

and handed down by his followers. They are therefore cast in the form of pithy sayings rather than treatises and have a strongly didactic flavor. Their underpinning is a moral rather than a religious philosophy that emphasizes education and self-sacrifice. Confucianism has been the most influential philosophy in world history.

BOOK II

The Master said, He who rules by (moral force) is like the pole-star, which remains in its place while all the lesser stars do homage to it.

The Master said, If out of the three hundred Songs I had to take one phrase to cover all my teaching, I would say 'Let there be no evil in your thoughts.'

The Master said, Govern the people by (regulations), keep order among them by chastisements, and they will flee from you, and lose all self-respect. Govern them by (moral force), keep order among them by ritual and they will keep their self-respect and come to you of their own accord.

The Master said, At fifteen I set my heart upon learning. At thirty, I had planted my feet firm upon the ground. At forty, I no longer suffered from perplexities. At fifty, I knew what were the bid-dings of Heaven. At sixty, I heard them with docile ear. At seventy, I could follow the dictates of my own heart; for what I desired no longer over-stepped the boundaries of right.

Mêng I Tzu asked about the treatment of parents. The Master said, Never disobey! When Fan Ch'ih was driving his carriage for him, the Master said, Mêng asked me about the treatment of parents and I said, Never disobey! Fan Ch'ih said, In what sense did you mean it? The Master said, While they are alive, serve them according to (ritual). When they die, bury them according to (ritual) and sacrifice to them according to (ritual).

Mêng Wu Po asked about the treatment of parents. The Master said, Behave in such a way that your father and mother have no anxiety about you, except concerning your health.

Tzu-yu asked about the treatment of parents. The Master said, ('Filial sons') nowadays are people who see to it that their parents get enough to eat. But even dogs and horses are cared for to that extent. If there is no (feeling of respect), wherein lies the difference?

Tzu-hsia asked about the treatment of parents. The Master said, It is the demeanour that is difficult. (Filial piety) does not consist merely in young people undertaking the hard work, when anything has to be done, or serving their elders first with wine and food. It is something much more than that.

The Master said, Look closely into his aims, observe the means by which he pursues them, discover what brings him content—and can the man's real worth remain hidden from you, can it remain hidden from you?

The Master said, He who by reanimating the Old can gain knowledge of the New is fit to be a teacher.

The Master said, A gentleman is not an implement.

Tzu-kung asked about the true gentleman. The Master said, He does not preach what he practises till he has practised what he preaches.

The Master said, A gentleman can see a question from all sides without bias. The small man is biased and can see a question only from one side.

The Master said, 'He who learns but does not think, is lost.' He who thinks but does not learn is in great danger.

The Master said, He who sets to work upon a different strand destroys the whole fabric.

The Master said, Yu, shall I teach you what knowledge is? When you know a thing, to recognize that you know it, and when you do not know a thing, to recognize that you do not know it. That is knowledge.

The Master said, Hear much, but maintain silence as regards doubtful points and be cautious in speaking of the rest; then you will seldom get into trouble. See much, but ignore what it is dangerous to have seen, and be cautious in acting upon the rest; then you will seldom want to undo your acts. He who seldom gets into trouble about what



Portrait of Confucius. This portrait of Confucius is by an unknown artist. It shows a serene old teacher.

he has said and seldom does anything that he afterwards wishes he had not done, will be sure incidentally to get his reward.

Duke Ai asked, What can I do in order to get the support of the common people? Master Kung replied, If you 'raise up the straight and set them on top of the crooked,' the commoners will support you. But if you raise the crooked and set them on top of the straight, the commoners will not support you.

Chi K'ang-tzu asked whether there were any form of encouragement by which he could induce the (common people) to be respectful and loyal. The

Master said, Approach them with dignity, and they will respect you. Show piety towards your parents and kindness towards your children, and they will be loyal to you. Promote those who are worthy, train those who are incompetent; that is the best form of encouragement.

Someone, when talking to Master K'ung, said, How is it that you are not in the public service? The Master said, The Book says: 'Be filial, only be filial and friendly towards your brothers, and you will be contributing to government.' There are other sorts of service quite different from what you mean by 'service.'

