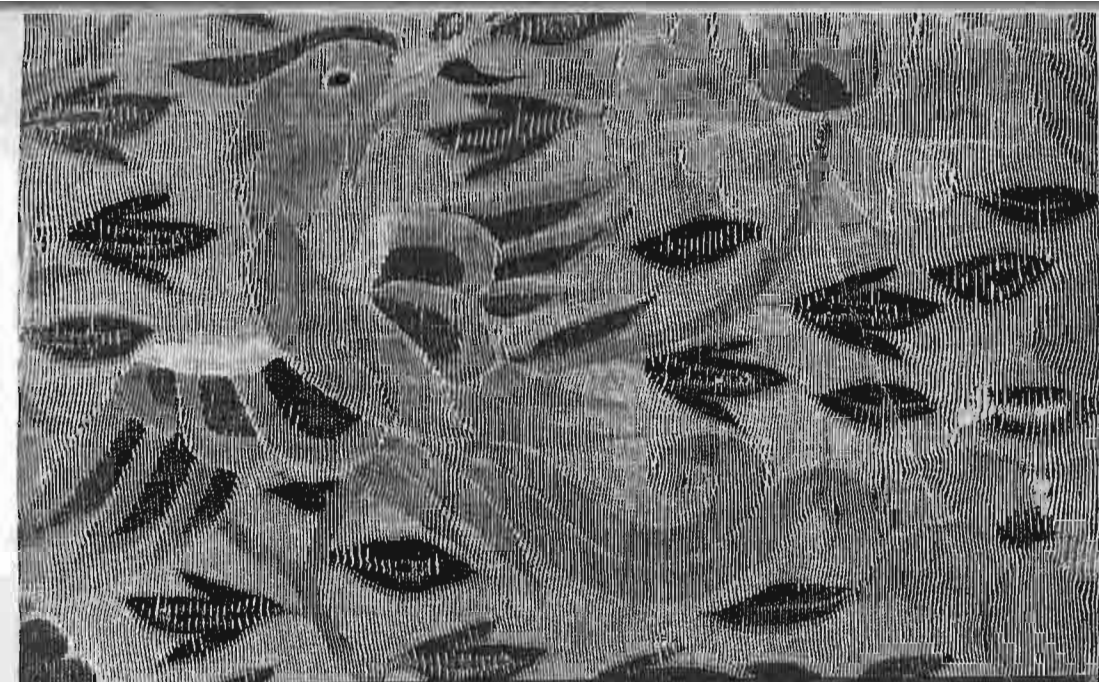




VOLUME ONE SOURCES OF
CHINESE TRADITION

FROM EARLIEST TIMES TO 1600

COMPILED BY WM. THEODORE DE BARY & IRENE BLOOM

SECOND EDITION

Sources of Chinese Tradition

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VOLUME I

FROM EARLIEST TIMES TO 1600

Compiled by Wm. Theodore de Bary and Irene Bloom

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Let the state be small and the people be few.
 There may be ten or even a hundred times as many implements,
 But they should not be used.
 Let the people, regarding death as a weighty matter,
 not travel far.
 Though they have boats and carriages, none shall ride in them.
 Though they have armor and weapons, none shall display them.
 Let the people return once more to the use of knotted ropes.¹⁴
 Let them savor their food and find beauty in their clothing,
 peace in their dwellings, and joy in their customs.
 Though neighboring states are within sight of one another,
 And the sound of cocks and dogs is audible
 from one to the other,
 People will reach old age and death
 and yet not visit one another.¹⁵

True words are not beautiful,
 Beautiful words are not true.
 Those who are good do not argue,
 Those who argue are not good.
 Those who know have no wide learning,
 Those with wide learning do not know.
 The sage does not hoard,
 The more he uses on behalf of others,
 The more he has himself.
 And the more he gives to others,
 The more comes back to him.
 The Way of Heaven is to bring benefit and not to harm.
 The Way of the sage is to do things without contending.

[Laozi (SBBY) — IB]

14. Tradition has it that knotted ropes were used for record-keeping before the invention of writing.

15. According to the commentary by Wang Bi, this is because there is nothing they want to acquire.

TRANSFORMATION AND TRANSCENDENCE IN THE ZHUANGZI

In Zhuang Zhou — or Zhuangzi — we encounter a true intellectual and spiritual genius, one of the most philosophically challenging and verbally adept contributors to the early Chinese tradition and also one of its wittiest and most intriguing personalities. Zhuangzi probes philosophical depths in ways that are often unsettling and even unnerving; simultaneously he achieves literary heights that are literally breathtaking. While the *Daodejing* offers its sententious wisdom in the form of a kind of gnomic poetry, the text that bears Zhuangzi's name is a linguistically flamboyant tour de force, opening with a dazzling flight of the spirit and closing, thirty-three chapters later, with a comprehensive and remarkably sober survey of the world of thought in the late Warring States period. In between there are conversations, often highly fanciful, between real or, more often, imaginary people, along with anecdotes, parables, meditations, and poems. The characters that inhabit the pages of the *Zhuangzi* include craftsmen, cripples, a slyly reconstructed Confucius, and a talking tree — among a host of others.

While it is now generally accepted that the author and teacher known as Laozi, "the old master," was not actually a single person, Zhuang Zhou, though biographical detail concerning his life is scant, has been recognized as a distinct individual. The Han dynasty historian Sima Qian (145?–86? B.C.E.) records that he was a native of a place called Meng, where he once served as "an official in the lacquer garden," and that he lived during the times of King Hui of Liang (370–319 B.C.E.) and King Xuan of Qi (319–301 B.C.E.). The location of Meng is still uncertain, but it may well have been in the feudal state of Song, where hundreds of years earlier the vestiges of the Shang royal family had been enfeoffed. The years of Zhuang Zhou's life are also not reliably known, but if Sima Qian's chronology is even approximately correct, Zhuang Zhou would have been a contemporary of Mencius.

Following the fourth-century commentator Guo Xiang (d. 312 C.E.), scholars generally attribute to this presumably historical Zhuang Zhou the first seven chapters of the *Zhuangzi*, which have become known as the Inner Chapters. All of the selections that follow below derive from these seven chapters. The rest of the *Zhuangzi* was divided into fifteen Outer Chapters and eleven Miscellaneous Chapters, which are generally acknowledged to have been the work of other, later hands.¹⁶

Given the subtlety and ambiguity of the thought encountered in the Inner Chapters of the *Zhuangzi*, it is difficult to characterize it in broad strokes,

16. Selections from these later chapters may be found in ch. 9, pp. 263–68.

though it is possible to highlight Zhuangzi's most prominent concerns. One of these is the issue of universality and particularity, the *Zhuangzi* being memorable for its meditation on the diversity of the human world as well as the world of nature as a whole, its reflection on how, amid the diversity of life, the universality of the Way may be perceived. Zhuangzi is also concerned with the nature of knowledge, the possibilities and limitations of language, the metaphysical implications of moral values, and the understanding of the self. For him, self-understanding is gained through an awareness that life involves both infinite variety and inexorable change and that death is both inevitable and unfathomable. Like Laozi, Zhuangzi is concerned also with transcendence, to be found here in the realization that life and death alike are simply two aspects of the great process of transformation.

The *Zhuangzi* has always been a challenge for translators, in part because it is so difficult to capture both its philosophical depth and its literary brilliance — the deep places and dark shadows within which Zhuangzi often works and the high humor and bright light with which he manages to illumine the darkness. Fortunately, readers of English have benefited from the fact that in recent years the text has been translated by two of the greatest Sinologists and translators of the twentieth century — Burton Watson and Angus Graham. Both of these masterful translations are represented in the selections that follow, Watson's in chapters 1 and 3–7, Graham's in chapter 2.

FROM CHAPTER 1, "FREE AND EASY WANDERING"

In the northern darkness there is a fish and his name is Kun.¹⁷ The Kun is so huge I don't know how many thousand *li* he measures. He changes and becomes a bird whose name is Peng. The back of the Peng measures I don't know how many thousand *li* across and, when he rises up and flies off, his wings are like clouds all over the sky. When the sea begins to move,¹⁸ this bird sets out for the southern darkness, which is the Lake of Heaven.

The *Universal Harmony*¹⁹ records various wonders, and it says: "When the Peng journeys to the southern darkness, the waters are roiled for three thousand *li*. He beats the whirlwind and rises ninety thousand *li*, setting off on the sixth-month gale." Wavering heat, bits of dust, living things blowing each other

17. Kun means "fish roe." So Zhuangzi begins with a paradox — the tiniest fish imaginable is also the largest fish imaginable.

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

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

about — the sky looks very blue. Is that its real color, or is it because it is so far away and has no end? When the bird looks down, all he sees is blue too.

If water is not piled up deep enough, it won't have the strength to bear up a big boat. Pour a cup of water into a hollow in the floor and bits of trash will sail on it like boats. But set the cup there and it will stick fast, for the water is too shallow and the boat too large. If wind is not piled up deep enough, it won't have the strength to bear up great wings. Therefore when the Peng rises ninety thousand *li*, he must have the wind under him like that. Only then can he mount on the back of the wind, shoulder the blue sky, and nothing can hinder or block him. Only then can he set his eyes to the south.

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

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

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

In the bald and barren north, there is a dark sea, the Lake of Heaven. In it is a fish that is several thousand *li* across, and no one knows how long. His name is Kun. There is also a bird there, named Peng, with a back like Mount Tai and wings like clouds filling the sky. He beats the whirlwind, leaps into the air, and rises up ninety thousand *li*, cutting through the clouds and mist, shouldering the blue sky, and then he turns his eyes south and prepares to journey to the southern darkness.

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

Therefore a man who has wisdom enough to fill one office effectively, good

conduct enough to impress one community, virtue enough to please one ruler, or talent enough to be called into service in one state, has the same kind of self-pride as these little creatures. Song Rongzi²⁰ would certainly burst out laughing at such a man. The whole world could praise Song Rongzi and it wouldn't make him exert himself; the whole world could condemn him and it wouldn't make him mope. He drew a clear line between the internal and the external, and recognized the boundaries of true glory and disgrace. But that was all. As far as the world went, he didn't fret and worry, but there was still ground he left unturned.

Liezi²¹ could ride the wind and go soaring around with cool and breezy skill, but after fifteen days he came back to earth. As far as the search for good fortune went, he didn't fret and worry. He escaped the trouble of walking, but he still had to depend on something to get around. If he had only mounted on the truth of Heaven and Earth, ridden the changes of the six breaths, and thus wandered through the boundless, then what would he have had to depend on?

Therefore I say, the Perfect Man has no self; the Holy Man has no merit; the Sage has no fame. [pp. 29–32]

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

Zhuangzi said, "Maybe you've never seen a wildcat or a weasel. It crouches down and hides, watching for something to come along. It leaps and races east and west, not hesitating to go high or low — until it falls into the trap and dies in the net. Then again there's the yak, big as a cloud covering the sky. It certainly knows how to be big, but it doesn't know how to catch rats. Now you have this big tree and you're distressed because it's useless. Why don't you plant it in Not-Even-Anything Village, or the field of Broad-and-Boundless, relax and do nothing by its side, or lie down for free and easy sleep under it? Axes will never shorten its life, nothing can ever harm it. If there's no use for it, how can it come to grief or pain?" [p. 35]

[Zhuangzi (SBBY) 1:1a–5b, 9a–b

— adapted from Watson, *Chuang Tzu*, pp. 29–32, 35]

20. Referred to elsewhere in the literature of the period as Song Jian or Song Keng. According to chapter 33 of the *Zhuangzi*, he taught a doctrine of social harmony, frugality, pacifism, and the rejection of conventional standards of honor and disgrace.

21. Lie Yukou, a Taoist sage frequently mentioned in the *Zhuangzi*. The *Liezi*, a work attributed to him, is of uncertain date and did not reach its present form until the second or third century C.E.

FROM CHAPTER 2, "THE SORTING WHICH EVENS THINGS OUT"

This chapter is considered the most philosophically significant in the *Zhuangzi*, dealing as it does with matters of knowledge and language, life and death, dream and reality. In the following passage Zhuangzi starts from a quotation or provisional formulation of his own. His theme is the mind or heart, the organ of thought. Should it be allowed to take charge of our lives? Isn't it merely one of many organs, each with its own functions within an order that comes from beyond us, from the Way?

"Without an Other there is no Self, without Self no choosing one thing rather than another."

This is somewhere near it, but we do not know in whose service they are being employed. It seems that there is something genuinely in command, and that the only trouble is we cannot find a sign of it. That as "Way" it can be walked is true enough, but we do not see its shape; it has identity but no shape. Of the hundred joints, nine openings, six viscera all present and complete, which should I recognize as more kin to me than another? Are you people pleased with them all? Rather, you have a favorite organ among them. On your assumption, does it have the rest of them as its vassals and concubines? Are its vassals and concubines inadequate to rule each other? Isn't it rather that they take turns as each other's lord and vassals? Or rather than that, they have a genuine lord present in them. If we seek without success to grasp what its identity might be, that never either adds to nor detracts from its genuineness. [p. 51]

Once we have received the completed body we are aware of it all the time we await extinction. Is it not sad how we and other things go on stroking or jostling each other, in a race ahead like a gallop which nothing can stop? How can we fail to regret that we labor all our lives without seeing success, wear ourselves out with toil in ignorance of where we shall end? What use is it for man to say that he will not die, since when the body dissolves the heart dissolves with it? How can we not call this our supreme regret? Is man's life really as stupid as this? Or is it that I am the only stupid one, and there are others not so stupid? But if you go by the completed heart and take it as your authority, who is without such an authority? Why should it be only the man who knows how things alternate and whose heart approves his own judgments who has such an authority? The fool has one just as he has. For there to be "That's it, that's not" before they are formed in the heart would be to "go to Yue today and have arrived yesterday."²² This would be crediting with existence what has

22. "I go to Yue today but came yesterday" was a paradox of the Sophist Hui Shi, with whom Zhuangzi argued, here mentioned only for its absurdity. Yue was an area far to the east populated by non-Chinese.

no existence; and if you do that even the daemonic Yu could not understand you, and how can you expect to be understood by me? [p. 52]

The following passage refers to conventions of disputation or argument that were current in Zhuangzi's time. In disputation, if an object fits the name "ox," one affirms with the demonstrative word shi "[That] is it"; if it is something other than an ox one denies with a fei "[That] is not." Here Zhuangzi tries to discredit disputation by the objection that at any moment of change both alternatives will be admissible. He appeals to a paradox of Hui Shi, "The sun is simultaneously at noon and declining, a thing is simultaneously alive and dead," and generalizes to the conclusion that any statement will remain inadmissible at the very moment when it has just become admissible. It was also recognized in current disputation (as practiced by followers of Mozi) that one can say both "Y is long" (in relation to X) and "Y is short" (in relation to Z) and that even with words such as black and white, which are not comparative, one has to decide whether to "go by" (yin) the black parts or the white when deeming someone a "black man." Zhuangzi sees it as the lesson of disputation that one is entitled to affirm or deny anything of anything. He thinks of Confucians and Mohists who stick rigidly to their affirmations and denials as lighting up little areas of life and leaving the rest in darkness; the illumination of the sage is a vision that brings everything to light.

