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# THE CONCEPT OF PEACE IN THE *TAO TE CHING*

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**M A THESIS**

*submitted by Bong Soo Kwag*

*in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree of Master of Arts in East Asian Studies*

*Department of East Asian Studies*

*University of Durham*

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- 4 MAR 1998

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## The Abstract

~~The thesis I propose to work on~~ <sup>This thesis</sup> represents a first attempt to analyze Lao Tzu's main methods of ~~answering~~ <sup>resolving</sup> the social and political problems in Ch'un Ch'iu and Warring States Periods.

Lao Tzu, the founder of Taoism, suggested many solutions that could bring an end to the conflicts and to ~~the ending of~~ the disunity of China. Examples of these include the reform or abolishment of some ancient Chinese institutions as well as new principles <sup>les</sup> for the enhancement and preservation of life. All these ideas were to ~~create~~ <sup>become crystallised in</sup> the *Tao Te Ch'ing*, which became an important religious text.

In particular, the aspect of Lao Tzu's methods <sup>for solving</sup> of ~~answering~~ the social and political problems of China in the Warring States Period needs more attention. In each chapter of the *Tao Te Ch'ing* there was a main emphasis on peace as the main method of <sup>developing</sup> social cohesion and <sup>as</sup> a cure to all fundamental human problems.

Therefore, Lao Tzu's ideas about peace and his methods of <sup>solving</sup> ~~answering~~ the problem<sup>s</sup> of the Warring States period are significant and <sup>form</sup> ~~would be~~ the main focus of the thesis.

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## INTRODUCTION

This thesis represents a first attempt to analyze Lao Tzu's main method of ~~answering~~<sup>resolving</sup> the social and political problems during the Ch'un Ch'iu and Warring States Period.

A review of the literature on this subject area reveals only the perspectives of a few Western Sinologists. These works include H. Welch and A. Seidel's *Facets of Taoism*<sup>1</sup>, J.C. Cooper, *Taoism, The Way of the Mystic*<sup>2</sup>, and H.G. Creel's *What is Taoism?*<sup>3</sup> which recognized that the rise of Taoism represented a reaction against the authoritarian government of the Warring States Period. However, their studies neglect the importance of the transitional age in Chinese history which made ~~large~~<sup>the great</sup> ~~turns~~<sup>leap</sup> from statism to nationalism.

Most scholars who have written about the thought in Lao Tzu have emphasised ~~or~~<sup>the</sup> or other of the different theories contained in it. I summarise the main arguments of leading scholars of the 1980s' and 90s' scholarship here. For examples, G. Henricks' *Lao Tzu Te Tao Ching* has two parts. The first consists of ~~Henricks'~~<sup>Henricks'</sup> translation alone. The second reprints the A and B texts side by side on the right-hand page.<sup>4</sup> His translation, notes and commentary, ~~which~~ are on the left. In his introduction, he claims that: "For society, any reform means a type of return to the remote past; civilisation is considered a degradation of the natural order, and the ideal is the return to an original purity. For the individual, wisdom is to conform to the rhythm of the universe. The Taoist mystic, however, not only adapts himself ritually and psy~~ch~~<sup>ch</sup>ologically to the

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<sup>1</sup>H. Welch & A. Seidel, *Facets of Taoism*, Yale University Press, 1979.

<sup>2</sup>J.C. Cooper, *Taoism, The Way of the Mystic*, The Aquarian Press, 1972.

<sup>3</sup>H.G. Creel, *What is Taoism?*, The University of Chicago Press, 1970.

<sup>4</sup> These are two versions of the Lao-tzu text discovered at ~~Mao~~ Mawangtui, showing a variety of differences in content and style. See R.G. Henricks (*infra*) p. xv for further information.

alternations of nature but creates a void inside himself that permits him to return to nature's origin."<sup>4</sup>

Chen<sup>5</sup> offer the best treatment of this <sup>which I would contend is religious.</sup> ~~religious~~ Taoist text. <sup>confronts</sup> She ~~observes that~~ the problem of the authenticity and date of the *Tao Te Ching*. <sup>Recognizes</sup> She ~~shows that~~ the notion of peace contained in this book. Her belief is that <sup>just as opposition to the</sup> ~~just as the hindrance~~ of Tao results in natural hardship <sup>so</sup> ~~and~~ the ruler's ignorance of public opinion and of what is afflicting his people results in rebellions and wars. To establish ~~the~~ peace, special principles are to be erected throughout the empire <sup>which will establish it as a</sup> ~~as~~ place of good ideas and morality texts. This collection of ancient Chinese wisdom made thus available to the prince, is to be recirculated among the people.

She claims that "The *Tao Te Ching* as religious in the commonly accepted meaning of religion as human transcendence of the world, as a work of fundamental ontology calling humans back to the remembrance of the ground for the peace and harmony of all beings, furnishes us with a profound religious vision."<sup>6</sup>

Boltz<sup>7</sup> discusses the problem and process of the textual criticism of the Lao Tzu. He insists that Lao Tzu is intended to serve as a kind of principles of governance, on both the personal and the political levels, for the sovereign. The intent of this book: to warn against the dangers of an extreme to the point of eternity in one direction.

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<sup>4</sup>R.G. Henricks, *Lao Tzu Te-Tao Ching* Introduction, pp. xviii-xix.

<sup>5</sup>Ellen.M.Chen, *The Tao Te Ching, A New Translation with Commentary*, New York:Paragon House, 1989.

<sup>6</sup>ibid. p.24.

<sup>7</sup>William G. Boltz, *The Lao Tzu Text That Wang Pi and Ho-Shang Kung Never Saw*, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 48, no.3. 1985. pp.493-501.

Ames<sup>8</sup> shows that the Taoist understanding of the person flows from a thoroughly elaborated metaphysical position, in which cultivation of the self -with human freedom as the goal- is explicitly described. He introduces the idea that all discourse concerning human freedom is worthless unless carried out within the framework of ontological reflection on what it means to be a human being and on the nature of the cosmos in general.

He contends that Taoism "sees the state as a natural institution," and that the ruler-  
 sage is portrayed as being capable of non-coercive governing. He insists that Lao Tzu is alluded to as a distant proto-anarchist theory with perhaps some historical relevance. Also many of the concepts of political philosophy found in his presentation are also found in the brief discussion of the political thought of *The Art of Rulership*.<sup>9</sup>

~~The area of early Taoist thought explored by Roth<sup>10</sup> is~~  
~~Roth<sup>10</sup> explores area of early Taoist thought~~ is that of psychology. What he finds is a system of thought that blends a cosmology based on the Tao as ultimate ground of the cosmos with both psychological techniques of self-cultivation leading to immediate experience of the Tao and a political philosophy that elaborates the Lao Tzu's principle of *wu-wei* (inaction).

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<sup>8</sup>R. Ames, *Is Political Taoism Anarchism?*, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, Vol. 10, No. 1. 1983. pp. 2-27.

<sup>9</sup>R. Ames, *The Art of Rulership: A Study in Ancient Chinese Political Thought*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1983.

<sup>10</sup>Harold D. Roth, *Psychology and Self-Cultivation in Early Taoist thought*, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol 51: No 1. 1991.



~~from the Lao Tzu~~

Psychological techniques of self-cultivation are centered on such concepts as emptiness (*hsu*), moving in unison with <sup>us</sup> ~~us~~ <sup>maintained.</sup> ~~from the Lao Tzu~~. The political philosophy is based upon *wu-wei* but is expanded to include such related ideas as shifting with the times, spontaneous response, suitability, adaptation, and compliance, which are not found in the Lao Tzu.<sup>11</sup>

Clark<sup>12</sup> observes that more recent anarchist theory, in its organicist and ecological forms, has in fact developed a much deeper ontological understanding of man and cosmos - one that is quite consonant with the Taoist understanding as articulated in the Lao Tzu. He maintains that the Lao Tzu, at least, "take an entirely negative view of government." The resolution of this problem appears to turn on two questions: the nature of "institutional authority" and the extent to which it can be exercised in a non-dominating fashion, and the question of how literally to take the Lao Tzu's pronouncements concerning the ruler-sages.

Ham Sok Hon<sup>13</sup> writes in his interpretation of Lao Tzu: "The objective of Lao Tzu is to let us perceive the fundamental core of the universe and human life, which is eternal life. The larger part of the *Tao Te Ching* has to do with history. The reason that the *Tao Te Ching* gives such weight to history is that it is a religion of fact, a religion of life, dedicated to the salvation of mankind. Not merely through thinking but through the actual history of life, it seeks to get at the deep meaning of life, life that informs the whole of the universe. In the *Tao Te Ching*, we find the origin and value of human kind and culture, as well as the principle behind the rise and fall of peoples and nations. In Lao Tzu's teaching, politics is not the ultimate goal, for people have to rise to still

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>J.P. Clark, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, Vol. 10. No. 1. March 1983. pp. 2-3.

<sup>13</sup>Ham Sok Hon, *Interpretation of Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu*, Han Gil Sa, Seoul Korea, 1988. pp. 40-71.

higher planes spiritually and religiously. Yet as politics sets the framework in which all major human activities take place, things people do are unavoidably tied to politics. For this reason, politics has to be an education; not only does one govern, but one has to lead the people and exercise moral influence on them."<sup>14</sup>

In what follows in this thesis I shall state the one theory of pacifism, and quote accounts of it from various works. I shall focus on Lao Tzu which emphasizes peace as an aspect of thought.

During the Ch'un Ch'iu period many states began to emerge and as they achieved greater stability, they acquired cultural differences that were individual and distinct from one another. These civilizations with settled communities that mainly consisted of farmers and craftsmen produced increased material benefits and therefore a higher standard of living. Cities were then founded and this gave birth to institutions and customs as well as law and order.

In the Ch'un Ch'iu and Warring States Period, which lasted for about five hundred years, China was in a constant, chaotic state of war and this made it difficult for her to achieve a unified state. This disunity was in the form of government, land, belief and ideology, while the devastation of war created a huge amount of suffering among people.

Many philosophies therefore emerged in this period which stressed the need for China to unify and to generally put an end to all conflicts and Taoism was to prove to become one of the most important among the many.

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<sup>14</sup>ibid. p.40.

Lao Tzu, the founder of Taoism,<sup>15</sup> suggested many solutions that could bring an end to the conflicts and to the ending of the disunity of China. Examples of these include the reform or abolishment of some ancient Chinese institutions as well as new principles for the enhancement and preservation of life. All these ideas were to create the *Tao Te Ching*, which became an important religious text.

However, after the death of Lao Tzu, his followers preferred to idealize and idolize their master and stripped all dynamism from his personality and ideas. The *Tao Te Ching* was therefore also reinterpreted in the process and repeated reinterpretations have continued until the present.

These repeated reinterpretations have not only stripped Lao Tzu and the *Tao Te Ching* of dynamism but also undermined the vitality of the *Tao Te Ching* as a Canon because the underlying spirit has been lost or misinterpreted.

With the problem of too many different reinterpretations of the *Tao Te Ching* it is necessary to attempt to find the original ideas of Lao Tzu and his way of thinking.

In particular, the aspect of Lao Tzu's methods of answering the social and political problems of China during the Warring States Period needs more attention. In each chapter of the *Tao Te Ching* there was an emphasis on peace as the main method of social cohesion and a cure to all fundamental human problems. Yet, many reinterpretations have distorted the original intentions of Lao Tzu's methods and many of his ideas were often overlooked as too idealistic during the Warring States Period, where there was little interest in his ideas.

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<sup>15</sup>see below, chapter 4, pp 84-88.

However, with the benefit of hindsight, one could see from a contemporary perspective that many of Lao Tzu's ideas were in fact practical and sensible and could even be usefully applied to contemporary problems of war and conflict despite the fact that they are ancient ideas that are 2,500 years old.

Therefore, Lao Tzu's ideas about peace and his methods of answering the problem of the Warring States period are significant and form the main focus of this thesis.

## CHAPTER ONE

### Rise of Political Theorists Response to The Political Situation in the Chan Kuo Period

This chapter shows how rulers and thinkers in the Spring and Autumn and Warring States Period in ancient China proposed to solve their problems using political means. I will examine the structure of violence in this era and how the states' forces were working for the solution of their problems. War existed in ancient Chinese daily life and was rampant within various political structures. There were conflicts within and between states. However, ideas of peace were also popular at that time.

"Warfare was the greatest theatre for sanctioned violence in the Spring and Autumn period.... The *Zuo zhuan* lists some 540 interstate wars and more than 130 major civil wars in a span of only 259 years."<sup>16</sup>

War became an eschatological instrument. The object was to fulfill a grand design. It became the tool with which the "master race" would acquire domination over China. The grand design might also be realized as the result of the chaos of the final war: the war to end all wars and to make the nation safe for unification, or the war to prepare the way for the triumph of its successful king and the establishment of the Heavenly Empire. It followed that in an age of total war fought for total objectives, there also had to be total victory. For example, Mencius is emphatic in his condemnation of the actual wars of his period. The last part of the *Book of Mencius* opens with a vigorous denunciation of warring princes: "Who strive for territory in war, filling the wildernesses with the corpses of the slain, who strive for cities in battle that they may fill them with the slain; this is to be called gathering in territory and feeding upon the flesh of men! Death is not enough for such crimes!"<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Mark Edward Lewis, *Sanctioned Violence in Early China*, State University of New York Press, p.36. also see, *Taiping yulan*, ch.736, p.6a.

<sup>17</sup>D.C.Lau, *Book of Mencius*, Book I.ii.13 , Penguin Books, 1970.

A peaceful resolution needed to be adopted; non-violent and pacifist. Ancient China had however been attracted to extend both its territory and political power. As a result, war happened and such confrontation continued. The vitality of ancient Chinese societies had been sapped, by overbearing military expenditure, destruction in wars, and economically unproductive war industries in the Ch'un Ch'iu and Chan Kuo period; by the excessively expensive programs of military security for state security; by rampancy of work stoppage and moral depravation.<sup>18</sup> Almost all of the warring nations were burdened by huge outlays for defence.

Rulers in ancient China stressed the material realm of man and society rather than their spiritual realm. One effect of the hard time in serious crisis was to stimulate creativity which was formed through the long history of bitter life.

Perhaps the most important discovery was of iron. Now tools , weapons and machines could be developed using this newly found material, instead of using bronze, stone or wood as previously. It was at this time that lots of new machinery was invented, for example to aid irrigation and for use in the military.

It was now time to march to a new era of peace through unification. Some sages advised the rulers on the peaceful achievement of unification. As an example, Chi K'an Tse(a feudal lord)\_inquiring of Confucius concerning government suggested, "What about killing the unprincipled so as to establish the principled?" Confucius retorted, "You, Sir, control the government, so why resort to killing? If you desire goodness the people will be good. The character of the true aristocrat is as the wind, the character of the common people like grass; the grass must sway with the wind."<sup>19</sup> King Hsiang of Liang asked Mencius, "Through what can the Empire be settled?" "Through unity," Mencius said. "Who can unite it?" "One who is not fond of killing can unite it,"Mencius said.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>Kuo-Chung Lin, *Classical Chinese Concepts of International Politics*, the University of Oklahoma Graduate College 1974, p.23.

<sup>19</sup>D.C. Lau, *Analects*, Book XII, 19. trans. , Penguin Books, 1979.

<sup>20</sup>D.C. Lau, *Mencius*, Book I, No,6. p.54

War led to a situation of political separation and economic bankruptcy. Political rulers were filled with mistrust, ignorance and corruption, and such conditions have frequently produced despair in its people. No one had the hope or the will to rebuild their desperate society by themselves. In the midst of this turmoil China attained unification which meant the ending of five hundred years of war and creation of definite policies. For example the army was restructured from cavalry to infantry which created greater mobility; there were changes in diplomatic policy to a more subtle approach than previously and there was an introduction of bureaucratic systems.<sup>21</sup>

Unification was needed in China because division was the biggest stumbling block to the development of the whole of China. She learned that extreme confrontation was to be avoided, and wanted to achieve peaceful unification through objective mutual understanding of the situation. As will be discussed in Chapter Two, the prominent sages, or philosophers, of the time with the possible exception of the Legalists, suggested that if war is created by the development of a materialistic lifestyle based around wealth, power, machinery and weaponry, then peace could be achieved by a return to a more natural and simple way of life in harmony with nature, based on the virtues of *Tao* and *Te*. *Tao* means "the Way", which corresponds closely with the idea of the Aryan Path.<sup>22</sup> *Te* means "Influencing or Transforming by Character or Virtue." The root of this is certainly to be found in the *Analects*.<sup>23</sup> Lao Tzu and his contemporaries, writing with deep feeling, compare the effect of war on people to a fractured limb; the enveloping of their country in fire and blood.

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<sup>21</sup>Mark Edward Lewis, *Sanctioned Violence in Early China*, pp5-7.

<sup>22</sup>H.G. Wells, *The Outline of History*, Cassel And Company, Ltd 1920, p.203.

<sup>23</sup>Leonard Tompkinson, *Studies of Peace and War in Chinese History*, p.16.

## I. The Historical Situation in ancient China

Historically, China had struggled between two political systems: feudalism and nationalism. It was possible for a new socio-political system to emerge, but wars caused tremendous suffering amongst the people, and constructive political thinkers addressing issues such as the development of ideal policy were convinced that peace was an absolute necessity. Despite the chaotic circumstances the Ch'un Ch'iu and Chan Kuo periods have been regarded as China's Golden Age of Thought which provided the basis for Chinese moral ideas in the future.

The main desideratum was the unification of China under a new political system. Preceding it, the Western Chou dynasty had enjoyed a unified culture; following it, there appeared in the reunification of the Middle Kingdom the cultures of Han. "Generally historians are all in agreement in viewing the Warring States in ancient China as a period of great chaos or as a period of transition. These periods were two stages of an epoch of transition from feudalism to a unified empire. In the Ch'un Ch'iu period the older order broke down; in the Chan Kuo period a new one began to emerge. The people living in the interval between the breakdown of the old and the establishment of the new were bewildered by the lack of standards for settling disputes and maintaining harmonious relationships."<sup>24</sup>

During that period many small states were liberated from the Chou Kingdom. The feudal lords aimed to establish independent states to escape the feudal Chou Empire. The weakness of the Chou was made evident when the central monarchy was defeated by insurgent feudal lords in 656 B.C.<sup>25</sup> These changes marked the sharp decline of Chou authority and in the following era, known as the Ch'un Ch'iu(Spring and Autumn) period, 771-483 B.C., and the Chan Kuo(Warring States) period, 403-221B.C., there developed a system of large independent states. "The old values and moral concepts changed during the transition period. There seems to have been a change in social structure. Before the end of the Chan Kuo period a system of contractual relationships started to emerge: bureaucracy, employer - employee relations, and commercial exchange all came into existence."<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Cho-Yun Hsu, *Ancient China in Transition*, Stanford University Press, California 1965, p.53.

<sup>25</sup>Mark Edward Lewis, *Sanctioned Violence in Early China*, op.cit., p.47.

<sup>26</sup>Cho-Yun Hsu, *Ancient China in Transition*, op.cit., p.2.



(a) The Ch'un Ch'iu period(771-483 B.C.) and the division of China

It could be asserted that the Chou feudal system was established just after the Chou overthrew the Shang states of the eastern plain in the closing years of the twelfth century B.C. The division of China resulted from the weakening of the Chou dynasty in 770 B.C. The rulers of the vassal states were already able to fight against each other and even against the Chou monarchy itself.<sup>27</sup>

The recurrent wars between the rulers of the various states striving for effective hegemony are notorious.<sup>28</sup> The pattern of dependency had become reversed. The central authority of the Chou came to have only a certain symbolic and ceremonial importance indicating the theoretical unity of China. In this way the Chinese world became divided into a multitude of political entities.<sup>29</sup> The division caused much suffering and mental anguish.

Between the eighth and fourth centuries B.C. there were in the Hwang-ho and Yang-tse valleys no less than five or six thousand small states with about a dozen powerful states dominating over them. The land was subjected to perpetual warfare.<sup>30</sup> The number of feudal states ranged from 130 to 1,800, of various sizes, subservient to the central Chou monarchy.<sup>31</sup> This growth increased the number of possible relationships, interdependencies, and the potential for conflict. Life at that stage of society appears to have been lacking in principles and moral values.

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<sup>27</sup>Edward T. Williams, *A Short History of China*, New York: Happer and Row, 1928, p.62.

<sup>28</sup>Leonard Tompkinson, *op. cit.*, p.6.

<sup>29</sup>Denis Twitchett, *The Cambridge History of China*, Vol 1, The Cambridge University Press, 1986, p.25.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup>Kenneth Scott Latourette, *The Chinese; Their History and Culture*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1934, p.37.

Nor were the wars of the period all civil wars. Leonard Tompkinson<sup>32</sup> has pointed out that the reason why the peripheral states of Ch'i, Chin, Ch'in and Ch'u became the only serious rivals for the control of the empire was because these states had greatly increased their resources in men and material by constant expansion at the expense of their barbarian neighbors. In this period, there were no righteous wars, though some were better than others. "Correction" implied the ruler taking action against the ruled. Hostile states did not "correct" each other.

Everyone needs a recognition of these wars in order to understand classical Chinese philosophy and culture. There are serious questions as well to ask to assist in examining thoughts and feeling about the war. There was the simple theory of war: Invade one country in order to make peace.

The structure of the political system was hierarchical and most feudal lords were dependent upon the Chou monarchy for lands, subsidies, and protection against each other. In theory, the feudal states were not supposed to expand their territory. In actual fact in some cases they fought wars with each other over territorial spoils. In the Spring and Autumn period, due to the weakness of the Chou central monarchy, the strength and independence of feudal lords grew rapidly at the expense of the central Chou authority.<sup>33</sup> Ch'i, Ch'u, Cheng, Lu, Yen, and many other similar rival settlements continuously battled, until all of them were finally destroyed.

In fact, the Chou leadership had presided over the evolution of states sharing, in varying degrees, a common language and culture, but maintaining military and customs barriers between one another, and ever ready to intrigue or ally, to make war or peace. Within several of the individual states themselves, increasing centralization of political power was taking place at the expense of subordinate hereditary landholders and officials.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Leonard Tompkinson, *Studies in the Theory and Practice of Peace and War in Chinese History and Literature*, Friends Centre, Shanghai, 1940.p.6. Although this book is more than 50 years old, I am of the opinion that he has much to say that remains of relevance today.

<sup>33</sup>Richard L. Walker, *The Multi-State System of Ancient China*, Hamden, Conn: The Shoe String Press, 1953, p.37.

<sup>34</sup>Denis Twitchett, op.cit.,p.27.

This political situation brought about dreadful destruction, devastation and tragedy that caused millions of casualties, and left the country split. By that time, Chou could no longer adopt the radically sound solution of aiming to make society correspond with the Golden Age of the sage Kings that permits men to be happy through being able to exercise mutual good with intuitive co-operation. This had been an ideal held by Lao Tzu, that was not to come to fruition in his lifetime. Instead the Legalist philosophers seemed to achieve for a short period their ideal of unification by use of power.

Human culture was already of nation-wide, imperial, proportions. The practical question was how to persuade the great area which did accept community ideas, civil standards, moral criteria and noble ideals, to put these things into practice: how to make a single state materialize and implement the courteous way of life that was accepted as right.

Furthermore, the beginnings of a national identity grew up within the independent states, replacing the popular patriotism toward the village chiefs and the central "Son of Heaven" of the earlier period.<sup>35</sup> "China was shattered, and while the separate states were still supposed to be fiefs of the sovereign overstate, the actual condition was close to that of medieval Europe under the figment of the Holy Roman Empire in which the real working powers were the rising nations, and the Pope-Emperor overlordship of Christendom was always a dream. Because of her secularist outlook and her early disregard of metaphysics China did not involve herself in the Papal Imperialist confusions caused by the disputes of the twin priest-kings, the secular and the religious."<sup>36</sup>

The development of a national identity made it easy for the rulers to organize peasant militias and armies to fight their wars for them with the feeling that they were struggling for the sovereignty, independence, and honor of their own states, not simply as a duty to a feudal lord. Among the hundreds of states in the period of Spring and Autumn, only five of these states were classified as great powers and played a leadership role in China during this period. These wars were the result of contact between non-integrated sovereign units.

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<sup>35</sup>Richard L. Walker, *op.cit.*, p.37.

<sup>36</sup>Gerald Hurd, *The Human Venture*, Haper & Brothers: New York, 1955. p.256.

The transition took place during the final two and a half centuries of the Chou; there were technological, military, political, administrative, agrarian relationships, power relationships, commercial and industrial changes, and intellectual changes.

