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Stuart Twite

THE HERITAGE  
OF WORLD  
CIVILIZATIONS

VOLUME ONE: TO 1650

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# Chapter 1

## *Birth of Civilization*

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### 1-1

### Hittite Laws

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1. If anyone kills a man or a woman in a quarrel, he shall be declared liable for him/her. He shall give four persons, man or woman, and pledge his estate as security.
2. If anyone kills a male or female slave in a quarrel, he shall be declared liable for him/her. He shall give two persons, man or woman, and pledge his estate as security.
3. If anyone strikes a free man or woman and he/she dies, (only) his hand doing wrong, he shall be declared liable for him/her. He shall give two persons and pledge his estate as security.
4. If anyone strikes a male or a female slave and he/she dies, (only) his hand doing wrong, he shall be liable for him/her. He shall give one person and pledge his estate as security.
7. If anyone blinds a free man or knocks out his teeth, they would formerly give one mina of silver; now he shall give twenty shekels of silver and pledge his estate as security.
8. If anyone blinds a male or female slave or knocks out his/her teeth, he shall give ten shekels of silver and pledge his estate as security.
9. If anyone batters a man’s head, they would formerly give six shekels of silver; he who was battered would receive three shekels of silver, and they would receive three shekels of silver for the palace. Now the king has abolished the (share) of the palace and only he who was battered receives three shekels of silver.
10. If anyone batters a man so that he falls ill, he shall take care of him. He shall give a man in his stead who can look after his house until he recovers. When he recovers, he shall give him six shekels of silver, and he shall also pay the physician’s fee.  
Later version of 10: If anyone injures a free man’s head, he shall take care of him. He shall give a man in his stead who can look after his house until he recovers. When he recovers, he shall give him ten shekels of silver, and he shall also pay the physician’s fee.
11. If anyone breaks a free man’s hand or foot, he shall give him twenty shekels of silver and pledge his estate as security.
12. If anyone breaks the hand or foot of a male or a female slave, he shall give ten shekels of silver and pledge his estate as security.  
Later version of 11 and 12: If anyone breaks a free man’s hand or foot, in case he is permanently crippled, he shall give him twenty shekels of silver. But in case he is not permanently crippled, he shall give him ten shekels of silver. If anyone breaks a slave’s hand or foot, in case he is permanently crippled, he shall give him ten shekels of silver. But in case he is not permanently crippled, he shall give him five shekels of silver.
13. If anyone bites off a free man’s nose, he shall give thirty shekels of silver and pledge his estate as security.
14. If anyone bites off the nose of a male or female slave, he shall give thirty shekels of silver and pledge his estate as security.
17. If anyone causes a free woman to miscarry—if (it is the ninth or) the tenth month, he shall give ten shekels of silver, if (it is) the fifth month, he shall give five shekels of silver and pledge his estate as security.  
Later version of 17: If anyone causes a free woman to miscarry, he shall give twenty shekels of silver.
18. If anyone causes a slave-woman to miscarry, if (it is) the tenth month, he shall give five shekels of silver.
22. If a slave runs away and anyone brings him back—if he seizes him in the vicinity, he shall give him shoes; if on this side of the river, he shall give him two shekels of silver; if on the other side of the river, he shall give him three shekels of silver.
23. If a slave runs away and goes to the country of Luwiya, he shall give to him who brings him back six shekels of silver. If a slave runs away and goes to an enemy country, whoever brings him nevertheless back, shall receive him (the slave) himself.
24. If a male or female slave runs away, the man at whose hearth his master finds him/her, shall give a man’s wages for one year, (namely) x shekels of silver, or a woman’s wages for one year, namely x shekels of silver.
27. If a man takes a wife and carries her to his house, he takes her dowry with her. If the woman dies, they

- turn her property into (property) of the man, and the man also receives her dowry. But if she dies in the house of her father, and there are children, the man will not receive her dowry.
29. If a girl is betrothed to a man and he has given the bride-price for her, but the parents subsequently abrogate the contract and withhold her from the man, they shall make double compensation.
  32. If a slave takes a free woman, the provision of the law is the same for them.
  33. If a slave takes a slave-girl, the provision of the law is the same for them.
  57. If anyone steals a bull—if it is a weanling, it is not a bull; if it is a yearling, it is not a bull; if it is a two-year-old, that is a bull—they would formerly give thirty (head of) cattle. Now he shall give fifteen (head of) cattle, (specifically) five two-year-olds, five yearlings (and) five weanlings and he shall pledge his estate as security.
  60. If anyone finds a bull and removes the brand, (if) its owner traces it out, he shall give seven (head of) cattle; he shall give (specifically) two two-year-olds, three yearlings, and two weanlings and he shall pledge his estate as security.
  61. If anyone finds a stallion and removes the brand, (if) its owner traces it out, he shall give seven horses; he shall give (specifically) two two-year-olds, three yearlings, and two weanlings and he shall pledge his estate as security.
  94. If a free man steals a house, he shall give (back) the respective goods; they would formerly give for the theft one mina of silver, but now he shall give twelve shekels of silver. If he has stolen much, they shall impose a heavy fine upon him; if he has stolen little, they shall impose a small fine upon him and pledge his estate as security.
  98. If a free man sets a house on fire, he shall rebuild the house. Whatever was lost in the house, whether it is man, cattle or sheep, he shall replace as a matter of course.
  99. If a slave sets a house on fire, his master shall make compensation in his stead. They shall cut off the slave's nose (and) ears and shall give him back to his master. But if he does not make compensation, he will lose that (slave).
  172. If a man saves a free man's life in a year of famine, he shall give (a person) like himself. If he is a slave, he shall give ten shekels of silver.
  173. If anyone rejects the judgment of the king, his house shall be made a shambles. If anyone rejects the judgment of a dignitary, they shall cut off his head. If a slave rises against his master, he shall go into the pit.
  188. If a man does evil with a sheep, it is a capital crime and he shall be killed. They bring him to the king's court. Whether the king orders him killed or whether the king spares his life, he must not appeal to the king.
  189. If a man violates his own mother, it is a capital crime. If a man violates his daughter, it is a capital crime. If a man violates his son, it is a capital crime.
  192. If a man's wife dies (and) he marries his wife's sister, there shall be no punishment.
  193. If a man has a wife and then the man dies, his brother shall take his wife, then his father shall take her. If in turn also his father dies, one of the brother's sons shall take the wife whom he had. There shall be no punishment.
  197. If a man seizes a woman in the mountains, it is the man's crime and he will be killed. But if he seizes her in (her) house, it is the woman's crime and the woman shall be killed. If the husband finds them, he may kill them: there shall be no punishment for him.
  198. If he brings them to the gate of the palace and declares: "My wife shall not be killed" and thereby spares his wife's life, he shall also spare the life of the adulterer and shall mark his head. If he says, "Let them die, both of them!" . . . the king may order them killed, the king may spare their lives.
  199. If anyone does evil with a pig, (or) a dog, he shall die. They will bring him to the gate of the palace and the king may order them killed, the king may spare their lives; but he must not appeal to the king. If an ox leaps at a man, the ox shall die, but the man shall not die. A sheep may be proffered in the man's stead and they shall kill that. If a pig leaps at a man, there shall be no punishment.

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*Was there legal equality among the Hittites?*

1–2

**Hymn to the Nile  
and Hymn to the Sun**

**HYMN TO THE NILE**

Praise to thee, O Nile, that issueth from the earth, and cometh to nourish Egypt. Of hidden nature, a darkness in the daytime. . . .

That watereth the meadows, he that Rē<sup>1</sup> hath created to nourish all cattle. That giveth drink to the desert places, which are far from water; it is his dew that falleth from heaven.

Beloved of Kēb,<sup>2</sup> director of the corn-god; that maketh to flourish every workshop of Ptah.<sup>3</sup>

Lord of fish, that maketh the water-fowl to go upstream. . . .

That maketh barley and createth wheat, so that he may cause the temples to keep festivals.

If he be sluggish,<sup>4</sup> the nostrils are stopped up,<sup>5</sup> and all men are improverished; the victuals of the gods are diminished, and millions of men perish.

If he be niggardly the whole land is in terror and great and small lament . . . Khnum<sup>6</sup> hath fashioned him. When he riseth, the land is in exultation and every body is in joy. All jaws begin to laugh and every tooth is revealed.

He that bringeth victuals and is rich in food, that createth all that is good. The revered, sweet-smelling. . . . That createth herbage for the cattle, and giveth sacrifice to every god, be he in the underworld, in heaven, or upon earth. . . . That filleth the storehouses, and maketh wide the granaries, that giveth things to the poor.

He that maketh trees to grow according to every wish, and men have no lack thereof; the ship is built by his power, for there is no joinery with stones. . . .

. . . thy young folk and thy children shout for joy over thee, and men hail thee as king. Unchanging of laws, when he cometh forth in the presence of Upper and Lower Egypt. Men drink the water. . . .

He that was in sorrow is become glad, and every heart is joyful. Sobk,<sup>7</sup> the child of Neith, laugheth, and the divine Ennead, that is in thee, is glorious.

<sup>1</sup>The sun-god.

<sup>2</sup>The earth-god.

<sup>3</sup>Ptah, the craftsman, who fashions everything, could effect nothing without the Nile.

<sup>4</sup> On the occasion of a deficient inundation.

<sup>5</sup> Men no longer breathe and live.

<sup>6</sup> The ram-headed god, who fashions all that is.

<sup>7</sup> Sobk has the form of a crocodile and will originally have been a water-god, who rejoices in the inundation.

Thou that vomitest forth, giving the fields to drink and making strong the people. He that maketh the one rich and loveth the other. He maketh no distinctions, and boundaries are not made for him.

Thou light, that cometh from the darkness! Thou fat for his cattle. He is a strong one, that createth. . . .

. . . one beholdeth the wealthy as him that is full of care, one beholdeth each one with his implements. . . .None that (otherwise) goeth clad, is clad,<sup>8</sup> and the children of notables are unadorned. . . .

He that establisheth right, whom men love. . . .It would be but lies to compare thee with the sea, that bringeth no corn. . . .no bird descendeth in the desert. . . .

Men begin to play to thee on the harp, and men sing to thee with the hand.<sup>9</sup> Thy young folk and thy children shout for joy over thee, and deputations to thee are appointed.

He that cometh with splendid things and adorneth the earth! That causeth the ship to prosper before men; that quickeneth the hearts in them that are with child; that would fain have there be a multitude of all kinds of cattle.

When thou art risen in the city of the sovereign, then men are satisfied with a goodly list.<sup>10</sup> “I would like lotus flowers,” saith the little one, “and all manner of things,” saith the . . .commander, “and all manner of herbs,” say the children. Eating bringeth forgetfulness of him.<sup>11</sup> Good things are scattered over the dwelling. . . .

When the Nile floodeth, offering is made to thee, cattle are slaughtered for thee, a great oblation is made for thee. Birds are fattened for thee, antelopes are hunted for thee in the desert. Good is recompensed unto thee.

Offering is also made to every other god, even as is done for the Nile, with incense, oxen, cattle, and birds (upon) the flame. The Nile hath made him his cave in Thebes, and his name shall be known no more in the underworld. . . .

All ye men, extol the Nine Gods, and stand in awe of the might which his son, the Lord of All, hath displayed, even he that maketh green the Two River-banks. Thou art verdant, O Nile, thou art verdant. He that maketh man to live on his cattle, and his cattle on the meadow! Thou art verdant, thou art verdant: O Nile, thou art verdant.

**HYMN TO THE SUN**

Thy dawning is beautiful in the horizon of heaven,  
O living Aton,<sup>1</sup> Beginning of life!

When thou risest in the eastern horizon of heaven,  
Thou fillest every land with thy beauty;

For thou art beautiful, great, glittering, high over the earth;

<sup>8</sup> For hard work, clothes are taken off.

<sup>9</sup> It is an old custom to beat time with the hand while singing.

<sup>10</sup>*I.e.*, a multitude of good things.

<sup>11</sup>The Nile.

<sup>1</sup>[One of the names given to the sun god—*Ed.*]



## Chapter 1

Thy rays, they encompass the lands, even all thou hast made.

Thou art Ré, and thou hast carried them all away captive;  
Thou bindest them by thy love.  
Though thou art afar, thy rays are on earth;  
Though thou art on high, thy footprints are the day.

When thou settest in the western horizon of heaven,  
The world is in darkness like the dead.  
They sleep in their chambers,  
Their heads are wrapt up,  
Their nostrils stopped, and none seeth the other.  
Stolen are all their things, that are under their heads,  
While they know it not.  
Every lion cometh forth from his den,  
All serpents, they sting.  
Darkness reigns,  
The world is in silence,  
He that made them has gone to rest in his horizon.  
Bright is the earth,  
When thou risest in the horizon,  
When thou shinest as Aton by day.  
The darkness is banished,  
When thou sendest forth thy rays,  
The Two Lands<sup>2</sup> are in daily festivity,  
Awake and standing upon their feet,  
For thou hast raised them up.  
Their limbs bathed, they take their clothing;  
Their arms uplifted in adoration to thy dawning.  
Then in all the world, they do their work.

All cattle rest upon their herbage,  
All trees and plants flourish,  
The birds flutter in their marshes.  
Their wings uplifted in adoration to thee.  
All the sheep dance upon their feet,  
All winged things fly,  
They live when thou hast shone upon them.

The barques sail up-stream and down-stream alike.  
Every highway is open because thou hast dawned.  
The fish in the river leap up before thee,  
And thy rays are in the midst of the great sea.  
Thou art he who creates the man-child in woman,  
Who makest seed in man,  
Who giveth life to the son in the body of his mother,  
Who soothest him that he may not weep,  
A nurse even in the womb.  
Who giveth breath to animate every one that he maketh.  
When he cometh forth from the body . . . on the day of  
his birth,  
Thou openest his mouth in speech.  
Thou suppliest his necessities.  
When the chicklet crieth in the eggshell,

Thou givest him breath therein, to preserve him alive.

When thou hast perfected him  
That he may pierce the egg,  
He cometh forth from the egg,  
To chirp with all his might;  
He runneth about upon his two feet,  
When he hath come forth therefrom.  
How manifold are thy works!  
They are hidden from before us,  
O thou sole god, whose powers no other possesseth.  
Thou didst create the earth according to thy desire.  
While thou wast alone:  
Men, all cattle large and small,  
All that are upon the earth,  
That go about upon their feet;  
All that are on high,  
That fly with their wings.  
The countries of Syria and Nubia,  
The land of Egypt;  
Thou settest every man in his place,  
Thou suppliest their necessities.  
Every one has his possessions,  
And his days are reckoned.  
Their tongues are divers in speech,  
Their forms likewise and their skins,  
For thou divider, hast divided the peoples.

Thou makest the Nile in the Nether World,  
Thou bringest it at thy desire, to preserve the people  
alive.

O lord of them all, when feebleness is in them,  
O lord of every house, who risest for them,  
O son of day, the fear of every distant land,  
Thou makest also their life.  
Thou hast set a Nile in heaven,  
That it may fall for them,  
Making floods upon the mountains, like the great sea;  
And watering their fields among their towns.  
How excellent are thy designs, O lord of eternity!  
The Nile in heaven is for the strangers,  
And for the cattle of every land, that go upon their feet;  
But the Nile, it cometh from the Nether World for Egypt.

Thus thy rays nourish every garden,  
When thou risest they live, and grow by thee.  
Thou makest the seasons, in order to create all thy  
works:

Winter bringing them coolness,  
And the heat of summer likewise.  
Thou hast made the distant heaven to rise therein,  
In order to behold all that thou didst make,  
While thou wast alone,  
Rising in thy form as living Aton,  
Dawning, shining afar off and returning.  
Thou makest the beauty of form, through thyself alone.  
Cities, towns and settlements,

<sup>2</sup>[Upper and Lower Egypt—*Ed.*]

On highway or on river,  
All eyes see thee before them.  
For thou art Aton of the day over the earth.

Thou art in my heart,  
There is no other that knoweth thee,  
Save thy son Ikhnaton.  
Thou hast made him wise in thy designs  
And in thy might.  
The world is in thy hand,  
Even as thou hast made them.  
When thou hast risen, they live:  
When thou settest, they die.  
For thou art duration, beyond thy mere limbs,  
By thee man liveth,  
And their eyes look upon thy beauty  
Until thou settest.  
All labour is laid aside,

When thou settest in the west;  
When thou risest, they are made to grow . . . for the  
king.

Since thou didst establish the earth,  
Thou hast raised them up for thy son,  
Who came forth from thy limbs,  
The king, living in truth,  
The lord of the Two Lands Nefer-khepure-Rē, Wan-Rē,  
The son of Rē, living in truth, lord of diadems,  
Ikhnaton, whose life is long;  
And for the great royal wife, his beloved,  
Mistress of the Two Lands, Nefer nefru aton, Nofretete,  
Living and flourishing for ever and ever.

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*What are the practical aspects and possible benefits  
of these hymns?*

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## 1–3

# The Epic of Gilgamesh

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I will proclaim to the world the deeds of Gilgamesh. This was the man to whom all things were known; this was the king who knew the countries of the world. He was wise, he saw mysteries and knew secret things, he brought us a tale of the days before the flood. He went on a long journey, was weary, worn out with labour, returning he rested, he engraved on a stone the whole story.

When the gods created Gilgamesh they gave him a perfect body. Shamash the glorious sun endowed him with beauty. Adad the god of the storm endowed him with courage, the great gods made his beauty perfect, surpassing all others, terrifying like a great wild bull. Two thirds they made him god and one third man.

In Uruk he built walls, a great rampart, and the temple of blessed Eanna for the god of the firmament Anu, and for Ishtar the goddess of love. . . .

### THE COMING OF ENKIDU

Gilgamesh went abroad in the world, but he met with none who could withstand his arms till he came to Uruk. But the men of Uruk muttered in their houses, “Gilgamesh

sounds the tocsin for his amusement, his arrogance has no bounds by day or night. No son is left with his father, for Gilgamesh takes them all, even the children; yet the king should be a shepherd to his people. His lust leaves no virgin to her lover, neither the warrior’s daughter nor the wife of the noble; yet this is the shepherd of the city, wise, comely, and resolute.”

The gods heard their lament, the gods of heaven cried to the Lord of Uruk, to Anu the god of Uruk. . . . When Anu had heard their lamentation the gods cried to Aruru, the goddess of creation, “You made him, O Aruru, now create his equal; let it be as like him as his own reflection, his second self, stormy heart for stormy heart. Let them contend together and leave Uruk in quiet.”

So the goddess conceived an image in her mind, and it was of the stuff of Anu of the firmament. She dipped her hands in water and pinched off clay, she let it fall in the wilderness, and noble Enkidu was created. There was virtue in him of the god of war, of Ninurta himself. His body was rough, he had long hair like a woman’s; it waved like the hair of Nisaba, the goddess of corn. His body was covered with matted hair like Samuqan’s, the god of cattle. He was innocent of mankind; he knew nothing of the cultivated land.

Enkidu ate grass in the hills with the gazelle and lurked with wild beasts at the water-holes; he had joy of the water with the herds of wild game. But there was a trapper who met him one day face to face at the drinking-hole, for the wild game had entered his territory. On three days he met him face to face, and the trapper was frozen with fear. He went back to his house with the game that he had caught, and he was dumb, benumbed with terror. His face was altered like that of one who has made a long journey. . . .

So the trapper set out on his journey to Uruk and addressed himself to Gilgamesh saying, "A man unlike any other is roaming now in the pastures; he is as strong as a star from heaven and I am afraid to approach him. He helps the wild game to escape; he fills in my pits and pulls up my traps." Gilgamesh said, "Trapper, go back, take with you a harlot, a child of pleasure. At the drinking-hole she will strip, and when he sees her beckoning he will embrace her and the game of the wilderness will surely reject him."

Now the trapper returned, taking the harlot with him. After a three days' journey they came to the drinking-hole, and there they sat down; the harlot and the trapper sat facing one another and waited for the game to come. For the first day and for the second day the two sat waiting, but on the third day the herds came; they came down to drink and Enkidu was with them. The small wild creatures of the plains were glad of the water, and Enkidu with them, who ate grass with the gazelle and was born in the hills; and she saw him, the savage man, come from far-off in the hills. The trapper spoke to her: "There he is. Now, woman, make your breasts bare, have no shame, do not delay but welcome his love. Let him see you naked, let him possess your body. When he comes near uncover yourself and lie with him; teach him, the savage man, your woman's art, for when he murmurs love to you the wild beasts that shared his life in the hills will reject him."

She was not ashamed to take him, she made herself naked and welcomed his eagerness; as he lay on her murmuring love she taught him the woman's art. For six days and seven nights they lay together, for Enkidu had forgotten his home in the hills; but when he was satisfied he went back to the wild beasts. Then, when the gazelle saw him, they bolted away; when the wild creatures saw him they fled. Enkidu would have followed, but his body was bound as though with a cord, his knees gave way when he started to run, his swiftness was gone. And now the wild creatures had all fled away; Enkidu was grown weak, for wisdom was in him, and the thoughts of a man were in his heart. So he returned and sat down at the woman's feet, and listened intently to what she said, "You are wise, Enkidu, and now you have become like a god. Why do you want to run wild with the beasts in the hills? Come with me. I will take you to strong-walled Uruk, to the blessed temple of Ishtar and of Anu, of love and heaven; there Gilgamesh lives, who is very strong, and like a wild bull he lords it over men." . . .

And now she said to Enkidu, "When I look at you you have become like a god. Why do you yearn to run wild again with the beasts in the hills? Get up from the ground, the bed of a shepherd." He listened to her words with care. It was good advice that she gave. She divided her clothing in two and with the one half she clothed him and with the other herself; and holding his hand she led him like a child to the sheepfolds, into the shepherds' tents. There all the shepherds crowded round to see him, they put down bread in front of him, but Enkidu could only suck the milk of wild animals. He fumbled and gaped, at a loss what to do

or how he should eat the bread and drink the strong wine. Then the woman said, "Enkidu, eat bread, it is the staff of life; drink the wine, it is the custom of the land." So he ate till he was full and drank strong wine, seven goblets. He became merry, his heart exulted and his face shone. He rubbed down the matted hair of his body and anointed himself with oil. Enkidu had become a man; but when he had put on man's clothing he appeared like a bridegroom.

Now Enkidu strode in front and the woman followed behind. He entered Uruk, that great market, and all the folk thronged round him where he stood in the street in strong-walled Uruk. The people jostled; speaking of him they said, "He is the spit of Gilgamesh." "He is shorter." "He is bigger of bone." "This is the one who was reared on the milk of wild beasts. His is the greatest strength." The men rejoiced: "Now Gilgamesh has met his match. This great one, this hero whose beauty is like a god, he is a match even for Gilgamesh."

In Uruk the bridal bed was made, fit for the goddess of love. The bride waited for the bridegroom, but in the night Gilgamesh got up and came to the house. Then Enkidu stepped out, he stood in the street and blocked the way. Mighty Gilgamesh came on and Enkidu met him at the gate. He put out his foot and prevented Gilgamesh from entering the house, so they grappled, holding each other like bulls. They broke the doorposts and the walls shook. Gilgamesh bent his knee with his foot planted on the ground and with a turn Enkidu was thrown. Then immediately his fury died. When Enkidu was thrown he said to Gilgamesh, "There is not another like you in the world. Ninsun, who is as strong as a wild ox in the byre, she was the mother who bore you, and now you are raised above all men, and Enlil has given you the kingship, for your strength surpasses the strength of men." So Enkidu and Gilgamesh embraced and their friendship was sealed. . . .

[After they had become good friends, Gilgamesh and Enkidu set out for the Cedar Forest (possibly southern Turkey or Phoenicia) in order to secure wood for the city. Before they got to the wood, however, they had to kill a fire-breathing ogre called Humbaba. Succeeding in this mission, they returned to Uruk, where Gilgamesh was offered marriage by the goddess of love, Ishtar (or Inanna).]

Gilgamesh opened his mouth and answered glorious Ishtar, "If I take you in marriage, what gifts can I give in return? What ointments and clothing for your body? I would gladly give you bread and all sorts of food fit for a god. I would give you wine to drink fit for a queen. I would pour out barley to stuff your granary; but as for making you my wife—that I will not. How would it go with me? Your lovers have found you like a brazier which smoulders in the cold, a backdoor which keeps out neither squall of wind nor storm, a castle which crushes the garrison, pitch that blackens the bearer, a water-skin that chafes the carrier, a stone which falls from the parapet, a battering-

ram turned back from the enemy, a sandal that trips the wearer. Which of your lovers did you ever love for ever? What shepherd of yours has pleased you for all time?" . . .

[Gravely insulted by the king's words, Ishtar asked her father, Anu, to punish Gilgamesh by sending the Bull of Heaven to ravage the land. Gilgamesh and Enkidu managed to kill the bull, whose hind leg Enkidu tore off and flung at the goddess. Such a serious offense against the gods demanded immediate punishment; thus did Enkidu fall ill and die.]

So Enkidu lay stretched out before Gilgamesh; his tears ran down in streams and he said to Gilgamesh, "O my brother, so dear as you are to me, brother, yet they will take me from you." Again he said, "I must sit down on the threshold of the dead and never again will I see my dear brother with my eyes." . . .

[Gilgamesh was unreconciled to the death of his beloved friend Enkidu. He decided to make a long and difficult journey to the Netherworld in order to search for the secret of immortality. There he encountered the Sumerian Akkadian Noah called Utnapishtim (or Ziusudra). Utnapishtim tells Gilgamesh of a Flood that had been sent by the gods to destroy all life except for Utnapishtim and his family.]

"In those days the world teemed, the people multiplied, the world bellowed like a wild bull, and the great god was aroused by the clamour. Enlil heard the clamour and he said to the gods in council, 'The uproar of mankind is intolerable and sleep is no longer possible by reason of the babel.' So the gods agreed to exterminate mankind. Enlil did this, but Ea because of his oath warned me in a dream. He whispered their words to my house of reeds, 'Reed-house, reed-house! Wall, O wall, hearken reed-house, wall reflect; O man of Shurruk, son of Ubara-Tutu; tear down your house and build a boat, abandon possessions and look for life, despise worldly goods and save your soul alive. Tear down your house, I say, and build a boat. These are the measurements of the barque as you shall build her: let her beam equal her length, let her deck be roofed like the vault that covers the abyss; then take up into the boat the seed of all living creatures.'

"In the first light of dawn all my household gathered round me, the children brought pitch and the men whatever was necessary. On the fifth day I laid the keel and the ribs, then I made fast the planking. The ground-space was one acre, each side of the deck measured one hundred and twenty cubits, making a square. I built six decks below, seven in all. I divided them into nine sections with bulkheads between. I drove in wedges where needed, I saw to the punt-poles, and laid in supplies. The carriers brought oil in baskets, I poured pitch into the furnace and asphalt and oil; more oil was consumed in caulking, and more again the master of the boat took into his stores. I slaughtered

bullocks for the people and every day I killed sheep. I gave the shipwrights wine to drink as though it were river water, raw wine and red wine and oil and white wine. There was feasting then as there is at the time of the New Year's festival; I myself anointed my head. On the seventh day the boat was complete.

"Then was the launching full of difficulty; there was shifting of ballast above and below till two thirds was submerged. I loaded into her all that I had of gold and of living things, my family, my kin, the beast of the field both wild and tame, and all the craftsmen. I sent them on board, for the time that Shamash had ordained was already fulfilled when he said, 'In the evening, when the rider of the storm sends down the destroying rain, enter the boat and batten her down.' The time was fulfilled, the evening came, the rider of the storm sent down the rain. I looked out at the weather and it was terrible, so I too boarded the boat and battened her down. All was now complete, the battening and the caulking; so I handed the tiller to Puzur-Amurri the steersman, with the navigation and the care of the whole boat. . . .

"For six days and six nights the winds blew, torrent and tempest and flood overwhelmed the world, tempest and flood raged together like warring hosts. When the seventh day dawned the storm from the south subsided, the sea grew calm, the flood was stilled; I looked at the face of the world and there was silence, all mankind was turned to clay. The surface of the sea stretched as flat as a roof-top; I opened a hatch and the light fell on my face. Then I bowed low, I sat down and I wept, the tears streamed down my face, for on every side was the waste of water. I looked for land in vain, but fourteen leagues distant there appeared a mountain, and there the boat grounded; on the mountain of Nisir the boat held fast, she held fast and did not budge. One day she held, and a second day on the mountain of Nisir she held fast and did not budge. A third day, and a fourth day she held fast on the mountain and did not budge; a fifth day and a sixth day she held fast on the mountain. When the seventh day dawned I loosed a dove and let her go. She flew away, but finding no resting-place she returned. Then I loosed a swallow, and she flew away but finding no resting-place she returned. I loosed a raven, she saw that the waters had retreated, she ate, she flew around, she cawed, and she did not come back. Then I threw everything open to the four winds, I made a sacrifice and poured out a libation on the mountain top. Seven and again seven cauldrons I set up on their stands, I heaped up wood and cane and cedar and myrtle. When the gods smelled the sweet savour, they gathered like flies over the sacrifice."

[Utnapishtim then revealed to Gilgamesh the secret of immortality. With the aid of his ferryman, Urshanabi, King Gilgamesh secured this mysterious prickly plant, but his hopes for future rejuvenation were not to be.]

"Gilgamesh, I shall reveal a secret thing, it is a mystery of the gods that I am telling you. There is a plant that

grows under the water, it has a prickle like a thorn, like a rose; it will wound your hands, but if you succeed in taking it, then your hands will hold that which restores his lost youth to a man.”

When Gilgamesh heard this he opened the sluices so that a sweet-water current might carry him out to the deepest channel; he tied heavy stones to his feet and they dragged him down to the water-bed. There he saw the plant growing; although it pricked him he took it in his hands; then he cut the heavy stones from his feet, and the sea carried him and threw him on to the shore. Gilgamesh said to Urshanabi the ferryman, “Come here, and see this marvellous plant. By its virtue a man may win back all his former strength. I will take it to Uruk of the strong walls; there I will give it to the old men to eat. Its name shall be ‘The Old Men Are Young Again’; and at last I shall eat it myself and have back all my lost youth.” So Gilgamesh returned by the gate through which he had come, Gilgamesh and Urshanabi went together. They travelled their twenty leagues and then they broke their fast; after thirty leagues they stopped for the night.

Gilgamesh saw a well of cool water and he went down and bathed; but deep in the pool there was lying a serpent, and the serpent sensed the sweetness of the flower. It rose out of the water and snatched it away, and immediately it sloughed its skin and returned to the well. Then Gilgamesh sat down and wept, the tears ran down his face, and he took the hand of Urshanabi: “O Urshanabi, was it for this

that I toiled with my hands, is it for this I have wrung out my heart’s blood? For myself I have gained nothing; not I, but the beast of the earth has joy of it now. Already the stream has carried it twenty leagues back to the channels where I found it. I found a sign and now I have lost it. Let us leave the boat on the bank and go.”

After twenty leagues they broke their fast, after thirty leagues they stopped for the night; in three days they had walked as much as a journey of a month and fifteen days. When the journey was accomplished they arrived at Uruk, the strong-walled city. Gilgamesh spoke to him, to Urshanabi the ferryman, “Urshanabi, climb up on to the wall of Uruk, inspect its foundation terrace, and examine well the brickwork; see if it is not of burnt bricks; and did not the seven wise men lay these foundations? One third of the whole is city, one third is garden, and one third is field, with the precinct of the goddess Ishtar. These parts and the precinct are all Uruk.”

This too was the work of Gilgamesh, the king, who knew the countries of the world. He was wise, he saw mysteries and knew secret things, he brought us a tale of the days before the flood. He went on a long journey, was weary, worn out with labour, and returning engraved on a stone the whole story.

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*Why was Enkidu created and how was he changed?*

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When I arose early in the morning, I faced my mother and said to her: “Give me my lunch, I want to go to school!” My mother gave me two rolls, and I set out; my mother gave me two rolls, and I went to school. In school the fellow in charge of punctuality said: “Why are you late?” Afraid and with pounding heart, I entered before my teacher and made a respectful curtsy.

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My headmaster read my tablet, said:  
“There is something missing,” caned me. . .  
The fellow in charge of neatness (?) said:  
“You loitered in the street and did not straighten up (?) your clothes (?),” caned me. . .  
The fellow in charge of silence said:  
“Why did you talk without permission,” caned me.  
The fellow in charge of the assembly (?) said:  
“Why did you ‘stand at ease (?)’ without permission,” caned me.  
The fellow in charge of good behavior said:  
“Why did you rise without permission,” caned me.  
The fellow in charge of the gate said:  
“Why did you go out from (the gate) without permission,” caned me.

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## 1-4

### An alumnus reminisces about scribal school in ancient Sumeria

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Source: Samuel Noah Kramer, *The Sumerians*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), pp. 237–240.

I recited my tablet, ate my lunch, prepared my (new) tablet, wrote it, finished it; then my model tablets were brought to me; and in the afternoon my exercise tablets were brought to me. When school was dismissed, I went home, entered the house, and found my father sitting there. I explained (?) my exercise-tablets to my father, (?) recited my tablet to him, and he was delighted, (so much so) that I attended him (with joy).

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I am thirsty, give me water to drink; I am hungry, give me bread to eat; wash my feet, set up (my) bed, I want to go to sleep. Wake me early in the morning, I must not be late lest my teacher cane me.

The fellow in charge of the whip said:  
 “Why did you take. . .without permission,” caned me.  
 The fellow in charge of Sumerian said:  
 “Why didn’t you speak Sumerian,” caned me.  
 My teacher (ummi) said:  
 “Your hand is unsatisfactory,” caned me.  
 (And so) I (began to) hate the scribe] art, (began to)

neglect the scribal art.

My teacher took no delight in me; (even) [stopped teaching (?) me his skill in the scribal art; in no way prepared me in the matters (essential) to the art (of being) a “young scribe,” (or) the art (of being) a “big brother.”

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Give him a bit extra salary, (and) let him become more kindly (?); let him be free (for a time) from arithmetic; (when) he counts up all the school affairs of the students, let him count me (too among them; that is, perhaps, let him not neglect me any longer).

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To that which the schoolboy said, his father gave heed. The teacher was brought from school, and after entering in the house, he was seated on the “big chair.” The schoolboy attended and served him, and whatever he learned of the scribal art, he unfolded to his father. Then did the father in the joy of his heart say joyfully to the headmaster of the school: “My little fellow has opened (wide) his hand, (and) you made wisdom enter there; you showed him all the fine points of the scribal art; you made him see the solutions of the mathematical and arithmetical (problems), you (taught him how) to make deep (?) the cuneiform script (?)

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Pour for him irda-oil, bring it to the table for him. Make fragrant oil flow like water on his stomach (and) back; I want to dress him in a garment, give him some extra salary, put a ring on his hand.

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Young fellow, (because) you hated not my words, neglected them not, (may you) complete the scribal art from beginning to end. Because you gave me everything without stint, paid me a salary larger than my effort (deserve), (and) have honored me, may Nidaba, the queen of guardian angels, be your guardian angel; may your pointed stylus write well for you; may your exercises contain no faults. Of your brothers, may you be their leader; of your friends may you be their chief; may you rank the highest among the school graduates, satisfy (?) all who walk (?) to and from in (?) the palaces. Little fellow, you “know” (your) father, I am second to him; that homage be paid to you, that you be blessed—may the god of your father bring this about with firm hand; he will bring prayer and supplication to Nidaba, your queen, as if it were a matter for your god. Thus, when you put a kindly hand on the . . .of the teacher, (and) on the forehead of the “big brother,” then (?) your young comrades will show you favor. You have carried out well the school’s activities, you are a man of learning. You have exalted Nidaba, the queen of learning; O Nidaba, praise!

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*What seems to have been the student’s attitude towards scribal education?*

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## 1–5

# The Books of Shang

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### BOOK I. THE SPEECH OF TANG.

I. The king said, “Come, ye multitude of the people, listen to my words. It is not I, the little child, who dare to undertake *what may seem to be* a religious enterprize; but for the many crimes of the sovereign of Hea Heaven has given the charge to destroy him.

“Now, ye multitudes, you are saying, ‘Our prince does not compassionate us, but is calling us away from our husbandry to attack and punish *the ruler* of Hea.’ I have indeed heard *these* words of you all: *but* the sovereign of Hea is an offender, and, *as* I fear God, I dare not but punish him.

“Now you are saying, ‘What are the crimes of Hea to us? The king of Hea does nothing but exhaust the strength

of his people, and exercise oppression in the cities of Hea. His people have all become idle *in his service*, and will not assist him. They are saying, ‘When will this sun expire? We will all perish with thee.’ Such is the course of *the sovereign of Hea*, and now I must go *and punish him*.

II. Assist, I pray you, me, the one man, to carry out the punishment appointed by Heaven. I will greatly reward you. On no account disbelieve me;—I will not eat my words. If you do not obey the words which I have spoken to you, I will put your children with you to death;—you will find no forgiveness.”

### BOOK II. THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF CHUNG-HWUY.

I. When T’ang, the Successful, was keeping Këë in banishment in Nan-ch’aou, he had a feeling of shame on account of his conduct, and said, “I am afraid that in future ages men will fill their mouths with me.”

II. On this Chung-hwuy made the following announce-

ment:—"Oh! Heaven gives birth to the people with *such* desires, that without a ruler they must fall into all disorders and Heaven *again* gives birth to the man of intelligence whose business it is to regulate them. The sovereign of Hea had his virtue all-obsured, and the people were *as if they were* fallen amid mire and charcoal. Heaven here-upon gifted *our* king with valour and wisdom, to serve as a mark and director to the myriad States, and to continue the old ways of Yu. You are now only following the standard course, honouring and obeying the appointment of Heaven. The king of Hea was an offender, falsely pretending to the sanction of supreme Heaven, to spread abroad his commands among the people. On this account God viewed him with disapprobation, caused *our* Shang to receive His appointment, and employed you to enlighten the multitudes of the people.

III. "Contemners of the worthy and parasites of the powerful,—many such followers he had indeed, *but* from the first our country was to the sovereign of Hea like weeds among the springing corn, and blasted grains among the good. *Our people*, great and small, were in constant apprehension, fearful though they were guilty of no crime. How much more was this the case, when our *prince's* virtues made them a theme *eagerly* listened to! *Our* king did not approach to *dissolute* music and women; he did not seek to accumulate property and money. To great virtue he gave great offices; to great merit he gave great rewards. He employed others as *if their abilities were* his own; he was not slow to change his errors. Rightly indulgent and rightly benevolent, from the display of *such virtue* confidence was reposed in him by the millions of the people.

"When the chief of Kō showed his enmity to the provision-carriers, the work of punishment began with Kō. When it went on in the east, the wild tribes of the west murmured; when it went on in the south, those of the north murmured :—they said, "Why does he make us alone the last?" To whatever people he went, they congratulated one another in their chambers, saying, 'We have waited for our prince;—our prince is come, and we revive.' The people's honouring our Shang is a thing of long existence.

IV. "Show favour to the able and right-principled *among the princes*, and aid the virtuous; distinguish the loyal, and let the good have free course. Absorb the weak, and punish the wilfully blind; take their States from the disorderly, and deal summarily with those going to ruin. Thus overthrowing the perishing and strengthening what is being preserved, how will the States all flourish!

"When a *sovereign's* virtue is daily being renewed, he is cherished throughout the myriad States; when he is full of his own will, he is abandoned by the nine classes of his kindred. Exert yourself, O king, to make your great virtue illustrious, and set up the *pattern of the Mean* before the people. Order your affairs by righteousness; order your heart by propriety:—so shall you transmit a grand example to posterity. I have heard the saying:—'He who finds instructors for himself, comes to the supreme dominion; he who says that others are not equal to himself, comes to

ruin. He who likes to ask becomes enlarged; he who uses *only* himself becomes small.'

Oh! he who would take care for his end must be attentive to his beginning. There is establishment for the observers of propriety, and overthrow for the blinded and wantonly indifferent. To revere and honour the way of Heaven is the way ever to preserve the favouring regard of Heaven."

### BOOK III. THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF T'ANG.

I. The king returned from vanquishing Hea, and came to Pō. There he made a grand announcement to the myriad regions.

II. The king said, "Ah! ye multitudes of the myriad regions, listen clearly to the announcement of me, the one man. The great God has conferred *even* on the inferior people a moral sense, compliance with which would show their nature invariably right. *But* to cause them tranquilly to pursue the course which it would indicate, is the work of the sovereign.

"The king of Hea extinguished his virtue and played the tyrant, extending his oppression over you, the people of the myriad regions. Suffering from his cruel injuries, and unable to endure the wormwood and poison, you protested with one accord your innocence to the spirits of heaven and earth. The way of Heaven is to bless the good and to punish the bad. It sent down calamities on *the House of Hea*, to make manifest its crimes.

"Therefore, I, the little child, charged with the decree of Heaven and its bright terrors, did not dare to forgive *the criminal*. I presumed to use a dark coloured victim, and making clear announcement to the spiritual Sovereign of the high heavens, requested leave to deal with the ruler of Hea as a criminal. Then I sought for the great sage, with whom I might unite my strength, to request the favour of *Heaven* on behalf of you, my multitudes. High Heaven truly showed its favour to the inferior people, and the criminal has been degraded and subjected. Heaven's appointment is without error;—brilliantly *now* like the blossoming of flowers and trees, the millions of the people show a true reviving.

III. "It is given to me, the one man, to give harmony and tranquillity to your States and Families; and now I know not whether may not offend *the powers* above and below. I am fearful and trembling, as if I should fall into a deep abyss.

"Throughout all the States that enter on a new life under me, do not, *ye princes*, follow lawless ways; make no approach to insolent dissoluteness: let everyone observe to keep his statutes:—that so we may receive the favour of Heaven. The good in you, I will not dare to conceal; and for the evil in me, I will not dare to forgive myself;—I will examine these things in harmony with the mind of God. When guilt is found anywhere in you who occupy the myriad regions, it must rest on me. When guilt is found in me, the one man, it will not attach to you who occupy the myriad regions.

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*In what ways might the "Book of Yu" stress the Chinese ideal of harmony?*

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1-6

**The Book of Songs**

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**IN THE WILDS IS A DEAD RIVER-DEER**

In the wilds is a dead river-deer  
wrapped in white rushes.  
A lady yearned for spring  
and a fine man seduced her.

In the woods are clusters of bushes  
and in the wilds a dead river-deer  
wrapped in white rushes.  
There was a lady fine as jade.

Oh! Slow down, don't be so rough,  
let go of my girdle's sash.  
Shhh! You'll make the dog bark.

*Translated by Tony Barnstone and Chou Ping*

**FRUIT PLUMMETS FROM THE PLUM TREE**

Fruit plummets from the plum tree  
but seven of ten plums remain;  
you gentlemen who would court me,  
come on a lucky day.

Fruit plummets from the plum tree  
but three of ten plums still remain;  
you men who want to court me,  
come now, today is a lucky day!

Fruit plummets from the plum tree.  
You can fill up your baskets.  
Gentlemen if you want to court me,  
just say the word.

*Translated by Tony Barnstone and Chou Ping*

**WHITE MOONRISE**

The white rising moon  
is your bright beauty  
binding me in spells  
till my heart's devoured.

The light moon soars  
resplendent like my lady,  
binding me in light chains  
till my heart's devoured.

Moon in white glory,  
you are the beautiful one  
who delicately wounds me  
till my heart's devoured.

*Translated by Tony Barnstone and Willis Barnstone*

**RIPE MILLET**

Rows and rows of ripe millet,  
the sorghum sprouts,  
and I take long slow walks  
with a shaking, shaken heart.  
My friends say  
"His heart is hurting"  
but strangers wonder  
"What can he be looking for?"  
O far far blue heaven  
what makes me feel this way?

Rows and rows of ripe millet,  
the sorghum is in spike,  
and I take long slow walks  
with a drunken heart.  
My friends say  
"His heart is hurting"  
but strangers wonder  
"What can he be looking for?"  
O far far blue heaven  
what makes me feel this way?

Rows and rows of ripe millet,  
the sorghum is all grain,  
and I take long slow walks  
with a choking heart.  
My friends say  
"His heart is hurting"  
but strangers wonder  
"What can he be looking for?"  
O far far blue heaven  
what makes me feel this way?

*Translated by Tony Barnstone and Chou Ping*

**THERE ARE TALL WEEDS IN THE FIELDS**

There are tall weeds in the fields  
with glistening dew drops.  
Here comes a beautiful girl  
with eyes like clear water.  
We meet here by chance—  
just as I wished.

Here are tall weeds in the fields  
with sparkling dew drops.



*Chapter 1*

There comes a beautiful girl,  
graceful as her eyes.  
We meet here by chance—  
let's find a place and hide.

*Translated by Tony Barnstone and Chou Ping*

**WHEN THE GOURD HAS DRIED LEAVES<sup>1</sup>**

When the gourd has dried leaves,  
you can wade the deep river.  
Keep your clothes on if the water's deep;  
hitch up your dress when it's shallow.

The river is rising,  
pheasants are chirping.  
The water is just half a wheel deep,  
and the hen is chirping for the cock.

Wild geese are trilling,  
the rising sun starts dawn.  
If you want to marry me,  
come before the river is frozen.

The ferry-man is gesturing,  
other people are going, but not me,

other people are going, but not me,  
I'm waiting for you.

*Translated by Tony Barnstone and Chou Ping*

**ALL THE GRASSLANDS ARE YELLOW**

All the grasslands are yellow  
and all the days we march  
and all the men are conscripts  
sent off in four directions.

All the grasslands are black  
and all the men like widowers.  
So much grief! Are soldiers  
not men like other men?

We aren't bison! We aren't tigers  
crossing the wilderness,  
but our sorrows  
roam from dawn till dusk.

Hairy tailed foxes slink  
through the dark grass  
as we ride tall chariots  
along the wide rutted roads.

*Translated by Tony Barnstone and Chou Ping*

<sup>1</sup>The ancient Chinese used to tie gourds around their waists as a safety device when wading across rivers.

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*What are the primary virtues of life as reflected in the songs?*

## Chapter 2

# *The Four Great Revolutions in Thought and Religion*

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### 2-1

### Confucius, *Analects*

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#### THE SUPERIOR MAN

1. Tsze-kung [Zigong] asked what constituted the superior man. The Master said, "He acts before he speaks, and afterwards speaks according to his actions."

2. The Master said, "The superior man is catholic and no partizan. The mean man is a partizan and not catholic."

3. (a) The Master said, "Riches and honours are what men desire. If it cannot be obtained in the proper way, they should not be held. Poverty and meanness are what men dislike. If it cannot be obtained in the proper way, they should not be avoided."

(b) "If a superior man abandons virtue, how can he fulfil the requirements of that name?"

(c) "The superior man does not, even for the space of a single meal, act contrary to virtue. In moments of haste, he cleaves to it. In seasons of danger, he cleaves to it."

4. The Master said, "The superior man, in the world, does not set his mind either for anything, or against anything; what is right he will follow."

5. The Master said, "The superior man thinks of virtue; the small man thinks of comfort. The superior man thinks of the sanctions of law; the small man thinks of favours which he may receive."

6. The Master said, "The mind of the superior man is conversant with righteousness; the mind of the mean man is conversant with gain."

7. The Master said, "The superior man wishes to be slow in his speech and earnest in his conduct."

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*What kind of person is "superior" in the Confucian sense?*

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### 2-2

### "Upanishads": A mirror into the underpinnings of the ancient Hindu faith

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Source: S.E. Frost, Jr., *The Sacred Writings of the World's Great Religions*. (N.Y.: McGraw-Hill, 1972), pp. 20-22, 27-30.

#### SECOND ADHYAYA

##### First Brahmana

1. There was formerly the proud Gargya Balaki, a man of great reading. He said to Ajatasatru of Kasi, "Shall I tell you Brahman?" Ajatasatru said. "We give a thousand (cows) for that speech (of yours), for verily all people run away, saying, Janaka (the king of Mithila) is our father (patron)."

2. Gargya said: "The person that is in the sun, that I adore as Brahman." Ajatasatru said to him: "No, no! Do not speak to me on this. I adore him verily as the supreme, the

head of all beings, the king. Whoso adores him thus, becomes supreme, the head all beings, a king."

3. Gargya said: "The person that is in the moon (and in the mind) that I adore as Brahman." Ajatasatru said to him: "No, no! Do not speak to me on this. I adore him verily as the great, clad in white raiment, as Soma, the king. Whoso adores him thus, Soma is poured out and poured forth for him day by day, and his food does not fail."

4. Gargya said: "The person that is in the lightning (and in the heart), that I adore as Brahman." Ajatasatru said to him: "No, no! Do not speak to me on this. I adore him verily as the luminous. Whoso adores him thus, becomes luminous, and his offspring becomes luminous."

5. Gargya said: "The person that is in the ether (and in the ether of heart), that I adore as Brahman." Ajatasatru said to him: "No, no! Do not speak to me on this. I adore him as what is full, and quiescent. Whoso adores him thus, becomes filled with offspring and cattle, and his offspring does not cease from this world."

6. Gargya said: "The person that is in the wind (and in the breath), that I adore as Brahman." Ajatasatru said to him: "No, no! Do not speak to me on this. I adore him as Indra Vaikuntha, as the unconquerable arm (of the Maruts). Whoso adores him thus, becomes victorious, unconquerable, conquering his enemies."

7. Gargya said: “The person that is in the fire (and in the heart), that I adore as Brahman.” Ajatasatru said to him: “No, no! Do not speak to me on this. I adore him as powerful. Whoso adores him thus, becomes powerful, and his offspring becomes powerful.”

8. Gargya said: “The person that is in the water (in seed, and in the heart), that I adore as Brahman.” Ajatasatru said to him: “No, no! Do not speak to me on this. I adore him as likeness. Whoso adores him thus, to him comes what is likely (or proper), not what is improper; what is born from him is like unto him.”

9. Gargya said: “The person that is in the mirror, that I adore as Brahman.” Ajatasatru said to him: “No, no! Do not speak to me on this. I adore him verily as the brilliant. Whoso adores him thus, he becomes brilliant, his offspring becomes brilliant, and with whomsoever he comes together, he outshines them.”

10. Gargya said: “The sound that follows a man while he moves, that I adore as Brahman.” Ajatasatru said to him: “No, no! Do not speak to me on this. I adore him verily as life. Whoso adores him thus, he reaches his full age in this world, breath does not leave him before the time.”

11. Gargya said: “The person that is in space, that I adore as Brahman.” Ajatasatru said to him: “No, no! Do not speak to me on this. I adore him verily as the second who never leaves us. Whoso adores him thus, becomes possessed of a second, his party is not cut off from him.”

12. Gargya said: “The person that consists of the shadow, that I adore as Brahman.” Ajatasatru said to him: “No, no! Do not speak to me on this. I adore him verily as death. Whoso adores him thus, he reaches his whole age in this world, death does not approach him before the time.”

13. Gargya said: “The person that is in the body, that I adore as Brahman.” Ajatasatru said to him: No, no! Do not speak to me on this. I adore him verily as embodied. Whoso adores him thus, becomes embodied, and his offspring becomes embodied.”

Then Gargya became silent.

14. Ajatasatru said: “Thus far only?” “Thus far only,” he replied. Ajatasatru said: “This does not suffice to know it (the true Brahman).” Gargya replied: “Then let me come to you, as a pupil.”

15. Ajatasatru said: “Verily, it is unnatural that a Brahmana should come to a Kshatriya, hoping that he should tell him the Brahman. However, I shall make you know him clearly”; thus saying, he took him by the hand and rose.

And the two together came to a person who was asleep. He called him by these names, “Thou, great one, clad in white raiment, Soma, king.” He did not rise. Then rubbing him with his hand, he woke him, and he arose.

16. Ajatasatru said: “When this man was thus asleep, where was then the person (purusha), the intelligent? and from whence did he thus come back?” Gargya did not know this.

17. Ajatasatru said: “When this man was thus asleep, then the intelligent person (purusha), having through the intelligence of the senses (pranas) absorbed within himself

all intelligence, lies in the ether, which is in the heart. When he takes in these different kinds of intelligence, then it is said that the man sleeps (svapiti). Then the breath is kept in, speech is kept in, the ear is kept in, the eye is kept in, the mind is kept in.

18. “But when he moves about sleep in (and dream), then these are his worlds. He is, as it were, a great king; he is, as it were, a great Brahmana; he rises, as it were, and he falls. And as a great king might keep in his own subjects, and move about, according to his pleasure, within his own domain, thus does that person (who is endowed with intelligence) keep in the various senses (pranas) and move about, according to his pleasure, within his own body (while dreaming).

19. “Next, when he is in profound sleep, and knows nothing, there are the seventy-two thousand arteries called Hita, which from the heart spread through the body. Through them he moves forth and rests in the surrounding body. And as a young man, or a great king, or a great Brahmana, having reached the summit of happiness, might rest, so does he then rest.

20. “As the spider comes out with its thread, or as small sparks come all forth from fire, thus do all senses, all worlds, all Devas, all beings come forth from that Self. The Upanishad (the true name and doctrine) of that Self is ‘the True of the True.’ Verily the senses are the True, and he is the True of the True.”

## FOURTH ADHYAYA

### Fourth Brahmana

1. Yajnavalkya continued: “Now when that Self, having sunk into weakness, sinks, as it were, into unconsciousness, then gather those senses (pranas) around him, and he, taking with him those elements of light, descends into the heart. When that person in the eye turns away, then he ceases to know any forms.

2. “‘He has become one’ they say, ‘he does not see.’ ‘He has become one,’ they say, ‘he does not smell.’ ‘He has become one,’ they say, ‘he does not taste.’ ‘He has become one,’ they say, ‘he does not speak.’ ‘He has become one,’ they say, ‘he does not hear.’ ‘He has become one’ they say, ‘he does not think.’ ‘He has become one,’ they say, ‘he does not touch.’ ‘He has become one’ they say, ‘he does not know.’ The point of his heart becomes lighted up, and by that light the Self departs, either through the eye, or through the skull, or through other places of the body. And when he thus departs, life (the chief prana) departs after him, and when life thus departs, all the other vital spirits (pranas) depart after it. He is conscious, and being conscious he follows and departs.

“Then both his knowledge and his work take hold of him, and his acquaintance with former things.

3. “And as a caterpillar, after having reached the end of a blade of grass, and after having made another approach

(to another blade), draws itself together towards it, thus does this Self, after having thrown off this body and dispelled all ignorance, and after making another approach (to another body), draw himself together towards it.

4. “And as a goldsmith, taking a piece of gold, turns it into another, newer and more beautiful shape, so does this Self, after having thrown off this body and dispelled all ignorance, make unto himself another, newer and more beautiful shape, whether it be like the fathers, or like the Gandharvas, or like the Devas, or like Prajapati, or like Brahman, or like other beings.

5. “That Self is indeed Brahman, consisting of knowledge, mind, life, sight, hearing, earth, water, wind, ether, light and no light, desire and no desire, anger and no anger, right or wrong, and all things. Now as a man is like this or like that, according as he acts and according as he behaves, so will he be—a man of good acts will become good, a man of bad acts, bad. He becomes pure by pure deeds, bad by bad deeds.

“And here they say that a person consists of desires. And as is his desire, so is his will; and as is his will, so is his deed; and whatever deed he does, that he will reap.

6. “And here there is this verse: ‘To whatever object a man’s own mind is attached, to that he goes strenuously together with his deed; and having obtained the end (the last results) of whatever deed he does here on earth, he returns again from that world (which is the temporary reward of his deed) to this world of action.’

“So much for the man who desires. But as to the man who does not desire, who, not desiring, freed from desires, is satisfied in his desires, or desires the Self only, his vital spirits do not depart elsewhere—being Brahman, he goes to Brahman.”

7. “On this there is this verse: When all desires which once entered his heart are undone, then does the mortal become immortal, then he obtains Brahman.”

“And as the slough of a snake lies on an ant-hill, dead and cast away, thus lies this body; but that disembodied immortal spirit (prana, life) is Brahman only, is only light.”

Janaka Vaideha said: “Sir, I give you a thousand.”

8. “On this there are these verses:

“The small, old path stretching far away has been found by me. On it sages who know Brahman move on to the Svargaloka (heaven), and thence higher on, as entirely free.

9. “On that path they say that there is white, or blue, or yellow, or green, or red; that path was found by Brahman, and on it goes whoever knows Brahman, and who has done good, and obtained splendour.

10. “All who worship what is not knowledge (avidya) enter into blind darkness: those who delight in knowledge, enter, as it were, into greater darkness.

11. “There are indeed those unblest worlds, covered with blind darkness. Men who are ignorant and not enlightened go after death to those worlds.

12. “If a man understands the Self, saying, ‘I am He,’ what could he wish or desire that he should pine after the body?

13. “Whoever has found and understood the Self that has entered into this patched-together hiding-place, he indeed is the creator, for he is the maker of everything, his is the world, and he is the world itself.

14. “While we are here, we may know this; if not, I am ignorant, and there is great destruction. Those who know it become immortal, but others suffer pain indeed.

15. “If a man clearly beholds this Self as God, and as the lord of all that is and will be, then he is no more afraid.

16. “He behind whom the year revolves with the days, him the gods worship as the light of lights, as immortal time.

17. “He in whom the five beings and the ether rest, him alone I believe to be the Self—I who know, believe him to be Brahman; I who am immortal, believe him to be immortal.

18. “They who know the life of life, the eye of the eye, the ear of the ear, the mind of the mind, they have comprehended the ancient, primeval Brahman.

19. “By the mind alone it is to be perceived, there is in it no diversity. He who perceives therein any diversity, goes from death to death.

20. “This eternal being that can never be proved, is to be in perceived in one way only; it is spotless, beyond the ether, the unborn Self, great and eternal.

21. “Let a wise Brahmana, after he has discovered him, practise wisdom. Let him not seek after many words, for that is mere weariness of the tongue.’

22. “And he is that great unborn Self, who consists of knowledge, is surrounded by the Pranas, the ether within the heart. In it there reposes the ruler of all, the lord of all, the king of all. He does not become greater by good works, nor smaller by evil works. He is the lord of all, the king of all things, the protector of all things. He is a bank and a boundary, so that these worlds may not be confounded. Brahmanas seek to know him by the study of the Veda by sacrifice, by gifts, by penance, by fasting, and he who knows him becomes a Muni. Wishing for that world (for Brahman) only, mendicants leave their homes.

“Knowing this, the people of old did not wish for offspring. What shall we do with offspring, they said, who have this Self’ and this world of (Brahman). And they, having risen above the desire for sons, wealth, and new worlds, wander about as mendicants. For desire for sons is desire for wealth, and desire for wealth is desire for worlds. Both these are indeed desires only. He, the Self, is to be described by No, no! He is incomprehensible, for he cannot be comprehended; he is imperishable, for he cannot perish; he is unattached, for he does not attach himself; unfettered, he does not suffer, he does not fail. Him (who knows), these two do not overcome, whether he says that for some reason he has done evil, or for some reason he has done good—he overcomes both, and neither what he has done, nor what he has omitted to do, burns (affects) him.

23. “This has been told by a verse (Rich): ‘This eternal greatness of the Brahmana does not grow larger by work, nor does it grow smaller. Let man try to find (know) its

trace, for not having found (known) it, he is not sullied by any evil deed.’

“He therefore that knows it, after having become quiet, subdued, satisfied, patient, and collected, sees self in Self, sees all as Self. Evil does not overcome him, he overcomes all evil. Evil does not burn him, he burns all evil. Free from evil, free from spots, free from doubt, he becomes a (true) Brahmana; this is the Brahma-world, O king”—thus spoke Vajnavalkya.

Janaka Vaideha said: “Sir: I give you the Videhas, and also myself, to be together your slaves.”

24. This indeed is the great, the unborn Self, the strong, the giver of wealth. He who knows this obtains wealth.

25. This great, unborn Self, undecaying, undying, immortal, fearless, is indeed Brahman. Fearless is Brahman, and he who knows this becomes verily the fearless Brahman.

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*How is the dream state explained, or employed, to illustrate a truth in each Adhyaya?*

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## 2-3

### The Path of Mindfulness

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Adapted from *Satipatthana-sutta*, translated by Thich Nhat Hanh and Annabel Laity

“O monks,” said the Buddha, “there is a most wonderful way to help living beings realize purification, overcome directly grief and sorrow, end pain and anxiety, travel the right path, and realize nirvana. This way is the Four Establishments of Mindfulness.

“What are the Four Establishments?

“Monks, a practitioner remains established in the observation of the body in the body, diligent, with clear understanding, mindful, having abandoned every craving and every distaste for this life.

“One remains established in the observation of the feelings in the feelings, diligent, with clear understanding, mindful, having abandoned craving and every distaste for life.

“One remains established in the observation of the mind in the mind, diligent, with clear understanding, mindful, having abandoned craving and every distaste for life.

“One remains established in the observation of the objects of mind in the objects of mind, diligent, with clear understanding, mindful, having abandoned craving and every distaste for life.

“And how does a practitioner remain established in the observation of the body in the body?

“One goes to the forest, to the foot of a tree, or to an empty room, sits down cross-legged in the lotus position, holds one’s body straight, and establishes mindfulness in front of oneself. “Breathing in, one is aware of breathing in. Breathing out, one is aware of breathing out. Breathing in a long breath, one knows. ‘I am breathing in a long breath.’ Breathing out a long breath, one knows, ‘I am breathing

out a long breath.’ Breathing in a short breath, one knows, ‘I am breathing in a short breath.’ Breathing out a short breath, one knows, ‘I am breathing out a short breath.’

“The practitioner uses the following practice: ‘Breathing in, I am aware of my whole body.’ And then, ‘Breathing in, I calm the activities of my body. Breathing out, I calm the activities of my body.’

“Moreover, when walking, the practitioner is aware, ‘I am walking’; when standing is aware, ‘I am standing’; when sitting, is aware, ‘I am sitting’; when lying down, is aware, ‘I am lying down.’ In whatever position one’s body happens to be, one is aware of the position of the body.

“When the one is going forward or backward, one applies full awareness to one’s going forward or backward. when one looks in front or looks behind, bends down or stands up, one also applies full awareness to wearing the robe or carrying the alms bowl. When one eats or drinks, chews or savors the food, one applies full awareness to all this. When passing excrement or urinating, one applies full awareness to this. When one walks, stands, lies down, sits, sleeps or wakes up, speaks or is silent, one shines his awareness on all this.”

“Monks, how does a practitioner remain established in the observation of the feelings in the feelings?

“Whenever the practitioner has a pleasant feeling, one is aware, ‘I am experiencing a pleasant feeling.’ Whenever one has a painful feeling, one is aware, ‘I am experiencing a painful feeling.’ Whenever one experiences a feeling which is neither pleasant nor painful, one is aware, ‘I am experiencing a neutral feeling.’ When one experiences a feeling based in the body, one is aware, ‘I am experiencing a feeling based in the body, one is aware, ‘I am experiencing a feeling based in the mind, one is aware, ‘I am experiencing a feeling based in the mind.’ ”

“Monks, how does a practitioner remain established in the observation of the mind in the mind?

“When one’s mind is desiring, the practitioner is aware, ‘My mind is desiring.’ When one’s mind is not desiring, one is aware, “My mind is not desiring.’ When one’s mind is hating something, one is aware, ‘My mind is hating.’

When one's mind is not hating, one is aware, 'My mind is not hating.' When one's mind is in a state of ignorance, one is aware, 'My mind is in a state of ignorance.' When one's mind is not in a state of ignorance, one is aware, 'My mind is not in a state of ignorance.' When one's mind is tense, one is aware, 'My mind is tense.' When one's mind is not tense, one is aware, 'My mind is not tense.' When one's mind is distracted, one is aware, 'My mind is distracted.' When one's mind is not distracted, one is aware, 'My mind is not distracted.' When one's mind has a wider scope, one is aware, 'My mind has widened in scope.' When one's mind has a narrow scope, one is aware, 'My mind has become narrow in scope.'

"When one's mind is composed, one is aware, 'My mind is composed.' When one's mind is not composed, one is aware, 'My mind is not composed.' When one's mind is free, one is aware, 'My mind is free.' When one's mind is not free, one is aware, 'My mind is not free.' "

"How, monks, does the practitioner remain established in the observation of the Four Noble Truths?

"A Practioner is aware 'This is suffering,' as it arises. One is aware, 'This is the cause of the suffering,' as it arises. One is aware, 'This is the end of suffering,' as it arises. One is aware, 'This is the path which leads to the end of suffering' as it arises."

"Monks, one who practices in the Four Establishments of Mindfulness for seven years can expect one of two fruits—the highest understanding in this very life or, if there remains some residue of affliction, he can attain the fruit of no-return.

"Let alone seven years, monks, whoever practices in the Four Establishments of Mindfulness for six, five, four, three, two years, one year, or one month, can also expect one of two fruits—either the highest understanding in this very life or can attain the fruit of no-return.

"Let alone a month, monks, whoever practices the Four Establishments of Mindfulness one week can also expect one or two fruits—either the highest understanding in this very life or the fruit of no-return."

The monks were delighted to hear the teaching of the Buddha. They took it to heart and began to put it into practice.

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*At first glance this teaching would appear to be a solitary one. What, however, are the social implications of a life lived in this way?*

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## 2-4

### Isaiah: from *The Book of Isaiah*

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In the year of the lord that king ũz-zĩ'äh died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

2 Above it stood the sër'-ă-phĩms: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet and with twain he did fly.

3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, *is* the LORD of hosts: the whole earth *is* full of his glory.

4. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

5 ¶ Then said I, Woe *is* me! for I am undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.

6 Then flew one of the sër'-ă-phĩms unto me, having a live coal in his hand, *which* he had taken with the tongs from off the altar:

7 And he laid *it* upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

8 Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here *am* I; send me.

9 ¶ And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.

10 Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest the see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

11 Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate.

12 And the LORD have removed men far away, and *there be* a great forsaking in the midst of the land.

13 ¶ But yet in it *shall be* a tenth, and *it* shall return, and shall be eaten: as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance *is* in them, when they cast *their leaves*: so the holy seed *shall be* the substance thereof.

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*Isaiah sees himself as unworthy for the call of God. How is he made ready and what are the implications of this preparation?*

## 2–5

*The Apology from Plato*

From Plato: *The Collected Dialogues*, Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns, eds. (Princeton: University Press, 1961), pp. 5–19.

Very well, then, I must begin my defense, gentlemen, and I must try, in the short time that I have, to rid your minds of a false impression which is the work of many years. I should like this to be the result, gentlemen, assuming it to be for your advantage and my own; and I should like to be successful in my defense, but I think that it will be difficult, and I am quite aware of the nature of my task. However, let that turn out as God wills. I must obey the law and make my defense.

Let us go back to the beginning and consider what the charge is that has made me so unpopular, and has encouraged Meletus to draw up this indictment. Very well, what did my critics say in attacking my character? I must read out their affidavit, so to speak, as though they were my legal accusers: Socrates is guilty of criminal meddling, in that he inquires into things below the earth and in the sky, and makes the weaker argument defeat the stronger, and teachers others to follow his example. It runs something like that. You have seen it for yourselves in the play by Aristophanes, where Socrates goes whirling round, proclaiming that he is walking on air, and uttering a great deal of other nonsense about things of which I know nothing whatsoever. I mean no disrespect for such knowledge, if anyone really is versed in it—I do not want any more lawsuits brought against me by answer questions for rich and poor alike, and I am equally ready if anyone prefers to listen to me and answer my questions. If any given one of these people becomes a good citizen or a bad one, I cannot fairly be held responsible, since I have never promised or imparted any teaching to anybody, and if anyone asserts that he has ever learned or heard from me privately anything which was not open to everyone else, you may be quite sure that he is not telling the truth.

But how is it that some people enjoy spending a great deal of time in my company? You have heard the reason, gentlemen; I told you quite frankly. It is because they enjoy hear-

ing me examine those who think that they are wise when they are not—an experience which has its amusing side. This duty I have accepted, as I said, in obedience to God's commands given in oracles and dreams and in every other way that any other divine dispensation has ever impressed a duty upon man. This is a true statement, gentlemen, and easy to verify. If it is a fact that I am in process of corrupting some of the young, and have succeeded already in corrupting others, and if it were a fact that some of the latter, being now grown up, had discovered that I had ever given them bad advice when they were young, surely they ought now to be coming forward to denounce and punish me. And if they did not like to do it themselves, you would expect some of their families—their fathers and brothers and other near relations—to remember it now, if their own flesh and blood had suffered any harm from me. Certainly a great many of them have found their way into this court, as I can see for myself—first Crito over there, my contemporary and near neighbor, the father of this young man Critobulus, and then Lysanias of Sphettus, the father of Aeschines here, and next Antiphon of Cephissus, over there, the father of Epigenes. Then besides there are all those whose brothers have been members of our circle—Nicostratus, the son of Theozotides, the brother of Theodotus, but Theodotus is dead, so he cannot appeal to his brother, and Paralus here, the son of Demodocus, whose brother was Theages. And here is Adimantus, the son of Ariston, whose brother Plato is over there, and Aeantodorus, whose brother Apollodorus is here on this side. I can name many more besides, some of whom Meletus most certainly ought to have produced as witnesses in the course of his speech. If he forgot to do so then, let him do it now—I am willing to make way for him. Let him state whether he has any such evidence to offer. On the contrary, gentlemen, you will find that they are all prepared to help me—the corrupter and evil genius of their nearest and dearest relatives, as Meletus and Anytus say. The actual victims of my corrupting influence might perhaps be excused for helping me; but as for the uncorrupted, their relations of mature age, what other reason can they have for helping me except the right and proper one, that they know Meletus is lying and I am telling the truth?

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*What is the mission of Socrates?*

## 2–6

*Aristotle, Nichomachean Ethics*

From Introduction to Aristotle, (Modern Library Series), ed. Richard McKeon (New York: Random House, 1992), pp. 358–367.

5 Next we must consider what virtue is. Since things that are found in the soul are of three kinds—passions, faculties,

states of character, virtue must be one of these. By passions I mean appetite, anger, fear, confidence, envy, joy, friendly feeling, hatred, longing, emulation, pity, and in general the feelings that are accompanied by pleasure or pain; by faculties the things in virtue of which we are said to be capable of feeling these, e. g. of becoming angry or being pained or feeling pity; by states of character the things in virtue of which we stand well or badly with reference to the *passions*, e. g. with reference to anger we stand badly if we feel it violently or too weakly, and well if we feel it moderately; and similarly with reference to the other passions.

Now neither the virtues nor the vices are passions, because we are not called good or bad on the ground of our passions, but are so called on the ground of our virtues and our vices, and because we are neither praised nor blamed for our passions (for the man who feels fear or anger is not praised, nor is the man who simply feels anger blamed, but the man who feels it in a certain way), but for our virtues and our vices are *are* praised or blamed.

Again, we feel anger and fear without choice, but the virtues are modes of choice or involve choice. Further, in respect of the passions we are said to be moved, but in respect of the virtues and the vices we are said not to be moved but to be disposed in a particular way.

For these reasons also they are not *faculties*; for we are neither called good nor bad, nor praised or blamed, for the simple capacity of feeling the passions; again, we have the faculties by nature, but we are not made good or bad by nature; we have spoken of this before.

If, then, the virtues are neither passions nor faculties, all that remains is that they should be *states of character*.

Thus we have stated what virtue is in respect of its genus.

6 We must, however, not only describe virtue as a state of character, but also say what sort of state it is. We may remark, then, that every virtue or excellence both brings into good condition the thing of which it is the excellence and makes the work of that thing be done well; e. g. the excellence of the eye makes both the eye and its work good; for it is by the excellence of the eye that we see well. Similarly the excellence of the horse makes a horse both good in itself and good at running and at carrying its rider and at awaiting the attack of the enemy. Therefore, if this is true in every case, the virtue of man also will be the state of character which makes a man good and which makes him do his own work well.

How this is to happen we have stated already, but it will be made plain also by the following consideration of the specific nature of virtue. In everything that is continuous and divisible it is possible to take more, less, or an equal amount, and that either in terms of the thing itself or relatively to us; and the equal is an intermediate between excess and defect. By the intermediate in the object I mean that which is equidistant from each of the extremes, which is one and the same for all men; by the intermediate relatively to us that which is neither too much nor too little—and this is not one, nor the same for all. For instance, if ten is many and two is few, six is the intermediate, taken in terms of the object; for it exceeds and is exceeded by an equal amount; this is intermediate according to arithmetical proportion. But the intermediate relatively to us is not to be taken so; if ten pounds are too much for a particular person to eat and two too little, it does not follow that the trainer will order six pounds; for this also is perhaps too much for the person who is to take it, or too little—too little for Milo, too much for the beginner in athletic exercises. The same is true of running and wrestling. Thus a master of any art avoids excess and defect, but seeks the intermediate and chooses this—the intermediate not in the object but relatively to us.

If it is thus, then, that every art does its work well—by looking to the intermediate and judging its works by this standard (so that we often say of good works of art that it is not possible either to take away or to add anything, implying that excess and defect destroy the goodness of works of art, while the mean preserves it; and good artists, as we say, look to this in their work), and if, further, virtue is more exact and better than any art, as nature also is, then virtue must have the quality of aiming at the intermediate. I mean moral virtue; for it is this that is concerned with passions and actions, and in these there is excess, defect, and the intermediate. For instance, both fear and confidence and appetite and anger and pity and in general pleasure and pain may be felt both too much and too little, and in both cases not well; but to feel them at the right times, with reference to the right objects, towards the right people, with the right motive, and in the right way, is what is both intermediate and best, and this is characteristic of virtue. Similarly with regard to actions also there is excess, defect, and the intermediate. Now virtue is concerned with passions and actions, in which excess is a form of failure, and so is defect, while the intermediate is praised and is a form of success; and being praised and being successful are both characteristics of virtue. Therefore virtue is a kind of mean, since, as we have seen, it aims at what is intermediate.

Again, it is possible to fail in many ways (for evil belongs to the class of the unlimited, as the Pythagoreans conjectured, and good to that of the limited), while to succeed is possible only in one way (for which reason also one is easy and the other difficult—to miss the mark easy, to hit it difficult); for these reasons also, then, excess and defect are characteristic of vice, and the mean of virtue;

For men are good in but one way, but bad in many.

Virtue, then, is a state of character concerned with choice, lying in a mean, i. e. the mean relative to us, this being determined by a rational principle, and by that principle by which the man of practical wisdom would determine it. Now it is a mean between two vices, that which depends on excess and that which depends on defect; and again it is a mean because the vices respectively fall short of or exceed what is right in both passions and actions, while virtue both finds and chooses that which is intermediate. Hence in respect of its substance and the definition which states its essence virtue is a mean, with regard to what is best and right an extreme.

But not every action nor every passion admits of a mean; for some have names that already imply badness, e.g., spite, shamelessness, envy, and in the case of actions adultery, theft, murder; for all of these and suchlike things imply by their names that they are themselves bad, and not the excesses or deficiencies of them. It is not possible, then, ever to be right with regard to them; one must always be wrong. Nor does goodness or badness with regard to such things depend on committing adultery with the right woman, at the right time, and in the right way, but simply



to do any of them is to go wrong. it would be equally absurd, then, to expect that in unjust, cowardly, and voluptuous action there should be a mean, an excess, and a deficiency; for at that rate there would be a mean of excess and of deficiency, an excess of excess, and a deficiency of deficiency. But as there is no excess and deficiency of temperance and courage because what is intermediate is in a sense an extreme, so too of the actions we have mentioned there is no mean nor any excess and deficiency, but however they are done they are wrong; for in general there is neither a mean of excess and deficiency, nor excess and deficiency of a mean.

7 We must, however, not only make this general statement, but also apply it to the individual facts. For among statements about conduct those which are general apply more widely, but those which are particular are more genuine, since conduct has to do with individual cases, and our statements must harmonize with the facts in these cases. We may take these cases from our table. With regard to feelings of fear and confidence courage is the mean; of the people who exceed, he who exceeds in fearlessness has no name (many of the states have no name), while the man who exceeds in confidence is rash, and he who exceeds in fear and falls short in confidence is a coward. With regard to pleasures and pains—not all of them, and not so much with regard to the pains—the mean is temperance, the excess self-indulgence. Persons deficient with regard to the pleasures are not often found; hence such persons also have received no name. But let us call them ‘insensible’.

With regard to giving and taking of money the mean is liberality, the excess and the defect prodigality and meanness. In these actions people exceed and fall short in contrary ways; the prodigal exceeds in spending and falls short in taking, while the mean man exceeds in taking and falls short in spending. (At present we are giving a mere outline or summary, and are satisfied with this; later these states will be more exactly determined.) With regard to money there are also other dispositions—a mean, magnificence (for the magnificent man differs from the liberal man; the former deals with large sums, the latter with small ones), and excess, tastelessness and vulgarity, and a deficiency, niggardliness; these differ from the states opposed to liberality, and the mode of their difference will be stated later.

With regard to honour and dishonour the mean is proper pride, the excess is known as a sort of ‘empty vanity’, and the deficiency is undue humility; and as we said liberality was related to magnificence, differing from it by dealing with small sums, so there is a state similarly related to proper pride, being concerned with small honours while that is concerned with great. For it is possible to desire honour as one ought, and more than one ought, and less, and the man who exceeds in his desires is called ambitious, the man who falls short unambitious, while the intermediate person has no name. The dispositions also are nameless, except that that of the ambitious man is called ambition. Hence the people who are at the extremes lay claim to the middle place; and we ourselves sometimes call the intermediate

person ambitious and sometimes unambitious, and sometimes praise the ambitious man and sometimes the unambitious. The reason of our doing this will be stated in what follows; but now let us speak of the remaining states according to the method which has been indicated.

With regard to anger also there is an excess, a deficiency, and a mean. Although they can scarcely be said to have names, yet since we call the intermediate person good-tempered let us call the mean good temper; of the persons at the extremes let the one who exceeds be called irascible, and his vice irascibility, and the man who falls short an inirascible sort of person, and the deficiency inirascibility.

There are also three other means, which have a certain likeness to one another, but differ from one another: for they are all concerned with intercourse in words and actions, but differ in that one is concerned with truth in this sphere, the other two with pleasantness; and of this one kind is exhibited in giving amusement, the other in all the circumstances of life. We must therefore speak of these too, that we may the better see that in all things the mean is praiseworthy, and the extremes neither praiseworthy nor right, but worthy of blame. Now most of these states also have no names, but we must try, as in the other cases, to invent names ourselves so that we may be clear and easy to follow. With regard to truth, then, the intermediate is a truthful sort of person and the mean may be called truthfulness, while the pretence which exaggerates is boastfulness and the person characterized by it a boaster, and that which understates is mock modesty and the person characterized by it mock-modest. With regard to pleasantness in the giving of amusement the intermediate person is ready-witted and the disposition ready wit, the excess is buffoonery and the person characterized by it a buffoon, while the man who falls short is a sort of boor and his state is boorishness. With regard to the remaining kind of pleasantness, that which is exhibited in life in general, the man who is pleasant in the right way is friendly and the mean is friendliness, while the man who exceeds is an obsequious person if he has no end in view, a flatterer if he is aiming at his own advantage, and the man who falls short and is unpleasant in all circumstances is a quarrelsome and surly sort of person.

There are also means in the passions and concerned with the passions; since shame is not a virtue, and yet praise is extended to the modest man. For even in these matters one man is said to be intermediate, and another to exceed, as for instance the bashful man who is ashamed of everything; while he who falls short or is not ashamed of anything at all is shameless, and the intermediate person is modest. Righteous indignation is a mean between envy and spite, and these states are concerned with the pain and pleasures that are felt at the fortunes of our neighbours; the man who is characterized by righteous indignation is pained at undeserved good fortune, the envious man, going beyond him, is pained at all good fortune, and the spiteful man falls so far short of being pained that he even rejoices. But these states there will be an opportunity of describing elsewhere; with regard to justice, since it has not one simple meaning,

we shall, after describing the other states, distinguish its two kinds and say how each of them is a mean; and similarly we shall treat also of the rational virtues.

8 There are three kinds of disposition, then, two of them vices, involving excess and deficiency respectively, and one a virtue, viz. the mean, and all are in a sense opposed to all; for the extreme states are contrary both to the intermediate state and to each other, and the intermediate to the extremes; as the equal is greater relatively to the less, less relatively to the greater, so the middle states are excessive relatively to the deficiencies, deficient relatively to the excesses, both in passions and in actions. For the brave man appears rash relatively to the coward, and cowardly relatively to the rash man; and similarly the temperate man appears self-indulgent relatively to the insensible man, insensible relatively to the self-indulgent, and the liberal man prodigal relatively to the mean man, mean relatively to the prodigal. Hence also the people at the extremes push the intermediate man each over to the other, and the brave man is called rash by the coward, cowardly by the rash man, and correspondingly in the other cases.

These states being thus opposed to one another, the greatest contrariety is that of the extremes to each other, rather than to the intermediate; for these are further from each other than from the intermediate, as the great is further from the small and the small from the great than both are from the equal. Again, to the intermediate some extremes show a certain likeness, as that of rashness to courage and that of prodigality to liberality; but the extremes show the

greatest unlikeness to each other; now contraries are defined as the things that are furthest from each other, so that things that are further apart are more contrary.

To the mean in some cases the deficiency, in some the excess is more opposed; e. g. it is not rashness, which is an excess, but cowardice, which is a deficiency, that is more opposed to courage, and not insensibility, which is a deficiency, but self-indulgence, which is an excess, that is more opposed to temperance. This happens from two reasons, one being drawn from the thing itself; for because one extreme is nearer and liker to the intermediate, we oppose not this but rather its contrary to the intermediate. E. g., since rashness is thought liker and nearer to courage, and cowardice more unlike, we oppose rather the latter to courage; for things that are further from the intermediate are thought more contrary to it. This, then, is one cause, drawn from the thing itself; another is drawn from ourselves; for the things to which we ourselves more naturally tend seem more contrary to the intermediate. For instance, we ourselves tend more naturally to pleasures, and hence are more easily carried away towards self-indulgence than towards propriety. We describe as contrary to the mean, then, rather the directions in which we more often go to great lengths; and therefore self-indulgence, which is an excess, is the more contrary to temperance.

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*What are some difficulties in finding the mean between excess and deficiency?*

## Chapter 3

# *Greek and Hellenistic Civilization*

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### 3-1

#### *Pericles' Funeral Oration* by Thucydides

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From *History of the Peloponnesian War*, translation by Rex Warner (New York: Penguin Books, 1986), pp. 143–151.

In the same winter the Athenians, following their annual custom, gave a public funeral for those who had been the first to die in the war. These funerals are held in the following way: two days before the ceremony the bones of the fallen are brought and put in a tent which has been erected, and people make whatever offerings they wish to their own dead. Then there is a funeral procession in which coffins of cypress wood are carried on wagons. There is one coffin for each tribe, which contains the bones of members of that tribe. One empty bier is decorated and carried in the procession: that is for the missing, whose bodies could not be recovered. Everyone who wishes to, both citizens and foreigners, can join in the procession, and the women who are related to the dead are there to make their laments at the tomb. The bones are laid in the public burial-place, which is in the most beautiful quarter outside the city walls. Here the Athenians always bury those who have fallen in war. The only exception is those who died at Marathon, who, because their achievement was considered absolutely outstanding, were buried on the battlefield itself.

When the bones have been laid in the earth, a man chosen by the city for his intellectual gifts and for his general reputation makes an appropriate speech in praise of the dead, and after the speech all depart. This is the procedure at these burials, and all through the war, when the time came to do so, the Athenians followed this ancient custom. Now, at the burial of those who were the first to fall in the war Pericles, the son of Xanthippus, was chosen to make the speech. When the moment arrived, he came forward from the tomb and, standing on a high platform, so that he might be heard by as many people as possible in the crowd, he spoke as follows:

‘Many of those who have spoken here in the past have praised the institution of this speech at the close of our ceremony. It seemed to them a mark of honour to our soldiers who have fallen in war that a speech should be made over them. I do not agree. These men have shown themselves valiant in action, and it would be enough, I think, for their glories to be proclaimed in action, as you

have just seen it done at this funeral organized by the state. Our belief in the courage and manliness of so many should not be hazard on the goodness or badness of one man’s speech. Then it is not easy to speak with a proper sense of balance, when a man’s listeners find it difficult to believe in the truth of what one is saying. The man who knows the facts and loves the dead may well think that an oration tells less than what he knows and what he would like to hear: others who do not know so much may feel envy for the dead, and think the orator over-praises them, when he speaks of exploits that are beyond their own capacities. Praise of other people is tolerable only up to a certain point, the point where one still believes that one could do oneself some of the things one is hearing about. Once you get beyond this point, you will find people becoming jealous and incredulous. However, the fact is that this institution was set up and approved by our forefathers, and it is my duty to follow the tradition and do my best to meet the wishes and the expectations of every one of you.

‘I shall begin by speaking about our ancestors, since it is only right and proper on such an occasion to pay them the honour of recalling what they did. In this land of ours there have always been the same people living from generation to generation up till now, and they, by their courage and their virtues, have handed it on to us, a free country. They certainly deserve our praise. Even more so do our fathers deserve it. For to the inheritance they had received they added all the empire we have now, and it was not without blood and toil that they handed it down to us of the present generation. And then we ourselves, assembled here today, who are mostly in the prime of life, have, in most directions, added to the power of our empire and have organized our State in such a way that it is perfectly well able to look after itself both in peace and in war.

‘I have no wish to make a long speech on subjects familiar to you all: so I shall say nothing about the warlike deeds by which we acquired our power or the battles in which we or our fathers gallantly resisted our enemies, Greek or foreign. What I want to do is, in the first place, to discuss the spirit in which we faced our trials and also our constitution and the way of life which has made us great. After that I shall speak in praise of the dead, believing that this kind of speech is not inappropriate to the present occasion, and that this whole assembly, of citizens and foreigners, may listen to it with advantage.

‘Let me say that our system of government does not copy the institutions of our neighbours. It is more the case of our being a model to others, than of our imitating anyone else. Our constitution is called a democracy because power is in the hands not of a minority but of the

whole people. When it is a question of settling private disputes, everyone is equal before the law; when it is a question of putting one person before another in positions of public responsibility, what counts is not membership of a particular class, but the actual ability which the man possesses. No one, so long as he has it in him to be of service to the state, is kept in political obscurity because of poverty. And, just as our political life is free and open, so is our day-to-day life in our relations with each other. We do not get into a state with our next-door neighbour if he enjoys himself in his own way, nor do we give him the kind of black looks which, though they do no real harm, still do hurt people's feelings. We are free and tolerant in our private lives; but in public affairs we keep to the law. This is because it commands our deep respect.

'We give our obedience to those whom we put in positions of authority, and we obey the laws themselves, especially those which are for the protection of the oppressed, and those unwritten laws which it is an acknowledged shame to break.

'And here is another point. When our work is over, we are in a position to enjoy all kinds of recreation for our spirits. There are various kinds of contests and sacrifices regularly throughout the year; in our own homes we find a beauty and a good taste which delight us every day and which drive away our cares. Then the greatness of our city brings it about that all the good things from all over the world flow in to us, so that to us it seems just as natural to enjoy foreign goods as our own local products.

'Then there is a great difference between us and our opponents, in our attitude towards military security. Here are some examples: Our city is open to the world, and we have no periodical deportations in order to prevent people observing or finding out secrets which might be of military advantage to the enemy. This is because we rely, not on secret weapons, but on our own real courage and loyalty. There is a difference, too, in our educational systems. The Spartans, from their earliest boyhood, are submitted to the most laborious training in courage; we pass our lives without all these restrictions, and yet are just as ready to face the same dangers as they are. Here is a proof of this: When the Spartan's invade our land, they do not come by themselves, but bring all their allies with them; whereas we, when we launch an attack abroad, do the job by ourselves, and, though fighting on foreign soil, do not often fail to defeat opponents who are fighting for their own hearths and homes. As a matter of fact none of our enemies have ever yet been confronted with our total strength, because we have to divide our attention between our navy and the many missions on which our troops are sent on land. Yet, if our enemies engage a detachment of our forces and defeat it, they give themselves credit for having thrown back our entire army; or, if they lose, they claim that they were beaten by us in full strength. There are certain advantages, I think, in our way of meeting danger voluntarily, with an easy mind, instead of with a laborious training, with natural rather than with state-induced courage. We do

not have to spend our time practising to meet sufferings which are still in the future; and when they are actually upon us we show ourselves just as brave as these others who are always in strict training. This is one point in which, I think, our city deserves to be admired. There are also others:

'Our love of what is beautiful does not lead to extravagance; our love of the things of the mind does not make us soft. We regard wealth as something to be properly used, rather than as something to boast about. As for poverty, no one need be ashamed to admit it: the real shame is in not taking practical measures to escape from it. Here each individual is interested not only in his own affairs but in the affairs of the state as well: even those who are mostly occupied with their own business are extremely well-informed on general politics—This is a peculiarity of ours: we do not say that a man who takes no interest in politics is a man who minds his own business; we say that he has no business here at all. We Athenians, in our own persons, take our decisions on policy or submit them to proper discussions: for we do not think that there is an incompatibility between words and deeds; the worst thing is to rush into action before the consequences have been properly debated. And this is another point where we differ from other people. We are capable at the same time of taking risks and of estimating them beforehand. Others are brave out of ignorance; and, when they stop to think, they begin to fear. But the man who can most truly be accounted brave is he who best knows the meaning of what is sweet in life and of what is terrible, and then goes out undeterred to meet what is to come.

'Again, in questions of general good feeling there is a great contrast between us and most other people. We make friends by doing good to others, not by receiving good from them. This makes our friendship all the more reliable, since we want to keep alive the gratitude of those who are in our debt by showing continued good-will to them: whereas the feelings of one who owes us something lack the enthusiasm, since he knows that, when he repays our kindness, it will be more like paying back a debt than giving something spontaneously. We are unique in this. When we do kindnesses to others, we do not do them out of any calculations of profit or loss: we do them without afterthought, relying on our free liberality. Taking everything together then, I declare that our city is an education to Greece, and I declare that in my opinion each single one of our citizens, in all the manifold aspects of life, is able to show himself the rightful lord and owner of his own person, and do this, moreover, with exceptional grace and exceptional versatility. And to show that this is no empty boasting for the present occasion, but real tangible fact, you have only to consider the power which our city possesses and which has been won by those very qualities which I have mentioned. Athens, alone of the states we know, comes to her testing time in a greatness that surpasses what was imagined of her. In her case, and in her case alone, no invading enemy is ashamed at being

defeated, and no subject can complain of being governed by people unfit for their responsibilities. Mighty indeed are the marks and monuments of our empire which we have left. Future ages will wonder at us, as the present age wonders at us now. We do not need the praises of a Homer, or of anyone else whose words may delight us for the moment, but whose estimation of facts will fall short of what is really true. For our adventurous spirit has forced an entry into every sea and into every land; and everywhere we have left behind us everlasting memorials of good done to our friends or suffering inflicted on our enemies.

‘This, then, is the kind of city for which these men, who could not bear the thought of losing her, nobly fought and nobly died. It is only natural that every one of us who survive them should be willing to undergo hardships in her service. And it was for this reason that I have spoken at such length about our city, because I wanted to make it clear that for us there is more at stake than there is for others who lack our advantages; also I wanted my words of praise for the dead to be set in the bright light of evidence. And now the most important of these words has been spoken. I have sung the praises of our city; but it was the courage and gallantry of these men, and of people like them, which made her splendid. Nor would you find it true in the case of many of the Greeks, as it is true of them, that no words can do more than justice to their deeds.

‘To me it seems that the consummation which has overtaken these men show us the meaning of manliness in its first revelation and in its final proof. Some of them, no doubt, had their faults; but what we ought to remember first is their gallant conduct against the enemy in defence of their native land. They have blotted out evil with good, and done more service to the commonwealth than they ever did harm in their private lives. No one of these men weakened because he wanted to go on enjoying his wealth: no one put off the awful day in the hope that he might live to escape his poverty and grow rich. More to be desired than such things, they chose to check the enemy’s pride. This, to them, was a risk most glorious, and they accepted it, willing to strike down the enemy and relinquish everything else. As for success or failure, they left that in the doubtful hands of Hope, and when the reality of battle was before their faces, they put their trust in their own selves. In the fighting, they thought it more honourable to stand their ground and suffer death than to give in and save their lives. So they fled from the reproaches of men, abiding with life and limb the brunt of battle; and, in a small moment of time, the climax of their lives, a culmination of glory, not of fear, were swept away from us.

‘So and such they were, these men—worthy of their city. We who remain behind may hope to be spared their fate, but must resolve to keep the same daring spirit against the foe. It is not simply a question of estimating the advantages in theory. I could tell you a long story (and you know it as well as I do) about what is to be gained by beating the enemy back. What I would prefer is that you should fix your eyes every day on the greatness of Athens as she

really is, and should fall in love with her. When you realize her greatness, then reflect that what made her great was men with a spirit of adventure, men who knew their duty, men who were ashamed to fall below a certain standard. If they ever failed in an enterprise, they made up their minds that at any rate the city should not find their courage lacking to her, and they gave to her the best contribution that they could. They gave her their lives, to her and to all of us, and for their own selves they won praises that never grow old, the most splendid of sepulchres—not the sepulchre in which their bodies are laid, but where their glory remains eternal in men’s minds, always there on the right occasion to stir others to speech or to action. For famous men have the whole earth as their memorial: it is not only the inscriptions on their graves in their own country that mark them out; no, in foreign lands also, not in any visible form but in people’s hearts, their memory abides and grows. It is for you to try to be like them. Make up your minds that happiness depends on being free, and freedom depends on being courageous. Let there be no relaxation in face of the perils of the war. The people who have most excuse for despising death are not the wretched and unfortunate, who have no hope of doing well for themselves, but those who run the risk of a complete reversal in their lives, and who would feel the difference most intensely, if things went wrong for them. Any intelligent man would find a humiliation caused by his own slackness more painful to bear than death, when death comes to him unperceived, in battle, and in the confidence of his patriotism.

‘For these reasons I shall not commiserate with those parents of the dead, who are present here. Instead I shall try to comfort them. They are well aware that they have grown up in a world where there are many changes and chances. But this is good fortune—for men to end their lives with honour, as these have done, and for you honourable to lament them: their life was set to a measure where death and happiness went hand in hand. I know that it is difficult to convince you of this. When you see other people happy you will often be reminded of what used to make you happy too. One does not feel sad at not having some good thing which is outside one’s experience: real grief is felt at the loss of something which one is used to. All the same, those of you who are of the right age must bear up and take comfort in the thought of having more children. In your own homes these new children will prevent you from brooding over those who are no more, and they will be a help to the city, too, both in filling the empty places, and in assuring her security. For it is impossible for a man to put forward fair and honest views about our affairs if he has not, like everyone else, children whose lives may be at stake. As for those of you who are now too old to have children, I would ask you to count as gain the greater part of your life, in which you have been happy, and remember that what remains is not long, and let your hearts be lifted up at the thought of the fair fame of the dead. One’s sense of honour is the only thing that does not grow old, and the last pleasure, when one is worn out with age,

is not, as the poet said, making money, but having the respect of one's fellow men.

'As for those of you here who are sons or brothers of the dead, I can see a hard struggle in front of you. Everyone always speaks well of the dead, and, even if you rise to the greatest heights of heroism, it will be a hard thing for you to get the reputation of having come near, let alone equalled, their standard. When one is alive, one is always liable to the jealousy of one's competitors, but when one is out of the way, the honour one receives is sincere and unchallenged.

'Perhaps I should say a word or two on the duties of women to those among you who are now widowed. I can say all I have to say in a short word of advice. Your great glory is not to be inferior to what God has made you, and the

greatest glory of a woman is to be least talked about by men, whether they are praising you or criticizing you. I have now, as the law demanded, said what I had to say. For the time being our offerings to the dead have been made, and for the future their children will be supported at the public expense by the city, until they come of age. This is the crown and prize which she offers, both to the dead and to their children, for the ordeals which they have faced. Where the rewards of valour are the greatest, there you will find also the best and bravest spirits among the people. And now, when you have mourned for your dear ones, you must depart.'

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*What are the main virtues of Athens as described by Pericles?*

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### 3-2

## *Antigone* by Sophocles

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From *The Complete Greek Tragedies*, David Grene and Richmond Lattimore, eds., (Chicago: University Press), pp. 186-193.

Here is Haemon, youngest of your sons.  
Does he come grieving  
for the fate of his bride to be,  
is agony at being cheated of his marriage?

**Creon**

Soon we will know that better than the prophets.  
My son, can it be that you have not heard  
of my final decision on your betrothed?  
Can you have come here in your fury against your father?  
Or have I your love still, no matter what I do?

**Haemon**

Father, I am yours; with your excellent judgment  
you lay the right before me, and I shall follow it.  
No marriage will ever be so valued by me  
as to override the goodness of your leadership.

**Creon**

Yes, my son, this should always be  
in your very heart, that everything else  
shall be second to your father's decision.  
It is for this that fathers pray to have  
obedient sons begotten in their halls,  
that they may requite with ill their father's enemy  
and honor his friend no less than the would himself.  
If a man have sons that are no use to him,  
what can one say of him but that he has bred

so many sorrows to himself, laughter to his enemies?  
Do not, my son, banish your good sense  
through pleasure in a woman, since you know  
that the embrace grows cold  
when an evil woman shares your bed and home.  
What greater wound can there be than a false friend?  
No. Spit on her, throw her out like an enemy,  
this girl, to marry someone in Death's house.  
I caught her openly in disobedience  
alone out of all this city and I shall not make  
myself a liar in the city's sight. No, I will kill her.  
So let her cry if she will on the Zeus of kinship;  
for if I rear those of my race and breeding  
to be rebels, surely I will do so with those outside it.  
For he who is in his household a good man  
will be found a just man, too, in the city.  
But he that breaches the law or does it violence  
or things to dictate to those who govern him  
shall never have my good word.  
The man the city sets up in authority  
must be obeyed in small things and in just  
but also in their opposites.

I am confident such a man of whom I speak  
will be a good ruler, and willing to be well ruled.  
He will stand on his country's side, faithful and just,  
in the storm of battle. There is nothing worse  
than disobedience to authority.  
It destroys cities, it demolishes homes;  
it breaks and routs one's allies. Of successful lives  
the most of them are saved by discipline.  
So we must stand on the side of what is orderly;  
we cannot give victory to a woman.  
If we must accept defeat, let it be from a man;  
we must not let people say that a woman beat us.

**Chorus**

We think, if we are not victims of Time the Thief,  
that you speak intelligently of what you speak.

**Haemon**

Father, the natural sense that the gods breed in men is surely the best of their possessions. I certainly could not declare you wrong— may I never know how to do so!—Still there might be something useful that some other than you might think. It is natural for me to be watchful on your behalf concerning what all men say or do or find to blame. Your face is terrible to a simple citizen; it frightens him from words you dislike to hear. But what *I* can hear, in the dark, are things like these: the city mourns for this girl; they think she is dying most wrongly and most undeservedly of all womenkind, for the most glorious acts. Here is one who would not leave her brother unburied, a brother who had fallen in bloody conflict, to meet his end by greedy dogs or by the bird that chanced that way. Surely what she merits is golden honor, isn't it? That's the dark rumor that spreads in secret. Nothing I own I value more highly, father, than your success. What greater distinction can a son have than the glory of a successful father, and for a father the distinction of successful children? Do not bear this single habit of mind, to think that what you say and nothing else is true. A man who thinks that he alone is right, or what he says, or what he *is* himself, unique, such men, when opened up, are seen to be quite empty. For a man, though he be wise, it is no shame to learn—learn many things, and not maintain his views too rigidly. You notice how by streams in wintertime the trees that yield preserve their branches safely, but those that fight the tempest perish utterly. The man who keeps the sheet of his sail tight and never slackens capsizes his boat and makes the rest of his trip keel uppermost. Yield something of your anger, give way a little. If a much younger man, like me, may have a judgment, I would say it were far better to be one altogether wise by nature, but, as things incline not to be so, then it is good also to learn from those who advise well.

**Chorus**

My lord, if he says anything to the point, you should learn from him, and you, too, Haemon, learn from your father. Both of you have spoken well.

**Creon**

Should we that are my age learn wisdom from young men such as he is?

**Haemon**

Not learn injustice, certainly. If I am young, do not look at my years but what I do.

**Creon**

Is what you do to have respect for rebels?

**Haemon**

I would not urge you to be scrupulous towards the wicked.

**Creon**

Is *she* not tainted by the disease of wickedness?

**Haemon**

The entire people of Thebes says no to that.

**Creon**

Should the city tell me how I am to rule them?

**Haemon**

Do you see what a young man's words these are of yours?

**Creon**

Must I rule the land by someone else's judgment rather than my own?

**Haemon**

There is no city possessed by one man only.

**Creon**

Is not the city thought to be the ruler's?

**Haemon**

You would be a fine dictator of a desert.

**Creon**

It seems this boy is on the woman's side.

**Haemon**

If you are a woman—my care is all for you.

**Creon**

You villain, to bandy words with your own father!

**Haemon**

I see your acts as mistaken and unjust.

**Creon**

Am I mistaken, reverencing my own office?

**Haemon**

There is no reverence in trampling on God's honor.

**Creon**

Your nature is vile, in yielding to a woman.

**Haemon**

You will not find me yield to what is shameful.

**Creon**

At least, your argument is all for her.

**Haemon**

Yes, and for you and me—and for the gods below.

**Creon**

You will never marry her while her life lasts.

**Haemon**

Then she must die—and dying destroy another.

**Creon**

Has your daring gone so far, to threaten me?

**Haemon**

What threat is to speak against empty judgments?

**Creon**

Empty of sense yourself, you will regret  
your schooling of me in sense.

**Haemon**

If you were not  
my father, I would say you are insane.

**Creon**

You woman's slave, do not try to wheedle me.

**Haemon**

You want to talk but never to hear and listen.

**Creon**

Is that so? By the heavens above you will not—  
be sure of that—get off scot-free, insulting,  
abusing me.

*(He speaks to the servants.)*

You people bring out this creature,  
this hated creature, that she may die before  
his very eyes, right now, next her would-be  
husband.

**Haemon**

Not at my side! Never thing that? She will not  
die by my side. But you will never again  
set eyes upon my face. Go then and rage  
with such of your friends as are willing to  
endure it.

**Chorus**

The man is gone, my lord, quick in his anger.  
A young man's mind is fierce when he is hurt.