Saying is not blowing breath, saying says something; the only trouble is that what it says is never fixed. Do we really say something? Or have we never said anything? If you think it different from the twitter of fledglings, is there proof of the distinction? Or isn't there any proof? By what is the Way hidden, that there should be a genuine or a false? By what is saying darkened, that sometimes "That's it" and sometimes "That's not"? Wherever we walk, how can the Way be absent? Whatever the standpoint, how can saying be unallowable? The Way is hidden by formation of the lesser, saying is darkened by its foliage and flowers. And so we have the "That's it, that's not" of Confucians and Mohists, by which what is *it* for one of them for the other is not, what is *not* for one of them for the other is. If you wish to affirm what they deny and deny what they affirm, the best means is Illumination.

No thing is not "other," no thing is not "it." If you treat yourself too as "other," they do not appear; if you know of yourself you know of them. Hence it is said:

"Other" comes out from "it," "it" likewise goes by "other,"

the opinion that "it" and "other" are born simultaneously. However,

"Simultaneously with being alive one dies,"

and simultaneously with dying one is alive; simultaneously with being allowable something becomes unallowable and simultaneously with being unallowable it

becomes allowable. If going by circumstance that's it, then going by circumstance that's not; if going by circumstance that's not, then going by circumstance that's it. This is why the sage does not take this course, but opens things up to the light of Heaven; his too is a "That's it" which goes by circumstance. [p. 52]

In the following exchange Gaptooth is pressing for an admission that there must be something that is knowable. Wang Ni denies it, perhaps because there could be no independent viewpoint from which to judge a universally shared opinion. Then at least one knows what one does not know. But that is another contradiction, or so Zhuangzi thinks. Then one knows that no one knows anything — another contradiction.

Gaptooth put a question to Wang Ni.

"Would you know something of which all things agreed 'That's it'?"

"How would I know that?"

"Would you know what you did not know?"

"How would I know that?"

"Then does no thing know anything?"

"How would I know that? However, let me try to say it — 'How do I know that what I call knowing is not ignorance? How do I know that what I call ignorance is not knowing?'"

"Moreover, let me try a question on you. When a human sleeps in the damp his waist hurts and he gets stiff in the joints; is that so of the loach? When he sits in a tree he shivers and shakes; is that so of the ape? Which of these three knows the right place to live? Humans eat the flesh of hay-fed and grain-fed beasts, deer eat the grass, centipedes relish snakes, owls and crows crave mice; which of the four has a proper sense of taste? Gibbons are sought by baboons as mates, elaphures like the company of deer, loaches play with fish. Maoqiang and Lady Li were beautiful in the eyes of men; but when the fish saw them they plunged deep, when the birds saw them they flew high, when the deer saw them they broke into a run. Which of these four knows what is truly beautiful in the world? In my judgment the principles of humaneness and rightness, the paths of 'That's it, that's not,' are inextricably confused; how could I know how to discriminate between them?"

[Gaptooth said,] "If you do not know benefit from harm, would you deny that the utmost man knows benefit from harm?"

[Wang Ni replied,] "The utmost man is daemonic.²³ When the wide woodlands blaze, they cannot sear him, when the Yellow River and the Han freeze they cannot chill him, when swift thunderbolts smash the mountains and whirlwinds shake the seas they cannot startle him. A man like that yokes the clouds

23. Or spiritual, *shen*.

to his chariot, rides the sun and the moon, and roams beyond the four seas; death and life alter nothing in himself, still less the principles of benefit and harm!" [p. 58]

Ququezi asked Changwuzi, "I heard this from the Master,²⁴ 'The sage does not work for any goal, does not lean toward benefit or shun harm, does not delight in seeking, does not fix a route by a Way, in saying nothing says something and in saying something says nothing, and roams beyond the dust and grime.' The Master thought of the saying as a flight of fancy, but to me it seemed the walking of the most esoteric Way. How does it seem to you?"

"This is a saying that would have puzzled the Yellow Emperor, and what would old Confucius know about it? Moreover, you for your part are counting your winnings much too soon; at the sight of the egg you expect the cock-crow, at the sight of the bow you expect a roasted owl. Suppose I put it to you in abandoned words, and you listen with the same abandon:

"Go side by side with the sun and moon,
Do the rounds of Space and Time.
Act out their neat conjunctions,
Stay aloof from their convulsions.
Dependents each on each, let us honor one another.
Common people fuss and fret.
The sage is a dullard and a sluggard.
Be aligned along a myriad years, in oneness, wholeness, simplicity.
All the myriad things are as they are,
And as what they are make up totality.

"How do I know that to take pleasure in life is not a delusion? How do I know that we who hate death are not exiles since childhood who have forgotten the way home? Lady Li was the daughter of a frontier guard at Ai. When the kingdom of Jin first took her the tears stained her dress; only when she came to the palace and shared the king's square couch and ate the flesh of hay-fed and grain-fed beasts did she begin to regret her tears. How do I know that the dead do not regret that ever they had an urge to life? Who banquets in a dream, at dawn wails and weeps; who wails and weeps in a dream, at dawn goes out to hunt. While we dream we do not know that we are dreaming, and in the middle of a dream interpret a dream within it; not until we wake do we know that we were dreaming. Only at the ultimate awakening shall we know that this is the ultimate dream. Yet fools think they are awake, so confident that they know what they are, princes, herdsman, incorrigible! You and Confucius are both

24. I.e., Confucius.

dreams, and I who call you a dream am also a dream. This saying of his, the name for it is 'a flight into the extraordinary'; if it happens once in ten thousand ages that a great sage knows its explanation it will have happened as though between morning and evening." [pp. 59-60]

[Zhuangzi (SBBY) 1:10a-15a, 15b-17b, 20a-23b
— adapted from Graham, *Chuang-tzu*, pp. 51-53, 58-60]

Once Zhuang Zhou dreamed he was a butterfly. A butterfly fluttering happily around — was he revealing what he himself meant to be? He knew nothing of Zhou. All at once awakening, there suddenly he was — Zhou. But he didn't know if he was Zhou having dreamed he was a butterfly or a butterfly dreaming he was Zhou. Between Zhou and the butterfly there must surely be some distinction. This is known as the transformation of things.

[Zhuangzi (SBBY) 1:25b — 1B]

FROM CHAPTER 3, "THE SECRET OF CARING FOR LIFE"

Your life has a limit but knowledge has none. If you use what is limited to pursue what has no limit, you will be in danger. If you understand this and still strive for knowledge, you will be in danger for certain! If you do good, stay away from fame. If you do evil, stay away from punishments. Follow the middle, go by what is constant, and you can stay in one piece, keep yourself alive, look after your parents, and live out your years.

Cook Ding was cutting up an ox for Lord Wenhui. At every touch of his hand, every heave of his shoulder, every move of his feet, every thrust of his knee — zip, zoop! He slithered the knife along with a zing, and all was in perfect rhythm, as though he were performing the dance of the Mulberry Grove or keeping time to the Jingshou music.²⁵

"Ah, this is marvelous!" said Lord Wenhui. "Imagine skill reaching such heights!"

Cook Ding laid down his knife and replied, "What I care about is the Way, which goes beyond skill. When I first began cutting up oxen, all I could see was the ox itself. After three years I no longer saw the whole ox. And now — now I go at it by spirit and don't look with my eyes. Perception and understanding have come to a stop and spirit moves where it wants. I go along with the natural makeup, strike in the big hollows, guide the knife through the big openings, and follow things as they are. So I never touch the smallest ligament or tendon, much less a main joint.

25. The Mulberry Grove is identified as a rain dance from the time of King 'Tang of the Shang dynasty, and the Jingshou music as part of a longer composition from the time of Yao.

"A good cook changes his knife once a year — because he cuts. A mediocre cook changes his knife once a month — because he hacks. I've had this knife of mine for nineteen years and I've cut up thousands of oxen with it, and yet the blade is as good as though it had just come from the grindstone. There are spaces between the joints, and the blade of the knife has really no thickness. If you insert what has no thickness into such spaces, then there's plenty of room — more than enough for the blade to play about it. That's why after nineteen years the blade of my knife is still as good as when it first came from the grindstone.

"However, whenever I come to a complicated place, I size up the difficulties, tell myself to watch out and be careful, keep my eyes on what I'm doing, work very slowly, and move the knife with the greatest subtlety, until — flop! the whole thing comes apart like a clod of earth crumbling to the ground. I stand there holding the knife and look all around me, completely satisfied and reluctant to move on, and then I wipe off the knife and put it away."

"Excellent!" said Lord Wenhui. "I have heard the words of Cook Ding and learned how to care for life!" . . . [pp. 50–51]

When Lao Dan²⁶ died, Qin Shi went to mourn for him; but after giving three cries, he left the room.

"Weren't you a friend of the Master?" asked Laozi's disciples.

"Yes."

"And you think it's all right to mourn him this way?"

"Yes," said Qin Shi. "At first I took him for a real man, but now I know he wasn't. A little while ago, when I went in to mourn, I found old men weeping for him as though they were weeping for a son, and young men weeping for him as though they were weeping for a mother. To have gathered a group like *that*, he must have done something to make them talk about him, though he didn't ask them to talk, or make them weep for him, though he didn't ask them to weep. This is to hide from Heaven, turn your back on the true state of affairs, and forget what you were born with. In the old days, this was called the crime of hiding from Heaven. Your master happened to come because it was his time, and he happened to leave because things follow along. If you are content with the time and willing to follow along, then grief and joy have no way to enter in. In the old days, this was called being freed from the bonds of Di.

"Though the grease burns out of the torch, the fire passes on, and no one knows where it ends." [pp. 52–53]

[*Zhuangzi* (SBBY) 2:11a–4a — Watson; *Chuang Tzu*, pp. 50–53]

26. Laozi, the reputed author of the *Daodejing*.

FROM CHAPTER 4, "IN THE WORLD OF MEN"

This chapter of the *Zhuangzi* opens with an exchange between Confucius and his favorite disciple, Yan Hui — an exchange concocted, of course, by Zhuangzi. Zhuangzi imagines Yan Hui requesting permission to journey to the state of Wei and contemplating what he might do to exert a positive influence over the young ruler of that state. Confucius is skeptical about Yan Hui's chances for success and points out that rulers motivated by concerns for fame or gain are likely to be intractable. After repeatedly cautioning Yan Hui, he asks to hear the disciple's plan.

Yan Hui said, "If I am grave and empty-hearted, diligent and of one mind, won't that do?"

"Goodness, how could *that* do? You may put on a fine outward show and seem very impressive, but you can't avoid having an uncertain look on your face, any more than an ordinary man can. And then you try to gauge this man's feelings and seek to influence his mind. But with him, what is called "the virtue that advances a little each day" would not succeed, much less a great display of virtue! He will stick fast to his position and never be converted. Though he may make outward signs of agreement, inwardly he will not give it a thought! How could such an approach succeed?"

"Well, then, suppose I am inwardly direct, outwardly compliant, and do my work through the examples of antiquity? By being inwardly direct, I can be the companion of Heaven. Being a companion of Heaven, I know that the Son of Heaven and I are equally the sons of Heaven. Then why would I use my words to try to get men to praise me, or try to get them not to praise me? A man like this, people call The Child. This is what I mean by being a companion of Heaven.

"By being outwardly compliant, I can be a companion of men. Lifting up the tablet, kneeling, bowing, crouching down — this is the etiquette of a minister. Everybody does it, so why shouldn't I? If I do what other people do, they can hardly criticize me. This is what I mean by being a companion of men.

"By doing my work through the examples of antiquity, I can be the companion of ancient times. Though my words may in fact be lessons and reproaches, they belong to ancient times and not to me. In this way, though I may be blunt, I cannot be blamed. This is what I mean by being a companion of antiquity. If I go about it in this way, will it do?"

Confucius said, "Goodness, how could *that* do? You have too many policies and plans and you haven't seen what is needed. You will probably get off without incurring any blame, yes. But that will be as far as it goes. How do you think you can actually convert him? You are still making the mind²⁷ your teacher."

27. Not the natural or "given" mind but the mind that makes artificial distinctions.

Yan Hui said, "I have nothing more to offer. May I ask the proper way?"

"You must fast!" said Confucius. "I will tell you what that means. Do you think that it is easy to do anything while you have [a mind]? If you do, Bright Heaven will not sanction you."

Yan Hui said, "My family is poor. I haven't drunk wine or eaten any strong foods for several months. So can I be considered as having fasted?"

"That is the fasting one does before a sacrifice, not the fasting of the mind."

"May I ask what the fasting of the mind is?"

Confucius said, "Make your will one! Don't listen with your ears, listen with your mind. No, don't listen with your mind, listen with your spirit.²⁸ Listening stops with the ears, the mind stops with recognition, but spirit is empty and waits on all things. The Way gathers in emptiness alone. Emptiness is the fasting of the mind."

Yan Hui said, "Before I heard this, I was certain that I was Hui. But now that I have heard it, there is no more Hui. Can this be called emptiness?"

"That's all there is to it," said Confucius. "Now I will tell you. You may go and play in his bird cage, but never be moved by fame. If he listens, then sing; if not, keep still. Have no gate, no opening, but make oneness your house, and live with what cannot be avoided. Then you will be close to success."

"It is easy to keep from walking; the hard thing is to walk without touching the ground. It is easy to cheat when you work for men, but hard to cheat when you work for Heaven. You have heard of flying with wings, but you have never heard of flying without wings. You have heard of the knowledge that knows, but you have never heard of the knowledge that does not know. Look into that closed room, the empty chamber where Brightness is born! Fortune and blessing gather where there is stillness. But if you do not keep still — this is what is called sitting but racing around. Let your ears and eyes communicate with what is inside, and put mind and knowledge on the outside. Then even gods and spirits will come to dwell, not to speak of men! This is the changing of the ten thousand things, the bond of Yu and Shun, the constant practice of Fu Xi and Ji Qu.²⁹ How much more should it be a rule for lesser men!" . . . [pp. 56–58]

Carpenter Shi went to Qi, and when he got to Crooked Shaft, he saw a serrate oak standing by the village shrine. It was broad enough to shelter several thousand oxen and measured a hundred spans around, towering above the hills. The lowest branches were eighty feet from the ground, and a dozen or so of them could be made into boats. There were so many sightseers that the place looked like a fair, but the carpenter didn't even glance around and went on his way without stopping. His apprentice stood staring for a long time and then ran

after Carpenter Shi and said, "Since I first took up my ax and followed you, Master, I have never seen timber as beautiful as this. But you don't even bother to look, and go right on without stopping. Why is that?"

"Forget it — say no more!" said the carpenter. "It's a worthless tree! Make boats out of it and they'd sink; make coffins out of it and they'd rot in no time; make vessels and they'd break at once. Use it for doors and it would sweat sap like pine; use it for posts and the worms would eat them up. It's not a timber tree — there's nothing it can be used for. That's how it got to be that old!"

After Carpenter Shi returned home, the oak tree appeared to him in a dream and said, "What are you comparing me with? Are you comparing me with those useful trees? The cherry apple, the pear, the orange, the citron, the rest of those fructiferous trees and shrubs — as soon as their fruit is ripe, they are torn apart and subjected to abuse. Their big limbs are broken off, their little limbs are yanked around. Their utility makes life miserable for them, and so they don't get to finish out the years Heaven gave them, but are cut off in mid-journey. They bring it on themselves — the pulling and tearing of the common mob. And it is the same way with all other things."

