

Dialogues of City and Country III

by Ishida Baigan

Akira MATSUO

「都鄙問答」の意識も、今度の紀要で三回目を迎える。その間ずっと大学当局から研究費の援助を受けていることに、重ねて謝意を表したい。

卷之三はすべてを性理の問題、つまり、実践の理論的根拠たる形而上学に当てている。石田梅岩は当初神道を志し、後に禪的な悟りに到達したのであるが、その思想の理論的支えとしては朱子学に頼ろうとした。この理由については色々な考えもあろうが、朱子学は当時広く行きわたっていただけに、その後の心学運動の高まりを支える基礎としては、社会運動論的見地からみて適切であったかも知れない。

尚、英文の検証については、M.Hood氏のお世話になった。この誌上を借りて御礼を述べる。

CHAPTER III

A Dialogue on the Principle of Nature

A scholar asked: Confucius, the great sage, taught us the three fundamental principles of human relations¹ and the five cardinal virtues, but did not mention the principle of nature. Mencius was the first sage to say, "Human nature is good." and "I foster moral courage overflowing the universe." Kao-tzu² said, "Life is no less than nature." and "Human nature is neither good nor bad." or "A piece of wood cannot itself be a cup. Similarly we cannot be benevolent without cultivation of the mind." and also "Human nature is like water which will flow in any direction." Han-tzu³ said, "Human nature is of three kinds; good, mixed, and bad." Hsun-tzu⁴ said, "Human nature is by its origin bad, though it sometimes appears good." Yang-tzu⁵ said, "Human nature is an alloy of good and bad." Besides the above, there are countless teachings: Lao-tzu's, Chuang-tzu's, the Buddhists' and so on. Which teachings should we rely upon? In our country, therefore, some Confucians believe Mencius and some others believe Kao-tzu or Han-tzu while still others disapprove of Mencius and even deny all including Confucius. No one persuasion is conclusive. You, however, justify Sung ju and respect Mencius, saying that man is innately good. But in my opinion you cannot affirm this conclusively. As you are human, you are unlikely ever to arrive at such a conclusion, but it seems that you say human nature is good only because other Confucians support Mencius, indeed because a majority of people think him right even though you yourself are uncertain of his view of human nature as essentially good. In short you are not honest as

a scholar. To say matters are doubtful whenever you are in doubt is honest. But honesty may make it hard to get on in the world. Yet you need not feel any remorse. If I get the truth out of you, you probably have no grounds for believing the doctrine that man's inborn nature is good. If so, do you entirely depend upon Mencius and this dogma of human nature as good in essence?

Answer: No, I do not. But you can take me as you please, for you seem to be incapable of understanding me.

Question: Do you answer so because my question has touched your weak point?

Answer: Not so. The Master said, "A piece of rotten wood cannot be carved, nor can a wall of dried dung be trowelled."⁶ Those like you who lose sight of their own heart are as good as dead, for they try to carve the rotten wood. To whom can they talk? As for the doctrine that man's inborn nature is good, you must first know your own nature and then ponder whether Mencius is right and whether this applies to your nature too: in short you must discuss it only after long deliberation. Now, aside from the doctrine, what do you think of Confucius' words, "My Way is bound by one single thread."?

Question: Tseng Tzu interpreted the words as "nothing but 忠恕(chu jo) alone.", chu means doing things from one's heart and jo, sincere consideration for others. That is all.

Answer: What Tseng Tzu calls chu jo is the highest good. It is understandable that those in later ages, ignorant of the principle of nature, say that chu jo represents the single thread. But it is nonetheless wrong to say that the single thread is chu jo alone, because, as I think, it is no longer orthodox for sages either in Japan or China to stress "chu jo alone". Therefore, the idea of the single thread as chu jo is pernicious in that it flouts orthodox thought. You no more than lap up the dregs of Tseng Tzu's words if you insist on this idea with no knowledge of the doctrine that man's inborn nature is good. The single thread is nothing other, in fact, than the subtle truth that human nature is originally good, and also identical with the sage's heart and, therefore, cannot be explained in words, so that you must perceive it directly. When Tseng Tzu heard the words, "one single thread", he immediately understood and firmly believed that it was in accord with the spirit of the Confucian teachings. And he assented. Other disciples were there with him and heard them too, but they did not understand. They asked what they meant after Confucius had left his seat and Tseng Tzu explained further, saying, "nothing but chu jo". Still they did not understand. Confucius also said to Tzu Kung once, "A single cord threads my Way through.", but he too could not yet understand, and so he failed to answer the Master. On the other hand, Tseng Tzu had already arrived at the orthodox thinking: hence, he could explain the meaning of the single thread by using the term, chu jo. One who has arrived at orthodoxy is free and qualified to assert that the single

thread is chu jo. Whether the explanation is reasonable depends upon whether the one who explains understands or not. But if you say chu jo, this chu jo is quite different from the chu jo expounded by Tseng Tzu, because you do not know that man's inborn nature is good. And, leaving chu jo aside, you will find many other things inconsistent. Yet, to be a teacher, you must elucidate those very things. As you are not familiar with the principle of nature, you seem not to understand them.

Question: Even the teacher cannot understand the things clearly. The sages could understand, but the scholars of today cannot. We might just say that the single thread is chu jo, but we should say nothing more.

Answer: You say that the scholars of today cannot understand the things, but the sages' teachings are immutable for all ages. It is the Buddhist notion of the latter days of the Law which establishes such a distinction between past and present. You should not confuse Buddhism with Confucianism. Now Confucius said, "The virtuous man is not always for or against a matter. He takes only the side of righteousness." Yen Yuan⁷ said, "I see the Way of Confucius before me. Next moment it is behind me." Mencius said, "The Way is one, only one." There are many sayings of this kind. What do you think of them?

Question: I cannot answer you at once, because I have not studied them thoroughly.

Answer: These three sayings refer to the heart; still you say you cannot reply immediately. Then, no matter how many books you read, you will be unable to profit from them. *The Analects* all reveal the sages' heart. Knowing not the heart, whom will you follow to improve yourself and how can you teach others?

Question: The Way of Confucius means nothing else but the five cardinal principles of morality and the five cardinal virtues. We cannot doubt it.

Answer: If you do not know the "one, only one." mentioned by Mencius, it means that you do not know the Way. Confucius said, "It is Man who is able to broaden the Way, not the Way that is capable of broadening Man." *The Variorum of the Analects of Confucius* reads, "Only he whose heart knows nature thoroughly can broaden the Way." It also reads, "Man cannot be man without the Way. The Way cannot be the Way without man. The heart alone knows the principle of nature." Therefore, a man can broaden the Way. The heart capable of knowing the Way is the essence of man and its workings are the five cardinal principles of morality. First comes the essence of man, and then its workings. They are the relationships of sovereign and subject, father and child, man and wife, brothers, and friends. With an awareness of benevolence, righteousness, propriety and wisdom, the heart will aim to realise the five cardinal principles of morality. But you do not know that this heart is the only one.

