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A Translation of Chapters 59 and 63 of the *Daodejing* 道德經 and their Annotations by Shi Deqing

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1. Original text and translation of chapter 59 of the *Daodejing* 道德經

1.1 Original text

治人、事天、莫若嗇。夫惟嗇，是謂早復。早復，謂之重積德。重積德，則無不克。無不克，則莫知其極。莫知其極，可以有國。有國之母，可以長久。是謂深根固蒂，長生久視之道。

1.2 Translation

Managing the country and pursuing the Dao of heaven, the best way is to save resources and thrifty. Only through thrift can we quickly recover out nature. The Chinese characters 早復 means that accumulate a lot of merit. Extensive accumulation of virtue can overcome all difficulties, overcoming all difficulties can have infinite power, having infinite power can govern a country well. With the foundation of governing the country, the rule will keep for a long time. This is why deep root will lead to long-term survival.

2. Original text and translation of Shi Deqing's 釋德清 annotation of chapter 59 5

2.1 Original text – Part A

此言聖人離欲復性，以為外王內聖之道也。嗇，有而不用之意。老子所言人天，莊子解之甚明。如曰，不以人害天，不以物傷性。蓋人，指物欲。天，指性德也。言治

人事天莫若嗇者。然嗇，即復性工夫也。謂聖人在位，貴為天子，富有四海。其子女玉帛，聲色貨利，充盈於前。而聖人以道自守，視之若無，澹然無欲，雖有而不用。

2.2 Translation of Part A

This chapter is about getting away from desire and restoring our nature, which is a way that having a sage's heart and looks like a king. The Chinese character 嗇 means that holding but not use. Lao Zi describe the relationship between human and heaven and Zhuang Zi explanation it very clear. For example, do not hurt the laws of nature with human desires, and do not hurt our own nature because of material things. Here, the Chinese word 人 means material desire, and the Chinese word 天 means our nature. The most important thing to govern the country and conform to the way of heaven is 嗇. The Chinese character 嗇 is a tool to restore nature. When a sage reigns, he is honored as the emperor and his riches were the possession of all within the four seas. His children, treasures and music are countless. However, they demand themselves the Dao.They regard these things as nothingness, very pure and without desire, although they have but do not use them.

2.3 Original text – Part B

所謂堯舜有天下而不與，此以嗇治人也。聖人并包四海，智周萬物。不以私智勞慮，而傷其性真。所謂毋搖爾精，毋勞爾形，毋使汝思慮營營。蓋有智而不用其智，此以嗇事天也。復性工夫，莫速於此。故曰是謂之早復。此復字，是復卦不遠復之意。言其速也。又如一日克己復禮，天下歸仁之意。

2.4 Translation of Part B

Just as Yao and Shun owned the world without occupying any property, which is called 以嗇治人也. Sages govern the world. Their wisdom is enough to understand everything. They do not hurt their nature by satisfying their desires about their selfishness, which is called do

not over consume the energy, do not strain the body and get do not caught up in distracting thoughts. They have wisdom but do not use it, which is called 以嗇事天也. This is the quickest way to restore our nature, which is called 早復. The Chinese characters 復, it is to describe not far from restoring nature, it means that the recovery speed is particularly fast. Just like Confucius said once everybody has become self-restrained and observed the rules of propriety again, benevolence will prevail in the whole kingdom.

2.5 Original text – Part C

莊子曰，賊莫大於德有心。然有心之德施於外，故輕而不厚。復性之功，天德日全，不期復而自復，所謂復見天地之心。故曰早復謂之重積德。能重積德，則無不克矣。此克字，乃克敵之克。即顏子克己之克。以性德日厚，則物欲消融。而所過者化，無物與敵。則其德高明廣大，民無得而稱焉。

2.6 Translation of Part C

Zhuang Zi said it was wrong to do moral things deliberately. Deliberately doing is external, meaningless and of little value. The practice of restoring nature will make our natural morality more and more complete. Without expecting to restoration, it will recover naturally, and our nature can be consistent with the nature of heaven and earth. Which is called 早復謂之重積德. If virtue can be accumulated extensively, there are no difficulties that cannot be overcome. The Chinese character 克 means conquer the enemy and just like master Yan Hui restrained himself. As virtue grows, material desires naturally disappear. Where they passed, everything was influenced without any obstacles. His wisdom and virtue, the people can not find the right words to praise them.