"As for me, I've been trying a long time to be of no use, and though I almost died, I've finally got it. This is of great use to me. If I had been of some use, would I ever have grown this large? Moreover, you and I are both of us things. What's the point of this — things condemning things? You, a worthless man about to die — how do you know I'm a worthless tree?"

When Carpenter Shi woke up, he reported his dream. His apprentice said, "If it's so intent on being of no use, what's it doing there at the village shrine?"³⁰

"Shhh! Say no more! It is only *resting* there. If we carp and criticize, it will only conclude that we don't understand it. Even if it weren't at the shrine, do you suppose it would be cut down? It protects itself in a different way from ordinary people. If you try to judge it by conventional standards, you'll be way off!" [pp. 63–65]

[Zhuangzi (SBBY) 2:6a–8a, 12a–13a

—adapted from Watson, *Chuang Tzu*, pp. 56–58, 63–65]

FROM CHAPTER 5, "THE SIGN OF VIRTUE COMPLETE"

Huizi said to Zhuangzi, "Can a man really be without feelings?"

Zhuangzi: "Yes."

Huizi: "But a man who has no feelings — how can you call him a man?"

28. Literally, with your *qi*, material-force or vital energy.

29. Mythical sage rulers.

30. The shrine, or altar of the soil, was always situated in a grove of beautiful trees. So the oak was serving a purpose by lending an air of sanctity to the spot.

Zhuangzi: "The Way gave him a face; Heaven gave him a form — why can't you call him a man?"

Huizi: "But if you've already called him a man, how can he be without feelings?"

Zhuangzi: "That's not what I mean by feelings. When I talk about having no feelings, I mean that a man doesn't allow likes or dislikes to get in and do him harm. He just lets things be the way they are and doesn't try to help life along."

Huizi: "If he doesn't try to help life along, then how can he keep himself alive?"

Zhuangzi: "The Way gave him a face; Heaven gave him a form. He doesn't let likes and dislikes get in and do him harm. You, now — you treat your spirit like an outsider. You wear out your energy, leaning on a tree and moaning, slumping at your desk and dozing — Heaven picked out a body for you and you use it to gibber about 'hard' and 'white'!"³¹

[Zhuangzi (SBBY) 2:15b–17b, 23a–b
— adapted from Watson, *Chuang Tzu*, pp. 75–76]

FROM CHAPTER 6, "THE GREAT AND VENERABLE TEACHER"

Nanbo Zikui said to the Woman Crookback, "You are old in years and yet your complexion is that of a child. Why is this?"

"I have heard the Way!"

"Can the Way be learned?" asked Nanbo Zikui.

"Goodness, how could that be? Anyway, you aren't the man to do it. Now there's Buliang Yi — he has the talent of a sage but not the Way of a sage, whereas I have the Way of a sage but not the talent of a sage. I thought I would try to reach him and see if I could get anywhere near to making him a sage. It's easier to explain the Way of a sage to someone who has the talent of a sage, you know. So I began explaining and kept at him for three days, and after that he was able to put the world outside himself. When he had put the world outside himself, I kept at him for seven days more, and after that he was able to put things outside himself. When he had put things outside himself, I kept at him for nine days more, and after that he was able to put life outside himself. After he had put life outside himself, he was able to achieve the brightness of dawn, and when he had achieved the brightness of dawn, he could see his own aloneness. After he had managed to see his own aloneness, he could do away with

31. Huizi and Gongsun Long, often identified as representatives of the School of Names (*mingjia*), were known for spending much time discussing the relationship between attributes such as "hard" and "white" and the things to which they pertain.

past and present, and after he had done away with past and present, he was able to enter where there is no life and death. That which kills life does not die; that which gives life to life does not live.³² This is the kind of thing it is: there's nothing it doesn't send off, nothing it doesn't welcome, nothing it doesn't destroy, nothing it doesn't complete. It's name is Peace-in-Strife. After the strife, it attains completion. . . ." [pp. 82–83]

Master Si, Master Yu, Master Li, and Master Lai were all four talking together. "Who can look upon nonbeing as his head, on life as his back, and on death as his rump?" they said. "Who knows that life and death, existence and annihilation, are all a single body? I will be his friend!"

The four men looked at each other and smiled. There was no disagreement in their hearts and so the four of them became friends.

All at once Master Yu fell ill. Master Si went to ask how he was. "Amazing!" said Master Yu. "The Creator is making me all crooked like this! My back sticks up like a hunchback, and my vital organs are on top of me. My chin is hidden in my navel, my shoulders are up above my head, and my pigtail points at the sky. It must be some dislocation of the yin and yang!"³³

Yet he seemed calm at heart and unconcerned. Dragging himself haltingly to the well, he looked at his reflection and said, "My, my! So the Creator is making me all crooked like this!"

"Do you resent it?" asked Master Si.

"Why, no, what would I resent? If the process continues, perhaps in time he'll transform my left arm into a rooster. In that case I'll keep watch on the night. Or perhaps in time he'll transform my right arm into a crossbow pellet and I'll shoot down an owl for roasting. Or perhaps in time he'll transform my buttocks into cartwheels. Then, with my spirit for a horse, I'll climb up and go for a ride. What need will I ever have for a carriage again?"

"I received life because the time had come; I will lose it because the order of things passes on. Be content with this time and dwell in this order and then neither sorrow nor joy can touch you. In ancient times this was called the 'freeing of the bound.' There are those who cannot free themselves, because they are bound by things. But nothing can ever win against Heaven — that's the way it's always been. What would I have to resent?"

Suddenly Master Lai grew ill. Gasping and wheezing, he lay at the point of death. His wife and children gathered round in a circle and began to cry. Master Li, who had come to ask how he was, said, "Shoo! Get back! Don't disturb the process of change!"

32. I.e., that which transcends the categories of life and death can never be said to have lived or died; only that which recognizes the existence of such categories is subject to them.

33. Yin and yang are complementary energies associated with dark and light, cold and heat, female and male, Earth and Heaven, etc.

he leaned against the doorway and talked to Master Lai. "How mar-
the Creator is! What is he going to make of you next? Where is he going
I you? Will he make you into a rat's liver? Will he make you into a bug's

ster Lai said, "A child, obeying his father and mother, goes wherever he
, east or west, south or north. And the yin and yang — how much more
ey to a man than father or mother! Now that they have brought me to
rge of death, if I should refuse to obey them, how perverse I would be!
fault is it of theirs? The Great Clod burdens me with form, labors me
ife, eases me in old age, and rests me in death. So if I think well of my
or the same reason I must think well of my death. When a skilled smith
ing metal, if the metal should leap up and say, 'I insist upon being made
Moyeh!'³⁴ he would surely regard it as very inauspicious metal indeed.
having had the audacity to take on human form once, if I should say, 'I
want to be anything but a man! Nothing but a man!' the Creator would
regard me as a most inauspicious sort of person. So now I think of Heaven
Earth as a great furnace, and the Creator as a skilled smith. Where could
nd me that would not be all right? I will go off to sleep peacefully, and
with a start I will wake up." . . . [pp. 83–85]

Hui said, "I'm improving!"
Confucius said, "What do you mean by that?"
"I've forgotten humaneness and rightness."
"That's good. But you still haven't got it."
Another day, the two met again, and Yan Hui said, "I'm improving!"
"What do you mean by that?"
"I've forgotten rites and music."
"That's good. But you still haven't got it."
Another day, the two met again, and Yan Hui said, "I'm improving!"
"What do you mean by that?"
"I can sit down and forget everything."
Confucius looked very startled and said, "What do you mean, sit down and
forget everything?"
Yan Hui said, "I smash up my limbs and body, drive out perception and
reflect, cast off form, do away with understanding, and make myself identical
with the Great Thoroughfare. This is what I mean by sitting down and forgetting
everything."
Confucius said, "If you're identical with it, you must have no more likes! If
you've been transformed, you must have no more constancy! So you really are

a worthy man after all!³⁵ With your permission, I'd like to become your fol-
lower." [pp. 90–91]

[Zhuangzi (SBBY) 3:7a–10a, 14a–b — Watson, *Chuang Tzu*, pp. 82–85, 90–91]

FROM CHAPTER 7, "FIT FOR EMPERORS AND KINGS"

The sovereign of the Southern Sea is called Impatient; the sovereign of the
Northern Sea is called Impulsive; the sovereign of the center of the world is
called the Primal Whole (*hundun*). Impatient and Impulsive met from time to
time in the territory of the Primal Whole, and the latter treated them well.
Impatient and Impulsive discussed together how they could repay his kindness.
They said, "All men have seven holes in their bodies for seeing, hearing, eating,
and breathing. Our friend here has none of these. Let us try to bore some holes
for him." Each day they bored one hole. On the seventh day the Primal Whole
died.

[Zhuangzi (SBBY) 3:19a–b — deB]

35. Zhuangzi may have intended a humorous reference to the words of Confucius in *Analects*
6:9: "The Master said, 'What a worthy man was Hui!'"

34. A famous sword of King Helü of Wu.

Chapter 6

THE EVOLUTION OF THE CONFUCIAN
TRADITION IN ANTIQUITY

In the two and a half centuries following the death of Confucius, the Chinese world changed enormously. During the lifetime of Confucius, China was still nominally ruled by the Zhou dynasty, though in fact the Zhou had lost virtually all of its actual power some three hundred years earlier, with real, if always uncertain, power having passed by the eighth century B.C.E. into the hands of the wayward rulers of contending feudal states. A certain tension seems to come through at various points in the Confucian *Analects* surrounding the status and prerogatives of the feudal lords who exercised power within the states but were nonetheless judged by Confucius to be deficient when it came to their claims to legitimacy. Several statements attributed to Confucius seem to imply that the prerogatives of the Zhou house should not have been usurped. Nonetheless, Confucius's recorders seem to have sensed in him — or attributed to him — an uncertainty about the future political order and, with it, a tendency to think of the Zhou more in terms of the nobility of its ancient culture than in terms of any possible restoration of its power.

Mencius (385?–312? B.C.E.), the first great successor to Confucius, held out even less hope for the future of the House of Zhou, or such is the implication of questions that are raised repeatedly, if often indirectly, in the Mencian conversations: who might be capable of uniting “all under Heaven,” and by what means? The same questions occupied Xunzi (310?–219? B.C.E.), the third major figure in the early Confucian tradition, who returns to them repeatedly in his

own reflections on government. By the closing years of Xunzi's lifetime, these questions would be at least partially resolved. When in 221 B.C.E. the feudal state of Qin conquered the last of the remaining feudal states, uniting China for the first time under a single ruler, the feudal order would finally be destroyed, and in its place a new empire would be established. That the empire would be founded on force was apparent; that the empire could be maintained and stabilized through force was not. Some of the long-standing questions about governance would persist and become ever more closely intertwined with questions about culture and history.

In fact, long before the Qin conquest and the founding of the empire, questions had begun to arise about the nature and the hold of the past — how it should be understood and in what respects it should be honored in changing circumstances. These may, in fact, have been the most persistent and pervasive questions to be pondered and debated at the time, not only among Confucians but among other thinkers of the Warring States period (479–221 B.C.E.) as well. For Confucians, the most urgent questions focused on the survival of moral attitudes and ritual forms that had been associated with the older feudal order. What was the role of courtesy and ritual, honor and fidelity, in a world marked by increasing social mobility, ever greater uncertainty about established social relationships, and escalating violence?

It was typical of Confucians to recognize civilization as both an ongoing process and an inheritance from the past, but was the cumulative achievement of “the ancients” to be preserved in the fullness of its form and detail or was their record of accomplishment to be treasured more for the noble and inspiring personal models that they provided for later generations following in a common cause? In either case, how much was to be preserved in the name of civilization as a legacy from the past, and how much was susceptible to change in defense of larger human purposes?

In this chapter we present excerpts from three of the most important texts of the Confucian tradition in ancient China. Each of them addressed these questions, though in different ways. The *Mencius* and the *Xunzi* may be described as philosophical works — quite different from each other in both form and content, yet similar in the sense that they reflect on matters of governance and personal cultivation and, like virtually all Confucian works, assume a direct relationship between the two. The *Zuozhuan* — or *Zuo's Commentary* — is China's oldest narrative history. It is not, perhaps, a Confucian work in the same sense that the *Mencius* and the *Xunzi* are, but at many points it vividly illustrates a similar alertness to the connection between the moral dispositions of individuals and the dynamics of their lives and political careers. Moreover, from very early times the *Zuozhuan*, traditionally believed to be a commentary on the classic known as the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, was itself accorded the status of a Confucian classic, whereas the *Mencius* was so honored only much later, in the twelfth century, and the *Xunzi*, for complex reasons, not at all.

Each of these texts provides a fascinating perspective on changes in values in the time of Confucius and in the subsequent Warring States period, while together they suggest the variety and complexity to be found within the Confucian tradition as it evolved in ancient China.

MENCIUS

Meng Ke—or Mencius, as he is known to readers of English translations—lived in the fourth century B.C.E., more than a century after the time of Confucius. Confucius, who in his own lifetime had enjoyed only the most qualified success, had by Mencius's time acquired the reputation of a sage. Mencius acknowledged him as such and seems to have shared his most cherished values, though not without transforming many of them. The Warring States period witnessed a process of consolidation in which larger and more powerful feudal states swallowed up smaller and weaker ones. A concomitant of this development was a change in the character of warfare, which now became more brutal, with large conscript armies pitted against each other in battles that typically took a terrible toll in human lives. During these uncertain times Mencius traveled from one feudal state to another, speaking to rulers about government, deploring the effects of warfare on the people, and pleading the case for the practicality of humaneness. His response to the political situation was determined, yet subtle: he reaffirmed a profound Confucian confidence in the efficacy of morality but was resigned to the possibility that he himself might not figure into, or even personally witness, the restoration of a moral order.

The *Mencius* is a record of conversations between Mencius and rulers of the contending feudal states, disciples, and philosophical adversaries. It also includes pronouncements by Mencius on a variety of subjects, especially government and human nature. We find in it not an authorial presence providing form, structure, and coherence to the work but rather a more disparate, even fragmented collection of exchanges that occurred at various times and places and were recorded after the fact. Many of these exchanges take the form of arguments. While maintaining that he was disinclined to argument, he insists that his career as a controversialist has been forced upon him—that he is compelled to dispute with rulers and scholars who fail to understand the legacy of civilization and, underlying it, the human potential for goodness.

In the selections that follow, some of the most prominent Mencian attitudes and themes emerge. A recurrent theme—one that echoes and reechoes in virtually all later Confucian discourse—is the idea that what ultimately matters in human interactions is the motivation of the actors and their capacity for mutual respect and regard based on recognition of a common humanity. Mencius both recalls and enlarges the Confucian idea of *ren*, or humaneness. Along-

side it he places the complementary principle of *yi*, or rightness, a complex idea of what is right in particular situations as individuals perform their distinct roles and confront the different circumstances of their lives.

