

THE NOTION OF NOTHINGNESS IN

M. HEIDEGGER AND LAO-TZU

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

People around the world said at one time that the physical sun rises in the sky from the East, but the light of reason rises from the West. Thus the Orient was excluded from a position in the history of philosophy. Even so, an inevitable dialogue between the East and the West has been developing for the past several years, especially in the philosophical sense.

The Orient long has been known as a great market for commercial and political dealings. Nevertheless, not all exchanges of goods and services are successful. Things which appeal to the Western salesmen do not always appeal to the Oriental buyer. And in philosophy, there is indeed a tendency to assume that the "categories of thought" are different in East and West. In one sense, the Orient is more consciously philosophical or non-practical than the West. That is to say it is usual in Oriental countries for life to be governed by conscious reference to general principles of philosophy of religion. These general principles find their way very naturally into conversation. In Oriental countries social life is based on the religious foundation. Life in the society cannot be separated from the religion. To many a Western mind, this is an oddity.

Western philosophy, on the other hand, tries to arrive at solutions through the rational or scientific method. People in the West

emphasize intellectual abilities in man, so they possibly do not agree that there is a certain connection with the Wholly Other beyond mankind's scope of activities.

In the case of Chinese philosophers, what is true of science is also true of metaphysics and of ethics. The ground of science can be found in the philosophical theory of metaphysics. By studying the theory of metaphysics, the Orient tries to fulfill the purposes for the economical life.

Some of us might raise the question: how can a dialogue between East and West be possible? In the West, the problem of metaphysics is already excluded from the stream of philosophy because of the influence of science. On the contrary, in neither India nor China is truth located in the mental intellect. The Indian and Chinese sages insisted on the very opposite: namely, that man does not attain to truth so long as he remains locked up in his intellect. In order to show how a dialogue between East and West is possible, I have chosen one metaphysical issue: the notion of Nothingness. In contemporary Western philosophy, the importance of metaphysics has been found again in Martin Heidegger's work, as he says, "in our times we deem it progressive to give our approval to 'metaphysics' again...."¹ Many people have begun finally to recognize the mysterious relations with the East.² Though Heidegger makes a few references to these bridges, we, in discussing his thought, cannot fail to refer to them.

Heidegger attempted sometimes to listen to the Oriental world through a dialogue on language between a Japanese scholar and himself as an Inquirer.³ Even if nobody knows his own motive, Heidegger, with the Oriental influence, studied Parmenides and Heracleitos and brought

himself to realize that what they were asking about was a being in relation to particular objects and not Being qua Being. So he tried to find the ground for Being qua Being in the possibility of Being (Sein)⁴. The possibility of the history of Being (Seingeschichte) indicates the possibility of true philosophy, apart from the contemporary Western thought. Heidegger says,

philosophy is haunted by the fear of losing prestige and validity, unless it becomes science.... Being as the element of thought has been abandoned in the technical interpretation of thought.⁵

His pursuit of the history of Being made him listen to the Oriental experience which was uncomprehensible in the Western discursive thought. According to William Barrett,

Western metaphysics before Heidegger had never thought out the nature of non-Being, but Chinese Taoism accepts cheerfully the necessary complementarity of Being and non-Being...⁶

It is not easy in Western thought to understand the experience out of which Eastern philosophies grew. Oriental philosophy is ubiquitous. The implementation of Oriental philosophies takes place even in the abstract branches of logic, but it is most conspicuous in metaphysics, ethics, and the foundation of social life. It has no philosophy and no religion which is not at work. Its reflections are kept in close connection with actions. Whatever is done in Oriental society is related to Being as the Wholly Other beyond mankind's scope of activities, yet such Being still gives a character to those activities. People in Oriental society work to find the meaning or the ground for their lives through Being.

That is why, whosoever is remote from the experience of Being and non-Being will recoil from it with a scandalized cry of Nihilism. That

is to say, they could misunderstand the notion of Nothingness.⁷ Whoever does not have the experience of Nothingness, remembers only the word "nothingness." Because of the impression of the word itself, it is possible to interpret the Nothingness as Helmut Kuhn does. He says,

...as an encounter with 'Nothingness', that is, the privation of meaning and reality, whereas, in truth, it seems to me that it is the incomprehensible fullness of meaning and reality.... But arriving there they find the place empty...⁸

But Kuhn might be misunderstanding the notion of Nothingness.

In Heidegger, the notion of Nothingness is not a counter-concept to Being. Heidegger, therefore, should not be called nihilistic.

The thought of Lao-Tzu greatly transcends the mundane world also; for instance, his strong attack on social and political institutions. In fact, depth in the principle of Tao (Nothingness) in Lao-Tzu does not emphasize the denial of mental activities in man, neither does it manifest the characteristic of nihilism or the scorning of actual society. Its principle is to rediscover the great principles directing the universe as well as human affairs by emphasizing the transcendence of Nothingness itself and the waiver of rational needs in man.

Martin Heidegger is a contemporary Existentialist thinker,⁹ and Lao-Tzu was an ancient Chinese philosopher.¹⁰ There will be differences in place and time between Heidegger and Lao-Tzu, but their central points seem to be similar to each other; the experience of Nothingness beyond the scope of intellectual abilities. In order to solve the question of Being, Heidegger first attempts to describe Seiende (or Dasein, Being-in-the-World), while Lao-Tzu first defines the character of Tao itself and then deals with beings in the world.

The purposes of this essay are: to examine how Heidegger and

Lao-Tzu define the same subject-matter, and, to illustrate how their solutions, arrived at from different starting-points, are similar. However, because even in their same fundamental Being-questions, different expressions for the solution to these questions exist, I will also try to find the bridge of dialogue by which a world of synthetical harmony can be established between Lao-Tzu and Heidegger.

I might be asked: why do you want to increase the philosophical dialogue between East and West, especially through the notion of Nothingness? Why is it necessary to have experienced the nothingness? Some people say, "We have nothing to do." Because of the expression, "nothing to do," they have been losing the meaning of their life. Actually they are misunderstanding the expression, "nothing to do." The positive aspects contained in the term "nothing to do" must be discovered through the experience of Nothingness. It must be known that the experience of Nothingness is not only the way to make us find our real selves but also the way to tell us what to do in different contexts. In a technological society, many people in the East and the West become alienated by losing the direction of life. I think they have to understand the expression, "nothing to do." Fortunately there are, at least, two philosophers who can each contribute something to the understanding of the notion of Nothingness.

I hope that the true understanding of the notion of Nothingness can be found through this essay in order to restore the direction of life.

Before proceeding with the main problem, there might be central questions raised that require our consideration. In their (Heidegger and Lao-Tzu) philosophical endeavours, do they ever directly share a

common perspective? Does the main concern of each define a common problem? The answer is probably "No." But how can I show significant common grounds of dialogue between them? This is the question concerning us.

As far as their positions regarding the main problem are concerned, some significant common grounds will afford us sufficient possibility for dialogue between Heidegger and Lao-Tzu. The meanings intended in the concept of Nothingness are especially able to serve as a basic bridge between the East and the West. By this comparison I hope to clarify the subject and thus to narrow the gap between Chinese and Western metaphysics.

FOOTNOTES

¹ Martin Heidegger, Being and Time, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York, 1962), p. 21.

² Martin Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," Phenomenology and Existentialism, ed. Richard M. Zaner and Don Ihde (New York, 1973), p. 163.

³ Martin Heidegger, On the Way to Language, trans. Peter D. Hertz (New York, 1971).

⁴ Martin Heidegger, An Introduction to Metaphysics, trans. Ralph Manheim (Garden City, 1961), p. 21.

⁵ Martin Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," Phenomenology and Existentialism, ed. Richard M. Zaner and Don Ihde (New York, 1973), p. 149.

⁶ William Barrett, Irrational Man (Garden City, 1962), p. 34. Strictly speaking, there are some ancient philosophers dealing with the being as the ultimate principle in East and West. Barrett is not quite right.

⁷ There are some references: (a) The Existentialist claims to initiate us, through acquaintance with Nothingness, into the maturity of disillusionment (p. xiv). (b) The Encounter initiating crisis is not an encounter with God who discovers our Nothingness but with Nothingness as the Vacuum left by the non-existent God as in Sartre, or the absent God as in Heidegger (p. xix). Helmut Kuhn, Encounter With Nothingness (Hinsdale, 1949).

⁸ Ibid., p. x.

⁹ William Barrett, Irrational Man (Garden City, 1962), p. 206. "Heidegger is not a rationalist, because reason operates by means of concepts, mental representations, and our existence eludes these. But he is not an irrationalist either. Irrationalism holds that feeling, or will or instinct are more valuable and indeed more truthful than reason. He is like a wanderer lost in a forest, attempting to mark out trails."

¹⁰ Charles A. Moore, ed. Philosophy - East and West (Princeton, 1946), p. 33. "Lao-Tzu is traditionally dated at C. 570 B. C. In the last two decades, the theory of Wang Chung (1744-1794) that Lao-Tzu and the Tao-Te Ching belonged to the fourth century B.C. has been revived and accepted by many Chinese and Western scholars."

CHAPTER II

THE BASIC QUESTION OF PHILOSOPHY:

HEIDEGGER AND LAO-TZU

In Western philosophy, an epoch-making era of studying Being has resulted from the work of Karl Jaspers and Martin Heidegger, in spite of the fact that an access to ontology was attempted before. In Jaspers and Heidegger metaphysics turned itself back to its preeminent position in philosophy for the first time since metaphysics had been considered by philosophers after Thales.

Many philosophers (except logical positivists) in the West have been increasing their attention to the central concept of traditional metaphysics---being or substance. Although today's concern about it in philosophy includes many aspects, one of the basic sources for the problem is Aristotle's metaphysics. Aristotle dealt with the concept of substance and with being qua being and its essential attributes.

It seems to me that Aristotle intended his proposition, "all men by nature desire to know," to tell us to be aware of men's ignorance about the leading principle or teleological cause or the grounding Ground of beings ("beings" is distinct from Being). He says,

Now if natural substances are the first of existing things, physics must be the first of science, but if there is another entity and substance, separable and unmovable, the knowledge of it must be different and prior to physics and universal because it is prior.¹

According to Aristotle, then, our desire to know is not satisfied in

knowing the characters and functions of an object, but in seeking the ultimate principle of all things, for all things need an ultimate cause in order to move, to be ordered, and to receive their existence.

Aristotle concentrates on the doctrine of Being, and does not make Non-Being a theme for his thought. Nevertheless, in any doctrine of Being, a doctrine of Non-Being is implied. Strictly speaking, it is not correct that Western metaphysicians before Heidegger had never thought out the nature of non-Being. Only they thought of the nature of the ultimate principle both cosmologically as being in relation to entities, and logically as the nature of being opposed to non-being. According to a Greek thinker, Parmenides,

The narrower bands were filled with the unmixed fire, and those next to them with night, and in the midst of these rushes their portion of fire. In the midst of these is the divinity that directs the course of all things; for he is the beginner of all painful birth and all begetting, deriving the female to embrace the male, and male the female.²

In this passage, it is not difficult to find Parmenides' position postulating a divinity that directs the course of all things. The divinity can be identical with Being, the ultimate principle or the ordering power of all things.

The ultimate principle was described in more detail by Aristotle. Metaphysics in the Aristotelian sense is definable as a science which investigates the nature of being qua being, that is, substance. In Plato, substance was the universal, the form which he assumed to reside in a world apart, the eternal and transcendent world of ideas, but Aristotle regards the particular objects or individual beings as real substances. Every individual substance consists of matter and form. By form Aristotle understands the universal aspect of a thing,

the essential unity shared by all things of the same type; matter is that which confers particularity and uniqueness. On this point, Aristotle asserts that the universal and the particular are composed into the complete unity of the individual. The individual object changes. How shall we explain this process of changing? There must be something underlying change, something that persists in the change, something to which the different qualities pertain. Aristotle says,

It follows, then, that 'substance' has two senses, (a) the ultimate substratum, which is no longer predicated of anything else, and (b) that which, being a this, is also separable—and of this nature is the shape or form of each thing.³

By this statement "substance" means something which is capable of independent existence.

Aristotle says in the Categories,

Everything except primary substance is either predicated of primary substances or is present in them, and if these last did not exist, it would be impossible for anything else to exist.⁴

In the above statement, Aristotle puts forward not only the connection between a primary substance and secondary substance, but also the notion of a persistent entity based on the priority of a primary substance to everything else. Priority, with respect to nature and substance, is something which can be without other things, while the others can not be without them.⁵ Aristotle is not satisfied in defining substance as attributes. So he tries to find something underlying attributes. Aristotle tries to locate the notion of a persistent entity in the concept of form as substance.

Because of the above conditions, Aristotle says,

As the substratum and the essence and the compound of these are called substance, so also is the universal.⁶

Here Aristotle describes substantiality as something involving both the essence and the substratum. Among possible characterizations of substance (Cat. 4 a, 10, Meta. 1029 a, 8), Aristotle's favorite account of substance is that of substance as essence, a core of essential properties.

Aristotle seems to intend to assert that the ultimate substratum must have its qualities in such a way that it must be other than the sum of its qualities. He posits the ultimate principle.

The traditional concept of "Being" in the West, according to Heidegger, is the universal, as was also realized by Aristotle, Thomas, and Hegel (however, Thomas and Hegel will not be dealt with in this paper); its universality goes beyond that of any genus. At the same time it is obscure and indefinable.

In contrast to the tradition, the main point of Heidegger's metaphysics is not to seek to determine whether or not being exists, how being exists, but to observe Being qua Being as what it is. In Being and Time, Heidegger says,

The Being of entities 'is' not itself an entity. If we are to understand the problem of Being, our first philosophical step consists in not ...defining entities, ...as if Being had the character of some possible entity.⁷

In order to elucidate the meaning of Being, Heidegger raised anew the question of the meaning of Being, and also began opening the horizon for Being in itself. He says that "we must first work out an adequate way of formulating it."⁸ Heidegger attempts this by asking "why are there essents, why is there anything at all, rather than nothing?"⁹ He says continuously that such a question compels us to ask the preliminary question: "How does it stand with Being?"¹⁰ The question

does not deal with the nature of entities as explained in Aristotle's case, but investigates "why" or "rather than nothing" as it is. Heidegger's main concern in philosophy is to know Being opening and laying the ground for entities.

One reason for this is that the universality of Being is not that of a class or genus. If we talk about a being or an entity, we can mean anything involved in the whatness of the object; when, however, we talk of Being simply, it is exemplified in all the beings. The term, "Being," therefore, does not define the realm of entities which is articulated conceptually according to genus and species.¹¹ Heidegger thinks of it as naming "something" which underlies all the inflections of the verb, to Be.¹² It is not an abstract, empty notion. Being in Heidegger preserves the notion of determinate characteristics for "somethings" as beings. Being exhibits the intimate connection which entities have with Being. Being is the source of and the actual Being of the being of entities.

Being and beings are not comparable.¹³ The Being of a house, an ontological character of that entity, is not like the color of the house, an ontic property.¹⁴ Heidegger holds that past philosophers have nonetheless usually understood Being--if they have concerned themselves with it at all--to be an entity, usually the highest or supreme entity.¹⁵ Here Heidegger most clearly departs from the Greek philosophers. For Being in the Greek tradition came to be understood as substance, "ousia," and substance in turn was equated with "parousia," presence. That which is truly present is the enduring, the unchanging, to which both past and future are irrelevant. So in Plato, Aristotle, and later Christian thinkers, Being became identified with the timeless

and supreme, and ontology passed into theology. Heidegger avoids this traditional pattern. For him Being is neither God nor a world-ground as it is in the German idealist tradition.

When we ask what Being is, how it can be characterized and known, we find in Martin Heidegger's thought as yet no satisfactory and full answer. When he came to describe Being as such, the traditional language of metaphysics failed him. Since the publication of Sein Und Zeit, he has tried to describe what may be his answer to the question: what is Being? In the late essay, On Time and Being, Heidegger has characterized Being indirectly by telling us what are false ways of understanding it. He says,

Being is not a thing, is not in time, yet Being as presencing remains determined as presence by time, by what is temporal.¹⁶

By "remain," he means not to disappear, to presence. In order to explain it more in detail, we must think of it. Heidegger says, "Being, by which all beings as such are marked, means presencing."¹⁷ We shall think Being in order to think it itself into its own element.

But we may ask: how is Being discovered and illuminated? There is Heidegger's different methodology, even if it never has been indicated as a methodology. This is the reason why Heidegger has been said to reject the traditional language of metaphysics. There are some clues in Heidegger similar to the method of Lao-Tzu (one of the Chinese philosophers). There is some attempt to describe how Being is revealed:

In order to emphasize the reference of Being to the essence of man as well as man's essential relation to the openness of Being as such... understanding of Being is itself a definite characteristic of Dasein's Being.¹⁸

For "Dasein is in such a way as to be something which understands something like Being."¹⁹ So the understanding of Being will be accomplished

in communication between Dasein and Being. Heidegger explains the communication in the following way:

Philosophy is the correspondence to the Being of being....²⁰

The phrase, "the correspondence," means "which discusses the appeal of the Being of being."²¹

It is not difficult to find a concept similar to Heidegger's in the work of one of the ancient Chinese philosophers, Lao-Tzu. Lao-Tzu uses the term Tao. Even though Tao plays a great role in Lao-Tzu's philosophy, we must confess a difficulty in describing it. Some difficulty exists in the meaning of the term "Tao" itself. Chinese thinkers call the highest reality Tao. Tao is the origin, destiny, creative principle, as well as final cause of all things in the world. In its ultimate aspect Tao is conceived to be "Nothingness." In relation to heaven it means the way that heaven can exist. In relation to man it means the way that he ought to exist. Tao originally was used in the sense of the way someone ought to act. But Lao-Tzu also tries to apply the concept of Tao to the creation as well as to the supportive foundation of the universe. So this meaning of Tao, at least, is essentially different from that of Confucius. Confucius explains the relation among human beings in five principles. The central idea in Confucius is jen or humanity, which develops the whole Confucian movement. Confucius explains the word, "humanity," as something which masters oneself and returns to propriety.²² This involves the realization of the self and the creation of a social order. Confucius says,

One who can practice five things wherever he may be, is a man of humanity....; earnestness, liberality, truthfulness, diligence, and generosity.²³

But Lao-Tzu asserts that the Tao provides principles for man from itself.

The Tao produced the One; the One produced the Two; the Two produced the Three; the Three produced all things.²⁴

Lao-Tzu seeks satisfaction for man's needs by formulating a metaphysical cosmology. In his theory of ethics, the attributes of Tao inform the individual how or what to do in a society as well as in a family.

A man's way of life should be based on an understanding of Tao.