Question: There is some truth in what you say and so we can learn either way. Hereafter I will think about the heart, but Mencius' doctrine that man's inborn nature is good is now all the more intractable and quite beyond my understanding. The sage is good because he has attained to the three virtues; wisdom, benevolence and courage. But not even the wisest have all three virtues: much less the people. However, you treat all men equally and maintain that man's inborn nature is good. Why?

Answer: Confucius says in *The Book of Changes*, "Yin and Yang represent the Way. To follow it is good and to perform it is nature." The Universe consists of Yin and Yang. What else exists except these two?

Question: Even the five natural elements are Yin and Yang. Nothing exists but these two.⁸

Answer: Then, do you regard Yin and Yang as two things or one thing?

Question: To separate them is hard. But to regard them as one is also difficult, because there are two elements, motion and rest.

Answer: If there are two elements, motion and rest, from where does motion come and to where does rest go?

Question: The Illimitable (無極 bukyoku) and the Ultimate (太極 taikyoku) are nothing but the names of something that does not exist. I do not understand this well, though.

Answer: It is not that they do not exist. The Ultimate is the essence of heaven, earth and man. Now should breathing through your nose and your mouth be regarded as one thing or two?

Question: We cannot draw a dividing line here, either.

Answer: Respiration through the nose and that through the mouth are the Yin and Yang of the Universe breathing in and out in the world. Can you stop breathing in and out and live even for a short time?

Question: No, you cannot.

Answer: Breathing in and out is the Yin and Yang of the Universe. It is not you who breathe. Therefore, you would immediately die unless you were in accord with the Yin and Yang of the Universe. It is obvious that only this unity with Yin and Yang allows you to live. Inhaling is Yin and exhaling is Yang. "To follow it is good." Physical motion and rest are also the Yin and Yang of the Universe. This is exactly as it is written in *The Book of Changes*. Confucius taught the substance of the Way by explaining the Universe, while Mencius taught by explaining man. Heaven and man are one and so the Way is also one. Chou tzu said,⁹ "The five natural elements are no more than Yin and Yang. Yin and Yang can be identified with the Ultimate. The Ultimate was originally the Illimitable." Should this Illimitable be counted as one thing or two? Unless you really know it, how can you

teach the Way? Is it not deplorable to lead the world astray by drunken maunderings? You must first learn what Confucius and Mencius call “the sole Way”. Confucius and Mencius are in perfect accord with each other. If you approve of Confucius, you must also affirm Mencius. I support Mencius not because I especially value his view of human nature as essentially good — I do not lap up every morsel of his words — but because what he says is in accord with my heart. An explanation like this seems to be facile, but it is in fact difficult to appreciate. If you comprehend it, life and death themselves will become one. Therefore, *The Analects* say, “He who hears about the Way in the morning fears not to die that same day.” Now many people misinterpret the good taught by Confucius and Mencius. They doubt the view of human nature as essentially good, because there are many bad people: if human nature were good, all the people in the world would be virtuous and nobody would be evil. This is because very few can appreciate the doctrine that man’s inborn nature is good. When people think of good, they look only at the surface of things, classing this as good and that as bad; therefore, they easily lose sight of the sages’ intention and err grossly in their interpretation of good.

Question: Could you tell me the cause of this error?

Answer: First, then, I will explain the Way of the Universe. Suppose there are two tan of rice fields. And let us assume that we transplant rice seedlings from the same nursery to the two fields at the same time and that the same amount of farmers’ efforts go into each of the two fields and also that we spread the same amount of night soil on each, and yet it may still happen that one of the fields produces three koku of rice and the other half of that amount. But may we say that this field is evil and that one is virtuous?

Question: The rice field has no heart and so we cannot say it is evil or virtuous. But we can say whether it has good or poor qualities.

Answer: Any rice field consists of soil, but some are rich and others are poor. Although there is rich soil and poor soil, soil is always soil. Therefore, if you spread manure and rich soil little by little on a rice field of poor quality, it will improve until it becomes a good field. If you apply this parable to men, a poor rice field is a low man, a better field is a wise man, and a field of the highest quality a sage. The low, the wise and the sage are quite distinct, but since their inborn natures are all good, a low man can by stages become wise, a wise man a sage through learning. This proves that we all share a single nature. All men, the sage, the wise and the low move and live because they breathe. If you observe this working of nature, you will realize that it is the formless substance, which was called “Good”. But you cannot understand how this nature is good, until you achieve detachment from yourself. As I said earlier, Mencius’ view of human nature as essentially good does not mean good as

opposed to bad. Do not make this mistake.

Question: I think Mencius' view that man's inborn nature is good and Kao-tzu's doctrine that human nature is neither good nor bad are equivalent, because where there is neither virtue nor vice is absolutely empty. Mencius named this empty world "Good" while Kao-tzu called it "Neither good nor bad". Their names seem different, but both are insubstantial. And yet you say that Mencius is right and Kao-tzu is mistaken. Why?

Answer: That is the point you fail to understand. In the first place, Kao-tzu's view that human nature is neither good nor bad is nothing but a hypothesis concocted, because he could not conclude whether human nature is good or bad, even after inquiring into his own original nature. Therefore he concluded that human nature is neither good nor bad. However, Mencius' doctrine that man's inborn nature is good is in perfect accord with a universe where man unconsciously breathes in and out even when he is asleep. His respiration is not his own. The Yin and Yang of the Universe suffuses his body and diffuses from it. It is breath (氣 ki) permeating the Universe that stirs and moves corporeal things. Mencius taught that man is innately good, because he rightly believed that man and the Universe are in harmony. His view is quite natural and in agreement with *The Book of Changes*. But this point may be difficult to understand. You must consider that. *The Book of Changes* explains things in accordance with natural phenomena and so everything told in the book is impersonal. The impersonal Yin and Yang is sometimes in motion and sometimes at rest. And it is "good" to follow that motion and its pause. We cannot confuse this subtle view with Kao-tzu's idea. They are quite different. Mencius' view of human nature as essentially good is the Way of Heaven transcending life and death. How can we place this view on the same level with Kao-tzu's transient theorizing? This point seems easy but in fact it is hard to understand. We cannot comprehend this only by thinking. We cannot understand this until we determine to seek the Way as assiduously as Confucius who went to the State of Chi and studied music so devotedly that he almost forgot to eat for three months. Some people read books, but do not know that man is innately good. Those who read books without knowing that are like invalids. The healthy enjoy their eating while the sick with a fever cannot. Those who do not know that man's inborn nature is good are like the fevered sick. They read books but never learn the significance of the books. And what is worse, they think that Mencius' view of human nature as good is wrong. But Mencius' view is the Way of Heaven and so is Confucius' view of human nature as good (stated in *The Book of Changes*). If you want to say that the Universe is one thing and man is another, then stop up your nose and mouth and see what will happen. If you could live without receiving the Yin and Yang of the Universe, Mencius would be wrong, but if you die, Mencius will be right and it also shows that the