Mencius appeals to rulers to draw on humaneness in their conduct of affairs of state rather than doubting their own capacity for compassion and to recognize the claims of rightness rather than succumbing to the expedient. He is direct to the point of acerbity in criticizing rulers for their role in instigating warfare, devout in deploring war's pernicious effects on the lives of the common people. Perhaps influenced by his adversaries, the Mohists and the Legalists, he displays a keen awareness that human beings have certain basic needs—food, clothing, shelter, and education—and that these must be met if their very existence as human beings is to be possible. War inevitably interferes with the satisfaction of these basic human needs, he observes, as does overindulgence on the part of rulers.

Mencius's discussions of matters of state draw on historical memory—or recreations of history. He seems to reclaim, in memory, the moral aura of a time before the beginning of the dynastic system, when rulers were selected on the morally compelling basis of merit rather than the less reliable basis of heredity. Much that he has to say about the ancient sage kings Yao, Shun, and Yu has to do with the moral authority that they wielded by virtue of their having gained the empire through the will of Heaven as signaled in the willingness of the people. Mindful of the potent idea of the Mandate of Heaven that he believed derived from the early Zhou, Mencius maintains that Heaven oversees a kind of overarching moral order in which it is given to rulers to rule for the sake of the common people, with the object of achieving their well-being and prosperity.

At many points in these conversations the reader will find evidence of Mencius's psychologically rich conception of human moral potential. One notable instance may be found in his discussion of the varieties of courage and of the cultivation of the "vast, flowing *qi*"—a psychophysical energy or vitality within the individual that he seems to find directly related to moral effort. Most famous are his discussions of the "four beginnings"—natural tendencies within all human beings that, he believes, can be cultivated and developed into the capacities for humaneness, rightness, propriety, and wisdom. This idea of a natural human tendency toward sympathetic responsiveness to others is, in fact, one of Mencius's most important contributions to the later history of Chinese thought.

It is clear from Mencius's arguments that many in his own time held different views of human nature, discounting his optimism, questioning his confidence in a moral potential inherent in each person, doubting his affirmation of the human capacity for perfectibility through self-cultivation. Some who followed Mencius, including such eminent Confucians as Xunzi, also challenged his views. Still, a survey of the long history of Confucian thought confirms that

Mencius was the single most influential contributor to a view of human nature that would ultimately become dominant, not only in China but also in the rest of Confucianized East Asia, and not only in the thought of an intellectual and social elite but in the value system of an entire culture.

The following numbered items may serve as a guide to some of the major themes of the text:

- Humaneness (ren)*: 1A:1, 1A:5, 1A:7, 2A:6, 3A:3, 3B:9, 4A:1-4, 4A:10, 4A:14, 4A:20, 4B:5, 4B:19, 4B:28, 6A:1, 6A:4, 6A:6, 6A:11, 6A:16-19, 7A:4, 7A:15, 7A:45, 7B:13
- Rightness (yi)*: 1A:1, 1A:7, 1B:8, 2A:2, 2A:6, 3A:4, 3B:9, 4A:1, 4A:10, 4B:5-6, 4B:19, 6A:1, 6A:5-7, 6A:10, 6A:16, 7A:15, 7B:37
- Rites, ritual propriety (li)*: 1A:7, 2A:6, 4A:1, 4A:10, 4A:20, 4B:6, 6A:6-7, 6A:10, 7B:33
- Serving parents*: 1A:5, 2A:6, 4A:12, 4A:19, 4A:26-27, 5A:2
- Government*: 1A:1-7, 1B:6, 1B:8, 1B:11, 2A:5, 3A:3-4, 3B:9, 4A:1-5, 4A:12, 4A:14, 4A:20, 4B:1, 4B:3-5, 5A:5, 5A:7, 5B:2, 5B:9, 6A:6, 7B:13-14
- Economic livelihood*: 1A:2-3, 1A:7, 3A:3-4
- Well-field system*: 3A:3
- Regicide, deposing a ruler*: 1B:6, 1B:8, 3B:9, 5B:9
- War, violence*: 1A:2, 1A:5-6, 1B:11, 2A:3, 3B:9, 4A:14
- The noble person (junzi)*: 1A:7, 4A:26, 4B:14, 4B:19, 4B:22, 4B:28, 5A:2, 7A:40-41, 7A:45, 7B:33, 7B:37
- Sages*: 2A:2, 3A:4, 3B:9, 4A:1-2, 4A:26, 4B:1, 4B:19, 4B:28, 4B:32, 5A:2, 5A:5, 5A:7, 6A:6-7, 6B:2, 6B:15, 7A:38, 7B:33, 7B:37-38
- The nature, human nature*: 2A:6, 6A:1-6, 7A:1, 7A:38
- Qi (energy, material force)*: 2A:2, 6A:8
- Mind*: 1A:7, 2A:2, 2A:6, 3A:3-4, 4B:12, 4B:28, 6A:7-11, 6A:15, 6A:17, 6B:15, 7A:1, 7B:35
- Heaven*: 3A:4, 5A:5, 6A:6-7, 6A:15-16, 6B:15, 7A:1, 7A:38, 7A:41, 7B:14
- Destiny, the mandate*: 4A:4, 7A:1-2
- Nobility*: 5B:2, 6A:16

Selections from the Mencius

1A:1 Mencius saw King Hui of Liang.

The king said, "So venerable an elder, having come a thousand *li*, and not considering that too far, must surely have some means to profit our state?"

Mencius replied, "Why must the king speak of profit? There are humaneness and rightness, that is all. If the king says, 'How can I profit my state?' the officers will say, 'How can I profit my house?' and the gentlemen and the common people will say, 'How can I profit my person?' Those above and those below will be competing with one another for profit, and the state will be imperiled. One who would murder the ruler of a state with ten thousand chariots would

have to be from a house of a thousand chariots; one who would murder the ruler of a state of a thousand chariots would have to be from a house of a hundred chariots. A share of a thousand out of ten thousand or a hundred out of a thousand is hardly negligible; yet when rightness is subordinated to profit the urge to lay claim to more becomes irresistible. It has never happened that one given to humaneness abandons his parents, or that one given to rightness subordinates the interests of his lord. The king should speak of humaneness and rightness. Why is it necessary to speak of profit?"

1A:2 Mencius saw King Hui of Liang. As he stood overlooking a pond, watching the geese and the deer, the king asked, "Do the worthy also enjoy such things?"

Mencius replied, "Being worthy, they enjoy these things. Were they not worthy, although they might have such things, they would find no enjoyment in them. The Ode says,

He began by measuring the spirit tower,
He measured it and planned it.
The common people worked on it,
Finishing before a day was out.
In beginning to measure he urged against haste,
Yet the people came as if they were his children.
The king was in the spirit park,
The doe lying down,
The doe glistening,
The white bird glittering.
The king was by his spirit pond,
How full it was with dancing fish!¹

"King Wen used the strength of the people to build his tower and his pond, and the people found their delight and their joy in it. They called his tower the spirit tower and his pond the spirit pond and found joy in his having deer, and birds, and turtles. The ancients shared their joys with the people and it was this that enabled them to feel joy.

"The 'Declaration of Tang' says,

O sun, when will you perish?
We will die along with you.²

1. Ode 242.

2. *Classic of Documents*, in Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, 3:175. The people were so eager for the death of Jie, the "bad last ruler" of the Xia, that they were willing to die themselves to ensure that end.

"If the people wished to die along with him, although he had a tower and pond, how could he enjoy them alone?"

1A:3 King Hui of Liang said, "As regards the state, this solitary man³ devotes his entire mind to it—when the year is bad within the river, transferring people to the east of the river and transferring grain to the area within the river, and when the year is bad to the east of the river, again, acting accordingly. Look into the governments of neighboring states: there is no one as mindful as this solitary man, and yet people in the neighboring states do not decrease, nor do the people of this solitary man increase. Why should this be?"

Mencius said, "The king is fond of war; so please allow an analogy that derives from war. Drums rumbling, the soldiers having crossed weapons, some then flee, abandoning their armor and trailing their weapons behind them. Some stop after a hundred paces and some after fifty paces. How would it be if those who ran only fifty paces were to laugh at those who ran a hundred paces?"

The king said, "That should not be. It was only that they did not run a hundred paces, that is all. But they also ran."

Mencius said, "If the king understands this, there is no reason to expect the people to be more numerous than they are in neighboring states. If the agricultural seasons are not interfered with, there will be more grain than can be eaten. If close-meshed nets are not allowed in the pools and ponds, there will be more fish and turtles than can be eaten. And if axes are allowed in the mountains and forests only in the appropriate seasons, there will be more timber than can be used. When grain, fish, and turtles are more than can be eaten, and timber is more than can be used, this will mean that the people can nourish life, bury their dead, and be without rancor. Allowing them to nourish life, bury their dead, and be without rancor is the beginning of kingly government.

"Let mulberry trees be planted around households of five *mu*, and people of fifty will be able to be clothed in silk. In the raising of chickens, pigs, dogs, and swine, do not neglect the appropriate breeding times, and people of seventy will be able to eat meat. With fields of a hundred *mu*, do not interfere with the appropriate seasons of cultivation, and families with several mouths to feed will be able to avoid hunger. Attend carefully to the education provided in the schools,⁴ which should include instruction in the duty of filial and fraternal devotion, and gray-haired people will not be seen carrying burdens on the roads.

It has never happened that people of seventy have worn silk and eaten meat, and the black-haired people been neither hungry nor cold, without the ruler having been a true king.

"The king's dogs and pigs eat food intended for human beings, and he does not know enough to prohibit this. On the roads there are people dying of starvation, and he does not know enough to distribute food. People die, and he says, 'It was not I; it was the year.' How is this different from killing a person by stabbing him and then saying, 'It was not I; it was the weapon'? When the king ceases to place the blame on the year, then the people of the world will come to him."

1A:5 King Hui of Liang said, "No state in the empire was stronger than Jin [or Liang], as the venerable elder is aware. But when it came to this solitary man, we were defeated by Qi in the east, and my eldest son died there. In the west seven hundred *li* were lost to Qin, while in the south we were humiliated by Chu. This solitary man is ashamed of this and wishes, before he dies, to expunge it. How may this be done?"

Mencius replied, "With a territory of so much as one hundred *li*, one can become a king. If the king bestows humane government on the people, reduces punishments, and lightens taxes, causing the plowing to be deep and the weeding thorough, the strong will be able to use their leisure time to cultivate filiality and brotherliness. Within the home they will serve their fathers and brothers, and outside they will serve their elders and superiors. They can then be made to take up sticks and overcome the strong armor and the sharp weapons of Qin and Chu.

"Those other rulers lay claim to the time of their people, so that they are unable to plow or to weed and thus to nourish their parents. Their parents then suffer from cold and hunger; elder and younger brothers are parted; wives and children are separated. These rulers bury their people and drown them. If the king will go and punish them, who would there be to stand as an enemy to him? Therefore it may be said that the humane man has no enemy. May it please the king to have no doubt about this."

1A:6 Mencius saw King Xiang of Liang. On emerging he said to someone, "Seeing him from a distance, he does not appear to be a ruler of men; approaching him, one sees nothing imposing about him. He abruptly asked, 'How can the empire be settled?'

"I replied, 'It can be settled through unity.'

"Who is able to unite it?"

"I replied, 'One who is not fond of killing people can unite it.'

"Who can give it to him?"

"I replied, 'There is no one in the empire who will deny it to him. Does the king know the way of seedlings? If there is drought in the seventh or eighth

3. The Chinese term *guaren*, literally, "lonely or friendless person," was one used by rulers to speak of themselves. It implies a sense (or a pretense) of self-depreciation.

4. Mencius here mentions two kinds of schools, the *xiang* and the *xu*. In 3A:10 he refers to these and several more, explaining that *xiang* was a Zhou term, while *xu* was a term used in the Shang dynasty.

month, the seedlings dry out. But when dense clouds gather in the sky, and the rain falls in torrents, the plants spring up and are revived. When this happens, who can stop it? Now among the herders of men in the empire there is none who is not fond of killing people. If there were one who was not fond of killing people, the people of the empire would crane their necks to look for him. Were this truly to happen, the people would return to him like water flowing downward, torrentially — and who could stop it?"

1A:7 King Xuan of Qi asked, "Would it be possible to hear about the affairs of Huan of Qi and Wen of Jin?"⁵

Mencius replied, "The followers of Confucius would not speak of the affairs of Huan and Wen, and thus nothing about them has been transmitted to later generations. Not having heard, and having nothing to say on that matter, how would it be if the minister were to speak of kingship?"

The king said, "What must one's virtue be like in order to become a king?"

Mencius said, "One who protects the people becomes a king, and no one is able to stop him."

"Could someone like this solitary man protect the people?"

"He could."

"How do you know that I could?"

"The minister heard Hu He say that, while the king was seated in the upper part of the hall, someone led an ox through the lower part. Upon seeing this, the king asked where the ox was going and was told that it was being taken to serve as a blood sacrifice in the consecration of a bell. The king said, 'Spare it. I cannot bear its trembling, like one who, though blameless, is being led to the execution ground.' Asked whether in that case the consecration of the bell should be dispensed with, the king said, 'How can it be dispensed with? Substitute a sheep instead.' Did this actually happen?"

"It did."

Mencius said, "With such a mind one has enough to become a king. Though the people all thought that it was because the king grudged the ox, the minister certainly knows that it was because the king could not bear to see its suffering."

5. Duke Huan of Qi (r. 685–643 B.C.E.), one of the most powerful feudal lords of the seventh century, was considered the first of the "Five Hegemons," and Duke Wen of Jin (r. 636–628 B.C.E.) was considered the second. Mencius's statement in the ensuing passage that he has "heard nothing about" these hegemonies is not to be taken literally. The reputation of neither ruler was entirely negative, but Mencius is making the point here that he prefers to talk about morally legitimate kings (*wang*) rather than "hegemons" (*ba*), whose claim to rule was believed by most Confucians to be more ambiguous, morally speaking.

The king said, "That is so. The people must truly have thought this, but, although the state of Qi is small and narrow, how could I grudge a single ox? It was because I could not bear its trembling, like one who, though blameless, was being led to the execution ground, that I had a sheep substituted instead."

Mencius said, "The king should not think it strange that the people assumed that he grudged the ox. How could they know why he substituted the smaller thing for the larger one? Had the king been grieving over its being led, blameless, to the execution ground, then what was there to choose between an ox and a sheep?"

The king smiled and said, "What kind of mind was this, after all? It was not that I grudged the expense, and yet I did exchange the ox for a sheep. No wonder the people said that I grudged it."

Mencius said, "There is no harm in this. This was after all the working of humaneness — a matter of having seen the ox but not the sheep. This is the way of the noble person in regard to animals: if he sees them alive, then he cannot bear to see them die, and if he hears their cries, then he cannot bear to eat their flesh. And so the noble person stays far away from the kitchen."

The king was pleased and said, "When the Ode says, 'What other people have in their minds, I measure by reflection,'⁶ it is speaking about the Master. When I tried it, going back and seeking my motive, I was unable to grasp my own mind. Yet when the Master spoke of it, my mind experienced a kind of stirring. How is it that this mind of mine accords with that of a king?"

Mencius replied, "Suppose someone were to report to the king, saying, 'My strength, while sufficient to lift a hundred *jun*, is not sufficient to lift a feather. My sight, while sufficient to scrutinize the tip of an autumn hair, is not sufficient to see a cartload of firewood.' Would the king accept this?"