The Master said, just as to sacrifice to ancestors other than one's own is presumption, so to see what is right and not do it is cowardice.

BOOK IV

The Master said, It is (Goodness) that gives to a neighbourhood its beauty. One who is free to choose, yet does not prefer to dwell among the Good—how can he be accorded the name of wise?

The Master said, Without Goodness a man

Cannot for long endure adversity,
Cannot for long enjoy prosperity.

The Good Man rests content with Goodness; he that is merely wise pursues Goodness in the belief that it pays to do so.

Of the adage 'Only a Good Man knows how to like people, knows how to dislike them,' the Master said, He whose heart is in the smallest degree set upon Goodness will dislike no one.

Wealth and rank are what every man desires; but if they can only be retained to the detriment of the Way he professes, he must relinquish them. Poverty and obscurity are what every man detests; but if they can only be avoided to the detriment of the Way he professes, he must accept them. The gentleman who ever parts company with Goodness does not fulfil that name. Never for a moment does a gentleman quit the way of Goodness. He is never

so harried but that he cleaves to this; never so tottering but that he cleaves to this.

The Master said, I for my part have never yet seen one who really cared for Goodness, nor one who really abhorred wickedness. One who really cared for Goodness would never let any other consideration come first. One who abhorred wickedness would be so constantly doing Good that wickedness would never have a chance to get at him. Has anyone ever managed to do Good with his whole might even as long as the space of a single day? I think not. Yet I for my part have never seen anyone give up such an attempt because he had not the *strength* to go on. It may well have happened, but I for my part have never seen it.

The Master said, In the morning, hear the Way; in the evening, die content!

The Master said, If it is really possible to govern countries by ritual and yielding, there is no more to be said. But if it is not really possible, of what use is ritual?

The Master said, In the presence of a good man, think all the time how you may learn to equal him. In the presence of a bad man, turn your gaze within!

The Master said, In serving his father and mother a man may gently remonstrate with them. But if he sees that he has failed to change their opinion, he should resume an attitude of deference and not thwart them; he may feel discouraged, but not resentful.

The Master said, In old days a man kept a hold on his words, fearing the disgrace that would ensue should he himself fail to keep pace with them.

The Master said, Those who err on the side of strictness are few indeed!

The Master said, A gentleman covets the reputation of being slow in word but prompt in deed.

The Master said, (Moral force) never dwells in solitude; it will always bring neighbours.

FOCUS QUESTIONS

1. Who are the people in the text who ask the Master questions?
2. Why do the *Analects* take the form of short, pithy sayings? How would their form affect their reception by the general population?
3. What are some of the personal characteristics Confucius values most?
4. The five Confucian relationships are husband–wife, older brother–younger brother, friend–friend, ruler–subject, and father–son. How are some of these relationships illustrated in the text? Why was having such a well-ordered, hierarchical society important to Confucius?

20

Tao-Te Ching (ca. 500 B.C.E.)

LAO-TZU

There remains considerable doubt about whether the Tao-Te Ching was written by a single person known as Lao-tzu. Tradition has it that Lao-tzu (ca. 570–490 B.C.E.) was a scholar at the Chou court entrusted with the keeping of sacred texts. He is said to have met Confucius and chided him for his vanity and to have disappeared while traveling in the west. Both stories are probably fictitious, although they are found in a biography of Lao-tzu written in 100 B.C.E.

What is not in doubt is the importance of Taoism in Chinese philosophical thinking. The Tao-Te Ching is composed in two parts, the Tao, which means "the way" and the Te, which means "virtue." Its 81 chapters are written in few characters, a form that is best rendered into verse. Taoism is a wholistic philosophy, fundamentally materialistic, which nevertheless provides a practical guide to morality and government. The various texts of the Tao-Te Ching show changes made as late as the first century C.E. The oldest surviving text was discovered in 1973 and dates from before 168 B.C.E.

