



“HE XIE” (HARMONY) AS POLITICAL IDEA
OF TAOISM AND ITS EMBODIMENT OF STATECRAFT

Mr. YAO-WU LEE

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

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ABSTRACT

This research is titled: **“He Xie” (Harmony) as Political Idea of Taoism and Its Embodiment of Statecraft**. This work focuses on the concept He Xie as essential political idea in Lao Tzu’s *Tao Te Ching*, and on the analysis of other relevant ideas in Taoism.

This dissertation includes five chapters. Chapter one is an introduction of the research. Chapter two analyses the concept of Tao and its essential implementation in the *Tao Te Ching*, Tao self-so naturally is the supreme value or principle embodied by the highest entity. Chapter three illustrates the concept of He Xie as statecraft. Wu Wei (inaction) is an important idea for ruler develop harmonious statecraft. With Wu Wei the ruler can make the state into a peaceful realm of He Xie. Chapter four deals with the embodiment of He Xie as statecraft. The good situation of a state, according to Lao Tzu, is not to ask people to develop much, but to keep the originality and naivety of the people. Chapter five is the conclusion of this research. The concept of He Xie can contribute well to the world nowadays, and also to the human culture in the future.

Key Words: He Xie, Lao Tzu, Statecraft, Tao, Taoism, *Tao Te Ching*, Wu Wei.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Significance of the Study

The background and significance of this research is highlighted by a remarkable absence of limits, rooted in previous millennia, and manifested in forms of Chinese philosophy. The basic concept of Tao is generally accepted since the term Taoist or Taoism originated from the word Tao. This is derived from its ancient Chinese symbol representing two distinctive hieroglyphics “head” and “foot,” which means the sensitivity of certain individuals in ancient Chinese states and societies. Used as a verb, Tao can mean to direct, to guide, to say, to tell, or even to be told-off. The implication of guiding or directing could be construed to suggest reason, truth, principle, or technique. Tao is a system or moral truth based on the origin of the cosmos as interpreted by Lao Tzu, also called “Zi Ran” (自然), and its English translation is called “Nature” (Self-so). “Taoism alone is known by the name, which is natural, eternal, spontaneous, nameless, and indescribable. The ideal life for the individual, the ideal order for society, and the ideal type of government are all based and guided by it. As a way of life, it denotes simplicity, spontaneity, tranquility, weakness, and most important of all, non-action (wu wei). However, the latter does not literally mean ‘inactivity’ but rather ‘taking no action that is contrary to Nature—in other words, letting Nature take its own course.’”(Chan, 1963, p.136)

Once the cosmos is formed, there will be everything in heaven and on earth, followed by the existence of human beings. Therefore, there will be various problems between human and nature, particularly major issues concerning human survival and development. The concept of He Xie (和諧 Harmony) of Taoist ideas is one of the important Chinese features. Its states and societies can accommodate the preservation of their own different excellent civilization, representative classics, reflecting the wisdom, and condense the essence of culture for a long history. Accumulating as the cultural tradition in the history of human civilization, the 5,000-year of Chinese history, the *Tao Te Ching* is a book of ancient Chinese thought. The celestial theory of Tao, pervaded the air, and formed ten-thousand things of self-so naturally (自然而然), yet it was nameless, as the *Tao Te Ching* chapter 1 mentioned:

The Tao (Way) that can be told of is not the eternal Tao;
 The name that can be named is not the eternal name.
 The Nameless is the Origin of Heaven and Earth;
 The Named is the mother of all things.
 Therefore let there always be non-being so we may see their subtlety,
 And let there always be being so we may see their outcome. (Chan's translation, 1963, p.139)¹

The simple and unalterable principle that Nature is, as the flow of unceasing +change without melting, “Tao abided to its principle naturally” (道法自然). it has its own version of multiplication and differentiation in Nature, as the *Tao Te Ching* chapter 42 mentioned:

The ten thousand things carry the yin and embrace the yang, and through the blending of the material force (*chi*) they achieve harmony. (Chan's translation, 1963, p.160)²

¹ Original text: 道可道，非常道；名可名，非常名。無名，天地之始；有名，萬物之母。故常無，欲以觀其妙；常有，欲以觀其徼。

² Original text: 萬物負陰而抱陽，沖氣以為和。

The *Tao Te Ching* expresses its ideas that the whole phenomenal world rests upon a polar opposition of forces that bring about change and transformation. Instead of understanding the forces, it speaks about as being them in a process of unceasing change. The One begets itself and becomes Two; the Two unites and become One. The split and unite unceasing processes generate the ten-thousand things. The ideal life for mankind, society, and states, as well as harmonious statecraft, are all based on He Xie and it is guided by the self-so naturally.

1.2 Thesis Statement

In this research, the researcher claims that the He Xie between Yin-Yang can be taken as an alternative way to solve political conflicts, because there are two layers in advocating He Xie. The first is to advocate people to conform to nature, move, and not to arbitrarily destroy the natural harmony. The second is to advocate rulers to apply He Xie through the spirit of natural inaction in order to simplify the various systems and norms of society and to govern the country naturally. This research explored the competition and cooperation among big powers in the world, which could be considered as the problems of conflicts that cannot be solved and be supplemented by He Xie.

He Xie this elegant wisdom of politics, when it is considered from the viewpoint of plural-valuable modern world, exhibits its special significance, because He Xie or harmony emphasizes various tones sound together but still pleasant.

1.3 Research Questions

The Research questions are concerned with the main ideas of Taoism and Lao Tzu, the *Tao Te Ching* as follows:

(1) What are the definitive Lao Tzu's political ideas that indicate, in accordance with He Xie in the *Tao Te Ching*?

(2) What is the aspect leading to Yin-Yang balance for harmonious statecraft in the *Tao Te Ching*?

(3) How genuine does Wu Wei motivate states and socialites to apply He Xie in the *Tao Te Ching*?

(4) What is the contemporary significance of He Xie as political and social concept?

1.4 Research Objectives

In this research, there are 4 main objectives as follows:

(1) To study the background and significance of concepts of Tao and its connection to Lao Tzu's political ideas in the *Tao Te Ching*.

(2) To analyze He Xie and its applications for political conflict in the Chinese historical legend, the Three Kingdoms.

(3) To discuss the debates between Taoism and other Schools about He Xie for statecraft.

(4) To examine the contemporary significance of He Xie in politics.

1.5 Research Methodology

The methodology of research in this dissertation, is collecting resources from recognized institutions, research works, such as articles, essays related to the *Tao Te Ching* and other literature reference. In part, this will be a qualitative research based on literature and written documents. It is a normative research based on the concepts of Tao, a way of nature and great Harmony, for different copies of documentary edited,

classic books, texts and journal articles either in Chinese or English. Moreover, conceptualizing and designing the entire methods of study based on hermeneutical, dialectical, and analytical approach. Philosophically deliberating debate and defense of He Xie for statecraft between Taoism and other Schools, and relevant Lao Tzu's political ideas of He Xie for statecraft in analyzing, interpreting, and criticizing in the *Tao Te Ching*.

The researcher applied qualitative and documentary, normative analyses to investigate the Taoist idea of He Xie and its embodiment in Chinese historical legend, the Three Kingdoms, taking into consideration the He Xie for statecraft in the *Tao Te Ching*. Its emphasis is through reading and writing while traveling studies at lots of palaces museums, heritages, libraries, and Taoist temples in Thailand, Mainland China, and Taiwan. Similarly, to enhance the fulfilled understanding in which every research object possible is coherent in order to comprehend this well-done dissertation.

1.6 The Scope of the Study

This research is focused on Lao Tzu's philosophy, a way of nature, and on understanding the classic texts, the *Tao Te Ching*. There are many objections to Lao Tzu from many philosophically different schools such as, Taoism, Confucianism, Legalists, Mohists, and the Strategists. The book *Lao Tzu*, or *Tao Te Ching*, is based on the Chinese classic commentary and annotations of the text, with its long history since around the fifth century A.D. There are more than five thousand different text copies still remaining especially *Po Shu* (Silky Manuscript帛書), which was unearthed in 1973 at Mawangtui (馬王堆), written on Bamboo Slip (竹簡). Among these following three classic texts could be the most important copied book edited:

(1) *Laozi*, interpreted by Wang Bi (王弼), around the third century A.D.

(2) *Laozi*, interpreted by He Shang-gong (何上公), around the second century A.D.

(3) *Laozi Zhu*, interpreted by Wang An-Shih (王安石).

Additionally, the English translation of the text and journal articles already number to more than thousands as well for this research of essential writing reference. Within the scope of this research is the classical literature of that period in human history which bypasses these lower depth with as much calm dominion. From within the scope of this research references, books, and articles, it can be perceived that the materials used by ancient Chinese scholars have been worked over time and again through many epochs of Chinese civilization, preparing the way for a somewhat unified approach in Chinese philosophy. Therefore, this research will narrow the scope of the study to the teachings of the *Tao Te Ching*, limited to the analysis and the criticism relevant to the statecraft, natural inaction in harmony, society and politics.

1.7 Definitions of Terms

(1) **He Xie (Harmony)**: means an important concept and value orientation of Chinese traditional culture, its basic characteristic of the Tao, which is the unity of opposites, Yin and Yang, is independent, the harmony between man and nature is the external environment and material basis of human society, and also the lifeline of social harmony. That the theories of other families in the pre-Qin dynasties are centered on social and political life, the idea of harmony is limited to construct the idealized relationship between man and society and discusses the harmony of individual body and mind. The harmony between man and nature and the harmony of international relations constitute the complete system of the theory of social harmony.

(2) **Metaphysics:** derived from the ancient Greek ‘meta ta physika’ (after the things of nature); referring to an idea, doctrine, or posited reality outside of human sense perception. In modern philosophical terminology, metaphysics refers to the studies of what cannot be reached through objective studies of material reality. Areas of metaphysical studies include ontology, cosmology, and often, epistemology.

(3) **Statecraft:** means statesmanship, the skillful management of state affairs, and of governing a country.

(4) **TAO TE CHING:** means a Chinese classic text traditionally credited to the 6th-century BCE sage Lao-tzu. The text’s authorship, date of composition and date of compilation are debated. The oldest excavated portion dates back to the late 4th century BCE, but modern scholars dates other parts of the text as having been written--or at least compiled--later than the earliest portions of the *Zhuangzi*. The *Tao Te Ching*, along with the *Zhuangzi*, is a fundamental text for both philosophical and religious Taoism, which was largely interpreted through the use of Taoist words and concepts when it was originally introduced to China, many Chinese have used the *Tao Te Ching* as a source of inspiration. Its influence has spread widely outside East Asia and it is among the most translated works in world literature.