"No," he said.

"Then what is there so different about the case of kindness sufficient to extend to animals yet without its benefits reaching the people? Not lifting a feather is the result of not exerting one's strength to do so; not seeing a cartload of firewood is the result of not employing his eyesight on it. That the people are not protected is because one does not exercise kindness toward them. Therefore, that the king is not kingly is because he does not do it; it is not because he is unable to do it."

The king asked, "How can one distinguish between 'not doing something' and 'being unable to do it'?"

Mencius said, "If it were a matter of taking Mount Tai under your arm and jumping over the North Sea with it, and one were to tell people, 'I am unable to do it,' this would truly be a case of being unable to do it. If it is a matter of breaking off a branch of a tree at the request of an elder, and one tells people,

6. Ode 198. Translation adapted from Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, 4:342.

'I am unable to do it,' this is a case of not doing it rather than a case of being unable to do it. And so the king's failure to be a king is not in the category of taking Mount Tai under one's arm and jumping over the North Sea with it; his failure to be a king is in the category of not breaking off a branch for an elder. By treating the elders in one's own family as elders should be treated and extending this to the elders of other families, and by treating the young of one's own family as the young ought to be treated and extending this to the young of other people's families, the empire can be turned around on the palm of one's hand. The Ode says,

He set an example for his wife;
It extended to his brothers,
And from there to the family of the state.⁷

"This speaks of taking this mind and extending it to others, that is all. Thus if one extends his kindness it will be enough to protect all within the four seas, whereas if one fails to extend it, he will have no way to protect his wife and children. The fact that the ancients so greatly surpassed others was nothing other than this: that they were good at extending what they did. Now what is there so different in the case of kindness that is sufficient to extend to the animals without the benefits reaching the people?"

"It is by weighing that we know which things are light and which are heavy, and by measuring that we know which are long and which are short. This is true of all things, and especially so with regard to the mind. May it please the king to measure his mind. When the king raises arms, endangers his subjects, and excites the enmity of the other feudal lords — does this perhaps bring pleasure to his mind?"

The king replied, "No. How could I take pleasure from this? It is just that I seek to realize that which I greatly desire."

"May I hear about what it is that the king greatly desires?"

The king smiled and did not speak.

Mencius said, "Is it that the king does not have enough rich and sweet foods to satisfy his mouth? Or enough light and warm clothing for his body? Or enough beautiful colors for his eyes to gaze upon, or enough sounds for his ears to listen to? Is it that he does not have servants enough to come before him and receive orders? The king's ministers are sufficient to provide for all of this. How could the king's desire be for any of these?"

He said, "No, it is none of these."

Mencius said, "Then what the king greatly desires can be known. His desire is to expand his territory, to bring Qin and Chu into his court, to rule the

Middle Kingdom, and to pacify the four Yi [non-Chinese peoples]. But to pursue such a desire by such an action is like climbing a tree to look for fish."

The king said, "Is it as bad as that?"

"It is even worse than that. When one climbs a tree to seek for fish, though one gets no fish, no disaster will ensue. But if one does what you are doing in pursuit of what you desire, and devotes the full strength of his mind to it, disaster is bound to ensue."

"May I hear about this?"

"If the people of Zou go to war with the people of Chu, who, in the king's opinion, will win?"

"The people of Chu will win."

"Thus the small definitely cannot contend with the large, the few definitely cannot contend with the many, and the weak definitely cannot contend with the strong. Within the seas, there are nine territories of a thousand leagues square, and Qi is only one of them. What difference is there between one part attacking the other eight and Zou contending with Chu? Why not rather return to the root of the matter? If the king were to institute a government that dispensed humaneness, he would make all the officers in the world wish to stand in his court, all of the tillers wish to till his fields, all merchants wish to entrust their goods to his marketplaces, and all travelers wish to go forth on his roads. All those in the world who have grievances to express against their rulers would wish to lay their complaints before him, and this being the case, who would be able to stop it?"

The king said, "I am unintelligent and have been unable to progress this far. I should like the Master to assist my will and be clear in giving me instruction, so that, while I am not clever, I may endeavor to carry it out."

"It is only a gentleman who will be able to have a constant mind despite being without a constant means of livelihood. The people, lacking a constant means of livelihood, will lack constant minds, and when they lack constant minds there is no dissoluteness, depravity, deviance, or excess to which they will not succumb. If, once they have sunk into crime, one responds by subjecting them to punishment — this is to entrap the people. With a person of humanity in a position of authority, how could the entrapment of the people be allowed to occur? Therefore an enlightened ruler will regulate the people's livelihood so as to ensure that, above, they have enough to serve their parents and, below, they have enough to support their wives and children. In years of prosperity they always have enough to eat; in years of dearth they are able to escape starvation. Only then does he urge the people toward goodness; accordingly, they find it easy to comply."

"At present, the regulation of the people's livelihood is such that, above, they do not have enough to serve their parents and, below, they do not have enough to support wives and children. Even in years of prosperity their lives are bitter, while in years of dearth they are unable to escape starvation. Under these cir-

7. Ode 240.

cumstances they only try to save themselves from death, fearful that they will not succeed. How could they spare the time for the practice of rites and rightness?

"If the king wishes to put this into practice, he should return to the root of the matter. Let mulberry trees be planted around households of five *mu*, and people of fifty will be able to be clothed in silk. In the raising of chickens, pigs, dogs, and swine, do not neglect the appropriate breeding times, and people of seventy will be able to eat meat. With fields of a hundred *mu*, do not interfere with the appropriate seasons of cultivation, and families with eight mouths to feed will be able to avoid hunger. Attend carefully to the education provided in the schools, which should include instruction in the duty of filial and fraternal devotion, and gray-haired people will not be seen carrying burdens on the roads. It has never happened that people of seventy have worn silk and eaten meat, and the black-haired people have been neither hungry nor cold, without the ruler having been a true king."⁸

THE DUTY OF MINISTERS TO REPROVE A RULER

In the following exchanges Mencius goes so far as to remind King Xuan of Qi that a ruler risks being deposed for crimes against humanity. This very forceful assertion, sometimes understood in our own time as implying a "right of revolution," actually involves no notion of either "rights" or "revolution" per se, having been advanced by Mencius centuries before the idea of rights was conceived anywhere in the world. In another conversation with King Xuan (translated in 5B:9) Mencius says that before the situation in a state reaches the point at which the ruler must be deposed, his ministers should remonstrate with him, quit his court if not listened to, and then have ministers of the royal blood depose him as a last resort. Thus Mencius's main emphasis is on the need for remonstrance and reproof, lest the situation in a state come to violence.

1B:6 Mencius said to King Xuan of Qi, "Suppose that one of the king's subjects entrusted his wife and children to his friend and journeyed to Chu. On returning he found that he had allowed his wife and children to be hungry and cold. What should he do?"

The king said, "Renounce him."

"Suppose the chief criminal judge could not control the officers. What should he do?"

The king said, "Get rid of him."

8. What Mencius describes here as a return to what is fundamental repeats almost exactly what he has told King Hui of Liang in 1A:3.

"Suppose that within the four borders of the state there is no proper government?"

The king looked left and right and spoke of other things.

1B:8 King Xuan of Qi asked, "Is it true that Tang banished Jie and King Wu rulted Zhou?"⁹

Mencius replied, "This is contained in the records."¹⁰

"For a minister to slay his ruler — can this be countenanced?"

"One who despoils humaneness is called a thief; one who despoils rightness is called a robber. Someone who is a robber and a thief is called a mere fellow. I have heard of the punishment of the fellow Zhou but never of the slaying of a ruler."

1B:11 The people of Qi having attacked Yan and taken possession of it, the several lords were making plans to rescue Yan. King Xuan said, "Many of the lords are making plans to attack this solitary man. How shall I prepare for them?"

Mencius replied, "Your minister has heard that there was one who with seventy *li* extended his government to the entire realm: this was Tang. I have not heard of one with a thousand leagues who feared others. The *Classic of Documents* says,

When Tang undertook the work of punishment he began with Ge.¹¹ The whole world trusted him. When he pursued the work of punishment in the east, the Yi in the west felt aggrieved; when he pursued the work of punishment in the south, the Di in the north felt aggrieved, saying, "Why does he leave us until last?"¹²

"The people looked to him as to clouds and rainbows in a time of great drought. Those going to market had no need to stop; those tilling the fields were unimpeded. He punished the rulers but comforted the people. He was like timely rain descending, and the people were greatly delighted. The *Classic of Documents* says,

9. According to tradition, Tang, as the first ruler of the Shang dynasty, was responsible for ousting the depraved Jie, the last ruler of the Xia dynasty. King Wu, as one of the founders of the Zhou dynasty, is credited with deposing the wicked Zhou, the last ruler of the Shang.

10. Tang's ousting of Jie is recorded in the *Classic of Documents*, "The Announcement of Zhonghui" and "The Announcement of Tang," and King Wu's removal of Zhou in the *Classic of Documents*, "The Great Declaration" and "The Successful Completion of the War."

11. This quotation, while not exact, is close to the language of "The Announcement of Zhonghui" in the *Classic of Documents*. See Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, 3:180.

12. Again, though the wording is slightly different, this quotation is close to the language of "The Announcement of Zhonghui" in the *Classic of Documents*. See *ibid.*, pp. 180–181.

"We await our ruler; when he comes we will be revived."¹³

"Now Yan oppressed its people, and the king went and punished it. The people believed he was going to deliver them from out of water and fire and, bringing baskets of rice and pitchers of drink, they welcomed the king's army. Then to have slain their fathers and elder brothers, bound their sons and younger brothers, destroyed their ancestral temple and carried off their treasured vessels—how can this be condoned? Certainly the world fears the might of Qi. Now the king has doubled his territory but has not practiced humane government: it is this that is setting the troops of the realm in motion. If the king will immediately issue orders to return the captives and stop the removal of the precious vessels, and if he will consult with the people of Yan about withdrawing once a ruler has been installed for them, he may still be able to stop an attack."

2A:2 Gongsun Chou asked, "If the Master were appointed to be a high officer and prime minister of Qi, and were able to put the Way into practice, it would hardly be surprising if the ruler were to become leader of the feudal lords or even king. Were this to occur, would your mind be moved or not?"

Mencius said, "No, since I was forty my mind has been unmoved."

"In that case the Master far surpasses Meng Bin."

"This is not difficult. Gaozi attained an unmoved mind before I did."

"Is there a way to attain an unmoved mind?"

"There is. Bogong Yu's way of nourishing his valor was neither to shrink from blows nor to avert his gaze. He thought that merely to be jostled by someone was like being flogged in the marketplace. What he would not accept from a poor fellow in coarse clothing he would not accept from a lord with ten thousand chariots, and he would cut down the lord with ten thousand chariots as soon as he would the poor man, coarsely clad. He was unawed by any of the several lords, and if an insult came his way he would invariably return it.

"Meng Shishe's way of nourishing his valor is expressed in his saying, 'I regard defeat just as I do victory. To advance only after having assessed the strength of the enemy, to engage only after having calculated the prospects for victory—this is to be intimidated by the opposing force. How can I be certain of victory? I can only be fearless, that is all.'

"Meng Shishe resembled Zengzi, while Bogong Yu resembled Zixia. I do not know which kind of valor should be considered superior, but Meng Shishe kept hold of what is essential. Formerly, Zengzi said to Zixiang, 'Does the Master¹⁴ love valor? I once heard this account of great valor from the Master:¹⁵

13. The language closely resembles "The Announcement of Zhonghui." See *ibid.*, p. 181.

14. That is, Zixiang.

15. That is, Confucius.

"If, on examining myself, I find that I am not upright, I must be in fear of even a poor fellow in coarse clothing. If, on examining myself, I find that I am upright, I may proceed against thousands and tens of thousands." So Meng Shishe's keeping hold of his *qi* was, after all, not comparable to Zengzi's keeping hold of what is essential."

"I venture to ask you, Master, about your unmoved mind compared to Gaozi's unmoved mind."

"Gaozi said, 'What you do not get in words, do not seek in the mind; what you do not get in the mind, do not seek in the *qi*.'¹⁶ It may be acceptable to say that what one does not get in the mind should not be sought in the *qi*. But it is unacceptable to say that what one does not get in words should not be sought in the mind. The will is the leader of the *qi*, and it is *qi* that fills the body. When the will goes forward the *qi* follows it. Therefore I say, maintain the will and do no violence to the *qi*."

"Since you say, 'When the will goes forward the *qi* follows it,' why is it that you also say, 'Maintain the will and do no violence to the *qi*'?"

"If the will is unified it moves the *qi*, whereas if the *qi* is unified it moves the will. Now when a person stumbles or runs, it is the *qi* that acts, but it also moves the mind."

"May I presume to ask the Master in what he excels?"

"I understand words. I am good at nourishing my vast, flowing *qi*."

"May I presume to ask what is meant by 'vast, flowing *qi*'?"

"It is difficult to speak of it. This is *qi*: it is consummately great and consummately strong. If one nourishes it with uprightness and does not injure it, it will fill the space between Heaven and Earth. This is *qi*: it is the companion of rightness and the Way, in the absence of which it starves. It is born from an accumulation of rightness rather than appropriated through an isolated display. If one's actions cause the mind to be disquieted, it starves. I therefore said that Gaozi did not understand rightness because he regarded it as external.

"Always be doing something, but without fixation, with a mind inclined neither to forget nor to help things grow. One should not be like the man of Song. There was a man of Song who, worried that his seedlings were not growing, pulled them up. Having done so, he returned home wearily, telling people, 'I am tired today—I have been helping the seedlings to grow.' When his sons rushed out to have a look, they found the seedlings were all withered. There are few in the world who do not try to help the seedlings to grow. Those who believe that there is no benefit in it neglect them and do not weed the seedlings. Those bent on helping them grow pull them up, which is not only of no benefit, but, on the contrary, causes them injury."

16. The meaning of Gaozi's statement has been subject to a variety of interpretations, but since Mencius provided almost no context for it, it remains difficult to know exactly what he intended. What is clear from Mencius's disagreement with Gaozi is that Mencius himself believed that language, the mind (or will), and physical energy are all closely interrelated.

"What is meant by 'understanding words'?"

"From distorted words, one knows the obscurity; from licentious words, one knows the corruption; from deviant words, one knows the waywardness; from evasive words, one knows the desperation. What is born in the mind does damage to government, and what arises in government does damage to the conduct of affairs. Were a sage to arise again, he would certainly follow my words. . . ."

2A:3 Mencius said, "One who, supported by force, fakes being humane is a hegemon, and a hegemon has to have a large state. One who out of virtue practices humaneness is a king, and a king does not need anything large. Tang did it with only seventy *li*, and King Wen did it with a hundred.

"When one uses force to make people submit, they do not submit in their hearts but only because their strength is insufficient. When one uses virtue to make people submit, they are pleased to the depths of their hearts, and they sincerely submit. So it was with the seventy disciples who submitted to Confucius. The Ode says,

From the west, and from the east,
From the south and from the north,
No one thought of not submitting.¹⁷

This is what was meant."