**Creon**

Let him go, and do and think things superhuman.  
But these two girls he shall not save from  
death.

**Chorus**

Both of them? Do you mean to kill them both?

**Creon**

No, not the one that didn't do anything.  
You are quite right there.

**Chorus**

And by what form of death do you mean to kill her?

**Creon**

I will bring her where the path is loneliest,  
and hide her alive in a rocky cavern there.  
I'll give just enough of food as shall suffice  
for a bare expiation, that the city may avoid pollution.  
In that place she shall call on Hades, god of death,  
in her prayers. That god only she reveres.  
Perhaps she will win from him escape from death  
or at least in that last moment will recognize  
her honoring of the dead is labor lost.

**Chorus**

Love undefeated in the fight,  
Love that makes havoc of possessions,  
Love who lives at night in a young girl's soft cheeks,  
Who travels over sea, or in huts in the countryside—  
there is no god able to escape you  
nor anyone of men, whose life is a day only,  
and whom you possess is mad.

You wrench the minds of just men to injustice,  
to their disgrace; this conflict among kinsmen  
it is you who stirred to turmoil.  
The winner is desire. She gleaming kindles  
from the eyes of the girl good to bed.  
Love shares the throne with the great powers that rule.  
For the golden Aphrodite holds her play there  
and then no one can overcome her.

Here I too am borne out of the course of lawfulness  
when I see these things, and I cannot control  
the springs of my tears  
when I see Antigone making her way  
to her bed—but the bed  
that is rest for everyone.

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*Several conflicts emerge in this discussion between  
Creon the King and his son. How do these conflicts  
still manifest themselves today?*



## 3–3

Homer: from  
*The Iliad*

From *The Iliad*, translation by Robert Fagles (New York: Viking Press, 1990), p. 77–80.

Rage—Goddess, sing the rage of Peleus' son Achilles, murderous, doomed, that cost the Achaeans countless losses, hurling down to the House of Death so many sturdy souls, great fighters' souls, but made their bodies carrion, feasts for the dogs and birds, and the will of Zeus was moving toward its end. Begin, Muse, when the two first broke and clashed, Agamemnon lord of men and brilliant Achilles.

What god drove them to fight with such a fury? Apollo the son of Zeus and Leto. Incensed at the king he swept a fatal plague through the army—men were dying and all because Agamemnon spurned Apollo's priest. Yes, Chryses approached the Achaeans' fast ships to win his daughter back, bringing a priceless ransom and bearing high in hand, wound on a golden staff, the wreaths of the god, the distant deadly Archer. He begged the whole Achaean army but most of all the two supreme commanders, Atreus' two sons, "Agamemnon, Menelaus—all Argives geared for war! May the Gods who hold the halls of Olympus give you Priam's city to plunder, then safe passage home. Just set my daughter free, my dear one . . . here, accept these gifts, this ransom. Honor the god who strikes from worlds away—the son of Zeus, Apollo!"

And all ranks of Achaeans cried out their assent: "Respect the priest, accept the shining ransom!" But it brought no joy to the heart of Agamemnon. The king dismissed the priest with a brutal order ringing in his ears: "Never again, old man, let me catch sight of you by the hollow ships! Not loitering now, not slinking back tomorrow. The staff and the wreaths of god will never save you then. The girl—I won't give up the girl. Long before that, old age will overtake her in *my* house, in Argos, far from her fatherland, slaving back and forth at the loom, forced to share my bed!

Now go, don't tempt my wrath—and you may depart alive."

The old man was terrified. He obeyed the order, turning, trailing away in silence down the shore where the roaring battle lines of breakers crash and drag. And moving off to a safe distance, over and over

the old priest prayed to the son of sleek-haired Leto, lord Apollo, "Hear me, Apollo! God of the silver bow who strides the walls of Chryse and Cilla sacrosanct—lord in power of Tenedos—Smintheus, god of the plague! If I ever roofed a shrine to please your heart, ever burned the long rich bones of bulls and goats on your holy altar, now, now bring my prayer to pass. Pay the Danaans back—your arrows for my tears!"

His prayer went up and Phoebus Apollo heard him. Down he strode from Olympus' peaks, storming at heart with his bow and hooded quiver slung across his shoulders. The arrows clanged at his back at the god quaked with rage, the god himself on the march and down he came like night. Over against the ships he dropped to a knee, let fly a shaft and a terrifying clash rang out from the great silver bow. First he went for the mules and circling dogs but then, launching a piercing shaft at the men themselves, he cut them down in droves—and the corpse-fires burned on, night and day, no end in sight.

Nine days the arrows of god swept through the army. On the tenth Achilles called all ranks to muster—the impulse seized him, sent by white-armed Hera grieving to see Achaean fighters drop and die. Once they'd gathered, crowding the meeting grounds, the swift runner Achilles rose and spoke among them: "Son of Atreus, now we are beaten back, I fear, the long campaign is lost. So home we sail . . . if we can escape our death—if war and plague are joining forces now to crush the Argives. But wait: let us question a holy man, a prophet, even a man skilled with dreams—dreams as well can come our way from Zeus—come, someone to tell us why Apollo rages so, whether he blames us for a vow we failed, or sacrifice. If only the god would share the smoky savor of limbs and full-grown goats, Apollo might be willing, still, somehow, to save us from this plague."

So he proposed and down he sat again as Calchas rose among them, Thestor's son, the clearest by far of all the seers who scan the flight of birds. He knew all things that are, all things that are past and all that are to come, the seer who had led the Argive ships to Troy with the second sight that god Apollo gave him. For the armies' good the seer began to speak: "Achilles, dear to Zeus . . . you order me to explain Apollo's anger, the distant deadly Archer? I will tell it all. But strike a pact with me, swear you will defend me with all your heart, with words and strength of hand. For there is a man I will enrage—I see it now—a powerful man who lords it over all the Argives, one the Achaeans must obey . . . A mighty king, raging against an inferior, is too strong. Even if he can swallow down his wrath today,

still he will nurse the burning in his chest  
until, sooner or later, he sends it bursting forth.  
Consider it closely, Achilles. Will you save me?"

And the matchless runner reassured him: "Courage!  
Out with it now, Calchas. Reveal the will of god,  
whatever you may know. And I swear by Apollo  
dear to Zeus, the power you pray to, Calchas,  
when you reveal god's will to the Argives—no one,  
not while I am alive and see the light on earth, no one will  
lay his heavy hands on you by the hollow ships.  
None among all the armies. Not even if you mean  
Agamemnon here who now claims to be, by far,  
the best of the Achaeans."

The seer took heart  
and this time he spoke out, bravely: "Beware—  
he casts no blame for a vow we failed, a sacrifice.  
The god's enraged because Agamemnon spurned his priest,  
he refused to free his daughter, he refused the ransom.  
That's why the Archer sends us pains and he will send us more  
and never drive this shameful destruction from the Argives,  
not till we give back the girl with sparkling eyes  
to her loving father—no price, no ransom paid—  
and carry a sacred hundred bulls to Chryse town.  
Then we can calm the god, and only then appease him."

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*What is the role of the Gods in this reading?*

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### 3–4

## *Tyrtaeus, The Spartan Creed*

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From *The Norton Book of Classical Literature*, ed. Bernard Knox  
(New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1993), pp. 211–212.

I would not say anything for a man nor take account of him  
for any speed of his feet or wrestling skill he might have,  
not if he had the size of a Cyclops and strength to go with it,  
not if he could outrun Bóreas, the North Wind of Thrace,  
not if he were more handsome and gracefully formed than  
Tithónos, or had more riches than Midas had, or Kínyras too,  
not if he were more of a king than Tantalid Pelops,  
or had the power of speech and persuasion Adrastós had,  
not if he had all splendors except for a fighting spirit.  
For no man ever proves himself a good man in war  
unless he can endure to face the blood and the slaughter,  
go close against the enemy and fight with his hands.  
Here is courage, mankind's finest possession, here is  
the noblest prize that a young man can endeavor to win,  
and it is a good thing his city and all the people share with  
him when a man plants his feet and stands in the foremost  
spears  
relentlessly, all thought of foul flight completely forgotten,  
and has well trained his heart to be steadfast and to  
endure,  
and with words encourages the man who is stationed beside  
him. Here is a man who proves himself to be valiant in war.  
With a sudden rush he turns to flight the rugged battalions of  
the enemy, and sustains the beating waves of assault.

And he who so falls among the champions and loses his  
sweet life, so blessing with honor his city, his father, and  
all his people,  
with wounds in his chest, where the spear that he was facing  
has transfixed  
that massive guard of his shield, and gone through his  
breastplate as well,  
why, such a man is lamented alike by the young and the elders,  
and all his city goes into mourning and grieves for his loss.  
His tomb is pointed to with pride, and so are his children, and  
his children's children, and afterward all the race that is his.  
His shining glory is never forgotten, his name is remembered,  
and he becomes an immortal, though he lies under the  
ground,  
when one who was a brave man has been killed by the furious  
War God  
standing his ground and fighting hard for his children and land.  
But if he escapes the doom of death, the destroyer of bodies,  
and wins his battle, and bright renown for the work of his  
spear,  
all men give place to him alike, the youth and the elders, and  
much joy comes his way before he goes down to the dead.  
Aging, he has reputation among his citizens. No one tries to  
interfere with his honors or all he deserves;  
all men withdraw before his presence, and yield their seats to  
him, the youth, and the men his age, and even those older  
than he.  
Thus a man should endeavor to reach this high place of  
courage with all his heart, and, so trying, never be  
backward in war.

*Translated by Richmond Lattimore.*

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*What is the main virtue of the Spartan citizen?*

## 3–5

## Thucydides from *History of the Peloponnesian War*

From *History of the Peloponnesian War*, translation by Rex Warner (New York: Penguin Books, 1986), pp. 35–45.

It appears, for example, that the country now called Hellas<sup>1</sup> had no settled population in ancient times; instead there was a series of migrations, as the various tribes, being under the constant pressure of invaders who were stronger than they were, were always prepared to abandon their own territory. There was no commerce, and no safe communication either by land or sea; the use they made of their land was limited to the production of necessities; they had no surplus left over for capital, and no regular system of agriculture, since they lacked the protection of fortifications and at any moment an invader might appear to take their land away from them. Thus, in the belief that the day-to-day necessities of life could be secured just as well in one place as in another, they showed no reluctance in moving from their homes, and therefore built no cities of any size or strength, nor acquired any important resources. Where the soil was most fertile there were the most frequent changes of population, as in what is now called Thessaly, in Boeotia, in most of the Peloponnese (except Arcadia), and in others of the richest parts of Hellas. For in these fertile districts it was easier for individuals to secure greater powers than their neighbours: this led to disunity, which often caused the collapse of these states, which in any case were more likely than others to attract the attention of foreign invaders.

It is interesting to observe that Attica, which, because of the poverty of her soil, was remarkably free from political disunity, has always been inhabited by the same race of people. Indeed, this is an important example of my theory that it was because of migrations that there was uneven development elsewhere; for when people were driven out from other parts of Greece by war or by disturbances, the most powerful of them took refuge in Athens, as being a stable society; then they became citizens, and soon made the city even more populous than it had been before, with the result that later Attica became too small for her inhabitants and colonies were sent out to Ionia.

Another point which seems to me good evidence for the weakness of the early inhabitants of the country is this: we

have no record of any action taken by Hellas as a whole before the Trojan War. Indeed, my view, is that at this time the whole country was not even called 'Hellas'. Before the time of Hellen, the son of Deucalion, the name did not exist at all, and different parts were known by the names of different tribes, with the name 'Pelasgian' predominating. After Hellen and his sons had grown powerful in Phthiotis and had been invited as allies into other states, these states separately and because of their connections with the family of Hellen began to be called 'Hellenic'. But it took a long time before the name ousted all the other names. The best evidence for this can be found in Homer, who, though he was born much later than the time of the Trojan War,<sup>2</sup> nowhere uses the name 'Hellenic' for the whole force. Instead he keeps this name for the followers of Achilles who came from Phthiotis and were in fact the original Hellenes. For the rest in his poems he uses the words 'Danaans', 'Argives', and 'Achaean'. He does not even use the term 'foreigners',<sup>3</sup> and this, in my opinion, is because in his time the Hellenes were not yet known by one name, and so marked off as something separate from the outside world. By 'Hellenic' I mean here both those who took on the name city by city, as the result of a common language, and those who later were all called by the common name. In any case these various Hellenic states, weak in themselves and lacking in communications with one another, took no kind of collective action before the time of the Trojan War. And they could not have united even for the Trojan expedition unless they had previously acquired a greater knowledge of seafaring.

Minos, according to tradition, was the first person to organize a navy. He controlled the greater part of what is now called the Hellenic Sea;<sup>4</sup> he ruled over the Cyclades, in most of which he founded the first colonies, putting his sons in as governors after having driven out the Carians. And it is reasonable to suppose that he did his best to put down piracy in order to secure his own revenues.

For in these early times, as communication by sea became easier, so piracy became a common profession both among the Hellenes and among the barbarians who lived on the coast and in the islands. The leading pirates were powerful men, acting both out of self-interest and in order to support the weak among their own people. They would descend upon cities which were unprotected by walls and indeed consisted only of scattered settlements; and by plundering such places they would gain most of their livelihood. At this time such a profession, so far from being regarded as disgraceful, was considered quite honourable. It is an attitude that can be illustrated even today by some of the

<sup>2</sup>Thucydides gives no date for the Trojan War.

<sup>3</sup>Rex Warner regularly translates the Greek *barbaroi* by 'foreigners'. It should be noted that the Athenians, for example, would call other Greeks, such as Spartans or Corinthians, *xenoi*, which is also commonly rendered by 'foreigners'.

<sup>4</sup>We now say 'Aegean Sea'.

<sup>1</sup>In the Greek language, ancient as well as modern, the name of the country is 'Hellas', of the people 'Hellenes'. 'Hellas' included all Greek communities, wherever they were established, but here Thucydides is referring more narrowly to the Greek peninsula.

inhabitants of the mainland among whom successful piracy is regarded as something to be proud of; and in the old poets, too, we find that the regular question always asked of those who arrive by sea is 'Are you pirates?' It is never assumed either that those who were so questioned would shrink from admitting the fact, or that those who were interested in finding out the fact would reproach them with it.

The same system of armed robbery prevailed by land; and even up to the present day much of Hellas still follows the old way of life—among the Ozolian Locrians, for instance, and the Aetolians and the Acarnanians and the others who live on the mainland in that area. Among these people the custom of carrying arms still survives from the old days of robbery; for at one time, since houses were unprotected and communications unsafe, this was a general custom throughout the whole of Hellas and it was the normal thing to carry arms on all occasions, as it is now among foreigners. The fact that the peoples I have mentioned still live in this way is evidence that once this was the general rule among all the Hellenes.

The Athenians were the first to give up the habit of carrying weapons and to adopt a way of living that was more relaxed and more luxurious. In fact the elder men of the rich families who had these luxurious tastes only recently gave up wearing linen undergarments and tying their hair behind their heads in a knot fastened with a clasp of golden grasshoppers: the same fashions spread to their kinsmen in Ionia, and lasted there among the old men for some time. It was the Spartans who first began to dress simply and in accordance with our modern taste, with the rich leading a life that was as much as possible like the life of the ordinary people. They, too, were the first to play games naked, to take off their clothes openly, and to rub themselves down with olive oil after their exercise. In ancient times even at the Olympic Games the athletes used to wear coverings for their loins, and indeed this practice was still in existence not very many years ago. Even today many foreigners, especially in Asia, wear these loincloths for boxing matches and wrestling bouts. Indeed, one could point to a number of other instances where the manners of the ancient Hellenic world are very similar to the manners of foreigners today.

Cities were sited differently in the later periods; for, as seafaring became more general and capital reserves came into existence, new walled cities were built actually on the coasts, and isthmuses were occupied for commercial reasons and for purposes of defence against neighbouring powers. Because of the wide prevalence of piracy, the ancient cities, both in the islands and on the mainland, were built at some distance from the sea, and still remain to this day on their original sites. For the pirates would rob not only each other but everyone else, seafaring or not, who lives along the coasts.

Piracy was just as prevalent in the islands among the Carians and Phoenicians, who in fact colonized most of them. This was proved during this present war, when Delos was officially purified by the Athenians and all the graves in the island were opened up. More than half of these

graves were Carian, as could be seen from the type of weapons buried with the bodies and from the method of burial, which was the same as that still used in Caria.<sup>5</sup> But after Minos had organized a navy, sea communications improved; he sent colonies to most of the islands and drove out the notorious pirates, with the result that those who lived on the sea-coasts were now in a position to acquire wealth and live a more settled life. Some of them, on the strength of their new riches, built walls for their cities. The weaker, because of the general desire to make profits, were content to put up with being governed by the stronger, and those who won superior power by acquiring capital resources brought the smaller cities under their control. Hellas had already developed some way along these lines when the expedition to Troy took place.

Agamemnon, it seems to me, must have been the most powerful of the rulers of his day; and it was for this reason that he raised the force against Troy, not because the suitors of Helen were bound to follow him by the oaths which they had sworn to Tyndareus.<sup>6</sup> Pelops, according to the most reliable tradition in the Peloponnese, came there from Asia. He brought great wealth with him, and, settling in a poor country, acquired such power that, though he was a foreigner, the whole land was called after him. His descendants became still more prosperous. Eurystheus was killed in Attica by the sons of Heracles, and before setting out he had entrusted Mycenae and its government to his relative Atreus, the brother of Eurystheus's mother, who had been exiled by his father because of the death of Chrysippus. When Eurystheus failed to return, Atreus, who had the reputation of a powerful man and who had made himself popular with the Mycenaeans, took over at their request, since they were frightened of the sons of Heracles, the kingship of Mycenae and of all the land that Eurystheus had ruled. So the descendants of Pelops became more powerful than the descendants of Perseus. It was to this empire that Agamemnon succeeded, and at the same time he had a stronger navy than any other ruler; thus, in my opinion, fear played a greater part than loyalty in the raising of the expedition against Troy. It appears, if we can believe the evidence of Homer, that Agamemnon himself commanded more ships than anyone else and at the same time equipped another fleet for the Arcadians. And in describing the sceptre which Agamemnon had inherited, Homer calls him:

*Of many Islands and all Argos King.*

As his power was based on the mainland, he could not have ruled over any islands, except the few that are near the

<sup>5</sup>In III, 104 Thucydides explains more fully: burials were henceforth prohibited on Delos because it was declared sacred ground. The archaeological evidence suggests that Thucydides, or his source, incorrectly identified early (Geometric) Greek pottery as Carian; see R. M. Cook in *Annual of the British School at Athens*, 50 (1955), 266–70.

<sup>6</sup>The tradition was that Helen was wooed by many leading Greek kings and nobles, that she was allowed to make her own choice, and that all the suitors swore on oath to her father Tyndareus to abide by her decision.

coast, unless he had possessed a considerable navy. And from this expedition we can make reasonable conjectures about other expeditions before that time.

Mycenae certainly was a small place, and many of the town of that period do not seem to us today to be particularly imposing; yet that is not good evidence for rejecting what the poets and what general tradition have to say about the size of the expedition. Suppose, for example, that the city of Sparta were to become deserted and that only the temples and foundations of buildings remained, I think that future generations would, as time passed, find it very difficult to believe that the place had really been as powerful as it was represented to be. Yet the Spartans occupy two-fifths of the Peloponnese and stand at the head not only of the whole Peloponnese itself but also of numerous allies beyond its frontiers. Since, however, the city is not regularly planned and contains no temples or monuments of great magnificence, but is simply a collection of villages, in the ancient Hellenic way, its appearance would not come up to expectation. If, on the other hand, the same thing were to happen to Athens, one would conjecture from what met the eye that the city had been twice as powerful as in fact it is.

We have no right, therefore, to judge cities by their appearances rather than by their actual power, and there is no reason why we should not believe that the Trojan expedition was the greatest that had ever taken place. It is equally true that it was not on the scale of what is done in modern warfare. It is questionable whether we can have complete confidence in Homer's figures, which, since he was a poet, were probably exaggerated. Even if we accept them, however, it appears that Agamemnon's force was smaller than forces are nowadays. Homer gives the number of ships as 1,200, and says that the crew of each Boeotian ship number 120, and the crews of the ships of Philoctetes were fifty men for each ship. By this, I imagine, he means to express the maximum and the minimum of the various ships' companies. In any case he gives no other figures for the crews in his catalogue of the ships. The men not only rowed in the ships but also served in the army, as is made clear by the passage about the ships of Philoctetes, when he states that the rowers were all archers. Apart from the kings and the very highest officers, it is unlikely that there were many men aboard who were not sailors; especially as they had to cross the open sea, carrying all their equipment with them, in ships that had no decks but were built in the old fashion of the pirate fleets. If, therefore, we reckon the numbers by taking an average of the biggest and the smallest ships, they will not appear very great, considering that this was a force representing the united effort of the whole of Hellas.

The reason for this was not so much shortage of manpower as shortage of money. Lack of supplies made them cut down their numbers to the point at which they expected they would be able to live off the country in which they were fighting. Even after the victory which they won on landing (it is clear that there must have been a victory: otherwise they could not have put up the fortifications round their camp), it does not appear that they brought the

whole of their force into action; instead they cultivated the soil of the Chersonese and went on plundering expeditions because of their shortage of supplies. It was because of this dispersal of their forces that the Trojans managed to hold out for ten years of warfare, since they were always strong enough to deal with that fraction of the Greek army which at any one time remained in the field. If, however, Agamemnon had had plenty of supplies with him when he arrived, and if they had used their whole force in making war continuously, without breaking off for plundering expeditions and for cultivating the land, they would have won easily, as is obvious from the fact that they could contain the Trojans when they were not in full force but employing only whatever portion of their army happened to be available. If, therefore, they had all settled down to the siege at once, they would have taken Troy in a shorter time and with less trouble.

As it was, just as lack of money was the reason why previous expeditions were not really considerable, so in the case of this one, which was more famous than any others before it, we shall find, if we look at the evidence of what was actually done, that it was not so important as it was made out to be and as it is still, through the influence of the poets, believed to have been.

Even after the Trojan War Hellas was in a state of ferment; there were constant resettlements, and so no opportunity for peaceful development. It was long before the army returned from Troy, and this fact in itself led to many changes. There was party strife in nearly all the cities, and those who were driven into exile founded new cities. Sixty years after the fall of Troy, the modern Boeotians were driven out of Arne by the Thessalians and settled in what is now Boeotia, but used to be called Cadmeis. (Part of the race had settled in Boeotia before this time, and some of these joined in the expedition to Troy.) Twenty years later the Dorians with the descendants of Heracles made themselves masters of the Peloponnese.

Thus many years passed by and many difficulties were encountered before Hellas could enjoy any peace or stability, and before the period of shifting populations ended. Then came the period of colonization. Ionia and most of the islands were colonized by the Athenians. The Peloponnesians founded most of the colonies in Italy and Sicily, and some in other parts of Hellas. All of them were founded after the Trojan War.

The old form of government was hereditary monarchy with established rights and limitations; but as Hellas became more powerful and as the importance of acquiring money became more and more evident, tyrannies were established in nearly all the cities, revenues increased, shipbuilding flourished, and ambition turned towards sea-power.

The Corinthians are supposed to have been the first to adopt more or less modern methods in shipbuilding, and it is said that the first triremes ever built in Hellas were laid down in Corinth. Then there is the Corinthian shipwright, Ameinocles, who appears to have built four ships for the Samians. It is nearly 300 years ago (dating from the end of

this present war) that Ameinocles went to Samos. And the first naval battle on record is the one between the Corinthians and the Corcyraeans: this was about 260 years ago.

Corinth, planted on its isthmus, had been from time immemorial an important mercantile centre, though in ancient days traffic had been by land rather than by sea. The communications between those who lived inside and those who lived outside the Peloponnese had to pass through Corinthian territory. So Corinth grew to power by her riches, as is shown by the adjective 'wealthy' which is given to her by the ancient poets. And when the Greeks began to take more to seafaring, the Corinthians acquired a fleet, put down piracy, and, being able to provide trading facilities on both the land and the sea routes, made their city powerful from the revenues which came to it by both these ways.

Later the Ionians were a great naval power. This was in the time of Cyrus, the first King of the Persians, and of his son Cambyses. Indeed, when they were fighting against Cyrus, they were for some time masters of all the sea in their region.

Then Polycrates, the tyrant of Samos, made himself powerful by means of his navy. He conquered a number of the islands, among which was Rhenea, which he dedicated to the Delian Apollo.

The Phocaeans, too, when they were founding Marseilles, defeated the Carthaginians in a naval engagement.

These were the greatest navies of the past, and even these navies, though many generations later than the Trojan War, do not seem to have possessed many triremes, but to have been still composed, as in the old days, of long-boats and boats of fifty oars. Triremes were first used in any numbers by the Sicilian tyrants and by the Corcyraeans. This was just before the Persian War and the death of Darius, who was King of Persia after Cambyses. There were no other navies of any importance in Hellas before the time of the expedition of Xerxes. Athens and Aegina and a few other states may have had navies of a sort, but they were mainly composed of fifty-oared boats. It was at the very end of this period, when Athens was at war with Aegina and when the foreign invasion was expected, that Themistocles persuaded his fellow-citizens to build the ships with which they fought at Salamis. Even these ships were not yet constructed with complete decks.

All the same these Hellenic navies, whether in the remote past or in the later periods, although they were as I have described them, were still a great source of strength to the various naval powers. They brought in revenue and they

were the foundation of empire. It was by naval action that those powers, and especially those with insufficient land of their own, conquered the islands. There was no warfare on land that resulted in the acquisition of an empire. What wars there were were simply frontier skirmishes; no expedition by land was sent far from the country of its origin with the purpose of conquering some other power. There were no alliances of small states under the leadership of the great powers, nor did the smaller states form leagues for action on a basis of equality among themselves. Wars were simply local affairs between neighbours. The nearest approach to combined action was in the ancient war between Chalcis and Eretria. On this occasion the rest of the Hellenic world did join in with one side or the other.

Different states encountered different obstacles to the course of their development. The Ionians, for instance, were a rapidly rising power; but King Cyrus and his Persians, having eliminated Croesus, invaded the country between the river Halys and the sea, and brought the Ionian cities on the mainland into the Persian Empire. Later Darius, with the aid of the Phoenician navy, conquered the islands as well.

And in the Hellenic states that were governed by tyrants, the tyrant's first thought was always for himself, for his own personal safety, and for the greatness of his own family. Consequently security was the chief political principle in these governments, and no great action ever came out of them—nothing, in fact, that went beyond their immediate local interests, except for the tyrants in Sicily, who rose to great power. So for a long time the state of affairs everywhere in Hellas was such that nothing very remarkable could be done by any combination of powers and that even the individual cities were lacking in enterprise.

Finally, however, the Spartans put down tyranny in the rest of Greece, most of which had been governed by tyrants for much longer than Athens. From the time when the Dorians first settled in Sparta there had been a particularly long period of political disunity; yet the Spartan constitution goes back to a very early date, and the country has never been ruled by tyrants. For rather more than 400 years, dating from the end of the late war, they have had the same system of government, and this has been not only a source of internal strength, but has enabled them to intervene in the affairs of other states.

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*What were the main forces that shaped the development of the Polis?*

# Chapter 4

## *Iran, India, and Inner Asia to 200 C.E.*

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### 4-1

### The Laws of Manu

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Trans. G. Bühler. Some minor modifications have been made in the text.

#### MANU THE LAWGIVER

The great sages approached Manu,\* who was seated with a collected mind, and, having duly worshipped him, spoke as follows:

“Deign, divine one, to declare to us precisely and in due order the sacred laws of each of the four chief castes and of the intermediate ones.

“For thou, O Lord, alone knowest the purport, the rites, and the knowledge of the soul, taught in this whole ordinance of the Self-existent, which is unknowable and unfathomable.”

He, whose power is measureless, being thus asked by the high-minded great sages, duly honored them, and answered, “Listen!”

#### THE FOUR CASTES

For the sake of the prosperity of the worlds, he caused the Brahmana, the Kshatriya, the Vaisya, and the Sudra to proceed from his mouth, his arms, his thighs, and his feet.

The Brahmana, the Kshatriya, and the Vaisya castes are the twice-born ones, but the fourth, the Sudra, has one birth only; there is no fifth caste.

To Brahmanas he assigned teaching and studying the Veda, sacrificing for their own benefit and for others, giving and accepting of alms. The Kshatriya he commanded to protect the people, to bestow gifts, to offer sacrifices, to study the Veda, and to abstain from attaching himself to sensual pleasures; the Vaisya to tend cattle, to bestow gifts, to offer sacrifices, to study the Veda, to trade, to lend money, and to cultivate land. One occupation only the lord prescribed to the Sudra, to serve meekly even these other three castes.

The seniority of Brahmanas is from sacred knowledge, that of Kshatriyas from valor, that of Vaisyas from wealth in grain and other goods, but that of Sudras from age alone.

A twice-born man who knowingly eats mushrooms, a village pig, garlic, a village cock, onions or leeks, will become an outcast.

Some wealthy Brahmana shall compassionately support both a Kshatriya and a Vaisya if they are distressed for a livelihood, employing them on work which is suitable for their castes. But a Brahmana who, because he is powerful, out of greed makes initiated men of the twice-born castes against their will do the work of slaves shall be fined by the king. But a Sudra, whether bought or unbought, he may compel to do servile work; for he was created by the Self-existent to be the slave of a Brahmana. A Sudra, though emancipated by his master, is not released from servitude; since that is innate in him, who can set him free from it?

With whatever limb a man of a low caste does hurt to a man of the three highest castes, even that limb shall be cut off; that is the teaching of Manu. He who raises his hand or a stick shall have his hand cut off; he who in anger kicks with his foot shall have his foot cut off.

A low-caste man who tries to place himself on the same seat with a man of a high caste shall be branded on his hip and be banished, or the king shall cause his buttock to be gashed. If out of arrogance he spits on a superior the king shall cause both his lips to be cut off; if he urines on him, the penis; if he breaks wind against him, the anus.

A man of low caste who through covetousness lives by the occupations of a higher one the king shall deprive of his property and banish.

Abstention from injuring creatures, veracity, abstention from unlawfully appropriating the goods of others, purity, and control of the organs, Manu has declared to be the summary of the law for the four castes.

#### THE BRAHMANA

Of created beings the most excellent are said to be those which are animated; of the animated, those which subsist by intelligence; of the intelligent, mankind; and of men, the Brahmanas. Of Brahmanas, those learned in the Veda; of the learned, those who recognize the necessity and the manner of performing the prescribed duties; of those who possess this knowledge, those who perform them; of the performers, those who know the Brahman.

The very birth of a Brahmana is an eternal incarnation of the sacred law; for he is born to fulfil the sacred law, and becomes one with Brahman. A Brahmana, coming into existence, is born as the highest on earth, the lord of all created beings, for the protection of the treasury of the law.

Whatever exists in the world is the property of the Brah-

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\*Manu in Hindu mythology is a being who is both divine and human.

mana; on account of the excellence of his origin the Brahmana is, indeed, entitled to it all. The Brahmana eats but his own food, wears but his own apparel, bestows but his own in alms; other mortals subsist through the benevolence of the Brahmana.

In order to clearly settle his duties and those of the other castes according to their order wise Manu, sprung from the Self-existent, composed these Institutes of the sacred law. A learned Brahmana must carefully study them and he must duly instruct his pupils in them, but nobody else shall do it. A Brahmana who studies these Institutes and faithfully fulfils the duties prescribed therein is never tainted by sins, arising from thoughts, words, or deeds. He sanctifies any company which he may enter, seven ancestors and seven descendents, and he alone deserves to possess this whole earth.

To study this work is the best means of securing welfare; it increases understanding, it procures fame and long life, it leads to supreme bliss. In this work the sacred law has been fully stated as well as the good and bad qualities of human actions and the immemorial rule of conduct to be followed by all the four castes. The rule of conduct is transcendent law, whether it be taught in the revealed texts or in the sacred tradition; hence a twice-born man who possesses regard for himself should be always careful to follow it. A Brahmana who departs from the rule of conduct does not reap the fruit of the Veda, but he who duly follows it will obtain the full reward.

Man is stated to be purer above the navel than below; hence the Self-existent has declared the purest part of him to be his mouth. As the Brahmana sprang from Brahman's mouth, as he was the first-born, and as he possesses the Veda, he is by right the Lord of this whole creation.

A Brahmana must seek a means of subsistence which either causes no, or at least little pain to others and live by that except in times of distress. For the purpose of gaining bare subsistence let him accumulate property by following those irreproachable occupations which are prescribed for his caste, without unduly fatiguing his body. He may either possess enough to fill a granary, or a store filling a grain-jar; or he may collect what suffices for three days, or make no provision for the morrow. Let him never, for the sake of subsistence, follow the ways of the world; let him live the pure, straight-forward, honest life of a Brahmana.

A Brahmana who knows the law need not bring any offence to the notice of the king; by his own power alone he can punish those men who injure him. His own power is greater than the power of the king; the Brahmana, therefore, may punish his foes by his own power alone.

A Brahmana shall never beg from a Sudra property for a sacrifice; for a sacrificer, having begged it from such a man, after death is born again as a Kandala ["the lowest of men"].

Let him not entertain at a Sradha [sacrificial meal] one who wears his hair in braids (a student), one who has not studied the Veda, one afflicted with a skin disease, a gambler, nor those who sacrifice for a multitude of others.

Physicians, temple-priests, sellers of meat, and those who subsist by shop-keeping must be avoided at sacrifices

offered to the gods and to the manes [spirits]; a paid servant of a village or of a king, a man with deformed nails or black teeth, one who opposes his teacher, one who has forsaken the sacred fire, and a usurer; one suffering from consumption, one who subsists by tending cattle, a younger brother who marries or kindles the sacred fire before the elder, one who neglects the five great sacrifices, an enemy of the Brahmana race, an elder brother who marries or kindles the sacred fire after the younger, and one who belongs to a company or corporation; an actor or singer, one who has broken the vows of studentship, one whose only or first wife is a Sudra female, the son of a remarried woman, a one-eyed man, and he in whose house a paramour of his wife resides; he who teaches for a stipulated fee and he who is taught on that condition, he who instructs Sudra pupils and he whose teacher is a Sudra, he who speaks rudely, the son of an adulteress, and the son of a widow; he who forsakes his mother, his father, or a teacher without a sufficient reason, he who has contracted an alliance with outcasts either through the Veda or through a marriage; an incendiary, a prisoner, he who eats the food given by the son of an adulteress, a seller of Soma, he who undertakes voyages by sea, a bard, an oil-man, a suborner to perjury; he who wrangles or goes to law with his father, the keeper of a gambling-house, a drunkard, he who is afflicted with a disease in punishment of former crimes, he who is accused of a mortal sin, a hypocrite, a seller of substances used for flavoring food; a maker of bows and of arrows, he who lasciviously dallies with a brother's widow, the betrayer of a friend, one who subsists by gambling, he who learns the Veda from his son; an epileptic man, one who suffers from scrofulous swellings of the glands, one afflicted with white leprosy, an informer, a madman, a blind man, and he who cavils at the Veda must all be avoided.

A trainer of elephants, oxen, horses, or camels, he who subsists by astrology, a bird-fancier, and he who teaches the use of arms; he who diverts water-courses, and he who delights in obstructing them, an architect, a messenger, and he who plants trees for money; a breeder of sporting-dogs, a falconer, one who defiles maidens, he who delights in injuring living creatures, he who gains his subsistence from Sudras, and he who offers sacrifices to the Ganas; he who does not follow the rule of conduct, a man destitute of energy like a eunuch, one who constantly asks for favors, he who lives by agriculture, a club-footed man, and he who is censured by virtuous men; a shepherd, a keeper of buffaloes, the husband of a remarried woman, and a carrier of dead bodies, all these must be carefully avoided.

A Brahmana who knows the sacred law should shun at sacrifices both to the gods and to the manes these lowest of twice-born men, whose conduct is reprehensible, and who are unworthy to sit in the company at a repast.

Let the king, after rising early in the morning, worship Brahmanas who are well versed in the threefold sacred science and learned in polity, and follow their advice. Let him daily worship aged Brahmanas who know the Veda and are pure. Let him honor those Brahmanas who have



returned from their teacher's house after studying the Veda; for that money which is given to Brahmanas is declared to be an imperishable treasure for kings. Not to turn back in battle, to protect the people, to honor the Brahmanas, is the best means for a king to secure happiness.

The slayer of a Brahmana enters the womb of a dog, a pig, an ass, a camel, a cow, a goat, a sheep, a deer, a bird, a Kandala, and a Pukkasa.

### THE KSHATRIYA

Kings and Kshatriyas, the domestic priests of kings, and those who delight in the warfare of disputations constitute the middling rank of the states caused by Activity.

As the Earth supports all created beings equally, thus a king who supports all his subjects takes upon himself the office of the Earth. Employing these and other means, the king shall, ever untired, restrain thieves both in his own dominions and in those of others.

Let him not, though fallen into the deepest distress, provoke Brahmanas to anger for they, when angered, could instantly destroy him together with his army and his vehicles. Who could escape destruction, when he provokes to anger those men by whom the fire was made to consume all things, by whom the water of the ocean was made undrinkable, and by whom the moon was made to wane and to increase again? Who could prosper, while he injures those men who, provoked to anger, could create other worlds and other guardians of the world, and deprive the gods of their divine station? What man, desirous of life, would injure them to whose support the three worlds and the gods ever owe their existence, and whose wealth is the Veda?

A Brahmana, be he ignorant or learned, is a great divinity, just as the fire, whether carried forth for the performance of a burnt-oblation or not carried forth, is a great divinity. The brilliant fire is not contaminated even in burial-places, and when presented with oblations of butter at sacrifices, it again increases mightily. Thus, though Brahmanas employ themselves in all sorts of mean occupations, they must be honored in every way for each of them is a very great deity.

When the Kshatriyas become in any way overbearing towards the Brahmanas, the Brahmanas themselves shall duly restrain them, for the Kshatriyas sprang from the Brahmanas. Fire sprang from water, Kshatriyas from Brahmanas, iron from stone; the all-penetrating force of those three has no effect on that whence they were produced. Kshatriyas prosper not without Brahmanas, Brahmanas prosper not without Kshatriyas. Brahmanas and Kshatriyas, being closely united, prosper in this world and in the next. But a king who feels his end drawing nigh shall bestow all his wealth accumulated from fines on Brahmanas, make over his kingdom to his son, and then seek death in battle.

Know that a Brahmana of ten years and a Kshatriya of a hundred years stand to each other in the relation of father and son; but between those two the Brahmana is the father.

### THE VAISYA

Know that the following rules apply in due order to the duties of Vaisyas:

After a Vaisya has received the sacraments and has taken a wife, he shall be always attentive to the business whereby he may subsist and to that of tending cattle. For when the Lord of creatures created cattle he made them over to the Vaisya; to the Brahmana and to the king he entrusted all created beings. A Vaisya must never conceive this wish, "I will not keep cattle," and if a Vaisya is willing to keep them they must never be kept by men of other castes.

A Vaisya must know the respective value of gems, of pearls, of coral, of metals, of cloth made of thread, of perfumes, and of condiments. He must be acquainted with the manner of sowing of seeds and of the good and bad qualities of fields and he must perfectly know all measures and weights; moreover, the excellence and defects of commodities, the advantages and disadvantages of different countries, the probable profit and loss on merchandise, and the means of properly rearing cattle.

He must be acquainted with the proper wages of servants, with the various languages of men, with the manner of keeping goods, and the rules of purchase and sale. Let him exert himself to the utmost in order to increase his property in a righteous manner, and let him zealously give food to all created beings.

The king should order a Vaisya to trade, to lend money, to cultivate the land, or to tend cattle.

There are seven lawful modes of acquiring property: Inheritance, finding or friendly donation, purchase, conquest, lending at interest, the performance of work, and the acceptance of gifts from virtuous men.

Learning, mechanical arts, work for wages, service, rearing cattle, traffic, agriculture, contentment with little, alms, and receiving interest on money are the ten modes of subsistence permitted to all men in times of distress. Neither a Brahmana nor a Kshatriya must lend money at interest but at his pleasure either of them may, in times of distress when he requires money for sacred purposes, lend to a very sinful man at a small interest.

A king (Kshatriya) who, in times of distress, takes even the fourth part of the crops is free from guilt, if he protects his subjects to the best of his ability. His peculiar duty is conquest and he must not turn back in danger; having protected the Vaisyas by his weapons, he may cause the legal tax to be collected—from the Vaisyas one-eighth as the tax on grain, one-twentieth on the profits on gold and cattle.

### THE SUDRA

That kingdom where Sudras are very numerous, which is infested by atheists and destitute of twice-born inhabitants, soon entirely perishes, afflicted by famine and disease.

A Brahmana may confidently seize the goods of his

Sudra for, as that slave can have no property, his master may take his possessions.

A Brahmana who takes a Sudra wife to his bed will after death sink into hell; if he begets a child of her he will lose the rank of a Brahmana. The son whom a Brahmana begets through lust on a Sudra female is, though alive, a corpse and hence called a living corpse.

A Sudra who has intercourse with a woman of a twice-born caste, guarded or unguarded, shall be punished in the following manner: If she was unguarded he loses the offending part and all his property; if she was guarded, everything, even his life.

The foolish man who, after having eaten a dinner, gives the leavings to a Sudra falls headlong into hell.

A Sudra who is pure, the servant of his betters, gentle in his speech, and free from pride, and always seeks refuge with Brahmanas attains in his next life a higher caste.

## **THE DASYUS**

All those tribes in this world which are excluded from the community of those born from the mouth, the arms, the thighs, and the feet of Brahman are called Dasyus, whether they speak the language of the barbarians or that of the Aryans.

The dwellings of Kandalas and Svapakas [low-order Dasyus] shall be outside the village and their wealth shall be dogs and donkeys. Their dress shall be the garments of the dead, they shall eat their food from broken dishes, black iron shall be their ornaments, and they must always wander from place to place.

A man who fulfils a religious duty shall not seek intercourse with them; their transactions shall be among themselves and their marriages with their equals.

Their food shall be given to them by others than an Aryan giver in a broken dish; at night they shall not walk about in villages and in towns. By day they may go about for the purpose of their work, distinguished by marks at the king's command, and they shall carry out the corpses of persons who have no relatives; that is a settled rule.

By the king's order they shall always execute the criminals, in accordance with the law, and they shall take for themselves the clothes, the beds, and the ornaments of such criminals.

A Kandala, a village pig, a cock, a dog, a menstruating woman, and a eunuch must not look at the Brahmanas while they eat.

Let a Brahmana gently place on the ground some food for dogs, outcasts, Kandalas, those afflicted with diseases that are punishments of former sins, crows, and insects.

## **MARRIAGE AND FAMILY**

A twice-born man shall marry a wife of equal caste who is endowed with auspicious bodily marks. A damsel who

is neither a Sapinda on the mother's side, nor belongs to the same family on the father's side, is recommended to twice-born men for wedlock and conjugal union. In connecting himself with a wife, let him carefully avoid the ten following families, be they ever so great or rich in kine, horses, sheep, grain, or other property: One which neglects the sacred rites, one in which no male children are born, one in which the Veda is not studied, one the members of which have thick hair on the body, those which are subject to hemorrhoids, phthisis, weakness of digestion, epilepsy, or white and black leprosy.

Let him not marry a maiden with reddish hair, nor one who has a redundant member, nor one who is sickly, nor one either with no hair on the body or too much, nor one who is garrulous or has red eyes, nor one named after a constellation, a tree, or a river, nor one bearing the name of a low caste, or of a mountain, nor one named after a bird, a snake, or a slave, nor one whose name inspires terror. Let him wed a female free from bodily defects, who has an agreeable name, the graceful gait of a Hamsa or of an elephant, a moderate quantity of hair on the body and on the head, small teeth, and soft limbs.

A man aged thirty years shall marry a maiden of twelve who pleases him or a man of twenty-four a girl eight years of age; if the performance of his duties would otherwise be impeded he must marry sooner.

The husband receives his wife from the gods, he does not wed her according to his own will; doing what is agreeable to the gods he must always support her while she is faithful.

He only is a perfect man who consists of three persons united—his wife, himself, and his offspring; thus says the Veda and learned Brahmanas propound this maxim likewise, "The husband is declared to be one with the wife."

Women must be honored and adorned by their fathers, brothers, husbands, and brothers-in-law, who desire their own welfare. Where women are honored there the gods are pleased but where they are not honored no sacred rite yields rewards. Where the female relations live in grief the family soon wholly perishes but that family where they are not unhappy ever prospers. The houses on which female relations, not being duly honored, pronounce a curse perish completely, as if destroyed by magic. Hence men who seek their own welfare should always honor women on holidays and festivals with gifts of ornaments, clothes, and dainty food.

"Let mutual fidelity continue until death"—this may be considered as the summary of the highest law for husband and wife.

A virtuous wife who after the death of her husband constantly remains chaste reaches heaven, though she have no son, just like those chaste men. But a woman who from a desire to have offspring violates her duty towards her deceased husband brings on herself disgrace in this world and loses her place with her husband in heaven.

Offspring begotten by another man is here not considered lawful nor does offspring begotten on another man's

wife belong to the be-getter nor is a second husband anywhere prescribed for virtuous women.

She who cohabits with a man of higher caste, forsaking her own husband who belongs to a lower one, will become contemptible in this world, and is called a remarried woman. By violating her duty towards her husband a wife is disgraced in this world; after death she enters the womb of a jackal and is tormented by diseases, the punishment of her sin.

She who, controlling her thoughts, words, and deeds, never slights her Lord resides after death with her husband in heaven and is called a virtuous wife. In reward of such conduct a female who controls her thoughts, speech, and actions gains in this life highest renown and in the next world a place near her husband.

Between wives who are destined to bear children, who are worthy of worship and irradiate their dwellings, and between the goddesses of fortune who reside in the houses of men there is no difference whatsoever.

The production of children, the nurture of those born, and the daily life of men, of these matters woman is visibly the cause. Offspring, the due performance of religious rites, faithful service, highest conjugal happiness and heavenly bliss for the ancestors and oneself depend on one's wife alone.

Though destitute of virtue, or seeking pleasure elsewhere, or devoid of good qualities, yet a husband must be constantly worshipped as a god by a faithful wife. No sacrifice, no vow, no fast must be performed by women apart from their husbands; if a wife obeys her husband she will for that reason alone be exalted in heaven.

A faithful wife who desires to dwell after death with her husband must never do anything that might displease him who took her hand, whether he be alive or dead. At her pleasure let her emaciate her body by living on pure flowers, roots, and fruit but she must never even mention the name of another man after her husband has died.

When the purpose of the appointment to cohabit with the widow has been attained in accordance with the law those two shall behave towards each other like a father and a daughter-in-law. If those two being thus appointed deviate from the rule and act from carnal desire they will both become outcasts, as men who defile the bed of a daughter-in-law or of a Guru.

By twice-born men a widow must not be appointed to cohabit with any other than her husband for they who appoint her to another man will violate the eternal law. In the sacred texts which refer to marriage the appointment of widows is nowhere mentioned, nor is the re-marriage of widows prescribed in the rules concerning marriage. This practice is reprehended by the learned of the twice-born castes as fit for cattle.

A wife, a son, and a slave, these three are declared to have no property; the wealth which they earn is acquired for him to whom they belong.

A wife, a son, a slave, a pupil, and a younger brother of the full blood who have committed faults may be beaten

with a rope or a split bamboo. But on the back part of the body only, never on a noble part.

To a distinguished, handsome suitor of equal caste should a father give his daughter in accordance with the prescribed rule, though she has not attained the proper age. But the maiden, though marriageable, should rather stop in the father's house until death than that he should ever give her to a man destitute of good qualities.

For the first marriage of twice-born men wives of equal caste are recommended but for those who through desire proceed to marry again, the following females, chosen according to the direct order of the castes, are most approved: It is declared that a Sudra woman alone can be the wife of a Sudra; she and one of his own caste the wives of a Vaisya; those two and one of his own caste the wives of a Kshatriya; those three and one of his own caste the wives of a Brahmana. A Sudra woman is not mentioned even in any ancient story as the first wife of a Brahmana or of a Kshatriya, though they lived in the greatest distress. Twice-born men who, in their folly, wed wives of the low Sudra caste soon degrade their families and their children to the state of Sudras.

In all castes those children only which are begotten in the direct order on wedded wives, equal in caste and married as virgins, are to be considered as belonging to the same caste as their father. Sons, begotten by twice-born men on wives of the next lower castes, they declare to be similar to their fathers but blamed on account of the fault inherent in their mothers. Such is the eternal law concerning children born of wives one degree lower than their husbands.

## WOMEN

Women do not care for beauty, nor is their attention fixed on age; thinking, "It is enough that he is a man," they give themselves to the handsome and to the ugly. Through their passion for men, through their mutable temper, through their natural heartlessness, they become disloyal towards their husbands, however carefully they may be guarded in this world.

Knowing their disposition, which the Lord of creatures laid in them at the creation, to be such, every man should most strenuously exert himself to guard them. When creating them Manu allotted to women a love of their bed, of their seat and of ornament, impure desires, wrath, dishonesty, malice, and bad conduct.

It is the nature of women to seduce men in this world; for that reason the wise are never unguarded in the company of females. For women are able to lead astray in this world not only a fool but even a learned man and to make him a slave of desire and anger.

Day and night women must be kept in dependence by the males of their families and, if they attach themselves to sensual enjoyments, they must be kept under one's control. Her father protects her in childhood, her husband

protects her in youth, and her sons protect her in old age; a woman is never fit for independence.

Reprehensible is the father who gives not his daughter in marriage at the proper time, reprehensible is the husband who approaches not his wife in due season, and reprehensible is the son who does not protect his mother after her husband has died.

A female must not seek to separate herself from her father, husband, or sons; by leaving them she would make both her own and her husband's families contemptible. She must always be cheerful, clever in the management of her household affairs, careful in cleaning her utensils, and economical in expenditure. Him to whom her father may

give her, or her brother with the father's permission, she shall obey as long as he lives and when he is dead she must not insult his memory.

Drinking spirituous liquor, associating with wicked people, separation from the husband, rambling abroad, sleeping at unseasonable hours, and dwelling in other men's houses are the six causes of the ruin of women.

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*What are the similarities and differences in the religious and social laws in this reading and those of the Hebrews and the Greeks?*

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## 4-2

### Bhagavad-Gita

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From *The Song of God*, trans. Dhan Gopal Mukerji. Copyright 1931 by Dhan Gopal Mukerji. Reprinted by permission of Dutton Signet, a division of Penguin Books USA Inc.

#### DEATHLESS LIFE AND CASTE OBLIGATION

How can I use my arrows in battle against Bhīshma, my grandsire, and Droṇa, my venerable teacher, who are worthy rather to be worshipped, O Destroyer of all opponents?

Surely would it be better to eat the bread of beggary in this life than to slay these great-souled masters!

If I kill them, all enjoyment of wealth, all gratified desire, is stained by their blood!

Indeed, scarcely can I tell which would be better, that they or we should conquer, for to destroy those sons of Dhṛitarāshṭra who oppose us, would be to extinguish forever the savor of life.

Overpowered by my helplessness, and with a mind in confusion, I supplicate Thee! Make clear to me that which is my good; I am Thy disciple. Instruct me, who have sought my refuge in Thee!

There is naught to dispel this sorrow which overpowereth my senses. Were I to obtain undisputed and powerful dominion over all the earth, and mastery over the gods, what then would that avail me?

Arjuna, having thus spoken to Kṛishṇa, Lord of the Senses, made end, saying:

'I shall not fight!' and with these words fell silent.

But as he remained sorrowing thus in the midst of the two armies, Kṛishṇa, smiling a little, spoke to him as follows:

Thou hast grieved for those undeserving of grief, Arjuna! Although thou speakest wisely, those who are still wiser mourn neither for the living nor for the dead.

For never hath it been that I was not, nor thou, nor these Kings; nor shall we cease to be, ever.

The self is not interrupted while childhood, youth and old age pass through the flesh; likewise in death the self dieth not, but is released to assume another shape. By this the calm soul is not deluded.

The impressions of the senses, quickened to heat and cold, pain and pleasure, are transitory. Forever on the ebb and flow, they are by their very nature impermanent. Bear them then patiently, O Descendant of Kings!

For the wise man who is serene in pain and pleasure, whom these disturb not, he alone is able to attain Immortality, O Great amongst men!

The unreal can never be; the real can never cease to be. Those who know the truth know that this is so.

The Unnamable Principle which pervadeth all things, none hath power to destroy: know thou certainly that It is indestructible.

By *That*, immortal, inexhaustible, illimitable, Indweller, is the mortality of this flesh possessed. Fight therefore O Descendant of brave Kings!

He who conceiveth this Indweller, this Self, as slayer, or who conceiveth It as slain, is without knowledge. The Self neither slayeth nor is It slain.

It is never born, nor doth It die, nor having once existed, doth It ever cease to be. Ancient, eternal, changeless, ever Itself, It perisheth not when the body is destroyed.

How can that man who knoweth It to be indestructible, changeless, without birth, and immutable, how can he, Arjuna, either slay or cause the slaying of another?

As a man casteth off an old garment and putteth on another which is new, so the Self casteth off its outworn embodiment and entereth into a new form.

This Self, weapons cut not; This, fire burneth not; This, water wetteth not; and This, the winds dry not up.

This Self cannot be cut, it cannot be burnt, it cannot be wetted, it cannot be dried. Changeless, all-pervading, unmoving, Eternal, it is the Unalterable Self.

This Self is invisible, inconceivable, and changeless. Knowing that It is such, cease, therefore, to grieve!

But whether thou believest this Self of eternal duration or subjected constantly to birth and death, yet Mighty-armed One, hast thou no cause to grieve.

For, to that which is born, death is certain; to that which dieth, birth is certain, and the unavoidable, giveth not occasion for grief.

Nothing may be perceived in its beginning; in its middle state only is it known, and its end again is undisclosed. What herein, Arjuna, is cause for grief?

One man perceiveth the Self as a thing of wonder; another speaketh of It as a wonder; others hear of It as a wonder, but though seeing, speaking, hearing, none comprehendeth It at all.

This, which is the Indweller in all beings, is forever beyond harm. Then, for no creature, Arjuna, hast thou any cause to grieve.

Examine thy duty and falter not, for there is no better thing for a warrior than to wage righteous war.

Fortunate indeed are the soldiers, Arjuna, who, fighting in such a battle, reach this unsought, open gate to heaven.

But to refuse this just fight and forgo thine own duty and honour, is to incur sin.

By so doing the world will also hold thee ever in despite. To the honourable, dishonour is surely worse than death.

The great charioteer warriors will believe that through fear thou hast withdrawn from the battle. Then shalt thou fall from their esteem, who hast hitherto been highly regarded.

Thine enemies moreover, cavilling at thy great prowess, will say of thee that which is not to be uttered. What fate, indeed, could be more unbearable than this?

Dying thou gainest heaven; victorious, thou enjoyest the earth. Therefore, Arjuna, arise, resolved to do battle.

Look upon pain and pleasure, gain and loss, conquest and defeat, as the same, and prepare to fight; thus shalt thou incur no evil.

Now hath been declared unto thee the understanding of the Self. Harken thou moreover to the Way,<sup>1</sup> following which, O son of Kings, thou shalt break through the fateful bondage of thine act.<sup>2</sup>

On this Way nothing that is begun is lost, nor are there any obstacles, and even a very little progress thereon bringeth security against great fear.

## DEVOTION TO GOD

But those who adore Me, and Me alone, and all beings who are steadfast and supremely dedicated in their worship, I augment in their fullness and fill them up in their emptiness.

Even those who devotedly worship other gods because of their love, worship Me; but the path they follow is not My path.

For I alone am the Deity of all sacrifices, and those who worship other gods than Me reach the end of merit and return to the world, where they must set forth anew upon the way.

One pursueth the gods and attaineth the sphere of the gods suitable to the merit of his works; another worshippeth the Fathers and yet another worshippeth attributes and incarnations, each attaining unto his own place; but he who worshippeth Me cometh unto Me.

Whosoever with devotion offereth Me leaf, flower, fruit, or water, I accept it from him as the devout gift of the pure-minded.

Whatsoever thou doest, Arjuna, whatsoever thou eatest, whatsoever thou givest away, whatsoever thou offerest up as sacrifice, and whatsoever austerity thou shalt practice, do it as an offering unto Me.

Thus shalt thou be released from the fateful bonds of thine acts, and the cage of good and evil. Thine heart shall renounce itself, and being liberated, shall come unto Me.

To Me none is hateful, none dear; but those who worship Me with devotion dwell in Me, and I also in them.

Even a very wicked man who worshippeth Me, eschewing all else in his devotion to Me, shall be regarded as worthy of merit, for great is his faith.

He shall attain righteousness in a short time, Arjuna, and compel everlasting Peace; therefore, proclaim it aloud that no one of My devotees is destroyed.

They also who might be considered of inferior birth, women, tradesmen, as well as day-laborers, even they shall master this world and attain Me, Arjuna, if they seek Me with single mind.

What need, then, to describe priests and kings who have attained holiness? Therefore, Arjuna, in this transient, joyless world, worship thou Me!

Make thy mind My dwelling place; consecrate thyself to Me; sacrifice unto Me, bow down unto Me, make thy heart steadfast in Me thy Supreme Destination, and thou too shalt assuredly come unto Me.

<sup>1</sup>Yoga. The exact meaning of Yoga depends on its context. It signifies any consistent way of spiritual life.

<sup>2</sup>“The bondage of thine act,” Karma. “The doctrine of true knowledge and of emancipation by means of it.”

*Explain what Arjuna's worldly and spiritual obligations are and the reason for his dilemma.*

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## 4-3

# Cyrus of Persia: A Study in Imperial Success

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Source: Xenophon, "The Persian Expedition," Rex Warner, ed. (Hammondsworth, England: Penguin, 1972), pp. 91-95.

### THE CHARACTER OF CYRUS

Of all the Persians who lived after Cyrus the Great, he was the most like a king and the most deserving of an empire, as is admitted by everyone who is known to have been personally acquainted with him. In his early life, when he was still a child being brought up with his brother, and the other children, he was regarded the best of them all in every way. All the children of Persian nobles are brought up at the Court, and there a child can pick up many lessons in good behaviour while having no chance of seeing or hearing anything bad. The boys see and hear some people being honoured by the King and others being dismissed in disgrace, and so from their childhood they learn how to command and how to obey. Here, at the Court, Cyrus was considered, first, to be the best-behaved of his contemporaries and more willing even than his inferiors to listen to those older than himself; and then he was remarkable for his fondness for horses and being able to manage them extremely well. In the soldierly arts also of archery and javelin-throwing they judged him to be most eager to learn and most willing to practise them. When he got to the age for hunting, he was most enthusiastic about it, and only too ready to take risks in his encounters with wild animals. There was one occasion when a she-bear charged at him and he, showing no fear, got to grips with the animal and was pulled off his horse. The scar from the wounds he got then were still visible on his body, but he killed the animal in the end, and as for the first man who came to help him Cyrus made people think him very lucky indeed.

When he was sent down to the coast by his father as satrap of Lydia and Great Phrygia and Cappadocia, and had been declared Commander-in-Chief of all who are bound to muster in the plain of Castolus, the first thing he did was to make it clear that in any league or agreement or undertaking that he made he attached the utmost importance to keeping his word. The cities which were in his command trusted him and so did the men. And the enemies he had were confident that once Cyrus had signed a treaty with them nothing would happen to them contrary to the terms of the treaty. Consequently when he was at war with Tissaphernes all the cities, with the exception of the Milesians, chose to follow him rather than Tissaphernes. The Milesians were afraid of him because he refused to give up the cause of the exiled government. Indeed, he made it

clear by his actions, and said openly that, once he had become their friend, he would never give them up, not even if their numbers became fewer and their prospects worse than they were.

If anyone did him a good or an evil turn, he evidently aimed at going one better. Some people used to refer to an habitual prayer of his, that he might live long enough to be able to repay with interest both those who had helped him and those who had injured him. It was quite natural then that he was the one man in our times to whom so many people were eager to hand over their money, their cities and their own persons.

No one, however, could say that he allowed criminals and evil-doers to mock his authority. On the contrary, his punishments were exceptionally severe, and along the more frequented roads one often saw people who had been blinded or had had their feet or hands cut off. The result was that in Cyrus's provinces anyone, whether Greek or native, who doing no harm could travel without fear wherever he liked and could take with him whatever he wanted.

Of course it is well known that he treated with exceptional distinction all those who showed ability for war. In his first war, which was against the Pisidians and Mysians, he marched into their country himself and made those whom he saw willing to risk their lives governors over the territory which he conquered; and afterwards he gave them other honours and rewards, making it clear that the brave were going to be the most prosperous while the cowards only deserved to be their slaves. Consequently there was never any lack of people who were willing to risk their lives when they thought that Cyrus would get to know of it.

As for justice, he made it his supreme aim to see that those who really wanted to live in accordance with its standards became richer than those who wanted to profit by transgressing them. It followed from this that not only were his affairs in general conducted justly, but he enjoyed the services of an army that really was an army. Generals and captains who crossed the sea to take service under him as mercenaries knew that to do Cyrus good service paid better than any monthly wage. Indeed, whenever anyone carried out effectively a job which he had assigned, he never allowed his good work to go unrewarded. Consequently it was said that Cyrus got the best officers for any kind of job.

When he saw that a man was a capable administrator, acting on just principles, improving the land under his control and making it bring in profit, he never took his post away from him, but always gave him additional responsibility. The result was that his administrators did their work cheerfully and made money confidently. Cyrus was the last person whom they kept in the dark about their possessions, since he showed no envy for those who became rich openly, but, on the contrary, tried to make use of the wealth of people who attempted to conceal what they had.

Everyone agrees that he was absolutely remarkable for doing services to those whom he made friends of and knew to be true to him and considered able to help him in doing whatever job was on hand. He thought that the reason why

he needed friends was to have people to help him, and he applied exactly the same principle to others, trying to be of the utmost service to his friends whenever he knew that any of them wanted anything. I suppose that he received more presents than any other single individual, and this for a variety of reasons. But more than anyone else he shared them with his friends, always considering what each individual was like and what, to his knowledge, he needed most. When people sent him fine things to wear, either armour or beautiful clothes, they say that the remark he made about these was that he could not possibly wear all this finery on his own body, but he thought the finest thing for a man was that his friends should be well turned out. There is, no doubt, nothing surprising in the fact that he surpassed his friends in doing them great services, since he had the greater power to do so. What seems to me more admirable than this is the fact that he outdid them in ordinary consideration and in the anxiety to give pleasure. Often, when he had had a particularly good wine, he used to send jars half full of it to his friends with the message: 'Cyrus has not for a long time come across a better wine than this; so he has sent some to you and wants you to finish it up today with those whom you love best.' Often too he used to send helpings of goose and halves of loaves and such things, telling the bearer to say when he presented them 'Cyrus enjoyed this; so he wants you to taste it too.' When there was a scarcity of fodder,—though he himself, because of the number of his servants and his own wise provision, was able to get hold of it,—he used to send round to his friends and tell them to give the fodder he sent

to the horses they rode themselves, so that horses which carried his friends should not go hungry.

Whenever he went on an official journey, and was likely to be seen by great numbers of people, he used to call his friends to him and engage them in serious conversation, so that he might show what men he honoured. My own opinion therefore, based on what I have heard, is that there has never been anyone, Greek or foreigner, more generally beloved. And an additional proof of this is in the fact that, although Cyrus was a subject, no one deserted him and went over to the King,—except that Orontas tried to do so; but in his case he soon found that the man whom he thought reliable was more of a friend to Cyrus than to him. On the other hand there were many who left the King and came over to Cyrus, when war broke out between the two, and these also were people who had been particularly favoured by the King; but they came to the conclusion that if they did well under Cyrus their services would be better rewarded than they would be by the King. What happened at the time of his death is also a strong proof not only of his own courage but of his ability to pick out accurately people who were reliable, devoted and steadfast. For when he died every one of his friends and table-companions died fighting for him, except Ariaeus, who had been posted on the left wing in command of the cavalry. When Ariaeus heard that Cyrus had fallen, he and the whole army which he led took to flight.

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*To what formative influences of Cyrus' youth does Xenophon attach the greatest importance?*

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## 4-4

### Kuan-yin [Guanyin]: Compassion of Bodhisattva\*

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H. Kern, trans., *Saddharma-Pundarika or The Lotus of the True Law* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), pp. 406–09.

Thereafter the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Akshayamati rose from his seat, put his upper robe upon one shoulder, stretched his joined hands towards the Lord, and said: For what reason, O Lord, is the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara called Avalokitesvara [Guanyin]? So he asked, and the Lord answered to the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Akshayamati: All the hundred thousands of myriads of kotis<sup>1</sup> of creatures, young man of good family, who in this

world are suffering troubles will, if they hear the name of the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara, be released from that mass of troubles. Those who shall keep the name of this Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara, young man of good family, will, if they fall into a great mass of fire, be delivered therefrom by virtue of the lustre of the Bodhisattva Mahasattva. In case, young man of good family, creatures, carried off by the current of river, should implore the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara all rivers will afford them a ford. In case, young man of good family, many hundred thousand myriads of kotis of creatures, sailing in a ship on the ocean, should see their bullion, gold, gems, pearls, lapis lazuli, conch shells, stones, corals, emeralds, Musaragalvas,<sup>2</sup> and other goods lost, and the ship by a vehement, untimely gale case on the island of Giantesses,<sup>3</sup> and if in that ship a single being implores Avalokitesvara, all will be saved from that island of Giantesses. For that reason, young man of good family, the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara is named Avalokitesvara.

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\*Also spelled as Kuan Yin or Kwan-shi-yin in Chinese, Kannon in Japanese, and Avalokitesvara in Sanskrit.

<sup>1</sup>A figure varying from 100,000 to 10,000,000,000.

<sup>2</sup>It is believed to be a kind of precious stone.

<sup>3</sup>Modern day Ceylon or Sri Lanka.

If a man given up to capital punishment implore Avalokitesvara, young man of good family, the swords of the executioners shall snap asunder. Further, young man of good family, if the whole triple chiliocosm<sup>4</sup> were teeming with goblins and giants, they would by virtue of the name of the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara being pronounced lose the faculty of sight in their wicked designs. If some creature, young man of good family, shall be bound in wooden or iron manacles, chains, or fetters, be he guilty or innocent, then those manacles, chains, or fetters shall give way as soon as the name of the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara is pronounced. Such, young man of good family, is the power of the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara. If this whole triple chiliocosm, young man of good family, were teeming with knaves, enemies, and robbers armed with swords, and if a merchant leader of a caravan marched with a caravan rich in jewels; if then they perceived those robbers, knaves, and enemies armed with swords, and in their anxiety and fright thought themselves helpless; if, further, that leading merchant spoke to the caravan in this strain: Be not afraid, young gentlemen, be not frightened; invoke, all of you, with one voice the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara, the giver of safety; then you shall be delivered from this danger by which you are threatened at the hands of robbers

and enemies; if then, the whole caravan with one voice invoked Avalokitesvara with the words: Adoration, adoration be to the giver of safety, to Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva Mahasattva! then by the mere act of pronouncing the name, the caravan would be released from all danger. Such, young man of good family, is the power of the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara. In case creatures act under the impulse of impure passion, young man of good family, they will, after adoring the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara, be freed from passion. Those who act under the impulse of hatred will, after adoring the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara, be freed from hatred. Those who act under the impulse of infatuation will, after adoring the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara, be freed from infatuation. So mighty, young man of good family, is the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara. If a woman, desirous of male offspring, young man of good family, adores Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara, she shall get a son, nice, handsome, and beautiful; one possessed of the characteristics of a male child, generally beloved and winning, who has planted good roots. If a woman is desirous of getting a daughter, a nice, handsome, beautiful girl shall be born to her; one possessed of the (good) characteristics of a girl, generally beloved and winning, who has planted good roots. Such, young man of good family, is the power of the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara.

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<sup>4</sup>The triple world is supposed to consist of the Realm of Desire, the Realm of Form, and the Formless Realm.

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*Why do you think Guanyin's role is so relevant to Mahayanistic Buddhism?*



## Chapter 5

# Republican and Imperial Rome

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### 5-1

#### The Speech of Camillus: “All Things Went Well When We Obeyed the Gods, but Badly When We Disobeyed Them”

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From *The Ancient World: Readings in Social and Cultural History*, by D. Brendan Nagle and Stanley M. Burstein (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1995), pp. 184–186.

“When you see such striking stances of the effects of honoring or neglecting the divine, do you not see what an act of impiety you are about to perpetrate, and indeed, just at the moment we are emerging from the shipwreck brought about by our former irreligiosity? We have a city founded with all due observance of the auspices and augury. Not a spot in it is without religious rites and gods. Not only are the days for our sacrifices fixed, but also the places where they are to be performed.

“Romans, would you desert all these gods, public as well as private? Contrast this proposal with the action that occurred during the siege and was beheld with no less admiration by the enemy than by yourselves? This was the deed performed by Gaius Fabius, who descended from a citadel, braved Gallic spear, and performed on the Quirinal Hill the solemn rites of the Fabian family. Is it your wish that the family religious rites should not be interrupted even during war but that the public rites and the gods of Rome should be deserted in time of peace? Do you want the Pontiffs and Flamens to be more negligent of public ritual than a private individual in the anniversary rite of a particular family?

“Perhaps someone may say that either we will perform these duties at Veii or we will send our priests from there to perform the rituals here—but neither can be done without infringing on the established forms of worship. For not to enumerate all the sacred rites individually and all the gods, is it possible at the banquet of Jupiter for the *lectisternium* [see pp. 196–97, “*Steadiness of the Romans*”] to be set up anywhere else other than the Capitol? What shall I say of the eternal fire of Vesta, and of the statue which, as the pledge of empire, is kept under the safeguard of the temple [the statue of Athena, the Palladium, supposed to have been brought by Aeneas from Troy]? What, O Mars

Gradivus, and you, Father Quirinus—what of your sacred shields? Is it right that these holy things, some as old as the city itself, some of them even more ancient, be abandoned on unconsecrated ground?

“Observe the difference existing between us and our ancestors. They handed down to us certain sacred rites to be performed by us on the Alban Mount and at Lavinium. It was felt to be impious to transfer these rites from enemy towns to Rome—yet you think you can transfer them to Veii, an enemy city, without sin! . . .

“We talk of sacred rituals and temples—but what about priests? Does it not occur to you what a sacrilege you are proposing to commit in respect of them? The Vestals have but one dwelling place which nothing ever caused them to leave except the capture of the city. Shall your Virgins forsake you, O Vesta? And shall the Flamen by living abroad draw on himself and on his country such a weight of guilt every night [the Flamen was supposed to never leave Rome]? What of the other things, all of which we transact under auspices within the Pomerium [the sacred boundary around Rome]? To what oblivion, to what neglect do we consign them? The Curiate Assembly, which deals with questions of war; the Centuriate Assembly at which you elect consuls and military tribunes—when can they be held under auspices except where they are accustomed to be held? Shall we transfer them to Veii? Or shall the people, for the sake of the assemblies, come together at great inconvenience in this city, deserted by gods and men? . . .

“Not without good cause did gods and men select this place for the founding of a city. These most healthful hills, a convenient river by means of which the produce of the soil may be conveyed from the inland areas, by which supplies from overseas may be obtained, close enough to the sea for all purposes of convenience, yet not exposed by being too close to the danger of foreign fleets. Situated in the center of Italy, it is singularly adapted by nature for the growth of a city. The very size of so new a city is itself proof. Citizens, it is now in its three hundred and sixty fifth year. Throughout those years you have been at war with many ancient nations. Not to mention single states, neither the Volscians combined with the Aequi, together with all their powerful towns, not all Etruria, so powerful by land and sea, occupying the breadth of Italy between the Tyrrhenian and Adriatic seas, have been a match for you in war. Since this is so, why in the name of goodness do you want to experiment elsewhere when you had such good fortune here? Though your courage may go with you, the fortune of this place certainly cannot be transferred. here is the

Capitol, where a Human head was found which foretold that in that place would be the head of the world, the chief seat of empire [*a play on words; head in Latin is caput*]. Here, when the Capitol was being cleared with augural rites, the gods Juventas and Terminus, to the great joy of your fathers, refused to be moved. here is the fire of Vesta, here

the sacred shields of Mars which fell from heaven. Here the gods will be propitious to you—if you stay.”

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*What are the similarities between this speech and Pericles' Funeral Oration?*

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## 5-2

### Polybius: “Why Romans and Not Greeks Govern the World”

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From Polybius, *Historiarum reliquiae* (Paris: Didot, 1839), VI, iii–xvii, pp. 338–48, *passim*; trans. and condensed by Henry A. Myers.

With those Greek states which have often risen to greatness and then experienced a complete change of fortune, it is easy to describe their past and to predict their future. For there is no difficulty in reporting the known facts, and it is not hard to foretell the future by inference from the past. But it is no simple matter to explain the present state of the Roman constitution, nor to predict its future owing to our ignorance of the peculiar features of Roman life in the past. Particular attention and study are therefore required if one wishes to survey clearly the distinctive qualities of Rome’s constitution.

Most writers distinguish three kinds of constitutions: kingship, aristocracy, and democracy. One might ask them whether these three are the sole varieties or rather the best. In either case they are wrong. It is evident that the best constitution is one combining all three varieties, since we have had proof of this not only theoretically but by actual experience, Lycurgus having organized the Spartan state under a constitution based upon this principle. Nor can we agree that these three are the only kinds of states. We have witnessed monarchical and tyrannical governments, which differ sharply from true kingship, yet bear a certain resemblance to it. Several oligarchical constitutions also seem to resemble aristocratic ones. The same applies to democracies.

We must not apply the title of kingship to every monarchy, but must reserve it for one voluntarily accepted by willing subjects who are ruled by good judgment and not by terror and violence. Nor can we call every oligarchy an aristocracy, but only one where the government is in the hands of a selected body of the justest and wisest men. Similarly the name of democracy cannot be applied to a state in which the masses are free to do whatever they wish, but only to a community where it is traditional and customary to reverence the gods, honor one’s parents, respect one’s elders, and obey the laws. Such states, provided the will of the greater number prevails, are to be called democracies.

We should therefore recognize six kinds of governments: the three above mentioned, kingship, aristocracy, and democracy, and the three which are naturally related to them, monarchy, oligarchy, and ochlocracy (mob-rule). The first to arise was monarchy, its growth being natural and unaided: the next is true kingship born from monarchy by planning and reforms. Kingship is transformed into its vicious related form, tyranny; and next, the abolishment of both gives birth to aristocracy. Aristocracy by its very nature degenerates into oligarchy; and when the masses take vengeance on this government for its unjust rule, democracy is born: and in due course the arrogance and lawlessness of this form of government produces mob-rule to complete the cycle. Such is the recurring cycle of constitutions; such is the system devised by nature.

Rome, foreseeing the dangers presented by such a cycle, did not organize her government according to any one type, but rather tried to combine all the good features of the best constitutions. All three kinds of government shared in the control of the Roman state. Such fairness and propriety was shown in the use of these three types in drawing up the constitution, that it was impossible to say with certainty if the whole system was aristocratic, democratic, or monarchical. If one looked at the power of the Consuls, the constitution seemed completely monarchical; if at that of the Senate, it seemed aristocratic; and if at the power of the masses, it seemed clearly to be a democracy.

Roman Consuls exercise authority over all public affairs. All other magistrates except the tribunes are under them and bound to obey them, and they introduce embassies to the Senate. They consult the Senate on matters of urgency, they carry out in detail the provisions of its decrees, they summon assemblies, introduce measures, and preside over the execution of popular decrees. In war their power is almost uncontrolled; for they are empowered to make demands on allies, to appoint military tribunes, and to select soldiers. They also have the right of inflicting punishment on anyone under their command, and spending any sum they decide upon from the public funds. If one looks at this part of the administration alone, one may reasonably pronounce the constitution to be a pure monarchy or kingship.

To pass to the Senate: in the first place it has the control of the treasury, all revenue and expenditure being regulated by it; with the exception of payments made to the consuls, no disbursements are made without a decree of the Senate. Public works, whether constructions or repairs, are under

the control of the Senate. Crimes such as treason, conspiracy, poisoning, and assassination, as well as civil disputes, are under the jurisdiction of the Senate. The Senate also sends all embassies to foreign countries to settle differences, impose demands, receive submission, or declare war; and with respect to embassies arriving in Rome it decides what reception and what answer should be given to them. All these matters are in the hands of the Senate, so that in these respects the constitution appears to be entirely aristocratic.

After this we are naturally inclined to ask what part in the constitution is left for the people. The Senate controls all the particular matters I mentioned and manages all finances, and the Consuls have uncontrolled authority as regards armaments and operations in the field. But there is a very important part left for the people. For the people alone have the right to confer honors and inflict punishment, the only bonds by which human society is held together. For where the distinction between rewards and punishment is overlooked, or is observed but badly applied, no affairs can be properly administered. For how can one expect rational administration when good and evil men are held in equal estimation? The people judge cases punishable by a fine, especially when the accused have held high office. In capital cases they are the sole judges. It is the people who bestow office on the deserving, the noblest reward of virtue in a state; the people have the power of approving or rejecting laws, and what is most important of all, they deliberate on questions of war and peace. Further in the case of alliances, terms of peace, and treaties, it is the people who ratify all these. Thus one might plausibly say that the people's share in the government is the greatest, and that the constitution is a democratic one.

Having stated how political power is distributed among the three constitutional forms, I will now explain how each of the three parts is enabled, if they wish, to oppose or cooperate with the other parts. The Consul, when he leaves with his army, appears to have absolute authority in all matters necessary for carrying out his purpose; however, in fact he really requires the support of the people and the Senate. For the legions require constant supplies, and without the consent of the Senate, neither grain, clothing, nor pay can be provided; so that the commander's plans come to nothing, if the Senate chooses to impede them. As for the people it is indispensable for the Consuls to conciliate them, however far away from home they may be; for it is the people who ratify or annul treaties, and what is most important, the Consuls are obliged to account for their actions to the people. So it is not safe for the Consuls to underestimate the importance of the good will of either the Senate or the people.

The Senate, which possess such great power, is obliged to respect the wishes of the people, and it cannot carry out inquiries into the most grave offenses against the state, unless confirmed by the people. The people alone have the power of passing or rejecting any law meant to deprive the Senate of some of its traditional authority. Therefore the Senate is afraid of the masses and must pay due attention to the popular will.

Similarly, the people are dependent on the Senate and must respect its members both in public and in private. Through the whole of Italy a vast number of contracts, which it would not be easy to enumerate, are given out by the Senate for the construction and repair of public buildings, and besides this there are many things which are farmed out, such as navigable rivers, harbors, gardens, mines, lands, in fact everything that forms part of the Roman domains. Now all these matters are undertaken by the people, and everyone is interested in these contracts and the work they involve. Certain people are the actual purchasers of the contracts, others are the partners of these first, others guarantee them, others pledge their own fortunes to the state for this purpose. In all these matters the Senate is supreme. It can grant extension of time; it can relieve the contractor if any accident occurs; and if the work proves to be absolutely impossible to carry out it can liberate him from his contract. There are many ways in which the Senate can either benefit or injure those who manage public property. What is even more important is that the judges in most civil trials are appointed from the Senate. As a result of the fact that all citizens are at the mercy of the Senate, and look forward with alarm to the uncertainty of litigation, they are very shy of obstructing or resisting its decisions. Similarly anyone is reluctant to oppose the projects of the Consuls as all are generally and individually under their authority when in the field.

Such being the power that each part has of hampering the others or cooperating with them, their union is adequate to all emergencies, so that it is impossible to find a better political system than this. Whenever the menace of some common danger from abroad compels them to act in concord and support each other, the strength of the state becomes great, as all are zealously competing in devising means of meeting the need of the hour. Consequently, this peculiar form of constitution possesses an irresistible power of attaining every object upon which it is resolved. When they are freed from external menace, and reap the harvest of good fortune and affluence which is the result of their success, and in the enjoyment of this prosperity are corrupted by flattery and idleness and become insolent and overbearing, as indeed happens often enough, it is then especially that we see the state providing itself a remedy for the evil from which it suffers. For when one part having grown out of proportion to the others aims at supremacy and tends to become too predominant, it is evident that none of the three is absolute. The purpose of one can be offset and resisted by the others, and none of them will excessively outgrow the others or treat them with contempt. All parts abide by the traditional constitutional practices because any aggressive impulse is sure to be checked and because they fear from the outset the possibility of being interfered with by the others. . . .

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*Why does Polybius think that checks and balances have given lasting stability to the Roman political system?*

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5-3

**Marcus Tullius Cicero:**  
*The Laws*

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From Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De legibus libri*, ed. J. Vahlen (Berlin: F. Vahlenum, 1883; I, vi, 18-19, I, xi, 33; II, iv, 9-v, 13) trans. Henry A. Myers. Dialogue-personage names omitted.

Those learned men appear to be right who say that law is the highest reason implanted in Nature, which commands what should be done and prohibits what should not be: when this same reason takes root and develops in the human mind it is law. Thus they consider law to be intelligence which has the power to command people to do what is right and to refrain from what is wrong. . . . The way Nature has made us let us share the concept of justice with each other and pass it on to all men. . . . Those human beings to whom Nature gave reason were also give *right* reason in matters of command and prohibition. . . .

From the time we were children, we have been calling rules that begin: "If a man makes a complaint in court" and similar things by the name "laws." It would be good now if we could establish that with commands to do things or refrain from doing them nations apply the power to steer people towards doing the right things and away from committing crimes; however, this power is not only older than peoples and governments but is of the same age as the God who protects and rules both Heaven and earth. You see, the divine mind cannot exist without reason, and divine reason must have the power to sanction what is right and wrong.

Nothing was ever written to say that one man alone on a bridge should face massed, armed forces of enemies and command the bridge behind him to be destroyed, but that fact should not mislead us into thinking that [Horatio]

Cocles was not following to the utmost the law which summons us to deeds of bravery. If there has been no written law in Rome against rape back when Lucius Tarquin ruled as king, that would not mean that Sextus Tarquin was not breaking that eternal law when he took Lucretia by force. . . . The fact is that reason did exist, a gift of Nature, calling upon man to do right and abstain from wrong. It did not begin to be law when it first came into being, which it did at the same time as the divine mind. . . . The varied ordinances formulated for monetary needs of the peoples bear the name "laws" through being so favored by conventional usage rather than because they are really *laws*. . . . Men introduced such laws to insure the protection of citizens and states, as well as the peaceful and happy lot of mankind. Those who originated these sanctions persuaded their people that what they were writing down and putting into effect would—if the people lived by them—give them happiness and honor. When these sanctions were formulated and went into effect they were indeed called "laws."

How about all the pernicious and pestilential bits of legislation which nations have been known to enact? These no more deserve the name "laws" than the agreements that gangs of robbers might make among themselves. We know that if ignorant and inexperienced men should recommend poisons instead of medicines with the power to heal these would not be called "physicians' prescriptions." In the same way, nothing causing injury should be called a "law," no matter how it may have been enacted by a state or how the people may accept it. Thus we find that law reflects justice, distinct from injustice, and comes from that most ancient and rightfully dominant of all things: Nature, which all human laws reflect when they punish evildoers while defending and protecting good people.

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*Why does Cicero consider Natural Law to have greater power than man-made law? Do you? Why?*

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5-4

**Overture:**  
*The Gospel of Jesus*

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From *The Historical Jesus* by John Dominic Crossan (New York: HarperCollins, 1991) pp. ix-xvi)

In the beginning was the performance; not the word alone, not the deed alone, but both, each indelibly marked with the other forever. He comes as yet unknown into a hamlet

of Lower Galilee. He is watched by the cold, hard eyes of peasants living long enough at subsistence level to know exactly where the line is drawn between poverty and destitution. He looks like a beggar, yet his eyes lack the proper cringe, his voice the proper whine, his walk the proper shuffle. He speaks about the rule of God, and they listen as much from curiosity as anything else. They know all about rule and power, about kingdom and empire, but they know it in terms of tax and debt, malnutrition and sickness, agrarian oppression and demonic possession. What, they really want to know, can this kingdom of God do for a lame child, a blind parent, a demented soul screaming its tortured isolation among the graves that mark the edges of the village? Jesus walks with them to the tombs, and, in the silence after the exorcism, the villagers listen once more,

but now with curiosity giving way to cupidity, fear, and embarrassment. He is invited, as honor demands, to the home of the village leader. He goes, instead, to stay in the home of the dispossessed woman. Not quite proper, to be sure, but it would be unwise to censure an exorcist, to criticize a magician. The village could yet broker this power to its surroundings, could give this kingdom of God a localization, a place to which others would come for healing, a center with honor and patronage enough for all, even, maybe, for that dispossessed woman herself. But the next day he leaves them, and now they wonder aloud about a divine kingdom with no respect for proper protocols, a kingdom, as he had said, not just for the poor, like themselves, but for the destitute. Others say that the worst and most powerful demons are not found in small villages but in certain cities. Maybe, they say, that was where the exorcised demon went, to Sepphoris or Tiberias, or even Jerusalem, or maybe to Rome itself, where its arrival would hardly be noticed amidst so many others already in residence. But some say nothing at all and ponder the possibility of catching up with Jesus before he gets too far.

Even Jesus himself had not always seen things that way. Earlier he had received John's baptism and accepted this message of God as the imminent apocalyptic judge. But the Jordan was not just water, and to be baptized in it was to recapitulate the ancient and archetypal passage from imperial bondage to national freedom. Herod Antipas moved swiftly to execute John, there was no apocalyptic consummation, and Jesus, finding his own voice, began to speak of God not as imminent apocalypse but as present healing. To those first followers from the peasant villages of Lower Galilee who asked how to repay his exorcisms and cures, he gave a simple answer, simple, that is, to understand but hard as death itself to undertake. You are healed healers, he said, so take the Kingdom to others, for I am not its patron and you are not its brokers. It is, was, and always will be available to any who want it. Dress as I do, like a beggar, but do not beg. Bring a miracle and request a table. Those you heal must accept you into their homes.

The ecstatic vision and social program sought to rebuild a society upward from its grass roots but on principles of religious and economic egalitarianism, with free healing brought directly to the peasant homes and free sharing of whatever they had in return. The deliberate conjunction of magic and meal, miracle and table, free compassion and open commensality, was a challenge launched not just at Judaism's strictest purity regulations, or even at the Mediterranean's patriarchal combination of honor and shame, patronage and clientage, but at civilization's eternal inclination to draw lines, invoke boundaries, establish hierarchies, and maintain discriminations. It did not invite a political revolution but envisaged a social one at the imagination's most dangerous depths. No importance was given to distinctions of Gentile and Jew, female and male, slave and free, poor and rich. Those distinctions were hardly even attacked in theory; they were simply ignored in practice.

What would happen to Jesus was probably as

predictable as what had happened already to John. Some form of religiopolitical execution could surely have been expected. What he was saying and doing was as unacceptable in the first as in the twentieth century, there, here, or anywhere. Still, the exact sequence of what happened at the end lacks multiple independent accounts, and the death is surer in its connection to the life than it is in its connection to the preceding few days. It seems clear that Jesus, confronted, possibly for the first and only time, with the Temple's rich magnificence, symbolically destroyed its perfectly legitimate brokerage function in the name of the unbrokered kingdom of God. Such an act, if performed in the volatile atmosphere of Passover, a feast that celebrated Jewish liberation from inaugural imperial oppression, would have been quite enough to entail crucifixion by religiopolitical agreement. And it is now impossible for us to imagine the offhand brutality, anonymity, and indifference with which a peasant nobody like Jesus would have been disposed of.

What could not have been predicted and might not have been expected was that the end was not the end. Those who had originally experienced divine power through his vision and his example still continued to do so after his death—in fact, even more so, because now it was no longer confined by time or place. A prudently neutral Jewish historian reported, at the end of the first century, “When Pilate, upon hearing him accused by men of the highest standing amongst us, had condemned him to be crucified, those who had in the first place come to love him did not give up their affection for him. And the tribe of the Christians, so called after him, has still to this day not disappeared.” And an arrogant Roman historian reported that, at the start of the second century, “Christus, the founder of the name [of Christian], had undergone the death penalty in the reign of Tiberius, by sentence of the procurator Pontius Pilatus, and the pernicious superstition was checked for the moment, only to break out once more, not merely in Judaea, the home of the disease, but in the capital itself, where all things horrible or shameful in the world collect and find a vogue.” Jesus' own followers, who had initially fled from the danger and horror of the crucifixion, talked eventually not just of continued affection or spreading superstition but of resurrection. They tried to express what they meant by telling, for example, about the journey to Emmaus undertaken by two Jesus followers, one named and clearly male, one unnamed and probably female. The couple were leaving Jerusalem in disappointed and dejected sorrow. Jesus joined them on the road and, unknown and unrecognized, explained how the Hebrew Scriptures should have prepared them for his fate. Later that evening they invited him to join them for their evening meal, and finally they recognized him when once again he served the meal to them as of old beside the lake. And then, only then, they started back to Jerusalem in high spirits. The symbolism is obvious, as is the metaphoric condensation of the first years of Christian thought and practice into one parabolic afternoon. Emmaus never happened. Emmaus always happens.

If we ask, however, which of all the words placed on his lips actually go back to the historical Jesus, it is possible to offer at least a reconstructed inventory. But, as you read them, recall that, in the light of the preceding paragraphs, these words are not a list to be read. They are not even a sermon to be preached. They are a score to be played and a program to be enacted.

Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals, nor two tunics.  
Whatever house you enter, eat what is set before you;  
heal the sick in it and say to them, "The kingdom of  
God has come upon you."

Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find;  
knock, and it will be opened for you.

The kingdom of God will not come with signs that can be  
checked beforehand; nor will they say, "Here it is!" or  
"There!" because the kingdom of God is already among you.

You have ears, use them!

Whoever receives you, receives not you but me; whoever  
receives me, receives not me but the one who sent me.

Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits  
adultery, and whoever marries a woman divorced from  
her husband commits adultery.

What goes into your mouth will not defile you, but what  
comes out of your mouth, that will defile you.

Those who enter the kingdom of God are like infants  
still being suckled.

You are the light of the world!

No prophet is acceptable in his village; no physician  
heals those who know him.

Human beings will be forgiven all their sins.

A woman in the crowd raised her voice and said to him,  
"Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts that  
you sucked!" But he said, "Blessed rather are those who  
hear the word of God and keep it!"

Forgive, and you will be forgiven.

The first will be last and the last first.

Whatever is hidden will be made manifest, whatever is  
covered up will be uncovered.

A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed  
fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it.  
Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it had not much  
soil, and since it had no root it withered away. Other seed  
fell among thorns and the thorns grew up and choked it,  
and it yielded no grain. And other seeds fell into good soil  
and brought forth grain, growing up and increasing and  
yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.

The kingdom of God is like a mustard seed, the smallest  
of all seeds. But when it falls on tilled ground, it produces  
a great plant and becomes a shelter for birds of the sky.

No one after lighting a lamp puts it in a cellar or under a  
bushel, but on a stand, that those who enter may see the  
light.

Be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.

To one who has will more be given; from one who has  
not, it will be taken away.

Blessed are the destitute.

If you follow me, you carry a cross.

A man planted a vineyard, and let it out to tenants, and  
went into another country. When the time came, he sent  
a servant to the tenants, that they should give him some  
of the fruit of the vineyard; but the tenants beat him, and  
sent him away empty-handed. And he sent another  
servant; him also they beat and treated shamefully, and  
sent him away empty-handed. And he sent yet a third;  
this one they wounded and cast out. Then the owner of  
the vineyard said, "What shall I do? I will send my  
beloved son; it may be they will respect him." But when  
the tenants saw him, they said to themselves. "This is the  
heir; let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours."

Blessed are the reviled.

I will destroy this Temple and no one will be able to  
rebuild it.

The harvest is great but the laborers are few. Pray the  
Lord of the harvest to send out laborers.

Why have you come out into the desert? To see a reed  
shaken by the wind? To see man clothed in soft  
clothing? Those who are gorgeously appareled and live  
in luxury are in kings' courts. What then did you come  
out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a  
prophet.

When you see a cloud rising in the west, you say at once,  
"A shower is coming"; and so it happens. And when you  
see the south wind blowing, you say, "There will be  
scorching heat" and it happens. You know how to interpret  
the appearance of earth and sky; but why do you not know  
how to interpret the present time?

They showed Jesus a gold coin and said to him,  
"Caesar's men demand taxes from us." He said to them,  
"Give Caesar what belongs to Caesar, give God what  
belongs to God."

Blessed are those who weep.

To save your life is to lose it; to lose your life is to save  
it.

Who is not against you is for you.

It is like a fisherman who cast his net into the sea and  
drew it up from the sea full of small fish. Among them  
he found a fine large fish. He threw all the small fish  
back into the sea and chose the large fish without  
difficulty.

I have cast fire upon the world, and see, I am guarding it  
until it blazes.

Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth?  
No, I tell you, but rather division; for henceforth in one  
house there will be five divided, three against two and  
two against three; they will be divided, father against son

## Chapter 5

and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against her mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

It is as if a man should scatter seed upon the ground, and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he knows not how. The earth produces of itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.

You see the mote in your brother's eye, but do not see the beam in your own eye. When you cast the beam out of your own eye, then you will see clearly to cast the mote from your brother's eye.

A city built on a high mountain and fortified cannot fall, nor can it be hidden.

What I tell you in the dark, utter in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim upon the housetops.

If a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into a pit.

It is not possible for anyone to enter the house of a strong man and take it by force unless he binds his hands; then he will be able to ransack his house.

Do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat, nor about your body, what you shall put on. Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Consider the lilies, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Instead, seek his kingdom, and these things shall be yours as well.

Woe to the Pharisees, for they are like a dog sleeping in the manger of oxen, for neither does he eat nor does he let the oxen eat.

Among those born of women, from Adam until John the Baptist, there is no one so superior to John that his eyes should not be lowered before him. Yet whichever one of you comes to be a child will be acquainted with the kingdom and will become superior to John.

No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other.

No one drinks old wine and immediately desires to drink new wine.

No one puts a new patch on an old garment, and no one puts new wine into old wineskins.

Whoever does not hate his father and mother cannot become a disciple to me. And whoever does not hate his brothers and sisters cannot become a disciple to me.

The kingdom may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field; but while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. And the servants of the householder

came and said to him, "Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then has it weeds?" He said to them, "An enemy has done this." The servants said to him, "Then do you want us to go and gather them?" But he said, "No; lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. Let both grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, 'Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.' "

There was a rich man who had much money. He said, "I shall put my money to use so that I may sow, reap, plant, and fill my storehouse with produce, with the result that I shall lack nothing." Such were his intentions, but that same night he died.

There was a man who (wanted) to invite guests and when he had prepared the dinner, he sent his servant to invite the guests. He went to the first and said to him, "My master invites you." He said, "I have claims against some merchants. They are coming to me this evening. I must go and give them my orders. I ask to be excused from the dinner." He went to another and said to him, "My master invites you." He said to him, "My friend is going to be married, and I am to prepare the banquet. I shall not be able to come. I ask to be excused from the dinner." He went to another and said to him, "My master invites you." He said to him, "I have just bought a farm, and I am on my way to collect the rent. I shall not be able to come. I ask to be excused." The servant returned and said to his master, "Those whom you invited to the dinner have asked to be excused." The master said to his servant, "Go outside to the streets and bring back those whom you happen to meet, so that they may dine."

Blessed are the hungry.

A man said to him, "Tell my brothers to divide my father's possessions with me." He said to him, "O man, who has made me a divider?"

The Kingdom is like a merchant who had a consignment of merchandise and who discovered a pearl. The merchant was shrewd. He sold the merchandise and bought the pearl alone for himself.

Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the human being has nowhere to lay its head.

Why do you wash the outside of the cup? Do you not realize that the one who made the inside made the outside too?

If you have money, do not lend it at interest, but give it to one from whom you will not get it back.

The Kingdom is like a certain woman. She took a little leaven, concealed it in some dough, and made it into large loaves.

The disciples said to him, "Your brothers and your mother are standing outside." He said to them, "Those here who do the will of God are my brothers and my mother."

They said to Jesus, "Come let us pray today and let us fast." Jesus said, "What is the sin that I have committed,

or wherein I have been defeated? But when the bridegroom leaves the bridal chamber, then let them fast and pray.”

The Kingdom is like a shepherd who had a hundred sheep. One of them, the largest, went astray. He left the ninety-nine and looked for that one until he found it. When he had gone to such trouble, he said to the sheep, “I care for you more than the ninety-nine.”

The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

The scribes and elders and priests were angry because he reclined at table with sinners.

Love your enemies and pray for those who abuse you.

He was casting out a demon that was dumb; when the demon had gone out, the dumb man spoke, and the people marveled. But some of them said, “He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the prince of demons.” But he said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and a divided household falls. And if Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul.”

If I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

Beware of the scribes, who like to go about in long robes, and to have salutations in the marketplaces and the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts.

Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how will you season it?

If any one strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also; and if any one would sue you and take your coat, let him have your cloak as well; and if any one forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles.

One of the disciples said to him, “Lord, let me go and bury my father.” But Jesus said to him, “Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead.”

Another said, “I will follow you, Lord; but let me first say farewell to those at my home.” Jesus said to him, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.”

You are as lambs in the midst of wolves.

What father among you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God. Why, even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not; you are of more value than many sparrows.

Where your treasure is, there will your heart also be.

From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of God has suffered violence, and men of violence take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.

Peter came up and said to him, “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?” Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven.”

A man going on a journey called his servants and entrusted to them his property; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them; and he made five talents more. So also, he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master’s money. Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, “Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents more.” His master said to him, “Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master.” And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, “Master, you delivered to me two talents; here I have made two talents more.” His master said to him, “Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master.” He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, “Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not winnow; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.” But his master answered him, “You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sowed, and gather where I have not winnowed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has the ten talents.”

He said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you; rather let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. For which is the greater, one who sits at table, or one who serves? Is it not the one who sits at table? But I am among you as one who serves.”

It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.

Love your neighbor like your soul; guard your neighbor like the pupil of your eye.

Become passersby.

It is impossible to mount two horses or to stretch two bows.



Blessed is the one who has suffered.

Split a piece of wood, and I am there. Lift up the stone, and you will find me there.

The Kingdom is like a certain woman who was carrying a jar full of meal. While she was walking on the road, still some distance from home, the handle of the jar broke, and the meal emptied out behind her on the road. She did not realize it; she had noticed no accident. When she reached her house, she set the jar down and found it empty.

The kingdom is like a certain man who wanted to kill a powerful man. In his own house he drew his sword and stuck it into the wall in order to find out whether his hand could carry through. Then he slew the powerful man.

If you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your neighbor has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your neighbor, and then come and offer your gift.

Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. Let what you say be simply yes or no; anything more than this comes from evil.

Exalt yourself and you will be humbled; humble yourself and you will be exalted.

The Kingdom may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. When he began the reckoning, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents; and as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, "Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay you everything." And out of pity for him the lord of the servant released him and forgave him the debt. But that same servant, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat he said, "Pay what you owe." So his fellow servant fell down and besought him, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you." He refused and went and put him in prison till he should pay the debt. When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, "You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you besought me; and should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?" And in anger his lord delivered him to the jailers, till he should pay all his debt.

The Kingdom is like a householder who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; and

to them he said, "You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you." So they went. Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing; and he said to them, "Why do you stand here idle all day?" They said to him, "Because no one has hired us." He said to them, "You go into the vineyard too." And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, "Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first." And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. And on receiving it they grumbled at the householder, saying, "These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat." But he replied to one of them, "Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what belongs to you, and go; I choose to give to this last as I give to you."

There are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven.

A man had two sons; and he went to the first and said, "Son, go and work in the vineyard today." And he answered, "I will not"; but afterward he repented and went. And he went to the second and said the same; and he answered, "I go, sir," but did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?

A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion, and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; then he sent him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, "Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back."

Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, "Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him"; and he will answer from within, "Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything."? Though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him whatever he needs.

A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. And he said to the vinedresser, "Lo, these three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down; why

should it use up the ground?" And he answered him, "Let it alone, sir, this year also, till I dig about it and put on manure. And if it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down."

For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, "This man began to build, and was not able to finish." Or what king, going to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and take counsel whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? And if not, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends an embassy and asks terms of peace.

What woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek diligently until she finds it? And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, "Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin which I had lost."

There was a man who had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the share of property that falls to me." And he divided his living between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took his journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in loose living. And when he had spent everything, a great famine arose in that country, and he began to be in want. So he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have fed on the pods that the swine ate; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, "How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired servants.' " And he arose and came to his father. But while he was yet at a distance, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son." But the father said to his servants, "Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." And they began to make merry. Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what this meant. And he said to him, "Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has received him safe and sound." But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, "Lo, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command; yet you never gave me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who

has devoured your living with harlots, you killed for him the fatted calf!" And he said to him, "Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to make merry and be glad for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found."

There was a rich man who had a steward, and charges were brought to him that this man was wasting his goods. And he called him and said to him, "What is this that I hear about you? Turn in the account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward." And the steward said to himself, "What shall I do, since my master is taking the stewardship away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. I have decided what to do, so that people may receive me into their houses when I am put out of the stewardship." So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he said to the first, "How much do you owe my master?" He said, "A hundred measures of oil." And he said to him, "Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty." Then he said to another, "And how much do you owe?" He said, "A hundred measures of wheat." He said to him, "Take your bill, and write eighty."

There was a rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, full of sores, who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table; moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried; and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes, and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus in his bosom. And he called out, "Father Abraham, have mercy upon me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame." But Abraham said, "Son, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us."

In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor regarded man; and there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, "Vindicate me against my adversary." For a while he refused; but afterward he said to himself, "Though I neither fear God nor regard man, yet because this widow bothers me, I will vindicate her, or she will wear me out by her continual coming."

Two men went up into the Temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, "God, I thank thee that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all that I get." But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying "God, be merciful to me a sinner!" This man went down to his house justified rather than the other.

Once again, those words are not a list to be read. They are not even a sermon to be preached. They are a score to be played and a program to be enacted. This book is an account of their inaugural orchestration and initial performance. In the end, as in the beginning, now as then, there is only the performance.