(b) The Chan Kuo Period (403-221 BC) And Division of China

The intermediate period between Ch'un Ch'iu and Chan Kuo was an interstate system of four power centers: Ch'in, Ch'i, Ch'u, and Yueh. When the Chou monarch, King Wei-lieh, endowed the "feudal state" title to the Three Chins(Han, Chao and Wei) in 403 B.C., the period of Warring States began.<sup>37</sup>

Due to several hundred years of interstate intercourse and cultural expansion in the Spring and Autumn period, the Chinese system of interstate politics had been greatly enlarged as the Warring States period started. The great wars fought by the mighty rulers of the Warring Periods were mostly attempts to unify the whole of China under one king and political system. There were great developments not only in abstract thought and political organization, but in many of the material aspects of civilization. For example, "The state of Chu carried out a major reorganization of its military levies and taxes in 548 B.C. This included not only a general survey of land and a redistribution of fields through the introduction of irrigation channels, but also an examination of mountain forests, salt ponds, fish ponds, and marshes."<sup>38</sup>

This led the ruling classes to use the spirit of totalitarian dictatorship to extract levies and taxes from the common people, to use their labor, and to conscript them into military service. This was too heavy a burden for the Chinese nation and much harm was caused both in terms of war casualties and in physical and financial hardship for the common people.

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<sup>37</sup>Yang Kuan, *Chan Kuo Shih, The History of Warring States*, Shanghai; Shanghai People's Press, 1955. p.130.

<sup>38</sup>Mark Edward Lewis, *op.cit.*, p.59.

A different type of war(i.e.: one fought by infantry instead of cavalry) was waged between smaller kingdoms and principalities to obtain supremacy. For example, each of the self-appointed Lords of the principalities advocated themselves to be the king of China. The creation of ancient nation-states had brought about a series of gigantic conflicts between whole conscripted nations, culminating in large scale wars.

Many states had the capacity to inflict enormous destruction on their enemies. As a consequence, security was often their preeminent problem. Many paths to deter aggression and avoid war were proposed, but most states' sense of security had increased during this time, and a workable solution to the security dilemma existed. Externally, at this time the great powers met each other frequently for alliance and mutual assistance purposes. Internally, they began their social, political and economic reforms. For example, in 356 B.C. Wei Yang(Lord of Shang) was appointed to initiate reform in Ch'in. The same type of reforms were also performed in Ch'i and several other states. Gradually, there appeared seven great powers in the interstate system. They were Yen, Chao, Han, Wei, Chi, Ch'u, Ch'in, the so-called "Seven Powers of Chan-Kuo."<sup>39</sup>

In the Warring States Period, the change in political institutions was completed. The period during this new international system differed greatly from that of the period of Spring and Autumn. The Chou monarchy was no longer respected and was even conquered. The feudal system collapsed completely. Most states sought complete independence and equality from one another. In the struggle for power, most of the individual states resorted to the use of force externally and to national political, economical, and social reforms internally. Comparatively, warfare at this time became more cruel, longer and larger involving much more manpower.

A social stratification developed that was economic as well as political. Economic development brought about the emergence of wealthy men and great landowners. Throughout this period the exploration of paths to peace emphasized arms. They differed in concept and in prescription, but all converged on the belief that the incidence of war was directly related to the distribution of arms. Who had how much of different kinds of military capabilities was assumed to determine whether war occurred and which states experienced and were vanquished by it. For example, some new weapons were invented at this time, such as "Yun-ti", a scaling

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<sup>39</sup>Yang Kuan, Chan Kuo Shih, op.cit., p.130.

ladder to climb the city wall, and "Kou-chu", the hooked claws used in naval battles.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, the components of state power were based not only upon the number of four-horse military chariots as before, but also upon such factors as population, political and social systems, national morale, manipulation of diplomacy, etc. which have been regarded as requirements of a national power in modern times.<sup>41</sup>

The military change was also completed. The art of battle became so refined that even in fiercest combat chivalrous manners were required of the nobility. Able strategists and tacticians were also much in demand. Sometimes both diplomatic talent and military ability were possessed by one person, as for example by Chang I and Kungsun Yen. Both were clever in winning allies for their states and in isolating their enemies.<sup>42</sup>

It was during this period that Sun Tzu wrote his famous work *The Art of War*,<sup>43</sup> which indicated ways of efficiently winning a battle through the use of skillful tactics. He emphasized the need for careful preparation for war by taking account of the natural environment and considering how best to use people. He suggested that armies should be led by those who had studied war and had both the knowledge and skill to lead an army into battle, rather than by a member of the ruling class or Royal family. This was obviously a move towards professionalisation of the military and creation of military genius' such as Sun Wu and Kuan Tzu.

According to H.G. Creel,<sup>44</sup> this period not only saw qualitative changes in the nature of warfare, but also introduced new concepts of the purpose of war which had nothing to do with the pursuit of limited national objectives. New technology played a central role in this transformation, especially the advent of infantry through the front line. Moreover, the mobilization of the whole nation for war raised

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<sup>40</sup>Yang Kuan, op.cit., p.134.; also see Chang Yin-ling, *Outline of Chinese History(Ancient Part)*, Taipei, Taiwan; Chang-Chung Book Company, 1969, p.103.

<sup>41</sup>ibid., pp.136-138.

<sup>42</sup>For information about Chang I, see his biography in Ssu-ma Ch'ien. *Shih Chi*, 70/ 4-14.

<sup>43</sup>Li Yu-Ning, *Shang Yang's Reforms and State Control in China*, p.263.

<sup>44</sup>H. G. Creel, *Soldier and Scholar In Ancient China*, Pacific Affairs September, 1935. Vol VIII, No.3. p.336.

questions about the distinction between soldiers and civilians. The role of infantry gradually became more significant. The use of foot soldiers was favoured, the territory itself limited the use of chariots. The aristocratic warfare of chariots and archery finally gave way to infantry tactics using a great number of foot soldiers advancing on foot with spears or swords in hand. Masses of tough foot soldiers, mostly hard working peasants inured to hardship and toil, replaced the gallant, chariot-riding noblemen. Iron weapons were used commonly.

Voices were being raised demanding compulsory military service and the maintenance of extensive armaments. The Legalists preached that only powerful armaments could maintain peace. The statistical information prepared by Cho-yun Hsu<sup>45</sup> appears surprising: According to this, the 259 year span of 722-464 witnessed only 38 years without war, whereas the 242 year span of 463-222 had no less than 89 such years. Wars were dominated by professional generals who fought to acquire territory and resources for whatever state employed them. Two strategies were available to states which sought unification and security through arms and strategy: (1) to aggregate military power by forming alliance with others in such a way that a balance of power would keep the peace, (2) to develop military might of sufficient deterrent capability that no adversary would risk launching a war against them.

How many were injured and killed? How much potential for good was lost in terms of the country's heritage, and personal talent? How many widows became deeply changed people through the loss of a husband? Mencius is emphatic in his condemnation of the actual wars of his period. The last part of the *Book of Mencius*<sup>46</sup> opened with a vigorous denunciation of Warring princes: "Mencius said, How lacking in charity was King Hwei of Liang!...King Hwei of Liang, for the sake of territory rent in pieces and destroyed his people in battle. When defeated he rallied again, and lest victory might not yet be his, drove his own dearly loved son to death." He shows even greater indignation in the following passage, denouncing those "Who strive for territory in war, filling the wilderness with the corpses of the slain, who strive for cities in battle that they may fill them with the slain; this is to be called 'gathering in territory and feeding upon the flesh of men! Death is not

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<sup>45</sup>Denis Twitchett, op.cit., p.25.

<sup>46</sup>D.C.Lau, *Book of Mencius*, Book IV.i.p.14.

enough for such crimes!"<sup>47</sup> We must look for these facts behind the facade of Chinese culture. The entire Warring States period was one of constant wars among these seven powers under the general strategic policies of balance of power: *Ho-Tsung*(Vertical Alliance) and *Lien-Heng*(Horizontal coalition)<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>Ibid.

<sup>48</sup>Cho-yun Hsu, *Ancient China in Transition, An analysis of Social Mobility, 722-222 B.C.*, Stanford University Press, 1965, p.92-96.



## 2. The Balance of Power in the Warring States Period

According to Cho-yun Hsu,<sup>49</sup> the intrastate system in this period was structured in such a way that it encouraged states to compete with one another for power, wealth, and territories. The anarchical system placed responsibility for the preservation of peace on each individual state, which must rely on self-help to preserve its own security.

Of all the forms of social conflict in the Warring States periods, international conflicts were the most important. International conflict affected all ancient Chinese. Politicians sought resolution of international conflicts by both intellectual efforts and practical means. They analyzed what seemed to be the manifold causes of wars. This political system resembled a war of all against all, a dynamic of perpetual conflict and struggle. To political realists this condition was a permanent one, and states must therefore attempt ceaselessly to maximize their own power.

How might such a disorderly and war-prone system be effectively managed? A traditional prescription had been to tie the survival of the states and the maintenance of peace to the functioning of a system of military balances.

Ch'in, located in the west, was a great power and a potential threat to the bordering states, and others too. Therefore, the only possible solution was a Horizontal Alliance, where any state would ally with Ch'in to attack others, or of a Vertical Alliance, where the other states would form a united front against Ch'in. The purpose of the policy of Ho-Tsung was to deter Ch'in's aggression under a collective defence system which Ch'in was obviously worried about. Hoping to break the tide and diminish the effectiveness of this collective defence system, of the states of Yen, Chao, Han, Wei, Ch'i and Ch'u, Ch'in devoted herself to winning any power or states among them by various means including the use of military threat, a promise of sharing the profit, and correctly handling the contradictions among the opponents.

International relations implied a certain degree of interdependence. International interdependencies were a mixture of cooperative and competitive interests. Competitive and inconsistent interests outweighed cooperative interests, and

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<sup>49</sup>ibid.

suspicious and hostile attitudes defined a win some, lose some situation. Such a situation led to a violent and irreconcilable confrontation.

The probability of conflicts between many states is greater than that of conflict between few states. There were twelve or thirteen major states in the Ch'un Ch'iu period, plus seven or eight score small ones, but seven large states held firm control of China in Chan Kuo times. "Therefore, balance of power was an ambiguous concept that has been used in a variety of ways. At the core of its many meanings was the idea that peace would result when the power of states was distributed in such a way that no one state was strong enough to pose a meaningful threat to the others. Should one state, or a combination of states, acquire enough power to constitute a threat, others would unite out of self-interest and form a defensive alliance to restore the balance. The equilibrium or balancing of power that would result from such collusion would be sufficient to deter the would be attacker from pursuing its expansionist goals."<sup>50</sup>

Political settlement would thus be produced from the equilibrium resulting from the balance of contending factions. My point is that the application of balance of power has ethical repercussions. If a balance of power system can halt the fighting and stop bloodshed, even for a short time, is this enough to justify this system?

Political realists in the Chan Kuo period saw all states as driven by self-interest: All were perceived to defile those interests in terms of power and its relentless quest. All, therefore, were expected to expand their power until checked by a countervailing power. Thus all were locked into a perpetual struggle for power as each competitively attempted to enhance its position relative to others.

The balance-of-power theory is predicated on the notion that weakness leads to war, that vulnerability invites attack from power-seeking aggressors, and that potential aggressors can be deterred from attacking only by intimidating them with countervailing power.<sup>51</sup> Hence the realist idea was to preserve peace by preparing for war. When all states were seen as driven by expansionist power ambition, the conclusion easily follows that one's own military capability should be strengthened

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<sup>50</sup>Charles W. Kegley, JR. Eugene R. Wittkope, *World Politics; Trend and Transformation*, St. Martin's Press. New York. p.422-426.

<sup>51</sup>op.cit.,p.423.

as a means of protecting against the hegemonical aspirations of potential adversaries. The balance-of-power theory was predicated on an acceptance of arms and wars as necessary tools of foreign policy. In addition, armaments and warfare were seen as vehicles for maintaining states' sovereign independence.

On the surface, these assumptions of balance-of-power theory appear dubious, premises that in a self-fulfilling way breed the very outcome most feared, war. But the proponents of balance-of-power theory as it was practised in the Chan Kuo period were not irrational. They thought that a system founded on suspicion, antagonism, fear and land competition could produce peace. The mechanism believed to translate these presumably violence-promoting features into international stability was alliance, a time-honoured means of enhancing the prospects for security and national survival by affecting the distribution of power.

War and conquest in the Chan Kuo period must have been less than in the Ch'un Ch'iu, since only sixteen states were extinguished by the seven great powers of the time. Chan Kuo wars were, however, in general longer and on a larger scale. The sovereign state, with its legal monopoly over the use of force, despite efforts to dislodge it, remains one of the most important factors. The Chan Kuo governments wielded tighter control over their domains than Ch'un Ch'iu rulers.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>Richard L. Walker, *The Multi-State System of Ancient China*, Hamden, Conn, p.23.

### 3. Alliance Politics in the Warring States Period

Ancient Chinese policymakers believed during the heyday of the balance-of-power system that coalitions were formed out of self-interest in an almost mechanistic fashion so as to protect any state threatened or under attack by a more powerful adversary.<sup>53</sup> The foreign policies of the great powers during the Warring States period oscillated between *Ho-Tsung* and *Lien-Heng* according to the appropriate situation and specific individual national interest.<sup>54</sup>

In practice, among the powers counteralliances were expected to be formed; states sitting on the sidelines could not afford the risk that a potential aggressor with greater capabilities might ultimately turn against them. Thus, rational calculations compelled states to align with others threatened by more powerful ones, not because of concern for the plight of weaker states, but because their own vulnerability would leave the uncommitted states exposed to the threat of an aggressive state with hegemonic ambitions. The result of these individual calculations would be the formation of coalitions approximately equal in power.<sup>55</sup> In the case of Ch'in, *Ho-Tsung* and *Lien-Heng* had been alternately utilized along with national expansion. Moreover, its flexible manipulation of the contradictions among the states and the strategy of allying and attacking, determined Ch'in's rule of China.

However, alliance competition could not achieve equilibrium automatically. The balance of power system seemed to produce a balance preserving peace if states behaved according to the following essential rules: (1) increase capabilities but negotiate rather than fight; (2) fight rather than fail to increase capabilities; (3) stop fighting rather than eliminate an essential actor; (4) oppose any coalition or single actor which tends to assume a position of predominance within the system; (5) constrain actors who subscribe to supranational organizational principles; and (6) permit defeated or constrained essential national actors to reenter the system as acceptable role partners.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>Edward T. Williams, *A Short History of China*, New York: Harper and Row, 1928, p.62.

<sup>54</sup>Cho-yun Hsu, *Ancient China in Transition*, p.93-97.

<sup>55</sup>op.cit., p.98.

<sup>56</sup>ibid.

According to these rules, competition was appropriate. Power is to be sought, not disdained. Force and war are approved as means to obtain power. The independence of each state would be cherished; to preserve competition led to the equalization of weapons capabilities among the major competitors. Defensive alliances emerged to counter states with preponderant capabilities. Alliances dissolve when the threat of aggression diminishes; they are never permanent. And because today's adversary may be tomorrow's friend, therefore, the only "rule" left was the struggle for power and security self-interest. The Legalist school and the concept of Legalism reached their golden age while the idealistic Taoism and the concept of Confucianism declined. Great advocates of Legalism, men such as Wei Yang, Su Ch'in, Chang Yi, Sun Pin, and Wei Liao, were very active and popular among the leaders of the great powers at that time. Even the Confucian follower, Hsun Tzu, became a Legalist thinker though he still kept Confucian principles in mind.<sup>57</sup> Their experience of service in the state's armies and their opportunity to reflect on it as the military strategists in China, led them to stress the instrumentality of war.

The final stage of the struggle among the states of these times brought the unification of China. The methods evolved for consolidating state governments to maintain cultural and political unity. It is perhaps ironic that these five centuries of war, causing much harm and hardship, led to the formation of China and her culture.

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<sup>57</sup>Denis Twitchett, *op. cit.*, p.25.

#### 4. The Result of War

These wars showed how the small nations would be in dealing with political issues at that time. We know what happened with the Chou unification. It had only limited success. A great many rulers relinquished power as a sacrifice to the chauvinistic ideas of the major powers. Ancient Chinese were on the horns of an ethical dilemma, and to find the middle way would require all their intelligence and all their good will. In fact, pacifism appeared to be the main issue after wars. Great masters of moral principles appeared: Lao Tzu and Confucius. This signifies that individual reason had achieved new heights, but on the collective level, reason had not achieved much. The solution proposed by Lao Tzu and Confucius would have meant putting the clock back by at least a millennium. This was the problem Confucius and Lao Tzu and their followers had to face and solve. China must go on, not back.

Confucius and Lao Tzu deepened the channel and most markedly advanced the course. Still the course itself had been decided upon centuries and maybe millennia before. Nations had regarded war as an act of righteousness and had praised aggression as a virtue. However, before going on to trace the Legalists' political victory, it must be asked: Was Lao Tzu's and Confucius' anything but a pathetic, ineffective protest? Did it contribute anything of value to the problem and need of human cohesion? The question is not an idle discussion about an almost prehistoric controversy. All decentralists, from Rousseau past Thoreau to Gandhi, have been convinced that only in primal village can man be virtuously happy.<sup>58</sup>

After the experience of wars, people in China began to hear the voices calling for humanity through the sages' teaching. Exclusion of nationalism which hinders the progress of their intellectual life, and promotion of universal life with international co-operation by appealing to reason and suppressing all extreme nationalist sentiment, became the goal. For this reason, these long-term wars were of great significance in dealing with the Chinese problem. Despite this, it seems that Ch'in's ambitions were characterised by qualities of nationalism, but the empire was short lived. In contrast, this empire was followed by the Han dynasty under the

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<sup>58</sup>Gerald Hurd, *op.cit.*, p.125.

banner of Confucianism and this was to last for four hundred years(209 B.C-220 A.D.)<sup>59</sup> In the long term, therefore the sages' ideals were proved to be right.

Throughout the ancient history of China and subsequent wars of over five hundred years, a series of humiliations, frustrations and failures came about. Liberty could not flourish in an ancient China that was permanently on a war footing, or even a near-war footing. Permanent crisis justified permanent control of everybody and everything by the agencies of the ruling powers.

When wars broke out not only were the Chinese persecuted and killed, but there was also the creation of great sages like Lao Tzu and Confucius. They tried to persuade people that there was a way to solve this problem and prevent wars between the states once and for all.<sup>60</sup> In this question of war and peace, these greatest political theorists made radical departure from the general outline of their statesmen's attitude with deep sympathy for the suffering masses,<sup>61</sup> and their hatred of the actual wars. Through their teachings, Chinese were convinced of the tragic meaning of wars. Their teachings may be: Mankind needs to transcend any material power. Human beings would find a more all-inclusive life beyond material and powerful confrontation. According to Gerald Hurd both Confucius and Lao Tzu agreed enthusiastically on the basic postulates - "that their contemporary man had fallen into chaos because he had torn himself from his pattern and turned himself into an explosion; he was suffering from the paranoid delusion that means were ends, machines were minds and weapons were arguments; and that the belligerent state which threatened to destroy itself must be reduced and despecialized back to that community of consent which is inherently cohesive. They exerted all their efforts toward building a future for the sadly demoralized country. This was the

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<sup>59</sup>John K.Fairbank, Edwin O. Reischauer Albert M.Craig, *East Asia, Tradition and Transformation*, Harvard University, 1973,pp.59-79.

<sup>60</sup>*Jen* ( 仁 ) is the core teaching of Confucianism. *Jen* literally means "benevolence" or "love" , both of which should prevent war.

<sup>61</sup>I believe that this is evident in the way Confucius spent his life travelling around China seeking audience with politicians in order to persuade them to rule the people by *Te*, which literally means "Virtue" . Similarly Lao Tzu's writing aimed to persuade politicians to rule by *Wu-Wei* or "inaction;" or *Tao*.

most important contribution they could make, and they were determined to do what they could."<sup>62</sup>

During long periods of war, the Chinese learned to object to the human strength which destroyed much heritage and found that moral principles should be restored. Also they realized that statesmen needed intelligence to achieve peace for the masses and find the way to national salvation.

So far as we understand the struggle in China, one clear observation emerges: War between groups of men forming social units always took place when these units exercised unrestricted sovereign power. It can be concluded then, that war is not a perversity peculiar to a few men or nations, but rather an inherent human behaviour that occurs wherever there are social groups interacting with one another. It seems relevant at this point to make mention of the famous argument between two of Confucius' disciples: Hsun Tzu, who claimed that human nature is intrinsically evil and that therefore conflict is unavoidable, and Mencius, who claimed that human nature is intrinsically good and that therefore conflict can be avoided. I am inclined to agree with Mencius' assertion and feel that as societies mature and learn from history they will begin to find alternatives to taking up arms.

I am aware that the political theorists have not had great prominence in this chapter and that Mo Tzu and the Legalist theorists have had little discussion, and I intend to address this further in the following chapter.

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<sup>62</sup>Gerald Hurd, *op. cit.*, p.131.



## CHAPTER TWO

### Philosophers' View of Society during the Ch'un Ch'iu and Warring States Period.

This chapter will examine the views of the major philosophers in China during the Ch'un Ch'iu and Warring States Period. This was a time of great transition for China, yet certain values, such as *Te*, *Tao*, *Jen* and Universal Love(兼愛), were, according to the philosophers of the time, able to remain unchanged. It is these ideas that I intend to examine in more detail. This period was transitional in many ways through both the political and social systems. For example, the system of monarchy broke down and many feudal Lords claimed their own independence and called themselves "King". This brought chaos and disorder and Chinese society changed from the previously rural communities to new urban communities. The people were unable to keep the simple and coherent life style to which they were accustomed. Such a change in lifestyle inevitably led to changes in the law, in the constitution and in the system of taxation.

The question of how China coped with such massive changes needs to be addressed and I aim to look at this issue through the views of the major philosophers of the time. It is my belief that the Chinese people began, during this era, to use the teachings of the philosophers as a guide towards achieving social solidarity. The philosophers used reason and persuasion to sway the people and not force or aggression. Their aim was to encourage a more co-operative lifestyle by developing one's innate moral force, or *Te*. The Legalists, as will be seen, are the one exception to this.

Human society was already at city scale by population increase and multiplication of skills. Human culture was already of nation wide, indeed imperial, proportions.<sup>63</sup> The practical question was how to persuade the great area which did accept community ideas, civil standards, moral criterion and noble ideas, to put these things into practice: How to make a single state materialize and implement the courteous way of life that was accepted as right. This was the problem Confucius had to face and solve. Somehow, the standards of civilization that were still accepted must be made actual. They must not be withdrawn, they must be

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<sup>63</sup>Gerald Hurd, op.cit., p.122.

emphasized, they must be advanced. Maybe advancement would involve compromises; maybe it would mean losing touch, perhaps for good, with those primal nature realities to which Lao Tzu so persuasively appealed; maybe it would mean that as nature went out of focus and ceased to be of concern as the inspiration and sanction of righteous behaviour, man would have to depend on man and morality would have to be no more than what was convenient, what worked here and now, and what most people, who were most successful, generally approached. But it was not Confucius who took that decisive turn. Before the Chou Dynasty had made the decision to concentrate on a social morality rather than on a cosmological system, on settling society rather than on understanding nature, China had made the crucial choice.<sup>64</sup>

Men at that time were becoming increasingly aware that the main problem was to get along with one another. Anarchy is always misery save for a very few. And because the Chinese felt that they could recall an age of creative peace, they were more anxious to make a nature that would make men behave - sanction and give prestige to moral conduct - rather than to explore spirituality, whether in nature or beyond the grave. With the breakup of the old Chou culture, founded on divination and sacrifice, there occurred a general diversion of interest from the dead to the living.<sup>65</sup>

Confucius and Lao Tzu spread their idealistic concepts of world order and philosophy during the latter part of the Ch'un Ch'iu period, and at that time interstate relations were still under a hierarchical feudal system. Therefore, Lao Tzu suggested a political philosophy of *wu-wei* (無為, do-nothing, inaction) and Confucius conservatively urged the restoration of former Chou's hierarchical system as an ideal order. When the interstate system entered into the power-politics period of Chan Kuo (Warring States), the idealistic thoughts declined and were overridden by the more pragmatic thoughts of Mohist utilitarianism and Legalism.

The Chinese schools of thought do not differ from each other on the cosmic world-view but on the temporal social world. Because the ages of Ch'un Ch'iu and Chan Kuo were abnormal with disharmony, different schools at that time suggested different theories for the purpose of correction and order.

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<sup>64</sup>op.cit.,p104.

<sup>65</sup>op.cit.,p.110.

For Lao Tzu and his followers, the Tao was no more than the following of nature and the principle of inaction, *wu-wei*. For Confucianism, the Tao was no more than the humanistic relations of *jen*(benevolence), *i*(義, righteousness), *Li*(礼, etiquette), and the principle of hierarchy. For Mohism, the Tao was no more than searching for utility and the principle of practical profit. For Legalism, the Tao was no more than the realistic functions of law, authority, and statecraft operating in the social, economic and political fields.

