

ERRATUM

The *Tsinghua China Law Review* offers the following explanation written by Prof. CHANG Wejen, for his own piece, *Classical Chinese Jurisprudence and the Development of the Chinese Legal System* (of our Spring 2010 issue).

In my article, I stated that both Laozi and Zhuangzi wanted sages exterminated and human intellect discarded. (pp. 243, 247).

It has since been pointed out to me that my use of the word “exterminate” is inappropriate, for Laozi and Zhuangzi, sages themselves, could never have advocated extermination of sages.

For the phrases “*jue sheng* (绝圣)” in *Laozi* and *Zhuangzi*, renowned translators of Chinese classics used different English words, for instance, “Exterminate the sages” by D.C. Lau (*Lao Tzu*, Penguin Classics, 1963, p. 75), “Get rid of the wise men” by Ling Yutang and Blakney (*The Sayings of Lao Tzu*, reprinted by Confucius Publishing Co., Taipei, 1988, p. 38), and “renounce our sageness” by James Legge (*Tao Te Ching and The Writings of Chuang-tzu* reprinted by Ch’eng-Wen Publishing Co., Taipei, 1969, p.110). I agree with Lau because his translation is closest to the basic meaning of the Chinese.

Of course Laozi and Zhuangzi did not advocate physically exterminating the sages, although a careful reading of their works reveals that in their thinking there were two kinds of sages – the true ones who genuinely wanted to save the world from chaos, and the false ones who actually helped create the chaos – and they wanted the false ones suppressed (their cacophony silenced). “To exterminate” was a figurative expression. It reminds me an interesting event.

In 1994 at a faculty luncheon at NYU Law School, after Professor Jerome Cohen finished a talk, Professor Frank Upham asked me to make a comment. I demurred. “Come on,” Upham insisted, “I know you have something to say.” Uncomfortable in such

a situation, I whispered back: “But Jerry was my teacher.” Upham laughed, speaking out loud: “You are truly Chinese. We Americans kill our teachers.”

Cohen taught me when I was a student at Harvard Law, and Upham was a classmate. Needless to say, Upham, a jovial and most kind-hearted fellow, did not mean what he declared. It must be in the same sense Laozi used the word *jue*, he did not mean literary to “kill” the sages.

The same must be true when Zhuangzi said “When the sages are not dead, robbers will not disappear.” He could not have meant that he wanted all the sages dead; he was also making a figurative expression.

Readers of *Laozi* and *zhuangzi* have to have some imagination and a sense of humor.