(5) **Wu Wei:** means “inaction”, “non-action” or “non-doing”. Wu Wei emerged in the “Spring and Autumn” period (春秋時期) to become an important concept in both Taoism and Chinese statecraft. In the *Tao Te Ching*, Lao Tzu explains that beings (or phenomena) that are wholly in harmony with the Tao behave in a completely natural, uncontrived way. The goal of spiritual practice for the human being is, according to Lao Tzu, the attainment of this purely natural way of behaving, as when the planets revolve around the sun. The planets effortlessly do this revolving without any sort of control,

force, or attempt to revolve themselves, thus engaging in effortless and spontaneous movement.

1.8 Expected Results

In this research, there are 4 main expected results as follows:

(1) The significance of Tao and its connection to the Lao Tzu's political ideas for political conflicts solution in the *Tao Te Ching* will be studied thoroughly.

(3) The concept of He Xie within Wu Wei and Yin-Yang harmoniously natural for statecraft in the *Tao Te Ching* will be analyzed and discussed

(2) The embodiment of He Xie in Chinese historic legend, the Three Kingdom, as statecraft in the *Tao Te Ching* will be taken as a research reference study.

(4) The contribution of He Xie with its ways could give an impetus to socialites and states, which is to be created from the book *Tao Te Ching*, and could benefit a new civilization with good applicability.

CHAPTER II

THE CONCEPT OF TAO AND ITS POLITICAL IMPLEMENTATION IN THE *TAO TE CHING*

2.1 Introduction

All kinds of civilizations in the world have their own cultural traditions, civilization of Eastern and Western have been inherited for thousands of years, and many cultural characteristics have been formed in the long river of history. In the aspect of personnel relations, harmony is also the basic principle of dealing with all kinds of contradictions. The so-called “dispute”, this refers to the ribbon. Because of its silky clutter, the extension of disputes. Human things are always in dispute, profit or harm, as the key to interpersonal problems. Harmony can also play a huge role in the governance of the country. The way of the state of the country is not to be sharp, to hurt the things, and to hurt the people by not disturbing them. Since ancient times, China has had the idea of He Xie between countries, nationalities, people and people should be united and mutual love, friendly coexistence as the highest realm; and different means that a country, a people can not only accommodate the existence of different civilizations, but also retain their own excellent civilized tradition; that only when different civilizations absorb and learn from each other can cultural relics be new and the progress of civilization be promoted. “Harmony” is the basic spirit of Chinese cultural tradition, but also the ideal realm of the unremitting pursuit of the Chinese kingdoms. Maintaining peace is the basic prerequisite for promoting social development in dealing with the

relationship between war and peace. Historical experience tells us that without a peaceful international environment, economic development and social progress in all countries are difficult to achieve. At the same time, the development and prosperity of all countries is a powerful guarantee for world peace. After World War II, the reason why world peace can be maintained is an important factor in the rapid development of the world economy and its diversification. Obviously, in the new millennium entering the twenty-first century, peace remains the most concerned issue for all mankind, because it is the basis for the continuation and development of human society and civilization. In other words, peace is the premise, development is the core, and promoting the common development of the whole world is a historic task facing contemporary society.

This chapter explains Lao Tzu's beliefs and philosophy about Chinese outlook and living. It shows how Lao Tzu mentioned these concepts through the use of metaphors, namely as a way of life from the *Tao Te Ching*. Taoism thought showed an evolution that takes its departure from the thought of Hwang Di (黃帝). It arrives at the brilliant discovery of the ideas, and culminates in the examination of the difficulties and problems posed by the theory of the ideas, an examination assuredly prompted by personal discussion with the *Tao Te Ching*. The development of Lao Tzu's ideals will be confined to an exposition of the most stimulating and fruitful features of his mature philosophy, which contains all the problems that were to set in motion the further history of Chinese thought. "The Chinese belief in the continuity of being, a basic motif in Chinese ontology, has far-reaching implications in Chinese philosophy, religion, epistemology, aesthetics, and ethics. Ancient Chinese thinkers were intensely interested

in the creation of the world. Some of them, notably the Taoists, even speculated on the creator and the process by which the universe came into being.” (Girardot, 1983, p.275)

As Frederick W. Mote comments:

The basic point which outsiders have found so hard to detect is that the Chinese, among all peoples ancient and recent, primitive and modern, are apparently unique in having no creation myth; that is, they have regarded the world and man as uncreated, as constituting the central features of spontaneously self-generating cosmos having no creator, god, ultimate cause, or will external to itself. (Mote, 1971, pp.17-18)

Mote has identified a distinctive feature of the Chinese mode of thought, in his word, “[t]he genuine Chinese cosmogony is that of the organismic process, meaning that all of the parts of the entire cosmos belong to one organic whole and that they all interact as participants in one spontaneously self-generating life process.” (Mote, 1971, p.19)

Strictly speaking, it is not because the Chinese has no idea of God external to the created cosmos that they have no choice but to accept the cosmogony as an organismic process. Whether it is the metaphorical mode of knowing that directs the Chinese to perceive the cosmos as an organismic processor, it is the ontological vision of the continuity of being that informs Chinese epistemology as a highly intriguing question. Many historians have remarked that the traditional Chinese notion of cyclic change, like the recurrence of the seasonal pattern, is incompatible with the modern Western idea of progress. As the *Tao Te Ching* chapter 25 mentioned:

There was something undifferentiated and yet complete. Which existed before heaven and earth. Soundless and formless, it depends on nothing and does not change. It operates everywhere and is free from danger. It may be considered the mother of the universe. I do not know its name; I call it Tao. If forced to give it a name, I still call it Great. (Chan’s translation, 1963, p.152)³

³ Original text: 有物混成，先天地生，寂兮寥兮，獨立而不改，周行而不殆，可以為天下母。吾不知其名，字之曰道，強為名之曰大。

Lao Tzu's philosophical thought did not originate from the use of amazement, but the reaction to the current social and political situation at that time, with the intention to solve the political problem. In other words, Lao Tzu's philosophical thinking was intended to solve the problem of abuses and disadvantages, and to solve the problem of artificial shackles through the liberalization of the nature of life. This argument can be confirmed in the relevant chapters in the *Tao Te Ching*. Related to analysis, to establish Lao Tzu's ideal politics, according to this, taking Lao Tzu's political ideas as an entry point, there are two main concepts in the *Tao Te Ching*: (1) "Promising politics (有為政治)" and (2) "Inaction politics (無為政治)". Lao Tzu's political ideas began with the introspection of the status quo of the states and societies, but these political ideas that begin to reflect upon the states and societies need to face political conflicts. There are four points in total:

- (1) Ritualization of rituals and raging of punishments;
- (2) Large-scale wars, states compete and swallow each other, and their lives are extremely fragile;
- (3) The rise of industry and commerce, the general growth of desires, and the floating of people's hearts;
- (4) The expansion of the Knight group has formed an upsurge of fame and fortune competition.

2.2 Lao Tzu

Lao Tzu was an ancient Chinese philosopher. People say that he is the founder of philosophical Taoism, and also a deity in religious Taoism. A semi-legendary figure, Lao Tzu was usually portrayed as a 6th-century B.C. contemporary of Confucius, but

some modern historians consider him to have lived during the “Warring States” period (戰國時期) of the 4th century B.C. A central figure in Chinese culture, he is claimed by both the emperors of the Tang dynasty and modern people of the Li surname as a founder of their lineage.

Lao Tzu’s life, as it results from Ssu-ma Chian (司馬遷 145-86 B.C.) who’s *Records of the Historian* (史記) was written around 100 B.C., seems to be restricted at three significant moments:

- (1) Lao Tzu was alike an official librarian at the Chou’s court;
- (2) Lao Tzu dismissed the Chou’s court, completed the writing of the *Tao Te Ching*, and then disappeared without a trace after.
- (3) Confucius did ask the propriety of Lao Tzu.

Ssu Ma Chien mentioned Lao Tzu’s things seem to be very different, not one historical name is mentioned anywhere in Lao Tzu’s brief ideas and has no desire at all to influence. As far as history is concerned, therefore, Lao Tzu fades into the nebulous distance where no one may follow him. This is precisely the reason Lao Tzu has such a strong effect in Europe, in spite of the enormous distance in space and time that separates him from us.

2.3 Philosophical and Religious Taoism

Taoism is a religious or philosophical tradition of Chinese origin, it emphasizes living in harmony with the “Tao”, literally: “the Way.” Tao is a fundamental idea in most Chinese philosophical schools. In Taoism however, it denotes the principle that is the source, pattern and substance of everything that exists. Taoism differs from Confucianism by not emphasizing rigid rituals and social order but is similar in the

sense that it is a teaching about the various disciplines for achieving perfection, and by becoming one with the unplanned rhythms of the universe called “the way.” Taoist ethics vary depending on the particular school, but in general tend to emphasize “Wu Wei” (action without intention), “Naturalness”, simplicity, spontaneity, and the Three Treasures: “compassion” (慈), “frugality” (儉), and “humility” (不敢為天下先).

There are two kinds of Taoism: philosophical Taoism or Tao-chia (道家), and religious Taoism or Tao-chiao (道教). Tao-chia, philosophical Taoism, was first used in the Han (漢) dynasty. It designates a sect of philosophers and their beliefs centering upon doctrine on the Tao self-so naturally, as a unique principle of the universe existing without having been created. All these beliefs were in confrontation with the humanism of Confucius and excelled in nihilist posture concerning the relation of the human being with the universe. The founder of Tao-chia, philosophical Taoism, may be considered Lao Tzu, the old sage, an author of the book *Tao Te Ching*. Tao-chiao or religious Taoism is Chinese indigenous religion. Its belief consists of many things and it includes the history and cultural characteristics of Chinese. This religious belief has spread in China for more than two thousand years. Its ideal has evolved from three basic thoughts of the society:

- (1) The belief in deities and spirits;
- (2) The belief in Fang Xian;
- (3) The through of Hwang Di and Lao Tzu.

These three sources have had far-reaching influence on the development and radiation of Taoism. Tao-chia, philosophical Taoism, and Tao-chiao, religious Taoism, are unable to divide those conceptions in ancient China. The political implication of Taoism was mainly inverse to typically political or administrative, and to the practice of

persuading by using force or threats. Taoist spontaneous behavior differs strikingly with profound or apparent implant in any particular societies and states.

Alan Watts, one of the most important western sinologist narrated Taoism:

Taoism [is] the way of man's cooperation with the course or trend of the natural world, whose principles we discover in the flow patterns of water, gas, and fire which are subsequently memorialized or sculptured in those of stone and wood, and, later, in many forms of human art.
(Watts, 1975, p.xiv).

“Taoism is a way of life which tries to accommodate the predisposition of nature (self-so), but it is not restricted to this alone. Rather it is a life philosophy and wisdom acquired by simply observing the flow of natural events.” (Koller, 1985, p.283). Taoism as a philosophy of secularization, in fact, replaced theology with ontology, it is a philosophical approach to life-based on the observation of nature mainly presented in the classical Taoist works, as an appropriate way of life.