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## 5-5

### *The Gospel According to John*

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From *The Bible Revised Standard Version*, Chapter 1, pp. 103-105.

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not over come it.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came for testimony, to bear witness to the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness to the light.

9 The true light that enlightens every man was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not. He came to his own home, and his own people received him not. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God; who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld this glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father. (John bore witness to him, and cried, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, for he was before me.'") And from his fullness have we all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known.

19 And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed, he did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Eli'jah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" And he answered, "No." They said to him then, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' as the prophet Isaiah said."

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*What vision of Jesus is portrayed by Crossan?*

24 Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Eli'jah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water; but among you stands one whom you do not know, even he who comes after me, the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie." This took place in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks before me, for he was before me.' I myself did not know him; but for this I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel." And John bore witness, "I saw the Spirit descend as a dove from heaven, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him; but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."

35 The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples; and he looked at Jesus as he walked, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. Jesus turned, and saw them following, and said to them, "What do you seek?" And they said to him, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?" He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where he was staying; and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour. One of the two who heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which means Christ). He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him, and said, "So you are Simon the son of John? You shall be called Cephas" (which means Peter).

43 The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. And he found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." Now Philip was from Beth-sa'ida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathan'a-el, and said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Nathan'a-el said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." Jesus saw Nathan'a-el coming to him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" Nathan'a-el said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Nathan'a-el answered

him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" Jesus answered him, "Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these." And he said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

2 On the third day there was a marriage at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there; Jesus also was invited to the marriage, with his disciples. When the wine failed, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "O woman, what have you to do with me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Now six stone jars were standing there, for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the steward of the feast." So they took it. When the steward of the feast tasted the water now become wine and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward of the feast called the bridegroom and said to him, "Every man serves the good wine first; and when men have drunk freely, then the poor wine; but you have kept the good wine until now." This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

12 After this he went down to Caper'na-um, with his mother and his brothers and his disciples; and there they stayed for a few days.

13 The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers at their business. And making a whip of cords, he drove them all, with the sheep and oxen, out of the temple; and he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. And he told those who sold the pigeons, "Take these things away; you shall not make my Father's house a house of trade." His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for thy house will consume me." The Jews then said to him, "What sign have you to show us for doing this?" Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?" But he spoke of the temple of his body. When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken.

23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs which he did; but Jesus did not trust himself to them, because he knew all men and needed no one to bear witness of man; for he himself knew what was in man.

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*What does the birth story of Jesus and the story of his baptism tell us about how the early church say him and his mission?*

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## 5-6

### *The Letter of Paul to the Romans*

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From *The Bible: Revised Standard Version*, Chapter 1, p. 169.

1 Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and designated Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ;

7 To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world. For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I mention you always in my prayers, asking that somehow by God's will I may now at last succeed in coming to you. For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you, that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine. I want you to know, brethren, that I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented), in order that I may reap some harvest among you as well as among the rest of the Gentiles. I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish: so I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel: it is the power of God for salvation to every one who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, "He who through faith is righteous shall live."

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of men who by

## Chapter 5

their wickedness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. Ever since the creation of the world his invisible nature, namely, his eternal power and deity, has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse; for although they knew God they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking and their senseless minds were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man or birds or animals or reptiles.

24 Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever! Amen.

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*What can we learn about the character and personality of Paul from this reading?*

## Chapter 6

# *Africa: Early History to 1000 C.E.*

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### 6-1

## **Bumba Vomits the World, Bushonga (Bantu), Zaire**

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Translated by E. Torday and T. A. Joyce, adapted by Maria Leach

In the beginning, in the dark, there was nothing but water. And Bumba was alone.

One day Bumba was in terrible pain. He retched and strained and vomited up the sun. After that light spread over everything. The heat of the sun dried up the water until the black edges of the world began to show. Black sandbanks and reefs could be seen. But there were no living things.

Bumba vomited up the moon and then the stars, and after that the night had its own light also.

Still Bumba was in pain. He strained again and nine living creatures came forth: the leopard named Koy Bumba, and Pongo Bumba the crested eagle, the crocodile, Ganda Bumba, and one little fish named Yo; next, old Kono Bumba, the tortoise, and Tsetse, the lightning, swift, deadly, beautiful like the leopard, then the white heron, Nyanyi Bumba, also one beetle, and the goat named Budi.

Last of all came forth men. There were many men, but only one was white like Bumba. His name was Loko Yima.

The creatures themselves then created all the creatures. The heron created all the birds of the air except the kite.

He did not make the kite. The crocodile made serpents and the iguana. The goat produced every beast with horns. Yo, the small fish, brought forth all the fish of all the seas and waters. The beetle created insects.

Then the serpents in their turn made grasshoppers, and the iguana made the creatures without horns.

Then the three sons of Bumba said they would finish the world. The first, Nyonye Ngana, made the white ants; but he was not equal to the task, and died of it. The ants, however, thankful for life and being, went searching for black earth in the depths of the world and covered the barren sands to bury and honor their creator.

Chonganda, the second son, brought forth a marvelous living plant from which all the trees and grasses and flowers and plants in the world have sprung. The third son, Chedi Bumba, wanted something different, but for all his trying made only the bird called the kite.

Of all the creatures, Tsetse, lightning, was the only troublemaker. She stirred up so much trouble that Bumba chased her into the sky. Then mankind was without fire until Bumba showed the people how to draw fire out of trees. "There is fire in every tree," he told them, and showed them how to make the firedrill and liberate it. Sometimes today Tsetse still leaps down and strikes the earth and causes damage.

When at last the work of creation was finished, Bumba walked through the peaceful villages and said to the people, "Behold these wonders. They belong to you." Thus from Bumba, the Creator, the First Ancestor, came forth all the wonders that we see and hold and use, and all the brotherhood of beasts and man.

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### 6-2

## **Cagn Orders the World, Bushman, Southern Africa**

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Translated by J. M. Orpen

A daughter of Cagn became cross because her father had scolded her and she ran away to destroy herself by throwing herself among the snakes (*qabu*). The snakes were also men, and their chief married her and they ate snake's meat,

but they gave her eland's meat to eat, because the child of Cagn must eat no evil thing. Cagn used to know things that were far off, and he sent his son Cogaz to bring her back, so Cogaz went with his young men, and Cagn lent him his tooth to make him strong. When the snakes saw Cogaz approaching with his party, they became angry and began to hide their heads, but their chief said, "You must not get angry, they are coming to their child," so the snakes went away to hunt, and his sister gave him meat, and they told her to tell her husband they were come to fetch her and she prepared food for the road and they went with her next morning, and they prepared themselves by binding rushes round their limbs and bodies, and three snakes followed them. These tried to bite them, but they only bit the rushes;

they tried to beat them with reins, but they only beat rushes, and they tried throwing sand at them to cause wind to drive them into the water, not knowing he had the tooth of Cagn, and they failed. The children at home, the young men with the chief of the snakes, knew that when those snakes came back they would fill the country with water. So they commenced to build a high stage with willow poles, and the female snakes took their husbands on their return and threw them into the water, and it rose about the mountains, but the chief and his young men were saved on the high stage; and Cagn sent Cogaz for them to come and turn from being snakes, and he told them to lie down, and he struck them with his stick, and as he struck each the body of a person came out, and the skin of a snake was left on the ground, and he sprinkled the skins with canna, and the snakes turned from being snakes, and they became his people. . . .

Cagn sent Cogaz to cut sticks to make bows. When Cogaz came to the bush, the baboons (*cogn*) caught him. They called all the other baboons together to hear him, and they asked him who sent him there. He said his father sent him to cut sticks to make bows. So they said—"Your father thinks himself more clever than we are, he wants those bows to kill us, so we'll kill you," and they killed Cogaz, and tied him up in the top of a tree, and they danced around the tree singing (an untranscribable baboon song), with a chorus saying, "Cagn thinks he is clever." Cagn was asleep when Cogaz was killed, but when he awoke he told Coti to give him his charms, and he put some on his nose, and said the baboons have hung Cogaz. So he went to where the baboons were, and when they saw him coming close by, they changed their song so as to omit the words about Cagn, but a little baboon girl said, "Don't sing that way; sing the way you were singing before." And Cagn said, "Sing as the little girl wishes," and they sang and danced away as before. And Cagn said, "That is the song I heard, that is what I wanted, go on dancing till I return"; and he went and fetched a bag full of pegs, and he went behind each of them as they were dancing and making a great dust, and he drove a peg into each one's back, and gave it a crack, and sent them off to the mountains to live on roots, beetles and scorpions, as a punishment. Before that baboons were men, but since that they have tails, and their tails hang crooked. Then Cagn took Cogaz down, and gave him canna and made him alive again.

Cagn found an eagle getting honey from a precipice, and said, "My friend, give me some too," and it said, "Wait a bit," and it took a comb and put it down, and went back and took more, and told Cagn to take the rest, and he climbed up and licked only what remained on the rock, and when he tried to come down he found he could not. Presently he thought of his charms, and took some from his belt, and caused them to go to Cogaz to ask advice; and Cogaz sent word back by means of the charms that he was to make water to run down the rock, and he would find

himself able to come down; and he did so, and when he got down, he descended into the ground and came up again, and he did this three times, and the third time he came up near the eagle, in the form of a huge bull eland; and the eagle said, "What a big eland," and went to kill it, and it threw an assegai, which passed it on the right side, and then another, which missed it, to the left, and a third, which passed between its legs, and the eagle trampled on it, and immediately hail fell and stunned the eagle, and Cagn killed it, and took some of the honey home to Cogaz, and told him he had killed the eagle which had acted treacherously to him, and Cogaz said, "You will get harm some day by these fightings." And Cagn found a woman named Cgorioinsi, who eats men, and she had made a big fire and was dancing round it, and she used to seize men and throw them into the fire, and Cagn began to roast roots at the fire, and at last she came and pitched him in, but he slipped through at the other side, and went on roasting and eating his roots, and she pitched him in again and again, and he only said "Wait a bit until I have finished my roots and I'll show you what I am." And when he was done he threw her into the fire as a punishment for killing people. Then Cagn went back to the mountain, where he had left some of the honey he took from the eagle, and he left his sticks there, and went down to the river, and there was a person in the river named Quuisi, who had been standing there a long time, something having caught him by the foot, and held him there since the winter, and he called to Cagn to come and help him, and Cagn went to help him, and put his hand down into the water to loosen his leg, and the thing let go the man's leg, and seized Cagn's arm. And the man ran stumbling out of the water, for his leg was stiffened by his being so long held fast, and he called out, "Now you will be held there till the winter," and he went to the honey, and threw Cagn's sticks away; and Cagn began to bethink him of his charms, and he sent to ask Cogaz for advice through his charms, and Cogaz sent word and told him to let down a piece of his garment into the water alongside his hand, and he did so, and the thing let go his hand and seized his garment, and he cut off the end of his garment, and ran and collected his sticks, and pursued the man and killed him, and took the honey to Cogaz.

The thorns (*dobbletjes*) were people—they are called Cagn-cagn—they were dwarfs, and Cagn found them fighting together, and he went to separate them, and they all turned upon him and killed him, and the biting ants helped them, and they ate Cagn up; but after a time they and the dwarfs collected his bones, and put them together and tied his head on, and these went stumbling home, and Cogaz cured him and made him all right again, and asked what had happened to him, and he told him; and Cogaz gave him advice and power, telling him how to fight them, that he was to make feints and strike as if at their legs, and then hit them on the head, and he went and killed many, and drove the rest into the mountains.

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## 6-3

### The Separation of God from Man (Krachi), Togo

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Retold by Paul Radin from material in S. W. Carinall

In the beginning of days Wulbari and man lived close together and Wulbari lay on top of Mother Earth, Asase Ya. Thus it happened that, as there was so little space to move about in, man annoyed the divinity, who in disgust went away and rose up to the present place where one can admire him but not reach him.

He was annoyed for a number of reasons. An old woman, while making her *fufu* outside her hut, kept on knocking Wulbari with her pestle. This hurt him and, as she

persisted, he was forced to go higher out of her reach. Besides, the smoke of the cooking fires got into his eyes so that he had to go farther way. According to others, however, Wulbari, being so close to men, made a convenient sort of towel, and the people used to wipe their dirty fingers on him. This naturally annoyed him. Yet this was not so bad a grievance as that which caused We, the Wulbari of the Kassena people, to remove himself out of the reach of man. He did so because an old woman, anxious to make a good soup, used to cut off a bit of him at each mealtime, and We, being pained at this treatment, went higher.

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*What are the similarities and differences in these creation stories? What do they tell us about the values of each group? How do these creation stories compare to the creation stories of other civilizations discussed thus far?*

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## 6-4

### Traditional Songs of Africa

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#### MUGALA'S SONG (SUNG WHILE HOEING)

from **Bosumbwa, Tanzania**

We were born under an evil star, we poets,  
When the jackal howls!  
We were given a thankless trade.  
They who are marked with python's excrement,  
They are born lucky,  
They are the rich.  
God created me ill. I had a desire.  
I do not know, but if I had stayed  
In my mother's belly, it would be over and done with.  
Crafts are dealt out.  
I was sound asleep,  
I woke—someone calls me:  
"You're asleep, Mugala!  
Come out here and see  
How the ground is ringing!"

*Translated by Willard R. Trask*

#### IN PRAISE OF BOW AND ARROW

from **Dahomean (Fon), Dahomey**

The sword does not run the elephant  
through,  
Fire does not devour the King's house,  
A wind does not pass through stones, through  
stones;  
A reed cartridge-pouch drops:  
A bow sends an arrow,  
The game falls in a heap;  
It is like a pearl on a manure pile.

Few men try to grasp iron red-hot from the  
fire;  
The earth does not bring forth the crocodiles of the  
lagoon;  
Until a beast is dead, it has not done dying;  
Cities that are too great perish;  
A horse does not travel in a reed boat;  
The wind does not pass through stones, through  
stones;  
A reed cartridge-pouch drops:  
An arrow . . . and the game falls in a heap;  
It is like a pearl on a manure pile.

*Translated by Willard R. Trask*



**CARAVANERS**

**from Galla, Southern Ethiopia**

In summer they even make the dust rise;  
In winter they even trample the mud!  
If they talk with the dark maiden,  
And smile upon the red maiden,  
Poverty will never leave them.  
Poverty is a terrible disease;  
It penetrates the sides,  
It bends the vertebrae,  
It dresses one in rags,  
It makes people stupid;  
It makes every desire remain in the breast;  
Those who are long, it shortens;  
Those who are short it destroys wholly.  
Not even the mother that has borne [the poor man] loves  
him any longer!  
Not even the father who has begotten him any longer  
esteems him!

*Translated by Willard R. Trask*

**THREE FRIENDS**

**from Yoruba, Nigeria**

I had three friends.  
One asked me to sleep on the mat.  
One asked me to sleep on the ground.  
One asked me to sleep on his breast.  
I decided to sleep on his breast.  
I saw myself carried on a river.  
I saw the king of the river and the king of the sun.  
There in that country I saw palm trees

so weighed down with fruit  
that the trees bent under the fruit,  
and the fruit killed it.

*Translated by Ulli Beier*

**SONG TO A LOVER**

**from Amharic, Ethiopia**

His trousers are wind,  
his buttons hail.

He's a lump of Shoa earth,  
at Gonda he is nothing.

A hyena with meat in its mouth,  
dragged by a piece of leather.

Water in a glass, by the fire,  
thrown into the heat.

A horse untouchable as mist,  
a flooding brook.

No good for anything,  
for anyone.

Why am I in love  
with him?

*Translated by Willis Barnstone*

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*What is the importance of popular song to its culture?  
What do these songs reveal of their cultures?*

# Chapter 7

## China's First Empire (221 B.C.E.–220 C.E.)

### 7–1

#### The Yellow Emperor, *Nei-ching* [*Neijing*] (Canon of Medicine)

Maoshing Ni, trans., *The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Medicine* (Boston: Shambhala, 1995), pp. 17–26, 192–94. Reprinted by permission.

#### MANIFESTATION OF YIN AND YANG

Huang Di said, “The law of yin and yang is the natural order of the universe, the foundation of all things, mother of all changes, the root of life and death. In healing, one must grasp the root of the disharmony, which is always subject to the law of yin and yang.

“In the universe, the pure yang qi energy ascends to converge and form heaven, while the turbid yin qi descends and condenses to form the earth. Yin is passive and quiet, while the nature of yang is active and noisy. Yang is responsible for expanding and yin is responsible for contracting, becoming astringent, and consolidating. Yang is the energy, the vital force, the potential, while, yin is the substance, the foundation, the mother that gives rise to all this potential. . . .

“In nature, the clear yang forms heaven and the turbid yin qi descends to form earth. The earthly qi evaporates to become clouds, and when the clouds meet with the heavenly qi, rain is produced. Similarly, in the body, pure yang qi reaches the sensory orifices, allowing one to see, hear, smell, taste, feel, and decipher all information so that the shen/spirit can remain clear and centered. The turbid yin qi descends to the lower orifices. The clear yang qi disperses over the surface of the body; the turbid yin qi flows and nourishes the five zang visceral organs. The pure yang qi expands and strengthens the four extremities, and the turbid yin qi fills the six fu organs.<sup>1</sup>

“The elements of fire and water are categorized into yang and yin, the fire being yang and the water being yin. The functional aspect of the body is yang and the nutritive or substantive aspect is yin. While food can be used to strengthen and nourish the body, the body's ability to transform it is dependent on qi. The functional part of qi is

derived from the jing/essence. Food is refined into jing/essence, which supports the qi, and the qi is required for both transformation and bodily functions. For this reason, when the diet is improper, the body may be injured, or if activities are excessive, the jing/essence can be exhausted.

“The yin and yang in the body should be in balance with one another. If the yang qi dominates, the yin will be deprived, and vice versa. Excess yang will manifest as febrile disease, whereas excess yin will manifest as cold disease. When yang is extreme, however, it can turn into cold disease, and vice versa.

“Cold can injure the physical body, and heat can damage the qi or energetic aspect of the body. When there is injury to the physical body there will be swelling, but if the qi level is damaged, it can cause pain because of the qi blockage. In an injury that has two aspects, such as swelling (yin) and pain (yang), treatment may consist of pungent herbs to disperse swelling and cooling herbs to subdue the pain. If a patient complains of pain first and swelling afterward, this means the qi level was injured first. But if a patient complains of swelling first followed by pain, the trauma occurred at the physical level initially.”

\* \* \*

“In the human body there are the zang organs of the liver, heart, spleen, lung, and kidneys. The qi of the five zang organs forms the five spirits and gives rise to the five emotions. The spirit of the heart is known as the shen, which rules mental and creative functions. The spirit of the liver, the hun, rules the nervous system and gives rise to extrasensory perception. The spirit of the spleen, or yi, rules logic or reasoning power. The spirit of the lungs, or po, rules the animalistic instincts, physical strength and stamina. The spirit of the kidneys, the zhi, rules the will, drive, ambition, and survival instinct.

“Overindulgence in the five emotions—happiness, anger, sadness, worry or fear, and fright—can create imbalances. Emotions can injure the qi, while seasonal elements can attack the body. Sudden anger damages the yin qi; becoming easily excited or overjoyed will damage the yang qi. This causes the qi to rebel and rise up to the head, squeezing the shen out of the heart and allowing it to float away. Failing to regulate one's emotions can be likened to summer and winter failing to regulate each other, threatening life itself.”

\* \* \*

Then Huang Di inquired, “What are the methods to balance yin and yang?”

<sup>1</sup>The *fu* organs are those of digestion and excretion; *zang* and *fu* together comprise the internal organs.

Qi Bo answered, “If one understands the methods or Tao of maintaining health and the causes of depletion, then one can readily master the balance of yin and yang and stay healthy. Normally, by the age of forty, people have exhausted fifty percent of their yin qi, and their vitality is weakened. At age fifty the body is heavy, the vision and the hearing deteriorated; by age sixty the yin qi is further diminished, the kidneys drained; the sensory organs and the nine orifices, including the excretory organs, have all become functionally impaired. Conditions will manifest such as prostatitis, vision loss, deficiency in the lower jiao (viscera cavity) and excess in the upper jiao, tearing, and nasal drainage problems.

“Thus, the body of one who understands the Tao will remain strong and healthy. The one who does not understand the Tao will age. One who is careless will often feel deficient, while one who knows will have an abundance of energy. Those who are knowledgeable have clear orifices, perceptions, hearing, vision, smell, and taste, and are light and strong. Even though their bodies are old, they can perform most of life’s activities.”

## THE ART OF ACUPUNCTURE

Huang Di said, “Will you please explain to me the nine different needles? And will you also please discuss the methods of tonification and sedation in excess and in deficiency?”

Qi Bo answered, “When acupuncture deficient conditions one should elicit heat sensation with the needle. Only when the qi is strong will it be able to produce heat. In treating excess conditions one should elicit a cooling sensation. When the pathogenic qi is weakening one will experience a cooling feeling. When there is stagnation in the blood caused by the accumulation of a pathogen, one should promote bloodletting to rid the bad blood. In withdrawing the needle on patients with an excess condition, withdraw the needle quickly. Allow the hole to remain open in order to disperse the pathogen. In deficiency, withdraw the needle slowly and close the hole to prevent loss of qi....

“In order to master the techniques one must be able to use the nine needles with equal ease. Each of the nine has a specific indication. In terms of the timing in tonifying or sedating, one must coordinate the technique with the opening and closing of the hole, and the arrival and departure of the qi. When the qi arrives, we call this opening. At this point, one can sedate. When the qi leaves, we call this closing. Now one can tonify.

“The nine needles are of different size, shape, and use. When acupuncture excess, one must sedate. Insert the needles and await the arrival of yin qi. When one feels a cooling sensation under the needle, remove the needles. In deficiency, one must tonify. After needle insertion, await the arrival of yang qi. When there is a warming sensation, remove the needles. Once you grasp the qi with the needle,

be very attentive and listen so as not to lose the opportunity to manipulate the effects. Treat disease according to where it is located; determine whether to insert deeply or shallowly. When the disease is located deep, insert deeply. When the disease is superficial, needle shallowly. Although there is a difference in depth of penetration, the principle of awaiting the qi is the same.

“When acupuncture, one should be prepared and careful, as if one is facing a deep abyss. Move carefully so as not to fall. In handling the needle, hold it as if holding the tiger—firmly grasped and in control. One needs a calm mind to observe the patient. Concentrate clearly on the patient and do not become scattered. Upon inserting the needle, be accurate and precise. It should not be crooked or miss the target. When the needle enters the body, the physician should observe the patient closely in order to help guide the patient’s attention. This allows the qi in the channels to move more easily, and the results are more effective.”

Huang Di said, “I’ve heard that the nine types of needles have a relationship to yin and yang and the four seasonal energies. Can you please explain this so it may be passed on to later generations as a principle of healing?”

Qi Bo answered, “In Taoist cosmology the number one corresponds to heaven; two to earth; three to man; four to the seasons; five to sounds; six to rhythms; seven to the stars; eight to wind; nine to the continents. People have physical form and connect to nature. The various shapes and forms of the nine needles conform to different types of conditions. The skin of human beings envelops and protects the body, just as heaven envelops and protects the myriad things. Muscles are soft, pliable, and calm, just as earth, which contains the myriad things.

“People move about and also sleep. The pulse mirrors this with excess and deficiency. The tendons that strap together the whole body have differing uses at different locations. This is similar to the seasons of the year, which have their unique uses and purposes too.

“People’s voices correspond to the five sounds. People’s six zang and six fu organs are yin-yang couples, similar to the six rhythms and scales. People’s sensory organs and their positions, as well as their teeth, are similar to the positions of the stars. People’s breath is like the wind of nature. The nine orifices and three hundred and sixty-five *luo* [channel points] collaterals spreading throughout the body are like the rivers and tributaries spreading over the earth; they feed the oceans, which in turn surround the nine continents.

“Therefore, we have the nine needles. The first, called *chan zhen*, superficially punctures the skin. The second needle, called *yuan zhen*, does not penetrate but instead massages the acupoints on the flesh and muscles. The third needle, *ti zhen*, punctures the vessels. The fourth needle, *feng zhen*, punctures and draws blood from capillaries and small veins. The fifth needle, *fei pi zhen*, lances the skin to drain pus. The sixth needle, *yuan li zhen*, punctures the joints for *bi* conditions. The seventh needle, *hao zhen*, punctures the acupoints on the flesh. The eighth needle,

chang zhen, punctures deep fleshy locations. The ninth needle, da zhen, punctures the abdomen to relieve edema or masses. Choose these needles wisely for the appropriate occasion.”

\* \* \*

“The blood and qi within the body circulate throughout the channels and vessels, balancing yin and yang, just as water in rivers and lakes circulates endlessly. The qi of the

liver connects with the eyes, and the eyes are part of the nine orifices.”

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*How similar and how different was traditional Chinese medicine from Hellenic and Hellenistic medicine? Did cosmology play any role in Western medicine in premodern times?*

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7-2

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**Song Yu, On the Wind**

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Translated by Burton Watson

King Hsiang of Ch'u was taking his ease in the Palace of the Orchid Terrace, with his courtiers Sung Yü and Ching Ch'a attending him, when a sudden gust of wind came sweeping in. The king, opening wide the collar of his robe and facing into it, said, "How delightful this wind is! And I and the common people may share it together, may we not?"

But Sung Yü replied, "This wind is for Your Majesty alone. How could the common people have a share in it?"

"The wind," said the king, "is the breath of heaven and earth. Into every corner it unfolds and reaches; without choosing between high or low, exalted or humble, it touches everywhere. What do you mean when you say that this wind is for me alone?"

Sung Yü replied, "I have heard my teacher say that the twisted branches of the lemon tree invite the birds to nest, and hollows and cracks summon the wind. But the breath of the wind differs with the place which it seeks out."

"Tell me," said the king. "Where does the wind come from?"

Sung Yü answered:

"The wind is born from the land  
And springs up in the tips of the green duckweed.  
It insinuates itself into the valleys  
And rages in the canyon mouth,  
Skirts the corners of Mount T'ai  
And dances beneath the pines and cedars.  
Swiftly it flies, whistling and wailing;  
Fiercely it splutters its anger.  
It crashes with a voice like thunder,  
Whirls and tumbles in confusion,  
Shaking rocks, striking trees,

Blasting the tangled forest.  
Then, when its force is almost spent,  
It wavers and disperses,  
Thrusting into crevices and rattling door latches.  
Clean and clear,  
It scatters and rolls away.  
Thus it is that this cool, fresh hero wind,  
Leaping and bounding up and down,  
Climbs over the high wall  
And enters deep into palace halls.  
With a puff of breath it shakes the leaves and flowers,  
Wanders among the cassia and pepper trees,  
Or soars over the swift waters.  
It buffets the mallow flower,  
Sweeps the angelica, touches the spikenard,  
Glides over the sweet lichens and lights on willow  
shoots,  
Rambling over the hills  
And their scattered host of fragrant flowers.  
After this, it wanders into the courtyard,  
Ascends the jade hall in the north,  
Clammers over gauze curtains,  
Passes through the inner apartments,  
And so becomes Your Majesty's wind.  
When this wind blows on a man,  
At once he feels a chill run through him,  
And he sighs at its cool freshness.  
Clear and gentle,  
It cures sickness, dispels drunkenness,  
Sharpens the eyes and ears,  
Relaxes the body and brings benefit to men.  
This is what is called the hero wind of Your Majesty."

"How well you have described it!" exclaimed the king.  
"But now may I hear about the wind of the common people?" And Sung Yü replied:

"The wind of the common people  
Comes whirling from the lanes and alleys,  
Poking in the rubbish, stirring up the dust,  
Fretting and worrying its way along.

It creeps into holes and knocks on doors,  
Scatters sand, blows ashes about,  
Muddles in dirt and tosses up bits of filth.  
It sidles through hovel windows  
And slips into cottage rooms.  
When this wind blows on a man,  
At once he feels confused and downcast.  
Pounded by heat, smothered in dampness,  
His heart grows sick and heavy,  
And he falls ill and breaks out in a fever.

---

### 7-3

## Anonymous Folk Songs from the Music Bureau (120 B.C.)

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Translated by Tony Barnstone and Chou Ping

### THE EAST GATE

I stride out the East Gate  
and don't look back.  
The next moment I'm in our doorway,  
about to break down.  
There's no rice in our pot.  
I see hangers but no clothes.  
So I draw my sword and again head out the East  
Gate!  
My wife grabs me by the shirt and sobs  
"I'm not like other wives. I could care less for gold and  
rank.

---

### 7-4

## Sima Qian: *The historian's historian writes about the builder of the Great Wall*

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Source: Raymond Dawson, trans., *Sima Qian: Historical Records*  
(Oxford & N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 55-61.

As for Meng Tian, his forebears were men of Qi. Tian's  
paternal grandfather, Meng Ao, came from Qi to serve  
King Zhaoxiang of Qin, and attained the office of senior  
minister. In the first year of King Zhuangxiang of Qin,

Where it brushes his lips, sores appear;  
It strikes his eyes with blindness.  
He stammers and cries out,  
Not knowing if he is dead or alive.  
This is what is called the lowly wind of the common  
people."

---

*What is the role of class and social status as revealed  
in this poem? How are those differences exposed?*

I'm happy to eat gruel if I'm with you.  
Look up! The sky is a stormy ocean.  
Look down! See your small son's yellow face?  
To go now is wrong."  
"Bah!" I say,  
"I'm going now  
before it's too late.  
We can barely survive as it is  
and white hairs are raining from my head."

### A SAD TUNE

I sing a sad song when I want to weep,  
gaze far off when I want to go home.  
I miss my old place.  
Inside me, a dense mesh of grief.  
But there's no one to go back to,  
no boat across that river.  
This heart is bursting but my tongue is dead.  
My guts are twisting like a wagon wheel.

---

*What is the appeal of the folk song style?*

Meng Ao became general of Qin, made an assault on Hann  
and took Chenggao and Xingyang, and established the  
Sanchuan province. In the second year Meng Ao attacked  
Zhao and took thirty-seven cities. In the third year of the  
First Emperor, Meng Ao attacked Han and took thirteen  
cities. In the fifth year Meng Ao attacked Wei, took twenty  
cities, and established Dong province. In the seventh year  
of the First Emperor, Meng Ao died. Ao's son was called  
Wu and Wu's son was called Tian. Tian at one time kept  
legal records and was in charge of the relevant literature.  
In the twenty-third year of the First Emperor, Meng Wu  
became an assistant general of Qin and, together with  
Wang Jian, made an attack on Chu and inflicted a major  
defeat upon it and killed Xiang Yan. In the twenty-fourth  
year Meng Wu attacked Chu and took the King of Chu  
prisoner. Meng Tian's younger brother was Meng Yi.

In the twenty-sixth year of the First Emperor, Meng Tian was able to become a general of Qin on account of the long-term service given by his family. He attacked Qi and inflicted a major defeat upon it, and was appointed Prefect of the Capital. When Qin had unified all under Heaven, Meng Tian was consequently given command of a host of 300,000 to go north and drive out the Rong and Di barbarians and take over the territory to the south of the Yellow River. He built the Great Wall, taking advantage of the lie of the land and making use of the passes. It started from Lintao and went as far as Liaodong, extending more than 10,000 *li*. Crossing the Yellow River, it followed the Yang Mountains and wriggled northwards. His army was exposed to the elements in the field for more than ten years when they were stationed in Shang province, and at this time Meng Tian filled the Xiongnu with terror.

The First Emperor held the Meng family in the highest esteem. Having confidence in them and so entrusting them with responsibility, he regarded them as men of quality. He allowed Meng Yi to be on terms of close intimacy, and he reached the position of senior minister. When he went out, he took him with him in his carriage, and within the palace he was constantly in the imperial presence. Tian was given responsibility for matters outside the capital, but Yi was constantly made to take part in internal planning. They were reputed to be loyal and trustworthy, so that none even of the generals or leading ministers dared to take issue with them in these matters.

Zhao Gao was a distant connection of the various Zhaos. He had several brothers, and all of them were born in the hidden part of the palace. His mother had been condemned to death, and her descendants were to be of low station for generations to come. When the King of Qin heard that Zhao Gao was forceful and well acquainted with the law, he promoted him and made him Director of Palace Coach-houses. Thereupon Gao privately served Prince Huhai and gave him instruction in judicial decisions. When Zhao Gao committed a major crime, the King of Qin ordered Meng Yi to try him at law. Yi did not dare to show partiality, so he condemned Gao to death and removed him from the register of officials, but because of Gao's estimable performance in the conduct of affairs, the Emperor pardoned him and restored his office and rank.

The First Emperor intended to travel throughout the Empire and go via Jiuyuan directly to Ganquan, so he made Meng Tian open up a road from Jiuyuan straight to Ganquan, hollowing out mountains and filling in valleys for 1,800 *li*. The road had not yet been completed when the First Emperor in the winter of the thirty-seventh year went forth on his journey and travelled to Kuaiji. Going along the sea coast, he went north to Langye. When he fell ill on the way, he made Meng Yi return to offer prayers to the mountains and streams. He had not yet got back when the First Emperor passed away on reaching Shaqiu. It was kept a secret, and none of the officials knew. At this time Chief Minister Li Si, Prince Huhai, and Director of Palace Coach-houses Zhao Gao were in constant attendance. Gao had

regularly obtained favours from Huhai and wanted him to be set on the throne. He was also resentful that when Meng Yi had tried him at law he had not been in favour of letting him off. Consequently he felt like doing him harm, and so he secretly plotted together with Chief Minister Li Si and Prince Huhai to establish Huhai as crown prince. When the Crown Prince had been established, messengers were sent to bestow death on Prince Fusu and Meng Tian because of their alleged crimes. Even after Fusu was dead, Meng Tian felt suspicious and requested confirmation of it. The messengers handed Meng Tian over to the law officers and replaced him.

The messengers returned and made their report, and when Huhai heard that Fusu was dead he intended to free Meng Tian. But Zhao Gao, fearing that the Meng family would again be treated with honour and be employed on affairs, felt resentful about this.

So when Meng Yi got back, Zhao Gao, making his plans on the pretext of loyalty towards Huhai, intended on this account to wipe out the Meng family. 'Your servant hears that the previous Emperor had long intended to promote a man of quality and set up a crown prince,' he therefore said, 'but Meng Yi had remonstrated and said that this would be improper. But if he was aware that you were a man of quality and yet insisted that you should not be set up, this would be acting disloyally and deluding one's sovereign. In your servant's foolish opinion, the best thing would be to put him to death.' Paying heed, Huhai had Meng Yi put in bonds at Dai. (Previously he had taken Meng Tian prisoner at Yangzhou.) When the announcement of mourning reached Xianyang and the funeral had taken place, the Crown Prince was set up as Second Generation Emperor and Zhao Gao, being admitted to terms of close intimacy; slandered the Meng family day and night, seeking out their crimes and mistakes so as to recommend their impeachment.

Ziying came forward to remonstrate, saying: 'I hear that in ancient times King Qian of Zhao killed his good minister Li Mu and employed Yan Ju, and King Xi of Yan secretly employed the strategems of Jing Ke and ignored the pact with Qin, and King Jian of Qi killed loyal ministers from ancient families which had given long-standing service and made use of the counsels of Hou Sheng. Each of these three rulers lost their states through changing ancient ways so that disaster befell them. Now the Meng family are important officials and counsellors of Qin and yet our sovereign intends to get rid of them all in a single morning, but your servant humbly considers this to be improper. Your servant hears that it is impossible for one who plans frivolously to govern a state and it is impossible for one who exercises wisdom on his own to preserve his ruler. If you put to death loyal servants and set up people who have nothing to do with integrity, then within the palace this will cause all your servants to lose confidence in each other, and in the field it will cause the purposes of your fighting men to lose their cohesion. Your servant humbly considers this to be improper.'

Huhai did not take any notice, but dispatched the imperial scribe Qu Gong to ride relay and go to Dai and instruct

Meng Yi as follows: ‘You, minister, made things difficult when our previous sovereign wanted to set up a crown prince. Now the Chief Minister considers that you are disloyal, and that your whole clan is implicated in the crime. But in the kindness of Our heart We bestow death upon you, minister, which is surely extremely gracious. It is for you to give this your consideration!’

‘If it is thought that your servant was incapable of grasping the wishes of our previous sovereign,’ replied Meng Yi, ‘then when he was young he was in his service and obediently received his patronage until he passed away, so it may be said that he knew what he wanted. Or if it is thought that your servant was unaware of the abilities of the Crown Prince, then he went all over the Empire with the Crown Prince in sole attendance, and left all the other princes far behind, so your servant had no doubts. Our previous sovereign’s proposal to employ him as crown prince had been building up over several years, so what words would your servant have dared to utter in remonstrance, and what plan would he dare to have devised! It is not that I dare to produce showy verbiage for the purpose of avoiding death and implicate the reputation of our previous sovereign by creating an embarrassment, but I would like you, sir, to devote your thoughts to this, and make sure that the circumstances which cause your servant to be put to death are true. Moreover, perfect obedience is what the Way honours, and killing as a punishment is what the Way puts an end to. In former times Duke Mu of Qin died having killed three good men, and charged Baili Xi with a crime although it was not his. Therefore he was given the title of “False.” King Zhaoxiang killed Bai Qi, Lord Wan. King Ping of Chu killed Wu She. Fucha King of Wu killed Wu Zixu. These four rulers all made major mistakes and so all under Heaven regarded them as wrong and thought such rulers were unenlightened, and as such they were recorded by the feudal lords. Therefore it is said that “Those who govern in accordance with the Way do not kill the guiltless and punishment is not inflicted on the innocent.” It is up to you, my lord, to take notice!’ But the messengers were aware of what Huhai wanted, so they took no notice of Meng Yin’s words, and killed him forthwith.

Second Generation also dispatched messengers to go to Yangzhou, with the following instructions for Meng Tian: ‘Your errors, my lord, have become numerous, and your younger brother Yi bears a great burden of guilt, so the law has caught up with you.’ ‘From my grandfather right down to his sons and grandsons,’ said Meng Tian, ‘their achievements and trustworthiness have been built up in Qin over three generations. Now your servant has been in command of more than 300,000 soldiers, and although he personally is a prisoner, his influence is sufficient to instigate a revolt. But as one who safeguards righteousness although he is aware he is bound to die, he does not dare to disgrace the teachings of his forbears, and in this way does not forget his former sovereign. In former times when King Cheng of Zhou was first set on the throne and had not yet left his swaddling clothes, Dan Duke of Zhou carried the King on his back to

go to court, and ultimately restored order in all under Heaven. When King Cheng had an illness and was in extreme danger, Duke Dan personally cut his finger-nails and sank the parings in the Yellow River. “The King does not yet possess understanding and it is I who handle affairs,” he said. “If there is a crime-engendered disaster, I accept the unfortunate consequences of it.” Accordingly he made an account and stored it away in the repository of records, and he may be said to have behaved with good faith. When the time came when the King was able to govern the country, there was a malicious official who said: “Dan Duke of Zhou has long intended to make a rebellion, and if the King is not prepared, there is bound to be a major crisis.” The King was consequently furious and Dan Duke of Zhou ran away and fled to Chu. When King Cheng looked at the repository of records, he got hold of the account of the sinking, and so he said, with tears streaming down his face: “Who said that Dan Duke of Zhou intended to make a rebellion?” He killed the one who had said this and restored Dan Duke of Zhou. Thus the *Book Zhou* says: “One must put them in threes and fives.” Now for generations my family has avoided duplicity, so if our affairs are finally in such straits, this is bound to be due to the methods of a wicked minister rebelliously stirring up trouble. That King Cheng made a mistake, but when he restored the situation, he ultimately flourished; but Jie killed Guan Longfeng and Zhou killed Prince Bi Gan, and they did not repent, and when they died their country was destroyed. Your servant therefore says that errors can be remedied and remonstrance can be understood. To examine into threes and fives is the method of supreme sages. All in all, your servant’s words have not been for the purpose of seeking to escape from blame. He is about to die because he is making a remonstrance, and he wishes Your Majesty would think about following the Way for the sake of the myriad people.’ ‘Your servants have received an imperial decree to carry out the law on you, general,’ said the messengers, ‘and they do not dare to report your words to the Supreme One.’ Meng Tian sighed deeply. ‘For what am I being blamed by Heaven,’ he cried, ‘that I should die although I have avoided error?’ After a good long while he solemnly said: ‘There is a crime for which I certainly ought to die. I built a wall stretching more than 10,000 *li* from Lintao as far as Liaodong, and so in the course of this I surely could not avoid cutting through the earth’s arteries. This then is my crime.’ And so he swallowed poison and killed himself.

The Grand Historiographer says: ‘I have been to the northern border and returned via the direct road. On my journey I observed the ramparts of the Great Wall which Meng Tian built for Qin. He hollowed out the mountains and filled in the valleys and opened up a direct road. To be sure, he showed little concern for the efforts of the people. Qin had only just destroyed the feudal states and the hearts of the people of all under Heaven had not yet been restored to order, and the wounded had not yet been healed; but Tian, although he had become a famous general, did not use this occasion to remonstrate strongly and remedy the distresses of the people, minister to the old and enable the

orphans to survive, and strive to cultivate harmony among the masses. Instead he embarked on great enterprises to pander to imperial ambition, so was it not therefore reasonable that both he and his brother should suffer the death penalty? Why in that case should cutting the arteries of the earth be made a crime?

---

7-5

**Cai Yan, from 18 Verses Sung to a  
Tatar Reed Whistle**

---

Translated by Kenneth Rexroth and Ling Chung

**I**

I was born in a time of peace,  
But later the mandate of Heaven  
Was withdrawn from the Han Dynasty.

Heaven was pitiless.  
It sent down confusion and separation.  
Earth was pitiless.  
It brought me to birth in such a time.  
War was everywhere. Every road was dangerous.  
Soldiers and civilians everywhere  
Fleeing death and suffering.  
Smoke and dust clouds obscured the land  
Overrun by the ruthless Tatar bands.  
Our people lost their will power and integrity.  
I can never learn the ways of the barbarians.  
I am daily subject to violence and insult.  
I sing one stanza to my lute and a Tatar horn.  
But no one knows my agony and grief.

**II**

A Tatar chief forced me to become his wife,  
And took me far away to Heaven's edge.  
Ten thousand clouds and mountains  
Bar my road home,  
And whirlwinds of dust and sand  
Blow for a thousand miles.  
Men here are as savage as giant vipers,  
And strut about in armor, snapping their bows.  
As I sing the second stanza I almost break the lute strings.  
Will broken, heart broken, I sing to myself.

**VII**

The sun sets. The wind moans.  
The noise of the Tatar camp rises all around me.

---

*Into what professions were Meng Tian's ancestors and relatives appointed?*

The sorrow of my heart is beyond expression,  
But who could I tell it to anyway?  
Far across the desert plains,  
The beacon fires of the Tatar garrisons  
Gleam for ten thousand miles.  
It is the custom here to kill the old and weak  
And adore the young and vigorous.  
They wander seeking new pasture,  
And camp for a while behind earth walls.  
Cattle and sheep cover the prairie,  
Swarming like bees or ants.  
When the grass and water are used up,  
They mount their horses and drive on their cattle.  
The seventh stanza sings of my wandering.  
How I hate to live this way!

**XIII**

I never believed that in my broken life  
The day would come when  
Suddenly I could return home.  
I embrace and caress my Tatar sons.  
Tears wet our clothes.  
An envoy from the Han Court  
Has come to bring me back,  
With four stallions that can run without  
stopping.  
Who can measure the grief of my sons?  
They thought I would live and die with them.  
Now it is I who must depart.  
Sorrow for my boys dims the sun for me.  
If we had wings we could fly away together.  
I cannot move my feet,  
For each step is a step away from them.  
My soul is overwhelmed.  
As their figures vanish in the distance  
Only my love remains.  
The thirteenth stanza—  
I pick the strings rapidly  
But the melody is sad.  
No one can know  
The sorrow which tears my bowels.

---

*How does the author portray the Chinese and their enemies?*



7-6

**Zhang Heng (78–139 CE),  
The Bones of Chuang Tzu**

Translated by Arthur Waley

I, Chang P'ing-Tzu, had traversed the Nine Wilds and  
seen their wonders,  
In the eight continents beheld the ways of Man,  
The Sun's procession, the orbit of the Stars,  
The surging of the dragon, the soaring of the phoenix in  
his flight.  
In the red desert to the south I sweltered,  
And northward waded through the wintry burghs of Yu.  
Through the Valley of Darkness to the west I wandered,  
And eastward travelled to the Sun's extreme abode,  
The stooping Mulberry Tree.

So the seasons sped; weak autumn languished,  
A small wind woke the cold.

And now with rearing of rein-horse,  
Plunging of the tracer, round I fetched  
My high-roofed chariot to westward.  
Along the dykes we loitered, past many meadows,  
And far away among the dunes and hills.  
Suddenly I looked and by the roadside  
I saw a man's bones lying in the squelchy earth,  
Black rime-frost over him; and I in sorrow spoke  
And asked him, saying, 'Dead man, how was it?  
Fled you with your friend from famine and for the last  
grains  
Gambled and lost? Was this earth your tomb,  
Or did floods carry you from afar? Were you mighty,  
were you wise,  
Were you foolish and poor? A warrior, or a girl?'  
Then a wonder came; for out of the silence a voice—  
Thin echo only, in no substance was the Spirit seen—  
Mysteriously answered, saying, 'I was a man of Sung,  
Of the clan of Chuang; Chou was my name.  
Beyond the climes of common thought  
My reason soared, yet could I not save myself;  
For at the last, when the long charter of my years was  
told,  
I too, for all my magic, by Age was brought  
To the Black Hill of Death.  
Wherefore, O Master, do you question me?'  
Then I answered:  
'Let me plead for you upon the Five Hill-tops,  
Let me pray for you to the Gods of Heaven and the  
Gods of Earth,

That your white bones may arise,  
And your limbs be joined anew.  
The God of the North shall give me back your ears;  
I will scour the Southland for your eyes;  
From the sunrise will I wrest your feet;  
The West shall yield your heart.  
I will set each several organ in its throne;  
Each subtle sense will I restore.  
Would you not have it so?'  
The dead man answered me:  
'O Friend, how strange and unacceptable your words!  
In death I rest and am at peace; in life, I toiled and  
strove.  
Is the hardness of the winter stream  
Better than the melting of spring?  
All pride that the body knew,  
Was it not lighter than dust?  
What Ch'ao and Hsü despised,  
What Po-ch'eng fled,  
Shall I desire, whom death  
Already has hidden in the Eternal Way—  
Where Li Chu cannot see me,  
Nor Tzū Yeh hear me,  
Where neither Yao nor Shan can praise me,  
Nor the tyrants Chieh and Hsin condemn me,  
Nor wolf nor tiger harm me,  
Lance prick me nor sword wound me?  
Of the Primal Spirit is my substance; I am a wave  
In the river of Darkness and Light.  
The Maker of All Things is my Father and Mother,  
Heaven is my bed and earth my cushion,  
The thunder and lightning are my drum and fan,  
The sun and moon my candle and my torch,  
The Milky Way my moat, the stars my jewels.  
With Nature am I conjoined;  
I have no passion, no desire.  
Wash me and I shall be no whiter,  
Foul me and I shall yet be clean.  
I come not, yet am here;  
Hasten not, yet am swift.'  
The voice stopped, there was silence.  
A ghostly light  
Faded and expired.  
I gazed upon the dead, stared in sorrow and compassion.  
Then I called upon my servant that was with me  
To tie his silken scarf about those bones  
And wrap them in a cloak of sombre dust;  
While I, as offering to the soul of this dead man,  
Poured my hot tears upon the margin of the road.

*How does this poem ask and respond to central  
Daoist questions especially about the nature of life  
and death?*

## Chapter 8

# Imperial China (589–1368)

### 8–1

## Emperor T'ai-tsung [Taizong]: “On the Art of Government”

“On the Art of Government” by T'ang T'ai-tsung, *Chen-kuan Cheng-yao* (Politics in Brief: The Chen-kuan Period, 627–49), ed. Wu Ching (669–749), in Dun J. Li, trans. and intro., *The Civilization of China, From the Formative Period to the Coming of the West* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975), pp. 161–64. Copyright © by Dun J. Li. Reprinted with permission.

As a young man, I loved archery and prided myself as an expert in the evaluation of bows and arrows. Recently I came into possession of a dozen bows, the quality of which was the best I had ever observed. I showed them to the bow makers and was surprised to hear that they were not as good as they looked. “Why?” I asked.

“The center of the wood is not located at the center of the bow; consequently all the wood grain moves in a bizarre fashion,” replied the bow makers. “Though the bow is strong and durable, an arrow released from it cannot travel straight for a long distance.”

I used a countless number of bows and arrows in unifying the country; yet I still do not know enough about them. Now that I have the country for only a short time, how can I say that I know enough about it to govern it successfully, taking into consideration the fact that my knowledge of it is certainly inferior to my knowledge of bows which I have used throughout my life? . . .

Lately the draft decrees that originate from the First Secretariat are often contradictory and in some cases correct one another. To clarify this point, let me say that the purpose of having both the First and the Second Secretariats is for them to check and balance each other, so that the error of one will be corrected by the other and that an error, whoever commits it, will not remain undetected for a long time and thus cause irreparable damage.

Different people are bound to have different opinions; the important thing is that differences in opinion should not degenerate into personal antagonism. Sometimes to avoid the possibility of creating personal grievances or causing embarrassment to a colleague, an official might decide to go ahead with the implementation of a policy even though he knows that the policy is wrong. Let us remember that the preservation of a colleague's prestige, or the avoidance of embarrassment to him, cannot be compared with the

welfare of the nation in importance, and to place personal consideration above the well-being of the multitude will lead to defeat for the government as a whole. I want all of you to understand this point and act accordingly.

During the Sui dynasty all officials, in the central as well as the local governments, adopted an attitude of conformity to the general trend in order to be amiable and agreeable with one another. The result was disaster as all of you well know. Most of them did not understand the importance of dissent and comforted themselves by saying that as long as they did not disagree, they could forestall harm to themselves that might otherwise cross their path. When the government, as well as their families, finally collapsed in a massive upheaval, they were severely but justifiably criticized by their contemporaries for their complacency and inertia, even if they themselves may have been fortunate enough to escape death through a combination of circumstances. This is the reason that I want all of you to place public welfare above private interest and hold steadfastly the principle of righteousness, so that all problems, whatever they are, will be resolved in such a way as to bring about a most beneficial result. Under no circumstances are you allowed to agree with one another for the sake of agreement. . . .

As for Sui Wen-ti [Wendi], I would say that he was politically inquisitive but mentally closed. Being close-minded, he could not see truth even if it were spotlighted for him; being overinquisitive, he was suspicious even when there was no valid reason for his suspicion. He rose to power by trampling on the rights of orphans and widows<sup>1</sup> and was consequently not so sure that he had the unanimous support of his own ministers. Being suspicious of his own ministers, he naturally did not trust them and had to make a decision on every matter himself. He became a hard worker out of necessity and, having overworked, could not make the right decision every time. Knowing the kind of man he was, all his ministers, including the prime minister, did not speak as candidly as they should have and unanimously uttered “Yes, sir” when they should have registered strong dissent.

I want all of you to know that I am different. The empire is large and its population enormous. There are thousands of matters to be taken care of, each of which has to be closely coordinated with the others in order to bring about maximum benefit. Each matter must be thoroughly investigated and thought out before a recommendation is submitted to the prime minister, who, having consulted all

<sup>1</sup>In 581 Sui Wen-ti forced Chou Ching-ti [Zhou Jingdi], aged seven, to abdicate the throne on his behalf. The boy's father had died only one year earlier; his mother was a young widow at the time of the abdication. Four months after his abdication, the boy died under suspicious circumstances.

the men knowledgeable in this matter, will then present the recommendation, modified if necessary, to the emperor for approval and implementation. It is impossible for one person, however intelligent and capable, to be able to make wise decisions by himself. Acting alone, he may be able, if he is fortunate, to make five right decisions out of ten each day. While we congratulate him for the five right decisions he has made that bring benefit to the country, we tend to forget the enormous harm that results from the implementation of the other five decisions that prove to be wrong. How many wrong decisions will he accumulate in a period of days, months, and years if he makes five such decisions every day? How, in that case, can he not lose his country or throne? Instead he should delegate authority to the most able and virtuous men he can find and supervise their work from above most diligently. When he makes clear to them that he will not tolerate any violation of the law, it is doubtful that they will abuse the authority with which they have been entrusted.

I want all of you to know that whenever an imperial decree is handed down you should carefully study its content and decide for yourselves whether all or part of it is or is not wise or feasible. If you have any reservations, postpone the enforcement and petition me immediately. You can do no less as my loyal ministers. . . .

Governing a country is like taking care of a patient. The better the patient feels, the more he should be looked after, lest in a moment of complacency and neglect one irrevocably reverse the recovery process and send him to death. Likewise, when a country has only recently recovered from chaos and war, those responsible for running the country should be extremely diligent in their work, for false pride and self-indulgence will inevitably return the country to where it used to be and perhaps make it worse.

I realize that the safety of this nation relies to a great extent on what I can or may do and consequently I have not relaxed for a moment in doing the best I can. But I cannot do it alone. You gentlemen are my eyes and ears, legs and arms, and should do your best to assist me. If anything goes wrong anywhere in the empire, you should let me know immediately. If there is less than total trust between you and me and consequently you and I cannot do the best we can, the nation will suffer enormous damage. . .

As the ancients say, a friend in need is a friend indeed. If mutual assistance governs the relations between two

friends, how can it not do so between a king and his ministers? Whenever I read of Chieh's [Jie] execution of Kuan Lung-feng [Guan Lung feng] and Han Chingti's [Han Jingdi] execution of Ch'ao Ts'o [Chao Cuo],<sup>2</sup> I cannot but feel deeply about the mistakes these monarchs made. Contrary to these monarchs, I am asking you gentlemen to speak candidly on matters that you believe are most important to the well-being of the nation, even though the opinion you express may not coincide with my own. Needless to say, there will be no penalty of any kind, let alone execution, for opinions honestly held.

Recently I have made several decisions that are clear violations of the law, even though such violations were not apparent to me at the time when the decisions were made. You gentlemen obviously thought that these violations were inconsequential and therefore abstained from speaking about them. The truth is that the most consequential acts are usually an accumulation of acts of less consequence and in order to prevent the greatest harm, one has to make sure that even the smallest harm does not occur. It will be too late to reverse the course after small disasters have coalesced to become a great one. Keep in mind that a government does not fall because of the occurrence of a major catastrophe; rather, its demise usually results from an accumulation of small misfortunes.

It enlightens one to note that not a single person expressed regret when Sui Yang-ti [Sui Yangdi], a brutal and merciless tyrant, met his death at the hands of a group of assassins. If you gentlemen keep in mind the reason why I have been able to overthrow the Sui regime, I, on my part, will constantly remind myself of the injustice suffered by Kuan Lung-feng and Ch'ao Ts'o. Only in this way can you and I be permanently secure.

---

*What aspects of Emperor T'ai-tsung's essay reflect his being a great ruler? Why?*

<sup>2</sup>Kuan Lung-feng was a loyal but outspoken minister under King Chieh (r. 1818–1765 B.C.), last ruler of the Hsia [Xia] dynasty. He was executed because of his criticism of the king's policies and personal behavior. Han Ching-ti (ca. 156–141 B.C.) ordered the execution of Ch'ao Ts'o (d. 154 B.C.) to appease some of the feudal lords who were then in rebellion. Previously Ch'ao Ts'o had recommended breaking up large feudal domains into smaller ones, a recommendation that angered the lords.

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8–2

Poems by Wang Wei

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**GOOD TO WEI, DISTRICT MAGISTRATE  
OF FANGCHENG, ON HIS WAY TO  
REMOTE CHU**

I remember the remote water reeds,  
a few souls walking in the vast region of Chu,  
high geese over the long Huai River,  
the ancient city of Ying like a flat wasteland.  
From your envoy's carriage you can hear pheasants  
feeding their young  
and the small county drum answering the cock.  
If you see a local official, don't blame him  
if he pulls out his scroll of complaints.

**SEEING OFF PREFECT JI MU AS HE LEAVES  
OFFICE AND GOES EAST OF THE RIVER**

The time of brightness is long gone.  
I, too, have been passed over.  
It's fate. No complaint colors my face.  
The plain life is what I enjoy.  
Now that you brush off your sleeves and leave,  
poverty will invade the four seas.  
Ten thousand miles of pure autumn sky.  
Sunset clarifies the empty river.  
What pleasure on a crystal night  
to rap on the side of the boat and sing  
or share the light with fish and birds  
leisurely stretched out in the rushes.  
No need to lodge in the bright world.

---

8–3

**Du Fu: *Ballad of the War Wagons***

---

Translated by Tony Barnstone and Chou Ping

Carts grumble and rattle  
and horses whinny and neigh  
as the conscripts pass, bows and quivers strapped to their  
waists.  
Parents, wives and children run to see them off  
till dust-clouds drown the bridge south of Changan.

All day let your hair be tangled like reeds.  
Be lazy and in the dark about human affairs,  
in a remote place, far from the emperor.  
You can gather things smaller than you;  
in the natural world there are no kings.  
I will also leave office and return,  
an old farmhand, plowing the fields.

**ON BEING DEMOTED AND SENT AWAY  
TO QIZHOU**

How easy for a lowly official to offend  
and now I'm demoted and must go north.  
In my work I sought justice  
but the wise emperor disagreed.  
I pass houses and roads by the riverside  
and villages deep in a sea of clouds.  
Even if one day I come back,  
white age will have invaded my hair.

**FOR ZHANG, EXILED IN JINGZHOU, ONCE  
ADVISOR TO THE EMPEROR**

Where are you? I think only of you.  
Dejected I gaze at the Jingmen Mountains.  
Now no one recognizes you  
but I still remember how you helped me.  
I too will work as a farmer,  
planting, growing old in my hilly garden.  
I see wild geese fading into the south.  
Which one can take you my words?

---

*Wang Wei was extremely torn between his duties at court and his religious retreat into nature. How is this tension revealed in these poems?*

Tugging at soldiers' clothes, they wail and throw  
themselves in the way,  
their wails rising into the clouds.  
On the roadside a passerby asks what's happening.  
The soldiers only say "We're called up often,  
some went North at fifteen to guard the Yellow River  
and still at forty are farming frontier settlements out West.  
We left so young the village chief wrapped our turbans  
for us;  
we came back white-haired but now we're off to fortify  
the frontier!  
The men there have shed a salt ocean of blood,  
but the warlike Emperor still lusts for empire.  
My lord, haven't you heard how in two hundred districts  
east of China's mountains

countless villages grow just weeds and thorns?  
Even if a stout wife tries to plough and hoe,  
east to west the crops grow wild over broken terraces.  
Qin soldiers are fierce warriors,  
so we are driven forth like chickens or dogs.

You, sir, can ask questions  
but conscripts don't dare complain.  
This winter  
they haven't released the Guanxi troops  
but officials still press for the land tax.  
Land tax! How are we to pay that?  
The truth is it's a sour thing to have sons.

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## 8-4

### Li Qingzhao (Li Ch'ing-chao) (1084–c. 1151): Poems

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Translated by Tony Barnstone and Chou Ping

#### TO THE TUNE OF “INTOXICATED IN THE SHADE OF FLOWERS”

Slight mist, the clouds are fat. This endless day is  
torture.  
Lucky Dragon incense dissolves in the gold animal.  
It's Autumn Festival, a good season,  
but by midnight the chill will pierce  
my jade pillow and thin silk curtains.

I drink wine by the east fence in yellow dusk  
and a secret fragrance fills my sleeves.  
Do not say my spirit isn't frayed.  
The west wind tangles in the curtains.  
I am thinner than a yellow flower.

#### TO THE TUNE OF “ONE BLOSSOMING SPRIG OF PLUM”

The scent of red lotus fades and my jade mat is cold as  
autumn.  
Gently I loosen my silk robe  
and enter the magnolia boat alone.  
Who has sent an embroidered letter via clouds?  
Wild geese form a character in the sky: *return*.  
The west tower fills with moon.

Blossoms drift and water flows where it will,  
but my heart is still sick,

Better to have a daughter—  
at least she can marry a neighbor.  
Our sons lie unburied in the grass.  
My lord, have you seen the Blue Sea's shore  
where the old white bones lie ungathered?  
New ghosts keen and old ghosts weep  
jiu, jiu, like twittering birds as rain sifts from the bleak sky.

---

*Long periods of warfare took their toll on China. How  
does DuFu express the ambiguities of war in this  
poem?*

split between this place and where you are.  
I can't kill this desire.  
Even when my eyebrows relax,  
my heart flares up again.

#### TO THE TUNE OF “SPRING AT WU LING”<sup>1</sup>

The wind fades. Dropped blossoms perfume the earth.  
At the end of the day, I'm too lazy to comb my hair.  
His things remain, but he is gone, and the world is dead.  
I try to speak but choke in tears.

I hear that spring is lovely at Twin Brook.  
I'd row there in a light craft  
but fear my grasshopper boat  
is too small to carry this grief.

#### TO THE TUNE OF “SILK WASHING BROOK”

I don't need deep cups of thick amber wine.  
My feelings will warm before I drown in drink.  
Already sparse bells are answering the night wind.

Lucky Dragon incense fades as my soul-dream breaks.  
From my loose hair drops a soft gold hairpin;  
I wake alone and watch the red candle die.

#### TO THE TUNE OF “DREAM SONG”

I'll never forget sunset at Brook Pavilion—  
drunk with beauty, we lost our way.  
When the ecstasy faded, we turned our boat home,  
but it was late and we strayed into a place deep with  
lotus flowers  
and rowed hard, so hard  
the whole shore erupted with herons and gulls.

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<sup>1</sup>Written after her husband's death.

## TO THE TUNE OF “DREAM SONG”

Sharp wind last night, and sparse raindrops.  
Thick sleep hasn't eased this hangover.  
I want to ask the servant rolling up the blinds  
has the flowering begonia blossomed?  
Do you know?

Do you know?  
Are the green leaves fat? The thin flowers red?

---

*Li Qingzhao was a woman of society who suffered many difficulties. What do her poems reveal about women in society in China during her lifetime?*

## 8–5

## The Zen Teaching of Huang Po

## 1

The Master said to me: All the Buddhas and all sentient beings are nothing but the One Mind, beside which nothing exists. This Mind, which is without beginning, is unborn and indestructible. It is not green nor yellow, and has neither form nor appearance. It does not belong to the categories of things which exist or do not exist, nor can it be thought of in terms of new or old. It is neither long nor short, big nor small, for it transcends all limits, measures, names, traces, and comparisons. It is that which you see before you—begin to reason about it and you at once fall into error. It is like the boundless void which cannot be fathomed or measured. The One Mind alone is the Buddha, and there is no distinction between the Buddha and sentient things, but that sentient beings are attached to forms and so seek externally for Buddhahood. By their very seeking they lose it, for that is using the Buddha to seek for the Buddha and using mind to grasp Mind. Even though they do their utmost for a full eon, they will not be able to attain to it. They do not know that, if they put a stop to conceptual thought and forget their anxiety, for Buddha will appear before them, for this Mind is the Buddha and the Buddha is all living beings. It is not the less for being manifested in ordinary beings, nor is it greater for being manifested in the Buddhas.

## 2

As to performing the six paramitas and vast numbers of similar practices, or gaining merits as countless as the sands of the Ganges, since you are fundamentally complete in every respect, you should not try to supplement that perfection by such meaningless practices. When there is occasion for them, perform them; and, when the occasion is passed, remain quiescent. If you are not absolutely convinced that the Mind is the Buddha, and if you are attached to forms, practices, and meritorious performances, your way of think-

ing is false and quite incompatible with the Way. The Mind is the Buddha, nor are there any other Buddhas or any other mind. It is bright and spotless as the void, having no form or appearance whatever. To make use of your minds to think conceptually is to leave the substance and attach yourselves to form. The Ever-Existent Buddha is not a Buddha of form or attachment. To practice the six paramitas and a myriad of similar practices with the intention of becoming a Buddha thereby is to advance by stages, but the Ever-Existent Buddha is not a Buddha of stages. Only awake to the One Mind, and there is nothing whatsoever to be attained. This is the *real* Buddha. The Buddha and all sentient beings are the One Mind and nothing else.

## 3

Mind is like the void in which there is no confusion or evil, as when the sun wheels through it shining upon the four corners of the world. For, when the sun rises and illuminates the whole earth, the void gains not in brilliance; and, when the sun sets, the void does not darken. The phenomena of light and dark alternate with each other, but the nature of the void remains unchanged. So it is with the Mind of the Buddha and of sentient beings. If you look upon the Buddha as presenting a pure, bright, or Enlightened appearance, or upon sentient beings as presenting a foul, dark, or mortal-seeming appearance, these conceptions resulting from attachment to form will keep you from supreme knowledge, even after the passage of as many eons as there are sands in the Ganges. There is only the One Mind and not a particle of anything else on which to lay hold, for this Mind is the Buddha. If you students of the Way do not awake to this Mind substance, you will overlay Mind with conceptual thought, you will seek the Buddha outside yourselves, and you will remain attached to forms, pious practices, and so on, all of which are harmful and not at all the way to supreme knowledge.

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*How does the teaching of no mind compare with the equally Buddhist teaching of mindfulness? Can they be reconciled?*

## 8-6

## Ssu-Ma Kwang

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## ANCESTRAL RITES

All ancestor worship should be conducted in the second month of a season [the first month being reserved for imperial ceremonies].

First, the master of the household, his younger brothers, sons, and grandsons, dressed in their formal attire, attend to the divination of an auspicious day for the ceremony. This is done outside of the Image Hall. The master of the household stands facing west, and all the others file behind him in one line, ordered according to their ranks in the family, from north to south. A table is set in front of the master on which are placed incense burners, incense boxes, and milfoil stalks. The master inserts his official tablet in his girdle, lights the incense, and addresses the diviner as follows:

“I would like to present a yearly offering to my ancestors on such-and-such a day. Please determine whether it is an auspicious day.”

Then he steps back and hands the milfoil stalks to the diviner, who then performs the divination, facing west. If the proposed date turns out to be inauspicious, then the master of the household names another. When finally an auspicious day is found, all present enter the Image Hall. The master now stands facing north, with his sons and grandsons in file behind him as before, except that now they are ordered according to their ranks from west to east.

The master inserts the official tablet in his girdle, advances to light the incense, then returns to his former position. The deliverer of prayers now comes out from the left of the master, turns to face east, inserts his official tablet in his girdle, takes out the written prayer from his breast pocket, and kneels down to read: “Your filial grandson, officially entitled such-and-such, will on such-and-such a day offer the yearly sacrifice to his departed grandparents. This is to report to you that the date has been found auspicious and that the offering will be made.” He then puts the prayer sheet away in his pocket, takes out his official tablet, and rises. After he has returned to his former position, the master of the household bows to the memorial tablets of the ancestors, and everyone exits.

Three days before the date set for the ceremony, the master of the household leads all the male members of the family (above ten years of age) to the outer quarters of the house to observe abstinence, while the women do so in the inner quarters. Thus, although there is wine-drinking, there

is no disorder. Meat-eating is allowed, but strong-smelling foods such as onion, leek, and garlic are prohibited. During this period the family members do not attend funerals, nor do they listen to music. All inauspicious and unclean matters are avoided, so that everyone can concentrate on the memory of the departed ancestors.

On the day before the ceremony, the master organizes all the male members of the family and the assistants to dust and sweep the place where the sacrifice will be held, to wash and clean the utensils and containers, and to arrange the furniture. The places for the departed ancestors are so arranged that each husband and wife are side by side, arranged according to proper ranking from west to east, and all facing south. The mistress of the house supervises the women of the household in cleaning the cooking utensils and preparing the food, which should include five kinds of vegetables and five kinds of fruits and not more than fifteen dishes of the following sorts: red stew, roast meat, fried meat, ribs, boiled white meat, dried meat, ground meat, special meats other than pork or lamb, foods made of flour. (If the family is poor, or if certain items cannot be obtained at a particular location or time, then merely include several items from each category, that is, vegetable, fruit, meat, flour-foods, and rice-foods.)

The assistants prepare a basin with a stand for washing hands and set it on the southeastern side of the eastern steps. To the north of the stand is set a rack of towels for drying hands. (These are for the relatives.) Then, on the east side of the eastern steps another basin and some towels are set; these, however, are without a stand or a rack. (These are for the assistants.)

On the day of the ceremony, all members of the family rise early and put on formal attire. The master and the mistress lead the assistants to the hall for the ceremony. In front of every seat, on the south side of the table, the assistants place vegetables and fruits, and on the north side, wine cups, spoons, chopsticks, teacups and saucers, and sauce bowls. Next they put a bottle of water and a bottle of wine on a table above the eastern steps. To its east is placed a table with a decanter, wine cups, knives, and towels on it. An incense table is placed in the center of the hall, with an incense burner and an incense box on it. An ash bowl is set on the east side, and a burner, a water bottle, an incense ash ladle, and a pair of tongs are set on the west side. Water is poured into the washing basins.

In the morning, when the cook reports that all the foods have been prepared, the master and mistress go to the Image Hall together. Two assistants carry the memorial tablets in a bamboo basket, and, with the master taking the lead and the mistress following him, all the members of the family form two rows, the men on the left-hand side and the women on the right-hand side. In this order they proceed to the hall of the ceremony. The basket is then placed at the top of the western steps, to the west of the burner.

The master and mistress now wash their hands and carry the memorial tablets to the seats: those of the male ancestors first, those of the female ones next. Afterwards, the

master leads all the men in the family to form one line, from west to east according to their ranks, below the eastern steps, all facing north. The mistress, likewise, leads all the women in the same order, from east to west, below the western steps, also facing north. The assistants to the ceremony form another line, from west to east, behind the men. When all have taken their proper positions, they bow together to greet the spirits of the ancestors.

The master then ascends the eastern steps and goes to the south of the incense table. He puts his official tablet in his girdle and lights the incense. Then he bows and returns to his former position. The deliverer of prayers and the assistants to the ceremony now wash and dry their hands. One assistant ascends the steps, opens the wine bottle, wipes the mouth of the bottle, and pours the wine into the decanter. Then he takes the wine cup, fills it with wine from the decanter, and makes a libation toward the west.

The cook and servants have by now put the foods for offering on a table placed on the east side of the washing basin and towel rack. The men now wash their hands. Then, following the example of the master, they put down their official tablets and hold up bowls of meat—the master ascends from the eastern steps, all the others from the western steps—and place them in front of the memorial tablets of the ancestors, to the north of the vegetables and fruits. Afterwards, they take up their official tablets and return to their former positions. Now the women wash and dry their hands. Led by the mistress, they first carry the foods made of flour, ascend the western steps, and set them down to the north of the meats. Then they carry the foods made of rice, ascend the western steps, and set them down to the north of the foods made of flour. Afterwards they descend and return to their former positions.

The master now ascends the eastern steps, goes to the wine table, and turns to face west. An assistant takes the wine cup of the great-grandfather in his left hand and that of the great-grandmother in his right hand; another assistant, in the same manner, holds the cups of the grandparents and a third holds the cups of the parents. The three assistants now go to the master, who, after putting his official tablet away in his girdle, pours wine into the cups. With these cups in their hands, the assistants walk slowly back to the tables to set them down in their former positions. The master takes out his official tablet again, approaches the seats of his great-grandparents, facing north. One assistant now takes the wine cup of the great-grandfather and stands on the left side of the master; another holds the cup of the great-grandmother and stands on the right side of the master. The master, putting away his official tablet, kneels and receives the cup of the great-grandfather, offers a libation, and returns the cup to the assistant, who puts it back where it was. The master then takes out his official tablet, prostrates himself on the floor, then rises and steps back a little.

The deliverer of prayers steps out from the left of the master, turns to face east, puts away his official tablet, takes out the written prayer, kneels down and reads:

On such-and-such a day, of such-and-such a month, of such-and-such a year, your filial great-grandson, officially titled as such-and-such, presents the soft-haired sacrifice (for lamb; if a pig is offered, then he should say “hard-haired” sacrifice) and good wine in the yearly offering to his great-grandfather, officially titled such-and-such, and great-grandmother (give honorary title here). O that you enjoy the food!

He then rolls up the prayer sheet and puts it back into his pocket. Then he takes out his official tablet and rises. The master bows to the memorial tablets.

Next they proceed with the same ceremony at the seats of the grandparents and those of the parents, except that the prayer is slightly modified, so that for the grandparents it reads: “Your filial grandson presents the yearly offerings . . .,” and for the parents, “Your filial son . . .,” etc.

When this first round of offerings is completed, the deliverer of prayers and the master descend and return to their former positions. Now the second round of offering begins. (This is usually performed by the mistress herself or some close relative.) The offerer washes her hands if she has not done so already, ascends through the western steps, pours the wine and offers libations, just as the master has done. The only difference is that there is no reading of prayers.

When this second round of offerings is completed, the master ascends the eastern steps, takes off his official tablet, holds the decanter, and fills all the wine cups. Then he takes up his official tablet again and steps back to stand on the southeast side of the incense table, facing north. The mistress ascends the western steps, places spoons in the bowls of millet, and straightens the chopsticks. The handles of the spoons should point to the west. She now goes to stand on the southwest side of the incense table and faces north. The master bows twice at the memorial tablets and the mistress bows four times.

One assistant now removes the tea leaves and another ladles soup for the ancestors, both starting from the western end. When this is done they leave, and the deliverer of prayers closes the door for the ancestors to dine in private. The master now should stand on the east side of the closed door, facing west, with all male members of the family in a file behind him; the mistress stands on the west side of the closed door and faces east, with all female members of the family in a file behind her. In this manner all persons wait for the duration of a meal. Then the deliverer of prayers ascends and approaches the door, facing north. He coughs three times to warn the ancestors before opening the door.

The assistants now go to the north of the table with the water, and the master comes in to take his position, facing west. The deliverer of prayers ascends the western steps and approaches the seat of the great-grandfather. He puts his official tablet in his girdle and raises the wine cup, slowly walks to the right of the master, turns to face south, and offers the cup to the master, who, after putting his official tablet away in the girdle, kneels down to receive the cup and to sip the wine.



An assistant then hands a container over to the deliverer of prayers, who uses a spoon to take a few grains of millet from the bowl of each ancestor and puts them in the container. He then carries the container and walks up to the left of the master, turns to face north, and offers the master this blessing: “Your grandfather commands me to confer many blessings on you, the filial grandson, enabling you to receive prosperity from Heaven, your fields to produce abundantly, and you to live a long life.”

The master places the wine cup in front of him, takes up his official tablet, prostrates himself on the floor, rises, and bows. Then he puts his official tablet away in his girdle and kneels to receive the millet. He tastes a little of it, then puts the rest in his left sleeve. An assistant is standing on his right side, and the master gives the container of the millet to him. The master then folds the edge of his left sleeve over his fingers, takes up the wine cup, and drinks from it. Another assistant is standing on his right side, to whom the master gives the cup. On the left side of the master another assistant is holding a plate. He now puts the plate on the floor, and the master lets the millet fall from his sleeve into the plate, which is then carried out. The master takes up his official tablet, prostrates himself, rises, and goes to stand at the top of the eastern steps, facing west. After the master receives the blessed millet, the deliverer of prayers holds up his official tablet and steps back to the top of the western steps, facing east. When the master has taken his position at the top of the eastern steps, the deliverer of prayers announces the completion of the ceremony. Then he descends and takes his former position. All present bow to the memorial tablets, except for the master, for he has received the blessing. Afterwards, the master descends and bows with everyone else to bid the ancestors farewell.

The ceremony having been completed, the master and mistress ascend to take down the memorial tablets and put them back into the bamboo basket, the tablets of the female ancestors being taken down first, then those of the male ancestors. Two assistants carry the basket to the Image Hall, followed by everyone in the family in the same manner as when the tablets were brought out.

At this point the mistress returns to supervise the removal of the offerings. The wine that remains in the cups, together with that in the decanter, is poured into a pot and sealed. This is the “blessed wine.”

The assistants bring the offered foods back to the kitchen, where they are removed from the special containers into ordinary bowls and plates, and the special containers are carefully washed and put away under the supervision of the mistress. A small portion is taken from each item of the offered foods, and put into food boxes, which are sealed together with some “blessed wine,” and dispatched, with a letter, to relatives and friends who are ardent observers of rites and rituals. This activity the master supervises. (The food sample is precious because it is left by the ancestors’ spirits; it does not have to be rich in itself.)

The assistants now help set up the feast. The men and

women are seated separately: the master and all the other male members of the family in the main hall, the mistress and the other female members of the family in the inner quarters. Tables and chairs are set; fruits, vegetables, sauces, wine cups, spoons, chopsticks, and knives are all placed in their proper places. Then wine is poured into decanters, and the hot foods that were offered to the spirits are warmed up.

First, the master of the household takes his seat, and all the other male members of the family offer their good wishes to him. They should stand according to their ranks in the family, just as during the preceding ceremony, and for both men and women the right side ranks higher than the left side. The eldest among them (either a younger brother of the master or his eldest son) stands a trifle ahead of everyone else. An assistant holds the wine decanter and stands on his right. Another assistant holds the wine cup and stands on his left. This eldest of the males then sticks his official tablet in his girdle, kneels, and takes the decanter in his right hand and the wine cup in his left. He then pours the wine and offers good wishes: “Now that the memorial ceremonies have been completed, our ancestors have been offered good food. We wish that you will receive all the five blessings, protect our lineage, and benefit our family.”

The assistant who was holding the decanter then steps back, and the one who was holding the cup presents the wine to the master of the household. The eldest male prostrates himself, rises, and returns to his former position. Then he bows to the master together with all the other males. The master then orders the assistant to bring the decanter and the cup of the eldest male member. He pours wine into the cup himself, declaring, “Now that the offerings to our ancestors are successfully accomplished, we celebrate the good fortune of the five blessings bestowed on us; I hereby share them with all of you.”

The assistant then hands the cup to the eldest male who, after putting away his official tablet in his girdle, kneels down to receive the wine. After he drinks the wine, he gives the cup back to the assistant, prostrates himself, then rises. The master then orders the assistant to pour wine for everyone. When this is done, all the males again prostrate themselves, and they are then ordered to be seated by the master.

Meanwhile, in the inner quarters, all the female members of the family salute the mistress and are in turn offered wine by her; the procedure is the same as that for the male members, except that it is all performed from a standing position with no kneeling or prostrating. When the round of drinking is over, the assistants bring in the meats. Afterwards, the women come to the main hall to offer their congratulations to the master, who then offers wine to the eldest female member (either a younger sister of his or the eldest daughter), who receives it without kneeling down. But all other procedures are the same as performed by the males. Then the men come to the inner quarters to offer their good wishes to the mistress, where the procedure is exactly as the one in the main hall.

Next the assistants bring in the foods made of flour, and all the assistants offer their good wishes to the master and mistress, in the same way that the female members saluted the mistress, but they are not offered wine.

Then the foods made of rice are brought in. After this, wine is liberally drunk, and wine games are played, and the offered food consumed. The number of rounds of wine-drinking is decided by the master. When the offered food and wine are used up, other food and wine is brought in. When the feast is over, the leftovers are given to the servants. The master distributes them to the servants of the outer quarters, and the mistress to the servants of the inner

quarters, reaching down even to the lowliest in rank, so that the foods are entirely consumed on that day.

Whenever ancestor worship is performed, sincerity in one's love and respect for one's ancestors are what is most significant. Thus, those who are ill should only do as much as they can, but the young and strong should naturally follow the ceremonies closely.

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*What are the social and political effects of ancestor worship? How do these rites reflect these effects?*

# Chapter 9

## *Japan: Early History to 1467*

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### 9-1

## **Futo No Yasumaro: The *Kojiki* or Records of Ancient Matters**

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Trans. Basil Hall Chamberlain.

### **PREFACE**

The Heavenly Sovereign [Emperor Temmu] commanded, saying “I hear that the chronicles of the emperors and likewise the original words in the possession of the various families deviate from exact truth, and are most amplified by empty falsehoods. If at the present time these imperfections be not amended, ere many years shall have elapsed, the purport of this, the great basis of the country, the grand foundation of the monarchy, will be destroyed. So now I desire to have the chronicles of the emperors selected and recorded, and the old words examined and ascertained, falsehoods being erased and truth determined, in order to transmit the latter to after ages.” At that time there was a retainer whose surname was Hiyeda and his personal name Are. He was twenty-eight years old, and of so intelligent a disposition that he could repeat with his mouth whatever met his eyes, and record in his heart whatever struck his ears. Forthwith Are was commanded to learn by heart the genealogies of the emperors, and likewise the words of former ages. Nevertheless, time elapsed and the age changed, and the thing was not yet carried out.

Prostrate I consider how Her Majesty the Empress [Gemmyo], having obtained Unity, illumines the empire. . . . Regretting the errors in the old words, and wishing to correct the misstatements in the former chronicles, She, on the eighteenth day of the ninth moon of the fourth year of Wado [A.D. 711], commanded me Yasumaro to select and record the old words learnt by heart by Hiyeda no Are according to the Imperial Decree, and dutifully to lift them up to Her.

In reverent obedience to the contents of the Decree, I have made a careful choice. . . . Altogether the things recorded commence with the separation of Heaven and Earth, and conclude with the august reign at Woharida [in 628, when Empress Sui-ko died]. . . . Altogether I have written three volumes, which I reverently and respectfully present. I Yasumaro, with true trembling and true fear, bow my head, bow my head.

Reverently presented by the Court Noble Futo no Yasumaro, an Officer of the Upper Division of the First Class of the Fifth Rank and of the Fifth Order of Merit, on the 28th day of the first moon of the fifth year of Wado [March 10, 712].

### **SECTION I. THE BEGINNING OF HEAVEN AND EARTH\***

The names of the Deities\*\* that were born in the Plain of High Heaven when the Heaven and Earth began were the Deity Master-of-the-August-Centre-of-Heaven, next the High-August-Producing-Wondrous-Deity, next the Divine-Producing-Wondrous-Deity. These three Deities were all Deities born alone, and hid their persons [i.e., died]. The names of the Deities that were born next from a thing [that sprouted up like unto a reed-shoot when the earth, young and like unto floating oil, drifted about medusa-like, were the Pleasant-Reed-Shoot-Prince-Elder-Deity, next the Heavenly-Eternally-Standing-Deity. These two Deities were likewise born alone, and hid their persons.

### **SECTION II. THE SEVEN DIVINE GENERATIONS**

The names of the Deities that were born next were the Earthly-Eternally-Standing-Deity, next the Luxuriant-Integrating-Master-Deity. These two Deities were likewise Deities born alone, and hid their persons. The names of the Deities that were born next were the Deity Mud-Earth-Lord, next his younger sister the Deity Mud-Earth-Lady, next the Germ-Integrating-Deity, next his younger sister the Life-Integrating-Diety, next the Deity Elder-of-the-Great-Place, next his younger sister the Deity Elder-Lady-of-the-Great-Place, next the Deity Perfect-Exterior, next his younger sister the Deity Oh-Awful-Lady, next the Deity Male-Who-Invites [also named Izanagi], next his younger sister the Deity Female-Who-Invites [also named Izanami]. From the Earthly-Eternally-Standing-Deity down to the Deity Female-Who-Invites [Izanami] in the previous list are what are termed the Seven Divine Generations.

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\*Section titles have been added by the translator.

\*\*The Japanese word *kami*, here and later translated as “diety” or “god,” actually has a broader meaning; it can refer to anything superior, particularly to a superior being.

### **SECTION III. THE ISLAND OF ONOGORO**

Hereupon all the Heavenly Deities commanded the two Deities His Augustness Izanagi and Her Augustness Izanami, ordering them to “make, consolidate, and give birth to this drifting land [Japan].” Granting to them a heavenly jewelled spear, they thus deigned to charge them. So the two Deities, standing upon the Floating Bridge of Heaven, pushed down the jewelled spear and stirred with it, whereupon when they had stirred the brine till it went curdle-curdle, and drew the spear up, the brine that dripped down from the end of the spear was piled up and became an island. This is the Island of Onogoro [a Japanese islet].

### **SECTION IV. COURTSHIP OF THE DEITIES THE MALE-WHO-INVITES AND THE FEMALE- WHO-INVITES**

Having descended from Heaven onto this island, they saw to the erection of a heavenly august pillar, they saw to the erection of a hall of eight fathoms. [They then produced a child.] This child they placed in a boat of reeds, and let it float away. Next they gave birth to the Island of Aha [another islet]. . . .

### **SECTION V. BIRTH OF THE EIGHT GREAT ISLANDS**

Hereupon the two Deities took counsel, saying: “The children to whom we have now given birth are not good. It will be best to announce this in the august place of the Heavenly Deities.” They ascended forthwith to Heaven and inquired of Their Augustnesses the Heavenly Deities. Then the Heavenly Deities commanded and found out by grand divination, and ordered them, saying: “They were not good because the woman spoke first. Descend back again and amend your words.” So thereupon descending back, they again went round the heavenly august pillar as before. Thereupon his Augustness Izanagi spoke first: “Ah! what a fair and lovely maiden!” Afterwards his younger sister Her Augustness Izanami spoke: “Ah! what a fair and lovely youth!” [They gave birth to another child.] Next they gave birth to the Island of Futa-na in Iyo. This island has one body and four faces, and each face has a name. So the Land of Iyo is called Lovely-Princess, the Land of Sanuki is called Prince-Good-Boiled-Rice, the Land of Aha is called the Princess-of-Great-Food, the Land of Tosa is called Brave-Good-Youth. Next they gave birth to the Islands of Mitsu-go near Oki, another name for which islands is Heavenly-Great-Heart-Youth. Next they gave birth to the island of Tsukushi. This island likewise has one body and four faces, and each face has a name. So the Land of Tsu-kushi is called White-Sun-Youth, the Land of Toyo is called Luxuriant-Sun-Youth, the Land of Hi is called Brave-Sun-Confronting-Luxuriant-Wondrous-Lord-

Youth, the Land of Kumaso is called Brave-Sun-Youth. Next they gave birth to the Island of Iki, another name for which is Heaven’s-One-Pillar. Next they gave birth to the Island of Tsu, another name for which is Heavenly-Hand-net-Good-Princess. Next they gave birth to the Island of Sado. Next they gave birth to Great-Yamato-the-Luxuriant-Island-of-the-Dragon-Fly, another name for which is Heavenly-August-Sky-Luxuriant-Dragon-Fly-Lord-Youth. The name of “Land-of-the-Eight-Great-Islands” therefore originated in these eight islands having been born first. [They then completed giving birth to the islands of Japan.]

### **SECTION VI. BIRTH OF THE VARIOUS DEITIES**

When they had finished giving birth to countries, they began afresh giving birth to Deities. [There follows a long list of deities to whom Izanagi and Izanami give birth, and who in turn give birth to further deities, and so on. Many of these deities have names descriptive of natural phenomena like rocks, wind, sea, autumn, trees, mountains, and moors.]

### **SECTION VII. RETIREMENT OF HER AUGUSTNESS THE PRINCESS-WHO-INVITES**

Through giving birth to this child her august private parts were burnt, and she [Izanami] sickened and lay down. . . . So the Deity Izanami, through giving birth to the Deity-of-Fire, at length divinely retired [died]. The total number of islands given birth to jointly by the two Deities Izanagi and Izanami was fourteen, and of Deities thirty-five.

So then His Augustness Izanagi said: “Oh! Thine Augustness my lovely younger sister! Oh! that I should have exchanged thee for this single child!” And as he crept round her august pillow, and as he crept round her august feet and wept, there was born from his august tears the Deity that dwells at Konomoto near Unewo on Mount Kagu, and whose name is the Crying-Weeping-Female-Deity. So he buried the divinely retired Deity Izanami on Mount Hiba at the boundary of the Land of Idzumo and the Land of Hahaki.

### **SECTION IX. THE LAND OF HADES**

Thereupon His Augustness Izanagi, wishing to meet and see his younger sister Her Augustness Izanami, followed after her to the Land of Hades. So when from the palace she raised the door and came out to meet him, His Augustness Izanagi spoke, saying: “Thine Augustness my lovely younger sister! the lands that I and thou made are not yet finished making, so come back.” Then Her Augustness Izanami answered, saying: “Lamentable indeed that thou camest not sooner! I have eaten of the furnace of Hades.

Nevertheless, as I reverence the entry here of Thine Augustness my lovely elder brother, I wish to return. Moreover I will discuss it particularly with the Deities of Hades.

Look not at me!” Having thus spoken, she went back inside the palace; and as she tarried there very long, he could not wait. So having taken and broken off one of the end-teeth of the multitudinous and close-toothed comb stuck in the august left bunch of his hair, he lit one light and went in and looked. Maggots were swarming, and she was rotting, and in her head dwelt the Great-Thunder, in her breast dwelt the Fire-Thunder, in her belly dwelt the Black-Thunder, in her private parts dwelt the Cleaving-Thunder, in her left hand dwelt the Young-Thunder, in her right hand dwelt the Earth-Thunder, in her left foot dwelt the Rumbling-Thunder, in her right foot dwelt the Couchant-Thunder—altogether eight Thunder-Deities had been born and dwelt there. Hereupon His Augustness Izanagi, overawed at the sight, fled back, whereupon his younger sister Her Augustness Izanami said: “Thou hast put me to shame,” and at once sent the Ugly-Female-of-Hades to pursue him. So His Augustness Izanagi took his black august head-dress and cast it down, and it instantly turned into grapes. While she picked them up and ate them, he fled on; but as she still pursued him, he took and broke the multitudinous and close-toothed comb in the right bunch of his hair and cast it down, and it instantly turned into bamboo-sprouts. While she pulled them up and ate them, he fled on. Again later his younger sister sent the eight Thunder-Deities with a thousand and five hundred warriors of Hades to pursue him. So he, drawing the ten-grasp sabre that was augustly girded on him, fled forward brandishing it in his back hand; and as they still pursued, he took, on reaching the base of the Even Pass of Hades, three peaches that were growing at its base, and waited and smote his pursuers therewith, so that they all fled back. Then His Augustness Izanagi announced to the peaches: “Like as ye have helped me, so much ye help all living people in the Central Land of Reed-Plains [Japan] when they shall fall into troublous circumstances and be harassed!”—and he gave to the peaches the designation of Their Augustnesses Great-Divine-Fruit. Last of all his younger sister Her Augustness Izanami came out herself in pursuit. So he drew a thousand-draught rock, and with it blocked up the Even Pass of Hades, and placed the rock in the middle; and they stood opposite to one another and exchanged leave-takings; and Her Augustness Izanami said: “My lovely elder brother, thine Augustness! If thou do like this, I will in one day strangle to death a thousand of the folks of thy land.” Then His Augustness Izanagi replied: “My lovely younger sister, Thine Augustness! If *thou* do this *I* will in one day set up a thousand and five hundred parturition-houses. In this manner each day a thousand people would surely die, and each day a thousand and five hundred people would surely be born.” So Her Augustness Izanami is called the Great-Deity-of-Hades. Again it is said that, owing to her having pursued and reached her elder brother, she is called the Road-Reaching-Great-Deity. Again the rock with which he blocked up the Pass of Hades is called the Great-Deity-of-the-Road-Turning-Back, and again it is called the Blocking-Great-Deity-of-the-Door-of-Hades. . . .

## SECTION X. THE PURIFICATION OF THE AUGUST PERSON

Therefore the Great Deity Izanagi said: “Nay! hideous! I have come to a hideous and polluted land, I have! So I will perform the purification of my august person.” So he went out to a plain covered with bushclover at a small river mouth near Tachibana in Himuka [probably on Honshu] in the island of Tsukushi and purified and cleansed himself. [Izanagi removes his clothing and begins to bathe; as by-products of these activities he creates a sizeable number of diverse deities, of which only the last three are significant.] The name of the Deity that was born as he thereupon washed his left august eye was the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity. The name of the Deity that was next born as he washed his right august eye was His Augustness Moon-Night-Possessor. The name of the Deity that was next born as he washed his august nose was His Brave-Swift-Impetuous-Male-Augustness (or Susa-noo). . . .

## SECTION XI. INVESTITURE OF THE THREE DEITIES, THE ILLUSTRIOUS AUGUST CHILDREN

At this time His Augustness Izanagi greatly rejoiced, saying: “I, begetting child after child, have at my final begetting gotten three illustrious children,” with which words, at once jinglingly taking off and shaking the jewel-string forming his august necklace, he bestowed it on the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity, saying: “Do Thine Augustness rule the Plain-of-High-Heaven.” With this charge he bestowed it on her. Now the name of this august necklace was the August-Storehouse-Shelf-Deity. Next he said to His Augustness Moon-Night-Possessor: “Do Thine Augustness rule the Dominion of the Night.” Thus he charged him. Next he said to Susanoo: “Do Thine Augustness rule the Sea-Plain.”

## SECTION XII. THE CRYING AND WEEPING OF HIS IMPETUOUS-MALE-AUGUSTNESS

So while the other two Deities each assumed his and her rule according to the command with which their father had deigned to charge them, Susanoo did not assume the rule of the dominion with which he had been charged, but cried and wept till his eight-grasp beard reached to the pit of his stomach. The fashion of his weeping was such as by his weeping to wither the green mountains into withered mountains and by his weeping to dry up all the rivers and seas. For this reason the sound of bad Deities was like unto the flies in the fifth moon as they all swarmed, and in all things every portent of woe arose. So the Great August Deity Izanagi said to Susanoo: “How is it that, instead of ruling the land with which I charged thee, thou dost wail and weep?” He replied, saying: “I wail because I wish to depart to my deceased

mother's land, to the Nether Distant Land [Hades].” Then the Great August Deity Izanagi was very angry and said: “If that be so, thou shalt not dwell in this land,” and forthwith expelled him with a divine expulsion. . . .

### SECTION XIII. THE AUGUST OATH

So thereupon Susanoo said: “If that be so, I will take leave of the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity, and depart.” With these words he forthwith went up to Heaven, whereupon all the mountains and rivers shook, and every land and country quaked. So the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity, alarmed at the noise, said: “The reason of the ascent hither of His Augustness my elder brother is surely no good intent. It is only that he wishes to wrest my land from me.” And she forthwith, unbinding her august hair, twisted it into august bunches, and both into the left and into the right august bunch, as likewise into her august head-dress and likewise on to her left and her right august arm, she twisted an augustly complete string of curved jewels eight feet long, of five hundred jewels, and, slinging on her back a quiver holding a thousand arrows, and adding thereto a quiver holding five hundred arrows, she likewise took and slung at her side a mighty and high-sounding elbow-pad, and brandished and stuck her bow upright so that the top shook, and she stamped her feet into the hard ground up to her opposing thighs, kicking away the earth like rotten snow, and stood valiantly like unto a mighty man, and waiting, asked: “Wherefore ascendest thou hither?”

Then Susanoo replied, saying: “I have no evil intent. It is only that when the Great-August-Deity our father spoke, deigning to inquire the cause of my wailing and weeping, I said: ‘I wail because I wish to go to my deceased mother's land,’ whereupon the Great-August-Deity said: ‘Thou shalt not dwell in this land,’ and deigned to expel me with a divine expulsion. It is therefore solely with the thought of taking leave of thee and departing, that I have ascended hither. I have no strange intentions.” [The two deities then engage in a contest of producing children, the sun goddess begetting five male deities and Susanoo begetting three female deities.]

### SECTION XV. THE AUGUST RAVAGES OF HIS IMPETUOUS-MALE-AUGUSTNESS

Then Susanoo said to the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity: “Owing to the sincerity of my intentions I have, in begetting children, gotten delicate females. Judging from this, I have undoubtedly gained the victory.” With these words, and impetuous with victory, he broke down the divisions of the ricefields laid out by the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity, filled up the ditches, and moreover strewed excrements in the palace where she partook of the great food. So, though he did thus, the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity upbraided him not, but said: “What

looks like excrements must be something that His Augustness mine elder brother has vomited through drunkenness. Again, as to his breaking down the divisions of the ricefields and filling up the ditches, it must be because he grudges the land they occupy that His Augustness mine elder brother acts thus.” But notwithstanding these apologetic words, he still continued his evil acts, and was more and more violent. As the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity sat in her awful [sacred] weaving-hall seeing to the weaving of the august garments of the Deities, he broke a hole in the top of the weaving-hall, and through it let fall a heavenly piebald horse which he had flayed. . . .

### SECTION XVI. THE DOOR OF THE HEAVENLY ROCK DWELLING

So thereupon the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity, terrified at the sight, closed behind her the door of the Heavenly Rock-Dwelling, made it fast, and retired. Then the whole Plain of High Heaven was obscured and all the Central Land of Reed-Plains [Japan] darkened. Owing to this, eternal night prevailed. Hereupon the voices of the myriad Deities were like unto the flies in the fifth moon as they swarm and a myriad portents of woe arose. Therefore did the eight hundred myriad Deities assemble in a divine assembly in the bed of the Tranquil River of Heaven, and bid the Deity Thought-Includer, child of the High-August-Producing-Wondrous-Deity, think of a plan, assembling the long-singing birds of eternal night and making them sing, taking the hard rocks of Heaven from the river-bed of the Tranquil River of Heaven, and taking the iron from the Heavenly Metal-Mountains, calling in the smith Ama-tsuma-ra, charging Her Augustness I-shi-ko-ri-do-me to make a mirror, and charging His Augustness Jewel-Ancestor to make an augustly complete string of curved jewels eight feet long, of five hundred jewels, and summoning His Augustness Heavenly-Beckoning-Ancestor-Lord and His Augustness Grand-Jewel, and causing them to pull out with a complete pulling the shoulder-blade of a true stag from the Heavenly Mount Kagu, and take cherry-bark from the Heavenly Mount Kagu, and perform divination, and pulling up by pulling its roots a true *Cleyera japonica* with five hundred branches from the Heavenly Mount Kagu, and taking and putting upon its upper branches the augustly complete string of curved jewels eight feet long, of five hundred jewels, and taking and tying to the middle branches the mirror eight feet long, and taking and hanging upon its lower branches the white pacificatory offerings and the blue pacificatory offerings, His Augustness Grand-Jewel taking these divers things and holding them together with the grand august offerings, and His Augustness Heavenly-Beckoning-Ancestor-Lord prayerfully reciting grand liturgies, and the Heavenly-Hand-Strength-Male-Deity standing hidden beside the door, and Her Augustness Heavenly-Alarming-Female hanging round her the heavenly clubmoss

from the Heavenly Mount Kagu as a sash, and making the heavenly spindle-tree her head-dress, and binding the leaves of the bamboo-grass of the Heavenly Mount Kagu in a pose for her hands, laying a sounding-board before the door of the Heavenly Rock-Dwelling, and stamping till she made it resound and doing as if possessed by a Deity, and pulling out the nipples of her breasts, pushing down her skirt-string to her private parts. Then the Plain of High Heaven shook, and the eight hundred myriad Deities laughed together. Hereupon the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity was amazed, and, slightly opening the door of the Heavenly Rock-Dwelling, spoke thus from the inside: "Methought that owing to my retirement the Plain of Heaven would be dark, and likewise the Central Land of Reed-Plains would all be dark: how then is it that the Heavenly-Alarming-Female makes merry, and that likewise the eight hundred myriad Deities all laugh?" Then the Heavenly-Alarming-Female spoke, saying: "We rejoice and are glad because there is a Deity more illustrious than Thine Augustness." While she was thus speaking, His Augustness Heavenly-Beckoning-Ancestor-Lord and His Augustness Grand-Jewel pushed forward the mirror and respectfully showed it to the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity, whereupon the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity, more and more astonished, gradually came forth from the door and gazed upon it, whereupon the Heavenly-Hand-Strength-Male-Deity, who was standing hidden, took her august hand and drew her out, and then His Augustness Grand-Jewel drew the bottom-tied rope along at her august back, and spoke, saying: "Thou must not go back further in than this!" So when the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity had come forth, both the Plain of High Heaven and the Central-Land-of-Reed-Plains of course again became light.

### **SECTION XXXIII. THE AUGUST DESCENT FROM HEAVEN OF HIS AUGUSTNESS THE AUGUST GRANDCHILD**

Then the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity and the High-Integrating-Deity commanded and charged the Heir Apparent His Augustness Truly-Conqueror-I-Conquer-Swift-Heavenly-Great-Great-Ears saying: "The Brave-Awful-Possessing-Male-Deity says that he has now finished pacifying the Central Land of Reed-Plains. So do

thou, in accordance with our gracious charge, descend to and dwell in and rule over it." Then the Heir Apparent His Augustness Truly-Conqueror-I-Conquer-Conquering-Swift-Heavenly-Great-Great-Ears replied, saying: "While I have been getting ready to descend, there has been born to me a child whose name is His Augustness Heaven-Plenty-Earth-Plenty-Heaven's-Sun-Height-Prince-Rice-ear-Ruddy-Plenty. This child should be sent down." Therefore, in accordance with these words, they laid their command on His Augustness Prince-Rice-ear-Ruddy-Plenty, deigning to charge him with these words: "This Luxuriant Reed-Plain-Land-of-Fresh-Rice-ears [Japan] is the land over which thou shalt rule." So he replied: "I will descend from Heaven according to your commands."

Then . . . they sent him down from Heaven. Thereupon they joined to him the eight-feet-long curved jewels and mirror that had allured the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity from the Rock-Dwelling and also the Herb-Quelling-Great-Sword, and likewise the Deity Thought-Includer, the Hand-Strength-Male-Deity, and the Deity Heavenly-Rock-Door-Opener of Eternal Night, and charged him thus: "Regard this mirror exactly as if it were our august spirit, and reverence it as if reverencing us." Next did they say: "Let the Deity Thought-Includer take in hand our affairs, and carry on the government." These two Deities are worshipped at the temple of Isuzu [at Ise]. The next, the Deity of Luxuriant-Food, is the Deity dwelling in the outer temple of Watarahi. The next, the Deity Heavenly-Rock-Door-Opener, another name for whom is the Wondrous-Rock-True-Gate-Deity, and another name for whom is the Luxuriant-Rock-True-Gate-Deity—this Deity is the Deity of the August Gate [of the Imperial Palace]. The next, the Deity Hand-Strength-Male dwells in Sanagata. Now His Augustness the Heavenly-Beckoning-Ancestor-Lord is the ancestor of the Nakatomi Chieftains, His Augustness Grand Jewel is the ancestor of the Imibe Headmen, Her Augustness the Heavenly-Alarming-Female is the ancestress of the Duchesses of Saru, Her Augustness I-shi-ko-ri-do-me is the ancestress of the Mirror-Making Chieftains, His Augustness-Jewel-Ancestor is the ancestor of the Jewel-Ancestor Chieftains.

