



【 水鏡回天錄白話解 】

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REFLECTIONS IN THE WATER-MIRROR: TURNING THE TIDE OF DESTINY
The Venerable Elder Laozi (CONTINUED)宣公上人講於一九八六年八月十五日 LECTURED BY THE VENERABLE MASTER HUA ON AUGUST 15TH, 1986
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「道」字包羅萬有，是妙不可言的。所謂「萬物因道生，得者自通靈；悟徹個中理，菩提不減增。」從字的構造來講，「道」字一開始就是兩點。這兩點代表天、地，代表日、月，代表陰、陽二氣。這兩點，也可以說是「無極」和「太極」。無極是真空，太極是妙有。由無極而生太極，太極動而生陽，太極靜而生陰。這兩點也是「人」字倒過來的寫法。

修道就是要倒過來，要逆流，非順流；順流即生死，逆流即涅槃。

兩點之下，是「一」字。這個一，本來不是「一」，而是無極的○圈。把○字破開，就成「一」字。這「一」字，不但是數目開始。而且能生天地、生萬物，生仙、生佛、生聖人。所謂「天得一以清，地得一以寧，人得一以聖，萬物得一，各正性命。」故「一」為萬物之始，但還不是究竟法。雖云「得一萬事畢」，但若對這個「一」生出執著，還落二、落三，猶不是真空。什麼是「真空」？就是「零」。這個「○」，是無大、無小，非內、非外，無始、無終，不落於數，但所有數目都未曾離開它。

真正妙有的道理，妙不可言。這種妙不可言的道理，到什麼地方去找呢？

The character Dao (the Way) encompasses all phenomena, and it is wonderful beyond words.

It is said,

The myriad things are born from the Dao.

One who attains it naturally penetrates its efficacy.

Awaken completely to the truth within this;

One's Bodhi (wisdom) wouldn't become less or more.

In terms of its structure as a Chinese character, Dao (道) starts with two dots, representing heaven and earth; the sun and the moon; yin and yang; they could also be said to symbolize the Infinite (*wuji*) and the Utmost (*taiji*). The Infinite means True Emptiness whereas the Utmost denotes Wonderful Existence. The Infinite gives rise to the Utmost. When the Utmost is active, it generates the Yang. When the Utmost is still, yin is generated. When these two dots are rotated one hundred-eighty degrees, they become the character for 'human' or 'person' (人). What this implies is that when cultivating the Way, we must reverse and go against the flow instead of with the flow. Going with the flow, we are in the realm of birth and death. Going against the flow, we reach nirvana.

Underneath the two dots of the Chinese character Dao (道), there is the character 'One' (一). The One did not start out being the first. It was actually a Zero, written as a circle (○) in Chinese, that represents the Infinite. Breaking this circle-shaped Zero, it becomes One (一). One is the beginning of all numbers and gives birth to heaven and earth as well as the myriad creatures, including immortals, Buddhas and sages. It is said, "If Heaven gains the One, it is pure. If earth attains the One, it is at peace. People who attain the One become sages. When all the myriad beings attain the One, they each rectify their lives." Therefore, the One is the start of all the myriad beings; however, this principle is not the ultimate dharma. Though we say that "when the One



答案就是「一」字下邊的「自」字。這「自」字是眼目的「目」上加一撇；表示求道不能向外馳求，要迴光反照、反求諸己，到外邊是找不到正道的。

道必須要去實行才是道，所以道的右邊有個「走」字。這表示要行持，才能有感應，有成就。若光是明白道理，而不去實行，也是沒有用處的。所謂「說一丈，不如行一尺。」我常說：「道是行的，不行何成道？德是立的，不立哪有德？」就是這個道理。故修道要躬行實踐、努力認真；欲返本還原，則由「一」回到「○」，即回到本來面目。

從義理上講，道是無形無相的，但有一股生生不息、化化無窮的作用。也就是「○」有那種能，所以才能生天、生地、生萬物，生仙、生佛、生聖人，這都是從○性中生出來的。再往清楚說，○字就是本有的佛性。它是大光明藏，圓陀陀、光灼灼。它小，比微塵還小；它大，大過法界。所以它是無限大、無限小，沒有限量。

這個「○」，也就是「無極」的圓圈。因為沒有極點，所以是圓圈。這個無極圈，修成功，就是「大圓鏡智」，修不成功，就是「無明」。修行要從「一」修回到「零」，到了一事也無時，就能從這個「零」，發生無量無邊的作用；這時，「一法不立，萬慮皆空」，是究竟解脫。

贊曰

大道無形 生育天地
大道無情 運行日月
大道無名 長養萬物
吾不知名 強名曰道

「大道無形，生育天地；」大道的本體，是無形無相，無影無蹤，不可言說的。但這虛無的本體，卻有無限能

is attained, everything is complete,” if one becomes attached to the One, then one falls into the secondary meaning and it is not yet the ultimate of True Emptiness. What is True Emptiness? It is the Zero (0), which is neither great nor small, not inside or outside, without beginning or end. It does not fall into any category of numbers, yet no number is apart from it.

