

Le Guin's *Tao Te Ching* (2)

The luck that had turned in Ethwen now turned the world with it under my hand. I never had a gift but one, to know when the great wheel gives to a touch, to know and act....A great delight it was to feel that certainty again, to know that I could steer my fortune and the world's chance like a bobsled down the steep, dangerous hour. (*Left Hand*, 526)

May I make one remark about the Tao? In one or two of these pieces [in the 1975 *Science Fiction Studies* special issue on her work] I find the critic apparently persuaded that Yin and Yang are *opposites*, *between* which lies the straight, but safe, Way. This is all wrong. There is some contamination from Manichaeism/Christianity, or Marxian dialectics, or something. I really do not dare try to explain about the T'ai chi t'u [i.e. the diagram of yin and yang]... The central image/idea of Taoism is an important thing to be clear about, certainly not because it's a central theme in my work. It's a central theme, period....

I do not like to see the word "liberal" used as a smear-word. That's mere newspeak. If people must call names, I cheerfully accept Lenin's anathemata as suitable: I am a petty-bourgeois anarchist, and an internal emigree. O.K.?

Le Guin, "A Response to the Le Guin Issue," *Science Fiction Studies* 3, no. 1 (March 1976): 45, [JSTOR](#).