The various meanings of Tao have been explored in the Tao Te Ching,

...which, being one of the earliest philosophical texts, contains some of the purest and most original metaphysical speculation done by the Chinese.²⁵

According to Chen's opinion

Nothingness literally means 'there-is-not,' 'nothing' 'the negative'. In the Tao Te Ching, Tao is primarily described as the 'not' and 'no': Tao has no name, no knowledge, no action, no desire, etc. Tao is wu, the 'not.' Wu is not merely the negation of all limitations and determinations, it contains in itself no affirmation at all. ...Because Tao is ultimately wu, even Tao's existence is said in Chapters 4 and 6 to be a matter of question.²⁶

Literally speaking, in the notion of Tao, Nothingness can be very puzzling, especially to Westerners trained in the tradition of the philosophy of being.²⁷ For in the Tao Te Ching, Nothingness and Being form a polarity within the notion of Tao-'nothingness' being the opposite of 'Being' and productive of 'Being.' This is clear in many chapters in the Tao Te Ching (I, 10, 11, 14, 34, 40). Because of this polarity, many different interpretations of Tao have been given to us. For instance, there are two examples, Wang Pi (226-249) and Kuo Hsiang (d. 312).

For Wang Pi, the concept of nothingness is restricted to what is formless and nameless. He says,

All being has begun with non-being. Therefore when there is yet no form nor name, it is the beginning of ten thousands things.... The ten thousand things depend on it to begin, depend on it to complete, but no one knows how. This is, called to go to the origin of origins.²⁸

For Wang Pi, nothingness is the origin of all things because it is the original state of all things. For Kuo Hsiang, nothingness as a principle to account for the generation of all things becomes quite unintelligible. He says,

Since nothingness is nothingness, it cannot give birth to being. Before 'being' is born, there is nothing to produce 'being.' Therefore who gives birth to what is born? All things come to be by themselves.

According to Kuo Hsiang, there can be no movement from non-being to being, from potentiality to actuality; all movements are self-movements from one state of actuality to another state of actuality. It is not necessary for us to make distinction between Wang Pi and Kuo Hsiang because originally Lao-Tzu had both meanings of Tao in his notion of Nothingness.

But sometimes, we use our own investigation. No matter what commentary subjects have been shown to us, we ~~need~~ to understand the subject by our own endeavour.

As Heidegger says that "philosophy is the correspondence to the Being of being," Lao-Tzu suggests the direct approach to Tao. When man acts concretely in accordance with the principle of Tao, he actualizes the attributes of Tao. Just as Heidegger's attitude of listening to the voice from Being (Sein) is necessary for us, so also an act to involve oneself in Tao is necessary for us. Everything in man can be satisfied by contacting or responding to Tao. For example, the main interest of Taoism and Confucianism is life; the chief difference is

that in Taoism the preservation of life comes with responding to nature, whereas in Confucianism the fulfillment of life comes with the artificial effort of man.

It seems to me that man in Heidegger and Lao-Tzu is not a self-sufficient being in the sense that he cannot be essentially thought of without considering his relation to Being (or Tao). Man is this relation itself. Relation to Being might be the very heart of human essence. In other words, whatever man does is only his response to Being (or Tao). Because of this situation, Sartre's proposition that existence precedes essence, is as remote as can be from these philosophers. Heidegger especially puts his philosophical point in the letter on Humanism: "Man is not the master of beings. Man is the shepherd of Being."²⁹ Like the shepherd, man's true role consists in his function of taking care of, of being a guardian. Man does not create Being but he is responsible for it.

Is there any reason we ought to be attuned to Tao? According to Lao-Tzu, the intellectual skill of human beings is unnatural as a way to satisfy their needs; unnatural in the sense that human reason is not durable. In contrast to the unnatural skill of human beings, he proposes to us the unchangeable as durability.

Heaven and earth are enduring.

The reason why heaven and earth can be enduring is that they do not give themselves life. Hence they are able to be long-lived.³⁰

Heaven and earth do not try to be long-lived by themselves; nevertheless, they are full of life enough to bear all creatures. Nobody has ever heard that heaven and earth try to preserve their life. They endure forever. Some of us may raise the question how eternal durability

is possible for man. Lao-Tzu answers in the following way:

Returning to One's destiny is known as the constant. Knowledge of the constant is known as discernment... The way to perpetuity. And to the end of one's days one will meet him no-danger.³¹

He who does not lose his station will endure. He who lives out his days has had a long life.³²

To know harmony is called the constant. To know the constant is called discernment.³³

This is called the Way of deep roots and firm stems by which one lives to see many days.³⁴

The nature of enduring Tao is called nothingness in relation to the cosmology; and in relation to human nature, it is called Te, meaning virtue. It is known that Tao was considered the central concept in the thought of Lao-Tzu. The Tao or way of Taoism is metaphysically an ultimate goal or state. It is referred to by the use of a singular term, and must be given its place among the monisms. For Lao-Tzu as for Heidegger there is one ground for all things, but the Tao is more naturalistic.

As explained above, concerning the question of how Being (or Tao) is discovered, it can be discovered through the investigation of, the listening to, or meditating upon language. Language in Heidegger can be conceived in a way directly related to most modern thinking. It is not a mere tool or instrument, nor does its essence consist entirely in its being a means of transmitting information. Language is the supreme event of human existence.³⁵ For Lao-Tzu, Tao is adumbrated by reason, but is to be attained by the quiet observances of a simple life which refuses to be perturbed by evils which are superficial.

How does it stand with Being? as well as Tao in Lao-Tzu?

Our understanding of Being and Tao will be clear in the concept of

Nothingness. Strictly speaking, Being is different from a being, or property. Also Nothingness in Lao-Tzu and Heidegger is not simply empty. They tell the holiness of Nothingness full of itself.

FOOTNOTES

¹Aristotle, "Metaphysics," Book XI, 1064 b 9-14, The Basic Works of Aristotle, ed. with An Introduction by Richard McKeon, (New York, 1971).

²John Burnet, Early Greek Philosophy (London, 1945), p. 177.

³Aristotle, Metaphysics, Book V, 1017 b 23.

⁴Aristotle, Categories, 2b, 4ff.

⁵Aristotle, Metaphysics, Book V, 1019 a 2.

⁶Aristotle, Metaphysics, Book VII, 1038 b 5.

⁷M. Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 26.

⁸Ibid., p. 24.

⁹M. Heidegger, An Introduction to Metaphysics, trans. by Ralph Manheim (Garden City, 1961), p. 1.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 27.

¹¹M. Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 22.

¹²M. Heidegger, An Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 57.

¹³M. Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 63.

¹⁴I am examining the ontological structure of There-being, whose essence lies in existence. Let the analysis be called 'existential.' Only it is existential which pertains to There-being's comprehension of the Being-structure of beings. But the primordial constitution of There-being itself, at first, should be presupposed in order to analyze the structure of Dasein. This dimension of existence is called 'existentiell.' 'Existential' and 'existentiell' are not separate. They are different dimensions of a unique and profoundly unified phenomenon. The existential analysis must be rooted in the existentiell. Unless it discerns the existential within the existentiell, it remains groundless. In Heidegger, 'Existentiell' is synonymous with 'ontic.' The ontological inquiry about all things must be based on the ontical priority. Ex.
(1) Tree itself is ontic, but the statement of tree is ontological,
(2) I as a being am ontical ontologically.

¹⁵M. Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 22-23.

¹⁶M. Heidegger, On Time and Being, trans. Joan Stambaugh, (New York, 1972), p. 3.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁸M. Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 32.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 39.

J. Glenn Gray says, "Being is objective to man; it exists apart from him..." in the article, "Heidegger's Being." (Journal of Philosophy, Vol. XLIX No. 12, June 15, 1952.) As far as these references are concerned, Mr. Gray's statement is wrong.

²⁰M. Heidegger, What is Philosophy? trans, with an Introduction by William Kluback and Jean T. Wilde (New York, 1958), p. 75.

²¹Ibid., p. 97.

²²Confucius, Analects, Ch. XII, 1, A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy, trans. Wing-Tait Chan (Princeton, 1972), p. 38.

²³Ibid., Ch. XVII, 6, p. 46.

²⁴Lao-Tzu, Tao Te Ching, trans. D. C. Lau (England, 1970), Ch. 42.

²⁵Ellen Marie Chen, "Nothingness and the Mother Principle in Early Chinese Taoism," International Philosophical Quarterly, Vol. IX, 1969, p. 391.

²⁶Ibid., p. 391.

²⁷In Western Philosophy, the negative is an inherent character of finite things. Non-being means the absence or negation of being while being is equated with the real, non-being is found only in the world of appearance as that which does not appear or is lacking.

²⁸As quoted in Ellen Marie Chen, "Nothingness and the Mother Principle in Early Chinese Taoism," p. 392-393.

²⁹M. Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism." p. 166.

³⁰Lao-Tzu, Tao Te Ching, Ch. VII.

³¹Ibid., Ch. XVI.

³²Ibid., Ch. XXXIII

³³Ibid., Ch. LV.

³⁴Ibid., Ch. LIX

³⁵J. Glenn Gray, "Heidegger's Being," p. 417.

CHAPTER III

APPROACHING CLUE TO UNDERSTAND BEING AND TAO:

HEIDEGGER AND LAO-TZU

A definite method for understanding the meaning of Being and Tao has never been given in the philosophies of Heidegger and Lao-Tzu. For Being and Tao were not products of rational, intellectual effort in relation to an appropriate word. The principle of nothingness in the philosophy of Lao-Tzu is "nameless," which indicates the existence of eternal and infinite Being, which transcends space and time and is unlimited in its nature. Regarded from the standpoint of its lack of limitation, it is completely independent, that is, absolute. "Absolute" means that it is relative to nothing and is self-sufficient. "Its lack of limitation" means that nothing can name it, in order to make a distinction in an epistemological sense.

In Heidegger, some methods for answering the question "What is Being?" are suggested. He says in one place, for instance,

...The ground is from where beings as such are what they are in their becoming, perishing and persisting as something that can be known, handled and worked upon. As the ground, Being brings beings to their actual presencing.¹

Heidegger refers to the ground of beings to answer to the question what Being is. So he says again, "...Yet Being as presencing remains determined as presence by time, by what is temporal."² To remain means, for Heidegger, not to disappear, to presence. The horizon for Being

is the opening in time in order to bring beings to their actual pre-sencing. Thus "time is determined by a kind of Being." "How is Being supposed to be determined by time? Being speaks out of the constancy of time's passing away."³

In other words, Being has a temporal character. Temporality is of its very essence. Being cannot be thought of as separate from time; time is Being coming to openness. So Heidegger has demonstrated in his book Being and Time that time is the "horizon of Being."⁴

But he also asserts in another essay:

'Being and Time' is the attempt to interpret Being in terms of the transcendental horizon of time. What does transcendental mean here? It does not mean the objectivity of an object of experience as constituted in consciousness, but rather the realm of projection for the determination of Being, that is, presencing as such...⁵

From this statement, we can infer some clues about the method for understanding Being: the transcendental horizon of Dasein for Being. Existence means literally to be present outside somewhere. A human being is opened outside in time. What a human being had already comes out in time through opening. What is "what a being had already?" That is a relation of human existence to Being as ground. As explained in the Letter on Humanism, "man is not the master of beings, man is the shepherd of Being."⁶

The horizon of Being helps us understand the meaning of the term, Being. The Horizon of Being, as already indicated in the above, is human existence (Dasein). The term "horizon" has a different meaning from the physical horizon. Heidegger means the human being's mental horizon, "being conscious of ...". Man can see something beyond the horizon, which serves as a window to show something over there. For

only Dasein (human existence) can ask about the existence of entities (Seienden) as well as himself (Dasein), and also can decide his action by understanding Being. That is why, through understanding Dasein, it will be possible to know "the reference of Being to the essence of man as well as man's essential relation to the openness (Da) of Being as such..."⁷

In Lao-Tzu, a definite method has not been suggested to understand Tao. That analogy might serve us as a method for understanding Tao has been suggested in Lao-Tzu: female, mother's principle, water, valley, etc. The reason is that in spite of the fact that Tao itself is not a product of rational intellectual effort, Lao-Tzu's philosophy has been expressed in the mental process. It is only by thorough dissection of the physical organism that we know about the parts. But Tao is said to indicate something other than the totality of the universe.

Totality means that the whole is only the aggregation of its parts without an ultimate principle.... Unity must exist before everything else, and everything presupposes unity as the condition of its individuality and rank within the whole. Thus the Tao or the One is unity, but not totality, and is prior to all things.⁸

The unity and priority of this ultimate principle are formulated in China by Lao-Tzu. In some sense, the namelessness of Nothingness is the nature of the ultimate principle discerned.

That is why, in order to understand the true meaning of nothing in Lao-Tzu's philosophy, we must make every effort to dissociate our minds from intellectual scientific attitudes. All things in the universe share not only in "thingness," but also in Nothingness. The logical method is not the only expression of the most positive truth; but in Lao-Tzu an illogical way is often strongly used to open the most

positive truth. For instance, as nothingness is the way to the very positive truth of Tao, simplicity, quietude, naturality without action may be the available way to understand Tao.⁹

To elucidate the meaning of Being, Heidegger began opening the horizon of Dasein for Being in itself. In other words, Being in itself has an ontical priority, but Dasein plays the role of a window to open or disclose the meaning of Being. A human being is able to extend his mental horizon on the basis of consciousness in order to unveil Being. In Lao-Tzu, Tao served sufficiently to indicate its essentially practical motives. The practical motives for life must be found in following nature. Through following nature, man can find some ways to understand Tao. In this section, I want to suggest some clues for understanding Being and Tao.

The Worldhood of Dasein and Discourse:

Heidegger

Dasein means literally "being-there." Dasein can be said to exist. What is the distinctive characteristic of existence as human Dasein? The basic state of Dasein in Heidegger's view is characterized as "Being-in-the-world." This is to speak not of man, but of Dasein's fundamental constitution. Also he prefers this term to express man's peculiar way considered ontologically.

In relation to an understanding of why Heidegger defines Dasein as Being-in-the-world, a first observation about the concepts of "existence," "world," "in" will help us understand his point of view.

At first, Heidegger realized that "existence as Dasein"--usually called "human life"--should be separated ontologically from all the

things which are not Dasein in its essential respect. The existence of Dasein is determined not by qualities, but possible ways of Being. In other words, man has not the essence of an object. Man in Heidegger's view is not described in terms of the "objective properties of something merely extant, but his possible ways of being, and only these."¹⁰ So man as existing is not complete or fixed in his being. He will be always more than he is now. His being is never complete at any given moment. Because man exists, he can choose for himself. That is why, to call man "Being-in-the-world" is to say something quite different from what can be said about an object, for instance, a match in a box. Heidegger's interest in Being-in-the world is ontological or existential.

Heidegger uses the expression, Being-in-the-world, to indicate a fundamental characteristic of human existence, namely man's intercourse in the world with all the things belonging to the world.¹¹ To reach an existential understanding of Dasein, we have to develop the second consideration on "the world."

The term, world, in Heidegger indicates the state, the how in which human Dasein is as a whole. Especially, Heidegger really refers to an individual world of a particular man (human existence), but not to the structure of everybody's world, which means the same as the world of all human beings. As contrasted with the common world, the individual man's world is formulated only through his own world. So Heidegger says that the world of Dasein is the place "wherein a factual Dasein as such can be said to be."¹² In the ontological sense, Heidegger called the world of Dasein "the worldhood of the world as such,"¹³ but he also designated the world of Dasein to be "the

ontologico--existential concept of worldhood."¹⁴

As already indicated in the above, the term, "worldhood," does not refer to the sum total of the things of nature, nor to a fundamental structure of the community of men. But it means originally "the how" in which the things which are in the world are in the world as related to human Dasein. The things are not simply in the world, but they are encountered within the world. In other words, the entities in the particular human Dasein's world in Heidegger's view are not meant to be construed in terms of the physical function of In. Those entities which man as human Dasein encounters in his own world are characterized in that world by the way the term "In" functions. Thus, to be in his own world does not mean for man merely to be located in it, as a rock is, but to be concerned with it in his existence. A match is in a box, but when a man is in his home, this relation, obviously, is not primarily the same as the relation of the match to the box. The former is "spatial," but the relation of a man with his home means to "dwell in," "stay in" which is more than spatial. We can see why Heidegger defines human Dasein as Being-in-the-world, through his interpretation of the term, In (living-in, in-dwelling). Being-in here means an existential relation, and is to be distinguished from the physical relation of being within the world.

The special considerable point of the existential use of In on the worldhood of Dasein is based on the following: for an entity to be in a person's world is for it to be an object of his concern.¹⁵ So Heidegger thinks of "just thinking about something" rather than "just looking at something," as the better way of being concerned about the something.¹⁶ Thus the existential use of the term, "In," has the basic

meaning of "dwelling with those things with which the person is familiar and looking after them caringly."¹⁷ For man to experience an object as it is, is to experience and interpret that object in terms of that person's world. Human Dasein's world serves as a necessary condition for the possibility of the particular person's experience, but the common world is a necessary condition for the possibility of everyone's experience. The existential understanding of the world originates in the consideration of the things within the world which confront man in human Dasein's concern as Being-in-the-world. In short, Heidegger explains Being-in-the-world as the way in which Dasein's character is defined existentially. The human Dasein's world must be the world which designates the ontologico-existential concept.¹⁸ Also the character of the world on the ontological structure of Dasein as In-Being is called the worldhood of the world. I have explained the fundamental character of Dasein as Being-in-the-world. To call man "Being-in-the-world" expresses the character of man that as existing he is bound up with the world.

Especially, in constructing the existential concept of the world, Heidegger returns to the practical character of the entities within the world as they confront man in his concern. He tries to analyze the constitutive attributes not of the things as present to hand (Vorhanden), but as utensils (Zuhanden) as man encounters them in his own concern. So things as related to human Dasein are originally encountered and discovered only in connection with his practical concern, not in an exclusively theoretical attitude. On the foundation of man's practical concern, Heidegger has defined the worldhood of the world as "the Being of the ontic condition of the possibility of the discoverability of any

beings encountered in the world."¹⁹ In other words, the concept of worldhood can be the foundation, not only to clarify what is meant by the there (Da) of Dasein, but also to understand the direction of Dasein's concern.²⁰ He says "those entities we encounter in concern equipment,"²¹ which refers to their "equipmentality,"²² as related to the direction of Dasein's concern. Equipmentality is essentially something of the in-order-to, which is discovered in relation to a practical pursuit. So Heidegger says that "a totality of equipment is constituted by various ways of the in-order-to such as serviceability, conduciveness, usability, manipulability."²³

On the basis of the analysis of the "Utensil" and of worldhood, human Dasein is said to disclose one's own spatiality, which means the characteristic of Dasein in terms of the existential function of In with the world. The central point of the analysis of Dasein as Being-in-the-world is to show its Erschlossenheit, the disclosed, discovered, the unveiled state of Dasein. This phenomenon of the Erschlossenheit of Dasein should be borne in mind when various modes of Being-in-the-world are considered.