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*This complex story reveals many ambiguities and conflicts. What do these tell us about the civilization that produced the Kosiki?*

## 9-2

## Prince Shotoku's Seventeen Article Constitution

Source: Ryusaku Tsunoda, ed., *Sources of the Japanese Tradition*, Vol.1 (N.Y.: Columbia University Press, 1964), pp. 49-51.

12th year [604], Summer, 4th month, 3rd day. The Prince Imperial in person prepared for the first time laws. There were seventeen clauses, as follows:

I. Harmony is to be valued and an avoidance of wanton opposition to be honored. All men are influenced by partisanship, and there are few who are intelligent. Hence there are some who disobey their lords and fathers, or who maintain feuds with the neighboring villages. But when those above are harmonious and those below are friendly, and there is concord in the discussion of business, right views of things spontaneously gain acceptance. Then what is there which cannot be accomplished?

II. Sincerely reverence the three treasures. The three treasures, viz. Buddha, the Law, and the Monastic orders, are the final refuge of the four generated beings, and are the supreme objects of faith in all countries. Few men are utterly bad. They may be taught to follow it. But if they do not betake them to the three treasures, wherewithal shall their crookedness be made straight?

III. When you receive the imperial commands, fail not scrupulously to obey them. The lord is Heaven, the vassal is Earth. Heaven overspreads, and Earth upbears. When this is so, the four seasons follow their due course, and the powers of Nature obtain their efficacy. If the Earth attempted to overspread, Heaven would simply fall in ruin. Therefore is it that when the lord speaks, the vassal listens; when the superior acts, the inferior yields compliance. Consequently when you receive the imperial commands, fail not to carry them out scrupulously. Let there be a want of care in this matter, and ruin is the natural consequence.

IV. The ministers and functionaries should make decorous behavior their leading principle, for the leading principle of the government of the people consists in decorous behavior. If the superiors do not behave with decorum, the inferiors are disorderly: if inferiors are wanting in proper behavior, there must necessarily be offenses. Therefore it is that when lord and vassal behave with decorum, the distinctions of rank are not confused: when the people behave with decorum, the government of the commonwealth proceeds of itself.

V. Ceasing from gluttony and abandoning covetous desires, deal impartially with the suits which are submitted to you. Of complaints brought by the people there are a thousand in one day. If in one day there are so many, how many will there be in a series of years? If the man who is to decide suits at law makes gain his ordinary motive, and hears cases with a view to receiving bribes,

then will the suits of the rich man be like a stone flung into water, while the complaints of the poor will resemble water cast upon a stone. Under these circumstances the poor man will not know whither to betake himself. Here too there is a deficiency in the duty of the minister.

VI. Chastise that which is evil and encourage that which is good. This was the excellent rule of antiquity. Conceal not, therefore, the good qualities of others, and fail not to correct that which is wrong when you see it. Flatterers and deceivers are a sharp weapon for the overthrow of the State, and a pointed sword for the destruction of the people. Sycophants are also fond, when they meet, of dilating to their superiors on the errors of their inferiors; to their inferiors, they censure the faults of their superiors. Men of this kind are all wanting in fidelity to their lord, and in benevolence towards the people. From such an origin great civil disturbances arise.

VII. Let every man have his own charge, and let not the spheres of duty be confused. When wise men are entrusted with office, the sound of praise arises. If unprincipled men hold office, disasters and tumults are multiplied. In this world, few are born with knowledge: wisdom is the product of earnest meditation. In all things, whether great or small, find the right man, and they will surely be well managed: on all occasions, be they urgent or the reverse, meet but with a wise man, and they will of themselves be amenable. In this way will the State be lasting and the Temples of the Earth and of Grain will be free from danger. Therefore did the wise sovereigns of antiquity seek the man to fill the office, and not the office for the sake of the man.

VIII. Let the ministers and functionaries attend the court early in the morning, and retire late. The business of the State does not admit of remissness, and the whole day is hardly enough for its accomplishment. If, therefore, the attendance at court is late, emergencies cannot be met: if officials retire soon, the work cannot be completed.

IX. Good faith is the foundation of right. In everything let there be good faith, for in it there surely consists the good and the bad, success and failure. If the lord and the vassal observe good faith one with another, what is there which cannot be accomplished? If the lord and the vassal do not observe good faith towards one another, everything without exception ends in failure.

X. Let us cease from wrath, and refrain from angry looks. Nor let us be resentful when others differ from us. For all men have hearts, and each heart has its own leanings. Their right is our wrong, and our right is their wrong. We are not unquestionably sages, nor are they unquestionably fools. Both of us are simply ordinary men. How can any one lay down a rule by which to distinguish right from wrong? For we are all, one with another, wise and foolish, like a ring which has no end. Therefore, although others give way to anger, let us on the contrary dread our own faults, and though we alone may be in the right, let us follow the multitude and act like them.

XI. Give clear appreciation to merit and demerit, and deal out to each its sure reward or punishment. In these



days, reward does not attend upon merit, nor punishment upon crime. Ye high functionaries who have charge of public affairs, let it be your task to make clear rewards and punishments.

XII. Let not the provincial authorities or the Kuni no Miyakko levy exaction on the people. In a country there are not two lords; the people have not two masters. The sovereign is the master of the people of the whole country. The officials to whom he gives charge are all his vassals. How can they, as well as the Government, presume to levy taxes on the people?

XIII. Let all persons entrusted with office attend equally to their functions. Owing to their illness or to their being sent on missions, their work may sometimes be neglected. But whenever they become able to attend to business, let them be as accommodating as if they had had cognizance of it from before, and not hinder public affairs on the score of their not having had to do with them.

XIV. Ye ministers and functionaries! Be not envious. For if we envy others, they in turn will envy us. The evils of envy know no limit. If others excel us in intelligence, it gives us no pleasure; if they surpass us in ability, we are envious. Therefore it is not until after a lapse of five hundred years that we at last meet with a wise man, and even in a thousand years we hardly obtain one sage. But if we do not find wise men and sages, wherewithal shall the country be governed?

XV. To turn away from that which is private, and to set our faces towards that which is public—this is the path of

a minister. Now if a man is influenced by private motives, he will assuredly feel resentments, and if he is influenced by resentful feelings, he will assuredly fail to act harmoniously with others. If he fails to act harmoniously with others, he will assuredly sacrifice the public interests to his private feelings. When resentment arises, it interferes with order, and is subversive of law. Therefore in the first clause it was said, that superiors and inferiors should agree together. The purport is the same as this.

XVI. Let the people be employed [in forced labor] at seasonable times. This is an ancient and excellent rule. Let them be employed, therefore, in the winter months, when they are at leisure. But from Spring to Autumn, when they are engaged in agriculture or with the mulberry trees, the people should not be so employed. For if they do not attend to agriculture, what will they have to eat? if they do not attend to the mulberry trees, what will they do for clothing?

XVII. Decisions on important matters should not be made by one person alone. They should be discussed with many. But small matters are of less consequence. It is unnecessary to consult a number of people. It is only in the case of the discussion of weighty affairs, when there is a suspicion that they may miscarry, that one should arrange matters in concert with others, so as to arrive at the right conclusion.

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*Which element of the “Seventeen Articles is the more dominant, the political or the ethical? Why?*

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## 9-3

### “Kagero Nikki”: A noblewoman’s lot in ancient Japan

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Source: Donald Keene, ed., *Anthology of Japanese Literature* (N.Y.: Grove Press, 1960), pp. 97–105.

The years of my youth have passed, and I can see little in them that suggests greatness. It is, I suppose, natural that I should have fallen into such mediocrity. I am less handsome than most, and my character is hardly remarkable. But as the days and nights have gone by in monotonous succession, I have had occasion to read most of the old romances, and I have found them masses of the rankest fabrication. Perhaps, I think to myself, the events of my own life, if I were to put them down in a journal, might attract attention, and indeed those who have been misled by the romancers might find in it a description of what the life of a well-placed lady is really like. But I must begin at the beginning, and I see that my memories of those first

years have blurred. I shall not be surprised then if one finds traces of fiction here too. . . .

It had become clear that I was to have a child. I passed a most unpleasant spring and summer, and toward the end of the eighth moon gave birth to a boy. The Prince showed every sign of affection.

But the following month I received a shock. Toying with my writing box one morning just after he had left, I came upon a note obviously intended for another woman. My chagrin was infinite, and I felt that I must at least send something to let him know I had seen the thing. “Might this be a bill of divorcement,” I wrote, “this note that I see for another?”

As the weeks went by my anxiety increased. Toward the end of the tenth moon he stayed away three nights running, and when he finally appeared he explained nonchalantly that he had hoped by ignoring me for a few days to find out what my feelings really were. But he could not stay the night: he had an appointment, he said, which could not very well be broken. I was of course suspicious, and I had him trailed. I found that he spent the night in a house off a certain narrow side street. It was so, then, I thought. My worst suspicions were confirmed.

Two or three days later I was awakened toward dawn by

a pounding on the gate. It was he, I knew, but I could not bring myself to let him in, and presently he went off, no doubt to the alley that interested him so. . . .

His visits became still more infrequent. I began to feel listless and absent-minded as I had never been before, and I fell into the habit of forgetting things I had left lying around the house. "Perhaps he has given me up completely," I would say to myself; "and has he left behind nothing to remember him by?" And then, after an interval of about ten days, I got a letter asking me to send him an arrow he had left attached to the bed pillar. He had indeed left that behind—I remembered now.

I returned it with a verse: "I am aroused by this call for an arrow, even as I wonder what is to bring memories."

My house was directly on his way to and from the palace, and in the night or early in the morning I would hear him pass. He would cough to attract my attention. I wanted not to hear, but, tense and unable to sleep, I would listen through the long nights for his approach. If only I could live where I would not be subjected to this, I thought over and over. I would hear my women talking among themselves of his current indifference—"He used to be so fond of her," they would say—and my wretchedness would increase as the dawn came on. . . .

Summer came, and a child was born to his paramour. Loading the lady into his carriage and raising a commotion that could be heard through the whole city, he came hurrying past my gate—in the worst of taste, I thought. And why, my women loudly asked one another, had he so pointedly passed our gate when he had all the streets in the city to choose from? I myself was quite speechless, and thought only that I should like to die on the spot. I knew that I would be capable of nothing as drastic as suicide, but I resolved not to see him again.

Three or four days later I had a most astonishing letter: "I have not been able to see you because we have been having rather a bad time of it here. Yesterday the child was born, however, and everything seems to have gone off well. I know that you will not want to see me until the defilement has worn off."

I dismissed the messenger without a reply. The child, I heard, was a boy, and that of course made things worse.

He came calling three or four days later, quite as though nothing unusual had happened. I did my best to make him uncomfortable, and shortly he left. . . .

It began to appear that the lady in the alley had fallen from favor since the birth of her child. I had prayed, at the height of my unhappiness, that she would live to know what I was then suffering, and it seemed that my prayers were being answered. She was alone, and now her child was dead, the child that had been the cause of that unseemly racket. The lady was of frightfully bad birth—the unrecognized child of a rather odd prince, it was said. For a moment she was able to use a noble gentleman who was unaware of her short-comings, and now she was abandoned. The pain must be even sharper than mine had been. I was satisfied. . . .

It had become painful even to get his rare letters, little flashes into the past, and I was sure, moreover, that there would be more insults like the recent one as long as he could pass my gate. I determined therefore to go away, as I had planned earlier, to that temple in the western mountains, and to do so before he emerged from his penance.

The mountain road was crowded with associations. We had traveled it together a number of times, and then there had been that time, just at this season, when he had played truant from court and we had spent several days together in this same temple. I had only three attendants with me this time.

I hurried up to the main hall. It was warm, and I left the door open and looked out. The hall was situated on an eminence in a sort of mountain basin. It was heavily wooded and the view was most effective, although it was already growing dark and there was no moon. The priests made preparations for the early watch, and I began my prayers, still with the door open.

Just as the conch shells blew ten there was a clamor at the main gate. I knew that the Prince had arrived. I quickly lowered the blinds, and, looking out, saw two or three torches among the trees.

"I have come to take your mother back," he said to the boy, who went down to meet him. "I have suffered a defilement, though, and cannot get out. Where shall we have them pick her up?"

The boy told me what he had said, and I was quite at a loss to know how to handle such madness. "What can you be thinking of," I sent back, "to come off on such a weird expedition? Really, I intend to stay here only the night. And it would not be wise for you to defile the temple. Please go back immediately—It must be getting late."

Those were the first of a great number of messages the boy had to deliver that night, up and down a flight of stairs that must have been more than a hundred yards long. My attendants, sentimental things, found him most pathetic.

Finally the boy came up in tears: "He says it is all my fault—that I am a poor one not to make a better case for him. He is really in a rage." But I was firm—I could not possibly go down yet, I said.

"All right, all right," the Prince stormed. "I can't stay here all night. There is no help for it—hitch the oxen."

I was greatly relieved. But the boy said that he would like to go back to the city with his father, and that he would probably not come again. He went off weeping. I was quite desolate: how could he, whom of all in the world I had come most to rely on, leave me like this? But I said nothing, and presently, after everyone had left, he came back alone.

He was choked with tears. "He says I am to stay until I am sent for."

I felt extremely sorry for the boy, but I tried to distract him by ridiculing his weakness. Surely he did not think his father would abandon him, too, I said. . . .

I spent the days in the usual observances and the nights praying before the main Buddha. Since the place was surrounded by hills and there seemed no danger of my being

seen, I kept the blinds up; but once, so great still was my lack of self-possession, I hastily started to lower them when an unseasonal thrush burst into song in a dead tree nearby.

Then the expected defilement approached, and I knew I should have to leave. But in the city a rumor had spread that I had become a nun, and I felt sure I could not be comfortable there. I decided therefore to withdraw to a house some distance below the temple. My aunt visited me there, but she found it a strange and unsettling place.

Five or six days after my removal came the night of the full moon. The scene was a lovely one. The moon flooded through the trees, while over in the shadow of the mountain great swarms of fireflies wheeled about. An uninhibited cuckoo made me think ironically of how once, long ago and back in the city, I had waited with some annoyance for a cuckoo that refused to repeat his call. And then suddenly, so near at hand that it seemed almost to be knocking on the door, came the drumming of a moor hen. All in all it was a spot that stirred in one the deepest emotions.

There was no word from the Prince. But I had come here by my own choice, and I was content.

In the evenings came the booming of the great sunset bells and the hum of the cicadas, and the choruses of small bells from the temples in the hills around us, chiming in one after another as though afraid to be left out, and the chanting of Sutras from the shrine on the hill in front of us.

Five days or so later the defilement passed and I returned to the temple. . . .

Then, after a time, I got several letters from the city. They all said the same thing: it appeared that the Prince was starting out to see me again, and that if I did not go back with him this time public opinion would label my behavior completely outrageous; that this was surely the last time he would come after me, and that if, after he had thus done everything possible to move me, I should come weakly back to the city by myself, I would be publicly laughed at.

My father had just that day come back from the provinces, and he hurried up to see me. "I had thought it would not be unwise for you to go away for a little while by yourself," he said, "but now that I see how the boy has wasted away I think it would be best for you to return. I can take you back today or tomorrow, whichever would be better. I shall come for you whenever you say."

It was clear that he was ordering me home. I felt quite drained of strength.

"Well, tomorrow then," he said, and started for the city.

My mind jumped about like the fisherman's bob in the poem—what could I do? And then came the usual shouting, and I knew the Prince had arrived. This time there was no hesitation. He marched straight in. I pulled up a screen to hide behind, but it was no use.

"Terrible," he exclaimed, as he watched me burning incense and fingering my beads, the Sutras spread out in front of me. "Worse even than I had expected. You really do seem to have run to an extreme. I thought you might be ready to leave by this time, but I now suspect that it would

be a sin and a crime to take you back." And, turning to my son, "How about it? Do you feel like staying on?"

"I don't like the idea at all," the boy answered, his eyes on the floor, "but what can we do?"

"Well, I leave it to you. If you think she should go back, have the carriage brought up."

And almost before he had finished speaking, the boy began dashing about, picking things up, poking them into bags, loading the carts, tearing the curtains down and rolling them into bundles. I was taken quite by surprise, and could only watch helplessly. The Prince was most pleased with himself. Now and then he would exchange an amused wink with the boy.

"Well, we have everything cleaned up," he finally said. "There is not much for you to do but come with us. Tell your Buddha politely that you are leaving—that is the thing to do, I hear." He seemed to think it all a great joke.

I was too numb to answer, but somehow I managed to keep the tears back, and still I held out. The carriage was brought up at about four, and at dark, when I still showed no sign of getting in, the Prince turned to my son in great annoyance.

"All right, all right, I am going back," he exclaimed. "I leave everything to you."

The boy, almost in tears, took my hand and pleaded with me to get in, and finally, since nothing else seemed possible, I allowed myself to be taken away, quite in a daze. Outside the main gate we divided up for the trip back, and the Prince got in with me. He was in a fine humor, but I was unable to appreciate his witty remarks. My sister was riding with us, however—she felt it would be all right since it was already dark—and now and then she took up the conversation.

We reached the city at about ten in the evening. My people had of course known of his trip and my probable return, and had cleaned the place thoroughly and left the gates open for us. Barely conscious, I lay down behind a curtain. Immediately one of my women came bustling up. "I thought of gathering seeds from the pinks," she said, "but the plants died. And then one of your bamboos fell over, but I had it put back up again." I thought it would be better to discuss these problems some other time, and did not answer. . . .

The New Year lists were published on the twenty-fifth, and the Prince, I heard, was made a senior councilor. I knew that his promotion probably would keep him from me more than ever, and when people came around to congratulate me it was as if they were joking. My son, however, appeared more delighted than he could say.

The following day the Prince sent a note: "Does this happy event mean nothing to you? Is that why you have sent no congratulations?" And toward the end of the month, "Has something happened to you? We have been very busy here, but it is not kind of you to ignore me." And thus my silence had the effect of making him the petitioner, a position that had to then been exclusively mine. "It is sad that your duties keep you so busy," I answered. I was sure that he had no intention of visiting me.

The days went by, and it became clear that I was right. But I had finally learned not to let his silence bother me. I slept very well at night.

Then one evening after I had gone to bed I was startled by a most unusual pounding outside. Someone opened the gate. I waited rather nervously, and presently the Prince was at the end door demanding to be let in. My people, all in night dress, scurried about for shelter. I was no better dressed than they, but I crawled to the door and let him in.

“You so seldom come any more even to pass the time of day,” I said, “that the door seems to have gotten a little stiff.”

“It is because you are always locking me out that I do not come,” he retorted pleasantly. And how would one answer that? . . .

My house was meanwhile going to ruin. My father suggested that it would be best to let it out, since my retinue was a small one, and move into his place on the Nakagawa. I had spoken to the Prince many times of the possibility that I might move, but now that the time approached I felt I should let him know I was finally leaving. I sent to tell him that I wanted to talk to him, but he replied coldly that he was in retreat. “If that is how he feels,” I said to myself. I went ahead with the move.

The new place fronted on the river, near the mountains. I found it rather satisfying to think that I was there by my own choice.

The Prince apparently did not hear for two or three days that I had moved. Then, on the twenty-fifth or twenty-sixth, I had a letter complaining that I had not informed him.

“I did think of telling you,” I answered, “but this is such

a poor place that I assumed you would not want to visit it. I had hoped to see you once more where we used to meet.”

I spoke as though I considered our separation final, and he seemed to agree. “You are perhaps right. It might not be easy for me to visit you there.” And I heard no more for some weeks.

The ninth moon came. Looking out early one morning after the shutters were raised, I saw that a mist had come in over the garden from the river, so that only the summits of the mountains to the east were visible. Somehow it seemed to shut me in from the world, alone. . . .

The New Year came, and on the fifteenth the boy’s men lit ceremonial fires to chase out the devils. They made rather a party of it, well on into the night. “Quiet down a bit,” someone shouted, and I went to the edge of the room for a look. The moon was bright, and the mountains to the east shone dim and icy through the mist. Leaning quietly against a Pillar, I thought about myself and my loneliness, how I should like to go off to a mountain temple somewhere if only I could, and how I had not seen him for five months, not since the end of the summer. I could not keep back my tears. “I would join my song with the song thrush,” I whispered to myself, “but the thrush has forgotten the New Year.”

*Translated by Edward Seidensticker*

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*How does the wife discover her husband’s infidelity and what were the results of his affair?*

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## 9-4

### Tale of the Heike (Twelfth to Fourteenth Centuries)

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Translated by Helen Craig McCullough

#### GION SHŌJA

The sound of the Gion Shōja bells echoes the impermanence of all things; the color of the *s’āla* flowers reveals the truth that the prosperous must decline. The proud do not endure, they are like a dream on a spring night; the mighty fall at last, they are as dust before the wind.

In a distant land, there are the examples set by Zhao Gao of Qin, Wang Mang of Han, Zhu Yi of Liang, and

Lushan of Tang, all of them men who prospered after refusing to be governed by their former lords and sovereigns, but who met swift destruction because they disregarded admonitions, failed to recognize approaching turmoil, and ignored the nation’s distress. Closer to home, there have been Masakado of Shōhei, Sumitomo of Tennyō, Yoshichika of Kōwa, and Nobuyori of Heiji, every one of them proud and mighty. But closest of all, and utterly beyond the power of mind to comprehend or tongue to relate, is the tale of Taira no Ason Kiyomori, the Rokuhara Buddhist Novice and Former Chancellor.

Kiyomori was the oldest son and heir of Punishments Minister Tadamori. He was a grandson of the Sanuki Governor Masamori, who was a descendant in the ninth generation from Prince Kazurahara of First Rank, the Minister of Ceremonial and fifth son of Emperor Kanmu. Prince Kazurahara’s son, Prince Takami, died without office or rank. The clan received the Taira surname in the time of Prince Takami’s son, Prince Takamochi, who left the imperial clan to become a subject soon after he was

named Vice-Governor of Kazusa Province. Prince Takamochi's son was the Defense Garrison Commander Yoshimochi, who changed his name to Kunika in later life. During the six generations from Kunika to Masamori, members of the clan held provincial governorships but were not permitted to have their names on the duty-board in the Courtiers' Hall.

### THE NIGHT ATTACK AT THE COURTIER'S HALL

But Tadamori, during his term as Bizen Governor, built a Buddhist hall thirty-three bays long, enshrined therein a thousand and one holy images, and offered it in fulfillment of Retired Emperor Toba's vow to found a temple, the Tokujōjuin. The dedication took place on the Thirteenth of the Third Month in the first year of Tenshō. Orders were issued to reward Tadamori with a province, and Tajima, which happened to be available, was given to him. The delighted Retired Emperor also granted him courtier privileges at the imperial palace. Tadamori set foot in the Courtiers' Hall for the first time at the age of thirty-six.

Angered by those marks of favor, the courtiers and senior nobles conspired to attack Tadamori under cover of darkness on the night of the Gosechi Flushed Faces Banquet, which was to be held on the Twenty-Third of the Twelfth Month in that same year. But Tadamori made preparations of his own on hearing of the plot. "I am not a civil functionary," he thought. "I belong to a warrior house. It would be a grief to my family and to me if I let myself be humiliated through lack of foresight. Besides, the book says, 'Take care of yourself so you can serve your master.'"

When Tadamori entered the palace, he brought along a large dagger, thrust loosely under his court robes. Turning toward a spot where the lamplight was dim, he drew the weapon with deliberation and held it alongside his head, its blade gleaming like ice. None of those present failed to mark the act. Furthermore, his retainer Sahyōe-no-jōIesada came and sat at attention in the small side garden, dressed in a green-laced corselet under a pale green hunting robe, with a sword and an attached bowstring bag under his arm. Iesada was a son of Shinnosaburō Dayū Suefusa and a grandson of Assistant Director of the Carpentry Bureau Sadamitsu, who had been a member of the Taira clan.

In great perturbation, the Head Chamberlain and his staff sent a Chamberlain of Sixth Rank to rebuke Iesada. "Who is this person in an unfigured hunting robe waiting beyond the rainspout near the bell pull? You are misbehaving. Get out of there!"

Iesada kept his seat. "I have been told that my hereditary lord, the honorable Governor of Bizen, is to be cut down in the dark tonight. I am here to witness his fate; I cannot leave." Perhaps the conspirators lost heart, for there was no attack that night.

Later during the same occasion, when it was Tadamori's turn to dance as part of the informal entertainment, the

gentlemen put new words to a song, chanting, "The Ise wine bottles are vinegar jars." Although the Taira were descended from the great Emperor Kanmu, they had not frequented the capital in the recent past, but had become *jige* with roots in Ise Province. Thus the singers chanted of Ise bottles, punning on a kind of vessel produced in that province. And because Tadamori suffered from a squint, they introduced the second pun.<sup>1</sup> Since Tadamori had no means of retaliation, he decided to slip away before the affair ended. He went to the north corner of the Shishinden, and there, within sight of the other courtiers, he called over a woman from the Bureau of Grounds and put the dagger in her charge. Then he left.

"How did things go?" Iesada asked. Tadamori wanted to tell him the truth, but Iesada was the kind of man who would leap into the Courtiers' Hall itself, slashing and cutting, if he were to hear such a story, so he replied, "Nothing much happened."

People are expected to confine themselves to amusing trifles like "White tissue paper, deep-dyed paper, corded brushes, and lacquered brushes" during the singing and dancing at Gosechi entertainments. In the relatively recent past, to be sure, there had been an incident involving the Dazaifu Provisional Governor-General Suenaka, whose swarthy complexion had caused him to be nicknamed the "Black Governor." Suenaka had danced at a Gosechi party during his tenure as Head Chamberlain, and the singers had improvised, "Ah, black, black, black is the head! Who applied the lacquer?"<sup>2</sup> There had also been the case of the Kazan'in Former Chancellor Tadamasu. Orphaned at ten by the death of his father, Middle Counselor Tadamune, Tadamasu had been taken as a son-in-law and maintained in luxury by the late Naka-no-mikado Middle Counselor, Fujiwara no Ienari, who was then Governor of Harima Province. When Tadamasu danced during the Gosechi festivities, the singers chanted, "Can the Harima rice be a scouring rush or a *muku* leaf? Ah, how it polishes up the wardrobe!"<sup>3</sup> Nothing had come of such affairs, people remarked now—but who could tell what might happen in these latter days of the Law?<sup>4</sup> It was a worrisome business.

As was to have been anticipated, all the courtiers presented complaints after the Gosechi ceremonies ended. "Rules and regulations are supposed to determine who may wear a weapon to an official banquet, and who may go in and out of the palace accompanied by Escorts," they said. "It has always been accepted that neither may be done

<sup>1</sup>*Heiji* can mean both "wine bottle" and "Taira clan"; *sugame*, "vinegar jar" and "squint eye."

<sup>2</sup>The song puns on *tō* ("face," "head") and Suenaka's official title, *kurōdo no tō* (Head Chamberlain).

<sup>3</sup>"Harima rice" is a metaphor for the Governor. Scouring rushes (*tokusa*) and the bristly leaves of the *muku* tree (*Aphananthe aspera*) were used as polishing agents.

<sup>4</sup>*Matsudai*. In Buddhist thought, a 10,000-year age of moral degeneration, culminating in the disappearance of the Law (doctrine) itself. In the 12th century, it was generally believed that the age had begun around 1050.

without explicit imperial authorization. But Tadamori stationed a warrior wearing a hunting robe at the small garden outside the Courtiers' Hall, on the pretext that the man was a hereditary retainer, and he also attended a formal banquet with a weapon at his waist. Both actions were unprecedented breaches of conduct. A person who commits a double offense must not escape punishment. Tadamori must have his name removed from the duty-board and lose his official position at once."

In great surprise, the Retired Emperor summoned Tadamori for questioning. "To begin with," Tadamori explained, "I had no idea that my retainer had posted himself in the small garden. But it has seemed recently that there has been some kind of plot against me. Iesada has been in my service for many years; he must have heard about it and gone there without my knowledge, in the hope of sparing me embarrassment. That is not something I could have done anything about. If Iesada deserves censure, shall I call him in and turn him over to you? Next, as regards the dagger, I gave it to one of the servants from the Bureau of Grounds to keep for me. Before judgment is rendered, would it not be well to summon the woman and see whether it is a real weapon?"

The Retired Emperor found the suggestion reasonable; he called for the dagger and inspected it. The scabbard was of black lacquer, but the blade proved to be silver foil over wood.

"He wanted to avoid humiliation, so he made a show of carrying a dagger," the Retired Emperor said. "But he wore a wooden blade because he knew there would be complaints later. That is a sign of admirable resourcefulness—precisely what one would desire in a warrior. His retainer's foray into the garden was the kind of thing warriors' retainers do. Tadamori is not to blame for it." In view of his evident approval, there was no more talk of punishment.

## THE DEATH OF ETCHŪ NO ZENJI

In reckless disregard of their lives, the warriors from Musashi and Sagami took the offensive on both the main front and the seaward side. The Kodama League sent a messenger from the mountain flank to the New Middle Counselor Tomomori, who was fighting with his face toward the east. "The men of the Kodama League tell you this because you were once Governor of Musashi: look behind you!" On doing so, Tomomori and the others saw a cloud of black smoke advancing toward them. "Ah! The western front has fallen!" They all fled in desperate haste.

Etchū no Zenji Moritoshi, the Samurai Commander on the cliffward side, halted his mount and sat motionless, perhaps because he believed it was too late to try to escape. Inomata no Koheiroku Noritsuna marked him as a worthy adversary, galloped forward with flailing whip and flapping stirrups, rode up alongside him, gripped him with all his strength, and crashed with him to the ground. Noritsuna was a man renowned in the Eight Provinces for his

great strength, a warrior who was said to have once torn apart a deer's double-branched antlers with ease. Moritoshi allowed others to consider him merely as strong as twenty or thirty ordinary men, but in actuality he could haul up or send down a vessel that required sixty or seventy men for the working. Thus, Moritoshi succeeded in gripping Noritsuna and holding him still. Noritsuna, lying underneath, tried to draw his dagger but could not grasp the hilt with his splayed fingers, tried to speak but was pinned too tight to utter a word. But although his head was about to be cut off, and despite his physical inferiority, his valor did not flag. He collected his breath calmly for a few instants and then spoke in an offhand manner.

"Did you hear me announce my name? A man who kills an enemy does not perform a great exploit unless he takes the head after identifying himself and requiring the other to do the same. What will you gain by taking an anonymous head?"

Moritoshi may have thought that he was right. "I am Etchū no Zenji Moritoshi, born a Taira but now become a samurai because of my inadequacies. Who are you? Announce your name: I would like to hear it."

"I am Inomata no Koheiroku Noritsuna, a resident of Musashi Province," Noritsuna continued, "If we look at the present state of affairs, it seems that the Genji are the stronger, and that you on the Heike side face defeat. Unless your masters prosper, you will reap no rewards by taking heads to show them. Stretch a point and spare me. I will use my exploits to save the lives of any number of Heike men—dozens, if you like."

Moritoshi was outraged. "In spite of all my shortcomings, I belong to the house of Taira. I have no intention of turning to the Genji for help, and no intention whatsoever of helping one of them. Your proposal is ignoble." He prepared to cut off Noritsuna's head.

"You are disgracing yourself! How can you decapitate a man who has already surrendered?" Noritsuna said.

"Very well, I will spare you." Moritoshi raised Noritsuna to his feet, and the two sat down to rest on a footpath, with a hard, sun-baked field in front and a deep, muddy rice paddy to their rear.

Presently, a warrior attired in a suit of armor with black leather lacing came galloping toward them on a whitish horse. Moritoshi eyed him suspiciously. "Don't worry," Noritsuna said. "That is Hitomi no Shirō, a friend of mine. He must have seen me." But to himself Noritsuna thought, "If I begin wrestling with Etchū no Zenji after Shirō gets close, Shirō will be sure to attack him, too." He bided his time.

The rider meanwhile advanced until he was a mere thirty-five feet away. At first, Moritoshi tried to keep one eye on each of the two men, but the galloping foe engaged his full attention as he gradually approached, and he lost track of Noritsuna. Noritsuna seized the opportunity. He sprang to his feet with a yell, dealt a powerful blow to Moritoshi's breastplate with the combined force of his two hands, and toppled him backwards into the rice paddy behind. As Moritoshi struggled to rise, Noritsuna clamped

him between his legs, snatched the dagger from Moritoshi's waist, lifted his adversary's armor skirt, plunged the weapon into his flesh three times, hilt, fist, and all, and took his head.

Hitomi no Shirō had come up in the meantime. "It is cases like this that give rise to disputes," Noritsuna thought. He impaled the head on the tip of his sword, held it high, and announced his name in a mighty voice. "Inomata no

Koheiroku Noritsuna has slain Etchū no Zenji Moritoshi, the Heike samurai known in these days as a demon god!" His name led that day's list of exploits.

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*What are the greatest societal values as revealed in these talks? How do they compare to the values in The Illiad by Homer?*

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## 9-5

### Kamo no Chomei (c. 1155–1216) (memoir)

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Translated by Helen Craig McCullough

#### AN ACCOUNT OF MY HERMITAGE

##### 1

The waters of a flowing stream are ever present but never the same; the bubbles in a quiet pool disappear and form but never endure for long. So it is with men and their dwellings in the world.

The houses of the high and the low seem to last for generation after generation, standing with ridgepoles aligned and roof-tiles jostling in the magnificent imperial capital, but investigation reveals that few of them existed in the past. In some cases, a building that burned last year has been replaced this year; in others, a great house has given way to a small one. And it is the same with the occupants. The places are unchanged, the population remains large, but barely one or two survive among every twenty or thirty of the people I used to know. Just as with the bubbles on the water, someone dies at night and someone else is born in the morning. Where do they come from and where do they go, all those who are born and die? And for whose benefit, for what reason, does a man take enormous pains to build a temporary shelter pleasing to the eye? The master in his dwelling is like the dewdrop vying in ephemerality with the morning glory where it forms. The flower may remain after the dew evaporates, but it withers in the morning sun; the flower may droop before the moisture vanishes, but the dew does not survive until nightfall.

##### 2

I have witnessed a number of remarkable occurrences in the more than forty years since I began to understand the nature of things. Around the Hour of the Dog [7:00

P.M.–9:00 P.M.] on a very windy night—I believe it was the Twenty-eighth of the Fourth Month in the third year of Angen [1177]—a fire broke out in the southeastern part of the capital and burned toward the northwest. In the end, it spread to Suzaku Gate, the Great Hall of State, the Academy, and the Ministry of Popular Affairs, reducing them all to ashes overnight. Its source is said to have been a temporary structure housing some dancers, located near the Higuchi–Tomi-no-kōji intersection. Spread here and there by an erratic wind, it burned in a pattern resembling an open fan, narrow at the base and wide at the outer edge. Suffocating smoke engulfed distant houses; wind-whipped flames descended to earth everywhere near at hand. The sky was red to the horizon with ashes lit by the fiery glare, and winged flames leaped a block or two at a time in the lurid atmosphere, torn free by the irresistible force of the gale. Everything must have seemed as unreal as a dream to the people in the fire's path. Some of them fell victim to the smoke. Others died instantly in the embrace of the flames. Still others managed to escape with their lives but failed to rescue their belongings, and all their cherished treasures turned to ashes. The value of so much property may be imagined! The fire claimed the houses of sixteen senior nobles, to say nothing of countless others of less importance. It was reported that fully one-third of the capital had been destroyed. Dozens of men and women were killed; innumerable horses and oxen perished.

All human enterprises are pointless, but it must be counted an act of supreme folly for a man to consume his treasure and put himself to endless trouble merely to build a house in a place as dangerous as the capital.

Again, around the Fourth Month in the fourth year of Jishō [1180], a great whirlwind sprang up near the Nakamikado–[Higashi] Kyōgoku intersection and swept all the way to Rokujō Avenue. Not a house, large or small, escaped destruction within the area of three or four blocks where the blast wreaked its full fury. In some cases, entire buildings were flattened; in others, only crossbeams and pillars were spared. Gates were caught up and deposited four or five blocks distant; fences were blown away and neighboring properties merged. And I need hardly mention what happened to smaller objects. Everything inside a house mounted to the skies; cypress-bark thatch and shingles whirled like winter leaves in the wind. Dust ascended

like smoke to blind the eye; the terrible howl of the storm swallowed the sound of voices. It seemed that even the dread karma-wind of hell could be no worse. Not only were houses damaged or destroyed, but countless men suffered injury or mutilation while the buildings were being reconstructed. The wind moved toward the south-south-east, visiting affliction on innumerable people.

Whirlwinds are common, but not ones such as that. Those who experienced it worried that it might be an extraordinary phenomenon, a warning from a supernatural being.

Again, around the Sixth Month in the fourth year of Jishō, the court moved suddenly to a new capital.<sup>1</sup> Nobody had dreamed of such a thing. When we consider that more than 400 years had elapsed since the establishment of the present imperial seat during Emperor Saga's reign, surely a new one ought not to have been chosen without exceptional justification. It was more than reasonable that people should have felt disquiet and apprehension.

But complaints were useless. The Emperor, the Ministers of State, the senior nobles, and all the others moved. Nobody remained in the old capital who held even a minor court position. Those who aspired to office and rank, or who relied on the favor of patrons, strove to move with all possible dispatch; those who had lost the opportunity to succeed in life, or who had been rejected by society, stayed behind, sunk in gloom. The dwellings that had once stood eave to eave grew more dilapidated with every passing day. Houses were dismantled and sent floating down the Yodo River, and their former locations turned into fields before the onlookers' eyes.

In a complete reversal of values, everyone prized horses and saddles and stopped using oxen and carriages. Properties in the Western and Southern Sea circuits were sought; those in the Eastern Sea and Northern Land circuits were considered undesirable.

It happened that something took me to the new capital in Settsu Province. The cramped site, too small for proper subdivision, rose high on the north where it bordered the hills and sank low on the south beside the sea. The breaking waves never ceased to clamor; the wind from the sea blew with peculiar fury. The imperial palace struck me as unexpectedly novel and interesting, situated in the hills as it was, and I asked myself whether Empress Saimei's log house might not have been rather similar.<sup>2</sup>

I wondered where people were erecting the whole houses that were being sent downstream daily, their numbers great enough to clog the river. There were still many empty parcels of land and few houses. The old capital was already in ruins; the new one had yet to take form. Not a soul but

felt as rootless as a drifting cloud. The original inhabitants grieved over the loss of their land; the new arrivals worried about plaster and lumber. On the streets, those who ought to have used carriages rode horseback; those who ought to have worn court dress or hunting robes appeared in *hitatare*. The customs of the capital had been revolutionized overnight, and people behaved like rustic warriors.

I have heard that such changes portend civil disturbance—and that was precisely what happened. With every passing day, the world grew more unsettled, people lost more of their composure, and the common folk felt more apprehension. In the end, a crisis brought about a return to the old capital during the winter of the same year.<sup>3</sup> But who knows what became of the houses that had been torn down everywhere? They were not rebuilt in their former style.

We are told that the sage Emperors of old ruled with compassion. They roofed their palaces with thatch, neglecting even to trim the eaves; they remitted the already modest taxes when they saw the commoners' cooking-fires emit less smoke than before. The reason was simply that they cherished their subjects and wished to help them. To compare the present to the past is to see what kind of government we have today.

Again, there was a dreadful two-year famine. (I think it was around the Yōwa era [1181–82], but it was too long ago to be sure.) The grain crops were ruined as one calamity followed another: drought in the spring and summer, typhoons and floods in the autumn. It was vain for the farmers to till the fields in the spring or set out plants in the summer; there was no reaping in the fall, no bustle of storage in the winter. Some rural folk abandoned their land and wandered off; others deserted their homes to live in the hills. Prayers were begun and extraordinary rituals were performed, but they accomplished nothing.

The capital had always depended on the countryside for every need. Now, with nothing coming in, people were beside themselves with anxiety. In desperation, they offered all their treasures at bargain rates, but nobody took any notice. The rare person who was willing to trade thought little of gold and much of grain. The streets were overrun with mendicants; lamentations filled the air.

The first of the two years dragged to a close. But just as everyone was anticipating a return to normal in the new year, a pestilence came along to make matters even worse. Like fish gasping in a puddle, the starving populace drew closer to the final extremity with every passing day, until at last people of quite respectable appearance, clad in hats and leggings, begged frantically from house to house. These wretched, dazed beings fell prostrate even as one marveled at their ability to walk.

Countless people perished of starvation by the wayside or died next to tile-capped walls. Since there was no way to dispose of the bodies, noisome stenches filled the air, and

<sup>1</sup>The move took place soon after the suppression of a preliminary attempt to overthrow the Taira. The new capital was at Fukuhara (now a part of Kōbe), where Taira no Kiyomori had established his principal residence some years earlier.

<sup>2</sup>The log house was a temporary residence in Kyūshū used by Empress Saimei (594–661) when the Japanese were preparing to attack the Korean state of Silla in 661.

<sup>3</sup>The rebellions of provincial Minamoto leaders had produced serious military disturbances.



innumerable decomposing corpses shocked the eye. Needless to say, the dead lay so thick in the Kamo riverbed that there was not even room for horses and ox-carriages to pass.

With the woodsmen and other commoners too debilitated to perform their usual functions, a shortage of firewood developed, and people who possessed no other means of support broke up their own houses to sell in the market. The amount a man could carry brought less than enough to sustain him for a day. It was shocking to see pieces of wood covered with red lacquer or gold and silver leaf jumbled together with the rest. On inquiry, one learned that desperate people were going to old temples, stealing the sacred images, tearing away the fixtures from the halls, and breaking up everything for firewood. It is because I was born in a degenerate age that I have been forced to witness such disgraceful sights.

Some deeply moving things also happened. Whenever a couple were too devoted to part, the one whose love was greater was the first to die. This was because he or she put the spouse's welfare first and gave up whatever food came to hand. Similarly, a parent always predeceased a child. One sometimes saw a recumbent child sucking at his mother's breast, unaware that her life had ended. Grieved that countless people should be perishing in that manner, Dharma Seal Ryūgyō of Ninnaji Temple sought to help the dead toward enlightenment by writing the Sanskrit letter "A" on the forehead of every corpse he saw.<sup>4</sup>

The authorities kept track of the deaths in the Fourth and Fifth Months. During that period, there were more than 42,300 bodies on the streets in the area south of Ichijō, north of Kujō, west of Kyōgoku, and east of Suzaku. Of course, many others died before and afterward. And there would be no limit to the numbers if we were to count the Kamo riverbed, Shirakawa, the western sector, and the outlying districts, to say nothing of the provinces in the seven circuits.

People say there was something similar during the reign of Emperor Sutoku, around the Choshō era [1132–35], but I know nothing about that. I witnessed this phenomenal famine with my own eyes.

If I remember correctly, it was at more or less the same time that a terrible seismic convulsion occurred. It was no ordinary earthquake. Mountains crumbled and buried streams; the sea tilted and immersed the land. Water gushed from fissures in the earth; huge rocks cracked and rolled into valleys. Boats being rowed near the shoreline tossed on the waves; horses journeying on the roads lost their footing. Not a Buddhist hall or stupa remained intact anywhere in the vicinity of the capital. Some crumbled, others fell flat. Dust billowed like smoke; the shaking earth and collapsing houses rumbled like thunder. If people stayed indoors, they were crushed at once; if they ran outside, the ground split apart. If men had been dragons, they might have ridden the clouds, but they lacked the wings to soar

into the heavens. It was then that I came to recognize an earthquake as the most terrible of all terrible things.

The violent shaking subsided fairly soon, but aftershocks followed for some time. No day passed without twenty or thirty earthquakes of an intensity that would ordinarily have caused consternation. The intervals lengthened after ten or twenty days, and then there were tremors four or five times a day, or two or three times a day, or once every other day, or once every two or three days. It must have been about three months before they ceased.

Of the four constituents of the universe, water, fire, and wind create constant havoc, but the earth does not usually give rise to any particular calamities. To be sure, there were some dreadful earthquakes in the past (for instance, the great shock that toppled the head of the Tōdaiji Buddha during the Saikō era [854–57]), but none of them could compare with this. Immediately after the event, people all talked about the meaninglessness of life and seemed somewhat more free from spiritual impurity than usual. But nobody even mentioned the subject after the days and months had accumulated and the years had slipped by.

Such, then, is the difficulty of life in this world, such the ephemerality of man and his dwellings. Needless to say, it would be utterly impossible to list every affliction that stems from individual circumstance or social position. If a man of negligible status lives beside a powerful family, he cannot make a great display of happiness when he has cause for heartfelt rejoicing, nor can he lift his voice in lamentation when he experiences devastating grief. In all that he does, he is ill at ease; like a sparrow near a hawk's nest, he pursues his daily activities in fear and trembling. If a poor man lives next door to a wealthy house, he abases himself before the neighbors and agonizes over his wretched appearance whenever he goes out in the morning or returns in the evening. Forced to witness the envy of his wife, children, and servants, and to hear the rich household dismiss him with contempt, he is forever agitated, constantly distraught.

He who lives in a crowded area cannot escape calamity when a fire breaks out nearby; he who settles in a remote spot suffers many hardships in his travels to and fro and puts himself at grave risk from robbers. The powerful man is consumed by greed; the man who refuses to seek a patron becomes an object of derision. The man who owns many possessions knows many worries; the impoverished man seethes with envy.

He who depends on another belongs to another; he who takes care of another is chained by human affection. When a man observes the conventions, he falls into economic difficulties; when he flouts them, people wonder if he is mad. Where can we live, what can we do, to find even the briefest of shelters, the most fleeting peace of mind?

<sup>4</sup>In esoteric Buddhism, of which Ninnaji was a center, "A," the first syllable in the Sanskrit syllabary, was regarded as symbolic of the unity of all things.

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*What is the literal and symbolic importance of Kamo no Chomei's living arrangements? Is he a mere escapist?*

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9-6

Japanese Zen Poetry

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Smell of autumn—  
heart longs  
for the four-mat room.

*Basho*

Skylark  
sings all day,  
and day not long enough.

*Basho*

Melon  
in morning dew—  
mud-fresh.

*Basho*

June rain,  
hollyhocks turning  
where sun should be.

*Basho*

Dozing on horseback,  
smoke from tea-fires  
drifts to the moon.

*Basho*

Crow's  
abandoned nest,  
a plum tree.

*Basho*

Journey's end—  
still alive,  
this autumn evening.

*Basho*

Wintry day,  
on my horse  
a frozen shadow.

*Basho*

Shrieking plovers,  
calling darkness  
around Hoshizaki Cape.

*Basho*

Withered grass,  
under piling  
heat waves.

*Basho*

Autumn moon,  
tide foams  
to the very gate.

*Basho*

Cedar umbrella,  
off to Mount Yoshino  
for the cherry blossoms.

*Basho*

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*What is the overall temper of Basho's haiku? How does the haiku form itself to become part of the message?*

# Chapter 10

## *Iran and India Before Islam*

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### 10-1 Gnostic Texts

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From *Gnosis on the Silk Road: Gnostic Parables, Hymns and Prayers from Central Asia*, Hans Joachim Klimkeit, Harper Collins 1993.

#### HYMN TO THE LIVING SOUL

You have come with salvation (*drōd*), you Radiant Soul,  
Salvation be yours, you are the Father's own.  
The righteous God, the highest of the gods, the diadem  
and the eternal glory (*farrah*), . . .  
—Praise to you, Living Soul, holy, holy, Lord Mār Mani!  
The Blissful One of Lights rejoiced and was glad when  
you (the First Man) were born in the Realm.  
The twelve sons and the Aeons of the Aeons in the Air  
were (then) gladdened also.  
All the gods and inhabitants [of the Realm of Light], the  
mountains, tree and springs,  
The spacious and strong palaces and halls exulted at thy  
advent, Friend!  
When the lovely virgins and maidens that had sprung  
from the Nous saw you,  
They all blessed you with one accord, you youth without  
blemish!  
Voices came from the Air, melodious songs from the  
Radiant Earth.  
They said to the Father of Light, “The battle-seeking one  
who will bring peace is born.”  
He who is supreme throughout eternity, the highest of the  
gods (the Father of Light), entrusted three tasks to you:  
Destroy death, vanquish the foe and hide all of the  
Paradise of Light from his eye.  
(Then) you paid homage and went out to [battle], you  
hid the entire Paradise of Light.  
(And) the tyrannical Prince (of Darkness) was bound  
[forever], and the ruthless dwelling of the dark powers  
was destroyed.  
The Radiant Friend, the First Man, remained there, until  
he had carried out the Father's will . . .

#### HYMN ON THE LIVING SOUL

You are worthy of honor,  
Redeemed Light [-Soul]!

—Salvation be yours, oh Soul (*grīv*),  
And may we also receive salvation!—  
You are the soul (*gyān*) and (its) splendor (*bām*),  
You are benign, an epiphany (*dīdan*), and (its) radiance,  
You are friendly and righteous,  
You are sweet and ambrosial,  
You are beautiful and without blemish,  
You are wise and meditative,  
You are fortunate (?) (and) a bringer of blessing,  
You are diligent and kind,  
You are blessed (?) and radiant,  
Wise are you and noble,  
You are king and ruler of the earth,  
You are the Messiah and the judge,  
You are valiant and skillful,  
You are the guide and the helmsman,  
You are a messenger (and) an interpreter,  
You bring order and safety,  
You are an eye and an epiphany (*pādgirb*),  
You are a creator and a redeemed one,  
You are the Light which we (possess).  
You are joy . . .  
You, you are the great Soul (*grīv*),  
You are the first and the last.  
Praised and lauded are you with many blessings.

#### HYMN ON THE LIVING SOUL

To you will I call,  
mighty God,  
Living Soul (*grīv*),  
gift of the Father!—Blessed, blessed [be] you, radiant Soul!  
Arrive at your homestead safe and sound!—  
Most fortunate Might,  
elect Greatness,  
mighty Power,  
judicious and wise!  
All the bright gods  
[have] . . . for your sake.  
To elect strive  
to exalt you.  
They tremble . . .  
in the midst of the world.  
. . . to you,  
son of Srōshav.  
The oppression,  
affliction and distress,  
that you have borne,  
who could endure them?

Bringer of Light, merciful  
 Lord, blessed,  
 mighty and noble!  
 Beneficent Mār Mani!  
 We would ever praise his divine glory (*farrah*), which  
 showed you, radiant soul, [the path] of salvation!

### HYMN ON THE FATE OF THE LIVING SOUL (PARTHIAN)

I hail from the Light and from the gods,  
 (Yet) I have become (as) one banished, separated from  
 them.  
 The foes assembled above me  
 (And) took me to the realm of death.  
 —Blessed be he who rescues my soul from distress, so  
 that it may be saved.—  
 A god am I, born of the gods,  
 A bright, radiant and shining,  
 Beaming, fragrant and beautiful god.  
 But now I have fallen into misery.  
 Countless demons seized me,  
 Loathsome ones captured me.  
 My soul has been subjugated (by them),  
 I am torn to pieces and devoured.  
 Demons, *yakshas* and *peris*,  
 Black, hideous, stinking dragons  
 That I could hardly repulse:  
 I experienced much pain and death at their hands.  
 They all roar and attack me,  
 They pursue (me) and rise up against me,  
 . . .

#### 1. BEMA LITURGY (PERSIAN AND PARTHIAN)

This part of the book contains the final portion of Mani's "Letter of the Seal," which he wrote to his community from prison prior to his death. It was read annually at the Bema festival, hence it was part of the Bema liturgy. Then follow three Bema hymns in which Mani is lauded and identified with the future Buddha, Maitreya. These hymns also contain invocations of the gods. Then come hymns in praise of the Third Messenger, the Column of Glory, and Jesus. We can surmise that the Maiden of Light and the Great Nous were invoked in the following lacunae. The next portion is comprised of hymns in praise of the "messengers," as the Church leaders are called. Here the dignitaries of the Manichaean Church are called to mind in hierarchical succession. This hymn ends with prayers for the whole community, including the auditors. The second hymn in praise of the messengers is preserved only in part. In the following Bema hymn, the whole "Community of Light," from the redeeming gods to the lowest laymen, is remembered again. The feeling of unity with superhuman powers is well expressed in the term "the whole flock of

Light." A second Bema hymn has not been preserved, nor is the beginning of a third one, but its final portion shows that the members of the Church did actually conceive of themselves as belonging to a Family of Light with Mani at its head. He is also the main point of reference in the final "hymns of the joyful."

#### I. The Letter of the Seal

[Persian]: . . . and from Ammō, my [most beloved] son, and from all the very dear children who are with (me). To all shepherds, teachers and bishops and all the elect [and auditors, to the brothers] and sisters, great and small ones, the pious, perfect and righteous ones, and to all of you who have received this good message from me and who have been happy with this teaching and these pious deeds that I have taught (you), and who are firm in the faith and free of doubt. To everyone personally.

[Sogdian]: (Here) ends the Letter of the Seal.

#### II. (Here) begin the Bema [hymns]

- [Persian]: You would we praise, Mani, oh Lord! You would we praise, Mani, oh Lord, king of the holy Church, wisest of the [great] Apostles!
- We would praise your name, God, Lord Mani! [Parthian]: Make me joyful, [Persian] loving resurrector of the dead! Give us power and might so that we may become perfect according to your commandment, oh God!
- We would praise the God Mani, the Lord! We honor your great, bright glory (*farrah*), we bow down before the Holy Spirit, together with the glories and mighty messengers.
- [Parthian]: Master Maitreya, Maitrāgar Maitr Āitr, God Christ, Mānīū, Mānīī, Mānīā-Xaios, Savior, God Mār Mani!
- [Persian/Parthian]: Mani has come from Paradise, rejoice, brothers! A bright day has come to us, the sons of the right hand.
- From Paradise the gate was opened and we were overcome with joy: the Lord Maitreya has come; Mār Mani, the Lord, (has come) for a new Bema!
- The gods opened the gate of prosperous Paradise. The wreath, crown and diadem [have been given] to us . . . [a few pages missing]
- [Parthian]: . . . preserve my body and redeem my soul; grant to me my pious wish, the eternal Paradise of Light.
- [Persian]: You would we laud, Jesus! You would we praise, Mani! Brightly illuminated was the day, brightly illuminated was the day, oh Lord Mani of noble name!
- You would we praise, bright king, son of kings, Mani, oh Lord! Mani, oh Lord, bright king, you are worthy of praise!
- You would we praise, Lord Mani, (and also) Jesus, the Maiden (of Light) and Vahman, and the beautiful Bema, and the messengers!

12. To you do I call, oh Lord; answer me, Lord! Mār Mani, Oh Lord! [Parthian]: Forgive my sins, oh Lord!
13. Buddha Maitreya has come, Mār Mani, the Apostle: he brought “victory” from the righteous God (the Father of Light). I would honor you, oh God! Grant remission of my sins, redeem my soul, lead me up to the New Paradise!
14. Maitreya . . .  
[several pages missing]

### III. Praise of Narisah-yazd (the Third Messenger)

. . . and the blissful ancestors who are themselves the bright chariots (the Third Messenger and Jesus), the valiant hunters and the keen helmsmen, the praised messengers, the great organizers and the mighty powers, the spirits that have been created by the word, the blissful rulers, the bright appearances, the best of gods, the great redeemers, the valiant helpers, the liberators who bring joy, the keen fighters, the strong warriors who have overcome death and have vanquished the foes, who have risen up victorious and are (now) in peace: May they always be blessed with the blessing of the bright aeons, and always be praised by a benevolent keeper of the entire Church, and be its living food. (May there also be blessing) especially on this place and this blessed community . . .

[several pages missing]

### IV. [Praise of] Srōsh-Ahrāy (the Column of Glory)

- 1–4. . . .
5. [Parthian]: . . . to all of us, the righteous believers and the meritorious auditors. May it be so eternally!
6. Blessing and praise to this strong power, the bright and beneficent God, the Perfect Man, who is the abode and the garment for all souls, the way and the path for all beings of Light, and for the redeemed souls. May he be blessed so that his splendor, full of life, may shine upon the chosen Church, so that he may give us peace, well-being and hope in all the lands. May he protect us, bringing us wonderful joy. May he accept from all of us this pure prayer, this living melody and (this) divine song. So be it eternally!  
[Persian]: (Here) end the Srōsh-Ahrāy (hymns), (all together) six.

### V. (Here) beings (the praise) of Jesus the Savior.

1. Praise to holy wisdom: Jesus the Splendor, the Maiden of Light and the great Vahman, (these) valiant redeemers who raise the holy Church from the dead. Blessing to these great physicians, the healers of the highest Self, so that they may also enhance our peace and well-being, joy and piety, redemption and the victory of the valiant and mighty ones. May they make us worthy of the great glory (*farrah*) and of the eternal diadem. So be it for ever and ever!

[Patron or Scribe]: Kirbakkarzāday.

2. Blessing and praise to Jesus the Savior, the New Aeon, the one who truly raises men from the dead, who is himself the life-giving mother of those who have died on account of the wounds and the gall of greed and sensual desire, who is the physician for those who have lost their senses because of weakness of the body. He himself became sight for the blind, hearing for the dumb, . . .

[several pages missing]

### VI. [Praise] of the Messengers

1. . . . the seventy-two bishops, the 360 presbyters, all the pure and holy elect that are perfect in (keeping) the five commandments and the three seals:

May they be remembered as a pious deed.

The great Glory (*farrah*) and the Spirit of the whole Eastern Church who is the guard and protector of this flock and righteous community of gods (elect): May they be remembered as a pious deed.

Mār Nāzayyazd, the Teacher at the head of the Eastern Church Province: May he be remembered as a pious deed.

And all bishops, presbyters, prayer leaders, wise preachers, valiant scribes, singers of melodious hymns, and all pure and holy brothers: May they be remembered as a pious deed.

The pure and holy sisters, together with their convents and nunneries:

May they be remembered as a pious deed.

And all auditors, brothers and sisters, in the East and the West, in the North and the South, who confess God, Light, Power and Wisdom: May they be remembered as a pious deed.

May the praise, acclaim, intercession, prayer and supplication of us all ascend in purity and forgiveness and be accepted by our kind fathers and venerable ancestors. May they send us power and aid, sal[vation] and [victory], health and [invulnerability], joy and piety, peace and trust, goodness (?) and protection, righteous zeal and the pursuit of perfection, and the remission of sins, the true light of salvation.

May (all this) remain with the whole holy Church, especially in this place and in (this) blessed congregation; (may they remain) with me and you, most beloved brothers, pure and holy sisters and pious auditors, so that they may be protected by the hands of the bright angels and powerful (heavenly) twins.

Be it so eternally, in a living [and holy] name.

2. [Parthian]: We laud and praise the bright messengers . . .

[one page missing]

. . . the presbyters, the prayer leaders, the preachers, the scribes, the pure, righteous ones (the elect), brothers and sisters, at all places, wherever they are dispersed, with their flocks, communities and monasteries. May they

be protected and led together by the right hand of the Holy Spirit, the friend.

And also the faithful auditors, brothers and sisters, the friends and sons of salvation, in all areas, lands and regions, wherever they are dispersed, those who believe in God, Light Power and Wisdom: May they be remembered as a good deed.

May the worship and praise, prayer and petition, supplication and invocation of us all ascend and be accepted by the gods and deities, so that they may send us strength and zeal, so that we may become perfect and perfected in love, in spirit and in body.

May the Living Self (*grīv, zīvandag*) attain salvation. May those giving alms become sinless and may we all gain salvation.

[Persian]: May it be so forever and ever, in a living and holy name.

(Here) end the hymns in praise of the messengers, all together two in number.

### VII. (Here) begin the hymns in praise of the Bema

1. We bend our knees in deep veneration, we worship and praise the mighty God, the praised King and Lord of the Worlds of Light, worthy of honor, according to whose wish and will you (Mani), our exalted God, did come to us.

We worship Jesus, the Lord, the Son of Greatness, who has sent you, blessed one, to us.

We worship the exalted Maiden (of Light), the bright Twin, who was your comrade and companion in every battle.

We worship the great Vahman whom you have planted in the hearts of the pious.

We worship your great Glory (*farrah*), our Father, Apostle of Light, oh Mani, oh Lord!

We worship this wonderful Bema and the bright seat on which you did seat yourself.

We worship the shining diadem that you did place upon your head.

We worship this wondrous appearance and this beautiful image.

We worship the gods and messengers that came with you.

We honor the whole community of elect and your blessed representation, oh Lord.

We honor the great teachers.

We honor the mighty bishops.

We honor the wise presbyters.

We honor the virtuous scribes.

We honor the singers of the melodious hymns.

We honor the pure righteous ones (the elect).

We honor the holy virgins.

We honor and praise the whole Flock of Light which you yourself chose in the spirit of Truth.

Of your Glory, oh Lord, and of the glory of all of these, I would request, as a grace for all my

(soul's) limbs, that remembrance may come into my heart, thought into my mind, consciousness into my nous, . . .

[at least two pages missing or badly preserved]

2. . . .

3. . . . Light, whereby you have appeared in the world of the tyrants and have assembled your family members. (Here) end the hymns of the bright Bema, all together three.

### VIII. (Here) begin the hymns of the joyful.

1. You did rise and shine like the Sun, blessed image, Leader of Truth, who are like the God Zurvān in appearance. On this day of joy our love would shine from our hearts to you. Come in good health! May the messengers give you peace!

2. May this Leader who has come to a great day of joy be blessed (in view of) a new good omen.

May the gods give you peace, may the angels protect you and may Vahman lead you anew to eternal life.

3. *Melody: Come forth to a new good omen:*

Come forth to a new good omen, and to an auspicious sign and to days of unceasing joy, to this community of gods and messengers. From all provinces (of the Church) and from many lands, the glories and spirits and bright gods have assembled joyfully on this day, in order to greet you lovingly, Lord, Leader of exalted name, and to protect you, Lord, Leader of exalted name, from all foes and destroyers of the Church. With great joy will we worship you, and at your glory (*farroxīth*) will we rejoice.

[Patron or Scribe]: Istōyīāday

4. (*To be sung*) with *pancī xazān melody*

Come, light-bringing Sun, shining full Moon; come wise Lord, strong and full of insight. Receive blessing ever anew from Vahman, the King. Rejoice and be glad in unceasing joy!

5. (*This hymn is to be sung*) according to (*the melody*): *Mani, the Lord has come*. The light-bringing Sun has come, it shone brilliantly in the skies. Its light shines in all lands and provinces. It is meet for us, brethren, to bow down before it, so that it may give us joy and eternal life.

6. (*This hymn is to be sung*) according to (*the melody*): *You are the strong God*. The Savior (*drōdegar*) who brings salvation (*drōd*) to the whole Church has come. Increase the salvation of the flock, of the congregation and the community of elect. May salvation come to you from the strong, the highest God. May salvation give you Light, Power and Wisdom. You shall be praised and blessed by the holy Church. May the messengers, the glories and the spirits give you peace. Live in joy, be glad and blessed in new peace. Illumine the children by the Living Spirit (*vāxs i zīhrēn*). [Patron or Scribe]: Bay Aryamān

7. (*This hymn is to be sung*) to the Sogdian tune.

A new light-bringing Sun has come, a new Apostle, a Teacher for the Eastern Province. He has brought new joy, new hope and new, vital encouragement to the whole Holy Church. The messengers and glories are joyful on your account, blessed Leader, Teacher of exalted name. Live in health and new peace . . .

## 2. CONFSSIONAL TEXT FOR THE ELECT (SOGDIAN WITH PERSIAN AND PARTHIAN CITATIONS)

This text was introduced by a discussion of the five commandments for the elect. Only the titles of the second commandment (“nonviolence”) and third commandment (“behavior in accordance with religion”) have been preserved. The fourth commandment (“purity of mouth”) and the fifth commandment (“blessed poverty”) are not expressly mentioned.

### I. [The Commandment: Truthfulness]

...

### II. A. The Commandment: Nonviolence

[Sogdian]: . . . as He (mani) teaches in the Scripture:  
[Persian]: “Whoever wishes to come to that World of Peace should from now on gather together (the limbs of) his soul, like the gods of Paradise.”

[Sogdian]: And every time I injure and afflict the five elements, the captured Light [that] is in the dry and wet earth.

1. If (I should have allowed) the weight of my body, the cruel [self (body)] to beat or hurt (that Light) while

walking or riding, ascending or descending, (walking) quickly or slowly; or by digging or shovelling, building or constructing a wall in the dry, cracked, injured, oppressed and trodden earth, by going into the waters, walking on mud, snow, rainwater or dew, by treading, breaking or cutting, injuring or tearing the five (types of) plants or the five (types of) fleshly beings, be they wet or dry; if I myself should have done this or if I should have caused [someone] else to do this;

2. if for my sake human beings were beaten or imprisoned, or if they had to endure humiliation or insults; if I should have inflicted injury on four-footed animals while ascending or descending, or by beating or spurring them on; if I should have planned to harm wild animals, birds, creatures in the water or reptiles creeping on the ground, and should have harmed their life;
3. furthermore, if I should have . . . opened my mouth (to eat it), thinking it to be a fig (or) a medicine; if I should have haughtily taken pleasure in battle between armies, or the death and destruction of sinners, or even in the misfortune of another person;
4. if I should have been lazy in the art of writing, disliking it or neglecting it, holding a brush, a slate (?), a piece of silk or paper in my hands and doing much harm and damage thereby;
5. if I should have spilled a little bit of water from a water jug so that it was wasted;—(then) for all this (I pray for) pardon.

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*What are the similarities and differences between Manichean liturgy and Christian or Jewish liturgy?*

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## 10–2

### Duties of a King, *Artha Shastra*

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From *Sources of Indian Tradition*, translated by William Theodore de Bary. Copyright © 1958 by Columbia University Press. Reprinted with permission of the publisher.

Only if a king is himself energetically active, do his officers follow him energetically. If he is sluggish, they too remain sluggish. And, besides, they eat up his works. He is thereby easily overpowered by his enemies. Therefore, he should ever dedicate himself energetically to activity.

He should divide the day as well as the night into eight

parts... . During the first one-eighth part of the day, he should listen to reports pertaining to the organization of law and order and to income and expenditure. During the second, he should attend to the affairs of the urban and the rural population. During the third, he should take his bath and meal and devote himself to study. During the fourth, he should receive gold and the department heads. During the fifth, he should hold consultations with the council of ministers through correspondence and also keep himself informed of the secret reports brought by spies. During the sixth, he should devote himself freely to amusement or listen to the counsel of the ministers. During the seventh, he should inspect the military formations of elephants, cavalry, chariots, and infantry. During the eighth, he, together with the commander-in-chief of the army, should make plans for the campaigns of conquest. When the day has come to an end he should offer the evening prayers.

During the first one-eighth part of the night, he should meet with the officers of the secret service. During the second, he should take his bath and meals and also devote himself to study. During the third, at the sounding of the trumpets, he should enter the bed chamber and should sleep through the fourth and fifth. Waking up at the sound of the trumpets, he should, during the sixth part, ponder over the teachings of the sciences and his urgent duties for the day. During the seventh, he should hold consultations and send out officers of the secret service for their operations. During the eighth, accompanied by sacrificial priests, preceptors, and the chaplain, he should receive benedictions; he should also have interviews with a physician, the kitchen superintendent, and the astrologer. Thereafter, he should circumambulate by the right a cow with a calf and an ox and then proceed to the reception hall. Or he should divide the day and the night into parts in accordance with his own capacities and thereby attend to his duties.

When he has gone to the reception hall, he should not allow such persons, as have come for business, to remain sticking to the doors of the hall [i.e., waiting in vain]. For,

a king, with whom it is difficult for the people to have an audience, is made to confuse between right action and wrong action by his close entourage. Thereby he suffers from the disaffection of his own subjects or falls prey to the enemy. Therefore he should attend to the affairs relating to gods, hermitages, heretics, learned brahmins, cattle, and holy places as also those of minors, the aged, the sick, those in difficulty, the helpless, and women—in the order of their enumeration or in accordance with the importance or the urgency of the affairs.

A king should attend to all urgent business, he should not put it off. For what has been thus put off becomes either difficult or altogether impossible to accomplish. . . .

In the happiness of the subjects lies the happiness of the king; in their welfare, his own welfare. The welfare of the king does not lie in the fulfillment of what is dear to him; whatever is dear to the subjects constitutes his welfare.

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*Are these guidelines and advice consistent with Hindu-Buddhist religious precepts? How?*

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## 10–3

### Kalidasa: from *The Seasons*

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#### WINTER

Winter is coming  
and the lotus shrivels as new snow coats  
sweet sprouts rising erect in the cornfields,  
ripe rice paddies and the myrtle's bursting flowers.

Now women are sensuous and fine as sandalwood,  
their skin is snow, their aureoles unadorned,  
while like jasmine moons  
their heavy breasts hang with pearls.

Their arms are bare  
of bracelets and arm-bands.  
New silk hugs the orbs of their hips  
and sheer cloth rides ripe goblets of milk.<sup>1</sup>

They take off jeweled gold-thread belts  
from their womanly hips  
and from feet beautiful as lotus flowers  
they discard anklets that ring like singing swans.

Rubbing black sandal oils into their skin,  
painting lotuses across their faces  
and scenting their tangled hair with aloe  
they make up for a feast of love.

Pale and weak with desire,  
the young girls are stabbed through with joy  
but sink teeth into their lower lips  
to bite back laughs as they seek a lover.

Beautiful breasts want to burst  
from their straight chests in distress  
like dew plunging from a leaf of grass  
or tears in the winter dawn.

Here where the town gives way to country  
this herd of does in fields flush  
with rice shoots fills the men with urges  
while the beautiful herons sing

and our minds are swept away  
by a lake's cold pure water  
decked out with flowering blue lotus  
and lust-crazed geese.

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<sup>1</sup>The term used for breasts here means literally milk-vessels.



## Chapter 10

Young tendrils droop and sway  
in the persistent snow winds,  
O sweet love vine you are pale  
as a lovesick woman who's lost her man.

Knocked out by passion and their bodies' wine  
the lovers sleep with their bodies twined,  
their limbs smelling sweet as the aroma  
of flower wine on their moist lips.

Lips red with bite marks, and breasts  
scratched and raw from their lovers' nails,  
are passionate evidence of the adult pleasures  
the young girls tasted last night.

In a handheld mirror someone paints her lotus face  
in the heat of the young morning but finds,  
pulling down her lip, that her lover tore it  
last night when he drunk her essence;

and here is another sex-tired body:  
she didn't sleep at all and her eyes are red lotuses.  
Now hair tangles around her drooping shoulders  
and she floats through soft sleep on warm sun waves.

Other young girls breathe in the nice aroma  
as they tear faded wreaths from their dense black hair.  
Their wand-like bodies bend over swollen breasts  
as they pile their locks into new creations.

As she touches up her lip this girl reads  
last night's frenzy in each mark on her body;  
her curved eyes half-lidded, hair a dark river,  
she slips her nail-torn form into a shirt.

These girls made love for so long  
their slack bodies are slick with sweat,  
pubic hair standing on end like their nipples  
as they oil their glorious bodies.

It's winter but the women thrill, heart-rapt,  
as ripe rice bursts into the village  
and the herons cry that the frost has flown;  
may you be so happy when your winter comes.

---

*Compare The Seasons with the Song of Solomon in the Old Testament. What is the purpose of the blending of nature and the erotic in these poems?*

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### 10-4

## Hsuan-tsang [Xuanzang], The Land and People of India

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From A.V. Williams Jackson, ed., *History of India*, Vol. IX (London: The Grolier Society, 1906), pp. 122-49, *passim*; condensed by Chong-kun Yoon.

Adopting a general name that is the most acceptable to the people, we shall call the country "In-tu," which signifies "moon." The moon has many designations, In-tu being one of them. It is said that all living creatures unceasingly transmigrate, revolving through mortal existences in the long darkness of ignorance without having a guiding star. It is like the night after the setting of the bright sun, when, although people get light by candles and have the shining light of the stars, these are not comparable with the brightness of the serene moon. For this reason the spiritual condition of India is allegorically compared with the shining moon. The sages and the wise teachers of this country followed the norm (of the Buddha) in succession, guided the people, and exercised rule, as the moon sheds its bright influences—on this account this country is called In-tu.

The towns and villages of India have gates; the surrounding walls are broad and high; the streets and lanes are narrow and crooked. The thoroughfares are dirty and the stalls are arranged on both sides of the road with appropriate signs. Butchers, fishermen, actors, executioners, scavengers, and so on, have their dwellings outside of the city. In coming and going these persons are bound to keep on the left side of the road till they arrive at their homes. As to the construction of houses and the enclosing walls, the land being low and moist, the walls of the towns are mostly built of bricks or tiles, and the enclosures of the houses are matted bamboo or wood. The houses have balconies made of wood, as well as flat roofs with a coating of lime, and are covered with burnt or unburnt tiles. The buildings are very high, and in style of construction they are like those in China. Branches or common grasses or tiles or boards are used for covering them. The walls are covered with lime, the floor is smeared with cow's dung as means of purity, and it is strewn with flowers of the season. In such matters they differ from us.

Many Samgharamas (Buddhist monasteries) are constructed with extraordinary skill. A three-storied tower is erected at each of the four angles. The beams and the projecting heads are carved with strange figures. The doors, the windows, and the walls are painted in many colors; the houses of the ordinary people are luxurious on the inside but plain on the outside. The interior and central rooms

vary in height and width. As to the form and construction of the tiers of terraces and the series of salons, there is no fixed rule. The doors open toward the east; the royal throne also faces the east.

When the Hindus sit or rest they all use corded benches; the royal family, great personages, the officials, and the gentry use benches variously ornamented, but in size they are exactly the same. The throne of the reigning sovereign is exceedingly high and broad, and it is set with pearls and precious gems; it is called the "lion-throne." It is covered with extremely fine drapery; the footstool is adorned with gems. The ordinary officials carve their seats in various ways and decorate them beautifully according to their taste.

To educate and encourage the young, they first teach them to study the book of "Twelve Chapters." After arriving at the age of seven years, the young are instructed in the great treatises of the "Five Sciences." The first is called Grammar, the elucidation of sounds. This treatise explains the meaning of words and their derivation.

The second science is called *Kiau-ming*; it treats of the arts and of mechanics, and it explains the principles of *Yin* and *Yang* (Negative and Positive Principles) of the calendar. The third is called the "Medicinal Treatise"; it illustrates the use of charms, medicinal stones, needles and moxa.<sup>1</sup> The fourth science is called "Logic," which determines the right and wrong and discriminates between the true and the false. The fifth science is called the science of "Inward Knowledge"; it relates to the Five Vehicles, and the doctrine of cause and effect (karma).

The Brahmans study the four Veda treatises. The first is called *Shau* ("longevity," i.e., the Ayur-Veda); it relates to the preservation of life and the regulation of the natural condition. The second is called *Sse* ("worship," i.e., the Yajur-Veda); it relates to sacrifice and prayer. The third is called *Ping* ("peace regulation," i.e., the Sama-Veda); it relates to decorum, casting of lots, military tactics, and warfare. The fourth is called *Shu* ("arts," i.e., the Atharva-Veda); it relates to various branches of science, incantations, medicine.

The doctrines of the Tathagata (Buddha) may be comprehended by men of different qualities; but, as the time is now remote since the Holy One lived, his doctrine is presented in a changed form, and is therefore understood orthodoxly or heterodoxly, according to the intelligence of those who inquire into it. The different schools are constantly at variance, and their contending utterances rise like the angry waves of the sea. The different schools have their separate masters, but they aim to reach one and the same end, though by different ways.

There are eighteen schools, each claiming pre-eminence. The tenets of the Great and the Little Vehicle [Mahayana and Hinayana] differ widely. There are some of the followers who give themselves up to meditation, and devote themselves, whether walking, standing still, or

sitting down, to the acquirement of wisdom and insight. Others, on the contrary, differ from these in raising noisy contentions about their faith. According to their fraternity, they are governed by distinctive rules and regulations, which we need not name.

The chief soldiers of the country are selected from the bravest of the people, and as the sons follow the profession of their fathers, they soon acquire a knowledge of the art of war. These dwell in garrison around the palace (during times of peace), but when on an expedition they march in front as an advance guard. There are four divisions of the army, the infantry, the cavalry, the chariots, and the elephants. The elephants are covered with strong armour, and their tusks are provided with sharp spurs. The commander-in-chief rides on an elephant, with two soldiers on the right and left to manage the animal. The ordinary officer rides in a chariot drawn by four horses; he is surrounded by a file of guards, who keep close to his chariot wheels.

The cavalry spread themselves in front to resist an attack, and in case of defeat they carry orders hither and thither. The infantry by their quick movements contribute to the defence. These men are chosen for their courage and strength. They carry a great shield and a long spear; sometimes they hold a sword or sabre, and advance to the front with impetuosity. All their weapons of war are sharp and pointed. Some of them are these—spears, shields, bows, arrows, swords, sabres, battle-axes, lances, halberds, long javelins, and various kinds of slings. All these they have used for ages.

The law of the state is sometimes violated by base persons, and plots are made against the ruler. When the matter has been fully sifted, the offenders are imprisoned for life. There is no infliction of corporal punishment; they are simply left to live or die, and are not counted among men. When the rules of propriety or justice are violated, or when a man fails in loyalty or filial piety, they cut off his nose or his ears, or his hands and feet, or expel him from the country, or drive him out into the desert wilds. For other faults, except these, a small payment of money will commute the punishment. In the investigation of criminal cases there is no use of rod or staff to obtain proofs (of guilt). In questioning an accused person, if he replies with frankness, the punishment is proportioned accordingly; but if the accused obstinately denies his fault, or in spite of it attempts to excuse himself, then in searching out the truth to the bottom, when it is necessary to pass sentence, there are four kinds of ordeal used—ordeal by water, by fire, by weighing, and by poison.

When the ordeal is by water, the accused is placed in a sack connected with a stone vessel and thrown into deep water. They then judge of his innocence or guilt in this way—if the man sinks and the stone floats, he is guilty; but if the man floats and the stone sinks, he is pronounced innocent.

Secondly, by fire. They heat some iron and make the accused kneel on it and then tread on it, and apply it to the palms of his hands; moreover, he is made to pass his tongue over it; if no scars result, he is innocent; if there are scars, his guilt is proved. In the case of timid and weak

<sup>1</sup>Moxa = Japanese *mogusa*: mixtures of wormwood leaves, to be dried and ignited on the skin to counter infections, inflammations, and tumors.

persons who cannot endure such a horrible ordeal, they take a flower-bud and cast it toward the fire; if it opens, he is innocent; if the flower is burned, he is guilty.

Ordeal by weight is this: A man and a stone are placed in a balance evenly, then they judge according to lightness or weight. If the accused is innocent, then the man weighs down the stone, which rises in the balance; if he is guilty, the man rises and the stone falls.

Ordeal by poison is this: They take a ram, cut off its right hind leg, and put poison upon the portion of flesh that is assigned to the accused to eat; if the man is guilty, the poison takes effect and he dies; if the man is innocent, the poison has no effect and he survives.

Every one who falls sick fasts for seven days. During this interval many recover, but if the sickness lasts they take medicine. The character of these medicines is different, and their names also vary. The doctors differ in their modes of examination and treatment. If a person dies, those who attend the funeral raise lamentable cries and weep together. They rend their garments and tear their hair; they strike their heads, and beat their breasts. There are no regulations as to dress for mourning, nor any fixed period for observing it. There are three methods of paying the last tribute to the dead: first, by cremation—wood being made into a pyre, the body is burnt; second, by water—the body is thrown into a stream to float and fall into dissolution; third, by desertion, in which case the body is cast into some forest-wild to be devoured by beasts.

When the king dies, his successor is first appointed, that he may preside at the funeral rites and fix the different

points of precedence. Whilst living they give their rulers titles of merit according to their character; when dead there are no posthumous titles.

In a house where there has been a death there is no eating allowed; but after the funeral they resume their usual habits. There are no anniversaries (of the death) observed. Those who have attended a funeral are regarded as unclean; they all bathe outside the town and then enter their houses.

The old and infirm who are approaching death, or those who are suffering from some incurable disease, who fear to linger to the end of their days, and through disgust at life wish to escape from its troubles, or those who, condemning mortal existence, desire release from the affairs of the world and its concerns—these persons after receiving a farewell meal at the hands of their relatives and friends, they place, amid the sounds of music, on a boat which they propel into the midst of the Ganges, and there these persons drown themselves. They think in this way to secure a birth in Heaven. Hardly one out of ten will not carry out his foolish idea.

The Buddhist brethren are not allowed to lament or weep for the dead; when the father or mother of a monk dies, they recite prayers, recounting their obligations to them and recalling the past, and they carefully attend to them being now dead. They expect by this to increase the happiness of the departed.

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*How does Xuanzang react to Hindu (as opposed to Buddhist) practices?*

# Chapter 11

## *The Formation of Islamic Civilization*

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### 11-1

#### **Al-Tabari: *An early biography of Islam's Prophet***

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Source: Arthur Jeffrey, trans., *Islam, Muhammad and His Religion* (N.Y.: Liberal Arts Press, 1958), pp. 15-17. Quoted in Mircea Eliade, *From Medicine Men to Muhammad* (N.Y.: Harper & Row, 1974), pp. 63-64.

Ahmad b. 'Uthman, who is known as Abu'l-jawza', has related to me on the authority of Wahb b. Jarir, who heard his father say that he had heard from an-Nu'man b. Rashid, on the authority of az-Zuhri from 'Urwa, from 'A'isha, who said: The way revelation (*wahy*) first began to come to the Apostle of Allah—on whom be Allah's blessing and peace—was by means of true dreams which would come like the morning dawn. Then he came to love solitude, so he used to go off to a cave in Hira where he would practise *tahannuth* certain nights before returning to his family. Then he would come back to his family and take provisions for the like number [of nights] until unexpectedly the truth came to him.

He (i.e., Gabriel) came to him saying: 'O Muhammad, thou art Allah's Apostle (rasūl).' Said the Apostle of Allah—upon whom be Allah's blessing and peace: 'Thereat I fell to my knees where I had been standing, and then with trembling limbs dragged myself along till I came in to Khadija, saying: "Wrap ye me up! Wrap ye me up!"

till the terror passed from me. Then [on another occasion] he came to me again and said: "O Muhammad, thou art Allah's Apostle," [which so disturbed me] that I was about to cast myself down from some high mountain cliff. But he appeared before me as I was about to do this, and said: "O Muhammad, I am Gabriel, and thou art Allah's Apostle." Then he said to me: "Recite!"; but I answered: "What should I recite?"; whereat he seized me and grievously treated me three times, till he wore me out. Then he said: "Recite, in the name of thy Lord who has created" (Sūra XCVI, 1). So I recited it and then went to Khadija, to whom I said: "I am worried about myself." Then I told her the whole story. She said: "Rejoice, for by Allah, Allah will never put thee to shame. By Allah, thou art mindful of thy kinsfolk, speakest truthfully, renderest what is given thee in trust, bearest burdens, art ever hospitable to the guest, and dost always uphold the right against any wrong." Then she took me to Waraqa b. Naufal b. Asad [to whom] she said: "Give ear to what the son of thy brother [has to report]." So he questioned me, and I told him [the whole] story. Said he: "This is the *nāmūs* which was sent down upon Moses the son of Amram. Would that I might be a stalwart youth [again to take part] in it. Would that I might still be alive when your people turn you out." "And will they turn me out?" I asked. "Yes," said he, "never yet has a man come with that with which you come but has been turned away. Should I be there when your day comes I will end you mighty assistance."

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*How did Muhammad react to the first visitations from Gabriel?*

## 11–2

## Islam in the Prophet's absence: Continuation under the Caliphate

Source: Bernard Lewis, ed., *Islam from the Prophet to the Capture of Constantinople*, Vol. I (N.Y.: Walker & Co., 1974), pp. 2–6.

### THE FOUNDING OF THE CALIPHATE (632)

#### An account of what happened between the Emigrants and the Helpers concerning the leadership, in the porch of the Banu Sa'ida<sup>1</sup>

Hishām ibn Muhammad told me on the authority of Abū Mikhnaf, who said: 'Abdallāh ibn 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn Abī 'Umra, the Helper, told me:

When the Prophet of God, may God bless and save him, died, the Helpers assembled in the porch of the Banū Sā'ida and said, "Let us confer this authority, after Muhammad, upon him be peace, on Sa'd ibn 'Ubāda." Sa'd, who was ill, was brought to them, and when they assembled Sa'd said to his son or to one of his nephews, "I cannot, because of my sickness, speak so that all the people can hear my words. Therefore, hear what I say and then repeat it to them so that they may hear it." Then he spoke and the man memorized his words and raised his voice so that the others could hear.

He said, after praising God and lauding Him, "O company of the Helpers! You have precedence in religion and merit in Islam which no other Arab tribe has. Muhammad, upon him be peace, stayed for more than ten years amid his people, summoning them to worship the Merciful One and to abandon false gods and idols. But among his own people only a few men believed in him, and they were not able to protect the Prophet of God or to glorify his religion nor to defend themselves against the injustice which beset them. God therefore conferred merit on you and brought honor to you and singled you out for grace and vouchsafed to you faith in Him and in His Prophet and protection for Him and His companions and glorification to Him and His religion and holy war against His enemies. It was you who fought hardest against His enemy and weighed more heavily on His enemy than any other, until the Arabs obeyed the command of God willy-nilly and the distant ones gave obedience, humbly and meekly; until Almighty God, through you, made the world submit to His Prophet, and through your swords the Arabs drew near to him. And when God caused him to die, he was content with you and delighted with you. Therefore, keep this authority for yourselves alone, for it is yours against all others."

They all replied to him, "Your judgment is sound and your words are true. We shall not depart from what you say and we shall confer this authority on you. You satisfy us and you will satisfy the right believer."

Then they discussed it among themselves and some of them said, "What if the Emigrants of Quraysh refuse, and say: 'We are the Emigrants and the first Companions of the Prophet of God; we are his clan and his friends. Why therefore do you dispute the succession to his authority with us?'" Some of them said, "If so, we would reply to them, 'An amir from us and an amir from you! And we shall never be content with less than that.'" Sa'd ibn 'Ubāda, when he heard this, said, "This is the beginning of weakness."

News of this reached 'Umar, and he went to the house of the Prophet, may God bless and save him. He sent to Abū Bakr, who was in the Prophet's house with 'Alī ibn Abī Tālib, upon him be peace, preparing the body of the Prophet, may God bless and save him, for burial. He sent asking Abū Bakr to come to him, and Abū Bakr sent a message in reply saying that he was busy. Then 'Umar sent saying that something had happened which made his presence necessary, and he went to him and said, "Have you not heard that the Helpers have gathered in the porch of the Banu Sā'ida? They wish to confer this authority on Sa'd ibn 'Ubāda, and the best they say is, 'an amir from among us and an amir from among Quraysh.'" They made haste toward them, and they met Abū 'Ubayda ibn al-Jarrāh. The three of them went on together, and they met 'Asim ibn 'Adī and 'Uwaym ibn Sā'ida, who both said to them: "Go back, for what you want will not happen." They said, "We shall not go back," and they came to the meeting.

'Umar ibn al-Khattāb said: We came to the meeting, and I had prepared a speech which I wished to make to them. We reached them, and I was about to begin my speech when Abū Bakr said to me, "Gently! Let me speak first, and then afterwards say whatever you wish." He spoke. 'Umar said, "He said all I wanted to say, and more."

'Abdallāh ibn 'Abd al-Rahmān said: Abū Bakr began. He praised and lauded God and then he said, "God sent Muhammad as a Prophet to His creatures and as a witness to His community that they might worship God and God alone, at a time when they were worshipping various gods beside Him and believed that they were intercessors for them with God and could be of help to them, though they were only of hewn stone and carved wood. Then he recited to them, 'And they worship apart from God those who could neither harm them nor help them, and they say these are our intercessors with God' [Qur'ān x, 19/18]. And they said, 'We worship them only so that they may bring us very near to God' [Qur'ān xxxix, 4/3]. It was a tremendous thing for the Arabs to abandon the religion of their fathers. God distinguished the first Emigrants of his people by allowing them to recognize the truth and believe in him and console him and suffer with him from the harsh persecution of his people when they gave

<sup>1</sup>The Emigrants (Muhājirūn) were the Qurayshī Muslims from Mecca who accompanied the Prophet on his migration to Medina; the Helpers (Ansār) were the Medinans who joined them. The Banū Sā'ida were a clan of Khazraj, one of the two main Arab tribes of Medina; the other was Aws.

them the lie and all were against them and reviled them. Yet they were not affrighted because their numbers were few and the people stared at them and their tribe was joined against them. They were the first in the land who worshipped God and who believed in God and the Prophet. They are his friends and his clan and the best entitled of all men to this authority after him. Only a wrongdoer would dispute this with them. And as for you, O company of the Helpers, no one can deny your merit in the faith or your great precedence in Islam. God was pleased to make you Helpers to His religion and His Prophet and caused him to migrate to you, and the honor of sheltering his wives and his Companions is still yours, and after the first Emigrants there is no one we hold of equal standing with you. We are the amirs and you are the viziers. We shall not act contrary to your advice and we shall not decide things without you.”

Abu Bakr said, “Here is ‘Umar and here is Abū ‘Ubayda. Swear allegiance to whichever of them you choose.” The two of them said, “No, by God, we shall not accept this authority above you, for you are the worthiest of the Emigrants and the second of the two who were in the cave and the deputy [*khalifa*] of the Prophet of God in prayer, and prayer is the noblest part of the religion of the Muslims. Who then would be fit to take precedence of you or to accept this authority above you? Stretch out your hand so that we may swear allegiance to you.”

And when they went forward to swear allegiance to him, Bashīr ibn Sa’d went ahead of them and swore alle-

giance to him . . . and when the tribe of Aws saw what Bashīr ibn Sa’d had done . . . they came to him and swore allegiance to him. . . .

Hishām said on the authority of Abū Mikhnaf: ‘Abdallāh ibn ‘Abd al-Rahmān said: People came from every side to swear allegiance to Abū Bakr.

## 2. The Accession Speech of Abū Bakr (632)

Then Abū Bakr spoke and praised and lauded God as it fitting, and then he said: O people, I have been appointed to rule over you, though I am not the best among you. If I do well, help me, and if I do ill, correct me. Truth is loyalty and falsehood is treachery; the weak among you is strong in my eyes until I get justice for him, please God, and the strong among you is weak in my eyes until I exact justice from him, please God. If any people holds back from fighting the holy war for God, God strikes them with degradation. If weakness spreads among a people, God brings disaster upon all of them. Obey me as long as I obey God and His Prophet. And if I disobey God and His Prophet, you do not owe me obedience. Come to prayer, and may God have mercy on you.

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*What was the nature of the split between the Helpers and the Emigrants after the Prophet’s death?*

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## 11–3

### The Caliphate in decline: Al-Matawwakil’s murder

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Source: Bernard Lewis, ed., *Islam from the Prophet to the Capture of Constantinople*, Vol. I (N.Y.: Walker & Co., 1974), pp. 30–34.

It is said that on the feast of ‘Id al-Fitr [247/861], al-Mutawakkil rode on horseback between two lines of soldiers four miles long. Everybody walked on foot in front of him. He conducted the public prayer and then returned to his palace, where he took a handful of earth and put it on his head. They asked him why and he replied, “I have seen the immensity of this gathering, I have seen them subject to me, and it pleased me to humble myself before Almighty God.” The day after the feast he did not send for any of his boon companions. The third day, Tuesday, 3 Shawwāl [December 10] he was lively, merry, and happy. . .

The singer Ibn al-Hafsi, who was present at the party, said: The Commander of the Faithful was never merrier than on that day. He began his party and summoned his boon companions and singers, who came. Qabīha, the mother of al-Mu‘tazz, presented him with a square cape of green silk, so splendid that no one had ever seen its like. Al-Mutawakkil looked at it for a long time, praised it and admired it greatly and then ordered that it be cut in two and taken back to her, saying to her messenger, “She can remember me by it.” Then he added, “My heart tells me that I shall not wear it, and I do not want anyone else to wear it after me; that is why I had it torn.” We said to him, “Master, today is a day of joy. God preserve you, O Commander of the Faithful from such words.” He began to drink and make merry, but he repeated, “By God, I shall soon leave you.” However, he continued to amuse and enjoy himself until nightfall.

Some said that al-Mutawakkil had decided, together with al-Fath [ibn Khāqān], to call next day, Thursday 5th Shawwāh [December 12], on ‘Abdallāh ibn ‘Umar al-Baziyār to ask him to murder al-Muntasir and to kill Wasīf, Bughā, and other commanders and leaders of the Turks.

On the previous day, Tuesday, according to Ibn al-Hafsi, the Caliph subjected his son al-Muntasir to heavy horse-

play, sometimes abusing him, sometimes forcing him to drink more than he could hold, sometimes having him slapped, and sometimes threatening him with death.

It is reported, on the authority of Hārūn ibn Muhammad ibn Sulaymān al-Hashīmī, who said that he had heard it from one of the women behind the curtain, that al-Mutawakkil turned toward al-Fath and said to him, “I shall renounce God and my kinship with the Prophet of God (may God bless and save him) if you don’t slap him (that is, al-Muntasir).” Al-Fath rose and slapped the back of his neck twice. Then al-Mutawakkil said to those present, “Be witnesses, all of you, that I declare al-Musta’jil-al-Muntasir—deprived of his rights to my succession.” Then he turned to him and said, “I gave you the name of al-Muntasir [the triumphant] but people called you al-Muntazir [the expectant] because of your foolishness. Now you have become al-Musta’jil [the urgent].”

“O, Commander of the Faithful,” replied al-Muntasir, “If you were to give the orders to behead me, it would be more bearable than what you are doing to me!”

“Give him a drink!” cried al-Mutawakkil and called for supper, which was brought. It was late at night. Al-Muntasir went out and ordered Bunan, the page of Ahmad ibn Yahyā, to follow him. When he had gone the table was placed before al-Mutawakkil who began to eat and gobble. He was drunk.

It is related on the authority of Ibn al-Hafsī that when al-Muntasir left to return to his own quarters, he took the hand of Zurāfa and asked him to accompany him. “But my Lord,” said Zurāfa, “the Commander of the Faithful has not yet risen.” “The Commander of the Faithful,” said al-Muntasir, “is overcome by drink, and Bughā and the boon companions will soon leave. I would like to talk to you about your son. Utamish has asked me to marry his son to your daughter and your son to his daughter.”

“We are your slaves, my lord,” replied Zurāfa, “and at your orders.” Al-Muntasir then took him by the hand and led him away. Zurāfa had earlier said to me, “Be calm, for the Commander of the Faithful is drunk and will soon recover. Tamra called me and asked me to ask you to go to him. Let us therefore go together to his quarters.” “I shall go there ahead of you,” I said, and Zurāfa left with al-Muntasir for his quarters.

Bunān, the page of Ahmād ibn Yahyā, related that al-Muntasir said to him, “I have united Zurāfa’s son to Utamish’s daughter and Utamish’s son to Zurāfa’s daughter.”

“My lord,” asked Bunān, “where are the confetti, for in that lies the beauty of such a union.”

“Tomorrow, please God!” he said, “for today has already passed.”

Zurāfa had gone to Tamra’s quarters. He entered and called for food, which was brought to him, but he had hardly begun to eat when we heard a noise and shouting. We stood up. “It is only Zurāfa leaving Tamra’s quarters,” said Bunān. Suddenly Bughā appeared before al-Muntasir, who asked, “What is this noise?”

“Good tidings, O, Commander of the Faithful,” said Bughā.

“What are you saying, wretch?” said al-Muntasir.

“May God give you a great reward in return for our master the Commander of the Faithful. He was God’s slave. God called him, and he went.”

Al-Muntasir held an audience and gave orders to close the door of the room in which al-Mutawakkil had been murdered, as well as that of the audience chamber. All the doors were closed. He then sent for Wasif and ordered him to summon al-Mu’tazz and al-Mu’ayyad, in the name of al-Mutawakkil.

It is reported, on the authority of ‘Ath’ath, that when al-Muntasir had risen and gone, taking Zurāfa with him, al-Mutawakkil had sent for his table. Bughā the younger, known as al-Sharābī, was standing by the curtain. On that day it was the turn of Bughā the elder to be on duty in the palace, but as he was in Sumaysāt at the time he had himself replaced by his son Mūsā, whose mother was al-Mutawakkil’s maternal aunt. Bughā the younger entered the gathering and ordered the boon companions of the Caliph to return to their quarters.

“It is not yet time for them to go,” al-Fath said to him, “the Commander of the Faithful has not yet risen.”

“The Commander of the Faithful,” said Bughā, “has ordered me to leave no one in the room after he has drunk seven pints [ratl], and he has already drunk fourteen.” Al-Fath objected to their going, but Bughā said, “The Commander of the Faithful is drunk, and his women are behind this curtain. Get up and go!” They all went out, leaving only al-Fath, ‘Ath’ath, and four of the Caliph’s servants, Shaftī, Faraj the younger, Mu’nis, and Abū ‘Isā Mārid al-Muhrizī. ‘Ath’ath said: The cook placed the table in front of al-Mutawakkil, who began to eat and gobble, and invited Marid to eat with him. He was drunk, and after eating, he drank again.

‘Ath’ath said that Abū Ahmād, the son of al-Mutawakkil and uterine brother of al-Mu’ayyad, who was present in the hall, came out to go to the lavatory. Bughā al-Sharābī had closed all the doors except that which opened to the river bank. It was by this door that those who had been appointed to murder the Caliph entered. Abū Ahmad saw them enter, and cried out, “What is this, villains?” Then suddenly they drew their swords. Leading the murderers were Baghlun the Turk, Baghir, Musa ibn Bughā, Hārūn ibn Suwārtagin, and Bughā al-Sharābī.

When al-Mutawakkil heard Abū Ahmad shout, he raised his head and saw them and asked, “What is it, Bughā?” And Bughā answered, “These are the men of the night watch, who will guard the gate of my lord, the Commander of the Faithful.” When they heard al-Mutawakkil speak to Bughā, they turned back. Neither Wajin and his men nor the sons of Wasif were with them. ‘Ath’ath said: I heard Bughā say to them, “Villains! You are all dead men without escape; at least die with honor.” They then came back into the hall, and Baghūn attacked first, giving the Caliph a blow which cut off his ear and struck his shoulder. “Ho!”

cried al-Mutawakkil. Hārūn ran him through with his sword, and he threw himself at his attacker, who, however, fended him off with his arm, and Bāghir joined them.

“Wretches!” cried al-Fath, “this is the Commander of the Faithful!”

“Be quiet!” said Bughā, and al-Fath threw himself over al-Mutawakkil. Hārūn ran him through with his sword, and he screamed “Death!” Hārūn and Bughā ibn Mūsā, strik-

ing him in turn with their swords, killed him, and cut him to pieces. ‘Ath’ath was wounded in the head. A young eunuch who was with al-Mutawakkil hid behind the curtain and was saved. The others fled.

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*What conclusions can one draw as to al-Mutawakkil’s character, and his relationship with his son?*

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## 11–4

### *Al Farabi: The Perfect State*

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Al-Farabi on the Perfect State, *trans. Richard Walzer (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985). Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.*

1. In order to preserve himself and to attain his highest perfections every human being is by his very nature in need of many things which he cannot provide all by himself; he is indeed in need of people who each supply him with some particular need of his. Everybody finds himself in the same relation to everybody in this respect. Therefore man cannot attain the perfection, for the sake of which his inborn nature has been given to him, unless many (societies of) people who co-operate come together who each supply everybody else with some particular need of his, so that as a result of the contribution of the whole community all the things are brought together which everybody needs in order to preserve himself and to attain perfection. Therefore human individuals have come to exist in great numbers, and have settled in the inhabitable (inhabited?) region of the earth, so that human societies have come to exist in it, some of which are perfect, others imperfect.

2. There are three kinds of perfect society, great, medium and small. The great one is the union of all the societies in the inhabitable world; the medium one the union of one nation in one part of the inhabitable world; the small one the union of the people of a city in the territory of any nation whatsoever. Imperfect are the union of people in a village, the union of people in a quarter, then the union in a street, eventually the union in a house, the house being the smallest union of all. Quarter and village exist both for the sake of the city, but the relation of the village to the city is one of service whereas the quarter is related to the city as a part of it; the street is a part of the quarter, the house a part of the street. The city is a part of the territory of a nation, the nation a part of all the people of the inhabitable world.

3. The most excellent good and the utmost perfection is, in the first instance, attained in a city, not in a society which

is less complete than it. But since good in its real sense is such as to be attainable through choice and will, and evils are also due to will and choice only, a city may be established to enable its people to co-operate in attaining some aims that are evil. Hence felicity is not attainable in every city. The city, then, in which people aim through association at co-operating for the things by which felicity in its real and true sense can be attained, is the excellent city, and the society in which there is a co-operation to acquire felicity is the excellent society; and the nation in which all of its cities co-operate for those things through which felicity is attained is the excellent nation. In the same way, the excellent universal state will arise only when all the nations in it co-operate for the purpose of reaching felicity.

4. The excellent city resembles the perfect and healthy body, all of whose limbs co-operate to make the life of the animal perfect and to preserve it in this state. Now the limbs and organs of the body are different and their natural endowments and faculties are unequal in excellence, there being among them one ruling organ, namely the heart, and organs which are close in rank to that ruling organ, each having been given by nature a faculty by which it performs its proper function in conformity with the natural aim of that ruling organ. Other organs have by nature faculties by which they perform their functions according to the aims of those organs which have no intermediary between themselves and the ruling organ; they are in the second rank. Other organs, in turn, perform their functions according to the aim of those which are in the second rank, and so on until eventually organs are reached which only serve and do not rule at all.

The same holds good in the case of the city. Its parts are different by nature, and their natural dispositions are unequal in excellence: there is in it a man who is the ruler, and there are others whose ranks are close to the ruler, each of them with a disposition and a habit through which he performs an action in conformity with the intention of that ruler; these are the holders of the first ranks. Below them are people who perform their actions in accordance with the aims of those people; they are in the second rank. Below them in turn are people who perform their actions according to the aims of the people mentioned in the second instance, and the parts of the city continue to be arranged in this way, until eventually parts are reached which perform their actions according to the aims of others, while there do not exist any people who perform



their actions according to their aims; these, then, are the people who serve without being served in turn, and who are hence in the lowest rank and at the bottom of the scale.