Universe and man are in accord with each other. This is a clear proof. As you have not seen this continuity, you are in doubt. And the doubt leads you to accept Kao-tzu's doctrine. If you use his words and say that human nature is neither good nor bad, then people may agree with you, but at this point you should stop to think again. The view that human nature is neither good nor bad might be only a slight slip at the start, but it will become a gross error by the destination. The Way for the sage to follow is nothing other than the Way of heaven and earth. Obviously, heaven and earth have purity and impurity. Heaven is pure, earth is impure. Neither the pure heavens nor the impure earth appears to create things of themselves. The Universe has no heart, but things have been created continuously one after another since time immemorial. The continuation of this constant creation is good. To be more precise, the heavens are formless like the heart, while the earth is material and a concrete thing. Heaven and earth seem to be animate in that they create things, and at the same time inanimate in that they have no heart. Indeed, they have two aspects: one is living and the other is dead. It is because the Universe has two faces, life and death, and that it is the substance of all things. We tentatively call this "reason" (理 ri), "nature" (性 sei) or "good" (善 zen). Some superficial men, however, know only one aspect, that of life, and do not know that the Universe is governed by the law of opposite aspects, life and death. These men are very misleading. Confucius said, "To attack a task from the wrong end can do nothing but harm."¹¹ If the Way of heaven and earth is observed by man, his heart is void like the heavens while his form is solid like the earth, and his respiration is Yin and Yang. It is good to be in accord with this. That which presides over these operations is "nature" (性 sei). In this light, a man is an entire microcosm. If you consider yourself to be a universe, then there will be little left to be desired. Kao-tzu is unaware of this. He thought his ideas floating in the mind was his nature, but that which can be conceived in thoughts is not nature, because the laws of nature are beyond ratiocination. Those who do not realize this, we call heathens, because they are out of joint with the Way of Heaven. They differ from Mencius who, in regard to nature (性 sei), attained to the knowledge that heaven, earth and man are harmonious.

Question: I understand that heaven and man are one and undivided, but I cannot comprehend how I too am united to heaven and earth. For your part do you understand this, although you cannot tell me what you do not know?

Answer: *The Scripture of Documents* reads, "Heaven sees as people see and hears as they hear." Heaven's heart is man and man's heart is heaven. This truth is immutable through all ages. With whom do you speak?

Question: With you.

Answer: I am one with all things. All things are the offspring of heaven. How could you have heart without communing with all things? All things are nothing less than heart. The cold shrivels you up while the warm weather relaxes you. Temperature is nothing but heart. Ponder deeply on this.

Question: I think the points you explained to me about the harmony between the universe and man, and also about the view of human nature as essentially good are all correct, but I am not convinced of them from my heart and neither do I find myself much concerned with them. Why not?

Answer: That is a good question. *Reflections in Hours of Idleness* says, "What you learn from others is not real knowledge". Even though you think you understand, you cannot yet comprehend fully. That is why you find no interest in the things you mentioned. One who trains himself in the pursuit of nature (性 sei) is distressed by his inability to solve the problem of what he is learning, and says, "I doubt this or I doubt that." He troubles himself day and night, but one day his eyes may suddenly open. This joy can be compared to the joy you would feel if your dead parents were brought back to life again. Since antiquity there have been paintings of a woodman with a heavy load on his shoulders enjoying the great relief of a rest while being supported by a stick. But those painters could not have known the joy welling up when your eyes suddenly opened. If I were asked to make a picture expressing the height of happiness, I would paint a man leaping up for joy on his enlightenment. *The Great Learning* reads regarding this point, "When you are enlightened, you can see the ins and outs, the substance and features of all things." This joy depends upon how much effort you have made. Some people are finally clear of all their doubts only after many years of pursuit while others come to understand, if only vaguely, after a few months. But these latter people do not win much joy, and so they may lose heart. And when you believe in the Way and come to be spiritually awakened, you will naturally be sure enough of yourself even to preach to other people on the street. Hence I am proselytizing for my faith regardless of my poor literary ability and the damage to my reputation.

Question: I think 性理 (seiri) "the principle of nature" or "nature and reason" is most important. But it seems difficult to understand. Even if you are convinced that Kao-tzu's doctrine, rather than Mencius' which is utterly different from the former, is wrong, is it then so easy to understand now Mencius' view is right?

Answer: If you grant Mencius' opinion that man is innately good, then it will enable you to see everything as clearly as telling light from shade in broad daylight. You will see clearly that many other doctrines are wrong even before you hear an explanation of their flaws. Indeed you need not study erroneous doctrines. If you only know that man's inborn nature

is good, you will, as it were, have a straight rule with which you can correct any crooked line. According to Mencius, "Man's inborn nature is good.", which means that "One who has thoroughly exhausted his heart knows his nature. When he knows his nature, he knows Heaven." Knowing Heaven is the beginning of learning. Know Heaven, and you will clearly see reason. This truth applies universally like the sun and the moon shine on all things. Kao-tzu's view loses sight of man's inborn nature, is self-complacent, and so it is as if to light a lamp in a room with all the windows shut up against the brilliant sunshine outside. There is a vast disparity between the two spaces lit by the lamp and the sun. Heaven and earth are bright and clear of themselves and with no effort on our part. The Way is achieved effortlessly and we can live peacefully leading a sunlit life: therefore we human beings can be the spirits of heaven and earth. Not knowing this, Kao-tzu suffered a spiritual crisis because of his opinionated doctrine. Since Mencius was familiar with the principle of nature, he fostered moral courage by doing what was right and attained to the high virtue which overflows the universe. As Kao-tzu was ignorant of this principle, he went his own way until he stumbled and was forced to seek out another course. In other words he changed his view every time he pronounced on nature. But what a man says after arriving at a definite conclusion should be immutable. Kao-tzu said, however, "What cannot be put into words is not to be sought for in the heart." This means, "What cannot be put into words should be left as it is. You must not seek for it in your heart." If you refuse to seek in your heart, how in the world can you open your eyes to any matter? Even a little matter cannot be understood unless you concentrate your heart on it. This is quite clear if you think of Kao-tzu comparing human nature to swirling water. According to Kao-tzu, the various ideas flowing through mind are elusive and so he likened human nature to deep and turbulent water. He did not know that the heavens create in an instant heat, cold, clouds, mists, wind and rain and that likewise the fresh air of dawn engenders a moral sense of benevolence, righteousness, propriety and wisdom. As he inquired into diverse things to the last detail, a slight error waxed great. It was as if a dog tried to bite his own tail and could never reach it because as he turned, so did his tail. Kao-tzu thought of things so deeply that he could never reach the view that man's inborn nature was good. This was regrettable. Mencius did not need to employ sophistry in order to do what was right and so he was able to foster moral courage like the fresh air at dawn. He attained to this truth by himself; therefore he said it was beyond description. Cheng-tzu said, "Judging from this brief remark, it is obvious that Mencius was indeed possessed of moral courage." Again, from the above words of Cheng-tzu, it is obvious that Cheng-tzu too fostered this moral courage. Wise men know this without doubt. If you take the view that man is innately good, then your heart

will be pure and bright and filled with benevolence and righteousness. Is there anything better in life than having such a heart full of benevolence and righteousness?