Now one of the existentials²⁴ of Being-in-the-world, as human Dasein, cooriginal with Befindlichkeit (the state of mind) and Verstehen (understanding) is Rede, translated in English as Discourse or speech. Discourse is the signifying articulation of the Being-in-the-world for the way in which human Dasein is understood. Human Dasein in the There (Da) in which it is placed, expresses itself as discourse. Therefore, the function of language within Heidegger's phenomenological method is the key to an understanding of how Heidegger thinks phenomena are to be uncovered. So he says in Being and Time,

We must avoid uninhibited word-mysticism. Nevertheless, the ultimate business of philosophy is to preserve the force of the most elemental words in which Dasein expresses itself, and to keep the common understanding from leveling them off to that unintelligibility which functions in turn as a source of pseudo-problems.²⁵

As already explained above, the actions of disclosing the characteristics of Dasein can be reflected in the structure and characteristics of language, because language reflects the ways in which human being is characterized. Discourse in Heidegger's view is not empirical behavior, but an existentialistic trait rooted in the constitution of Dasein. The whole structure of Discourse in Heidegger's philosophy has been elaborated on the basis of the analysis of Dasein. In other words, discourse is regarded or analyzed as a fundamental mode of the Being-in-the-world of human Dasein, equally essential as the Befindlichkeit with its "primordial self-finding" to where and how, as the understanding of Being's possibilities. Especially, discourse refers not only to voice and sounds, but also to the key in which the worldhood of Dasein itself is discovered. Discourse for Heidegger, therefore, is not only language (written or spoken) but also, in some peculiar way, something which makes language possible.²⁶ For instance, listening (hoeren) and silence (schweigen) belong as potentialities together with language. So Heidegger says that man is the being who can make himself present in his possession of language itself. But Heidegger rejects a formulizing of language because its formulation overlooks the basic meaning of discourse, and cuts man off from an understanding of those basic acts which make language itself possible. In other words, according to Heidegger, human Dasein can reveal certain structures, phenomena which are prior to written language, especially

that which is constituted by language. Nevertheless, because the fundamental force of discourse is "to bring something into the presence," an examination of discourse in Heidegger's opinion makes it possible to grasp the structural determination of human Dasein's situation. So he thinks that its structures are so analogous to the structure of this intelligibility--articulation that an examination of the one will yield insight into the other.²⁷

On the other hand, Heidegger agrees with the view that the limits of language are the limits of a person's worldhood, so language contributes to the formulation and participates in the constitution of fact. Constitutive components of language in Heidegger's view are the following: what is spoken of, what is said as such, communication, and the information given. In other words, nobody can get outside of human Dasein's language to compare its structure with the structure of things. In the structure and function of language, anything about Being ought to be reflected. That is to say, to speak of Being is "to think of the essence of language in its correspondence to Being and, what is more, as this very correspondence, i.e., the dwelling of man's essence."²⁸ So he says that language is the "House of Being."²⁹ Discourse in Heidegger's view is not only the voice of Being, but also the house wherein man exists. Language is the clearing-and-concealing advent of Being itself.³⁰ But language is also the ground which lets human Dasein reveal itself or be determined as what it is.

Unfortunately, according to Heidegger, human Dasein has appeared as modes of Sprachverfall, which means losing the house of language. As already considered in the above, since language for Heidegger is the "House of Being," the truth of Being can be reflected in the

structure and function of language. Languageless means that human Dasein is homeless (unheimlich). The human Dasein, who loses the truth of Being (die Wahrheit des Seins), expresses itself through idle talk, curiosity and ambiguity. In the languageless, the concept of semblance³¹ can be referred to in formulating the structure of Dasein. A semblance is something that looks as if it were other in character than it actually is. Heidegger defines a semblance as "something which shows itself as what in itself it is not."³² In other words, it looks as if it were, looks to be, but in fact is actually not. A semblance is something that only seems to have a certain quality.

Because of the above condition, in Heidegger's view a reflective turn on our own self is required to restore the truth of Being. "Turning on" is not a simple matter; it must involve the attainment of what Heidegger terms authenticity (Eigentlichkeit).³³ At the same time the attainment of this authenticity, according to Heidegger, is what opens one toward Being.³⁴

The worldhood of human Dasein cannot be an objective thing of knowledge, but must be an environmental world formulated on the directionality of human Dasein's concern. Furthermore, an analysis of human Dasein's structures embedded in language ought to yield knowledge of Being, the meaning of Being. In other words, with a proper understanding and analysis of discourse based on the worldhood of Dasein, Being in its "equiprimordial" structure can be uncovered or opened. Thus language is a central element in understanding the worldhood of human Dasein.

Through a detailed analysis of Dasein, Heidegger attempts to reveal Being itself. Specifically, the language of man is needed to

bring the silent words of Being into human discourse.

The Transcendental Horizon of Dasein
for Being: Heidegger

For M. Heidegger, the notion of transcendence has been defined as a "going beyond" in his book, The Essence of Truth. This going-beyond is not concerned with particular beings or their reactions in order to get to the Supreme Being (in a religious sense), but with the relationship of all human beings to Being. Transcendence expresses the distinguishing mark of the human being as Dasein; the way in which it points us to Being itself. Heidegger says;

...then it is right to say that transcendence indicates the essence of the subject and is the fundamental structure of subjectivity. The subject never exists mainly as a 'subject' so that it can also transcend toward objects especially if they are there at the disposal of the subject, but being-a-subject means: to be the being in the transcendence and as the transcendence.³⁵

The importance of "the transcendence" can be considered as a means (the way) to shed light on the reality of Being. But the transcendental horizon also is important as the foundation or ground which makes it possible to reveal the character of Being.

According to Heidegger, human existence must be able to understand itself not only in that "I am," but in the possibility that "I can be," and thus come toward himself in the light of Being. In other words, man must be able to transcend, to go out beyond himself as he already is to the possibilities of his being, and it is this unique way of being which Heidegger calls existing. What at first comes to light in this transcendence is not something outside and beyond the world, but precisely human beings as the beings they are—human beings' facticity.

The transcendence of man's being is only possible in this confrontation of facticity of human being with the "other" reality.

As a matter of fact, the term, "facticity," stands for a way of human Dasein as being-in-the-world. That does not mean a fact of nature (Vorhanden) or an objective fact, but a fact in the sense that "it is and has to be."³⁶ Even though human Dasein does not know "from where" and "when," he finds himself in a situation where "it is and has to be." It is not deniable for Dasein to exist there. "I am here," "I am in the world," is an undeniable fact, even though "how?" "why?" or "what for?" are unanswerable questions. Such a facticity is simply given, not chosen. Man as existing is already in a world.

The possibilities of existence are always conditioned by the facticity of existence. The existence of Dasein is not pure possibility, but always factual possibility. In other words, while there are some facts in nature Dasein can choose, Dasein cannot deny what has been given to its individual existence. Dasein has a relation to oneself in a way that is peculiar to him as existing. Existence is always mine. So "I am and have to be myself in my worldhood." Facticity is characterized not only by the individuality of my existence, but also by what Heidegger calls "thrownness" (Geworfen). Heidegger says that "an entity of the character of Dasein is its 'there,' in the sense that whether explicitly or not, it finds itself in its thrownness."³⁷

The term "thrownness" here means the There of Dasein, the actual situation in which Dasein finds itself. The structure of facticity in existence (I am myself and no one else, I am and have to be in the world) is part of the disclosure of ontological anxiety towards the hidden background (where he comes from and where he is going remain

hidden). The thrownness means again that it has been already thrown into the potentiality of death. Whenever Dasein exists, it is also already "thrown" into the potentiality of death. The thrownness unto death, in some sense, unveils Dasein more genuinely and more penetratingly in the Befindlichkeit of anxiety. The anxiety of death is dread of one's own innermost and inescapable potentiality of Being, not to be overcome. What is dreaded in the state of anxiety is the "Being-in-the-world."

As Dasein is always essentially thrown as potentialities into the There of Dasein, Dasein always projects essentially its potentialities. So the term "project" is concerned with the full disclosedness of Being-in-the-world. The project is the activity (the counter-acting to the thrownness of Dasein) by which Dasein throws itself forward into its potentialities. "A project," (something that has been thrown forward, projected,) does not mean just any kind of project, like going for a picnic tomorrow, but means the ground, plan, the first basic design, the all-embracing conception which in advance encircles the whole and so makes it possible for any detail to make sense. Again, as related to man's possibilities, the "project" suggests intention or purpose in relation to the practical concern. By this, a project is not meant as a plan which has been thought out and then put into operation, but the ongoing structural orientation of all Dasein's activities.

Things in themselves are meaningless, even though what is as present-at-hand is there. But they are able to have significance through the projecting activity of Dasein's understanding. To project one's possibilities means to construct the worldhood of Dasein by disclosing one's potentialities of Being. Different ways of understanding are

related to the projecting of different possibilities of Dasein. For instance, man can understand an object (a fork) in the sense that he has discovered its instrumental character in relation to Dasein's worldhood. He makes the object serve as one of his possibilities in projecting his potentialities upon it. As Heidegger says,

In the projecting of ~~the~~ understanding, entities are disclosed in their possibility.... Entities within-the-world generally are projected upon the world--that is, upon a whole of significance, to whose reference--relations concern, as Being-in-the-world, has been tied up in advance.³⁸

Dasein has always projected itself and continues to project as long as Dasein exists. When entities are discovered through the projection of Dasein, it can be said that meaning for entities is projected by understanding.

This gives us some clue to capturing essentially the structure of understanding; it throws forward possibilities, but at the same time, it holds out toward itself what it has already forethrown. In other words, while we throw these possibilities forward, they at the same time turn around and seem positively to look at ourselves. But the disclosure of possibilities in human existence is the achievement of existential understanding, and also the expression of a basic way of existing.

Human existence in Heidegger's view has been marked by a three-fold character of the existential constitution of Dasein; the state of mind, understanding, and discourse. The understanding in Heidegger's view is not theoretical or abstract like an intellectual activity which leads to theoretical knowledge. The understanding in Heidegger shines (open) light on the "There" of Dasein in a different way from "Befindlichkeit." The original meaning of an understanding discloses

entities to the Dasein "for the sake of which Dasein exists." According to Heidegger, things and persons and the whole of "Being-in-the-world" gain their significance from the purpose or aim for the sake of which man understands himself to exist.

The disclosedness of understanding, as the disclosedness of the 'for-the-sake-of-which' and of significance equiprimordially, pertains to the entity of Being-in-the-world.³⁹

This disclosedness lets things lie unconcealed or unhidden in this world before human existence. The understanding always touches on the whole constitution of Being-in-the-world. That is not purely or even primarily theoretical, but is rooted in man's way of being as practically concerned with this world (Heidegger's example: "the hammer is heavy").⁴⁰ So the understanding needs to be formulated not in the objective world, but in the field of my concern (ex: Zuhanden rather than Vorhanden is more important). What is Zuhanden is seen and discovered in its serving function as related to Dasein's concern. The understanding is always essentially concerned with potentialities of Dasein. Understanding unveils man's potentialities of Being to him. The "for-the-sake-of-which" is regarded in utensils or in the worldhood of Dasein.

As already mentioned above, this disclosedness, however, cannot happen to some abstract man in general, but only to a factually existing man (Dasein). Not only that, but also this disclosedness is just a basic way of the Dasein's existing. So Heidegger says,

If Dasein is, it already has, as directing and deserving, its own discovered region. Both directionality and de-severance, as modes of Being-in-the-world, are guided beforehand, 'by the circumspection of concern.'⁴¹

It is this aspect of human being which Heidegger later calls

"transcendence," including the meaning of anticipation, of going beyond the given facticity. This is what Heidegger's "existentiality" means. The human being is always reaching out beyond itself; its very being consists in aiming at what it is not yet.

Whatever Dasein faces in the world has relation to the whole of understanding that it has. Dasein has put entities in his worldhood and has related to them. In doing so, Dasein has also assigned it a meaning. That is, meanings are not discovered in things, but they are in relation to things in the worldhood of understanding which Dasein has already brought to itself.

Such projection never outruns the boundaries of the world it has been given. It is projection in and of and with the world. So Heidegger says,

The disclosedness of the 'there' in understanding is itself a way of Dasein's potentiality-for-Being. In the way in which its Being is projected both upon the 'for-the-sake-of-which' and upon significance (the world), there lies the disclosedness of Being in general.⁴²

In its own self-projection and self-transcendence then, human being at once understands its world and becomes its authentic self in the light of Being.

What characterizes the existential known as "understanding," according to Heidegger, is that it develops itself as a projection (Entwurf) in one direction among many possible determinations. The understanding is an existential possible way of being. Its characteristic structure is the projection. Things are meaningless, but they are able to have significance through the projecting activity of Dasein's understanding. The understanding not only is characterized by forward direction in its projection but also is primarily futural

(Zukunftig).

In other words, on the basis of the primarily future-oriented projection of understanding, and the primarily past-oriented state of mind, Dasein thus falls into a present moment with things in the world (Ecstasy of temporality in Dasein), which means that the temporality of Dasein, with its relation to future, past and present, opens up the horizon for the question about "Being." It also means there can not be any gap in continuous time. The present is a moment connecting the past and the future.

What is specifically connected to the self-transcendence of the ecstasy of temporality in Dasein, is the existential ontological death as a mode of human Dasein's authenticity. The Being-toward-death belongs genuinely and essentially to the Being of Dasein. The arrival at the boundary of death is at the same time the loss of Dasein by the self-projection. It means to uncover the unauthentic veils of Dasein through the temporality of Dasein.

Being-towards-death is the anticipation of a potentiality-for-Being of that entity whose kind of Being is anticipation itself. In the anticipatory revealing of this potentiality-for-Being, Dasein discloses itself to itself as regards its uttermost possibility.⁴³

The "running forward in existential decision" (the character of always having to make decisions among future possibilities) makes Dasein authentic with the future. The formulation of the analysis of "Being-toward-death" presupposes the authentic potentiality of Dasein.

But it is necessary to remember the concept of everydayness, which means the mode of Dasein in accordance with habit and convention. The mode of everydayness is based on the "They-time." Heidegger says that binding self with other in togetherness is,

cutting off its primary and primordially genuine relationships-of-Being towards the worldhood,... and towards its very Being-in.⁴⁴

So Dasein listens to the publicness of man and maintains itself in idle talk. This is unauthentic Dasein which means the self-loss. Heidegger says, "We take pleasure and enjoy ourselves as 'they (men)' take pleasure;..."⁴⁵

By opening for his own potentiality of existence, Dasein lets its own self act in the way of 'inner action.' This means to characterize the existential structure of the authentic potentiality-for-Being, which is essentially connected with the "running forward in decision" to death conceived only in its ontological possibility. This attitude lets Dasein unveil itself in and for its Being as potentiality in advance of itself. Especially this "running forward in decision" to the potentiality of death makes it truly possible as such and makes the Dasein free for it. By such running forward in decision, one's own and innermost extreme potentiality of In-Being can be understood in authentic existence. This means to change the anxiety of death into the expectation of death, unauthentic Dasein toward death into authentic Dasein. But Dasein also can open itself for its own potentiality of existence by projecting itself into the ground of Being.

Indirectly speaking, the external entities in nature make us investigate the question of Being. If Being is what makes possible things with determinate characteristics, then an analysis of these entities' structures ought to yield knowledge of Being. However, what lies behind the entities, in the enveloping background of all things, seems to have little to do with our practical needs considered in relation to the things in our environment. Therefore, Being is not an

empty abstraction but something which is the most concrete and closest of presences. The problem is how to bring Being into the light.

Strictly speaking, the meaning of Being is not applicable to entities other than human Dasein. Being is understood in the sense of Dasein's disclosing of Being, because Dasein has been referred to as being "something which understands something like Being."⁴⁶ The method used by Heidegger is that of phenomenology, which means "to let that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself."⁴⁷ Phenomenology is suitable to show the ultimate Being itself hidden behind all entities through Dasein.

To elucidate the meaning of Being, Heidegger began opening the horizon of Dasein for Being in itself. In other words, Being in itself has an ontical priority, but Dasein plays the role of a window to open or disclose the meaning of Being. Human Dasein especially is able to extend its mental horizon on the basis of care in order to unveil Being. The existential possibilities of Dasein are used as the horizon to bring the meaning of Being into the light.

Up to now, I have indicated that phenomenology is suitable to show the ultimate Being itself hidden behind all entities through Dasein. Man's understanding of Being is not an isolated event, nor merely a part in Dasein, but occurs through the whole existential way of Human Dasein. The unique character of the human being is not confined merely to his thinking or cognitive activities but is determined in all the ways in which he can be. Being is in the understanding of Dasein and not in things. Man is the only being who has an understanding of Being. In order to support the relation between Being and human Dasein, I tried to touch several aspects related to the notion of transcendence.

Human existence in Heidegger's view is called "transcendence." Dasein as transcendence is the starting-point of fundamental ontology for the question of Being.

The Harmony with the Inner Principle of
Nature: Lao-Tzu

While the goal of Confucianism is the fully developed life, that of Lao-Tzu in Tao Te Ching is simplicity and the harmonious life. A simple life means a life of plainness in which profit is discarded, cleverness abandoned, selfishness minimized, and desires reduced.⁴⁸ It is the life of "perfection which seems to be incomplete," of "fullness which seems to be empty," of "absolute straightness which seems to be crooked," of "skill which seems to be clumsy," and "eloquence which seems to stutter." It is the life of "producing and rearing things without taking possession of them," of "doing work but not taking pride in it," and of "ruling over things but not dominating them."⁴⁹

However, it is not difficult to think that the mode of a simple life is originated in relation with Tao. The harmonious life means to follow the principle given to us from Tao. The harmony with Tao is formulated through methods in accordance with attributes of Tao. Human artificiality is not necessary to do that.

In order to support our understanding to this point, I would like to discuss the following key concepts: "intuition and quietude," "naturalness without action," and "void."

"Intuition" is the key word in understanding Tao, unlocking all the secrets of Being as well as of non-being (nothing). The method is

like a private awareness of one's innermost being-existential self. It is a pure self-consciousness through immediate, direct, primitive penetration instead of by a method that is derivative, inferential or rational. The distinction between the knower and the known can be removed by identifying subject with object. The understanding of Tao by intuition is an inner experience in which the distinction between subject and object vanishes. This means an immediate contact of awareness rather than an inferential or intellectual process. That is why Tao does not blossom into vital consciousness until all distinctions between self and nonself have disappeared. The nature of the identity between subject and object can be understood through intuition, apart from the relation of premise with conclusion or apart from rational explanation. The awareness of the identification of subject and object is the intuited result of an ontological experience.

