

2) The difference between Tao and religions

Tao is the body of character that is the Ultimate Reality or Source. The Great Ultimate is simply the principle of highest good. Each and every person has in him the Great Ultimate. The Great Ultimate is a name to express all the virtues and the highest good in Heaven and Earth, man and things. Tao is the divine intelligence of the universe; the source of all things; the life-giving principles, the relativity of all to the Primeval one. It is the root and the path a joining to eternity; and the gate to the secret of all life-and-death.

The top secret of Tao was confidential during the early periods. If it is not with the command of our heavenly Mother to spread Tao widely at this stage, no sages or Gods themselves would dare to reveal its secrets. Hence, the Great Truth is not so easily apprehended by a commoner.

When people think of learning the truth, they think of books. Books are only words and words, of course, have a value. But the value of words lies in the meaning behind them. This so-called meaning is but an effort to grasp at something and that something cannot really be expressed by words. Because the world values words, it preserves the books. But I do not value them, because what they value is not the real value of the books. What the eye can see are forms and colours. That the ear can hear are names and sounds. Alas! People think that from forms and colours, and names and sounds, they can penetrate to the truths of reality. Since form and colour and names and sounds cannot help one to penetrate to the truth of reality, therefore he who knows does not speak, and he who speaks does not know.

A man with lop-sided knowledge, observing only one corner of the Tao, cannot understand it. The result is that if he thinks he has an adequate understanding of it, his mind is thrown into confusion on the one hand, and on the other he misleads others. For those above to obscure the vision of those below, this is the calamity of benightedness. They shall never find the truth. The scholars of posterity unfortunately shall not be able to see the original simplicity of the universe, and the main foundation of thought of the ancient. The actual condition in men is to have a blind spot, and this is the cause of their inability and denials of the one school regarding as right what the other regards as wrong.

The statement from every point of view are all capable of being statements of one or other aspect of the truth. From this point of view, the statements made are not in the last resort affirmable or deniable in relation to each other. The origin of 'right' and 'wrong' lies in the limited range of vision which each man has in viewing things. Because of this, every man has his one-sided view, his 'narrow conclusion'. Not being aware that his view is so, he regards it as inclusive. That being so, the Tao is obscured. And not only is every man 'unaware that he is one-sided, he also embroiders the statement of his view in the hope that it may be regarded as having good ground for it. Thus, truth-demonstrating 'speech is nowhere to achieve the Tao'. The trouble generally is that they are selfish and rely on the use of their intellect. Since they are selfish, they are precluded from making their actions to be spontaneous responses. Since they reply on the use of intellect, they cannot regard their

intuitions as something entirely natural. If we are led by someone who had the order of our Heavenly Mother to direct us the Path; the Way to the Great Truth; to open the right door; and to relate the Secrets of Tao, no highly educated persons can ever unlock that secrets.

Life energy comes from Tao, and bodily forms come from life energy, and thus all things of the creation evolve into different forms. Religions are actually outer boundaries of Tao. It is the power of Tao to give out its energy for their various activities. Things have their root and their branches. Affairs have their end and their beginning to know what is first and what is last will lead man to the Way. Tao is root of the tree, whereas religions are merely its leaves and branches. As seen, all religions are under the same principle One, One is the Truth of Heaven. Life springs into existence from one, without it nothing can proceed. All creatures and all forms have their source in the One. It comes from non-being. From non-being there is the One. Since we already call it the One, there is speech about it. The One in the beginning of calculation and the starting point of things. The Tao that can be comprised in words is not the abiding Tao.

All things are produced by the Tao, and nourished by its outflowing operation. They receive their forms according to the nature of each, and are completed according to the circumstances of their condition. Therefore, all things without exception honour the Tao, and exalt its outflowing operation. This honouring of the Tao and exalting of its operation is not the result of any ordination, but always a spontaneous tribute. Thus it is that the Tao produces all things, nourishes them, brings them to their full growth, nurses them, completes them, matures them, maintains them and overspreads it.

The object of religion is to teach men how to rid themselves of selfishness, how to cultivate the sense of justice and how to sacrifice one's own interests and even one's own life to attain the goal of loving others and helping them. The collective wisdom of all world religions not only save ourselves from self-destruction but also reaffirm our determination to extend our love of brotherhood to all people on earth. Although the rites of the various religions differ; their principles are the same. Good deeds invite happy rewards and evil influences bring results of sufferings. He who attained such goodness will be rewarded with a comfortable and luxurious life in his next reincarnation. As such, all religions are basically the same for they teach equal principles. The sayings written in the sacred books of sages or holy man appear apprehensible, belong only to the common preaching. The Truth can never be realised by a commoner since it is blindfolded by the knowledge of the surface. Unless led and taught by a 'teacher' (messenger of God) and having attained the utmost realisation, least of all wit and intelligence, no one is able to apprehend the profound Secrets of Tao. Such is the difference between Tao and religion. Religion always exists, but Tao appears only at the right time. Tao appears in form and disappears in formlessness. When it disappears, no wise men or even genius of the age are able to hear of it. It is because Heaven has sent down calamities to get rid of all evil man, so the dawning of Tao is to save the good people back to where they belong. But religion exists even with or without the appearance of Tao. Teaching morality is the task of religion. The teachings of religion serve to lay out the Path for one to the admittance of Tao later on. Therefore, the relationship between Tao and religion is inseparable. If Tao is separated from religion, the doorstep of Tao would be deserted. If religion is separated from Tao, then it is a false religion.

Tao is the emancipation from the sufferings of reincarnation (whether in the form of man, animals, sea-living creatures or insects); returning to the place of utmost happiness (heaven); avoidance of befalling disasters during the course of one's life on earth; to redeem the sins we have owe; others; the alteration of fate; and not to be churned into the world full of sufferings (i.e. to say less happiness) repeatedly.

Religion teach us the way of living; the doctrines of human principles, the practice of self-cultivation; the making up of a good citizen; and dawned the world with goodness by teaching man to repent his past wrong-doings and advert to goodness, and thus to lead an orderly life throughout. A man who does so will taste the good fruits of which he has ploughed. Such will be the necessary steps and preparation for the later admittance to Tao. Therefore, religion should not be left without. Tao is hoped that believers of different religion would understand Tao is actually the root of all religions. From religion to Tao, one requires wisdom for the acquisition of Tao followed by the realisation of the original self. When one realises the place where he had come and the return after death, he would diligently tread his path and confident in reaching his ultimate destination. But the realisation of his hope can only be achieved through self-cultivation and no other short ways.

Those who have a head and feet but no mind nor ears, are many. Those who have a body without a body or appearance of one, and yet there they are – are none. Movement and rest, life and death, rise and fall, are not at the beck and call of man. Cultivation of self is in his own hands. To be unconscious of objective existences and of God, this is to be unconscious of one's own personality. And he who is unconscious of his own personality, combines in himself the human and the divine.

Tao similarises the great ocean – though vast and unfathomable, it does not distinguish between big and small streams, rivers and regardless of clean or polluted water. For such of all these will have to flow to the big sea finally. Isn't it amazing to see water from different streams and rivers, whether clear or polluted flow into the great sea, mixed to become only one of the same form and taste! Since it is going to be the end of the world, Tao has to be widespread. So, Tao does not distinguish between people. Different human races, rich or poor may easily hear of it. The Way of Tao has no favourites: it is invariably given to good men.

The first impression Tao may gets from outsiders is a newly formed religion but which actually is not. It existed long before earth and sky come into being and is the originator of every creation. Althou