However, the idealist schools of Taoism and Confucianism interpreted the Tao through an idealistic viewpoint of optimism and suggested an ideal world in the future. Lao Tzu saw an ideal state where a sage ruler would undo all the causes of trouble in the world and would govern with non-action. Chinese minds are primarily social and practical, and their true cosmos is anthropocentric rather than theocentric. Therefore, a leading principle of Chinese natural philosophy is that the physical world is a world of action or phenomena which appear to be always in flux with little to do with any eternal verities, as opposed to assumptions of a static world and a world of substance.<sup>66</sup> In general, the Chinese believe that all the phenomena in the world in the realms of art, literature, philosophy, politics and religion, do not exist individually but are closely associated with one another as a continuous whole. This is the spirit of Chinese culture and the concept of *Tao* - the Truth, the Harmony, the Order, the Way - by which all things come to be.

On the contrary, the realist schools of Mohism and Legalism interpreted the Tao through the pragmatic viewpoint of pessimism as a practical means or a right way to control the world disorder in order to restore universal harmony. Mohists suggested pragmatism and utilitarianism, and the Legalists saw the law, authority, and statecraft as the proper tools for social and political management.

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<sup>66</sup>H.G. Creel, *Sinism*, Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Co., 1929, pp-20-21.

## 1. Confucius<sup>67</sup>

Confucianism has become the backbone of the Chinese political system over the last one thousand years. As a religion it had great influence not only over China but also over Korea and Japan. In contrast to the mystical emphasis of Taoism, Confucianism gives very practical guidance on all aspects of life from how to govern a country to how to treat one's family members. Examples can be found in "Analects of Confucius". It therefore contributed a great deal to the formation of Chinese society. However, because of its prescriptiveness, it led to a restriction in the flexibility of thought and a uniformity of behavior. However, this was not the intention of Confucius himself, but rather the interpretation and misuse of his ideas by rulers after his death. During his lifetime, little attention was paid to him; it was only after his death that his disciples spread his ideas that were then taken on by rulers for their own ends. It was not until one hundred years after his death that he was taken seriously. The Han Empire was the first to adopt Confucianism as a method of governing the country. This lasted for about four hundred years. Much later, after the T'ang(618-907) and Sung(960-1279) dynasties, neo-Confucianism was born and a new interpretation of Confucianism was given by scholars. Since then there have been many dynasties but all have had Confucianism as the core of both religion and government.

Confucius is said to have spent most of his lifetime travelling to meet Kings in order to persuade them of his ideas about government. He was active in politics himself as a state administrator and wanted to reform society, but he eventually realized his ideas would not come to fruition during his lifetime. After many years of travelling he returned to his own state where he taught his disciples his ideas until his death. His disciples recorded many of his thoughts that have become the main creed of Confucianism.

Although Confucius was a sociologist, the basic tenet of Confucianism is the importance of morality. He taught that if people are treated well, they will behave well, but that difficulties arise when they do not control themselves but seek

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<sup>67</sup>The references used in this section are: *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, Fung Yu-lan; *The Human Venture*, Gerald Hurd; *Chinese Political Thought*, E.O. Thomas; *The Analects of Confucius*, Willam Edward Soothill; *East Asia, Tradition and Transformation*, John K. Fairbank & Edwin O. Reischauer; *Confucius the Man and the Myth*, H.G. Creel.

individual happiness and profit at the expense of an ordered and peaceful society. He believed therefore that it was necessary to have leaders to guide the majority, and his aim was to teach the rulers to rule well and not for personal gain. He wanted them to rule using the ideas of *ren* or benevolence; *Yi* or righteousness; *li* or good manners; and *Te* or virtue. He asked the rulers to accumulate all of these virtues in order to become perfect rulers who would be of benefit to the common people.

## 2. Mencius

Mencius followed Confucius's idea of *Jen*, *I*, *Li*, and *Te*, but he emphasized the importance of *I* or righteousness as a principle of human conduct. Like Confucius he agreed with the concept of a politics of virtue, and condemned the evils of war which he regarded as the great human tragedy. So he argued that "if the ruler of a state loves benevolence, he will have no opponent in all the world."<sup>68</sup> Mencius believed that if a state wants to be a world leader or to win the whole world or to influence other nations, the key principle is to win the people over rather than by exerting force which people dislike. Mencius says: "There is a way to get the world: get the people, and the empire is got. There is a way to get the people: get their hearts, and the people are got. There is a way to get their hearts: it is simply to collect for them what they like, and not to lay on them what they dislike."<sup>69</sup>

War among the nations is a great crime to the people. Mencius condemning it stated: "Death is not enough for such a crime."<sup>70</sup> Keeping the principle of *I* in mind, Mencius strongly opposed the concept of profit or interest, *Li*, especially the imperialistic acquisition through conquest. He observed that men were constantly struggling over gains, profits, and national interest, unsatisfied till they have usurped all. Therefore, he strongly condemned wars of imperialism for interest and profits, and he denied the right of one state to intervene in the internal affairs of other states because it often resulted in war. Mencius was an exponent of self-determination for peoples. The states should be independent on their own feet and the government established for the welfare of the people. With democratic ideas in mind, Mencius asserted that in a nation the people were the most noble and important element of the state, the ministers and material resources next, and the ruler the least essential.<sup>71</sup> So the government is supposed to serve the public interest of the people rather than tyrannize the people.

In order to deter imperialistic aggression Mencius approved the war of justice, *I*, for self-defence. He did not feel the state needed to participate in interstate alliances or organizations for collective defence because these are often distorted by certain

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<sup>68</sup>Tsin Hsin, *Meng Tzu, the Works of Mencius*, Book IV, Part I, Chapter 7.

<sup>69</sup>op.cit., chapter 9.

<sup>70</sup>op.cit., ch.,14.

<sup>71</sup>op.cit., Book VIII , Part II, ch, 14.

individual states. Once Mencius was counselled about the question of self-defence and alliance. He said: "There is one thing I can suggest. Dig deeper your moats; build higher your walls; guard them along with your people. In case of attack, be prepared to die in your defence, and have the people so that they will not leave you: this is the proper course."<sup>72</sup>

Mencius emphasized that the real strength of a nation lies in its people and their morale rather than in material power. The strongest forces and weapons may very well collapse through the corruption of morale in either the defenders or aggressors. Proper military preparations and material resources and facilities are necessary, but they constitute no guarantee of winning. but "most important of all is a happy, contented, loyal, united, benevolently governed people."<sup>73</sup>

Mencius suggests that the way to a strong individual or nation is achieved through self-cultivation, self-discipline, and self-reliance. Too much ease and pleasure in prosperity will spoil man's nature and may corrupt the nation. Therefore a nation needs external hostile stimuli or outside threats to sustain emotional tension for constant self-restrengthening. Internally, people of a nation need a continuous revolutionary mood for human cultivation, self-training, social discipline and system reform.

Mencius had two recommendations: one economic and for the masses; the other radical psychological and for the elite; and neither of them mentioned by Confucius. The first was land distribution to the peasants. Indeed, he maintained he had such hope that food in plenty could make a good society that he said, "If beans and millet were as plentiful as fire and water, such a thing as a bad man would not exist among the people."<sup>74</sup> Mencius penetrated to the root of the problem of how society might become wise and good when he turned to examine the needs of the key man, the only possible conservator and guardian of right living, the philosopher.

Mencius believed that good behavior was natural to man, he thought nature should be studied so that her lawfulness and order might suggest right conduct and confirm man in his ethic. He believed in a natural theology as a sanction of morals. He

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<sup>72</sup>op.cit., Book I, Part II, Chapter 13.

<sup>73</sup>E.O. Thomas, *Chinese Political thought*, New York: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1968, p.246.

<sup>74</sup>A. Waley, *Three Ways of Thought in Ancient China*, p.119.

took exception to Lao Tzu's principle that Tao is only to be known intuitively and mystically; he commended natural science.<sup>75</sup> Another important piece of evidence shows that Mencius' thinking, though only hundred years later, had already become distinctly different from that of Confucius. Mencius had based his message on *Jen* - the basic Goodness which at his time he rightly named compassion, the *Jen* that Confucius had prized and pointed to as a height of conduct so sublime as not to be lightly spoken about. Mencius saw that peace of mind and noncoercive cohesion could not be won simply by a man's feeling himself a gentleman and keeping it alive by cultural exercises and refreshments. Mencius said specifically "you must recover the child mind," the original trustful, confident innocence(i.e., the harmlessness, nonaggressiveness, which man once had). This was to go back to Confucius, but it was also beyond Confucius, because Mencius advised specific exercises of time and place and probably psychophysical method. Mencius was also beyond Confucius because he held out hope for a civilization which, being later, was even more complex and confused than that in which his master had lived.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>75</sup>G.Hurd,op.cit., p.126.

<sup>76</sup>op.cit., p.128.



### 3. Mo Tzu

Mo Tzu's main doctrine was of "Universal Love" and mutual aid which tries to treat others the same as oneself. Whereas Confucius had talked of the need for a hierarchy, Mo Tzu refuted this. He argued: "Whoever loves others is loved by others; whoever aids others is aided by others; whoever hates others is hated by others; whoever injures others is injured by others. Then, what difficulty is there with "Universal Love"? Only, the government fails to employ it in his state and the common man in his conduct."<sup>77</sup> However, he displayed considerable inconsistency in the methods he suggests for implementing his ideas, in that he advocated punishment for anyone who did not love all equally.

Lao Tzu and Confucius were able to respect one another because both cared for society as it was and were fairly consistent in their notions of how to repair a damaged and chaotic culture. Lao Tzu preferred that society be simplified to a village level, while Confucius wanted to preserve the urbanized and socially stratified society. Contrarily, according to Gerald Hurd,<sup>78</sup> Mo Tzu seems to have imagined some sort of mobilized humanity as extreme in ideal and as drastic in means as the French Revolution's Committee of Public Safety or the Russian dictatorship.

Mo Tzu's notion of "Universal Love" did not suit everyone. He had a quite different view of peace from most others, believing only in his own kind of war. He was critical of Confucius' long term view of reformation; and of his need to see human nature redevelop the virtues of *Jen* and *Te*. He rejected the Confucian belief that one should love one's kin more than the stranger, and taught that one should love everyone and everything equally. Although this belief may have been partly idealistic, it seems likely that it was also partly because communities were breaking down and the distinction between kin and stranger was becoming blurred; the community was ceasing to have validity in its own right. To Mo Tzu the individual was the only real unity, and he did not believe in a hierarchy; he therefore emerges as an anarchist whose truths were only partial. It becomes clear, then, that

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<sup>77</sup> B. Watson, *Mo Tzu*, Vol.I, Chapter of *Universal Love*, Section I . p.39.

<sup>78</sup>G.Hurd, op.cit., p.129.

Confucius and Mencius were nearer the anthropological truth, and deserved their ultimate victory.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>79</sup>op.cit., p.130.

#### 4. The Legalists<sup>80</sup>

Legalism began to develop during the Warring States Period and because it offered practical solutions to the problems faced by a rapidly changing society it proved very popular with the leaders of the time, particularly towards the end of the Warring States period when a more pragmatic approach was called for. However, it was less popular among the common people. Chinese society was moving from the feudal system, where people lived in small, easily self-regulated 'clans', to a more urban, city-scale society which made control more difficult to maintain on an informal basis. The Legalists developed a theory of how to manage these newly emerging societies that was very different from the teaching of Confucius, Mencius and Mo Tzu, in that no attention was paid to the development of virtues, but rather a method of ruling by control was encouraged. The Legalists' social policy was concerned with increasing the military budget and introducing a more complex system of laws in order to maintain control. They demanded that the common people should contribute to this maintenance by the introduction of taxation, compulsory military service and use of their labour. They felt that this would increase competition between the states and a system of reward and punishment was used to keep control.

The philosophy underpinning the Legalists' teachings is that all people are intrinsically evil and therefore a strong system of control (i.e.: reward and punishment) is needed for successful government. They also adopted a system of diplomatic manipulation whereby one state would ally itself with another enemy state for the common purpose of defeating yet another greater enemy state. These ties were temporary and for the purpose of overthrowing the third party only, after which time the states would separate again. These temporary alliances were formed and reformed as necessary. The primary aim of the Legalists was the acquisition of power by whatever means. As an example of how Legalism worked in practice on a national scale, the Q'in Empire can be mentioned here. The leaders used Legalism to take the people from their previously simple lifestyles and created a much more sophisticated society which placed a great burden on the common people. They felt their suffering was too great under the Legalists; that the Q'in

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<sup>80</sup>The references used in this section are: *East Asia, Tradition and Transformation*, John K. Fairbank  
 Edwin O. Reischauer Albert M. Craig; *Sanctioned Violence in Early China*, Mark Edward Lewes;  
*The Human Venture*; G.Hurd, *Shang Yang's Reforms and State Control in China*, Li Yu-Ning.

Emperor abused the system by over taxing people and making too great a use of their labour, for example in the building of the Great Wall as a defence system. This was at huge cost to the people, some of whom were forced to spend their whole lives in this service. Furthermore he burned all the literature produced by the Confucianists and the other aforementioned schools of philosophy, forbidding such ideals in the pursuance of his own need to create an empire. This had the effect of limiting individual development and freedom and so the common people began to rebel. Very soon the Q'in Empire fell, having been the shortest lived empire in Chinese history.

## 5. Taoists: Lao Tzu and Taoism <sup>81</sup>

Taoism claims to descend from Lao Tzu. The *Tao*, for Taoists, is neither moral nor theistic but a neutral and impartial principle which governs all things in the universe and is devoid of human violation and emotion. For Lao Tzu and his followers the first principle is that *Tao* is the law of nature and the right way concerning the relations between man and nature.

Taoism is very idealistic and although popular during the late Spring and Autumn and early Warring States periods it was later overridden by Legalism when the interstate situation became chaotic, and it appears to have had little influence on the development of Chinese society during the latter part of the Warring States period. This is perhaps because Taoism is not concerned with politics, but rather with more enduring concepts and a transcendence of the material world and the riches and power sought by the Legalists. The Taoists felt that whilst people needed salvation, this was not achievable through politics alone. Their emphasis was on spirituality.

Lao Tzu suggested the idea of *wu-wei*, or inaction,<sup>82</sup> as a basic theme of political theory. He believed that society had done too much and this excess had resulted in social disorder and human disharmony. Furthermore he admitted that sometimes the use of military force and interstate war are inevitable, but they should be kept to a minimum and not glorified or employed enthusiastically.

The *Tao* which Lao Tzu preached could hold a village community together in the peace of consent, but any larger community would prove unstable. He believed that people's minds would continually turn towards gaining more personal power and economic possession; that they would neglect social agreement and lose peace of mind and thus would become ignorant of the way, or *Tao*.

Whereas Confucius believed it was necessary to return to formal Chou's hierarchical system of pre-feudal times when China had one king for the whole nation, Lao Tzu believed that this would be impossible. He believed that the

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<sup>81</sup>The references used in this section are: *Lao Tzu Te Tao Ching*, Robert G Henricks; *Taoism, The Parting of the Way*, Holmes. Welch; *The Way and its Power*, A.Waley; Chao Wen-hsiu, *Study of Lao Tzu*, Taipei: Yen-Ching Press, 1969, pp.24-25.

<sup>82</sup>see below, chapter 3, p.59.

Chou's hierarchical system was man-made and was therefore in opposition to his belief in *wu-wei*, or inaction. He also taught that the pragmatism of the Mohists and Legalists was man-made and not in accordance with *wu-wei*, which by its very inaction means adopting a following of the "Natural Order".

## Conclusion

This chapter has looked at a period of huge change for China: the Ch'un Ch'iu and Warring States period, during which time she moved from a feudal state system to an urbanized city scheme. During this transitional period many distinguished thinkers emerged, and so the period has become known as The Golden Age of Thought. These thinkers, or philosophers, succeeded in helping the people of China to overcome the great and lengthy sufferings of the Warring States period through their thoughts and the subsequent gaining of wisdom that would last long into the future.

Each school of thought had its own unique theory yet left the rulers of the time freedom to make up their own minds about the validity of each. There seems, however, to have been less freedom of choice for the common people, as can be seen particularly in the section on Legalism.

As has been shown in this essay, Legalism and Confucianism were used fully in the development of political systems during the Ch'un Ch'iu and Warring States period and onward. Indeed, Confucianism remains the backbone of Chinese culture today.

Taoism holds a unique position among all the schools of thought discussed here, in that it is firmly situated in a spiritual realm and can be viewed as much as a religion as a school of philosophy. This does not mean, however, that it had no influence on the development of political thought. I would assert that Taoism has influenced the way Chinese people think and that it has therefore infiltrated all aspects of life.

In contrast to the lasting influence of the philosophers, the wisdom of the war heroes such as Sun Wu and Kuan Tzu has all but disappeared. It becomes clear, then, as we continue to study the ideas of the philosophers today, that 'the pen is mightier than the sword.' We could substitute here "pen" for "*Jen*", "*I*", "*Li*", "*Tao*", "Universal Love", or "*Wu-wei*", which are, as the philosophers taught, the unchanging values necessary for peace at both an individual and national level. The one possible exception to this is the view of the Legalists who ruled by control. It is perhaps worth re-stating that they went on to preside over the shortest dynasty in Chinese history.

## Chapter Three

### Terminology of the *Tao Te Ching* and Its Concept of peace

In this chapter I attempt to discover the original meaning of words used in the texts in the Taoist writings when they were first written. Also I examine the original meaning of existing scripture with historical backgrounds. Unfortunately, *Tao Te Ching* and other books have been much misunderstood by many Chinese, as well as Western translators; yet for increased capacity to read such literature, the meaning of the words used in these books should be understood closely.

The Chinese developed their particular philosophy in politics throughout the history of the 'Warring States' period. Many Schools were built up, flourished and declined. Consequently, there must have been some success or failure of resources. Many Schools pointed to the main theory that *Tao* provided the primary resource of all human development and the entire form of culture. Therefore *Tao* is the key to the philosophy of China.

I am examining the evolution of the meaning of *Te* and the *Yin, Yang* theory through various references. The meaning of these terminologies can not be separated from the term *Tao* in the text books in Chinese philosophy.<sup>83</sup> These terminologies became the common stock of all Chinese philosophy. I intend to uncover the origin of the various schools with all their similarities and differences.

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<sup>83</sup>Throughout this chapter I have used *Chinese- English Dictionary*, Oxford University Press as a source of reference.



## 1. The meaning of *Tao* : Discussion of it by the Principal Schools

The word *Tao* is one of the most important terms in Chinese philosophy. Major Chinese schools were paying particular attention to *Tao*. They tried to describe and analyze the nature of *Tao*; It is a valuable and thought-provoking word.

There is a significance of intuitive expression and constructive explanation of *Tao* in the arts, science, politics and religion. In this chapter I focus on the meaning of *Tao* in the realm of politics and religion.

No one may be able to say where *Tao* came from in the first place; it maintains itself through various kinds of Schools and evolves itself throughout the whole of Chinese culture. Therefore the philosophy of *Tao* is the most vital of all resources in the minds of the Chinese.

I shall suggest that *Tao* has effected a threefold synthesis: first, the social and political world within the sphere of mind and spirit; second, the past with the present and future (溫故知新,)<sup>84</sup> and third, variety with unity by One, the many with the One.(同歸而殊途)<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> see below, p.38. *Analects* XX/5. Literally trans. by Tu Wei Ming, as 'look at the past in perspective and you will gain an understanding of the present.' *Centrality and Commonality an Essay on Chung-Yung*, The University Press of Hawaii, 1976.p.21.

see also, 陳柱, “中庸注參”, 國學小叢書 p.58. “故君子尊德性而道問學, 致廣大而盡精微, 極高明而道中庸, 溫故知新.” Arthur Waley insists on the reinterpretation of *Tao Te Ching* and says: “I can not believe that the study of the past has any object save to throw light upon the present.” See further Ham Sok Hon 咸錫憲 全集 20, 老子, p.5., Hangil Publishing Ltd, Seoul, 1988: 執古之道, 以御今之有, “We should grasp the Tao which has existed from very old times, and then use it in the present time.”(tr.auct.).

I shall give several examples that provide significant explanation of the above statement. Firstly, In the Warring States period many states experienced a serious crisis. Most politicians were realistic and clung to their material interest in life. Many philosophers diagnosed their lives and found that peace and harmony in the soul and body was the key to overcoming this political crisis. Some philosophers suggested an idealistic view of life: They suggested living according to *Yin* and *Yang* theory; *Te* and *Wu-wei* principle with *Tao*. With these theories, various schools aimed to educate politicians, administrators and an entire community for coping with this chaotic epoch.

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See also 北流陣, 柱柱尊著, “老子集訓”, 上篇. 十四章, The Commercial Press, Ltd. Shanghai, 1928. p.204.

<sup>85</sup> Kim Yong Ho, trans. “周易”, *Voice of the People*, 1990. p.67. He expresses it as 'pluralistic absolutism'

(A)Confucian interpretation of Tao

Confucius mentioned '*wen ku chih hsin*'(溫故知新).<sup>86</sup> I interpret it : "men should hold on to the *Tao* of the past and manage the things of the present by it". It means men are historical beings, so they should understand the past with correct observation; only then can they find useful solutions for their present lives. It is a reminder that all ancient philosophers of China first try to find enlightenment by understanding human history; they recommend that men should know the beginning of ancient history. Through such effort, they find the eternal Truth. It is *Tao* which is transcendental, being beyond time.

*The Book of Changes*(易經) says: "There is one moving force, but from it a hundred thoughts and schemes arise. All have the same objective, though their ways are different."<sup>87</sup> . This book explains *Tao* as the unchanging unity underlying a shifting plurality, and at the same time the impetus giving rise to every form of life and motion. Therefore *Tao* exists in one moving force.

*Tao* is described thus : "There is no thought and no action. It is still and without movement; but, when in action, it penetrates forthwith to all phenomena and events under the sky(無思也無爲也 寂然不動 感而遂通天下之故)."<sup>88</sup> It demands a denial of oneself and denial of material power or action. Only by 'emptying one's mind', can men return to the *Tao*. With such a condition men can perceive the perfection of *Tao*. '*Budong*(不動)' indicates that men should not act with their own will, but only rely on the *Tao*'s guidance; only then can men accomplish their aims

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<sup>86</sup> *Analects of Confucius*, trans. Tu Wei Ming, op. cit. xx/5.

<sup>87</sup>Quoted from Burton Watson, *Ssu-ma Ch'ien Grand Historian of China*, Columbia University Press, New York 1958. p.43-44.

<sup>88</sup>Z.D.Sung, *The Text of Yi King*, The China Modern Education Co. Shanghai. 1935.p.295.

in the world. Therefore life and death, good and bad, strength and weakness, beauty and ugliness are united by *Tao*. *Tao* should not be confused with 'totality'; it is a universality, a Way that cannot be named.

In *the Way of the Great Learning*(大學) the *Tao* is explained: "The Way of the Great Learning consists in illuminating the clarity of virtue, in loving the common people, and in abiding in the highest good."<sup>89</sup> Confucius' *Tao*(道) is the method by which the end can be attained. His view is realistic. The purpose of *Tao* according to Confucius is to teach systematically. It is a practical form of reality. It demands rational understanding and knowledge.

How to perceive this *Tao*? *Chung-yung*(中庸) answers : "What Heaven imparts to man is called human nature. To follow human nature is the Way(道). The Way can not be separated from us for a moment. What can be separated from us is not the Way."<sup>90</sup> *Tao*, in the *Chung-yung*, maintains a strong relationship with human nature. The supernatural elements in *Tao* are reconciled with the significance of human nature. *Tao* and human nature are therefore always intertwined.

In addition, this book explains *Tao* as a centrality(中):"Before the feelings of pleasure, anger, sorrow, and joy are aroused it is called centrality."<sup>91</sup> It takes account of one's state of mind. It means that men should not be partial, or inclined

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<sup>89</sup>see, 齊志忠, *Da Xue* 大學, "大學之道在明明德在親民在止於至善" 三聯書店出版發行, 北京, 1990. p.9

<sup>90</sup>see 陣柱, "中庸注參", "天命之謂性,率性之謂道,道也者,不可須臾離也,可離非道也," 國學小叢書, 上海, 1955, pp.1-3.

<sup>91</sup>Tu Wei-ming, *Centrality and Commonality An Essay on Chung-yung*, The University of Hawaii, Hawaii, 1976,p.2.

to one side, and should not have a partiality for politics (不偏不党).<sup>92</sup> It is impartial, unprejudiced. When men perceive this centrality, they can avoid being selfish in matters of life and not be biased toward any human plan and therefore make correct judgments in human affairs. It is the utmost point '*chi*(极)' in other words. It is not a halfway. It is a middle, but it is an all and a whole.