2A:5 Mencius said, "When a ruler honors those who are exemplary and employs those who are capable, so that outstanding persons hold positions of authority, all of the world's scholars will be pleased and will want to stand in his court. When in his marketplace he levies a ground-rent, but without levying a tax on goods, or else enforces the regulations but without levying any ground-rent, all of the world's merchants will be pleased and will want to store their goods in his marketplace. When at his frontier passes there is an inspection but no tax is levied, all of the world's travelers will be pleased and will want to travel on his roads. When tillers are required to render their assistance¹⁸ but are not taxed, then all of the world's farmers will be pleased and will want to till his fields. When individuals are not fined and no levy of cloth is exacted,¹⁹ then all the world's people will be pleased and will want to people his state. If one is truly able to do these five things, the people of neighboring states will look to him like a father and mother and follow him like his children. Never since

17. Ode 244.

18. This appears to be a reference to the mutual assistance owed under the well-field system, discussed in 3A:3.

19. The meaning of this passage is unclear. Some commentators refer to the *Zhouli* (*Rites of Zhou*), which indicates fines were imposed on those who did not do sufficient work, as well as a tax levied in cloth on families that failed to plant a requisite number of mulberry trees.

th of humankind has anyone ever succeeded in causing people to attack parents. So the ruler will have no enemies in the world, and one who has enemies in the world is the agent of Heaven. Could he then fail to be a king?

2A:6 "All human beings have a mind that cannot bear to see the sufferings of others. The ancient kings had a commiserating mind and, accordingly, a commiserating government. Having a commiserating mind, a commiserating government, governing the world was like turning something around on the palm of the hand.

"Here is why I say that all human beings have a mind that commiserates with others. Now,²⁰ if anyone were suddenly to see a child about to fall into a well, his mind would always be filled with alarm, distress, pity, and compassion. That he would react accordingly is not because he would use the opportunity to ingratiate himself with the child's parents, nor because he would seek commendation from neighbors and friends, nor because he would hate the adverse reputation. From this it may be seen that one who lacks a mind that feels pity and compassion would not be human; one who lacks a mind that feels shame and aversion would not be human; one who lacks a mind that feels modesty and compliance would not be human; and one who lacks a mind that knows right and wrong would not be human.

"The mind's feeling of pity and compassion is the beginning of humaneness (*ren*); the mind's feeling of shame and aversion is the beginning of rightness (*yi*); the mind's feeling of modesty and compliance is the beginning of propriety; and the mind's sense of right and wrong is the beginning of wisdom.

"Human beings have these four beginnings just as they have four limbs. For one to have these four beginnings and yet to say of oneself that one is unable to fulfill them is to injure oneself, while to say that one's ruler is unable to fulfill them is to injure one's ruler. When we know how to enlarge and bring to fulfillment these four beginnings that are within us, it will be like a fire beginning to burn or a spring finding an outlet. If one is able to bring them to fulfillment, they will be sufficient to enable him to protect 'all within the four seas'; if one is not, they will be insufficient even to enable him to serve his parents."

THE WELL-FIELD SYSTEM OF LANDHOLDING

The following conversation between Mencius, a ruler, and one of his ministers offers another illustration of Mencius's concern for the responsibility of the state to help the people meet their basic needs for material livelihood. It also illustrates a typically

20. At the beginning of the passage Mencius recalls that the ancient kings had this "mind that cannot bear to see the sufferings of others." Here he affirms that people of the present also have it.

month. When arrangements had been made for the Master's lodging, he at once presented himself to the emperor, who expressed his gratitude, saying, "Other rulers summoned you, but you would not go to them. And now you have come ten thousand *li* to see me. I take this as a high compliment."

The Master replied, "That I, a hermit of the mountains, should come at your Majesty's bidding was the will of Heaven." Chinggis was delighted, begged him to be seated and ordered food to be served. Then he asked him, "Adept, what medicine of long life have you brought me from afar?" The Master replied, "I have means of protecting life, but no elixir that will prolong it." The emperor was pleased with his candor and had two tents for the Master and his disciple set up to the east of his own. . . . [pp. 100–101]

The Master's words were translated into Mongol by A-hai. The emperor was delighted with his doctrine and on the nineteenth, when there was a bright night, sent for him again. On this occasion too he was much pleased by what he heard and sent for the Master to come to his tent once more on the twenty-third (October 29). He was here treated with the same regard as before and the emperor listened to him with evident satisfaction. He ordered that the Master's words should be recorded and especially that they should be written down in Chinese characters, that they might be preserved from oblivion. To those present he said, "You have heard the holy Immortal discourse three times upon the art of nurturing the vital spirit. His words have sunk deeply into my heart. I rely upon you to repeat what you have heard." During the remainder of the Imperial Progress to the east, the Master constantly discoursed to the emperor concerning the mysteries of Dao. [p. 113]

[*Changchun zhenren xiyouji*, DZ 1056, no. 1429; trans. Waley, *Travels of an Alchemist*, pp. 60–62, 92, 100–101, 113]

Chapter 15

THE INTRODUCTION OF BUDDHISM

The coming of Buddhism to China was an event of far-reaching importance in the development of Chinese thought and culture and of Buddhism itself. After a long and difficult period of assimilation, this new teaching managed to establish itself as a major system of thought, contributing greatly to the enrichment of Chinese philosophy, and also as a major system of religious practice, which had an enduring influence on Chinese popular religion. Indeed, it came to be spoken of along with the native traditions, Confucianism and Daoism, as one of the Three Teachings or Three Religions, thus achieving a status of virtual equality with these beliefs.

By the time Buddhism reached China (according to official tradition, in the first century C.E.), it had already undergone several centuries of development in regard to both its philosophical doctrines and its religious practices. This is not the place to attempt a summation of that historical development, but a brief statement of the major principles and concepts of Buddhism in India is essential to understanding the forms it took in China.

BASIC TEACHINGS OF BUDDHISM

The fundamental truths on which Buddhism is founded are not metaphysical or theological but, rather, psychological. Basic is the doctrine of the "Four

Noble 'Truths': (1) all life is inevitably sorrowful, (2) sorrow is due to craving, (3) sorrow can only be stopped by the stopping of craving, and (4) this can be done by a course of carefully disciplined conduct, culminating in the life of concentration and meditation led by the Buddhist monk. These four truths, which are the common property of all schools of Buddhist thought, are part of the true Doctrine (Sanskrit, *dharma*), which reflects the fundamental law of the universe.¹

All things are composite, and, as a corollary of this, all things are transient, for the composition of all aggregates is liable to change with time. Moreover, being essentially transient, they have no eternal Self or soul, no abiding individuality. And, as we have seen, they are inevitably liable to sorrow. This three-fold characterization of the nature of the world and all that it contains — sorrowful, transient, and soulless — is frequently repeated in Buddhist literature; without fully grasping its truth no being has any chance of salvation, for until one thoroughly understands the three characteristics of the world one will inevitably crave for permanence in one form or another, and as this cannot, by the nature of things, be obtained, one will suffer, and probably make others suffer also.

All things in the universe may also be classified into five components or are composed of a mixture of them: form and matter (*rūpa*), sensations (*vedanā*), perceptions (*saṃjñā*), psychic dispositions or constructions (*saṃskāra*), and consciousness or conscious thought (*viññāna*).

The first consists of the objects of sense and various other elements of less importance. Sensations are the actual feelings arising as a result of the exercise of the six senses (mind being the sixth) upon sense-objects, and perceptions are the cognitions of such sensations. The psychic constructions include all the various psychological emotions, propensities, faculties, and conditions of the individual, while the fifth component, conscious thought, arises from the interplay of the other psychic constituents. The individual is made up of a combination of the five components, which are never the same from one moment to the next, and therefore the individual's whole being is in a state of constant flux.

The process by which life continues and one thing leads to another is explained by the Chain of Causation or Dependent Origination. The root cause of the process of birth and death and rebirth is ignorance, the fundamental illusion that individuality and permanence exist, when, in fact, they do not. Hence there arise in the organism various psychic phenomena, including desire, followed by an attempt to appropriate things to itself — this is typified es-

pecially by sexual craving and sexual intercourse, which are the actual causes of the next links in the chain, which concludes with old age or death, only to be repeated again and again indefinitely. Rebirth takes place, therefore, according to laws of karma, which do not essentially differ from those of Hinduism, though they are explained rather differently.

As we have seen, no permanent entity transmigrates from body to body, and all things, including the individual, are in a state of constant flux. But each act, word, or thought leaves its traces on the collection of the five constituents that make up the phenomenal individual, and their character alters correspondingly. This process goes on throughout life, and when the material and immaterial parts of the being are separated in death, the immaterial constituents, which make up what in other systems would be called soul, carry over the consequential effects of the deeds of the past life and obtain another form in one of the ten realms of existence: namely, those of hell dwellers, hungry ghosts, animals, human beings, *asuras* (or spirits), heavenly beings, *śrāvakas* (or direct disciples of Buddha), *pratyeka-buddhas*,² bodhisattvas, or buddhas. Thus there is no permanent soul, but nevertheless room is found for the doctrine of transmigration. Though Buddhism rejects the existence of the soul, this makes little difference in practice, and the more popular literature of Buddhism, such as the *Birth Stories* (*Jātaka*), takes for granted the existence of a quasi-soul, at least, which endures indefinitely.

The process of rebirth can be stopped only by achieving *nirvāṇa*, first by adopting right views about the nature of existence, then by a carefully controlled system of conduct, and finally by concentration and meditation. The state of *nirvāṇa* cannot be described, but it can be hinted at or suggested metaphorically. The word literally means "blowing out," as of a lamp. In *nirvāṇa* all idea of an individual personality or ego ceases to exist and there is nothing to be reborn: as far as the individual is concerned *nirvāṇa* is annihilation. But it was not generally thought of by the early Buddhists in such negative terms. It was rather conceived of as a transcendent state, beyond the possibility of full comprehension by the ordinary being enmeshed in the illusion of selfhood but not fundamentally different from the state of supreme bliss as described in other non-theistic Indian systems.

These are the doctrines of the Theravāda or Hīnayāna school, and with few variations, they would be assented to by all other schools of Buddhism. But when Mahāyāna Buddhism arose in India, claiming to offer salvation for all, it styled itself *Mahāyāna*, the Greater Vehicle to salvation, as opposed to the older Buddhism, which it referred to disparagingly as *Hīnayāna*, or the Lesser Vehicle. The Mahāyāna scriptures also claimed to represent the final doctrines of the Buddha, revealed only to his most spiritually advanced followers, while the

1. The word *dharma* as employed in Buddhism is untranslatable in English. Besides meaning "Law" or "Doctrine" it also represents phenomena in general, as well as the qualities and characteristics of phenomena.

2. Private: buddhas who have attained enlightenment for themselves.

earlier doctrines were merely preliminary ones. Though Mahāyāna Buddhism, with its pantheon of heavenly buddhas and bodhisattvas and its idealistic metaphysics, was strikingly different in many respects from the Theravāda, it can be viewed as the development into finished systems of tendencies that had existed long before.

A tendency to revere the Buddha as a god had probably existed in his own lifetime. In Indian religion, divinity is not something completely transcendent, or far exalted above all mortal things, as it is for the Jew, Christian, or Muslim; neither is it something concentrated in a single unique omnipotent and omniscient personality. In Indian religions godhead manifests itself in so many forms as to be almost, if not quite, ubiquitous, and every great sage or religious teacher is looked on as a special manifestation of divinity, in some sense a god in human form. How much more divine was the Buddha, to whom even the great god Brahma himself did reverence, and who, in meditation, could far transcend the comparatively tawdry and transient heavens where the great gods dwelt, enter the world of formlessness, and pass thence to the ineffable *nirvāṇa* itself. From the Buddhist point of view, even the highest of the gods was liable to error, for Brahma imagined himself to be the creator, when in fact the world came into existence as a result of natural causes. The Buddha, on the other hand, was omniscient.

Yet, according to theory, the Buddha had passed completely away from the universe, had ceased in any sense to be a person, and no longer affected the world in any way. But the formula of the "Three Treasures" or "Jewels" — "I take refuge in the Buddha, the *dharma*, and the *saṅgha*" — became the Buddhist profession of faith very early and was used by monk and layman alike. Taken literally, the first clause was virtually meaningless, for it was impossible to take refuge in a being who had ceased to exist as such. Nevertheless, the Buddha was worshiped from very early times, and he is said to have himself declared that all who had faith in him and devotion to him would obtain rebirth in paradise.

A further development that encouraged the tendency to theism was the growth of interest in the bodhisattva. This term, meaning literally "Being of Wisdom," was first used in the sense of a previous incarnation of the Buddha. For many lives before his final birth as Siddhārtha Gautama, the Bodhisattva did mighty deeds of compassion and self-sacrifice, as he gradually perfected himself in wisdom and virtue. Stories of the Bodhisattva, known as *Birth Stories* (*Jātaka*) and often adapted from popular legends and fables, were very popular with lay Buddhists, and numerous illustrations of them occur in early Buddhist art.

It is probable that even in the lifetime of the Buddha it was thought that he was only the last of a series of earlier buddhas. Later, perhaps through Zoroastrian influence, it came to be believed that other Buddhas were yet to come, and interest developed in Maitreya, the future Buddha, whose coming was said

to have been prophesied by the historical Buddha and who, in years to come, would purify the world with his teaching. But if Maitreya was yet to come, the chain of being that would ultimately lead to his birth (or, in the terminology of other sects, his soul) must be already in existence. Somewhere in the universe, the being later to become Maitreya Buddha was already active for good. And if this one, how many more? Logically, the world must be full of bodhisattvas, all striving for the welfare of other beings.

The next step up in the development of the new form of Buddhism was the changing of the goal at which the believer aimed. According to Buddhist teaching there are three types of perfected beings — Buddhas, who perceived the truth for themselves and taught it to others; *pratyeka*-buddhas, "private Buddhas," who perceived it but kept it to themselves and did not teach it; and *arhats*, "worthies," who learned it from others but fully realized it for themselves. According to earlier schools, the earnest believer should aspire to become an *arhat*, a perfected being for whom there was no rebirth, who already enjoyed *nirvāṇa* and who would finally enter that state after death, all vestiges of his personality dissolved. The road to *nirvāṇa* was a hard one and could only be covered in many lives of virtue and self-sacrifice; even so, the goal began to be looked on as selfish. Surely a bodhisattva, after achieving such exalted compassion and altruism, and after reaching such a degree of perfection that he could render inestimable help to other striving beings, would not pass as quickly as possible to *nirvāṇa*, where he could be of no further use, but would deliberately choose to remain in the world, using his spiritual power to help others, until all had found salvation. Passages of Mahāyāna scriptures describing the self-sacrifice of the bodhisattva for the welfare of all things living are among the most passionately altruistic in the world's religious literature.

The replacement of the ideal of the *arhat* by that of the bodhisattva is the basic distinction between the old sects and the new Mahāyāna. Faith in the bodhisattvas and the help they afforded was thought to carry many beings along the road to bliss, while the older schools, which did not accept the bodhisattva ideal, could save only a few patient and strenuous souls.