Question: Even granted that it is best to hold this view of human nature as essentially good, a man like me could never persuade himself of it, however much I hear it. I wish I were as gifted as Mencius, but no one can reach his level in these latter days. But supposing that only twenty or thirty or even ninety or a hundred of the several hundred million people in the world were convinced of it, they would be nothing but a small minority. Thus it is better to preach so that you can gather many followers in droves: if you speak to a Buddhist priest, you should please him by saying he will go to Paradise and if you speak to a Confucian, you should tell him that the yin side of his soul will remain on earth after death and the yang side will go up to heaven. There is no need to make extraordinary efforts, even if you have attained spiritual enlightenment.

Answer: Do you exert yourself to learn merely because learning is useful? If you do not learn, you are a mediocre man. Are you not learning indeed to avoid being a mediocre man? The most important thing in learning is to attain the level of the sages. To know the view that man is innately good is the gate leading to that level. And how could you reach that degree without entering at the gate? Mencius said, "The way of Yao and Shun was only that of filial piety and fraternal duty." The discharge of that duty itself will improve you, but if you neglect it, you will be regarded as a beast. If you come to be as a beast and behave so undutifully that there is no longer any mutual understanding between you and your parents and brothers, can you imagine anything unhappier than this in the world? Therefore, *The Book of Filial Duty* reads, "Confucius said that all men from the emperor to the commoner must be wholly devoted to their parents or otherwise they would meet misfortune wherever they might go." And it also says, "The five kinds of punishment cover about three thousand crimes, but disobedience to parents is the most culpable." Do you think that mean men who shamelessly breach moral principles and consider it unprofitable to discharge their filial and fraternal duties will be as fairly set about the heavens and the earth when they die as virtuous men?

Question: How can we ignore moral principles? I too doubt whether the mean, like the virtuous, will be set in the heavens and on earth after their death. But I do not think that they will go to paradise or hell. Neither do I believe in the existence of what Buddhism calls the previous life, this world and the next. I am not the only one to think this way. Undoubtedly there are many people like me. Once there lived a devoted Confucian preacher, who used to criticize Buddhism and never prayed even when he visited Shinto shrines or Buddhist temples at the invitation of his friends. But one day when he was seriously ill in

bed and seemed without hope, he joined his hands and shed tears before a Buddhist priest, with whom he had been on friendly terms because they were relatives by marriage, saying to him, "Please remember to hold Buddhist services for me after death so that I can go to paradise." Suddenly even the devoted Confucian preacher seemed to have felt that he might go to hell and so in his last moments in a mood of despair quite different from his usual vigorous way, he appealed to the priest. I too am doubtful of the existence of paradise or hell, but at the same time I feel it vexatious to consult priests about this. Moreover I do not know any bonze who has genuinely attained spiritual enlightenment. One day I happened to meet a bonze in the country and said to him, "It is said that Buddhism explains life and death, the things of the gravest concern to us. Would you be good enough to tell me all this evening?" Then the bonze set a brush of long white hair on the tatami in front of him, but I did not understand what he meant. We talked about something else for a little while and I asked him again, "Would you please explain life and death once more so that I may understand more easily?" Then he said, "I am afraid the strong tea you have had may keep you awake tonight." I thought only that he had missed my point and repeated, "Will you tell me about life and death?" In answer to this, he exclaimed, "A night watchman is already striking the clappers to mark ten o'clock." And then he continued, "You appear to be a learned man, but sadly you seem also to be deaf." This being so, my question was in vain. How can I resolve my uncertainty to die in peace and not weep like the devoted Confucian preacher?

Answer: You must, in fact, be blind because you did not understand what the bonze meant when he set up a brush of long white hair. His calling you deaf when you questioned him repeatedly even shows that the way he taught you was somewhat too mild. Confucius said with utter concision, "I hide nothing from you." The Master also said when Chi-lu¹⁵ asked about death, "You do not understand life yet. How could you understand death?" If you know yourself, then you can clearly understand death. Why do you try to understand by asking for yet another doctrine? Life and death are clearly explained in *The Analects*. The true Confucian is one who can thoroughly teach this question of life and death. You should clear away your uncertainty about life and death by studying under a teacher who hides nothing from you. You refuse to learn things through your personal experience but worry yourself about the teaching of the sages, and deceive yourself by justifying your own way of life, yet claim to be a disciple of Confucius and a true Confucianist. Why?

Question: An old poem¹⁶ tells us that to lie is sometimes expedient but to reply to the promptings of one's own heart is quite another question. As this poem says, if you examine yourself in the light of your heart, you will find it difficult to set your heart at rest. In answer to

others you may glibly say, “Confucians never think of their stipend or of their livelihood. Our origin was in heaven and to heaven we return.”¹⁷ But in fact you are not stainless. You feel uneasy in your heart as if to suppress something. This disquiet is inevitable, however. Not only Confucians but Buddhists too suffer from this and act likewise. In short nobody can escape this kind of disquiet. As there are a great number of Buddhists, one in a thousand may be spiritually awakened, but as the number of Confucians is limited, there should be far fewer who have attained complete enlightenment.

Answer: I do not think so. The number of spiritually awakened Confucians is more than that of Buddhists. Confucians are scholars, but Confucianism(儒 ju) is 濡ju(this character means “wet”). In other words, Confucianism means to moister or to water or to nourish: therefore one who is at peace with himself may be called a Confucian. Mencius said, “No man lacks something honourable in himself.” That which is honourable is his heart. A Confucian is one who knows his heart, sets it at peace and nourishes himself. Granted that there are a great many Buddhist priests, they are less than a tenth of the laity. As the number of Buddhist priests is small, those who have attained spiritual enlightenment among them are also few. On the contrary, the laity are numerous, and so it seems that there are also many laymen who have nourished themselves.

Question: If so, how useful would it be to train yourself so that you may know your heart and finally clear all doubt from the Way?