Confucius insists on benevolence, righteousness, posterity(裔), intelligence(智) and learning(學) for realizing the Tao. It is a practicable way. D.C.Lau says:

"Confucius's most distinctive contribution to Chinese thought is his exposition of the concepts of '*jen*' and '*i*'. '*Ren*' has been variously rendered in English as benevolence, human-heartedness, goodness, love, altruism and humanity. '*I*' is often rendered as righteousness. It can be applied to an act which is right, to their agent who does what is right and to a duty which an agent ought to do. Although both '*jen*' and '*i*' are of the first importance to Confucius' teaching, '*jen*' is more basic. It is conceived of as the totality of moral virtues and in this sense we can say that '*i*' is rooted in '*jen*'. He gave '*ren*' an important place in his political philosophy."<sup>93</sup>

It should be noted that '*jen*' and '*i*' are key words in making peace in society. These words are close to *Tao*. '*Jen*' is conceived of high moral virtues, and it is rooted in *Tao*. It obtains an important place in political history in China.

His aim is the education of people and politicians. He gives encouragement to extend one's knowledge and practise it in daily life. Why do men need knowledge? It leads people to respond to life's challenges or to cope with environmental challenges in the world. It provides not only the information one

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<sup>92</sup>Ham Son Hon, trans. "莊子", published by "Voice of the people", Seoul, 1975. p.58.

<sup>93</sup>*Mencius*, op, cit., p.12.

needs for living life but also enables men to transform their lives. Therefore Confucius advocates moralism : he insists that men should learn 'jen', benevolence; 'i, righteousness; 'li(禮)', rites; 'yue(樂)', music; 'sheng(聖)', sacred; 'chih(知)', knowledge by human will.

Learning means to take up a positive attitude.<sup>94</sup> It is an artificial way. Confucius defines it in the Analects: 'To learn means the study of morals. It means the acquisition of wisdom(知) and its expression in conduct (行)."<sup>95</sup> Men should learn wisdom and then practise it. It is called 'morals(道德)'. Ch'eng Tzu describes it as: "The natural law pertaining to any phenomenon. (事物當然之理)"<sup>96</sup> Phenomenal things are many, changing, and known by the senses.<sup>97</sup> Confucius' teaching of wisdom came from the learning of the Three Dynasties (夏, 商, 周) and followed the example of its leaders.<sup>98</sup>

Ch'eng Tzu(程子) says: "Learning demands conscientiousness and sincerity as its first principles.(學之道必以忠信爲主)"<sup>99</sup> It is guided by one's sense of duty. Men should object to doing something when they think it is morally wrong. It demands moral conscientiousness of all human actions. The 'Ta Hsueh(大學)' reads: "The object of learning is the apprehension of illuminating virtue, the renovation of the

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<sup>94</sup>originally xue(學) comes from 孝 to teach, and 白. See "*The Analects of Confucius*", translated by William Edward Soothill, p.108. This book provides both the original text and Soothill's own interpretation.

<sup>95</sup>Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., p.54.

<sup>97</sup>Quoted from Donald J. Munro, op, cit., p 123.

<sup>98</sup>see, "*The Analects of Confucius*" A comment under I. 7, translated by Willam Edward Soothill, p.108.

<sup>99</sup>Ibid.

people, and the resting in perfect goodness."<sup>100</sup> Confucius had a realist view of life. Learning should be applicable to the present life. Therefore he has played an important role in forming the backbone of Chinese political history.

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<sup>100</sup>Ibid.

(B) The Taoist understanding of *Tao*

In the *Tao Te Ching*, which is said to have been written by Lao Tzu, the author tries to encourage the thought of peace and harmony by *Tao*. What is the *Tao*? Lao Tzu's *Tao* has a quite different perspective from other schools. His *Tao*, "transcends individualism, and fundamental consciousness which is basic to all conscious people. It is called 'Heaven' , '*Tao*' or 'Nature'"<sup>101</sup>.

According to this belief, the heaven and earth, all creatures, and moral consciousness reveal themselves by *Tao*, not by human invention. Therefore all human wisdom has to be understood as the '*Tao*' and all fundamental human action should be obedient to the principle of *Tao*. In the *Tao*, great universal harmony exists, so there is no place for conflict between differing thoughts , no struggling between individuals and no fighting between men and nature. Human ideas and all artificial inventions are not truthful beings. They represent small, prejudicial thought. Since men do not trust the great universal harmony, they invented politics. And they try to make their own world with power and talents. Universal harmony is great and deep, but human power and talents are small and shallow. Therefore politics makes "human nature excessive'(淫性) and destroys the human virtue(遷德)".<sup>102</sup>

During the Warring States periods, men could not maintain peace of mind; could not trust that human minds were genuine. Because all artificial civilization destroys human nature, men invent laws and systems to prevent it destroying their social system, but such human efforts make human nature worse.

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<sup>101</sup>Ham Son Hon, trans., "莊子", *Voice of the people*, Seoul, 1975. p.52.

<sup>102</sup>HamSok Hon, *ibid.*, p.60.



One of the aims of *Tao* is to help a man pick his way through all the hazards inherent in living in this disorderly age. In *Tao Te Ching*, Lao Tzu's political theory rests on the concept of *Tao*. He has absolutely no doubt that the ruler is set up by *Tao* for the benefit of the people. A ruler should depend on *Tao* and carry out this duty. It is called the Way of men(人道). *Tao* should be realized in reality in human life. Therefore, "men are the main actors to realize the *Tao*'s purpose in the world. Its purpose is accomplished by human effort and toil.(因而學之, 誠之 or 苦心戮力)".<sup>103</sup>

On the other hand, *Tao* has also a mystical concept. There is a sense of oneness with the universe. It is called the Way of heaven(天道). It can be realized with men's toil, and action(有爲). Chuang Tzu supports this idea in his writings about politics. He says: "kings should follow the way of heaven, and ministers should follow the way of men(主者天道也, 臣者人道也)".<sup>104</sup> Therefore a great achievement of *Tao* is not only the defence of peace in politics, but also the addition of a spiritual depth.

*Tao* is One(一), and it is simple and easy to understand it: It is within all creatures and in the universe. Therefore all creatures are able to achieve *Tao*, so it is Truth. Men can not conquer it or control it. It can not be achieved by human will. *Tao* provides that all creatures in the universe have their own self-nature, and this nature has its own self-realization which comes from the *Tao* and has the law of Nature. Therefore creatures can not be controlled by human power.

To the Taoists, men should be aware of a person's motive in discussing 'Heaven' and 'Nature'. *Tao* is the foundation of all creatures, therefore if men do not

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<sup>103</sup>Ibid.

<sup>104</sup>Ibid.

understand the *Tao*, all human action will be useless. Only *Tao* is truth, other things are falsehood, so men can achieve nothing without *Tao*. It is said by Chuang Tzu: "不通於道者 無自而可."<sup>105</sup> I interpret this: "if a man does not know the '*Tao*', he can not accomplish anything." Lao Tzu criticized both politicians and administrators during the Warring States period.

Lao Tzu characterizes *Tao* thus, "Men should know the beginning of the thread of the *Tao*. But they can not see it; not hear it; not hold it. This cannot be examined to the limit. Boundless, formless! It cannot be named. *Tao* is called the formless form. Follow it and you won't see its head. Greet it and you won't see its head."<sup>106</sup> He says that the history of *Tao* can not trace the origin of time. It was a being before the history of men started. Lao Tzu and Confucius' common point is that they insist the past is related strongly with the present and future. It means men are a historical production. But as Lao Tzu explains more deeply: men are also a spiritual production from the past influence. But he does not explain what *Tao* is in words. It is a mystical being.

A. Waley's understanding of *Tao* in the *Tao Te Ching* is : "The *Tao* is the ultimate reality in which all attributes are united, it is heavy as a stone, light as a feather'; it is the unity underlying plurality. It is impossible for men to understand *Tao* entirely unrelated to mankind, neither will he be able to see *Tao* unrelated to life, nor life related to the universe."<sup>107</sup> H. Welch<sup>108</sup> says that Lao Tzu means *Tao* not only as a cosmoginal unity, but as a continuous field in which all physical and moral contraries are reconciled, in which up and down, good and evil disappear.

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<sup>105</sup>Ibid.

<sup>106</sup>see, Robert G Henricks, "*Lao Tzu, Te-Tao Ching*", The Bodley Head, Chapter 14, 1990, p.66.

<sup>107</sup>A. Waley, "*The Way and its Power*", 1934, p.50-55.

<sup>108</sup>Holmes. Welch, "*Taoism, The Parting of the Way*", 1966, p.57.

These two aspects quite correctly express the nature of *Tao*. It is Oneness and Unity. Lao Tzu says that "both Outcome and Secret Essence issue from the same mould."<sup>109</sup> What is the Secret Essence? It is the manifestation of the inner aspect of *Tao*, just as the Outcomes are the manifestations of its outer aspect. The inner aspect of *Tao* is called 'Yin', and its outer aspect is 'Yang'.<sup>110</sup>

Each school of philosophy has its *Tao* and its doctrine of the Way. During the Warring States periods, there were hundreds of schools(諸者百家) each showing their theory and practising it for the salvation of the Chinese. Their observations on their epoch are different as a result of their differing views of history. Also they each understand the concept of the *Tao* in a different way.

Lao Tzu explains *Tao* as a *ch'ang*(常): "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."<sup>111</sup> It means that an ordinary language is insufficient to define *Tao*. It is almost impossible to state precisely the meaning of *Tao*.

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<sup>109</sup>see, R.G. Henricks, op., cit., p.160.

<sup>110</sup>The Chinese believe that two elements always interact in the phenomenon of Nature. These two elements compose and produce all creatures. This twin exists always in the universe; they are firmly inter-related. So one cannot work without the other. For example, in an electric current, its negative(-) needs positive(+) to complete its work. Without the negative current, positive can not operate.

<sup>111</sup>Robert G Henricks, *Lao-Tzu, Te-Tao Ching*, ch.1. p.188.

Also, 咸錫憲, "老子,道德經" 一章, "道可道非常道 名可名非常名" op. cit., p.18.

Lao Tzu explains that in order to perceive *Tao*, or sense it, we need to use intellect or practicable ways. Intellectual methods are *hsu wu*(虛無 Absolute Vacancy), *chi mo*(寂寞, lonesome), *t'ien tan*(恬淡, quiet and tranquil), *pu cheng*(不爭, do not compete). It requires nothingness, tranquillity, unselfishness. An empty mind means that one denies oneself. To be tranquil means to have infinite patience. That tranquillity of the 'spirit' is the essence of Taoism. And the practical ways are *wu wei*(inaction), *jou juo*(柔弱, soft and weak), and *fu kui*(復歸, return). It requires weakness, pacifism and reversion.

Lao Tzu's experience of *Tao* is as soft and weak. *Tao* is characterized as feminine. It is called 'the Mysterious Female' or 'the Mother'. Weakness(弱) overcomes strength(強). Softness(柔) can win over solidness(剛). To yield is to conquer, whereas to grasp is to lose.

*Tao* is like water. Water is close to the *Tao*. Lao Tzu indicates that "non-striving" is essential for perceiving *Tao*. The nature of water is a "non-striving". It heads off the collision against any obstacle. It is a highest good. It provides a living energy to all creatures, yet it does not demand any reward. It represents a 'humility' and 'self-effacement'. Its weakness overcomes a hardness. It does not force, but it achieves its goals. It penetrates all hard materials and melts any obstacles. It has such powerful energy, but it always dwells in a low tract of ground. Therefore, "the *Tao* of Man is to act on behalf of others and not to compete with them.(人之道爲而不爭)"<sup>112</sup> Lao Tzu says: "Water is good at benefiting the ten thousand things and it does not compete with them, it dwells in places the masses of people detest. Therefore it is close to the *Tao*."<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>112</sup>see, Robert G. Henrick, *The Te Tao Ching*, Chapter 81, op. cit., p.158-159.

<sup>113</sup>老子, "道德經", 八章 "上善若水 水善利萬物而不爭 處衆人之所惡故幾于道" trans.

Donald J. Munro, *The Concept of Man in Early China*, p.116.

Lao Tzu criticizes the rulers of the 'Warring States' period who brought on war and armed competition between states, and advocated the political slogan 'rich states and powerful army'. He stressed the word 'non-striving'. Water is an emblem of peace. When rulers follow the principle of water, war comes to an end.

Nearest to *Tao* is the infant. *Tao* is new, in an early stage, so it is simple. This symbol of *Tao* is embodied in processing, growing and completing itself like an infant. It is pure and genuine. Mencius, who offers us an alternative interpretation of *Tao*, says: "the 'morally great man' is one who has kept through later years his 'infant heart'".<sup>114</sup> Conscience is weak, so its sensitivity can follow the right direction and judge the wrong.

Every human being, having five senses<sup>115</sup>, knows that strength will overcome weakness and solidity is stronger than softness. On the other hand, to perceive the *Tao*, men should not follow the five senses which are based on material feelings. Five senses indicates material life, whereas Lao Tzu indicates men should follow the spiritual life. He explains: "The five colours cause one's eyes to go blind. Racing horses and hunting cause one's mind to go mad. Goods that are hard to obtain pose an obstacle to one's travels. The five flavours confuse one's palate.

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<sup>114</sup>Mencius IV.2.12. Trans. D.C.Lau. Penguin Classics, 1970. p128.

<sup>115</sup> Ancient Chinese philosophy indicates that all creatures have the five fundamental elements: It is called 'YinYang Wu Hang shuo' (陰陽五行說);

The physical elements *Huo*(火)*T'u*(土)*Chin*(金)*Shui*(水)*Mu*(木), the five organs

*hsin*(心), *Fei*(肺), *Kan*(肝), *P'i*(脾), *Shen*(腎). The senses *Yen*(眼), *Erh*(耳), *Pi*(鼻), *She*(舌), *Shen*(腎),

the colours *Ching*(青)*Huang*(黃)*Ch'ih*(赤)*Pai*(白)*Hei*(黑). the tones *Kung*(宮), *Shang*(商),

*Chiao*(角), *Cheng*(徵), *Yu*(羽), the flavours *Suan*(酸), *Hsien*(咸), *Hsin*(辛), *Kan*(甘), *K'u*(苦). See

Ham Son Hon, trans, "老子, 道德經", 十二章, *Voice of the People*, Seoul, 1989, p.187.

The five tones cause one's ears to go deaf. Therefore, in the government of the Sage: He is for the belly and not for the eyes. Thus he rejects that and takes this."<sup>116</sup> Man has had his bellyful of eating, he doesn't want any more. It is a self-sufficiency(自足,or 知足).<sup>117</sup>

Five senses cause "one's mind to go mad".<sup>118</sup> These senses lead to an instinctive existence, which does not come from training or from any learning from *Tao*. This instinctive way causes avarice, and it causes self-interest, and finally men become selfish. Therefore, *Tao* is far away from the five senses. It is an eternal being, not a perishing one. When men grasp the *Tao* firmly, then can they be awakened in their minds. Otherwise, when men follow just five senses, they lose the *Tao*. The sage lives a spiritual life, and follows the Truth, and therefore does not follow the material life.

Lao Tzu claims "*chueh xue wu yu*(絕學無憂)".<sup>119</sup> I interpret this: " stop learning and then to be free from anxieties." Fear comes from human consciousness and anxiety from human knowledge. All these emotional conditions make men tired. Therefore men's keen desire for learning is far away from *Tao*. He continues to explain : "Agreement and angry rejection; How great is the difference between them? Beautiful and ugly; What's it like--the difference between them? The one who is feared by others, must also, because of this, fear other men. Wild, unrestrained! It will never come to an end." <sup>120</sup> The phenomenal world has its relativity. Human judgments are comparative, and relative.

<sup>116</sup>老子,"德道經", chapter 12, translated by R.G.Henricks , p.64

<sup>117</sup>see "老子集訓", chapter 33, p.54.

<sup>118</sup>R.G. Henricks, op.cit.

<sup>119</sup>see "老子集訓", chapter 20, p.31.

<sup>120</sup>see R.G.Henricks, *Te-Tao Ching*, chapter 20,op, cit., p.72.

His writing in *Tao Te Ching* is replete with paradoxical statements aimed at shocking the reader into an awareness of the Tao. D.J. Munro argues: "His writings have no systematic argument from premise to conclusion."<sup>121</sup> Lao Tzu's *Tao* is wide, deep and broad...it is limitless. His ideas are incomprehensible to the realists. His view is idealistic.

His concept of *Tao* penetrates the ultimate position and immediately transcends reality. Therefore it is impossible to gain knowledge of *Tao* through reasoning. It cannot be named. It cannot be explained by word. Why is that? It existed before the earth and sky. It is a mother of the world: it is the foundation of everything. It is a cause without a cause. Lao Tzu explains in chapter 56 that: "Those who know do not talk about it : those who talk do not know it."<sup>122</sup> It is a being by itself, it is called nature and it is called 'nothingness(*Wu*無)'.

Lao Tzu's attitude of life is how to overcome such environment or nature. It is called the "transformation". He demands the change of one's disposition or nature. For example, a caterpillar is transformed into a butterfly. It is a changing of the whole shape and quality of human nature. Only by *Tao* has men's character undergone a great transformation. It is a revolution of the human mind, leading to reformation of the outside world.

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<sup>121</sup>Donald J. Munro, *The Concept of Man in Early China*, Chapter 5, p.116. Stanford University Press 1969.

<sup>122</sup>Robert G Henricks, *Lao Tzu, Te Tao Ching*, chapter 56. Random Century Group Ltd.1991. p.25  
Also see 咸錫憲, "老子 “， ” 知者不言 言者不知 “ Chapter 56. Hangil Publishing Ltd. Seoul, 1988. p.56.

Lao Tzu's idea of *Tao* came to oppose the ideas of Confucius. Confucianism played an important role in forming the backbone of Chinese political and social history. But Lao Tzu's philosophy has identified the specific gravity of the whole history of China. Taoism, which has been a major religion in China, originated from Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu's philosophy. Their ideas of '*Tao*' have influence everywhere in China. In a sense, Lao Tzu has provided the Chinese with a deeper understanding of history than Confucius. He suggests an eternal solution. *Tao* exists itself without beginning or end; lasting for ever. Therefore his eternal *Tao* may lead to a right direction in human history.

Lao Tzu's *Tao* can be founded in intuitive wisdom, rather than in rational knowledge. He acknowledges the limitations and the relativity of the world of rational thinking. Fritjof Capra<sup>123</sup> argues that : "*Tao* is, basically, a way of liberation from this world. In the context of the *Tao Te Ching*, the *Tao* meant, more specifically, a liberation from the strict rules of convention. It is based on the firm belief that the human intellect can never comprehend the *Tao*." Lao Tzu possessed a strong apposition to ordinary convention and thoughts. *Tao*, according to Lao Tzu, is a way of liberating men from human prejudice.

Confucius thought that it was important to lead people in the right direction and he taught practical knowledge based on practical morality. Confucius says: "Is it not indeed a pleasure to acquire knowledge and constantly to exercise oneself therein?"<sup>124</sup> It is all conscious action by human mind. 'Learning' is a human action, and it is a '*You wei*(有爲)'. But Lao-Tzu sees its limitation and believes it

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<sup>123</sup>Quoted from Fritjof Capra, *The Tao of Physics*, published by Wildwood House 1975.p.125.

<sup>124</sup>translated by Willam Edward Soothill, *The Analects of Confucius*, Volume 1.Book I, The Fukuin Printing Company, Ltd., Yokohama 1910. p.117. see 論語卷之一, '學而第一' '學而時習之, 不亦說乎.'



would be impossible to achieve this goal in Confucius' way. He suggests totally different methods. He insists : return to fundamental problems, in order to find the original source of these problems, and thus overcome confusion.

Logical reasoning and argumentation about *Tao* was not considered valid by Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu.<sup>125</sup> In the words of Chuang Tzu, "The most extensive knowledge does not necessarily know it; reasoning will not make men wise in it. The sages have decided against both these methods."<sup>126</sup> Chuang Tzu's book is full of passages reflecting the Taoist's contempt for reasoning and argumentation. Thus he says, "A dog is not reckoned good because he barks well, and a man is not reckoned wise because he speaks skillfully",<sup>127</sup> and "Disputation is a proof of not seeing clearly".<sup>128</sup> Logical reasoning was considered by the Taoists as part of the artificial world of man.

Through four examples Lao Tzu also explains how people's common goals can be achieved. He says: "If you wish to shrink it, You must certainly stretch it. If you wish to weaken it, You must certainly strengthen it. If you wish to desert it, You must certainly work closely with it. If you wish to snatch something from it, You must certainly give something to it."<sup>129</sup> This is the natural way of humans in

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<sup>125</sup>Ch'ien Mu dates Chuang Tzu as having lived not earlier than 365 and not later than 290

B.C.(Ch'ien, *Hsien-Ch'in Chu-tzu Hsi-nien*, 618). Fung Yu-lan, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*,: p. 104, gives his dates as "c.369-c.286" B.C.

<sup>126</sup>*Chuang Tzu*, trans. James Legge, arranged by C. Waltham (Ace Books, New York, 1971), ch.22.

<sup>127</sup>*ibid.*, ch.24.

<sup>128</sup>*Ibid.*, ch.2.

<sup>129</sup>Robert G Henricks, *Lao-Tzu Te-Tao Ching*, Chaptr 36.p.88. Also see 咸錫憲,

"老子". "道德經' 三六章, " 將欲歛之 必固張之 將欲弱之 必固強之 將欲廢之 必固興之 ", p.44.

achieving something of their purpose. But *Tao* can only be achieved when men are submissive and weak within Nature and then these conditions can conquer and overcome the strong.

From this notion in the *Tao Te Ching* chapter 36, the movements of the *Tao* as a continuous interplay between opposites, the Taoists deduced two basic rules for human conduct. Whenever you want to achieve anything, they said, you should start with its opposite.<sup>130</sup> But Lao Tzu suggested a different way to achieve the *Tao*. It can be acknowledged only through weakness and softness. Finally "the submissive and weak conquer the strong(柔弱勝剛強)".<sup>131</sup> He believes that defeat may come, but the ultimate outcome will be eternal victory.

According to B. Watson, "the essence of the Great *Tao* is to discard strength and envy and to do away with intelligence and understanding; one must discard these and entrust himself to the practice of *Tao*. If the spirit of a man is too much used it will become exhausted; if his body substance is put to much labour it will wear out. If a man has early in life exhausted his spirit and body, it is unheard of that he should hope to attain the long life of heaven and earth".<sup>132</sup>

Lao Tzu saw that it is impossible to achieve the *Tao* by the way of *You Wei*(Artificial way). He insists on *Wu Wei* for achieving its goals. According to J. Legge,<sup>133</sup> this chapter exhibits the operation of the *Tao* in nature, in man, and in government; an operation silent, but all-powerful; unaccompanied with any

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<sup>130</sup>Fritjof Capra, op. cit., p.127.

<sup>131</sup> see 咸錫憲, "老子", chapter 46, p.44.

<sup>132</sup>Quoted from B. Watson's *Ssu-ma Ch'in Grand Historian of China*, Columbia University Press 1958. p.45.

<sup>133</sup>James Legge, op, cit., p.60.

demonstration of its presence, but great in its results. In other words, *Tao* is like a vessel, its emptiness can be filled fully when it is vacant inside. Or as between Heaven and earth, this space provides a living place for all creatures.

For Lao Tzu, life itself originated in the *Tao* and also ended in the *Tao*. One can return to the state in which one was born and can realize the fundamental meaning of the universe. It is not the method but is the end itself.<sup>134</sup>

Lao Tzu's *Tao*<sup>135</sup> means the opposite of having a positive attitude or alternatively to act passively. In the first instance one seems to gain by having a positive attitude but in actual fact nothing concrete is learnt. At first having a negative attitude seems to be of no advantage but the result is actually one of discovery.<sup>136</sup>

Lao Tzu explains : "Those who work at their studies increase day after day; Those who have heard the *Tao* decrease day after day. They decrease and decrease, till they get to the point where they do nothing. They do nothing and yet there's nothing left undone." <sup>137</sup>

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<sup>134</sup>Ham Sok Hon, "老子", op. cit., p 28.

<sup>135</sup>original word 道 from 之 to go, and 首 A head,- to go ahead, follow the straight ahead road. The right Road; the Truth; the way. see *The Analects of Confucius* by William Edward Soothill, Introduction, VIII. Terminology, p. 108.

<sup>136</sup>Ham Sok Hon, op, cit., p30.

<sup>137</sup>陣柱編, "老子集訓", ch.48, "為學日益' 為道日損 損之又損 以至於無為 無為而無不為", 商務書館發行, Shanghai, 1928, p.82.