2.4 The Book *Tao Te Ching*

The *Tao Te Ching* was originally not divided, but only later was it separated into two parts containing eighty one chapters, there are many variations of a minor nature in words and order. The oldest and best text is that used by Wang-Bi, the *Lao Tzu Tao-Te Ching Chu* (老子道德經注 Commentary on the *Lao Tzu*). The text used by He Shang-Kung (何上公) in his *Lao Tzu Chang-Chu* (老子章句 Commentary on the *Lao Tzu*) is supposed to be older, but authenticity is doubted. The *Tao Te Ching*, of course, is written in ancient Chinese, which is not notable for many formal rigid or grammatical structures, an ancient Chinese word classically does not depict a single concrete idea, it generally suggests relationships between various thoughts and things, a number of Chinese words can be used similar to English verbs, nouns, or adjectives,

simultaneously. Therefore, ancient Chinese characters used in the text of the *Tao Te Ching* are often loaded with seemingly obscure meaning, deliberate or unintended by the scribe can only be guessed, thus, the *Tao Te Ching* is disposed to quite diverse translations and interpretations to fit individual agenda through poetic license, it is challenging to translators, interpreters, and readers alike. There is encouragement in the *Tao Te Ching*, nevertheless, to seek out the sometimes quite vague gems of the *Tao Te Ching* by transcending the symbols of the text and seeking the knowledge and wisdom inherent in the message being communicated. Through using objective knowledge based reason and the independent will to choose, that one facet of the *Tao Te Ching* Taoism could be summarize in the words of Ssu-ma Ch'ian - the historian of the Chinese ancient culture - when he said about Lao Tzu that he practices the Tao and Te, and preaches the retreat from the social world, and anonymity.

The *Tao Te Ching* or *Lao Tzu*, is a short classic with about 5,250 Chinese words. No other Chinese classic of such small size has exercised so much influence. It is a combination of poetry, philosophical speculation, and mystical refection. Passages attributed to the Lao Tzu in other works are either not found here or are different. During Han dynasty several emperors took to studying the *Tao Te Ching*, in particular Han Wen Di (漢文帝劉恆 180--157 B.C.), whose peaceful and simple way of government has been considered a direct result of the teachings of the old sage. His son Han Jing Di (漢景帝劉啟 157--141 B.C.) titled the book, *Tao Te Ching*, of meaning and life, which has been known in China ever since. The book *Tao Te Ching* implies:

- (1) The inner man's directedness towards something;
- (2) The inner man as the seat of consciousness, perception, thinking, reflection;
- (3) Bodily sensation, predominantly used in the plural;

(4) The meaning, idea, sense of words, images, and actions.

This similar concept on the absence of transcendence appeared in a commentary in the *Zhuang Zi* by Guo Xiang, a neo-Taoist, is quoted by A. C. Graham:

I should like to ask whether the maker of things is something (yu) or nothing (wu). If he is nothing, how is he able to make things? If he is something, he is unequal to the making things in their multitudinous shapes. Therefore it is quite pointless to discuss the making of things with someone until he understands that the multitudinous shapes become things of themselves (Graham, 1989, p.412)

Guo Xiang's reading is full of implicit and explicit rejections of the suggestion that Tian, Tao, and Zi Ran, or other concepts have anything to do with transcendence or anything remotely resembling a God, or otherwise with any transcendent quality or metaphysical reality, a powerful answer to the metaphysical bent of various interpreters. A similar approach was adopted by Francois Jullien "who makes use of the metaphysical language of transcendence but does not sanction the metaphysical way of thinking (Jullien, 2000, p.290). "We may speak of mysticism with regards to Taoism, but it is not the same mysticism of the western tradition." (Jullien, 2000, p.302). It may be argued that a non-metaphysical reading is closer to Taoist sensibilities, at the same time we judge that Taoist classics are inherently open to a multitude of interpretations, then this most certainly must include the possibility of metaphysical interpretations.

German sinologist Richard Wilhelm (1873-1930) lived in China for many years. He produced a steady stream of translations from Chinese-language of the *Tao Te Ching: the Book of Meaning and Life*, which will be helpful for more advanced understanding of the work. Experts in Chinese studies will agree that anyone undertaking a new translation of the *Tao Te Ching* must put forward a good case for doing so. For no other Chinese literary text has attached as much attention and as many attempts at translation in the past hundred years or so. Among many documents of

Chinese religion and philosophy, the *Tao Te Ching*, the source of so much influence, cannot be ignored even if only the most important parts of it is to be represented, as is intended here. It is significant that new discoveries are made almost every day where Lao Tzu is concerned, and it might have been tempting to off yet another one. In fact, one discovers that certain common elements find their way from one book into all subsequent ones, partly by acknowledgment, and partly by rejection. For this reason, both the translation of the *Tao Te Ching: the Book of Meaning and Life* and the notation on the text are based on Chinese sources throughout. At the same time, however, none of the more important issues in the continuing discussion of the *Tao Te Ching* is thought to have been neglected. In certain circumstances, even silence is a kind of recognition, particularly where the available space does not allow the translator to go into detail and prove his own opinions.

The book *Tao Te Ching*, “Tao” (force/way), “Te” (strength/virtue/moral force), and “*Ching*” (scripture/text/classic), is a short ancient Chinese work around 2,500 years ago, Traditionally portrayed in eighty one verses/chapters, the *Tao Te Ching* is organized into two parts; one associated with Tao and the other with Te. There are several different known source versions of the classic and it is generally accepted as providing the principle for philosophical Taoism, that is, the significant mainstay of Chinese culture. The *Tao Te Ching* consists of two parts (on Tao chapters 1-37, on Te chapters 38-81), and is written with about 5,000 Chinese characters. Every chapter of the book is a very short statement on the different value of Taoist philosophy, lists of attributes or even aphorisms. In view of its importance, concepts on each verse/chapter is referred to the following messages.

Being and Non-being: verse/chapter 1, 2, 11, 40.
Desires: verse/chapter 3, 19, 34, 37, 57.

Female, Water: verse/chapter 8, 10, 20, 25, 28, 52, 55, 59, 78.
 Government: verse/chapter 3, 17, 26, 29-31, 57, 60, 61, 65, 74, 75, 80.
 Humanity and Righteousness: verse/chapter 18, 19, 38.
 Knowledge: verse/chapter 3, 70, 71.
 Name: verse/chapter 1, 25, 32, 41
 Natural (self-so, Zi Ran): verse/chapter 17, 23, 25, 51, 64.
 Non-strife: verse/chapter 3, 7- 9, 22, 24, 66, 73, 81.
 One: verse/chapter 10, 14, 22, 39, 42.
 Good and Evil: verse/chapter 2, 7, 20, 36, 45, 58.
 Reversal: verse/chapter 14, 16, 28, 40, 52.
 Simplicity: verse/chapter 19, 28, 32, 37, 57.
 Tao: verse/chapter 1, 4, 8, 14, 16, 21, 23, 25, 32, 34, 35, 37, 40-42, 51.
 Tranquility: verse/chapter 16, 37, 61.
 Virtue: verse/chapter 10, 21, 23, 38, 51, 65.
 Weakness: verse/chapter 10, 22, 36, 40, 43, 52, 76, 78.
 Wu Wei (Inaction): verse/chapter 2, 3, 10, 37, 43, 48, 63, 64.

The *Tao Te Ching*, of course, is written in classic Chinese-language, which is not notable for many formal rigid or grammatical structures. Classic Chinese texts classically does not depict a single concrete idea. It generally suggests relationships between various thoughts and things. A number of Chinese words can be used similar to English verbs, nouns, or adjectives, simultaneously. Therefore, ancient Chinese characters used in the *Tao Te Ching* are often loaded with seemingly obscure meanings, deliberate or unintended by the scribe which can only be guessed. Thus, the *Tao Te Ching* is available to quite diverse translations and interpretations to fit individual agenda through poetic license, and therefore, is challenging to translators, interpreters, and readers alike. There is encouragement in the *Tao Te Ching*, nevertheless, seeking out sometimes quite vague gems of it, by transcending symbols of classic texts and by seeking the knowledge and wisdom inherent in the message being communicated.

2.5 The Concept of Tao

Tao “self-so naturally” (自然而然) is the supreme value or principle embodied by

the highest entity. Tao is the basic concept of Taoist philosophy or Taoism, it is generally accepted that the term Taoist or Taoism originated from the word Tao. “Tao means a system or moral truth, it is the One, which is natural, eternal, spontaneous, nameless, and indescribable. The ideal life for the individual, the ideal order for society, and the ideal type of government are all based on it and guided by it. As the way of life, it denotes simplicity, spontaneity, tranquility, weakness, and most important of all, non-action (wu-wei), it is not meant ‘inactivity’ but rather ‘taking no action that is contrary to Nature’ -- in other words, letting Nature take its own course” (Chan, 1969, p.136)

The Taoist insists not to interfere the natural system of ten thousand things, as the *Tao Te Ching* chapter 51 mentioned:

All things are produced by the Tao, 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 honor the Tao, and exalt its outflowing operation. (Legge's translation, 1962)⁴

“The Taoist perception of Tao was central to the intellectual mindset of China as it replaced the traditional concept of Heaven (天 tien) as the ultimate reality. Heaven being the core notion in Confucianism, represents the ultimate reality either as a personal God or the pinnacle moral principle giving the concepts of Jen-Yi Li-an ultimate footing” (Koller, 1985, p.263).

Tao, is the originator of heaven and earth, the totality of beings, the locus of ten thousand things that are produced and interpreted by Lao Tzu as the principle of nature. For Lao Tzu, Tao existed before heaven and the realm of all beings as they are derived from the manifestation of Tao and must return to Tao. Tao increasingly presented as

⁴ Original text: 道生之，德畜之，物形之，勢成之。是以萬物，莫不尊道而貴德。道之尊，德之貴，夫莫之命而常自然。

metaphysical substance which brings about all becoming and passing away, and which projects itself into the phenomenal world without itself ever becoming phenomenal. Tao is the creator and sustainer of everything in the universe. Lao Tzu begins by searching for a fundamental principle for his views of the world, and in doing so, he took over and transformed an existing expression. The Tao (ways) of heaven and the Tao (ways) of man had been known since ancient times, given the manner in which Lao Tzu uses the term, it is described “Call It The Tao” in the *Tao Te Ching* chapter 21 mentions as follows:

The Tao is elusive and intangible, dim and shadowy. Thoughts looking for words to name it, to call it force, essence, vitality. Who can trust words that are only the groupings of thinking's thoughts? Yet from the very beginning something obscure has persisted, a nameless and unthinkable thought. Call it the Tao. It was when the beginning arose from the dark chaos. It is the something within the heart of everything that sets moving each thing in its own way. (Wilhelm's translation, 1978)⁵

In *I-Ching* (易經) there is a relevant paragraph about this:

The Creative knows the great beginnings. The Receptive completes the finished things. The Creative (Ch'ien) knows through the easy, is easy to know, what is simple, is easy to follow attains works. He who possesses attachment can endure for long; He possesses works can become great. (Wilhelm's translation, 1995, p.307)

In the end, to put the metaphysics creativity of Tao in the *I Ching* in contrast to that in the western process thought, especially in Whitehead and Hartshorne, one may find some striking parallels as well as the significant difference between the two parties. They both lay great emphasis on the notion of temporality, creativity, novelty, order, self-caused, indeterminacy, and the continuity of space and time, and they both agree on the creative process of the universe to be unpredictable, indeterminate, and self-determined. (Hartshorne, 1970, p.18).

