

IV. TAO, WAY

1. General Tao

There are more than eighty¹⁹⁸ occurrences of Tao in the Analects. These fall into several categories mainly according to the contextual meaning: general Tao, universal Tao, Tao of state administration, Tao of the gentleman.¹⁹⁹

The category of general Tao describes the general characteristics of Confucian Tao. These characteristics can be seen in the relationship of Tao with other concepts or ideas in Confucian thinking recorded in the Analects.

Tao has a connection with the Confucian ideal of antiquity.²⁰⁰ The people of the three dynasties followed a straight Tao 直道; Confucius's contemporaries were the continuation or extension of the people of the three dynasties and they too followed the straight Tao.²⁰¹ In this way the ancient people are a fine example or model for the contemporary people. Waley says about Tao in this context: "In general, however, the word Tao in the Analects means one thing only, the way of the ancients as it could be reconstructed from the stories told about the founders of the Chou dynasty and the semi-gods who had preceded them."²⁰²

Tao is also related to filiality: 孝 "Observe what a man has in mind to do when his father is living, and then observe what he does when his father is dead. If, for three years, he makes no changes to his father's ways, 父之道 he can be said to be a good son." A problem arises if the father's ways have been evil. There are several traditional suggestions to resolve the problem. The son of an evil father does not want to admit the wickedness of his father and consequently the son continues the evil ways of his father. If the son changes the ways of the father, this means that the son admits that the ways of his father were not good. Another explanation says that the behavior of the father is not important, but the father's Tao is important. A fourth interpretation says that if the son is filial 孝 he does not think about whether the father was good or not. After the father's death the son feels very mournful and regards his father as still being alive. Consequently it is not fitting for the son to change the ways of his father. 道治也。 Tao means to govern. The son acts according to the policy of the father

¹⁹⁸ In the first part (books one to ten) there are 39 occurrences, of which all 39 appear in Confucius's words, and in the latter part there are 50 occurrences which include 33 in Confucius's own words. HU Chih-kuei 1965, p. 5.

¹⁹⁹ On the development of the concept Tao, see THIEL 1970, pp. 2-6. For a short summary of Confucian Tao, see SMITH 1973, pp. 65, 66. Legge translates Tao in the Analects in the following 21 ways: road, path, way, course, path of duty, duty, characteristic, truth, right, doctrine, principle, rule, things, studies and employments, well instructed, government, governed, order, lead, speak, say. EGEROD 1990, p. 84.

²⁰⁰ AN. 1:12, 3:16, pp. 86, 98. LAU 1979, pp. 61, 70. See also YEN 1972, pp. 18, 19.

²⁰¹ AN. 15:24, p. 198. The interpretation follows HSIEH Ping-ying 1976, p. 203.

²⁰² WALEY 1964, p. 31. See also AN. 11:19, p. 157.

for three years, after which period the policy can be changed.²⁰⁵

Apparently, Tao is here regarded as something good, which does not need to be changed immediately. According to Ch'eng Tao is not here behavior generally, or action in general. If it had been a general action, it would have been said 父之行, but here it is said 父之道, which here is presupposed as something good, which can be preserved for the time being. It can be applied for a period even if the situation has become different to some extent.²⁰⁴

This emulation of the model of the ancients and following the Tao of one's father reflect the continuity and conservatism of Tao in Confucius's thought.

According to Confucius men tend to desire wealth and high station and to dislike poverty and low station, however, one must not act according to this tendency, it is not according to Tao.²⁰⁵ This shows that there is a tension between Tao and man's natural tendency.²⁰⁶ General Tao appears in relation to other concepts. Tao may be extended by the deeds of righteousness, Yi, 義. Here Yi is not identified with Tao, but it helps one to extend Tao.²⁰⁷

Tao is mentioned collocatively together with Te 德, Jen 仁 and arts, I 藝.²⁰⁸ This collocative similarity suggests that Tao has an ethical connotation, like the other principles listed together with it. The relationship with Te points in the same direction.

One may have Te and Tao. There should be a degree of intensity in one's Te and Tao, otherwise it is not clear whether one has them or not. Confucius requires a total commitment to them.²⁰⁹

²⁰³ AN. 1:11, p. 86. The same sentence is repeated: AN. 4:20, p. 106. See also AN. 19:18. LAU 1979, pp. 61, 75, 155. CH'ENG Shu-te 1974, pp. 38-40. LIU Pao-nan 1973, pp. 15, 16. CHENG, Zhongying 1989, pp. 53,54.

²⁰⁴ CH'ENG Shu-te 1974, p. 40.

²⁰⁵ AN. 4:5, p. 102. Lau says that this sentence is most likely corrupt. The sentence should read: "Poverty and low station are what men dislike, but if I got them in the right way I would not try to escape from them." LAU 1979, p. 72.

²⁰⁶ Most of the passages in Book Four reflect a kind of tension between two things or notions. This passage 4:5 calls for a choice between desires and Tao.

²⁰⁷ AN. 16:12, p. 207. Cf. CREEL 1929, p. 76.

²⁰⁸ AN. 7:6, pp. 123,124.

²⁰⁹ Ch'en regards Te and Tao as being almost interchangeable concepts in Confucius's philosophy. CH'EN Ta-chi 1967, p. 71. See AN. 19:2, LAU 1979, p. 153. This passage 子張曰，執德不弘，信道不篤，焉能為有，焉能為亡, has been translated in a variety of ways. Here 有 theoretically might mean 'to have', 'there is', (having =) rich, and 亡 'not have', 'not exist', 'disappear' 'to die'. KARLGREN 1972, pp. 197, 261, 162. Waley translates it as: "Tzu-chang said, He who sides with moral force (te) but only to a limited extent, who believes in the Way, but without conviction - how can one count him as with us, how can one count him as not with us?" WALEY 1964, p. 224.

This raises the objection that if one believes in Tao without conviction, logically it should be clear that he cannot be counted as "not with us". The matter should be clear. Legge refers to existence and non existence. LEGGE I 1969, p. 339.

However, Te and Tao refer to morality and not to ontology in Confucius's thinking. Lau translates the passage as: "Tzu-chang said, 'How can a man be said either to have anything or not to have anything who fails to hold on to virtue with all his might or to believe in the Way with all his heart.'" LAU 1979, p. 152. This translation is least far fetched and fits the context of Confucian thought well.

焉 may also refer to A becomes B. DOBSON 1974, p. 767. If this meaning is applied here, the interpretation would be: "How can a man be said either to become having Tao and Te or not to become

The Tao of the master is "loyalty and consideration", Chung, Shu, 忠恕.²¹⁰ According to Karlgren, 忠 in the Analects means sincere, loyal, integrity. Here it means loyalty to superiors.²¹¹ 忠 has been interpreted as the full development of one's (originally good) mind and 恕 as the extension of that mind to others. This becomes clear in Anal. 15:23, where it is defined by the "golden rule", "Never do to others what you would not like them to do to you." This "reciprocity" is a single saying "that one can act upon all day every day." Karlgren says that 恕 means generous, indulgent. Thus, when he uses these concepts, 忠, 恕 Confucius offers an ideal standard which is to be the guiding and controlling factor in moral experience.²¹² These concepts expose the center of the Confucian system and are the thread that runs right through Tao, or binds it together.²¹³

Tao also expresses intimacy in the social process. With some people, one can study, but not join in progress along the way. With others, one may join in progress along the Way, but one cannot collaborate in office. With yet others people one may collaborate in office, but not join in counsel.²¹⁴

Tao has a close relation to man: "It is Man who is capable of broadening the Way. It is not the Way that is capable of broadening Man." 人能弘道。非道弘人。 There is a traditional interpretation of this sentence which has a Taoist overtone: Tao is the general name of all things. It is invisible or abstract, but its function is very great 大 and wonderful. One cannot become separated from it, not even for briefest moment. Good people think that Tao is good. Wise people think that Tao is wisdom. So, if one's talent is great 大 one's Tao is also great 大. Thus it says man can enlarge Tao. The common people use Tao daily, but they do not understand it. So if one's talent is small, one's Tao is also small. Chu Hsi emphasizes the mutual connection between man and Tao. Man's heart has feelings, and the function of the body of Tao is having Tao and Te, if he fails to hold on to virtue with all his might or to believe in the Way with all his heart." Having something cannot depend on Te or Tao; one can have a chariot, or a horse, or one can hold an office, and yet one may not follow Te and Tao. The uncertainty of having or not having Te and Tao is because on the one hand one might lose them because of lack of intensity, or on the other hand, one might finally have them, because one is in contact with them, even though in a superficial way. This superficiality may later intensify, or perhaps it may weaken.

²¹⁰ AN. 4:15, p. 105. LEGGE I 1969, p. 170.

²¹¹ KARLGREN 1972, p. 265. WALEY 1964, p. 105. 忠 is translated by Wilhelm "Bewusstsein der Mitte" WILHELM 1950, p. 89. See also FINGARETTE 1979. 忠 refers to trying one's best and to keeping one's position, (as when the father has his position or rank, and the son has his and is loyal to his father, and both take care of their responsibilities.) CHU Hsi 1952, p. 23.

²¹² AN. 4:14, 15:23, pp. 105, 198. The same saying is also in AN. 5:11, p. 110. KARLGREN 1972, p. 43. MAHOOD 1971, p. 9. MIYAZAKI 1965, P. 86. See also 忠 interpreted as "the mean in action". HAMBURGER 1956, p. 329. Wilhelm translates 忠 as "Gleichheit". WILHELM 1950, p. 89.

²¹³ Wilhelm says about the two concepts: "Wir haben in diesen Aussprüchen das Zentrum des konfuzianischen Systems erfasst. Er spricht es hier deutlich aus, dass seine Lehre einen durchgehenden Faden hat, und dem alles ausgereiht ist, was an Einzelheiten darin enthalten ist..." WILHELM 1950, p. 89. Loyalty and consideration is one thread that runs through Tao of Confucius. AN. 4:15, p. 105, LAU 1979, p. 74.

²¹⁴ AN. 9:29, p. 145, AN. 9:30, LAU 1979, p. 100.

nothing 無. So, a man can enlarge his Tao, Tao cannot enlarge its man.²¹⁵

The passage above calls for one's own activity to broaden one's way. There is a passage concerning one's own activity regarding the way: "Jan Ch'iu said, 'It is not that I am not pleased with your way, but rather that my strength gives out.' The Master said, 'A man whose strength gives out collapses along the course. In your case you set the limits beforehand," or "you limit yourself".²¹⁶ This shows that Tao is not something outside of man, but rather that Tao is rooted in man. It is not just an ideal ethical entity outside of man to be striven for, it is an entity which grows in and from the activity of man.