2.7 Original text – Part D

故曰無不克，則莫知其極。極，至極，猶涯量也。此內聖之德既全，雖無心於天下，乃可以託於天下。故曰莫知其極，可以有國。此內聖之道，真以治身，其緒餘以為天下國家。故曰可以有國。此道先天地不為老，後天地不為終。故曰可以長久。古人所言深根固蒂長生久視之道者，如此而已。結句蓋古語。老子引證，以結其意耳。

2.8 Translation of Part D

So called 無不克，則莫知其極. The Chinese character 極 means limit. The virtue of sages is perfect. They do not want to occupy the world, but the world can be entrusted the world to him. Which is called 莫知其極，可以有國. This is the sages' heart, they try their best to cultivate themselves, and the rest of their energy can manage the country well, which is called 可以有國. This Dao existed before the formation of heaven and earth, but it can not be called old, which is called 可以長久. The ancients said that only deep-rooted can last long, just like so. The conclusion is a quotation of Lao Zi to prove his article.

3. Original text and translation of chapter 63 of the *Daodejing* 道德經

3.1 Original text

為無為。事無事。味無味。大，小。多，少。報怨以德。圖難於其易。為大於其細。天下難事，必作於易。天下大事，必作於細。是以聖人終不為大，故能成其大。夫輕諾必寡信。多易必多難。是以聖人猶難之。故終無難。

3.2 Translation

Deal with things without interfering, do real things with an empty heart and have a tasteless heart to taste things with taste. Treat small things as big things, regard the less as the more. Respond to resentment with kindness. Solve difficult things from simple places. If we want to do great things, we must start with small things. The difficult things in the world

must start from the simple, and the major events in the world must start from the small places. Because sages are not greedy for great things, they can achieve great things. Easy to promise is easy to break one's promise. If things go too easy, there will be more difficulties. Saints will anticipate more difficulties, but they are not easy to encounter any difficulties.

4. Original text and translation of Shi Deqing's 釋德清 annotation of chapter 63

4.1 Original text – Part A

此言聖人入道之要妙，示人以真切工夫也。凡有為，謂智巧。有事，謂功業。有味，謂功名利欲。此三者，皆世人之所尚。然道本至虛而無為。至靜而無事。至淡而無味。獨聖人以道為懷，去彼取此。故所為者無為。所事者無事。所味者無味。故世人皆以名位為大，以利祿為多而取之。然道至虛微淡泊無物，皆以為小少，故棄而不取。

4.2 Translation of Part A

This chapter is the wonderful of learning Dao, and show people the level of sages. Trying to intervene in something is called clever and skill, what really exists is called undertaking. The Chinese word 有味 specifically refers to reputation and interests. These three are what people pursue. But Dao is non-being and has no intervention, quietest and no interference, most peaceful and no desire. Sages take the Dao as the foundation and abandon fame and wealth. There is no interference in life, their own thoughts and desires. They do things without their own intervention. They do things with an empty heart, and the taste they taste is tasteless. People pursue the positions with the greatest power and strive for the greatest wealth. But Dao is very subtle. It seems to exist or not. People mistakenly think it is small and few, so people abandon it.

4.3 Original text – Part B

聖人去功與名，釋智遺形，而獨與道游。是去其大多，而取其小少。故以至小為至大，至少為至多。故大其小，而多其少也。試觀世人報怨以德，則可知矣。何也。且世之人，無論貴賤，事最大而難解者，怨也。然怨之始也，偶因一言之失，一事之差。遂相搆結，以至殺身滅名，亡國敗家之禍。甚至有積怨深憤，父子子孫，累世相報而未已者。

4.4 Translation of Part B

Sages abandon fame and forget wisdom and themselves, the sage is with the Dao. Because they abandoned what people sought and chose the rarer ones. The smallest is the biggest, and the least is the most. Regard the small as large and the more as less. Try to observe how people respond to resentment with kindness, why? Whether people are noble or humble, the most difficult thing to resolve is resentment. The beginning of resentment is often because of saying a wrong word and doing a wrong thing. Therefore, they even kill each other and destroy their country. Some even extend into feuds, with no results from generation to generation

4.5 Original text – Part C

此舉世古今之恆情也。豈非其事極大且多哉。惟聖人則不然。察其怨之未結也，本不有。始結也，事甚小。既結也，以為無與於己。故無固執不化之心，亦無有我以與物為匹敵。其既往也，事已消之，求其朕而不可得。以此觀之，則任彼之怨，在我了無報之之心矣。然彼且以為有怨，在我全無報復之心，彼必以我為德矣。

4.6 Translation of Part C

This is a very common thing since ancient times. Is not it caused by a lot of things? Saints are not like this. They can observe that there is no resentment when it does not exist. At the beginning, things were very small. Things have happened and people do not think it will affect them. Therefore, they are not stubborn and will not be enemies. When things are over and naturally eliminated, there will be no trace left. It can be seen that even if others have resentment, we don't have any revenge. The other party thinks there is still resentment. We don't want revenge. He will think I am a person with virtue.