⁵ Original text: 孔德之容，唯道是從。道之為物，惟恍惟惚。惚兮恍其中有象；恍兮惚其中有物。

The importance of Tao is determined in the confession that something is former to many particular matters that exist in the universe, something gives unity to all the existing matters that determined the extreme presence and effect of everything.

2.5.1 Tao as Zi Ran, Self-So or Nature

The Chinese belief that “Zi Ran” (自然 self-so or nature) is a continuous evolution of cosmic objects, including two complementary systems in the biological and non-biological communities, has profound and lasting implication in Chinese thought. Lao Tzu’s concept of Zi Ran is not a simple concept. In addition to having a clear original meaning, it has a wealth of extension. Without a comprehensive and multilayered analysis of the concept of Zi Ran, it is impossible to correctly understand Lao Tzu’s thought of Zi Ran.

By nature, is meant the principle of growth. As one daily grows, one daily achieves completion. Thus, by the Mandate of Heaven is not meant that heaven gives the decree (ming, mandate) only at the moment of one’s birth... In the production of things by heaven, the process of transformation never ceases. (Chan, 1969, p.699)

Accordingly, Zi Ran refers to the state of existence of mankind and matters, not the specific existence of the object itself. The existence state and development process of mankind and matters are Self-so naturally, and should not be interfered by external forces. The *Tao Te Ching* chapter 40 mentions: “All things under heaven are born of being. The beginning of being is in having non-being as its origin. If one desired to accomplish being, one must first revert to non-being.” The fundamental reason for the harmony between heaven and earth and life in society is that obtaining the Tao and the fundamental way to achieve social harmony are reflected by the principle of natural inaction. It is described “Attain complete vacuity” in the *Tao Te Ching* chapter 16 mentions as follows:

Attain complete vacuity. Maintain steadfast quietude. All things come into being. I see thereby their return. All things flourish, But each one returns to its root. This return to its roots means tranquility. It is called returning to its destiny. To return to destiny is called enlightenment. (Chan's translation, 1963)⁶

Tao is the highest entity, self-so naturally is the supreme value or principle embodied by the highest entity, it is the basic concept of Taoist philosophy or Taoism, it is generally accepted that the term Taoist or Taoism originated from the word Tao. The sense of the word Tao is derived from its ancient Chinese symbol representative of this expression. Used as a verb, Tao can mean to direct, to guide, or even to say, to tell, as well as to be told off. The implication of guiding or directing could be construed to suggest reason, truth, principle, or technique in Chinese philosophy.

2.5.2 Tao as Wu (無 Emptiness)

The *Tao Te Ching* chapter 11, briefly describes “Emptiness”:

The thirty spokes unite in the one nave; but it is on the empty space (for the axle), that the use of the wheel depends. Clay is fashioned into vessels, but it is on their empty hollowness that their use depends. The door and windows are cut out (from the walls) to form an apartment; but it is on the empty space (within), that its use depends. Therefore, what has a (positive) existence serve for profitable adaptation, and what has not that is for (actual) usefulness. (Legge's translation, 1962)⁷

It is a concrete model expressing the idea of Wu or “Emptiness.” A total of 30 spokes, because the center of the hub is empty, the car can produce the role of the load. Flexible clay made into utensils, because the middle of the utensils is empty, in order to produce the role of the object. The excavation of doors and windows causes houses, because the middle of the house is empty, in order to produce the role of residence. The function of the wheel, as of everything in the cosmos, relies on its empty space,

⁶ Original text: 致虛極；守靜篤。萬物並作，吾以觀復。夫物芸芸，各復歸其根，歸根曰靜，是謂復命；復命曰常，知常曰明。

⁷ Original text: 三十輻共一轂，當其無，有車之用。埴埴以為器，當其無，有器之用。鑿戶牖以為室，當其無，有室之用。故有之以為利，無之以為用。

actually, ten thousand things are made of fullness and emptiness, the view of the metaphysical reality of the cosmos taught by the Taoists. Another practicing concept of Tao on Wu, Emptiness, as the *Tao Te Ching* chapter 14 mentioned:

Look but the Tao cannot be seen, it is without form. Listen but it cannot be heard, it is without sound. Take hold of emptiness, it cannot be grasped. These three are one indefinable. The Tao is an unbroken thread stretching from nothing to nothing. Try to find where it reaches and there is no beginning and no end. Try to find where it is, and it is beyond form, beyond definition, beyond imagination. Mind trying to find it exhausts itself with itself. (Legge's translation, 1962)⁸

Tao increasingly presented as a metaphysical substance which brings about all beings, becoming and passing away, and which projects itself into the phenomenal world without itself ever being/becoming phenomenal.

2.5.3 Tao as Wu Wei (無為), Inaction

Wu Wei (無為 wúwéi) is not a tendency to do nothing or to remain unchanged, to an individual for doing without strives, nothing is “done”, everything will be done of its own accord, thus, inaction is Lao Tzu's fundamental principle of He Xie of the statecraft. The reforms that Lao Tzu mentioned in the first place is purely negative: everything that is praised as morals and culture, conventional saintliness, knowledge, morality, duty, art and profit--is to be thrown ever board forthwith. Wu Wei appeared in the *Tao Te Ching* chapter 2 mentioned:

Being and non-being produce each other; Difficult and easy complete each; Long and short contrast each other; High and low distinguish each other; Sound and voice harmonize with each other; Front and back follow each other. Therefore the sage manages affairs without action (wu-wei). And spreads doctrines without words. (Chan's translation, 1963, p.140)⁹

⁸ Original text: 視之不見，名曰夷；聽之不聞，名曰希；搏之不得，名曰微。此三者不可致詰，故混而為一。其上不皦，其下不昧，繩繩不可名，復歸於無物，是謂無狀之狀，無物之象，是謂惚恍。

⁹ Chan's translation (1963), p.140. Original text: 有無相生，難易相成，長短相形，高下相傾，音聲相和，前後相隨。是以聖人處無為之事，行不言之教。

Zhuang Tzu expressed another feature of Wu Wei that idea and sensibleness result in an intuitional understanding of the advisable action. “Knowledge of the appropriate action comes from observing the natural character of the participants and adapting one’s action to that character.”¹⁰

In the *Tao Te Ching*, Wu Wei is the main concept of the Tao, it is also a pattern of guidance of He Xie of the statecraft. As *Tao Te Ching* chapter 48 mentioned:

No action is undertaken, and yet nothing is left undone. An empire is often brought to order by having no activity (laissez-faire). If one (likes to) undertake activity, he is not qualified to govern the empire. (Chan’s translation, 1963, p.162)¹¹

Wu Wei is thus the way of ruling without interfering their course. An interpretation of this main concept of Tao from Watts mentioned:

...wu-wei, meaning not to force, refers to what we understand of one’s acting accordingly to nature, of one’s moving in order to avoid a stroke, of one’s swimming downstream, sailing before the wind, rolling like the waves or one’s bending in order to win. (Watts, 1975, p.27).

Russell Goodman agrees with this claim,

We who conform to the course of Tao, following the natural processes of Heaven and Earth, find it easy to manage the whole world. Thus, it was Yu the Great who was able to engineer the canals by following the nature of water as his guide. (Goodman, 1980, p.75)

The watercourse-way is, without any suspicion, the utterance which perfectly insinuates to the suitable doing of Taoist Sages. This “way” was extracted from the *I Ching* (*Book of Changes* 易經) and wonderfully described in a short commentary on the Hexagram (八卦).

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¹⁰ *Chuang Tzu*, chap. 7. See the Harvard Yen-ching Index on the *Chinang-Tzu*. Retrieved from <https://harvard-yenching.org/> 11/05/2018.

¹¹ Original text; 以至於無為；無為而無不為矣。故取天下者，常以無事；及其有事，不足以取天下。

The water endlessly flows and fills, up to a certain limit, the corners it is flowing through; the water is not afraid of any dangerous place, of any falling and there is nothing making it lose its essence.
Under all circumstances, it remains equal to its nature.
(Wilhelm, 1962, p.19)

Natural Inaction or do nothing naturally in the *Tao Te Ching*, Natural Inaction is not the state of being away from a place from disturbing with things, but a pathway of acting in line with the very routing of the matters inaction naturally. In the *Tao Te Ching*, “inaction naturally” to sum up, Wu Wei is not the pure absence or refrain from interfering with things (as in *Tao Te Ching*), but a way of acting in accord with the very course of the things. In other words, Wu Wei, Inaction, is thus the way of ruling things without interfering with their course, as the line of minimal resistance.

2.5.4 Tao as Fu (復), Returning.

One of the most important principles in the *Tao Te Ching* and *I-Ching*, is where both mentioned the general relationship and harmony between macrocosm and microcosm. “Fu”, Returning, brings humans to the point for speaking about Tao of transformation. As humans, there is no level place without a bank, no going away without coming back. This denotes “the Tao of transformation” which is the complement to going and coming.

In regard to the great flux of transformation in the universe, what we see is a returning; this is because there has been no original coming. The *Tao Te Ching* also mentioned that all things emerge from the Tao and return to it. Wang-Bi commented, all things come from emptiness, and all movements begin in quiescence. The result is that all things, although in every case they move and act, yet in the end goes back to emptiness and quiescence. So also, with “Does not the Fu Hexagram reveal the mind of Heaven and Earth?” Wang-Bi’s comment is:

The meaning of Fu is a reverse movement back to the origin, and the reference to the mind of Heaven and Earth is to the original root. If there is resistance from movement, this is quiescence, or, quiescence is not the opposite of movement. To desist from speaking is to be silent, but silence is not the opposite of speaking. This being so, although Heaven and Earth are so vast and is filled with myriads of things, with such transformations thunder moving and the wind traveling, yet the silence of non-being is the original root of it all. (Lau, 1963)

The sum of these interpretations, in the *Tao Te Ching*, and the *I-Ching* are complementary in explaining that for “Fu”, transformation is for it to start going in the reverse direction, to the use of the Taoism ideas in explanation of the “I” (易), it is not true to the original ideas of the “I”. The Taoism returning is one of return to the root, to the destined condition, and the emphasis here is on non-being, whilst in the “I” amplification, the emphasis is ongoing and coming without end, i.e. “on Being”. The mutually opposed Hexagrams always go together in pairs, as a result, in this amplification finding the “Tai” (泰), Prosperity, Hexagram symbolizes having a free course, a thing cannot have that forever, with the result that “Pi” (否), Lack of Prosperity, Hexagram proceeds to “Tai”. “Po” (剥), Disintegration, symbolizes things disintegrate; it is impossible that a thing should be entirely obliterated; after the process of disintegration ends, the reverse process begins. The result is that the succeeding Hexagram is the Fu (Returning). Further, Qian (乾), Starting Movement, symbolizes movement, but things cannot keep moving forever, with the result that the next Hexagram is the “Chi Chi”(既濟), Having Accomplished. Hexagram comes to the “Wei Chi”(未濟), Not Yet Accomplished, the order of the Hexagrams mentioned, “It is impossible that events and things come to a final end.” The result is that the *I Ching* concludes with the sixty-fourth (and final) Hexagram “Wei Chi”, Not Yet Accomplished.