This conception of Tao is not the only Tao according to Confucius. He emphasizes that "our Tao" is to be distinguished from the Tao of others. Tao of others may be a positive notion. "Discussing the good points in the conduct (= Tao 道) of others" is taken as being a profitable activity.²¹⁷ However, there is a limit to this intercourse between people who follow different ways; "There is no point in people taking counsel together who follow different ways" (= Tao).²¹⁸

Confucius understands that his Tao is the only right conduct, although it is not followed in order to solve his difficulties.²¹⁹ Apparently, according to Confucius, there are different kinds of Taos. These may have good points when compared with each other, in other words, the different Taos have good points in different aspects. Because of this, it is profitable to have intercourse between the supporters of different Taos, to a certain extent. However, generally the Tao of Confucius, as defined mainly through the ideas of antiquity and the concepts mentioned above, is the only right Tao to be followed. One should also pay attention to the fact that "our Tao" is not outside "us", it attunes "my" will with the moral code, it is a harmonizing subject of "my" person and action.²²⁰

²¹⁵ AN. 15:28, LAU 1979, p. 136. CHI SAN CHING 1977, p. 140. CHU Hsi 1952, p. 110. This interpretation is followed by Chu. See CHU, Tien-kuang-hung 1976, p. 1028.

Creel declares that this sentence emphasizes that the Confucian Way was "not a thing in the mystical sense in which the Taoists later regarded it as such." The Way of Confucius was not a "cosmic absolute". CREEL 1975, pp. 47, 48.

According to Wing-tsit Chan this sentence, AN. 15:28, expresses Confucius's concentration on man. CHAN Wing-tsit 1970, p. 15.

Tong says that "Confucius centers his philosophical effort upon the moral Tao of man." TONG 1969, p. 522. Tu says about this sentence: "The question of the ultimate meaning of human existence, in light of the agelong belief that 'it is man that can make the Way great and not the Way that can make man great,' is thus an anthropocosmic question." TU Wei-ming 1989, p. 2.

²¹⁶ AN. 6:10, p. 118. LEGGE I 1969, p. 188; LAU 1979, pp. 82, 83.

²¹⁷ AN. 16:5, p. 205. This book, 16, with its many numbered categories, is apparently from a later date than books 1-15, and its statements need not necessarily be consistent with the rest of the Analects.


²¹⁸ AN. 15:39, LAU 1979, AN. 15:40, p. 137; LEGGE I 1969, p. 305. See also AN. 2:16, p. 91, WALEY 1964, p. 91, footnote 4, FRANKE 1953, p. 75, FORKE 1925, pp. 112-118. WATTS 1968, p. 108: "...to follow its own *tao*, because if we do not allow all other things their *tao* we cannot expect to have our own *tao*."

²¹⁹ AN. 6:12,15, pp. 118,119. LAU 1979, AN. 6:17, p. 83.

²²⁰ Fingarette starts from explaining "self" "as a self-observing and self-regulating individual, a self sharply distinct from others... From this self there arises a kind of directed dynamism - wanting." "Confucius appeals to us to activate our will." "Our will is inherently a *personal will*" In Fingarette's explanation "Confucius teaches, as central to his Way, that we must have *no self* and *not* impose our

Confucius brings out the importance of Tao by saying: "He has not lived in vain who dies the day he is told about the Way." Chiu interprets this by saying that eternal life is found in this world, death does not matter, provided that it will help to preserve virtue instead of injuring it.²²¹

2. Universal Tao

Tao appears in the Analects also as a universal principle prevailing or not prevailing universally under Heaven or in a country. Whether Tao prevails or not is determined by Heaven. What is apparently talked about in this context is the Way of Confucius which prevails or does not prevail according to the will of Heaven or Destiny ²²²

personal will." Confucius rejects certain motives and goals, such as personal profit, fame etc. Fingarette states quite rightly that "it is not that there is anything intrinsically wrong with fame, wealth, honor, or even sensual pleasure - *if* such things arise as incidental effects of a will directed to the Way (*tao*) for its own sake." "It is true that I and only I can will *my* will, but it may be that *what* I will is what is called for by ... the *Tao*, and that my reason for so willing is precisely that this *is* what the *tao* calls for." "In respect to the ground of my will in such cases, my will is *not* personal. For neither *Tao* nor its subsidiary aspects are defined by reference to me uniquely." "The moral authority is independent of reference to me. The ground = *Tao* in which I choose and justify the direction for my will ... is no way one that has reference to me personally." "Egoists are those who have their will rooted in themselves personally as ground." "The ego is present in the egoist's will. The *Tao* is present in the *chun tzu's* will." FINGARETTE 1979, pp. 133-136.

Ch'ien points out that truth in Confucianism is a personal matter and that unlike Catholic Christianity Confucianism does not have problems of unbelief and heresy. CHIEN Hsin-tsu 1989, p. 12.

Above it was seen that there is a tension between Tao and the tendency of man or the personal will of man. On the other hand, however, it was seen that Tao is not outside of man to the extent that Fingarette maintains. Fingarette seems to presuppose that wealth and rank and things like these are more according to the personal will of a man than Tao. On the basis of the Analects it is hard to distinguish this difference, since we saw above that Tao is defined in certain respects with reference to man. Tao is rather an entity which grows and gets shape in company with those who have Tao and in learning, and shapes one's self to act willingly, spontaneously, according to Tao. The function of Tao is the ennoblement of one's person and self and will according to Tao.

One should also take into account the other Taos mentioned. Selfishness can be regarded as a kind of Tao, which is not recommended to be followed. Mostly, however, Confucius speaks about Tao as his own Tao.

M. Roberts says: "In the great majority of locutions in which it (= Tao) appears, however, the term *Tao* refers to the Right Order or a Right Way, often in a political sense, but with no clue as to what this might mean." ROBERTS 1966, p. 47. The text above shows that there are several definitive clues to the Tao of Confucius already at this stage of "general Tao", and more clues later to characterize the universal Tao, Tao of state administration and Tao of the gentleman. In terms of methodology, one should explore all the occurrences of Tao in the Analects first, before going to later sources, in order to establish Confucian Tao.

M. Roberts regards Tao as primarily a metaphysical question. From this point of view it may be necessarily to go outside of the Analects, where the metaphysical characteristics of Tao are not much developed. M. Roberts translates AN. 1:2 本立而道生, "When (these moral) fundamentals are established, the *Tao* becomes productive." ROBERTS 1966, p. 47. Compare with LAU 1979, p. 59. WALEY 1964, p. 83. "Tao grows", is a more probable translation. (M. Roberts has apparently translated a preconceived opinion in his mind.)

²²¹ AN. 4:8, LAU 1979, p. 73, CHIU 1984, p. 441.

²²² AN. 14:38, pp. 189, 190. LAU 1979, AN. 14:36, p. 130. "Under Heaven" 天下 is not mentioned here. LEGGE I 1969, p. 289.

When discussing the characteristics of Tao under Heaven Confucius said that "When the way prevails in the Empire, 天下有道, the rites and music and punitive expeditions are initiated by the emperor. When the Way does not 天下無道 prevail in the Empire, they are initiated by the feudal lords. When the Way prevails in the Empire, policy does not rest with the Counsellors. When the Way prevails in the Empire, the Commoners do not express critical views." The lower the rank of governmental administration which initiate the rites, music and punitive expeditions, the shorter is the dynasty.²²³ According to this passage, if the Way prevails under Heaven, its consequence is that the emperor has the authority to give orders. It also seems to be a question of the proper order of the different ranks of officers and their activities as a means of achieving the main administrative goal, peace and harmony in the empire. Schwartz says that the word Tao is Confucius's inclusive name for all-embracing normative human order.²²⁴

Confucius taught how one should adapt oneself to the Way prevailing or not prevailing. "Show yourself when the way prevails in the empire, but hide yourself when it does not. It is a shameful matter to be poor and humble when the Way prevails in the state. Equally, it is shameful matter to be rich and noble when the Way falls into disuse in the state." Economically, Confucius is of the opinion that wealth and high station can be accepted only in the right Way, Tao. It follows from this that if one is rich when the Way has fallen into disuse in the state, this means that one has obtained one's riches against the Way. In the realm of economy, Confucius told Tzu-hsia, the prefect of Chü Fu that he should not see only the petty gains: "If you see only the petty gains, the great tasks will not be accomplished." The petty gains may refer to some small gains in governmental administration or equally some personal economic gains. The great tasks surely are related to Way in the country.²²⁵

Another person said of Confucius: "The Empire has long been without the Way. Heaven is about to use your Master as the wooden tongue for a bell." Schwartz notes that it is clear from the Analects that the Tao as "all-embracing normative human order" does not prevail in the world of Confucius's time. Confucius had also a deep sense of alienation from the way things were. Schwartz says: "If the word 'conservative', means a satisfied approval of a prevailing state of affairs, Confucius is anything but a conservative."²²⁶ The effect of Way under Heaven seems to refer in these passages to the possibility of Confucius being allowed to proclaim his principles. If the Way does not prevail, he is unable or not allowed to do that, he must keep quiet. There is also a

²²³ AN: 16:2, LAU 1979, p. 139. See text LEGGE I 1969, p. 310.

²²⁴ YANG 1969, p. 138. "Verdensaltets store harmoni, tao, er et forbillede som det menneskelige samfund skal aftegnede og efterstrøbe,..." EGEROD 1964, p. 315. See also LIDIN 1974, pp. 5-9. SCHWARTZ 1985, p. 63

²²⁵ AN 8:13, 4:5, 13:17, LAU 1979, pp. 94,72,121. CHANG Chien 1989, p. 42. "To become very rich one must tax excessively. Thus Confucius quite naturally considered the very wealthy to be oppressors." CREEL 1951, p. 163.

²²⁶ AN. 3:24, LAU 1979, p. 71. SCHWARTZ 1985, p. 63. Confucius is active when than Way prevails in the empire. AN. 18:6, LAU 1979, p. 150. The Analects see the problematic of realizing the Tao, or the difficulties in realizing Tao in practice. AN. 18:7, LAU 1979, p. 151. This is in the less reliable part of the Analects.

statement which concerns the effect on the relationship between an officer's speech and actions of the situation when Tao prevails in the country 天下有道 or when Tao does not prevail in the country 天下無道 "When the Way prevails in the state, speak and act with perilous high-mindedness; when the Way does not prevail, act with perilous high-mindedness but speak with self-effacing diffidence."²²⁷

Confucius mentions a case when a person did not change his attitude when Tao ceased to prevail in the country, and another case when the person left office in similar circumstances. Confucius seems not to disapprove of either of these.²²⁸ This passage shows that Confucius paid attention to the problem of choice²²⁹ in governmental affairs, which were also closely related to moral behavior here. It was correct to do either way.

Confucius expresses his admiration when an officer or minister, Ning Wu Tzu of Wei, despite the confusion in the country when his prince was dethroned, and thus the Way did not prevail any more, remained loyal to his prince and brought the disorder to an end, and the prince was reinstated. In this context Confucius states: "Others may equal his intelligence but they cannot equal his stupidity", meaning that the minister was brave.²³⁰ Here the Tao of the country means the peaceful and harmonious, political situation in a feudal state.

Tao may be very close to being attained: "At one stroke Ch'i can be made into a Lu, and Lu, at one stroke, can be made to attain the Way." Here Lu as a preserver of the old tradition is closer to Tao than Ch'i.²³¹

3. Tao of Ruling

Universal Tao under Heaven leads to using Tao in ruling and to realizing Tao universally in practice.

In Books One and Two, Tao was used in the sense of 'administer' and 'govern', or to 'guide'. "The Master said, 'In guiding a state of a thousand chariots, approach your duties with reverence and be trustworthy in what you say; avoid excesses in expenditure and love your fellow men; employ the labour of the common people only in the right

²²⁷ AN. 14:4, p. 180, AN. 14:3, LAU 1979, p. 124, LAU 14:3, p. 124. See the text LEGGE I 1969, p. 276.