The approach to Nothingness through quietude is named the "losing-method."⁵⁰ To be quiet means to reflect on one's own error by thinking about himself carefully. While sitting down quietly one will know how heedless his temper has been. In fact, through quietude one strives to return to the deep root of his Being and to become aware of the deep root of all things.⁵¹ Because of this view, the state of quietude does not ask us to find out the physical benefits of life. Lao-Tzu says:

In the pursuit of learning one knows more every day; in the pursuit of the way one does less every day. One does less and less until one does nothing at all, and when one does nothing at all there is nothing that is undone.⁵²

The process of seeing and delving into the maternal depth of nature consists of and results in the losing of external interest.

According to the Taoist, when a state of perfect quietude is

achieved, all the signs of action in the outside world and one's own world will cease. And every trace and mark of limitations and conditions will also vanish. No artificial thought (rational thought) will disturb. One is aware of a heavenly radiance within. It is light in darkness.

Intuition through quietude is the way to have thorough knowledge about Tao. For instance, according to Lao-Tzu, our life must be natural. To be natural means to live like water, which is "similar to the highest good," and "almost identical with Tao."⁵³ Water "occupies places which people detest," but "it benefits the myriad creatures without making any demand."⁵⁴ "There is nothing softer and weaker than water, and yet there is nothing better for attacking hard and strong things."⁵⁵ This is not the state of ignorance and incapability.⁵⁶ It is rather a state of quietude, harmony and insight.

"Naturality without action" is one of the important concepts in Lao-Tzu's philosophy. We have to clarify the meaning of the Chinese words, "Wu-Wei," "Tzu-Jan," which can be literally translated as "without acting (no action,) "naturality."⁵⁷

The term "naturality" means not to work with any artificiality. It means nature as it is, but this could not be a negative term in a devitalized sense. In order to support our understanding of it, here are some examples:

In a gross way, we take the example of a whirlpool as a case of pure spontaneity, which signifies nothing. The force of the stream tumbling over a fall is matched by the force of the inertia of the body of water which has already collected. These two forces interact with such proportion and symmetry that a circular motion is formed. The flow of the water in this form is the completion which very nearly supplies the conditions complete spontaneity.⁵⁸

Again, we may find the same principle in our own breathing. We are aware, if we stop to notice, that there are inhalation and exhalation in alternation. As long as each inhalation moves indirectly into the following exhalation over a smooth course, as it were, this is a condition of complete regularity (spontaneity).

The term "Wu-Wei" also, generally interpreted as not-acting, no action, is a peculiar way, or more exactly, the natural way, of behaviour. "The sage keeps to the deed that consists in taking no action and practices the teaching that uses no words."⁵⁹ The natural way is to "support all things in their natural state" and thus allow them to "transform spontaneously."⁶⁰ In this manner, "The way (Tao) undertakes no activity, and yet there is nothing left undone."⁶¹ From this point, it is quite clear that the way of Wu-Wei is the way of spontaneity, as contrasted with the artificial way, the way of cleverness and social conventional morality.

The term, "Wu-Wei" implies a type of human activity, which does not mean "the activity of the principles of his time--aggression, force and violence."⁶² As in the given examples, there is no artificiality in the flow of water. The movement of nature is quiet, unpretentious, and yet sure. Lao-Tzu recognized that greed for power leads to aggressiveness and to violence. This is the cause of chaos. He saw that "they overcome the main discontent, but only in such a way as to cause further discontents."⁶³

What naturality without action means is not an ideal of absolute inaction, but a set of positive actions achievable by an invisible action. That is, "the way (Tao) never acts yet nothing is left undone."⁶⁴ Even if it looks like no-action, everything can be achieved

through the endless action. This is the identification of the opposites: action - inaction.

A man of the highest virtue does not ~~keep to~~ virtue and that is why he has virtue. A man of the lowest virtue never strays from virtue and that is why he is without virtue. The former never acts yet leaves nothing undone. The latter acts but there are things left undone.⁶⁵

The above verse indicates the paradoxical interrelation of Tao with Wu-Wei, or inaction. In contrast, to say of the Tao that it acts is to limit its effectiveness, because merely by doing some things, it must leave other things undone. To say that it does not act at least leaves it untrammelled.

In ensconcing himself in inaction, the Taoist merely imitates Tao, which efficacy is universal for the very reason that it is inactive. Because Tao is universal spontaneity, everything in nature comes about of itself without any particular kind of intervention (as opposed to the act of a divinity or of providence). Similarly, on the human level, a prominent politician emulates naturally the attributes of Tao when he does not strive for fame and does not express his contribution to the people.

But the attitude of no-action is not pure passivity. Action and non-action are not isolated, but coalescent. Things in action are simultaneously forever in non-action; things in non-action are forever in action. The wise follow the path of non-assertion and teach without words. Various symbols are used to illustrate this idea, for example, water and the valley.

In the world there is nothing more submissive and weak than water. Yet for attacking that which is hard and strong nothing can surpass it.⁶⁶

The reason why the River and the Sea are able to be king of the hundred valleys is that they excel in taking the lower position. Hence they are able to be king of the hundred valleys.⁶⁷

These verses symbolize the way Tao functions. In order to formulate Tao, we must find out how Tao functions. The low lying places are themselves the image of Tao because the water converges in them. The weak overcomes the strong and in so doing it becomes strong itself and so falls victim in turn to the weak. The virtue of humility can influence positively the egoistic person. The unknown influence lets the strong change himself. But Tao can be no more like non-being than it is like something. Nevertheless, Lao-Tzu is sometimes called a nihilist. (This will be explained in more detail in a later section.) So we must direct our attention to the significance of the paradoxical harmony.

Tao is the harmonizing principle. Created things are external, composed of contraries. These contraries are harmonized by Tao. For instance, man must act in such a way as to avoid the two extremes, evil and good. His action should transcend the opposites in the harmonious state of the two. In the sense of activity,⁶⁸ this no-action cannot always remain pure passivity; otherwise it will defeat its own purpose. But this no-action is soft and yielding like water. Yet it overcomes all. No-action cannot stop the gentle yielding movement of water. The activity of water is definitely not pure passivity. It is actively passive in the sense of an over "conquering-yielding" activity. It is very active in its passivity. To have harmony man's activity must have the qualities of quietness of nature and of the "gentle-ever-conquering-yieldingness" of water. Thus he conquers all without effort.

Thus, the life of artificiality drew Lao-Tzu's vigorous attack and led him to glorify the reality of non-being, the utility of the useless, and the strength of the weak.⁶⁹

In Lao-Tzu the void is referred to poetically and symbolically in Chapter 5, Tao-Te-Ching.

Is not the space between heaven and earth like a bellows?
It is empty without being exhausted. The more it works
the more it comes out.

It can be said that the void which is none other than the absence of perceptible qualities, characterizes Tao. There is rationalized effort involved in disobeying the attribute of Tao. When we give rational pursuit to it, we have trouble. The more a society is developed by the intellectual power, the more trouble is the result. In Chapter 4, Tao is compared to an empty container, a container which contains nothing, from which all things come.

Tao is like an empty bowl,
Yet in being used it is not depleted.
Fathomless like deep water,
It seems to be the ancestor of all things.

By saying, "Tao is like an empty bowl," the Tao Te Ching means that all things issue forth from its emptiness. Hence Ellen Marie Chen says that as compared to deep water, "Tao is the dark, unfathomable depth, which is yet the origin as well as the destiny of all things."⁷⁰ But emptiness is something to which we have to direct our attention. In other words, the notion of Nothingness as the empty in the Tao Te Ching does not correspond to our understanding of empty space today.

According to Chen's explanation,⁷¹ in Chapter 4 of the Tao Te Ching the bowl is empty, but it contains air; in Chapter 5 the bellows is empty, likewise it contains air; in Chapter 6 the valley is hollow,

again it is not a vacuum. From these descriptions, it is not difficult to think of the image of nothingness as not the absolute empty. But the notion of nothingness "as the emptiness of air readily lends also theoretical ground to the cultivation of breathing exercises as a practical method to reach union with Tao."⁷²

Saying, "Tao is like an empty bowl," means an empty mind is required.⁷³ Lao-Tzu does not allow artificial effort or practical employment of reason to increase satisfaction. Lao-Tzu says, "always rid yourself of desires in order to observe Tao's secrets."⁷⁴

The void is efficacious because, like the bellows, it is capable of producing breaths at will. The idea expressed herein is like the one associated with the symbol of the valley. The valley is so void that all the streams are coming into it. The image of the thirty spokes converging toward the empty space of the hub is often used to symbolize the virtue of the ruler who attracts all creatures to his service. The virtue of being empty brings order to the multiplicity of things. The concept of void means "empty," purified of all passions and desire. The shape of Tao is allegorized as "empty," being efficacious, and animating all creatures.

The terms, "intuition and quietude," "void," "naturalness without acting," suggest a method for understanding the character of Tao through uniting oneself with Tao, and for expressing that character. Returning to Tao transfers its character into life.

The Correlation in the Identity of the

Opposition: Lao-Tzu

In many passages Lao-Tzu expounds the action of Tao; in very few

passages does he explain the nature of Tao itself.

In Lao-Tzu Tao is the primordial source of every beginning and every end. It can be the realm from which all birth issues forth and to which all death returns in a metaphysical sense. As the Confucianist Hsün Ching said, Tao is understood as a mystical concept for the primal stuff of the universe or the totality of all things. So he says that no one in ancient China taught the Tao correctly. But although Tao is indistinct and ineffable, something hidden in it should be the ground to stand for the totality of all creatures, equivalent to what some Western philosophers have called "the absolute." Tao is the unity in diversities, and particularity in universality.

This meaning can be easily understood by means of a comparative study of the use of the term "Tao" in many parallel and cognate passages describing different aspects and senses of Tao. Chapters 1 and 2 in Tao Te Ching will be good examples.

The way (Tao, nothing) that can be spoken of is not the constant way;
The name (reality) that can be named is not the constant name. (Chapter 1)

The whole world recognizes the beautiful as the beautiful, yet this is only the ugly; the whole world recognizes the good as the good, yet this is only the bad. (Chapter 2)

These two verses not only contain two passages similar to each other, but also are made of the same type of propositions. This means that 'Way,' 'name,' 'beautiful,' 'good' are described by identifying them with their opposites. The invariable Tao is indicated by variable names, but Lao Tzu seems not to be interested in direct exposition of the individual variables. To us, however, "Way (nothing, Tao)" and "name (reality,--)" or "beautiful and bad" are the concrete expressions

of the abstract opposites. It makes no difference which of the two would be meant in Lao-Tzu's basic thought-form.⁷⁵

Investigation about the nature of Te (virtue) might help us understand Lao-Tzu further. In Chapter 49, Lao-Tzu says:

Those who are good I treat as good. Those who are not good I also treat as good. In so doing I gain in goodness. Those who are of faith I have faith in. Those who are lacking in good faith, I also have faith in. In so doing I gain in good faith.

The above parallel passages are made of identical propositions, revealing the nature of Te. Basically, Te is an attitude of man toward another man, whether he possesses some quality or not. That is to say, the nature of Te (virtue) in Lao-Tzu is to treat man on the same equal standing with goodness and good faith. Therefore Lao-Tzu says Te is like the following: "To know harmony is called the constant. To know the constant is called discernment."⁷⁶ Te (virtue) brings the opposites into one great harmony. This makes Te refer to the natural, primitive qualities of Tao, as opposed to those enjoined by social sanction and education. It is a basic principle of Taoism that one should be in harmony with, not in rebellion against, the fundamental laws of the universe.

As we saw earlier, the term "Tao" usually means a road, or a way of action in Confucius. Tao was used as a philosophical concept to establish communication for the right way of action, but Confucius did not treat it as a metaphysical concept. Lao-Tzu, however, is quite different in his theory. His theory could be called the unification of Tao in a metaphysical sense. Tao is a productive origin as well as an operating law for all creatures. In other words, Tao is the fundamental energy which produces the myriad creatures as well as controls

the phenomenal world. It is full by itself. But it is simple, formless, desireless, without striving, supremely content. So the realm of Tao is absolutely free from limitations and distinctions. Tao is called the one without contrast.

In the example that "the way that can be spoken of is not the constant way," the following point should be made. The constituents of the proposition consist of affirmation and negation in the sense of logical definition. Lao-Tzu says,

The nameless (nothing) was the beginning of heaven and earth;
the named (reality) was the mother of the myriad creatures.
...These two are the same but diverge in name as they issue
forth.

"Nothing" and "reality" are at the same ontological level. The phrase, "Heaven and earth" indicates the bounds of the universe, but the phrase "the myriad creatures," indicates the contents therein. And the words "beginning" and "mother" both indicate the origin of the universe in the spatio-temporal sense. None of the terms are defined independently. They are rather correlated with each other. Hence Lao-Tzu says that "Nothing and reality are co-existent."⁷⁸ This expression is the key to understanding the relation in the opposites. Later the complementary relation develops into that of substantial identity. The opposites have a common origin; their only difference is a matter of terminology. Their difference is correlated with their identity, paradoxically affirming the identity of the opposites. This correlation of the identity with the opposites is called "mystery" or "Nothingness."

Tao is simple. It is the harmonizing principle. Even when there are contraries in created things, these contraries are harmonized by Tao. In Tao the contraries disappear. The emphasis on making a clear

distinction between doing good and doing evil is the cause of all evil and disorder. Man must act in a way to avoid the two extremes, evil and good, in order to be in harmony with Tao. This is something mysterious.

The correlation in the identity of the opposites was explained in the Lao-Tzu expression: "What is most perfect seems to be incomplete," and "What is most full seems to be empty " (Ch. 14). In these utterances, Lao-Tzu was a step closer to the golden mean. "Make the small big and the few many; do good to him who has done you an injury" (Ch. 63). On the surface, he seems to be negative (or just not-active) since the fundamental principle of life and infancy is the ideal state of being (Ch. 6, 20). That is why he seems to put his emphasis on emptiness and quietude. At bottom, however, his ethical position comes much nearer to the center than to the extreme. He says.

Since much talk always fails in due course, it is better to adhere to the principle of centrality.⁷⁹

The main point in Lao-Tzu is the fact that the measure of all things is nature. Simplicity (empty mind), not-acting and other ethical ideals are all moral lessons drawn from nature, which is the standard for Heaven and Earth as well as man (Ch. 25). It is the way or Tao, the universal principle of existence. It is "the source of Heaven and earth" and "the mother of all things" (Ch. 1, 4, 25). It is eternal, one, all-pervasive and absolute (Ch. 1, 14). It is natural (Ch. 25).

What has been said indicates the importance of the ultimate principle of Tao in the harmonious correlation of the opposites. To support this interpretation, the following quotations are offered:

The Tao produced the One; the One produced the Two; the Two produced the Three; the Three produced all things.⁸⁰

Once there was a time when all things were harmonized through the One; the heavens receiving the One became clear; the earth receiving the One became calm; spirits receiving the One became divine; Valleys receiving the One became full; all things receiving the One began to live; princes and kings receiving the One were able to adopt their empires. All these are the effects of receiving the One.⁸¹

These statements show that the Tao or the One is prior to all things, and from the Tao all things derive their order.

But here we must be careful, for the Tao of Chinese metaphysics is not outside of nature. It is nature itself, as already indicated in the above. It is thus important to note that the Tao is "something other than the totality of the universe."⁸² According to the interpretation of Gi-Ming Shien, totality, as far as Tao in Lao-Tzu is concerned, means that "the whole is only the aggregation of its parts without an ultimate principle. Unity, therefore, does not mean totality. ... Unity must exist before everything else,..."⁸³

The absolute itself, from which all opposites come and to which all opposites return in order to become identified, does not appear (Ch. 14). This is one meaning of Nothingness, or Tao. The absolute underlies all the relative things that are. Thus the harmonious identity of the opposites is very close to Lao-Tzu's first meaning of Tao:

Non-being definitely does not mean actual 'Nothingness.' It is simply a convenient name for what is really indescribable and, therefore, strictly speaking, unnamable: the state which is different from, or ontologically prior to, the state of being of our own organized, finite universe.⁸⁴

There is Lao-Tzu's own expression:

There is thing, formless yet complete. Before Heaven and Earth it existed. Without sound, without substance, it stands alone without changing. It is all pervading and

unfailing. One may think of it as the mother of all beneath Heaven. We do not know its name, but we term it Tao. Forced to give an appellation to it, I should say it was Great.⁸⁵

As a matter of fact, the harmonious correlation in the opposites has been shown very well in Lao-Tzu's theory as the mother principle:

"...of it as the mother of all beneath Heaven" (Ch. 25). In Chapter 4, Tao was symbolized as the fathomless, deep water, while in Chapter 5, it was given to us as the emptiness of the female. But in Chapter 6, Tao was compared to the mysterious female or the valley spirit that engenders heaven and earth;

The spirit of the valley never dies.
This is called the mysterious female.
The gateway of the mysterious female is called
the root of heaven and earth.
Dimly visible, it seems as if it were there,
Yet use will never drain it.⁸⁶

The analogy of Tao as the female and the valley spirit can be said to justify Tao as an organic productive principle. The female productive power encompasses the seat of productivity for all beings. Taoism, with its teaching on non-action (Ch. 2, 37), on the need to give up all efforts (Ch. 43, 48), to simply abide by the mother (Ch. 52), celebrates the love of the mother. Hence, according to Chen's opinion,

While the Christian religion reflects a male-centered society, Taoism looks back to an age when the mother with her love was the overwhelming experience of mankind.⁸⁷

What significances are involved in Lao-Tzu's analogy of Tao as the mother? Chen's thought reminds us of

...original inspiration to the existence of a matriarchal society, and in the golden age people cared for their mothers, but not for their father...⁸⁸

So far, I have explained Heidegger's and Lao-Tzu's individual methods of attaining a solution to these questions. Heidegger's basic

emphasis was on analyzing the existence-structure of Dasein because Being can be disclosed in the existential horizon of Dasein. As with Lao-Tzu's thinking, Heidegger attempts to identify Dasein with Sein through experience in Being, but also he attempts to find the wholeness of Dasein and Sein.

Lao-Tzu emphasizes the individual life based on attributes of Tao rather than analysis the existence-structure of a human being. The mode of a simple life is originated in relation with Tao, and the "harmonious life" means to follow the principle given to us from Tao. The true life of a human being is only possible in experience of intuition and quietude, naturality without action, and void. These experiences are the ways which make it possible for a human being to experience Tao and to find wholeness.

As mentioned in the above, Heidegger and Lao-Tzu seem to be different from each other in the sense that they use different methodologies to understand their central subject-matters: Being and Tao, but both of them have the common final goal: through the experience of Nothingness, a human being can understand Being and Tao.