Answer: Mencius said, “At the age of forty I attained an unperturbed mind.” It is admirable to lead a virtuous life without fears or doubts while taking the helm of state affairs. Some men, however, gather pupils to teach them the Way but do not know how to teach. In other words they are fed by their pupils. They can be compared to one who is reversely depending upon his wife just because he cannot afford to support her. In the same way you will lag behind if you teach others without knowing your own heart. *The Great Learning* reads, “The way to the great learning is, first of all, to shed light on the flawless quality in man. To lead the thought of the people to an entirely different channel is of lesser importance. The first thing for the scholar to do is to know the heart. If you know the heart, you will behave prudently. If you behave well, then you will be courteous and feel at peace. To feel at peace is to be benevolent. Benevolence is a moral courage originating from the fountainhead of the universe. This fountainhead creates all things and nourishes them. To study the heart in this light is the first and last of learning. It is my task to nourish human nature with the heart as long as I live. If I do an act of charitable benevolence which accords with righteousness, no matter how small it is, I shall feel at peace. In teaching the Way, can there be any other way than teaching this feeling at peace? Even if you pretend

to know the Way, you are certain to torment yourself because your heart refuses the pretence. This shows how true the old poem you quoted is and that a lie is indeed sometimes expedient but replying the promptings of one's own heart is the question. Confucius said, "The virtuous man has neither cares nor fears." He also said, "If a man examines himself and cannot find anything to be ashamed of, then how can he feel care or fear?" This is no more or less than what I want to tell you. If you free yourself from care and fear day after day, find nothing to be ashamed of on examining yourself and feel at peace in your heart, then you can look forward to this.

Question: The sage is born with knowledge, but a man like you is unable even to conjecture this. You conclude, however, that the sage's knowledge is such and such and selfish knowledge is also such and such. Why?

Answer: You can easily tell black from white. Similarly, it is easy to distinguish the sage's knowledge from selfish knowledge. When Yu¹⁸ controlled rivers to prevent flood, he knew little more than the whereabouts of the highlands and the lowlands. Selfish knowledge is not natural knowledge but something made up of various ideas centering on self. If you want to know the sage's knowledge better, you can learn these words of Chengtzu's, "We can control horses, but not cattle, with a bit. Everyone knows that men invented the bridle, but never consider that it is only made useful by the horse. The sage educates people in this way." The sage makes a bit after looking at the horse and puts it in its mouth to set it to work. The sage is not born with knowledge. He regards the heart of the other party as if it were his own. This outstanding point is characteristic of the sage's knowledge. His heart reflects all things as they are as if it were a cloudless mirror or limpid water. Everyone has the same heart, but it can be clouded by the seven emotions (joy, anger, sorrow, fear, love, evil and desire) and so you tend to think that the sage's knowledge is different from your own heart and begin to doubt. From the first you should think the heart of a visible thing represents its shape. For instance, if you scratch yourself or turn over in bed while asleep, then the changes of your sleeping postures openly declares your heart. That is to say, the mosquito larva does not bite a man in the water, but as soon as it becomes a mosquito, it bites. In other words, its heart changes in accordance with its metamorphosis. You should observe birds and beasts, too. The frog is naturally terrified of the snake. It does not seem that the parent frog hands down the fear from age to age by saying, "The snake swallows you. It is terrible." That which has come into existence with a frog shape fears the snake because its shape is nothing but its heart. To give a familiar instance, the flea comes out on people in summer. This is not because the parent flea has taught her young to live on human flesh or leap away quickly to survive when assailed by a human hand. They have not

learned to escape by jumping, but they leap naturally because of their form. Mencius said, "The human form is our Heaven-conferred nature. Only the sage can fulfil the design in his form." To fulfil the design in the human form is to carry out the five cardinal principles of morality. A man who cannot live in accordance with the design in his form is worthless. Birds and beasts are not rational and so they live out the designs of their forms. These are natural laws known to the sage. ¹⁹ *The Chronicles of Japan* read, "Ōanauchi no Mikoto and ²⁰ Sukunahikona no Mikoto ²¹ reigned over the whole country with one accord and laid down cures for various distempers of their dear people and animals. They also enacted a law to charm away damage caused by birds, beasts and insects. All the people, therefore, are even now indebted to these two gods." All countries have the same natural laws. The story of ²² Fu-i in China who tamed animals offered in sacrifice is found in *The Historical Memoirs*. In the first place man is essentially different from beasts: thus they do not come near us for fear. But Chinese sages and Japanese gods were impartial; therefore they could take the feelings of beasts into consideration. They knew that cattle like this, sheep like that, what pigs like is this, and what horses like is that. They were familiar with their respective dispositions, strong, weak, fierce and quiet, with animals of different kinds and so they were able to tame many beasts. As a result they offered meat of various kinds to the gods and advised men to give more meat to the old. It is a natural law that weak creatures obey strong ones. Sages and gods were so virtuous that they did not kill creatures to no purpose. They killed them to use their meat only in unavoidable circumstances: when they held a festival, received guests or fed the old. They did not kill even a worm when they did not need it. They also knew how important grains were in comparison with other crops and taught people when to plant barley, rice, soybeans, adzuki beans and cowpeas. Besides, they taught which vegetables were good to eat. Furthermore, they could tell good soil from bad and taught where to plant this and that. Therefore, we have come to live without knowing starvation. This is all due to the virtuous benevolence of Ōanauchi no Mikoto and Sukunahikona no Mikoto here in Japan and of ²³ Fu-i, Shen Nung and Huang-ti in China. Heaven creates all things and what is created naturally grows. ²⁴ *The Chronicles of Japan* read, "When Ukemochi no Kami looked toward the country, rice issued from his mouth, when he looked toward the sea, fishes of diverse sizes issued forth and when he turned toward the mountains, beasts with fur or skin issued forth. You should consider what a mouth this was. In such a way the gods in heaven and on earth can do anything of their own free will. As Ukemochi no Kami's mouth was free, what issued from his mouth was also free. For example, the cicada is said to sing not with its mouth but with its armpits. It must have a mouth, but you cannot tell where it is. When it comes to small insects flying in the spring and summer skies, they seem to eat

nothing but never starve. They are born and die in the air, but you cannot tell where they come from. In the light of these examples, you should meditate Ukemochi no Kami's mouth. In other words people in this world seem to be free, but in reality they are regulated by something. They do not, however, know this. The sage, therefore, observed all things and their natures and then established his teachings. The teachings directly represent the rules of heaven and are thus immutable through all ages in history. Heaven creates everything it confers on men and makes visible its heart to them through sages and gods. The sage, unlike heaven, cannot create a thing, but he helps heaven by doing what it omits to do itself and so saves the world. Were it not for the sage, heaven would not reveal its virtue. But for its virtue, even the sage could not work. For instance, without Yamato Takerunomikoto's valour,²⁵ Amenomurakumo no Tsurugi²⁶ could not have been called Kusanagi no Tsurugi. Even the usefulness of a treasure depends upon its possessor. Even if there were no sages, the Way in heaven would remain. But it would not reveal itself. You must, therefore, open your eyes to make it clear. The wisdom that first learned the Way in heaven and taught it to the world may be called a sage's.

Question: Confucians condemn Buddhism by calling it heresy. Why?