To sum up, the “Fu”, is related to three kinds of the transformation of metaphysical Tao, its hermeneutics in the *Tao Te Ching* and *I-Ching* are as follows:

(1) The first kind of transformation, “creativity” (I 易), is the immutable law that works through all these transformations. This law causes all movements to become visible in a definite manner, to observe the phenomena in Heaven and Earth. They appear overwhelming in multiplicity;

(2) The second kind of transformation, “changing” (Pien I 變易), is represented by progressive development, one state of things progressively changes into another, but the line does not revert to its original condition. Progress and development continue in either time or space;

(3) The third kind of transformation, “unchanging” (Pu I 不易), such as the cyclical change of the seasons. One state of things changes into another, but in the course of such change the original state of things is restored. or example, cosmic events are like the rising and setting of the sun in the course of the day and the year.

For it is one of the most important principles of the *I-Ching*. There is a general relationship and harmony between macrocosm and microcosm. It brings us to the point for speaking about the Tao of transformation, the advancing thing also retires and the retiring things come back again, the so-called, “Fu”. All existence comes from the Tao and returns to the Tao, and the behavior from the human body will eventually return to itself. As the *Tao Te Ching* chapter 40 mentioned:

Reversion is the action of Tao. Weakness is the function of Tao. All things in the world come from being. And being comes from non-being. (Chan's translation, p.160)¹²

¹² Original text: 反者道之動，弱者道之用。天下萬物生於有，有生於無。

The operation of the Tao is cyclical change and repeated, and the function of the Tao is weak and humble. Nothing is the ontology of the Tao, there is the role of the Tao, and all things in the universe are produced by existence then inexistence with no beginning and no ending.

2.6 Lao Tzu's Political Ideas in the *Tao Te Ching*

Before formally exploring Lao Tzu's ideas of politics, compare the western philosophy that focuses on theoretical orientation, or, Chinese philosophy that focuses on practical orientation. Therefore, the emergence of Lao Tzu's thought did not stem from the application of amazement, but rather to the inspiring reaction aroused by the current social and political situation at that time, with the intention of fundamentally solving the result of political conflicts. In turn, it is essential to say that Lao Tzu's thought is intended to solve the dilemma of artificial bondage, most of the arguments can be confirmed, as far as, to establish the ideal politics concerned in the *Tao Te Ching*. In addition, that Lao Tzu's political ideas could provide liberalism and know that it was beyond reason, therefore, in order to make a reasonable position in understanding, take Lao Tzu's political ideas like the theme of the discussion. The result of the fundamental intention is to solve the political conflict of King Zhou Wen (周文王) on its weaknesses, and to solve the problem of artificial restraint through the liberalization of the essence of life. There are four shackles:

- (1) The rigidness of the ritual and the ravages of the punishment;
- (2) The second is a large-scale war, many states are competing for each other, and life is incomparably weak;
- (3) The third is the rise of industry and commerce, the general desire for growth, and the floating of the people.

(4) The expansion of the “Intellectual” groups form a wave of fame and fortune competition.

“Promising Politics” which is dominated by rulers and people are just tools to satisfy the desires of rulers. In this kind of politics, there is not only the argument of political structure, but also the argument of the negative and positive norm of the political system. Therefore, “promising politics” that is the center of the ruler of contention as the essence. Or, “Inaction Politics” that is not dominated by rulers but dominated by the people of the governed. How to establish ideal politics, “promising politics” and “inaction politics” that is one of the main concerns for statecraft of He Xie that can be confirmed in the relevant chapters in the *Tao Te Ching*.

2.6.1 Promising Politics

Promising politics that is the center of the ruler of contention as the essence, which is dominated by rulers and people are just tools to satisfy the desires of rulers. Promising politics is a kind of political structure and system, forgets the naturalness of structure and system differentiation, and deliberately makes it change from tools to purposes, and alienates from the alienation politics outside the original state of nature. This kind of promising politics, that is, mentioned in the *Tao Te Ching* chapter 65;

Not to Govern the State with Knowledge.

In ancient times those who practiced Tao well. Did not seek to enlighten the people, but to make them ignorant. People are difficult to govern because they have too much knowledge. Therefore he who rules the state through knowledge is a robber of the state; He who rules a state not through knowledge is a blessing to the state. (Chan’s translation, 1963, p.170)¹³

That is to say, it is the authority of the emperor to protect the people from living and working in peace. If a politician loses his duty, he will permanently lose his position.

¹³ Original text: 古之善為道者，非以明民，將以愚之。民之難，治以其智多。以智治國，國之賊；不以智治國，國之福。

As *Tao Te Ching* chapter 49 mentioned: “The sage has no fixed (personal) ideas, he regards the people’s ideas as his own”. The sage has no selfishness and takes the wishes of the people as his own wishes, the greatest wish of the people is nothing more than the peace of life and the peace of society. Since ancient times, the ideal society that the future generations are also based on the principle of the people’s lives, working, societies and states in peace. This kind of “promising politics”, that is, mentioned in the *Tao Te Ching* chapter 49;

The sage has no fixed (personal) ideas. He regards the people’s ideas as his own. I treat those who are good with goodness, And I also treat those who are not good with goodness. Thus goodness is attained. I am honest to those who are honest, And I am also honest to those who are not honest. Thus honesty is attained. (Chan’s translation, 1963, p.163) ¹⁴

The sage must be close to the people, learning what people’s wants are, and people are perfect to be ancestors. The sage must be behind them, the people are not harmed. In this kind of “promising politics”, there is not only the dispute of structure and system, but also the negative norm of political function and system. Therefore, “promising politics” is centered on contending as the essence of the ruler of politics.

2.6.2 Inaction Politics

Ruling with inaction (無為而治) is the basic idea of Taoism. It is also the principle of the ancient Chinese rulers for statecraft of He Xie, it is the highest and the best way to govern the states. “Inaction politics” is not a politics dominated by rulers, but a politics dominated by the people of the rulers. This kind of “promising politics”, is mentioned in the *Ta Te Ching* chapter 63;

Act without action. Do without ado. Taste without tasting. Whether it is big or small, many or few, repay hatred with virtue. Prepare for the difficult while it is still easy. Deal with the big while it is still small. Difficult

¹⁴ Original text: 聖人無常心，以百姓心為心。善者吾善之，不善者吾亦善之。德善矣，信者吾信之，不信者吾亦信之，德信矣。

undertakings have always started with what is easy. And great undertakings have always started with what is small. Therefore, the sage never strives for the great, And thereby, the great is achieved. He who makes rash promises surely lacks faith. He who takes things too easily will surely encounter much difficulty. For this reason even the sage regards things as difficult, And therefore, he encounters no difficulty. (Chan's translation, 1963, p.169)¹⁵

It seems that “inaction naturally” or “action without strives” (無不為) to be contradictory, in fact, has no contradiction. Inaction is not doing anything, but not being arrogant, not chaotic, not violating the Tao, that is, does not follow the individual's wishes, personal mind, adjusting to the nature of universe, conform and preserve natural shackles of all things. The root of inaction is not to distort the autonomy of the people, return to the originality of the people's autonomy and return to the Tao itself. As stated in the *Tao Te Ching* chapter 57;

Administer the empire by engaging in no activity. Therefore the Sage says: I take no action and the people of themselves are transformed. I love tranquility and the people of themselves become correct. I engage in no activity and the people of themselves become prosperous. I have no desires and the people of themselves become simple. (Chan's translation, 1963, p.166)¹⁶

In Lao Tzu's view, the most ideal political and top-notch statecraft is “ruling inaction”. In the *Tao Te Ching* chapter 37 mentioned: “The Tao acts ‘inaction naturally’ than ‘action without strives’; when the Masters abide, the myriad things being naturally self-transpired” (道常無為而無不為；侯王若能守，萬物將自化。). As mankind is one of the myriad things, it is better to adhere the fundamental principle of inaction naturally. Mankind will be able to cultivate themselves without any artificial restraint

¹⁵ Original text: 為無為，事無事，味無味。大小多少，報怨以德。圖難于其易，為大于其細。天下難事必作于易，天下大事必作于細，是以聖人終不為大，故能成其大。夫輕諾必寡信，多易必多難，是以聖人猶難之，故終無難。

¹⁶ Original text: 無事取天下。故聖人云：我無為而民自化，我好靜而民自正，我無事而民自富，我無欲而民自朴。

and interference, and give full play to their self-potentials, naturally and voluntarily. In this way, the people will be in the natural state of the Tao and develop freely according to their own inevitable laws. Everything is completely incompatible “inaction” with heaven and earth, and everything has the power with “action without strives” of Tao. On the contrary, all the arbitrariness of the rulers will destroy the natural order, disrupt the states, and harm the people. Then, the political function of negative normative argument dispelled into an indisputable, will return to the inaction naturally for statecraft of He Xie.

2.7 Summary

Lao Tzu declared that inaction was the most fundamental law of all things in the universe, thus establishing a prerequisite for the inaction of heaven. It is related to the concept of Taoism. Lao Tzu assumes that there is a comfortable and infinite entity outside of everything, this entity is regarded as the mother of all things in the universe. All things exist in support of the Tao, and it has the power to keep all things. All objects are based on it, so it is the largest and truest reality of all things in the universe. Everything is occupying a limited amount of time and space, it is changing and fleeting, therefore, limited, diverse. But Tao is conceived as a comfortable, timeless thing that occupies infinite space, and it is pure in texture and always one. Therefore, the comfortable, infinite texture is purely one of the characteristics.

In Lao Tzu's view, it is not surprising that the contradiction and its relationship between “ruler” and “governed” in society and state are ubiquitous. In order to achieve the “ruler” and “governed” between the contradiction and the cessation of struggle together to promote the progress of social history, this is the key features of Lao Tzu's

political ideas. Therefore, Lao Tzu's social "harmony" is simply to stop the contradictions and struggles between the "ruler" and "governed" and to achieve peaceful coexistence. To this end, Lao Tzu believes that the rulers should turn "promising" into "inaction", "strong" into "weak", and "hard" into "soft", so as to achieve the position of the governed and at the same, so that it appears as political situation of He Xie for statecraft. In Lao Tzu's view, only the rulers' scapegoat the hearts and minds of the people, in order to maximize the people's will, in order to maximize the mobilization of the people's production enthusiasm and creativity, and promote production development, economic prosperity. From this, it also realized the ruler's "inaction" to become "promising."