But the limbs and organs of the body are natural, and the dispositions which they have are natural faculties, whereas, although the parts of the city are natural, their dispositions and habits, by which they perform their actions in the city, are not natural but voluntary—notwithstanding that the parts of the city are by nature provided with endowments unequal in excellence which enable them to do one thing and not another. But they are not parts of the city by their inborn nature alone but rather by the voluntary habits which they acquire such as the arts and their likes; to the natural faculties which exist in the organs and limbs of the body correspond the voluntary habits and dispositions in the parts of the city.

5. The ruling organ in the body is by nature the most perfect and most complete of the organs in itself and in its specific qualification, and it also has the best of everything of which another organ has a share as well; beneath it, in turn, are other organs which rule over organs inferior to them, their rule being lower in rank than the rule of the first and indeed subordinate to the rule of the first; they rule and are ruled.

In the same way, the ruler of the city is the most perfect part of the city in his specific qualification and has the best of everything which anybody else shares with him; beneath him are people who are ruled by him and rule others.

The heart comes to be first and becomes then the cause of the existence of the other organs and limbs of the body, and the cause of the existence of their faculties in them and of their arrangement in the ranks proper to them, and when one of its organs is out of order, it is the heart which provides the means to remove that disorder. In the same way the ruler of this city must come to be in the first instance, and will subsequently be the cause of the rise of the city and its parts and the cause of the presence of the voluntary habits of its parts and of their arrangement in the ranks proper to them; and when one part is out of order he provides it with the means to remove its disorder.

The parts of the body close to the ruling organ perform of the natural functions, in agreement—by nature—with the aim of the ruler, the most noble ones; the organs beneath them perform those functions which are less noble, and eventually the organs are reached which perform the meanest functions. In the same way the parts of the city which are close in authority to the ruler of the city perform the most noble voluntary actions, and those below them less noble actions, until eventually the parts are reached which perform the most ignoble actions. The inferiority of such actions is sometimes due to the inferiority of their matter, although they may be extremely useful—like the action of the bladder and the action of the lower intestine in the body; sometimes it is due to their being of little use; at other times it is due to their being very easy to perform. This applies equally to the city and equally to every whole which is composed by nature of well ordered coherent

parts: they have a ruler whose relation to the other parts is like the one just described.

6. This applies also to all existents. For the relation of the First Cause to the other existents is like the relation of the king of the excellent city to its other parts. For the ranks of the immaterial existents are close to the First. Beneath them are the heavenly bodies, and beneath the heavenly bodies the material bodies. All these existents act in conformity with the First Cause, follow it, take it as their guide and imitate it; but each existent does that according to its capacity, choosing its aim precisely on the strength of its established rank in the universe: that is to say the last follows the aim of that which is slightly above it in rank, equally the second existent, in turn, follows what is above itself in rank, and in the same way the third existent has an aim which is above it. Eventually existents are reached which are linked with the First Cause without any intermediary whatsoever. In accordance with this order of rank all the existents permanently follow the aim of the First Cause. Those which are from the very outset provided with all the essentials of their existence are made to imitate the First (Cause) and its aim from their very outset, and hence enjoy eternal bliss and hold the highest ranks; but those which are not provided from the outset with all the essentials of their existence, are provided with a faculty by which they move towards the expected attainment of those essentials and will then be able to follow the aim of the First (Cause). The excellent city ought to be arranged in the same way: all its parts ought to imitate in their actions the aim of their first ruler according to their rank.

7. The ruler of the excellent city cannot just be any man, because rulership requires two conditions: (a) he should be predisposed for it by his inborn nature, (b) he should have acquired the attitude and habit of will for rulership which will develop in a man whose inborn nature is predisposed for it. Nor is every art suitable for rulership; most of the arts, indeed, are rather suited for service within the city, just as most men are by their very nature born to serve. Some of the arts rule certain (other) arts while serving others at the same time, whereas there are other arts which, not ruling anything at all, only serve. Therefore the art of ruling the excellent city cannot just be any chance art, nor due to any chance habit whatever. For just as the first ruler in a genus cannot be ruled by anything in that genus—for instance the ruler of the limbs cannot be ruled by any other limb, and this holds good for any ruler of any composite whole—so the art of the ruler in the excellent city of necessity cannot be a serving art at all and cannot be ruled by any other art, but his art must be an art towards the aim of which all the other arts tend, and for which they strive in all the actions of the excellent city.

8. That man is a person over whom nobody has any sovereignty whatsoever. He is a man who has reached his perfection and has become actually intellect and actually being thought (intelligized), his representative faculty having by nature reached its utmost perfection in the way stated by us; this faculty of his is predisposed by nature to

receive, either in waking life or in sleep, from the Active Intellect the particulars, either as they are or by imitating them, and also the intelligibles, by imitating them. His Passive Intellect will have reached its perfection by [having apprehended] all the intelligibles, so that none of them is kept back from it, and it will have become actually intellect and actually being thought. Indeed any man whose Passive Intellect has thus been perfected by [having apprehended] all the intelligibles and has become actually intellect and actually being thought, so that the intelligible in him has become identical with that which thinks in him, acquires an actual intellect which is superior to the Passive Intellect and more perfect and more separate from matter (immaterial?) than the Passive Intellect. It is called the 'Acquired Intellect' and comes to occupy a middle position between the Passive Intellect and the Active Intellect, nothing else being between it and the Active Intellect. The Passive Intellect is thus like matter and substratum for the Acquired Intellect, and the Acquired Intellect like matter and substratum for the Active Intellect, and the rational faculty, which is a natural disposition, is a matter underlying the Passive Intellect which is actually intellect.

9. The first stage, then, through which man becomes man is the coming to be of the receptive natural disposition which is ready to become actually intellect; this disposition is common to all men. Between this disposition and the Active Intellect are two stages, the Passive Intellect which has become actually intellect, and [the rise of] the Acquired Intellect. There are thus two stages between the first stage of being a man and the Active Intellect. When the perfect Passive Intellect and the natural disposition become one thing in the way the compound of matter and form is one—and when the form of the humanity of this man is taken as identical with the Passive Intellect which has become actually intellect, there will be between this man and the Active Intellect only one stage. And when the natural disposition is made the matter of the Passive Intellect which has become actually intellect, and the Passive Intellect the matter of the Acquired Intellect, and the Acquired Intellect the matter of the Active Intellect, and when all this is taken as one and the same thing, then this man is the man on whom the Active Intellect has descended.

10. When this occurs in both parts of his rational faculty, namely the theoretical and the practical rational faculties, and also in his representative faculty, then it is this man who receives Divine Revelation, and God Almighty grants him Revelation through the mediation of the Active Intellect, so that the emanation from God Almighty to the Active Intellect is passed on to his Passive Intellect through the mediation of the Acquired Intellect, and then to the faculty of representation. Thus he is, through the emanation from the Active Intellect to his Passive Intellect, a wise man and a philosopher and an accomplished thinker who employs an intellect of divine quality, and through the emanation from the Active Intellect to his faculty of representation a visionary prophet: who warns of things to come and tells of particular things which exist at present.

11. This man holds the most perfect rank of humanity and has reached the highest degree of felicity. His soul is united as it were with the Active Intellect, in the way stated by us. He is the man who knows every action by which felicity can be reached. This is the first condition for being a ruler. Moreover, he should be a good orator and able to rouse [other people's] imagination by well chosen words. He should be able to lead people well along the right path to felicity and to the actions by which felicity is reached. He should, in addition, be of tough physique, in order to shoulder the tasks of war.

This is the sovereign over whom no other human being has any sovereignty whatsoever; he is the Imām; he is the first sovereign of the excellent city, he is the sovereign of the excellent nation, and the sovereign of the universal state.

12. But this state can only be reached by a man in whom twelve natural qualities are found together, with which he is endowed by birth. (1) One of them is that he should have limbs and organs which are free from deficiency and strong, and that they will make him fit for the actions which depend on them; when he intends to perform an action with one of them, he accomplishes it with ease. (2) He should by nature be good at understanding and perceiving everything said to him, and grasp it in his mind according to what the speaker intends and what the thing itself demands. (3) He should be good at retaining what he comes to know and see and hear and apprehend in general, and forget almost nothing. (4) He should be well provided with ready intelligence and very bright; when he sees the slightest indication of a thing, he should grasp it in the way indicated. (5) He should have a fine diction, his tongue enabling him to explain to perfection all that is in the recess of his mind. (6) He should be fond of learning and acquiring knowledge, be devoted to it and grasp things easily, without finding the effort painful, nor feeling discomfort about the toil which it entails. (7) He should by nature be fond of truth and truthful men and hate falsehood and liars. (8) He should by nature not crave for food and drink and sexual intercourse, and have a natural aversion to gambling and hatred of the pleasures which these pursuits provide. (9) He should be proud of spirit and fond of honour, his soul being by his (?) nature above everything ugly and base, and rising naturally to the most lofty things. (10) Dirham and dīnār and the other worldly pursuits should be of little amount in his view. (11) He should by nature be fond of justice and of just people, and hate oppression and injustice and those who practice them, giving himself and others their due, and urging people to act justly and showing pity to those who are oppressed by injustice; he should lend his support to what he considers to be beautiful and noble and just; he should not be reluctant to give in nor should he be stubborn and obstinate if he is asked to do justice; but he should be reluctant to give in if he is asked to do injustice and evil altogether. (12) He should be strong in setting his mind firmly upon the thing which, in his view, ought to be done, and daringly and bravely carry it out without fear and weak-mindedness.

13. Now it is difficult to find all these qualities united in one man, and, therefore, men endowed with this nature will be found one at a time only, such men being altogether very rare. Therefore if there exists such a man in the excellent city who, after reaching maturity, fulfils the six aforementioned conditions—or five of them if one excludes the gift of visionary prophecy through the faculty of representation—he will be the sovereign. Now when it happens that, at a given time, no such man is to be found but there was previously an unbroken succession of sovereigns of this kind, the laws and the customs which were introduced will be adopted and eventually firmly established.

The next sovereign, who is the successor of the first sovereigns, will be someone in whom those [twelve] qualities are found together from the time of his birth and his early youth and who will, after reaching his maturity, be distinguished by the following six qualities: (1) He will be a philosopher. (2) He will know and remember the laws and customs (and rules of conduct) with which the first sovereigns had governed the city, conforming in all his actions to all their actions. (3) He will excel in deducing a new law by analogy where no law of his predecessors has been recorded, following for his deductions the principles laid down by the first Imāms. (4) He will be good at deliberating and be powerful in his deductions to meet new situations for which the first sovereigns could not have laid down any law; when doing this he will have in mind the good of the city. (5) He will be good at guiding

the people by his speech to fulfil the laws of the first sovereigns as well as those laws which he will have deduced in conformity with their principles after their time. (6) He should be of tough physique in order to shoulder the tasks of war, mastering the serving as well as the ruling military art.

14. When one single man who fulfils all these conditions cannot be found but there are two, one of whom is a philosopher and the other fulfils the remaining conditions, the two of them will be the sovereigns of this city.

But when all these six qualities exist separately in different men, philosophy in one man and the second quality in another man and so on, and when these men are all in agreement, they should all together be the excellent sovereigns.

But when it happens, at a given time, that philosophy has no share in the government, though every other condition may be present in it, the excellent city will remain without a king, the ruler actually in charge of this city will not be a king, and the city will be on the verge of destruction; and if it happens that no philosopher can be found who will be attached to the actual ruler of the city, then, after a certain interval, this city will undoubtedly perish.

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*Al Farabi's image of a perfect leader is, as he admits, rare in history. How does this impact his notion of the perfect state? How does he get around this problem?*

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## 11–5

### Shiism and Caliph Ali: Controversy over the Prophet's succession

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Source: William C. Chittick, ed., *A Shiite Anthology* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1981, copyright: Muhammadi Trust of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), pp.68–72.

°Alī wrote these instructions to al-Ashtar al-Nakhaʿt when he appointed him governor of Egypt and its provinces at the time the rule of Muhammad ibn Abī Bakr was in turmoil. It is the longest set of instructions (in the *Nahj al-bal-āghah*). Among all his letters it embraces the largest number of good qualities.

## PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

This is that with which °Alī, the servant of God and Commander of the Faithful, charged Malik ibn al-Hārith al-Ashtar in his instructions to him when he appointed him governor of Egypt: to collect its land tax, to war against its enemies, to improve the condition of the people and to engender prosperity in its regions. He charged him to fear God, to prefer obedience to Him (over all else) and to follow what He has directed in His Book—both the acts He has made obligatory and those He recommends—for none attains felicity but he who follows His directions, and none is overcome by wretchedness but he who denies them and lets them slip by. (He charged him) to help God—glory be to Him—with his heart, his hand and his tongue, for He—majestic is His Name—has promised to help him who exalts Him. And he charged him to break the passions of his soul and restrain it in its recalcitrance, for the soul incites to evil, except inasmuch as God has mercy.

**PART TWO: COMMANDS AND INSTRUCTIONS  
CONCERNING RIGHTEOUS ACTION IN THE  
AFFAIRS OF THE STATE**

Know, O Mālik, that I am sending you to a land where governments, just and unjust, have existed before you. People will look upon your affairs in the same way that you were wont to look upon the affairs of the rulers before you. They will speak about you as you were wont to speak about those rulers. And the righteous are only known by that which God causes to pass concerning them on the tongues of His servants. So let the dearest of your treasures be the treasury of righteous action. Control your desire and restrain your soul from what is not lawful to you, for restraint of the soul is for it to be equitable in what it likes and dislikes. Infuse your heart with mercy, love and kindness for your subjects. Be not in face of them a voracious animal, counting them as easy prey, for they are of two kinds: either they are your brothers in religion or your equals in creation. Error catches them unaware, deficiencies overcome them, (evil deeds) are committed by them intentionally and by mistake. So grant them your pardon and your forgiveness to the same extent that you hope God will grant you His pardon and His forgiveness. For you are above them, and he who appointed you is above you, and God is above him who appointed you. God has sought from you the fulfillment of their requirements and He is trying you with them.

Set yourself not up to war against God, for you have no power against His vengeance, nor are you able to dispense with His pardon and His mercy. Never be regretful of pardon or rejoice at punishment, and never hasten (to act) upon an impulse if you can find a better course. Never say, "I am invested with authority, I give orders and I am obeyed," for surely that is corruption in the heart, enfeeblement of the religion and an approach to changes (in fortune). If the authority you possess engender in you pride or arrogance, then reflect upon the tremendousness of the dominion of God above you and His power over you in that in which you yourself have no control. This will subdue your recalcitrance, restrain your violence and restore in you what has left you of the power of your reason. Beware of vying with God in His tremendousness and likening yourself to Him in His exclusive power, for God abases every tyrant and humiliates all who are proud.

See that justice is done towards God and justice is done towards the people by yourself, your own family and those whom you favor among your subjects. For if you do not do so, you have worked wrong. And as for him who wrongs the servants of God, God is his adversary, not to speak of His servants. God renders null and void the argument of whosoever contends with Him. Such a one will be God's enemy until he desists or repents. Nothing is more conducive to the removal of God's blessing and the hastening of His vengeance than to continue in wrongdoing, for God harkens to the call of the oppressed and He is ever on the watch against the wrongdoers.

Let the dearest of your affairs be those which are middlemost in rightfulness, most inclusive in justice and most comprehensive in (establishing) the content of the subjects. For the discontent of the common people invalidates the content of favorites, and the discontent of favorites is pardoned at (the achievement of) the content of the masses. Moreover, none of the subjects is more burdensome upon the ruler in ease and less of a help to him in trial than his favorites. (None are) more disgusted by equity, more importunate in demands, less grateful upon bestowal, slower to pardon (the ruler upon his) withholding (favor) and more deficient in patience at the misfortunes of time than the favorites. Whereas the support of religion, the solidarity of Muslims and preparedness in the face of the enemy lie only with the common people of the community, so let your inclination and affection be toward them.

Let the farthest of your subjects from you and the most hateful to you be he who most seeks out the faults of men. For men possess faults, which the ruler more than anyone else should conceal. So do not uncover those of them which are hidden from you, for it is only incumbent upon you to remedy what appears before you. God will judge what is hidden from you. So veil imperfection to the extent you are able; God will veil that of yourself which you would like to have veiled from your subjects. Loose from men the knot of every resentment, sever from yourself the cause of every animosity, and ignore all that which does not become your station. Never hasten to believe the slanderer, for the slanderer is a deceiver, even if he seems to be a sincere advisor.

Bring not into your consultation a miser, who might turn you away from liberality and promise you poverty; nor a coward, who might enfeeble you in your affairs; nor a greedy man, who might in his lust deck out oppression to you as something fair. Miserliness, cowardliness and greed are diverse temperaments which have in common distrust in God.

Truly the worst of your viziers are those who were the viziers of the evil (rulers) before you and shared with them in their sins. Let them not be among your retinue, for they are aides of the sinners and brothers of the wrongdoers. You will find the best of substitutes for them from among those who possess the like of their ideas and effectiveness but are not encumbered by the like of their sins and crimes; who have not aided a wrongdoer in his wrongs nor a sinner in his sins. These will be a lighter burden upon you, a better aid, more inclined toward you in sympathy and less intimate with people other than you. So choose these men as your special companions in privacy and at assemblies. Then let the most influential among them be he who speaks most to you with the bitterness of the truth and supports you least in activities which God dislikes in His friends, however this strikes your pleasure. Cling to men of piety and veracity. Then accustom them not to lavish praise upon you nor to (try to) gladden you by (attributing to you) a vanity you did not do, for the lavishing of abundant praise causes arrogance and draws (one) close to pride.

Never let the good-doer and the evil-doer possess an equal station before you, for that would cause the good-doer to abstain from his good-doing and habituate the evil-doer to his evil-doing. Impose upon each of them what he has imposed upon himself.

Know that there is nothing more conducive to the ruler's trusting his subjects than that he be kind towards them, lighten their burdens and abandon coercing them in that in which they possess not the ability. So in this respect you should attain a situation in which you can confidently trust your subjects, for trusting (them) will sever from you lasting strain. And surely he who most deserves your trust is he who has done well when you have tested him, and he who most deserves your mistrust is he who has done badly when you have tested him.

Abolish no proper custom (*sunnah*) which has been acted upon by the leaders of this community, through which harmony has been strengthened and because of which the subjects have prospered. Create no new custom which might in any way prejudice the customs of the past, lest their reward belong to him who originated them, and the burden be upon you to the extent that you have abolished them.

Study much with men of knowledge (*'ulamā'*) and converse much with sages (*hukanā'*) concerning the consolidation of that which causes the state of your land to prosper and the establishment of that by which the people before you remained strong.

### **PART THREE: CONCERNING THE CLASSES OF MEN**

Know that subjects are of various classes, none of which can be set aright without the others and none of which is independent from the others. Among them are (1.) the soldiers of God, (2.) secretaries for the common people and the people of distinction, executors of justice, and

administrators of equity and kindness, (3.) payers of *jizyah* and land tax, namely the people of protective covenants and the Muslims, (4.) merchants and craftsmen and (5.) the lowest class, the needy and wretched. For each of them God has designated a portion, and commensurate with each portion He has established obligatory acts (*farīdah*) in His Book and the Sunnah of His Prophet—may God bless him and his household and give them peace—as a covenant from Him maintained by us.

Now soldiers, by the leave of God, are the fortresses of the subjects, the adornment of rulers, the might of religion and the means to security. The subjects have no support but them, and the soldiers in their turn have no support but the land tax which God has extracted for them, (a tax) by which they are given the power to war against their enemy and upon which they depend for that which puts their situation in order and meets their needs. Then these two classes (soldiers and taxpayers) have no support but the third class, the judges, administrators and secretaries, for they draw up contracts, gather yields, and are entrusted with private and public affairs. And all of these have no support but the merchants and craftsmen, through the goods which they bring together and the markets which they set up. They provide for the needs (of the first three classes) by acquiring with their own hands those (goods) to which the resources of others do not attain. Then there is the lowest class, the needy and wretched, those who have the right to aid and assistance. With God there is plenty for each (of the classes). Each has a claim upon the ruler to the extent that will set it aright. But the ruler will not truly accomplish what God has enjoined upon him in this respect except by resolutely striving, by recourse to God's help, by reconciling himself to what the truth requires and by being patient in the face of it in what is easy for him or burdensome.

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*What advice does Ali give the al-Ashtar about policy towards the proper customs of the subject peoples?*

## Chapter 12

# *The Early Middle Ages in the West to 1000: The Birth of Europe*

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### 12–1

#### **The Institutes of Justinian from the *Corpus Iuris Civilis***

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From *The Institutes of Justinian* with English introduction, trans. and notes by C. Sandars (London: Longmans Green and Co., 6th ed., 1878). Book IV Title xviii, pp. 503–06, *passim*.

#### **INSTITUTES AND CODE**

Public prosecutions bear no resemblance to the other legal remedies of which we have been speaking. There is a great difference between them both in the mode in which they are begun and in that in which they are carried on.

They are called public, because generally any citizen may institute them.

Some public prosecutions are capital, some are not. We term capital those which involve the extreme punishment of the law, or the interdiction from fire and water, or deportation, or the mines. Those which carry with them infamy and a pecuniary penalty are public, but not capital.

Public prosecutions are instituted under the following laws. The Julian Treason Law, which subjects to its severe provisions all who attempt anything against the emperor or State. The penalty it inflicts is the loss of life, and the memory of the guilty is condemned even after his death.

Also the Julian Adultery Law, which punishes with death not only those who are guilty of adultery, but those who give themselves up to works of lewdness with their own sex. The same law also punishes seduction without violence of a virgin, or of a widow of honest character. The penalty upon offenders of honorable condition is

the confiscation of half their fortune, upon those of low condition, corporal punishment and relegation.

Also the Cornelian Murder and Lethal Weapons Law, which strikes with the sword of vengeance murders and those who for the purpose of killing a man go armed with a lethal weapon. By the same law, poisoners are capitally condemned who by hateful arts use poisons or magic charms to kill men, or publically sell hurtful drugs.

Another law, the Pompeian Intrafamily Murder Law, inflicts upon the most horrible of crimes an unusual punishment. It provides, that anyone who has hastened the death of a parent or child, or of any other relation whose murder is legally termed parricide, whether he acts openly or secretly, and whoever instigates or is an accomplice in the commission of a crime, although a stranger, shall undergo the penalty of parricide. He will be punished, not by the sword, nor by fire, nor by any ordinary mode of punishment, but he is to be sewed up in a sack with a dog, a cock, a viper, and an ape, and enclosed in this horrible prison he is to be, according to the nature of the place, thrown into the sea, or into a river, that even in his lifetime he may begin to be deprived of the use of the elements, and that the air may be denied to him while he lives, and earth when he dies.<sup>1</sup>

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*In the excerpts from Justinian's Institutes, deterrence is obviously the overriding consideration. How much of a part does deterrence play in philosophes of law today? What other considerations influence the way our own society attempts to cope with the offenses indicated?*

<sup>1</sup>The fact that the dog could not see for ten days or so after birth symbolized the parricide's blindness to natural decency; the rooster's crowing symbolized arrogant pride; the viper symbolized treachery; the monkey's semi-human appearance symbolized having human attributes but not the right ones.

Schröder, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Deutsche Chroniken* (Hannover: Hahn, 1892), vol. 1, pp. 339–53, *passim*.

The Empire remained without a head. The lords of Rome set the crown on Saint Peter's Altar. Meeting all together, they swore before the people that never again would they choose a king—nor judge, nor anyone else to rule them—from the kin of the preceding house, which had proven unable to maintain faith and honor with them. They wanted kings from other lands. . . .

According to a custom of those days, young princes

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### 12–2

#### **The Book of Emperors and Kings, Charlemagne and Pope Leo III**

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From *The Book of Emperors and Kings (Der keiser und der kunige buoch)*. Trans. Henry A. Myers from text published as *Die Kaiserchronik eines Regensburger Geistlichen*, ed. Eduward

from all over the Empire were raised and instructed with great care at the court in Rome. The Romans gave them the sword of knighthood when the time came. . . ., sending the young heirs back to their homelands. This helped keep all the dominions mindful of serving Rome.

It came to pass that Pippin, a mighty king of Karlingen,<sup>1</sup> had two fine sons. One of them named Leo came to hold Saint Peter's throne after being raised in Rome, while Charles, the other, stayed home.

One night when Charles fell asleep, a voice called out to him three times: "Arise, beloved Charles, and hurry to Rome! Your brother Leo needs you!" And quickly Charles made ready, saying nothing to anyone about what he intended to do until he asked leave of the King to go. . . .

When the young Prince asked for leave, his father granted it to him gladly and bestowed gifts upon his son in a manner worthy of a mighty king. . . .

Charles really undertook his journey more for [the chance to pray at the tombs of] the divine Apostles than for his brother's sake. Early and late in the day his thoughts, which he revealed to no one, were filled with love of God. . . .

When Charles arrived in Rome, he was given a fine reception by old and young. . . . Pope Leo sang a mass then in honor of the Holy Ghost and to strengthen the Prince's spirit. Then he received God's Body. All who were there praised God, finding Charles so worthy and to their liking that the law should make him their ruler.

Charles did not listen to what was being said: He had made his journey for the sake of prayer, and he let no commotion distract him. He entered churches barefoot and, imploring God's mercy, he prayed for his soul. This steadfast devotion brought him every worldly honor, too. . . .

Thus he spent four weeks so wrapped in prayer and meditation that no one could approach him to speak, until once his brother, Pope Leo, and all the people fell at his feet. Charles pointed out to God in Heaven that if he were to prove unworthy he never should have made his journey. Then he received the royal emblems, and they set a magnificent crown on his head. All those there in Rome rejoiced that day, and all said, "Amen."

Then the King sat in judgment, and the Pope made complaint before him that church properties and the collection of tithes, entrusted to him by his predecessors for his use in the saving of souls, were being granted away from his jurisdiction, and that his benefices had been taken from him. His complaint angered a number of the nobles.

Then Charles spoke these true ruler's words: "Never in this world, I feel sure, did anyone make a gift to honor God in order that another might take it. That would clearly be robbery. . . . Whoever would take anything away from

gifts bestowed on God's houses, through which God's work is furthered, would be despised of God and could not remain a good Christian. . . ." Then those nobles departed, full of resentment. Charles also had no desire to remain there any longer.

Charles returned to Ripuarria.<sup>2</sup> The Romans realized very well that he was their rightful judge, but stupid men among them ridiculed the others for ever having proclaimed him ruler. . . . In Saint Peter's Cathedral they caught the Pope and pushed his eyes out of their sockets.... and sent him blind to the King in Ripuarria.

Nothing remained for the Pope to do but set out on the journey in his hapless condition. He rode on a donkey and took with him two of his chaplains, desiring no other escort. . . .

The Pope arrived in Ingelheim with his two chaplains and rode into the King's courtyard. When the King saw him coming, he said to one of his men: "Someone has attacked this pilgrim, and we shall do justice in his cause if we can. He seems badly injured. Someone must have robbed him. . . ."

The King strode quickly across the courtyard... and said: "Good pilgrim, if you wish to stay here with me, I will gladly take you in. Tell me if your misfortune is such that I can help you with it. Why don't you dismount?"

The noble Pope wanted to draw closer to the King. His head hung at a strange angle, and his eyes stared askew. "That God should have granted me your presence!" he began. . . . "It has not been long since I sang a mass for you at Rome, when I could still see." As he spoke these words, the noble King recognized him and was so shocked that he could neither see nor hear. . . . His body went limp and he could not speak. . . .

When the Emperor had recovered, the Pope told him sorrowfully: "I have come here that you may take pity on me. It was because of you that I lost my eyes: they blinded me to get even with you. Still, Brother, you must pull yourself together, and weep no more. . . ."

The Emperor himself lifted him down and carried him across the courtyard into his private chamber. There they sat together, and Charles told his men to go outside. "Brother," he said, "how did this happen to you? Let me hear your complaint, and then my forces of justice will right the wrong."

Pope Leo answered the King: "Brother, after you left Rome, the Romans very soon betrayed their loyalty to me in a conspiracy. They caught me in the Cathedral and committed this terrible crime upon me. Brother, we must bear this patiently: I seek vengeance only in Heaven, and you must not injure any of them for this."

"It would be doing God a dishonor to spare those murderers!" the noble King replied. "Ah! How sorely that

<sup>1</sup>"Karlingen," the name given by several medieval German writers to the domain of Charlemagne and his ancestors, is probably a derivation by analogy on the assumption that the name of the great Charles (Karl) was given to his whole family domain. Similarly, his grandson Lothar's name was applied to Lorraine (Lotharingen).

<sup>2</sup>Territorial home of one historic group of the Franks on the Rhine River; for the author, this location is sometimes synonymous with "Karlingen," sometimes one of its provinces.

would injure Christendom. I am called 'Judge' and 'Ruler': and this means I have the duty of judging over the peoples. . . . I must defend Christendom with the sword. You will have them sorely regret their crime against you. I will avenge your eyes, or I will renounce my sword."

Then he dispatched messengers to King Pippin to tell him of his great need and let the nobles of Karlingen know that if they ever wanted to render God a loving service they should hurry to him. And there were none in Karlingen but who proclaimed all with one voice: "Woe to the fatal hour that Rome was ever founded!"...

The messengers galloped ceaselessly from land to land and from lord to vassal: all men were willing to come to the cause of Charles. Farmers and merchants, too—no one could hold them back. They left all their belongings and set out to join Charles. The mourning and grief over the news traveled through Christendom from people to people, and the streams of warriors converged like clouds over the Great Saint Bernard Pass. . . . The book does not give a number for the total army, but it was the greatest military expedition that ever descended on Rome.

When the army had advanced to within sight of the Aventine Hill in Rome, the worthy King asked three days and nights for himself. This annoyed his great lords, who went to him to say that it ill became his office to pause there, now that they had come so close that they could see the city which had aggrieved them.

"First we must pray to God, for we must gain His leave to carry through," answered the King. "Then we shall fight with ease. . . ."

Early one morning the voice of God spoke to him: "God in Heaven commands you, King, to remain here no longer. Ride on to Rome: God has rendered judgment, and just vengeance shall overtake them."

And so the King's banner was raised, and Charles let word pass through his whole army that when the knights were prepared for battle they should keep their eyes upon the banner and ride in close formation. Hearts swelling with high spirits, Charles's men swarmed over the hill. . . .

Owī, what an army this was that besieged Rome and the Lateran for seven days and seven nights, so menacingly that no one would fight against it! On the eighth day—this is the truth I am telling you—the Romans ordered the city gates opened and offered to let the King enter with this condition: that any man who could prove himself innocent of committing, aiding, or advising the crime would remain in the King's favor, while the King would deal with the guilty ones after deciding on a just sentence. . . .

As the Emperor sat in judgment and the document naming the guilty men was read, the accused all fervently denied their guilt when they were called forward. The King ordered them to submit to trial by combat for their unwillingness to confess. But then the Romans objected that this was not according to their law, and that no Emperor had ever forced such treatment on them before; instead, they should prove their innocence by swearing with their two fingers.

Then King Charles spoke: "I doubt that any crime so great was ever committed before. Don't be overhasty now: I imagine my brother saw at the time who did it." Still, when so very many of the accused offered their oaths in the Cathedral, the King said: I will not deprive you of recourse to your own law any longer; however, I know of a youth here named Pancras. If you are willing to swear an oath at his grave and if he tolerates it, then I will be willing to believe you."

Icy fear seized the Romans at the mention of this test. As they came to the place sacred to Saint Pancras and were supposed to hold up their fingers and to keep asserting their innocence under oath, one man was overcome, and panic gripped all the rest. They retreated in fear and fled back over the bridge although a fair number went back to Saint Peter's Cathedral.

Charles hesitated no longer but rode after them angrily. For three days, he and his men struck them down, and for three days they carried them out. Then they washed down the floor stones. . . . Charles fell on his knees before Saint Peter's tomb and made his plea to Christ: "Lord God in Heaven, how can I be any good to You as King when You let such shame befall me? Sinner that I may be, I do make every attempt to judge the people in a manner worthy of You. The Romans swore allegiance to a Pope, and You granted him a portion of Your power that he might loose the people from their sins and bind them. I [ask]... that you give the evil people of Rome something to recognize Your hidden power by: then they will know for certain that You are a true God. Grant me this, Holy Christ!"

A second time Charles, the noble King, fell to the ground and said: "Hail noble Saint Peter! You are really a divine stalwart of God, a watchman of Christendom. Think now, my lord, what I am going through! You are a summoner of the Kingdom of Heaven. Just look at your Pope! I left him sound of body in your care. Blinded was how I found him, and if you do not heal the blind man today I shall destroy your Cathedral and ruin the buildings and grounds donated to you, and then I shall leave him for you blind as he is, and go back again to Ripuarium."

Quickly the noble Pope Leo made himself ready and said his confession. As he spoke the last word, he saw a heavenly light with both his eyes. Great are hidden powers of God.

The Pope turned around and spoke to the multitude: "My dearest children gathered from afar, be glad of heart, for the Kingdom of God is drawing near to you. God has heard you and because of your holy prayer has turned His face toward you. Here, at this very place, you are called to be public witnesses that a great miracle has happened. . . . I can see with both eyes better than I ever saw in this world." . . .

The Pope consecrated him as Emperor and granted absolution to all his comrades in arms. Owī, what joy there was in Rome then! The whole people rejoiced then and sang: "*Gloria in excelsis Deo.*"

Then Charles laid down the Imperial Law, as an angel recited the true words of God to him. . . . And so the



mighty Emperor left us many good laws, which God caused to be spoken before him. . . .

The very first laws the Emperor established dealt with what seemed to him to be the most exalted matters, those concerning bishops and priests, for the Imperial Law of Constantine had been sadly neglected. At the same time, he established laws governing tithes and gifts of property to the Church. . . .

Now I shall tell you about what the peasant is to wear according to the Imperial Law: his clothes may be black or gray, and he is allowed no other. . . . He is to have shoes of cow leather only and seven yards of towcloth for his shirt and breeches. He is to spend six days at the plow and doing plenty of other work; on Sunday he is to go to Church, carrying his animal goad openly in his hand. If a sword is found on a peasant, he is to be led bound to the churchyard fence, where he is to be tied and his skin and hair are to be flayed. If he is threatened by enemies, however, let him defend himself with a pitchfork. This law King Charles established for his peasants. . . .

Emperor Charles besieged a walled city called Arles [France], which actually took him more than seven years. The inhabitants had considered him unworthy of his office. By way of an underground canal, wine was conveyed to them in plentiful supply, but finally Charles's cunning succeeded in cutting off their source. When the inhabitants could not hold out any longer, they threw open the city gates and fought fiercely, offering no terms at all. So many were slain on both sides that there is no man who can tell another how many of either the Christians or the heathens were lying there dead after the battle. No one could tell the dead apart until the Emperor solved the problem with God's help: He found the Christians lying separately in well adorned coffins. Now that is a wonder really worth telling about. . . .

The Emperor and his men turned toward Galicia [in Spain], where the king of the heathens inflicted great losses upon them. The Christian soldiers were all slain, and Charles barely escaped from the battle. Today the stone stays wet on which Charles sat afterwards, weeping passionately as he lamented his sins, saying: "Hail to You, God sublime! Grant me mercy for my poor soul. Take me out of this world, so that my people will no longer be punished because of me. I can never be consoled again."

Then an angel comforted him, saying: "Charles, beloved of God, your joy will come to you quickly. Bid your messengers make haste to summon virgin women—leave the married ones at home—for God will reveal His power through them. If you will fear and love God, the maidens will win your honor back again for you."

The messengers made haste and thoroughly searched through all the lands. They gathered together the maidens and brought them together . . . where the Emperor was waiting for them. Many a young maid came to join the host, fifty-three thousand—I am telling you this as a fact—and sixty-six more. . . .

When all the maidens arrived in a valley since named for Charles, they readied themselves for battle in formations just like men. . . .

Each heathen sentry was struck by wonder as to who this people could be, for it all seemed very strange to them. They hurried back, and one of them said to their king: "Sire, even though we slew the old ones, we must tell you for a fact that the young ones have followed them here. I have the feeling they want to slake their thirst for vengeance. They are big around the chest. Sire, if you fight with them, it will not come to any good end. Their hair is long, and their gait is very graceful: They are fine knights indeed. They are a terrifying lot. . . . No force could ever be assembled on this earth to defeat them. . . ."

At the advice of his experienced counsellors, their king turned over hostages to the Emperor. The king then had himself baptized—how well he suddenly believed in God!—and all his people with him. . . . Thus God made Charles victorious without the thrust of a spear or the blow of a sword, and the maidens well realized that God in Heaven was with them.

Charles and his heroines returned to their own homes back in the Empire. On the way, the worthy maidens came to a green meadow. Tired from the expedition, the heroines stuck their spearshafts into the ground and stretched out their arms in the form of a cross, sleeping on the ground after praising God for the goodness which He had shown them. They stayed there overnight, and a great miracle occurred. Their spearshafts had turned green and had sent forth leaves and blossoms. That is why the place is called "Woods of the Spearshafts"; it can be seen to this day.

Charles, the rich and powerful, built a mighty and beautiful church for the praise of Holy Christ, the honor of Saint Mary and all God's maidens, and the solace of Christendom. Since through chastity and spiritual purity the maids achieved their victory, the church is called *Domini Sanctitas*.<sup>3</sup>

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*How does the author establish Charlemagne as a model Christian ruler?*

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<sup>3</sup>This church is the Emperor's Chapel, the main and oldest part of the Aachen Cathedral, also called Saint Mary's.

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12–3

**Benedict of Nursia:**  
*The Rule of St. Benedict*

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From *Documents of the Christian Church*, ed. Henry Bettenson (New York:Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 116–128.

I. *Of the Kinds of Monks.*

II. *Of the Character of the Abbot.*

III. *Of calling the Brethren to Counsel.*—Whenever matters of importances have to be dealt with in the monastery, let the abbot summon the whole congregation and himself put forward the question that has arisen. Then, after hearing the advice of the brethren let him think it over by himself and do what he shall judge most advantageous. Now we have said that all should be summoned to take counsel for this reason, that it is often to the younger that the Lord reveals what is best. But let the brethren give advice with all subjection of humility, so as not to presume obstinately to defend their own opinions; rather let the matter depend on the abbot's judgement, so that all should submit to whatever he decide to be best. Yet, just as it becomes the disciples to obey their master, so it behoves him to order all things with prudence and justice.

And in all things let all follow the Rule as their guide: and let no one diverge from it without good reason. Let no one in the monastery follow his own inclinations, and let no one boldly presume to dispute with his abbot, whether within or without the monastery. If anyone so presume, let him be subject to the discipline of the Rule. The abbot, for his part, should do everything in the fear of the Lord and in observance of the Rule; knowing that he will surely have to give account to God for all his decisions, as to a most impartial judge. If it happen that matters of less moment have to be dealt with, let him avail himself of the advice of the seniors only; as it is written: 'Do all things with counsel, and thou shalt not thereafter repent' [Ecclus. xxxii. 19.]

VIII. *Of the Divine Office at Night.*—In the winter time, that is from the First of November until Easter, according to what is reasonable, they must rise at the eighth hour of the night, so that they rest a little more than half the night, and rise when they have had their full sleep. But let the time that remains after vigils be spent in study by those brothers who have still to learn any part of the psalter or lessons. From Easter, moreover, until the aforesaid First of November, let the hour of keeping vigils be so arranged that, after a short interval, in which the brethren may go out for the necessities of nature, lauds, which are always to be said at break of day, may follow immediately.

XVI. *How Divine Office shall be said in the Daytime.*—As the prophet says: 'Seven times in the day do I praise Thee.' This sacred number seven will thus be fulfilled by us if, at lauds, at the first, third, sixth, ninth hours, at vesper

time and at 'completorium' we perform the duties of our service; for it is of these hours of the day that he said: 'Seven times in the day do I praise Thee' [Ps. cxix. 164]. For, concerning the night hours, the same prophet says: 'At midnight I arose to confess unto thee' [*ibid.* 62]. Therefore, at these times, let us give thanks to our Creator concerning the judgements of his righteousness; that is, at matins, etc. . . . and at night we will rise and confess to him. . . .

XX. *Of Reverence in Prayer.*—When we make application to men in high positions we do not presume to do so without reverence and humility; how much more, then, are we bound to entreat God, the Lord of all, with all humility and devout purity of heart. And we must recognize that we are heard not for our much speaking, but for our purity of heart and tears of contrition. Therefore our prayer must be brief and pure—unless it chance to be prolonged with the inspiration of God's grace. When we assemble together, let the prayer be quite brief; and let us all rise together, when the Prior gives the signal.

XXI. *Of the Deans of the Monastery.*—If the congregation be a larger one, let there be chosen from it brothers of good reputation and of godly life; and let them be made deans. And they shall be watchful over their deaneries in all things, according to the commands of God and the precepts of their abbot. And the deans elected shall be such that the abbot may with confidence share his burdens with them. And they shall not be elected according to seniority, but according to the merit of their life and their learning and wisdom. And, should any one of these deans be found to be blameworthy, being puffed up by pride; and if, after being admonished once and again and a third time, he be unwilling to amend—let him be deposed; and let another, who is worthy, be chosen in his place.

XXII. *How the Monks are to sleep.*—Let them sleep in separate beds, and let their beds be suitable to their manner of life, as the Abbot shall appoint. If possible, let them all sleep in one room. But if there be too many for this, let them take their rest in groups of 10 or 20, with seniors in charge of each group. Let a candle be kept burning in the cell until morning. Let them sleep clothed, girdled with belts or cords—but without knives at their sides, lest they injure themselves in sleep. And thus let the monks be always ready; and, when the signal is given, let them rise without delay and rival one another in their haste to the service of God, yet with all reverence and modesty.

Let not the younger brothers have beds by themselves, but dispersed among the seniors. And when they rise for the service of God let them gently encourage one another, because the sleepy ones are apt to make excuses.

XXIII. *Of Excommunication for Faults.*—If a brother be found contumacious or disobedient, proud or a grumbler, or in any way acting contrary to the holy Rule and despising the orders of his seniors, let him, according to the Lord's commandment, be privately admonished once and twice by his seniors. If he do not then amend, let him be publicly rebuked before all. But if even then he do not correct himself, let him be subjected to excommunication,

if he understands the gravity of this penalty. If, however, he is incorrigible, let him undergo corporal chastisement.

XXIV. *Of the Extent of Excommunication.*—The extent of the excommunication or discipline is to be regulated according to the gravity of the fault; and this is to be decided by the abbot's discretion. If a brother be found guilty of a lighter fault, he shall be excluded from the common table; he shall also intone neither psalm nor antiphon in the oratory, or read a lesson, until he has atoned. He shall take his meals alone, after those of the brethren; if, for example, the brothers have their meal at the sixth hour, he shall have his at the ninth. . . .

XXV. *Of Grave Faults.*—The brother who is held guilty of a graver fault shall be suspended both from table and from the oratory. None of the brothers may in any way consort with him, or have speech with him. He shall be alone at the labour enjoined upon him, and continue in the sorrow of penitence; knowing that terrible sentence of the Apostle who said that such a man was given over to the destruction of the flesh in order that his soul might be saved at the day of the Lord [I Cor. v. 5]. His portion of food he shall take alone, in the measure and at the time that the abbot shall appoint as suitable for him. Nor shall he be blessed by any one who passes by, nor the food that is given him.

XXVI. *Of those who, without being ordered by the Abbot, consort with the Excommunicated.*—If any brother presume, without an order of the abbot, in any way to associate with an excommunicated brother, or to speak with him, or to give an order to him: he shall suffer the same penalty of excommunication.

XXVII. *What care the Abbot should exercise with regard to the Excommunicated.*—The abbot shall show the utmost solicitude and care towards brothers that offend: 'They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick [Matt. ix. 12]. And therefore he ought to use every means, as a wise physician; to send 'playmates,' i.e. older and wiser brothers, who, as it were secretly, shall console the wavering brother and lead him to the atonement of humility. And they shall comfort him lest he be overwhelmed by excess of sorrow. But rather, as the same apostle says [2 Cor. ii. 8], charity shall be confirmed in him, and he shall be prayed for by all. For the abbot should employ the utmost solicitude, and take care with all prudence and diligence, lest he lose any of the sheep entrusted to him. For he should know that he has undertaken the care of weak souls, not the tyranny over the strong. And he shall fear the threat of the prophet through whom the Lord says: 'Ye did take that which ye saw to be strong, and that which was weak ye did cast out' [? cf. Ezek. xxxiv]. And let him imitate the pious example of the good Shepherd, who, leaving the ninety and nine sheep upon the mountains, went out to seek the one sheep that had gone astray: and He had such compassion upon its infirmity, that He deigned to place it upon His sacred shoulders, and thus to carry it back to the flock.

XXVIII. *Of those who, being often rebuked, do not amend.*—If any brother, having frequently been rebuked

for any fault, do not amend even after he has been excommunicated, a more severe chastisement shall fall upon him; that is, the punishment of the lash shall be inflicted upon him. But if he do not even then amend; or, if perchance (which God forbid) puffed up with pride he try even to defend his deeds: then the abbot shall act as a wise physician. If he have applied the fomentations, the ointments of exhortation, the medicaments of the Divine Scriptures; if he have proceeded to the last cauterization of excommunication, or flogging, and if he see that his efforts avail nothing: let him also (what is more powerful) call in the prayer of himself and all the brothers for him: that God who can do all things may work a cure upon a sick brother. But if he be not healed, even in this way, then at last the abbot may use the surgeon's knife, as the apostle says: 'Remove evil from, you' [I Cor. v. 13], lest one diseased sheep contaminate the whole flock.

XXIX. *Whether Brothers who leave the Monastery ought again to be received.*—A brother who goes out, or is cast out, of the monastery for his own fault, if he wish to return, shall first promise every amends for the fault on account of which he departed; and thus he shall be received into the lowest degree—so that thereby his humility may be proved. But if he again depart, up to the third time he shall be received. Knowing that after this every opportunity of return is denied to him.

XXX. *Concerning Boys under Age, how they shall be corrected.*—Every age or intelligence ought to have its proper bounds. Therefore as often as boys or youths, or those who are less able to understand how great is the punishment of excommunication; as often as such persons offend, they shall either be punished with extra fasts, or coerced with severe blows, that they may be healed.

XXXIII. *Whether the Monks should have anything of their own.*—More than any thing else is this vice of property to be cut off root and branch from the monastery. Let no one presume to give or receive anything without the leave of the abbot, or to retain anything as his own. He should have nothing at all: neither a book, nor tablets, nor a pen—nothing at all. For indeed it is not allowed to the monks to have bodies or wills in their own power. But for all things necessary they must look to the Father of the monastery; nor is it allowable to have anything which the abbot has not given or permitted. All things shall be common to all, as it is written: 'Let not any man presume or call anything his own' [Acts iv. 32]. But if any one is found delighting in this most evil vice: being warned once and again, if he do not amend, let him be subjected to punishment.

XXXIV. *Whether all ought to receive Necessaries equally.*—As it is written: 'It was divided among them singly, according as each had need' [Acts iv. 35]: whereby we do not say—far from it—that there should be respect of persons, but a consideration for infirmities. Wherefore he who needs less, let him thank God and not be grieved; but he who needs more, let him be humiliated on account of his weakness, and not made proud on account of the indulgence that is shown him. And thus all members will

be in peace. Above all, let not the evil of grumbling appear, on any account, by the least word or sign whatever. But, if such a grumbler is discovered, he shall be subjected to stricter discipline.

XXXV. *Of the Weekly Officers of the Kitchen.*—The brothers shall wait on each other in turn that no one shall be excused from the kitchen-work, unless he be prevented by sickness, or by preoccupation with some matter of great necessity whereby is gained a greater reward and increase of charity. . . . An hour before each meal the weekly servers are to receive a cup of drink and a piece of bread over and above their ration, so that they may wait on their brethren without grumbling or undue fatigue. But on solemn days they shall fast till after Mass. . . .

XXXVI. *Of the Sick Brethren.*—Before all things, and above all things, care must be taken of the sick; so that the brethren shall minister to them as they would to Christ himself; for he said: ‘I was sick and ye visited me’ [Matt. xxv. 36], and ‘Inasmuch as, etc.’ [*ibid.* 40]. But let the sick, on their part, remember that they are being cared for to the honour of God; and let them not by their abundance offend the brothers who serve them: which (offences) nevertheless are patiently to be borne, for, from such, a greater reward is acquired. Wherefore let the abbot take the greatest care that they suffer no neglect. And for these infirm brothers a cell shall be set apart, and a servitor, God-fearing, and diligent and careful. The use of baths shall be offered to the sick as often as is necessary: to the healthy, and especially to youths, more rarely. The eating of meat also shall be allowed to the sick, and to the delicate, to assist their recovery. But when they have grown better, they shall all, in the usual manner, abstain from flesh. The abbot, moreover, shall take the greatest care that the sick be not neglected by the cellarer or by the servitors: for whatever fault is committed by the disciples recoils upon him.

XXXVII. *Of the Old and Young.*—Although human nature itself is prone to have consideration for these ages—that is, old age and infancy,—nevertheless the authority of the Rule also should provide for them. Their weakness shall always be taken into account, and in the matter of food, the strict tenor of the Rule shall by no means be observed, as far as they are concerned; but they shall be treated with kind consideration, and may anticipate the regular (canonical) hours [*sc.* of meals].

XXXVIII. *Of the Weekly Reader.*—At the meal times of the brothers there should always be reading; no one may dare to take up the book at random and begin to read there; but he who is about to read for the whole week shall begin his duties on Sunday. And, entering upon his office after Mass and Communion, he shall ask all to pray for him, that God may avert from him the spirit of elation. And this verse shall be said in the oratory three times by all, he however beginning it: ‘O Lord, open Thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Thy praise.’ And thus, having received the benediction, he shall enter upon his duties as reader. And there shall be the greatest silence at table, so that no whispering or any voice save the reader’s may be

heard. And whatever is needed, in the way of food, the brethren should pass to each other in turn, so that no one need ask for anything. But if anything should be wanted let them ask for it by means of a sign rather than by speech. . . .

XXXIX. *Of the Amount of Food.*—We think it sufficient for the daily meal, either at the sixth or the ninth hour, that there be, at all seasons, two cooked dishes. And this because of the weaknesses of different people, so that he who happens not to be able to eat of one may make his meal of the other. Let two dishes, then, suffice for the brethren: or if fruits or fresh vegetables are obtainable, a third may be added. Let one pound of bread suffice for a day, whether there be one principal meal, or both dinner and supper. If there is to be supper, the cellarer must keep back a third of the pound, to be given out at supper. But if unusually heavy work has been done it shall be in the discretion and power of the abbot to make some addition; avoiding excess, above all things, that no monk be overtaken by indigestion. . . . All must abstain from the flesh of four-footed beasts, except the delicate and the sick.

XL. *Of the Amount of Drink.*—Each one has his own gift from God, the one in this way, the other in that [I Cor. ix. 17]. Therefore it is with some hesitation that the amount of daily sustenance for others is fixed by us. Nevertheless, in view of the weakness of the infirm we believe that one pint of wine a day is enough for each one. Let those to whom God gives the ability to endure abstinence know that they will have their reward. But the prior shall judge if either the nature of the locality or labour, or the heat of summer, requires more; taking care in all things lest satiety or drunkenness creep in. Indeed we read that wine is not suitable for monks at all. But because, in our day, it is not possible to persuade the monks of this, let us agree at least as to the fact that we should not drink to excess, but sparingly. For wine can make even the wise to go astray. Where, moreover, owing to local conditions, the amount aforesaid cannot be provided,—but much less or nothing at all—those who live there shall bless God and shall not grumble. And we admonish them as to this above all: that they be without grumbling.

XLI. *At what Hours the Brothers ought to take their Refection.*—From the holy Easter time until Pentecost the brothers shall have their refection at the sixth hour; and at evening they shall sup. From Pentecost, moreover, through the whole summer—unless the monks have hard labour in the fields, or the extreme heat of the summer oppress them—they shall fast on Wednesday and Friday until the ninth hour: but on the other days they shall have their meal at the sixth hour. Which sixth hour, if they have ordinary work in the fields, or if the heat of summer is not great, shall be kept to for the meal; and it shall be for the abbot to decide. And he shall so arrange all things, that their souls may be saved on the one hand; and that, on the other, what the brothers do they shall do without any justifiable grumbling. Moreover, from the 13th of September to the beginning of Lent they shall have their meal at the ninth hour.

But during Lent they shall have the meal in the evening, at such time as enables them to finish in daylight. . . .

XLII. *Of Silence after Compline.*—Monks should practise silence at all times, but especially in the hours of night. Therefore on all days, whether fasting days or otherwise, let them sit together as soon as they have risen from supper (if it be not a fast day) and let one of them read the ‘Collations’ [‘Selections’] or ‘Lives of the Fathers,’ or something, else which may edify the hearers. But not the Heptateuch, or ‘Kings’; for it will not profit weak intellects to listen to that part of Scripture at that hour; but they may be read at other times. . . . At the end of the reading... let them say Compline [*Completorium*] and when that is over, let no one be allowed to speak to anyone. If anyone be found breaking this law of silence he shall undergo severe punishments. Unless the presence of guests should require speech, or the abbot should chance to issue some order. But, even so, let it be done with the utmost gravity and moderation.

XLVIII. *Of the daily Manual Labour.*—Idleness is enemy of the soul. And therefore, at fixed times, the brothers ought to be occupied in manual labour; and again, at fixed times, in sacred reading. Therefore we believe that both these ought to be arranged thus: from Easter until the 1st of October, on coming out of Prime they shall do what labour may be necessary until the fourth hour. From the fourth hour until about the sixth, they shall apply themselves to reading. After the meal of the sixth hour, moreover, rising from table, they shall rest in their beds in complete silence; or, perchance, he that wishes to read may read to himself in such a way as not to disturb any other. And None shall be said rather before the time, about the middle of the eighth hour; and again they shall work at their tasks until evening. But, if the needs of the place or poverty demand that they labour at the harvest, they shall not grieve at this: for then they are truly monks if they live by the labours of their hands; as did also our fathers and the apostles. Let all things be done with moderation, however, on account of the fainthearted. From the 1st of October, moreover, until the beginning of Lent they shall be free for reading until the end of the second hour. At the second hour Terce shall be said, and all shall labour at the task which is enjoined upon them until the ninth. The first signal of None having been given, they shall each one leave off his work; and be ready when the second signal strikes. After the meal they shall be free for their readings or for psalms. But in the days of Lent, from dawn until the end of the third hour, they shall be free for their readings; and, until the end of the tenth hour, they shall do the labour that is enjoined on them. In which days of Lent they shall each receive a book from the library; which they shall read entirely through in order. These books are to be given out on the first day of Lent. Above all there shall certainly be appointed one or two elders, who shall go round the monastery at the hours in which the brothers are engaged in reading, and see to it that no troublesome brother chance to be found who is engaged in idleness or gossip instead of reading. . . . On Sunday all shall be occupied in reading,

except those who are assigned to various duties. But if any is so negligent or slothful that he lacks the will or the ability to read, let some task within his capacity be given him, that he be not idle. For the weak or delicate brethren some work or craft must be found to keep them from idleness while not overwhelming them with such heavy labour as to drive them away. The abbot is to take their infirmity into consideration.

XLIX. *Of the Observance of Lent.*—The life of a monk should be always as if Lent were being kept. But few have virtue enough for this, and so we urge that during Lent he shall utterly purify his life, and wipe out, in that holy season, the negligence of other times. This is duly performed if we abstain from vices and devote ourselves to prayer with weeping, to study and heartfelt contrition and to abstinence. And so, in those days, let us of ourselves make some addition to our service—special prayers, and special abstinence in food and drink; so that each of us shall offer, over and above his appointed portion, a freewill offering to God, with the joy of the Holy Spirit. Let him discipline his body in respect of food, drink, sleep, chatter, and mirth; and let him look forward to holy Easter with the joy of spiritual longing. And let each announce his offering to the abbot that it may be done with his prayers and with his approval. For whatever is done without the leave of the spiritual father is to be set down to presumption and pride, and not to the credit of a monk.

L. *Of those who work away from the Monastery, or those on a Journey.* [They must observe the Hours.]

LI. *Of those who go on Short Journeys.* [They must not eat outside, without leave of the abbot.]

LIII. *Of the Reception of Guests.*—All guests are to be received as Christ himself; for He Himself said: ‘I was a stranger and ye took Me in’ [Mt. xxv. 35]. And to all, fitting honour shall be shown; but, most of all, to servants of the faith and to pilgrims. When, therefore, a guest is announced, the prior or the brothers shall run to meet him, with every service of love. And first they shall pray together; and thus they shall be joined together in peace. Which kiss of peace shall not first be offered, unless a prayer have preceded, on account of the wiles of the devil. In the salutation itself, moreover, all humility shall be shown. In the case of all guests arriving or departing: with inclined head, or with prostrating of the whole body upon the ground, Christ, who is also received in them, shall be adored. The guests moreover, having been received, shall be conducted to prayer; and afterwards the prior, or one whom he himself orders, shall sit with them. The law of God shall be read before the guest that he may be edified; and, after this, every kindness shall be shown. A fast may be broken by the prior on account of a guest; unless, perchance, it be a special day of fast which cannot be violated. The brothers, moreover, shall continue their customary fasts. The abbot shall give water into the hands of his guests; and the abbot as well as the whole congregation shall wash the feet of all guests. This being done, they shall say this verse: ‘We have received, O Lord, Thy

loving-kindness in the midst of Thy temple' [Ps. xlvi. 8, Vulgate=xlvi. 9, E.V.]. Chiefly in the reception of the poor and of pilgrims shall care be most anxiously shown: for in them Christ is received the more. For the very fear of the rich exacts honour for them. The kitchen of the abbot and the guests shall be by itself; so that guests coming at uncertain hours, as is always happening in a monastery, may not disturb the brothers. Into the control of this kitchen, two brothers, who can well fulfil that duty, shall enter yearly; and to them, according as they shall need it, help shall be administered; so that they may serve without grumbling. And again, when they are less occupied they shall go out where they are commanded to, and labour. . . .

LIV. *Whether a Brother may receive Letters or Gifts.* [No; except by leave of the abbot.]

LV. *Of Clothing.*—Clothing shall be given to the brothers according to the nature of the places where they dwell, or the climate. For in cold regions more is required; but in warm, less. This is a matter for the abbot to decide. We nevertheless consider that for temperate places a cowl and tunic apiece shall suffice—the cowl in winter hairy, in summer fine or worn—and a scapular for work. And for the feet, shoes and stockings. Concerning the colour and size of all of which things the monks shall not talk; but they shall be such as can be found in the province where they are or as can be bought the most cheaply. The abbot, moreover, shall provide, as to the measure, that those vestments be not short for those using them; but of suitable length. And, when new ones are received, they shall always straightway return the old ones, to be kept in the wardrobe for the benefit of the poor. It is enough, moreover, for a monk to have two tunics and two cowls; a spare one for nights, and to permit them to wash the things themselves. Everything, then, that is over this is superfluous, and ought to be removed. And the shoes, and whatever is old, they shall return when they receive something new. And those who are sent on a journey shall receive cloths for the loins from the wardrobe; which on their return they shall restore, having washed them. And there shall be cowls and tunics somewhat better than those which they have ordinarily: which, when they start on a journey, they shall receive from the wardrobe, and, on returning, shall restore. For bedding, a mattress, a woollen blanket, a woollen under-blanket, and a pillow shall suffice. And these beds are frequently to be searched by the abbot for private property. And, if anything is found belonging to any one which he did not receive from the abbot, he shall be subjected to the most severe discipline. And, in order that this vice of property may be cut off at the roots, all things which are necessary shall be given by the abbot: that is, a cowl, a tunic, shoes, stockings, girdle, a knife, a pen, a needle, a handkerchief, tablets: so that all excuse of necessity shall be removed.

LVIII. *Concerning the Manner of receiving Brothers.*—When any new comer applies for admission, an easy entrance shall not be granted him: but, as the Apostle says, 'Try the spirits if they be of God' [I John iv. I]. Therefore, if he who comes perseveres in knocking, and is seen after

four or five days to endure with patience the insults inflicted upon him, and the difficulty of entrance, and to persist in his demand, entrance shall be allowed him, and he shall remain for a few days in the cell of the guests. After this he shall be in the cell of the novices, where he shall meditate and eat and sleep. And an elder brother shall be appointed for him who shall be capable of saving souls, who shall watch him with the closest scrutiny, and make it his care to see if he reverently seek God, if he be zealous in the service of God, in obedience, in suffering shame. And all the harshness and roughness of the means through which God is approached shall be told him in advance. If he promise perseverance in his steadfastness, after the lapse of two months this Rule shall be read to him in order, and it shall be said to him: 'Behold the law under which thou dost wish to serve; if thou canst observe it, enter; but if thou canst not, depart freely.' If he have stood firm thus far, then he shall be taken into the aforesaid cell of the novices; and again he shall be tried with every kind of endurance. And, after the lapse of six months, the Rule shall be read to him; that he may know upon what he is entering. And, if he stand firm thus far, after four months the same Rule shall again be re-read to him. And if, having deliberated with himself, he shall promise to keep everything, and to obey all the commands that are laid upon him: then he shall be received in the congregation; knowing that it is decreed, by the law of the Rule, that from that day he shall not be allowed to depart from the monastery, nor to free his neck from the yoke of the Rule, which, after such long deliberation, he was at liberty either to refuse or receive. He who is to be received, moreover, shall, in the oratory, in the presence of all, make promise concerning his steadfastness and the change in his manner of life and his obedience to God and to His saints; so that if, at any time, he act contrary, he shall know that he shall be condemned by Him whom he mocks. . . .

LXIV. *Of the Appointing of an Abbot.*—In appointing an abbot this principle shall always be observed: that such a one shall be put into office as the whole congregation, according to the fear of God, with one heart—or even a part, however small, of the congregation with more prudent counsel—shall have chosen. He who is to be ordained, moreover, shall be elected for merit of life and learnedness in wisdom; even though he be the lowest in rank in the congregation. But even if the whole congregation with one consent shall have elected a person willing to connive at their vices (which God forbid), and those vices shall in any way come clearly to the knowledge of the bishop to whose diocese that place pertains, or to the neighbouring abbots or Christians: the latter shall not allow the consent of the wicked to prevail, but shall set up a worthy steward of the house of God; knowing that they will receive a good reward for this, if they do it in pureness of heart and with zeal for God. Just so they shall know, on the contrary, that they have sinned if they neglect it. The abbot who is ordained, moreover, shall reflect always what a burden he is undertaking, and to whom he is to render account of his

stewardship. He shall know that he ought rather to be of help than to command. He ought, therefore, to be learned in the divine law, that he may know how to bring forth both the new and the old; chaste, sober, merciful. He shall always exalt mercy over judgement, that he may obtain the same. He shall hate vice, he shall love the brethren. In his blame itself he shall act prudently and do nothing excessive; lest, while he is too desirous of removing the rust, the vessel be broken. And he shall always suspect his own frailty; and shall remember that bruised reed is not to be crushed. By which we do not say that he shall permit vice to be nourished; but prudently, and with charity, he shall remove it, according as he finds it to be expedient in the case of each one, as we have already said. And he shall strive rather to be loved than feared. He shall not be troubled and anxious; he also shall not be too obstinate; he shall not be jealous and too suspicious; for then he will have no rest. In his commands he shall be prudent, and shall consider whether they be of God or of the world. He shall use discernment and moderation with regard to the labours which he enjoins, thinking of the discretion of holy Jacob who said: 'if I overdrive my flocks they will die all in one day.' [Gen. xxxiii. 13]. Accepting therefore this and other testimony of discretion the mother of the virtues, he shall so temper all things that there may be both what the strong desire, and the weak do not shrink from. And, especially, he shall keep the present Rule in all things;...

LXV. *Of the Provost.*—[Not to consider himself a 'second abbot.']

LXVI. *Concerning the Doorkeepers of the Monastery.*—At the door of the monastery shall be placed a wise old man who shall know how to receive a reply and to return one; whose ripeness of age will not permit him to gossip. The doorkeeper ought to have a cell next to the door; so that those arriving may always find one present from whom they may receive a reply. And straightway, when any one has knocked, or a poor man has called out, he shall answer, 'Thanks be to God!' or shall give the blessing; and with all the gentleness of the fear of God he shall quickly give a reply with the fervour of charity. And if this doorkeeper need assistance he may receive a younger brother.

A monastery should, if possible, be so arranged that everything necessary—that is, water, a mill, a garden, a bakery—may be available, and different trades be carried on, within the monastery; so that there shall be no need for the monks to wander about outside. For this is not at all good for their souls. We wish, moreover, that this Rule

be read very often in the congregation; lest any of the brothers excuse himself on account of ignorance.

LXVIII. *If Impossible things are enjoined.*—If it happen that any overwhelming or impossible task is set him, a brother should receive the command of one in authority with all meekness and obedience. But if he sees that the weight of the burden is utterly beyond his strength, let him, with patience and at a convenient time, suggest to his Superior what makes it impossible—without presumption or obstinacy or answering back. If, after this suggestion, the command of the superior stand as it was first given, the subordinate shall realize that thus it is expedient for him: and he shall obey, with all charity, and will trust in God's help.

LXIX. *No one shall take it on himself to take another's part.*

LXX. *No one shall take it on himself to strike another without orders.*

LXXI. *Monks shall obey each other.*

LXXII. *Of the Good Zeal which the Monk, should have.*—[A zeal mingled with charity, patience, and tolerance for others.]

LXX. *Concerning the Fact that not every Righteous Observance is decreed in this Rule.*—We have written out this Rule that we may show those observing it in the monasteries how to have some honesty of character, or the beginning of conversion. But for those who hasten to the perfection of living, there are the teachings of the holy Fathers; the observance of which leads a man to the heights of perfection. For what page, or what discourse, of Divine authority in the Old or the New Testament does not contain a most perfect rule for human life? Or what book of the holy Catholic Fathers does not tell us with the voice of a trumpet how by the right path we may come to our Creator? And the reading aloud of the Fathers, and their decrees, and their lives; also the Rule of our holy Father Basil—what else are they except instruments of virtue for well-living and obedient monks? We blush with shame for the idle, and the evil-living and the negligent. Thou that hastenest to the heavenly country, perform with Christ's aid this Rule which is written down as the least of beginnings: and then at length, under God's protection, thou wilt come to the greater things that we have mentioned; to the heights of learning and virtue.

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*Whatever elements of the Rule of St. Benedict are adopted by the Order of the Cluny?*

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## 12–4

### Leo I: The man who laid the foundations for the medieval Papacy

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Source: Filey Cooper and Matthew Schwartz, eds., *Roman letters: History from a Personal Point of View* (Detroit: Wayne State University, 1991), pp. 291–292.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, Saviour of the human race, desired to have the observance of divine religion shine out through God's grace unto all nations and races. He established it in such a way that truth, previously contained only in proclamations of the Law and the Prophets, might proceed from the Apostles' trumpet for the salvation of all, as it is written: "Their sound has gone forth unto all the earth: and their words unto the ends of the world." Now, the Lord desired that the dispensing of this gift should be shared as a task by all the Apostles, but in such a way that He put the principal charge on the most blessed Peter, the highest of all the Apostles. He wanted His gifts to flow into the entire body from Peter himself, as it were from the head... But the man who attempts to infringe on its power by furthering his own desires and not following practices received from antiquity is trying with absolutely blasphemous presumption, to destroy this most sacred solidity of that rock, established with God as the builder, as we mentioned. For he believes that he is subject to no law, that he is not restrained by any regulations that the Lord ordained. Being intent on novel

assumption of power, he departs from what you and we are accustomed to; he presumes to do what is illegal and neglects traditions that he ought to have maintained... Your Fraternities should, of course, realize with us that the Apostolic See (out of reverence for it) has countless times been reported to in consultation by bishops even in your province. And through the appeal of various cases to it, decisions already made have been either rescinded or confirmed, as dictated by long-standing custom. As a result, with "unity of spirit in the bond of peace" being preserved, with letters being sent and received, what was done in a holy manner has been conducive to abiding charity. For our solicitude, which seeks not its own interests but those of Christ, does not detract from the dignity given by God to the churches and the bishops of the churches. This was the procedure always well observed and profitably maintained by our predecessors. But Hilary has departed from it, aiming to disturb the status of the churches and harmony among the bishops by his novel usurpations of power. He seeks to subject you to his authority while not allowing himself to be under the Jurisdiction of the blessed Apostle Peter. He claims for himself the right to consecrate in all the churches of Gaul and takes as his own the dignity which belongs to the metropolitan bishops. He even lessens the reverence due to the most blessed Peter himself by his quite arrogant statements. And although the power to bind and loose was given to Peter before the others, still, in an even more special way, the pasturing of the sheep was entrusted to him. Anyone who thinks that the primacy should be denied to Peter cannot in any way lessen the Apostle's dignity: inflated with the wind of his own pride, he buries himself in hell.

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*Of what does Leo accuse Bishop Hilary?*

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## 12–5

### Law Code of the Visigoths

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From *Leges Visigothorum antiquiores*, ed. Karl Zeumer (Hanover and Leipzig: Hahn, 1894), pp. 58–59, 66, 103; trans. Henry A. Myers.

#### ATTACKS

1. Only the master or lord is to be considered guilty when a common man or a serf commits [these] crimes at his command.
2. When someone in possession of a place is driven from it by another who fails to get a court order for what he intends to do, that latter person will lose his case even if right is otherwise mostly on his side. The man who is attacked and displaced should receive back everything which he possessed in the condition it was in when he had it before and should retain it in assured safety. Moreover, if the guilty man should have taken possession of a property in a way which he cannot justify before a court, he shall lose his case and give to the man he attacked as much of this property as is equal to the value of the one he tried to take over. . . .
3. If someone assembles a gang (*turba*) for the purpose of committing murder, or has instigated some disruptive activity with the intent of doing someone bodily harm, or if he has committed people for this purpose,



the judge shall have him seized as soon as he learns of the misdeed. The ringleader shall lose his good name and receive sixty lashes before the judge; he must name all those who assembled at his instigation so that they—provided they are free men and not legally obedient to him—shall receive fifty lashes. Serfs, however, who belong to another lord but who took part in this crime, shall, as a deterrent to others, be stretched out before the judge and receive two hundred lashes. . . .

### **INDUCEMENT TO ROBBERY**

If a man has induced another to commit robbery, to destroy someone's goods, or to steal his sheep or other animals, he must pay to the person eleven times the value of what he stole. His free accomplices shall be fined five solidi each or shall, if they do not have enough money to pay this fine, receive fifty lashes. If serfs have committed such a crime without the approval of their lord they shall receive 150 lashes. All goods shall be returned on the spot.

### **(ROBBERY IN A LORD'S ABSENCE)**

While a lord is away or on a public military expedition no one shall disturb the peace of his estate. Let no one force entrance into the house of anyone who is away or taking

part in a public military expedition. If during such an absence anyone takes possession of an item he might have sued to get legally, he shall replace it with double its value. If, however, he takes something to which he had absolutely no legal claim, he shall replace it with triple its value.

### **CONCERNING THE MURDERERS OF RELATIVES OR CONCERNING THEIR PROPERTY**

Concerning those who have killed their next of kin, when a son kills his father or a father kills his son, or a husband kills his wife or the wife her husband, or a mother her daughter or a daughter her mother, or a brother his brother, a sister her sister [the list goes on] ... that person shall be condemned to death. A murderer, however, who flees to a church or to any holy altars and whose life is spared by the order of a ruler or judge must live in perpetual exile. All of his (or her) property shall be given to the heirs in the sequence provided by law or to the treasury in case the murdered person has left no heirs. For the murderer should not enjoy this property in freedom, even if he escapes with his life.

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*Can you see the institutions of manorialism and strict class differentiation in the Visigothic Code? Where in particular?*

## Chapter 13

# *The High Middle Ages (1000–1300)*

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### 13–1

## Gregory VII's Letter to the Bishop of Metz, 1081

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From *Documents of the Christian Church*, ed. Henry Bettenson (New York:Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 104–110.

Bishop Gregory, servant of the servants of God, to his beloved brother in Christ, Hermann bishop of Metz, greeting and apostolic benediction. It is doubtless owing to a dispensation of God that, as we learn, thou art ready to endure trials and dangers in defence of the truth. For such is His ineffable grace and wonderful mercy that He never allows His chosen ones completely to go astray—never permits them utterly to fall or to be cast down. For, after they have been afflicted by a period of persecution—a useful term of probation as it were,—He makes them, even if they have been for a time fainthearted, stronger than before. Since, moreover, manly courage impels one strong man to act more bravely than another and to press forward more boldly—even as among cowards fear induces one to flee more disgracefully than another,—we wish, beloved, with the voice of exhortation, to impress this upon thee: thou shouldst the more delight to stand in the army of the Christian faith among the first, the more thou art convinced that the conquerors are the most worthy and the nearest to God. Thy request, indeed, to be aided, as it were, by our writings and fortified against the madness of those who babble forth with impious tongue that the authority of the holy and apostolic see had no authority to excommunicate Henry—a man who despises the Christian law; a destroyer of the churches and of the empire; a patron and companion of heretics—or to absolve any one from the oath of fealty to him, seems to us to be hardly necessary when so many and such absolutely decisive warrants are to be found in the pages of Holy Scripture. Nor do we believe, indeed, that those who (heaping up for themselves damnation) impudently detract from the truth and contradict it have added these assertions to the audacity of their defence so much from ignorance as from a certain madness.

For, to cite a few passages from among many, who does not know the words of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who says in the gospel: 'Thou art Peter and upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon

earth shall be bound also in Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth shall be loosed also in Heaven'? [Matthew xvi. 18, 19.] Are kings excepted here? Or are they not included among the sheep which the Son of God committed to St Peter? Who, I ask, in view of this universal concession of the power of binding and loosing, can think that he is withdrawn from the authority of St Peter, unless, perhaps, that unhappy man who is unwilling to bear the yoke of the Lord and subjects himself to the burden of the devil, refusing to be among the number of Christ's sheep? It will help him little to his wretched liberty that he shake from his proud neck the divinely granted power of Peter. For the more any one, through pride, refuses to bear it, the more heavily shall it press upon him unto damnation at the judgement.

The holy fathers, as well in general councils as in their writings and doings, have called the Holy Roman Church the universal mother, accepting and serving with great veneration this institution founded by the divine will, this pledge of a dispensation to the church, this privilege entrusted in the beginning and confirmed to St Peter the chief of the apostles. And even as they accepted its statements in confirmation of their faith and of the doctrines of holy religion, so also they received its judgements—consenting in this, and agreeing as it were with one spirit and one voice: that all greater matters and exceptional cases, and judgements over all churches, ought to be referred to it as to a mother and a head; that from it there was no appeal; that no one should or could retract or reverse its decisions....

... Shall not an authority founded by laymen—even by those who do not know God,—be subject to that authority which the providence of God Almighty has for His own honour established and in his mercy given to the world? For His Son, even as He is undoubtingly believed to be God and man, so is He considered the highest priest, the head of all priests, sitting on the right hand of the Father and always interceding for us. Yet He despised a secular kingdom, which makes the sons of this world swell with pride, and came of His own will to the priesthood of the cross. Who does not know that kings and leaders are sprung from men who were ignorant of God, who by pride, robbery, perfidy, murders—in a word, by almost every crime at the prompting of the devil, who is the prince of this world—have striven with blind cupidity and intolerable presumption to dominate over their equals, that is, over mankind? To whom, indeed, can we better compare them, when they seek to make the priests of God bend to their feet, than to him who is head over all the sons of pride and who, tempting the Highest Pontiff Himself, the Head of priests, the Son of

the Most High, and promising to Him all the kingdoms of the world, said: 'All these I will give unto Thee if Thou wilt fall down and worship me'? who can doubt but that the priests of Christ are to be considered the fathers and masters of kings and princes and of all the faithful? Is it not clearly pitiful madness for a son to attempt to subject to himself his father, a pupil his master; and for one to bring into his power and bind with iniquitous bonds him by whom he believes that he himself can be bound and loosed not only on earth but also in Heaven? This the emperor Constantine the Great, lord of all the kings and princes of nearly the whole world, plainly understood—as the blessed Gregory reminds us in a letter to the emperor Maurice, when, sitting last after all the bishops, in the holy council of Nicaea, he presumed to give no sentence of judgement over them, but addressed them as gods and decreed that they should not be subject to his judgement but that he should be dependent upon their will. . . .

. . . Many pontiffs have excommunicated kings or emperors. For, if particular examples of such princes is needed, the blessed pope Innocent excommunicated the emperor Arcadius for consenting that St John Chrysostom should be expelled from his see. Likewise another Roman pontiff, Zacchary, deposed a king of the Franks, not so much for his iniquities as because he was not fitted to exercise so great power. And in his stead he set up Pepin, father of the emperor Charles the Great, in his place—releasing all the Franks from the oath of fealty which they had sworn him. As, indeed, the holy church frequently does by its authority when it absolves servitors from the fetters of an oath sworn to such bishops as, by apostolic sentence, are deposed from their pontifical rank. And the blessed Ambrose—who, although a saint, was still not bishop over the whole church—excommunicated and excluded from the church the emperor Theodosius the Great for a fault<sup>3</sup> which, by other priests, was not regarded as very grave. He shows, too, in his writings that gold does not so much excel lead in value as the priestly dignity transcends the royal power; speaking thus towards the beginning of his pastoral letter: 'The honour and sublimity of bishops, brethren, is beyond all comparison. If one should compare them to resplendent kings and diademed princes it would be far less worthy than if one compared the base metal lead to gleaming gold. For, indeed, one can see how the necks of kings and princes are bowed before the knees of priests; and how, having kissed their right hands, they believe themselves strengthened by their prayers.' And a little later: 'Ye should know, brethren, that we have mentioned all this to show that nothing can be found in this world more lofty than priests or more sublime than bishops.'

Furthermore every Christian king, when he comes to die, seeks as a pitiful suppliant the aid of a priest, that he may escape hell's prison, may pass from the darkness into the light, and at the judgement of God may appear

absolved from the bondage of his sins. Who, in his last hour (what layman, not to speak of priests), has ever implored the aid of an earthly king for the salvation of his soul? And what king or emperor is able, by reason of the office he holds, to rescue a Christian from the power of the devil through holy baptism, to number him among the sons of God, and to fortify him with the divine unction? Who of them can by his own words make the body and blood of our Lord,—the greatest act in the Christian religion? Or who of them possesses the power of binding and loosing in heaven and on earth? From all of these considerations it is clear how greatly the priestly office excels in power.

Who of them can ordain a single clerk in the holy Church, much less depose him for any fault? For in the orders of the Church a greater power is needed to depose than to ordain. Bishops may ordain other bishops, but can by no means depose them without the authority of the apostolic see. Who, therefore, of even moderate understanding, can hesitate to give priests the precedence over kings? Then, if kings are to be judged by priests for their sins, by whom can they be judged with better right than by the Roman pontiff?

In short, any good Christians may far more properly be considered kings than may bad princes. For the former, seeking the glory of God, strictly govern themselves, whereas the latter, seeking the things which are their own and not the things of God, are enemies to themselves and tyrannical oppressors of others. Faithful Christians are the body of the true king, Christ; evil rulers, that of the devil. The former rule themselves in the hope that they will eternally reign with the Supreme Emperor, but the sway of the latter ends in their destruction and eternal damnation with the prince of darkness, who is king over all the sons of pride.

It is certainly not strange that wicked bishops are of one mind with a bad king, whom they love and fear for the honours which they have wrongfully obtained from him. Such men simoniacally ordain whom they please and sell God even for a paltry sum. As even the elect are indissolubly united with their Head, so also the wicked are inescapably leagued with him who is the head of evil, their chief purpose being to resist the good. But surely we ought not so much to denounce them as to mourn for them with tears and lamentations, beseeching God Almighty to snatch them from the snares of Satan in which they are held captive, and after their peril to bring them at last to a knowledge of the truth.

We refer to those kings and emperors who, too much puffed up by worldly glory, rule not for God but for themselves. Now, since it belongs to our office to admonish and encourage every one according to the rank or dignity which he enjoys, we endeavour, by God's grace, to arm emperors and kings and other princes with the weapon of humility, that they may be able to allay the waves of the sea and the floods of pride. For we know that earthly glory and the cares of this world usually tempt men to pride, especially those in authority. So that they neglect humility and seek

<sup>3</sup>A savage massacre in Thessalonica, 390, as a reprisal for a riot.

their own glory, desiring to lord it over their brethren. Therefore it is of especial advantage for emperors and kings, when their minds tend to be puffed up and to delight in their own glory, to discover a way of humbling themselves, and to realize that what causes their complacency is the thing which should be feared above all else. Let them, therefore, diligently consider how perilous and how much to be feared is the royal or imperial dignity. For very few are saved of those who enjoy it; and those who, through the mercy of God, do come to salvation are not so glorified in the Holy Church by the judgement of the Holy Spirit as are many poor people. For, from the beginning of the world until our own times, in the whole of authentic history we do not find seven emperors or kings whose lives were as distinguished for religion and so adorned by miracles of power as those of an innumerable multitude who despised the world—although we believe many of them to have found mercy in the presence of God Almighty. For what emperor or king was ever so distinguished by miracles as were St Martin, St Antony and St Benedict—not to mention the apostles and martyrs? And what emperor or king raised the dead, cleansed lepers, or healed the blind? See how the Holy Church praises and venerates the Emperor Constantine of blessed memory, Theodosius and Honorius, Charles and Louis as lovers of justice, promoters of the Christian religion, defenders of the churches: it does not, however, declare them to have been resplendent with such glorious miracles. Moreover, to how many kings or emperors has the holy church ordered chapels or altars to be dedicated, or masses to be celebrated in their honour? Let kings and other princes fear lest the more they rejoice at being placed over other men in this life, the more they will be subjected to eternal fires. For of them it is written: ‘The powerful shall powerfully suffer torments.’<sup>6</sup> And they are about to render account to God for as many men as they have had subjects under their dominion. But if it be no little task for any private religious man to guard his own soul: how much labour will there be for those who are rulers over many thousands of souls? Moreover, if the judgement of the Holy Church severely punishes a sinner for the slaying of one man, what will become of those who, for the sake of worldly glory, hand over many thousands to death? And such persons, although after having slain many they often say with their lips ‘I have sinned,’ nevertheless rejoice in their hearts at the extension of their (so-called) fame. They do not regret what they have done. Nor are they grieved at having sent their brethren down to Tartarus. As long as they do not repent with their whole heart, nor agree to give up what they have acquired or kept through bloodshed, their repentance remains without the true fruit of penitence before God.

Therefore they should greatly fear and often call to mind what we have said above, that out of the innumerable host of kings in all countries from the beginning of the world,

very few are found to have been holy; whereas in one single see—the Roman—of the successive bishops from the time of blessed Peter the Apostle, nearly one hundred are counted amongst the most holy. And why is this, unless because kings and princes, enticed by vain glory, prefer, as has been said, their own things to things spiritual, whereas the bishops of the Church, despising vain glory, prefer God’s will to earthly things? The former are quick to punish offences against themselves, but lightly tolerate those who sin against God. The latter readily pardon those who sin against themselves, but do not readily forgive offenders against God. The former, too bent on earthly achievements, think little of spiritual ones; the latter, earnestly meditating on heavenly things, despise the things of earth. . . .

Therefore let those whom Holy Church, of its own will and after proper counsel, not for transitory glory but for the salvation of many, calls to have rule or dominion, humbly obey. And let them always beware in that point as to which St Gregory in that same pastoral book<sup>7</sup> bears witness: ‘Indeed, when a man disdains to be like to men, he is made like to an apostate angel. Thus Saul, after having possessed the merit of humility, came to be swollen with pride when at the summit of power. Through humility, indeed, he was advanced; through pride, rejected—God being witness who said: “When thou wast small in thine own eyes, did I not make thee head over the tribes of Israel?”’<sup>8</sup> And a little further on: ‘Moreover, strange to say, when he was small in his own eyes he was great in the eyes of God; but when he seemed great in his own eyes he was small in the eyes of God.’ Let them also carefully retain what God says in the gospel: ‘I seek not my own glory’; and, ‘He who will be the first among you shall be the servant of all.’<sup>9</sup> Let them always prefer the honour of God to their own; let them cherish and guard justice by observing the rights of every man; let them not walk in the counsel of the ungodly but, with an assenting heart, always consort with good men. Let them not seek to subject to themselves or to subjugate the Holy Church as a handmaid; but above all let them strive, by recognizing the teachers and fathers, to render due honour to the eyes of the Church—the priests of God. For if we are ordered to honour our fathers and mothers after the flesh—how much more our spiritual ones! And if he who has cursed his father or mother after the flesh is to be punished with death—what does he merit who curses his spiritual father or mother? Let them not, led astray by worldly love, strive to place one of their own sons over the flock for which Christ poured forth His blood, if they can find some one who is better and more useful than he: lest, loving their son more than God, they inflict the greatest damage on the Holy Church. For he who neglects to provide to the best of his ability for such a want—and, one might say, neces-

<sup>7</sup>Reg. Past. II. vi.

<sup>8</sup>I Sam. xv. 17.

<sup>9</sup>Jn. viii, 50, Matt. xx. 27.

<sup>6</sup>Wisdom vi. 6. Greek, ‘Mighty men shall be searched out mightily.’

sity—of Holy Mother Church is openly convicted of not loving God and his neighbour as a Christian should.

For if this virtue, love, has been neglected, no matter what good any one does he shall be without any fruit of salvation. And so by humbly doing these things, and by observing the love of God and of their neighbour as they ought, they may hope for the mercy of Him who said: ‘Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart.’<sup>10</sup> If they have humbly imitated

<sup>10</sup> Matt. xi. 29.

Him they shall pass from this servile and transitory kingdom to a true kingdom of liberty and eternity.

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*Why is Papal authority so important to Gregory and the Church? Could he have compromised?*

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## 13–2

### Duke William of Aquitaine: *Foundation Charter for the Abbey of Cluny, 909*

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From *The Tenth Century*, ed. R. S. Lopez; New York, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1959, pp. 14–15; by permission.

It is clear to all men of sane mind that the providence of God so decrees for any rich man that he may be able to deserve everlasting rewards by means of the goods he transitorily possesses, if he uses them well. . . .

And I, William, count [of Auvergne] and duke [of Aquitaine] by the gift of God, carefully pondering this, and desiring to provide for my own salvation while it is permissible for me, have considered it proper, nay, most necessary, that from the goods which have been temporarily conferred upon me, I am to give a small portion for the gain of my soul. . . . And in order to make this deed not a temporary but lasting one, I am to support at my own expense a congregation of monks, trusting and hoping that even though I myself am unable to despise all things, nevertheless, by taking charge of despisers of the world whom I deem to be righteous, “I may receive the reward of the righteous” [Matthew 10, 41].

Therefore. . . I hand over from my own domains to the holy apostles, Peter and Paul, the following goods legally held by me: the vill of Cluny with the court and demesne manor, and the chapel in honor of Saint Mary, mother of God, and of Saint Peter, prince of the apostles, together with all the goods pertaining to it, namely, the vills, the chapels, the serfs of both sexes, the vines, the fields, the meadows, the waters and their courses, the mills, the entrances and exits,

what is cultivated and what is not, all in their entirety. . . . [I give all this] with this understanding, that a regular monastery be constructed in Cluny in honor of the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and that there the monks shall congregate and live according to the rule of the blessed Benedict. . . .

And let the monks, as well as all the aforesaid possessions, be under the power and authority of the Abbot Bemon [d. 926], who shall regularly preside over them, as long as he lives, according to his knowledge and ability. But after his death, the same monks are to have power and permission to elect as abbot and rector any one of their order whom they will choose, in keeping with the will of God and the rule promulgated by Saint Benedict, so that they may not be impeded from making a canonical election by our opposition or that of any other power. Every five years, then, the aforesaid monks are to pay ten shillings to the church of the apostles for their lights. . . . We further will that every day they perform works of mercy toward the poor, the needy, the stranger and the pilgrim. . . .

The same monks there congregated are to be subject neither to our sway nor to that of our relatives, nor to the splendor of the royal greatness, nor to that of any earthly power. And I warn and beseech, through God and all His saints, and by the terrible Day of Judgment, that no one of the secular princes, no count whatever, no bishop at all, nor the pontiff of the aforesaid Roman See, is to invade the property of these servants of God, or alienate it, or impair it, or give it as a benefice to any one, or appoint any prelate over them against their will. . . . And I beseech you, Oh Peter and Paul, holy apostles and glorious princes of the earth, and you, Pontiff of the pontiffs of the apostolic see, that... you remove from the community of the holy church of God and of life eternal the robbers and invaders and alienators of these goods.

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*What elements of the Rule of St. Benedict are adopted by the Order of the Cluny?*

## 13–3

## St. Thomas Aquinas: *The Summa against the Gentiles (Summa Contra Gentiles)*, 1259–1264

From *St. Thomas Aquinas on Politics and Ethics* (Norton Critical Editions), translated and edited by Paul Sigmund (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1983), pp. 3–5.

### BOOK 1 CHAPTER 3

#### The Two Ways of Knowing the Truth about God.

There are two ways of knowing what we hold to be true about God. There are some truths about God that exceed the capacity of human reason—for example the fact that God is three and one. There are also some truths that natural reason can attain, such as that God exists, that he is one, and other truths of this kind. These are truths about God that have been conclusively proved by philosophers making use of their natural reason.

It is evident that there are some things to be known about God that completely exceed the capacity of human reason. Since all the knowledge that a person has about a thing is based on his understanding of its substance (according to the Philosopher [Aristotle] the basis for any argument is “what a thing is”),<sup>1</sup> the way the substance of a thing is understood must determine what is known about it. Thus if the human intellect comprehends the substance of, say, a stone or a triangle, no intelligible aspect of that thing is beyond the capacity of the human reason. However this is not the case for us with God. The human intellect can not achieve the understanding of God’s substance by means of its natural capacity because in this life all knowledge that is in our intellects originates in the senses. Hence things that are not perceived by the senses cannot be grasped by the human intellect except in so far as knowledge of them is gathered from the senses. But the objects of the senses cannot lead the human intellect to the point that in them it can see the divine substance as it is, for they are effects that are not equal in power to their cause. However our intellect is led from the objects of the senses to the knowledge of the existence of God—as well as to other attributes of the First Principle.<sup>2</sup> Therefore there are some things that can be known about God that are available to human reason, but there are others that totally exceed its power.

<sup>1</sup>Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics*, II, 3. For medieval philosophy, *substantia* is the underlying reality that distinguishes a thing from others and gives it independent existence.

<sup>2</sup>First Principle—God as the Foundation of all creation. For Aquinas’s argument that reason can lead us to the knowledge of the existence of God, see *Summa Theologiae*, I, qu. 2, a. 3. (p. 30).

### CHAPTER 4

#### Truths about God that are Known by Reason are also Properly Made Available to Man by Faith.

If it were left solely to reason to seek the truth about God, few men would possess a knowledge of God. There are three reasons why most men are prevented from carrying out the diligent inquiry that leads to the discovery of truth. Some are prevented from doing so because of their physical disinclination—as a result of which many men by nature are not disposed to learning. And so however earnest they are, they cannot attain the highest level of human knowledge which consists in knowing God. Others are prevented from doing so by the pressures of family life. Some men must devote themselves to managing temporal affairs and thus are not able to spend time in leisurely contemplative inquiry, so as to reach the highest point of human inquiry—the knowledge of God. Laziness prevents others. To know what reason can investigate concerning God requires that one already have a knowledge of many things, since almost all of philosophy is directed towards the knowledge of God. This is why we learn metaphysics, which is concerned with the divine, last among the subjects in the field of philosophy. The study of truth requires a considerable effort—which is why few are willing to undertake it out of love of knowledge—despite the fact that God has implanted a natural appetite for such knowledge in the minds of men.

### CHAPTER 7

#### Truths Based on Reason Are Not Contrary to the Truth of the Christian Faith.

Although the truth of the Christian faith exceeds the capacity of human reason, truths that reason is fitted by nature to know cannot be contrary to the truth of faith. The things that reason is fitted by nature to know are clearly most true, and it would be impossible to think of them as false.<sup>3</sup> It is also wrong to think that something that is held by faith could be false since it is clearly confirmed by God. Since we know by definition that what is false is contrary to the truth, it is impossible for the principles that reason knows by nature to be contrary to the truth of faith.

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We conclude therefore that any arguments made against the doctrines of faith are incorrectly derived from the self-evident first principles of nature. Such conclusions do not have the force of proofs, but are either doubtful opinions or sophistries, and so it is possible to answer them.

<sup>3</sup>Nature, for Aquinas, is purposive and man’s intellect is directed by nature to the knowledge of truth.

## CHAPTER 8

**The Relationship between the Human Reason and the Primary Truth of Faith.**

There is a further point to be considered. The objects of the senses on which human reason bases its knowledge retain some traces of likeness to God, since they exist and are good. This resemblance is inadequate because it is completely insufficient to manifest the substance of God. Effects possess a resemblance to causes in their own particular way because everything that acts does so in ways like itself, but effects do not always exhibit a perfect likeness to their cause. Now human reason is related to the knowledge of the truth of faith—which can only be known fully by those who see the

divine substance—in such a way that reason can attain likenesses of it that are true but not sufficient to comprehend the truth conclusively or as known in itself. Yet it is useful for the human mind to exercise its powers of reasoning, however weak, in this way provided that there is no presumption that it can comprehend or demonstrate [the substance of the divine]. For it is most pleasing to be able to see some aspect of the loftiest things, however weak and inadequate our consideration of them may be.

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*What truths about God are reserved to faith? What can reason tell us about God?*

## 13–4

**St. Thomas Aquinas: *On Kingship or The Governance of Rulers (De Regimine Principum)*, 1265–1267**

From *St. Thomas Aquinas on Politics and Ethics* (Norton Critical Editions), translated and edited by Paul Sigmund (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1988), pp. 14–20.

## CHAPTER 1

**Men in Society Must Be under Rulers.**

We must first explain what is meant by the term, king. When a thing is directed towards an end, and it is possible to go one way or another, someone must indicate the best way to proceed toward the end. For example, a ship that moves in different directions with the shifting winds would never reach its destination if it were not guided into port by the skill of its helmsman. Man too has an end towards which all the actions of his life are directed, since all intelligent beings act for an end. Yet the diversity of men's pursuits and activities means that men proceed to their intended objectives in different ways. Therefore man needs someone to direct him towards his end. Now every man is naturally endowed with the light of reason to direct his actions towards his end. If men were intended to live alone as do many animals, there would be no need for anyone to direct him towards his end, since every man would be his own king under God, the highest king, and the light of reason given to him from on high would enable him to act on his own. But man is by nature a political and social

animal.<sup>1</sup> Even more than other animals he lives in groups (*multitudine*). This is demonstrated by the requirements of his nature. Nature has given other animals food, furry covering, teeth, and horns and claws—or at least speed of flight—as means to defend themselves. Man however, is given none of these by nature. Instead he has been given the use of his reason to secure all these things by the work of his hands. But a man cannot secure all these by himself, for a man cannot adequately provide for his life by himself. Therefore it is natural for man to live in association with his fellows.

In addition, nature has installed in other animals the ability to perceive what is useful or harmful to them. For example, a sheep knows by nature that the wolf is its enemy. Some animals even have the natural ability to know the medicinal herbs and other things necessary to their existence. Man, on the other hand, has a natural knowledge of what is necessary to his life only in a general way, using his reason to move from general principles to the knowledge of particular things that are necessary for human life. And it is not possible for one man to arrive at the knowledge of all these things through the use of his reason. Thus it is necessary for him to live in society so that one person can help another and different men can employ their reasons in different ways, one in medicine, and others in this or that endeavor. This is most clearly demonstrated by the fact that man uses words to communicate his thoughts fully to others. It is true that other animals express their feelings in a general way. Dogs express their anger by barking and other animals express their feelings in other ways. But man is more able to

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<sup>1</sup>Aristotle (*Politics*, 1, 2) says man is a “political animal” (*zoon politikon*). Aquinas, following William of Moerbeke's translation, recognizes that in Greek thought the political had a broader meaning than in medieval times, and included society and social life as a whole.

communicate with others than other gregarious animals such as cranes, ants, or bees. [King] Solomon refers to this when he says “it is better for two to live together than alone, for they have the advantage of mutual company.”<sup>2</sup>

Therefore if it is natural for man to live in association with others, there must be some way for them to be governed. For if many men were to live together and each to provide what is convenient for himself, the group (*multitudo*) would break up unless one of them had the responsibility for the good of the group, just as the body of a man or an animal would disintegrate without a single controlling force in the body that aimed at the common good of all the members. As Solomon says, “Where there is no ruler, the people will be dispersed.”<sup>3</sup> This is reasonable since the private good and the common good are not the same. Private concerns divide the community, while common concerns unite it. Those differences exist for different reasons. Therefore besides what moves each person to his own private good there must be something that moves everyone to the common good of the many. Therefore in everything that is ordered to a single end, one thing is found that rules the rest. In the physical universe, by the intention of divine providence all the other bodies are ruled by the first or heavenly body, as divine providence directs, and all material bodies are ruled by rational creatures.<sup>4</sup> In each man the soul rules the body and within the soul reason rules over passion and desire. Likewise among the parts of the body there is one ruling part, either the heart or the head that moves all the others. So in every group, there must be something that rules.

When things are ordered to some end, one can proceed in the right way and the wrong way. So the government of a group can be carried out in the right way or the wrong way. Something is done in the right way when it is led to its appropriate end, and in the wrong way when it is led to an inappropriate end. The proper end of a group of free men is different from that of a group of slaves, for a free man determines his own actions while a slave, *qua* slave, is one who belongs to another. If then a group of free men is directed by a ruler to the common good of the group, his government will be right and just because it is appropriate for free men, but if the government is directed not at the common good of the group but at the private good of the ruler it will be unjust and a perversion. God warns such rulers in the Book of Ezekiel, “Woe to shepherds that feed themselves (because they seek their own benefit). Should

not the flocks be fed by the shepherd?”<sup>5</sup> Shepherds must seek the good of their flocks, and rulers, the good of those subject to them.

If a government is under one man who seeks his own benefit and not the good of those subject to him, the ruler is called a tyrant. The word is derived from *tyro*, the Greek word for “strength,” because he uses force to oppress the people instead of justice to rule. Hence among the ancients all powerful men were called tyrants. But if an unjust government is exercised not by one but by more than one, if they are few it is called an oligarchy which means “rule by the few.” In this case a few rich men oppress the people. Such a government differs only in number from a tyranny. An unjust government exercised by the many is called a democracy, that is, “rule by the people,” which occurs when the common people use the force of numbers to oppress the rich. In this case the whole people acts like a tyrant.<sup>6</sup>

We can also classify the types of just government. If the government is carried out by a large number, as when a group of warriors governs a city or province, it is usually called a polity.<sup>7</sup> But if a few virtuous men carry out the administration, a government of this kind is called an aristocracy, that is the best rule, or rule of the best, who for this reason are called the aristocrats. But if a good government is in the hands of one man alone, it is appropriate to call him a king. So the Lord said in [the Book of] Ezekiel, “My servant David will be king all over, and there will be one shepherd over all of them.”<sup>8</sup> Thus it is very clear that it is the nature of kingship that there should be one to rule and that he should be a shepherd who seeks the common good of all and not his own benefit.

Since men must live together because they cannot acquire what is needed to live if they remain by themselves, a social group is more perfect if it provides better for the necessities of life. A family in a single household provides adequately for some of the needs of life such as the natural acts of nourishment and the procreation of children, etc. In a single locality you will find self-sufficiency in a given manufacture. But a city which is a perfect community contains whatever is needed for life, and even more so a province because of the need for common defense and mutual aid against enemies. Therefore the right name for someone who rules a perfect community, whether a city or a province, is a king, while someone who directs a household is not called a king but the father of a family. Yet there is a certain resemblance to a king in his position so that sometimes kings are called the fathers of their people.

<sup>2</sup>Ecclesiastes, 4:9. Ecclesiastes was attributed to Solomon, King of Israel between 971 and 920 B.

<sup>3</sup>Proverbs, 11:14. The central chapters of Proverbs are also attributed to King Solomon.

<sup>4</sup>According to Aquinas’s cosmology the stars and planets are arranged hierarchically in a series of spheres with the heavenly sphere and fixed stars on the outside, giving motion to the rest. All the motions of the universe are subject to rational control of God and the intelligences of the angels. For the origins of this cosmology in Aristotle see his *De Caelo (On the Heavens)* I–II.

<sup>5</sup>Ezekiel, 34:2.

<sup>6</sup>This classification is derived from Aristotle’s *Politics*, III, 7–8.

<sup>7</sup>This is a garbled reference to Aristotle’s assertion (*Politics*, III, 7) that the shared excellence or virtue of a good government by the many is likely to be military, and the franchise will be related to the possession of arms.

<sup>8</sup>Ezekiel, 37:24. The reference is to King David who ruled over Israel in the 10th Century B.C. and was believed to be author of the Psalms.



From what we have said it is clear that a king is one who rules over the people of a city or a province for the common good. So Solomon says in [the Book of] Ecclesiastes. “A king commands all the lands subject to him.”<sup>9</sup>

## CHAPTER 2

### Is it Better for a Group to Be under One Ruler or Many?

Next we must inquire as to whether it is better for a province or a city to be ruled by one person or by many. We will approach this question from the point of view of the purpose of government.

The aim of any ruler should be to promote the welfare of the territory that he has been given to rule. The aim of a helmsman is to preserve his ship from the dangers of the sea and to bring it safely to port. The welfare of any organized group is based on the preservation of its unity in what we call peace. Without peace life in society is no longer beneficial and its divisions make social life burdensome. Thus the most important responsibility of the ruler of a community is to achieve unity in peace. Just as a doctor does not debate whether to cure a sick man under his care there is no reason for a ruler to question whether he should maintain the peace of the community under him. No one should debate about the end of an action but about the appropriate means. Therefore the Apostle [Paul] when he endorses the unity of the faithful says, “Be solicitous to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.”<sup>1</sup> Thus the more effective a government is in promoting unity in peace, the more useful it will be. We say more useful, because it leads more directly to its end. But it is evident that that which is itself one can promote unity better than that which is a plurality, just as the most effective cause of heat is that which is in itself hot. Therefore government by one person is better than by many.