The true principle of Wonderful Existence is beyond expression. Where does one find this incommunicable principle? The answer is ‘oneself’(自), which is the character underneath the One (一) of Dao (道). The character ‘oneself’ (自) is composed of a left-falling stroke over an ‘eye’ (目). This means that the Dao cannot be sought outwardly but only looking inwards. One must introspect and reflect within. One cannot find the proper Way by seeking outside.

The Dao must be practiced. Hence, it has a ‘walking’ radical (走) to the right of the Chinese character Dao (道). This means that by practicing (walking toward) the Way, one then can gain a response and achieve success. If only understands principles but does not practice, it is of no use. Therefore, there’s a saying: “A foot of practice is better than a yard of talk.” I always say, “The Way must be practiced (walked), or else how can it be the Way? Virtue must be created. Otherwise, how can there be virtue?” The same principle applies here. Therefore, cultivating the Way means practicing it personally and diligently. To return to the origin is to go from the One back to Zero, hence returning to our original source.

In principle, the Way has no shape or form. Nevertheless, its functions are everlasting and endlessly transforming. This refers to the Zero, which contains this kind of function and energy; therefore, it can give rise to heaven, earth and the myriad beings, including immortals, Buddhas and sages. All of these are born from the nature of the Zero. To make it more explicit, Zero is the original Buddha nature. It is the bright treasury, perfect and illuminating. It is smaller than a mote of dust. At the same time, it is greater than the Dharma Realm. It has no limit, being infinitely small and yet infinitely great.

The Zero (0) is also the circle of the Infinite. Because the Infinite has no end, it is represented as a circle. When one perfects the cultivation of this circle of the Infinite, it becomes the Great Perfect Mirror Wisdom. If one fails, it becomes Ignorance. To cultivate, one ought to start from the One (existence) and returning to the state of Zero (emptiness). When one reaches the point of there being nothing whatsoever, limitless and boundless functions arise from this state of Zero. At that point, one has reached the ultimate liberation where “not a single dharma exists; the myriad thoughts are empty.”

A verse in praise says:

**The Great Way has no form,
Yet it gives rise to heaven and earth.
The Great Way has no sentience,
Yet it moves the sun and moon.
The Great Way has no name,**



量，能以無而生有，以一而化萬，
天地萬物都從它而生。

「大道無情，運行日月。」大道雖是無情，其中卻內涵無形的本體精華，既全且備，能運行日月。

「大道無名，長養萬物；」大道雖是不可名狀，無名可名的，但卻是萬有之源。○能起真空、妙有的變化，而成孕育萬物之母。

「吾不知名，強名曰道。」我(老子)不知道它叫什麼名字，祇好勉強將此本體稱之為「道」。

又說偈曰

清淨無為守本真
谷神不死天地根
同出異名觀微妙
寡欲斷愛保元明
上善若水利萬物
至仁似木蔭群倫
青牛西去泥蹤跡
紫氣東來永長春

「清淨無為守本真」：老子主張清淨無為，是「為無為而無所不為」。雖萬事紛紛，心中仍清淨自若。不勉強，不生分別心，也不矯揉造作，自然順著理勢而行。養大智於大愚之中，以保存真常之心。

「谷神不死天地根」：谷神是空靈虛無而能容納一切的。就因它是無形、無相，所以能永遠長存而不死。道之為物，也像谷神一樣，無所不容，無微不入。所有的萬物都由它有生生不息，所以叫做「玄牝」。這玄牝的門戶，就是天地的根源。

「同出異名觀微妙」：真空、妙有，有欲、無欲，其名雖不同，但都是自真常性天中流露出來的，同是玄妙莫測。以真空來觀道的神妙，以妙

**Yet it grows and nourishes the myriad beings.
I do not know its name,
So I style it 'the Way.'**

Commentary:

The Great Way has no form, / Yet it gives rise to heaven and earth. The original substance of the Great Way is invisible, formless, traceless and beyond expression. Though the substance is nonexistent, it contains limitless energy. It generates existence from emptiness and transforms myriad things from one. All beings between the heaven and the earth are born from it.

The Great Way has no sentience, / Yet it moves the sun and moon. Even though the Great Way has no feelings/emotions, it contains an invisible substance and essence. All is replete with the Great Way so that the sun and the moon move and rotate.

The Great Way has no name, / Yet it grows and nourishes the myriad beings. The Great Way is the origin of all beings though its shape and identity cannot be described. Zero produces the changes of True Emptiness and Wonderful Existence and as a result, it becomes the nourishing mother of all creatures.