CHAPTER III

THE CONCEPT OF HE XIE AS STATECRAFT

3.1 Philosophical ideas of He Xie

From the Pre-Qin period, He Xie is the ideal realm, and it is elaborated in the concept of Taoism. Especially in dealing relationship with mankind and nature, people and society, the idea of harmony has been fully expressed. Here, in terms of Lao Tzu's view of harmony and its universal value, is to prove to the academic world. It is a significant cultural value since ancient Chinese society made "He" (和) or "Peace", about 2,500 years ago. "Harmony is the English translation of 'He', although 'He' is a richer connotation, including such meanings as on good terms with each other, gentle, mild, and peace" (*A Modern Chinese-English Dictionary*, 1988). Chinese think deeply or carefully about 'He' by excessive heritable sayings with a harmony motif, such as "'He' is precious" (和為貴), and "family members live in relationship of 'He', then, all business blossoms" (家和萬事興). That "He" is also significant value in other East Asian countries in light of Taoism influence. "Given the prominence of harmony in Chinese culture, it is not surprising that Chinese approach interpersonal disagreements and social clashes with a harmony perspective" (Gabrenya & Hwang, 1996, p.174).

He Xie can play a huge role in governing the country, it advocates a peaceful way to deal with the relationship between countries. Since ancient times in China, it is the highest state of solidarity, mutual love and friendship between states, and between people; that is, a state can accommodate different civilizations and retain their own. He

Xie is the basic spirit of Chinese cultural tradition and the ideal realm of unremitting pursuit.

3.1.1 Signification of He Xie

The concept of He Xie is undoubtedly one of the important features of Chinese and Eastern civilization. Eastern civilization and Western civilization have been inherited for thousands of years, and many cultural characteristics have been formed in the long river of history. According to Chinese culture, the concept of He Xie originated very early. For example, the Pre-Qin classic “*Shangshu Kangxi*”(尚書•康誥)has the record of “only the people are harmonious”(惟民其敕懋和) and the the *Analects* of Confucius” also indicated that for “rituals for the essence of peace (禮之用，和為貴)”. *Zuo Zhuan* (左傳) also mentioned “real creatures, the same does not continue (和實生物，同則不繼)”. In these ancient classical discourses, He Xie means both “peace” and “harmony”. The former is “peace” from the perspective of social and interpersonal relationship, while the latter is “harmony” from the perspective of natural phenomena. The simple philosophical concept that summed up the ideal realm of Taoism from the Pre-Qin period, Taoism elaborated on this concept.

The Great Harmony is called the Tao. It embraces the nature which underlies all counter processes of floating and sinking, rising and falling, and motion and rest. It is the origin of the process of fusion and intermingling, of overcoming and being overcome, and expansion and contraction. At the commencement, these processes are incipient, subtle, obscure, easy and simple, but at the end they are extensive, great, strong and firm. It is ch’ien (“heaven”) that begins with the knowledge of Change, and k’un (“earth”) that models after simplicity. That which is dispersed, differentiated and discernible in form becomes ch’i, and that which is pure, penetrating, and not discernible in form becomes spirit. Unless the whole universe is in the process of fusion and intermingling like fleeting forces moving in all directions, it may not be called “Great Harmony”. (Chan, 1969, pp.500-501)

In dealing relationship with mankind and nature, people and society, the idea of harmony has been fully expressed by Lao Tzu's view of harmony and its universal value, to prove to the academic world, in the *Tao Te Ching*, the word "peace" is seen in eight different chapters, and in the word "harmony". For example, "Sound and voice harmonize with each other; front and back follow each other." (音聲相和，前後相隨), "Soften the light, become one with the dusty world, this is called profound identification." (和其光，同其塵，是謂玄同) "To know harmony means to be in accord with the eternal, to be in accord with the eternal means to be enlightened." (知和曰常，知常曰明), "To patch up great hatred is surely to leave some hatred behind, how can this be regarded as goodness." (和大怨，必有餘怨，安可以為善), "The ten thousand things carry the yin and embrace the yang, and through the blending of the material force they achieve harmony." (萬物負陰而抱陽，衝氣以為和), "Heaven and earth unite to drip sweet dew, without the command of men, it drips evenly over all." (天地相合，以降甘露，人莫之令而自均). Tao contains two of the opposite aspects of Yin-Yang, all things in the universe contain Yin-Yang plus and minus, Yin-Yang shake and interact with each other, to form "peace", it is the character of ten thousand things in the cosmos and to survival, in heaven and earth.

In the axis of the creation of Chinese culture as mentioned in He Xie, Harmony, without thinker has vividly put forward the idea of combining love and making benefits (兼相愛，交相利) like Mo Tzu (墨子), and spares no effort to advocate and practice the philosophy of "combining love". Mo Tzu believes that the reason why the Pre-Qin society lost its standard is that people cannot fall in love with each other. It is the princes who does not love each other, but they will fight in the field. If the family does

not love each other, they will be opposite each other. If people do not love each other, they will be thieves. Then, if you are not loyal, if the father and the son are not in love, then they will not be filial. If the brothers are not in love, they will not adjust.

Thus, Mo Tzu puts forward the political philosophy of “combining love and making benefits.” Mo Tzu’s thought of mutual benefit and mutual benefit reflects the simple, pure and kind character and desire of the working people, and is an ideal for pursuing a harmonious society.

3.1.2 He Xie as Natural Inaction

He Xie in Taoist idea is reverence for life and conforms to the principles self-so naturally, He Xie refers to the thinking in intention of action. At the time, the trend of the decision is to make an orderly, and adapt to the changing principle of nature, so that things keep its natural essence not artificial affectation, achieving the realm of “inaction than action without strives” (無為而無不為). According to the different handling problems, the attitude of “natural inaction” can be used for political policy, governor inaction, human autonomy, action and can also be used for self-cultivation. By adopting its way of thinking, it can be said to be based on the concept of Taoists, taking naturalism as its purpose, taking “natural inaction” as its guideline, and governing to the political, the country and the people, as its goal to achieve social harmony and political ideal. Harmony and “natural inaction” are reverence for life and conforming to the principles of self-so naturally.

In Lao Tzu’s view of being that is absolutely in harmony with Tao’s conduct not appearing in the artificial path, but appealing in the natural motion, this is Great Harmony.

Vast indeed is the [sublime] Creative, it generates all things and beings, and it [power] permeates even Heaven.

It causes the clouds to come forth, the rain to bestow its bounty, and all objects and beings to flow reaching their [respective] forms. Its dazzling brilliance [leads them] from their end to the [new] beginning (...) The Way of the Creative consists in alternations and transformations, [granting] to each [object and being] its right nature and destiny. Then it preserves their conformity with the Great Harmony [of the universe]. (Waley, 1999, p.85)

He Xie is also a concept of the unity of opposites and a special form of mutual relations between two contradictions. There can be no harmony without the opposite of “infuriating” and “running in”. Accordingly, in relation to harmony for nature as being universally all-pervading eternal.

To understand such harmony is to understand the always-so, to understand the always-so is to be illumined, but to fill life to the brim is to invite omens, if the heart makes calls upon the life-breath, rigidity follows, whatever has a time of vigor also has a time of decay, such things are against Tao, and, whatever is against Tao is soon destroyed. (Waley, 1999, p.119)

It is the principles of the universe that human beings can retain their own subjectivity, therefore Tao is a general rule intended to regulate behavior or thought for ten thousand things, its substance is to implement the vastness of harmony and to get along well in Tao.

3.1.3 He Xie Falling with Perfect Balance

Taoism pays particular attention to take the initiative existence, and emphasizes conversion. Its thinking can be said to be based on the ideals, taking naturalism as its purpose, taking natural inaction as its guideline, and governing the country and the people as its goal to achieve social harmony and life ideal. The idea of harmony in human life is between man and nature, as well as the thought of governing the states in a passive manner and in accordance with the principle. He Xie and natural inaction are the core contents of Taoism. Taoists believe that harmony is the norm of all things in heaven and earth, and discord is temporary. Disharmony in social life and disharmony

the relationship with mankind and nature is mainly caused by human misconduct. In light of Taoism, despotism is destined to desperate states because the dictators were obstructing too much, going against the principle of “inaction” and causes disharmony in political problem for statecraft. Lao Tzu’s famous slogan has puzzled interpreters for centuries and has given rise to numerous analyses. The first character is not the main problem. Wu simply “does not exist.” In this phrase, however, interpreters treat it as a negative prescription: “avoid Wei (為).” The harder problem is to understand Wei. In modern Mandarin, the character has two different tones, the fourth tone reading is usually translated as “for the sake of.” In the second tone reading, the character would normally be translated as “to act”. Textbook interpretations say Wei means “purpose” as well as “action,” so the slogan means “non-purposive action.” The second tone reading, however, has another important use. Some grammar textbooks call it the putative sense - “to deem, regard or interpret.” Wei functions in this sense in Literary Chinese belief ascriptions which focus on the predicate. Ancient Chinese has several meaning-related homonyms, including Wei (is-only), Wei (to be called), and Wei (artificial). The latter adds a “human” radical to Wei (do deem). Typical translations of this character include “artificial” or “false”. The cluster of concepts corresponding to the pivotal Taoist contrast between “Tian” (the nature 天) and “Ren” (the human 人). Wei is something done by human conceptualizing rather than something natural. Including in this content of explanation of Lao Tzu’s use of Wei, to explain its role more fully than does the theory on acts while lacking in “purpose” or deliberation. Little in the Lao Tzu (or earlier Chinese thought) suggests any development of a distinction between voluntary, deliberate, or purposive action and its opposite.

To act without Wei is to remove the social, conceptual character from our behavior and act on natural instinct or intuition. This makes the concept cohere nicely with Lao Tzu's analysis of names and knowledge as forms of social control. The “inner chapters” of the *Zhuangzi* rarely mention the slogan. However, it is used in the “outer chapters” to construct a possible Zhuang Zi's version of the slogan. One tempting view associates Wu Wei with the “inner chapter” discussions of skillful behavior that develops into a kind.

3.1.4 He Xie between Yin and Yang

It is generally believed that the supreme realm pursued by Lao Tzu is oneness or “sameness”, but Tao is the highest harmony. Therefore, Lao Tzu pursues its ultimate value and the highest state as He Xie. This is an important concept and value orientation of traditional culture in China. Some theories of other schools in the Pre-Qin period on social and political life, of which ideology of harmony is confined to the ideal dealing relationship with mankind and nature, people and society. Those harmonious ideas of Lao Tzu and Taoism lie in the discourse, in addition to the harmonious relationship with mankind and nature, people and society, and the harmony of states relations. Thus this constitutes a complete system of social harmony theory.