Furthermore, it is evident that many persons cannot preserve the unity of a group if they generally disagree. Some agreement among them is necessary for them to govern at all. A number of men could not move a ship in one direction unless they worked together in some way. But a number of people are said to be united to the extent that they come closer to unity. It is better therefore for one person to rule than for many to try to achieve unity.

In addition, whatever is in accord with nature is best, for nature always operates for the best. But in nature government is always by one. Among the members of the body, the heart moves all the other parts; among the parts of the soul one power, reason, predominates. Among the bees there is one king bee, and in the whole universe one God is the Maker and Ruler of all.<sup>2</sup> This is in accord with reason

since every plurality derives from unity. Therefore since art imitates nature and a work of art is better to the degree that it resembles what is in nature, it follows that it is best for a human group (*multitudo*) to be ruled by one person.

This is also apparent from experience. Provinces and cities that are not ruled by one person are torn by dissension and disputes without peace so that the words of the Lord spoken through the Prophet [Jeremiah] seem to be fulfilled, “Many shepherds have destroyed my vineyard.”<sup>3</sup> On the other hand provinces and cities under a single king enjoy peace, justice flourishes, and they delight in the abundance of wealth. Hence the Lord through his prophets promises the people as a great favor that lie will place them under one hand and that there will be “one prince in the midst of them.”<sup>4</sup>

## CHAPTER 3

### Just Rule by One Person Is the Best Form of Government; Its Opposite Is the Worst.

Just as government by a king is best, so government by a tyrant is the worst. Democracy stands in opposition to polity as indicated above, since both are governments by the many. Oligarchy is opposed to aristocracy, since both are governments by the few. Kingship is the opposite of tyranny since both are governments by one person. We have shown above that kingship is the best form of government. Since that which is opposite to the best is the worst, it follows that tyranny is worst form of government.<sup>5</sup>

In addition a force that is united is more effective than one that is divided. Many persons working together can pull a load that individually they could not pull. Thus just as a force operating for good is better at producing good if it is one, so a force operating for evil is more harmful if it is one rather than divided. The power of an unjust ruler operates to the detriment of the group because he replaces the common good of the group with his own advantage. Similarly in good governments, since a more unified government is a more effective one, monarchy is better than aristocracy, and aristocracy is better than polity, while in bad governments the opposite is the case so that the more unified it is the more harmful it is. Thus tyranny is more harmful than oligarchy and oligarchy is more harmful than democracy.

Furthermore what makes a government unjust is the fact that the private interest of the ruler is pursued in preference to the common good of the society. The further he departs from the common good, the more unjust his government will be. An oligarchy departs from the common good more than a democracy because it seeks the good of the few

<sup>9</sup>Ecclesiastes, 5:8.

<sup>1</sup>Ephesians, 4:3.

<sup>2</sup>Aquinas probably derives his (inaccurate) knowledge of bees from Aristotle, *History of Animals*, V, 21.

<sup>3</sup>Jeremiah, 12:10.

<sup>4</sup>Jeremiah, 30:21. However, see the warning of the dangers of monarchy in I Samuel, 8.

<sup>5</sup>See Aristotle, *Politics*, III, 7.

rather than the many. Tyranny departs still more from the common good because it seeks the good of only one person. The greater number comes nearer to the whole than a few, and the few nearer than only one person. Tyranny therefore is the most unjust form of government.

We can see this when we consider the order of divine providence which directs everything in the best way. The good in things results from a single perfect cause, that is, from everything working together for good, while evil results from individual defects. There is no beauty in a body unless all its parts are properly integrated. Ugliness results from one member not fitting in properly. And so ugliness comes in different ways from many different causes while beauty comes in one way from a single perfect cause. In all cases of good and evil God seems to provide that good from one cause will be stronger and evil from many causes will be weaker. It is proper therefore that just government should be exercised by one person so that it can be stronger. But if the government becomes unjust it is better that it be exercised by many, so that it is weaker because of internal divisions. Therefore among unjust governments democratic government is the most tolerable of the unjust forms of government, while tyranny is the worst.

This is also apparent when one considers the evils that result from tyranny. The tyrant despises the common good and seeks his private good and as a result he oppresses his subjects in different ways and which goods will be affected will depend on the various passions to which he is subject. If he is subject to the passion of greed, he steals the property of his subjects. Thus Solomon says "A just king improves the land; a greedy man destroys it."<sup>6</sup> If he is dominated by the passion of anger, he sheds blood for nothing, so that it is said in Ezekiel "The princes among them are like wolves seizing their prey and shedding blood."<sup>7</sup> The wise man advises us to avoid this kind of government when he says "keep away from the man with the power to kill"<sup>8</sup> for he does not kill in pursuit of justice but uses his power to satisfy his willful lust. Thus when the ruler departs from law there is no security and everything is uncertain. No reliance can be placed on the will, not to speak of the lust, of another. He threatens not only the bodies of his subjects but also their spiritual welfare, since those who seek to use rather than to be of use to their subjects oppose any progress by their subjects since they suspect that any excellence among their subjects is a threat to their unjust rule. Tyrants always suspect the good rather than the evil and are always afraid of virtue. They seek to prevent their subjects from becoming virtuous and developing a public spiritedness which would not tolerate their

unjust domination. They prevent the bond of friendship from developing among their subjects and the enjoyment of mutual peace since as long as there is mutual distrust no attempt can be made to overthrow their rule. Therefore tyrants sow discord among them, promote dissension, and prohibit gatherings such as marriage celebrations and feasts and the like that foster familiarity and mutual trust among men.<sup>9</sup> They try to prevent their subjects from becoming powerful or rich since, judging their subjects on the basis of their own bad consciences, they suspect that they will also use their power and wealth to harm them. Thus Job says of the tyrant, "The sound of terror is always in his ears and even when there is peace (that is, no one is trying to harm him) he always suspects plots."<sup>1</sup> Thus it is that because rulers instead of inducing their subjects to be virtuous are wickedly jealous of their virtue and hinder it as much as they can, very few virtuous men are found under tyrants. For as Aristotle says, "Brave men are found where brave men are honored,"<sup>2</sup> and Cicero says, "What is despised by everyone decays and ceases to grow."<sup>3</sup> It is natural that men who are brought up in fear should become servile in spirit and cowardly in the face of any difficult or strenuous endeavor. So the Apostle [Paul] says "Fathers, do not provoke your children to indignation lest they become discouraged."<sup>4</sup> King Solomon had these evil effects of tyranny in mind when he said "When the wicked reign it is the ruination of men"<sup>5</sup> because the wickedness of tyranny leads their subjects to fall away from the perfection of virtue. He also says "When the wicked take power, the people weep as if they were being led into slavery" and "When the wicked rule, men will go into hiding" to avoid the cruelty of tyrants.<sup>6</sup> This is no wonder since one who does not rule according to reason but following the lusts of his spirit is no different from a beast, so that Solomon says "A wicked prince over his poor people is like a roaring lion and a ravenous bear."<sup>7</sup> So men hide from tyrants as from cruel beasts and there is no difference between being subject to a tyrant and being ravaged by a wild beast.

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*In light of the shortcomings demonstrated by democracy, does Aquinas have a strong argument? Why or why not?*

<sup>6</sup>Proverbs, 29:4

<sup>7</sup>Ezekiel, 22:27.

<sup>8</sup>Sirach (Wisdom), 9:13.

<sup>9</sup>The preceding description is similar to Aristotle's discussion of methods of preserving a tyranny in *Politics*, V, 11.

<sup>1</sup>Job, 15:21.

<sup>2</sup>Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, III.

<sup>3</sup>Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations*, 1, 2, 4.

<sup>4</sup>Colossians, 3:21.

<sup>5</sup>Proverbs, 28:12

<sup>6</sup>Proverbs, 29:2; 28:28.

<sup>7</sup>Proverbs, 28:15.

## 13–5

*The Magna Carta*

*Magna Carta*, trans. A. E. Dick Howard (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1964). Reprinted with permission of the University Press of Virginia.

John, by the grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, Duke of Normandy and Aquitaine, and Count of Anjou: To the Archbishops, Bishops, Abbots, Earls, Barons, Justiciaries, Foresters, Sheriffs, Reeves, Ministers, and all Bailiffs and others, his faithful subjects, Greeting. Know ye that in the presence of God, and for the health of Our soul, and the souls of Our ancestors and heirs, to the honor of God, and the exaltation of Holy Church, and amendment of Our kingdom, by the advice of Our reverend Fathers, Stephen, Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of all England, and Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church; Henry, Archbishop of Dublin; William of London, Peter of Winchester, Jocelin of Bath and Glastonbury, Hugh of Lincoln, Walter of Worcester, William of Coventry, and Benedict of Rochester, Bishops; Master Pandulph, the Pope's subdeacon and familiar; Brother Aymeric, Master of the Knights of the Temple in England; and the noble persons, William Marshal, Earl of Pembroke; William, Earl of Salisbury; William, Earl of Warren; William, Earl of Arundel; Alan de Galloway, Constable of Scotland; Warin FitzGerald, Peter Fitz-Herbert, Hubert de Burgh, Seneschal of Poitou, Hugh de Neville, Matthew Fitz-Herbert, Thomas Basset, Alan Basset, Philip Daubeny, Robert de Roppelay, John Marshal, John Fitz-Hugh, and others, Our liegemen:

1. We have, in the first place, granted to God, and by this Our present Charter confirmed for Us and Our heirs forever—That the English Church shall be free and enjoy her rights in their integrity and her liberties untouched. And that We will this so to be observed appears from the fact that We of Our own free will, before the outbreak of the dissensions between Us and Our barons, granted, confirmed, and procured to be confirmed by Pope Innocent III the freedom of elections, which is considered most important and necessary to the English Church, which Charter We will both keep Ourselves and will it to be kept with good faith by Our heirs forever. We have also granted to all the free men of Our kingdom, for Us and Our heirs forever, all the liberties underwritten, to have and to hold to them and their heirs of Us and Our heirs.

2. If any of Our earls, barons, or others who hold of Us in chief by knight's service shall die, and at the time of his death his heir shall be of full age and owe a relief [a form of tax], he shall have his inheritance by ancient relief; to wit, the heir or heirs of an earl of an entire earl's barony, £100; the heir or heirs of a baron of an entire barony, £100;

the heir or heirs of a knight of an entire knight's fee, 100s. at the most; and he that owes less shall give less, according to the ancient custom of fees.

3. If, however, any such heir shall be under age and in ward, he shall, when he comes of age, have his inheritance without relief or fine.

4. The guardian of the land of any heir thus under age shall take therefrom only reasonable issues, customs, and services, without destruction or waste of men or property; and if We shall have committed the wardship of any such land to the sheriff or any other person answerable to Us for the issues thereof, and he commit destruction or waste, We will take an amends from him, and the land shall be committed to two lawful and discreet men of that fee, who shall be answerable for the issues to Us or to whomsoever We shall have assigned them. And if We shall give or sell the wardship of any such land to anyone, and he commit destruction or waste upon it, he shall lose the wardship, which shall be committed to two lawful and discreet men of that fee, who shall, in like manner, be answerable unto Us as has been aforesaid.

5. The guardian, so long as he shall have the custody of the land, shall keep up and maintain the houses, parks, fishponds, pools, mills, and other things pertaining thereto, out of the issues of the same, and shall restore the whole to the heir when he comes of age, stocked with ploughs and tillage, according as the season may require and the issues of the land can reasonably bear.

6. Heirs shall be married without loss of station, and the marriage shall be made known to the heir's nearest of kin before it be contracted.

7. A widow, after the death of her husband, shall immediately and without difficulty have her marriage portion and inheritance. She shall not give anything for her marriage portion, dower, or inheritance which she and her husband held on the day of his death, and she may remain in her husband's house for forty days after his death, within which time her dower shall be assigned to her.

8. No widow shall be compelled to marry so long as she has a mind to live without a husband, provided, however, that she give security that she will not marry without Our assent, if she holds of Us, or that of the lord of whom she holds, if she holds of another.

9. Neither We nor Our bailiffs shall seize any land or rent for any debt so long as the debtor's chattels are sufficient to discharge the same; nor shall the debtor's sureties be distrained so long as the debtor is able to pay the debt. If the debtor fails to pay, not having the means to pay, then the sureties shall answer the debt, and, if they desire, they shall hold the debtor's lands and rents until they have received satisfaction of the debt which they have paid for him, unless the debtor can show that he has discharged his obligation to them.

10. If anyone who has borrowed from the Jews any sum of money, great or small, dies before the debt has been paid, the heir shall pay no interest on the debt so long as

he remains under age, of whomsoever he may hold. If the debt shall fall into Our hands, We will take only the principal sum named in the bond.

. . .

12. No scutage [a payment in place of a personal service—*Ed.*] or aid shall be imposed in Our kingdom unless by common counsel thereof, except to ransom Our person, make Our eldest son a knight, and once to marry Our eldest daughter, and for these only a reasonable aid shall be levied. So shall it be with regard to aids from the City of London.

13. The City of London shall have all her ancient liberties and free customs, both by land and water. Moreover, We will and grant that all other cities, boroughs, towns, and ports shall have all their liberties and free customs.

14. For obtaining the common counsel of the kingdom concerning the assessment of aids (other than in the three cases aforesaid) or of scutage, We will cause to be summoned, severally by Our letters, the archbishops, bishops, abbots, earls, and great barons. We will also cause to be summoned, generally, by Our sheriffs and bailiffs, all those who hold lands directly to Us, to meet on a fixed day, but with at least forty days' notice, and at a fixed place. In all letters of such summons We will explain the cause thereof. The summons being thus made, the business shall proceed on the day appointed, according to the advice of those who shall be present, even though not all the persons summoned have come.

15. We will not in the future grant permission to any man to levy an aid upon his free men, except to ransom his person, make his eldest son a knight, and once to marry his eldest daughter, and on each of these occasions only a reasonable aid shall be levied.

16. No man shall be compelled to perform more service for a knight's fee or other free tenement than is due therefrom.

17. Common Pleas shall not follow Our Court, but shall be held in some certain place.

. . .

20. A free man shall be amerced [fined] for a small fault only according to the measure thereof, and for a great crime according to its magnitude, saving his position; and in like manner a merchant saving his trade, and a villein [serf] saving his tillage, if they should fall under Our mercy. None of these ameracements shall be imposed except by the oath of honest men of the neighborhood.

21. Earls and barons shall be amerced only by their peers, and only in proportion to the measure of the offense.

22. No amercement shall be imposed upon a clerk's [clergyman's] lay property, except after the manner of the other persons aforesaid, and without regard to the value of his ecclesiastical benefice.

. . .

28. No constable or other of Our bailiffs shall take corn or other chattels of any man without immediate payment, unless the seller voluntarily consents to postponement of payment.

29. No constable shall compel any knight to give money in lieu of castle-guard when the knight is willing to perform it in person or (if reasonable cause prevents him from performing it himself) by some other fit man. Further, if We lead or send him into military service, he shall be quit of castle-guard for the time he shall remain in service by Our command.

30. No sheriff or other of Our bailiffs, or any other man, shall take the horses or carts of any free man for carriage without the owner's consent.

. . .

31. Neither We nor Our bailiffs will take another man's wood for Our castles or for any other purpose without the owner's consent.

. . .

35. There shall be one measure of wine throughout Our kingdom, and one of ale, and one measure of corn, to wit, the London quarter, and one breadth of dyed cloth, russets, and haberjets, to wit, two ells within the selvages. As with measures so shall it also be with weights.

. . .

38. In the future no bailiff shall upon his own unsupported accusation put any man to trial without producing credible witnesses to the truth of the accusation.

39. No free man shall be taken, imprisoned, disseised [dispossessed], outlawed, banished, or in any way destroyed, nor will We proceed against him or prosecute him, except by the lawful judgment of his peers and by the law of the land.

40. To no one will We sell, to none will We deny or delay, right or justice.

41. All merchants shall have safe conduct to go and come out of and into England, and to stay in and travel through England by land and water for purposes of buying and selling, free of illegal tolls, in accordance with ancient and just customs, except, in time of war, such merchants as are of a country at war with Us. If any such be found in Our dominion at the outbreak of war, they shall be attached, without injury to their persons or goods, until it be known to Us or Our Chief Justiciary how Our merchants are being treated in the country at war with Us, and if Our merchants be safe there, then theirs shall be safe with Us.

42. In the future it shall be lawful (except for a short period in time of war, for the common benefit of the realm) for anyone to leave and return to our kingdom safely and securely by land and water, saving his fealty to Us. Excepted are those who have been imprisoned or outlawed according to the law of the land, people of the country at war with Us, and merchants, who shall be dealt with as aforesaid.

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52. If anyone has been disseised or deprived by Us, without the legal judgment of his peers, of lands, castles, liberties, or rights, We will immediately restore the same, and if any dispute shall arise thereupon, the matter shall be decided by judgment of the twenty-five barons mentioned below in the clause for securing the peace. With regard to all those things, however, of which any man was disseised or deprived, without the legal judgment of his peers, by King Henry Our Father or Our Brother King Richard, and which remain in Our hands or are held by others under Our warranty, We shall have respite during the term commonly allowed to the Crusaders, except as to those matters on which a plea had arisen, or an inquisition had been taken by Our command, prior to Our taking the Cross. Immediately after Our return from Our pilgrimage, or if by chance We should remain behind from it, We will at once do full justice.

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54. No one shall be arrested or imprisoned upon a woman's appeal for the death of any person other than her husband.

55. All fines unjustly and unlawfully given to Us, and all amercements levied unjustly and against the law of the land, shall be entirely remitted or the matter settled by judgment of the twenty-five barons of whom mention is made below in the clause for securing the peace, or the majority of them, together with the aforesaid Stephen, Archbishop of Canterbury, if he himself can be present, and any others whom he may wish to bring with him for the purpose; if he cannot be present, the business shall nevertheless proceed without him. If any one or more of the said twenty-five barons be interested in a suit of this kind, he or they shall be set aside, as to this particular judgment, and another or others, elected and sworn by the rest of said barons for this occasion only, be substituted in his or their stead.

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60. All the customs and liberties aforesaid, which We have granted to be enjoyed, as far as in Us lies, by Our people throughout Our kingdom, let all Our subjects, whether clerks or laymen, observe, as far as in them lies, toward their dependents.

61. Whereas We, for the honor of God and the amendment of Our realm, and in order the better to allay the discord arisen between Us and Our barons, have granted all these things aforesaid, We, willing that they be forever enjoyed wholly and in lasting strength, do give and grant to Our subjects the following security, to wit, that the barons shall elect any twenty-five barons of the kingdom at will, who shall, with their utmost power, keep, hold, and cause to be kept the peace and liberties which We have granted unto them and by this Our present Charter have confirmed, so that if We, Our Justiciary, bailiffs, or any of

Our ministers offend in any respect against any man, or shall transgress any of these articles of peace or security, and the offense be brought before four of the said twenty-five barons, these four barons shall come before Us, or Our Chief Justiciary if We are out of the kingdom, declaring the offense, and shall demand speedy amends for the same. If We, or, in case of Our being out of the kingdom, Our Chief Justiciary fail to afford redress within the space of forty days from the time the case was brought before Us or, in the event of Our having been out of the kingdom, Our Chief Justiciary, the aforesaid four barons shall refer the matter to the rest of the twenty-five barons, who, together with the commonalty of the whole country, shall distraint and distress Us to the utmost of their power, to wit, by capture of Our castles, lands, and possessions and by all other possible means, until compensation be made according to their decision, saving Our person and that of Our Queen and children; as soon as redress has been had, they shall return to their former allegiance. Anyone in the kingdom may take oath that, for the accomplishment of all the aforesaid matters, he will obey the orders of the said twenty-five barons and distress Us to the utmost of his power; and We give public and free leave to everyone wishing to take such oath to do so, and to none will we deny the same. Moreover, all such of Our subjects who shall not of their own free will and accord agree to swear to the said twenty-five barons, to distraint and distress Us together with them, We will compel to do so by Our command in the manner aforesaid. If any one of the twenty-five barons shall die or leave the country or be in any way hindered from executing the said office, the rest of the said twenty-five barons shall choose another in his stead, at their discretion, who shall be sworn in like manner as the others. In all cases which are referred to the said twenty-five barons to execute, and in which a difference shall arise among them, supposing them all to be present, or in which not all who have been summoned are willing or able to appear, the verdict of the majority shall be considered as firm and binding as if the whole number should have been of one mind. The aforesaid twenty-five shall swear to keep faithfully all the aforesaid articles, and, to the best of their power, to cause them to be kept by others. We will not procure, either by Ourselves or any other, anything from any man whereby any of these concessions or liberties may be revoked or abated. If any such procurement be made, let it be null and void; it shall never be made use of either by Us or by any other.

62. We have also wholly remitted and pardoned all ill-will, wrath, and malice which has arisen between Us and Our subjects, both clergy and laymen, during the disputes, to and with all men. Moreover, We have fully remitted and, as far as in Us lies, wholly pardoned to and with all, clergy and laymen, all trespasses made in consequence of the said disputes from Easter in the sixteenth year of Our reign till the restoration of peace. Over and above this, We have caused to be made in their behalf letters patent by testimony of Stephen, Archbishop of Canterbury, Henry, Archbishop

of Dublin, the Bishops above-mentioned, and Master Pandulph, for the security and concessions aforesaid.

63. Wherefore We will, and firmly charge, that the English Church shall be free, and that all men in Our kingdom shall have and hold all the aforesaid liberties, rights, and concessions, well and peaceably, freely, quietly, fully, and wholly, to them and their heirs, of Us and Our heirs, in all things and places forever, as is aforesaid. It is moreover sworn, as well on Our part as on the part of the

barons, that all these matters aforesaid shall be kept in good faith and without deceit. Witness the above-named and many others. Given by Our hand in the meadow which is called Runnymede, between Windsor and Staines, on the fifteenth day of June in the seventeenth year of Our reign.

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*What is the purpose of the Magna Carta? How does it seek to achieve this purpose?*

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## 13–6

### Robert of Clari, *The Conquest of Constantinople*

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In the meantime, while the crusaders and the Venetians were staying there [on the Dalmation coast] that winter, the crusaders bethought them that they had spent a great deal. And they talked with one another and said that they could not go to Babylon or to Alexandria or to Syria, because they had neither provisions nor money for going there. For they had spent nearly everything, on the long delay they had made as well as on the great price they had given for the hire of the fleet. . . .

The doge of Venice saw right well that the pilgrims were in sore straits, and he spoke to them and said: “Lords, in Greece there is a land that is very rich and plenteous in all good things. If we could have a reasonable excuse for going there and taking provisions and other things in the land until we were well restored, it would seem to me a good plan. Then we should be well able to go oversea.” . . .

Now you have heard how Isaac arose and how he became emperor and how his son went to Germany—he for whom the crusaders and the Venetians were going to send, on the advice of the marquis of Montferrat, their leader, . . . so that they might have an excuse for going to the country of Constantinople. And now we shall tell you about this youth and the crusaders, how the crusaders sent for him and how they went to Constantinople and how they conquered it. . . .

Then all the barons of the host were summoned and the Venetians. And when they were all assembled, the doge of Venice rose and spoke to them. “Lords,” said the doge, “now we have a good excuse for going to Constantinople, if you approve of it, for we have the rightful heir.” Now there were

some who did not at all approve of going to Constantinople. Instead they said: “Bah! what shall we be doing in Constantinople? We have our pilgrimage to make, and also our plan of going to Babylon or Alexandria. Moreover, our navy is to follow us for only a year, and half of the year is already past.” And the others said in answer: “What shall we do in Babylon or Alexandria, when we have neither provisions nor money to enable us to go there? Better for us before we go there to secure provisions and money by some good excuse than to go there and die of hunger. Then we shall be able to accomplish something. Moreover, he offers to come with us and to maintain our navy and our fleet a year longer at his own cost.” . . . When they of Constantinople saw this fleet which was so finely arrayed, they gazed at it in wonder, and they were mounted on the walls and on the houses to look upon this marvel. And they of the fleet also regarded the great size of the city, which was so long and so wide, and they marveled at it exceedingly.

When the emperor of Constantinople learned of it, he sent good envoys to ask them what they sought there and why they were come there, and he sent word to them that if they wanted any of his gold or his silver, he would right gladly send it to them. When the high men heard this, they answered the envoys that they did not want any of his gold or his silver, but rather they wanted the emperor to surrender the empire, for he held it neither rightfully nor loyally, and they sent word to him that they had the rightful heir with them, Alexius, the son of Isaac the emperor. Thereupon the envoys answered and said that the emperor would do nothing of the sort, and with that they went away. . . .

While the French and the Venetians were talking together, there arose a great clamor in the city, for they of the city told the emperor that he ought to deliver them from the French who were besieging them, and that if he did not fight with them they would seek out the youth whom the French had brought and make him emperor and lord over them.

When the emperor heard this, he gave them his word that he would fight them on the morrow. But when it came near midnight, the emperor fled from the city with as many people as he could take with him.

When the morning was come on the morrow and they of the city knew that the emperor was fled, what do they

do but go to the gates and open them and issue forth and come to the camp of the French and ask and inquire for Alexius, the son of Isaac. And they were told that they would find him at the tent of the marquis. When they came there, they found him, and his friends did him great honor and made great rejoicing over him. And they thanked the barons right heartily and said that they who had done this thing had done right well and had done a great deed of baronage. And they said that the emperor had fled, and that they [the crusaders] should come into the city and into the palace as if it all belonged to them. Then all the high barons of the host assembled, and they took Alexius, the son of Isaac, and they led him to the palace with great joy and much rejoicing. And when they were come to the palace, they had Isaac, his father, brought out of prison, and his wife also. This was the one who had been imprisoned by his brother, the recent emperor. When Isaac was out of prison, he made great rejoicing over his son and embraced and kissed him, and he gave great thanks to the barons who were there and said that it was by the help of God first and next by theirs that he was out of prison. Then they brought two golden chairs and seated Isaac on one and Alexius his son on the other beside him, and to Isaac was given the imperial seat. . . .

Afterwards the emperor sought out the barons and said to them that he had nothing save Constantinople and that this was worth little to him by itself, for his uncle held all the cities and castles that ought to be his. So he asked the barons to help him conquer some of the land around, and he would right gladly give them still more of his wealth. Then they answered that they would be very glad to do it, and that anyone who wanted to profit by this could go. Then a good half of the host went with Alexius and the other half stayed in Constantinople to receive the payment, and Isaac stayed behind to make the payment to the barons. So Alexius went with all his host and conquered full twenty cities and full forty castles or more of the land, and Alexius, the other emperor, his uncle, fled always before him. . . .

When this respite was past and the French saw that the emperor was not going to pay them anything, all the counts and the high men of the host came together, and they went to the palace of the emperor and asked again for their payment. Then the emperor answered them that he could not pay them anything, and the barons answered that if he did not pay them they would seize enough of his possessions to pay themselves. . . .

While these things were going on, those of the Greeks who were traitors toward the emperor and this Murzuphlus whom the emperor had freed from prison came together and plotted a great treason. For they wanted to make someone else emperor, someone who would deliver them from the French, because Alexius did not seem good to them any longer. And finally Murzuphlus said: "If you will leave it to me," said he, "and will make me emperor, I will deliver you from the French and from this emperor, so that you will never have any more trouble from them." And they said that if he would deliver them they would make

him emperor, and Murzuphlus vowed to free them within a week, and they agreed to make him emperor.

Then Murzuphlus went and lost no time. He took sergeants with him and entered by night into the chamber where his lord the emperor, who had freed him from prison, was sleeping, and he had them tie a cord around his neck and strangle him and his father Isaac also. . . . It was not long afterwards that Murzuphlus sent word to the count of Flanders, to Count Louis, to the marquis, and to all the other high barons, telling them to go away and vacate his land, and letting them know that he was emperor and that if he came on them there a week from then he would slay them all. When the barons heard the message that Murzuphlus had sent, they replied: "What?" said they, "He who has treacherously murdered his lord by night has sent this word to us?" And they sent back word to him that they defied him and let him now beware of them, for they would not abandon the siege until they had avenged him whom he had murdered and had taken Constantinople again and had secured in full the payment which Alexius had promised them. . . .

Then it came about on a Friday, about ten days before Palm Sunday, that the pilgrims and the Venetians got their ships and their engines ready and prepared for the assault. So they ranged their ships side by side, and the French had their engines loaded on barges and galleys, and they set out to go toward the city, and the navy extended fully a good league along its front. . . .

When the navy was about to make land, they took strong cables and drew their ships as close as they could to the walls, and the French had their engines set up, their "cats" and "carts" and "sows," to mine the walls. And the Venetians mounted on the bridges of their ships and hardily assailed the walls and the French likewise assailed them with their engines. When the Greeks saw the French attacking them thus, they set to hurling huge blocks of stone, more than enough, onto the engines of the French, and they began to crush and break to pieces and destroy all these engines, so that no one dared to remain inside or under them. And the Venetians on their part were not able to reach the walls or the towers, they were so high. Nor ever that day were the Venetians or the French able to accomplish anything at the walls or at the city. When they saw that they could not do anything, they were greatly disheartened and drew off. When the Greeks saw them withdrawing, they began to hoot and to call out more lustily than a great deal, and they mounted on the walls and let down their clouts and showed them their backsides. . . .

Then when the bishops had preached and had shown the pilgrims that the battle was a righteous one, they all confessed themselves right well and were given communion. When it came to Monday morning, the pilgrims all made themselves ready and armed themselves right well, and the Venetians also. Then they repaired the bridges on their ships and got ready their transports and their galleys and ranged them side by side for the assault, and the navy had fully a good league of front. When they reached the

shore and had drawn up as close as they could to the walls, they cast anchor. And when they were at anchor, they began to attack vigorously and to shoot and hurl stones and throw Greek fire on the towers, but the fire could not take hold on them because of the hides with which they were covered. And those within the city defended themselves right hardily, and they had fully sixty petraries [medieval military engines for discharging stones] hurling missiles, and at each cast they hit the ships, but the ships were so well covered with planks and with grapevines that they did not do them any harm, and the stones were so large that a man could not lift one of them from the ground. . . . When my lord Pierre of Amiens saw that those who were in the towers were not advancing and saw the condition of the Greeks, what does he do but descend to the land on foot, he and his people with him, on a little piece of ground that was between the sea and the wall. When they were on land, they looked ahead and saw a false postern, the door of which had been removed and it had been walled up again. . . .

When they were come to this postern, they began to attack it hardily with their picks, and the quarrels of the crossbows were flying so thick and they were hurling so many stones down on them from the walls, that it seemed as if they would be buried under them, so many were thrown. And those below had shields and targes with which they covered those who were picking at the postern. And the others hurled down on them pots full of boiling pitch and Greek fire and immense stones, so that it was a miracle of God they were not all crushed. And my lord Pierre of Amiens and his people endured there labors and difficulties more than a great deal. So they picked away at this postern with axes and with good swords, with pieces of wood, with bars and with picks, until they made a great hole in it. . . .

When those who were defending the towers and the walls saw that the French were entered into the city and their emperor had fled away, they did not dare remain there but fled away each one as best he could. Thus was the city taken. When the city was taken in this way and the French were inside, they stayed right where they were. Then the high barons assembled and took counsel among them as to what they should do. And finally it was cried through the host that no one should dare to go on into the city, for it was a great peril to go there, lest they should cast stones on them from the palaces, which were very large and high, or lest they should slay them in the streets, which were so narrow that they would not be able to defend themselves, or lest the city should be set on fire behind them and they be burned. Because of these dangers and perils, they did not dare seek quarters or disperse, but remained there right where they were. . . .

When morning came on the morrow, what do they do, the priests and clergy in their vestments, the English, Danes, and people of other countries, but come in procession to the camp of the French and cry them mercy and tell them all that the Greeks had done, and they said that all the

Greeks had fled and no one was left in the city but the poor people. When the French heard this, they were mightily glad. Then they had it cried through the host that no one should take possession of a house until it had been decided how they should be divided. Then the high men, the rich men, came together and agreed among themselves to take the best houses of the city, without the common people or the poor knights of the host knowing anything about it. And from that time on they began to betray the common people and to keep bad faith and bad comradeship with them. . . .

So they sent to seize all the best houses and the richest of the city, and they had them all taken before the poor knights and the common people of the host were aware of it. And when the poor people were aware of it, they went each one as best he could and took what they could get. . . .

When the city was captured and the pilgrims were quartered, . . . and the palaces were taken over, then they found in the palaces riches more than a great deal. And the palace of Boukoleon was very rich and was made in such a way as I shall tell you. Within this palace, . . . there were fully five hundred halls, all connected with one another and all made with gold mosaic.<sup>1</sup> And in it there were fully thirty chapels, great and small, and there was one of them which was called the Holy Chapel. . . .<sup>2</sup> Within this chapel were found many rich relics. One found there two pieces of the True Cross as large as the leg of a man and as long as half a *toise*, and one found there also the iron of the lance with which Our Lord had His side pierced and two of the nails which were driven through His hands and feet, and one found there in a crystal phial quite a little of His blood, and one found there the tunic which He wore and which was taken from Him when they led Him to the Mount of Calvary, and one found there the blessed crown with which He was crowned, which was made of reeds with thorns as sharp as the points of daggers. And one found there a part of the robe of Our Lady and the head of my lord St. John the Baptist and so many other rich relics that I could not recount them to you or tell you all the truth. . . .

Now I will tell you about the church of Saint Sophia, how it was made. Saint Sophia in Greek means Sainte Trinité [“Holy Trinity”] in French [*sic.*] The church of Saint Sophia was entirely round, and within the church there were domes, round all about, which were borne by great and very rich columns, and there was no column which was not of jasper or porphyry or some other precious stone, nor was there one of these columns that did not work cures. There was one that cured sickness of the reins when it was rubbed against, and another that cured sickness of the side, and others that cured other ills. . . . On the ring of the great door of the church, which was all of silver, there hung a tube, of

<sup>1</sup>In these terms Robert attempts to describe the great complex of buildings lying between the Hippodrome and the sea walls, which was known as the Great Palace. . . .

<sup>2</sup>This is the celebrated church of the Blessed Virgin of the Pharos (lighthouse). . . .



what material no one knew; it was the size of a pipe such as shepherds play on. This tube had such virtue as I shall tell you. When an infirm man who had some sickness in his body like the bloat, so that he was bloated in his belly, put it in his mouth, however little he put it in, when this tube took hold it sucked out all the sickness and it made the poison run out of his mouth and it held him so fast that it made his eyes roll and turn in his head, and he could not get away until the tube had sucked all of this sickness out of him. And the sicker a man was the longer it held him, and if a man who was not sick put it in his mouth, it would not hold him at all, much or little. . . .

And among the rest, there was another of the churches which they called My Lady Saint Mary of Blachernae, where was kept the *sydoine* in which Our Lord had been wrapped, which stood up straight every Friday so that the features of Our Lord could be plainly seen there.<sup>3</sup> And no one, either Greek or French, ever knew what became of this *sydoine* after the city was taken. . . .

Afterwards it came about that all the counts and all the high men came together one day at the palace of Boukoleon, which belonged to the marquis, and they said to one another that they ought to decide on an emperor and ought to choose their ten electors, and they told the doge

of Venice to choose his ten. When the marquis heard this, he wanted to put in his own men and those who he thought would choose him as emperor, and he wanted to be emperor forthwith. . . . This discord lasted a good fortnight without their ever being able to agree. And there was no day on which they did not assemble for this affair, until at length they agreed that the clergy of the host, the bishops and abbots who were there, should be the electors. . . .

When the mass was chanted, the electors assembled and took counsel together, and they talked of one and of another, until the Venetians and the bishops and abbots, all twenty electors, agreed all together that it should be the count of Flanders, nor was there one of them who was against it. . . .

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*Why was the Fourth Crusade a perversion of the crusading spirit?*

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<sup>3</sup>Robert seems to have confused the *sudarium* (the sweat cloth or napkin, the True Image of St. Veronica) with the *sinclon* (the grave cloth in which the body of Jesus was wrapped for entombment). Both relics were in the church of the Blessed Virgin in the Great Palace, and not in the church in the palace of Blachernae, as Robert says.

## Chapter 14

# *The Islamic Heartlands and India* (ca. 1000-1500)

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### 14-1

#### **William of Rubruck: *Impressions of the medieval Mongols***

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Source: Christopher Dawson, ed., *Mission to Asia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, for the Medieval Academy of America, 1980), pp. 93-104. (First published by Sheed & Ward, London, 1955 as *The Mongol Mission*; reprinted by Harper & Row, 1966.)

#### **THE TARTARS AND THEIR DWELLINGS**

THE Tartars have no abiding city nor do they know of the one that is to come. They have divided among themselves Scythia, which stretches from the Danube as far as the rising of the sun. Each captain, according to whether he has more or fewer men under him, knows the limits of his pasturage and where to feed his flocks in winter, summer, spring and autumn, for in winter they come down to the warmer districts in the south, in summer they go up to the cooler ones in the north. They drive their cattle to graze on the pasture lands without water in winter when there is snow there, for the snow provides them with water.

The dwelling in which they sleep has as its base a circle of interlaced sticks, and it is made of the same material; these sticks converge into a little circle at the top and from this a neck juts up like a chimney; they cover it with white felt and quite often they also coat the felt with lime or white clay and powdered bone to make it a more gleaming white, and sometimes they make it black. The felt round the neck at the top they decorate with lovely and varied paintings. Before the doorway they also hang felt worked in multi-coloured designs; they sew coloured felt on to the other, making vines and trees, birds and animals. They make these houses so large that sometimes they are thirty feet across; for I myself once measured the width between the wheel tracks of a cart, and it was twenty feet, and when the house was on the cart it stuck out at least five feet beyond the wheels on each side. I have counted to one cart twenty-two oxen drawing one house, eleven in a row across the width of the cart, and the other eleven in front of them. The axle of the cart was as big as the mast of a ship, and a man stood at the door of the house on the cart, driving the oxen.

In addition they make squares to the size of a large coffer out of slender split twigs; then over it, from one end to the other, they build up a rounded roof out of similar twigs and

they make a little entrance at the front end; after that they cover this box or little house with black felt soaked in tallow or ewes' milk so that it is rain-proof, and this they decorate in the same way with multi-coloured handwork. Into these chests they put all their bedding and valuables; they bind them onto high carts which are drawn by camels so that they can cross rivers. These chests are never removed from the carts. When they take down their dwelling houses, they always put the door facing the south; then afterwards they draw up the carts with the chests on each side, half a stone's throw from the house, so that it stands between two rows of carts, as it were between two walls.

The married women make for themselves really beautiful carts which I would not know how to describe for you except by a picture; in fact I would have done you paintings of everything if I only knew how to paint. A wealthy Mongol or Tartar may well have a hundred or two hundred such carts with chests. Baatu has twenty-six wives and each of these has a large house, not counting the other small ones which are placed behind the large one and which are, as it were, chambers in which their attendants live; belonging to each of these houses are a good two hundred carts. When they pitch their houses the chief wife places her dwelling at the extreme west end and after her the others according to their rank, so that the last wife will be at the far east end, and there will be the space of a stone's throw between the establishment of one wife and that of another. And so the *orda* of a rich Mongol will look like a large town and yet there will be very few men in it.

One woman will drive twenty or thirty carts, for the country is flat. They tie together the carts, which are drawn by oxen or camels, one after the other, and the woman will sit on the front one driving the ox while all the others follow in step. If they happen to come on a bad bit of track they loose them and lead them across it one by one. They go at a very slow pace, as a sheep or an ox might walk.

When they have pitched their houses with the door facing south, they arrange the master's couch at the northern end. The women's place is always on the east side, that is, on the left of the master of the house when he is sitting on his couch looking towards the south; the men's place is on the west side, that is, to his right.

On entering a house the men would by no means hang up their quiver in the women's section. Over the head of the master there is always an idol like a doll or little image of felt which they call the master's brother, and a similar one over the head of the mistress, and this they call the mistress's brother; they are fastened on to the wall. Higher up between these two is a thin little one which is, as it were, the guardian of the whole house. The mistress of the

house places on her right side, at the foot of the couch, in a prominent position, a goat-skin stuffed with wool or other material, and next to it a tiny image turned towards her attendants and the women. By the entrance on the women's side is still another idol with a cow's udder for the women who milk the cows, for this is the women's job. On the other side of the door towards the men is another image with a mare's udder for the men who milk the mares.

When they have foregathered for a drink they first sprinkle with the drink the idol over the master's head, then all the other idols in turn; after this an attendant goes out of the house with a cup and some drinks; he sprinkles thrice towards the south, genuflecting each time; this is in honour of fire; next towards the east in honour of the air, and after that to the west in honour of water; they cast it to the north for the dead. When the master is holding his cup in his hand and is about to drink, before he does so he first pours some out on the earth as its share. If he drinks while seated on a horse, before he drinks he pours some over the neck or mane of the horse. And so when the attendant has sprinkled towards the four quarters of the earth he returns into the house; two servants with two cups and as many plates are ready to carry the drink to the master and the wife sitting beside him upon his couch. If he has several wives, she with whom he sleeps at night sits next to him during the day, and on that day all the others have to come to her dwelling to drink, and the court is held there, and the gifts which are presented to the master are placed in the treasury of that wife. Standing in the entrance is a bench with a skin of milk or some other drink and some cups.

In the winter they make an excellent drink from rice, millet, wheat and honey, which is clear like wine. Wine, too, is conveyed to them from distant regions. In the summer they do not bother about anything except cosmos. Cosmos [koumiss] is always to be found inside the house before the entrance door, and near it stands a musician with his instrument. Our lutes and viols I did not see there but many other instruments such as are not known among us. When the master begins to drink, then one of the attendants cries out in a loud voice "Ha!" and the musician strikes his instrument. And when it is a big feast they are holding, they all clap their hands and also dance to the sound of the instrument, the men before the master and the women before the mistress. After the master has drunk, then the attendant cries out as before and the instrument-player breaks off. Then they drink all round, the men and the women, and sometimes vie with each other in drinking in a really disgusting and gluttonous manner.

When they want to incite anyone to drink they seize him by the ears and pull them vigorously to make his gullet open, and they clap and dance in front of him. Likewise when they want to make a great feast and entertainment for anyone, one man takes a full cup and two others stand, one on his right and one on his left, and in this manner the three, singing and dancing, advance right up to him to whom they are to offer the cup, and they sing and dance

before him; when he stretches out his hand to take the cup they suddenly leap back, and then they advance again as before; and in this way they make fun of him, drawing back the cup three or four times until he is in a really lively mood and wants it: then they give him the cup and sing and clap their hands and stamp with their feet while he drinks.

## THE FOOD OF THE TARTARS

As for their food and victuals I must tell you they eat all dead animals indiscriminately and with so many flocks and herds you can be sure a great many animals do die. However, in the summer as long as they have any cosmos, that is mare's milk, they do not care about any other food. If during that time an ox or a horse happens to die, they dry the flesh by cutting it into thin strips and hanging it in the sun and the wind, and it dries immediately without salt and without any unpleasant smell. Out of the intestines of horses they make sausages which are better than pork sausages and they eat these fresh; the rest of the meat they keep for the winter. From the hide of oxen they make large jars which they dry in a wonderful way in the smoke. From the hind part of horses' hide they make very nice shoes.

They feed fifty or a hundred men with the flesh of a single sheep, for they cut it up in little bits in a dish with salt and water, making no other sauce; then with the point of a knife or a fork especially made for this purpose—like those with which we are accustomed to eat pears and apples cooked in wine—they offer to each of those standing round one or two mouthfuls, according to the number of guests. Before the flesh of the sheep is served, the master first takes what pleases him; and also if he gives anyone a special portion then the one receiving it has to eat it himself and may give it to no one else. But if he cannot eat it all he may take it away with him or give it to his servant, if he is there to keep for him; otherwise he may put it away in his *captargac*, that is, a square bag which they carry to put all such things in: in this they also keep bones when they have not the time to give them a good gnaw, so that later they may gnaw them and no food be wasted.

## HOW THEY MAKE COSMOS

COSMOS, that is mare's milk, is made in this way: they stretch along the ground a long rope attached to two stakes stuck into the earth, and at about nine o'clock they tie to this rope the foals of the mares they want to milk. Then the mothers stand near their foals and let themselves be peacefully milked; if any one of them is too restless, then a man takes the foal and, placing it under her, lets it suck a little, and he takes it away again and the milker takes its place.

And so, when they have collected a great quantity of milk, which is as sweet as cow's milk when it is fresh, they pour it into a large skin or bag and they begin churning it

with a specially made stick which is as big as a man's head at its lower end, and hollowed out; and when they beat it quickly it begins to bubble like new wine and to turn sour and ferment, and they churn it until they can extract the butter. Then they taste it and when it is fairly pungent they drink it. As long as one is drinking, it bites the tongue like vinegar; when one stops, it leaves on the tongue the taste of milk of almonds and greatly delights the inner man; it even intoxicates those who have not a very good head. It also greatly provokes urine.

For use of the great lords they also make caracosmos, that is black cosmos, in this wise. Mare's milk does not curdle. Now it is a general rule that the milk of any animal, in the stomach of whose young rennet is not found, does not curdle; it is not found in the stomach of a young horse, hence the milk of a mare does not curdle. And so they churn the milk until everything that is solid in it sinks right to the bottom like the lees of wine, and what is pure remains on top and is like whey or white must. The dregs are very white and are given to the slaves and have a most soporific effect. The clear liquid the masters drink and it is certainly a very pleasant drink and really potent.

Baatu has thirty men within a day's journey of his camp, each one of whom provides him every day with such milk from a hundred mares—that is to say, the milk of three thousand mares every day, not counting the other white milk which other men bring. For, just as in Syria the peasants give a third part of their produce, so these men have to bring to the orda of their lords the mare's milk of every third day.

From cow's milk they first extract the butter and this they boil until it is completely boiled down; then they store it in sheep's paunches which they keep for this purpose; they do not put salt into the butter; however it does not go bad owing to the long boiling. They keep it against the winter. The rest of the milk which is left after the butter has been extracted they allow to turn until it is as sour as it can be, and they boil it, and in boiling, it curdles; they dry the curd in the sun and it becomes as hard as iron slag, and this they keep in bags against the winter. During the winter months when there is a scarcity of milk, they put this sour curd, which they call *grut*, into a skin and pour hot water on top of it and beat it vigorously until it melts in the water, which, as a result, becomes completely sour, and this water they drink instead of milk. They take the greatest care never to drink plain water.

### **THE ANIMALS THEY EAT, THEIR CLOTHES, AND THEIR HUNTING**

THE great lords have villages in the south from which millet and flour are brought to them for the winter; the poor provide for themselves by trading sheep and skins; and the slaves fill their bellies with dirty water and are content with this. They also catch mice, of which many kinds abound there; mice with long tails they do not eat but

give to their bards; they eat dormice and all kinds of mice with short tails. There are also many marmots there which they call *sogur* and these congregate in one burrow in the winter, twenty or thirty of them together, and they sleep for six months; these they catch in great quantities.

Also to be found there are cones with a long tail like a cat and having at the tip of the tail black and white hairs. They have many other little animals as well which are good to eat, and they are very clever at knowing the difference. I saw no deer there, I saw few hares, many gazelles; wild asses I saw in great quantities and these are like mules. I also saw another kind of animal which is called *arcali* and which has a body just like a ram's and horns twisted like a ram's but of such a size that I could scarce lift the two horns with one hand; and they make large cups out of these horns.

They have hawks, gerfalcons and peregrine falcons in great numbers and these they carry on their right hand, and they always put a little thong round the hawk's neck. This thong hangs down the middle of its breast and by it they pull down with the left hand the head and breast of the hawk when they cast it at its prey, so that it is not beaten back by the wind or carried upwards. They procure a large part of their food by the chase.

When they want to hunt wild animals they gather together in a great crowd and surround the district in which they know the animals to be, and gradually they close in until between them they shut in the animals in a circle and then they shoot at them with their arrows.

I will tell you about their garments and their clothing. From Cathay and other countries to the east, and also from Persia and other districts of the south, come cloths of silk and gold and cotton materials which they wear in the summer. From Russia, Moxel, Great Bulgaria and Pascatu, which is Greater Hungarys and Kerkis, which are all districts towards the north, and full of forests, and from many other regions in the north which are subject to them, valuable furs of many kinds are brought for them, such as I have never seen in our part of the world; and these they wear in winter. In the winter they always make at least two fur garments, one with the fur against the body, the other with the fur outside to the wind and snow, and these are usually of the skins of wolves or foxes or monkeys, and when they are sitting in their dwelling they have another softer one. The poor make their outer ones of dog and goat.

They also make trousers out of skins. Moreover, the rich line their garments with silk stuffing which is extraordinarily soft and light and warm. The poor line their clothes with cotton material and with the softer wool which they are able to pick out from the coarser. With the coarse they make felt to cover their dwellings and coffers and also for making bedding. Also with wool mixed with a third part horse-hair they make their ropes. From felt they make saddle pads, saddle cloths and rain cloaks, which means they use a great deal of wool. You have seen the men's costume.

## HOW THE MEN SHAVE AND THE WOMEN ADORN THEMSELVES

THE men shave a square on the top of their heads and from the front corners of this they continue the shaving in strips along the sides of the head as far as the temples. They also shave their temples and neck to the top of the cervical cavity and their forehead in front to the top of the frontal bone, where they leave a tuft of hair which hangs down as far as the eyebrows. At the sides and the back of the head they leave the hair, which they make into plaits, and these they braid round the head to the ears.

The costume of the girls is no different from that of the men except that it is somewhat longer. But on the day after she is married a woman shaves from the middle of her head to her forehead, and she has a tunic as wide as a nun's cowl, and in every respect wider and longer, and open in front, and this they tie on the right side. Now in this matter the Tartars differ from the Turks, for the Turks tie their tunics on the left, but the Tartars always on the right.

They also have a head-dress which they call *bocca*, which is made out of the bark of a tree or of any other fairly light material which they can find; it is large and circular and as big as two hands can span around, a cubit and more high and square at the top like the capital of a column. This *bocca* they cover with costly silk material, and it is hollow inside, and on the capital in the middle or on the side they put a rod of quills or slender canes, likewise a cubit and more in length; and they decorate this rod at the top with peacock feathers and throughout its length all round with little feathers from the mallard's tail and also with precious stones. The wealthy ladies wear such an ornament on the top of their head and fasten it down firmly with a hood which has a hole in the top for this purpose, and in it they stuff their hair, gathering it up from the back on to the top of the head in a kind of knot and putting over it the *bocca* which they then tie firmly under the chin. So when several ladies ride together and are seen from a distance, they give the appearance of soldiers with helmets on their heads and raised lances; for the *bocca* looks like a helmet and the rod on top like a lance.

All the women sit on their horses like men, astride, and they tie their cowls with a piece of sky-blue silk round the waist, and with another strip they bind their breasts, and they fasten a piece of white stuff below their eyes which hangs down to the breast.

The women are wondrous fat and the less nose they have the more beautiful they are considered. They disfigure themselves hideously by painting their faces. They never lie down on a bed to give birth to their children.

## THE DUTIES OF THE WOMEN AND THEIR WORK

IT is the duty of the women to drive the carts, to load the houses on to them and to unload them to milk the cows, to make the butter and *grut*, to dress the skins and to sew them,

which they do with thread made out of tendons. They split the tendons into very thin threads and then twist these into one long thread. They also sew shoes and socks and other garments. They never wash their clothes, for they say that that makes God angry and that it would thunder if they hung them out to dry; they even beat those who do wash them and take them away from them. They are extraordinarily afraid of thunder. At such a time they turn all strangers out of their dwellings and wrap themselves in black felt in which they hide until it has passed over. They never wash their dishes, but when the meat is cooked, they wash out the bowl in which they are going to put it with some boiling broth from the cauldron which they afterwards pour back. The women also make the felt and cover the houses.

The men make bows and arrows, manufacture stirrups and bits and make saddles; they build the houses and carts, they look after the horses and milk the mares, churn the cosmos, that is the mares' milk, and make the skins in which it is kept, and they also look after the camels and load them. Both sexes look after the sheep and goats, and sometimes the men, sometimes the women, milk them. They dress skins with the sour milk of ewes, thickened and salted.

When they want to wash their hands or their head, they fill their mouth with water and, pouring this little by little from their mouth into their hands, with it they wet their hair and wash their head.

As for their marriages, you must know that no one there has a wife unless he buys her, which means that sometimes girls are quite grown up before they marry, for their parents always keep them until they sell them. They observe the first and second degrees of consanguinity, but observe no degrees of affinity; they have two sisters at the same time or one after the other. No widow among them marries, the reason being that they believe that all those who serve them in this life will serve them in the next, and so of a widow they believe that she will always return after death to her first husband. This gives rise to a shameful custom among them whereby a son sometimes takes to wife all his father's wives, except his own mother; for the orda of a father and mother always falls to the youngest son and so he himself has to provide for all his father's wives who come to him with his father's effects; and then, if he so wishes, he uses them as wives, for he does not consider an injury has been done to him if they return to his father after death.

And so when anyone has made an agreement with another to take his daughter, the father of the girl arranges a feast and she takes flight to relations where she lies hid. Then the father declares: "Now my daughter is yours; take her wherever you find her." Then he searches for her with his friends until he finds her; then he has to take her by force and bring her, as though by violence, to his house.

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*As described by William Rubruck, in a culture such as that of the Mongols, what items would have been held in the greatest value?*

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14-2

**Farid al-Din Attari:**  
*The Conference of Birds*

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Translated by Afkham Darbandi and Dick Davis

. . . The world's birds gathered for their conference  
And said: 'Our constitution makes no sense.  
All nations in the world require a king;  
How is it we alone have no such thing?  
Only a kingdom can be justly run;  
We need a king and must inquire for one.'

They argued how to set about their quest.  
The hoopoe fluttered forward; on his breast  
There shone the symbol of the Spirit's Way  
And on his head Truth's crown, a feathered spray.  
Discerning, righteous and intelligent,  
He spoke: 'My purposes are heaven-sent;  
I keep God's secrets, mundane and divine,  
In proof of which behold the holy sign  
*Bismillah*\* etched for ever on my beak.  
No one can share the grief with which I seek  
Our longed-for Lord, and quickened by my haste  
My wits find water in the trackless waste.  
I come as Solomon's close friend and claim  
The matchless wisdom of that mighty name  
(He never asked for those who quit his court,  
But when I left him once alone he sought  
With anxious vigilance for my return—  
Measure my worth by this great king's concern!).  
I bore his letters—back again I flew—  
Whatever secrets he divined I knew;  
A prophet loved me; God has trusted me;  
What other bird has won such dignity?  
For years I travelled over many lands,  
Past oceans, mountains, valleys, desert sands,  
And when the Deluge rose I flew around  
The world itself and never glimpsed dry ground;  
With Solomon I set out to explore  
The limits of the earth from shore to shore.  
I know our king—but how can I alone  
Endure the journey to His distant throne?  
Join me, and when at last we end our quest  
Our king will greet you as His honoured guest.  
How long will you persist in blasphemy?  
Escape your self-hood's vicious tyranny—  
Whoever can evade the Self transcends  
This world and as a lover he ascends.  
Set free your soul; impatient of delay,  
Step out along our sovereign's royal Way:

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\*'In the name of God': the opening words of the Koran.

We have a king; beyond Kaf's mountain peak  
The Simorgh lives, the sovereign whom you seek,  
And He is always near to us, though we  
Live far from His transcendent majesty.  
A hundred thousand veils of dark and light  
Withdraw His presence from our mortal sight,  
And in both worlds no being shares the throne  
That marks the Simorgh's power and His alone—  
He reigns in undisturbed omnipotence,  
Bathed in the light of His magnificence—  
No mind, no intellect can penetrate  
The mystery of His unending state:  
How many countless hundred thousands pray  
For patience and true knowledge of the Way  
That leads to Him whom reason cannot claim,  
Nor mortal purity describe or name;  
There soul and mind bewildered miss the mark  
And, faced by Him, like dazzled eyes, are  
dark—

No sage could understand His perfect grace,  
Nor seer discern the beauty of His face.  
His creatures strive to find a path to Him,  
Deluded by each new, deceitful whim,  
But fancy cannot work as she would wish;  
You cannot weigh the moon like so much fish!  
How many search for Him whose heads are sent  
Like polo-balls in some great tournament  
From side to giddy side—how many cries,  
How many countless groans assail the skies!  
Do not imagine that the Way is short;  
Vast seas and deserts lie before His court.  
Consider carefully before you start;  
The journey asks of you a lion's heart.  
The road is long, the sea is deep—one flies  
First buffeted by joy and then by sighs;  
If you desire this quest, give up your soul  
And make our sovereign's court your only goal.  
First wash your hands of life if you would say:  
"I am a pilgrim of our sovereign's Way";  
Renounce your soul for love; He you pursue  
Will sacrifice His inmost soul for you.

It was in China, late one moonless night,  
The Simorgh first appeared to mortal sight—  
He let a feather float down through the air,  
And rumours of its fame spread everywhere;  
Throughout the world men separately conceived  
An image of its shape, and all believed  
Their private fantasies uniquely true!  
(In China still this feather is on view,  
Whence comes the saying you have heard, no doubt,  
"Seek knowledge, unto China seek it out.")  
If this same feather had not floated down,  
The world would not be filled with His renown—  
It is a sign of Him, and in each heart  
There lies this feather's hidden counterpart.  
But since no words suffice, what use are mine

## Chapter 14

To represent or to describe this sign?  
Whoever wishes to explore the Way,  
Let him set out—what more is there to say?'

The hoopoe finished, and at once the birds  
Effusively responded to his words.  
All praised the splendour of their distant king;  
All rose impatient to be on the wing;  
Each would renounce the Self and be the friend  
Of his companions till the journey's end.  
But when they pondered on the journey's length,  
They hesitated; their ambitious strength  
Dissolved: each bird, according to his kind,  
Felt flattered but reluctantly declined.

### THE NIGHTINGALE'S EXCUSE

The nightingale made his excuses first.  
His pleading notes described the lover's thirst,  
And through the crowd hushed silence spread as he  
Descanted on love's scope and mystery.  
'The secrets of all love are known to me,'  
He crooned. 'Throughout the darkest night my song  
Resounds, and to my retinue belong  
The sweet notes of the melancholy lute,  
The plaintive wailing of the love-sick flute;  
When love speaks in the soul my voice replies  
In accents plangent as the ocean's sighs.  
The man who hears this song spurns reason's rule;  
Grey wisdom is content to be love's fool.  
My love is for the rose; I bow to her;  
From her dear presence I could never stir.  
If she should disappear the nightingale  
Would lose his reason and his song would fail,  
And though my grief is one that no bird knows,  
One being understands my heart—the rose.  
I am so drowned in love that I can find  
No thought of my existence in my mind.  
Her worship is sufficient life for me;  
The quest for her is my reality  
(And nightingales are not robust or strong;  
The path to find the Simorgh is too long).  
My love is here; the journey you propose  
Cannot beguile me from my life—the rose.  
It is for me she flowers; what greater bliss  
Could life provide me—anywhere—than this?  
Her buds are mine; she blossoms in my sight—  
How could I leave her for a single night?'

### THE HOOPOE ANSWERS HIM

The hoopoe answered him: 'Dear nightingale,  
This superficial love which makes you quail  
Is only for the outward show of things.  
Renounce delusion and prepare your wings

For our great quest; sharp thorns defend the rose  
And beauty such as hers too quickly goes.  
True love will see such empty transience  
For what it is—a fleeting turbulence  
That fills your sleepless nights with grief and blame—  
Forget the rose's blush and blush for shame!  
Each spring she laughs, not *for* you, as you say,  
But *at* you—and has faded in a day.'

\* \* \*

### THE PEACOCK'S EXCUSE AND THE HOOPOE'S ANSWER

Next came the peacock, splendidly arrayed  
In many-coloured pomp; this he displayed  
As if he were some proud, self-conscious bride  
Turning with haughty looks from side to side.  
'The Painter of the world created me,'  
He shrieked, 'but this celestial wealth you see  
Should not excite your hearts to jealousy.  
I was a dweller once in paradise;  
There the insinuating snake's advice  
Deceived me—I became his friend, disgrace  
Was swift and I was banished from that place.  
My dearest hope is that some blessed day  
A guide will come to indicate the way  
Back to my paradise. The king you praise  
Is too unknown a goal; my inward gaze  
Is fixed for ever on that lovely land—  
There is the goal which I can understand.  
How could I seek the Simorgh out when I  
Remember paradise?' And in reply  
The hoopoe said: 'These thoughts have made you  
stray  
Further and further from the proper Way;  
You think your monarch's palace of more worth  
Than Him who fashioned it and all the earth.  
The home we seek is in eternity;  
The Truth we seek is like a shoreless sea,  
Of which your paradise is but a drop.  
This ocean can be yours; why should you stop  
Beguiled by dreams of evanescent dew?  
The secrets of the sun are yours, but you  
Content yourself with motes trapped in its beams.  
Turn to what truly lives, reject what seems—  
Which matters more, the body or the soul?  
Be whole: desire and journey to the Whole.'

\* \* \*

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*The human soul on a search for meaning and contact  
with the divine is a common one. What are the  
similarities and differences between this selection and  
Dante's The Inferno?*

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## 14-3

### *The Thousand and One Nights*

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#### **[THE STORY OF KING SHAHRAYAR AND SHAHRAZAD, HIS VIZIER'S DAUGHTER]**

It is related—but God knows and sees best what lies hidden in the old accounts of bygone peoples and times—that long ago, during the time of the Sasanid dynasty, in the peninsulas of India and Indochina, there lived two kings who were brothers. The older brother was named Shahrayar, the younger Shahzaman. The older, Shahrayar, was a towering knight and a daring champion, invincible, energetic, and implacable. His power reached the remotest corners of the land and its people, so that the country was loyal to him, and his subjects obeyed him. Shahrayar himself lived and ruled in India and Indochina, while to his brother he gave the land of Samarkand to rule as king.

Ten years went by, when one day Shahrayar felt a longing for his brother the king, summoned his vizier (who had two daughters, one called Shahrazad, the other Dinarzad) and bade him go to his brother. Having made preparations, the vizier journeyed day and night until he reached Samarkand. When Shahzaman heard of the vizier's arrival, he went out with his retainers to meet him. He dismounted, embraced him, and asked him for news from his older brother, Shahrayar. The vizier replied that he was well, and that he had sent him to request his brother to visit him. Shahzaman complied with his brother's request and proceeded to make preparations for the journey. In the meantime, he had the vizier camp on the outskirts of the city, and took care of his needs. He sent him what he required of food and fodder, slaughtered many sheep in his honor, and provided him with money and supplies, as well as many horses and camels.

For ten full days he prepared himself for the journey; then he appointed a chamberlain in his place, and left the city to spend the night in his tent, near the vizier. At midnight he returned to his palace in the city, to bid his wife good-bye. But when he entered the palace, he found his wife lying in the arms of one of the kitchen boys. When he saw them, the world turned dark before his eyes and, shaking his head, he said to himself, "I am still here, and this is what she has done when I was barely outside the city. How will it be and what will happen behind my back when I go to visit my brother in India? No. Women are not to be trusted." He got exceedingly angry, adding, "By God, I am king and sovereign in Samarkand, yet my wife has betrayed me and has inflicted this on me." As his anger boiled, he drew his sword and struck both his wife and the cook. Then he dragged them by the heels and threw them from the top of the palace to the trench below. He then left the city and, going to the vizier, ordered that they depart

that very hour. The drum was struck, and they set out on their journey, while Shahzaman's heart was on fire because of what his wife had done to him and how she had betrayed him with some cook, some kitchen boy. They journeyed hurriedly, day and night, through deserts and wilds, until they reached the land of King Shahrayar, who had gone out to receive them.

When Shahrayar met them, he embraced his brother, showed him favors, and treated him generously. He offered him quarters in a palace adjoining his own, for King Shahrayar had built two beautiful towering palaces in his garden, one for the guests, the other for the women and members of his household. He gave the guest house to his brother, Shahzaman, after the attendants had gone to scrub it, dry it, furnish it, and open its windows, which overlooked the garden. Thereafter, Shahzaman would spend the whole day at his brother's, return at night to sleep at the palace, then go back to his brother the next morning. But whenever he found himself alone and thought of his ordeal with his wife, he would sigh deeply, then stifle his grief, and say, "Alas, that this great misfortune should have happened to one in my position!" Then he would fret with anxiety, his spirit would sag, and he would say, "None has seen what I have seen." In his depression, he ate less and less, grew pale, and his health deteriorated. He neglected everything, wasted away, and looked ill.

When King Shahrayar looked at his brother and saw how day after day he lost weight and grew thin, pale, ashen, and sickly, he thought that this was because of his expatriation and homesickness for his country and his family, and he said to himself, "My brother is not happy here. I should prepare a goodly gift for him and send him home." For a month he gathered gifts for his brother; then he invited him to see him and said, "Brother, I would like you to know that I intend to go hunting and pursue the roaming deer, for ten days. Then I shall return to prepare you for your journey home. Would you like to go hunting with me?" Shahzaman replied, "Brother, I feel distracted and depressed. Leave me here and go with God's blessing and help." When Shahrayar heard his brother, he thought that his dejection was because of his homesickness for his country. Not wishing to coerce him, he left him behind, and set out with his retainers and men. When they entered the wilderness, he deployed his men in a circle to begin trapping and hunting.

After his brother's departure, Shahzaman stayed in the palace and, from the window overlooking the garden, watched the birds and trees as he thought of his wife and what she had done to him, and sighed in sorrow. While he agonized over his misfortune, gazing at the heavens and turning a distracted eye on the garden, the private gate of his brother's palace opened, and there emerged, strutting like a dark-eyed deer, the lady, his brother's wife, with twenty slave-girls, ten white and ten black. While Shahzaman looked at them, without being seen, they continued to walk until they stopped below his window, without looking in his direction, thinking that he had gone to the hunt



with his brother. Then they sat down, took off their clothes, and suddenly there were ten slave-girls and ten black slaves dressed in the same clothes as the girls. Then the ten black slaves mounted the ten girls, while the lady called, “Mas’ud, Mas’ud!” and a black slave jumped from the tree to the ground, rushed to her, and, raising her legs, went between her thighs and made love to her. Mas’ud topped the lady, while the ten slaves topped the ten girls, and they carried on till noon. When they were done with their business, they got up and washed themselves. Then the ten slaves put on the same clothes again, mingled with the girls, and once more there appeared to be twenty slave-girls. Mas’ud himself jumped over the garden wall and disappeared, while the slave-girls and the lady sauntered to the private gate, went in and, locking the gate behind them, went their way.

All of this happened under King Shahzaman’s eyes. When he saw this spectacle of the wife and the women of his brother the great king—how ten slaves put on women’s clothes and slept with his brother’s paramours and concubines and what Mas’ud did with his brother’s wife, in his very palace—and pondered over this calamity and great misfortune, his care and sorrow left him and he said to himself, “This is our common lot. Even though my brother is king and master of the whole world, he cannot protect what is his, his wife and his concubines, and suffers misfortune in his very home. What happened to me is little by comparison. I used to think that I was the only one who has suffered, but from what I have seen, everyone suffers. By God, my misfortune is lighter than that of my brother.” He kept marveling and blaming life, whose trials none can escape, and he began to find consolation in his own affliction and forget his grief. When supper came, he ate and drank with relish and zest and, feeling better, kept eating and drinking, enjoying himself and feeling happy. He thought to himself, “I am no longer alone in my misery; I am well.”

For ten days, he continued to enjoy his food and drink, and when his brother, King Shahrayar, came back from the hunt, he met him happily, treated him attentively, and greeted him cheerfully. His brother, King Shahrayar, who had missed him, said, “By God, brother, I missed you on this trip and wished you were with me.” Shahzaman thanked him and sat down to carouse with him, and when night fell, and food was brought before them, the two ate and drank, and again Shahzaman ate and drank with zest. As time went by, he continued to eat and drink with appetite, and became lighthearted and carefree. His face regained color and became ruddy, and his body gained weight, as his blood circulated and he regained his energy; he was himself again, or even better. King Shahrayar noticed his brother’s condition, how he used to be and how he had improved, but kept it to himself until he took him aside one day and said, “My brother Shahzaman, I would like you to do something for me, to satisfy a wish, to answer a question truthfully.” Shahzaman asked, “What is it, brother?” He replied, “When you first came to stay with me, I noticed that you kept losing weight, day after day,

until your looks changed, your health deteriorated, and your energy sagged. As you continued like this, I thought that what ailed you was your homesickness for your family and your country, but even though I kept noticing that you were wasting away and looking ill, I refrained from questioning you and hid my feelings from you. Then I went hunting, and when I came back, I found that you had recovered and had regained your health. Now I want you to tell me everything and to explain the cause of your deterioration and the cause of your subsequent recovery, without hiding anything from me.” When Shahzaman heard what King Shahrayar said, he bowed his head, then said, “As for the cause of my recovery, that I cannot tell you, and I wish that you would excuse me from telling you.” The king was greatly astonished at his brother’s reply and, burning with curiosity, said, “You must tell me. For now, at least, explain the first cause.”

Then Shahzaman related to his brother what happened to him with his own wife, on the night of his departure, from beginning to end, and concluded, “Thus all the while I was with you, great King, whenever I thought of the event and the misfortune that had befallen me, I felt troubled, careworn, and unhappy, and my health deteriorated. This then is the cause.” Then he grew silent. When King Shahrayar heard his brother’s explanation, he shook his head, greatly amazed at the deceit of women, and prayed to God to protect him from their wickedness, saying, “Brother, you were fortunate in killing your wife and her lover, who gave you good reason to feel troubled, careworn, and ill. In my opinion, what happened to you has never happened to anyone else. By God, had I been in your place, I would have killed at least a hundred or even a thousand women. I would have been furious; I would have gone mad. Now praise be to God who has delivered you from sorrow and distress. But tell me what has caused you to forget your sorrow and regain your health?” Shahzaman replied, “King, I wish that for God’s sake you would excuse me from telling you.” Shahrayar said, “You must.” Shahzaman replied, “I fear that you will feel even more troubled and careworn than I.” Shahrayar asked, “How could that be, brother? I insist on hearing your explanation.”

Shahzaman then told him about what he had seen from the palace window and the calamity in his very home—how ten slaves, dressed like women, were sleeping with his women and concubines, day and night. He told him everything from beginning to end (but there is no point in repeating that). Then he concluded, “When I saw your own misfortune, I felt better—and said to myself, ‘My brother is king of the world, yet such a misfortune has happened to him, and in his very home.’ As a result I forgot my care and sorrow, relaxed, and began to eat and drink. This is the cause of my cheer and good spirits.”

When King Shahrayar heard what his brother said and found out what had happened to him, he was furious and his blood boiled. He said, “Brother, I can’t believe what you say unless I see it with my own eyes.” When Shahzaman saw that his brother was in a rage, he said to him, “If you do not

believe me, unless you see your misfortune with your own eyes, announce that you plan to go hunting. Then you and I shall set out with your troops, and when we get outside the city, we shall leave our tents and camp with the men behind, enter the city secretly, and go together to your palace. Then the next morning you can see with your own eyes.”

King Shahrayar realized that his brother had a good plan and ordered his army to prepare for the trip. He spent the night with his brother, and when God’s morning broke, the two rode out of the city with their army, preceded by the camp attendants, who had gone to drive the poles and pitch the tents where the king and his army were to camp. At nightfall King Shahrayar summoned his chief chamberlain and bade him take his place. He entrusted him with the army and ordered that for three days no one was to enter the city. Then he and his brother disguised themselves and entered the city in the dark. They went directly to the palace where Shahzaman resided and slept there till the morning. When they awoke, they sat at the palace window, watching the garden and chatting, until the light broke, the day dawned, and the sun rose. As they watched, the private gate opened, and there emerged as usual the wife of King Shahrayar, walking among twenty slave-girls. They made their way under the trees until they stood below the palace window where the two kings sat. Then they took off their women’s clothes, and suddenly there were ten slaves, who mounted the ten girls and made love to them. As for the lady, she called, “Mas’ud, Mas’ud,” and a black slave jumped from the tree to the ground, came to her, and said, “What do you want, you slut? Here is Sa’ad al-Din Mas’ud.” She laughed and fell on her back, while the slave mounted her and like the others did his business with her. Then the black slaves got up, washed themselves, and, putting on the same clothes, mingled with the girls. Then they walked away, entered the palace, and locked the gate behind them. As for Mas’ud, he jumped over the fence to the road and went on his way.

When King Shahrayar saw the spectacle of his wife and the slave-girls, he went out of his mind, and when he and his brother came down from upstairs, he said, “No one is safe in this world. Such doings are going on in my kingdom, and in my very palace. Perish the world and perish life! This is a great calamity, indeed.” Then he turned to his brother and asked, “Would you like to follow me in what I shall do?” Shahzaman answered, “Yes. I will.” Shahrayar said, “Let us leave our royal state and roam the world for the love of the Supreme Lord. If we should find one whose misfortune is greater than ours, we shall return. Otherwise, we shall continue to journey through the land, without need for the trappings of royalty.” Shahzaman replied, “This is an excellent idea. I shall follow you.”

Then they left by the private gate, took a side road, and departed, journeying till nightfall. They slept over their sorrows, and in the morning resumed their day journey until they came to a meadow by the seashore. While they sat in the meadow amid the thick plants and trees, discussing their misfortunes and the recent events, they

suddenly heard a shout and a great cry coming from the middle of the sea. They trembled with fear, thinking that the sky had fallen on the earth. Then the sea parted, and there emerged a black pillar that, as it swayed forward, got taller and taller, until it touched the clouds. Shahrayar and Shahzaman were petrified; then they ran in terror and, climbing a very tall tree, sat hiding in its foliage. When they looked again, they saw that the black pillar was cleaving the sea, wading in the water toward the green meadow, until it touched the shore. When they looked again, they saw that it was a black demon, carrying on his head a large glass chest with four steel locks. He came out, walked into the meadow, and where should he stop but under the very tree where the two kings were hiding. The demon sat down and placed the glass chest on the ground. He took out four keys and, opening the locks of the chest, pulled out a full-grown woman. She had a beautiful figure, and a face like the full moon, and a lovely smile. He took her out, laid her under the tree, and looked at her, saying, “Mistress of all noble women, you whom I carried away on your wedding night, I would like to sleep a little.” Then he placed his head on the young woman’s lap, stretched his legs to the sea, sank into sleep, and began to snore.

Meanwhile, the woman looked up at the tree and, turning her head by chance, saw King Shahrayar and King Shahzaman. She lifted the demon’s head from her lap and placed it on the ground. Then she came and stood under the tree and motioned to them with her hand, as if to say, “Come down slowly to me.” When they realized that she had seen them, they were frightened, and they begged her and implored her, in the name of the Creator of the heavens, to excuse them from climbing down. She replied, “You must come down to me.” They motioned to her, saying, “This sleeping demon is the enemy of mankind. For God’s sake, leave us alone.” She replied, “You must come down, and if you don’t, I shall wake the demon and have him kill you.” She kept gesturing and pressing, until they climbed down very slowly and stood before her. Then she lay on her back, raised her legs, and said, “Make love to me and satisfy my need, or else I shall wake the demon, and he will kill you.” They replied, “For God’s sake, mistress, don’t do this to us, for at this moment we feel nothing but dismay and fear of this demon. Please, excuse us.” She replied, “You must,” and insisted, swearing, “By God who created the heavens, if you don’t do it, I shall wake my husband the demon and ask him to kill you and throw you into the sea.” As she persisted, they could no longer resist and they made love to her, first the older brother, then the younger. When they were done and withdrew from her, she said to them, “Give me your rings,” and, pulling out from the folds of her dress a small purse, opened it, and shook out ninety-eight rings of different fashions and colors. Then she asked them, “Do you know what these rings are?” They answered, “No.” She said, “All the owners of these rings slept with me, for whenever one of them made love to me, I took a ring from him. Since you two have slept with me, give me your rings, so

that I may add them to the rest, and make a full hundred. A hundred men have known me under the very horns of this filthy, monstrous cuckold, who has imprisoned me in this chest, locked it with four locks, and kept me in the middle of this raging, roaring sea. He has guarded me and tried to keep me pure and chaste, not realizing that nothing can prevent or alter what is predestined and that when a woman desires something, no one can stop her.” When Shahrayar and Shahzaman heard what the young woman said, they were greatly amazed, danced with joy, and said, ‘O God, O God! There is no power and no strength, save in God the Almighty, the Magnificent. Great is women’s cunning.’” Then each of them took off his ring and handed it to her. She took them and put them with the rest in the purse. Then sitting again by the demon, she lifted his head, placed it back on her lap, and motioned to them, “Go on your way, or else I shall wake him.”

They turned their backs and took to the road. Then Shahrayar turned to his brother and said, “My brother Shahzaman, look at this sorry plight. By God, it is worse than ours. This is no less than a demon who has carried a young woman away on her wedding night, imprisoned her in a glass chest, locked her up with four locks, and kept her in the middle of the sea, thinking that he could guard her from what God had foreordained, and you saw how she has managed to sleep with ninety-eight men, and added the two of us to make a hundred. Brother, let us go back to our kingdoms and our cities, never to marry a woman again. As for myself, I shall show you what I will do.”

Then the two brothers headed home and journeyed till nightfall. On the morning of the third day, they reached their camp and men, entered their tent, and sat on their thrones. The chamberlains, deputies, princes, and viziers came to attend King Shahrayar, while he gave orders and bestowed robes of honor, as well as other gifts. Then at his command everyone returned to the city, and he went to his own palace and ordered his chief vizier, the father of the two girls Shahrazad and Dinarzad, who will be mentioned below, and said to him, “Take that wife of mine and put her to death.” Then Shahrayar went to her himself, bound her, and handed her over to the vizier, who took her out and put her to death. Then King Shahrayar grabbed his sword, brandished it, and, entering the palace chambers, killed every one of his slave-girls and replaced them with others. He then swore to marry for one night only and kill the woman the next morning, in order to save himself from the wickedness and cunning of women, saying, “There is not a single chaste woman anywhere on the entire face of the earth.” Shortly thereafter he provided his brother Shahzaman with supplies for his journey and sent him back to his own country with gifts, rarities, and money. The brother bade him good-bye and set out for home.

Shahrayar sat on his throne and ordered his vizier, the father of the two girls, to find him a wife from among the princes’ daughters. The vizier found him one, and he slept with her and was done with her, and the next morning he ordered the vizier to put her to death. That very night he took one of his army officers’ daughters, slept with her, and the next morning ordered the vizier to put her to death. The vizier, who could not disobey him, put her to death. The third night he took one of the merchants’ daughters, slept with her till the morning, then ordered his vizier to put her to death, and the vizier did so. It became King Shahrayar’s custom to take every night the daughter of a merchant or a commoner, spend the night with her, then have her put to death the next morning. He continued to do this until all the girls perished, their mothers mourned, and there arose a clamor among the fathers and mothers, who called the plague upon his head, complained to the Creator of the heavens, and called for help on Him who hears and answers prayers.

Now, as mentioned earlier, the vizier, who put the girls to death, had an older daughter called Shahrazad and a younger one called Dinarzad. The older daughter, Shahrazad, had read the books of literature, philosophy, and medicine. She knew poetry by heart, had studied historical reports, and was acquainted with the sayings of men and the maxims of sages and kings. She was intelligent, knowledgeable, wise, and refined. She had read and learned. One day she said to her father, “Father, I will tell you what is in my mind.” He asked, “What is it?” She answered, “I would like you to marry me to King Shahrayar, so that I may either succeed in saving the people or perish and die like the rest.” When the vizier heard what his daughter Shahrazad said, he got angry and said to her, “Foolish one, don’t you know that King Shahrayar has sworn to spend but one night with a girl and have her put to death the next morning? If I give you to him, he will sleep with you for one night and will ask me to put you to death the next morning, and I shall have to do it, since I cannot disobey him.” She said, “Father, you must give me to him, even if he kills me.” He asked, “What has possessed you that you wish to imperil yourself?” She replied, “Father, you must give me to him. This is absolute and final.” Her father the vizier became furious and said to her, “Daughter, ‘He who misbehaves, ends up in trouble,’ and ‘He who considers not the end, the world is not his friend.’ As the popular saying goes, ‘I would be sitting pretty, but for my curiosity.’ I am afraid that what happened to the donkey and the ox with the merchant will happen to you.” She asked, “Father, what happened to the donkey, the ox, and the merchant?” He said: . . .

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*What is the main message or moral of this tale? What does it reveal of its society?*

14-4

Two *Bhakti* Poets:  
Ravidas and Mirabai

Between the twelfth and eighteenth centuries, a religious movement known as *bhakti* developed in India and produced a great body of poetry. These poems were composed not in Sanskrit, but in regional vernaculars like Tamil and Hindi. *Bhakti* (“sharing [in God]”) refers to a passionate devotion to a divinity, but a devotion unrelated to the traditional religious rituals, social conventions, and political values of Hinduism. The movement has its roots in Hinduism, of course—although after the thirteenth century, when India passed under Muslim rule, it was also influenced by the devotional practices of Islamic Sufism.

*Bhakti* provided an outlet for economic and social discontent. Modern social movements in India often adopt *bhakti* poets as avatars, but it would be wrong to see them as social rebels or to see *bhakti* as a religion of the oppressed. These poets did not try to change social conditions. They focused instead on the unreality of the world. Often compared to the mystics of medieval Europe, *bhakti* poets are not, however, constrained by rigorous spiritual discipline. *Bhakti* takes two forms: devotion to a particular god and devotion to a divine principle without attributes. The poems included here represent these two forms and are composed by members of two of India’s most oppressed groups: the untouchables and women.

Ravidas lived in the late fifteenth century in Benares. He was a tanner of hides, an occupation suitable for untouchables because it requires the handling of dead animals. He does not lament his social standing, however, but affirms it and transcends it. The body is only a hollow puppet, he claims; spiritually, he is a Brāhman:

As the lotus leaf floats above the water, Ravidas says,  
so he flowers above the world of his birth.

Ravidas is considered a guru in the Sikh form of Hinduism and is an important voice in modern movements against the caste system, including that of Mahatma Gandhi.

Mīrābāī, the most popular of all the *bhakti* poets, was a woman of the late sixteenth century, reputed by legend to have been a student of Ravidas. Unlike Ravidas, however, she was devoted to a particular god, Krishna. Legend says she rejected her royal husband to be a consort of the god (see Rābī‘ah, pp. 832–840). For this violation, her husband’s family tried to poison her, but the god saved her. When rejected by a priest of Krishna because she was a woman, she argued that all human beings are women in relation to the god. This argument may help explain why among all the *bhakti* poets, she speaks the most directly. She casts herself outrageously as a *gopi*, one of the divine milkmaids who are Krishna’s consorts:

Let Mira, your servant, safely cross over,  
a cowherding Gokul girl.

In India today Mīrābāī’s popularity is indicated by both the seven films that have been made of her life and the numberless recordings of her songs, which are played and sung everywhere. Unlike the formal verse of the other *bhakti* poets, her songs are often indistinguishable from the oral tradition of women’s folk songs. Many are folk songs that have simply become attached to her name. She also used conventions from the Sanskrit tradition (see Kālidāsa and Vidyakara), such as images of the lover-in-separation.

RAVIDAS (LATE 15TH CENT.)

Translated by J.S. Hawley

“I’ve never known how to tan or sew”

I’ve never known how to tan or sew,  
though people come to me for shoes.  
I haven’t the needle to make the holes  
or even the tool to cut the thread.  
Others stitch and knot, and tie themselves in knots  
while I, who do not knot, break free.  
I keep saying Ram and Ram, says Ravidas,  
and Death keeps his business to himself.

“Who could long for anything but you?”

Who could long for anything but you?  
My master, you are merciful to the poor;  
you have shielded my head with a regal parasol.  
Someone whose touch offends the world  
you have enveloped with yourself.  
It is the lowly my Govind makes high—  
he does not fear anyone at all—  
And he has exalted Namdev and Kabir,  
Trilocan, Sadhna, and Sen.  
Listen saints, says Ravidas,  
Hari accomplishes everything.

“Oh well born of Benares, I too am born well known”

Oh well born of Benares, I too am born well known:  
my labor is with leather. But my heart can boast the  
Lord.  
See how you honor the purest of the pure,  
water from the Ganges, which no saint will touch  
If it has been made into intoxicating drink—  
liquor is liquor whatever its source;  
And this toddy tree you consider impure  
since the sacred writings have branded it that way,  
But see what writings are written on its leaves:  
the Bhagavata Purana you so greatly revere.  
And I, born among those who carry carrion

## Chapter 14

in daily rounds around Benares, am now  
the lowly one to whom the mighty Brahmins  
come

And lowly bow. Your name, says Ravidas,  
is the shelter of your slave.

### “A family that has a true follower of the Lord”

A family that has a true follower of the Lord  
Is neither high caste nor low caste, lordly or poor.  
The world will know it by its fragrance.  
Priests or merchants, laborers or warriors,  
halfbreeds, outcastes, and those who tend cremation  
fires—  
their hearts are all the same.

He who becomes pure through love of the Lord  
exalts himself and his family as well.

Thanks be to his village, thanks to his home,  
thanks to that pure family, each and every one,  
For he's drunk with the essence of the liquid of life  
and he pours away all the poisons.

No one equals someone so pure and devoted—  
not priests, not heroes, not parasolled kings.  
As the lotus leaf floats above the water, Ravidas  
says,  
so he flowers above the world of his birth.

### “Mother, she asks, with what can I worship?”

Mother, she asks, with what can I worship?  
All the pure is impure. Can I offer milk?  
The calf has dirtied it in sucking its mother's teat.  
Water, the fish have muddied; flowers, the bees—  
No other flowers could be offered than these.  
The sandalwood tree, where the snake has coiled, is  
spoiled.

The same act formed both nectar and poison.  
Everything's tainted—candles, incense, rice—  
But still I can worship with my body and my mind  
and I have the guru's grace to find the formless  
Lord.

Rituals and offerings—I can't do any of these.  
What, says Ravidas, will you do with me?

### “Your name: the act of worship”

Your name: the act of worship  
with the lifted lamp, Murari;  
without the name of Hari all the universe is a lie.

Your name: the throne on which  
the deity sits, your name the grinding stone,  
the saffron that is ground and daubed upon the gods.

Your name: the holy water,  
your name the sandal for sandalwood paste.  
Grinding, chanting, I take that name and offer it to  
you.

Your name: the little lamp, the cruse,  
your name the wick.  
Your name is the oil that I pour into the ritual lamp.

Lighting your name:  
the flame in the lamp  
brings the glow that lightens all the corners of the  
house.

Your name: the garland;  
your name the string, the flowers.  
Beside them wither all the blossoms of the wilds.

Your handiwork: the world;  
what could I offer more?  
I can only wave your name like the whisk before the  
gods.

The world contains the vessels  
for your sacred rites—  
the scriptures, the direction points, and all the sacred  
sites—

But your name, says Ravidas,  
is the lifting of the lamp;  
your true name, O Hari, your food.

### “The walls are made of water, pillared by air”

The walls are made of water, pillared by air,  
sealed together with the mortar of blood,  
A cell of veins and meat and bones,  
a cage to hold this poor bird.  
Who cares what is yours or mine?—  
for we nest in this tree only briefly.  
As high as you can build, as low as you can dig,  
your size will never swell the dimensions of a grave;  
Those lovely curls, that turban tied so rakishly—  
they'll soon be turned to ash.  
If you've counted on the beauty of your wife and home  
without the name of Ram, you've already lost the  
game.  
And me: even though my birth is mean,  
my ancestry by everyone despised,  
I have always trusted in you, King Ram,  
says Ravidas, a tanner of hides.

### “It's just a clay puppet, but how it can dance!”

It's just a clay puppet, but how it can dance!  
It looks here, looks there, listens and talks,  
races off this way and that;  
It comes on something and it swells with pride,  
but if fortune fades it starts to cry.  
It gets tangled in its lusts, in tastes  
of mind, word, and deed,  
and then it meets its end and takes some other form.

Brother, says Ravidas, the world's a game, a magic show,  
and I'm in love with the gamester,  
the magician who makes it go.

**"The house is large, its kitchen vast"**

The house is large, its kitchen vast,  
but after only a moment's passed, it's vacant.  
This body is like a scaffold made of grass:  
the flames will consume it and tender it dust.  
Even your family—your brothers and friends—  
clamor to have you removed at dawn.  
The lady of the house, who once clung to your chest,  
shouts "Ghost! Ghost!" now and runs away.  
The world, says Ravidas, loots and plunders all—  
except me, for I have slipped away  
by saying the name of God.

**"This bodily world is a difficult road—hilly,  
overgrown—"**

This bodily world is a difficult road—hilly,  
overgrown—  
and I've only this worthless bullock to rely on.  
This request I make of Ram:  
protect my wealth as I go along.  
Who is a peddler for Ram?  
My daily pack is loaded—  
I am a peddler for Ram;  
I traffic in his easy ecstasy:  
I've loaded myself with the wealth of Ram's name  
while the world is loaded down with poison.  
You who know both shores of the sea,  
chart my course through heaven and hell  
So Death will not ambush me with his stick  
nor trap me in his snare.  
The world's a fading yellow dye, says the tanner  
Ravidas,  
but Ram is an indelible red.

**"Peddler, the first watch of night"**

Peddler,  
the first watch of night.  
What's this body's business?  
Hari, the child-god:  
you paid him no heed—  
simpleton, such a foolish, childish way to think!  
Simpleton, such a foolish, childish way to think—  
you ignored the net of illusion,  
simply paid it no mind.  
What's that? Why repent?  
All that water everywhere,  
and once the sails are loose, you're gone.  
Peddler,  
so says Ravidas the slave:  
simpleton, such a foolish, childish way to think.

Peddler,  
the second watch of night.  
You went chasing shadows of yourself.  
You paid him no heed—Hari,  
the child-god—  
didn't board his boat.  
Didn't board Hari's name—  
you couldn't, all bloated up  
with youth.  
Desire so dulled you,  
you couldn't see the line  
between the woman that was yours  
and someone else's.  
Well, Hari will straighten the accounts;  
you'll pay in full.  
You'll burn if that's what's right.  
Peddler,  
so says Ravidas the slave:  
you went chasing shadows of yourself.

Peddler,  
the third watch of night.  
The breath has gone slack.  
Peddler, the body is bent  
and what to do?  
Bad thoughts have settled inside.  
Bad thoughts have settled inside,  
evil fool—a life completely lost.  
Now was the moment,  
but you shunned what was right  
and the time will never come again.  
Your frame is weary,  
your body frail,  
and still you won't rethink your ways.  
Peddler,  
so says Ravidas the slave:  
the breath has gone slack.

Peddler,  
the fourth watch of night.  
The body shivers, it quakes.  
Peddler,  
the Master is going to settle accounts.  
Abandon your perverse old ways.  
Get wise,  
abandon the old fort.  
He may adorn you, he may feed you to the fire.  
Death himself is at large:  
he's sent to have you bound,  
you smuggler. It's death's door.  
The road ahead is hard,  
and you'll travel it alone.  
Where are the ones you once loved?  
Peddler,  
so says Ravidas the slave:  
the body shivers, it quakes.

**“The day it comes, it goes”**

The day it comes, it goes;  
whatever you do, nothing stays firm.  
The group goes, and I go;  
the going is long, and death is overhead.  
What! Are you sleeping? Wake up, fool,  
wake to the world you took to be true.  
The one who gave you life daily feeds you, clothes you;  
inside every body, he runs the store.  
So keep to your prayers, abandon “me” and “mine,”  
now’s the time to nurture the name that’s in the  
heart.  
Life has slipped away. No one’s left on the road,  
and in each direction the evening dark has come.  
Madman, says Ravidas, here’s the cause of it all—  
it’s only a house of tricks. Ignore the world.

**“The regal realm with the sorrowless name”**

The regal realm with the sorrowless name:  
they call it Queen City, a place with no pain,  
No taxes or cares, none owns property there,  
no wrongdoing, worry, terror, or torture.  
Oh my brother, I’ve come to take it as my own,  
my distant home, where everything is right.  
That imperial kingdom is rich and secure,  
where none are third or second—all are one;  
Its food and drink are famous, and those who live  
there  
dwell in satisfaction and in wealth.  
They do this or that, they walk where they wish,  
they stroll through fabled palaces unchallenged.  
Oh, says Ravidas, a tanner now set free,  
those who walk beside me are my friends.

**MĪRĀBĀĪ (LATE 16TH CENT.)**

*Translated by Mark Juergensmeyer*

**“I’m colored with the color of dusk, oh rana”**

I’m colored with the color of dusk, oh *rana*,  
colored with the color of my Lord.  
Drumming out the rhythm on the drums, I danced,  
dancing in the presence of the saints,  
colored with the color of my Lord.  
They thought me mad for the Maddening One,  
raw for my dear dark love,  
colored with the color of my Lord.  
The *rana* sent me a poison cup:  
I didn’t look, I drank it up,  
colored with the color of my Lord.  
The clever Mountain Lifter is the lord of Mira.  
Life after life he’s true—  
colored with the color of my Lord.

**“Life without Hari is no life, friend”**

Life without Hari is no life, friend,  
And though my mother-in-law fights,  
my sister-in-law teases,  
the *rana* is angered,  
A guard is stationed on a stool outside,  
and a lock is mounted on the door,  
How can I abandon the love I have loved  
in life after life?  
Mira’s Lord is the clever Mountain Lifter:  
Why would I want anyone else?

**“Today your Hari is coming, my friend”**

Today your Hari is coming,  
my friend,  
to play the game of Spring.  
The harbinger crow in the courtyard speaks,  
my friend,  
an omen of good times ahead.  
All the cowherds have gathered in the garden,  
my friend,  
where the basil grows:  
I hear the sound of tambourines and drums,  
my friend.  
Why sleep? Wake up and go!  
There’s water and betel-leaf, mats and sheets,  
my friend.  
Go greet him: touch his feet.  
Mira’s Lord is the clever Mountain Lifter,  
my friend,  
the best blessing you could have.

**“I saw the dark clouds burst, dark Lord”**

I saw the dark clouds burst,  
dark Lord,  
Saw the clouds and tumbling down  
In black and yellow streams  
they thicken,  
Rain and rain two hours long.  
See—  
my eyes see only rain and water,  
watering the thirsty earth green.  
Me—  
my love’s in a distant land  
and wet, I stubbornly stand at the door,  
For Hari is indelibly green,  
Mira’s Lord,  
And he has invited a standing,  
stubborn love.

**“Hey love bird, crying cuckoo”**

Hey love bird, crying cuckoo,  
don’t make your crying coos,

for I who am crying, cut off from my love,  
will cut off your crying beak  
and twist off your flying wings  
and pour black salt in the wounds.

Hey, I am my love's and my love is mine.  
How do you dare cry love?  
But if my love were restored today  
your love call would be a joy.  
I would gild your crying beak with gold  
and you would be my crown.

Hey, I'll write my love a note,  
crying crow, now take it away  
and tell him that his separated love  
can't eat a single grain.  
His servant Mira's mind's in a mess.  
She wastes her time crying coos.

Come quick, my Lord,  
the one who sees inside;  
without you nothing remains.

**“Murali sounds on the banks of the Jumna”**

Murali sounds on the banks of the Jumna,  
Murali snatches away my mind;  
My senses cut loose from their moorings—  
Dark waters, dark garments, dark Lord.  
I listen close to the sounds of Murali  
And my body withers away—  
Lost thoughts, lost even the power to think.  
Mira's Lord, clever Mountain Lifter,  
Come quick, and snatch away my pain.

**“The Bhil woman tasted them, plum after plum”**

The Bhil woman tasted them, plum after plum,  
and finally found one she could offer him.  
What kind of genteel breeding was this?  
And hers was no ravishing beauty.  
Her family was poor, her caste quite low,  
her clothes a matter of rags,  
Yet Ram took that fruit—that touched, spoiled  
fruit—  
for he knew that it stood for her love.  
This was a woman who loved the taste of love,  
and Ram knows no high, no low.

What sort of Veda could she ever have learned?  
But quick as a flash she mounted a chariot  
And sped to heaven to swing on a swing,  
tied by love to God.  
You are the Lord who cares for the fallen;  
rescue whoever loves as she did:  
Let Mira, your servant, safely cross over,  
a cowherding Gokul girl.

**“Sister, I had a dream that I wed”**

Sister, I had a dream that I wed  
the Lord of those who live in need:  
Five hundred sixty thousand people came  
and the Lord of Braj was the groom.  
In dream they set up a wedding arch;  
in dream he grasped my hand;  
in dream he led me around the wedding fire  
and I became unshakably his bride.  
Mira's been granted her mountain-lifting Lord:  
from living past lives, a prize.

**“I have talked to you, talked”**

I have talked to you, talked,  
dark Lifter of Mountains,  
About this old love,  
from birth after birth.  
Don't go, don't,  
Lifter of Mountains,  
Let me offer a sacrifice—myself—  
beloved,  
to your beautiful face.  
Come, here in the courtyard,  
dark Lord,  
The women are singing auspicious wedding songs;  
My eyes have fashioned  
an altar of pearl tears,  
And here is my sacrifice:  
the body and mind.

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*How does Rivadas, an untouchable, transcend his  
place in life in these poems?*

*How does Mīrābāī express her great love for  
Krishna? Can you provide examples of other mystics  
or poets who use this same imagery?*



## Chapter 15

# *Ancient Civilizations of the Americas*

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### 15–1

## The Myth of the Incas: A case of double creation?

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Source: Padraic Colum, *Myths of the World* (New York: MacMillan & Co., 1952), cited in Van Over, *Sun Songs*, pp. 112–116.

In other days we who are of the race of the Incas worshipped the Sun; we held that he was the greatest and most benignant of all beings, and we named ourselves the children of the Sun. We had traditions that told of the pitiable ways that we and the rest of the human race lived in before the Sun, having had compassion upon us, decided to lead us towards better ways of living . . . Lo, now! Our Lord, the Sun, put his two children, a son and a daughter, in a boat upon Lake Titicaca. He told them they were to float upon the water until they came to where men lived. He put his golden staff into the hands of his son. He told him he was to lead men into a place where that staff, dropped upon the earth, sank deep down into it.

So the children of our Lord the Sun went upon the waters of Lake Titicaca. They came to where our fathers lived in those far days . . . Where we live now we see villages and cities; we see streams flowing down from the mountains, and being led this way and that way to water our crops and our trees; we see flocks of llamas feeding on good grass with their lambs—countless flocks. But in those days we lived where there were thickets and barren rocks; we had no llamas; we had no crops, we knew not how to make the waters flow this way and that way; we had no villages, no cities, no temples. We lived in clefts of the rocks and holes in the ground. The covering of our bodies was of bark or of leaves, or else we went naked in the day and without covering to put over us at night. We ate roots that we pulled up out of the ground, or fought with the foxes for the dead things they were carrying away. No one bore rule amongst us, and we knew nothing of duty or kindness of one to another.

Out of their boat on Lake Titicaca came the children of our Lord to us. They brought us together; they had rule over us, and they showed us how to live as husband and wife and children, and how to know those who were leaders amongst us and how to obey those leaders. And having showed us these things they led us from the land they had found us in.

And often did he who was the son of our Lord the Sun drop the golden staff upon the ground as we went on. Sometimes the staff sank a little way into the earth, some-

times it sank to half its length in the earth. We came to a place where the golden staff, dropped by him who was the son of our Lord the Sun, sank into the earth until only its top was to be seen. And there we stayed, or, rather, there our fathers stayed, for we are many generations from the men and women who came into this place with the two who were the children of the Sun.

They showed us how to sow crops in that rich ground, and how to lead water down from the hills to water the crops and the trees. They showed us how to tame the llamas, and how to herd them and tend them as tamed beasts. They showed us how to take the wool from them and weave the wool into garments for ourselves; also, they showed us how to dye our garments so that we went brightly clad in the light of the sun. They showed us how to work in gold and silver, and how to make vessels of clay, and how to put shapes and figures upon these vessels. They showed us how to build houses, and how to build villages, and cities, and temples. And they showed us, too, how to obey the rule of those who were left to rule over us, the Incas.

Then the two who were the son and daughter of the Sun left us. Before they went from us they told us that the Sun, their father, would adopt us as his children. And so we of the Inca race became the children of the Sun. They said to us, too, “Our father, the Sun, does good to the whole world; he gives light that men may see and follow their pursuits; he makes men warm when they had been cold; he ripens their crops; he increases their flocks of llamas; he brings dew upon the ground. The Sun, our father, goes round the earth each day that he may know of man’s necessities and help him to provide for them. Be like the Sun, then, far-seeing, regular in all your occupations. And bring the worship of the Sun amongst the tribes who live in darkness and ignorance.”

And so these two, his son and daughter who were sent to us by the Sun, were seen no more by us. But we knew ourselves now as the children of the Sun. We subdued the tribes in his name, and brought the knowledge of his beneficence amongst them. We built a great temple to him. And the daughters of the Incas in hundreds served him as Virgins of the Sun.

Yes, but there were those amongst us who came to have other thoughts about Heaven and the ways of Heaven. “Does not the Sun go as another being directs him to go?” one of the Incas said to his councillors. “Is he not like an arrow shot onward by a man? Is he not like a llama tethered by the will of a man rather than like one who has freedom? Does he not let a little cloud obscure his splendour? Is it not plain that he may never take rest from his tasks?”

So men amongst us have said, and they who have said them have mentioned a name. Viracocha that name is. And

then they would say words from rites that were known to the people of this land before the Incas came into it. They would say, "O conquering Viracocha! Thou gavest life and valour to men, saying, 'let this be a man,' and to women saying, 'let this be a woman.' Thou madest them and gavest them being! Watch over them that they may live in health and peace! Thou who art in the high heavens, and among the clouds of the tempest, grant this with long life, and accept this sacrifice, O Creator!" So those who were priests in the land before our fathers came into it prayed.

And they said that it was Viracocha who created the Sun, and created the Moon also. They said that at the beginning the Sun was not brighter than the Moon, and that in his jealousy he flung ashes upon the face of the Moon and dimmed the Moon's primal brightness. And they said that Viracocha could make great terraces of rock and clay, rear themselves up with crops upon them, and that he could bring the water-courses to freshen terraces and gardens merely by striking with a hollow cane that he carried.