²²⁸ AN. 15:6, LAU 1979, AN. 15:7, p. 133. For a discussion of the difficulties of realizing Tao in practice, see AN. 18:7, p. 151. See also AN. 18:4, pp. 218,219.

²²⁹ Fingarette stresses quite strongly that "the problem of genuine choice among real alternatives never occurred to Confucius, or at least never clearly occurred to him as a fundamental moral task." FINGARETTE 1972, pp. 21-24. Fu disagrees and refers to AN. 15:9, 14:2, 17:23, 4:10, 15:36, see LAU 1979, pp. 133, 125, 126, 147, 148, 73, 137. FU 1978, pp. 183, 184.

²³⁰ AN. 5:20, p. 112. LAU 1979, AN. 5:21, p. 79. Waley explains the background: Ning Wu Tzu was "a minister of Wei (seventh century B.C.), famous for his blind devotion to his prince, whose enemies had incarcerated him in a deep dungeon. Here Ning managed to feed his prince through a tube." WALEY 1964, p. 112.

²³¹ AN. 6:22, LAU 1979, AN. 6:24, p. 84. Chu Hsi explains the background of this statement: during Confucius's time Ch'i was eager to be strong, but usually it did not use good methods to attain strength. The state Lu was eager to follow the rites, Li 禮 and righteousness, I 義 The good tradition of the ancient times was preserved in Lu. CHU HSI 1952, p. 39.

seasons."²³² Confucius advises the ruler: "Guide them by edicts, keep them in line with punishments, and the common people will stay out of trouble but will have no sense of shame. Guide them by virtue 德, keep them in line with the rites 禮, and they will, besides having a sense of shame, reform themselves."²³³ The governor must not kill those who do not have the Way 道.²³⁴ From this we can see that if the people are governed by virtue, this will lead to ethical growth, an automatic improvement of the ethical behavior of the people. In this way the people themselves get a sense of ethical behavior. If the people are governed by force, this will cause them to behave ethically according to the necessary minimum.

Even if the duke may not have Tao, it is still possible for him to keep his country or state, if he has good officers.²³⁵

The ideal of the old kings in the Tao of ruling is well expressed.²³⁶ It was an essential part of the ideal of ancient kings that they ruled by goodness and not by force.²³⁷ The way of the former kings got this beauty 美 from prizing the harmony 和 in the usage of ritual, 禮 but the harmony had to be modulated by the ritual.²³⁸

It seems to be the right attitude for an officer to retire when it is not possible to serve his lord according to the way. Rubin says: "Confucius and his pupils regarded withdrawal as the most honorable way of demonstrating protest."²³⁹ The attitude of Confucius himself was that if the Way makes no progress 道不行 he will go and settle among the barbarians.²⁴⁰ But, Confucius regarded such a person as good who "was not cast aside when the Way prevailed in the state and when the Way fell into disuse he stayed clear of the humiliation of punishment."²⁴¹

²³² AN. 1:5, LAU 1979, p. 59. Waley explains the contents: "Bad rulers on the contrary, listen to music or go hunting when they ought to be attending to business, continually employ labour on ostentatious building schemes etc." WALEY 1967, p. 84.

²³³ AN. 2:3, LAU 1979, p. 63. LEGGE I 1969, p. 146. TS'AI Jen-hou 1986, p. 21. Egerod explains: "Her er dao altså dydens vej, og dyden er den moralske kraft. For Kongfuzi er dyden ikke den naturgivne lykke, men den er stadig naturgiven, og den kan stadig øve kraftig indflydelse på andre. Alle menneskers fødes gode, men godheden kan mistes. Den ædle med den store dyd skal hjælpe den som har mindre dydkraft. Vigtigst af alt er det at kongen bruger den enestående position, hvori Himlen har anbragt ham, at han følger sin kongelige vej." EGEROD 1990, p. 84.

Master Tseng describes the loss of the way: "It is long since those above lost the Way of the Ruler and the common people lost their cohesion. If you find evidence of this, then be sad and show pity rather than be pleased at discovering such evidence." AN. 19:19, p. 228.

²³⁴ AN. 12:19, LAU 1979, p. 115.

²³⁵ AN. 14:20, LAU 1979, p. 127.

²³⁶ AN. 19:22, LAU 1979, p. 156.

²³⁷ AN. 3:16, p. 98.

²³⁸ AN. 1:12, p. 86. For information about the ideal of the ancients see also KRAMERS 1979, p. 59.

²³⁹ AN. 11:23, LAU 1979, AN. 11:24, p. 109. RUBIN 1986, p. 166. EBER 1986, pp. 144,145.

²⁴⁰ AN. 5:6, p. 108. Legge I 1964, p. 174, 175. The main point of this passage is that Confucius felt sad because Tao did not prevail in the country. HSIEH Ping-ying 1976, p. 88. See also LAU 1979 AN. 5:7, pp. 76, 77. About Confucius going among the barbarians see also: AN. 9:13. LAU 1979 AN. 9:14, p. 98.

²⁴¹ "He gave him (Nan-jung) his elder brother's daughter in marriage." AN. 5:1, LAU 1979, AN. 5:2, p. 76. AN. 19:4 "The men of Ch'i made a present of singing and dancing girls. Chu Huan Tzu accepted them and stayed away from court for three days. Confucius departed." LAU 1979, p. 149.

4. Tao of the Gentleman

Tao is mentioned in the Analects as a personal characteristic of those responsible for ruling, the gentlemen 君子. He "perfects his way through learning 學".²⁴² Learning, in connection with Tao, apparently means associating with those who possess Tao and taking them as a good example.²⁴³ The Analects describe how the Way of the gentleman grows: "The gentleman devotes his efforts to the roots 本, for once the roots are established, the Way will grow therefrom. Being good as a son and obedient as a young man is, perhaps, the root of man's character."²⁴⁴ Opposite to these "roots" or primary things stand the "small Tao", about which it is said: "Tzu-hsia said, Even the minor walks 小道 (of knowledge) have an importance of their own. But, if pursued too far they tend to prove a hindrance; for which reason a gentleman does not cultivate them."²⁴⁵

The "small Tao" has been understood mainly in two ways. One interpretation is given by Chu Hsi, who understands it to mean the way of farmers, gardeners, physicians and fortune tellers. This interpretation is reflected in the translation above.²⁴⁶ Another interpretation is to understand the Hsiao Tao 小道 to mean I Tuan, 異端, heterodoxy. The concept appears in the passage: "The Master said: 'To study of strange doctrines, I Tuan, is injurious indeed.'²⁴⁷ Teng says that I Tuan "implies heathenism or

²⁴² AN. 19:7. This is said in contrast with the artisan: "The artisan, in any of the hundred crafts, masters his trade by staying in his workshop; the gentleman perfects his way through learning." 百工居肆，以成其事，君子學以致其道。LAU 1979, p. 154. LEGGE I 1969, p. 341.

²⁴³ AN. 1:14, LAU 1979, p. 61. Fingarette says that one can be truly following the Way... for a wholehearted commitment to learning the Way is itself the Way for those who are not yet perfected in the Way. Fingarette also says: "The basic conception of man in the Analects is that he is a being born into the world - more specially into society - with the potentiality to be shaped into a truly human form." This must be elaborated by learning and culture, shaped and controlled by li. FINGARETTE 1972, p. 21. See also AN. 19:19, p. 228.

²⁴⁴ AN. 1:2. 君子務本，本立，而道生，孝弟也者，其為仁之本與。LEGGE I 1969, pp. 138, 139. LAU 1979, p. 59. Cf. ROBERTS 1966, p. 47.

For matters which are 本 see AN. 19:12, Lau 1979, p. 154. Actions like sweeping and cleaning are regarded as being opposite to the basic 本 or essential concerns of the gentleman. See also LEGGE I 1969, p. 343. AN. 19:4 "Even minor arts 小道 (such as agriculture, medicine etc.) are sure to have their worthwhile aspects, but the gentleman does not take them up because the fear of a man who would go long way is that he should be bogged down." LAU 1979, p. 153. LEGGE I 1969, pp. 340, 341. See also YEN 1972, p. 18.

²⁴⁵ AN. 19:4, p. 225.

²⁴⁶ CHU HSI 1952, p. 132. Lau clearly follows Chu Hsi. LAU D.C. 1979, p. 153. TENG Ssu-yü 1984, p. 340.

²⁴⁷ AN 2:16, LEGGE I 1969, p. 150. The concept I Tuan is translated by Waley as "a different strand". WALEY 1964, p. 91. Ware translates it as "utterly new and strange doctrines." WARE 1975, p. 14. "Small Tao" is interpreted as heterodoxy, I Tuan, by Liu Pao-nan, See LIU Pao-nan 1973, p. 32. According to Teng this interpretation was started by Ho Yen, 3rd, century A.D. "and was recently endorsed by the legal historian, Ch'eng Shu'te". TENG Ssu-yü, 1984, p. 340, and CHENG Shu-te 1974, pp. 93-97, 1133,1134.

Lau translates the passage: "The Master said, 'To attack a task from the wrong end can do nothing but

paganism in the sense that he who is not a Confucian is an i-tuan." Teng, who shares this viewpoint, translates the passage in AN. 19:4 as "Even the lesser doctrines certainly have their attraction."²⁴⁸ Both interpretations have their merit and can be understood on the basis of the Analects. Chu Hsi's interpretation is understandable from the background that the gentleman did not need to know so many practical matters as Confucius did himself. Ho Yen's interpretation can be understood in the light of the passage about heterodoxy above. Neither interpretation conflicts with the Analects.

An essential aspect of the Tao of the Gentleman is that he takes it as the most important thing in life and is not concerned about how to make a living, or whether he will get any reward. However, simplicity or modesty alone is not a way to excellence.²⁴⁹

Confucius twice enumerates some characteristics which belong to Tao. "A man of benevolence never worries (about the future); a man of wisdom is never in two minds (about right or wrong); a man of courage is never afraid."²⁵⁰

The second enumeration is: "The Master said of Tzu-ch'an that he had the way of the gentleman on four counts: he was respectful in the manner he conducted himself; he was reverent in the service of his lord; in caring for the common people, he was generous and, in employing their services, he was just."²⁵¹

There is also a third enumeration, made by master Tseng when he was seriously ill and about to die: "There are three things which the gentleman values most in the Way: to stay clear of violence by putting on a serious countenance, to come close to being trusted by setting a proper expression on his face, and to avoid being boorish and unreasonable by speaking in proper tones. As for the business of sacrificial vessels, there are officials responsible for that."²⁵²

Confucius said: "The gentleman who has studied the Way loves his fellow men and the small man who has studied the Way is easy to command."²⁵³ According to Confucius "The gentleman 君子 is easy to serve but difficult to please. He will not be pleased unless you try to please him by following the Way, but when it comes to employing the services of others, he does so within the limits of their capacity. The small man 小人 is difficult to serve but easy to please. He will be pleased even though you try to please him by not following the Way, but when it comes to employing the services of others, he demands all-round perfection."²⁵⁴

There are also two passages about the way of a knight or officer, shih 士

harm." LAU 1979, p. 16.

²⁴⁸ TENG Ssu-yü 1984, p. 340.

