



十. 《老子》選¹



課文 (Text)

大道廢，² 有仁義。慧智出，³ 有大偽。⁴ 六親不和，⁵ 有孝慈。⁶ 國家昏亂，⁷ 有忠臣。⁸

註釋 (Annotations)

1. 老子 Lǎozǐ a book attributed to Lǎo Dǎn 老聃, the leading philosopher of the Daoist School. The Daoist School advocates going along with nature and is against artificial contrivance.
2. 大道 dà dào the ultimate Way.
- 廢 fèi to abolish; here used in the passive sense.
3. 慧智 huì zhì intelligence.
- 出 chū to emerge.
4. 偽 wěi falsehood; hypocrisy.
5. 六親 liù qīn the six kinds of closest relatives. (Interpretations differ on the specific relations. Some possible groupings include 父子 fù zǐ; 夫婦 fū fù; 兄弟 xiōng dì "father and son; husband and wife; elder brother and younger brother".)
- 和 hé harmonious.
6. 孝 xiào filial piety.
- 慈 cí parental love.
7. 國家 guó jiā state.
- 昏 hūn dark; confused; disorderly.
8. 臣 chén minister.
- 忠臣 zhōng chén a loyal minister.

文法闡釋 (Grammar Note)

大道廢，有仁義。

This is a compound sentence with two clauses. The first clause should, therefore, be translated with "if" or "when". The verb 有 in the Daoist texts generally means the coming into existence of something that did not exist before. So the sentence should be translated as: "When the great Dao was neglected, (the concepts of) *Ren* and *Yi* then came into existence". The three sentences following this one share the same structure.

課文一續 (Text — Continued)

天下莫柔弱於水，⁹ 而攻堅強者莫之能勝，¹⁰ 以其無以易之。¹¹ 弱之勝強，柔之勝剛，¹² 天下莫不知，莫能行。¹³ 是以聖人云：¹⁴ 「受國之垢，¹⁵ 是謂社稷主；¹⁶ 受國不祥，¹⁷ 是為天下王。」正言若反。¹⁸ (78)

註釋 (Annotations)

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| 9. 莫 | mò | no one; nothing; nobody. (A pronoun.) |
| 柔 | róu | soft. |
| 10. 堅 | jiān | hard. |
| 強 | qiáng | strong. |
| 11. 其 | qí | its. (A possessive pronoun.) |
| 易 | yì | to replace. |
| 12. 剛 | gāng | hard. |
| 13. 行 | xíng | to practice; to do. |

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| 14. 聖人 | shèng rén | the Sage. |
| 15. 受 | shòu | to receive; to be subjected to. |
| 垢 | gòu | humiliation. |
| 16. 社 | shè | deity of land. |
| 稷 | jì | deity of grain. |
| 社稷 | shè jì | in ancient China, the ruler of every state must offer sacrifice to the local deity of land and deity of grain. So 社稷 means "national altars" in a general sense, and represents "state sovereignty" figuratively. |
| 17. 不祥 | bù xiáng | bad luck; disaster. |
| 18. 正言若反 | zhèng yán
ruò fǎn | positive words may sound like negative ones. |



文法闡釋 (Grammar Notes)

I. 天下莫柔弱於水

莫 is a general negative pronoun ("none; nothing; nobody") and serves as the subject of this sentence. When an adjective is followed by 於 and a noun, it is generally read in the comparative sense. So the sentence should be translated as: "Under the sky, nothing is softer and weaker than water".

II. 以其無以易之

The expression 無以易之 is syntactically a sentence by itself, meaning "There is nothing (with which) to replace it". When used, as it is here, as a description for something, it means that thing is irreplaceable. The 以 at the beginning means "due to" or "because of". 其 is a possessive pronoun. So this sentence is an explanation for the preceding sentence, and can be translated as: "This is because of its being irreplaceable".

課文—續 (Text—Continued)

小國寡民，¹⁹ 使有什佰之器而不用，²⁰ 使民重死而不遠徙。²¹ 雖有舟輿，²² 無所乘之；²³ 雖有甲兵，²⁴ 無所陳之；²⁵ 使人復結繩而用之。²⁶ 甘其食，²⁷ 美其服，²⁸ 安其居，²⁹ 樂其俗。³⁰ 鄰國相望，³¹ 雞犬之聲相聞，³² 民至老死不相往來。³³

註釋 (Annotations)

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| 19. 小國寡民 | xiǎo guó guǎ mín | make the state small, make the people few. (小 and 寡 are used as causative verbs.) |
| 20. 什佰 | shí bǎi | ten times and a hundred times. |
| 器 | qì | tool. |
| 什佰之器 | shí bǎi zhī qì | tools which are tenfold or a hundred-fold more efficient than the normal ones. |
| 21. 重死 | zhòng sǐ | to take death seriously. (重 is here a putative verb.) |
| 22. 輿 | yú | chariot; carriage. |
| 23. 乘 | chéng | to mount; to ride on. |
| 24. 甲 | jiǎ | armor. |
| 兵 | bīng | weapon. |
| 25. 陳 | chén | to display. |
| 26. 結繩 | jié shéng | to keep a record by making knots with a rope.
(A primitive method to keep records before the invention of writing.) |

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| 27. 甘 | gān | sweet; here used as putative verb, meaning "to regard something as sweet". |
| 28. 服 | fú | clothes. |
| 29. 安 | ān | to feel comfortable with. |
| 居 | jū | dwelling place. |
| 30. 樂 | lè | to feel happy with. |
| 俗 | sú | customs. |
| 31. 鄰國相望 | lín guó xiāng wàng | (people of) neighboring states can see each other. |
| 32. 雞犬之聲
相聞 | jī quǎn zhī
shēng xiāng
wén | the crowing of roosters and the barking of dogs can be heard mutually (by the people of either state). |
| 33. 至 | zhì | till. (A preposition.) |
| 往來 | wǎng lái | to visit each other; to have contact. |



文法闡釋 (Grammar Notes)

I. 小國寡民

The two adjectives 小 and 寡 are here causative verbs, and 民 does not merely mean "people", but "subjects" or "the ruled" (versus "the rulers"). So this sentence must be translated as "make your state small and your subjects few". (Note that this extract advises rulers how to rule. In interpreting this piece of writing, this undertone must be kept in mind.)

II. 甘其食，美其服，安其居，樂其俗。

Unlike the previous sentences, this one is not preceded by either 使民 or 使人, but it must, nevertheless, be understood as such. This means that the adjectives 甘, 美, 安, and 樂 here are all putative verbs, so we have to understand their respective objects as having such qualities. So the sentence should be interpreted as, "(Make

your subjects) regard their food as delicious, their clothes as beautiful, their homes as comfortable, and their way of living as enjoyable". That is, to make them feel satisfied with what they have.