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Lao Tzu

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Mythopoeic Society's Online Midwinter Seminar 2024

17th–18th February 2024: Something Mighty Queer

Submission Deadline: November 30, 2023

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Lao Tzu

LAO TZU

by

David Sparenberg

Here is the field. These are the trees which grow in this field. This is the ocean. These are the waves which are made and which move by the making and movement of the perpetual and generative ocean. This is the field. These are the lives, the diversity of species, alive in the field. The field and the trees are one. The ocean and waves are one. The lives – the people walking, talking, aware and unaware, eating, procreating, are one with the field. The field is energy, the trees are energies.

The ocean is energy, the waves are energies. The lives – the diversities are energies. And the field, like a bridge, a stairway, a holy ladder, between upper and lower realities, is a sustaining and conveying energy: profound!

The field, it is a language. Trees are dialects. Ocean is a language. The waves are physical accents of excitation, forming, duration. The lives are vernacular terms, in a theater of dialogues, monologues, soliloquies: seeing, listening-sensations, self-overhearing!

Field, it is the language of an arc, of a platform, of a stage, globe, universe, a shaping, peopled with lives, with trees, with brindled billowing waves, articulate energies. Profound! Most profound! The field is consciousness: so the trees are, so the lives are. The ocean, it is consciousness too; so too the waves, consciousness directional—like yin and yang—and antithetical. The field, it is unconsciousness configured. And the lives, the ocean, the players, the waves, in the energy drama, on the energy stage: *Shiva!* The dancing mind, the green dragon – the OM dreamer atop the invisible volcano of *kundalini*, the *qi gong* swimmer – Space... configured.

The field is what it is: a field of energy. The trees are what they are, that there are no trees without field. That there are no lives (in the fluttering tapestry, the budding, bubbling balloons of diversity), that there are no waves, without ocean, without field. No oneness except through the imaginal, through multiplicity.

The ocean is what it is: extension and intensity, breathing out then breathing in. Thus there is no energy without one energy, no consciousness without one consciousness/unconsciousness; no anything, expressed, without the eternally unspoken. No democracy without the first of all flourishing, warring, embattled, recuperative democracies.

So, Heraclitus the Dark; rescued from archaic obscurity by the curiosity of Heidegger; understood that mystery resides inside of mystery, and proclaimed that “*Nature loves to hide,*” that “*The transformations of fire are, first of all, sea; and half of the sea is earth, half whirlwind...*” So saying, he named his doctrine Lao-Tzu, an Asian sage worth remembering and sharing with those who would be wise and cleverly reticent. Who would rather point to a serpent rising into lotus bloom than spill the beans and father much idle rhetoric.

Under any circumstances of honest perception and expression, it is enough to say I or this or that, and to know that my words have included you and regions of otherness-extensive, that circle around us in great coils of magnetic light and bubbling bonds of energy.

Call it, A Way. Or say nothing but look and smile. And charm far generations with the gift of a rightly oriented Oriental mystery where light and dark, field and particle, string and membrane, heartbeat and wink, are raindrops floating in the eyes of deities.

Or, as you enter another’s vision, why kiss them prettily! Plant a rosette stamp upon their lips and say, “*This kiss was sent to you by Lao Tzu.*”