What characteristics are contained in the notion of Nothingness? I am going to explain those characteristics in the next chapter because I dealt already with the approaching clue to find the attributes of Being and Tao.

FOOTNOTES

¹M. Heidegger, On Time and Being, p. 56.

²Ibid., p. 3.

³Ibid., p. 3.

⁴M. Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 438.

⁵M. Heidegger, On Time and Being, p. 27.

⁶M. Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," p. 166.

⁷Ibid., p. 155.

⁸Gi-Ming Shien, "Being and Nothingness in Greek and Ancient Chinese Philosophy," Philosophy East and West, A Journal of Oriental and Comparative Thought, Vol. I, No. 2 (July, 1951), p. 20.

⁹Lao-Tzu, Tao Te Ching, Ch. 3, 5, 9, 11, 14, 25, 37, 40, 57.

¹⁰M. Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 67.

¹¹Ibid., p. 95.

¹²Ibid., p. 93.

¹³Ibid., p. 92.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 93.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 109ff.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 114.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 111.

¹⁸See footnote 14, Ch. 2.

¹⁹M. Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 117.

²⁰Care is the basic existential ontological phenomenon. It includes in itself care-taking (respect for the things), concern (respect for the others), and self-concern (care for Dasein's own self).

- ²¹M. Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 97.
- ²²Ibid., p. 97.
- ²³Ibid., p. 97.
- ²⁴Human existence in Heidegger's view has been marked by three general traits: the state of mind (Befindlichkeit), understanding (Verstehen), and discourse (Rede). These three characteristics of the existential constitution of Dasein are called three "Existentials" as basic categories of Existence.
- ²⁵M. Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 262.
- ²⁶Ibid., p. 55-58.
- ²⁷Ibid., p. 262.
- ²⁸M. Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," p. 148.
- ²⁹Ibid., p. 160.
- ³⁰Ibid., p. 156.
- ³¹M. Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 51.
- ³²Ibid., p. 51.
- ³³Ibid., p. 54-55, p. 59ff.
- ³⁴M. Heidegger, An Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 15-18.
- ³⁵M. Heidegger, Vom Wesen des Grundes, in Earth and Gods by Vincent Vycinas (Hague, 1961) p. 117.
- ³⁶M. Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 173.
- ³⁷Ibid., p. 174.
- ³⁸Ibid., p. 192.
- ³⁹Ibid., p. 182.
- ⁴⁰Ibid., p. 199.
- ⁴¹Ibid., p. 143.
- ⁴²Ibid., p. 187.
- ⁴³Ibid., p. 307.
- ⁴⁴Ibid., p. 214.

- ⁴⁵Ibid., p. 164.
- ⁴⁶Ibid., p. 39.
- ⁴⁷Ibid., p. 58.
- ⁴⁸Lao-Tzu, Tao Te Ching, Ch. XII, XIX.
- ⁴⁹Ibid., Ch. X, XII, XXIV, LI, XLV.
- ⁵⁰Ibid., Ch. XXVI, XXXVII, XLV.
- ⁵¹Ibid., Ch. XVI.
- ⁵²Ibid., Ch. XLVIII.
- ⁵³Ibid., Ch. VIII.
- ⁵⁴Ibid., Ch. VIII.
- ⁵⁵Ibid., Ch. LXXVIII.
- ⁵⁶This notion may be misunderstood as pessimism or nihilism. But the real content in Lao-Tzu is different. It will be explained later on.
- ⁵⁷The Tzu-jan is better translated into the English, "naturalness," "spontaneity," rather than "nature." The wu-wei has been translated; "without action," "by doing nothing," "by not acting." "The principle of 'acting' by not acting' in the Tao Te Ching" by Ing, Paul Tan Chee. International Philosophical Quarterly, Vol. XI, 1971, p. 365.
- ⁵⁸Gi-Ming Shien, "Nothingness in the Philosophy of Lao-Tzu," Philosophy-East and West, A Journal of Oriental and Comparative Thought, Vol. I, No. 3 (Oct., 1951), p. 60.
- ⁵⁹Lao-Tzu, Tao Te Ching, Ch. II.
- ⁶⁰Ibid., Ch. XXXVII.
- ⁶¹Ibid., Ch. XXXVII.
- ⁶²Ing, Paul Tan Chee, "The Principle of 'Acting by Not Acting' in the Tao Te Ching," op. cit., p. 367.
- ⁶³Lao-Tzu, Tao Te Ching, Ch. LXXIX, LXXVII.
- ⁶⁴Ibid., Ch. XXXVII.
- ⁶⁵Ibid., Ch. XXXVIII.
- ⁶⁶Ibid., Ch. LXXVIII.

- ⁶⁷Ibid., Ch. LXVI.
- ⁶⁸Ing, Paul Tan Chee, "The Principle of 'Acting by Not Acting' in the Tao Te Ching," op. cit., p. 368-369.
- ⁶⁹Lao-Tzu, Tao Te Ching, Ch. XL, XI, LXXVI.
- ⁷⁰Ellen Marie Chen, "Nothingness and the Mother Principle in Early Chinese Taoism," International Philosophical Quarterly, Vol. IX (1969), p. 398.
- ⁷¹Ibid., p. 398.
- ⁷²Ibid., p. 398.
- ⁷³Lao-Tzu, Tao Te Ching, Ch. III. "Therefore in governing the people, the sage empties their (people) minds but fills their bellies, weakens their wills but strengthens their bones. He always keeps them innocent of knowledge and free from desire, and ensures that the clever never dare to act."
- ⁷⁴Lao-Tzu, Tao Te Ching, Ch. I.
- ⁷⁵In the opening verse of Ch. I, "X that can be spoken of (as X) is non-X, X that can be named (as X) is non-X." In the opening verse of Ch. II "The whole world recognizes X as X, yet X is non-X; the whole world recognizes Y as Y yet Y is non-Y." The more important point in the opening verses is that the constituents of the proposition consist of affirmation ("recognize," "be spoken") and negation ("non-X").
- ⁷⁶Lao-Tzu, Tao Te Ching, Ch. XVI.
- ⁷⁷Ibid., Ch. I.
- ⁷⁸Ibid., Ch. II.
- ⁷⁹Ibid., Ch. V.
- ⁸⁰Ibid., Ch. XLII.
- ⁸¹Ibid., Ch. XXXIX.
- ⁸²Gi-Ming Shien, "Being and Nothingness in Greek and Ancient Chinese Philosophy," op. cit., p. 20.
- ⁸³Ibid., p. 20.
- ⁸⁴Deck Bodde, "Harmony and Conflict in Chinese Philosophy," Studies in Chinese Thought, ed. Arthur F. Wright (Chicago, 1953), p. 57-58, quoted in Ellen Marie Chen, "Nothingness and the Mother Principle in Early Chinese Taoism," op. cit., p. 395.
- ⁸⁵Lao-Tzu, Tao Te Ching, Ch. XXV.

⁸⁶Ibid., Ch. VI.

⁸⁷Ellen Marie Chen, "Nothing and the Mother Principle in Early Chinese Taoism," *op. cit.*, p. 402.

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 401.

CHAPTER IV

META-METAPHYSICS AND NOTHINGNESS

Meta-metaphysics and the Change of Traditional Logic

Martin Heidegger and Lao-Tzu are not satisfied to infer to Being or Tao, but are concerned with understanding the ground of Being or Tao in itself and in recognizing the true human being (or authenticity) through metaphysical experience. Thus, Heidegger and Lao-Tzu have untraditional attitudes toward answering the question of Being. For both Heidegger and Lao-Tzu the answer to the question "What is Being?", can be found in a revelation which includes Nothingness.

How does it stand with Being?

Generally, oriental philosophical wisdom does not come under the heading of knowledge gained through inferential processes. Wisdom is a specialized learning directed to the attainment of a higher state of being. The philosopher is called one whose nature has been transformed, reformed to a pattern of supernatural entity by enlightenment. Lao-Tzu is not an exception. He emphasizes intuition, naturality without action, and quietude, which are called the nature of Tao. Through such real experiences, it is possible to know the nature of Tao.

How is the concept of "Nothing" related to Tao?

Tao is immanent and yet transcendental. That means that all creatures appearing in the world are the appearances of Tao. Tao is the

origin which produces all creatures and draws them toward it as a terminus. Even though the phenomena of Tao are limited in space and time, Tao itself is absolutely beyond space and time. So Tao is wholly individual and yet is the source from which all multiplicity proceeds. It is free from all contradictions and separation. It is beyond the reach of all intellectual processes. Tao is all-embracing, far-reaching, never-changing, never-ceasing. But nobody knows how to refer to Tao in a language that would express what Tao refers to apart from the origin of all creatures, multiplicity. The term "nothing" is only a feeble attempt. The realm of the unknown ultimately is the realm of the unnamed.

Lao-Tzu says the nature of nothing is like the following:

What cannot be seen is called evanescent;
 What cannot be heard is called rarefied;
 What cannot be touched is called minute.
 These three cannot be fathomed and so they are
 confused and looked upon as one.
 Its upper part is not dazzling;
 Its lower part is not obscure.
 Dimly visible, it cannot be named
 And returns to that which is without substance.
 This is called the shape that has no shape,
 The image that is without substance.
 This is called indistinct and shadowy.
 Go up to it and you will not see its head;
 Follow behind it and you will not see its rear.
 Hold fast to the way of antiquity
 In order to keep in control the realm of today.
 The ability to know the beginning of antiquity
 Is called the thread running through the way.

This passage describes the nature of nothing, the one individual whole capable of accommodating both of our perceptual opposites. It says that the individual whole does not vary with changes in our perception of it; it evades all our sense of spatial perspective. Its essence and brightness remain always the same to us. It rules the past and

dominates the present as the master of history. There is no suitable name for it. Especially in the individual whole, it happens to comprehend the opposites of all perceptual phenomena. We are impressed with the fact that it is imperceptible or more comprehending than our perception. We are impressed with its mystery containing the source of our perceptions.

If we examine the whole of Chapter 14, Tao Te Ching, as to the one indivisible whole, negative terms are mainly used: "formless," "without substance" and "infinite." But the clearest expression is "returns to that which is without substance." If all creatures return to that which is without substance, then something unnamed exists antecedently to all creatures. The wholeness is not to change itself. Change is for a part, not for the whole. Lao-Tzu believes that the one indivisible whole, nothing, never changes. The parts return to that "which is without substance (nothingness)."

Because of its imperceptibility and indescribability, Lao-Tzu himself finds it difficult to give a name to the paradoxical whole. So he says;

There is a thing confusedly formed,
 Born before heaven and earth.
 Silent and void
 It stands alone and does not change,
 Goes round and does not weary.
 It is capable of being the mother of the world
 I know not its name
 So I style it 'the way' (Tao).²

Here the word "Tao" is not an indicative noun, but a symbol pointing out the paradoxical whole. "Tao" is the name given to "that which was originally nameless" or "which is without substance." The entity of the paradoxical whole remains nameless (Nothingness) or not possible

to be named. This is "Nothingness." Because Tao has simplicity, no-action and quietness, it seems that It does not have a form of existence. Moreover, Tao is not statically still, but dynamically powerful. Something is moving in Tao.

Tao, nevertheless, does ~~not~~ move violently but in a weak and gentle manner. It works so faintly that its movement is hardly felt or noticeable. What Tao accomplishes is not done purposefully, but is simply spontaneous.

Chapter 42 reveals to us another meaning of Tao in the Tao Te Ching. Tao is understood to be the first principle of all things. Tao cannot be itself a thing in the way that all creatures are things. Tao is not an object, and may be spoken of as "the nameless (non-being)." Nothing (wu) is non-being because it is a gentle reflexive motion that gives birth to all things in the world. In the Tao Te Ching, Tao is indefinable, nameless, shape of no-shape, sign of no-thing, illusive and evasive (Ch. 14).

In the sense that Tao is a motion, Nothingness embraces all and excludes none (Ch. 27, 62), never withdraws itself. Nothingness is beyond opening and developing one's consciousness (Ch. 24, 47, 52), beyond making distinctions and limitation.

Therefore the concept of nothingness in Lao-Tzu is different from the ordinary contrast, non-being as opposed to being. Nothingness, expressing the inner essence of Tao, is the constant way. Nothingness signifies a reality behind the origin of the universe, and a principle of order.

Heidegger also was concerned with the perspective within which Being itself may be found. He says,

...presence speaks in all metaphysical concepts of Being, speaks in all determinations of Being. Even the ground as what already lies present, as what underlies, leads, when considered in itself to lasting, enduring, to time, to the present.³

Thus the laying of the foundation as the projection of ~~the~~ intrinsic possibility of metaphysics is necessarily a letting become effective of the supporting power of the established ground.⁴

From the above statements, we can discover some suggestions for understanding Being, especially different attitudes from the traditional explanation of metaphysics. Traditional metaphysics deals with the relation between a branch and a root in a tree. In order to explain the branch of tree, the speculative Western European thinkers have been content to dig out its root as clearly as possible. But what, Heidegger asks, is the ground in which metaphysics is rooted? The unequivocal answer is "Being."

Being can be called, then, the ground in which metaphysics, as the root of the tree of philosophy, is held fast and nourished. To interrogate the ground of metaphysics, Heidegger changed the style of the fundamental question, the question about the sense of Being.⁵ Being means to be confined "within the sphere of actuality and presence, of permanence and duration, of abiding and occurrence."⁶

The question of Being requires the building of a new metaphysics by surpassing traditional metaphysics. The new metaphysics does not ask about the constitution of ontology separated from the ontic ground of Being. To think Being, according to Heidegger, explicitly requires us to relinquish Being as the ground of beings... in favor of Being.⁷

Heidegger is the thinker of Being. Always there is Being which reveals itself. This is the problem on which Heidegger has concentrated.

In fact, his whole account of Being (Sein), according to Magda King,⁸ consists in an analysis of the Greek term for "infinitive" in conjunction with his view of the Greek conception of Being. Being in Heidegger means "constancy," "permanence," "presence." But it means also "a letting become effective of the supporting power of the established ground." It means "what stands or takes a stand." "Being is not. There is. It gives Being as the unconcealing of presencing."⁹

To quote Heidegger's opinion:

What actually has being is accordingly what always is, 'aei on.' Permanently present is what we must go back to in comprehending and producing: the model, the 'idea.' Permanently present is what we must go back to in all 'logos,' statement; it is what lies-before, 'hypokeimenon,' 'subjectum.'¹⁰

The four divisions characterizing the question of Being in Heidegger have close parallels in Lao-Tzu's Tao. Some explanations for Lao-Tzu's Tao have been given already: Lao-Tzu has pointed out "permanence," "unchanging," "which is actually there" and "as what ought to be."

Metaphysics in Heidegger and Lao-Tzu seems to think Being as that to which all beings belong. Since the beginning of philosophy the Being of beings has been shown in a sense as the ground. The ground is that from which beings as such are what they are in their becoming, perishing and persisting as something that can be known, handled and worked upon. As the ground, Being brings beings to their actual presencing. In accordance with the actual kind of presence (beings), the ground has the character of grounding as

the ontic causation of the real, as the transcendental making possible of the objectivity of objects, as the dialectical mediation of the movement of the absolute Spirit, of the historical process of production, as the will to power positing values.¹¹

There is an ontological difference between Being and beings, since the function of Being is simply to enlighten beings. It gives being. In and through this letting, (this giving) presencing is admitted to that to which it belongs. "This letting" is intrinsic to its very nature. Being is oriented to us through the negative term "not" (hiddenness). Heidegger has meditated the sense of "not" (hiddenness) in What is Metaphysics? Therefore the meditation of the hiddenness (not) of Being in beings is for him an essential part of his experience of Being itself. Being is disclosure through the experience of Being. The experience of Being is not logical. Heidegger transcends logic because the question of Being is itself, "a mode of thinking which, instead of supplying concepts merely, feels and tests itself as a new mode of relationship to Being."¹² Heidegger, at first, is seeking for the significance involved in the "Not" (Nothingness) on the ground of Meta-metaphysics (der Metaphysik der Metaphysik). Even if overcoming the traditional metaphysics means Meta-metaphysics, every question in Meta-metaphysics always covers the whole range of metaphysical problems.¹³

There are two problems requiring our consideration comparing Heidegger and Lao-Tzu with traditional metaphysics and its logic. Needless to say, the question of Being in Heidegger and Lao-Tzu requires us to reexamine two established attitudes of philosophy, that is, the change of traditional logic and the rejection of traditional metaphysics.

Briefly speaking, meta-metaphysics in Heidegger means the total re-interpretation of the ground of logic formulating traditional metaphysics.¹⁴ It means the revolution of metaphysics. Because Heidegger's thinking is related to the truth of Being, he turns from the limits of

traditional metaphysics. "To turn away from" means "to return to the ground of metaphysics" in the other dimension of metaphysics. In other words, it [the turning] may continually swing back again to the ground-question of metaphysics."¹⁵ To think Being is not associated with any area in metaphysics, but it is a result of pushing a straight continuous line of questioning from the question of substance or essences because the question of Being has been asked by "going beyond the essence." And also "going beyond the essence" itself is metaphysics even if such a moving indicates the essence of what-is.¹⁶ That is why Heidegger, instead of thinking of the so-called specific areas in metaphysics, attempts to ask about their wholeness; that is,

metaphysics is an enquiry over and above what-is, with a view to winning it back again as such and in totality for our understanding.¹⁷

The new direction of metaphysics originated in "going beyond the essences" will go toward Being, Nothingness.

But Heidegger's thinking has been against logic. He says,

Thought is, more simply, thought of Being. The genitive has two meanings. Thought is of Being, insofar as thought, eventuated by Being, belongs to Being. Thought is at the same time thought of Being insofar as thought listens to, heeds, Being.¹⁸

What he means is that thinking only dealing with rules of logic cannot recognize the purpose or point to the hiddenness behind the question of Being. In fact, according to Heidegger, "logic began to be established when Greek philosophy had come to its end."¹⁹ When the essence of Being became the object of knowledge, logic appeared as an affair of organization and technique on the stage of philosophy. In spite of the fact that science has investigated deeply the ground of entities by the methods of logic, its methods of discovering Being, unfortunately,

could not accomplish its purpose. Because Being as the ground of entities exists not only as a quality of what-is, it also cannot be conceived and established objectively. "No logic can grasp truth of a thinking."²⁰

Does Heidegger mean that the challenge to logic is the entire negation of logic, or the substitution of ~~an~~ illogical method for it? His challenge does not mean to negate a logical conception or categories, but to criticize the groundless intellectual trick based on "ratio." In fact, as Heidegger's system itself indicated, he is not irrationalistic although he might be misunderstood as an irrationalist.²¹ He says,

to surpass the traditional logic does not mean elimination of thought and the domination of sheer feeling; it means more radical, stricter speaking, a thinking that is a part and parcel of being.²²

Thinking as opposed to logic would rather point to considering the true essence in logic rather than to fighting desperately for something irrational. Heidegger's way of thinking must be separated from the simple mysticism dealing with feeling as opposed to logic.