²⁴⁹ AN. 15:31, p. 199. LAU 1979. 15:32, p. 136. AN. 14:1, p. 180, LAU 1979, p. 124. "It is shameful to make salary your sole object, irrespective of whether the Way prevails in the state or not." AN. 14:1. Tao should be more important than riches. AN. 4:5 p. 192, LAU 1979, p. 72. See also CHANG Chien 1989, p. 42.

For Confucius's thoughts on modesty or wearing a worn-out gown and standing beside a man wearing fur or badger fur without feeling ashamed see AN. 9:26, LAU 1979, AN. 9:27, p. 100. LEGGE I 1969, p. 225.

²⁵⁰ AN. 14:30 p. 188, LAU 1979, AN. 14:28, p. 128. LEGGE I 1969, p. 286. 子曰，君子道者三，我無能為，仁者不憂，知者不惑，勇者不懼。

²⁵¹ AN. 5:15, LAU 1979, AN. 5:16, p. 78. Tzu-ch'an was a minister in the state of Cheng, he died in 522 B.C. WALEY 1964, p. 110. LEGGE 1969, pp. 178, 179.

²⁵² AN. 8:4, p. 133, LAU 1979, pp. 92, 93. LEGGE 1969, p. 209.

²⁵³ AN. 17:4, p. 133, LAU 1979, p. 143. LEGGE I 1969, p. 319.

²⁵⁴ AN. 13:25, p. 177, LAU 1979, pp. 122, 123.

According to Confucius: "There is no point in seeking the views of a knight who, though he sets his heart on the Way, is ashamed of poor food and poor clothes."²⁵⁵ The second passage says that "A knight must be strong and resolute, for his burden is heavy and the road is long. He takes benevolence as his burden. Is that not heavy? Only with death does the road come to an end. Is that not long?"²⁵⁶

Tao appears twice in the meaning of an ordinary road. It also appears in the meaning of a way of doing something and to lead or to guide.²⁵⁷

5. Early Confucian Tao and Tao in Shu Ching

Shu Ching and the Analects place Tao in a retrospective environment. In Shu Ching, the Duke of Chou's Tao was to transmit the serene king's virtue. This retrospective aspect of Tao entailed following the Tao of the old kings; thus preserving the continuity of tradition. The bases of this tradition was firstly the idea that the king was perfect, and secondly the ideal of objectivity or non-partiality, which showed itself particularly in impartiality when judging criminal cases. In the Analects this retrospectivity meant that the ancient people were a good example or model for the contemporary people. The filiality also meant to preserve the ways of one's father; thus preserving the tradition. In this way both Shu Ching and the Analects have a conservative tendency related to Tao.

In Shu Ching Heaven announced its way when giving the lands of the four quarters to Wen and Wu. This may be interpreted as resembling the Confucian "universal Tao". In the Analects this Tao is determined by Heaven, but in Shu Ching this is the Tao of Heaven. The conception of Tao in both sources has a transcendental dimension. Confucius developed this universal Tao further by discussing whether it prevails or not and what the implications are for those responsible for governing. These questions are not discussed in connection with Tao in Shu Ching.

Tao of ruling appears in Shu Ching as well. It is attached to the continuity of tradition mentioned above. The king's Tao is the royal perfection which stimulates people to follow it. In this context the Analects have the retrospective dimension as well, but develop the notion further by stating that the old kings ruled by goodness and not by force. Here Confucius has a principle of automatic control in government and automatic improvement of the ethical behavior of the people. To some extent this grows from the idea in Shu Ching which is the smooth and easy king's Tao, which is

²⁵⁵ AN. 4:9, p. 103, LAU 1979, p. 73. Knight, shih, 士 refers to an officer of low rank. LAU 1979, p. 12. LIU Pao-nan 1073, p. 78. LEGGE I 1969 p. 168.

²⁵⁶ AN. 8:7, p. 134, Lau 1979, p. 93.

Tao is mentioned once as Tao of a judge 士師. This reveals that a person worth following in office is faithful in realizing Tao, without compromises, despite the difficulties he may suffer because of his conviction of Tao. AN. 18:2, LAU 1979, p. 149, LEGGE I 1969, p. 331.

²⁵⁷ AN. 9:11, p. 141, LAU 1979, 9:12, p. 98. AN. 17:14, p. 213, LAU 1979, p. 146. Tao does not appear explicitly in Lau's translation.

AN. 15:41, p. 201, WALEY 1964, p. 201, LAU 1979, 15:42, p. 137. Here it refers to a way of assisting a blind music master.

AN. 19:25, p. 230, WALEY 1964, p. 230. LAU 1979, p. 157. LEGGE I 1964, p. 349. AN.12:23, p. 170, LEGGE I 1964, p. 261.

objective and non partial, and which also stimulates men to follow it.

Tao of the Gentleman in the Analects can be compared with Tao of Chou Kung, which was to prolong or continue the "serene King's virtue" in Shu Ching. In the place of this retrospective motive, Confucius regards learning and following the example of those who possess Tao, and not being too much concerned about personal economy as being the correct way. In addition, the Analects lists different characteristics of the Tao of the gentleman.

Confucius relates Tao to other concepts: not to rule by force, but by goodness, filiality, loyalty and consideration. Shu Ching relates it to objectivity in ruling and judging crimes. This can be regarded as being a kind of definitive attribute of Tao in Shu Ching. However, the definitive attributes of Tao are more developed in the Analects through the relation to other concepts.

There are a number of other differences between Shu Ching and the Analects. In Shu Ching Tao was transmitted to the highest levels of governmental administration. This is natural because Shu Ching reflects the official Chou propaganda of the Chou ruling class. The Analects bring Tao down to a lower level. Through filiality Tao has been widened so that it has a general application in the attitude of any son to his deceased father.

Tao of ruling in the Analects is a more advanced principle than in Shu Ching. Its relations to Te and Li are new; its legal usage and the idea of retiring are new in the Analects compared with Shu Ching.

Although Tao in Shu Ching is a much less developed concept than in the Analects, in Shu Ching one still finds a concrete and a more abstract usage of the term. The Analects has developed its more abstract meaning, although the Analects use the term also to mean an ordinary road.²⁵⁸

6. Early Confucian Tao and Tao in Shih Ching

A comparison between the Analects and Shih Ching is perhaps more valid than a comparison with Shu Ching, since Shih Ching has 32 occurrences of Tao.

In Shih Ching too, Tao appears as a method of governing, resembling the Tao of ruling in the Analects. In addition Shih Ching has Tao as a method in the agricultural connection.

The main meaning of Tao in Shih Ching is the ordinary road. In the Analects the term appears in this sense in two occurrences.

Tao in Shih Ching does not bear any special rationalistic or ideological connotation, but it has the connotation of "the method of governing". This may indicate that the abstraction of Tao started from the governmental application of the word, and this sense of the word is developed further by Confucius.²⁵⁹

The comparison shows that of the earlier traditions, it is Shu Ching which shares a common ground with the Analects. Shih Ching speaks mostly about a concrete road,

²⁵⁸ For a more detailed account of Tao in Shu Ching, see NIKKILÄ 182, pp. 134-137.

²⁵⁹ For a more detailed account of Tao in Shih Ching, see NIKKILÄ 1982, pp. 185-189.

whereas Shu Ching speaks about Tao at a higher level of abstraction. Confucius has used the term on a higher level of abstraction by applying Tao in several usages and giving some definitive attributes for it. However, Confucius's thought cannot be described as a Tao philosophy, which would center on Tao. This is so even though Tao touches the core of Confucian thinking.

7. A Comparison of with Lao Tzu's Concept of Tao

a. Different Conceptions of Tao

To write about Tao of Lao Tzu is a vast undertaking. A thorough study, even in outline, would inevitably form the body of this work. The present study is not therefore intended to go deeply into Taoist philosophy. The purpose is rather only to trace the changes which occurred when the early Confucian philosophy was formed. A short comparison with Lao Tzu is included so that we may see more clearly the special characteristics of Confucian philosophy compared to other schools. So only a short survey of Lao Tzu's Tao, and a comparison with the Analects will suffice for our purposes.

Tao is the main concept of Lao Tzu. However, a number of authors have identified a number of different kinds of Taos within it. In the following some conceptual divisions are listed: Chiu divides Tao into the following categories: 1) Tao as the Ontological Reality, which is creative and produces and even regenerates all things in the universe. 2) Tao as the Universal Principle being the law of the universe. 3) Tao as the Creative force. 4) Tao as the Process of Individuation which permeates all things and allows each individual thing to be distinctive and unique. Here Chiu regards Te as a part of Tao: "Virtue (Te) is that part of Tao's creation in nursing, fostering, caring, and protecting an individual which also becomes the integral virtue of an individual and enables that individual to grow spontaneously." 5) Tao as the Way of Manifestation and Application. "Tao appears both in the Yin and Yang, heaven and earth, great and small, East and West, life and death, and any opposites and dichotomies." 6) Tao as the Final Harmony of the Universe. The final goal of Tao "is to integrate all things to unite in harmony". Chiu states that Tao is "coincidentia oppositorum" or the mystery of all mysteries. Chiu says:

"The peculiarity of Tao as a vision of harmony appear to lie in its emphasis on opposites as complements. In the language of Yin and Yang, the Tao points to a perspective for viewing contrasts and differences as eligible complements in a harmonious whole, since a Yin contains seeds of the generation of a Yang, and conversely; Yin and Yang are by their nature different but not exclusive."²⁶⁰

Fang divides the concept of Tao in the following way: 1) Ontologically Tao is the infinite ontic substance, which was multifariously characterized by Lao Tzu. (a) as the

²⁶⁰ CHIU, Milton M. 1984, pp. 6-12. CUA 1981, p. 128.