4.7 Original text – Part D

是所謂報怨以德，非謂曲意將德以報怨也。孔子以直報怨，正謂此耳。斯則怨乃事之至大而多，人人必有難釋者。殊不知有至易者存焉。是所謂為無為，事無事，大其小，而多其少也。天下之事，何獨於怨，而事事皆然。

4.8 Translation of Part D

The so-called 報怨以德 it is not to misinterpret the meaning that use a grateful heart to influence resentment. Confucius said that it is the same to treat resentment with integrity. Such resentment is big and many, and people will encounter such difficult things. The hardest thing also has a simple side. This is to deal with things without intervention and do real things with an empty heart. Turn big things into small things, and turn more into less. Things in the world are not just resentment like this. Everything else is the same.

4.9 Original text – Part E

故天下之事至難者，有至易存焉。至大者，有至細存焉。人不見其易與細，而於難處圖之，大處為之，必終無成。苟能圖之於易，而為之於細，鮮不濟者。以天下難事

必作於易。天下大事必作於細，故也。作者，始起也。是以聖人虛心體道，退藏於密。跡愈隱而道愈光，澤流終古而與天地參。此所謂終不為大，故能成其大也。

4.10 Translation of Part E

The most difficult thing in the world also has a simple side, and the most important thing also has a small side. People do not see the simplicity and smallness of things. They always start from the most difficult and biggest place, People don't see the simplicity and smallness of things. They always start from the most difficult and biggest place, there will be no good results in the end. If people can start planning from a simple place, start with small things, few people will fail. Because all the difficult things in the world start from simple things, and all the major events in the world start from small things. The Chinese character 作 means start. Sages empties their heart into the Dao, they are unassuming and hide themselves. The more they hide, the brighter the Dao. Gracing all things and existing forever, which is called 謂終不為大，故能成其大也.

4.11 Original text – Part F

老子言及至此，抑恐世人把易字當作容易輕易字看。故誡之曰，夫輕諾必寡信，多易必多難。謂世人不可將事作容易看也。且容易許人，謂之輕諾。凡輕許者，必食言而寡信。見事之容易而輕為者，必有始而無終。是故易字，非容易也。世人之所難，而聖人之所易。世人之所易，而聖人之所難。

4.12 Translation of Part F

Lao Zi worried that future generations will misunderstand and regard 易 as easy. Therefore, he warned that easy promises rarely come true, if people regard things simple, they will encounter difficulties. Tell people not to despise everything they encounter. making promises lightly called 輕諾. Making promises lightly seldom keep promise. People

who think things are simple and easy to do must have a beginning and no end. So the Chinese character 易 not means easy. People think it is difficult, sages think it is easy, people think it is easy, sages think it is difficult.

4.13 Original text – Part G

故曰聖人猶難之，故終無難。猶，應作尤。古字通用。更也。謂世人之所甚易者，而聖人更難之，故終不難耳。觀夫文王兢兢，周公業業，戒慎恐懼乎不睹不聞，皆聖人之所難也。余少誦圖難於易為大於細二語，只把作事看。及余入山學道，初為極難，苦心不可言。及得用心之訣，則見其甚易。然初之難，即今之易。今之易，即初之難。然治心如此，推之以及天下之事皆然。此聖人示人入道之真切工夫也。志道者勉之。

4.14 Translation of Part G

Sages do not despise anything and will not encounter difficulties in the end. The Chinese character 猶 is as same as 尤. There are many uses for a word in ancient Chinese. What people think is easy, sages think it is difficult, but it will eventually become simple. Emperor Wen and Duke Zhou were very careful when others couldn't see them and hear them, all of this sages think are difficult. When I was a child, I read that doing difficult things from simple things and doing important things form small things. I just treated them as a simple two sentences. When I began to learn Tao, I felt really difficult and painful. When I find a way to try hard, I feel very simple, the original difficulty is the present simplicity, and the present simplicity is also the original difficulty. It is a way to cultivating one's own heart and so is governing the world. This is the way that saints give people, hoping to work together with like-minded people

5. Commentary and Reflection

In the Analects of Confucius, the teachings of Confucius are the same as the chapter 59 of Lao Zi. Confucius said that exemplary man strives to establish his moral foundation. Because this is the foundation of dealing with everything and governing the country. Frugality is a traditional virtue of the Chinese nation. It teaches people not only to cherish property, but also to pay attention to spiritual protection and accumulate enough virtue as a foundation in order to play a role in governing the country. Chapter 63 Lao Zi teaches us to protect our hearts, always keep empty and always keep an attitude of non intervention. To be a down-to-earth person, difficult things have a simple side, and big things have a small side. As long as we can do every little thing safely, all the difficulties in the world can be solved. Sages are noble because they do not think they are noble. They take everything seriously without any contempt, so difficult things become very simple here.