In Heidegger's opinion, the object of metaphysical thought is not the essent (the beings) but Being (Being of the beings), so it is obviously true to surpass the way of traditional logic which shackles thought under the definite established laws of the essent (the beings).

...the whole body of logic as it is known to us, ... is grounded in a very definite answer to the question about the essent (the beings); perhaps, in consequences, all thinking which solely follows the laws of thought prescribed by traditional logic is incapable ...of understanding the question about the essent by its own resources...²³

By surpassing the traditional logic Heidegger tries to get the essential answer from a renewed consideration of logic; in other words,

The animus against logic... derives from the knowledge of that thinking which has its source not in the observation of the objectivity of what-is, but in the experience of the truth of Being.²⁴

Through the experience of the truth of Being (Nothingness) the question of what Being is can be answered. The new direction of metaphysics is to analyze and interpret the meanings involved in Being through responding to Being. Therefore the meta-metaphysics is to search out or examine what has been involved in responding to Being.

The question of Being and Tao in Heidegger and Lao-Tzu is the question of Nothingness. In Heidegger as well as in Lao-Tzu Being as the tree root to the essent (the beings) can be compared only with nothingness. When it is possible to think of Being by negating the essent (the beings), Nothingness becomes the source of negation of the what-is-totality. Nothingness is neither an annihilation of what-is, nor does it spring from negation. Nothingness nihilates of itself. Nothingness is more original than the Not and Negation.²⁵ Nothingness does not play the role of connection bridging the gap between the beings and Being. For Heidegger it is not acceptable only to ask what Nothingness is in itself as traditional metaphysics has asked and observe the objectivity of what-is through "the law of thought prescribed by traditional logic." Whoever does not have any experience of the essence of Being (according to both Heidegger and Lao-Tzu) may think only of Nothingness as negative. It is hard to know the positive significance in Nothingness. But through the complete negation of the totality of the beings, the positive significance of Nothingness can be known.

Nothingness and the Origin of the Universe

The conception of Nothingness in Heidegger and Lao-Tzu has been treated in relation to Being (or Tao). I have already indicated that the new metaphysical question of Being is like that of Nothingness.

The question of Nothingness is the annihilation of the what-is-totality in order to understand Being in itself. Heidegger says, "Nothingness is the negation of the totality of what-is: Nothing is not something which is absolutely not."²⁶

In this section, I would like to explain the Ground of the Universe in relation to Nothingness. That is to say, in order to understand the question of Being, one, at least, must think of the ground to establish the whole field of metaphysics. Nothingness is said to be something underlying as substratum to support Being of what-is-totality. Heidegger says that "Nothingness is that which makes the revelation of what-is as such possible for our human existence."²⁷

The question of Nothing pervades the whole of metaphysics only because it forces us to face the problem of the origin of negation...²⁸

In other words, the question of Nothingness is "that which makes the revelation of what-is... possible," "pervades the whole of metaphysics ..." These statements have the ontological significance directed toward describing the universe. Heidegger himself in What is Metaphysics? did not accept two propositions: "Nothing comes from Nothingness," "The created being is made out of nothing."²⁹

The concept of Nothing usually has been described as the opposite concept to what-is-totality, or as the negation of entities. Nothingness has been used negatively to define Being. In other words, Being

lost its own opportunity to be examined for itself. Through the means of another entity, Being may be defined. For instance, with regard to the question, "Who am I?", I answer that I am not John, not Mike. Through borrowing the concept of nothing, Being can be defined. An attempt to answer the question of Being or Ground itself has never been made before.

Fortunately Heidegger tried to seek the meaning of Nothingness by which most of us know entities. Nothingness is defined as the Other to what-is-totality. He says, "Nothing, conceived as the pure "Other" that what is, is the veil of Being."³⁰ Heidegger seems to recognize that Nothingness has been entirely rejected by science and becomes abandoned as null and void.

What does he mean by "the veil of Being?" Literally, the veil means something which hides the real face. Whosoever is excessively attached to the veil, cannot see the real face. But the veil may give us a hint of an object behind its own self. Whoever does not get the hint, cannot recognize the existence of the object. And whoever emphasizes the veil itself, cannot recognize the existence of Being. To whoever considers Nothingness as a simple nothing, Nothingness really becomes null and void. Asking about Being covered with the veil is the same as being projected into Nothingness.

Nothingness is the Other to what-is, and has been identified with Being behind the veil. That is why Nothingness in Heidegger is sharply different from nihilistic thought. Nothingness is not pure logical negation or empty, but Other to what-is-totality. Without Nothingness, the question of the Being of what-is-totality cannot be asked in order to establish the principle of identity and the principle of sufficient

reason. So Heidegger says, "Pure Being and Pure Nothing are thus one and the same."³¹

Being and Nothing hang together, but not because the two things... are one in their indefiniteness and immediateness, but because Being itself is finite in essence and is only revealed in the transcendence of Dasein as projected into Nothing.³²

Being and Nothingness are not identified in a dialectical leap of thought like the relation between thesis and antithesis in Hegel. Rather Heidegger tells us to experience the truth of Being.³³ In the book, What is Metaphysics?, he has told us to experience the world of Being. To experience the world of Being is to characterize the dialectic relation between Being and Dasein.

To the degree that we degrade this essential dread that the relationship cleared within it for Man to Being, we demean the essence of courage. Courage can endure Nothing: it knows, in the abyss of terror, the all but untrodden region that 'is' returns into 'what' it is and is able to be.³⁴

To experience the world of Being means to listen to the word of Being. In Heidegger's philosophy, listening to the word of Being has been very much emphasized, and also to obey the word of Being which means to turn back to the fundamental ground for all laws. In relation to going beyond the limitation of reason, he might be called irrational. However, through experience of Being, Heidegger has found the essence of Nothingness in order to solve the ground of what-is-totality.

In Lao-Tzu the concept of Tao (Way) has been explained as the ultimate Being which produces the universe. Tao is no longer the way of something existing objectively, but a completely independent entity, and has replaced the religious God in all functions.

Actually the concept of Heaven in Chinese culture was known as the creator of the universe or as the superintendent for fortune and

misfortune in man.³⁵ Whoever wants to understand Chinese philosophy, has to understand the concept of Heaven. In Lao-Tzu the concept of Heaven remains central in his thought as a means of describing Tao. He puts emphasis on the priority of the more ultimate Being, Tao as the cause of Heaven. In other words, the ultimate Being proceeds to give attributes to the universe. But this "the ultimate Being" is beyond the categories of human reason according to Lao-Tzu, as has been explained in regard to man's lack of perceptual understanding of Tao. The ultimate Being cannot be experienced through the senses of the human being. It is impossible for the ultimate Being to be definitely named and also to be put into the form of conceptions. For the form of concept related to senses is not worthy to be called the ultimate Being. Lao-Tzu says, "This called the shape that has no shape, The image that is without substance" (Ch. 14). The scientific attitude is not qualified to explain the ultimate Being. "The way that can be spoken of is not the constant," (Ch. 1) "Darkly visible, it only seems as if it were those. I know not whose it is. It images the forefather of God" (Ch. 4). In the religious sense, Lao-Tzu neglects the creative power of God, the absoluteness and the infinite. Tao has replaced God as the ultimate cause of the universe, given attributes of gods and heaven. For Tao exists before separation of the subject and the object, that is, beyond the relative discrimination. Tao existed by itself before developing into forms and having qualities. To get forms and qualities means to have intentionality or purpose. Tao does not have any intentionality or purposeful nature in itself. Fung Yu-Lan says, "What Tao accomplishes is not done purposefully but is simply spontaneously so."³⁶

Therefore, Tao means, metaphysically, that "for the universe to have come into being, there must exist an all-embracing first principle."³⁷

How does Lao-Tzu explain Tao? Tao, according to him, consists of evanescent, rarefied, and minute.

What cannot be seen is called evanescent; what cannot be heard is called rarefied; what cannot be touched is called minute. These three cannot be fathomed and so they are confused and looked upon as one...³⁸

The characters of Tao in the above statements can be said to be beyond the limitation of senses. But Tao seems also to be known through experience of intuition and quietude, not through intellectual analysis. Intellectual analysis informs us of things as the manifestation of Tao. At the same time, Tao is "What has brought the universe into being,"³⁹ and in one way it may also be said to be Being. Therefore Lao-Tzu says,

...Hence always rid yourself of desire in order to observe its secrets (Tao's internal); but always allow yourself to have desires in order to observe its manifestation (Tao's external).⁴⁰

The method of understanding the world of external manifestations cannot be adjusted to observing Tao's internal secrets. The analysis of manifestations cannot be used to understand the secret of Nothingness.

The reason is,

There is a thing confusedly formed. Born before heaven and earth. Silent and void, It stands alone and does not change. Goes around and does not weary. It is capable of being the mother of the world. I know not its name. So I style it the Way (Tao)...⁴¹

Tao can be referred to both as Being (beings) and non-Being (Nothingness).

To whosoever has the rational, perceptual or scientific attitude, Nothingness as Tao could be explained as analogous to empty or void

space. There are statements given to such a scholar in the Tao Te Ching. Lao-Tzu says,

Tao (the Way) begets one, one begets two, two begets three, three begets the ten thousand (i.e., infinite number of) things. The ten thousand things support the Yin and embrace the Yang. It is on the blending of the breaths that their harmony depends.⁴²

Heaven and Earth and the ten thousand things are produced from Being; Being is the product of non-Being.⁴³

Tao is Nothingness. But it signifies some special meaning; that is, this does not mean only non-Being as opposed to the Being of material objects, but also what is not, even ideally, "a mere Zero"⁴⁴ or Nothingness. Nothingness is the supreme stillness and the ultimate origin of the Universe. Here because of the impossibility of expression in the language, Lao-Tzu has said that Tao is "shadowy and indistinct" or Nothingness. That is because all names have the influence of limitation and determination, as already mentioned. "Tao is eternally nameless" (Ch. 42), "Tao is concealed in the nameless" (Ch. 41).

Tao, nevertheless, is said to pervade the concrete world ceaselessly. Tao as Nothingness can be the mother of the phenomenal world. But Lao-Tzu does not put any emphasis on the causal origin of the world because cause and effect themselves belong to the phenomenal order of the universe. What he wants to do is to relate Nothingness and the universe in such a way that the universe is seen as originated in Nothingness, but not by means of any physical causality or as physically caused by Nothingness. And Lao-Tzu goes on to elaborate the effect of Nothingness upon the universe through indicating how all things exist through Nothingness or oneness.

Of all, these came to be in possession of the one;
 Heaven in virtue of the one is limpid;
 Earth in virtue of the one is settled;
 Gods in virtue of the one have their potencies;
 The valley in virtue of the one is full;
 the myriad creatures in virtue of the one are alive;
 Lords and princes in virtue of the one become leaders
 in the empire. It is the one that makes these what
 they are.⁴⁵

The statement shows us the idea that Tao pervades all the strata of the universe including the divine. And it helps us to understand how Fung Yu-Lan explained "Tao being the first all-embracing principle."⁴⁶ Here we have to bear in mind as a side issue that the order of stratification in Nothingness proceeds from Nothingness to heaven, earth, valley and the living creatures.

There are some similar points made by Heidegger and Lao-Tzu in Nothingness. It is not difficult to compare the common attributes in Nothingness between them.

Nothingness and the Process of the Universe

As already mentioned in the above, for Heidegger Nothingness is not an independent entity, but rather the nihilation of the what-is-totality in order to understand Being in itself. In other words, Nothingness does not appear as something that we can think. Because we cannot conceive of Nothingness as an entity, we should not attempt to formulate propositions about it as an object of thought.

The Nothingness is the condition of the what-is revealing itself as such, that is, the condition of the being of the what-is and not the nothing. As Heidegger mentioned,

Only in the clear night of dread's Nothingness is what-is as such revealed in all its original overtness: that it 'is' and is not Nothing.⁴⁷

This openness revealed alone is what makes it possible for the what-is as a whole—including man—to be revealed to the specifically human kind of Being. Thus the Nothingness does not afford us the opposite concept to the what-is. The Nothingness has no separate existence, and it belongs to the essence of Being itself (Zum Wesen des Seins selbst). The essence of Being can be perceived through the process of appearing. Nothingness renders possible the manifestation of beings as beings. This is precisely the function of Being itself. Heidegger says, "Nothingness is that which makes the revelation of what-is as such possible for our human existence."⁴⁸ Let us think of a bowl. If the bowl is full of some entities, the bowl itself would not be used any more to carry other things. But when the bowl is empty (Nothingness), the bowl is able to have an opportunity to be used or to be valued. The state of being empty (Nothingness) can be said to bring the bowl itself into unconcealment. The bowl itself needs Nothingness for its own self-existence or for its own self-preservation, but also plays a role like the ground of Nothingness. When the empty bowl is full of something (Nothingness has disappeared), the bowl itself as Being of the bowl can be named as what it is. By making Nothingness null, Being lets what-is be what-is. In other words, Nothingness exists as the essence of Being. Heidegger says, "Nothing ceases to be the vague opposite of what-is: it now reveals itself as integral to the Being of what-is."⁴⁹ So, Nothingness not only is "the veil of Being"⁵⁰ for what-is-totality, but also essentially exists as Being itself. In other words, Heidegger understands Being and Nothingness to be one.⁵¹

In Heidegger's opinion, the concept of Nothingness is not a simple

nothing which indicates some indefinite material. Nothingness is not entirely like something producing the disharmonious contradictory to Being.⁵² There is a qualitative same and a different aspect between Being and Nothing.

Being and Nothingness is a mixture, but also both are synonymous terms as Lao-Tzu says, "two are the same but diverge in name as they issue forth" (Ch. 1). Nothingness is not a counter-concept, but a function of Being. Everything in the world has its own originality of self-identity in the concept of Nothingness. The concept of Nothingness can be the fundamental principle capable of guaranteeing self-identities of entities. The openness of Nothingness lies at the basis of all wonder as the ultimate origin. With the revelation of Nothingness is disclosed ontological truth, and an effort to answer the question about Nothingness is an endeavour to meditate Being in its truth.

In Chapter 42 of Tao Te Ching, Lao-Tzu explains the productive process of the universe in relation to Nothingness. He says;

The Way begets one; One begets two; Two begets three; Three begets the myriad creatures; the myriad creatures carry on their backs the Yin and embrace in their arms the Yang and are the blending of the generative force of the two.

This passage explains not only the nature of Tao but also the relation of Tao with the universe.⁵³

One in the passage means Tao or the identity of opposites. The "one" generates "two," the pair of opposites inherent in the identity. The "two" opposites together with the identity give a numerical total of "three." All things, generated from the "three," are made of Yin and Yang, a pair of opposites, which are comprehended in one supreme harmony. These statements explain that Tao gives rise to the womb of

the mother, that the universe is born from that of the mysterious female. The passage presents a picturesque way of describing how the universe came to appear concretely. Lao-Tzu's presentation of Tao's creation is, of course, very ambiguous and abstract. Because of this condition, Lao-Tzu was misunderstood, as if the problem of creation had not been dealt with by Lao-Tzu. In some sense, Heidegger also does not give any description of how the world of beings (Seienden) comes to be from Being, though it is not clear why.

Tao is called the generative force (full force), which means the vital force involving the harmony of Yin and Yang. The full force is fundamentally like an additive state of the power of movement and repose. The state can be divided into the Yin and the Yang by moving the power. Because the Yin and the Yang are originated in the generative force, they are not individually the divided separate entities. That is, the external movement among them is different from their internal relation with Tao. The movement of Tao becomes the Yang, and its stillness becomes the Yin. In other words, nothing as the energy of harmony including the Yin and Yang existed antecedently before being divided into two parts. The concept of Nothingness might be compared to the concept of Energy as force of the universe. However, energy is not physical force, but function or life-movement in a metaphysical sense. That is why Lao-Tzu says that Tao has three characteristics: not to be seen, not to be heard and not to be caught. These are mixed into one entity, Tao. How is such a mixture called? Lao-Tzu calls it "Nothingness." What is Nothingness like? It is like an ecstasy. Any linguistic expression for it is not available. Because of these conditions Lao-Tzu refers to or calls it, "Nothingness:" "This is called

the shape that has not shape," "The image that is without substance," "The spirit of the valley," "The mysterious female," "The great image." Of course, those terms refer to the difficulty in describing Tao as an object of knowledge. Hence Lao-Tzu suggests to us that we need an "empty mind," "the state of setting always free from desire," if we want to observe Nothingness as the principle of heaven and earth.

As the process of the universe was indicated in the above, Tao here is known as Nothingness, the ultimate beginning. The moment of change itself through the movement of Nothingness is called one; so called, it is the great axis of the universe. The great axis has Yin and Yang capable of producing three.⁵⁴ The three indicates energy, shape (form) and matter. According to Chu Tzu, something uniting, maintaining, and supporting Yin and Yang is energy, the great axis of the universe. The Yin and Yang can produce all creatures. Therefore, Tao as Nothingness really exists and becomes the ultimate principle of all creatures. Tao, though, does not depend for its existence on some previous condition or event.⁵⁵

Nothingness produces movement of the myriad creatures, but never separates itself from the universe. On the surface Nothingness seems to produce no-acting because of our limited scope of knowledge, but the movement therein is ceaseless like the momentum of continuous force.

Lao-Tzu says,

The way is broad, reaching left as well as right. The myriad creatures depend on it for life yet it claims no authority. It accomplishes its task yet lays claim to no merit. It clothes and feeds the myriad creatures yet lays no claim to being their master.⁵⁶

The principle producing the universe is Nothingness as the essence of Tao. The universe consists of one, two, and three: Energy, Yin and

Yang, physical force, form and matter. These are produced from the foundation of the movement of Nothingness. But no man can recognize its action. Its movement is natural, not artificial. Opposing the artificial technique of human beings, Lao-Tzu advises us to act according to our natural inclination or according to the rule of nature as it is. If we push ourselves into the deep experience of Tao by uniting with and experiencing Nothingness, we can find that Lao-Tzu does not neglect or despise human effort at all. Only artificial thought, which draws man away from the source of his Being, was neglected by Lao-Tzu. But one should use his mental activity to follow the principle of Tao.

Heidegger suggests how to understand Being: listening to the voice of Being. This signifies the establishment of the encounter between human existence and Being. This is done by "corresponding to the call of Being." What does "corresponding to the call" mean? It means to call Dasein into Being or to open Being to Dasein. Heidegger says, "the call comes from me and yet from beyond me and over me."⁵⁷

Who calls in me? The answer is:

the caller is Dasein in its uncanniness; primordial, thrown Being-in-the-world as the 'not-at-home'--the bare 'that-it-is' in the 'nothing' of the world. The caller is unfamiliar to the everyday they-self; It is something like an alien voice.⁵⁸

What does the caller say to the called?