Answer: Heresy(異端 itan) means that its end is different. (異 i means "different", 端 tan means "end") According to Confucianism, the five cardinal virtues, benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and fidelity, and the five human relations of sovereign and subject, father and son, husband and wife, young and old, and friends constitute the Way in heaven, which corresponds with the Way in the world. But Buddhism does not teach the five cardinal virtues or the five human relations. In this respect, Buddhism differs from Confucianism. Therefore it is called a heresy. However, if a Confucian who does not know his own heart teaches the classics of Confucianism, he can never understand the sage's heart and merely teaches his own self-opinionated doctrines and so he too should be regarded as a heretic. But as he appears like the disciple of a sage, we do not mark him out as a heretic. Yet even if we do not say so, he is little more than a heretic. But in due time he will come to know his heart and then he will be a true Confucian. If you descend into trivial details in discussing the difference between Confucianism and Buddhism, matters will become too complicated for you. The most important thing is to understand their differing principles of nature. First, in Buddhism, the Tendai sect emphasizes 止觀 shikan—the importance of contemplating nature by eliminating all distracting ideas, the Shingon sect teaches 阿字本不生 ajihonbusho—that the ground of all phenomena in the universe is eternally immutable, for it is Emptiness, while the Zen sect sets value on 本来面目 honrai menmoku—our original human heart. The Nembutsu sect preaches 入我我入・機法一体 nyugaganyu kihōittai—integration of the self

with the law of Buddhism and the Nichiren sect lays emphasis on 妙法 myohō—the supreme law of Buddha. Although each sect has its own name, their object is one and the same. For instance, *Juryomuhen gyo*²⁷ reads, “Buddha told Manjushiri²⁸ that the substance of Buddha, entirely free from all thoughts and ideas, is truly miraculous and that it has neither birth nor death, neither form nor state.” This does not imply nothingness as opposed to existence. Rather it reveals the quintessence of the universe. Therefore, you must first comprehend it. If you can understand, you can transcend life and death. But if you fail, you cannot hope to become a leader of any religious sect. And likewise in Confucianism, *The Doctrine of the Mean* reads as follows on the culmination of the principle of nature, “There is neither sound nor odour in heaven.” *The Book of Changes* echoes this; “To seek truth and to know thoroughly the true nature of the universe is the shortest way to observe Heaven’s decree.” This is the sage’s heart. But these words may be too vague for us to understand. However, as the sage sought truth, there must be some significance in them. It is a little like scenting ume(Japanese apricot) flowers in the snow. You cannot see them, but their presence is certain. In the same way the sage’s heart has attained Heaven and will reside there as long as heaven and earth last. You may wonder at his heart’s enduring there after his death, but it is already in Heaven while he is alive. *The Book of Songs*²⁹ reads, “Wen Wang is above us, bright in Heaven.” One who can get to the very heart of this quotation may be called a Confucian even if he is not sufficiently virtuous, but if he cannot get to it, he is not worthy to be called a disciple of a sage. Now Buddhism and Confucianism are close in theory, hardly distinguishable, but with regard to austerities, as you see, they are quite different. Bonzes observe the five precepts against murder, lust, theft, lying, and intemperance while the laity must obey the five cardinal principles of morality: the five human relations of lord and vassal, father and son, husband and wife, young and old, and friends. Both are quite clear. But if the laity imitate bonzes, they will waste their energy upon trifles.³⁰ Wu-ti of Liang in China, for example, ate vegetables once a day, offered noodles instead of meat to his departed ancestors at the mausoleum and wept over every sentence of death and so he became well-known in the country for his benevolent heart. However, about the end of the Wu-ti reign,³¹ there occurred a revolt to the south of the Yangtzechian, because he adhered to the precepts without knowing the Buddha’s heart: such conduct may then bring misfortune. If I give you an example to show you what form misfortune may take, it is something like giving gold to a starving man. He will still die, clutching it in his hands, rejoicing at gaining the most precious treasure in the world. But what the sage teaches is more like giving bread to the hungry. Bread is less esteemed than gold, but keeps you alive: nothing could be more vital. If there were a sovereign like Wu-ti who wept over a criminal sentenced to death, people

might be touched by his benevolent heart as if they had received some gold. Yet Wu-ti's administration was unsatisfactory and there arose a rebellion. Thus, the people under his rule could be likened to those who starve to death with gold in their hands. In short, such benevolence is harmful. If the sage were to govern the whole country now, he would practise filial piety and brotherly love with respect and teach his people to do the same. Thus this precept tells us only to give a piece of bread to a hungry brother to save his life, but if all the people practised this, it would have a great effect on the world and they would derive much benefit from it. But if a Buddhist priest were the ruler, for example, he could not execute even a criminal who deserved death. The true bonze would request the authorities concerned to save his life on condition that he was placed in his custody as a disciple. In other words, if a ruler governed a state without taking any notice of the way a sage should administer his people, the ruler would lead the country to disorder. It is quite natural such a sovereign as Wu-ti was condemned as a heretic.

Question: As I cultivate my mind according to the Confucian rule, I am not asking on my own part. But sometimes all the people from the authorities to the commoners believe in Buddhism. If there is any harm in yoking Buddhism together with Confucianism, then the government is not to accept Buddhism. How can you justify this?

Answer: If there are people like you who cannot understand, then it will be harmful. But how can it be harmful to those who can understand?

Question: I ask you because you said it was harmful to employ them together.

Answer: That is not what I meant. I meant that if they do not know how to employ Buddhism, then there will be harm.

Question: What do you mean by saying there are two ways of employing Buddhism, one right and the other wrong?

Answer: If a man only knows the surface of Buddhism and cannot understand its true significance, he might act as if to ask Wu-ti to pardon criminals. In other words, he might know how to save people, but would not know to reform them. Then how could he govern the state?

Question: So, his administration would be harmful. And even if he understood the true significance of Buddhism, he could not take life without flouting its teachings. Thus, if he saved criminals worthy of the death penalty, it would evidently work great mischief in the state.

Answer: Buddhism is also a way of saving people as medicine too saves the sick. It is useful to propagate Buddhism and likewise to give medicines to the sick in order to save people, but it matters also who does these things. There are many physicians in the world.

So some of them use aconites or bear liver to cure sick people. Others mainly employ ginseng. And still others use just melons or water to cure fever although most physicians would not prescribe such medicine because cold and uncooked things are believed to be harmful. But no matter how good the medicine or ginseng, it will be quite futile if it does not cure the disease. Considering this, how can you say that the ginseng is effective? In the same way how can you say aconites and bear liver are less useful? Skilled physicians must be able to employ any medicine to cure diseases and must learn how to use all medicines in their treatments. There is no need to give up any medicine if it has a reputation as a remedy. The superior physician should neither discard nor overuse any one but must be able to use every drug. If he adheres to one kind and does not know how to adapt according to conditions, he is not worthy of the name of a good physician. Such also is the way to govern a whole country. Not to discard or cleave too much to any one policy, assuming always that it has been known to be effective, this is just how the superior physician cures diseases by using a variety of medicines. Confucianism is known to benefit the administration of the whole country, but if a foolish ruler adhered too closely to it, it would be harmful. This is like the charlatan who kills his patient by employing ginsengs in the wrong way. Even gold dust blinds your eyes if it blows into them. The end of Buddhism is to attain to an enlightened heart. Is there any difference between a heart enlightened through the virtue of Buddhism and a heart enlightened by Confucianism? If only a ruler governs the whole country with a benevolent heart, however he might have attained that heart, why should he bring any harm down on the state? The sovereign does not put criminals to death at his personal whim. The punishment itself does not derive from his heart. *The Scripture of Documents* says, "No one could live while bringing calamities upon himself." The sage's government is like heaven. It is at peace, though he initiates nothing. A certain book says, "The cattails for the whip are decaying, the fireflies have gone. The hand drums for appeals are now moss-grown and affright the birds no more."³²

Question: If you are right, it would seem correct to employ Buddhism to attain to an enlightened heart. But since Buddhism is not my interest, I prefer to depend upon Confucianism. Is it permissible to exclude Buddhism?