Chuang Tzu's<sup>138</sup> answer to the *Tao* is the *tu*(督), which means the middle-way and has the same meaning as centrality(中). It means literally a human -spine. It should be located always in the middle position of the body. It symbolizes that *Tao* is not partial. It is fair, but not one-sided. He explains *Tao*: " If we keep this middle-way, then we can preserve our body and it will be possible to lead a fulfilled life, and to nurture others." *Tu* can be defined as the fundamental basic principle for eternity and infinity. *Tao* is the constant way. He thinks that there is simply an endless changing of things, one "form"(*hsing*, 型) into another "form," and that *Tao* is the principle dictating the changes. His symbol for *Tao* is the wheel, or more specifically, the pivot of the wheel. A "thing"(物) exists on the rim of the wheel, which constantly changes. For him the pivot and the rim came into existence at the same time, rather than the former producing the latter.<sup>139</sup>

It is easy for everyone to achieve their own result. It is difficult, however, to obtain the *Tao* for all members of the community. Lao Tzu said it is called *Wei ming*(微明, 'Minimising the Light'). When people have this '*Wei ming*' all things are possible to achieve the *Ming*(明). It means brightness. Due to its brightness one would imagine it to be obvious to see. However Lao Tzu believes that it is hard to find. Genuine brightness which can save the whole world is not light. It is concealed and shadowed light. It is called *I*(夷), *Hsi*(希), *Wei*(微).<sup>140</sup> There is a mystical quality in the Taoist denial that ordinary human language can convey the truth, and in Taoist insistence that the "light within" can be discovered only when man ceases to use human language and human senses.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> 俞國慶著, "莊子, 養生篇": "緣督以爲經 可以保身 可以全生, 可以養親 可以盡年"

國學小叢書, 上海, 1955, p.71.

<sup>139</sup> Donald J. Munro, op,cit., p.120.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., p.121.

Why is it concealed and a mere shadow? The reason is because it is neither an object nor one's works. These two are representatives of power. It can be one thing but it cannot be another. The light is beautiful but it can have no fragrance. Fragrance can be intoxication but can not become a flavour. Every revelation is a case of self being. Self being is a case of self assertion. Self assertion should be eradicated. Every existence comes from non-existence. So why has Tao no name? Lao Tzu mentioned that for the Tao to be worthy to be called the Tao there should be no Tao.<sup>142</sup> Therefore, the Tao is formless and dark, yet it lightens the whole world. Thus it may return to the Nameless. It is the spirit which gives life to all men.

According to B. Watson, Lao Tzu teaches men to live a life of spiritual concentration and to act in harmony with the Unseen. Its teaching is all-sufficient and embraces all things.<sup>143</sup> Lao Tzu explains it: "We look at it but do not see it; We name this "the minute". We listen to it but do not hear it; We name this "the rarefied". We touch it but do not hold it; We name this "the level and smooth." These three cannot be examined to the limit."<sup>144</sup>

To Lao Tzu, *Tao* is the ultimate position of the universe. It is the fundamental principle underlying the world. He calls it *ch'ang*(常), because it maintains an absolute position - before time, space and human perception. It is impossible for humans to grasp the boundaries of *ch'ang* because all human beings can comprehend is the relative phenomena, but this relative world originates from the

<sup>142</sup>see 咸錫憲, "老子, 道德經", 一章, p.24.

<sup>143</sup>B. Watson, op, cit., p.44.

<sup>144</sup>Robert G Henricks, "老子, 德道经", 十四章, "視之不見名曰夷, 聽之不聞名曰希, 搏之不得名曰微, 此三者不可致詰", p.66.

absolute world. It can not be proved but it must surely be believed. So in the *Tao Te Ching* chapter one, Lao Tzu continues to explain: "The nameless is the beginning of ten thousand things; The named is the mother of the ten thousand things."<sup>145</sup>

It is difficult to see what is absolute *Tao*, so it is called *Miao*(妙) which means subtlety, it can be realized by intuition and instinct rather than by logical explanations. Relatives and absolutes are intrinsically linked to each other. They both originate from the same source. Lao Tzu explains it: "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."<sup>146</sup> Chuang Tzu explains *Tao* thus: "reckoned by the day it seems insufficient, but reckoned over the year there is enough and to spare."<sup>147</sup>

Looking at the absolute from the relative position, Lao Tzu observed that the relative originated from within the absolute which is eternal and infinite. So the relative is eternal and infinite. Therefore, to live in the relative world it is still possible to be at one in the absolute world. Lao Tzu explains it: "These two together emerge; They have different names yet they are called the same; That which is even more profound than the profound- The gateway of all subtleties." <sup>148</sup> He explains it further in chapter 25: "There was something formed out of chaos, that was born before Heaven and Earth. Quiet and Still! Pure and Deep! It stands on

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<sup>145</sup>ibid, "無名天地之始, 有名萬物之母"

<sup>146</sup>Ibid. "故常無欲以觀其妙 常有欲以觀其微"

<sup>147</sup>莊子, "齊物論", 日計之不足 歲計之而有餘, op. cit., see Ham Sok Hon, "老子, 莊子篇"

Hangil publishing Ld. Seoul, 1988. p.13.

<sup>148</sup> "兩者同出而異名同謂之玄 玄之又玄 眾妙之門", see "老子集訓", 上篇, 一章, translated by Robert G. Henricks, ibid, p.53.

its own and does not change. It can be regarded as the mother of Heaven and Earth. I do not know yet its name: I "style" it "the Way".<sup>149</sup>

In both the *Tao Te Ching* and the *Chuang Tzu* is the idea of permanence amid change. Men live in a world of change -- the birth and death of human beings, for example. However, undetected by the senses but existing nonetheless, there are things that are permanent and unchanging.<sup>150</sup> In early Taoist thought, *Tao* is the permanent entity amid change. Although it supposedly cannot be described in words, we learn that it "existed before Heaven and earth." *Tao* is present in all things. It is best to treat *Tao* as the principle of change, for then the paths that things follow in their necessary transformations may be viewed as constant.<sup>151</sup>

For the Taoist, the *Tao* is to relate to Nature(自然)<sup>152</sup>and the principle of non-action. It is essential to understand what 'Nature' and 'non-action' means. '*Wuwei tzujan*(無爲自然)' has had its meaning distorted by many translators. In the Chinese concept of Nature, its entirety must be regarded as one gigantic process and it is never static: it always processes. Arthur Waley suggests the Taoist's *Tao* meant

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<sup>149</sup> "有物混成 先天地生 寂兮寥兮 獨立不改 周行而不殆 可以爲天下母 吾不知其名字之曰道"  
 ,see "老子集訓", 二十五章, translated by R.G.Henricks, *Lao-Tzu, Te-Tao Ching*, op.cit.,p236.

<sup>150</sup>Donald J. Munro, op, cit., p.122.

<sup>151</sup>Ibid., p.123.

<sup>152</sup>"Nature is that infinite realm where in the universal flux of life is revealing itself and fulfilling everything with its intrinsic worth. Nature is infinite in the sense that it is not limited by anything that is beyond and above it, which might be called Supernature. The fulness of reality in Nature does not prejudice against the potency of God, for the miraculous creation may be continually accomplished with in it. Nor is there any gulf between Nature and human nature inasmuch as human life is interpenetrating with the cosmic life as a whole. *The Chinese View of Life*, by Henry Bergson, pp.18-19.

the Way the universe works, and ultimately, something very like God.<sup>153</sup> It is the fundamental source of life, the basis of our very being. It is both eternal and infinite.

Lao Tzu says : "As for weapons--they are instruments of ill omen. And among things there are those that hate them. Therefore, the one who has the *Tao*, with them does not dwell. When the gentleman is at home, he honors the left; When at war, he honors the right. Therefore, weapons are not the instrument of the gentleman -- Weapons are instruments of ill omen. When you have no choice but to use them, it's best to remain tranquil and calm. You should never look upon them as things of beauty. If you see them as beautiful things--this is to delight in the killing of men. And when you delight in the killing of men, you'll not realize your goal in the land. Therefore, in happy events we honor the left, But in mourning we honor the right. Therefore, the lieutenant general stands on the left; And the supreme general stands on the right. Which is to say, they arrange themselves as they would at a funeral. When multitudes of people are killed, we stand before them in sorrow and grief. When we are victorious in battle, we treat the occasion like a funeral ceremony."<sup>154</sup>

In this chapter, Lao Tzu revealed himself as a hard-core pacifist. He talked about an army. The one who has the *Tao*, he says, does not dwell with an army. In Chinese tradition, lucky affairs regard the left as valuable, inauspicious affairs regard the right as valuable.(吉事尚左凶事尚右).<sup>155</sup> It means that lucky affairs oppose inauspicious ones. For example, man stands left, woman stands right(男左女右)<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>153</sup>Arther Waley, *The Way and Its Power*, p.50.

<sup>154</sup>see, R.G. Henricks, *Lao Tzu, Te-Tao Ching*, Chapter 31, p.83.

<sup>155</sup>咸錫憲, "老子", 三十一章, op. cit., p.39.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.



in Chinese tradition. However, at war he honours right because an army is an instrument of ill omen. Why? Because they should kill each other during war times. A Gentleman honours the left, therefore, if he is victorious in battle he treats the occasion like a funeral ceremony.(戰勝以喪禮處之)<sup>157</sup> The one who has the *Tao* does not dwell with weapons. In other words, a ruler should not use any military spirit in his policy. When he uses it, he will fail to maintain his position because ordinary people do not like to kill one other and the basic need of the people is a reasonable and steady livelihood. In Lao Tzu's time there were more frequent wars on an ever-increasing scale. Lao Tzu's attitude towards this follows from his belief in pacifism. War brings great suffering to the people as they are the ones who get killed. Hence it is something to be abhorred, and should be resorted to only as a desperate remedy.

Chuang Tzu criticizes Confucius' idea of "governing the world" by men; Men should rely solely on *Tao*. He thought that men should follow the principle of *Tao* for the reforming of society. He says that " I have heard of letting the world be, of leaving it alone; I have never heard of governing the world." He insists that *Tao* exists in the true form of human inborn nature.<sup>158</sup> He condemned Confucius for using benevolence because it brings confusion to Virtue, and righteousness because it turn its backs on reason, because it is assisting artifice; knowledge because it is assisting the fault-finders. These efforts will begin to grow warped and crooked, jumbled and deranged, and will bring confusion to the world.<sup>159</sup> All these : benevolence, righteousness, rites, music and knowledge, are artificiality.

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<sup>157</sup>R.G.Henricks, op.cit.

<sup>158</sup>*The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu*, trans. Burton Watson, Columbia University Press, New York and London ,1968, p.115.

<sup>159</sup>Ibid.

Therefore, *Tao* does not exist there. Logicians cause men to overload in reasoning and often to miss the truth.

## 2 . The meaning of Wu Wei('doing nothing', or 'non-action')

### (A) Confucian interpretation of Wu Wei

The concept of 'wu-wei' occurs in the 'Lun-yu'(論語). It says: "The Master said, 'Was it not Shun who did nothing and yet ruled well? What did he do? He merely corrected his person and took his proper position as ruler.'"<sup>160</sup>

Confucius regarded 'wu wei' as an important factor in politics. He says: "He who conducts government by virtue may be compared to the northern constellation, which remains in its place, and all the stars bend towards it.(子曰,爲政以德譬如北辰 居其所而 衆星共之)"<sup>161</sup> In his expression 'the north constellation' is the Pole Star, the axis of the heavens, - like the axis of a millstone.(北辰北極天之樞也)"<sup>162</sup> "When a Prince rules by his moral character transformation results without activity on his part, people believe him before he speaks, and without effort all succeeds well.(为政以德则不动而化 不言而信无为而成)"<sup>163</sup> The meaning of 'rule' in him is to rectify, viz., that whereby the incorrect is made correct.(政之爲言正也, 所以正人之不正也)"<sup>164</sup>

<sup>160</sup>translated by H.G. Creel, "子曰, 無爲而治者基舜也與夫何爲哉恭己正南面而已矣".

Here, Shun(舜) was the name of a legendary monarch in ancient China. See "A Great Chinese Dictionary 語言大典,下册" p.3259. Shun was a divine sage(聖人) whose 'te' was so great that it sufficed to guide and transform the people. See Arthur Waley, trans., *The Analects of Confucius*(London, 1936; reprint of 1945), p.193.

<sup>161</sup>William Edward Soothill, *The Analects of Confucius*, 爲政第二篇 printed by the Fukkuin Printing Company, Ltd., Yokohama. 1910. pp.144-45.

<sup>162</sup>ibid.

<sup>163</sup>ibid.

<sup>164</sup>ibid.

Confucius led his life labouring under the impression that he was benefiting mankind. But Lao Tzu believed that his teaching might lead the people in the wrong direction in terms of 'You-wei', and Chuang Tzu criticized bitterly his idea, warning that his teachings would be easily distorted by his followers and cause harmful effects to people, because Confucius and his followers promoted loyalty and good faith to the King and support for the Legal Constitution. But 'bad' Kings abused this system and oppressed the people. The doctrines of Confucianism have led in terms that are too formal and blindly obedient to authority. This contributed to the building of a rigid class system in China.

The proper role of a ruler by 'Wu Wei' is summed up by Shen Tzu: "The ruler is like a mirror, which merely reflects the light that comes to it, itself doing nothing, and yet because of its mere presence, beauty and ugliness present themselves to view. He is like a scale, which merely establishes equilibrium, itself doing nothing, yet the mere fact that remains in balance causes lightness and heaviness to discover themselves. The ruler's method is that of complete acquiescence. He merges his personal concerns with public weal, so that as an individual he does not act. He does not act, yet as a result of his non-action the world brings itself to a state of complete order."<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>165</sup>Wei Cheng(魏徵), *Ch'un-shu Chih-yao*(群書治要),

"鏡設精無爲而美惡自備衡設平物無爲而輕重自得凡因之道身與公無事無事而天下自也",

Shanghai, 1930, 36.25b-27a.

(B)The Taoist understanding of Wu Wei

Animals have no politics, only human beings. Why? Because humans are 'thinking beings'. When thinking, men come into confrontation with the world. They develop a technique. But when separated from morality, all techniques are manslaughter techniques, because men become an 'artificial god' who looks upon the universe as an enemy.

The concept of 'wu wei' was essentially Taoist in origin, but it is used similarly in works of the *Fa Chia*(法家) and other schools. It has been borrowed from the Taoist context.<sup>166</sup> The Taoists lived in troubled times, as did the Confucians, and their instruction for men of the age was, "Non-action". What has this word "non-action" imposed upon historical meaning?

It is hard to understand. Kuo Hsiang (郭象) said: "Hearing the theory of non-action(*wu-wei*), some people think lying down is better than walking. These people are far wrong in understanding the ideas of non-action."<sup>167</sup> Fung Yu-lan argued that "despite this criticism, it would seem that in their understanding of non-action such people were not far wrong."<sup>168</sup>

The concept of '*wu-wei*' occurs in the works of both Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu. Duyvendak says that "the '*Tao Te Ching*' addresses its message in the first place to the Sage as ruler. The consequence of '*Wu-wei*' in ruling a State is the abstention from all government interference."<sup>169</sup> Inaction is used in this book as a technique of

<sup>166</sup>Ibid., p.48.

<sup>167</sup>Quoted from Fung Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, op, cit., p.225.

<sup>168</sup>Ibid.

<sup>169</sup>Ibid., also, Duyvendak, *Tao Te Ching*, p.12.

government. This word is treated as a technique of government in fifty per cent of its occurrences in the works of Lao Tzu, and in thirty-two per cent of its occurrences in the works of Chuang Tzu.<sup>170</sup>

Lewis explains the real situation of the 'Spring and Autumn' period in China. He shows the frequency and importance of both interstate and civil war, for it was out of these struggles that the political institutions of the Warring States emerged. He says that: "These reforms involved the requirement of labor and military service. The process was progressively extended in various states, and the entire adult, male population was registered, ranked, and allocated land on the basis of military service. Carrying out these reforms imposed the development of new administrative organs for effective local government throughout the territory of the state, and practices for registering and policing large populations. These policies, designed for mass mobilization and the control of infantry armies, became the basis for control of the civil population. In providing the engine for the creation of the new state and the destruction of the old social order, the nature of men was forced to shift. In response to these policies many philosophers also began to present discussions of warfare. It was the control of men and the manipulation of combat for higher ends. The superior man imposed the pattern which demands the obedience and hierarchy of the participants. The ruler's power extended into the men's natural realm."<sup>171</sup>

According to H.G. Creel:<sup>172</sup> "No government had been able to follow a policy of doing nothing for very long and stay in power during the 'Warring States' period,

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<sup>170</sup>Herrlee G. Creel, *What is Taoism?; On the Origin of Wu-wei*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1970. p.55.

<sup>171</sup>M.E .Lewis, *Sanctioned Violence in Early China*, op. cit., pp.11-12.

<sup>172</sup>H.G. Creel, op. cit., p.55.

in which Taoism developed, because beyond the borders of every state there were others eager to exploit any weakness and to invade, if not annex, its territory.

Within the state, rivals were watchful for any opportunity to topple the ruler and seize his throne." Therefore, Lao Tzu's *wu-wei* did not have any strong influence in the Chinese history of politics. Even Lao Tzu himself had no desire to involve himself in politics in Ch'un Ch'iu times.

Shall we conclude that Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu were stupid? This is impossible. 'Wu wei' is not a simple concept. In order to look for a simpler beginning of the concept of 'wu-wei', a key to understanding it as a technique of government, let us see how 'wu-wei' is used in earlier Chinese literature. Somewhat important is the one remaining instance of *wu-wei* in the *Shih*.<sup>173</sup> The poem begins by speaking of a hare that moves slowly and cautiously, while a rash pheasant falls into the net. It then says: "In the early part of my life would that I had not acted. In the latter part of my life I have met with these hundred sorrows.(我生之初尚無爲我生之後连此百罹)"<sup>174</sup>

Here *wu-wei* means "not acting," praised as a preferred course that may keep one out of trouble.<sup>175</sup>

It is not a question of the lack of doing, being, or acting upon a particular thing or in a particular way, but of the absence of all 'wei(爲)'. Waley says that 'wu-wei' is "rule through *te* ('virtue,' 'power') acquired in trance."<sup>176</sup> Creel<sup>177</sup> thinks this would

<sup>173</sup>Quoted from H.G. Creel, op.cit., p.67. See *Mao-shih Chu-su*, 4 chih 1. 12b-13b.

<sup>174</sup>Ibid., See also Karlgren, *The Book of Odes*, 47; see also his note, 47-48. Both Legge, *The She King*, 117-118, and Waley, *The Book of Songs*, 307.

<sup>175</sup>H.G. Creel, op, cit., p57.

<sup>176</sup>A. Waley, *The Way and Its Power*, op.cit., p. 145. Shun(舜) was a culture-hero and king, who wore himself out ploughing and potting. See Waley's *The Way and Power*, p.40. Also see

not have stopped the powerful armies, only 'rules by non-activity' would have, in the sense that divine essence assures the fecundity of people and the fertility of the soil. Hsun-tzu,<sup>178</sup> writing in the third century BC, has a passage which seems clearly to be based upon and to interpret this passage, as follows: "The abilities of a ruler appear in his appointment of the proper men to office. A ruler is able to cause others to perform the functions of government. To appraise virtue and employ the able in bestowing office is the way of the sage king. Thus the Son of Heaven need only correct his person." Certainly, 'wu-wei' objects to despotic governments and warns absolutists. It could be seen as democratic, because each person's gifts are advocated and give full play to one's ability.

Therefore, the ruler should turn over the administration of government. The ruler should set an example of character and conduct, and should select virtuous and able ministers, but having done so he should leave the governing to them, without interference. Government by 'wu-wei' meant, for Confucius, that the ruler should "reign but not rule."<sup>179</sup>

The direction of history in the 'Chun-Ch'iu' and 'Warring States' period was to complete the system of society and order of human inquiry and to expand human civilization. Such human efforts were the mainspring of activity in this particular

Analects's definition of sage translated by W.E. Soothill : "He who hears and explains all things, a seer. His knowledge is innate, and he pursues the right course without effort." Other definitions are 'apprehending clearly' and 'there is nothing he fails to apprehend'. p.112

<sup>177</sup>H.G. Creel, *What is Taoism?* op. cit., p.58.

<sup>178</sup>Quoted from H.G.Creel, *What is Taoism?*, *ibid.*, see Hsun-tzu (Ssu-pu Pei-yao ed.), 7.6b-7b. translated by H.G. Creel, "人主者以官人爲能者 人主得使人爲之 何故必自爲之 倫德使能而官施之聖王之道也 則天子共己而已"

<sup>179</sup>H.G. Creel, *What is Taoism?*, op.cit., pp.59-60.



epoch. Therefore Chinese philosophers in many areas focused on the issue of the power structure of the state, and they produced diverse theories of their ideal power state. Lao Tzu also studied such issues at a deep level and explained his ideal theory of the system of states and power. But Lao Tzu did not want to embody his ideal state through human power and effort in artificial ways. In this point, Lao Tzu's concept of government seemed to come out of a common category in the 'Chun Ch'iu' and 'Warring States' period. He had negative ideas about the system of government and its power structure. He frequently proposed a 'wu-wei(non-action)' policy and the idea that 'little governing in the state is best', and no-control of people under the state was always recommended.

Why did he refuse to adopt the power state? How were such negative thoughts against the power state developed in the *Tao Te Ching*? He gained his unique ideas from his life in the difficult 'Chun Ch'iu' periods during which he lived. He discovered the origin of this tragic life and determined it came from a 'human desire' for power. 'Human desire' means both doing good works and doing evil works. It produced all the problems; conflict, restriction, suffering, struggling. Lao Tzu explained that the effects of the 'Chun Ch'iu' period originally came from human desire which could not take China in the right direction. The will of men, knowledge of men, and value of men also represented 'human desire' in the '*Tao Te Ching*'. All human efforts could not reflect 'Truth' completely, because such human efforts were artificial, not the natural way.

As H.G. Creel<sup>180</sup> points out: "During the Warring States period, authority was derived from the imitation of Heaven by a cosmetically powerful ruler. In Legalist practice the primary mechanisms for creating this order in society were universal military service and the penal law, while in Confucian theory hierarchical order was

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<sup>180</sup>Ibid., p.13.

created in the practice of rituals, of which sacrificial rites were the most important. Underlying and providing the impetus for all these changes was the constant warfare which dominated the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods. It was the integrated reforms of service obligations, and local government carried out by states seeking increased military power that generated the institutional and conceptual changes." This conclusion will provide a starting point for new attempts to achieve a more complete understanding of the *Wu-wei*, "non-action".

The Taoists claimed that the exercise of government should be according to *Wu-wei*, doing without doing, governing without government. The task for the sage is to learn '*Wu wei*', so that he can live in a natural order in a world of change. The motto of the Taoist was "look beyond transitory phenomena, seek enlightenment about Tao, and follow *wu-wei*'s dictates."<sup>181</sup>

Lao Tzu proposes the doctrine of "doing nothing", but insists that thereby "there is nothing that is not done." (道常無爲而無不爲)<sup>182</sup> It means that "the State stops thinking about benefiting the State, that the State is itself sound."<sup>183</sup> According to B. Watson's<sup>184</sup> opinion of *Wu-wei*, "its teaching takes emptiness and inaction as its basis." He says: "It recognizes as a fact that nothing is complete and finished, that nothing is constant in form. Therefore it is able to penetrate the spirit of all things. It does not put material things first, nor does it put them last; therefore it is able to master all things. It has laws and yet it is as though it had no laws, for it follows the time in all its undertakings. It has rules and yet it is as though it did not have

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<sup>181</sup>James Legge, op.cit., p.79.

<sup>182</sup>see "老子集训", 上篇, 三十七章, op.cit., p.59.

<sup>183</sup>Quoted from A. Waley, *The Way and Its Power*, p.35. Also see *Lieh Tzu*, VI I.9.

<sup>184</sup>B. Watson, op. cit., p.47.

them, because it follows things and accords with them. Therefore it is said that the Sage is without great skill but follows the changes of the times."

Both Fritjof Capra<sup>185</sup> and J. Needham<sup>186</sup> discuss the importance of spontaneity in Taoism. Because the Universal Truth is unchanging, but time is constantly changing, Taoists aim to continuously reinterpret *Tao* within the context of the time in which they live. Throughout history, evolution and revolution have been necessary elements in the development of the world. Taoism encourages these elements, whereas the politicians and leaders at any one time would prefer things to remain static rather than give up their own positions of power. In that respect, *Tao* can be seen as revolutionary.

People are made up of two elements: on the one hand we are conservative, want things to remain the same and to stay in the same place, and on the other we want constant change. We can use our homes as an example to illustrate this point: We want to live in one place, in one house, but our house needs constantly repairing and even at times rebuilding. So, on the one hand we keep things as they are, yet on the other it is constantly changing. Similarly our skin remains with us always and appears to be the same, yet everyday new skin is being grown. In the same way, we want to remain clothed, yet are always changing our clothes according to climate and fashion. Advocates of spontaneity are critical of fixed cultures, institutions and ideas and are always ready to change with the times whilst always maintaining the Unchanging Truth.

