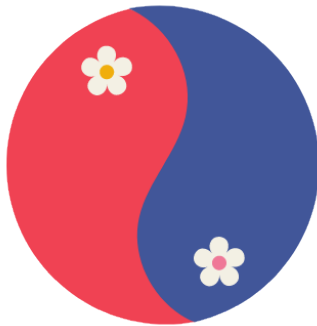


The Gender Neutral Book of Dao



Clark Gillian

Singel Uitgevers B.V.
Under Brave New Books

Weteringschans 259,
1017 XJ Amsterdam

First Edition
April 24th 2021
ISBN 9789464353006

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The Gender Neutral Book of Dao	5
1. Gateway to wonder	10
2. An opposition that connects	12
3. Simplicity	14
4. Unfathomable.....	16
5. Out of emptiness.....	18
6. Soul of the valley	20
7. Endless selflessness	22
8. Adjust without resisting	24
9. Letting go.....	26
10. Pure and modest.....	28
11. Creative emptiness	30
12. Self-esteem without addiction	32
13. Independent self-esteem.....	34
14. Beyond understanding	36
15. Unfathomable wisdom	38
16. Return to constancy	40
17. Thoughtful leadership	42
18. Signs of decay.....	44
19. The freedom of sobriety.....	46
20. Worldly people, wise people	48
21. Inscrutable Dao.....	53
22. The wisdom of flexibility	55
23. The durability of the path	57
24. Avoid complexity	59
25. The greatness of Dao.....	61
26. Serene	65
27. True skillmanship.....	67
28. Power of vision	69
29. Without intervening.....	6
30. Power without violence.....	8
31. Finest weapons - instruments of misery	12
32. Rise above.....	16
33. Enlightenment.....	18

34. Great selflessness.....	20
35. Incorruptible.....	22
36. Paradox of power	24
37. The victory of contentedness	26
38. Power without intention	28
39. Harmony through simplicity	32
40. The return	36
41. Unforced	38
42. Nonviolence	42
43. The victory of tenderness	44
44. True ideals	46
45. Paradox of truth.....	48
46. Peaceful modesty.....	50
47. To see and to understand	52
48. Less is more	54
49. Trust and goodness	56
50. Life and death	58
51. The power of the way	60
52. the sensation of feeling	62
53. To move forward or stray	64
54. Maturation.....	66
55. The power of soundness.....	70
56. Silent enlightenment	72
57. Quiet, simple righteousness.....	74
58. A gentle lead	76
59. Moderation	78
60. Cooperation.....	80
61. First servant.....	82
62. Refuge	84
63. Lightness of being	86
64. First steps.....	88
65. Modest self-reliance	92
66. The kings of the hundred valleys.....	94
67. Three treasures.....	96

68. True leadership	98
69. The victory of retreat.....	100
70. Easy to understand, hard to follow	102
71. Wisdom and illusion.....	104
72. True authority	106
73. Silent victory	108
74. Lethal death.....	110
75. Burdens	112
76. Subtle power	114
77. The way of nature.....	116
78. The wisdom of water	118
79. Blessed tolerance	120
80. Simple living	122
81. Words of truth.....	124

1.

Gateway to wonder

The road, once taken,
Is no longer all the road could have been.
As soon as something is named,
It much of its meaning is lost.

The cosmos has its origin in the nameless.
Naming things is the mother of factuality.
Move aside desire,
To reveal the wondrous.
To wish and desire,
Reveals only the wishable and desirable.

Never one without the other,
Yet differently named.
Call them deep,
Even deeper than deep:
The gate into the wondrous.

道可道，非常道。

名可名，非常名。

無名天地之始；
有名萬物之母。

故常無欲，
以觀其妙；
常有欲，
以觀其徼。

此兩者，
同出而異名，
同謂之玄。

玄之又玄，
衆妙之門。

2.

An opposition that connects

Understanding what makes beauty beautiful,
Is knowing ugliness.