Answer: Mencius said, "The feelings of pity, shame and revulsion are indispensable to man." It is due to the feelings of shame and revulsion that you have laboured under an inability to know your heart and felt ashamed of your doing evil all this while. And getting to the root of the feeling of shame and revulsion, you will arrive at the benevolent voice of conscience. You need not depend on Buddhism. Where you find your heart, there is no distinction between Confucianism and Buddhism. Imagine an expert in burnishing mirrors

by way of example. You ask him only to polish a mirror, not with what he polishes. The question of whether one should employ Confucianism or Buddhism is like this. Either may serve to polish your heart. I cannot conceive why you are particular about the way it is polished. Whether or not you study under a Confucian, all will be futile if you are unsuccessful. Even if you study under a Buddhist, all will be well, if you can only purify your heart. This is because you have only one heart. But it would be absurd in the extreme to think that just studying under a Buddhist could entirely transform your heart. There are many Buddhist priests who began their studies with Confucianism. I have never yet heard an instance of Confucian works preventing a man from attaining the essence of Buddhism. In the same way, why should Confucians take issue with the Buddhism by which they purify their hearts? Buddhism has indeed adopted a number of doctrines conceived by Confucians. According to the Buddhist scriptures, Buddha means comprehension. "He who comprehends undeceives all creatures." Undeceived, everyone returns to the original nature; therefore, it is said that the whole world manifests only one heart. And the undeceived essence is called the Buddha-nature. That Buddha-nature is the substance of heaven, earth and man. After all, what is Buddhism but knowledge of the nature? Bodhidharma in the 28th generation after Shakyamuni taught, "Who sees the nature attains Buddhahood." Confucianism also teaches, "The root of the Way originates in heaven.": therefore, "heaven's decree is called nature." The nature is the substance of heaven, earth and man. The heart that attains spiritual enlightenment is one and only one, be the creed Shinto, Confucianism or Buddhism. You can come to know your heart on whichever principle you rely. Zen priests even say, "The universe is as cramped as a peapod, so there is no need to stay inside it." This means that if you reach the stage of Buddhahood where there is no good or evil you can transcend the concept of the universe and so you need not be confined to this merely provisional locus. This does not mean, however, that you depart from the universe. Those Confucian scholars who are ignorant of the principle of nature would be surprised to hear of such an idea and they might dismiss in their teaching with the comment, "The Zen sect is freakish." If so, they may be true pupils of Kao-tzu who said, "What cannot be put into words is not to be sought for in the heart.", but they are no longer Confucians. In what respect do they differ from Kao-tzu? According to *The Doctrine of the Mean*, the Master said, "Shun was a great man of wisdom. He liked to ask questions and understood even folk words. He never spoke ill of others but praised them for their good conduct. He always took the golden mean for his people. These are the reasons why Shun left his footprints on the sands of time." He was broad-minded enough to contemplate the bad with the good and then to take up the virtuous while casting aside the evil. People of today evade anything

they cannot understand regardless of whether it is good or bad. The reasons why Confucius called Shun a great man of wisdom were these: Shun would ask questions about everything, understood folk dialects well enough to take in any situation, suppressed bad things while adopting high ideals but, in administering his people, took the middle path between the extremes of those ideals. Therefore, Confucius called him not only a great man of wisdom but a sage too. The true learning leads you to an absolutely selfless state of mind. You must know that even Confucius, filled with virtue, said as follows, “A honeyed tongue, ingratiating looks and excessive reverence, these things Tso-chiu Ming³⁴ regarded as shameful. I find them shameful, too.” and also “I transmit but add nothing; I put my trust in antiquity and devote myself to it. At heart I compare myself to our Old Peng.”³⁵ Needless to say, Confucius was far more virtuous than any other sages in history, but the wise men mentioned above had their own virtues and so the Master held them in esteem. You must draw your model from Confucius’ selfless way of life. It goes without saying that if you want to know your heart you must first give up all your selfish desires. There can be no one, definite way for you to come to know your heart. Confucius said when he was standing by a river, “This resembles everything that passes away. Day gives way to night unceasingly.” The example of the river illuminates the essence of the Way. When Confucius heard a boy singing, “The water of the Tsang-lang³⁶ being clear, I wash the strings of my cap: the water of the Tsang-lang being muddy, I wash my feet.”³⁷ he said, “Listen to what he sings, my pupils. When clear, he will wash the strings of his cap; When muddy, he will wash his feet. His choice all depends upon the water itself. If a man has something despicable in his heart, then others will despise him.”³⁸ As this story shows, Confucius always took sustenance for his heart from what he saw or heard around him. The sage’s learning did, indeed, adhere to the Way. Long ago when I still could not understand that everything stemming from the Ultimate was originally one and the same, I read a book with this sentence: “The land of the Gods reaching to every corner of the sphere would be wide and yet narrow, but the land in an atomy would be narrow and yet wide.” and immediately my doubt cleared on whether everything was originally one and the same. Even if one cleared away doubt by reading something other than Confucian books, Confucianism would not be injured. Similarly it would not be strange at all for those who have studied Confucianism to consult an oracle. The teachings of Buddhism and those of Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu are all instruments for training your heart and so should not be disparaged. Once you have burnished your heart, it will always be like a mirror, no matter how many teachings you glean from Buddha, Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu or the hundreds of nameless preceptors to discipline your heart. Should something appear, your heart will immediately reflect it and as it passes on, so its image will