Now although Viracocha was so great, he obscured himself, and came back to live amongst the Gods in the guise of a beggar. None knew him for Viracocha, the Creator of all things. And he saw the Goddess Cavillaca as she sat amongst llama lambs under a lucma-tree, weaving the wool of the white llama. He saw her and he approached her. He left a ripe fruit beside her. She ate the fruit and she became with child by him.

And when her child was born her parents and her friends said to her, "You must find out who is the father of this child. Let all who live near come to this lucma-tree, and let the child crawl amongst them. The man he crawls to and touches with his hand we will know is his father."

So under the lucma-tree Cavillaca sat, and her child was with her. All who lived near came to that place, and amongst them came Viracocha, still in his beggar's dress. All came near to Cavillaca and her child. The child crawled where they stood. He came to Viracocha. He put his hand up and touched the man who was in the beggar's garb.

Then was Cavillaca made ashamed before all the Gods. She snatched up her child and held him to her. She fled away from that place. She fled towards the ocean with her child. Viracocha put on his robes of splendour and hastened after her. And as he went he cried out, "O Goddess, turn; look back at me! See how splendid I am!" But the Goddess, without turning, fled with her child from before him.

Viracocha went seeking them. As he crossed the peaks he met a condor, and the condor flew with him, and consoled him. Viracocha blessed the condor, and gave him long life and the power to traverse the wilderness and go over the highest peaks; also he gave him the right to prey upon creatures. Afterwards he met a fox; but the fox derided him, telling him that his quest was vain. He cursed the fox, saying to him that he would have to hunt at night, and that men would slay him. He met a puma, and the puma went

with him and consoled him. He blessed the puma, saying that he would receive honour from men. As he went down the other side of the mountain, he came upon parrots flying from the trees of their forest. And the parrots cried out words that were of ill-omen. He cursed the parrots, saying that they would never have honour from men. But he blessed the falcon that flew with him down to the sea.

And when he came to the sea he found that Cavillaca and her child had plunged themselves into the water and had been transformed into rocks. Then Viracocha in his grief remained beside the sea.

Now beside the sea there were two virgins who were Urpihuachac's daughters. They were guarded by a serpent. Viracocha charmed the serpent with his wisdom, and the serpent permitted him to approach Urpihuachac's daughters. One flew away and became a dove. But the other lived there with Viracocha. And this Virgin of the Sea showed Viracocha where her mother kept all the fishes of the world. They were in a pond and they could not go through the waters of the world. Viracocha broke down the walls of their pond, and let them go through the streams and the lakes and the sea. And thus he let men have fishes to eat.

He lived amongst men, and he taught them many arts. He it was, as the priests of those who were here before the Incas say, showed men how to bring streams of water to their crops, and taught them how to build terraces upon the mountains where crops would grow. He set up a great cross upon the mountain Caravay. And when the bird that cries out four times at dawn cried out, and the light came upon the cross he had set up, Viracocha went from amongst men. He went down to the sea, and he walked across it towards the west. But he told those whom he had left behind that he would send messengers back who would protect them and give them renewed knowledge of all he had taught them. He left them, but men still remember the chants that those whom he left on the mountain, by the cross, cried out their longing:

Oh, hear me!  
From the sky above,  
In which thou mayst be,  
From the sea beneath,  
In which thou mayst be,  
Creator of the world,  
Maker of all men;  
Lord of all Lords,  
My eyes fail me  
For longing to see thee;  
For the sole desire to know thee.

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*What appears to have been the most significant attribute, in the eyes of the Incas and the Sun? Of Viracocha?*

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15–2

**The Mesoamerican Mind:  
Tezcatlipoca, Quetzatcoatl,  
and music**

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Source: Irene Nicholson, *Mexican and Central American Mythology* (London: Paul Hamlyn, 1967), pp. 31, 32, 35, 37.

Tezcatlipoca - god of heaven  
and of the four quarters of the heavens -  
came to earth and was sad.  
He cried from the uttermost depths of the four quarters:

‘Come, O wind!  
Come, O wind!  
Come, O wind!  
Come, O wind!’

The querulous wind, scattered over earth’s sad bosom,  
rose higher than all things made;  
and, whipping the waters of the oceans  
and the manes of the trees,  
arrived at the feet of the god of heaven.  
There he rested his black wings  
and laid aside his endless sorrow.  
Then spoke Tezcatlipoca:

‘Wind, the earth is sick from silence.  
Though we possess light and colour and fruit,  
yet we have no music.  
We must bestow music upon all creation.  
To the awakening dawn,  
to the dreaming man,  
to the waiting mother,  
to the passing water and the flying bird,  
life should be all music!  
Go then through the boundless sadness  
between the blue smoke and the spaces  
to the high House of the Sun.  
There the father Sun is surrounded  
by makers of music  
who blow their flutes sweetly  
and, with their burning choir,  
scatter light abroad.  
Go, bring back to earth a cluster - the most flowering -  
of those musicians and singers.’

Wind traversed the earth that was plunged in silence and  
trod with his strength of breath pursued,  
till he reached the heavenly roof of the World  
where all melodies lived in a nest of light.  
The Sun’s musicians were clad in four colours.

White were those of the cradle songs;  
red those of the epics of love and of war;  
sky blue the troubadours of wandering cloud;  
yellow the flute players enjoying gold  
milled by the Sun from the peaks of the World.  
There were no musicians the colour of darkness.  
All shone translucent and happy, their gaze turned forward.  
When the Sun saw the wind approaching he told his  
musician:

‘Here comes the bothersome  
wind of earth:  
Stay your music!  
Cease your singing!  
Answer him not!  
Whoever does so  
will have to follow him  
back down there into silence.’

From the stairways of light  
of the House of the Sun,  
Wind with his dark voice shouted:

‘Come, O musicians!’

None replied.  
The clawing wind raised his voice and cried:

‘Musicians, singers!  
The supreme Lord of the World is calling you . . . !’

Now the musicians were silent colours;  
they were a circling dance held fast  
in the blinding flame of the Sun.  
Then the god - he of the heaven’s four quarters -  
waxed wroth.  
From the remotest places,  
whipped by his lightning lash,  
flocks of cloud whose blackened wombs  
were stabbed and torn by lightning  
assembled to besiege the House of the Sun.  
His bottomless throat let loose the thunder’s roar  
Everything seemed to fall flat in a circle  
beneath the World’s mad roof, in whose breast  
the Sun like a red beast drowned.  
Spurred on by fear,  
the musicians and singers then ran for shelter  
to the wind’s lap.  
Bearing them gently  
lest he should harm their tender melodies,  
the wind with that tumult of happiness in his arms  
set out on his downward journey, generous and contented.  
Below, Earth raised its wide dark eyes to heaven  
and its great face shone, and it smiled.  
As the arms of the trees were uplifted,  
there greeted the wind’s wanderers  
the awakened voice of its people,

the wings of the quetzal birds,  
the face of the flowers  
and the cheeks of the fruit.  
When all that flutter of happiness landed on earth,  
and the Sun's musicians spread to the four quarters,  
then Wind ceased his complaining and sang,  
caressing the valleys, the forests and seas.  
Thus was music born on the bosom of earth.  
Thus did all things learn to sing:  
the awakening dawn,

the dreaming man,  
the waiting mother,  
the passing water and the flying bird.  
Life was all music from that time on.

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*Based on the words of their gods in the manuscript,  
what positive religious properties did the  
Mesoamericans attribute to music?*

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## 15-3

### The Mesoamerican Mind: The Aztecs and holy warfare

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Source: Edward Kissam & Michael Schmidt, trans., *Poems of the Aztec Peoples*, (Ypsilanti, MI: Bilingual Press, 1983), pp. 90, 104-109.

#### TEZCATLIPOCA'S SONG

I myself am the enemy.  
I search out the servants and messengers  
of my relatives  
who are dressed in dark plumes,  
who are plumes of rain.

I have to see them there,  
not tomorrow or the next day.

I have my magic mirror with me,  
smoking with stars,  
and my allies

until those others, my relatives, those  
dark plumes of rain in glistening sun

until they're put away.

#### HOMAGE TO TLACAHUEPAN

With shields, you paint nobility.  
With arrows, you write battle.  
Now, you dress yourself in plumes  
and paint your face with chalk for the sacrifice.  
Oh Tlachahuepan,  
you are going to take them with you, into the realm of  
mystery.

Oh Tlachahuepan, you are over the princes.  
You cry out, the eagle who is red answers you.  
Like a dancer, who is to die,  
with whistling hands,  
and at the end, to the realm  
of mystery.

Your song is like a mottled jaguar.  
Your flower is like the spread wings of an eagle.  
Oh my prince, as a dancer, who is to die,  
there in the clash of shields.  
How beautifully you play your drum.

You garland the nobles with flowers of the eagle,  
the gathering of friends, oh dancer, who is to die,  
the wine of precious flowers makes men drunk and brave  
and he will dress himself with his flowers and songs  
in the realm of mystery.

Perhaps the Mexicans are singing there too.

#### ELEGY FOR THE TLACAHUEPANTZIN

God of rattlesnakes!  
your flowers tremble—  
tiger, eagle warriors roar.

The War Prince befriends  
and favours us. But flowers  
of flesh wither.  
There, by the drums,  
they are shuddering like women.

The war-dead! in the flowering water  
with shields and banners raised!  
Not by spears or arrows  
the precious flower falls.

The flower made of human body  
will never taint the moss  
of Moctezuma, will not ever  
sprout again in Mexico.

## Chapter 15

Smoke-stained, your red bird of light:  
you pass, prince Tlacahuepan.  
Smoke-stained, the god renews him.  
God, god tears your flesh away!

. . .

. . . desolate my heart,  
I see a child  
tremble like a feather  
shattered.  
I go to the garden  
where princes  
make each other proud with flowers.  
I see a child . . .

### NEZAHUALPILLI'S LAMENT

Drunk,  
my heart is drunk:  
dawn  
and the zacuan bird is singing  
over the shield stockade,  
stockade of spears.

Tlacahuepan, neighbour, friend,  
rejoice! You with your shaven head  
are like none of the Cuexteca tribe  
drunk with the flower waters,  
by the shore of bird-river,  
with your shaven head.

Rocks fracture  
jewels, precious feathers,  
my princes:  
those who were drunk with death  
in the plain of water,  
on the shore—there,  
the Mexicans among cactus.

The eagle screams,  
warrior with tiger's face roars,  
O prince Macuil Malinalli;  
there in the field of smoke,  
field of red . . .  
it is right, it is right  
the Mexicans make war!

. . .

My prince  
blood-stained, death-yellow  
the lord of the Cuextecas,  
his skirt now black as the zapote fruit.  
The glory of war clothes my friend  
Tlacahuepan—in the mystery

where one perhaps lives on.

My prince  
Matlaccuiatzin is drunk  
with the flower of war, death-yellow  
lord of the Cuextecas,  
bathed in the liquid of war.  
Together they go  
where one perhaps lives on.

Sound the tiger's trumpet!  
Eagle on the war-stone screams,  
there on the carcasses of our dead lords.  
The old men pass, Cuextecas  
drunk with the flower of shields.  
In Atlixco they dance!

Sound the turquoise drum.  
Cactuses are drunk with fallen flowers;  
you with the heron head-dress,  
you with the painted body.  
They hear him, go beside him,  
birds with flower-bright beaks  
accompany the strong youth  
with the tiger shield. He has returned to them.

I weep  
from my heart, I, Nezahualpilli.  
I search for my comrades  
but the old lord is gone,  
that petal-green quetzal,  
and gone  
the young warrior.

Let the sky-blue be your dwelling!  
Are Tlatohuetzin and Acapipiyol coming  
to taste the water here  
as I am weeping?

### Nezahualpilli

I see the eagle and the tiger warrior.  
Their glory saddens me who will depart  
from earth, from the friendship of warriors.

Ipalnemoani,  
you fly to us, bird  
with a sword in your claw  
and darts. Perched  
in your own temple you preen  
and sway among the drums.

Rain of down:  
like a sacred heron you preen  
and sway among the drums,  
You tint the fire  
and colour the throne of warriors.

My friends, you are princes  
in the springtime palace.  
What does Ipalnemoani require of us?

You will not remain long  
in this palace. Nezahualpilli,  
our friend, deserts you. War  
sends up its flowers. Some grow,  
some wither. They are eagles, tigers of war.

Those that wither  
come back to you,  
Ipalnemoani.

A march of warriors  
to the region of Death:  
every lord descended  
but returned  
in a flash  
to live in the face of the sun.

Now they wander  
the endless plain of the dead.

---

*What passages are indicative of the “glorious” or  
sacred view of warfare?*

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## 15–4

### Twenty Sacred Hymns (1554), Mexico

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The highest form of Nahuatl poetry, these hymns were recorded by the Franciscan friar Bernardino de Sahagun around 1559 just north of Tenochtitlan. He attached them to the Florentine Codex but left them untranslated for fear of their demonic power. Their subjects include the Mexica or Aztec war god Huitzilopochtli, who was “born on his shield,” and whose temple stood atop the main pyramid in Tenochtitlan, alongside that of the rain god Tlaloc; the Mother of the Gods Tonantzin, the prototype of the Virgin of Guadalupe; the Chichimec patron Mixcoatl or “Cloud-Snake”; the guardians of childbirth; and Cinteotl and other maize deities. An idea of the complex language of these hymns can be gleaned from the term *jaguar-snake* (oceló-coatl) that is applied to Tlaloc. In the visual language of the ancient books, this name evokes his thunder and lightning, as the roar of the jaguar and the strike of the snake. Moreover, in ritual arithmetic Tlaloc’s mask is Sign XIX, the sum of the Signs Jaguar (XIV) and Snake (V).

#### TLALOC (HYMN 3)

CHORUS In Mexico the god is being asked for a loan  
among the paper banners in four directions  
now is the time for weeping

PRIEST I am prepared I take to the courtyard  
the bundles of bloodthorns of my god  
you are my commander magic prince  
and you are the one who makes our flesh  
you are the very first one the offerings  
can only cause you shame

TLALOC But if someone causes me shame  
it is because he didn’t know me  
you are my fathers my elder priesthood  
the Jaguar Snake  
the Jaguar Snake

PRIEST From Tlalocan in a jade boat  
Acatonal comes out  
extend yourself in Poyauhtlan  
with rattles of mist he is taken to Tlalocan

VICTIM *My brother, Tozcuecuexi,  
I am going forever it’s the time of weeping  
send me to wherever it is  
under his command I have already said  
to the frightening prince I am going forever  
it is time for weeping  
over four years me shall be carried on the wind  
unknown to others by you it is told  
to the place of the unflashed  
In the house of Quetzal plumes  
transformation is effected  
it is the due of the one who vivifies men*

CHORUS Extend yourself in Poyauhtlan  
with rattles of mist he is taken to Tlalocan

*Translated by Gordon Brotherston and Edward Dorn*

#### TO THE MOTHER OF THE GODS (HYMN 4)

Oh, golden flower opened up  
she is our mother  
whose thighs are holy  
whose face is a dark mask.  
She came from Tamoanchan,  
the first place  
where all descended  
where all was born.

Chapter 15

Oh, golden flower flowered  
she is our mother  
whose thighs are holy  
whose face is a dark mask.  
She came from Tamoanchan  
Oh, white flower opened up  
she is our mother  
whose thighs are holy  
whose face is a dark mask.  
She came from Tamoanchan,  
the first place  
where all descended  
where all was born.  
Oh, white flower flowered  
she is our mother  
whose thighs are holy  
whose face is a dark mask.  
She came from Tamoanchan.  
  
\* \* \*  
She lights on the round cactus,  
she is our mother  
the dark obsidian butterfly.  
Oh, we saw her as we wandered  
across the Nine Plains,  
she fed herself with deers' hearts.  
She is our mother,  
the goddess earth.  
She is dressed  
in plumes  
she is smeared with clay.  
In all four directions of wind  
the arrows are broken.  
They saw you as a deer  
in the barren land.  
those two men, Xiuhnel and Mimich.

*Translated by Edward Kissam*

**TO EASE BIRTH (HYMN 12)**

in the house with the tortoise chair  
she will give birth to the pearl  
to the beautiful feather  
in the house of the goddess who sits on a tortoise  
she will give birth to the necklace of pearls  
to the beautiful feathers we are  
there she sits on the tortoise  
swelling to give us birth  
on your way on your way  
child be on your way to me here  
you whom I made new  
come here child come be pearl  
be beautiful feather

*Translated by Anselm Hollo*

**FOR EATING UNLEAVENED TAMALES  
(HYMN 14)**

1

the flower  
my heart  
it opened  
at midnight  
that lordly hour  
she has arrived  
Tlaçolteotl  
our mother  
goddess desire

2

in the birth house  
in the flower place  
on the day called 'one flower'  
the maize god is born  
in the vapor and rain place  
where we go angling for jewel-fish  
where we too make our young

3

soon day red sky  
quechol-birds in the flowers

4

down here on earth  
you rise in the market place and say  
I am the lord Quetzalcoatl

let there be gladness among the flowering trees  
and the quechol-bird tribes  
who are the souls of the brave

may they rejoice

hear the word of our lord  
the quechol-bird's word

'your brother whom we mourn  
will never be killed again  
never again will the poison dart strike him'

5

maize flowers  
white and yellow  
I have brought from the flower place

see there is the lord of the jewel land  
playing ball in his holy field

there he is the old dog god  
Xolotl

6

now go look if Piltzintecutli  
lord fertility himself  
has yet lain down in the dark house  
in the house where it grows dark

o Piltzintli Piltzintli  
yellow feathers  
you glue all over yourself

on the ball-playing field you lie down  
and in the dark house where it grows dark

7

here comes a merchant

a vassal of Xochiquetzal  
mistress of Cholula

(heart o heart  
I fear the maize god is still on his way)

a merchant a man from Chacalla  
sells turquoise spikes for your ears  
and turquoise bands for your arms

8

the sleeper the sleeper he sleeps  
with my hand I have rolled him to sleep

9

here  
the woman  
here  
am I  
here  
asleep

*Translated by Anselm Hollo, after Edward Seler*

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*The Gods play complex and ambiguous roles in these hymns. Compare them to the hymns to Mani in Chapter 10.*

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## 15-5

### *Florentine Codex (1579), Mexico*

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The many diverse texts gathered in the Codex served as source material for Bernardino de Sahagún's *History of the Things of New Spain* (ca. 1580). Arranged in twelve books, they offer an encyclopedic range of information about ancient Mexico, in such matters as the origins of the gods and the story of Tula (Book 3), rulers and administration (Book 6), and human types and professions (Book 10).

#### **THE TOLTECS WERE CERTAINLY RICH (BOOK III)**

the toltecs were certainly rich  
food was not scarce enough to sell  
their vegetables were large  
melons for example mostly too fat to get your arms  
round  
maize ears millstone size  
and they actually *climbed*  
their amaranth plants

cotton came ready dyed  
in colours like crimson saffron pink violet leaf-green  
azure  
verdigris orange umbra grey rose-red and coyote  
yellow  
it all just grew that way

they had all kinds of valuable birds  
blue cotingas quetzals turpials red-spoonbills  
which could talk and sang in tune  
jade and gold were low-priced popular possessions  
they had chocolate too, fine cocoa flowers  
everywhere  
the toltecs did not in fact lack anything  
no one was poor or had a shabby house  
and the smaller maize ears they used as fuel  
to heat their steam baths with

*Translated by Gordon Brotherston and Edward Dorn*

#### **THE DEADLY DANCE (BOOK III)**

That shaman, owl man,  
dressed himself in shining yellow feathers  
once he had won.  
Then he planned that the people



## Chapter 15

should come together and dance.  
So the cryer went to the hill  
and announced it,  
and called to all the people.  
Everyone in the country around heard him  
and left quickly for  
Texcalapa, that place in the rocky country.  
They all came,  
both nobles and the people,  
young men and young women,  
so many they could not be counted,  
there were so many.  
And then he began his song.  
He beats his drum,  
again and again.  
They begin to join in the dance.  
They leap into the air,  
they join hands weaving themselves together,  
whirling around, and there is great happiness.  
The chant wavers  
up and breaks into the air,  
returns as an echo from the distant hills  
and sustains itself.  
He sang it, he thought of it,  
and they answered him.  
As he planned, they took it from his lips.  
It began at dusk  
and went on halfway to midnight.  
And when the dance  
they all did together  
reached its climax,  
numbers of them hurled themselves from the cliffs  
into the gulleys.  
They all died and became stones.  
Others, who were on the bridge over the canyon,  
the shaman broke it  
under them  
though it was stone.  
They fell in the rapids  
and became stones.

The Toltecs  
never understood what happened there,  
they were drunk with it,  
blind,  
and afterwards gathered many times there to dance.  
Each time,  
there were more dead,  
more had fallen from the heights  
into the rubble,  
and the Toltecs destroyed themselves.

*Translated by Edward Kissam*

### THE ARTIST (BOOK X)

The artist: disciple, abundant, multiple, restless.  
The true artist: capable, practicing, skillful;  
maintains dialogue with his heart, meets things with his  
mind.  
The true artist: draws out all from his heart,  
works with delight, makes things with calm, with  
sagacity,  
works like a true Toltec, composes his objects, works  
dexterously, invents;  
arranges materials, adorns them, makes them  
adjust.  
The carrion artist: works at random, sneers at the  
people,  
makes things opaque, brushes across the surface of the  
face of things,  
works without care, defrauds people, is a thief.

*Translated by Denise Levertov*

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*The Codex provided much information about New Spain. What are some examples of the very rich culture that they reveal?*

## Chapter 16

# *The Late Middle Ages and the Renaissance in the West*

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### 16–1

#### The Chronicle of Jean de Venette

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From Richard A. Newhall, ed., *The Chronicle of Jean de Venette*, trans. Jean Birdsall, Records of Civilization, Sources and Studies, no. 50. Copyright © 1953 by Columbia University Press. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

In A.D. 1348, the people of France and of almost the whole world were struck by a blow other than war. For in addition to the famine . . . and to the wars . . . pestilence and its attendant tribulations appeared again in various parts of the world. In the month of August, 1348, after Vespers when the sun was beginning to set, a big and very bright star appeared above Paris, toward the west. It did not seem, as stars usually do, to be very high above our hemisphere but rather very near. As the sun set and night came on, this star did not seem to me or to many other friars who were watching it to move from one place. At length, when night had come, this big star, to the amazement of all of us who were watching, broke into many different rays and, as it shed these rays over Paris toward the east, totally disappeared and was completely annihilated. Whether it was a comet or not, whether it was composed of airy exhalations and was finally resolved into vapor, I leave to the decision of astronomers. It is, however, possible that it was a presage of the amazing pestilence to come, which, in fact, followed very shortly in Paris and throughout France and elsewhere, as I shall tell. All this year and the next, the mortality of men and women, of the young even more than of the old, in Paris and in the kingdom of France, and also, it is said, in other parts of the world, was so great that it was almost impossible to bury the dead. People lay ill little more than two or three days and died suddenly, as it were in full health. He who was well one day was dead the next and being carried to his grave. Swellings appeared suddenly in the armpit or in the groin—in many cases both—and they were infallible signs of death. This sickness or pestilence was called an epidemic by the doctors. Nothing like the great numbers who died in the years 1348 and 1349 has been heard of or seen or read of in times past. This plague and disease came from *ymaginatione* or association and contagion, for if a well man visited the sick he only rarely evaded the risk of death. Wherefore in many towns timid priests withdrew, leaving the exercise of their ministry to such of the religious as were more daring. In

many places not two out of twenty remained alive. So high was the mortality at the Hôtel-Dieu in Paris that for a long time, more than five hundred dead were carried daily with great devotion in carts to the cemetery of the Holy Innocents in Paris for burial. A very great number of the saintly sisters of the Hôtel-Dieu who, not fearing to die, nursed the sick in all sweetness and humility, with no thought of honor, a number too often renewed by death, rest in peace with Christ, as we may piously believe.

This plague, it is said, began among the unbelievers, came to Italy, and then crossing the Alps reached Avignon, where it attacked several cardinals and took from them their whole household. Then it spread, unforeseen, to France, through Gascony and Spain, little by little, from town to town, from village to village, from house to house, and finally from person to person. It even crossed over to Germany, though it was not so bad there as with us. During the epidemic, God of His accustomed goodness deigned to grant this grace, that however suddenly men died, almost all awaited death joyfully. Nor was there anyone who died without confessing his sins and receiving the holy viaticum. To the even greater benefit of the dying, Pope Clement VI through their confessors mercifully gave and granted absolution from penalty to the dying in many cities and fortified towns. Men died the more willingly for this and left many inheritances and temporal goods to churches and monastic orders, for in many cases they had seen their close heirs and children die before them.

Some said that this pestilence was caused by infection of the air and waters, since there was at this time no famine nor lack of food supplies, but on the contrary great abundance. As a result of this theory of infected water and air as the source of the plague the Jews were suddenly and violently charged with infecting wells and water and corrupting the air. The whole world rose up against them cruelly on this account. In Germany and other parts of the world where Jews lived, they were massacred and slaughtered by Christians, and many thousands were burned everywhere, indiscriminately. The unshaken, if fatuous, constancy of the men and their wives was remarkable. For mothers hurled their children first into the fire that they might not be baptized and then leaped in after them to burn with their husbands and children. It is said that many bad Christians were found who in a like manner put poison into wells. But in truth, such poisonings, granted that they actually were perpetrated, could not have caused so great a plague nor have infected so many people. There were other causes; for example, the will of God and the corrupt humors and evil inherent in air and earth. Perhaps the poisonings, if they actually took place in some localities,

reinforced these causes. The plague lasted in France for the greater part of the years 1348 and 1349 and then ceased. Many country villages and many houses in good towns remained empty and deserted. Many houses, including some splendid dwellings, very soon fell into ruins. Even in Paris several houses were thus ruined, though fewer here than elsewhere.

After the cessation of the epidemic, pestilence, or plague, the men and women who survived married each other. There was no sterility among the women, but on the contrary fertility beyond the ordinary. Pregnant women were seen on every side. Many twins were born and even three children at once. But the most surprising fact is that children born after the plague, when they became of an age for teeth, had only twenty or twenty-two teeth, though before that time men commonly had thirty-two in their upper and lower jaws together. What this diminution in the number of teeth signified I wonder greatly, unless it be a new era resulting from the destruction of one human generation by the plague and its replacement by another. But woe is me! The world was not changed for the better but for the worse by this renewal of population. For men were more avaricious and grasping than before, even though they had far greater possessions. They were more covetous and disturbed each other more frequently with suits, brawls, disputes, and pleas. Nor by the mortality resulting from this terrible plague inflicted by God was peace between kings and lords established. On the contrary, the enemies of the king of France and of the Church were stronger and wickeder than before and stirred up wars on sea and on land. Greater evils than before pullulated everywhere in the world. And this fact was very remarkable. Although there was an abundance of all goods, yet everything was twice as dear, whether it were utensils, victuals, or merchandise, hired helpers or peasants and serfs, except for some hereditary domains which remained abundantly stocked with everything. Charity began to cool, and iniquity with ignorance and sin to abound, for few could be found in the good towns and castles who knew how or were willing to instruct children in the rudiments of grammar. . . .

In the year 1349, while the plague was still active and spreading from town to town, men in Germany, Flanders, Hainaut, and Lorraine uprose and began a new sect on their

own authority. Stripped to the waist, they gathered in large groups and bands and marched in procession through the crossroads and squares of cities and good towns. There they formed circles and beat upon their backs with weighted scourges, rejoicing as they did so in loud voices and singing hymns suitable to their rite and newly composed for it. Thus for thirty-three days they marched through many towns doing their penance and affording a great spectacle to the wondering people. They flogged their shoulders and arms with scourges tipped with iron points so zealously as to draw blood. But they did not come to Paris nor to any part of France, for they were forbidden to do so by the king of France, who did not want them. He acted on the advice of the masters of theology of the University of Paris, who said that this new sect had been formed contrary to the will of God, to the rites of Holy Mother Church, and to the salvation of all their souls. That indeed this was and is true appeared shortly. For Pope Clement VI was fully informed concerning this fatuous new rite by the masters of Paris through emissaries reverently sent to him and, on the grounds that it had been damnably formed, contrary to law, he forbade the Flagellants under threat of anathema to practise in the future the public penance which they had so presumptuously undertaken. His prohibition was just, for the Flagellants, supported by certain fatuous priests and monks, were enunciating doctrines and opinions which were beyond measure evil, erroneous, and fallacious. For example, they said that their blood thus drawn by the scourge and poured out was mingled with the blood of Christ. Their many errors showed how little they knew of the Catholic faith. Wherefore, as they had begun fatuously of themselves and not of God, so in a short time they were reduced to nothing. On being warned, they desisted and humbly received absolution and penance at the hands of their prelates as the pope's representatives. Many honorable women and devout matrons, it must be added, had done this penance with scourges, marching and singing through towns and churches like the men, but after a little like the others they desisted.

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*How does Jean de Venette's account explain the origins of the Black Death?*

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16–2

**The Bull *Unam Sanctam*  
of Boniface VIII**

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“The Bull *Unam Sanctam* of Boniface VIII,” in *Translations and Reprints from the Original Sources of European History*, Vol. III, No. 6 (Philadelphia: The Department of History of the University of Pennsylvania, 1912). Courtesy of the Department of History of the University of Pennsylvania.

That there is one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church we are impelled by our faith to believe and to hold—this we do firmly believe and openly confess—and outside of this there is neither salvation or remission of sins, as the bridegroom proclaims in Canticles, “My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother; she is the choice one of her that bare her.” The Church represents one mystic body and of this body Christ is the head; of Christ, indeed, God is the head. In it is one Lord, and one faith, and one baptism. In the time of the flood, there was one ark of Noah, prefiguring the one Church, finished in one cubit, having one Noah as steersman and commander. Outside of this, all things upon the face of the earth were, as we read, destroyed. This Church we venerate and this alone, the Lord saying through his prophets, “Deliver my soul, O God, from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog.” He prays thus for his soul, that is for Himself, as head, and also for the body, which He calls one namely, the Church on account of the unity of the bridegroom, of the faith, of the sacraments, and of the charity of the Church. It is that seamless coat of the Lord, which was not rent, but fell by lot. Therefore, in this one and only Church, there is one body and one head—not two heads as if it were a monster—namely, Christ and Christ’s Vicar, Peter and Peter’s successor, for the Lord said to Peter himself, “Feed my sheep”: *my* sheep, he said, using a general term and not designating these or those sheep, so that we must believe that all the sheep were committed to him. If, then, the Greeks, or others, shall say that they were not entrusted to Peter and his successors, they must perforce admit that they are not of Christ’s sheep, as the Lord says in John, “there is one fold, and one shepherd.”

In this Church and in its power are two swords, to wit, a spiritual and a temporal, and this we are taught by the words of the Gospel, for when the Apostles said, “Behold, here are two swords” (in the Church, namely, since the Apostles were speaking), the Lord did not reply that it was too many, but enough. And surely he who claims that the temporal sword is not in the power of Peter has but ill understood the word of our Lord when he said, “Put up the sword in its scabbard.” Both, therefore, the spiritual and

material swords, are in the power of the Church, the latter indeed to be used for the Church, the former by the Church, the one by the priest, the other by the hand of kings and soldiers, but by the will and sufferance of the priest. It is fitting, moreover, that one sword should be under the other, and the temporal authority subject to the spiritual power. For when the Apostle said “there is no power but of God and the powers that are of God are ordained,” they would not be ordained unless one sword were under the other, and one, as inferior, was brought back by the other to the highest place. For, according to the Holy Dionysius, the law of divinity is to lead the lowest through the intermediate to the highest. Therefore, according to the law of the universe, things are not reduced to order directly, and upon the same footing, but the lowest through the intermediate and the inferior through the superior. It behooves us, therefore, the more freely to confess that the spiritual power excels in dignity and nobility any form whatsoever of earthly power, as spiritual interests exceed the temporal in importance. All this we see fairly from the giving of tithes, from the benediction and sanctification, from the recognition of this power and the control of the same things. For the truth bearing witness, it is for the spiritual power to establish the earthly power and judge it, if it be not good. Thus, in the case of the Church and the power of the Church, the prophecy of Jeremiah is fulfilled: “See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms”—and so forth. Therefore, if the earthly power shall err, it shall be judged by the spiritual power; if the lesser spiritual power err, it shall be judged by the higher. But if the supreme power err, it can be judged by God alone and not by man, the apostles bearing witness saying, the spiritual man judges all things but he himself is judged by no one. Hence this power, although given to man and exercised by man, is not human, but rather divine power, given by the divine lips to Peter, and founded on a rock for Him and his successors in Him whom he confessed, the Lord saying to Peter himself, “Whatsoever thou shalt bind,” etc. Whoever, therefore, shall resist this power, ordained by God, resists the ordination of God, unless there should be two beginnings, as the Manichaeans imagine. But this we judge to be false and heretical, since, by the testimony of Moses, not in the *beginnings*, but in the *beginning*, God created the heaven and the earth. We, moreover, proclaim, declare, and pronounce that it is altogether necessary to salvation for every human being to be subject to the Roman Pontiff.

Given at the Lateran the twelfth day before the Kalends of December, in our eighth year, as a perpetual memorial of this matter.

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*How does the church justify its involvement, indeed its supremacy, in the temporal realm? Is its justification a success?*

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## 16–3

### Propositions of Wycliffe condemned at London, 1382, and at the Council of Constance, 1415

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From *Documents of the Christian Church*, ed. Henry Bettenson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 172–173.

I.<sup>2</sup> That the material substance of bread and the material substance of wine remain in the Sacrament of the altar.

2. That the accidents of bread do not remain without a subject (substance) in the said Sacrament.

3. That Christ is not in the Sacrament essentially and really, in his own corporeal presence.

4. That if a bishop or priest be in mortal sin he does not ordain, consecrate or baptize.

5. That it is not laid down in the Gospel that Christ ordained the Mass.

6. That God ought to obey the devil.<sup>1</sup>

7. That if a man be duly penitent any outward confession is superfluous and useless.

10. That it is contrary to Holy Scripture that ecclesiastics should have possessions.

14. That any deacon or priest may preach the word of God apart from the authority of the Apostolic See or a Catholic bishop.

15. That no one is civil lord, or prelate, or bishop, while he is in mortal sin.

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<sup>2</sup> The propositions are numbered as at Constance. Fasc. Ziz. give a different order.

<sup>1</sup> i.e. 'Dominion by grace' cannot be put into operation in the world as it is.

16. That temporal lords can at their will take away temporal goods from the church, when those who hold them are sinful (habitually sinful, not sinning in one act only).

17. That the people can at their own will correct sinful lords.

18. That tithes are mere alms, and that parishioners can withdraw them at their will because of the misdeeds of their curates.

20. That he who gives alms to friars is by that fact excommunicate.

21. That any one who enters a private religion (i.e. religious house), either of those having property or of mendicants, is rendered more inapt and unfit for the performance of the commands of God.

22. That holy men have sinned in founding private religions.

23. That the religious who live in private religions are not of the Christian religion.

24. That friars are bound to gain their livelihood by the labour of their hands, and not by begging.

28. That the confirmation of young men, the ordination of clerics, the consecration of places are reserved for the Pope and bishops on account of the desire for temporal gain and honour.

30. That the excommunication of the Pope or of any prelate is not to be feared, because it is the censure of antichrist.

34. That all of the order of mendicants are heretics.

35. That the Roman Church is the synagogue of Satan, and the Pope is not the next and immediate vicar of Christ and the Apostles.

42. That it is fatuous to believe in the indulgences of the Pope and the bishops.

43. That all oaths made to corroborate human contracts and civil business are unlawful.

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*Why were the ideas of Wycliffe so odious to the Church?*

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## 16–4

### Dante: *The Divine Comedy*— *Inferno, Canto I*

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From *The Divine Comedy* (Penguin Classics), translation by Mark Musa (New York: Penguin Books, 1986), pp. 67–71.

Midway along the journey of our life

I woke to find myself in a dark wood,  
for I had wandered off from the straight path.

How hard it is to tell what it was like,  
this wood of wilderness, savage and stubborn  
(the thought of it brings back all my old fears),

a bitter place! Death could scarce be bitterer.

But if I would show the good that came of it  
I must talk about things other than the good.

How I entered there I cannot truly say,  
I had become so sleepy at the moment  
when I first strayed, leaving the path of truth;

but when I found myself at the foot of a hill,  
at the edge of the wood's beginning, down in the valley,  
where I first felt my heart plunged deep in fear,

I raised my head and saw the hilltop shawled  
in morning rays of light sent from the planet  
that leads men straight ahead on every road.

And then only did terror start subsiding  
in my heart's lake, which rose to heights of fear  
that night I spent in deepest desperation.

Just as a swimmer, still with panting breath,  
now safe upon the shore, out of the deep,  
might turn for one last look at the dangerous  
waters,

so I, although my mind was turned to flee,  
turned round to gaze once more upon the pass  
that never let a living soul escape.

I rested my tired body there awhile  
and then began to climb the barren slope  
(I dragged my stronger foot and limped along).

Beyond the point the slope begins to rise  
sprang up a leopard, trim and very swift!  
It was covered by a pelt of many spots.

And, everywhere I looked, the beast was there  
blocking my way, so time and time again  
I was about to turn and go back down.

The hour was early in the morning then,  
the sun was climbing up with those same stars  
that had accompanied it on the world's first day,

the day Divine Love set their beauty turning;  
so the hour and sweet season of creation  
encouraged me to think I could get past

that gaudy beast, wild in its spotted pelt,  
but then good hope gave way and fear returned  
when the figure of a lion loomed up before me,

and he was coming straight toward me, it seemed,  
with head raised high, and furious with hunger—  
the air around him seemed to fear his presence.

And now a she-wolf came, that in her leanness  
seemed racked with every kind of greediness  
(how many people she has brought to grief!).

This last beast brought my spirit down so low  
with fear that seized me at the sight of her,  
I lost all hope of going up the hill.

As a man who, rejoicing in his gains,  
suddenly seeing his gain turn into loss,  
will grieve as he compares his then and now,

so she made me do, that relentless beast;  
coming toward me, slowly, step by step,  
she forced me back to where the sun is mute.

While I was rushing down to that low place,  
my eyes made out a figure coming toward me  
of one grown faint, perhaps from too much  
silence.

And when I saw him standing in this wasteland,  
“Have pity on my soul,” I cried to him,  
“whichever you are, shade or living man!”

“No longer living man, though once I was,”  
he said, “and my parents were from Lombardy,  
both of them were Mantuans by birth.

I was born, though somewhat late, *sub Julio*,  
and lived in Rome when good Augustus reigned,  
when still the false and lying gods were worshipped.

I was a poet and sang of that just man,  
son of Anchises, who sailed off from Troy  
after the burning of proud Ilium.

But why retreat to so much misery?  
Why not climb up this blissful mountain here,  
the beginning and the source of all man's joy?”

“Are you then Virgil, are you then that fount  
from which pours forth so rich a stream of  
words?”

I said to him, bowing my head modestly.

“O light and honor of the other poets,  
may my long years of study, and that deep love  
that made me search your verses, help me now!

You are my teacher, the first of all my authors,  
and you alone the one from whom I took  
the noble style that was to bring me honor.

You see the beast that forced me to retreat;  
save me from her, I beg you, famous sage,  
she makes me tremble, the blood throbs in my  
veins.”

“But you must journey down another road,”  
he answered, when he saw me lost in tears,  
“if ever you hope to leave this wilderness;

this beast, the one you cry about in fear,  
allows no soul to succeed along her path,  
she blocks his way and puts an end to him.

She is by nature so perverse and vicious,  
her craving belly is never satisfied,  
still hungering for food the more she eats.

She mates with many creatures, and will go on  
mating with more until the greyhound comes  
and tracks her down to make her die in anguish.

He will not feed on either land or money:  
his wisdom, love, and virtue shall sustain him;  
he will be born between Feltro and Feltro.

He comes to save that fallen Italy  
for which the maid Camilla gave her life  
and Turnus, Nisus, Euryalus died of wounds.

And he will hunt for her through every city  
until he drives her back to Hell once more,  
whence Envy first unleashed her on mankind.

And so, I think it best you follow me  
for your own good, and I shall be your guide  
and lead you out through an eternal place

where you will hear desperate cries, and see  
tormented shades, some old as Hell itself,  
and know what second death is, from their screams.

And later you will see those who rejoice  
while they are burning, for they have hope of coming,  
whenever it may be, to join the blessed—

to whom, if you too wish to make the climb,  
a spirit, worthier than I, must take you;  
I shall go back, leaving you in her care,

because that Emperor dwelling on high  
will not let me lead any to His city,  
since I in life rebelled against His law.

Everywhere He reigns, and there He rules;  
there is His city, there is His high throne.  
Oh, happy the one He makes His citizen!”

And I to him: “Poet, I beg of you,  
in the name of God, that God you never knew,  
save me from this evil place and worse,

lead me there to the place you spoke about  
that I may see the gate Saint Peter guards  
and those whose anguish you have told me of”

Then he moved on, and I moved close behind him.

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*What is the goal of the “journey” that Dante the Pilgrim is taking?*

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## 16–5

### Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince* and *The Discourses on Titus Livy*

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First two excerpts from Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. S.G.W. Benjamin (n.p.: The National Alumni, 1907), pp. 25–39, *passim*. Latter two excerpts from Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Discourses*, in *The Prince and The Discourses*, trans. Luigi Ricci, E.R.P. Vincent, and Christian E. Detmold (New York: Modern Library, 1950), pp. 145–48, 486–88, *passim*.

#### **TERRITORIES ACQUIRED BY VIRTUE OR BY FORTUNE**

They who from private condition become princes, and, merely by the indulgence of fortune, arrive without much trouble at that dignity, though it costs them dear to maintain it, meet but little difficulty in their passage, being hurried as it were with wings, yet when they come to settle and establish then begins their misery.

. . . About the arrival at this authority, either by virtue or by good fortune, I shall instance two examples that are in our memory; one is Francesco Sforza, the other Caesar Borgia. Sforza, by just means and extraordinary virtue, made himself Duke of Milan, and enjoyed it in great peace, though it was gained with much trouble. Borgia, on the other hand, (called commonly Duke of Valentine), got several fair territories by the fortune of his father, Pope Alexander, and lost them all after his death, though he used

all his industry, and employed all the arts that a wise and brave prince ought to use to fix himself in the sphere where the arms and fortune of other people had placed him. . . .

Pope Alexander VI had a desire to make his son Duke Valentine great, but he saw many impediments in the way, both for the present and for the future. First, he could not see any way to advance him to any territory that depended not upon the Church; and to those in his gift he was sure the Duke of Milan and the Venetians would never consent; for Faenza and Rimum had already put themselves under Venetian protection. He was likewise sensible that the forces of Italy, especially those that were capable of assisting him, were in the hands of those that ought to apprehend the greatness of the Pope . . . and therefore could not repose any great confidence in them; besides, the laws and alliances of all the states in Italy must of necessity be disturbed before he could make himself master of any part, which was no hard matter to do, finding the Venetians, upon some private interest of their own, inviting the French to another expedition into Italy, which his Holiness was so far from opposing that he promoted it by dissolution of King Louis’s former marriage. Louis therefore passed the Alps by the assistance of the Venetians and Alexander’s consent, and was no sooner in Milan than he sent forces to assist the Pope in his enterprise against Romagna, which was immediately surrendered upon the King’s reputation. Romagna being in this manner reduced by the Duke, and the Colonesi defeated, he was ambitious both to keep what he had got, and to advance in his conquests. . . .

When the Duke had possessed himself of Romagna, finding it had been governed by poor and inferior lords, who had rather robbed than corrected their subjects, and given them more occasion of discord than of unity, insomuch as

that province was full of robberies, riots, and all manner of disturbances, to reduce them to unanimity and subjection to monarchy, he thought it necessary to provide them a good governor, and thereupon he conferred that office upon Remiro d'Orco, with absolute power, though he was a cruel and passionate man. d'Orco soon settled it in peace, with no small reputation to himself. Afterward the Duke, apprehending that so large a power might become odious to the people, erected a court of judicature in the center of the province, in which every city had its advocate, and an excellent person was appointed to preside. And as he discovered that his past severity had made him many enemies, to remove that ill opinion, and recover the affections of the people, he had a mind to show that, if any cruelty had been exercised, it proceeded not from him but from the arrogance of his minister; and for their further confirmation he caused the said governor to be apprehended, and his head chopped off one morning in the market-place at Cesena, with a wooden dagger on one side of him and a bloody knife on the other; the ferocity of which spectacle not only appeared but amazed the people for a while.

The Duke, finding himself powerful enough, and secure against present danger, being as strong as he desired, and his neighbors in a manner reduced to an incapacity of hurting him, was willing to go on with his conquests. Nothing remained but jealousy of France, which was without cause, for he knew that King Louis had found his error at last, and would be sure to obstruct him. Hereupon he began to look abroad for new allies, and to hesitate and stagger toward France, as appeared when the French army advanced into the kingdom of Naples against the Spaniards, who had besieged Cajeta. His main design was to secure himself against the French, and he would doubtless have done it if Alexander had lived.

These were his provisions against the dangers that were imminent; but those that were remote were more doubtful and uncertain. The first thing he feared was, lest the next Pope should be his enemy and reassume all that Alexander had given him, to prevent which he considered four ways. The first was by destroying the whole line of those lords whom he had dispossessed, that his Holiness might have no occasion to restore them. The second was to cajole the nobility in Rome, and draw them over to his party, that thereby he might put an awe and restraint upon the Pope. The third was, if possible, to make the College his friends. The fourth was to make himself so strong before the death of his father as to be able to stand upon his own legs and repel the first violence that should be practised against him. Three of these four expedients he had tried before Alexander died, and he was in a fair way for the fourth. . . .

On serious examination, therefore, of the whole conduct of Duke Valentine, I see nothing to be reprehended; it seems rather proper to me to present him, as I have done, as an example for the imitation of all such as by the favor of fortune, or the supplies of other princes, have got into power; for, his mind being so large, and his intentions so high, he could not do otherwise, and nothing could have opposed the

greatness and wisdom of his designs but his own infirmity and the death of his father. He, therefore, who thinks it necessary in the minority of his dominion to secure himself against his enemies, to gain himself friends; to overcome, whether by force or by fraud; to make himself beloved or feared by his people; to be followed and revered by his soldiers; to destroy and exterminate such as would do him injury; to repeal and suppress old laws, and introduce new; to be severe, grateful, magnanimous, liberal, cashier and disband such of his army as were unfaithful, and put new in their places; manage himself so in his alliances with kings and princes that all should be either obliged to requite him or afraid to offend him—he, I say, cannot find a fresher or better model than the actions of this prince.

### **OF SUCH WHO HAVE ARRIVED AT DOMINION BY WICKED MEANS**

Agathocles, the Sicilian, not only from a private but from a vile and abject condition was made King of Syracuse; and being but the son of a potter, he continued the dissoluteness of his life through all the degrees of his fortune. Nevertheless, his vices were accompanied with such courage and activity that he applied himself to the wars, by which, and his great industry, he came at length to be the Pretor of Syracuse. Being settled in that dignity, and having determined to make himself prince, and hold by violence, without obligation to anybody, that which was conferred upon him by consent, he came to an understanding with Hamilcar the Carthaginian, who was then at the head of an army in Sicily; and, calling the people and the Senate of Syracuse together one morning, as if he intended to consult them on some matter of importance to the state, on a signal appointed he caused his soldiers to kill all the senators and the most wealthy of the people; after whose death he usurped the dominion of that city without any obstruction.

Nevertheless it cannot be called virtue in him to kill his fellow-citizens, betray his friends, and be without faith, pity, or religion; these are ways that may get a man empire, but no glory or reputation. Yet, if the wisdom of Agathocles be considered, his dexterity in encountering and overcoming of dangers, his courage in supporting and surmounting his misfortunes, I do not see why he should be held inferior to the best captains of his time. But his unbounded cruelty and barbarous inhumanity, added to numerous other vices, will not permit him to be numbered among the most excellent men. So, then, that which he performed cannot justly be attributed either to fortune or to virtue. . . .

It may seem wonderful to some that it should come to pass that Agathocles, and such as he, after so many treacheries and acts of inhumanity, should live quietly in their own country so long, defend themselves so well against foreign enemies, and none of their subjects conspire against them at home; since several others, by reason of their cruelty, have not been able, even in time of peace, to maintain their government. I conceive it fell out according as



their cruelty was well or ill applied. I say well applied (if that word may be applied to an ill action), and it may be called so when committed but once, and that of necessity for one's own preservation, but never repeated, and even then converted as much as possible to the benefit of the subjects. Ill applied are such cruelties as are but few in the beginning, but in time do rather multiply than decrease. . . .

Whence it is to be observed that he who usurps the government of any State is to execute and put in practice all the cruelties that he thinks material at once, that he may have no occasion to renew them often, but that by his discontinuance he may mollify the people, and by benefits bring them over to his side. He who does otherwise, whether from fear or from ill counsel, is obliged to be always ready with his knife in his hand; for he never can repose any confidence in his subjects, while they, by reason of his fresh and continued inhumanities, cannot be secure against him.

So then injuries are to be committed all at once, that the last being the less, the distaste may be likewise the less; but benefits should be distilled by drops, that the relish may be the greater.

## THE RELIGION OF THE ROMANS

Although the founder of Rome was Romulus, yet the gods did not judge the laws of this prince sufficient for so great an empire, and therefore inspired the Roman Senate to elect Numa Pompilius as his successor, so that he might regulate all those things that had been omitted by Romulus. Numa, finding a very savage people, and wishing to reduce them to civil obedience by the arts of peace, had recourse to religion as the most necessary and assured support of any civil society; and he established it upon such foundations that for many centuries there was nowhere more fear of the gods than in that republic, which greatly facilitated all the enterprises which the Senate or its great men attempted. Whoever will examine the actions of the people of Rome as a body, or of many individual Romans, will see that these citizens feared much more to break an oath than the laws, like men who esteem the power of the gods more than that of men . . . , which can be ascribed to nothing else than the religious principles which Numa had instilled into the Romans. And whoever reads Roman history attentively will see in how great a degree religion served in the command of the armies, in uniting the people and keeping them well conducted, and in covering the wicked with shame. . . . In truth, there never was any remarkable lawgiver amongst any people who did not resort to divine authority, as otherwise his laws would not have been accepted by the people; for there are many good laws, the importance of which is known to the sagacious lawgiver, but the reasons for which are not sufficiently evident to enable him to persuade others to submit to them; and therefore do wise men, for the purpose of removing this difficulty, resort to divine authority. Thus did Lycurgus and Solon, and many others who aimed at the same thing.

The Roman people, then, admiring the wisdom and goodness of Numa, yielded in all things to his advice. It is true that those were very religious times, and the people with whom Numa had to deal were very untutored and superstitious, which made it easy for him to carry out his designs, being able to impress upon them any new form. And doubtless, if any one wanted to establish a republic at the present time, he would find it much easier with the simple mountaineers, who are almost without any civilization, than with such as are accustomed to live in cities, where civilization is already corrupt; as a sculptor finds it easier to make a fine statue out of a crude block of marble than out of a statue badly begun by another. Considering then, all these things, I conclude that the religion introduced by Numa into Rome was one of the chief causes of the prosperity of that city; for this religion gave rise to good laws, and good laws bring good fortune, and from good fortune results happy success in all enterprises. And as the observance of divine institutions is the cause of the greatness of republics, so the disregard of them produces their ruin; for where the fear of God is wanting, there the country will come to ruin.

## CINCINNATUS: ILLUSTRATION OF POVERTY AS GOOD FOR REPUBLICS

It is of the greatest advantage in a republic to have laws that keep her citizens poor. Although there does not appear to have been any special law to this effect in Rome . . . , yet experience shows that even so late as four hundred years after its foundation there was still great poverty in Rome. We cannot ascribe this fact to any other cause than that poverty never was allowed to stand in the way of the achievement of any rank or honor, and that virtue and merit were sought for under whatever roof they dwelt; it was this system that made riches naturally less desirable. We have a manifest proof of this on the occasion when the Consul Minutius and his army were surrounded by the Equeans, and all Rome was full of apprehensions lest the army should be lost, so that they resorted to the creation of a Dictator, their last remedy in times of difficulty. They appointed L. Quintius Cincinnatus, who at the time was on his little farm, which he cultivated with his own hands. This circumstance is celebrated by Titus Livius in the following golden words: "After this let men not listen to those who prefer riches to everything else in this world, and who think that there is neither honor nor virtue where wealth does not flow." Cincinnatus was engaged in ploughing his fields, which did not exceed four acres, when the messengers of the Senate arrived from Rome to announce his election to the dictatorship, and to point out to him the imminent danger of the Roman republic. He immediately put on his toga, gathered an army, and went to the relief of Minutius; and having crushed and despoiled the enemy, and freed the Consul and his army, he would not permit them to share the spoils, saying, "I will not allow you to participate in the spoils of

those to whom you came so near falling a prey." He deprived Minutius of the consulate, and reduced him to the rank of lieutenant, saying to him, "You will remain in this grade until you have learned to be Consul."

Cincinnatus had chosen for his master of cavalry L. Tarquinius whose poverty had obliged him to fight on foot. Let us note here how Rome honored poverty, (as has been said), and how four acres of land sufficed for the support of so good and great a citizen as Cincinnatus. We find also that poverty was still honored in the times of Marcus Regulus, who when commanding an army in Africa asked permission of the Roman Senate to return to look after his farm, which was being spoiled by the laborers in whose charge it had been left by him. These instances suggest two reflections: the one, that these eminent citizens were content to remain in such poverty, and that they were satisfied

merely to win honor by their military achievements, and to leave all the profits of them to the public treasury; for if they had thought of enriching themselves by their wars, they would have cared little whether their fields were being spoiled or not; and the other, as to the magnanimity of these citizens, who, when placed at the head of an army, rose above all princes solely by the grandeur of their souls. . . .

I might demonstrate here at length that poverty produces better fruit than riches,—that the first has conferred honor upon cities, countries, and religions, whilst the latter have only served to ruin them,—were it not that this subject has been so often illustrated by other writers.

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*Why were the activities of Pope Alexander VI contrary to his official position?*

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## 16–6

### Francis Petrarch, *Rime*

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1

O You who hear within these scattered verses  
the sound of sighs with which I fed my heart  
in my first errant youthful days when I  
in part was not the man I am today;

for all the ways in which I weep and speak  
between vain hopes, between vain suffering,  
in anyone who knows love through its trials,  
in them, may I find pity and forgiveness.

For now I see, since I've become the talk  
so long a time of people all around  
(it often makes me feel so full of shame),  
that from my vanities comes fruit of shame  
and my repentance and the clearest knowledge  
that worldly joy is a quick passing dream.

3

It was the day the sun's ray had turned pale  
with pity for the suffering of his Maker  
when I was caught, and I put up no fight,  
my lady, for your lovely eyes had bound me.

It seemed no time to be on guard against  
Love's blows; therefore, I went my way  
secure and fearless—so, all my misfortunes  
began in midst of universal woe.

Love found me all disarmed and found the way  
was clear to reach my heart down through the eyes  
which have become the halls and doors of tears.

It seems to me it did him little honor  
to wound me with his arrow in my state  
and to you, armed, not show his bow at all.

16

The old man takes his leave, white-haired and  
pale,  
of the sweet place where he filled out his age  
and leaves his little family, bewildered,  
beholding its dear father disappear;

and then, dragging along his ancient limbs  
throughout the very last days of his life,  
helping himself with good will all he can,  
broken by years, and wearied by the road,

he comes to Rome, pursuing his desire,  
to look upon the likeness of the One  
he hopes to see again up there in heaven.

Just so, alas, sometimes I go, my lady,  
searching as much as possible in others  
for your true, your desirable form.

61

Oh blessed be the day, the month, the year,  
the season and the time, the hour, the instant,  
the gracious countryside, the place where I  
was struck by those two lovely eyes that bound  
me;

## Chapter 16

and blessed be the first sweet agony  
I felt when I found myself bound to Love,  
the bow and all the arrows that have pierced me,  
the wounds that reach the bottom of my heart.

And blessed be all the poetry  
I scattered, calling out my lady's name,  
and all the sighs, and tears, and the desire;

blessed be all the paper upon which  
I earn her fame, and every thought of mine,  
only of her, and shared with no one else.

### 132

If it's not love, then what is it I feel?  
But if it's love, by God, what is this thing?  
If good, why then the bitter mortal sting?  
If bad, then why is every torment sweet?

If I burn willingly, why weep and grieve?  
And if against my will, what good lamenting?  
O living death, O pleasurable harm,  
how can you rule me if I not consent?

And if I do consent, it's wrong to grieve.  
Caught in contrasting winds in a frail boat  
on the high seas I am without a helm,

so light of wisdom, so laden of error,  
that I myself do not know what I want,  
and shiver in midsummer, burn in winter.

### 319

My days, swifter than any fawn, have fled  
like shadows, and for me no good has lasted  
more than a wink, and few are those calm hours  
whose bittersweetness I keep in my mind.

O wretched world, changing and arrogant,  
a man who puts his hope in you is blind:  
from you my heart was torn and now is held  
by one whose flesh and bones are turned to  
dust.

But her best form, which still continues living  
and will forever live high in the heavens,  
makes me fall more in love with all her beauty;

and as my hair is changing I think only  
what she is like today and where she dwells,  
what it was like to see her lovely veil.

### 333

Go now, my grieving verse, to the hard stone  
that hides my precious treasure in the earth;  
and there call her, who will respond from Heaven  
although her mortal part be darkly buried,

and tell her I am weary now of living,  
of sailing through the horrors of this sea,  
but that, by gathering up her scattered leaves,  
I follow her this way, step after step,

speaking of her alone, alive and dead  
(rather, alive, and now immortalized),  
so that the world may know and love her more.

Let her watch for the day I pass away  
(It is not far from now), let her meet me,  
call me, draw me to what she is in Heaven.

### 365

I go my way regretting those past times  
I spent in loving something which was mortal  
instead of soaring high, since I had wings  
that might have taken me to higher levels.

You who see all my shameful, wicked errors,  
King of all heaven, invisible, immortal,  
help this frail soul of mine for she has strayed,  
and all her emptiness fill up with grace,

so that, having once lived in storms, at war,  
I may now die in peace, in port; and if my stay  
was vain, at least let my departure count.

Over that little life that still remains to me,  
and at my death, deign that your head be present:  
You know You are the only hope I have.

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*Petrarch's theme of hopeless love is still a  
very popular one. Why is this theme so  
attractive?*

## Chapter 17

# *The Age of Reformation and Religious Wars*

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### 17-1

#### **Christopher Columbus: *The Letters of Columbus to Ferdinand and Isabel***

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From *The Journal of Christopher Columbus*, translation by Cecil Jane (London: Anthony Blond, 1968) pp. 191, 194, 196–198, 200–201.

SIR: Since I know that you will be pleased at the great victory with which Our Lord has crowned my voyage, I write this to you, from which you will learn how in thirty-three days I passed from the Canary Islands to the Indies, with the fleet which the most illustrious King and Queen, our Sovereigns, gave to me. There I found very many islands, filled with innumerable people, and I have taken possession of them all for their Highnesses, done by proclamation and with the royal standard unfurled, and no opposition was offered to me.

To the first island which I found I gave the name “San Salvador,” in remembrance of the Divine Majesty, Who had marvellously bestowed all this; the Indians call it “Guanahani.” To the second, I gave the name the island of “Santa Maria de Concepcion,” to the third, “Fernandina,” to the fourth, “Isabella,” to the fifth island, “Juana,” and so each received from me a new name. . . .

Española is a marvel. The sierras and the mountains, the plains, the champaigns, are so lovely and so rich for planting and sowing, for breeding cattle of every kind, for building towns and villages. The harbours of the sea here are such as cannot be believed to exist unless they have been seen, and so with the rivers, many and great, and of good water, the majority of which contain gold. In the trees, fruits and plants, there is a great difference from those of Juana. In this island, there are many spices and great mines of gold and of other metals.

The people of this island and of all the other islands which I have found and of which I have information, all go naked, men and women, as their mothers bore them, although some of the women cover a single place with the leaf of a plant or with a net of cotton which they make for the purpose. They have no iron or steel or weapons, nor are they fitted to use them. This is not because they are not well built and of handsome stature, but because they are very marvellously timorous. They have no other arms than

spears made of canes, cut in seeding time, to the ends of which they fix a small sharpened stick. Of these they do not dare to make use, for many times it has happened that I have sent ashore two or three men to some town to have speech with them, and countless people have come out to them, and as soon as they have seen my men approaching, they have fled, a father not even waiting for his son. This is not because ill has been done to any one of them; on the contrary, at every place where I have been and have been able to have speech with them, I have given to them of that which I had, such as cloth and many other things, receiving nothing in exchange. But so they are, incurably timid. It is true that, after they have been reassured and have lost this fear, they are so guileless and so generous with all that they possess, that no one would believe it who has not seen it. They refuse nothing that they possess, if it be asked of them; on the contrary, they invite any one to share it and display as much love as if they would give their hearts. They are content with whatever trifle of whatever kind that may be given to them, whether it be of value or valueless. I forbade that they should be given things so worthless as fragments of broken crockery, scraps of broken glass and lace tips, although when they were able to get them, they fancied that they possessed the best jewel in the world. So it was found that for a thong a sailor received gold to the weight of two and a half Castellanos, and others received much more for other things which were worth less. As for new blancas, for them they would give everything which they had, although it might be two or three castellanos’ [gold coins] weight of gold or an arroba or two of spun cotton. They took even the pieces of the broken hoops of the wine barrels and, like savages, gave what they had, so that it seemed to me to be wrong and I forbade it. I gave them a thousand handsome good things, which I had brought, in order that they might conceive affection for us and, more than that, might become Christians and be inclined to the love and service of Your Highnesses and of the whole Castilian nation, and strive to collect and give us of the things which they have in abundance and which are necessary to us.

They do not hold any creed nor are they idolaters; but they all believe that power and good are in the heavens and were very firmly convinced that I, with these ships and men, came from the heavens, and in this belief they everywhere received me after they had mastered their fear. This belief is not the result of ignorance, for they are, on the contrary, of a very acute intelligence and they are men who navigate all those seas, so that it is amazing how good an account they give of everything. It is because they have never seen people clothed or ships of such a kind.

As soon as I arrived in the Indies, in the first island which I found, I took some of the natives by force, in order that they might learn and might give me information of whatever there is in these parts. And so it was that they soon understood us, and we them, either by speech or signs, and they have been very serviceable. At present, those I bring with me are still of the opinion that I come from Heaven, for all the intercourse which they have had with me. They were the first to announce this wherever I went, and the others went running from house to house, and to the neighbouring towns, with loud cries of, "Come! Come! See the men from Heaven!" So all came, men and women alike, when their minds were set at rest concerning us, not one, small or great, remaining behind, and they all brought something to eat and drink, which they gave with extraordinary affection. . . .

In all these islands, I saw no great diversity in the appearance of the people or in their manners and language. On the contrary, they all understand one another, which is a very curious thing, on account of which I hope that their Highnesses will determine upon their conversion to our holy faith, towards which they are very inclined.

I have already said how I went one hundred and seven leagues in a straight line from west to east along the seashore of the island of Juana, and as a result of this voyage I can say that this island is larger than England and Scotland together, for, beyond these one hundred and seven leagues, there remain to the westward two provinces to which I have not gone. One of these provinces they call "Avan," and there people are born with tails. These provinces cannot have a length of less than fifty or sixty leagues, as I could understand from those Indians whom I have and who know all the islands.

The other island, Española, has a circumference greater than all Spain from Collioure by the seacoast to Fuenterabia in Vizcaya, for I voyaged along one side for one hundred and eighty-eight great leagues in a straight line from west to east. It is a land to be desired and, when seen, never to be left. I have taken possession of all for their Highnesses, and all are more richly endowed than I know how or am able to say, and I hold all for their Highnesses, so that they may dispose of them as they do of the king-

doms of Castile and as absolutely. But especially, in this Española, in the situation most convenient and in the best position for the mines of gold and for all trade as well with the mainland here as with that there, belonging to the Grand Khan, where will be great trade and profit, I have taken possession of a large town, to which I gave the name "Villa de Navidad," and in it I have made fortifications and a fort, which will now by this time be entirely completed. In it I have left enough men for such a purpose with arms and artillery and provisions for more than a year, and a fusta, and one, a master of all seacraft, to build others, and I have established great friendship with the king of that land, so much so, that he was proud to call me "brother" and to treat me as such. . . .

In conclusion, to speak only of what has been accomplished on this voyage, which was so hasty, their Highnesses can see that I will give them as much gold as they may need, if their Highnesses will render me very slight assistance; presently, I will give them spices and cotton, as much as their Highnesses shall command; and mastic, as much as they shall order to be shipped and which, up to now, has been found only in Greece, in the island of Chios, and the Seignory sells it for what it pleases; and aloe, as much as they shall order to be shipped; and slaves, as many as they shall order, and who will be from the idolaters. I believe also that I have found rhubarb and cinnamon, and I shall find a thousand other things of value, which the people whom I have left there will have discovered, for I have not delayed at any point, so far as the wind allowed me to sail, except in the town of Navidad, in order to leave it secured and well established, and in truth I should have done much more if the ships had served me as reason demanded. . . .

This is an account of the facts, thus abridged.

Done in the caravel, off the Canary Islands, on the fifteenth day of February, in the year one thousand four hundred and ninety-three.

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*How could Columbus reconcile his views of the native peoples with his stated intention of taking their gold and enslaving them?*

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17–2

Erasmus, *Julius II Excluded*

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From Erasmus, *Julius II Excluded: A Dialogue*. Translated and included by J.A. Froude in his *Life and Letters of Erasmus* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1894), pp. 149–68, *passim*.

**Scene—Gate of Heaven**

*Julius:* What the devil is this? The gates not opened! Something is wrong with the lock. . . .

*Peter:* Well that the gates are adamant, or this fellow would have broken in. He must be some giant, or conqueror. Heaven, what a stench! Who are you? What do you want here? . . .

*Julius:* Enough of this. I am Julius . . . , P.M., as you can see by the letters if you can read.

*Peter:* P.M.! What is that? Pestis Maxima?

*Julius:* Pontifex Maximus, you rascal. . . .

*Peter:* . . . Let me look at you a little closer. Hum! Signs of impiety in plenty . . . not precisely like an apostle. Priest's cassock and bloody armour below it, eyes savage, mouth insolent, forehead brazen, body scarred with sins all over, breath loaded with wine, health broken with debauchery. Ay, threaten as you will, I will tell you what you are for all your bold looks. You are Julius the Emperor come back from hell. . . .

*Julius:* Make an end, I say, or I will fling a thunderbolt at you. I will excommunicate you. I have done as much to kings before this. . . .

*Peter:* You must show your merits first; no admission without merits. . . .

*Julius:* The invincible Julius ought not to answer a beggarly fisherman. However, you shall know who and what I am. First, I am a Ligurian, and not a Jew like you. My mother was the sister of the great Pope Sixtus IV. The Pope made me a rich man out of Church property. I became a cardinal. I had my misfortunes. I had the French pox. I was banished, hunted out of my country; but I knew all along that I should come to be pope myself in the end . . . I succeeded. I rose to the top, and I have done more for the Church and Christ than any pope before me.

*Peter:* What did you do?

*Julius:* I raised the revenue. I invented new offices and sold them. . . . Then I annexed Bologna to the Holy See. I have torn up treaties, kept great armies in the field. I have covered Rome with palaces, and I have left five millions in the Treasury behind me. . . .

*Peter:* Invincible warrior! All this is quite new to me. Pardon my simplicity, who are these fair curly-haired boys that you have with you?

*Julius:* Boys I took into training to improve their minds.

*Peter:* And those dark ones with the scars?

*Julius:* Those are my soldiers and generals who were killed fighting for me. They all deserve heaven. I promised it to them under hand and seal if they lost their lives in my service, no matter how wicked they might be. . . .

*Peter:* My orders are not to admit men who come with Bulls, but to admit those who have clothed the naked, fed the hungry, given the thirsty drink, visited the sick and those in prison. Men have cast out devils and worked miracles in Christ's name and yet have been shut out. . . .

*Julius:* If I had but known.

*Peter:* What would you have done? Declared war?

*Julius:* I would have excommunicated you.

*Peter:* . . . When I was pope the difficulty was to find men who would be priests or deacons.

*Julius:* Naturally, when bishops and priests had nothing for their reward but fasts, and vigils, and doctrines, and now and then death. Bishops nowadays are kings and lords, and such positions are worth struggling for. . . .

*Peter:* Why did you take Bologna . . . ?

*Julius:* Because I wanted the revenue for my own treasury, and because Bologna was otherwise convenient for me. So I used my thunderbolts, the French helped me, and now Bologna is mine, and every farthing of the taxes goes to Rome for the Church's use. If you had only seen my triumphal entry. . . .

*Peter:* He who represents Christ ought to try to be like Christ. But, tell me, is there no way of removing a wicked pope?

*Julius:* Absurd! Who can remove the highest authority of all?

*Peter:* That the Pope is the highest is a reason why he should be removed if he causes scandal. Bad princes can be removed. The Church is in a bad way if it must put up with a head who is ruining it.

*Julius:* A Pope can only be corrected by a general council, but no general council can be held without the Pope's consent; otherwise it is a synod, and not a council. Let the council sit, it can determine nothing unless the Pope agrees; and, again, a single pope having absolute power is superior to the council. Thus he cannot be deposed for any crime whatsoever. . . .

*Peter:* A novel privilege for my successors—to be the wickedest of men, yet be safe from punishment. So much the unhappier the Church which cannot shake such a monster off its shoulders.

*Julius:* Some say there is one cause for which a Pope can be deposed.

*Peter:* When he has done a good action, I suppose, since he is not to be punished for his bad actions.

*Julius:* If he can be convicted publicly of heresy. But this is impossible, too. For he can cancel any canon which he does not like. . . .

*Peter:* In the name of the papal majesty, who made these fine laws?

*Julius:* Who? Why, the source of all law, the Pope himself, and the power that makes a law can repeal it.

*Peter:* What else can you do?

*Julius:* What else? How do kings levy revenues? They persuade the people that they owe their fortunes to them, and then they ask, and the people give. So we make the people believe that they owe to us their knowledge of God, though we sleep all our lives. Besides, we sell them indulgences in small matters at a cheap rate, dispensations for not much more, and for blessings we charge nothing. . . .

*Peter:* This is all Greek to me. But why do you hate the barbarians, and move heaven and earth to get rid of them?

*Julius:* Because barbarians are superstitious, and the French worst of all.

*Peter:* Do the French worship other gods besides Christ?

*Julius:* No; but they have precise notions of what is due to Christ. They use hard words about certain things which we have left off.

*Peter:* Magical words, I presume?

*Julius:* No, not magical. They talk of simony and blasphemy, sodomy, poisoning, witchcraft, in language expressing abomination of such actions.

*Peter:* I do not wish to be personal, but can it be that such crimes are to be found among yourselves, professing Christians?

*Julius:* The barbarians have vices of their own. They censure ours and forget theirs. We tolerate ours and abominate theirs. Poverty, for instance, we look on as so wicked that anything is justifiable to escape from it, while the barbarians scarcely approve of wealth if innocently come by. . . . Barbarians forbid usury; we regard it as a necessary institution. They think looseness with women polluting and disgusting; we—well, we do not think so at all. They are shocked at simony; we never mention it. They stick to old laws and customs; we go for novelty and progress. While our views of life are so different, we don't like to have the barbarians too close to us. They have sharp eyes. They write letters about us to our friends. . . . Thus the Church suffers: we sell fewer dispensations, and get a worse price for them, and we receive less money for bishoprics and abbeys and colleges; worst of all, people are no longer frightened at our thunderbolts. Once let them think that a wicked Pope cannot hurt them, we shall be starved out. So we mean to keep the barbarian at a distance.

*Peter:* The Church is a community of Christians with Christ's Spirit in them. You have been a subverter of the Church.

*Julius:* The Church consists of cathedrals, and priests, and the Court of Rome, and myself at the head of it.

*Peter:* Christ is our Head, and we are His ministers. Are there two Heads? How have you increased the Church?

*Julius:* I found it poor: I have made it splendid.

*Peter:* Splendid with what? With faith? . . .

*Julius:* I have filled Rome with palaces, trains of mules and horses, troops of servants, armies and officers.

*Spirit:* With scarlet women and the like.

*Julius:* With purple and gold, with revenues so vast that kings are poor beside the Roman Pontiff. Glory, luxury, hoards of treasure, these are splendours, and these all I have created.

*Peter:* Pray, inform me. The Church had nothing of all this when it was founded by Christ. Whence came all this splendour, as you call it? . . .

*Julius:* You are thinking of the old affair, when you starved as Pope, with a handful of poor hunted bishops about you. Time has changed all that, and much for the better. You had only the name of Pope. Look now at our gorgeous churches, our priests by thousands; bishops like kings, with retinues and palaces; cardinals in their purple gloriously attended, horses and mules decked with gold and jewels, and shod with gold and silver. Beyond all, myself, Supreme Pontiff, borne on soldiers' shoulders in a golden chair, and waving my hand majestically to adoring crowds. Harken to the roar of the cannon, the bugle notes, the boom of the drums. Observe the military engines, the shouting populace, torches blazing in street and square, and the kings of the earth scarce admitted to kiss my Holiness's foot. Behold the Roman Bishop placing the crown on the head of the Emperor, who seems to be made king of kings, yet is but the shadow of a name. Look at all this, and tell me it is not magnificent!

*Peter:* I look at a very worldly tyrant, an enemy of Christ and a disgrace to the Church.

*Julius:* Mere envy! You perceive what a poor wretch of a bishop you were compared to me.

*Peter:* Insolent wretch! Dare you compare your glory with mine?—and mine was Christ's, and not my own. Christ gave to me the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, trusted His sheep to my feeding and sealed my faith with His approval. Fraud, usury, and cunning made you Pope, if Pope you are to be called. I gained thousands of souls to Christ: you have destroyed as many thousands. I brought heathen Rome to acknowledge Christ: you have made it heathen again. I healed the sick, cast out devils, restored the dead to life, and brought a blessing with me where I went. What blessings have you and your triumphs brought? I used my power for the good of all: you have used yours to crush and vex mankind. . . .

*Julius:* Do you mean to say I am to give up money, dominion, revenues, pleasures, life? Will you leave me to misery?

*Peter:* Yes, if you count Christ as miserable. He who was Lord of all became the scorn of all, endured poverty, endured labour, fasting, and hunger, and ended with a death of shame.

*Julius:* Very admirable, no doubt. But He will not find many imitators in these times of ours.

*Peter:* To admire is to imitate. Christ takes nothing good from any man. He takes what is falsely called good, to give him instead eternal truth, as soon as he is purged from the taint of the world. Being Himself heavenly, He will have His Church like Him, estranged from the world's corruption, and those who are sunk in pollution can not resemble One who is sitting in heaven. Once for all, fling away your imagined wealth, and receive instead what is far better.

*Julius:* What, I beseech you?

*Peter:* The gift of prophecy, the gift of knowledge, the gift of miracles, Christ Himself. The more a man is afflicted in the world the greater his joy in Christ, the poorer in the world the richer in Christ, the more cast down in the world the more exalted in Christ. Christ will have His followers

pure, and most of all His ministers, the bishops. The higher in rank they are the more like Christ they are bound to be, and the less entangled in earthly pleasures. Yet you, the bishop next to Christ, who make yourself equal with Christ, think only of money, and arms, and treaties, to say nothing of vicious pleasures, and you abuse His name to support your own vanities. You claim the honour due to Christ, while you are Christ's enemy. You bless others, you are yourself accursed. You pretend to have the keys of heaven, and you are yourself shut out from it. . . .

*Julius:* Then you won't open the gates?

*Peter:* Sooner to anyone than to such as you. We are not of your communion in this place. You have an army of sturdy rogues behind you, you have money, and you are a famous architect. Go build a paradise of your own, and fortify it, lest the devils break in on you.

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*Why was Pope Julius II not considering a reforming pope such as Gregory VII and Innocent III?*

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## 17-3

### Martin Luther: *Ninety-Five Theses* or *Disputation on the Power* and *Efficacy of Indulgences*

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From *Martin Luther's Basic Theological Writings*, ed. Timothy F. Lull (Chicago:Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 1989), pp. 21-29.

Out of love and zeal for truth and the desire to bring it to light, the following theses will be publicly discussed at Wittenberg under the chairmanship of the reverend father Martin Lutter,<sup>1</sup> Master of Arts and Sacred Theology and regularly appointed Lecturer on these subjects at that place. He requests that those who cannot be present to debate orally with us will do so by letter.<sup>2</sup>

In the Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

1. When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, "Repent" [Matt. 4:17],<sup>3</sup> be willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance.

2. This word cannot be understood as referring to the sacrament of penance, that is, confession and satisfaction, as administered by the clergy.

3. Yet it does not mean solely inner repentance; such inner repentance is worthless unless it produces various outward mortifications of the flesh.

4. The penalty of sin<sup>4</sup> remains as long as the hatred of self, that is, true inner repentance, until our entrance into the kingdom of heaven.

5. The pope neither desires nor is able to remit any penalties except those imposed by his own authority or that of the canons.<sup>5</sup>

6. The pope cannot remit any guilt, except by declaring and showing that it has been remitted by God; or, to be sure, by remitting guilt in cases reserved to his judgment. If his right to grant remission in these cases were disregarded, the guilt would certainly remain unforgiven.

7. God remits guilt to no one unless at the same time he humbles him in all things and makes him submissive to his vicar, the priest.

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<sup>1</sup>Luther spelled his name Lutter in this preamble.

<sup>2</sup> There was actually no debate, for no one responded to the invitation. The contents of the ninety-five theses were soon widely disseminated by word of mouth and by the printers, and in effect a vigorous debate took place that lasted for a number of years.

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<sup>3</sup> The Latin form, *poenitentiam agite*, and the German, *tut Busse*, may be rendered in two ways, "repent," and "do penance."

<sup>4</sup>Catholic theology distinguishes between the "guilt" and the "penalty" of sin.

<sup>5</sup>The canons, or decrees of the church, have the force of law. Those referred to here and in Theses 8 and 85 are the so-called penitential canons.



8. The penitential canons are imposed only on the living, and, according to the canons themselves, nothing should be imposed on the dying.

9. Therefore the Holy Spirit through the pope is kind to us insofar as the pope in his decrees always makes exception of the article of death and of necessity.<sup>6</sup>

10. Those priests act ignorantly and wickedly who, in the case of the dying, reserve canonical penalties for purgatory.

11. Those tares of changing the canonical penalty to the penalty of purgatory were evidently sown while the bishops slept [Matt. 13:25].

12. In former times canonical penalties were imposed, not after, but before absolution, as tests of true contrition.

13. The dying are freed by death from all penalties, are already dead as far as the canon laws are concerned, and have a right to be released from them.

14. Imperfect piety or love on the part of the dying person necessarily brings with it great fear; and the smaller the love, the greater the fear.

15. This fear or horror is sufficient in itself, to say nothing of other things, to constitute the penalty of purgatory, since it is very near the horror of despair.

16. Hell, purgatory, and heaven seem to differ the same as despair, fear, and assurance of salvation.

17. It seems as though for the souls in purgatory fear should necessarily decrease and love increase.

18. Furthermore, it does not seem proved, either by reason or Scripture, that souls in purgatory are outside the state of merit, that is, unable to grow in love.

19. Nor does it seem proved that souls in purgatory, at least not all of them, are certain and assured of their own salvation, even if we ourselves may be entirely certain of it.

20. Therefore the pope, when he uses the words “plenary remission of all penalties,” does not actually mean “all penalties,” but only those imposed by himself.

21. Thus those indulgence preachers are in error who say that a man is absolved from every penalty and saved by papal indulgences.

22. As a matter of fact, the pope remits to souls in purgatory no penalty which, according to canon law, they should have paid in this life.

23. If remission of all penalties whatsoever could be granted to anyone at all, certainly it would be granted only to the most perfect, that is, to very few.

24. For this reason most people are necessarily deceived by that indiscriminate and high-sounding promise of release from penalty.

25. That power which the pope has in general over purgatory corresponds to the power which any bishop or curate has in a particular way in his own diocese or parish.

26. The pope does very well when he grants remission to souls in purgatory, not by the power of the keys, which he does not have,<sup>7</sup> but by way of intercession for them.

27. They preach only human doctrines who say that as soon as the money clinks into the money chest, the soul flies out of purgatory.

28. It is certain that when money clinks in the money chest, greed and avarice can be increased; but when the church intercedes, the result is in the hands of God alone.

29. Who knows whether all souls in purgatory wish to be redeemed, since we have exceptions in St. Severinus and St. Paschal,<sup>8</sup> as related in a legend.

30. No one is sure of the integrity of his own contrition, much less of having received plenary remission.

31. The man who actually buys indulgences is as rare as he who is really penitent; indeed, he is exceedingly rare.

32. Those who believe that they can be certain of their salvation because they have indulgence letters will be eternally damned, together with their teachers.

33. Men must especially be on their guard against those who say that the pope’s pardons are that inestimable gift of God by which man is reconciled to him.

34. For the graces of indulgences are concerned only with the penalties of sacramental satisfaction<sup>9</sup> established by man.

35. They who teach that contrition is not necessary on the part of those who intend to buy souls out of purgatory or to buy confessional privileges<sup>10</sup> preach unchristian doctrine.

36. Any truly repentant Christian has a right to full remission of penalty and guilt,<sup>11</sup> even without indulgence letters.

37. Any true Christian, whether living or dead, participates in all the blessings of Christ and the church; and this is granted him by God, even without indulgence letters.

38. Nevertheless, papal remission and blessing are by no means to be disregarded, for they are, as I have said [Thesis 6], the proclamation of the divine remission.

<sup>6</sup> Commenting on this thesis in the *Explanations of the Ninety-five Theses* (p. 114), Luther distinguishes between temporal and eternal necessity. “Necessity knows no law.” “Death is the necessity of necessities.” Cf. WA 1, 549.

<sup>7</sup>This is not a denial of the power of the keys, that is, the power to forgive and to retain sin, but merely an assertion that the power of the keys does not extend to purgatory.

<sup>8</sup>Luther refers to this legend again in the *Explanations of the Ninety-five Theses* below, p. 178. The legend is to the effect that these saints, Pope Severinus (638–640) and Pope Paschal I (817–824), preferred to remain longer in purgatory than they might have greater glory in heaven.

<sup>9</sup>Satisfaction is that act on the part of the penitent, in connection with the sacrament of penance, by means of which he pays the temporal penalty for his sins. If at death he is in arrears in paying his temporal penalty for venial sins, he pays this penalty in purgatory. Indulgences are concerned with this satisfaction of the sacrament of penance—they permit a partial or complete (plenary) remission of temporal punishment. According to Roman Catholic theology, the buyer of an indulgence still has to confess his sins, be absolved from them, and be truly penitent.

<sup>10</sup>These are privileges entitling the holder of indulgence letters to choose his own confessor and relieving him, the holder, of certain satisfactions.

<sup>11</sup>To justify the placing of absolution before satisfaction, contrary to the practice of the early church. Theologians distinguished between the guilt and the penalty of sins.

39. It is very difficult, even for the most learned theologians, at one and the same time to commend to the people the bounty of indulgences and the need of true contrition.

40. A Christian who is truly contrite seeks and loves to pay penalties for his sins; the bounty of indulgences, however, relaxes penalties and causes men to hate them—at least it furnishes occasion for hating them.

41. Papal indulgences must be preached with caution, lest people erroneously think that they are preferable to other good works of love.

42. Christians are to be taught that the pope does not intend that the buying of indulgences should in any way be compared with works of mercy.

43. Christians are to be taught that he who gives to the poor or lends to the needy does a better deed than he who buys indulgences.

44. Because love grows by works of love, man thereby becomes better. Man does not, however, become better by means of indulgences but is merely freed from penalties.

45. Christians are to be taught that he who sees a needy man and passes him by, yet gives his money for indulgences, does not buy papal indulgences but God's wrath.

46. Christians are to be taught that, unless they have more than they need, they must reserve enough for their family needs and by no means squander it on indulgences.

47. Christians are to be taught that the buying of indulgences is a matter of free choice, not commanded.

48. Christians are to be taught that the pope, in granting indulgences, needs and thus desires their devout prayer more than their money.

49. Christians are to be taught that papal indulgences are useful only if they do not put their trust in them, but very harmful if they lose their fear of God because of them.

50. Christians are to be taught that if the pope knew the exactions of the indulgence preachers, he would rather that the basilica of St. Peter were burned to ashes than built up with the skin, flesh, and bones of his sheep.

51. Christians are to be taught that the pope would and should wish to give of his own money, even though he had to sell the basilica of St. Peter, to many of those from whom certain hawkers of indulgences cajole money.

52. It is vain to trust in salvation by indulgence letters, even though the indulgence commissary, or even the pope, were to offer his soul as security.

53. They are enemies of Christ and the pope who forbid altogether the preaching of the Word of God in some churches in order that indulgences may be preached in others.

54. Injury is done the Word of God when, in the same sermon, an equal or larger amount of time is devoted to indulgences than to the Word.

55. It is certainly the pope's sentiment that if indulgences, which are a very insignificant thing, are celebrated with one bell, one procession, and one ceremony, then the gospel,

which is the very greatest thing, should be preached with a hundred bells, a hundred processions, a hundred ceremonies.

56. The treasures of the church,<sup>12</sup> out of which the pope distributes indulgences, are not sufficiently discussed or known among the people of Christ.

57. That indulgences are not temporal treasures is certainly clear, for many [indulgence] preachers do not distribute them freely but only gather them.

58. Nor are they the merits of Christ and the saints, for, even without the pope, the latter always work grace for the inner man, and the cross, death, and hell for the outer man.

59. St. Laurence said that the poor of the church were the treasures of the church, but he spoke according to the usage of the word in his own time.

60. Without want of consideration we say that the keys of the church,<sup>13</sup> given by the merits of Christ, are that treasure.

61. For it is clear that the pope's power is of itself sufficient for the remission of penalties and cases reserved by himself.

62. The true treasure of the church is the most holy gospel of the glory and grace of God.

63. But this treasure is naturally most odious, for it makes the first to be last [Matt. 20:16].

64. On the other hand, the treasure of indulgences is naturally most acceptable, for it makes the last to be first.

65. Therefore the treasures of the gospel are nets with which one formerly fished for men of wealth.

66. The treasures of indulgences are nets with which one now fishes for the wealth of men.

67. The indulgences which the demagogues acclaim as the greatest graces are actually understood to be such only insofar as they promote gain.

68. They are nevertheless in truth the most insignificant graces when compared with the grace of God and the piety of the cross.

69. Bishops and curates are bound to admit the commissaries of papal indulgences with all reverence.

70. But they are much more bound to strain their eyes and ears lest these men preach their own dreams instead of what the pope has commissioned.

71. Let him who speaks against the truth concerning papal indulgences be anathema and accursed;

72. But let him who guards against the lust and license of the indulgence preachers be blessed;

73. Just as the pope justly thunders against those who by any means whatsoever contrive harm to the sale of indulgences.

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<sup>12</sup>The treasury of merits is a reserve fund of good works accumulated by Christ and the saints upon which the pope could draw when he remitted satisfaction in indulgences.

<sup>13</sup>The office of the keys: the preaching of the gospel, the celebrating of the sacraments, the remitting of sins to the penitent, and the excommunicating of impenitent sinners.

74. But much more does he intend to thunder against those who use indulgences as a pretext to contrive harm to holy love and truth.

75. To consider papal indulgences so great that they could absolve a man even if he had done the impossible and had violated the mother of God is madness.

76. We say on the contrary that papal indulgences cannot remove the very least of venial sins as far as guilt is concerned.

77. To say that even St. Peter, if he were now pope, could not grant greater graces is blasphemy against St. Peter and the pope.

78. We say on the contrary that even the present pope, or any pope whatsoever, has greater graces at his disposal, that is, the gospel, spiritual powers, gifts of healing, etc., as it is written in I Cor. 12 [:28].

79. To say that the cross emblazoned with the papal coat of arms, and set up by the indulgence preachers, is equal in worth to the cross of Christ is blasphemy.

80. The bishops, curates, and theologians who permit such talk to be spread among the people will have to answer for this.

81. This unbridled preaching of indulgences makes it difficult even for learned men to rescue the reverence which is due the pope from slander or from the shrewd questions of the laity,

82. Such as: "Why does not the pope empty purgatory for the sake of holy love and the dire need of the souls that are there if he redeems an infinite number of souls for the sake of miserable money with which to build a church? The former reasons would be most just; the latter is most trivial."

83. Again, "Why are funeral and anniversary masses for the dead continued and why does he not return or permit the withdrawal of the endowments founded for them, since it is wrong to pray for the redeemed?"

84. Again, "What is this new piety of God and the pope that for a consideration of money they permit a man who is impious and their enemy to buy out of purgatory the pious soul of a friend of God and do not rather, because of the need of that pious and beloved soul, free it for pure love's sake?"

85. Again, "Why are the penitential canons, long since abrogated and dead in actual fact and through disuse, now satisfied by the granting of indulgences as though they were still alive and in force?"

86. Again, "Why does not the pope, whose wealth is today greater than the wealth of the richest Crassus,<sup>14</sup> build this one basilica of St. Peter with his own money rather than with the money of poor believers?"

87. Again, "What does the pope remit or grant to those who by perfect contrition already have a right to full remission and blessings?"<sup>15</sup>

88. Again, "What greater blessing could come to the church than if the pope were to bestow these remissions and blessings on every believer a hundred times a day, as he now does but once?"<sup>16</sup>

89. "Since the pope seeks the salvation of souls rather than money by his indulgences, why does he suspend the indulgences and pardons previously granted when they have equal efficacy?"<sup>17</sup>

90. To repress these very sharp arguments of the laity by force alone, and not to resolve them by giving reasons, is to expose the church and the pope to the ridicule of their enemies and to make Christians unhappy.

91. If, therefore, indulgences were preached according to the spirit and intention of the pope, all these doubts would be readily resolved. Indeed, they would not exist.

92. Away then with all those prophets who say to the people of Christ, "Peace, peace," and there is no peace! [Jer. 6:14].

93. Blessed be all those prophets who say to the people of Christ, "Cross, cross," and there is no cross!

94. Christians should be exhorted to be diligent in following Christ, their head, through penalties, death, and hell;

95. And thus be confident of entering into heaven through many tribulations rather than through the false security of peace [Acts 14:22].

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*What is primarily behind Luther's opposition to indulgences?*

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<sup>14</sup>Marcus Licinius Crassus (115–53 B.C.), also called Dives ("the Rich"), was noted for his wealth and luxury by the classical Romans. Crassus means "the Fat."

<sup>15</sup>See Theses 36 and 37.

<sup>16</sup>The indulgence letter entitled its possessor to receive absolution once during his lifetime and once at the approach of death.

<sup>17</sup>During the time when the jubilee indulgences were preached, other indulgences were suspended.

17–4

**Luther vs. Erasmus:**  
*A reformer's attack on free will*

Sources: J.I. Packer & O.R. Johnson, trans., *Martin Luther: The Bondage of the Will* (Westwood, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell, copyright James Clark & Co., 1957), pp. 312–315, 317–320.

...To sum up: Since Scripture everywhere proclaims Christ categorically and antithetically, as I said, and thereby subjects all that is without the Spirit of Christ to Satan, ungodliness error, darkness, sin, death and the wrath of God, every statement concerning Christ is a direct testimony against 'free-will'. And such statements are innumerable; indeed, they constitute the whole of Scripture. If, therefore, we conduct our argument with Scripture as judge, the victory in every respect belongs to me; for there is not one jot or tittle of Scripture left that does not condemn the doctrine of 'free-will'!

Though the great theologians who guard 'free-will' may not know, or pretend not to know, that Scripture proclaims Christ categorically and antithetically, all Christians know it, and commonly confess it. They know that there are in the world two kingdoms at war with each other. In the one, Satan reigns (which is why Christ calls him 'the prince of this world' (John 12.31), and Paul 'the god of this world' (2 Cor. 4.4). He, so Paul again tells us, holds captive at his will all that are not wrested from him by the Spirit of Christ; nor does he allow them to be plucked away by any other power but the Spirit of God, as Christ tells us in the parable of the strong man armed keeping his palace in peace. In the other kingdom, Christ reigns. His kingdom continually resists and wars against that of Satan; and we are translated into His kingdom, not by our own power, but by the grace of God, which delivers us from this present evil world and tears us away from the power of darkness. The knowledge and confession of these two kingdoms ever warring against each other with all their might and power would suffice by itself to confute the doctrine of 'free-will', seeing that we are compelled to serve in Satan's kingdom if we are not plucked from it by Divine power. The common man, I repeat, knows this, and confesses it plainly enough by his proverbs, prayers, efforts and entire life.

**(xvii) Rom. 7; Gal. 5: the power of the 'flesh' in the saints disproves 'free-will' (783)**

I forbear to insist on the Achilles of my arguments, which the Diatribe proudly passes by without notice—I mean, Paul's teaching in Rom. 7 and Gal. 5, that there is in the saints and the godly such a mighty warfare between the Spirit and the flesh that they cannot do what they would.

From this I would argue as follows: If human nature is so bad that in those who are born again of the Spirit it not only fails to endeavour after good, but actually fights against and opposes good, how could it endeavour after good in those who are not yet born again of the Spirit, but serve under Satan in the old man? And Paul is not here speaking of gross affections only (which is the universal expedient by which the Diatribe regularly parries the thrust of every Scripture); but he lists among the works of the flesh heresy, idolatry, contentions, divisions, etc., which reign in what you call the most exalted faculties, that is, reason and will. If, now, the flesh with these affections wars against the Spirit in the saints, much more will it war against God in the ungodly and in their 'free-will'! Hence in Rom. 8 he calls it 'enmity against God' (v. 7). May I say that I should be interested to see *this* argument punctured, and 'free-will' safeguarded from its attack!

**(xviii) Of the comfort of knowing that salvation does not depend on 'free-will' (783)**

I frankly confess that, for myself, even if it could be, I should not want 'free-will' to be given me, nor anything to be left in my own hands to enable me to endeavour after salvation; not merely because in face of so many dangers, and adversities, and assaults of devils, I could not stand my ground and hold fast my 'free-will' (for one devil is stronger than all men, and on these terms no man could be saved); but because, even were there no dangers, adversities, or devils, I should still be forced to labour with no guarantee of success, and to beat my fists at the air. If I lived and worked to all eternity, my conscience would never reach comfortable certainty as to how much it must do to satisfy God. Whatever work I had done, there would still be a nagging doubt as to whether it pleased God, or whether He required something more. The experience of all who seek righteousness by works proves that; and I learned it well enough myself over a period of many years, to my own great hurt. But now that God has taken my salvation out of the control of my own will, and put it under the control of His, and promised to save me, not according to my working or running, but according to His own grace and mercy, I have the comfortable certainty that He is faithful and will not lie to me, and that He is also great and powerful, so that no devils or opposition can break Him or pluck me from Him. 'No one,' He says, 'shall pluck them out of my hand, because my Father which gave them me is greater than all' (John 10.28–29). Thus it is that, if not all, yet some, indeed many, are saved; whereas, by the power of 'free-will' none at all could be saved, but every one of us would perish.

Furthermore, I have the comfortable certainty that I please God, not by reason of the merit of my works, but by reason of His merciful favour promised to me; so that, if I work too little, or badly, He does not impute it to me, but with fatherly compassion pardons me and makes me better. This is the glorying of all the saints in their God.

**(xix) Of faith in the justice of God in His dealings with men (784–786)**

You may be worried that it is hard to defend the mercy and equity of God in damning the undeserving, that is, ungodly persons, who, being born in ungodliness, can by no means avoid being ungodly, and staying so, and being damned, but are compelled by natural necessity to sin and perish; as Paul says: ‘We were all the children of wrath, even as others’ (Eph. 2.3), created such by God Himself from a seed that had been corrupted by the sin of the one man, Adam. But here God must be revered and held in awe, as being most merciful to those whom He justifies and saves in their own utter unworthiness; and we must show some measure of deference to His Divine wisdom by believing Him just when to us He seems unjust. If His justice were such as could be adjudged just by human reckoning, it clearly would not be Divine; it would in no way differ from human justice. But inasmuch as He is the one true God, wholly incomprehensible and inaccessible to man’s understanding, it is reasonable, indeed inevitable, that His justice also should be incomprehensible; as Paul cries, saying: ‘O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!’ (Rom. 11.33). They would not, however, be ‘unsearchable’ if we could at every point grasp the grounds on which they are just. What is man compared with God? How much can our power achieve compared with His power? What is our strength compared with His strength? What is our knowledge compared with His wisdom? What is our substance compared with His substance? In a word, what is all that we are compared with all that He is?...

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I shall here end this book, ready though I am to pursue the matter further, if need be; but I think that abundant satisfaction has here been afforded for the godly man who is willing to yield to truth without stubborn resistance. For if we believe it to be true that God foreknows and foreordains all things; that He cannot be deceived or obstructed in His foreknowledge and predestination; and that nothing happens but at His will (which reason itself is compelled to grant); then, on reason’s own testimony, there can be no ‘free-will’ in man, or angel, or in any creature.

So, if we believe that Satan is the prince of this world, ever ensnaring and opposing the kingdom of Christ with all his strength, and that he does not let his prisoners go unless he is driven out by the power of the Divine Spirit, it is again apparent that there can be no ‘free-will’.

So, if we believe that original sin has ruined us to such an extent that even in the godly, who are led by the Spirit, it causes abundance of trouble by striving against good, it is clear that in a man who lacks the Spirit nothing is left that can turn itself to good, but only to evil.

Again, if the Jews, who followed after righteousness with all their powers, fell into unrighteousness instead,

while the Gentiles, who followed after unrighteousness, attained to an un-hoped-for righteousness, by God’s free gift, it is equally apparent from their very works and experience that man without grace can will nothing but evil.

And, finally, if we believe that Christ redeemed men by His blood, we are forced to confess that all of man was lost; otherwise, we make Christ either wholly superfluous, or else the redeemer of the least valuable part of man only; which is blasphemy, and sacrilege.

**VIII CONCLUSION (W.A. 786–787)**

Now, my good Erasmus, I entreat you for Christ’s sake to keep your promise at last. You promised that you would yield to him who taught better than yourself. Lay aside respect of persons! I acknowledge that you are a great man, adorned with many of God’s noblest gifts—wit, learning and an almost miraculous eloquence, to say nothing of the rest; whereas I have and am nothing, save that I would glory in being a Christian. Moreover, I give you hearty praise and commendation on this further account—that you alone, in contrast with all others, have attacked the real thing, that is, the essential issue. You have not wearied me with those extraneous issues about the Papacy, purgatory, indulgences and such like—trifles, rather than issues—in respect of which almost all to date have sought my blood (though without success); you, and you alone, have seen the hinge on which all turns, and aimed for the vital spot. For that I heartily thank you; for it is more gratifying to me to deal with this issue, insofar as time and leisure permit me to do so. If those who have attacked me in the past had done as you have done, and if those who now boast of new spirits and revelations would do the same also, we should have less sedition and sects and more peace and concord. But thus it is that God, through Satan, has punished our unthankfulness.

However, if you cannot treat of this issue in a different way from your treatment of it in this Diatribe, it is my earnest wish that you would remain content with your own gift, and confine yourself to pursuing, adorning and promoting the study of literature and languages; as hitherto you have done, to great advantage and with much credit. By your studies you have rendered me also some service, and I confess myself much indebted to you; certainly, in that regard, I unfeignedly honour and sincerely respect you. But God has not yet willed nor granted that you should be equal to the subject of our present debate. Please do not think that any arrogance lies behind my words when I say that I pray that the Lord will speedily make you as much my superior in this as you already are in all other respects. It is no new thing for God to instruct a Moses by a Jethro, or to teach a Paul by an Ananias. You say that ‘*you have wandered far from the mark, if you are ignorant of Christ.*’ I think that you yourself see how the matter stands. But not all will go astray if you or I go astray. God is One Who is proclaimed as wonderful among His saints, so that we

may regard as saints persons that are very far from sanctity. Nor is it hard to believe that you, as being a man, should fail to understand aright, and to note with sufficient care, the Scriptures, or the sayings of the fathers, under whose guidance you think that you are holding to the mark. That you have thus failed is clear enough from your saying that *you assert nothing, but have 'made comparisons'*. He who sees to the heart of the matter and properly understands it does not write like that. Now I, in this book of

mine, HAVE NOT 'MADE COMPARISONS', BUT HAVE ASSERTED, AND DO ASSERT; and I do not want judgment to rest with anyone, but I urge all men to submit! May the Lord, whose cause this is, enlighten you and make you a vessel to honour and glory. *Amen.*

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*How does Luther say that the conflict between the Kingdoms of Christ and of Satan disproves free will?*

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## 17-5

### John Calvin and the Elect: *The cool logic of salvation*

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Sources: Ford Lewis Battles, trans., *John Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Atlanta: John Knox Press), pp. 80–85.

Moreover, since the church is the people of God's elect [John 10:28], it cannot happen that those who are truly its members will ultimately perish [John 10:28], or come to a bad end. For their salvation rests on such a sure and solid bed, that, even if the whole fabric of the world were to fall, it itself could not tumble and fall. First it stands with God's election, nor can it change or fail, unless along with that eternal wisdom. Therefore they can totter and waver, even fall, but not contend against one another for the Lord supports their hand; that is what Paul says, "for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance" [Rom. 11:29]. Then those whom the Lord has chosen, have been turned over to the care and keeping of Christ his Son so that "he may lose none of them but may revive all on the last day." [Jn. 6:39f.] Under such a good watchman [cf. II Cor. 4:9] they can wander and fall, but surely they cannot be lost. Beside it must have been so decreed that there was no time from the creation the world when the Lord did not have his church upon the earth, also that there will be no time, even to the end of the age, when he will not have it, even as he himself promises [Joel 3:20; Ps. 89:27, 35–37; Ps. 132:12–18]. For even if at once from the beginning the human race was, by Adam's sin, corrupted and vitiated, yet from this as it were polluted mass, he sanctifies some vessels unto honor [Rom. 9:21], so there is no age that does not experience his mercy [II Tim. 2:20f.] Finally, if we are so to believe the church that, relying upon the faithfulness of divine goodness, we hold for certain that we are a part of and with the rest of God's elect, with whom we have been called and already in part justified, let us have faith we shall be perfectly justified and glorified.