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<sup>185</sup>Fritjof Capra, *The Tao of Physics*, Wildwood House 1975, p.129.

<sup>186</sup>J. Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China*, Cambridge University Press, London, 1956, vol.II, p.88.

The reason Taoists refuse to accept Confucianism or Legalism is that although they provided a good model for rulers in their own time they were not adaptable enough, in the view of the Taoists, to continue being effective indefinitely. This can be explained further if we consider that each human life-span is short compared to Life itself which is eternal and ever-changing. The focus of Taoism is on the immensity of Life itself and sees each human life time being absorbed into the whole. Each individual, therefore is only a small part of the whole and should not try to change it as it is far greater than he. The Taoists saw the Confucianists and Legalists as trying to impose their will over the whole. To the Taoists this could never work on a long term basis.

The Taoists thought that the Confucianists and Legalists were concerned only with those things about which we already know, such as science, reason, culture and society, and not with anything sub-conscious. The Taoists believe that, like an iceberg, that which is unseen, or sub-conscious, is far greater than that which is known. They believe it is this huge subconsciousness that humans need to discover and develop and that in order for this to be achieved spontaneity is vital.

In the words of Huai Nan Tzu, "Those who follow the natural order flow in the current of the Tao." <sup>187</sup> Non-action means that all efforts made with a purpose are sure to fail.<sup>188</sup> Joseph Needham<sup>189</sup> translates it as 'refraining from activity contrary to nature', justifying this interpretation with a quotation from the Chuang Tzu: "Non-action does not mean doing nothing and keeping silent. Let everything be allowed to do what it naturally does, so that its nature will be satisfied."

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<sup>187</sup>Ibid.

<sup>188</sup>J.Legge, *ibid.*, p.72.

<sup>189</sup>J.Needham, *ibid.*, pp.68-9.

Chuang Tzu protested against the history of human civilization which was invented by human ideas and minds. He believed that the history of human civilization had evolved by human intelligence. Human civilization shaped the state and produced the power and authority. Such belief is an illusion in which people tried to create an ideal society by human will. Chuang Tzu did not approve of this human effort. He criticized reform of society by human effort, as causing only side-effects and having a negative influence on human nature. What did human intelligence contribute to the Warring States periods? He believed that it can have been nothing. That it caused only confusion in mind and produced suffering through fighting each other. Therefore, he bitterly criticized 'human intelligence', 'human value', 'human knowledge', and 'human authority'.

During the Ch'un Ch'iu and Warring States periods, all sorts of human inventions produced prejudice of different human values and human power structure restrained the liberty of human life. 'State' and 'human authority' failed to build an order of human civilization and to secure peace. This historical period reflected Chuang Tzu's awareness, as he believed that 'state' and 'its authority' could not provide a life of happiness, but only add severe suffering to the lives of common people. To Chuang Tzu, 'human intelligence' represented human selfishness.

His theory indicates that this positivity, and artificiality can not lead to a revelation of truth. Goal-seeking through passivity is certainly different from what people usually have in mind when they speak of striving for something. Therefore, the concept of *wu wei*, or "non-striving," is important in Taoist context.<sup>190</sup>

People of the world like to indulge in arguments and discussion in order to find out the facts of the matter. However this does not lead to a true discovery of either

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<sup>190</sup>Donald J. Munro, *The Concept of Man in Early China*, ch..5, p.119.

facts or reason. The relative world does not exist in objective standards.<sup>191</sup> Lao Tzu explains it: "Take emptiness to the limit; Maintain tranquillity 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 tranquillity. "Tranquillity" - 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 are 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 are one with the Tao, to the end of your days you will suffer no harm."<sup>192</sup>

*Wu-wei* does not act for ends, so one should not contradict it by seeking to realize various goals. This warning is especially directed against those who seek power and glory that do not naturally fall to their lot. Taoism does not advocate a hermit-like withdrawal, however: Lao Tzu said that a person should "take part in the dirt of the world," but a tranquil adaptation to whatever occurs is necessary.<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>191</sup>Lao Tzu believes that all human works without *wu wei* come tumbling down like the story of the Tower of Babel in the Old Testament.

<sup>192</sup>translated by R.G. Henricks, *op.cit.*, p.68. see 咸錫憲, “老子” 十六章, “致虛極 守靜篤 萬物旁作 吾以觀復 夫物芸芸 各復歸其根 歸根曰靜 是謂復命 復命曰常 知常曰明 不知常 妄作凶 知常容 容乃公 公乃天 天乃道 道乃久 沒身不殆” . p.30.

<sup>193</sup>Donald J. Munro, *op.cit.*, p. 123.

Chuang Tzu supports its theory more deeply. He says: "We are blinded by our relative viewpoint and we judge whether something is right or wrong, big or small; from an absolute viewpoint everything is one."<sup>194</sup>

Fung Yu-lan<sup>195</sup> considers *wu wei*, as a principle of governing State, to be derived from Lao Tzu. The consequence of *wu wei* in ruling a State is the abstention from all government interference. It guides political policies, for the ruler or anyone else concerned with government. It leads one to conclude, therefore, that the most enduring government would be the one permitting the greatest freedom.

In the words of D.J. Munro: "This is not freedom in the sense of allowing individuals to control their own destinies, for this no one can do. It is freedom in the sense of absence of external compulsion or restraint; it is avoiding the establishment of institutions that prevent men from acting spontaneously, in accordance with their natures."<sup>196</sup>

The '*Wu-wei*', Yang Tzu argued, implies perfect individuals. Let each man perfect himself. If the State asks from him one single act that interferes with this process of self-perfection, he should refuse, not merely on his own account, but out of regard for the State which suffers in as far as one of its members is 'imperfect'.<sup>197</sup> The literature of the 3rd century BC is full of references to recluses, people who 'lived

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<sup>194</sup>Victor H. Mair, *Experimental Essays on Chuang-tzu*, University of Hawaii Press, Hawaii, 1983, p.9.

<sup>195</sup>see *History of Chinese Philosophy* by Fung Yu-Lan. Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1973.

<sup>196</sup>Donald J. Munro, op. cit., p.123.

<sup>197</sup>see A. Waley, op, cit., p.34.

among rocks or in holes in the ground' and 'even if they were offered salaried employments would not accept them'.<sup>198</sup>

The Taoist treatment of "*wu-wei*" should be understood in the context of the attempt to dehumanize Nature and make 'a ruler' aware of his own limitations. For example, "a ruler", says Kuan Tzu,<sup>199</sup> "should not listen to those who believe in *Wu-wei* and in the importance of the individual. Such teachings cause men to withdraw to quiet places and hide away in caves or on mountains, there to complain bitterly at the prevailing government, sneer at those in authority, belittle the importance of rank and salaries, and despise all who hold official posts". As this example has shown, the real reason why such persons refused to draw official salaries and insisted on living in their own way on the fruit of their own labour was that they thought society should consist of individuals each complete in himself.

Lao Tzu explains it: "Yet through his actionless activity all things are duly regulated." (爲無爲則無不治)<sup>200</sup> The *Chuang Tzu* says also that "for the Chun Tzu(君子) who cannot avoid governing the world, nothing is so good as doing nothing(*wu wei*)."<sup>201</sup> Waley offers the meaning of *wu wei* as "rule through *te* acquired in trance."<sup>202</sup> It does not mean a lack of doing, being, or acting upon a particular thing or in a particular way, but of the absence of all artificial methods, and of self-centered and selfish minds. It means all human works should be

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<sup>198</sup>Ibid., p.37.

<sup>199</sup>Ibid.

<sup>200</sup>translated by A.Waley, op. cit., p.145. also see '老子'集訓、上篇、三章 “ p.7.

<sup>201</sup>Victor H. Mair, op. cit., p.29. see *Chuang-tzu*, chapter 4.15b.

<sup>202</sup>A.Waley, op.cit., p. 145.



operated by the *Tao*. In passage *Chou-i Chien-i*(周易兼義) it is explained as:  
 "there is no thought and no action.(易無思也無爲也)"<sup>203</sup>

Lao Tzu says that men all seek the actual(*shih*實), but he alone took the empty(*hsu*虛). For example, Legalists advocated that 'law' and 'strong authority' contributed to the building of a safe state. Their actual theory was law and authority. Confucius' actual theory was '*tao-te*', which was a morality based on reason. On the contrary, Lao Tzu built his system upon the principle of eternal Non-being. His outward expression was weakness and humility. "Pure emptiness that yet did not destroy objective things was for them actuality."<sup>204</sup> Therefore, Lao Tzu criticized Legalists and Confucians' actual theory which was based on human desire. Men were 'natural beings' rather than 'social beings'. Men could only realize their lives' purpose and meaning through Nature rather than through human society.

*Tao* is something that is at the same time within and without; for in *Tao* all opposites are blended, all contrasts harmonized.<sup>205</sup> J. Legge<sup>206</sup> suggested that '*wu wei*' is the meaning of the title, 'Emptiness and Nothingness,' an entire conformity to the *Tao* in him who professes to be directed by it. Such a one will be omnipotent in all others. By these conditions, one can return to the state one was born and can realize the fundamental meaning of the universe.

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<sup>203</sup>James Legge, trans., *The Yi King, in Sacred Books of the East*, xvi, 2d ed. Oxford, 1899.

see, 十三經注疏, (Nanchang, 1815).

<sup>204</sup>see *History of Chinese Philosophy* by Fung Yu-Lan. Princeton University Press . Princeton,1973.

pp.173-175.

<sup>205</sup>A.Waley, op. cit., p.52.

<sup>206</sup>J. Legge, *Sacred Books of the East, The Texts of Taoism*. p.45.

*Wu-wei* was the constant principle of law in the government policy. Lao Tzu insisted many times *wu-wei* should be as a basic principle to the ruler. Through it, all the officers proceed to their business with a clear understanding of their respective duties.

Lao Tzu's *wu-wei* always works with Tao. He explains it in chapter 60 : "Ruling a large state is like cooking small fish. When you use the Way to govern the world, evil spirits won't have godlike power. Actually, it is not that evil spirits won't have god like power. It is that their power will not harm men. But it is not just that their power won't harm men, The Sage, also, will not harm them. Since these two do not harm others, Therefore their Virtues intermingle and return to them."<sup>207</sup>

His suggestion of *wu-wei* is that the government or the rulers should not interfere with people's own nature and "let them leave it untouched."<sup>208</sup> He explains it: "For those who would like to take control of the world and act on it- I see that with this they simply will not succeed. The world is a sacred vessel; It is not something that can be acted upon. Those who act on it destroy it; Those who hold on to it lose it."<sup>209</sup>

According to Waley: "Human beings have a naturally strong desire to complete their own self perfection: This is why the State should not interfere with the common people's will and should cease intervention in the internal affairs of other states. Let each man perfect himself. Each person has his own inner nature and

<sup>207</sup>translated by R.G. Henricks, *Lao Tzu, Te-Tao Ching*, chapter 60.p.142. see "老子集訓"

,六十章: "治大國若烹小鮮 以道莅天下 其鬼不神 非其鬼不神 其神不傷人 非其神不傷人 聖人亦不傷人 夫兩不相傷 故德交歸焉." p.101

<sup>208</sup>咸錫憲, his interpretation of "老子" Han Gil Publishing. Seoul, 1989. p.69.

<sup>209</sup>Robert G Henricks, *Lao-Tzu Te-Tao Ching*, op.cit., p.244.

gifts. But when the State or ruler begins to interfere, problems are caused."<sup>210</sup>

Ham Sok Hon's interpretation reads: "Only by *wu wei*, can the State gain and maintain support for any length of time. Even Lao Tzu insists that the ruler should stop thinking about benefiting the State and then the State is itself sound."<sup>211</sup> When he takes action, he will not succeed.(爲者敗之)<sup>212</sup>

According to these schools' ideas of politics, the Tao means to accept fundamental truth and principle, and the ruler should follow the '*wu-wei*' accordingly. Then the ruler could achieve his goals properly. Chuang Tzu also recommends this theory: "Whosoever can make nothing the head of his existence.(孰能以無爲首)"<sup>213</sup> He observes that the rulers should not bear a selfish motive in their works. Only a policy of inaction could have avoided exploitation of weakness and invasion of other states during the 'Warring States' period. This may be why Lao Tzu exclaimed about '*wu wei*' so many times in the *Tao Te Ching*. In his book, there are twelve instances of *wu-wei*,<sup>214</sup> at least six clearly concerned with government.<sup>215</sup> In the Chuang Tzu, '*wu wei*' occurs some fifty-six times. In at least eighteen cases

<sup>210</sup>Arther Waley,op.cit., pp39-40.

<sup>211</sup>咸錫憲, his interpretation of "老子", 二十九章, : "天下神器不可爲也". p.69. see also "老子集訓",op.cit., p.47. R.G. Henricks translated:"For those who like to take control of the world and act on it-- I see that with this they simply will not succeed. The world is a sacred vessel; It is not something that can be acted upon. Those who act on it destroy it; Those who hold on to it lose it." p.81.

<sup>212</sup>Ibid.

<sup>213</sup>Fung Yu-lan, *Chuang Tzu*, p.120. also see *Chuang Tzu*, 3.8a.

<sup>214</sup>Quoted from H.G. Creel, *What is Taoism?*, p.55. Lao Tzu, shang. 2a(chap.2), 2b(chap.3), 5b(chap.10), 21a(chap.37); hsia. 1a(chap.38), 6a(chap.43), 13a(chap.57), 16b(chap.63), 17b(chap.64).

<sup>215</sup>Herrlee G. Creel *What is Taoism?*, The University of Chicago Press. p.55.

the context associates *wu wei* with government. Thus *wu wei* is treated as a technique of government in fifty per cent of its occurrences in the Lao Tzu, and in thirty-two per cent of its occurrences in the Chuang Tzu.<sup>216</sup>

Through the Chan-kuo period, political rivals within the state or among the states looked for any chance to destroy the rulers, and they tried to maintain or extend their power. The rulers collected heavy taxes and charged the military duty to the common people and many things had to be done for them. Therefore Lao Tzu had insisted on '*wu wei*' for the sake of the ancient Chinese.

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<sup>216</sup>Ibid.

### 3. The meaning of *Te*

#### (A) Confucian interpretation of *Te*

*Te* is usually translated as 'virtue', 'uprightness' and is symbolized by a straight line indicating the Tao, or Way, which is a conformity to principles.<sup>217</sup> This word, *Te*, corresponds closely to the Latin "*virtus*." It means, just as "*virtus*" often does, the specific quality or 'virtue' latent in anything.<sup>218</sup> A. Waley has generally rendered *Te* by the term 'moral force,' particularly where it is contrasted with *li*, 'physical force'. For example, a horse's *te* can be spoken of as its 'moral force'.

Here 'character' is the only possible equivalent; and in the case of human beings the term 'prestige' often comes close to what is meant by *te*.<sup>219</sup>

William E. Soothill<sup>220</sup> quotes, "It may be interpreted by 'something acquired', that is, by the practice of Truth to have obtained possession of it in the heart. Hence it is something more than mere outward morality of conduct, it is also an inward grace of the soul."

The early usage of "*Te*" according to A. Waley<sup>221</sup> can be explained by the oriental belief that good luck can be earned through good or virtuous behavior, and then stored. This is '*Te*'. If it is not used, it gets handed down through the generations. It remains stored until someone takes the right steps to convert it, into a '*Fu*(福)' or material blessing.

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<sup>217</sup>J.C.Cooper, *Taoism The Way of the Mystic*, The Aquarian Press, 1972. p19.

<sup>218</sup>A.Waley, *The Analects of Confucius*, p.33.

<sup>219</sup>A.Waley, *The Analects of Confucius*, George & Unwin Ltd. London. 1945.p.33.

<sup>220</sup>W.E.Soothill, *The Analects of Confucius*, Principal of the Imperial University, Shansi, 1910.pp.109-110.

<sup>221</sup>A. Waley, *The Book of Changes*, p. 24.

In the words of D.J. Munro: "Since the early West Chou(周) 'te' had been viewed as a source of communion between man and Heaven, and as a source of Heavenly benefits. *Te* was no longer viewed as simply the necessary precondition for contacting a high power. Instead, it was believed to be the actual vehicle for communion between man and *Tao*. In its meaning among the Taoist, 'te' continued to be a link between man and "deity"; but *Tao* had taken the place of the deity, and the nature of the relationship between the two had changed."<sup>222</sup>

Confucius regards *Te* as being divine in nature. He complained to his disciples who were too lazy to practise the virtue: "The highest virtue has certainly for a long time been rare among the people, also the knowledge of it rare; the love of virtue is not to be seen at all."<sup>223</sup>

He believed virtue to be powerful and influential, and able to change society. He said: "He who practises virtue is not left to stand alone, but finds neighbours. By means of it people are subdued. The three virtues are: wisdom, humanity and valour."<sup>224</sup> Virtue exists therefore not so much as a single entity, but as a more general concept.

According to Confucius, human virtue always corresponds with the inner, ethical standpoint, therefore "the self-conceited people of the village are called robbers of virtue. On the other side virtue, if native, is the pure nature of man, in full activity, and combines therefore the *Tao* of the external and internal."<sup>225</sup>

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<sup>222</sup>Donald J Munro, op. cit., p.125.

<sup>223</sup>Ibid, see, *Analects* VII.,22(66), VI.,27(57), XV.,3(159), XV.,12(162).

<sup>224</sup>Ibid, see also, *Analects* IV.,II(173), XIV., 30(150), IX., 28(89).

<sup>225</sup>Ibid, see, *Analects*. XIV.,35(152), XVII., 13(189).

Speaking of conduct, we naturally come to the notion of Virtue. In the *Analects*, Confucius says: "The superior man cherishes Virtue, it must be cultivated. It must be firmly grasped, and enlarged."<sup>226</sup>

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<sup>226</sup>W.E. Soothill, *The Analects of Confucius*, op., cit, pp.42-46. See, *Analects*, IV., II, VII., 3(59), XIX., 2(203).

(B) The Taoist understanding of *Te*

In the *Tao Te Ching* the relationship between 'Tao' and 'Te' is depicted by the analogy between "an uncarved block of wood and that same wood cut into pieces."<sup>227</sup> My explanation of this is as follows: The *Tao* is huge, universal and constant but, like the sun, it cannot be touched. Its immensity is too great for us to comprehend, yet Taoists know it exists. Imagine the *Tao* to be a huge uncarved piece of wood, natural and unchanged by human will, and then imagine taking small pieces of it to use elsewhere, for example to make ships or houses or furniture. If the use to which the small pieces are put is beneficial we see a demonstration of the virtuous behavior that can be stored and the small pieces of wood can be seen as 'Te'. The small pieces, or 'Te', could not exist without the whole, uncarved piece, or *Tao*, and the whole uncarved piece needs the small pieces to be taken and used for it to be of use in the world. Hence the two are inseparable.

The Taoist condemned 'te' in the sense of "kindness", which had been extended from its early meaning. The Taoist term for man's internal constant was 'te'.<sup>228</sup> On the contrary the definition of 'te' in Analects is interpreted as 'something acquired', that is, by the practice of 'Truth' to have obtained possession of it in the heart.<sup>229</sup>

'Te' had traditionally involved the expectation of "getting" some benefit. But Taoists' basic sense of 'te' was "bestowal," not "that which is received." The commentator Ch' 其eng Hsuan-ying says: "Therefore, giving birth and fostering the

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<sup>227</sup>Ibid.

<sup>228</sup>Donald J. Munro, op.cit., p127.

<sup>229</sup>William E.Soothill, op. cit., p110.



myriad things is the expression of abundant 'te'.<sup>230</sup> Hence 'te' is something more than mere outward morality of conduct, it is also an inward grace of the soul.

According to Donald J. Munro's definition, 'te' is the sense of an internal life principle that is received through the productive operation of *Tao*.<sup>231</sup>

'Te' is an ability. It is the potential capacity and power to do something physical or mental. 'Life' has an ability to develop itself, it is called 'te'. Therefore 'te' is a power come out from 'Tao'. It is called "*Tao-te*". It means a morality. For example, plants and animals also have an innate energy but have a natural tendency to behave in a certain way without reasoning or training. It can survive by itself. It adapts itself to its environment and survives by itself, but it does not make any conscious effort to live. It has only the instinct of self-preservation, and therefore has no morality.

'Te' is 'Te(得)'.<sup>232</sup> It means men should gain 'Te' by spiritual efforts. Men have a self-consciousness that overcomes natural instinct, it completes 'te' and finally realizes the 'Tao'. It has a higher stage than 'te' which exists naturally. Therefore it is worthy and meaningful. 'Te' is achieved consciously, but also it transcends consciousness.

In the Taoist passages that describe giving birth, rearing, or nourishing as *te*, both Tao and the sage ruler are often used interchangeably as the subject of phrases like these: "Gives birth to rear them and nourishes them; Gives birth to rear them but

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<sup>230</sup>Quoted from *The Concept of Man in Early China* by Donald J. Munro. p. 126.

<sup>231</sup>Donald J. Monro, op. cit., p.127.

<sup>232</sup>咸錫憲, his interpretation of '莊子' in the magazine of *Voice of the people*, Seoul, 1975. p.44.

does not make them a possession; Transforms them but not to lean on them; Raises them but not to control them. This is the mysterious 'te'."<sup>233</sup>

'Te' in this sense is not only the nourishing activity of *Tao* but also a thing apportioned from *Tao* to the individual. There were two aspects to the meaning of 'te' in the early Taoist thought. First, it referred to the productive world: "*Tao* gives birth to them(the myriad things), 'te' rears them, the species shapes them, the environment completes them."(道生之，德畜之；物形之，势成之。)"<sup>234</sup> The sagely ruler did the same for the people in his realm: "He raises them, but not to control them. This is the mysterious 'te'."<sup>235</sup> In both cases, the process is impartial and disinterested. It is not a purposeful activity.

'Te' also referred to something received by the individual from *Tao* through the operation of "nourishment," that is, to a life principle: "When things got that by which they were born, it was called their 'te'. Life is the expression of 'te'."<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>233</sup>Quoted from D.J. Monro, op.cit., 126.

<sup>234</sup>Robert G Henricks, *Te-Tao Ching*, ch.51, p.20. See also "老子集訓", 五十一章, p.86.

<sup>235</sup>Ibid.

<sup>236</sup>Ibid.

#### 4. Yin and Yang theory in Tao

##### (A) Confucian interpretation of Yin and Yang

*Yin* and *Yang* literally mean "dark side" and "sunny side" of a hill. They are mentioned for the first time in the *Hsi tzu*, or "Appended Explanations"(4th century BC), an appendix to the *Yi Ching*: "One Yang is two complementary, interdependent principles or phases alternating in space and time, they are emblems evoking the harmonious interplay of all pairs of opposites in the universe."<sup>237</sup>

First conceived by musicians, astronomers, or diviners and then propagated by a school that came to be named after them, *Yin* and *Yang* became the common stock of all Chinese philosophy.<sup>238</sup>

Confucius<sup>239</sup> advocated a dualism, and dualism was the first speculative philosophy ever constructed by Chinese thinkers. It is set forth in one of the oldest writings called "Yi Ching"(Book of Change). *Yi* (易) means change in any form -the change from daylight to moonlight, the change from blooming springtime to harvesting autumn, or the change from fortune to ill-luck, and vice versa. Change is a predominant characteristic of all activities; and this is caused by the interplay of the male(*Yang*) and the female(*Yin*) principles in the universe.

So it is said in the *Appendix III*: "Heaven is high, earth is low; and the relation between the strong and the weak is determined. The low and the high are arranged in order;

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<sup>237</sup>*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1983.Vol.17. p.399.

<sup>238</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>239</sup>D.T.Suzuke, *A Brief History of Early Chinese Philosophy*, London, 1914. p.15.

and the relation between the noble and the lowly is settled. Movement and rest follow their regular course; and the relation between the rigid and the tender is defined. Therefore, the rigid and tender come in contact; the eight symbols interact. To stimulate, we have thunder and lightning; to moisten, we have wind and rain. the sun and moon revolve and travel, which give rise to cold and warmth."<sup>240</sup>

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<sup>240</sup>Ibid. p.16.

(B)The Taoist understanding of *Yin* and *Yang*

The Chinese believe that there are two fundamental elements in the universe, and that they are the cause of all movement in '*Yin*' and '*Yang*' which in Taoism represented two aspects. '*Yin*' represents human inner cultivation and suggests that men should cultivate their inner mind before they attempt to revolutionize the world. It demands strict self-examination and is aimed at self-fulfillment. Through studying human nature, men might achieve self-conquest. After completing self-perfection, men can teach other people. Lao Tzu says that: "the sage settled with the common people like dust(同于塵)"<sup>241</sup> and taught them how to practise Tao with *Yin* and *Yang* principle.