Taken strictly, nothing. The caller asserts nothing, gives no information about world-events, has nothing to tell.⁵⁹

How does the caller represent itself?

Conscience manifests itself as the call of care: the caller is Dasein, which, in its thrownness (in its Being-already-in), is anxious about its potentiality-for-Being.⁶⁰

So, to experience Being gives pleasure and a sufficient ground for human thinking. Philosophical thought in Heidegger means not to be satisfied in knowing the inferential derived from the ground of Being, but to be satisfied in understanding the ground of Being itself as well as finding the true self of the human being.

Therefore in Lao-Tzu and Heidegger the essence of man is existence into the openness of Being. Since Being implies Nothingness, this existence of man is "being projected into Nothingness."⁶¹ As far as man is the place of Being's coming into openness, he is the place to make Nothing null. The relation of man to Nothingness is not merely a relation in which man thinks nothingness; as being-held-in-nothingness, he exists in the midst of it. He is the tenant of Nothingness.

Nothingness and the Virtue of Human Nature

It has been the fact that Heidegger and Lao-Tzu have thought essentially of the question of Being and Tao in metaphysical aspects: the origin of the Universe and its process. In order to develop their theories of the question of Being and Tao, my first concern was to examine their methodological attitude to get the answer. This essay tried to show the meta-metaphysics and the challenge to the traditional logic in each thinker.

There is yet an important point to which we have to pay attention: through the explanation of Being and Tao, how to live in the world has been shown to us, or how to live our lives has been answered. In Lao-Tzu, Tao is said to serve sufficiently to indicate its essentially practical motive in relation to virtue. In Heidegger, it is not easy to find his theory of virtue. Being in itself, as already indicated,

has an ontical priority, but Dasein plays the role of a window to open or disclose the meaning of Being. In other words man's understanding of Being is not an isolated faculty, nor merely a part in Dasein, but is formulated through the whole way of human Dasein. Probably "Man's way to be is to live,... Man's way to being is to understand Being."⁶²

Heidegger says;

The 'essence' of Dasein lies in its existence. Accordingly those characteristics which can be exhibited in this entity are not 'properties' present-at-hand of some entity which 'looks' so and so and is itself present-at-hand; ...⁶³

"Virtue" in this discussion refers to the character of human existence. Virtue is something which should be in a human as a person because of what they are authentically and not because of artificial training. So Lao-Tzu uses the term, Te (Virtue) to indicate natural, instinctive, primitive qualities as opposed to those joined to man by social training and education. Virtue is, according to Lao-Tzu, that one should be in harmony with the fundamental law of the universe. The verse "the named was the mother of the myriad creatures" is the clue to how to explain the relation between Tao and the world. Lao-Tzu considers "always allow oneself to have desires" as the appearance of human nature. Lao-Tzu characterizes the living-condition as the basis of "following Tao." It is understandable that Lao-Tzu attempted, at first, to employ metaphysical speculation and mystical insight before he could find a basis for this way of life.

But in Heidegger human existence is how to reflect or echo the voice of Being in itself. The soundless voice of Being is the word of Being, capable of revealing or opening Being in more detail. The word of Being is the foundation in which the essence of Being has been

opened. "To echo" means to respond or to answer or to listen to the soundless voice of Being. "To listen to" is experience which expresses its contents with the language, not only available in words, but also in silence. Expression, whatever it is, is emphasized to open clearly the essence of Being.

Probably some of us think of the virtue of human nature as practical utility for a society as well as for human life. But Heidegger and Lao-Tzu have a different view of virtue.

In Lao-Tzu the nature of virtue should exist in a person or a thing by understanding how such a person or thing can be tied to Tao and can manifest Tao. His explanation of virtue originates in the nature of Tao.

Virtue is said to be the actual aspect of Tao. Virtue brings the opposites into one great harmony. In this sense, virtue would be a function of nothingness. In Lao-Tzu the true form of human nature has to be the following; "Always rid oneself of desires." In order to explain this, I would like to show the symbolized substantial character of Tao.

Tao is like a vessel which, though empty, may be drawn upon endlessly. And never needs to be filled. So vast and deep (Ch. 4).

Therefore in governing the people, the sage empties their minds (people's mind) but fills their bellies (Ch. 3).

The spirit of the valley never dies (Ch. 30).

The point here is to empty one's mind. To empty one's mind is a method of turning back to Tao, the supreme goal of life. Because the attributes of Tao are quietude, naturality without action, empty, Lao-Tzu bases his theory of ethics on the essence of Nothingness. In order to

return to Tao, one should prepare his mind to transfer into his actual life the following points; humility, weaknesses, and knowledge of contentment or developed ability to be content.

Know contentment
 And you will suffer no disgrace;
 Know when to stop
 And you will meet with no danger.
 You can then endure.⁶⁴

It is understandable to counter man's natural tendencies by knowing contentment and knowing when to stop. Unless man experiences contentment, man causes himself to suffer from continuous discontentment. The artificial rule for life, on the contrary, makes human beings fallen or discontent or ambitious. That is why Lao-Tzu says that one should hold the three treasures: compassion, frugality, and not daring to take the lead in the empire (Ch. 67). This is how Lao-Tzu wants to explain the attributes of virtue related to Tao. This concept of virtue in Lao-Tzu differs from Confucius' Jen (humanness). Jen indicates the relation between human beings in order to make a harmonious society by man's artificial efforts. But Tao indicates a different aspect.

That is,

The sage keeps to the deed that consists in taking no-action and practices the teaching that uses no words (Ch. 2).

In quality of mind it is depth that matters (Ch. 8)
 ... returning to one's roots is known as stillness (Ch. 16).

These passages refer to the quiet character of mind and the potentiality capable of being represented outside. Tao is the fundamental feature of emotion in mind. So Nothingness which is the essence of the universe becomes the essential state of human nature. The verse "heaven and earth are ruthless, ... the sage is ruthless" (Ch. 79) represents the relation between Nothingness and human nature. The operation

of mind in human nature that is one of stillness or absence of distinctions between subject and object is originated in Tao. Tao in itself is the state of absoluteness before subject and object are separated, but the appearance of Tao is relative to the distinction between opposites. The world of Tao as the appearance is like the following,

Thus something and nothing produce each other;
 the difficult and the easy complement each other;
 the long and the short off-set each other;
 the high and the low incline towards each other;
 note and sound harmonize with each other;
 before and after follow each other.⁶⁵

By explaining transcendence and relation in Tao, Lao-Tzu deals with the harmony of unification involving true and false, good and bad, beautiful and ugly in human nature. Especially, he says that "therefore the sage always excels in saving people" (Ch. 27), so the sage, being beyond the relative, discriminative value, helps all creatures realize completely their own nature in Tao. The sage embraces both the good and the evil together in his heart. As a matter of fact, Nothingness, transcending value-judgment, has nothing to classify as good and evil. The world that transcends value-judgment is difficult to be known by human perception. It resists the classificatory act of artificial reason. Lao-Tzu considers the relativity of the phenomenal world but always analyzes that world by the relation of the phenomenal to the absolute of Tao. The transcendental absolute of Tao is not separated from the phenomenal, but the absolute of Tao controls and operates appearance in the world. Lao-Tzu says continuously this is how the sage differs from human beings, "Hence the sage knows himself but does not display himself, loves himself but does not exalt himself."⁶⁶ These are some virtues for self-realization or self-

perfection. Even though the sage finds himself to be wise, he does not express it outside. He does not represent his own superiority to others. The sage keeps always three treasures in his mind: compassion, frugality, and concession. Without these three treasures, nobody can be the sage of self-realization. Anybody who wants to be courageous, noble, and a leader, should mound his virtue on the basis of Nothingness. "Therefore the sage, while clad in homespun, conceals on his person a priceless piece of jade."⁶⁷ The sage appears externally to make compromises with the non-sage but inside he has a precious jewel. His action is no-action, and he teaches without language. Therefore, even though the sage does not himself attempt to be great, he can be called great because he succeeds in not attempting to be great.

We remember that Dasein is projected in Being. That means not only to be born therein, but also to open or uncover the essence of Being. To open Being signifies uncovering the truly authentic Being. To be true means how much the authentic Being has been uncovered. True discourse uncovers the authentic potentiality of Dasein and thus lets it be seen as something no longer escaping notice. The word for untrue, "false discourse," contains the notion of covering over, concealing.

The authentic potentiality of Dasein was presupposed in the formulation of the analysis of "Being-toward-death." What is meant by the authentic Being-towards-death? In order to testify to such a potentiality of In-Being, three phenomena must be ontologically analysed: conscience, guilt, and resolve.

The phenomenon of conscience allows us to see Dasein in its

authenticity.⁶⁸ Conscience discloses precisely to Dasein "what he ought to be." Conscience is the awareness of how Dasein is with itself. When Dasein primarily listens to others, Dasein not only depends on the illusion of the publicity, but also gains its unauthentic potentiality of Being-in-the-world. But the voice of calling from the authentic self is necessary to the self lost in the "they." The voice of calling is conscience. Heidegger refuses to accept the common interpretation of conscience, which means the presumed faculties of the soul, intellect.

The call of conscience is characterized as a mode of speech in the following ways: (1) what is spoken of is Dasein itself in its everydayness, (2) what is appeared to is one's own self, (3) what is said in the call of conscience is "nothing," and conscience speaks in the mode of silence. In Heidegger, conscience is the call of care in human Dasein. The call comes not from anyone else but from myself and upon myself. Especially, Dasein, being placed in the ground of its anxiety, is the caller of conscience. The call speaks in the anxious mood of silence to call the self back into the silence of the existent potentiality of Being. In the call of conscience, Dasein can project itself to disclose its own potentiality of Being-in-the-world, but also Dasein understands its guilt, which means that Dasein owes to itself a debt.

The basic ontological meaning of guilt is a lack of something. The guilt is grounded in the facticity of Dasein (thrownness, fallenness). After realizing the voice of calling, Dasein can open for its own potentiality of Being-towards-death as well as for its own guilt. "Opening for his own potentiality of existence" means Dasein lets its

own self act in the way of "inner action." This characterizes the existential structure of the authentic potentiality-for-Being, which is essentially connected with the "running forward in decision" to death conceived only in its ontological possibility. It does not aim at bringing something real into one's control, but approaches it in its potentiality most closely.

The term "resolve" means ontologically to bring Dasein into potentiality of In-Being in advance of itself. This attitude lets Dasein unveil itself in and for its Being as potentiality in advance of itself. Especially, this "running forward in decision" to the potentiality of death makes it truly possible as such and makes the Dasein free for it. By such running forward in decision, one's own and innermost extreme potentiality of In-Being can be understood of authentic existence. The "running forward in decision" makes Dasein authentic with the future.

Heidegger's view of truth is not the expression of correct propositions formulated by the human intellectual faculty. Truth is rather the openness of what is. "To open something," according to Heidegger, means "to make something light, free and open."⁶⁹ For instance, to open the forest in the mountain is to set the place free from the trees. The openness is the clearing. How much the forest is open is a measure as how much the place is set free. The operation of opening is the way to live life in the world in order to answer the question of Being. It is necessary for us to be the authentic life, not the unauthentic way, in its own-most. Heidegger has mentioned the point: "man as a basic state of Dasein, is the foundation for the primordial phenomenon of truth."⁷⁰ In other words, Dasein in Heidegger seeks to open the truth. For instance, man's speech is the way to respond to

the calling of Being. Especially Heidegger says, "the thinker utters Being, the poet names what is holy."⁷¹ For the subject-matter, the thinker deals with Being, the poet deals with what is holy. The former utters the already opened essence of Being, but the latter names something concealed yet mysterious in Being. Both of them deal with Being in different ways. It is not hard to understand that "Being and what is holy are the one and same in the poet." But Being is also the essence of truth. And Being functions as the ground of what-is-totality.

By the above explanations about the virtue of human nature, it is possible to figure out what should be done in the world. While Lao-Tzu has suggested to us what or how to live in the world on the foundation of Tao's principle, Heidegger seems not to suggest anything of this sort directly. But indirectly one can derive such opinion on ethics from the relation between the transcendental horizon of human existence and truth-discovering.

The attitudes of Heidegger and Lao-Tzu on the virtue of human existence are related to the attributes of Being and Tao. Without understanding Being and Tao, it is not possible to know the nature of virtue. The experience of Being and Tao can be represented concretely in the way of life. In Lao-Tzu, that is "to follow Tao," in Heidegger it is to open the secret of truth. Both refuse the artificial (unauthentic) way to live life in the world, and only suggest we live authentically or naturally in progress of listening to Being and Tao.

Because of these views, Heidegger and Lao-Tzu have been called types of Nihilists. Is that right?

Nothingness and Nihilism

In this section we will answer the question of whether Heidegger and Lao-Tzu are nihilists. It will also become clear why I have chosen to explore the notion of Nothingness.

Heidegger and Lao-Tzu may be called thinkers of Nihilism. They have dealt with so called, negative terms: "naturalness without action," "non-artificial," "nothing," in Lao-Tzu, and "anxiety," "death," "authenticity," "nothing," in Heidegger. Most of these terminological expressions give us a dark, not a bright impression. But if Heidegger and Lao-Tzu have been called nihilists because of terminological conditions, they must be again re-examined because the essential contents of their philosophies were not opened to (or discovered by) people. For instance, love does more than just cover the hurt heart of another person; it also criticizes constructively another person's mistakes. The Christian's God is not only for punishment but also for everlasting love capable of forgiving a person's sin through faithful confession.

The Oriental attitude is never considered negative by the Orient itself. It is always the reunification of something of lower value with something of greater reality and higher value. The non-artificial attitude to life in Lao-Tzu does not refuse our life, but gets to the universality of our life. Lao-Tzu's attitude does not emphasize this world. That is why, if "positive attitude" refers to the acceptance of life in this world, to make life as satisfactory as possible, then the Oriental attitude, especially in Lao-Tzu's case, may probably be called "negative." On the above criteria, Taoism may be considered negative ethical theory. However, whoever considers Lao-Tzu as a nihilist must

be requested to observe again Lao-Tzu's philosophy. Lao-Tzu's philosophy searches for ultimate peace or quietude, not temporal self-realization. By ultimate peace he means ultimate salvation, which involves the loss of all individuality and of all differences and distinctions between subject and object. Salvation here is attainable only by discarding, through any degree of renunciation necessary, all that is differentiated. Though the general tendency in Taoism is in the direction of negativism, it is not a philosophy of non-dynamic inaction or nothingness. Taoism is rather a philosophy of "simple living," a negation only of striving, extravagance, and artificiality. Man as a person feels difficulty in negating his desire. To negate one's desire does not mean to abandon one's desires. To negate is to overcome all of man's artificial desires or to control them. As already explained, therefore, in essence Lao-Tzu advises one not to live fully but long and contentedly. He urges that the best life is one of contentment and that the best means to this end is to avoid or control anything that can bring discontent.

In the West people have attempted to follow moral perfectionism in their attitude of living fully, or in self-realization in the sense of the full actualization of one's potentialities. Living fully is the ideal. The attitude of sacrificing fullness of life for mere contentment is not completely unknown in the West. But it is not in the mainstream of Western philosophy. When it occasionally has arisen, it has been rejected. In other words, to live fully instead of considering a life of contentment becomes nihilism. To this problem, Heidegger has the solution.

According to Heidegger, if the primary understanding of Being is

lost, the true understanding of the essence of man and things would be again lost. Generally speaking, most of us think of human and things in respect to their relation to a subject. In respect to a subject, things are objects. Beings as objects in the sense of differentiation can only be thought of by forgetting Being itself. Such a philosophical attitude, according to Heidegger, becomes nihilism. When there is no Being of beings, that is really nihilism. Heidegger says,

...they reject the question of being and treat being like a nothing (nihil) which in a certain sense it is, insofar as it has an essence. To forget being and cultivate only the essent--that is Nihilism.⁷²

"Forgetting" easily means "to take on the appearance of mere neglect, of a lack, of something disagreeable."⁷³ People's unconcern for Being is that which Heidegger understands to be the true nihilism. Nothingness is never just a neglected something. "Nothing" is more original than the Not and negation.⁷⁴ Negation, strictly speaking, presupposes Nothingness. Nothingness is real and belongs to the event of Being. So Heidegger's investigation of Being shows that to be opposed to beings is not to be nothing in the sense of nihil. Nothing is the character of totality as what-is-total. Nevertheless, the reason why "Nothingness" has been misunderstood as nihil is because "it conceals itself."⁷⁵ The secret of hidden treasure is not the same as the absence of the treasure. Heidegger says that the concealment of the still unrevealed being "preserves untouched treasures and is the promise of a find which is only waiting for the proper search."⁷⁶ In order to get the treasure, we need to open or discover the secret. In other words, the experience of Nothingness always occurs in the neighborhood of Being itself. The concealment of Being as lacking a meaning of Being is the

first step toward the truth of Being. This step toward the truth of Being "can be realized, not simply by a rejection of nihilism, but by an attempt to reach and penetrate its essence."⁷⁷ The road leading to the essence of nihilism, not only helps to overcome nihilism, but also brings us back to Being.⁷⁸

There are some aspects of Lao-Tzu's opinion which can be significant for the Heideggerian. They agree with each other on the rejection of any view that places ultimate value upon the individual as such. In all there is a higher principle. Tao and Being as Nothingness are the universal principle of all things, the essence of reality. They go beyond finite particularity; they cannot be defined. Tao is primarily the Way, the essential or underlying law or principle of reality. The ideal in Taoism is conformity with the law of reality, whether that be interpreted as a purely natural law or as a supernatural principle. Each thing conforms to the universal Tao, and in this way, the universe runs smoothly. It is a philosophy of the harmony of things with each other and of all things with Nature or with the inner principle of Nature. Practically speaking, this may be opposed to any philosophy of competition or the effort to expand one-self beyond the natural limits of one's nature.