1

As for the Way, the Way that can be spoken of
is not the constant Way;
As for names, the name that can be named is
not the constant name.
The nameless is the beginning of the ten
thousand things;
The named is the mother of the ten thousand
things.
Therefore, those constantly without desires, by
this means will perceive its subtlety.
Those constantly with desires, by this means will
see only that which they yearn for and seek.
These two together emerge;
They have different names yet they're called
the same;
That which is even more profound than the
profound—
The gateway of all subtleties.

6

The (valley spirit) never dies;
We call it the (mysterious female).
The gates of the mysterious female—
These we call the roots of Heaven and
Earth.
Subtle yet everlasting! It seems to exist.
In being used, it is not exhausted.

14

1 { We look at it but do not see it;
We name this "the minute."
2 { We listen to it but do not hear it;
We name this "the rarefied." *spiritual/spatial*
3 { We touch it but do not hold it;
We name this "the level and smooth."

These three cannot be examined to the limit.
Thus they merge together as one.

"One"—there is nothing more encompassing
above it,

And nothing smaller below it.

Boundless, formless! It cannot be named,

And returns to the state of no-thing.

This is called the formless form,

The substanceless image.

This is called the subtle and indistinct.

Follow it and you won't see its back;

Greet it and you won't see its head.

Hold on to the Way of the present—

To manage the things of the present,

And to know the ancient beginning.

This is called the beginning of the thread
of the Way.

16

Take emptiness to the limit;

Maintain tranquility in the center.

The ten thousand things—side-by-side they
arise;

And by this I see their return.

Things come forth in great numbers;

Each one returns to its root.

This is called tranquility.

"Tranquility"—This means to return to your
fate.

To return to your fate is to be constant;

To know the constant is to be wise.

Not to know the constant is to be reckless and
wild;

If you're reckless and wild, your actions will
lead to misfortune.

To know the constant is to be all-embracing;

To be all-embracing is to be impartial;

To be impartial is to be kingly;

To be kingly is to be like Heaven;

To be like Heaven is to be one with the Tao;

If you're one with the Tao, to the end of your
days you'll suffer no harm.

25

There was something formed out of chaos,

That was born before Heaven and Earth,

Quiet and still! Pure and deep!

It stands on its own and doesn't change.

It can be regarded as the mother of Heaven
and Earth.

I do not yet know its name:

I "style" it "the Way."

Were I forced to give it a name, I would call it
"the Great."

"Great" means "to depart";

"To depart" means "to be far away";

And "to be far away" means "to return."

The Way is great;

Heaven is great;

Earth is great;

And the king is also great.

In the country there are four greats, and the
king occupies one place among them.

Man models himself on the Earth;

The Earth models itself on Heaven;

Heaven models itself on the Way;

And the Way models itself on that which is so
on its own.

34

The Way floats and drifts;

It can go left or right.

It accomplishes its tasks and completes its
affairs, and yet for this it is not given a name.

The ten thousand things entrust their
lives to it, and yet it does not act as their
master.

Thus it is constantly without desires.

It can be named with the things that
are small.

The ten thousand things entrust their lives
to it, and yet it does not act as their master.

It can be named with the things that are
great.

Therefore the Sage's ability to accomplish the great
Here Comes from his not playing the role of the great.
Therefore he is able to accomplish the great.

52

The world had a beginning,
 Which can be considered the mother of the world.
 Having attained the mother, in order to
 understand her children,

If you return and hold on to the mother, till
 the end of your life you'll suffer no harm.
 Block up the holes;
 Close the doors;
 And till the end of your life you'll not labor.
 Open the holes;
 Meddle in affairs;
 And till the end of your life you'll not be saved.
 To perceive the small is called "discernment."
 To hold on to the pliant is called "strength."
 If you use the rays to return to the bright light,
 You'll not abandon your life to peril.
 This is called Following the Constant.

*ending
reading*

FOCUS QUESTIONS

1. What is "the Way"?
2. What is the role of the sage in Taoism?
3. The basis for Taoist political philosophy is *wu wei*, or "not doing." How is this illustrated in the text? What, according to Lao-Tzu, is the consequence of *wu wei*?
4. It has been asserted that the Chinese were Confucian while in "public office" but Taoist in their "private lives" because Taoism allowed them to escape the burden of their social responsibilities. What characteristics of Taoism allowed them to think this?