Chao calls Taoism which conceives the universe as a harmonious whole, a "Romantic Taoism". CHAO 1982, p. 47. Tang says: "Originally 'yin' meant what is concealed and unknown to us, and 'yang' meant what is manifested and known to us. They were originally concepts or attributes of things based on their status relative to other things, and were not originally concept of substance or force." TANG Chün-i 1964, p. 296. See also COOPER 1981, pp. 13-21.

fathomless unity of all beings, (b) as the fundamental root of heaven and earth, (c) as the primordial One having ingression into all forms of beings, (d) as the unique pattern of all kinds of activities, (e) as the Great Form, (f) as the final destiny. 2) Cosmogenetically, the infinitely great Tao is the all-pervasive function with an inexhaustible store of powerful energy. 3) Phenomenologically Fang classifies Tao under two headings, namely, natural attributes and arbitrary attributes. (4) "Characterologically, the supreme excellencies, manifested as the natural attributes, originally pertain to the nature of Tao but will come in ingress into the integrity of the sage, who is really the exemplar of the Tao in this world."²⁶¹

Thiel says that Tao includes several concepts in Tao Te Ching. Often Tao has been translated as Doctrine or Method. Other meanings are the Tao of Heaven, the logical Tao and "Tao im Sinne von Enstase oder Versenkung"²⁶²

According to Chen, Lao Tzu also uses the term Tao in various senses. 1a) Tao with a name is the beginning of heaven and earth and Tao without a name is the mother of myriad things. 1b) Tao as a storehouse of myriad things. 1c) Tao as an ultimate model of man. These characteristics above are the static side of Tao. The second main group is dynamic side of Tao. This group is: 2a) Tao as an agent or as an efficient cause. 2b) Tao which sustains the myriad beings. 2c) Tao as the process by contraries. The primary pair of contraries is Nothing and Being. 2d) Tao in these dynamic senses is conceived as a universal principle. The third main group is Tao in the moral sense. 3a) Declining Tao. 3b) Deviation from Tao is still to obey it. 3c) Tao as a norm.²⁶³

Tang classifies Tao into four levels in accordance with chapter 25 of Tao Te Ching: "The Man imitates the Earth, the Earth imitates the Heaven, the Heaven imitates the Tao and the Tao imitates itself as such."²⁶⁴

Tu explains Tao as moon or moon god. As god Tao is the "Vagina Gentium". Ethically, man should imitate this Tao godhead. Dark moon for Lao Tzu is a "basis, humility, patience, eternity, immutability something like the divine substance. The bright moon means active, superficial, false, even sinful."²⁶⁵

These examples already begin to show how diversified is the conception of Tao. In Lao Tzu's philosophy of Tao, we find different characteristics depending on the purposes Tao is used for. If we compare it with Confucius's conception of Tao it is possible to see to what extent the characteristics of Confucian Tao, the "General Tao", "Universal Tao", "Tao of ruling" and "Tao of Gentleman" correspond with and differ from the Taoist conception. For this purpose, it would be useful to see how Tao in Lao Tzu can be characterized on a very general level, or in other words, what phenomena of Tao arise from the text of Tao Te Ching itself. Any such attempt to characterize Tao in early Taoism is a matter of dispute, since Tao Te Ching has been interpreted in several ways. However, certain directions of thought can be discerned, although not very strict and definite ones.

²⁶¹ FANG, Thomé H. 1964, pp. 110-112.

²⁶² THIEL 1971, pp. 51-87.

²⁶³ CHEN, Chung-hwan 1964, pp. 150-158.

²⁶⁴ TANG Chün-i 1968, pp. 171-176,206.

²⁶⁵ TU Erh-wei 1978, pp. iii,iv.

b. Non Action.

Tao as a subject in Tao Te Ching appears in three different groups. 1) Non action, 2) the quality of Tao, 3) the usage of Tao.

First, the functioning of Tao. Tao functions by non action. This means that Tao is not involved in any specific activity to accomplish any project. Yet, Tao has accomplished everything that exists. "The way never acts yet nothing is left undone." Needham explains the concept Wu Wei 無為 which has generally been translated 'non-action' or 'inactivity', in such a way that the concept actually means 'refraining from activity contrary to Nature', i.e. "from insisting on going against the grain of things, from trying to make materials perform functions for which they are unsuitable, from exerting force in human affairs when the man of insight could see that it would be doomed to failure, and that subtler methods of persuasion, or simply letting things alone to take their own course, would bring about the desired result". Hsu notes that even if man has spoiled the natural world, it is wrong for man to think that it needs man to put it back into order. The more willfully he acts, the more chaotic and entangled the world would become. Wang Pi explains that the inactivity of Tao means that it follows nature. That nothing is left undone is explained as follows: "Nothing exists which is not governed or accomplished by action." This also shows the feminine characteristic of Taoism: The female "acts by not acting in both sex and in generation. She thus represents the nonassertive, the uncalculating, the nondeliberative, nonpurposeful processes of generation and growth - the processes by which the 'empty' gives rise to the full; the quiet gives rise to the active, and the 'one' gives rise to the many. The female is the epitome of wu-wei." It is important to see here, that in the place of this sentence in both of the Ma Wang Tui manuscripts there is: "The way is constantly nameless."²⁶⁶

²⁶⁶ LAO TZU 37:81, p. 96, CHENG, Chung-ying 1977b p. 316. NEEDHAM 1956, p. 68. HSU, Sung-peng 1976, pp. 303,304. LAO TZU 64, pp. 125,126, 73:179, p. 135. LIN, Paul J 1977, p. 37, WANG Pi 1975, p. 73, and WANG PI 1979, p. 107: "Tao invariably takes no action, This means to follow Nature, and yet there is nothing left undone. The myriad things follow it to begin and complete its being."

Strauss explains: "Wu Wei bedeutet Nicht-Tun (Nicht-Handeln, Nicht-Machen). Dieses Nicht-Tun ist keinesfalls ein Nichtstun, ist also ebensowenig wie Nicht-Sein als ein absolutes Nicht aufzufassen, sondern bloss als konträrer (nicht kontradiktorischer) Gegensatz zum Tun, wie die Negierung des phänomenalen Siens." STRAUSS 1950, pp. 41,42. Wulff says: Dieses wirken ohne zu handeln oder, wie Strauss feinsinnig sagt 'wirken ohne Werke' bezeichnet nicht, wie es von einigen verstanden worden ist, die absolute passivität, es besteht, um wiederum mit Strauss zu reden, 'im Nicht-Thun, keineswegs aber im Nichts-Thun', es heisst die dinge so zu 'machen' die verhältnisse so zu gestalten, dass die machende, die gestaltende hand nicht gespürt wird, zu lenken und zu leiten, ohne dass ein eingriff empfunden wird, weil eben alles natürliches, regelmässiges und selbstverständliches werdend und geschehen ist: wo ei eingriff erkennbar ist, indem die regelmässigkeit durchbrochen wird, da heisst es naturkatastrophe. Auf diese selbe weise soll auch die menschliche verhältnisse gestaltet, menschliche dinge 'gemacht' werden." WULFF 1942, pp. 32,33. On the Ma Wang Tui manuscripts, see MA WANG TUI 1980, p. 124.

LAU 1982, p. 322,323

In one instance Confucius, too, mentions this concept of non action: "The Master said, Among those that 'ruled by inactivity' surely Shun may be counted. For what action did he take? He merely placed himself gravely and reverently with his face due south; that was all." Schwartz explains that Yao, Shun and Yü were the founders of human civilization. Yao, The founder, and Yü, the controller of floods and promoter of agriculture, were more active than Shun, who was between the two. Shun manifested his virtue, Te, through all the civilized forms of high civilization.

"There is here, to be sure, no hint of Lao-tzu's 'primitivist' critique of high civilization. What Confucius dreams of is a society in which civilized behavior will 'just come naturally,' as it does in his own case after the age of seventy. This may be his dream, but he is acutely aware that this is not the actuality. The Tao can, in fact, be restored to the world only by the noble man's sustained conscious efforts, by painstaking self-scrutiny, a scrupulous attention to behavior, unflagging devotion to the cultivation of learning, attentive practice of li, and conscientious service in government."

Schwartz gives an observation of the history of ideas that Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu, were the first ones to, "draw on strains whose beginning can be discerned in the Analects" in developing further the philosophy of non action. However, Mo-tzu's idea of Wei or Yu-wei is directly opposed to this: "of deliberate, analytic, and goaloriented thought and action in a plural world... He lives in a world where order must be 'constructed'" Secondly, Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu "may also represent a sharp reaction against the exaltation of conscious, purposive action wei so explicitly and vehemently exposed by the Mohists."²⁶⁷

From the point of view of the history of ideas, there surely are deeper and stronger roots of Taoism than some of the ideas in the Analects, which might have been recorded earlier than the writings in the Tao Te Ching. The writings of Taoism are so different from the Analects that their origins must be elsewhere. It seems more probable that Confucius has taken something from the Taoist ideology which was "in the air", if not recorded in clear words. Taoist ideas had their own roots which the Taoists developed themselves, and Confucius has taken something from these same ideas, but the Taoists hardly developed anything through or via Confucius. However, it is possible that they have also in their turn approved something in the Confucian tradition.

Schwartz notes that the Confucians and Mohists shared the common view that "the achievement of the norms of civilization require both knowledge and deliberate unremitting moral efforts of sages, noble men, and men of worth." Early Taoism opposed this view: "In the Lao-tzu - Chuang-tzu perspective these sages were busybodies who wander about the world deceiving themselves in the belief that they can transform the human world by yu-wei activity."²⁶⁸

"Turning back is how the way moves. Weakness is the means the way employs." In Chu Hsi's opinion Lao Tzu was a selfish person always taking advantage of others. Because of this, he taught that weakness would overcome strength. In a commentary on the passage above he says:

"Lao Tzu always talked along this line, He knew the conditions of the world very well. He always approached things from the opposite. For instance, if a man is strong, shouts and kicks, he will

HENRICKS 1979, p. 190. See also LAO TZU 4:11, p. 60. WAGNER 1986, p. 102. SCHWARTZ 1985, pp. 200,201.

²⁶⁷ AN. 15:4, p. 193, SCHWARTZ 1985, pp. 189-191.

²⁶⁸ SCHWARTZ 1985, p. 191.

inevitably be exhausted. So Lao Tzu merely wanted to be a weak person. In the condition of weakness, he would conserve his strength completely. When the strength is exercised, it will be irresistible... The upshot will be that one will be cruel and unkind., regarding all people in the world as dummies."²⁶⁹

Chen interprets this passage: "Tao; therefore, is the movement of reversion". He explains that Tao is the beginning and the end of things including the process of becoming of things. "The becoming of things is a return to the origin after being originated and developed in the tao." This idea becomes even more clear in the passage: "The way is the refuge for the myriad creatures."²⁷⁰ This reflects the cyclic world-view, in which the things originate from Tao and return back to there. We can see how Tao functions in the following quote: "The way conceals itself in being nameless. It is the way alone that excels in bestowing and in accomplishing."²⁷¹

Although the Way acts through non action, still it is the "mother of the world", or primary origin of all that exists. A cosmogonic myth in Tao Te Ching says: "The way begets one; one begets two; two begets three; three begets the myriad creatures." In this passage, which is often seen as being the very crux of early Taoist ideology and cosmology, two apparently refer to Yin and Yang principles, since the next phrase is: "The myriad creatures carry on their backs yin and embrace in their arms the yang and are the blending of the generative forces of the two." Another explanation refers to the following phrase: "The myriad creatures in the world are born from Something 有 and Something from Nothing 無." According to this "one" is "something" and "two" is "nothing" and "three" is the synthesis of "something" and "nothing". Wang Pi explains the numbers and "the myriad things":

"Myriad things have myriad shapes but return to One... Because they are from nothingness. From nothingness comes One; this One may be called nothingness. Once it is called 'One', how can it not be described? Having One and describing it, are there not two? Having One and two, then there is three. From non-being to being, the numbers end here. From this point on, nothing flows from Tao. Therefore, regarding the birth of myriad things, I know their master (Tao). Thought with myriad shapes, they blend breaths into one."

Girardot says: "The meaning of life from this perspective is that life is not a binary manipulation of two different kinds of 'things,' not movement between two separate and static antipodes, but the pure process or constant creative transition that can only be artificially or culturally cut into discrete bits, categories, ideas, words, utensils, and containers." Yu suggests that the creation myth of Chaos is the antecedent of the concept Tao. Chaos is present in creation as its source. When Tao produced one, this may simply have meant that Chaos is perfection, and the "one" is a symbol of coincidentia oppositorum, the unity of opposites, which refers to Yin and Yang. Because Chaos is the source of creation, it is potentially present in the myriad things as their original

²⁶⁹ LAO TZU 40:88, p. 101, CHENG, Chung-ying 1977a, p. 316. CHAN, Wing-tsit 1975, pp. 132,133. See also CREEL 1929, p. 97.