immediately disappear. If you study the teachings of the sages after you have achieved this state of the heart, you will see them as if looking at your own reflection in a cloudless mirror. Even when you look at all the myriad things on earth, you will see but one principle there as simply as if you were gazing just at your own palm. You and the universe are one. *The Chronicles of Japan* read, “Amaterasu ōmi kami³⁹ blessed Amano Oshiho mimi no mikoto,⁴⁰ gave her treasure, the mirror, to him and told him to look in it as if worshipping her, to place it at his bedside and treat it as pure and sacred.” Amaterasu ōmi kami was the virtuous goddess entrusted with the Three Sacred Treasures of the Japanese Imperial House; the mirror, sword and jewels. *The Doctrine of the Mean* says, “That which the true heart illuminates is the true nature.” This is the Way of Heaven. Amano oshiho mimi no mikoto was also of great virtue and was entrusted with the sacred jewels. *The Doctrine of the Mean* also says, “To teach is to cause you to seek for the true heart, the source of light.” If a man’s virtue were great enough to be entrusted with the sacred jewels, it would naturally mean that he might also hold the other Sacred Treasures. As Amaterasu ōmi kami said, “Look in this treasure mirror as if worshipping myself”, you should pay great respect to it as if it were the shrine of Amaterasu itself. “Place it at your bedside” is an oracle signifying that emperors from generation to generation might peacefully govern the country as long as they do not neglect the virtue which qualifies them to hold the sacred mirror. Should this principle be ignored, the sovereign will drive his state to ruin, the subject will bring down tragedy on his home, the government will go to wrack, the people will wantonly take life, indulge their desires, act dishonestly and so set their faces against the five cardinal virtues and the five human relations. Even the Buddhist priest will err from the way of Buddhism by breaking the five precepts. How can you govern the world peacefully without depending upon the Way the sage should follow? Therefore, in serving the country, you must seek all the aid you can from Confucianism and Buddhism, from the teachings of Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu. We should worship the Grand Shrine of Amaterasu as our root, which is the Japanese emperors’ ancestral mausoleum, and obey the Shrine’s divine message that reads, “Purge away all sophistry ideas, seek out the only absolute law in your own heart and follow Amaterasu’s edicts.” In order to maintain this sole, absolute Shinto law, you will do well to employ Confucianism and Buddhism. Therefore, above all, do not abandon nor yet adhere to any one law: you should not strive against nature.

Just then, another man broke in: Your reply to this guest still seems to leave something to be desired. Your answer is an echo of; “The path of learning is but the search for the conscience we have lost since birth”, but at the same time it echoes too, “The sage’s heart is detached.” If your heart is detached, you need not search for the purity of mind we have

lost. If you really want to search for the lost heart, it is wrong to preach detachment. Why do you preach so ambiguously without distinguishing between right and wrong?

Answer: The way of teaching neither “adheres to one point and does not know to adapt itself”⁴² nor does “take up one point and abandon a hundred others.”⁴³ To give an example, it is like riding a log raft. Those who are accustomed to riding it find no difficulty in boarding it, because wherever they may tread, they can keep their balance. Those who are unused to it find it hard to ride because they do not know where to tread. The path of learning is like this. If you do not know your heart, you comprehend nothing. But if you know your heart, you can understand all things because their underlying reason is the same. “The search for the conscience we have lost since birth” and “The sage’s heart is detached” are not two different things but identical. The heart of heaven and earth creates all things. All created things make the heart of heaven and earth their own. Human avarice, however, overshadows your own heart. Therefore, when you strive to return to the heart of heaven and earth, your mental state can be described as “the search for the lost heart.” And when you can return there, you attain the heart of heaven and earth. Then, your mental state is to be explained in the light of “the detached heart”. Heaven and earth are detached, yet the four seasons come around and all things grow. The sage too is selfless and detached for he has returned to the heart of heaven and earth, yet he practises “benevolence, righteousness, propriety and wisdom”. If once your eyes are opened, you will clear away all doubt. Learn this first, and then discuss the sage’s learning.

NOTES

Chapter III

1. the three fundamental principles of human relations : the Way of sovereign and subject, father and child, man and wife.
2. Kao-tzu : a famous scholar in the turbulent age of China.
3. Han-tzu : famous for writing a good style and also wellknown as a Confucian in the Tang and Sung age.
4. Hsun-tzu : a Confucian in the turbulent age of China.
5. Yang-tzu : a Confucian in the Earlier Han age.
6. “A piece of wood ... be trowelled.” : taken from D.C.Lau’s translation of *The Analects*.
7. Yen Yuan : the most gifted disciple of Confucius’. His early death grieved Confucius in his last years.
8. the five natural elements : fire, wood, earth, metal, and water.
9. Chou-tzu : Real name, Chou Tun-yi. He wrote *The Diagram of the Supreme Ultimate Explained*.
10. tan : 0.245 acre.
11. “To attack a task ... but harm.” : from *The Analects* translated by D.C.Lau.
12. “What cannot be put ... your heart.” : taken from *The Variorum of the Analects of Confucius* by Chu-tzu.
13. The five kinds of punishment : In ancient China the five kinds of punishment were graded according to the crime ; death, castration, chopping off a foot, cutting off the nose, and tattooing. These punishments

- differed somewhat with the eras.
14. a brush of long white hair : used by bonzes to sweep away earthly desires.
 15. Chi-lu : See Tsu-lu, Note 2 of Chapter II.
 16. An old poem : the poet unidentified.
 17. 'Our origin ... return.' : taken from *The Record of Rites*.
 18. Yu : the Great, founder of the Hsia dynasty and of the feudal State.
 19. *The Chronicles of Japan* : A history compiled by the government. It consists of 30 volumes and was completed in 720 A.D. It deals with the times up to 697.
 20. Ōanauchi no Mikoto : known as Ōkuninushi no Mikoto. The chief god of Izumo province in the age of the gods.
 21. Sukunahikona no Mikoto : A very tiny god. He saved the life of the chief god of Izumo province when the latter created the province.
 22. *Historical Memoirs* : A history by Ssu-ma Chien. It consists of 130 volumes dealing with ancient China.
 23. Huang-ti : An emperor in ancient China who is said to have formulated weights and measures.
 24. Ukemochi no Kami : the god of food.
 25. Yamato Takerunomikoto : the 12th Japanese emperor's son.
 26. Amenomurakumo no Tsurugi : One of the Three Sacred Treasures of the Japanese Imperial House. Yamato Takerunomikoto did mighty deeds in war with this sword.
 27. Juryomuhen gyo : a part of the Lotus Sutra.
 28. Manjushiri : the bodhisattva of wisdom and intellect.
 29. Wen Wang : a founder of the Chou dynasty.
 30. Wu-ti of Liang : the first emperor of Liang(464-549).
 31. the Yangtzechiang : the greatest river in China.
 32. A certain book : 和漢朗詠集 (Wakanrōei-shū) *The Collection of Japanese and Chinese Recitations*.
 33. "The cattail for whip ... any more." : This quotation is an image of peace in the world.
 34. Tso-chiu Ming : identity uncertain.
 35. Old Peng : identity uncertain.
 36. Tsang-lang : a stream in Shan-tang.
 37. "The water of the Tsang-lang ... my feet." : taken from *The Works of Mencius*.
 38. "Listen to what he sings ... others will despise him." : taken from *The Works of Mencius*.
 39. Amaterasu ōmi kami : the first child of Izanaginomikoto and Izanaminomikoto, according to *The Chronicles of Japan*.
 40. Amano oshiho mimino mikoto : the father of Ninigi no mikoto.
 41. the mirror : One of the Three Sacred Treasures of the Japanese Imperial House.
 42. "adheres to one point ... adapt itself." : taken from *The Variorum of the Works of Mencius*.
 43. "take up one point ... abandon a hundred others." : taken from *The Works of Mencius*.