'*Yang*' suggests that men with a '*Yin*' aspect could change the social consciousness, human relations, moral values and government. Therefore, the revolution of the world should start with the changing of oneself; the transformation of men can succeed in achieving man's goal to live in harmony with Nature and gain peace in the world. A.Waley noted that 'to be in harmony with, not in rebellion against, the fundamental laws of the universe, is the first step, then, on the way of *Tao*.'<sup>242</sup>

"One of the most important insights of the Taoists was the realization that transformation and change are essential features of nature. The Taoists perceived all changes in nature through the polar opposites '*yin*' and '*yang*'. It seems a most paradoxical theory that experiences and values which we had always believed to be contrary should be, after all, aspects of the same thing."<sup>243</sup>

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<sup>241</sup>see R.G.Henricks, *Te Tao Ching*, ch.56. p.134. See also "老子集訓", 五十六章, p.94.

<sup>242</sup>A.Waley, op. cit., p.55.

<sup>243</sup>Quoted in Fritjof Capra, op. cit., p.126.

The Taoists believe that in any pair of opposites each is always linked to the other. Sometimes, this idea of the unity of all opposites is difficult to accept. However, it has always been considered that for the attainment of enlightenment it is necessary to go 'beyond earthly opposites', and the relationship of all opposites lies at the very basis of Taoist thought. Therefore, the realization of transformation and change by 'Yin' and 'Yang' are essential ideas of Taoism. A passage in the Chuang Tzu demonstrates the fundamental importance of this theory: "The 'this' is also 'that'. The 'that' is also 'this'. That the 'that' and the 'this' cease to be opposites is the very essence of *Tao*. Only this essence, an axis as it were, is the center of the circle responding to the endless changes."<sup>244</sup>

The 'Sage' in *Tao Te Ching* has reached a higher point of view in which the relativity of all opposites is clearly perceived. The Taoist sage does not strive for the good but rather tries to transcend this relativity of the world and maintain a dynamic balance between *Yin* and *Yang*.

Chuang Tzu is very clear on this point: " Shall we not follow and honour the right and have nothing to do with the wrong?" and 'Shall we not follow and honor those who secure good government and have nothing to do with those who produce disorder?' show a want of acquaintance with the principles of Heaven and Earth and with the different qualities of things. It is like following and honouring Heaven and taking no account of Earth; it is like following and honoring the *yin* and taking no account of the *yang*. It is clear that such a course cannot be pursued."<sup>245</sup>

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<sup>244</sup>Fung Yu-Lan, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, (Macmillan, New York, 1958), p.112.

<sup>245</sup>*Chuang Tzu*, trans. James Legge, op. cit., ch.17. p.60.

## Conclusion

In this chapter , I have tried to outline the meanings of '*Tao*' and other terminology which is inter-related with '*Tao*'. To understand these words, it might be helpful to know the Chinese answers for their social problems. I tried to utilize these words in order to convince the reader of what *Tao* is. *Tao* offers us an example. It explains and persuades readers. There was no intention to influence people in a fanatically exclusive manner, but rather a moving towards a consciously accepted idea of *Tao*: altruism and tolerance.

Lao Tzu faced the serious problems of how to enable people to live in a state of social morality and in a settled society. Monarchy brought misery and failed to save the people. However the *Tao Te Ching*, had a great impact on Chinese mentality.

Lao Tzu spread his idealistic view in '*Tao Te Ching*', which consists of five thousand words. It explains a political philosophy of '*wu-wei*' and the cosmological system '*Tao*'. It is about a natural mysticism and has a strong social concern. '*Tao*' is: the Truth, the Harmony, the Order, the Way. The *Tao* is the impartial principle which governs all things in the universe and is devoid of human volition and emotion. It is opposite to the principle of materialism. Heaven and earth are not under human control. *Tao* dominates man. In other words, *Tao* is working in its own way and is all-powerful and perfect.

## CHAPTER FOUR

A study of Lao Tzu's concept of peace in the *Tao Te Ching*

Having already presented a historical background, a study of Lao Tzu's contemporaries and an explanation of the terminology used in the *Tao Te Ching*, I now intend to give an interpretation of Lao Tzu's concept of peace as presented in his work, the *Tao Te Ching*. It is not my intention to impose my views about Lao Tzu, or his concept of peace, but rather to come to an understanding of what Lao Tzu was trying to say.

The *Tao Te Ching* itself consists of 81 chapters, and to consider each of them individually here would be far too huge a task. Throughout the work is a consistent theme of peace, and I have selected three chapters that I feel to be representative of the whole. I will examine these in detail while making some comment on, or reference to other parts of the work. I feel this to be a valid way of approaching this study, and would like to use the analogy of understanding Westerners. If I am to come to an understanding of Western culture must I meet and study every individual Westerner, or would it be sufficient to meet and study only a representative number and make reference to the others? It is my belief that the latter holds true, hence my approach to this study of LaoTzu's concept of peace in the *Tao Te Ching*.

As can be seen in Chapter 3 <sup>246</sup>of this thesis, I have already cited many examples from the *Tao Te Ching* that serve to illustrate and support my argument that peace comes

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<sup>246</sup>If the reader needs further references, see Chapter 3 pages 43-98 etc. See list above. ch.12, ch.14, ch.16, ch.20, ch.25, ch.29, ch.31, ch.33, ch.36, ch.37, ch.48, ch.51, ch.56, ch.60.



into every chapter. Included in this is my examination of the various terms used, such as *Yin, Yang, Tao, Te, Wu-wei*.

The *Tao Te Ching's* 81 chapters, each being more like a poem in form, are made up of only 5,000 words, some chapters consisting of no more than a few phrases. This is not because Lao Tzu had little to say, but because he was able to condense great meaning into one or two well chosen words. Lao Tzu himself explained why it is a short work thus: "Those who understand it do not speak about it, those who speak about it do not understand it"(知者不言 言者不知)<sup>247</sup>

In order to even begin to understand Lao Tzu's concepts it is necessary to be familiar with the time in which he wrote and the terminology used by the philosophers of the time. The reader also needs to translate carefully in order to understand it. It is a difficult book even though Lao Tzu tried to write in an easy and simple style. It is written in "classical Chinese(古文)." <sup>248</sup> It is composed of an ancient Chinese prose and writing system. It is "a classical literature(古典)". Therefore, some Chinese characters in the text have become lost or confused and it demands commentaries.<sup>249</sup> I have used one Chinese, one English and one Korean text of the *Tao Te Ching*.<sup>250</sup> I have used these editions because they present the *Tao Te Ching* in its entirety, and I have checked them against each other throughout. It has also been necessary for me to consider interpretations and commentaries written by scholars from China, Korea, Japan, England, Germany and America, all of

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<sup>247</sup>"老子集訓", op.cit.,ch.2. p.4. , trans. H.A. Giles, trans of *Lao Tzu*, op.cit.,p.7.

<sup>248</sup>咸錫憲, *Voice of the people*, op.cit., 1990. p.52.

<sup>249</sup>Ibid.

<sup>250</sup>*The Remains of Lao Tzu*, by H.A.Giles, *Lao Tzu Te Tao Ching*, by R.G. Henricks, *Lao Tzu Tao Te Ching*, by 咸錫憲, "老子集訓", by 陳柱.

which I have tried to incorporate into this study in order to come to a clear understanding of the *Tao Te Ching*.

The discovery of the Ma-wang-tui<sup>251</sup> manuscripts has demonstrated that the preservation of the ancient Chinese texts on the whole seems to have been remarkably reliable and true to the original. In spite of the numerous instances of textual variation in the Lao Tzu, the overall agreement between the Ma-wang-tui manuscript and later versions of the work is noticeable.

Some Sinologists<sup>252</sup> have concluded that: "the Ma-wang-tui manuscripts date back at least five hundreds years earlier than the so-called 'received' text of the Lao Tzu. The received text is the one on which the commentaries of Hsiang erh, Wang Pi, and Ho-shang Kung were based in the third century. The Wang Pi version of the received text came to be favoured by most scholars. Almost all previous translations into other languages have been based on the Wang Pi version of the received text. But since it was subject to almost two millennia of commentary and interpretation, a new translation of the Ma-wang-tui texts seemed necessary to Sinologists who wanted to take a fresh look at things."

In G.Henricks' introduction,<sup>253</sup> he claims that: "the Ma-wang-tui manuscripts 'do not differ in any radical way' from the received text. There are no extra or missing

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<sup>251</sup> Among the silk manuscripts in the Han Ma-wang-tui tomb in 1973 were , two manuscript copies of the Lao Tzu. See, W B.Boltz's *The Religious and Philosophical Significance of the 'Hsiang Erh, Lao Tzu in the light of the Ma-Wang-Tui silk manuscripts*, p.98.

<sup>252</sup>Robert G. Henricks, *Lao Tzu Te-Tao Ching: A New Translation Based on the Recently Discovered Ma-Wang-Tui Texts. Translated, with an Introduction and Commentary*, New York:Balantine, 1989.p.xv.

<sup>253</sup>Ibid.



chapters. In some cases a different word or phrase is used, but their sense is usually the same. In other places a word, phrase, or even a whole line is missing from a passage, but the gap is usually not enough to change dramatically its sense. The text also differs with regard to chapter divisions as well as their order." According to him, overall the Ma-wang-tui manuscripts are more grammatical and precise than the received version. But in the final analysis, he concedes, there is nothing in the Ma-wang-tui texts that would lead us to understand the philosophy of the text in a radical way.

Chen<sup>254</sup> also denies the need for a new translation of the *Tao Te Ching* based on the Ma-wang-tui manuscripts. However, Boltz<sup>255</sup> discusses the problem and process of the textual criticism of the Lao Tzu and touches on the significance that the different Ma-wang-tui manuscripts have for its overall meaning. He concludes that the Lao Tzu B manuscript was written between 206 and 187 B.C. These early Han manuscripts are at least four centuries earlier than any other known text of the Lao Tzu. The standard, received versions of the Lao Tzu are usually regarded as those with commentaries by either Wang Pi (A.D. 224-249) or Ho Shang-kung.<sup>256</sup>

Some Sinologists seem to enjoy spending time arguing about such minor details as the difference of a few characters, instead of concentrating on the essential meaning of the text.

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<sup>254</sup> E M. Chen, *The Tao Te Ching, A New Translation with Commentary*, New York:Paragon House, 1989.p.40.

<sup>255</sup> W G.Boltz, *The Lao Tzu Text That Wang Pi and Ho-Shang Kung Never Saw*, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 48, No.3.1985, pp.493-501.

<sup>256</sup> W G.Boltz, *The Religious and Philosophical Significance of the Hsiang Erh, Lao Tzu in the light of the Ma-Wang-Tui silk manuscripts*, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 45, No.1(1982):p.98.

Analysing each word can sometimes be important, but at other times such analysis can serve to destroy the main message. For example if we go to a mountain range like the Alps and begin examining each rock of each mountain individually we will see only small rocks and trees. Such close examination would make the Alps appear like any other mountain range as every mountain range is made up of only rocks and trees. Yet if we are to have any chance of capturing the immensity and beauty of the Alps, we must surely stand back and view the whole.

Similarly, too detailed an examination of the *Tao Te Ching* can detract from the authors original intent. There comes a point at which argument and debate over minor details becomes unhelpful and prevent us understanding the main message. It may become like debating about whether the chicken came first, or the egg came first. Whichever argument we start with, it leads us to the other; there is no end.

An important point to consider is whether the *Tao Te Ching* was, in fact, written by one person or by many. Both authorship and date remain a matter of controversy and I will first of all discuss authorship.

The *Tao Te Ching* is said to have been originally known as "Lao Tzu". Fung Yu-Lan writes: "The book known as the Lao Tzu, but popularly called the *Tao Te Ching*, is traditionally said to have been written by an older contemporary of Confucius, Lao Tan(老聃). The real founder of the philosophy found in the Lao Tzu is Li Erh, a man who lived during the Warring States period."<sup>257</sup>

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<sup>257</sup>Fung Yu-Lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, trans by Derk Bodde, London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd. 1937,p.170.

Ssu-ma Ch'ien, the most famous of all China's historians, comments in his writings; "a book in 5,000 and odd character; Lao Tzu was written at around the time of Confucius."<sup>258</sup> Dr. Legge says, "Lao Tzu wrote the *Tao Te Ching*, and the *Tao Te Ching* is a genuine relic of one of the most original minds of the Chinese race, putting his thoughts on record 2,400 years ago."<sup>259</sup> Holmes Welch suggests that the "*Tao Te Ching* might have been compiled at the time of Mencius, probably slightly ante-dating Chuang Tze"<sup>260</sup> At a later period it was dubbed a *Ching* or canonical text, the term by which we speak with equal correctness of the canonical books of Confucianism.<sup>261</sup>

A growing body of scholarship supports the statement of Fung Yu-Lan that the Lao Tzu "is really a collection of Taoist writings and sayings, made by different persons at different times, rather than the single work of any one person."<sup>262</sup> However, it is important to note that in the literary style of the *Tao Te Ching* there is no use of the second(第二人稱) and third person(第三人稱) as a grammatical personal pronoun, whereas the first person(第一人稱) appears many times.<sup>263</sup> For example, *wo*(我), *wu*(吾) is used many times throughout book. Examples can be seen in, chapters 4,

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<sup>258</sup>Burton Watson, *Ssu-ma Ch'ien Grand Historian of China*, New York, 1958, Columbia University Press, p165.

<sup>259</sup>James Legge, *The Sacred Book of China The texts of Taoism*, Oxford At The Clarendon Press 1891, pp.4-9. The Lao Tzu probably represents currents of thought in China around 300 B.C. See, H.A. Giles, *The Remains of Lao Tzu*, p.5.

<sup>260</sup>H. Welch, *Taoism: The Parting of the Way*(Boston:Beacon Press, 1966), pp.179-180.

<sup>261</sup>see, *The Remains of Lao Tzu*, by H.A. Giles, p.2.

<sup>262</sup>H.G Creel, *What is Taoism?*, p.2. Also see, Fung Yu-Lan, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, p.65.

<sup>263</sup>Kim Young-Oak, "老子哲学", Seoul, Tong Na Mu, 1989, p.141.

20, and 70: "I do not know whose son it is.<sup>264</sup>(吾不知誰之子)<sup>265</sup>"; "I am tranquil and quiet.. I alone seem to be lacking. Mine is the mind of a fool ignorant and stupid!..I alone am dark. I alone am muddled and confused. Formless am I! Shapeless am I! As though I have nothing in which I can rest. I alone am stupid and obstinate like a rustic...For I value drawing sustenance from the Mother."<sup>266</sup>(我独怕兮...我独昏昏 俗人察察 我獨悶悶 而我独顿似鄙我獨又於人 而贵食母)<sup>267</sup>; "How do I know this to be the case in the world."<sup>268</sup>(吾何以知天下之然哉)<sup>269</sup>; "My words are easy to understand, And easy to put into practice. Yet no one in the world can understand them, ; But when those who understand me are few, then I'm of great value."<sup>270</sup>(吾言甚易知, 甚易行; 天下莫能知 莫能行)<sup>271</sup> The *wu*(吾), 'I' may be understood as meaning Lao Tzu himself. Furthermore, one consistent theme(Tao and peace) has been revealed as if by one person's will. In addition, it was written as a small book which one person was able to handle.

For these reasons it is my belief that the *Tao Te Ching* was written entirely by Lao Tzu, but after much consideration and synthesis of the works of others. From his study he was able to establish his own unique philosophy.

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<sup>264</sup>trans by Wing-Tsit Chan, *Lao Tzu*, ch.4, p.141.

<sup>265</sup>"老子集訓", 四章, p.8.

<sup>266</sup>Wing-Tsit Chan, *op.cit.*, ch.20, p.72.

<sup>267</sup>"老子集訓", 二十章, pp.31-32.

<sup>268</sup>Wing-Tsit Chan, *op.cit.*, ch.54, p.165.

<sup>269</sup>"老子集訓", 五十四章, p.91.

<sup>270</sup>R.G. Henricks, *Lao Tzu Te Tao Ching*, ch.70,p.166.

<sup>271</sup>"老子集訓", 七十章, p.117.

In considering the date of authorship, the date of Lao Tzu's birth should be determined. Although nobody can be sure of the exact time, it is traditionally believed that he was born during the Ch'un Ch'iu period, and that he was born more or less 30 years before Confucius.<sup>272</sup> However, most Western sinologists believe that he was born, and that the *Tao Te Ching* was composed, after Confucius' times.<sup>273</sup> The reason for this is that: "The way of discussing, a logic which teaches the terminology of Tao and modes of reasoning for explaining the 'Truth' in the *Tao Te Ching*, is an antithesis to Confucianism."<sup>274</sup>

Historically there is a dialectical dispute between Taoists and Confucianists. Antithesis exists after thesis in the dialectic(辨證法). Lao Tzu had a strong antithesis against Confucius. He demands of readers a critical analysis of the mental process of Confucianism and engages in a logical deputation against Confucianism. It seems, therefore, that "Lao Tzu came after Confucianism."<sup>275</sup>

Sinologists regard the *Tao Te Ching* as a synonym for Chinese thought, and the school of the *Tao*, a name early applied to a group of men who rose to influence in the states during the period of the "Spring and Autumn(722-484 B.C.)"; Lao Tzu has become the representative name of the school.

Most scholars would admit that there is still extant some literature, though there is still little agreement as to just how much, which is pre-Taoist in origin, but the "*Tao Te Ching*" nevertheless is the centre and base of Taoism.

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<sup>272</sup>咸錫憲, *Voice of the People*, op.cit., 1990. p.60.

<sup>273</sup>Ibid.

<sup>274</sup>Ibid.

<sup>275</sup>Ibid.

I examine in this section three chapters of the *Tao Te Ching* dealing directly with the question of peace and war.

Lao Tzu is the best representative of the writers who throughout the Ch'un Ch'iu period lamented the horrors and hardship of war. He execrated war and advocated peace. War was the most prejudicial, the most damnable of all acts to him. Therefore, he shows " the correct ways to govern the state."<sup>276</sup>(以正治國)<sup>277</sup> It is 'the exercise of government'(为政). This exercise should be according to peace.

To quote James Legge: " Lao Tzu considered the surest way to win a war was not to fight with weapons, for no one could defeat a man who would not fight." <sup>278</sup> As the *Tao Te Ching* says: "submitting was often regarded as a superior technique for conquering, renouncing as the most efficient way of gaining." <sup>279</sup> There are those who, like Dr.Kim would argue that:"Lao Tzu is not opposed from an ethical point of view to the use of force.He is only antagonistic to an inefficient use of force." <sup>280</sup> However, it is my belief that Lao Tzu was an absolute pacifist. I will examine a number of his verses and words in order to clearly demonstrate his pacifism

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<sup>276</sup>L. Tompkinson, op.cit., ch.48. p.52.

<sup>277</sup> “老子集训 “, 下篇, ch.48.,p.59.

<sup>278</sup>J.Legge, *The Writings of Kwantse, Sacred Books of the East Series*, ch.39.,p.182.

<sup>279</sup>L. Tomkinson, op.cit., p.169.

<sup>280</sup>Kim Young-Oak, *The Philosophy of Lao Tzu*, published by Tong Na Mu Ltd., Seoul, 1989.p.221.



## Chapter 8

"The highest good is like water(上善若水); Water is good at benefiting the ten thousand things and yet it does not compete with them.(水善利萬物而不爭) It dwells in places the mass of people detest,(處眾人之所惡) Therefore it is close to the Way.(故幾於道) In dwelling, the good thing is the land.(居善地); In the mind, the good thing is depth(心善淵); In giving, the good thing is being like Heaven (與善天); In speaking, the good thing is sincerity (言善信); In governing, the good thing is order(正善治); In affairs, the good thing is ability (事善能); In activity, the good thing is timeliness.(動善時) It is only because it does not compete, that therefore it is without fault.(夫唯不爭故無爲)." <sup>281</sup>

W.G.Old, in his translation of this chapter, gave a vivid picture of *Tao* and water, and the resemblances between one and another: "*Tao* is low and receiving as a valley, soft and life-giving as water, and it is the "mysterious female," the source of all life, the Mother of the Ten Thousand Beings. Man should become weak and yielding as water that overcomes the hard and the strong and always takes the low ground."<sup>282</sup>

He explains further: "Principal among the qualities of water are its universality, its adaptability, and its steadfastness or incompressibility. In this it is like the *Tao*, for while it accommodates itself to the dimensions and shape of every vessel, it is nevertheless steadfast and unyielding. It is at once the softest and the most irresistible of things. It flows of its own accord to the lowest places, yet it found in the most elevated. It is deeper than the deepest mine and higher than the loftiest mountain. It seeks the line of least resistance, and therefore it makes most

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<sup>281</sup>Robert G Henricks, his trans of *Te Tao Ching*, ch. 8., p.60. See "老子集訓", 上篇, 八章, p.14.

<sup>282</sup>W.G.Old, *The Simple Way Lao Tzu*, Philip Wellby, London, 1905.p.36.

progress. The virtue of *Tao* is manifold. The use of water is manifold. Nature cannot do without water, and Heaven cannot do without *Tao*. Man, who is related to both God and Nature, needs both water and *Tao*.<sup>283</sup>

'Water(水)', female, and the infant are Lao Tzu's famous symbols of peace. Water is a metaphor of peace. It is a symbol of weakness(柔弱). However, water will wear away the hardest rocks as 'the softest thing in the world'. Wing-Tsit Chan argues: "The emphasis of the symbolism in the *Tao Te Ching* is ethical rather than metaphysical."<sup>284</sup>

What is a basic morality for people? Lao Tzu suggests that men should learn from water because it does not compete and "it dwells in places the mass of people detest. (處眾人之所惡)<sup>285</sup> Ambitious people do not like to stay in lowly places, do not like weakness, do not like to be in a humble position nor to be treated with contempt. These people are always trying to climb upwards; they strive to be on the next rung of the ladder. In contrast water always seeks a way down from the highest places to the lowest, being happiest and most settled at the bottom.

The words "不爭" (do not compete) form a main theme in this chapter. Water does not compete, yet it is still able to reach its goal of getting to the ocean: all water from raindrops to brooks and streams eventually joins the sea. Similarly, as

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<sup>283</sup> Ibid.

<sup>284</sup> translated and compiled by Wing-Tsit Chan, *A Source Book In Chinese Philosophy*, Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1963, p.143. "It is interesting to note that while early Indians associated water with creation and the Greeks looked upon it as a natural phenomenon, ancient Chinese philosophers, whether Lao Tzu or Confucius, preferred to learn moral lessons from it." Ibid. See also, Rig Veda, 10:129 and Analects, 9:16.

<sup>285</sup> "老子集训", op.cit., ch.8.p.14. trans. R.G. Henrick, op.cit.,ch.8 p.67.

Henricks<sup>286</sup> points out : "Man should not strive for wealth and fame." He goes on to say that if man is able to stop competing for wealth and fame he will make fewer enemies and can therefore avoid "the anxieties and emotions that physically waste others away."

Life has a close relationship with water: human beings, plants and animals cannot survive without it. The human body is made up of 90% water. It is essential to life, yet it is never boastful, always preferring the lowest position. It is easy for us not to feel its importance because of its humility. Lao Tzu might imagine that "Nature exists only by water." Therefore it is "the highest style of goodness." (上善若水)<sup>287</sup>

For example, Ch'u Ta-kaio shows how the Sage, the personified form of highest good, is unselfish. He comments: "He does good to others but does not contend with them.. He has no spite for what others disdain. He is content with everything. With him as an example, the world would be at peace."<sup>288</sup>

Yet despite its humility and apparent weakness it is all-penetrating and will gain an eventual victory. As it passes over the hard rocks on its way down to the lowest point, it gradually wears away the rock until there is no rock left, yet the gentle but persistent water remains. Similarly, if we burn a saucepan the burnt remains are difficult to scrub clean, yet if the pan is soaked in water, the water loosens and lifts the burnt remains without apparent effort. It has a gentle, long term effect. This can be compared with the concept of "*wu wei*", or 'inaction', as discussed in chapter 3 of this thesis.

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<sup>286</sup>H.G. Henricks, op.cit., p.xxviii.

<sup>287</sup> "老子集训", op.cit.,p.14. trans. ibid, p.12.

<sup>288</sup> Ch'u Ta-kaio, *Tao Te Ching*, The Buddhist Lodge, London, 1942. p.18.

L.Tompkinson<sup>289</sup> commented: "In nature the softest overcomes the strongest. There is nothing so weak as water. But nothing can surpass it in attacking the hard and strong: there is no way to alter it. Truth is paradoxical."