We indeed cannot comprehend God's incomprehensible wisdom, nor is it in our power to investigate it so as to find out who have by his eternal plan been chosen, who condemned [Rom. 11:1–36]. But this is not needed by our faith, which is rendered abundantly secure by this promise: God will recognize as his sons those who have received his only-begotten Son [Jn. 1:12]. Who can there be with such shameless desire as, not content to be God's son, to seek something beyond?

24. When, therefore, we have found in Christ alone the good will of God the Father toward us, life, salvation, in short, the very kingdom of heaven itself, he alone ought to be more than enough for us. For this we must ponder: that utterly nothing will be lacking to us which can conduce to our salvation and good, if he is ours; that he and all things of his become ours, if we lean in sure faith upon him, if we rest in him, if we repose in him salvation, life, in sum, all our possessions, if we rest assured that he is never going to forsake us. For with ready hands he gives himself to us only that we may receive him in faith.

But those who, not content with Christ, strive to penetrate more deeply, arouse God's wrath against themselves and, because they break into the depths of his majesty, from his glory cannot but be oppressed [Prov. 25:2–6]. For since Christ our Lord is he in whom the Father, from eternity has chosen those he has willed to be his own and to be brought into the flock of his church, we have a clear enough testimony that we are among God's elect and of the church, if we partake in Christ. Then, since the very same Christ is the constant and unchangeable truth of the Father, we are by no means to doubt that his word truly proclaims to us the Father's will as it was from the beginning and ever will be [Jn. 1:1; 14:7–11].

When therefore by faith we possess Christ and all that is his, it must certainly be established that as he himself is the beloved Son of the Father and heir of the Kingdom of Heaven, so we also through him have been adopted as children of God, and are his brothers and companions in such a way as to be partakers of the same inheritance; on this account we are also assured that we are among those whom the Lord has chosen from eternity, whom he will ever protect and never allow to perish [Rom. 8:31–39].

25. Otherwise if each one of us did not believe himself to be a member of it, we would vainly and fruitlessly believe there to be a church catholic. But it is not for us to determine for certain whether others are of the church, nor to distinguish the elect from the reprobate. For this is God's prerogative alone, to know who are his own, as Paul attests [II Tim. 2:19]. And to keep men's rashness from getting out of hand, we are warned by daily events how far the Lord's judgments surpass our perception. For those who seemed utterly lost and had obviously been given up as hopeless, are recalled to the pathway by his goodness, and those who seemed to stand before the rest, often tumble down. Only God's eyes see who will persevere to the very end [Matt. 24:13], because he alone is the Head of salvation [Heb. 2:10].

Not indeed because Christ has declared that those things which the ministers of his Word loose or bind on earth will be loosed or bound in heaven [Matt. 16:19], does it follow from this that we can discern who are of the church, and who are strangers to it. For by this promise he did not mean to give some external criterion to point out to us openly and lay before our eyes the bound and loosed, but only to promise this: that they who shall hear and receive in faith the gospel promise by which Christ is offered upon earth as redemption and liberation, that is, proclaimed in this life by man to himself—that they, I say, are truly loosed and freed in heaven, that is, in God's presence and by His judgment; but those who will reject and hold it in contempt, to them there is from this promise the testimony that, in heaven and in God's presence they remain in their chains and so in their condemnation.

26. The elect cannot be recognized by us with assurance of faith, yet Scripture describes certain sure marks to us, as has previously been said, by which we may distinguish the elect and the children of God from the reprobate and the alien, insofar as He wills us so to recognize them. Consequently, all who profess with us the same God and Christ by confession of faith, example of life and participation in the sacraments, ought by some sort of judgment of love to be deemed elect and members of the church. They should be so considered, even if some imperfection resides in their morals (as no one here shows himself to be perfect), provided they do not too much acquiesce and flatter themselves in their vices. And it must be hoped concerning them that they are going to advance by God's leading ever into better ways, until, shed of all imperfection, they attain the eternal blessedness of the elect. For by these marks and traits Scripture delineates for us the elect of God, the children of God, the people of God, the church of God, as they can be understood by us. But those who either do not agree with us on the same faith, or, even though they have confession on their lips, still deny by their actions the God whom they confess with their mouth (as those whom we see wicked and lost throughout life, drunk with the lust of sinning, and quite unconcerned over their own wickedness)—all of this sort show themselves by their traits that they are not members at present of the church.

For this use have excommunications been instituted, in

order that those may be withdrawn and expelled from the gathering of the believers who, falsely pretending faith in Christ, by worthlessness of life and unbridled license of sinning, are nothing else than a scandal to the church, and therefore unworthy to boast in Christ's name [I Cot. 5:1–5; Matt. 18:15–19; I Tim. 1:20]. First, lest they be named among Christians with reproach to God, as if his holy church would be a conspiracy of evildoers and publicly wicked men; second, lest by frequent intercourse they corrupt others by the example of a perverse life; finally, that they may commence to repent, confounded by shame, and from that repentance they may at last learn to “wise up.”

27. Such persons we can adjudge, for the time being, to be estranged from the church, insofar as one is permitted to discern, and according to the rule of that knowledge which we have mentioned. But we are not so to despair of them as though they were cast outside God's hand. And utterly wicked is it to wipe anyone of these from the number of the elect, or to despair of him as though he were already lost, unless perchance it is very certain that such persons have already been condemned by God's Word. Included among these is anyone who, with set purpose and with resolute evil intent, should attack the truth, oppress the gospel, snuff out God's name, and resist the Holy Spirit. For the Lord's mouth already pronounced these condemned, when he said that the sin against the Holy Spirit is not forgiven, either in this age or in the future [Matt. 12:32]. This can only rarely be sensed by us (if it is ever possible), so it would be a more discreet plan to await the day of revelation, and not rashly go beyond God's judgment [Heb. 6:6; 10:26; John 5:28–29; I Cot. 4:3–5].

Let us not claim for ourselves more license in judgment, unless we wish to limit God's power and confine his mercy by law. For God, whenever it pleases him, changes the worst men into the best, engrafts the alien, and adopts the stranger into the church. And He does this to frustrate men's opinion and restrain their rashness—which venture to assume for themselves a greater right of judgment than is fitting.

Rather, we are to take care to treat one another with mutual candor, to the best of our ability. Let each of us accept the acts done to one another in the best part; let us not twist them deviously and sinisterly as suspicious persons are accustomed to do [Matt. 7:1–5; Rom. 12:9–10; 14:13, 19; I Thess. 5:15; Heb. 12:14]. But if any are so perverse, as not to let others think well of them, nevertheless let us commit them to God's hand, commend them to his goodness, hoping for better things from them than we now see. For thus it will come to pass that as we bear with one another in mutual equity and patience and nourish peace and love, not stupidly bursting into God's more secret Judgments, we will not entangle ourselves in the darkness of error. To put the matter in a word: let us not sentence the person himself (who is in the hand and judgment of God) to death; but let us only weigh the works of each according to God's law, the rule of good and evil.

28. In this sense are to be taken excommunications, not those by which persons who have (before men) separated

from the church's flock, are cast outside the hope of salvation; but only those by which they are chastised until they return to the path from the filth of their previous life. As Paul writes, he turned over a man to Satan, to physical death, in order that his spirit might be made safe in the day of the Lord [I Cor. 5:5; II Thess. 3:14–15]. That is, (as I interpret it) he consigned him to temporal condemnation, that he might be made safe in eternity [II Thess. 3:14–15].

Consequently, though ecclesiastical discipline does not permit us to live familiarly or have intimate contact with excommunicated persons, we ought nevertheless to strive by whatever means we can, whether by exhortation and teaching or by mercy and gentleness, or by our own prayers to God, that they may turn to a more virtuous life and may return to the society and unity of the church. And not only those are to be so treated, but also Turks and Saracens, and other enemies of religion. Far be it from us to approve those methods by which many until now have tried to force them to our faith, when they forbid them the use of fire and water and the common elements, when they deny to them all offices of humanity, when they pursue them with sword and arms.

29. Although, while we are as yet uncertain of God's judgment, we are not allowed to distinguish individually those who belong to the church or not, yet where we see the Word of God purely preached and heard, where we see the sacraments administered according to Christ's institu-

tion, there, it is not to be doubted, the church of God exists [cf. Eph. 2:20]. For his promise cannot fail: "Wherever two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them" [Matt. 18:20].

No surer or even other knowledge concerning the church of God can be held on earth nor can one otherwise discern who are of it, who not. Rather, nothing is known of these except by faith. This is what we mean when we say, "we believe the church." For by faith are believed things that cannot be seen with the naked eye. By this it is made plain that it is not a physical thing which ought to be subjected to our sense perception, or enclosed within a definite space, or fixed in some spot.

30. "We" likewise "believe the communion of saints." That is, in the catholic church all the elect (who with true faith worship God together) have reciprocal communication and participation in all goods. By this one does not deny that individuals have various gifts (as Paul teaches that the gifts of the Spirit have been divided and been variously distributed) [I Cor. 12:4–11], but not without each one holding duly and in order his own place which he possesses from the constitution of the civil order (as is necessary, under the elements of this world, for there to be separate possessions among men)....

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*How does Calvin define and describe the Elect?*



# Chapter 18

## Africa

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### 18–1

#### Ibn Battuta in Mali

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From Ibn Battuta, *Voyages D'Ibn Batoutah*, trans. from the Arabic by C. Defrémery and B.R. Sanguinetti (Paris: Imprimerie Impériale, 1858), IV, 387–90, 421–24. Trans. Philip F. Riley.

The condition of these people [of Iwalatan] is strange and their manners are bizarre. As for their men, there is no sexual jealousy about them. None of them is named after his father, but each traces his genealogy from his maternal uncle. A man's inheritance is not passed to his own sons but to the sons of his sister. I have never seen such a thing in any other part of the world except among the infidels who live on the Malabar coast of India. These people are Muslims who follow exactly the prescribed laws for prayer, study the laws of Islam, and know the Koran by heart. Their women are not modest in the presence of men; despite reciting their prayers punctually, they do not veil their faces. Any male who wishes to marry one of them can do so very easily, but the women do not travel with their husbands for her family would not allow it. In this country, the women are permitted to have male friends and companions among men who are not members of her family. So too for men; they are permitted to have female companions among women who are not members of his family. It happens quite often that a man would enter his own house and find his wife with one of her own friends and would not rebuke her.

#### ANECDOTE

One day I entered the home of a judge in Iwalatan after he had given his permission, and I found him with a very young and beautiful woman. Immediately I thought it best to leave, but she laughed at me and was not at all embarrassed. The judge asked me “Why would you want to leave? She is my friend.” I was astonished at the conduct of these two. He was a judge and had made a pilgrimage to Mecca. Later I learned that he has asked permission of the Sultan to go on a pilgrimage to Mecca that year with his female friend. Whether it was this one or another I do not know, but the Sultan refused to let him go.

#### A SIMILAR ANECDOTE

One day I entered the home of Aboû Mohammed Yandecán, a man of the Mesoûfah tribe. He was sitting on a rug while in the middle of his house was a bed covered with a canopy. On it was his wife in conversation with another man sitting at her side. I said to Aboû Mohammed “Who is this woman?”—“She is my wife,” he responded—“And who is the man with her?” I asked. “He is her friend,” replied the judge. I asked how he, who knew the divine law on such matters, could permit such a thing. He replied that “The companionship of women with men in this country is proper and honorable: It does not inspire suspicion. Our women are not like the women of your country.” I was shocked at his stupid answer and immediately left his home and never returned. . . .

#### GOOD AND BAD QUALITIES

Among their good qualities we can cite the following:

1. There is a small amount of crime, for these people obey the law. Their sultan does not pardon criminals.
2. Travelers and natives alike are safe from brigands, robbers, and thieves.
3. The natives do not confiscate the property of white men who die in this country, even if they are very wealthy; instead they entrust it to another, respected white man to dispose of it properly.
4. The prayers are offered punctually and with fervor. Children who neglect their prayers are beaten. If you do not come to the mosque early on a Friday you cannot find a place to pray because the crowds are so large. Quite often they send their slaves to the mosque with a prayer rug to find and hold a place for their masters. These prayer rugs are made from the leaves of trees similar to palm trees, but one that bears no fruit.
5. White garments are worn on Fridays. If by chance one does not have a proper white garment, regular clothing is washed and cleaned to wear for public prayer.
6. They are committed to learn by heart the sublime Koran. Children who fail to learn the Koran by heart have their feet shackled and these shackles are not removed until they memorize the Koran. On a feast day I visited a judge who had his children in chains. I said to him “Why don't you release them?” He said “I will not do so until they know the Koran by heart.” Another day I passed a handsome young black man dressed superbly, but shackled by a heavy chain on his feet. I

asked my companion, "What has this young man done? Is he a murderer?" The handsome young black man laughed and my companion told me, "He has been chained so that he will learn the Koran by heart."

Among their bad qualities we can cite the following:

1. Their female servants, slave women and small daughters appear before men completely naked, exposing their private parts. Even during the month of Ramadan [a period of fast], military commanders broke their fast in the palace of the Sultan. Twenty or more naked servant girls served them food.
2. Nude women without veils on their faces enter the palace of the Sultan. On the twenty-seventh night of

Ramadan, I saw about a hundred naked female slaves coming out of the palace of the Sultan with food. Two of the Sultan's daughters, who have large breasts, were with them and they were naked.

3. These natives put dust and ashes on their head to show their education and as a sign of respect.
4. They laugh when poets recite their verse before the Sultan.
5. Finally, they eat impure meat such as dogs and donkeys.

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*Why was Ibn Battuta so troubled by his African hosts' methods of tracing genealogy? Are there political implications of this genealogical system?*

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## 18–2

### Martín Fernández de Figueroa, *Confronting the Moors in Somalia*

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Reprinted by permission of the publishers and the Loeb Classical Library from James B. McKenna, *A Spaniard in the Portuguese Indies: The Narrative of Martín Fernández de Figueroa*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, © 1967.

Afonso de Albuquerque had set out for the Strait of Mecca as captain major of six ships. He then informed them of his arrival at a city on the mainland called Brava. The Portuguese entered it by force of arms, killed many Moors, and carried off great riches which their owners had not thought to save, thinking they could defend the city. Nor could they save their women, very rich and handsome with seven and eight bracelets on each arm, and just as many, thick and valuable, on their legs. This occasioned severe cruelty, for the men, blinded by avarice rather than enlightened by mercy, so as not to lose a moment's time, cut off the arms, the legs, and the ears which bore the jewelry, without a trace of pity. Good men would never do such a thing, if only because women are "vessels of generation" and of tender, delicate flesh and gentle condition. What man would not have been moved to pity contemplating their beauty! What man would not have cast down his sword before bloodying it on a woman! Worthy of reprimand are such cruel victors and their cruel deeds, but you may be sure that the ones who did such foul things were not the ordinary nor the best of men. The women all ran crying through the streets, covered with blood. Some went

fleeing with children in their arms but could find no haven. Quite a few of them were defended and sheltered by the virtuous men who were there.

The city was finally ordered burned, which was done, whereupon they set out for another city, Mogadishu, which was nearby. There, although the army was sore afraid, the ferocity of contrary winds kept the Christians from waiting and attacking, and thus hostile weather frustrated their good and worthy goal. They left that place and went to Socotra,<sup>1</sup> whose inhabitants consider themselves Christians. They fast during Lent and Advent, eating neither meat nor fish. They have churches and altars with crosses on them. They observe most of the principal feast days, as well as those of the Apostles, whose names they take. They give alms. Every day they hear Matins, Vespers, and Compline. They hold the Cross in such veneration that he who wears it goes about without fear of harm from the enemies or the authorities. So states at length the King Manuel letter written in Portuguese that I had in hand.... This land is completely surrounded by water. They anchored opposite the castle, and as soon as it was realized that they were Portuguese, mortars were hauled out and a stout defense made ready. They did not want peace or even to let the Portuguese take on Socotran water. There the Christians killed a Socotran captain. The battle was very rough, and a captain named Leonel Coutinho proved himself unflinchingly courageous. With the fierce blows he dealt them, he sorely pressed the castle defenders. As he drove the Moors back from the walls, he put up scaling ladders. Thus, the first Christians who succeeded in entering opened the castle gates, and the Christians entered and captured the fort. No Moor survived, because, rather than surrender and live without their patrimony, they chose to die. Then the conquerers consolidated

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<sup>1</sup>An island in the Indian Ocean off Cape Guardafui, at the horn of Africa.

the land. Although these people were defeated, they died courageously. When winter passed, the men of Hispania attacked the city of Hormuz under the orders of Captain Afonso de Albuquerque. They conquered and took possession of it. The Moors rose up against the Christians, so they went to Socotra again and from there to Cape Guardafui to lie in wait for infidel ships.

During their voyage, the captains came upon Mogadishu, of which we have already spoken. They sighted a Moorish ship and drove it ashore. When they reached it, they saw that everyone was gone, so they set it afire along with its entire rich cargo. Without stopping, they journeyed to Afonso de Albuquerque, by whom they were honorably welcomed. Cape Guardafui is called a cape because there the seacoast comes to an end. There is another cape there, called Fartak, and between these two enters the sea they call the Strait of Mecca. Arabia is a wretched land; the airs are torrid. Its inhabitants are Arabs, cattle-raisers. Fresh water is far away and is brought there in leather gourds to be sold. From there they went to Socotra to spend the winter.

The captains, and Martín Fernández de Figueroa with them, spent the entire winter (which out there runs from the month of April through the middle of August) on the island of Socotra. On this island one finds good-natured men. Their churches do not have statues of men or women saints, only crosses. They sound for Mass with wooden tablets. The men enter church by one door and the women by another, and this practice never varies. On solemn occasions they anoint the cross with lard. The women dearly love the Christians of Hispania. Some of these people know Arabic, but they have their own language. The men go about naked except for their shameful parts. The women wear Moorish tunics; they wear their hair long and comb it down their backs. Women are held in common, which is an abominable custom. Thus the husband will invite you to sleep with his wife, and fathers and mothers with their daughters. They are a libidinous people. In that land it rarely rains except for the dew. No wheat grows there, nor rice, millet, nor barley. There are lots of cattle and palm groves. A pitcher of wine there costs sixteen hundred maravedis, a needle twenty maravedis, and similar pieces must be paid for many other necessary things.

A knight from Captain Major Afonso de Albuquerque's company scrupulously related to the captains of the other coast the conquest of Hormuz. He told how, after they had seized the fort from the Fartaks, who fight like Swiss mercenaries, they left it strongly garrisoned and set out in search of provisions. Sailing along the Arabian coast, they came to Kalhat, a rich port city, and the Captain Major was delighted to have come upon a land of good supplies. They entered the harbor, although with difficulty, for it was occu-

pied by many handsome ships and ringed by elegant buildings along the shore. They gave a thunderous artillery display to frighten the inhabitants. They took the supplies the Moors had provided, and the Captain did not harm them, because he had given them a guarantee and one of his rings as token thereof. Kalhat, later destroyed when Hormuz revolted, was more populated outside the city than within. Afonso de Albuquerque departed the next day, and they went to a port named Quryat, which also belongs to the King of Hormuz. It is a very wealthy town located at the water's edge, well stocked with mortars. The Captain Major requested provisions, but the Moors paid no attention. So the next day Afonso de Albuquerque organized his men and the captains of the rear guard and commenced the attack. He destroyed the enemy, and, with Moors fleeing and Christians killing, the ships were well stocked with the riches and supplies they found ashore, namely an abundance of wheat, flour, rice, dates, fish, lard, and honey. They rested there for three days. In all this said encounter or battle no Christian was killed, only one of the Captain Major's Negroes who had strayed off. After this victory, they boarded their ships. They had burned and razed the mosque, the land, and the ships; nothing remained. They sailed forth to Masqat, which belongs to the King of Hormuz. Larger than Kalhat, it had a good port and stout defenses. However, the Moors met with the Captain Major (who truly awed and terrified them) under a flag of truce, whereupon they did as he directed and became vassals of the King of Portugal. There the Christians secured very fresh and rich provisions, but first they had to fight a fierce and cruel battle, for the Moors broke their promise of peace. The city was sacked, the ruler killed, and one Christian captain wounded. The city, its ships and riches were burned and reduced to ashes. With this victory they returned to the ships; the battle had taken place on a Sunday morning and lasted three hours. From there Afonso de Albuquerque and his men moved along the coast to a town called Suhar, where there was a fort garrisoned by a captain and men of the King of Hormuz. As soon as they saw the Christian ships, the captain and his men were terrified, so Suhar and its Moors became vassals of King Manuel of Portugal. Great celebrations were held, and the Portuguese banner was raised over the fort, with Moors and Christians shouting: "Portugal and Spain!"

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*Why does Figueroa seem to think it is normal enough for the Portuguese to attack the inhabitants of Brava and Mogadishu in Somalia? For what acts does he reproach them as exceeding acceptable limits in the behavior of victors?*

## 18–3

## Kilwa, Mombasa, and the Portuguese: Realities of empire

Source: E. Axelson, "South East Africa," 1940; pp. 231–238. Quoted in G.S.P. Freeman-Grenville, *The East African Coast: Selected Documents* (London: Rex Collings, 1974), pp. 105–112. The Voyage and Acts of Dom Francisco, Viceroy of India, written in the ship *Sam Rafael* of Oporto, captained by Fernan Suarez.

In the year 1505, on 25 March, Tuesday, the feast of the Annunciation of Our Lady, Dom Francisco d'Almeida sailed with a fleet of twenty vessels. There were fourteen large men-of-war and six caravels.

They rounded the Cape of Good Hope on 20 June and were driven away from it seventy leagues. On 2 July there were great storms with thunder, and two men from the flagship and one from the *Lyomarda* fell overboard. On 18 July they sighted land for the first time, 369 leagues beyond the Cape of Good Hope, near the Ylhas Darradeiras, which are thirty leagues from the island of Mozambique. On 19 July they were in sight of Mozambique, and on 21 July they were crossing the shallow waters of Sam Rafael, which are thirty leagues from Kilwa.

On Tuesday, 22 July, they entered the harbour of Kilwa at noon, with a total of eight ships. Immediately on their arrival the Grand-Captain, Dom Francisco d'Almeida, sent Bona Ajuta Veneziano to summon the king. He excused himself from coming, but sent the Grand-Captain gifts instead; They were five goats, a small cow and a large number of coconuts and other fruit.

Next day the Grand-Captain ordered the ships to have their artillery in readiness. Then the captains, each in his best clothes, and full armour, went in his own boat to lie off the town in the hope that the king would decide to come out. The sheikh, however, sent a message to say that he could not come since he had guests, but, if required, he would send the tribute due to the King of Portugal. This message was brought by a party of five Moors, who were immediately seized.

At dawn on Thursday, 24 July, the vigil of the feast of St. James the Apostle, all went in their boats to the shore. The first to land was the Grand-Captain, and he was followed by the others. They went straight to the royal palace, and on the way only those Moors who did not fight were granted their lives. At the palace there was a Moor leaning out of the window with a Portuguese flag in his hand, shouting: 'Portugal! Portugal!' This flag had been left behind by the admiral [Vasco da Gama] when he had arranged for Kilwa to pay a tribute of 1,500 ounces of gold a year. The Moor was asked to open the door, and, when he did not do so, the door was

broken down with axes. They found neither the Moor nor anyone else in the Palace, which was deserted.

In Kilwa there are many strong houses several storeys high. They are built of stone and mortar and plastered with various designs. As soon as the town had been taken without opposition, the Vicar-General and some of the Franciscan fathers came ashore carrying two crosses in procession and singing the Te Deum. They went to the palace, and there the cross was put down and the Grand-Captain prayed. Then everyone started to plunder the town of all its merchandise and provisions.

The town of Kilwa lies on an island around which ships of 500 tons can sail. The island and town have a population of 4,000 people. It is very fertile and produces maize similar to that of Guinea, butter, honey, and wax. On the trees hang beehives like jars of three *almudes* capacity, each closed with woven palm leaves. There are holes through which the bees go in and come out.

There are many trees and palms here and on the mainland, some of them different from those of Portugal. From the island to the mainland the distance is in some places two leagues and in others one.

There are sweet oranges, lemons, vegetables, small onions, and aromatic herbs. They are grown in gardens and watered with water from the wells. Here also grows betel which has leaves like ivy and is grown like peas with sticks at the root for support. The leaf is used by the wealthy Arabs for chewing together with specially prepared limes which look like an ointment. They keep the leaves as if they were to be put on wounds. These leaves make the mouth and teeth very red, but are said to be most refreshing.

There are more black slaves than white Moors here: they are engaged on farms growing maize and other things. There are various types of peas which are produced by plants as high as large pepper trees; when they are ripe, they are gathered and stored. The soil is red, the top layer being sandy; the grass is always green. There are many fat beasts, oxen, cows, sheep, and goats and also plenty of fish; there are also whales which swim round the ships. There is no running drinking water on the island. Near the island there are other small islands which are inhabited. There are many boats as large as a caravel of fifty tons and other smaller ones. The large ones lie aground on the shore and are dragged down to the sea when the people wish to sail them. They are built without nails: the planks are sewn together with rope made from knotted coir from the coconut palm. The same kind of rope is used for the rudder. The boats are caulked with black pitch made from crude incense and resin. They sail from here to Sofala, 255 leagues away.

The palms here do not produce dates but from some of them wine and vinegar are obtained. These come from the palm trees which do not produce coconuts. The coconuts are the size of large melons, and from the fibres inside the shell all kinds of rope are made. Inside the shell is a fruit the size of a large pineapple. It contains half a pint of milk which is very pleasant to drink. When the milk has been

drunk the nut is broken and eaten; the kernel tastes like a walnut which is not fully ripe. They dry it and it yields a large quantity of oil.

People here sleep raised above the ground in hammocks made of palm leaves in which only one person can lie.

The Portuguese found here a large quantity of pure drinking water. Flasks of very good perfume are exported from here and a large quantity of glass of all types and all kinds of cotton piece-goods, incense, resin, gold, silver, and pearls. The Grand-Captain ordered the loot to be deposited under seal in a house.

The fortress of Kilwa was built out of the best house there was there. All the other houses round it were pulled down. It was fortified and guns were set in place with everything else a fort needs. Pero Ferreira was left in command of it with eighty men.

The country is not very hot. The men are armed with bows and large arrows, strong shields of palm leaves bound with cotton, and pikes better than those of Guinea. Few swords were seen. They have four catapults for hurling stones but do not yet know the use of gunpowder.

The sea laps the entrance of the fortress at high water near where the ships enter.

When the king fled from Kilwa, the Grand-Captain appointed another, a local Moor beloved by all, whom they took in procession on horseback through the town.

Lime is prepared here in this manner: large logs of wood are piled in a circle and inside them coral limestone is placed; then the wood is burnt. The process after that is the same as in Portugal.

Cotton is found in abundance. It is of good quality and is planted and grows well in the island. The sheep have wool no better than goats. The slaves wear a cotton cloth round the waist and down to the knees; the rest of the body is naked. The white Arabs and slave owners wear two pieces of cotton cloth, one round the waist down to the feet and the other thrown over the shoulders and reaching down as far as where the first cloth is tied.

They have copper coins like our *ceptis*, four being equal to one *real*; Portuguese coins have the same value there as at home. There are no gold coins but the weight of their *mitical* is equal to 460 *reis* in Portugal.

The winter season in Kilwa is from April to September. It is not cold and for this reason the people wear scanty clothes.

The Grand-Captain twice went from one side of the town to the other. Once he saw twenty-five gazelle which had been let loose on the island. There are also many wild cats in the bush.

There are many vaulted mosques, one of which is like that of Cordova. All the upper-class Moors carry a rosary.

## MOMBASA

On 9 August the ships left Kilwa for Mombasa, sixty leagues up the coast. The ship Sam Rafael reached there on

14 August, but the Grand-Captain arrived with the other ten ships a day earlier.

The Moors of Mombasa had built a strongpoint with many guns at the entrance of the harbour, which is very narrow. When we entered, the first ship, which was under the command of Gonzalo de Paiva, who was going in front to explore the channel, was fired on by the Moors from both sides. We promptly replied to the fire, and with such intensity that the gunpowder in their strongpoint caught fire. It started burning and the Moors fled, thus allowing the whole fleet to enter and lie at anchor in front of the town. And on that day, the vigil of the feast of the Assumption, the town was bombarded with all the guns on the ships, while the guns of the town replied to our fire.

When the Grand-Captain went ashore he seized a Moor who happened to be a member of the royal household. The Portuguese obtained good information from him.

The first night the fleet arrived in Mombasa there came out on the shore a Spanish Christian who was living there, a gunner by profession and a convert to Islam. He told the Christians to go away and that Mombasa was not like Kilwa: they would not find people with hearts that could be eaten like chickens as they had done in Kilwa, but that if they were keen to come ashore the people were ready to set about them for their supper. The Grand-Captain, however, offered him his protection and pardon, but he refused.

Mombasa is a very large town and lies on an island from one and a half to two leagues round. The town is built on rocks on the higher part of the island and has no walls on the side of the sea; but on the land side it is protected by a wall as high as the fortress. The houses are of the same type as those of Kilwa: some of them are three storeyed and all are plastered with lime. The streets are very narrow, so that two people cannot walk abreast in them: all the houses have stone seats in front of them, which makes the streets yet narrower.

The Grand-Captain met with the other captains and decided to burn the town that evening and to enter it the following morning. But when they went to burn the town they were received by the Moors with a shower of arrows and stones. The town has more than 600 houses which are thatched with palm leaves: these are collected green for this purpose. In between the stone dwelling-houses there are wooden houses with porches and stables for cattle. There are very few dwelling houses which have not these wooden houses attached.

Once the fire was started it raged all night long, and many houses collapsed and a large quantity of goods was destroyed. For from this town trade is carried on with Sofala and with Cambay by sea. There were three ships from Cambay and even these did not escape the fury of the attack. It was a moonless night.

On Friday 25 August, the feast of the Assumption of Our Lady, the Grand-Captain drew up eight ships on one side of Mombasa. On the other side was his son, Dom Lourenço d'Almeida, with three ships. Early in the morn-

ing they all prepared their arms and had breakfast. The Grand-Captain had ordered that all should land as soon as a shot from a big gun was fired. Thus all the boats were waiting ready on the water: when the shot was fired all got quickly on to the shore in very good order. The archers and gunners went ahead of everyone else, all going up the steep ascent into the town. When they entered, they found that some of the houses had been deserted as a result of the fire of the previous night. Further on they found three storeyed houses from which stones were thrown at them. But the stones which were thrown fell against the walls of the very narrow streets, so that much of the force of their fall was lost. There were also many balconies projecting over the streets under which one could shelter.

The Grand-Captain went straight to the royal palace: he was led by the Moor who had been captured on the previous day. He had ordered that no one should enter any of the houses, and that anyone who did so should die. When the Grand-Captain arrived at the palace, Captain Verraudez immediately climbed up the wall and hoisted our flag, shouting: Portugal, Portugal. And there were many Moors killed on the way there.

They saw from there some sixty Moors leaving the town, all dressed in gowns and turbans; they were going towards a palm grove and did not seem in any hurry. Some said that the king was among them. The Christians, however, did not follow them. All the people of the town were taken to this palm grove, and the entrance to it was guarded by more than 500 archers. These archers were all negro slaves of the white Moors, and obedient to their masters in their captivity like those of Kilwa.

The Grand-Captain ordered that the town should be sacked and that each man should carry off to his ship whatever he found: so that at the end there would be a division of the spoil, each man to receive a twentieth of what he found. The same rule was made for gold, silver, and pearls. Then everyone started to plunder the town and to search the houses, forcing open the doors with axes and iron bars. There was a large quantity of cotton cloth for Sofala in the town, for the whole coast gets its cotton cloth from here. So the Grand-Captain got a good share of the trade of Sofala for himself. A large quantity of rich silk and gold embroidered clothes was seized, and carpets also; one of these, which was without equal for beauty, was sent to the King of Portugal together with many other valuables.

When night came the Grand-Captain ordered all the men to a field which lay between the town and the sea. A section of it was allotted to each captain and a watch was set for the night. They were at a distance of a gun shot from the palm grove where the Moors were with their king. On the morning of the 16th they again plundered the town, but because the men were tired from fighting and from lack of sleep, much wealth was left behind apart from what each man took for himself. They also carried away provisions, rice, honey, butter, maize, countless camels and a large number of cattle, and even two elephants. They paraded these elephants in front of the people of the town before

they took it, in order to frighten them. There were many prisoners, and white women among them and children, and also some merchants from Cambay.

On Saturday evening the Grand-Captain ordered that all should return to the ships in a disciplined manner, keeping a watch for the Moors as they went on their way. And as the Christians left by one way, so the Moors entered by the other to see what destruction had been done. For the streets and houses were full of dead, who were estimated to be about 1,500.

Dom Fernando de Sà was wounded with an arrow which did not have an iron point. Some of their arrows are made of wood with iron points, others of burnt wood soaked in an unknown poison. Some say the wood itself is poisonous. The arrows with iron points have herbs at the tip, but these are not dangerous, as was evident from those wounded by them.

According to the Moors this town is the most famous of all the coast of Abyssinia. The island is very fertile, and produces a large quantity of sweet oranges, pomegranates, lemons, and sugar cane; all these things are more abundant here than at Kilwa.

All the guns belonging to the town were taken to the ships. They found one old cannon lying in the street which five men could not lift. It was said to have belonged to a ship called *Rey* which had been lost nearby. They also found an anchor which had been stolen from the Admiral Vasco da Gama. Because the Portuguese could not take it the Arabs pointed it out to each other. There were only five Portuguese dead in the battle and many wounded—more by the grace of God than by any act of man.

After returning to the ships they weighed anchor and moved inshore so that the anchors were exposed on dry land at low water. They remained there for ten days. It was very difficult to go out through the narrow entrance and also because there were strong contrary winds blowing. The ship *Lyomarda* lost its rudder and they could not find it again. So they were obliged to make a new one, for which each ship had to give up one of its hooks.

The ship *San Gabriel* arrived on 20 August with its mainmast broken, but the whereabouts of the supply ships was still not known.

Now the King of Mombasa and the King of Malindi were at war, and many of their people had been killed on both sides, the cause of the war being the friendship of the King of Malindi with the King of Portugal. Eventually the King of Mombasa had been defeated by the King of Malindi, and for the present they were friends. So the King of Mombasa wrote the following letter to the King of Malindi:

May God's blessing be upon you, Sayyid Ali! This is to inform you that a great lord has passed through the town, burning it and laying it waste. He came to the town in such strength and was of such cruelty, that he spared neither man nor woman, old nor young, nay, not even the smallest child. Not even those who fled escaped from his fury. He not only killed and burnt men but even the birds of the heavens were shot down. The stench of the corpses is so great in the town that I dare not go there; nor can I ascer-

tain nor estimate what wealth they have taken from the town. I give you these sad news for your own safety.

There were more than 10,000 people in Mombasa, of whom 3,700 were men of military age.

## MALINDI

Thence they sailed to Malindi, twenty-five leagues further north. Five leagues outside Malindi they were halted by strong currents and there they met the caravel of Johan Homere, which had captured two islands for Portugal. One of them was 450 leagues beyond the Cape of Good Hope and was uninhabited. They took in firewood and water there.

The other island lies between Kilwa and Mombasa and is known as Zanzibar. As the Moors of this island already knew of the destruction of Kilwa, they presented the captain with provisions and said they were at the service of the King of Portugal. The ship had arrived there on 24 August, and they had taken in water, firewood and meat.

Mogadishu lies on this coast and is 100 leagues from Malindi. It is a large town with plenty of horses. . . .

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*What was the apparent reason for the attack on Kilwa? What were the results? How did d'Almeida change Kilwa's government?*

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## 18-4

## Sundiata

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Niane, D. T., *Sundiata*, trans. G. D. Pickett (Harlow: Longman, 1965). Courtesy of Presence Africaine.

### THE BATTLE OF KRINA

Sundiata wanted to have done with Soumaoro before the rainy season, so he struck camp and marched on Krina where Soumaoro was encamped. The latter realized that the decisive battle had come. Sundiata deployed his men on the little hill that dominates the plain. The great battle was for the next day.

In the evening, to raise the men's spirits, Djata gave a great feast, for he was anxious that his men should wake up happy in the morning. Several oxen were slaughtered and that evening Balla Fasséké, in front of the whole army, called to mind the history of old Mali. He praised Sundiata, seated amidst his lieutenants, in this manner:

'Now I address myself to you, Maghan Sundiata, I speak to you king of Mali, to whom dethroned monarchs flock. The time foretold to you by the jinn is now coming. Sundiata, kingdoms and empires are in the likeness of man; like him they are born, they grow and disappear. Each sovereign embodies one moment of that life. Formerly, the kings of Ghana extended their kingdom over all the lands inhabited by the black man, but the circle has closed and the Cissés of Wagadou are nothing more than petty princes in a desolate land. Today, another kingdom looms up, powerful, the kingdom of Sosso. Humbled kings have borne their tribute to Sosso, Soumaoro's arrogance knows no more bounds and his cruelty is equal to his ambition.

But will Soumaoro dominate the world? Are we, the griots of Mali, condemned to pass on to future generations the humiliations which the king of Sosso cares to inflict on our country? No, you may be glad, children of the "Bright Country," for the kingship of Sosso is but the growth of yesterday, whereas that of Mali dates from the time of Bilali. Each kingdom has its childhood, but Soumaoro wants to force the pace, and so Sosso will collapse under him like a horse worn out beneath its rider.

'You, Maghan, you are Mali. It has had a long and difficult childhood like you. Sixteen kings have preceded you on the throne of Niani, sixteen kings have reigned with varying fortunes, but from being village chiefs the Keitas have become tribal chiefs and then kings. Sixteen generations have consolidated their power. You are the outgrowth of Mali just as the silk-cotton tree is the growth of the earth, born of deep and mighty roots. To face the tempest the tree must have long roots and gnarled branches. Maghan Sundiata, has not the tree grown?

'I would have you know, son of Sogolon, that there is not room for two kings around the same calabash of rice. When a new cock comes to the poultry run the old cock picks a quarrel with him and the docile hens wait to see if the new arrival asserts himself or yields. You have come to Mali. Very well, then, assert yourself. Strength makes a law of its own self and power allows no division.

. . .

'Griots are men of the spoken word, and by the spoken word we give life to the gestures of kings. But words are nothing but words; power lies in deeds. Be a man of action; do not answer me any more with your mouth, but tomorrow, on the plain of Krina, show me what you would have me recount to coming generations. Tomorrow allow me to sing the "Song of the Vultures" over the bodies of the thousands of Sossos whom your sword will have laid low before evening.'

It was on the eve of Krina. In this way Balla Fasséké reminded Sundiata of the history of Mali so that, in the morning, he would show himself worthy of his ancestors.

At break of day, Fakoli came and woke up Sundiata to tell him that Soumaoro had begun to move his sofas out of Krina. The son of Sogolon appeared dressed like a hunter king. He wore tight-fitting, ochre-coloured trousers. He gave the order to draw up the sofas across the plain, and while his chiefs bustled about, Manding Bory and Nana Triban came into Djata's tent.

'Brother,' said Manding Bory, 'have you got the bow ready?'

'Yes,' replied Sundiata. 'Look'.

He unhooked his bow from the wall, along with the deadly arrow. It was not an iron arrow at all, but was made of wood and pointed with the spur of a white cock. The cock's spur was the Tana of Soumaoro, the secret which Nana Triban had managed to draw out of the king of Sosso.

'Brother,' said Nana Triban, 'Soumaoro now knows that I have fled from Sosso. Try to get near him for he will avoid you the whole battle long.'

These words of Nana Triban left Djata worried, but Balla Fasséké, who had just come into the tent, said to Sundiata that the soothsayer had seen the end of Soumaoro in a dream.

The sun had risen on the other side of the river and already lit the whole plain. Sundiata's troops deployed from the edge of the river across the plain, but Soumaoro's army was so big that other sofas remaining in Krina had ascended the ramparts to see the battle. Soumaoro was already distinguishable in the distance by his tall headdress, and the wings of his enormous army brushed the river on one side and the hills on the other. As at Neguéboria, Sundiata did not deploy all his forces. The bowmen of Wagadou and the Djallonkés stood at the rear ready to spill out on the left towards the hills as the battle spread. Fakoli Koroma and Kamandjan were in the front line with Sundiata and his cavalry.

With his powerful voice Sundiata cried 'An gnewa.' The order was repeated from tribe to tribe and the army started off. Soumaoro stood on the right with his cavalry.

Djata and his cavalry charged with great dash but they were stopped by the horsemen of Diaghan and a struggle to the death began. Tabon Wana and the archers of Wagadou stretched out their lines towards the hills and the battle spread over the entire plain, while an unrelenting sun climbed in the sky. The horses of Mema were extremely agile, and they reared forward with their fore hooves raised and swooped down on the horsemen of Diaghan, who rolled on the ground trampled under the horses' hooves. Presently the men of Diaghan gave ground and fell back towards the rear. The enemy centre was broken.

It was then that Manding Bory galloped up to announce to Sundiata that Soumaoro, having thrown in all his reserve, had swept down on Fakoli and his smiths. Obviously Soumaoro was bent on punishing his nephew. Already overwhelmed by the numbers, Fakoli's men were beginning to give ground. The battle was not yet won.

His eyes red with anger, Sundiata pulled his cavalry over to the left in the direction of the hills where Fakoli was valiantly enduring his uncle's blows. But wherever the son of the buffalo passed, death rejoiced. Sundiata's presence restored the balance momentarily, but Soumaoro's sofas were too numerous all the same. Sogolon's son looked for Soumaoro and caught sight of him in the middle of the fray. Sundiata struck out right and left and the Sossos scrambled out of his way. The king of Sosso, who did not want Sundiata to get near him, retreated far behind his men, but Sundiata followed him with his eyes. He stopped and bent his bow. The arrow flew and grazed Soumaoro on the shoulder. The cock's spur no more than scratched him, but the effect was immediate and Soumaoro felt his powers leave him. His eyes met Sundiata's. Now trembling like a man in the grip of a fever, the vanquished Soumaoro looked up towards the sun. A great black bird flew over above the fray and he understood. It was a bird of misfortune.

'The bird of Krina,' he muttered.

## THE PURSUIT OF SOUMAORO

The king of Sosso let out a great cry and, turning his horse's head, he took to flight. The Sossos saw the king and fled in their turn. It was a rout. Death hovered over the great plain and blood poured out of a thousand wounds. Who can tell how many Sossos perished at Krina? The rout was complete and Sundiata then dashed off in pursuit of Soumaoro. The sun was at the middle of its course. Fakoli had caught up with Sundiata and they both rode in pursuit of the fugitives. Soumaoro had a good start. Leaving the plain, the king of Sosso had dashed across the open bush followed by his son Balla and a few Sosso chiefs. When night fell Sundiata and Fakoli stopped at a hamlet. There they took a little food and rest. None of the inhabitants had seen Soumaoro. Sundiata and Fakoli started off in pursuit again as soon as they were joined by some horsemen of Mema. They galloped all night and at daybreak Djata learnt from some peasants that some horsemen had passed that way when it was still dark. The king of Sosso shunned all centres of population for he knew that the inhabitants, seeing him on the run, would no longer hesitate to lay hands on him in order to get into favour with the new master. Soumaoro was followed by none but his son Balla. After having changed his mount at daybreak, the king of Sosso was still galloping to the north.

With difficulty Sundiata found the trail of the fugitives. Fakoli was as resolute as Djata and he knew this country better. It was difficult to tell which of these two men harboured the greatest hatred towards Soumaoro. The one was avenging his humiliated country while the other was prompted by the love of a wife. At noon the horses of Sundiata and Fakoli were out of breath and the pursuers halted at Bankoumana. They took a little food and Djata learnt that Soumaoro was heading for Koulikoro. He had only given himself enough time to change horses. Sundi-



ata and Fakoli set off again straight away. Fakoli said, 'I know a short cut to Koulikoro, but it is a difficult track and our horses will be tired.'

'Come on,' said Djata.

They tackled a difficult path scooped out by the rain in a gully. Cutting across country they now crossed the bush until, pointing a finger in front of him, Fakoli said, 'Look at the hills over there which herald Koulikoro. We have made up some time.'

'Good,' replied Djata simply.

However, the horses were fatigued, they went more slowly and painfully lifted their hooves from the ground. As there was no village in sight, Djata and Fakoli dismounted to let their mounts get their wind back. Fakoli, who had a small bag of millet in his saddle, fed them. The two men rested under a tree. Fakoli even said that Soumaoro, who had taken an easy but lengthy route, would not arrive at Koulikoro until nightfall. He was speaking like a man who had ridden over the whole country.

They continued on their way and soon climbed the hills. Arrived at the top, they saw two horsemen at the bottom of the valley going towards the mountain.

'There they are,' cried Djata.

Evening was coming on and the sun's rays were already kissing the summit of Koulikoro mountain. When Soumaoro and his son saw the two riders behind them, they broke off and began to climb the mountain. The king of Sosso and his son Balla seemed to have fresher horses. Djata and Fakoli redoubled their efforts.

The fugitives were within spear range when Djata shouted to them, 'Stop, stop.'

Like Djata, Fakoli wanted to take Soumaoro alive. Keleya's husband sheered off and outflanked Soumaoro on the right, making his horse jump. He was going to lay hands on his uncle but the latter escaped him by a sudden turn. Through his impetus Fakoli bumped into Balla and they both rolled on the ground. Fakoli got up and seized his cousin while Sundiata, throwing his spear with all his might, brought Soumaoro's horse tumbling down. The old king got up and the foot race began. Soumaoro was a sturdy old man and he climbed the mountain with great agility. Djata did not want either to wound him or kill him. He wanted to take him alive.

The sun had just disappeared completely. For a second time the king of Sosso escaped from Djata. Having reached the summit of Koulikoro, Soumaoro hurried down the slope followed by Djata. To the right he saw the gaping cave of Koulikoro and without hesitation he entered the black cavern. Sundiata stopped in front of the cave. At this moment arrived Fakoli who had just tied the hands of Sosso Balla, his cousin.

'There,' said Sundiata, 'he has gone into the cave.'

'But it is connected to the river,' said Fakoli.

The noise of horses' hooves was heard and it turned out to be a detachment of Mema horsemen. Straight away the son of Sogolon sent some of them towards the river and had all the mountain guarded. The darkness was complete.

Sundiata went into the village of Koulikoro and waited there for the rest of his army.

## THE DESTRUCTION OF SOSSO

The victory of Krina was dazzling. The remains of Soumaoro's army went to shut themselves up in Sosso. But the empire of Sosso was done for. From everywhere around kings sent their submission to Sundiata. The king of Guidimakhan sent a richly furnished embassy to Djata and at the same time gave his daughter in marriage to the victor. Embassies flocked to Koulikoro, but when Djata had been joined by all the army he marched on Sosso. Soumaoro's city, Sosso, the impregnable city, the city of smiths skilled in wielding the spear.

In the absence of the king and his son, Noumounkeba, a tribal chief, directed the defence of the city. He had quickly amassed all that he could find in the way of provisions from the surrounding countryside.

Sosso was a magnificent city. In the open plain her triple rampart with awe-inspiring towers reached into the sky. The city comprised a hundred and eighty-eight fortresses and the palace of Soumaoro loomed above the whole city like a gigantic tower. Sosso had but one gate; colossal and made of iron, the work of the sons of fire. Noumounkeba hoped to tie Sundiata down outside of Sosso, for he had enough provisions to hold out for a year.

The sun was beginning to set when Sogolon-Djata appeared before Sosso the Magnificent. From the top of a hill, Djata and his general staff gazed upon the fearsome city of the sorcerer-king. The army encamped in the plain opposite the great gate of the city and fires were lit in the camp. Djata resolved to take Sosso in the course of a morning. He fed his men a double ration and the tamtams beat all night to stir up the victors of Krina.

At daybreak the towers of the ramparts were black with sofas. Others were positioned on the ramparts themselves. They were the archers. The Mandingoes were masters in the art of storming a town. In the front line Sundiata placed the sofas of Mali, while those who held the ladders were in the second line protected by the shields of the spearmen. The main body of the army was to attack the city gate. When all was ready, Djata gave the order to attack. The drums resounded, the horns blared and like a tide the Mandingo front line moved off, giving mighty shouts. With their shields raised above their heads the Mandingoes advanced up to the foot of the wall, then the Sossos began to rain large stones down on the assailants. From the rear, the bowmen of Wagadou shot arrows at the ramparts. The attack spread and the town was assaulted at all points. Sundiata had a murderous reserve; they were the bowmen whom the king of the Bobos had sent shortly before Krina. The archers of Bobo are the best in the world. On one knee the archers fired flaming arrows over the ramparts. Within the walls the thatched huts took fire and the smoke swirled up. The ladders stood against the curtain wall and the first

Mandingo sofas were already at the top. Seized by panic through seeing the town on fire, the Sossos hesitated a moment. The huge tower surmounting the gate surrendered, for Fakoli's smiths had made themselves masters of it. They got into the city where the screams of women and children brought the Sossos' panic to a head. They opened the gates to the main body of the army.

Then began the massacre. Women and children in the midst of fleeing Sossos implored mercy of the victors. Djata and his cavalry were now in front of the awesome tower palace of Soumaoro. Noumounkeba, conscious that he was lost, came out to fight. With his sword held aloft he bore down on Djata, but the latter dodged him and, catching hold of the Sosso's braced arm, forced him to his knees whilst the sword dropped to the ground. He did not kill him but delivered him into the hands of Manding Bory.

Soumaoro's palace was now at Sundiata's mercy. While everywhere the Sossos were begging for quarter, Sundiata, preceded by Balla Fasséké, entered Soumaoro's tower. The griot knew every nook and cranny of the palace from his captivity and he led Sundiata to Soumaoro's magic chamber.

When Balla Fasséké opened the door to the room it was found to have changed its appearance since Soumaoro had been touched by the fatal arrow. The inmates of the chamber had lost their power. The snake in the pitcher was in the throes of death, the owls from the perch were flapping pitifully about on the ground. Everything was dying in the sorcerer's abode. It was all up with the power of Soumaoro. Sundiata had all Soumaoro's fetishes taken down and before the palace were gathered together all Soumaoro's wives, all princesses taken from their families by force. The prisoners, their hands tied behind their backs, were already herded together. Just as he had wished, Sundiata had taken Sosso in the course of a morning. When everything was outside of the town and all that there was to take had been taken out, Sundiata gave the order to complete its destruction. The last houses were set fire to and prisoners were employed in the razing of the walls. Thus, as Djata intended, Sosso was destroyed to its very foundations.

Yes, Sosso was razed to the ground. It has disappeared, the proud city of Soumaoro. A ghastly wilderness extends over the places where kings came and humbled themselves before the sorcerer king. All traces of the houses have vanished and of Soumaoro's seven-storey palace there remains nothing more. A field of desolation, Sosso is now a spot where guinea fowl and young partridges come to take their dust baths.

Many years have rolled by and many times the moon has traversed the heaven since these places lost their inhabitants. The bourein, the tree of desolation, spreads out its thorny undergrowth and insolently grows in Soumaoro's capital. Sosso the Proud is nothing but a memory in the mouths of griots. The hyenas come to wail there at night, the hare and the hind come and feed on the site of the palace of Soumaoro, the king who wore robes of human skin.

Sosso vanished from the earth and it was Sundiata, the son of the buffalo, who gave these places over to solitude.

After the destruction of Soumaoro's capital the world knew no other master but Sundiata.

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## THE MALI EMPIRE

Ka-ba was a small town founded by Niagalin M'Bali Faly, a hunter of Sibi, and by Sounoumba Traore, a fisherman. Ka-ba belonged to the king of Sibi and nowadays you can also find Keitas at Ka-ba, but the Keitas did not come there until after Sundiata's time. Ka-ba stands on the left bank of the Niger and it is through Ka-ba that the road to old Mali passes.

To the north of the town stretches a spacious clearing and it is there that the great assembly was to foregather. King Kamandjan had the whole clearing cleaned up and a great dais was got ready. Even before Djata's arrival the delegations from all the conquered peoples had made their way to Ka-ba. Huts were hastily built to house all these people. When all the armies had reunited, camps had to be set up in the big plain lying between the river and the town. On the appointed day the troops were drawn up on the vast square that had been prepared. As at Sibi, each people was gathered round its king's pennant. Sundiata had put on robes such as are worn by a great Muslim king. Balla Fasséké, the high master of ceremonies, set the allies around Djata's great throne. Everything was in position. The sofas, forming a vast semicircle bristling with spears, stood motionless. The delegations of the various peoples had been planted at the foot of the dais. A complete silence reigned. On Sundiata's right, Balla Fasséké, holding his mighty spear, addressed the throng in this manner:

'Peace reigns today in the whole country; may it always be thus. . . .'

'Amen,' replied the crowd, then the herald continued:

'I speak to you,' assembled peoples. To those of Mali I convey Maghan Sundiata's greeting; greetings to those of Do, greetings to those of Ghana, to those from Mema greetings, and to those of Fakoli's tribe. Greetings to the Bobo warriors and, finally, greetings to those of Sibi and Ka-ba. To all the peoples assembled, Djata gives greetings.

'May I be humbly forgiven if I have made any omission. I am nervous before so many people gathered together.

'Peoples, here we are, after years of hard trials, gathered around our saviour, the restorer of peace and order. From the east to the west, from the north to the south, everywhere his victorious arms have established peace. I convey to you the greetings of Soumaoro's vanquisher, Maghan Sundiata, king of Mali.

'But in order to respect tradition, I must first of all address myself to the host of us all, Kamandjan, king of Sibi; Djata greets you and gives you the floor.'

Kamandjan, who was sitting close by Sundiata, stood up and stepped down from the dais. He mounted his horse and brandished his sword, crying 'I salute you all, warriors of

Mali, of Do, of Tabon, of Mema, of Wagadou, of Bobo, of Fakoli . . . ; warriors, peace has returned to our homes, may God long preserve it.’

‘Amen,’ replied the warriors and the crowd. The king of Sibi continued.

‘In the world man suffers for a season, but never eternally. Here we are at the end of our trials. We are at peace. May God be praised. But we owe this peace to one man who, by his courage and his valiance, was able to lead our troops to victory.

‘Which one of us, alone, would have dared face Soumaoro? Ay, we were all cowards. How many times did we pay him tribute? The insolent rogue thought that everything was permitted him. What family was not dishonoured by Soumaoro? He took our daughters and wives from us and we were more craven than women. He carried his insolence to the point of stealing the wife of his nephew Fakoli! We were prostrated and humiliated in front of our children. But it was in the midst of so many calamities that our destiny suddenly changed. A new sun arose in the east. After the battle of Tabon we felt ourselves to be men, we realized that Soumaoro was a human being and not an incarnation of the devil, for he was no longer invincible. A man came to us. He had heard our groans and came to our aid, like a father when he sees his son in tears. Here is that man. Maghan Sundiata, the man with two names foretold by the soothsayers.

‘It is to you that I now address myself, son of Sogolon, you, the nephew of the valorous warriors of Do. Henceforth it is from you that I derive my kingdom for I acknowledge you my sovereign. My tribe and I place ourselves in your hands. I salute you, supreme chief, I salute you, Fama of Famas. I salute you, Mansa.’

The huzza that greeted these words was so loud that you could hear the echo repeat the tremendous clamour twelve times over. With a strong hand Kamandjan stuck his spear in the ground in front of the dais and said, ‘Sundiata, here is my spear, it is yours.’

Then he climbed up to sit in his place. Thereafter, one by one, the twelve kings of the bright savanna country got up and proclaimed Sundiata ‘Mansa’ in their turn. Twelve royal spears were stuck in the ground in front of the dais. Sundiata had become emperor. The old tabala of Niani announced to the world that the lands of the savanna had provided themselves with one single king. When the imperial tabala had stopped reverberating, Balla Fasséké, the grand master of ceremonies, took the floor again following the crowd’s ovation.

‘Sundiata, Maghan Sundiata, king of Mali, in the name of the twelve kings of the “Bright Country”, I salute you as “Mansa”.’

The crowd shouted ‘Wassa, Wassa. . . . Ayé.’

It was amid such joy that Balla Fasséké composed the great hymn ‘Niama’ which the griots still sing:

Niama, Niama, Niama,  
You, you serve as a shelter for all,  
All come to seek refuge under you.

And as for you, Niama,  
Nothing serves you for shelter,  
God alone protects you.

The festival began. The musicians of all the countries were there. Each people in turn came forward to the dais under Sundiata’s impassive gaze. Then the war dances began. The sofas of all the countries had lined themselves up in six ranks amid a great clatter of bows and spears knocking together. The war chiefs were on horseback. The warriors faced the enormous dais and at a signal from Balla Fasséké, the musicians, massed on the right of the dais, struck up. The heavy war drums thundered, the bolons gave off muted notes while the griot’s voice gave the throng the pitch for the ‘Hymn to the Bow’. The spearmen, advancing like hyenas in the night, held their spears above their heads; the archers of Wagadou and Tabon, walking with a noiseless tread, seemed to be lying in ambush behind bushes. They rose suddenly to their feet and let fly their arrows at imaginary enemies. In front of the great dais the Kéakéa-Tigui, or war chiefs, made their horses perform dance steps under the eyes of the Mansa. The horses whinnied and reared, then, overmastered by the spurs, knelt, got up and cut little capers, or else scraped the ground with their hooves.

The rapturous people shouted the ‘Hymn to the Bow’ and clapped their hands. The sweating bodies of the warriors glistened in the sun while the exhausting rhythm of the tamtams wrenched from them shrill cries. But presently they made way for the cavalry, beloved by Djata. The horsemen of Mema threw their swords in the air and caught them in flight, uttering mighty shouts. A smile of contentment took shape on Sundiata’s lips, for he was happy to see his cavalry manoeuvre with so much skill.

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## THE RETURN TO NIANI

But it was time to return to his native Mali. Sundiata assembled his army in the plain and each people provided a contingent to accompany the Mansa to Niani. At Ka-ba all the peoples separated in friendship and in joy at their new-found peace.

Sundiata and his men had to cross the Niger in order to enter old Mali. One might have thought that all the dug-out canoes in the world had arranged to meet at the port of Ka-ba. It was the dry season and there was not much water in the river. The fishing tribe of Somono, to whom Djata had given the monopoly of the water, were bent on expressing their thanks to the son of Sogolon. They put all their dug-outs side by side across the Niger so that Sundiata’s sofas could cross without wetting their feet.

When the whole army was on the other side of the river, Sundiata ordered great sacrifices. A hundred oxen and a hundred rams were sacrificed. It was thus that Sundiata thanked God on returning to Mali.

The villages of Mali gave Maghan Sundiata an unprecedented welcome. At normal times a traveller on foot can cover the distance from Ka-ba to Niani with only two halts, but Sogolon's son with his army took three days. The road to Mali from the river was flanked by a double human hedge. Flocking from every corner of Mali, all the inhabitants were resolved to see their saviour from close up. The women of Mali tried to create a sensation and they did not fail. At the entrance to each village they had carpeted the road with their multi-coloured pagnes so that Sundiata's horse would not so much as dirty its feet on entering their village. At the village exits the children, holding leafy branches in their hands, greeted Djata with cries of 'Wassa, Wassa, Ayé'.

Sundiata was leading the van. He had donned his costume of a hunter king—a plain smock, skin-tight trousers and his bow slung across his back. At his side Balla Fasséké was still wearing his festive garments gleaming with gold. Between Djata's general staff and the army Sosso Balla had been placed, amid his father's fetishes. But his hands were no longer tied. As at Ka-ba, abuse was everywhere heaped upon him and the prisoner did not dare look up at the hostile crowd. Some people, always ready to feel sympathy, were saying among themselves:

'How few things good fortune prizes!'

'Yes, the day you are fortunate is also the day when you are the most unfortunate, for in good fortune you cannot imagine what suffering is.'

The troops were marching along singing the 'Hymn to the Bow', which the crowd took up. New songs flew from mouth to mouth. Young women offered the soldiers cool water and cola nuts. And so the triumphal march across Mali ended outside Niani, Sundiata's city.

It was a ruined town which was beginning to be rebuilt by its inhabitants. A part of the ramparts had been destroyed and the charred walls still bore the marks of the fire. From the top of the hill Djata looked on Niani, which looked like a dead city. He saw the plain of Sounkarani, and he also saw the site of the young baobab tree. The survivors of the catastrophe were standing in rows on the Mali road. The children were waving branches, a few young women were singing, but the adults were mute.

'Rejoice,' said Balla Fasséké to Sundiata, 'for your part you will have the bliss of rebuilding Niani, the city of your fathers, but nevermore will anyone rebuild Sosso out of its ruins. Men will lose recollection of the very site of Soumaoro's city.'

With Sundiata peace and happiness entered Niani. Lovingly Sogolon's son had his native city rebuilt. He restored in the ancient style his father's old enclosure where he had grown up. People came from all the villages of Mali to settle in Niani. The walls had to be destroyed to enlarge the town, and new quarters were built for each kin group in the enormous army.

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Djata's justice spared nobody. He followed the very word of God. He protected the weak against the strong and people would make journeys lasting several days to come and demand justice of him. Under his sun the upright man was rewarded and the wicked one punished.

In their new-found peace the villages knew prosperity again, for with Sundiata happiness had come into everyone's home. Vast fields of millet, rice, cotton, indigo and fonio surrounded the villages. Whoever worked always had something to live on. Each year long caravans carried the taxes in kind to Niani. You could go from village to village without fearing brigands. A thief would have his right hand chopped off and if he stole again he would be put to the sword.

New villages and new towns sprang up in Mali and elsewhere. 'Dyulas', or traders, became numerous and during the reign of Sundiata the world knew happiness.

There are some kings who are powerful through their military strength. Everybody trembles before them, but when they die nothing but ill is spoken of them. Others do neither good nor ill and when they die they are forgotten. Others are feared because they have power, but they know how to use it and they are loved because they love justice. Sundiata belonged to this group. He was feared, but loved as well. He was the father of Mali and gave the world peace. After him the world has not seen a greater conqueror, for he was the seventh and last conqueror. He had made the capital of an empire out of his father's village, and Niani became the navel of the earth.

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*Compare the notion of the hero in Sundiata with the Epic of Gilgamesh and Greek and Roman heroes. What are the similarities? What are the differences?*

## Chapter 19

# *Conquest and Exploitation: The Development of the Transatlantic Economy*

19–1

### **Bernal Díaz del Castillo,** *The Conquest of Mexico*

From Bernal Díaz del Castillo, *The True History of the Conquest of New Spain*, trans. and ed. A.P. Maudslay (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1908–1916), 5 vols., I, pp. 237–40, *passim*.

The next morning, the 5th September, 1519, we mustered the horses. There was not one of the wounded men who did not come forward to join the ranks and give as much help as he could. The crossbowmen were warned to use the store of darts very cautiously, some of them loading while the others were shooting, and the musketeers were to act in the same way, and the men with sword and shield were instructed to aim their cuts and thrusts at the bowels [of their enemies] so that they would not dare to come as close to us as they did before. With our banner unfurled, and four of our comrades guarding the standard-bearer, Corral, we set out from our camp. We had not marched half a quarter of a league before we began to see the fields crowded with warriors with great feather crests and distinguishing devices, and to hear the blare of horns and trumpets.

All the plain was swarming with warriors and we stood four hundred men in number, and of those many sick and wounded. And we knew for certain that this time our foe came with the determination to leave none of us alive excepting those who would be sacrificed to their idols.

How they began to charge on us! What a hail of stones sped from their slings! As for their bowmen, the javelins lay like corn on the threshing floor; all of them barbed and fire-hardened, which would pierce any armour and would reach the vitals where there is no protection; the men with swords and shields and other arms larger than swords, such as broadswords, and lances, how they pressed on us and with what mighty shouts and yells they charged upon us! The steady bearing of our artillery, musketeers, and crossbowmen, was indeed a help to us, and we did the enemy much damage, and those of them who came close to us with their swords and broadswords met with such sword play from us that they were forced back and they did not close in on us so often as in the last battle. The horsemen were so skillful and bore themselves so valiantly that, after God who protected us, they were our bulwark. However, I saw that our troops were in considerable confusion, so that neither the shouts of Cortés nor the other captains availed

to make them close up their ranks, and so many Indians charged down on us that it was only by a miracle of sword play that we could make them give way so that our ranks could be reformed. One thing only saved our lives, and that was that the enemy were so numerous and so crowded one on another that the shots wrought havoc among them, and in addition to this they were not well commanded, for all the captains with their forces could not come into action and from what we knew, since the last battle had been fought, there had been disputes and quarrels between the Captain Xicotenga and another captain the son of Chichimecatecle, over what the one had said to the other, that he had not fought well in the previous battle; to this the son of Chichimecatecle replied that he had fought better than Xicotenga, and was ready to prove it by personal combat. So in this battle Chichimecatecle and his men would not help Xicotenga, and we knew for a certainty that he had also called on the company of Huexotzinco to abstain from fighting. Besides this, ever since the last battle they were afraid of the horses and the musketry, and the swords and crossbows, and our hard fighting; above all was the mercy of God which gave us strength to endure. So Xicotenga was not obeyed by two of the commanders, and we were doing great damage to his men, for we were killing many of them, and this they tried to conceal; for as they were so numerous, whenever one of their men was wounded, they immediately bound him up and carried him off on their shoulders, so that in this battle, as in the last, we never saw a dead man.

The enemy was already losing heart, and knowing that the followers of the other two captains whom I have already named, would not come to their assistance, they began to give way. It seems that in that battle we had killed one very important captain, and the enemy began to retreat in good order, our horsemen following them at a hard gallop for a short distance, for they could not sit their horses for fatigue, and when we found ourselves free from that multitude of warriors, we gave thanks to God.

In this engagement, one soldier was killed, and sixty were wounded, and all the horses were wounded as well. They gave me two wounds, one in the head with a stone, and one in the thigh with an arrow; but this did not prevent me from fighting, and keeping watch, and helping our soldiers, and all the soldiers who were wounded did the same; for if the wounds were not very dangerous, we had to fight and keep guard, wounded as we were, for few of us remained unwounded.

Then we returned to our camp, well contented, and giving thanks to God. We buried the dead in one of those houses which the Indians had built underground, so that

the enemy should not see that we were mortals, but should believe that, as they said, we were Teules. We threw much earth over the top of the house, so that they should not smell the bodies, then we doctored all the wounded with the fat of an Indian. It was cold comfort to be even without salt or oil with which to cure the wounded. There was another want from which we suffered, and it was a severe one—and that was clothes with which to cover ourselves,

for such a cold wind came from the snow mountains, that it made us shiver, for our lances and muskets and crossbows made a poor covering.

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*Why were so few conquistadors able to defeat considerably larger numbers of Indians?*

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## 19–2

### Bartholomew de Las Casas: *Amerindians and the “Garden of Eden”*

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From *Bartholomew De Las Casas: His Life, His Apostolate, and His Writings*, translation by Francis Augustus McNutt (New York, 1909), pp. 314–315.

God has created all these numberless people to be quite the simplest, without malice or duplicity, most obedient, most faithful to their natural Lords, and to the Christians, whom they serve; the most humble, most patient, most peaceful, and calm, without strife nor tumults; not wrangling, nor querulous, as free from uproar, hate and desire of revenge, as any in the world.

They are likewise the most delicate people, weak and of feeble constitution, and less than any other can they bear fatigue, and they very easily die of whatsoever infirmity; so much so, that not even the sons of our Princes and of nobles, brought up in royal and gentle life, are more delicate than they; although there are among them such as are of the peasant class. They are also a very poor people, who of worldly goods possess little, nor wish to possess: and they are therefore neither proud, nor ambitious, nor avaricious. . . .

They are likewise of a clean, unspoiled, and vivacious intellect, very capable, and receptive to every good doctrine; most prompt to accept our Holy Catholic Faith, to be endowed with virtuous customs; and they have as little difficulty with such things as any people created by God in the world.

Once they have begun to learn of matters pertaining to faith, they are so importunate to know them, and in frequenting the sacraments and divine service of the Church, that to tell the truth, the clergy have need to be endowed of God with the gift of preeminent patience to bear with them: and finally, I have heard many lay Spaniards frequently say many years ago, (unable to deny the goodness of those they saw) certainly these people were the most blessed of the earth, had they only knowledge of God.

#### THE “SINS” OF THE SPANISH INVASION

*Militant friars like Las Casas and many of his fellow Dominicans also tried to picture the Spanish conquistadors and settlers as vicious and cruel exploiters. These tales had some basis in reality, but they were also aimed at convincing a European audience that the excesses of the conquest had to be curbed and the powers of the crown and the clergy expanded in the New World. Along with the images of the indigenous peoples as innocents reminiscent of the Garden of Eden, they created a powerful picture of European excesses. According to many friars, these abuses undermined the chances for salvation of all Christians who tolerated such “sins” against humanity. The selection below is taken from Bartolomé de las Casas, Very Brief Account of the Destruction of the Indies, trans. Francis Augustus MacNutt in Bartholomew de Las Casas, 319–20.*

The Christians, with their horses and swords and lances, began to slaughter and practise strange cruelty among them. They penetrated into the country and spared neither children nor the aged, nor pregnant women, nor those in child labour, all of whom they ran through the body and lacerated, as though they were assaulting so many lambs herded in their sheepfold.

They made bets as to who would slit a man in two, or cut off his head at one blow: or they opened up his bowels. They tore the babes from their mothers' breast by the feet, and dashed their heads against the rocks. Others they seized by the shoulders and threw into the rivers, laughing and joking, and when they fell into the water they exclaimed: "boil body of so and so!" They spitted the bodies of other babes, together with their mothers and all who were before them, on their swords.

They made a gallows just high enough for the feet to nearly touch the ground, and by thirteens, in honour and reverence of our Redeemer and the twelve Apostles, they put wood underneath and, with fire, they burned the Indians alive. . . .

And because all the people who could flee, hid among the mountains and climbed the crags to escape from men so deprived of humanity, so wicked, such wild beasts, exterminators and capital enemies of all the human race, the Spaniards taught and trained the fiercest boar-hounds to tear an Indian to pieces as soon as they saw him, so that they more willingly attacked and ate one, than if he had been a boar. These hounds made great havoc and slaughter.

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*What are the similarities between Columbus's view of the natives and that of Las Casas? What explains the dramatic difference in how they sought to treat the natives?*

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### 19-3

## Christopher Columbus, *Journal of First Voyage to America*

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From Christopher Columbus, *Journal of First Voyage to America* (New York: A. & C. Boni, 1924), pp. 20-26, *passim*.

Monday, Oct. 8th. Steered W.S.W. and sailed day and night eleven or twelve leagues; at times during the night, fifteen miles an hour, if the account can be depended upon. Found the sea like the river at Seville, "*thanks to God,*" says the Admiral. The air soft as that of Seville in April, and so fragrant that it was delicious to breathe it. The weeds appeared very fresh. Many land birds, one of which they took, flying towards the S.W.; also *grajaos*, ducks, and a pelican were seen.

Tuesday, Oct. 9th. Sailed S.W. five leagues, when the wind changed, and they stood W. by N. four leagues. Sailed in the whole day and night, twenty leagues and a half; reckoned to the crew seventeen. All night heard birds passing.

Wednesday, Oct. 10th. Steered W.S.W. and sailed at time ten miles an hour, at others twelve, and at others, seven; day and night made fifty-nine leagues' progress; reckoned to the crew but forty-four. Here the men lost all patience, and complained of the length of the voyage, but the Admiral encouraged them in the best manner he could, representing the profits they were about to acquire, and adding that it was to no purpose to complain, having come so far, they had nothing to do but continue on to the Indies, till with the help of our Lord, they should arrive there.

Thursday, Oct. 11th. Steered W.S.W.; and encountered a heavier sea than they had met with before in the whole voyage. Saw *pardelas* and a green rush near the vessel. The crew of the *Pinta* saw a cane and a log; they also picked

up a stick which appeared to have been carved with an iron tool, a piece of cane, a plant which grows on land, and a board. The crew of the *Niña* saw other signs of land, and a stalk loaded with roseberries. These signs encouraged them, and they all grew cheerful. Sailed this day till sunset, twenty-seven leagues.

After sunset steered their original course W. and sailed twelve miles an hour till two hours after midnight, going ninety miles, which are twenty-two leagues and a half; and as the *Pinta* was the swiftest sailer, and kept ahead of the Admiral, she discovered land and made the signals which had been ordered. . . . At two o'clock in the morning the land was discovered, at two leagues' distance; they took in sail and remained under the squaresail lying to till day, which was Friday, when they found themselves near a small island, one of the *Lucayos*, called in the Indian language *Guanahani*. Presently they descried people, naked, and the Admiral landed in the boat, which was armed, along with Martin Alonzo Pinzon, and Vincent Yañez his brother, captain of the *Niña*. The Admiral bore the royal standard, and the two captains each a banner of the Green Cross, which all the ships had carried; this contained the initials of the names of the King and Queen each side of the cross, and a crown over each letter. Arrived on shore, they saw trees very green, many streams of water, and divers sorts of fruits. The Admiral called upon the two Captains, and the rest of the crew who landed, as also to Rodrigo de Escovedo, notary of the fleet, and Rodrigo Sánchez, of Segovia, to bear witness that he before all others took possession (as in fact he did) of that island for the King and Queen his sovereigns, making the requisite declarations, which are more at large set down here in writing. Numbers of the people of the island straightway collected together. Here follow the precise words of the Admiral: "As I saw that they were very friendly to us, and perceived that they could be much more easily converted to our holy faith by gentle means than by force, I presented them with some red caps, and strings of beads to wear upon the neck, and many other trifles of small value,

wherewith they were much delighted, and became wonderfully attached to us. Afterwards they came swimming to the boats, bringing parrots, balls of cotton thread, javelins and many other things which they exchanged for articles we gave them, such as glass beads, and hawk's bells; which trade was carried on with the utmost good will. But they seemed on the whole to me, to be a very poor people. They all go completely naked, even the women, though I saw but one girl. All whom I saw were young, not above thirty years of age, well made, with fine shapes and faces; their hair short, and coarse like that of a horse's tail, combed toward the forehead, except a small portion which they suffer to hang down behind, and never cut. . . . It appears

to me, that the people are ingenious, and would be good servants; and I am of opinion that they would very readily become Christians, as they appear to have no religion.

They very quickly learn such words as are spoken to them. If it please our Lord, I intend at my return to carry home six of them to your Highnesses, that they may learn our language. I saw no beasts in the island, nor any sort of animals except parrots." These are the words of the Admiral.

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*What did Columbus tell his crew in order to pacify and encourage them when they complained and became impatient with the length of the voyage?*

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## 19-4

### **Bartolomé de Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies and The Only Method of Converting the Indians***

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From *Bartolomé de Las Casas: A Selection of His Writings* by Bartolomé de Las Casas, trans. Geo Sanderlin. Copyright © 1971 by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

In the year 1511 the Spaniards passed over to the island of Cuba, which as I said, is as long as from Valladolid to Rome, and where there were great and populous provinces. They began and ended in the above manner, only with incomparably greater cruelty. Here many notable things occurred.

A very high prince and lord, named Hatuey, who had fled with many of his people from Hispaniola to Cuba, to escape the calamity and inhuman operations of the Christians, having received news from some Indians that the Christians were crossing over, assembled many or all of his people, and addressed them thus.

"You already know that it is said the Christians are coming here; and you have experience of how they have treated the lords so and so and those people of Hayti (which is Hispaniola); they come to do the same here. Do you know perhaps why they do it?" The people answered no; except that they were by nature cruel and wicked. "They do it," said he, "not alone for this, but because they have a God whom they greatly adore and love; and to make us adore Him they strive to subjugate us and take our lives." He had near him a basket full of gold and jewels and he said: "Behold here is the God of the Christians, let us perform *Areytos* before Him, if you will (these are dances

in concert and singly); and perhaps we shall please Him, and He will command that they do us no harm."

All exclaimed: it is well! it is well! They danced before it, till they were all tired, after which the lord Hatuey said: "Note well that in any event if we preserve the gold, they will finally have to kill us to take it from us: let us throw it into this river." They all agreed to this proposal, and they threw the gold into a great river in that place.

This prince and lord continued retreating before the Christians when they arrived at the island of Cuba, because he knew them, but when he encountered them he defended himself; and at last they took him. And merely because he fled from such iniquitous and cruel people, and defended himself against those who wished to kill and oppress him, with all his people and offspring until death, they burnt him alive.

When he was tied to the stake, a Franciscan monk, a holy man, who was there, spoke as much as he could to him, in the little time that the executioner granted them, about God and some of the teachings of our faith, of which he had never before heard; he told him that if he would believe what was told him, he would go to heaven where there was glory and eternal rest; and if not, that he would go to hell, to suffer perpetual torments and punishment. After thinking a little, Hatuey asked the monk whether the Christians went to heaven; the monk answered that those who were good went there. The prince at once said, without any more thought, that he did not wish to go there, but rather to hell so as not to be where Spaniards were, nor to see such cruel people. This is the renown and honour, that God and our faith have acquired by means of the Christians who have gone to the Indies.

On one occasion they came out ten leagues from a great settlement to meet us, bringing provisions and gifts, and when we met them, they gave us a great quantity of fish and bread and other victuals, with everything they could supply. All of a sudden the devil entered into the bodies of the Christians, and in my presence they put to the sword, without any motive or cause whatsoever, more than three thousand persons, men, women, and children, who were



seated before us. Here I beheld such great cruelty as living man has never seen nor thought to see.

Once I sent messengers to all the lords of the province of Havana, assuring them that if they would not absent themselves but come to receive us, no harm should be done them; all the country was terrorized because of the past slaughter, and I did this by the captain's advice. When we arrived in the province, twenty-one princes and lords came to receive us; and at once the captain violated the safe conduct I had given them and took them prisoners. The following day he wished to burn them alive, saying it was better so because those lords would some time or other do us harm. I had the greatest difficulty to deliver them from the flames but finally I saved them.

After all the Indians of this island were reduced to servitude and misfortune like those of Hispaniola, and when they saw they were perishing inevitably, some began to flee to the mountains; others to hang themselves, together with their children, and through the cruelty of one very tyrannical Spaniard whom I knew, more than two hundred Indians hanged themselves. In this way numberless people perished.

There was an officer of the King in this island, to whose share three hundred Indians fell, and by the end of the three months he had, through labour in the mines, caused the death of two hundred and seventy; so that he had only thirty left, which was the tenth part. The authorities afterwards gave him as many again, and again he killed them: and they continued to give, and he to kill, until he came to die, and the devil carried away his soul.

In three or four months, I being present, more than seven thousand children died of hunger, their fathers and mothers having been taken to the mines. Other dreadful things did I see.

Afterwards the Spaniards resolved to go and hunt the Indians who were in the mountains, where they perpetrated marvellous massacres. Thus they ruined and depopulated all

this island which we beheld not long ago; and it excites pity, and great anguish to see it deserted, and reduced to a solitude.

### THE ONLY METHOD OF CONVERTING THE INDIANS

The one and only method of teaching men the true religion was established by Divine Providence for the whole world, and for all times: that is, by persuading the understanding through reasons, and by gently attracting or exhorting the will. This method should be common to all men throughout the world, without any distinction made for sects, errors, or corrupt customs.

This conclusion will be proved in many ways: by arguments drawn from reason; by examples of the ancient Fathers; by the rule and manner of preaching which Christ instituted for all times; by the practices of the Apostles; by quotations from holy teachers; by the most ancient tradition of the Church and by her numerous ecclesiastical decrees.

And first, this conclusion will be proved by arguments drawn from reason, among which let this be the first. There is only one method peculiar to Divine Wisdom by which it disposes and moves created beings gently to actions and to their natural ends. But among created beings, rational creatures are higher and more excellent than all others which were not made in the image of God. . . . Therefore, Divine Wisdom moves rational creatures, that is, men, to their actions or operations gently. . . . Therefore, the method of teaching men the true religion ought to be gentle, enticing, and pleasant. This method is by persuading the understanding and by attracting the will.

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*What advice does the Indian ruler, Hatuey, suggest to his followers in an effort to survive the arrival of Spaniards?*

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## 19-5

### *Olaudah Equiano, The Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, The African*

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From Olaudah Equiano, *The Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, The African, Written by Himself* (Boston: I. Knapp, 1837), 31-32, 43-44, 47-48, 50-52.

One day, when all our people were gone out to their works as usual and only I and my dear sister were left to mind the house, two men and a woman got over our walls, and in a moment seized us both, and without giving us time to cry

out or make resistance they stopped our mouths and ran off with us into the nearest wood. Here they tied our hands and continued to carry us as far as they could till night came on, when we reached a small house where the robbers halted for refreshment and spent the night. . . .

The first object which saluted my eyes when I arrived on the coast was the sea, and a slave ship which was then riding at anchor and waiting for its cargo. These filled me with astonishment, which was soon converted into terror when I was carried on board. I was immediately handled and tossed up to see if I were sound by some of the crew, and I was now persuaded that I had gotten into a world of bad spirits and that they were going to kill me. Their complexions too differing so much from ours, their long hair and the language they spoke (which was very different from any I had ever heard) united to confirm me in this belief. Indeed such were the horrors of my views and fears at the moment that, if ten

thousand worlds had been my own, I would have freely parted with them all to have exchanged my condition with that of the meanest slave in my own country. When I looked round the ship too and saw a large furnace or copper boiling and a multitude of black people of every description chained together, every one of their countenances expressing dejection and sorrow, I no longer doubted of my fate; and quite overpowered with horror and anguish, I fell motionless on the deck and fainted. When I recovered a little I found some black people about me, who I believed were some of those who had brought me on board and had been receiving their pay; they talked to me in order to cheer me, but all in vain. I asked them if we were not to be eaten by those white men with horrible looks, red faces, and loose hair. They told me I was not, and one of the crew brought me a small portion of spirituous liquor in a wine glass, but being afraid of him I would not take it out of his hand. One of the blacks there took it from him and gave it to me, and I took a little down my palate, which instead of reviving me, as they thought it would, threw me into the greatest consternation at the strange feeling it produced, having never tasted any such liquor before. Soon after this the blacks who brought me on board went off, and left me abandoned to despair. . . .

The stench of the hold while we were on the coast was so intolerably loathsome that it was dangerous to remain there for any time, and some of us had been permitted to stay on the deck for the fresh air; but now that the whole ship's cargo were confined together it became absolutely pestilential. The closeness of the place and the heat of the climate, added to the number in the ship, which was so crowded that each had scarcely room to turn himself, almost suffocated us. This produced copious perspirations, so that the air soon became unfit for respiration from a variety of loathsome smells, and brought on a sickness among the slaves, of which many died, thus falling victims to the improvident avarice, as I may call it, of their purchasers. This wretched situation was again aggravated by the galling of the chains, now become insupportable, and the filth of the necessary tubs, into which the children often fell and were almost suffocated. The shrieks of the women and the groans of the dying rendered the whole a scene of horror almost inconceivable. Happily perhaps for myself I was soon reduced so low here that it was thought necessary to keep me almost always on deck, and from my extreme youth I was not put in fetters. . . .

At last we came in sight of the island of Barbados, at which the whites on board gave a great shout and made many signs of joy to us. We did not know what to think of this, but as the vessel drew nearer we plainly saw the harbour and other ships of different kinds and sizes, and we soon anchored amongst them off Bridgetown. Many merchants and planters now came on board, though it was in the evening. They put us in separate parcels and examined us attentively. They also made us jump, and pointed to the land, signifying we were to go there. We thought by this we should be eaten by these ugly men, as they appeared to us; and when soon after we were all put down under the deck again, there was much dread and trembling among us, and nothing but

bitter cries to be heard all the night from these apprehensions, insomuch that at last the white people got some old slaves from the land to pacify us. They told us we were not to be eaten but to work, and were soon to go on land where we should see many of our country people. This report eased us much; and sure enough soon after we were landed there came to us Africans of all languages. We were conducted immediately to the merchant's yard, where we were all pent up together like so many sheep in a fold without regard to sex or age. As every object was new to me everything I saw filled me with surprise. What struck me first was that the houses were built with storeys, and in every other respect different from those in Africa: but I was still more astonished on seeing people on horseback. I did not know what this could mean, and indeed I thought these people were full of nothing but magical arts. While I was in this astonishment one of my fellow prisoners spoke to a countryman of his about the horses, who said they were the same kind they had in their country. I understood them though they were from a distant part of Africa, and I thought it odd I had not seen any horses there; but afterwards when I came to converse with different Africans I found they had many horses amongst them, and much larger than those I then saw. We were not many days in the merchant's custody before we were sold after their usual manner, which is this: On a signal given, (as the beat of a drum) the buyers rush at once into the yard where the slaves are confined, and make choice of that parcel they like best. The noise and clamour with which this is attended and the eagerness visible in the countenances of the buyers serve not a little to increase the apprehensions of the terrified Africans, who may well be supposed to consider them as the ministers of that destruction to which they think themselves devoted. In this matter, without scruple, are relations and friends separated, most of them never to see each other again. I remember in the vessel in which I was brought over, in the men's apartment there were several brothers who, in the sale, were sold in different lots; and it was very moving on this occasion to see and hear their cries at parting. O, ye nominal Christians! might not an African ask you, Do unto all men as you would men should do unto you? Is it not enough that we are torn from our country and friends to toil for your luxury and lust of gain? Must every tender feeling be likewise sacrificed to your avarice? Are the dearest friends and relations, now rendered more dear by their separation from their kindred, still to be parted from each other and thus prevented from cheering the gloom of slavery with the small comfort of being together and mingling their sufferings and sorrows? Why are parents to lose their children, brothers their sisters, or husbands their wives? Surely this is a new refinement in cruelty which, while it has no advantage to atone for it, thus aggravates distress and adds fresh horrors even to the wretchedness of slavery.

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*What does this memoir tell us about the organization and extent of slavery in the eighteenth-century Atlantic world?*

## 19–6

## Commerce, Slavery and Religion in North Africa

Abridged and translated by John O. Hunwick from Gen. E. Daumas, *Le Grand Désert. Itinéraire d'une caravane du Sahara au pays des nègres, royaume de Haoussa*, 4th ed., Paris, 1860, pp. 199–247.

### THE SLAVE TRADE

We had been at Katsina for ten days and when the story had got around in the surrounding villages that a rich caravan had arrived, all the petty merchants hastened to the town. Moreover, since those of Katsina were pressing us it was decided to put our merchandise on sale and Cheggueun went to tell Omar<sup>1</sup> what we intended to do. The response of the serki (ruler) was that we could do as we liked, but that he would reserve the sale of all our broadcloths, in the name of the sultan. His oukil (agent) made a list the same day and took us to the palace to discuss the price with the serki himself.

“Khabir (caravan leader),” said Omar to our chief, “according to what my agent has told me, the broadcloths of your merchants are of inferior quality and are worth no more than a single slave, negro or negress, per cubit,” “Sir, it shall be done according to your justice. We are your servants,” replied Cheggueun, and we all put our fist on our chest as a sign of consent, for in fact we were getting a good deal. “Go in peace, then,” replied the serki, “I do not have enough slaves to pay you today. But, by the grace of God, Mohammed Omar shall not fail in his word.”

As we went out of the palace a regular low pitched sound caught our attention. It came from the center of the town and we made for it. It led us to the Makhzen (army) square where, from every street, a crowd came running like us. At the center of the square was placed a huge drum which a strapping Negro beat with a knobbed stick with all his might. This is the sultan’s drum. It is never beaten for anything but assembling the army.

We had discovered the secret of the strange noise that had moved us and this proclamation of the chief of the Mekhazenia informed us for what purpose they were gathered: “This is the will of the serki. In the name of sultan Bello the Victorious,<sup>2</sup> may God bless him, all of you, are summoned to present yourselves here at daybreak, armed and mounted, with sufficient provisions to go, some to Zenfra [Zamfara] and others to Zendeur [Zinder] to hunt

the idolatrous Koholanes<sup>3</sup>—enemies of the glorious sultan our master—may God curse them.” “All that the sultan orders is good,” responded the soldiers. “Let it be done according to the will of our lord and master.”

The following day, in fact, the Mekhazenia (soldiery), prompt to the appointed meeting, divided themselves into two goums (companies), one taking the east and the other the south-west with orders to attack places without defences and to carry off the inhabitants as well as seizing all peasants busy cultivating their fields. At the same time orders were given to track down the idolatrous Koholanes in the interior.

Whilst waiting for the return of the goums that Omar had despatched to hunt Negroes, we went every day to the slave market where we bought at the following prices:

A Negro with beard	10 or 15,000 cowries
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They are not considered as merchandise since one has little chance of preventing them from escaping.

An adult Negress, same price for the same reasons	10 or 15,000 cowries
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An adolescent Negro	30,000 cowries
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A young Negress	50–60,000 cowries
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(The price varies according to whether she is more or less beautiful.)

A male Negro child	45,000 cowries
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A female Negro child	35–40,000 cowries
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The seller gives the buyer the greatest possible chance to examine the slaves and one has three days to give notice of concealed faults.

### THE RETURN OF OMAR’S GOUM

The goum of serki Omar had been on campaign for about a month when we learnt from a messenger that the double raid launched against Zinder and Zamfara had been completely successful and that the makhzen, bringing back two thousand slaves would return to Katsina the next day. In a few hours this good news had spread throughout the town and at daybreak the next day the entire population crowded the gardens on the east side where the two armies that had the previous day joined up ought to arrive.

A cloud of dust soon announced it and as they crossed the outer wall where the route was better marked and the terrain more solid, their confused mass began to make itself out from the veil of sand that they had raised on the plain. The prisoners walked at the head, men, women, children, the elderly, almost all naked or half covered in rags of blue cloth. The women and the elderly were unbound but tightly packed together; the children were piled onto camels with

<sup>1</sup>Umar Dallāji, emir of Katsina, 1806–1835.

<sup>2</sup>Muhammad Bellow (d. 1837) was the ruler of the Sokoto empire of which the emirate of Katsina formed a constituent part.

<sup>3</sup>In Saharan Arabic *kuhlān* (sing. *akh.al*) is the equivalent of *sūdān*—“blacks” with a pejorative connotation.

some sitting on their mothers' backs in a piece of cloth doing duty as a bag. The men had been chained, five or six to the same chain, their necks fixed in a strong iron ring closed by a padlock and their hands bound with palm ropes. The strongest and most resistant were tied down to the tails of horses. Women moaned and children cried. Men, in general, seemed more resigned, but the bloody cuts that the whip had made on their shoulders bore witness to their tough struggle with the horsemen of the serki.

The convoy steered itself towards the palace and its arrival was announced to Mohammed Omar by musicians. At the first sound of the music the serki came out of his palace followed by his agent and some dignitaries. On seeing him all the slaves threw themselves on their knees and the musicians attacked their instruments with a passion that bordered on fury. The serki, approaching the goum, complimented its leaders, examined the slaves and gave the order for them to be taken to the market. There they were placed in two rows in sheds, women on one side and men on the other, and on the next day we were invited to go and choose those which suited us. Cheggueun and the palace agent went with us and after very careful examination each of us obtained as many Negroes and Negresses as he had handed over cubits of broadcloth to the serki. Nevertheless, we only accepted those whose sound constitutions were a surety against the hazards of the long journey we had to make. The elderly, small children and pregnant women were sold to the people of Katsina or given by Omar as gifts to the leaders of his mekhazénias.

## DEPARTURE OF THE CARAVAN

We were now in the month of April and the season was favorable for leaving. We hastened to gather provisions of maize, millet, dried meat, butter and honey sufficient for each person for three months and we bought baggage camels in sufficient number to insure against accidents en route and some oxhide tents. Finally, our caravan which had set out from Metlily (in Algeria) with sixty-four camels and only sixteen persons, was now augmented by four hundred slaves, of whom three hundred were women, and had a total of almost six hundred camels.

The people of Touat [Tuwāt]<sup>4</sup> who joined with us, had increased in number similarly. They had purchased fifteen hundred slaves and their camels had risen in number to two thousand. Altogether we formed a company of about two thousand one hundred men and two thousand six hundred camels. Katsina had no square big enough to contain us and so, under the name of the Touat caravan, we went to establish ourselves in one of the great empty spaces set up in the middle of the gardens.

Finally we saw successively arriving the three caravans of Ghadames, Ghat and the Fezzan.<sup>5</sup> The first had pene-

trated as far as Nupe on the banks of the Bahar-el-Nil [river Niger] to the south of Sokoto. It brought back three thousand slaves and three thousand five hundred camels. The second had pushed down to Kano to the south-east of Katsina. It only numbered seven or eight hundred camels and four or five hundred slaves. The third came back from Sokoto and was no larger than the preceding one.

At daybreak our camels were loaded, the Negro children perched atop the baggage, the male Negroes secured by their chains in the center of the convoy and the Negro females grouped in eights or tens under the watch of men carrying whips. The departure signal was given and the first caravan moved. It was at this point that suddenly a confused noise of cries and sobs passed from one group of slaves to another and reached our own. All, together, wept and moaned, called out and uttered farewells. They were terrified of being eaten during the journey. Some rolled on the ground, clung to bushes and absolutely refused to walk. Nothing had any effect on them, neither kind words nor threats. They could only be got up with mighty lashes of the whip and by rendering them completely bloody. Despite their obstinacy, no one of them resisted this extreme measure. Moreover, joined together as they were, the less fearful or more courageous, struggling with the weaker ones, forced them to walk.

The first day we halted at only three leagues<sup>6</sup> from Katsina on a huge plain where we found pools and plenty of grass and wood. Each caravan established its camp separately. As soon as our camels had crouched down and after having, first and foremost, chained up our Negresses by the foot in groups of eight or ten, we forced our Negroes to help us, using their left hand which we had left free, in unloading our animals, marking out a circle with our loads and putting up the ox-hide tents we had brought from Katsina within this perimeter. Two or three of the older Negresses whom we had not chained together, but who nevertheless had their feet shackled, were set to preparing something for us to dine on.

The next day we loaded up early and this time the Ghat caravan took the lead. Although calmer than they were the evening before, our slaves were still very irritable. To tire them out and weaken them we made the slaves carry their irons, their dishes and the mortars for pounding maize and millet. And so that our entire attention could be concentrated on them, each of us tied his camels together in a single file. Watching over them thus became easier and if one of them fell down or a load fell off, we could in this way halt them all at once and we avoided the whole group bolting as we got one on its feet or reloaded another.

## ESCAPE, RECAPTURE, PUNISHMENT

[The narrator's personal slave, Mebrouk, could not reconcile himself to his condition, despite his owner's blandishments, and led a party of six slaves—all chained together

<sup>4</sup>Tuwāt is a large oasis in the central Algerian Sahara.

<sup>5</sup>Ghadames and Ghat are Libyan oases close to the Algerian border. Fezzan is a large oasis region in southern Libya.

<sup>6</sup>The conventional distance of a league is three miles.

for the night—in an escape. Two were recaptured; two others chained together were attacked by a lion and one was mauled to death while the other eventually died of fright. Mebrouk and one other slave were never found.]

When news of this event was noised abroad our *khebirs*, each followed by fifteen horsemen, set off at a gallop and explored the countryside far and wide. But it is full of scrub and so dotted with hillocks that they could only find two of the fugitives. As a lesson for the future, it remained for us to learn from the two recaptured fugitives by what clever means they and their companions had slipped their chains. But neither kindness nor patience on the part of Cheggueun who was interrogating them, could make their tongues wag and, seized by anger, he ordered that they should be flogged in front of the other slaves. In no time all these pagans were lined up on the side of a hillock. Two powerful men seized one of the two Negroes, threw him to the ground and sat astride his heels and neck. At the same time two *chaouchs* (assistants) had taken up their stations, canes in hand, one on the right and the other on the left of the guilty one.

“Go to it,” said Cheggueun. At the first blow the canes were white. At the fiftieth they were red and blood ran on the thighs and sides of the victim. But the obstinate fellow had still said nothing. Only his fitful breathing and some movement of his loins bore witness to the fact that they were not beating a corpse. Finally he cried out, “Abi (father)! Serki (chief)! I will tell all. Stop the beating.” A gesture from Cheggueun brought the *chaouchs* to a halt.

“Speak,” he said to the Negro. “What did you do to break your chains and what happened to them?”

“O Serki! I touched them with my *kerikeri* (amulet) and made them melt.”

“*Chaouchs!*” responded Cheggueun, “Beat him harder. He lies.”

The canes descended on the liar so hard that they removed a strip of his skin.

“Abi! Serki! I will talk. I will talk,” he cried.

“Dog of a pagan,” said Cheggueun, “I will have you killed if you lie to me again.”

“By my father’s neck,” replied the slave, “here is the truth, During the night, by slithering on the sand, Mebrouk came over to us. He had some hot water in a calabash and he poured some of this in the lock of our chains. Thus wetted, when we tapped it on its side we made the bolt slide and we opened it. Out of the five, however, two had to escape attached to one another, carrying the chain with them.”

“O my children,” Cheggueun said to us, “you hear him. Above all, those of you whose Negroes are chained up with old chains, never go to sleep without seeing with your eye and touching with your hand the padlocks which protect your fortune. Let this be a good lesson to you all!”

The slave was seated and the *chaouchs* helped him to stand up. Limping and groaning he dragged himself to the feet of his master, prostrated with his face on the ground and poured sand over himself as a sign of his repentance and submission. It had taken no less than one hundred and twenty strokes of the cane to drag out his secret from him

and good justice would have required that his accomplice receive the same. But his owner objected that two such wounded men would be an embarrassment for everyone, that they might die of exhaustion and that his loss was already great. Cheggueun, who had a heart of gold, was easily convinced by these good reasons and he gave orders that on departure the next morning the sick man should be put on a camel.

## WITH THE MARABOUTS

[The caravan halted at a place called Aghezeur, probably near Agades in present-day Niger, to take on provisions and to reclaim some items they had deposited there on the southbound journey in the keeping of a community of “*marabouts*” (Muslim holymen).]

With our preparations for departure complete we were of a mind to set out on the third day after our arrival, but the *marabouts* of the *zauouïa* (lodge) of Sidi Ahmed who had come to our camp and called us together for prayer held us back with these words: “O Muslims! These negroes you are bringing are idolators. We must make them know the One God; we must teach them to pray and how to perform ablutions; we must circumcise them today. God will reward you for it. Make your slaves assemble. By God’s grace we know their language; we will put ourselves in the middle of them and teach them what it is good for them to know.”

We understood well, for the Lord loves him who causes the number of His servants to be increased; moreover, there is, from the point of view of sales, a great advantage in turning an idolator into a Muslim. Almost all of our slaves already knew the *shahāda* (declaration of faith) and the name of the Prophet and God. Frequently, during leisure time at camp we would teach them the basic tenets of the religion, speaking broken *gnāwiyya*<sup>7</sup> to them while they spoke broken Arabic to us. To the best behaved we offered some concessions; to the obdurate some harsh discipline; thus self-interest, if not conviction, had readied them for the solemn ceremony which would today make them into Muslims.

In front of the *zāwiya* of Sidi Ahmed is a huge open space. Each one of us led his Negroes there and made them sit on the ground and soon their number sketched out a gigantic thick semi-circle facing the *zauouïa*. Like a muezzin calling to prayer, the imam climbed up on the mosque and uttered these words:

“God is One; He has no associates. He is unique of His kind and none is comparable to Him. He is the Sovereign and Incomparable Lord. He is from all time and shall endure for all time. Eternity shall not destroy Him and time and the centuries do not change Him. He is the First, the Last, the Manifest and the Hidden. He knows what is in the inside of bodies. Nothing is similar to Him; He is superior to all things. His superiority and His exhaltation, instead of

<sup>7</sup>“Blacks” language, i.e., Hausa.

distancing Him from His worshippers, brings Him closer to His creatures. He is All-Seeing, All-Knowing, He is Omnipresent. He is Holy and no place can encompass Him. Only the saints can look upon Him in the places where His dwelling is sempiternal, as has been established by the verses of the Qur'ān and the accounts of the ancients. He is Living, He is Powerful, He is Almighty, He is Superb, He is Severe; idleness and weakness are remote from Him.”

“He forgets not, He sleeps not. His is the command and to Him belongs the vastness of the universe. To Him belong honor and omnipotence. He created creatures and their acts. When He wishes a thing, it is. When He does not wish it, it is not. He is the Beginning and the End, the Doer of His will. Everything that is in the world—movement, rest, good, evil, profit, loss, faith, infidelity, obedience and disobedience—all come from God. There is no bird that flies with its wings, no beast that walks on its feet, no serpent that glides on its stomach, no leaf that grows or falls and no light or darkness without the almighty will of God. Everything that exists is created; God exists from eternity and all that has been created demonstrates His unity. Man’s petition to God is prayer and prayer itself only exists by the will of God. If you put your confidence in God, He will care for you as He cares for the birds of the heavens who set out hungry and return full. He does not bring food to their nests, but he puts in them the instinct to search for it.”

I would not dare to say that this speech made a lively impression on the Negroes, but the solemnity of the new spectacle for them, the receptivity with which we, their masters and the holy marabout, listened certainly made

them ready for the carrying out of the religious act that would make them Muslims. When time for the operation came, though all or almost all showed themselves surprised, not one refused to undergo it, for they take pride in having no fear of pain. As soon as they had been marked with the symbol of the Muslims, they had their wounds staunching by us with an astringent powder made of dried ground leaves of arrar [juniper] and el-aazir, blended with butter.<sup>8</sup>

The marabouts then prayed over them in gnāwiyya, saying: “O you Negroes, give thanks to God! Yesterday you were idolators and today you are Muslims. Depart with your masters who will clothe you, feed you and love you like their brothers and children. Serve them well and they will give you your liberty in a while. If you are comfortable with them you shall stay there. If not you shall return to your land.”

That day and the next we took particular care of our slaves. We fed them good meat and let them sleep in tents to keep them from the cold and dew of the nights. Thanks to such attentions our caravan did not lose a single one. In the other caravans, however, some of the older ones died.

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*How important was the European influence in determining the character of the North African slave trade?*

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<sup>8</sup>El-Aazir has not been identified. The “butter” referred to was no doubt *samm*—“clarified butter” or “ghee,” not the type one is accustomed to spread on bread.