Understanding what makes goodness good,
Is knowing the bad.

So concerning being and not-being,
So too they are understood by each other.

The wise stay in the undone,
Following unspoken lessons.

Where everything
unfolds without end,
Comes forth without shape,
Does without doing.

It completes without owning,
And what remains unclaimed,
Becomes eternal.

天下皆知美之為美，
斯惡已。

皆知善之為善，
斯不善已。

故有無相生，
難易相成，
長短相較，
高下相傾，
音聲相和，
前後相隨。

是以聖人處無為之事，
行不言之教；
萬物作焉而不辭，
生而不有。

為而不恃，
功成而弗居。

夫唯弗居，
是以不去。

3.

Simplicity

Not praising talent,
Prevents competition.
Not cherishing the valuable,
Prevents theft.
Not watching the seductive,
Prevents distortion.

That is why the wise act thusly:

Empty the heart,
Fill the stomach,
Temper ambitions,
Strengthen the bones.

Knowing nothing and desiring nothing,
That is when thoughts don't dare interfere.

Only start to do nothing,
To leave nothing unfinished.

不尚賢，
使民不爭；
不貴難得之貨，
使民不為盜；
不見可欲，
使心不亂。
是以聖人之治，
虛其心，
實其腹，
弱其志，
強其骨。

常使民無知無欲。
使夫¹知者不敢為也。

為無為，
則無不治。

4.

Unfathomable

As the Dao overflows,
Using it never fills it back up.
Its unfathomable depth,
Reveals the origin of all.

As sharpness fades into softness,
All that was tangles releases itself,
Blending into the light.
Still one with the earth.

Hidden, hidden away,
The only place possibility,
Seems to exist.

I don't know whose child it is,
That is the parent of Heaven.

道冲而用之或不盈。

淵兮似萬物之宗。

挫其銳，

解其紛，

和其光，

同其塵。

湛兮似或存。

吾不知誰之子，

象帝之先。

5.

Out of emptiness

Heaven and earth don't make exceptions for humans.

All creatures know the same fate as the sacrificial animals.

The wise don't make exceptions for humans.

All families know the same destiny as the sacrificial animals.

Aren't heaven and earth similar to

The bellows and flutes of the bagpipes?

Completely filled with emptiness when still,

Creating only when moved.

Big words lead to big exhaustion,

Being grounded there is no compare.

天地不仁，
以萬物為芻狗；
聖人不仁，
以百姓為芻狗。
天地之間，
其猶橐籥乎？
虛而不屈，
動而愈出。
多言數窮，
不如守中。

6.

Soul of the valley

Immortal is the soul of the valley,
This we call the pervious mystery.
The gate to this valley,
We call the root of Heaven and Earth.

So elusive,
Seemingly non-existent,
At the same time
inexhaustible.

谷神不死，
是謂玄牝。
玄牝之門，
是謂天地根。
綿綿若存，
用之不勤。

7.

Endless selflessness

Heaven is eternal,
Earth is boundless,
Heaven and Earth are therefor of an eternal
boundlessness.

Because they didn't originate from themselves,
They live in constancy,
Constantly producing life.

The wise put themselves last,
And so take the lead.
They least of all consider themselves,
And so remain untouched.

Is it not because they are so detached from
selfishness,
That they reach all their goals?

天長地久。

天地所以能長且久者，
以其不自生，
故能長生。

是以聖人後其身而身先；
外其身而身存。

非以其無私耶？

故能成其私。

8.

Adjust without resisting

The highest of the high is as water,
For water benefits all,
Without competition.

Even present in the most reviled spaces,
In doing so always near.

It lives in the foundation of benevolence.
It is aware of the deepest goodness.
Spreading the most humane goodness.
Speaking the sincerest goodness.
Standing firm in reserved goodness.
Acting in talented goodness.
Moving in timeless goodness.

Of itself and without competition.
Remaining ever without competition.