²⁷⁰ LAO TZU 62.143, p. 123. CHEN, Chung-hwan 1964, pp. 151-154. About returning NEEDHAM 1956, pp. 75,76, BODDE 1967, p. 21.

²⁷¹ LAO TZU 41:92, p. 102, See also LAO TZU 73:179, p. 135, CHANG, Aloysius 1974, p. 23. Wang Pi comments: "In general, all skillfulness is perfected through Tao. In regard to forms, it is great form, but the great form has no shape. In regard to music, it is great music, but great music sounds faint. Things are accomplished by Tao, but one does not see their complete shape. Therefore it is hidden and without name." Wang Pi comments on Lao Tzu 25:56, "I do not know its name: A name determines a form. What is indifferntiated, complete, and formless cannot be determined." WANG PI 1979, pp. 126, 75. See also WAGNER 1986, p. 108. FINAZZO 1968, P. 17.

nature.²⁷² There is a division of function between Tao and Te. Tao is the life giving force, but Te acts in taking care of the creatures.²⁷³

The way of Heaven (T'ien Tao) is neutral: "It is the way of heaven to show no favoritism. It is for ever on the side of the good man."²⁷⁴ This is at the end of the Tao Te Ching; it seems to reflect a certain Confucian influence. A similar sentiment can be seen in the way that Tao of heaven presses down the high and lifts up the low, and "It is the way of heaven to take from what has in excess in order to make good what is deficient."²⁷⁵ This resembles the Confucian idea of searching the mean, or balancing between the extremes.

c. The Quality of Tao

The quality of the way cannot be described. The well known beginning of Tao Te Ching is: 道可道，非常道，名可名，非常名。 "The way that can be spoken of, Is not the constant way; The name that can be named Is not the constant name."²⁷⁶ This passage has been translated in many ways. To illustrate the problems in understanding Tao Te Ching, some translations are listed below:

"The Tao that can be expressed is not the eternal Tao; The name that can be defined is not the unchanging name." (Ch'u Ta-ko)

"The Tao Way that can be (told of:) defined is not the constant Way, the names that can be named (used as terms) (sc. for notions, such as 'good' and 'bad', cf. Ch. 2) are not constant names (terms)." (Karlgrén)

"Den Norm som kan angivas som norm är ej den eviga Normen. Det namn som kan nämnas är ej det eviga namnet." (Karlgrén)

The Way that can be told of is not an Unvarying Way; The names that can be named are not unvarying names." (Waley)

"The DAO that can be expressed is not the eternal DAO. The name that can be named is not the eternal name.", "Der SINN, der sich aussprechen lässt, ist nicht der ewige SINN. Der Name, der sich nennen lässt, ist nicht der ewige Name." (Wilhelm)

"The TAO that can be told of is not the eternal TAO; The name that can be named is not the eternal name." (Chan)

"The Tao that can be spoken of is not the Tao itself. The name that can be given is not the name itself." (Chang)

"The Tao that can be expressed is not the eternal Tao; The name that can be defined is not the unchanging name." (Ch'u)

"There are ways but the Way is uncharted: There are names but not nature is words." (Blakeney)

"Tao, kann es ausgesprochen werden, ist nicht das ewige Tao. Der Name, kann er genannt werden, ist nicht der ewige Name." (Strauss)

"Der ANSCHLUSS, den man herstellen kann, ist nicht der grosse Anschluss; der Zustand, den man

²⁷² LAO TZU 25:56, p. 82, 42:93,94, p. 103. 40:89, p. 101. WEI Cheng-t'ung 1969, p. 474. See also LAO TZU 2:5, p. 58. ZHAN Jianfeng 1983, p. 64. NEEDHAM 1956, p. 50. FENG Yu-lan 1972, pp. 100-102. BÉKY 1984, p. 82. LIN, Paul J. 1977, p. 42. WANG Pi 1975, p. 90. GIRARDOT 1983, pp. 56-58, 246. FINAZZO 1968, P. 25.

YU, David C 1981, pp. 485-488. COLEGRAVE 1979, pp. 28,32,33,50-59.

²⁷³ LAO TZU 51:115, p. 112.

²⁷⁴ LAO TZU 79:192, p. 141, 81:196, p. 143, DE GROOT 1918, p. 31. For an account of the way prevailing in the empire, see also LAO TZU 46:104, p. 128.

²⁷⁵ LAO TZU 77:184, p. 139. See also ROBERTS 1975, pp. 40,41.

²⁷⁶ LAO TZU 1:1, p. 57. See also LAO TZU 25:56, p. 82, 32:72, p. 91, WAGNER 1986, pp. 106,108. These sayings refer to mysticism, see SCHWARTZ 1985, p. 194.

ausdrücken kann, is nicht der grosse Zustand." (Dallago)

"Es gibt ein Tao, welches jedermann verständlich gezeigt werden kann, das aber ist nicht das ewige Tao in seiner ganzen Vollkommenheit. Wollte man demselben einen Namen geben, so würde dieser des ewige Tao doch nicht klar bezeichnen." (Plaenckner)

"Lodehead lodehead-brooking: no forewonted lodehead; Namecall namecall-brooking : no forewonted namecall. (Boodberg) Boodberg says that this translation has little literary merit. "It reflects, however, to the best of my ability, every significant etymological and grammatical feature, including every double entendre, that I have been able to discover in the original in an endeavour to establish a solid philological foundation upon which a firmer interpretation of the incipit of Taoist philosophy might be built." (Boodberg)

"Das Tao, das (uns menschen) als tao dienen kann, is nicht das "evige" Tao, und die namen, die (uns menschen) als namen (der dinge) dienen können, sind nicht die "evigen" (durch die natur der dinge gegebenen) namen." (Wulff) Wulff explains: "Wenn Lao-tse zwischen den "evigen namen" und den inter uns menschen gebräuchlichen bezeichnungen unterscheidet, so wird man dabei an die, auch sonst bei ihm zu spürende, primitive anschauung denken müssen, nach der der name nicht eine dem ding mehr oder weniger zufällig angeheftete bezeichnung, sondern ein unlöslicher bestandteil seines wesens ist, durch den die natur des dinges daher auch vollkommen charakterisiert ist, weil er sich eben mit ihr deckt; solcher natur sind die namen oder bezeichnungen, die wir menschen anwenden können, nicht."

Wang Pi says about the passage: "The Tao that can be spoken of and the Name that can be named, which refer to the denoting of things and the making of shapes, are not eternal. Therefore, (the eternal) cannot be spoken of and named."

The passage "The way that can be spoken of, Is not the constant way; The name that can be named, Is not the constant name," is according to the i-silk text: "The Way that can be talked about, the abiding name." Hansen explains that if we can formulate the social practices, we can modify and alter them. If we apply this to Tao, it means that if we could name Tao, it would not be immune to change by using language. The non-nameability is a necessary condition for constancy. Schwartz compares the Taoist attitude to language with Confucianism and Mohism:

"If Confucius deeply believes in language as providing an image of true order and if Mohism gropes toward the notion of a new, improved language which will provide a new and more precise picture of the world in all its particularities, the Lao-tzu book while not casting doubt on the language which describes the natural order (although it does indeed cast doubt on the received language descriptive of the human order) finds that that which makes the determinate tao possible lies beyond all language."²⁷⁷

In this difficult passage it is apparent that both Tao and the "name" refer to an ontological basic entity, which is as it is and cannot be described. This ontological basic entity is the essence in itself, the ultimate unchanging existence of existence, the hindmost cause of everything, which is beyond of description by humans.²⁷⁸

The above characteristic of Tao exposes the moral relativism inherent in Taoist thought. Wong explains: "Let me offer the following explanation of the Taoists, which is consistent with my interpretation of them as holding that there is no single true

²⁷⁷ CHU Ta-kao 1989, p. 17. KARLGREN 1975, p. 1. KARLGREN 1964, p. 122. WALEY 1958, p. 141. WILHELM 1925, p. 72,

CHAN, Wing-tsit 1963, p. 97. CHANG, Chung-yuan 1975, p. 3. CH'U Ta-kao 1972, p. 11. BLAKNEY 1955, p. 53. STRAUSS 1950, p. 57.

DALLAGO 1953, p. 6,

PLAENCKNER 1870, p. 2,

BOODBERG 1957, p. 618, WULFF 1942, pp. 90, 82. See also WATTS 1975, p. 39. LIN, Paul J. 1977, p. 3. WANG Pi 1975, p. 5. About the silk text, see HENRICKS 1979, p. 195. MA WANG TUI 1980, p. 114, LAU 1982, pp. 266,267. See also HANSEN 1981, p. 330.

CUA 1981, p. 123. SCHWARTZ 1985, p. 197.

²⁷⁸ LAO TZU 1:1, p. 57. LIU Ts'un Jen 1971, pp. 287,288, CHU Ch'ien 1984, p. 4. WEBER 1989, p. 383. CHENG, Chung-ying 1989, p. 198,199.

morality. They anticipated the fundamental paradox of Ch'an Buddhism: there is a way to live that is in accord with our nature and the nature of the world; but that way, our nature, and the nature of the world can never be adequately described through the use of our categories, evaluative or nonevaluative; while we may unavoidably use words to 'point' to the way, our statements cannot be absolutely true any more than other statements can be absolutely true. While we may crudely describe a way of life as 'good', the ultimate point is to go beyond any evaluations."²⁷⁹

Lao tzu does not spend much time on defining Tao or on describing its specific characteristics. Tao is linked with Te, but Li, rites are against Tao. But "Foreknowledge is the flowery embellishment of the way." Tao is said to have the following attributes: "Shadowy, indistinct,... Yet within it is an image... Dim and dark, Yet within it is an essence. This essence is quite genuine And within it is something that can be tested."²⁸⁰

Tao is imperceptible.²⁸¹ "The way that it bright seems dull", "The way is empty, yet use will not drain it." All depend on Tao, "yet it claims no authority."²⁸² Tao "is vast and resembles nothing." If Tao is defined as one concept, it inevitably gets a broad and superficial meaning. However, the text of Tao Te Ching refers to this direction. Lao Tzu suggests a reason for this: "If it resembled anything, it would, long before, have become small." Close to this notion is that "the way is empty, yet use will not drain it... It images the forefather of God." Here Tao has a mythological meaning "in the sense of its ancestral quality as a mythological personage."²⁸³ But, water "comes close to the way", However, the reason is more practical or functional than ontological: "Because water excels in benefiting the myriad creatures without contending with them and settles where none would like to be."²⁸⁴ The water-symbol is linked with the feminine-symbol. These symbols of Taoism pointed to everything which was "tolerant, yielding, permissive, withdrawing, mystical and receptive" in opposition to the Confucian and Legalist social-ethical thought-complex, which was "masculine, managing, hard, dominating, aggressive, rational and donative."²⁸⁵

²⁷⁹ Wong refers to LAO TZU 1:1,2:6, 19:43, pp. 57,58,74. WONG, David B. 1986, p. 281.