The next stage in the evolution of the theology of the new Buddhism was the doctrine of the "Three Bodies" (*Trikāya*). If the true ideal was that of the bodhisattva, why did not Siddhārtha Gautama remain one, instead of becoming a Buddha and selfishly passing to *nirvāṇa*? This paradox was answered by a theory of docetic type, which, again, probably had its origin in popular ideas prevalent among lay Buddhists at a very early period. Gautama was not in fact an ordinary man, but the manifestation of a great spiritual being. The Buddha had three bodies — the Body of Essence (*Dharmakāya*), the Body of Bliss (*Sambhogakāya*), and the Body of Transformation (*Nirmāṇakāya*). It was the Body of Transformation that lived on earth as Siddhārtha Gautama, an emanation of the Body of Bliss, which dwelled forever in the Heavens as a sort of supreme god. But the Body of Bliss was in turn the emanation of the Body of Essence,

the ultimate Buddha, who pervaded and underlay the whole universe. Subtle philosophies and metaphysical systems were developed parallel with these theological ideas, and the Body of Essence was identified with *nirvāṇa*. It was in fact the World Soul, the Brahman of the Upaniṣads in a new form. In the fully developed Mahāyānist cosmology there were many Bodies of Bliss, all of them emanations of the single Body of Essence, but the heavenly Buddha chiefly concerned with our world was *Amitābha* (Immeasurable Radiance), who dwelt in *Sukhāvātī*, the "Happy Land" (or "Pure Land," as it was known to the Chinese), the Paradise of the West. With him was associated the earthly Gautama Buddha and a very potent and compassionate bodhisattva, Avalokiteśvara (the Lord Who Looks Down).

The older Buddhism and the newer flourished side by side in India during the early centuries of the Christian era, and we read of Buddhist monasteries in which some of the monks were Mahāyānist and some Hīnayānist. But, in general, the Buddhists of northwestern India were either Mahāyānists or members of Hīnayāna sects much affected by Mahāyānist ideas. The more austere forms of Hīnayāna seem to have been strongest in parts of western and southern India, and in Sri Lanka. It was from northwestern India, under the rule of the great Kushāna empire (first to third centuries C.E.) that Buddhism spread throughout Central Asia to China; since it emanated from the northwest, it was chiefly of the Mahāyāna or near-Mahāyāna type.

THE COMING OF BUDDHISM TO CHINA

As Buddhism spread from its homeland, it became the harbinger of civilization in many of the areas that it penetrated. Many of them had no system of writing before the advent of the new religion. One of the most notable exceptions to this statement, however, was China. By the time Buddhism was introduced, China boasted a civilization that was already very old, a classic canon, time-hallowed traditions, and the conviction that its society was the only truly civilized society in the world. Thus, while Buddhism was the vehicle for the introduction into Central Asia of many arts of civilization, the Buddhist missionaries found in China a country that possessed these things in an already highly developed state. Buddhism was obliged to compete with indigenous philosophical and religious systems to win the hearts of the Chinese, and the Chinese, for their own part, were hindered in their understanding of Buddhist philosophy by preconceptions based on indigenous philosophical systems.

No one can say when or in what fashion the Chinese first came into contact with Buddhism. It is to be presumed, from conjecture, and from what sparse documentation there is, that this contact was with Buddhist icons worshiped by Central Asians coming into China. The Chinese of the time adopted the Buddha into their scheme of things as a demigod on the order of their own mythical

immortality. But the dawn of history for Chinese Buddhism came with the rendition of Buddhist sacred texts into the Chinese language.

The Chinese were particularly desirous of knowing whether Buddhism could add to their knowledge of elixirs and practices that would contribute to longevity, levitation, and other superhuman achievements. As it happened, Buddhism (like many other Indian religions) prescribed a precise set of practices, varying from school to school, which was believed to enhance the intuitive faculties. The early Buddhist missionaries found that the scriptures containing these prescriptions were what the Chinese wanted most to read, and so they proceeded to translate them. This was the beginning of Buddhist literature in China.

As time went on, and as the interest of China's intellectuals veered toward metaphysical speculation, it became fashionable to seek in Buddhism those sublime truths that persons so inclined were seeking in some of China's own canonized classics. When, in 317 C.E., non-Chinese peoples forced the Chinese court out of North China, an educated elite was displaced to the south. A refined and sophisticated culture developed among them, with the dominant trend in southern Buddhism being toward abstruse philosophical discussion in salons that brought together the cream of secular society and the best wits from the great metropolitan monasteries. An often facile interpretation of Buddhism in terms of Daoism and the Learning of the Mysterious³ prevailed, and Buddhism's Indian origins were somewhat effaced.

There were contrary trends, however. In the first place, not a few monks, in both North and South China, were earnestly concerned with the true meaning of Buddhism and of Buddhist salvation. The Chinese aversion to foreign languages being what it was, these persons showed their zeal principally in seeking out capable translators or in participating in translation projects themselves. Also, simultaneously with the philosophical salons and the great translation projects a trend developed, more pronounced in the north than in the south, toward a practical and devotional Buddhism, which consisted of an emphasis on contemplative practices as well as on adoration and good works. Temples and statuary were soon erected all over China.

The selections that follow are intended to illustrate the general character of Buddhism in this early period and some of the problems encountered in gaining acceptance for it among the Chinese.

MOUZI: DISPOSING OF ERROR

Though the date and authorship of this work are not known, the general tone of the composition leads one to suspect that the work was written at a time when Buddhism had gained a sufficient foothold to cause many Chinese to fear its influence and to

attempt to strike back. While the counterattack against Buddhism in the north took the form of official persecution or curtailment, under the Southern Dynasties (317–589 C.E.) it usually took the form of polemics. *Disposing of Error*, or *Lihuo lun*, as it is known in Chinese, appears to be an apologia for Buddhism, written in answer to such polemical writings.

The form of the work is conversational — an exchange between Mouzi and a questioner (or questioners) bent on criticizing Buddhist ideas and practices from a distinctively Chinese perspective. The author — Mouzi himself or a recorder of his words — takes the stand that it is possible to be a good Chinese and a good Buddhist at the same time, that there is no fundamental conflict between the two ways of life, and that the great truths preached by Buddhism are preached, if in somewhat different language, by Confucianism and Daoism as well.

Why Is Buddhism Not Mentioned in the Chinese Classics?

The questioner said, "If the way of the Buddha is the greatest and most venerable of ways, why did Yao, Shun, the Duke of Zhou, and Confucius not practice it? In the Seven Classics⁴ one sees no mention of it. You, sir, are fond of the *Classic of Odes* and *Classic of Documents*, and you take pleasure in the *Rites* and "Music." Why, then, do you love the way of the Buddha and rejoice in outlandish arts? Can they exceed the Classics and commentaries and beautify the accomplishments of the sages? Permit me the liberty, sir, of advising you to reject them."

Mouzi said, "All written works need not necessarily be the words of Confucius, and all medicine does not necessarily consist of the formulae of Bian Que.⁵ What accords with rightness is to be followed, what heals the sick is good. The gentleman-scholar draws widely on all forms of good and thereby benefits his character. Zigong⁶ said, 'Did the Master have a permanent teacher?'⁷ Yao served Yin Shou; Shun served Wucheng; the Duke of Zhou learned from Lü Wang; and Confucius learned from Laozi. And none of these teachers is mentioned in the Seven Classics. Although these four teachers were sages, to compare them to the Buddha would be like comparing a white deer to a unicorn,⁸ or a swallow to a phoenix. Yao, Shun, the Duke of Zhou, and Confucius learned even from such teachers as these. How much less, then, may one reject the Buddha, whose distinguishing marks are extraordinary and whose superhuman

powers know no bounds! How may one reject him and refuse to learn from him? The records and teachings of the Five Classics do not contain everything. Even if the Buddha is not mentioned in them, what occasion is there for suspicion?"

Why Do Buddhist Monks Do Injury to Their Bodies?

One of the greatest obstacles confronting early Chinese Buddhism was the aversion of Chinese society to the shaving of the head, which was required of all members of the Buddhist clergy. The Confucians held that the body is the gift of one's parents and that to harm it is to be disrespectful toward them.

The questioner said, "The *Classic of Filiality* says, 'Our body, limbs, hair, and skin are all received from our fathers and mothers. We dare not injure them.' When Zengzi was about to die, he bared his hands and feet.⁹ But now the monks shave their heads. How this violates the sayings of the sages and is out of keeping with the way of the filial!" . . .

Mouzi said . . . "Confucius has said, 'There are those with whom one can pursue the Way . . . but with whom one cannot weigh [decisions].'¹⁰ This is what is meant by doing what is best at the time. Furthermore, the *Classic of Filiality* says, 'The early kings ruled by surpassing virtue and the essential Way.' Taibo cut his hair short and tattooed his body, thus following of his own accord the customs of Wu and Yue and going against the spirit of the 'body, limbs, hair, and skin' passage.¹¹ And yet Confucius praised him, saying that his might well be called the ultimate virtue."¹²

Why Do Monks Not Marry?

Another of the great obstacles confronting the early Chinese Buddhist church was clerical celibacy. One of the most important features of indigenous Chinese religion is devotion to ancestors. If there are no descendants to make the offerings, then there will be no sacrifices. To this is added the natural desire for progeny. Traditionally, there could be no greater calamity for a Chinese than childlessness.

4. There are several different lists of the Seven Classics. One found in the *History of the Latter Han* includes the *Odes*, *Documents*, *Rites*, "Music," *Changes*, *Spring and Autumn Annals*, and the *Analects* of Confucius.

5. The most famous physician of antiquity.

6. A prominent disciple of Confucius.

7. *Analects* 19:22.

8. *Qilin*, a mythical beast like the unicorn, but not actually one-horned.

9. To show he had preserved them intact from all harm. *Analects* 8:3.

10. *Analects* 9:29. The full quotation is "There are those with whom one can learn but with whom one cannot pursue the Way; there are those with whom one can pursue the Way but with whom one cannot take one's stand; there are those with whom one can take one's stand but with whom one cannot weigh [decisions]."

11. Uncle of King Wen of the Zhou who retired to the barbarian land of Wu and cut his hair and tattooed his body in barbarian fashion, thus yielding his claim to the throne to King Wen.

12. *Analects* 8:1.

The questioner said, "Now of felicities there is none greater than the continuation of one's line, of unfilial conduct there is none worse than childlessness. The monks forsake wife and children, reject property and wealth. Some do not marry all their lives. How opposed this conduct is to felicity and filiality!" . . .

Mouzi said . . . "Wives, children, and property are the luxuries of the world, but simple living and doing nothing (*wuwei*) are the wonders of the Way. Laozi has said, 'Of reputation and life, which is dearer? Of life and property, which is worth more?'¹³ . . . Xu You and Chaofu dwelt in a tree. Boyi and Shuqi starved in Shouyang, but Confucius praised their worth, saying, 'They sought to act in accordance with humanity and they succeeded in acting so.'¹⁴ One does not hear of their being ill-spoken of because they were childless and propertyless. The monk practices the Way and substitutes that for the pleasures of disporting himself in the world. He accumulates goodness and wisdom in exchange for the joys of wife and children."

Death and Rebirth

Chinese ancestor worship was premised on the belief that the souls of the deceased, if not fed, would suffer. Rationalistic Confucianism, while taking over and canonizing much of Chinese tradition, including the ancestral sacrifices, was skeptical about the existence of spirits and an afterlife apart from the continuance of family life.

The Buddhists, though denying the existence of an immortal soul, accepted transmigration, and the early Chinese understood this to imply a belief in an individual soul that passed from one body to another until the attainment of enlightenment. The following passage must be understood in the light of these conflicting and confusing interpretations.

The questioner said, "The Buddhists say that after a man dies he will be reborn. I do not believe in the truth of these words. . . ."

Mouzi said . . . "The spirit never perishes. Only the body decays. The body is like the roots and leaves of the five grains. When the roots and leaves come forth they inevitably die. But do the seeds and kernels perish? Only the body of one who has achieved the Way perishes." . . .

Someone said, "If one follows the Way one dies. If one does not follow the Way one dies. What difference is there?"

Mouzi said, "You are the sort of person who, having had not a single day of goodness, yet seeks a lifetime of fame. If one has the Way, even if one dies, one's soul goes to an abode of happiness. If one does not have the Way, when one is dead one's soul suffers misfortune."

13. *Daodejing* 44.

14. *Analepts* 7:14.

Why Should a Chinese Allow Himself to Be Influenced by Indian Ways?

This was one of the objections most frequently raised by Confucians and Daoists once Buddhism had acquired a foothold on Chinese soil. The Chinese apologists for Buddhism answered this objection in a variety of ways. Here we see one of the arguments they used.

The questioner said, "Confucius said, 'The barbarians with a ruler are not so good as the Chinese without one.'¹⁵ Mencius criticized Chen Xiang for rejecting his own education to adopt the ways of [the foreign teacher] Xu Xing, saying, 'I have heard of using what is Chinese to change what is barbarian, but I have never heard of using what is barbarian to change what is Chinese.'¹⁶ You, sir, at the age of twenty learned the Way of Yao, Shun, Confucius, and the Duke of Zhou. But now you have rejected them and instead have taken up the arts of the barbarians. Is this not a great error?"

Mouzi said . . . "What Confucius said was meant to rectify the way of the world, and what Mencius said was meant to deplore one-sidedness. Of old, when Confucius was thinking of taking residence among the nine barbarian nations, he said, 'If a noble person dwells in their midst, what rudeness can there be among them?'¹⁷ . . . The commentary says, 'The north polar star is in the center of Heaven and to the north of man.'¹⁸ From this one can see that the land of China is not necessarily situated under the center of Heaven. According to the Buddhist scriptures, above, below, and all around, all beings containing blood belong to the Buddha-clan. Therefore I revere and study these scriptures. Why should I reject the Way of Yao, Shun, Confucius, and the Duke of Zhou? Gold and jade do not harm each other, crystal and amber do not cheapen each other. You say that another is in error when it is you yourself who err."

Does Buddhism Have No Recipe for Immortality?

Within the movement broadly known as Daoism there were several tendencies, one the quest for immortality, another an attitude of superiority to questions of life and death. The first Chinese who took to Buddhism did so out of a desire to achieve superhuman qualities, among them immortality. The questioner is disappointed to learn that Buddhism does not provide this after all. Mouzi counters by saying that even in Daoism, if properly understood, there is no seeking after immortality.

15. *Analepts* 3:5.

16. *Mencius* 3A:4.

17. *Analepts* 9:13.

18. It is not clear what commentary is quoted here.

The questioner said, "The Daoists say that Yao, Shun, the Duke of Zhou, and Confucius and his seventy-two disciples did not die, but became immortals. The Buddhists say that men must all die, and that none can escape. What does this mean?"

Mouzi said, "Talk of immortality is superstitious and unfounded; it is not the word of the sages. Laozi said, 'Even Heaven and Earth cannot last forever. How much less can human beings!'¹⁹ Confucius said, 'The wise man leaves the world, but humaneness and filial piety last forever.' I have looked into the six arts and examined the commentaries and records. According to them, Yao died; Shun had his [place of burial at] Mount Cangwu; Yu has his tomb on Kuaiji; Boyi and Shuqi have their grave in Shouyang. King Wen died before he could chastise [the tyrant] Zhou; King Wu died without waiting for [his son] King Cheng to grow up. . . . And, of Yan Yuan, the Master said, 'Unfortunately, he was short-lived,'²⁰ likening him to a bud that never bloomed.²¹ All of these things are clearly recorded in the Classics: they are the absolute words of the sages. I make the Classics and the commentaries my authority and find my proof in the world of men. To speak of immortality, is this not a great error?"