To follow Tao, to "fit in with" the Way, will lead to peace as well as to accomplishment and happiness, but the important fact is that Tao is the essence of reality—that is why men should "follow Tao." But also in Heidegger, when Being, as bringing itself into openness, is disclosure, the disclosedness of Being can be possible in such a way that he (Dasein) may come to experience Being in Nothingness.⁷⁹

Therefore man belongs to the openness of Being essentially and Being defines itself by living toward human essence.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹Lao-Tzu, Tao Te Ching, Ch. XIV.
- ²Ibid., Ch. XXV.
- ³M. Heidegger, On Time and Being, p. 34.
- ⁴M. Heidegger, Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics, trans. by James S. Churchill (Bloomington, 1965), p. 5.
- ⁵M. Heidegger, An Introduction to the Metaphysics, p. 15.
- ⁶Ibid., p. 77.
- ⁷M. Heidegger, On Time and Being, p. 6.
- ⁸Magda King, Heidegger's Philosophy (New York, 1964), p. 111.
- ⁹M. Heidegger, On Time and Being, p. 6.
- ¹⁰M. Heidegger, An Introduction to the Metaphysics, p. 161.
- ¹¹M. Heidegger, On Time and Being, p. 56ff.
- ¹²M. Heidegger, "On the Essence of Truth," Werner Brock, Existence and Being (Chicago, 1949), p. 324.
- ¹³M. Heidegger, What is Metaphysics?, p. 325.
- ¹⁴Ibid., p. 330, p. 349.
- ¹⁵Ibid., p. 349.
- ¹⁶Ibid., p. 348.
- ¹⁷Ibid., p. 344.
- ¹⁸M. Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," p. 149.
- ¹⁹M. Heidegger, What is Metaphysics?, p. 355-356.
- ²⁰Ibid., p. 357.
- ²¹M. Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," p. 170.

- ²²M. Heidegger, An Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 103.
- ²³Ibid., p. 20-21.
- ²⁴M. Heidegger, "What is Metaphysics?" p. 356.
- ²⁵Ibid., p. 331. But there are three Chinese expressions, Nothingness, not, negation.
- ²⁶Ibid., p. 330.
- ²⁷Ibid., p. 340.
- ²⁸Ibid., p. 346.
- ²⁹Ibid., p. 344-345. Heidegger has a different interpretation of Nothingness so he does not accept the two propositions.
- ³⁰Ibid., p. 360.
- ³¹Ibid., p. 346.
- ³²Ibid., p. 346.
- ³³Ibid., p. 356.
- ³⁴Ibid., p. 355.
- ³⁵Fung Yu-Lan, A History of Chinese Philosophy, trans. Derk Bodde (Princeton, 1952), Vol. I, p. 177.
- ³⁶Ibid., p. 177.
- ³⁷Ibid., p. 177.
- ³⁸Lao-Tzu, Tao Te Ching, Ch. XIV.
- ³⁹Fung Yu-Lan, A History of Chinese Philosophy, p. 178.
- ⁴⁰Lao-Tzu, Tao Te Ching, Ch. I.
- ⁴¹Ibid., Ch. XXV.
- ⁴²Ibid., Ch. XLII.
- ⁴³Ibid., Ch. XL.
- ⁴⁴Fung Yu-Lan, A History of Chinese Philosophy, p. 179.
- ⁴⁵Lao-Tzu, Tao Te Ching, Ch. XXXIX.
- ⁴⁶Fung Yu-Lan, A History of Chinese Philosophy, p. 179.

- ⁴⁷M. Heidegger, "What is Metaphysics?" p. 339.
- ⁴⁸Ibid., p. 340.
- ⁴⁹Ibid., p. 346.
- ⁵⁰Ibid., p. 360.
- ⁵¹Ibid., p. 346.
- ⁵²For instance, Heidegger's concept is different from that dealt with in Christianity. In Christianity the creation has been interpreted as coming into Being from Nothing.
- ⁵³Chapter 42 evokes many controversies among scholars over the interpretation of the numerical symbols. Symbols: one, two and three, are interpreted as thesis, antithesis, and synthesis in the Hegelian sense. But that is misunderstanding.
- ⁵⁴The three might be understood as heaven, earth and man, however, this is wrong.
- ⁵⁵"Its existence" is similar to a non-hypothetical principle in Aristotle.
- ⁵⁶Lao-Tzu, Tao Te Ching, Ch. XXXIV.
- ⁵⁷M. Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 320
- ⁵⁸Ibid., p. 321.
- ⁵⁹Ibid., p. 318.
- ⁶⁰Ibid., p. 322.
- ⁶¹M. Heidegger, "What is Metaphysics?" p. 339. Dasein means being projected into Nothing.
- ⁶²Magda King, Heidegger's Philosophy, p. 28-29.
- ⁶³M. Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 67.
- ⁶⁴Lao-Tzu, Tao Te Ching, Ch. XLIV.
- ⁶⁵Ibid., Ch. II.
- ⁶⁶Ibid., Ch. LXXII.
- ⁶⁷Ibid., Ch. LXX.
- ⁶⁸M. Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 312-348.
- ⁶⁹M. Heidegger, On Time and Being, p. 65.

- 70 M. Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 261.
- 71 M. Heidegger, "What is Metaphysics?" p. 360.
- 72 M. Heidegger, An Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 169.
- 73 M. Heidegger, The Question of Being, trans. William Kluback and Jean T. Wilde (New York, 1958), p. 89.
- 74 M. Heidegger, "What is Metaphysics?" p. 331.
- 75 M. Heidegger, The Question of Being, p. 89.
- 76 Ibid., p. 91.
- 77 Vincent Vycinas, Earth and Gods: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Martin Heidegger (Hague, 1961), p. 108.
- 78 Ibid., p. 108.
- 79 M. Heidegger, "What is Metaphysics?" p. 355.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Regardless of geographical boundaries, as long as there are human beings, everyone in the world has a common question to answer: what is man really? Not all people have an answer capable of satisfying the philosophical question. And in some sense, different answers to the question can be given depending on the methodology employed.

I attempted to indicate, in the first chapter, the gap of philosophical dialogue between East and West by indicating differences of methodology. It has been said that there is a deep barrier in philosophical thinking between the two areas. To take away such a gap, I chose to analyze the notion of Nothingness. In this essay, the notion of Nothingness has been presented not only to answer the above philosophical question (what a man really is) but also to bridge the gap of philosophical dialogue between East and West by means of a comparison of Heidegger and Lao-Tzu.

In order to reveal the whole aim of Heidegger's thinking as well as Lao-Tzu's, I have brought the sense of Being into focus. Heidegger says;

The Being of entities 'is' not itself an entity. If we are to understand the problem of Being, our first philosophical step consists in not ... defining entities, ... as if Being had the character of some possible entity. (Being and Time, p. 26)

Lao-Tzu says;

The nameless was the beginning of heaven and earth; the named was the mother of the myriad creatures. . . . These two are the same but diverge in name as they issue forth. (Tao Te Ching, Ch. I.)

These two passages show the same point to us: how the sense of Being can be characterized. Heidegger does not attempt to define Being concretely. He says, "the Being... is not itself an entity." The first philosophical step in Heidegger is not to define Being as so and so. Lao-Tzu uses also the negative form for Tao: "The nameless was the beginning of" From the beginning of their philosophies, the notion of negation has been introduced to explain Being and Tao. The notion of annihilation (Nothingness) plays the role of a guide-light to search out Being and Tao. In Heidegger and Lao-Tzu, Being (Tao) is the source of and the actual Being of entities.

To elucidate the meaning of Being, Heidegger attempts to open the horizon for Being itself. The horizon is a window to unveil Being. Through the horizon, it is possible to understand Being. What is the horizon? The horizon is Dasein itself. In the second chapter, I indicated that understanding of Being would be accomplished in communication between Dasein and Being. This communication in Heidegger is philosophy. Dasein as the horizon for Being can be called a method (the phenomenological way) to describe Being.

In other words, it is only possible to unveil Being through a mode of Being. The mode of Being in Heidegger is a human existence (Dasein) because of the characteristics of Dasein's concern. Dasein can be said to be rooted in Being. The term "existence" shows us something hidden in a human being. "Existence" is that which "stands out from." But

what is the something from which a human being stands out? It cannot be defined so and so. It is "something holy" behind a human being. The way of understanding the "something holy" is the phenomenological experience of Nothingness. Through this historical (Geschichte) vacuum of a human being, Dasein becomes authentic and then enters into Being which is something holy.

On the other hand, to elucidate the meaning of Tao, Lao-Tzu was presented as carefully observing the universe. Rather than a social order and an active life, an individual life and tranquility has been concentrated on in Lao-Tzu's philosophy. Even though a definite method has not been presented for understanding Tao, Lao-Tzu suggests to us to learn something from the appearance of the universe. In Lao-Tzu, the appearance of the universe shows to us the attributes of Tao: for instance, water occupies places which people detest, but it benefits the myriad creatures without asking any demand. Nobody has ever heard that water is boasting its higher benefits, but nobody can forget the debt of gratitude we owe it. Water seems to have nothing to do. Female stands for weak and soft. But the soft mother has been known to be the strongest of all. Water or female, on the surface, seems to be naturalness without action, but it has the powerful strength. Again, the mother does not boast her love to the child. But without experiencing the mother's love, it is impossible to understand the mother. To have communication with those powers of the universe is necessary in Oriental society.

As indicated several times through the thesis, Nothingness in Heidegger and Lao-Tzu is not simply empty. Both philosophers hold to the holiness (mystery) of Nothingness as full of itself.

To find the holiness of Nothingness, I have attempted, in the third chapter, to explain the characteristics of Dasein. Dasein, different from non-human existence can ask about the existence of entities as well as himself. Through asking (concern), the worldhood of Dasein has been established. To explain this worldhood, I have presented three terms "existence," "world," and "in." In Heidegger, a human existence has been marked by three existentials: the state of mind, understanding, and discourse (language). Especially, Heidegger's view on language is peculiar. Language is the house of Being. Language is like a world to open Being. In order to understand Dasein as the horizon for Being, I have also attempted to analyze the existence structure of Dasein: facticity, thrownness, Dasein's projection, authenticity and inauthenticity. To open Being is to unveil the mask of Being which is the mode of Being, through observing or analyzing the phenomena of Dasein. This means to bring something hidden to light. In other words, to uncover the mask of Being and to "lay bare" the Dasein's own-most being is, in truth, to uncover the attributes of Being. To "lay bare" the Dasein's own-most being is to negate Dasein's inauthenticity. The negation is a step to becoming authentic through making Dasein's inauthenticity null. This annihilation is not for its own sake, but for the sake of becoming authentic. The process of negating the inauthentic characteristics of Dasein is necessary to find the meaning of Dasein by observing Dasein. The concrete observation of Dasein brings something hidden to light through the process of Nothingness. In Lao-Tzu's philosophy, the nature of Tao and Te has also been expressed. Even though Lao-Tzu did not formulate any definite philosophic method, he has told us what to do or how to live. The understanding of Tao

is possible in unification with Tao through the experience of Tao. To support the experience of Tao, I have presented some ways: intuition and quietude, naturalness without action, void (empty mind). Tao exists beyond the perception. Empty mind is a way to experience Tao. That is to say, Lao-Tzu refuses an artificiality of the intellectual skill. The universe moves in accordance to naturalness without action. In order to open Tao, a human being has to live his life following the attributes of Tao. Lao-Tzu says in Chapter 47 of Tao Te Ching, "Therefore the sage knows without going about, understands without seeing, And accomplishes without any action." That is to say, through the internal intuition, it is possible to know Tao. But the more a human being goes externally, the less one knows Tao. Lao-Tzu does not seem to analyze existence like Heidegger, but Lao-Tzu has told us to have unification with the universe. The unification with Tao is the world beyond the distinction between good and evil, beauty and ugly, based on artificial intellectual efforts.

In the sense that a human being is deeply related to Being or Tao, the question of Nothingness is required beyond the traditional metaphysical scope and its logic. Nothingness is not a category for the differentiation between being, non-being, and man. The concept of Nothingness includes all the terms.

In the fourth chapter, I have explained the notion of Nothingness beyond traditional metaphysics and its logic. Meta-metaphysics overcoming traditional metaphysics was presented. Nothingness was dealt with as the ground for the principle of sufficient reason in Heidegger, and as the essence or origin of the universe in Lao-Tzu. From the ground of the universe, Nothingness can be discovered in the process

of the universe. In Heidegger, Nothingness is not a counter-concept of Being, but "functioning" in Being, and in Lao-Tzu the appearance of the universe is the same as Tao, and the difference is only the name. Because Nothingness in Heidegger is the ground of opening truth, (authenticity), I tried to explain the relation between Nothingness and the essence of virtue. In Lao-Tzu, the self-realization of the human being becomes unification with Tao through intuition and quietude, naturality without action.

In the last part of the fourth chapter, I tried to explain the problem of Nothingness and nihilism. This part explains my fundamental purpose in writing on the notion of Nothingness. The character of Nihilism has been given to us in Heidegger as "in the forgottenness of Being, by only being occupied with the beings, lies nihilism." Nihilism does not come from the relation between object and subject, but from the ground of forgetting Being beyond the object and the subject. That is why Nothingness is not simply an undetermined opposite to beings. It reveals itself as pertaining to the Being of beings. How does Nothingness pertain to Being of beings? Nothingness is not a counter-conception to Being but "functioning" in Being. Nothingness is a gateway to show the "real" attributes of Being. Nothingness belongs to Being as its accessible edge. Nothingness in the ontological sense has relation to Being, but they have different names. The answer to the question of Nothingness contains also the ~~ground~~ to enquire into the significance of all the beings in the world.

Nevertheless, my attempt to derive philosophical enlightenment from Heidegger and Lao-Tzu is severely handicapped by the fact that their writings are not easy to understand. Their views have been

expressed in peculiar terminology. The terminology has been formulated in the existential experience of Dasein rather than through logical analysis. Lao-Tzu presents the terms "empty mind," "the naturalness without action," and "the mysterious female,"... and Heidegger can be said to establish his own terminology (ex. Being-in-the-world). These terms mean the world of actual experience in man rather than artificial concepts to be used in analysis. If we want to answer to the question of Nothingness, the simple rational approach to the question must be surrendered to a more original type of unification than logic can provide. That is the ontological experience of Nothingness. Through the experience of Nothingness, Being itself can ultimately be illuminated in Lao-Tzu and Heidegger.

In Lao-Tzu's philosophy, the surrender and limitation of the rational faculty is emphasized, and whosoever wants to analyze logically the philosophical questions, whatever they are, cannot understand Lao-Tzu's philosophy. Lao-Tzu seems to handle negatively the concrete occurrences of mental activity by ruling out the rational faculty in a man. But he did not assert simply a going beyond the world by rejecting completely the factual events. Rather than by logical analysis, the method of knowing can be found in the experience of Tao. In Lao-Tzu's philosophy, the only way to know the secret of Tao is to "always rid oneself of desires in order to observe its secrets." The expression "The nameless was the beginning of heaven and earth" (Ch. 1) stands for the always existing-situation of Tao as the origin of the universe. This always existing-situation of Tao explains also the condition of a human mind capable of knowing Tao. Since Tao exists in Nothingness (the nameless), a human mind has to be empty (always rid

of desire). But the opposing phrase "always allow yourself to have desires in order to observe its manifestations" expresses the distinction between subject and object. Only by this distinction is it possible to know the manifestation of the named. The manifestation of the named characterizes the appearance of the human mind. It means to name good or bad, beautiful or ugly, etc. In other words, the appearance of the mind is not the way to know Tao. But Tao cannot be known without its appearance. "Always rid oneself of desires" (Nothingness) is a gateway to let a man know Tao.

In Heidegger, the method of knowing is found in admitting the limited situation of a human existence, because nobody knows the Absolute beyond time. The ontological interpretation of a human being enables us to find the meaning of Being. In order to disclose the essence and the ground for the human existence, Heidegger asserts its relation with Being. Heidegger's philosophy seems to reveal the true nature of the human existence in relationship to Being. In other words, Being can be disclosed through human existence. It would seem that Being emerges and becomes real or is essentialized through the existence, but at the same time Being is obscured. Being and human existence are distinct but interdependent. The essence of Dasein is existence. Why does Heidegger say that Dasein is existence? Heidegger does not agree that the essence of Dasein is found in relation with God (a religious sense). What is essential for Dasein is existence. What does existence mean? It means literally "stands-out-from." Opening the essence of Dasein means to analyze phenomenologically the existential-structure of Dasein. Especially the structure of Dasein's facticity (it is and has to be in the world) is part of the disclosure of ontological anxiety

towards the hidden background.

Anxiety is the basic mood and reveals to Dasein his radical finitude—Being unto death. Anxiety is not fear, being afraid of this or that definite object, but the uncanny feeling of being afraid of nothing at all. What is dreaded in anxiety is entirely indefinite. The object of anxiety is wholly undefined. It is nothing in particular. It cannot be approached from any direction because it is already there and yet no-where. This anxiety discloses to man that he is not at home (nicht zu Hause) in the world. Through this anxiety, Dasein discloses to himself the inauthenticity of Dasein and seeks a ground of his Being. In Heidegger, anxiety to Nothingness in particular discloses the ground of what-is.

Therefore, Heidegger attempts to transcend to Being by elucidating the world of Dasein. It can be said that he reinterprets the meaning of the worldhood of Dasein through transcending into Being. Lao-Tzu elucidates the worldhood of human existence on the presupposition of unification with Tao. Lao-Tzu tells us to understand a new meaning of human existence through the experience of Tao.

Heidegger and Lao-Tzu have denied the superiority of reason. Through the existential transcendence into Being, Being begins coming out through the veil of Nothingness. Nothingness has been identified with Being behind the veil. Nothingness is not pure logical negation or empty, but Other to what-is-totality. What does it mean that Nothingness can be considered a "veil" of Being? Whoever wants to see the real face behind a veil, has to open the veil by using his hands. To show the "real" face it is necessary to work to open the veil rather than do a logical analysis of how to open the veil. To look at the veil

itself or to analyze logically whether the face exists or not makes the other person wander in the vacuum.

What is needed to do is to touch the veil and to take it off in order to see the "real" face. This is the experience of Nothingness. Through the experience of Nothingness, it is possible to know the attributes of Being and Tao as we can really see the face by opening the veil. In opening the veil, a human existence expresses himself as a person who is already related to Being itself. At this moment, the purity of existence as well as the true relation of existence to the world can be found.

In order to experience Being and Tao, Heidegger and Lao-Tzu recommend a "listening to the voice of Being." As F. Heineman says in the book, Existentialism and the Modern Predicament, a man is not simply a thinking self, or an existing individual, but also "a responding self." What does man respond to? To Being and Tao through transcendence into Nothingness.

The voice of Being has been expressed in language which contains or houses Being. The language stores the truth of Being, but also consists of the foundation which can determine the essence of a man. The forgetting of Being is the same as the state of "language-fall." The loss of language is poetically expressed as homelessness. Being is the home in which a man dwells or lives. Because a man forgets Being, the world unfortunately becomes strangely unfamiliar to us, or a non-home town.

Therefore, in order to restore a true human existence, we must recover our home from homelessness. This is one of my answers to the question which might be raised in this thesis: why I wanted to deal

with the notion of "Nothingness." I wanted to indicate that the notion of Nothingness is not simply a negative term. This is the way through which a man can be brought to a self-restoration from a self-loss. I think that future philosophy will have to go beyond concepts to a genuinely creative interrogation of Being in relation to man.

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