(1) Lao Tzu believes that harmony is the norm of all things in heaven and earth, and discord is temporary. Disharmony in social life and disharmony between man and nature are mainly caused by human misconduct. From a long history, this phenomenon is temporary of the world; there are two states of “harmony” in the world, which should be maintained and handled well. Lao Tzu said: “To him by whom this harmony is known, (The secret of) the unchanging (Dao) is shown” (Chapter 55, Legge's translation). It is the common understanding that everything is in harmony with

everything in the universe. Lao Tzu believes that “harmony” is the essential manifestation of Taoism, on the contrary, the completely opposite state of Yin-Yang is neither Tao nor the norm of things. The conclusion that “peace” is the normal state of all things in the world has been proven by celestial history. This is to say that the principle of nature tends to be balanced and harmonious, and since entering the private-owned society, human society as a whole has been discordant because of lack of inadequate, and principle prevailed. However, judging from the general trend of development, disharmony is not only the norm in nature but also not the norm in human society. Since the long history of human history, the existence of private ownership is only an episode. there are two states of “harmony” in this basic schema: one is the “oneness” of the Tao and the “oneness” phase of its “birth”, and the “harmony” of the chaotic state that has not yet been divided; the second is the “infuriating harmony” after “second and third births”, which is the state of harmony achieved after the sympathetic turbulence of the opposite. According to the *Tao Te Ching* chapter 55 mentioned: “its essence is at its height”, and “the most perfect” prickly atrophy, chapter 28 mentioned: “return to the baby”, is that people wants to maintain or return to the undifferentiated state, that is, so-called return to early. Obviously, Lao Tzu’s distinction of “harmony” has important theoretical and practical significance.

(2) Lao Tzu reveals profoundly the inherent mechanism of the harmony of ten thousand things in the cosmos and society. Harmony is a concept of a pair of opposites and a special form of mutual relations between two contradictions. There can be no harmony without the opposite of “infuriating” and “running in”. “All things are Yin-Yang” means that ten thousand things in the cosmos contain an opposite of mutual interdependence and mutual infiltration. There is a pair of opposites between Yin-Yang

that is the inherent attribute of all things. It is impossible to establish that there is neither “yin” nor “yang” or “yin” and “yin”, just as there is no inferior but superior. It is not a kind of Chi (氣) is believed to be a vital force forming part of any living entity, and figuratively as “material energy”, “life force”, or “energy flow”. But a mechanism of mutual exclusion, mutual struggle, swirling and turbulent opposition, and unity of opposites in the internal opposition of the unification. Mutual exclusion and mutual contradictions between the two sides is to achieve some kind of harmony. Things, that is, in a word, “harmony” is referred to as a concept of the unity of opposites. In shaking agitation as the basis, the necessary conditions and the internal motivation of “harmony”, without differences, conflicts, antagonisms and necessary struggles, there will be no unity and harmony of the opposite and no transformation of the opposite. Therefore, harmony is not without contradictions, but rather with special forms of mutual relations between contradictions. The struggle between the two sides cannot be erased, the state in which the unity is relatively balanced is called harmony, nor can the state in which the two sides are in conflict is likewise called harmony. Only the two parties to the conflict are not only relatively stable in the unity, but also the development of one side is conducive to the development of the other side. That is to say, “complementarity”, “symbiotic co-prosperity”, and “mutually beneficial” are the so-called physical harmony.

(3) Lao Tzu believes that the “Tao” itself is a harmonious one. The fundamental reason for the harmony between heaven and earth and life in society is “obtaining the Tao” and the fundamental way to achieve social harmony, is reflected by the principle of natural inaction. Harmony is the basic trait of Taoism, Taoism is the unity of antithesis and independence. Therefore, in order to achieve social harmony, people must hold and allow the banner of Taoism. To put it in practice, Taoism seems supernatural,

but its mysterious veil is opened up, its essence is the principle of contradictions or the principle of unity of opposites. Slightly different, Lao Tzu places particular emphasis on following the principle of natural inaction embodied in Taoism. The principle of natural inaction requires conforming to the self-so naturally of things and its development trend. For the society, it is to create a good social and political environment for the people and provide sufficient space for free development, which is obviously conducive to the realization of harmonious states and societies. Obviously, the former is conducive to promoting social harmony and the latter can only barely maintain the temporary social stability. Lao Tzu also believes that in order to promote the realization of social harmony, people must establish a just and reasonable mechanism for the distribution of interests at the institutional level so as to ensure the rights of ordinary people to life and development and actively advocate without any reason for social fashion. Without the harmony of social individuals, a harmonious society can only be a mirage.

The harmony dealing relationship with mankind and nature is the external environment and the material foundation for the harmonious society of mankind and is also the lifeline of social harmony. Lao Tzu reveals the relationship with mankind and ten thousand things in the cosmos from the highness of the Tao. It shows that there are common essences between them and follow commonalities, manifested as a homologous, coexistence and common prosperity of the organic whole.

Yin-Yang is the basic idea of changes in Taoist thought, also in spite of importance in Chinese philosophy. Yin-Yang is meant as a concept, such as, “dark” and “bright”, “weak” and “strong”, “soft” and “hard” expressions of the Tao. Yin-Yang element is quoted by “*Book of Change*” its interpretation and analysis:

Heaven is high, the earth is low, and thus “Chien” (Heaven) and “Kun” (Earth) are fixed. As high and low are thus made clear, the honorable and

humble have their places accordingly. As activity and tranquility have their constancy, the strong and the weak are thus differentiated. Ways come together according to their kinds, and things are divided according to classes. Therefore the strong and weak interact and activate each other. “Chien” knows great beginning and “Kun” acts to bring things to completion. (Chan’s translation, 1969, p.248)

All things are Yin (Earth, 坤) and Yang (Heaven 乾) which means that ten thousand things in the cosmos are contained in the opposite of mutual interdependence and infiltration. The unity of opposites between Yin-Yang is the inherent attribute of all things, it is impossible to establish that there is neither “yin” nor “yang”, just as there is no inferior or superior.

3.2 Debates of the Concept of He Xie between Taoism and Other Schools

Once the world is formed, there will be everything in heaven and earth, followed by the existence of human beings; therefore, there will be various conflicts that deals in the relation between mankind and nature, people and society. He Xie is an important proposition and core spirit in Chinese major philosophy schools, like, Taoism, Confucianism, Mohists, Legalists, Strategists, and others. It has a profound elucidation of harmonious thoughts in Chinese traditional culture.

(1) Confucianism (儒家) advocates “neutralization (中和)”, emphasizes the harmonious coexistence between people and states, and the harmonious development of man and society.

(2) Taoism (道家) pursues the harmony and unity of man and nature, advocates compliance with the line, the rate of movement, and the situation, in accordance with nature, so as to establish a natural and “harmonious rule of governance”.

(3) Mohists (墨家) advocate “love and benefits each other”, advocating the realization of individual and social orderly integration, moral and utilitarian harmony.

(4) Legalists (法家) advocate the correct orientation of dealing relationship with individual, society and state, and realize the social harmony under the leadership of the state within the pattern of the unified.

(5) Strategists (兵家) advocate war that requires political, economic, military and other factors to support and guarantee it, and this has prompted the military to stand at the height of the overall situation. It advocates that both the political and the people should be cultivated, including the economically rich and powerful.

All this shows that He Xie is the essential attribute of Chinese traditional culture. From a deeper level of investigation, He Xie has the following distinct characteristics among the above-mentioned major issues concerning human survival and development. Lao Tzu is concern about the dealing relationship with mankind and nature, which is the core content in the *Tao Te Ching*. The idea of He Xie in human life is between man and nature, as well as the thought of statecraft in a passive manner and in accordance with the principle. Taoists believe that He Xie is the norm of all things in heaven and earth, and discord is temporary, disharmony between man and nature, in social life, and statecraft are mainly caused by human misconduct. In Taoism, the best state of the states is without sufficient development, and the perfect state of human society is the original one that gets along with little interference. Several questions are central to the teachings and debates that make up Chinese social and political thought, among which the issue of how to sustain “order (治)” -- often understood more particularly as “harmony (和)” -- is the most basic.

3.2.1 Debate between Taoism and Confucianism

Confucian thought of “governing with morality” (以德治國), in a nutshell, as well as moral politics are models of social governance in which moral education is used as a means of domination. Confucian moral rule is a kind of theory that applies morality to the political field. It is a kind of theory which uses morality as the norm to standardize a monarch’s behavior, and is a theory that takes moral education as a main means of governing and uses the intrinsic binding force of morality to achieve the goal of social harmony and stability. It is the way to statecraft, which is based on the proposition of “virtue”, the punishment and the rule of the state, and the goal of establishing a harmonious and orderly moral society through moral politics. The essence of Confucian thought of rule by virtue and its important reference value and significance to build harmonious societies and states, implement the statecraft of virtue. As a lofty and ideal social model, harmonious statecraft is an ideal of governing, and constructing and building statecraft of He Xie, scapegoats the hearts and minds of the people, and is the ideal statecraft that mankind is striving for.

The dynamic of people identifying with and modeling themselves on the ruler permeates the text’s understanding of governance. Asked whether a ruler should kill those who fail to follow the way (道), Confucius responds:

You are there to govern; what use have you for killing? If you desire the good, the people will be good. The virtue of the gentleman is the wind; the virtue of the little people is the grass. The wind on the grass will surely bend it. (*Analects* 12:19) (Brooks and Brooks, 1998, p. 94)

Unlike the emphasis put on “punishments” as one kind of “standard (罰)” in the *Analects* minimizes the importance of killing. This point is reinforced in perhaps the most famous saying in the text about governance:

Lead them with government and regulate them by punishments, and the people will evade them with no sense of shame. Lead them with virtue and regulate them by ritual, and they will acquire a sense of shame—and moreover, they will be orderly. (*Analects*2:3) (Brooks and Brooks, 1998, p. 110)

From the Song dynasty all the way through the Qing, the Neo-Confucians counted among their ranks many thinkers interested in “statecraft” By the late Ming dynasty and thereafter, “statecraft” came to describe almost any method or techniques that could be used for the practical operations of the state, construed so expansively as to include mathematics and history. But in the narrower sense common among earlier Neo-Confucians, it refers to a philosophical position that aims to address social problems through institutional reform rather than through dramatic transformations of character. Scholars sometimes describe these thinkers as belonging to a “Statecraft School” which includes Song philosophers like Chen Liang (1143–1194) and Ye Shi (1150–1223), and the Ming Neo-Confucian Wang Tingxiang (1474–1544) (Cf. Niu 1998, Tillman 1982 and Ong 2006).