[From *Hongming ji*, TD, no. 2102:1-7 — adapted from LH by IB]

HUIYUAN: A MONK DOES NOT BOW DOWN BEFORE A KING

When an Indian entered the Buddhist clergy, he left his clan, his caste, and all his worldly possessions. As one standing outside of ordinary society, he from then on paid no outward signs of veneration to secular potentates. In China, too, early Buddhist clerics, though they knelt in their religious ceremonies, displayed no signs of respect to laymen in positions of authority, not even to the emperor.

At first this constituted no great problem, since only the most eminent monks were ever likely to meet the emperor, and these were usually foreigners who were not expected to follow full Chinese etiquette. When native Chinese came to constitute the majority of Buddhist clerics, however, the problem became more serious. The question was brought under discussion at court during the Eastern Jin period, but no settlement was reached until 402 C.E. At that time the high minister Huan Xuan (369-404), who had temporarily usurped the throne, referred the problem to one of the outstanding monks of the day, Huiyuan (334-417), for a recommendation. Huiyuan replied with a letter stating that, though Buddhist laymen, like other laymen, were obliged by the customary etiquette to acknowledge their loyalty and respect for their sovereign, the Buddhist clergy, who by the nature of their life and aims were far removed from ordinary men, could not be expected to go through the outward signs

19. *Daodejing* 23.

20. *Analects* 11:6.

21. *Analects* 9:21.

of obeisance. Huan Xuan accepted Huiyuan's argument and decreed that monks need not bow before the emperor. Shortly after this, Huiyuan composed a treatise titled "A Monk Does Not Bow Down Before a King" ("Shamen bu jing wang zhe lun"), stating his argument in greater detail.

Buddhism in the Household

If one examines the broad essentials of the teachings of the Buddha, one will see that they distinguish between those who leave the household life and those who remain in it. . . . Those who revere the Buddhist laws but remain in their homes are subjects who are obedient to the transforming powers [of temporal rulers]. Their feelings have not changed from the customary, and their course of conduct conforms to the secular world. Therefore this way of life includes the affection of natural kinship and the proprieties of obedience to authority. Decorum and reverence have their basis herein, and thus they form the basis of the doctrine. That on which they are based has its merit in the past. Thus, on the basis of intimacy it teaches love and causes the people to appreciate natural kindness; on the basis of austerity it teaches veneration and causes the people to understand natural respect. . . . Thus obedience is made the common rule, and the natural way is not changed. . . .

Hence one may not benefit by [the ruler's] virtue and neglect propriety, bask in his kindness and cast aside due respect. Therefore they who rejoice in the way of Śākya invariably first serve their parents and respect their lords. They who change their way of life and throw away their hair ornaments must always await [their parents'] command, then act accordingly. If their lords and parents have doubts, then they retire, inquire of their wishes, and wait until [the lords and parents] are enlightened. This, then, is how the teaching of Buddha honors life-giving and assists kingly transformation in the way of government.

Buddhism Outside the Household

This second part sets forth the core of Huiyuan's argument as to why the monk should not make a display of respect for worldly potentates. The monk, so the argument goes, is not a disrespectful, much less an impious, person, but he stands completely outside of the framework of lay life; hence he should not abide by its regulations insofar as merely polite accomplishments are concerned.

He who has left the household life is a lodger beyond the earthly [secular] world, and his ways are cut off from those of other beings. The doctrine by which he lives enables him to understand that woes and impediments come from having a body, and that by not maintaining the body one terminates woe. . . .

If the termination of woe does not depend on the maintenance of the body,

then he does not treasure the benefits that foster life. This is something in which the principle runs counter to physical form and the Way is opposed to common practice. Such men as these commence the fulfillment of their vows with the putting away of ornaments of the head [shaving the head] and realize the achievement of their ideal with the changing of their garb. . . . Since they have changed their way of life, their garb and distinguishing marks cannot conform to the secular pattern. . . . Afar they reach to the ford of the Three Vehicles,²² broadly they open up the Way of Heaven and the human. If but one of them be allowed to fulfill his virtue, then the Way spreads to the six relations and beneficence flows out to the whole world. Although they do not occupy the positions of kings and princes, yet, fully in harmony with the imperial ultimate, they let the people be. Therefore, though inwardly they may run counter to the gravity of natural relationships, yet they do not violate filial piety; though outwardly they lack respect in serving the sovereign, yet they do not lose hold of reverence.

He Who Seeks the First Principle Is Not Obedient to Change

In general, those who reside within the limits [of ordinary existence] receive life from the Great Change. . . . Life is fettered by physical form, and life depends upon change. When there is change and the feelings react, then the spirit is barred from its source and the intellect is blinded to its own illumination. If one is thus shut up as in a hard shell, then what is preserved is only the self, and what is traversed is only the state of flux. Thereupon the bridle of the spirit loses its driver, and the road to rebirth is reopened daily. One pursues lust in the long stream of time; is one thus affected only once? Therefore he who returns to the source and seeks the First Principle does not encumber his spirit with life. He who breaks out of the grimy shell does not encumber his life with feelings. If one does not encumber one's spirit with life, then one's spirit can be made subtle. The subtle spirit transcending sense-objects — this is what is meant by *nirvāṇa*. The name *nirvāṇa*, can it possibly be an empty appellation? I beg leave to extend this argument and so to prove its truth. Heaven and Earth, though they are great because they give life to living beings, cannot cause a living being not to die. Kings and princes, though they have the power of preserving existence, cannot cause a preserved creature to be without woe. Therefore in our previous discussion we have said, "[He who has left the household life] understands that woes and impediments come from having a body

22. That is, postponing enlightenment in order to bring others closer to salvation, attaining enlightenment by personal exertions in an age in which there is no Buddha, and attaining enlightenment by hearing the Buddha's preaching. These three are associated with the bodhisattva, the *pratyeka* or "private buddha," and the *śrāvaka* or "voice-hearer," respectively.

and that by not maintaining the body one terminates woe. He knows that continued life comes from undergoing change, and by not obeying this change he seeks the First Principle." Herein lay our meaning, herein lay our meaning. This is why the monk refuses homage to the Lord of the Myriad Chariots [i.e., the emperor] and keeps his own works sublime, why he is not ranked with kings or princes and yet basks in their kindness.

[From *Hongming ji*, TD 52, no. 2102:29–32 — LH]

ADMONITIONS OF THE FANWANG SŪTRA

The following admonitions represent the basic moral code to which many Mahāyāna monks in China subscribed when they took the bodhisattva vows or precepts. From what now appears to be an apocryphal text, never canonically sanctioned, these admonitions purport to come from the mouth of the Buddha. In effect they constitute a substantial reduction and modification of the disciplinary code for monks in the earlier, so-called Hīnayāna or Smaller Vehicle (seen as "smaller" because it was more restrictive, difficult to practice, and thus limited in its practicability for all). Here the unlimited expedient or adaptive means available through the later, Greater Vehicle enable it to overcome some of the Chinese objections to the Hīnayāna cited in the preceding Mouzi text.

Note in these admonitions the strong invocation of filiality as a basis for Buddhist discipline. This adaptation to the more life-affirming, family orientation of Confucianism contrasts with the earlier characterization of the Buddhist religious vocation as "leaving the family" (*chujia*). As a major concession to Chinese values, this new view of Buddhism as fulfilling the ends of filial piety became a marked feature of East Asian Buddhism in general.

Later even this simplified code was further minimized in the two main schools of Chinese Buddhist practice, Pure Land and Chan, which emphasized means other than adherence to the traditional disciplinary code for the attainment of salvation.

At that time, the Buddha Śākyamuni, seated under the Bo tree after having attained supreme enlightenment, first set up the Precepts (*Prātimokṣa*): to be filial to one's parents, teacher[s], members of the Buddhist community, and the Three Treasures. Filial obedience is the way by which one attains the Way. Filial piety is called the "admonitions"; it is also called the "prohibitions." Then the Buddha emanated infinite light from his mouth.

At that time, trillions of participants in the assembly, including all the bodhisattvas, eighteen Brahmin kings, the kings of the six heavens in the realm of desires, and sixteen great kings, etc., all joined their palms in front of their chests and listened to the Buddha reciting the Mahāyāna Admonitions of all the Buddhas.

The Buddha told all the bodhisattvas: "I now recite by myself every fortnight,

the Admonitions of the Law. All of you bodhisattvas — bodhisattvas who have just aspired [for supreme enlightenment] — should also recite them; bodhisattvas who are in the ten stages of directional decision, the ten stages of the well-nourished heart, the ten stages of “diamond heart,” and bodhisattvas who are in the ten stages before attaining Buddhahood, should also recite them. This is why the light of the Admonitions issues forth from my mouth. It has some conditions that make it possible, and it is not without a cause; hence the manifestation as light. [Yet] the light is neither green, nor yellow, nor red, nor white, nor black. It is neither material nor mental. It is neither being nor nonbeing. It is not causation. It is the source of all Buddhas and the root of all bodhisattva deeds. It is the root of all sons of the Buddha in this assembly. Therefore, all sons of the Buddha should receive it and hold to it. You should read, recite, and master it.

“All sons of the Buddha, listen carefully: those who wish to receive the Admonitions, be they kings, princes, ministers, prime ministers, monks, nuns, eighteen Brahmin kings, the six kings of Heaven’s realm of desire, or sixteen great kings, commoners . . . male prostitutes, female prostitutes, male servants, female servants, the eight classes of supernatural beings, guardians, animals, even illusory beings, as long as they understand the language of the master [who gives the Admonitions], they are all able to receive the Admonitions and thereby be called ‘most pure ones.’”

The Buddha proclaimed to all the sons of the Buddha, saying, “There are ten major precepts. Anyone who has received the Bodhisattva Admonitions and yet does not recite them is not a bodhisattva, nor is one the seed of a Buddha. I also recite them. All the [past] bodhisattvas have learned, all the [future] bodhisattvas will learn, and all the [present] bodhisattvas are learning them. Now that I have explained briefly the nature of the Bodhisattva Precepts, you should learn them and follow them with respect.”

1. The Buddha said: “Sons of the Buddha, in the case of killing or urging others to kill; killing for expediency or condoning others who kill; or rejoicing at seeing others kill, or killing by means of a spell — whatever the causes of killing, the condition of killing, the method of killing, or the action of killing — the killing of any living being should not be done intentionally. A bodhisattva should always give rise to a heart of compassion, a heart of filial piety, using all expedient means to save all sentient beings. If, on the contrary, one kills living beings as one pleases, one commits an unpardonable offense for a bodhisattva.”

2. “In the case of a son of the Buddha stealing, urging others to steal, stealing for expediency, or stealing by means of spells — whatever the cause of stealing, the condition of stealing, the method of stealing, and the action of stealing — even things owned by gods and spirits — and whatever the goods — even a needle or a blade of grass — there should be no intentional stealing. A bodhisattva should give rise to the heart of filiality of the Buddha-nature, a heart of com-

passion, always helping all people to achieve felicity and happiness. If, on the contrary, one goes so far as to steal the property of others, one commits a most unpardonable offense for a bodhisattva.”

3. “In the case of a son of the Buddha committing fornication, urging others to commit fornication, or committing fornication with any woman — there should be no intentional fornication, no matter what the cause, condition, method, or act of fornication, whether with female animals, female deities, or female spirits, or any such sexual misconduct. A bodhisattva should give rise to the heart of filiality, bring all sentient beings to salvation, and offer them pure truth. If, on the contrary, one commits any kind of fornication, whether with animals, one’s own mother, sisters, and relatives, showing no compassion or restraint, one commits an unpardonable offense for a bodhisattva.”

4. “In the case of a son of the Buddha lying, urging others to lie, or lying for expediency — whatever the cause . . . condition . . . method . . . or the act of lying — even if one says one sees something without actually seeing it, or says one did not see something when one has seen it — a bodhisattva should always give rise to correct speech and [help] all sentient beings to give rise to correct speech and correct views. If, on the contrary, one prompts sentient beings to evil speech or evil views, one commits a most unpardonable offense for a bodhisattva.”

5. “In the case of a son of the Buddha dealing in alcoholic liquors, or urging others to deal in them — whatever the cause . . . the condition . . . the method . . . or the act of dealing in alcohol — one should do nothing of that kind. Alcoholic liquors are a cause and condition that give rise to wrongdoing, whereas a bodhisattva should give rise to the clear and thorough wisdom of all sentient beings. If, on the contrary, one causes confusion in the minds-and-hearts of all sentient beings, one commits an unpardonable offense for a bodhisattva.”

6. “In the case of a son of the Buddha criticizing the transgressions of a bodhisattva who has renounced the world, a bodhisattva who is a householder, a *bhikṣu* monk or a *bhikṣuṇī* nun, or of someone urging others to criticize such people — whatever the cause . . . condition . . . method . . . or act of criticizing — or when a bodhisattva hears an evil person of a non-Buddhist sect or an evil person who is either a *śrāvaka* or a *pratyeka*-buddha criticizing any Buddhist’s violations of law or discipline, if, instead of motivating such an evil person to adopt a positive Mahāyāna mind, the bodhisattva rather lends himself to such criticism, it is a transgression of the Buddha’s law and a most unpardonable offense.”

7. “In the case of a son of the Buddha himself praising or blaming others, or telling others to do so — whatever the cause . . . the condition . . . the method . . . or act of blaming — whereas the bodhisattva should take upon himself the blame or shame that attaches to all other living beings, whether for evil deeds to oneself or great deeds of others, if, instead, he praises his own merits and

conceals others' good deeds, or lets others take the blame, it is a most unpardonable offense for a bodhisattva."

Similar formulations are given for three other offenses — stinginess, anger, and slander against the Three Treasures — which, with the preceding items, make up the ten major vices. These are then followed by a detailing of forty-eight minor violations or vices to be avoided by the bodhisattva, such as disrespect to one's master, drinking liquor, eating meat, eating five forbidden spices, and so on.

[*Fanwang jing*, TD 24, no. 1484:1004–1005 —THT]

Chapter 16

SCHOOLS OF BUDDHIST DOCTRINE

Doctrinal Buddhism developed in China at least three hundred years after Buddhism's presence was first noted there in the first century. It arose not as a result of violent schisms or protestant revolts but as an outgrowth of tendencies already manifest in the earlier period of Buddhist thought.

THE GENERAL CHARACTER OF DOCTRINAL BUDDHISM

The division of Chinese Buddhism into discrete schools had its origins in the tendency to concentrate on the study of one particular scripture or group of scriptures, as containing the most essential truths of the religion. The Chinese knew almost nothing of the splintering of Buddhism into sects in India and Central Asia. They did not know to what extent the scriptures themselves were sectarian writings, nor did they properly understand the sectarian motivation that lay behind the selection by the various missionaries of the scriptural texts they translated. For them, any Buddhist text translated into Chinese was the word of the Buddha. And since all of the Buddha's pronouncements had to be true, it was necessary to find some way to reconcile the frequently glaring inconsistencies found in the scriptures. A suggestion on how to deal with this problem was furnished to them by the Mahāyāna scriptures themselves.