M.Kaltenmark, in his "Lao Tzu and Taoism", gives an illuminating discussion of the relationship between *wu-wei* and water: "The attitude of *wu-wei* is undeniably hard to live up to, but it confers true strength on the man who sticks by it, for as Lao Tzu says in a typical paradox, "the soft and the weak overcome the hard and the strong," because weakness, or nonresistance, is the method of the *Tao*. Various symbols serve to illustrate this idea: water, the valley, and the infant. The low-lying places are themselves the image of the *Tao*, because the waters converge in them."<sup>290</sup>

During the Warring States Period, the strong nations wanted to control( 支配) the small states. However, Lao Tzu had a different idea. He said: "The large state is like the lower part of a river. The large state - if it is below the small state, can take over the small state."( 大國者下流 故大國以下小國 則取小國)<sup>291</sup>

Here, the large state can be likened to the ocean in that just as the ocean receives water in whatever form it comes, whether raindrops, rivers or even sewerage, so the large states receive people in whatever form and from wherever they come. However, some states put many regulations in the way to prevent people from

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<sup>289</sup>L.Tomkinson,op.cit.,p.51.

<sup>290</sup> Max Kaltenmark, *Lao Tzu and Taoism*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California. 1969. p.55.

<sup>291</sup>" 老子集训", op.cit., ch.61,p.104. trans. R.G.Henricks, op.cit.,ch.61, p.30.

outside entering and impose strict rules on those already within. Other states welcome all and impose few controls on those within.

Lao Tzu was suggesting that those states who welcome all and impose few controls are most like the ocean, and it is those states that will eventually win and achieve peace, just as the ocean always wins. Its nature remains unchanged and it continues to support life whatever other water enters it. Therefore if those in power wish to govern wisely and achieve peace they should not aim to impose restrictions and controls on the people, but should govern them according to the *Tao*.

J. Lin, in his works of Lao Tzu, explains the relations between water and Tao. Here, *Tao* is absolute, but water is relative being. He writes: "*Tao* is nothing; water is something. They are, therefore, "very close" but not the same. That is to say, all men should follow the Tao of governing."<sup>292</sup> Tao, like water, 'take the low ground.' It has the conception of the soul as a well that never runs dry. In Taoism water, as the emblem of the unassertive, and the 'low ground', as the home of water, become favourite images.

Arthur Waley<sup>293</sup> devotes a particularly eloquent passage to water as pattern and example to the 'ten thousand things,'<sup>294</sup> that is to say to everything in the universe, and to the low ground as 'dwelling-place of *Tao*.' It is by absorbing the water-spirit that vegetation lives, 'that the root gets its girth, the flower its symmetries, the fruit its measure.' Lao Tzu said: " The Way('Tao') of Heaven is not striving, yet surely

<sup>292</sup> Paul J.Lin, *A translation of Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching and Wang Pi's Commentary*, Michigan Papers in Chinese Studies , No.30. 1977. p.15.

<sup>293</sup> Arthur Waley, *The Way and its Power*, London George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1936.p.56.

<sup>294</sup>The number 10.000 symbolizes totality. See, *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1983.Vol.17.p.397.

it will be victorious."(天之道不爭而善勝)<sup>295</sup> Therefore submitting is regarded as a superior technique for victory, renouncing as the most effective way of gaining. Even ordinary people realize the importance of the Taoist principle of 'water-like' behavior, i.e. not striving to get on top or to the fore.<sup>296</sup>

It is now appropriate to conclude with an examination of one important word, '*shan*' (善), and trace the root of its meaning which is related to peace. '*Shan*', is the character used in this chapter of the original text of the *Tao Te Ching*, translated here as "...the good thing..." '*Shan*', the meaning of which includes all the following virtues: good, wise, friendly, honest, mercy, kindness, etc,<sup>297</sup> is a word that comes originally from *yang* 羊(sheep) plus *yan* 言(word, say).<sup>298</sup>

Sheep were chosen by Lao Tzu as a symbol as many sheep were reared during this period in China's history, and people were therefore familiar with its characteristics. The sheep represents a meek and gentle animal. Sheep do not act individually, always collectively. This suggests sheep have no selfish desires. The sheep is a symbol of gentleness, of sacrifice. It also provides benefits to human life in the form of leather, meat and cloth. It is almost like water. Therefore, *Yang* means 'good' things in classical Chinese, for example, *Mei*(美 = 羊 + 大, beauty), *Yi* (義 = 羊 + 我, justice). In Chinese, *Shan* is used in relation to those who possess the most 'good' characteristics.<sup>299</sup> Therefore, *shan* relates to men who have a peaceful mind and commit righteous acts. I suggest that Lao Tzu, like Mencius, subscribes to the theory of the innate goodness of man.

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<sup>295</sup>"老子集训", 下篇, ch.73,p.121. trans. L.Tompkinson,op.cit.,ch.73,p.52.

<sup>296</sup> A.Waley, op., cit. p.151.

<sup>297</sup>see, *Concise English-Chinese/ Chinese-English Dictionary*, Oxford.

<sup>298</sup> 咸锡宪, op. cit., p.64.

<sup>299</sup>Ibid.

## 2. Chapter 36

"If you wish to shrink it, You must certainly stretch it.( 將欲縮之, 必固與之)  
 If you wish to weaken it, You must certainly strengthen it. (將欲弱之, 必固強  
 之) If you wish to desert it, You must certainly work closely with it. ( 將欲廢  
 之, 必固興之) If you wish to snatch something from it, You must certainly  
 give something to it.(將欲奪之 必固與之) This is called the Subtle Light.<sup>300</sup>  
 The submissive and weak conquer the strong.( 是謂微明 柔弱勝剛強) Fish  
 should not be taken out of the depths; The state's sharp weapons should not be  
 shown to the people."( 魚不可脫於淵 國之利器不可以示人)<sup>301</sup>

The main theme of this chapter can be seen in the last three lines, where Lao Tzu is again recommending a lack of boastfulness as being the most necessary characteristic. It means that men should not praise themselves and their nation. Boasting is self-assertion; it is unreasonableness and obstinacy. It is violence. Therefore, both individuals and nations will meet with destruction through boastfulness and self-assertion. Lao Tzu recommends: "When the able are not exalted, the people may be restrained from strife"<sup>302</sup>( 不尚賢, 使民不爭) <sup>303</sup>

In this passage, it is clear enough that "one aspect of the idea is that desires must be restrained if strife and wars are to be avoided, that the presence of temptations to covetousness and ambition is prejudicial to peace."<sup>304</sup>

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<sup>300</sup>*Wei* (微) means (1) 'obscure because so small', (2) 'obscure because so dark.' It is etymologically connected with *mei* 'dark'. See, A.Waley, op.,cit. p.187.

<sup>301</sup> "老子集訓", 上篇, 三十六章, p.58. trans. R.G Henrick, op.cit.,, ch.36, p.88.

<sup>302</sup>L. Tompkinson, op.cit.,p.53.

<sup>303</sup> "老子集訓", 三章, p.6.

<sup>304</sup>L. Tomkinson, op.cit., p.51.

Lao Tzu thought that "Arrogance and pride with wealth and rank, together bring on disaster." (富貴而驕 自遺基咎)<sup>305</sup> The Lao Tzu's objection to the recognition of any strife, and the prohibition of the taking of life as a result of a strife, shows that this chapter has been an important part of the pacifism of the *Tao Te Ching*.

Considerable use in the *Tao Te Ching* is made of metaphors; the strength of softness, the power of the female, the efficiency of water, or the superiority of the valley.<sup>306</sup> Lao Tzu conveys his ecstatic insights in images and parables.<sup>307</sup> The root idea in any case is, "weakness overcomes strength" (柔弱勝則強). Lao Tzu uses a fish to explain his idea of peace. "A fish should not be taken out of the depths" (魚不脫于淵)<sup>308</sup> means the fish should stay in the depths of the marsh, otherwise it may be caught and killed. A fish has no weapon. The fish is a symbol of 'weakness' (柔弱). A.Giles<sup>309</sup> interprets *Yuan* (淵), the deep, as reference to the personal influence of the Sovereign, which once lost can never be regained.

As long as the fish remains in deep water, no harm can come to it, but if the fish becomes boastful and shows itself above or near the surface of the water to try to impress people, then it is likely to be killed and eaten. Lao Tzu was suggesting that people, like fish, should not make a show of what they possess, whether beauty, intelligence, wealth or weapons, otherwise some harm is likely to befall them. This

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<sup>305</sup>"老子集訓", 九章, op.cit., p.16. trans. H.G. Henrick, op.cit., ch.9, p.61.

<sup>306</sup>L. Tomkinson, op.cit., Introduction.

<sup>307</sup>*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol.17, 1983, p.398.

<sup>308</sup>"老子集訓", op.cit., ch.36. p.58. trans. H.G. Henricks, op.cit., p.88. See, Han Fei Tzu has a *shen* (深) before *yuan* (淵), which is a rhythmical improvement. see, H.A.Giles, *The Remains of Lao Tzu*, p.24.

<sup>309</sup>H.A.Giles, *The Remains of Lao Tzu*, Hong Kong: The China Mail Office. 1886. p.25.



would apply equally to a nation and its weapons, as the last line of Chapter 36 states.

What does it mean to show a nation's sharp weapon to a foreigner? It is boasting. Why are men boasting? They believe in their own power. However, power brings with it a stronger power, a trick brings more wicked tricks and it falls eventually into a snare. This is a simple truth, but people who have a selfishness and avarice cannot see it.

Lao Tzu explains that there is something of greater importance to nations than 'sharp weapons'. Lao Tzu wanted to teach people about the real 'sharp weapon' which makes a nation's people depend on the rise and fall of the nation. He explains: "The 'sharp weapon' of a nation is the spirit of 'weakness': not boasting of their talents; not trusting in money and power, not using force, but to live as one member of a whole community."<sup>310</sup> We can deduce from this that Lao Tzu's use of the expression "sharp weapon" was symbolism. He was not referring to knives or guns, but to a nation's 'weakness', its sense of community, being its strength, or weapon.

Occasionally it is expressed in more or less ethical terms: "Unselfishness leads to universality. Universality leads to greatness. Greatness leads to the *Tao* which is eternal. Though the power decays, the spirit is everlasting. Not egotistic he will become famous; not proud, he will become chief."<sup>311</sup>

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<sup>310</sup>H.A.Henricks, *op.cit.*, ch.36. p.88. See also, 咸錫憲, his *tran.op.cit.*, p.49.

<sup>311</sup>Quoted from L.Tomkinson, *op.cit.*, Introduction.

The spirit of 'weakness' is men's 'conscience'.<sup>312</sup> Everyone has a conscience. It is weak and mild. Nevertheless, it will win ultimately. Therefore, Lao Tzu said: "柔弱勝則強"<sup>313</sup> I interpret it: The weak overcomes the strong, the soft the hard, or : "the submissive and weak conquer the strong."<sup>314</sup> That "the soft and the weak overcome the hard and the strong" is evident from the facts of Nature. Water is yielding and soft, but it wears away the rocks. Love is gentle and yielding, but it overcomes Self, which is a very hard thing.<sup>315</sup>

The conscience in the normal situation is weak and calm like a fish in deep water. In this condition, it has the power to overcome temptation and threat. Therefore Lao Tzu says: "To see the small(beginnings of things) is clearness of sight. To rest in weakness is strength."(見小曰明 守柔曰強)<sup>316</sup>

When conscience directs man it is called 'strength'. Under such circumstances, the mental powers will be constant. And brute force is not real force, but force is force only when under the guiding influence of human conscience. Lao Tzu's belief was that before a man can control a nation, he must first learn to control himself. If he cannot resist temptation and keep his own urges under control, how, then, can he hope to control a whole nation? Therefore, Lao Tzu says: "Mighty is he who conquers himself."(自勝自強)<sup>317</sup>

According to D.C.Lau,<sup>318</sup> the 'fish' is the symbol for the ruler, and the 'deep' his

<sup>312</sup>咸錫憲,"老子", op.cit., p.49.

<sup>313</sup>"老子集訓", 上篇, ch.36, p.58.

<sup>314</sup>H.G. Henrick, his trans of *Lao Tzu, Te Tao Ching*, ch.36. p.88.

<sup>315</sup>Walter Gorn Old, *The Simple Way Lao Tzu*, p.84.

<sup>316</sup>老子集訓, op.cit., ch 52. p.87.

<sup>317</sup>"老子集訓", op.cit., ch.37, p.54. trans. H.A.Giles, op.cit., p.23.

power. For a ruler to allow the power to slip out of his hands is for the 'fish' to be 'allowed to leave the deep.' Reward and punishment are the 'twin instruments of power in a state', and 'must not be revealed to anyone', lest, in the wrong hands, even the knowledge of how they are dispensed can be turned into a source of power.

Lin suggests the following translation for the last five lines: "This is called discernment of subtlety." Following the nature of things, let them destroy themselves. Do not use punishment to eliminate those that one is 'about to' eliminate. This is called subtle wisdom. When opened enough and left to suffice, one who tries to open it more will be shut out by the people. When not opened enough and left to change, the one who opens it more will receive the benefit and the one who failed to open it enough will be in danger. Sharp weapons(利器) refer to weapons of benefit to the state. Following only the nature of things, never using form to manage things and allowing weapons to be seen; all things will have their proper place. This is called weapons of benefit to the state. To show them to the people means using punishment. Using punishment to benefit the state is to lose it. Fish separated from deep water will certainly be lost. Sharpening the state's weapons to signify punishment of the people will certainly fail."<sup>319</sup>

Giles says<sup>320</sup> 'warlike weapons' should be 'treasures' and that they 'should not be employed to influence the people. *Li Ch'i*(利器) means 'instruments of

<sup>318</sup>D.C.Lau, *Lao Tzu Tao Te Ching*, Penguin books. 1963.p.95.

<sup>319</sup>Paul J.Lin, *A translation of Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching and Wang Pi's Commentary*, Michigan papers in Chinese Studies, No.30. 1977. p.64.

<sup>320</sup>Herbert A.Giles, *The Remains of Lao Tzu*, Hong Kong, 1886. p.25.

government'. These are 'rewards and punishments of government,' which should not be trusted out of the hands of the Sovereign.

Wang Pi comments, "Things should be developed according to their nature without the use of sharp implements. When implements are shown, all will be at a loss, just as fish have left water against Nature."<sup>321</sup>

According to A.Waley, "the Sage must 'stoop to conquer', must make himself small in order to be great, must be cast down before he can be exalted. He must remain like the fish at the bottom of the pool. The 'sharp weapons' symbolize the Taoist sage who is a kind of secret armament on whom the safety of the state depends. The fish symbolizes armor because both have 'scales'."<sup>322</sup>

Dr.Mears suggests,<sup>323</sup> this chapter teaches the principle of Alternation, Pusation, Rhythm. The heart must be emptied before it can be filled with vital fluid, in order to fulfil its function. The long-cells must be emptied of vitiated air before they can vitalise the body by the inflow of vital air. A muscle must be relaxed, made apparently quite weak, before it can manifest its fullness of action.

So, the Sage tells us, in the moral world we must learn to take a lowly place if we would be great. Above all, we must learn to give most freely if we desire to be enriched by true riches. It is only by means of Alternation that function can be perfectly performed. Alternation means reiteration, returning. Therefore, "He who returns is sent forth by *Tao*,"; he who has the secret of return from outward activity

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<sup>321</sup>Ibid.

<sup>322</sup> A.Waley, op.,cit. p.187.

<sup>323</sup>Dr.Isabella Mears, *Tao Te King by Lao tzu*, William McLellan & Co. Glasgow, 1916. pp53-54.

to the Source of Life shall be renewed in strength, in proportion as he avails himself of this principle.<sup>324</sup>

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<sup>324</sup>ibid

### 3. Chapter 59

"For ordering humanity and serving Heaven, nothing's so good as being sparing.(治人事天莫若嗇) For only if you are sparing can you, therefore, early submit to the Way.(夫唯嗇是謂早服) Early submission --this is called to repeatedly accumulate Virtue.(早服謂之重積德) If you repeatedly accumulate Virtue, then there is nothing you can't overcome.(重積德則無不克) When there is nothing you can't overcome, no one knows where it will end.(則莫知其極) When no one knows where it will end, you can possess the state.(莫知其極, 可以有國) And when you possess the mother of the state, you can last a very long time.(有國之母 可以長久) This is called having deep roots and a firm base.(是謂深根固氏) It's the Way of long life and long-lasting vision.(長生久視之道)"<sup>325</sup>

In this chapter, Lao Tzu gives advice to the kings on how to govern the states during the Ch'un Ch'iu and Warring States Period'. The whole of this chapter can be explained with this important summary: "Kings should not have any avarice for the sake of states."<sup>326</sup> It means that a king should not waste the state economy for his own purpose or in preparation of war, etc. He recommends thrift and a save-all which can support the commoners. H.A.Giles explains: "it is only one who has not gone to extremes who can fall in readily with any call for modification of policy."<sup>327</sup>

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<sup>325</sup>R.G. Henricks, his trans of *Lao Tzu Te Tao Ching*, op.cit., ch.59, p.140. see also "老子集训", ch.59.

<sup>326</sup>咸錫憲, his trans of "老子", ch.59. p.99.

<sup>327</sup>Herbert A. Giles, op.cit., ch.59, p.42.

Men develop a luxurious life style in society, in knowledge and in thinking: the luxury of culture and institutions, words, laws, thought, recreation and religious ceremony. They run the economy and politics in order to maintain a luxurious life style rather than for surviving and cooperating. Therefore, the luxurious life opposes a spiritual and virtuous life. Techniques are used to maintain luxury whilst machines are used to prepare for war. The purpose of war is to maintain power and politics for the privileged groups and kings.

Therefore, Lao Tzu continues: "For only if you are sparing can you, therefore, easily submit to the Way. (夫惟嗇是早服)<sup>328</sup> In other words 'Zaofu' (早服) is synonymous with 'Guiyuan' (歸元). It means 'Returning to the Source'<sup>329</sup> It shows how the practice of the Tao must be conducive to contentment (知足) and happiness. For achieving this, Lao Tzu spoke of "the Moderating of Desire or Ambition" (儉欲).<sup>330</sup>

However, how does one make peace in the state and the lives of people? Lao Tzu answers: "If you repeatedly accumulate virtue, then there is nothing you cannot overcome." (重積德則無不可)<sup>331</sup> It may take time to accumulate virtue, but virtue should be accumulated. After possessing virtue, "a king can govern men and serve Heaven" (治人事天)<sup>332</sup>

Who can govern men and serve Heaven? Lao Tzu answers: "The Empire is a divine trust, and may not be ruled. He who rules, ruins. He who holds it by force,

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<sup>328</sup>"老子集训", ibid. trans. R.G. Henricks, ibid.

<sup>329</sup>J. Legge, op.cit., p.95.

<sup>330</sup>Ibid., p.85.

<sup>331</sup>"老子集训", ibid. trans.R.G. Henricks, op.cit., p.140.

<sup>332</sup>"老子集训", ibid. trans. H.A. Giles, op, cit., p.41.

loses it."(天下神器也不可爲也爲者敗<sup>執</sup>之者失之)<sup>333</sup> Therefore, governing men by government is good-for-nothing, it can only be achieved by self-government; self-administration; autonomy; home rule.<sup>334</sup> During the Warring States Period all of the rulers were controlling the states by force or the imposition of their own laws, so for Lao Tzu to suggest "self government; self-administration; autonomy; home rule" was at that time a very unique position to hold. The Chinese had been accustomed to a highly centralised system and now Lao Tzu was advocating decentralisation or democracy, which was previously unheard of. He was not highly regarded during his lifetime as his idea that men ought to govern with morality and spirituality rather than by power and luxury went against everything that was known. A nation exists because of the people, not because of the politicians or kings. Therefore, Lao Tzu says: "You possess the mother of the state."(有國之母)<sup>335</sup> Here, 'mother'(母) symbolizes 'weakness' and 'peace'(平和).<sup>336</sup>

For being a king, Lao Tzu suggests this condition: " He who respects the State as his own body, is fit to support it. He who loves the State as his own body, is fit to govern it"(貴以身爲天下 若可寄天下 愛以身爲天下 若可托天下).<sup>337</sup>

The object of these words seems to be to show how such 'loving oneself'(愛己)<sup>338</sup> should be manifested, and to enforce the lesson by the example of the 'sage', the true master of the Tao. Therefore, the kind of king or a person who loves himself more than ruling the world can govern the world.

<sup>333</sup>"老子集訓", op.cit., ch.29. p.47, trans. H.A. Giles, op.cit., ch.29, p.23.

<sup>334</sup>咸錫憲, op. cit., p.64.

<sup>335</sup>"老子集訓", ibid, trans. R.G. Henricks, ibid.

<sup>336</sup>咸錫憲, ibid.

<sup>337</sup>"老子集訓", op.cit., ch.13. p.14, trans. H.A.Giles, op.cit., ch.13,p.14.

<sup>338</sup>James Legge, op.cit., p.114.



## CONCLUSION

This study has looked at Lao Tzu's ideas about peace and his methods of answering the problems of the Warring States period by providing an analysis of Lao Tzu's specific thoughts in the *Tao Te Ching* and their relation to the main method of answering the social and political problems in the Ch'un Ch'iu and Warring States Period.

In order to set the work in its historical context, Chapter One provided a historical background of the Ch'un Ch'iu and the Warring States Period to analyze the war, division and general misfortunes in China. This demonstrated the creation of a Golden Age of Thought in religion and philosophy.

Chapter Two provided an examination of some of the major religions and philosophies of the time and looked at the ideas of the founders of these major schools of thought, Lao Tzu's contemporaries.

In order to understand Lao Tzu's message in the *Tao Te Ching* it was necessary to interpret the concepts and terminology related to "peace" in the *Tao Te Ching*, a study of which is provided in Chapter Three. The final chapter then analyzed Lao Tzu's specific thoughts on peace in the *Tao Te Ching*: three representative chapters were examined in detail.

The *Tao Te Ching* is a difficult work to understand and, like philosophical Taoism, makes no sense without a lot of thought. However, it offers the reader many lasting insights and is therefore very powerful. In contrast, other religions or philosophies such as Confucianism and Legalism offer followers very practical guidance. They don't offer the very long term, even eternal, aims of Taoism. What one can gain

from Taoism, though, is a richness of thought; an enriching of one's soul, and through this should come enrichment of the world.

Given the practical nature of the Chinese people and the esoteric nature of Taoism one might be led to ask why Taoism is still one of the major religions of China. Taoism clearly has a lasting quality. As has been discussed in this study Legalism was tried and failed. Confucianism has been, and indeed continues to be, of use but I would assert that it has already given all it has to give. There is nothing we have not yet discovered about Confucianism, yet it has been unable to solve all of China's ills.

It appears, however, that Philosophical Taoism has not yet reached its full potential and therefore needs continuing study. Practical methods alone have proved lacking, as, as is well known by Christians, "Man cannot live by bread alone." A spiritual or psychological dimension is being sought and I would assert that Philosophical Taoism holds the answer.

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## GLOSSARY

- Pu Cheng 不爭  
 Chan Kuo 戰國  
 Ch'ang 常  
 Cheng Tzu 程子  
 Chi mo 寂寞  
 Ching 經  
 Chueh hsueh wu yu 絕學無憂  
 Chou-i Chien-i 周易兼義  
 Chuang Tzu 莊子  
 Ch'un Ch'iu 春秋  
 Chung(centrality) 中  
 Chung Yung 中庸  
 Ta Hsueh 大學  
 Tu 督  
 Fa Chia 法家  
 Fu 福  
 Fu gui 復歸  
 Ham Sok Hon 咸錫憲  
 Han Fei Tzu 韓非子  
 Hsi 希  
 Hsing 型  
 Hsun Tzu 旬子  
 I 義  
 Jen 仁  
 Jou Juo 柔弱  
 Ku Wen 古文

Ku Tian 古典  
Kuo Hsiang 郭象  
Ku Wen 古文  
Kuan Tzu 管子  
K'ung Tzu 孔子  
Lao Tan 老聃  
Lao Tzu, Tao Te Ching 老子 道德經  
Li 禮  
Li 利  
Lun yu 論語  
Mei 美  
Meng Tzu 孟子  
Miao 妙  
Mo Tzu 墨子  
P'ien 篇  
Ping fa, Sun Wu 兵法, 孫武  
Shan 善  
Sheng 聲  
Shih 實  
Ssu-ma Ch'ien 司馬遷  
Ssu-shu wu-ching 四書五經  
T'ang 唐  
Tao 道  
Te 德  
Te 得  
Tian dan 恬淡  
Wei Ming 微明  
Wen 文

Wen ku chih hsin 溫古知新

Wo 我

Wu 吾

Wu Se 五色; ch'ing青, huang黃, ch'ih赤, bai白, hei黑

Wu-wei 無爲

Suan酸, hsien咸, hsin辛, kan甘, k'u苦

Wu Tsang 五臟; hsin心 fei肺, kan肝, p'i脾, shen腎

Hsu wu 虛無

Yang 陽

Yang 羊

Yi 義

Yi King 易經

Yin Yang Wu Hang Sho 陰陽五行說

Yin 陰

You Wei 有爲

Yueh 樂

Tsaofu 早服

Chih 知

