

Philosophy 154E.001 'Asian Philosophies'
Some translations of Chapter One of the *Tao-te ching*

The tao that can be told
is not the eternal Tao.
The name that can be named
is not the eternal Name.

The unnamable is the eternally real.
Naming is the origin
of all particular things.

Free from desire, you realize the mystery.
Caught in desire, you see only the
manifestations.

Yet mystery and manifestations
arise from the same source.
This source is called darkness.

Darkness within darkness.
The gateway to all understanding.

(Translated by Stephen Mitchell. Published by HarperCollins Publishers with a copyright date of 1988.)

The Tao that can be trodden is not the enduring and
unchanging Tao. The name that can be named is not the enduring and
unchanging name.

(Conceived of as) having no name, it is the Originator of heaven
and earth; (conceived of as) having a name, it is the Mother of all
things.

Always without desire we must be found,
If its deep mystery we would sound;
But if desire always within us be,
Its outer fringe is all that we shall see.

Under these two aspects, it is really the same; but as development
takes place, it receives the different names. Together we call them
the Mystery. Where the Mystery is the deepest is the gate of all that

is subtle and wonderful.

(Translated by James Legge. 'Published' at <<http://www.edepot.com/tao8.html>>.)

The Tao that can be followed is not the eternal Tao.

The name that can be named is not the eternal name.

The nameless is the origin of heaven and earth

While naming is the origin of the myriad things.

Therefore, always desireless, you see the mystery

Ever desiring, you see the manifestations.

These two are the same—

When they appear they are named differently.

This sameness is the mystery,

Mystery within mystery;

The door to all marvels.

(Translated by Charles Muller (Toyo Gakuen University). 'Published' at <<http://www.hm.tyg.jp/~acmuller/contao/daodejing.html#div-1>>.)

The Tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao;

The name that can be named is not the eternal name.

The Nameless is the origin of Heaven and Earth;

The Named is the mother of all things.

Therefore let there always be non-being, so we may
see their subtlety,

And let there always be being, so we may see their outcome.

The two are the same,

But after they are produced, they have different names.

They both may be called deep and profound.

Deeper and more profound,

The door of all subtleties!

(Translated by Wing-Tsit Chan. Published by Prentice Hall, with a copyright date of 1963.)

