

# Harmony

## *Lao-Tzu*

Exterminate the sage [the ruler] and discard the wisdom [of rule],  
And the people will benefit a hundredfold.

Without law or compulsion, men would dwell in harmony.

All things carry the yin and embrace the yang.  
They achieve harmony through their interaction.

The more prohibitions there are,  
The poorer the people will be.

The more laws are promulgated,  
The more thieves and bandits there will be.

Therefore a sage has said:  
So long as I “do nothing” the people will of themselves be transformed;  
So long as I love quietude, the people will of themselves go straight.  
So long as I act only by inactivity the people will of themselves become prosperous.

The people starve because those above them eat too much tax-grain. That is the only reason why they starve. The people are difficult to keep in order because those above them interfere. That is the only reason why they are so difficult to keep in order.