Kupperman stresses that Taoism is less ethically relativistic, saying that "it is possible to interpret the great Taoists as espousing what is primarily a nonethical kind of relativism." Kupperman refers to LAO TZU 8:20, p. 64: "Highest good is like water," and LAO TZU 19:43, p. 75, "A visible simplicity of life, Embracing unpretentious ways, And small self-interest And poverty of coveting," which is translated by Lau as: "And the people must have something to which they can attach themselves: Exhibit the unadorned and embrace the uncarved block, Have little thought of self and as few desires as possible." Kupperman also says that "We should be careful of importing into other philosophies the structures of modern Western philosophy." KUPPERMAN 1986, p. 175.

²⁸⁰ LAO TZU 23:52, p. 80, 38:84, p. 99, 21:49, p. 78. The way is these attributes, but according to the silk text these attributes are "The things of Tao", referring closer to inclusion. HENRICKS 1979, p. 188.

²⁸¹ LAO TZU 35:78, p. 94.

²⁸² LAO TZU 41:91, p. 102, 4:11, p. 60, 34:76, p. 93, DE GROOT 1918, p. 40.

²⁸³ LAO TZU 67:163, p. 129, 4:11, p. 60, THIEL 1971, p. 52, GIRARDOT 1983, pp. 66,67. LAO TZU 57:163 is "The whole world says that my way is vast and resembles nothing." In both of the silk texts the passage is: "The whole world says that I am great, great and yet unlike anything else." HENRICKS 1979, p. 192.

²⁸⁴ LAO TZU 8:20, p. 64. WATTS 1975, pp. 41,47. HSU, Sung-peng 1976, p. 305.

²⁸⁵ NEEDHAM 1956, pp. 57-59, LAO TZU 43:98,99, p. 104, 6:17, p. 62,28:63, p. 85. See also

d. The Usage of Tao

Tao Te Ching says: "When the best student hears about the way He practises it assiduously; When the average student hears about the way It seems to him one moment there and gone the next; When the worst student hears about the way He laughs out loud. If he did not laugh It would be unworthy of being the way."²⁸⁶ Here Tao appears as the way of high ranking students, not as a harmonizer between the worst and best students, but as an agent which makes the opposites more radical.

Tao is used as an object also in the following: the "myriad creatures all revere the way and honour virtue," because "The way gives them life and Virtue rears them." It is natural for them to do so.²⁸⁷ This reflects the idea of paying back. One who "has the way" does not abide in the "excessive food and useless excrescences".²⁸⁸ One who has Tao is ethically modest in his style of life. Holding fast to Tao gives one the ability to manage things despite adversities, or the ability to be successful despite an apparent lack of success.²⁸⁹

Holding fast to Tao is important for the rulers, because this causes everything to be transformed naturally "of their own accord". In this way the ruler controls the ruled. Lao Tzu mentions antiquity in connection with Tao and ruling: "The ability to know the beginning of antiquity is called the thread running through the way." Giving respect to old people belongs to this category too: "Doing harm to the old is known as going against the way."²⁹⁰

Tao as an object appears also as something to be seen. "Without stirring abroad One can know the whole world; Without looking out of the window One can see the way of heaven The further one goes The less one knows."²⁹¹ Here Taoism is a long way from empirical principles in acquiring knowledge. But, this could as well be an ironic statement: if one really tries to get knowledge one will see that one does not know, whereas if one does not try to get knowledge one can imagine one knows everything. Lao Tzu here is probably not ironic because it is said: "In the pursuit of learning one knows more every day; in the pursuit of the way one does less every day... until one knows nothing at all, and when one does nothing at all there is nothing that is undone" Cheng explains the relationship between learning (hsüeh) and Tao. These are opposites to each other. Cheng says:

"The contrast between hsüeh and tao is one between relative knowledge and absolute knowledge. The former is conditioned, the latter unconditioned. Though Lao Tzu does not explicitly say that "doing learning (hsüeh)" as versus "doing tao" does not yield true knowledge; it is clear from the contrast between "doing learning" and "doing tao" that, in order to have true knowledge (namely, doing tao"),

HSU, Sung peng 1976, p. 305.

²⁸⁶ LAO TZU 41:90, p. 102.

²⁸⁷ LAO TZU 51:114, p. 112.

²⁸⁸ LAO TZU 24:55, p. 81.

²⁸⁹ LAO TZU 15:36, p. 71.

²⁹⁰ LAO TZU 37:81, p. 96, 14:34, p. 70, 30:70, p. 88.

²⁹¹ LAO TZU 47:106, p. 108.

we must abandon "doing learning"²⁹²

Tao is used as an instrument, as a way to be followed. A man of great virtue follows it. By following the way one gets a lasting foundation²⁹³ There has also been a misuse of the way: "Of old those who excelled in the pursuit of the way did not use it to enlighten the people but to hoodwink them."²⁹⁴ A clear criticism against Confucianism is when Lao Tzu does not appreciate the Confucian virtues Jen 仁 and Yi 義, saying: "When the great way falls into disuse There are benevolence 仁 and rectitude 義."²⁹⁵ Tao cannot be exhausted by use.²⁹⁶

Tao is used in governing the state as well. To govern a state is a delicate matter: it is like boiling a small fish, which can be spoiled simply by being handled. If the empire is ruled in accordance with the way, the spirits and the sage do not harm the people. Tao also contributes the possibility of pacifism. Te is with Tao of ruling. Tao in this context leads to great age. When discussing the method of ruling according to Lao Tzu, Creel says:

"The emperor and his ministers and assistants in the government were not put in their places to interfere; their duty is to meditate on the tao. The Laoist sage must occupy no position in the government save that of chief of all the officers, exercising a general supervision over them all but not bothering about any details... Lao Tse's aim was rather to exalt the members of a very small group, than to save men in general, since the number who could occupy such a position was strictly limited... the difference between Confucius and Lao Tse was not chiefly one of world view, nor even, if we look closely, of technique, the difference was, rather, that Confucius was, first of all, a practical statesman seeking to save the world, while Lao Tse was a disheartened philosopher, despairing of the world and fleeing from it, yet driven by the imperative necessity of vindicating the worth of his own personality; in the process of rehabilitating the latter, he achieved a technique for overcoming his despair of the world."²⁹⁷

Anti-way appears in two passages: "A creature in this prime doing harm to the old Is known as going against the way, That which goes against the way will come to an early end". Another anti-way description is: "The court is corrupt, The fields are overgrown with weeds, The granaries are empty; yet there are those dressed in fineries. With swords at their sides, Filled with food and drink, And possessed of too much wealth, This is known as taking the lead in robbery, Far indeed is this from the way."²⁹⁸

e. Tao, Lao Tzu and Confucius

Tao in Lao Tzu differs in a number of respects from Tao in Confucius. Lao Tzu has very little to say about what ethical areas belong to Tao, whereas the Analects speak some time on the ethical characteristics of Tao. For Lao Tzu, Tao is not a concept

²⁹² LAO TZU 48:108, p. 109. See also LAO TZU 53:120, p. 114. CHENG, Chung-ying 1977a, p. 142.

²⁹³ LAO TZU 21:48, p. 78, 23:51, p. 80.

²⁹⁴ LAO TZU 65:157, p. 127.

²⁹⁵ LAO TZU 18:42, p. 74, CHU Ch'ien 1984, p. 72.

²⁹⁶ LAO TZU 4:11, p. 60, 6:17, p. 62, 25:78, p. 94, 45:101, p. 106.

²⁹⁷ LAO TZU 60:139, p. 121, 30:69, p. 88. 59:137, p. 120. 16:38, p. 72. CREEL 1929, pp. 99,100. NEEDHAM 1956, pp. 126,127.

²⁹⁸ LAO TZU 55:127, p. 116, 53:121, p. 114.

which could first be analyzed into elements and then put back together to form a Tao. For Lao Tzu Tao is a wide, vague, all embracing concept, a monistic unity. The Tao of Lao Tzu should be conceived of as a whole and not as certain parts. A suitable illustration would be a building made of bricks. When we speak about the building, we say it is made of bricks, but then we do not describe each brick when we describe the building. We describe the building as a whole, its dimensions, rooms, shape etc. When we describe Tao of Lao Tzu, it is useless to describe its parts, since the sum of the parts is not Tao; Tao itself is different from the sum of its parts.

In Taoism we cannot speak about ethics as such, but we can speak about ethics as Tao. Lao Tzu connects ethics with ontology. When one acts naturally according to Tao, one does not follow Tao as imitator, but one is in Tao. If ethics were something like virtues which could be learned and performed, this would, according to Taoism, be outside Tao. For Confucius ethics is a value in itself. Pure goodness is a sufficient motive to be good. However, for Lao Tzu ethics is an anti-value, anti Tao. Ethics, morals, is valueless as such. The only value is Tao, which is more a natural course of everything that happens and is.

For the Confucian ethics learning is important, whereas Lao Tzu does not value it at all. In addition, virtues such as benevolence and rectitude, and even the rites are not Tao. This criticism includes two things. Tao is not something to be learned and to be divided into rules of action or behavior. Learning, creating ethical rules, attempting to follow certain principles strenuously are all unnatural and against Tao.

In contrast with this general stance in opposition to Confucianism, Lao Tzu does have one remarkable common point with Confucianism. This is Tao used in ruling and honoring the ancients. According to both philosophies, the modest and simple style of life is suitable for the ruler. One may suggest that this is the Confucian fingerprint in Tao Te Ching. However, one should consider that in Shih Ching the abstraction of the concept Tao was highest in connection with the ruling of the country. Tao in this connection, including honoring the ancients, does not necessarily need to be a Confucian trademark, it may possibly be from an older common source, which both Confucianism and Taoism have adopted into their own system. Moreover, in this context both have their specific points of view. The Analects include in this the Rites whereas Tao Te Ching does not include rites, but stresses pacifism.

Lao Tzu avoided using Tao in the meaning of ordinary road, way of doing and to lead, to guide. The usage of Tao is thus strictly confined to its monistic meaning.

8. A Comparison of with Mo Tzu's Concept of Tao

a. Tao of Mo Tzu

Mo Tzu quite often mentions the Tao of the ancient kings. This way implies an exaltation of the virtuous, Hsien, 賢 no matter whether they are prosperous or not, and it implies the employment of the capable persons in government. In this way the whole world will be benefited. According to this way of administration, good people should be

encouraged and evil doers should be obstructed. In following the ways of the old kings "Heaven on high, spirits in the middle and people below would be blessed." When this way was followed during the ancient kings, the empire was brought into harmony, the people were led to do service to God, hills and rivers, and the spirits and ghosts. "Many were the benefits to the people and great was their success". Heaven rewarded the wise men, the spirits enriched them and the people praised them.²⁹⁹

The Tao of the old legendary kings relates to different virtues.

"If the kings, dukes and important personages of the world now sincerely want to practise magnanimity, Jen, 仁, and righteousness, Yi, 義, and be superior men, if they want to attain the way, Tao, 道, of the sage-kings on the one hand and contribute toward the benefit of the people on the other, they cannot leave the principle of identification with the Superior unexamined and un-understood. Identification with the Superior is, indeed, the foundation of government and essence of orderliness."