I do not know its name, / So I style it 'the Way.' I, Laozi, do not know what this is so I just give it a provisional name 'the Way'.

Another verse says:

**Through purity and unconditioned doing, guard the original truth.
The spirit of the valley never dies and is called
the root of heaven and earth.**

**From the same source but bearing different names:
observe the mysterious wonder.**

**Lessen desires and cut off love to conserve one's energy
and essence.**

Highest good is like water, benefiting the myriad creatures.

The ultimate kindness resembles trees that shelter all beings.

Riding a blue ox to the west, he vanished without a trace.

**Auspicious purple clouds hover from the east;
his thoughts are everlasting.**

Commentary

Through purity and unconditioned doing, guard the original truth. Laozi proposed pureness and no doing; there is nothing being done and yet everything is done." Although there are ten thousand things going on simultaneously, his mind is still pure and at ease. There is no coercing, no discriminating, and no artificial effort. Everything progresses with the nature. Great wisdom is nourished in great foolishness in order to keep the true and everlasting mind.

The spirit of the valley never dies and is called the root of heaven



有來觀道的微眼。一切事事物物，莫不各有微妙。處世為人，第一要知道事物的微妙。修身若不知微妙，就會戕賊性命；行政若不知微妙，就會壞亂國家。

「寡欲斷愛保元明」：老子主張清心寡欲，斷欲去愛來保全自己的元明、元精、元氣、元神。收一分念，即保有一分真陽；虛一分心，即收取一分真陽。

「上善若水利萬物」：水能利益萬物，卻常處於低下，是最能不爭的。就因為它不爭，所以才無過錯。上善的聖人，就好似水一樣。聖人沒有自私自心，但求利人，不為自己著想，不和人爭。雖處於極卑下，眾人所惡之處，也自在如常，所以近於道。

「至仁似木蔭群倫」：大道分運道力、大能於天地，使天地化生萬物，生生不息。這都是無心之施，無心之化。如此至仁大德，猶如樹木一樣，護蔭眾生。

「青牛西去泯蹤跡」：老子後來騎著青牛，西出函谷關後，就無人知道他的下落。

「紫氣東來永長春」：老子之道，視之不見，搏之不得，就像神龍似的，或潛或躍，或現或隱，變化難測。他的立言，猶如萬道光芒，凝為紫蓋。這種祥瑞之氣，充塞宇宙之間。流到中國來，使中國沐浴在祥和之氣中，生氣蓬勃，好似永遠是春天一樣。

and earth. The immortal spirit is empty yet it includes everything. Because it is intangible and markless, it can last eternally and not cease. The Way is like the immortal spirit that contains everything and is in all subtleness. All creatures are born generation after generation because of it. That is why it is called the mysterious female. The gateway to the mysterious female is the root of heaven and earth.

From the same source but bearing different names: Observe the mysterious wonder. True Emptiness, Wonderful Existence, cravings and the lack thereof are recognized differently. However, they are from the same nature of truth and permanence that is mysterious and unfathomable. All things and phenomena are wonderful when one contemplates the wonder of the Way from the perspectives of true emptiness and wonderful existence. Being a person in the world, we first have to know the mystery and wonder of all matters. If in cultivation we are unaware of this, we could lose our lives; if in governing we do not know this, we could cause chaos and decline in the nation.

Lessen desires and cut off love to conserve one's energy and essence. Laozi promoted purity and few desires. Cutting off desires and love, we reserve our inner light, spirit, essence and energy. When we draw in one thought, we keep one share of true yang energy. When we practice humbleness, we gather and gain one share of true yang energy.

Highest good is like water, benefiting the myriad creatures. Water can benefit all beings by staying at the lowest place, not contending with anyone or anything. Because it does not compete with people or things, it makes no mistakes. The highest sages are just like water. They do not have selfish minds. Instead, they only benefit others. They do not look after their own gains nor do they fight with others. Although staying in the lowest places which people loathe, they are at ease. Thus, it is close to Way.

The ultimate kindness resembles trees that shelter all beings. The Great Way exerts its power, which is so great that it causes the transformations of all beings between the heaven and the earth without cease. All this is giving and transforming unintentionally. Such extreme virtue of greatness is like trees that protect and shelter living beings.

Riding a blue ox to the west, he vanished without a trace. Later, Laozi rode a blue ox through the Hangu Pass and headed westwards. No one knows where he went after that.

Auspicious purple clouds hover from the east; his thoughts are everlasting. The Way of Laozi is such that you may look for it but you cannot see it; you may try to grasp it but it cannot be attained. It is like a divine dragon, diving or leaping, hiding or manifesting, transforming in unfathomable ways. Laozi's words resemble myriad rays of light that formed a purplish canopy. This auspicious energy permeated the universe and flowed into China, bathing China in peace and vitality so that it seemed to enjoy an everlasting springtime.