The identification with the Superiors in connection with the Tao of government means that a similar pattern of government should work from the low administrative levels to the highest ones. The emperor should organize the empire in such a way that everything is according to the will of Heaven, which is his superior. The administration on lower levels, for example in the clan or family, should be arranged according to the administrative method of the king, who follows the will of Heaven. Here Mo Tzu refers to a proverb, which says: "To govern the world-empire is the same as to rule a single family clan, to command all the people in the world is the same as to order a single individual." At first the identification with the superior was not advocated. At that time everybody had one's own ideas and views, which worked for the disadvantage of others, and also there was general disorder, but then Heaven chose a virtuous person to become the emperor.³⁰⁰

To desire the well being of the empire, to have it orderly and not chaotic, to bring about universal love and mutual aid is the Tao of the sage-king and the way, Tao, to order for the world.³⁰¹

It is part of the Tao of the sage kings not to have elaborate funerals.

"If the gentleman of the world really want to practice righteousness, Yi, 義, and magnanimity, Jen, 仁, and to seek to be superior men, desiring to attain the way Tao, 道, of the sage-kings on the one hand and to procure blessings for the people on the other, they cannot afford to neglect the principle of simplicity in funeral in government."

Generally, to cut useless expenditure is the way of the sage-kings. Mo Tzu criticizes the elaborate funerals because the massive grave of the lord, and the treasures buried with him would seriously effect the economy of the state. Even elaborate funerals of common men would exhaust the wealth of the family. In addition the way of mourning affects the economy. This becomes clear in the following quotation:

"What are the rules to be observed by the mourner? He must weep without restraint and sound as if he is choking. Sackcloth is worn on the breast and hat of flaw in the head. His tears and snivel are not to be wiped away. The mourner is to live in a mourning hut, sleep on a coarse mat of straw, and lay his head on a lump of earth. Then, he would be obliged to abstain from food in order to look hungry, and to wear little in order to look cold. The face and eyes are to look sunken and as if in fear, and the complexion is to appear dark. Ears and eyes are to become dull, and hands and feet to become weak and unusable. And, also, if the mourner is a high official, he has to be supported to rise, and lean on a cane to walk, And all this is to last three years."

²⁹⁹ MO TZU pp. 35,42,43,49,54,107,108.

³⁰⁰ MO TZU pp. 75,77,55.

³⁰¹ MO TZU p. 86.

This sort of a doctrine prevents those who mourn from doing their duties, prevents the farmers from farming, the artisans from building the boats, making vehicles and utensils, women from rising early and retiring late to weave and spin. "So, then in elaborate funerals much wealth is buried, and in extended mourning abstention from work is prolonged."³⁰²

One aspect of the way of the ancient kings in governing the empire is that the feudal lord reports the malefactor. If he fails in this reporting it means that he participates in his crime against the state. Similarly, the good should be reported. In this way the feudal lord rewards and encourages the good people and punishes the evil people. This method of reporting is part of the principle of identification with the Superior. This guarantees the general order.³⁰³

Another aspect of the way of the sage kings is to condemn offensive war. Mo Tzu says:

"Now, if the rulers and the gentlemen of the world sincerely desire to procure benefits and avert calamities for the world - if they desire to do righteousness and be superior men, if they desire to strike the way of the sage-kings on the one hand and bless the people on the other - if so, the doctrine of Condemnation of Offensive War should not be left unheeded."³⁰⁴

The Tao of the sage kings is identified with universal love. It gives peace to the rulers. The gentleman should understand and practise universal love "Then he would be gracious as a ruler, loyal as a minister, affectionate as a father, filial as a son, courteous as an elder brother, and respectful as a younger brother." Universal love also implies serving each other and explaining Tao to those who do not know it.³⁰⁵

Tao belongs to the Gentleman or the superior man, Chün Tzu, 君子. "If the gentlemen of the world really desire to follow the way and benefit the people, they must not disobey the will of Heaven, the origin of magnanimity, Jen, 仁, and righteousness, 義." The Tao of the superior man does not follow that of Confucianism. According to Mohism, the Confucians say: "The superior man is like a bell. It will sound when it is struck. It will remain silent when it is not struck." Mo Tzu wants to reply to this that the magnanimous person, Jen, should be loyal in serving his superior and filial in serving his parents. "When there is excellence (in the superior) he should adore, when there is fault he should give counsel." If he remains silent if not struck, he will hide his knowledge and spare his efforts, waiting to be questioned before he answers. A part of the way of the gentleman is to admit the existence of the spirits and not to oppose the interest of the sage-kings. Generally, the Tao of the gentleman obliges him to benefit the empire and to avoid anything which does not bring profit to the empire. It is allowed for the gentleman to obtain riches and to avoid poverty and humility by practising virtue and by helping others, by sharing his wealth with others and by teaching his Tao to others. In so doing the standard of life for the people is guaranteed.³⁰⁶

Mo Tzu criticizes the way of administration of his day; when the taxes are high,

³⁰² MO TZU pp. 119,125-127 131-134.

³⁰³ MO TZU pp. 67,73-76.

³⁰⁴ MO TZU pp. 102,103,116.

³⁰⁵ MO TZU pp. 102,103,116.

³⁰⁶ MO TZU pp. 142,143,144,150,167,205,206,52,53.

people suffer hunger, cold diseases and wars. Man and woman cannot see each other for a long time. And so the population decreases. Economical Mo Tzu says that the way of the sage-kings was to cut out all useless expenditure.³⁰⁷

Mo Tzu opposes the Confucian Ming, 命, as being fatalism. "The Confucianists take this teaching about fate to be the Tao and the principle of life. This is to destroy the people of the empire." According to Mo Tzu fatalism is a way, Tao, 道, of the wicked, maintained by the wicked kings, leading to chaos in government and to poverty, and thus there will be no cakes and wine to worship and do sacrifice to God, ghosts and spirits above. Fatalism is not helpful to Heaven above, nor to the spirits in the middle sphere, nor man below. Fatalism "is a great calamity to the world."³⁰⁸

Mo Tzu advocates the doctrine, or Tao, about the will of Heaven. To this he attaches all the good qualities of Heaven.³⁰⁹

Mo Tzu refers to his personal Tao only seldom. Despite the fact that according to his doctrines the Gentleman should be wealthy, Mo Tzu himself did not regard wealth as important when he was offered a great opportunity of becoming rich. He was satisfied with the minimum standard of living, but regarded adopting of his Tao as necessary.³¹⁰

Mo Tzu regards Tao as more important than personal honor. The following story illustrates this: In the uprising of Po Kung the Prince Tse Lü was held captive. Po Kung offered him the choice of becoming the lord of the state of Ch'ü, or he could refuse and die. Tse Lü refused, because Po Kung had killed the parents of Tse Lü. Tse Lü regarded taking the state as an unrighteous act. Mo Tzu did not regard this as being Jen and asked

"If he thought the Lord had gone away astray from the Tao, why not accept the offer and undertake the government himself? If he thought Po Kung was unrighteous, why not accept the Lordship also, execute Po Kung, and then return the Lordship to the Lord? Therefore I say what he did was indeed difficult, but hardly magnanimous, Jen."³¹¹

Here Mo Tzu shows that personal honor and honoring parents does not overrule utilitarian calculations, according to which some other action would have bestowed more beneficence.

Mo Tzu connects Tao with the sensual perception, too: "The way, Tao, to find out whether anything exists or not is to depend on the testimony of the ears and eyes of the multitude. If some have heard it or some have seen it then we have to say it exists."³¹²

In his conception of Tao, Mo Tzu wants ultimate effectiveness and responsibility to get good results. He says:

"When silent one should be deliberating; when talking one should instruct; when acting one should achieve (something). When one employs these three alternatively he will be a sage. Pleasure, anger, joy, sorrow, love (and hate) are to be removed and magnanimity, Jen, and righteousness, Yi, are to replace them. ..Though one cannot achieve righteousness, one must not abandon the way, Tao, just as the carpenter must not blame the line though he cannot saw the lumber straight."³¹³

³⁰⁷ MO TZU pp. 119,102,103

³⁰⁸ MO TZU pp. 202,186-188.

³⁰⁹ MO TZU pp. 143-145,155. SJÖHOLM 1982, p. 128.

³¹⁰ MO TZU pp. 250,251.

³¹¹ MO TZU pp. 253,254.

³¹² MO TZU p. 161.

³¹³ MO TZU p. 224.

Through these ideas Mo Tzu also teaches sentimental apathy.

Mo Tzu uses Tao also to mean to say, an ordinary road, to go.³¹⁴

Before comparing Mo Tzu directly with Confucian thinking, it would be useful to sum up some of the central motives of Mohist Tao. Mo Tzu regards the general order, not chaos, as important, as though he were afraid that everything will be ruined through unrest in the society. During his own time he saw things which appeared to indicate that things were moving in this direction.

Secondly the well being and a reasonable living standard of the people is important. Also, a high population growth is important. Here Mo Tzu emphasized utilitarianism. He wanted to save the material resources to be used for the good of the people. This is why he opposed war and too extravagant funerals and excessive mourning.

Thirdly, religious matters were important for Mo Tzu. He tried to justify his doctrines by using Heaven and the spirits and old legendary kings as good examples of the right Tao.

Mo Tzu also had a mission, to instruct Tao to those who were unaware of it. Sensual perception is a Tao of Mohist science, but this is more a democratic principle than physical.

Personally Mo Tzu was satisfied with a minimum standard of living, although he appreciated the well being of the gentleman who could share his wealth among the people.

b. Tao, Mo Tzu and Confucius

The Mohist Tao is commensurate with that of Confucian Tao. Both regard the ancient mythical kings as a good example for Tao in the present day. Both see filiality as important in this context. In the general, Confucius wants to avoid wealth although it is the natural tendency of man, whereas Mo Tzu regards wealth as a good thing in itself. Material well being is an important motive in Mohist Tao, but not in the Confucian Tao. Confucius has a conceptual discussion about Tao, but Mo Tzu regards Tao as more clearly given, or generally understood, without discussing the possible problems in the concept. In this, Confucius is more rational, because he sees problems to be discussed in Tao. However, Confucius is quite exclusive in his Tao. There are other Taos, but the Confucian Tao is the only right one. For both Confucius and Mo Tzu Tao is important.

In the universal Tao, Tao prevails if the emperor has the authority, in Confucius's opinion. A similar idea is to be found in Mo Tzu when he speaks about identification with the superior, according to which the Tao of the ruler follows Heaven, and the Tao of the lower administrators is identified with that of the emperor. The attitude to this universal Tao differs. When Tao prevails in the empire, both see that it is worthwhile to serve. When Tao does not prevail, Confucius wants to withdraw and keep silent. In this situation Mo Tzu is more aggressive. He wants to serve and will not keep quiet, hoping that this will help the Tao to start to prevail again.

In the Tao of ruling, both see the economy as important, but Mo Tzu is much more

³¹⁴ MO TZU pp. 170,172,223,106.

emphatically utilitarian. In Confucius's opinion Te and Li are important. Mo Tzu wants to see punishments and encouragements as important in the Tao of ruling.

In the Tao of the gentleman, Confucius sees that it is important never to worry. Mo Tzu wants to teach that feelings must not overrule ethical considerations. Confucius continually emphasizes the importance of Li, whereas Mo Tzu overlooks this almost totally.

Mo Tzu is more critical than Confucius, criticizing Confucianism and his time, whereas Confucius pays more attention to presenting his ideas without reflecting them to some other traditions of thought than his own. However, Mo Tzu is more ideological, because he does not see so many problems in his own ideas as Confucius does.