Mou Zongsan (牟宗三 1909-1995), a leader of the new Confucian movement in the twentieth century, offered a particularly creative way out of the recurrent tension between personal virtue (or morality) and public standards (or politics). Mou’s insight is that the relation between morality and politics is “dialectical”. Rather than seeing a leader’s political virtue as a direct extension of his or her personal, moral virtue, Mou argues that there needs to be an indirect relation between them. “Politics and political virtue must develop out of morality, but nonetheless have an independent, objective existence. Politics and political virtue must develop out of morality, but nonetheless have an independent, objective existence. This means that human rights, for example, must have a basis in morality, but come to be measured by standards that are separate

from moral standards. The converse is also true: full moral virtue requires that which partly ‘restricts itself (自我節制)’, namely objective structure.” (Mou, 1991, p.59)

The concrete implication of this is that no matter what one’s level of moral accomplishment, insofar as one’s virtue is manifested in politics, one cannot override the relevant limits (that is, the highest principles of the political world), and in fact must devote one’s august character to the realization of these limits. (Mou, 1991, p.128)

In short, Sages cannot break the law or violate the constitution, politics thus has its independence from morality. One of the great debates of the Neo-Confucian era is about the relative importance or priority of institutions, this debate takes on many guises, but at bottom is the sense that there is a tension between two ways of understanding the structure that undergirds a well-ordered society. One sees institutions and their component parts (traditions, rules, and regulations, etc.) as more fundamental. The other sees the people who direct and belong to the institutions, and particularly the character of such people (understood as a combination of talents and ethical dispositions), as more fundamental.

Opposed to Confucian idea of “governing with morality”, Taoism indicates the idea of “ruling with inaction (無為而治)”. It is the principle of statecraft for those rulers in ancient China, and it is also the basic idea of Taoism. It is the highest and the best way for statecraft of He Xie. It comes to Lao Tzu’s social and political ideals, most people will think of the *Tao Te Ching* chapter 37, thinking that “ruling with inaction” is Lao Tzu’s political ideal.

Many scholars write about this critical analysis, that this is the negative backwardness of ideas in the *Tao Te Ching*. “Tao invariably takes no action, and yet there is nothing left that is done”(無為無不為) to consensual, it is yearning for primitive statecraft. It is explicit that it is crucial to maintain the ethical purity of those

in the faction; “if there are those who are wicked and evil, then you ought to expel them completely” (Zhu, 2002, p.1244). Similar views can be found among the leaders of Neo-Confucianism’s most famous faction, the Shen Buhai (申不害 354-337 BCE). Shen’s central insight seems to have been that government should be based not on feudal principles, but on a bureaucratic system. Creel observes that Shen favored “a system of administration by means of professional functionaries, whose functions are more or less definitely prescribed” (Creel, 1974, p.55). Rulers should not find good men and give them responsibility, but instead find the right man for each role in the system. The role of the ruler in such a theory is simple: define the needed functions and select men to perform them, then “do nothing (wuwei)”. Doing nothing does not mean to literally abstain from action, but the ruler does nothing more than keep the system running smoothly. Shen compares the ruler to a scale:

... which merely establishes equilibrium, itself doing nothing; yet the mere fact that it remains in balance causes lightness and heaviness to discover themselves. (Creel, 1974, p.352)

Unlike the *Tao Te Ching*, which seems to trust nature more than man, Shen trusts man-made institutions more than individuals’ decision-making powers. In recent years, although many Chinese scholars have overturned the “ruling inaction”, but they have not characterized it as reactionary backwardness. Lao Tzu yearns for “When the leaders abide, the myriad things transpire” in statecraft of He Xie. As *Tao Te Ching* chapter 37 mentioned:

Tao invariably takes no action, and yet there is nothing left undone. If kings and barons can keep it, all things will transform spontaneously. If, after transformation, they should desire to be active. I would restrain them with simplicity, which has no name. Simplicity, which has no name, is free of

desires. Being free of desires, it is tranquil. And the world will be at peace of its own accord. (Chan's translation, 1963, p.158)¹⁷

Inaction without prejudice is Lao Tzu taking the action of using Tao for ruling governance of states, it is Lao Tzu's advice to kings and barons. Rulers succeed by allowing nature to take its course: by "not acting (*wuwei*)". Ironically, some of the *Tao Te Ching*'s teachings are appropriated as straight-forward political advice by certain later thinkers. The best communities, as far as the *Tao Te Ching* is concerned, are those that form and flourish naturally, with little guidance from above, as for instance: "The way is revered and virtue is honored not because this is decreed by any authority but because it is natural for them to be treated so." (Chapter 51) for example, echoes the *Tao Te Ching* in calling for rulers to avoid articulating explicit standards or desires, but it does so in order to make sure that ministers cannot pander to the ruler, rather than out of a deeper objection to standards as such.

3.2.2 Debate between Taoism and Mohism

"Exaltation of the virtuous and use of the capable" (尚賢使能) is the Mohist idea of governance. Its political ideas in advocating the promotion of the "virtuous" (賢才), eliminating class thinking, making unity, advocating "non-offensive", and opposing all wars of aggression. Mohists believes that the ancient sage with great respect for the people of virtue, talent and wisdom, uses various methods to encourage and promote the so-called "exaltation of the virtuous" (尚賢), and then promote reuse according to their abilities, called "use of the capable" (使能). Mo Tzu believes that the governance of states, first of all, to persuade the monarch to respect talent, gather talents, reuse talent, this governs top priority. Therefore, only the choice of virtuous, can govern the great

¹⁷ Original text: 道常無為而無不為。侯王若能守，萬物將自化；化而欲作，吾將鎮之以無名之樸；無名之樸，亦將不欲；不欲以靜，天下將自正。

state. On the use of virtuous people, it emphasizes that rulers should practice enlightened politics and be human beings. Mo Tzu closely linked the problem of talent with the state's chaos and social development, which cannot but be said to be a fruitful way to the statecraft of He Xie. Mo Tzu's ideas of "exaltation of the virtuous" stated:

This is because the rulers have failed to exalt the virtuous and to employ the capable in their government. When the virtuous are numerous in the state, order will be stable; when the virtuous are scarce, order will be unstable. Therefore the task of the lords lies nowhere but in multiplying the virtuous. (Mo Tzu, "Exaltation of the Virtuous")¹⁸

Mo Tzu's political thought begins with a distinctive, fascinating state of nature account of the origin and justification of the state. People's primary motivation is not self-interest, but their diverse, individual conceptions of "Yi" (righteousness). Of course, some of the individuals in the state of nature might be ethical egoists, whose conception of "Yi" is that it is morally right to pursue one's self-interest. Individuals all tend to do what they think is right; the problem is that everyone disagrees about what that is. The plurality of moral standards thus leads to contention, belligerence, and wasted resources. Mo Tzu stated,

In antiquity, when people first arose, before there were penal codes and government, probably the saying was, "People have different norms of righteousness (yi)." Inside the family, fathers and sons, elder and younger brothers became resentful and scattered, unable to remain together with each other peacefully. The people of the world all injured each other with water, fire, and poison. It reached the point that, having surplus strength, they couldn't use it to labor for each other; letting surplus resources rot, they didn't share them with each other; and concealing good dao (ways), they didn't teach them to each other. The disorder (luan) in the world was like that among the birds and beasts. (Mo Tzu, "Identification with the Superior")¹⁹

¹⁸ Original text: 是在王公大人為政於國家者，不能以尚賢事能為政也。是故國有賢良之士眾，則國家之治厚，賢良之士寡，則國家之治薄。故大人之務，將在於眾賢而已。

¹⁹ Original text: 古者民始生，未有刑政之時，蓋其語『人異義』。是以內者父子兄弟作怨惡，離散不能相和合。天下之百姓，皆以水火毒藥相虧害，至有餘力不能以相勞，腐臭餘財不以相分，隱匿良道不以相教，天下之亂，若禽獸然。

It was understood that the people lacked government leaders to unify the world's norms of righteousness, and so the world was in disorder. Thus the most worthy, sagely, and intelligent person in the world was chosen. The texts do not explain how the ruler is selected, nor, given their differences, how people manage to agree on who qualifies as the most worthy candidate. This is the basis for such other aims as national defense, public security, economic management, and social welfare.

As Chris Fraser comments,

As we have seen, the theory of “conforming upward” argues for a centralized state with a hierarchical, tightly organized bureaucracy. The other prominent Mohist political doctrine, “promoting the worthy,” contends that to ensure the success of the state in securing wealth, a large population, and social order, appointments to the bureaucracy must be based on ethical merit and professional ability. Talented commoners should be considered for office as well as those from elite backgrounds (particularly kinsmen of the ruler). This doctrine is partly a response to new administrative challenges arising from population growth, economic expansion, and interstate military rivalry, which called for a move beyond the traditional feudal system and the development of a more specialized, professional cohort of government officials. It is also a reaction against nepotism and incompetence and an appeal for greater equality of opportunity for those of non-elite origin, such as the Mohists themselves. (Fraser, 2015)

It must be perceived as promoting and rewarding the genuinely worthy and offering a fair opportunity for advancement to all. The Mohists' defense of equality of opportunity does not rest on the individualist view that, other things being equal, people intrinsically deserve to be treated similarly. The argument is rather that the utility of the state and society is promoted by employing the most qualified candidates, without regard for their social background. Chris Fraser comments:

Promoting the Worthy” and “Identifying Upward.” The purpose of government is to achieve a stable social, economic, and political order (*zhi*, pronounced “jr”) by promulgating a unified conception of morality (*yi*). This task of moral education is to be carried out by encouraging everyone to “identify upward” to the good example set by social and political

superiors and by rewarding those who do so and punishing those who do not. Government is to be structured as a centralized, bureaucratic state led by a virtuous monarch and managed by a hierarchy of appointed officials. Appointments are to be made on the basis of competence and moral merit, without regard for candidates' social status or origins. (Fraser, 2015)

It is accomplished primarily by emulating the judgments and conduct of moral exemplars, specifically how they distinguish “right” (是) from “not” (非) and act accordingly. The outcome of such behavioral pattern will be virtues, reliable dispositions to distinguish right from not correctly in speech and action. As we saw earlier, such dispositions constitute the Mohists' basic conception of knowledge. In summary, “benefit to the world” is a general conception of welfare comprising social harmony and public security; economic prosperity and a thriving population and family; reciprocal cooperation among neighbors and charity for the needy; and good social relations, manifested in the exercise of virtues corresponding to the fundamental social roles.

Opposed to Mohist's idea, Taoism indicates “not to exalt the virtuous and then let people not vying” (不尚賢，使民不爭) as the ideal statecraft for rulers in ancient China. Lao Tzu teaches people not to be aggressive in vying name, not to envy those who are in the leading position, then struggle for profit greedy endless, people having not an intense and selfish desire for power or wealth. As *Tao Te Ching* chapter 3 mentioned:

Do not exalt the worthy, so that the people shall not compete. Therefore in the government of the Sage, he always causes his people to be without knowledge or desire. And the crafty to be afraid to act, by acting without action, all things will be in order. (Chan's translation, 1963, pp.140-141)²⁰

²⁰ Original text: 不尚賢，使民不爭。是以聖人之治，常使民無知無欲，使夫智者不敢為也。為無為，則無不治。

Do not admire talented people, nor let the ordinary people compete with each other, do not cherish rare possessions, guide the ordinary people not to steal, and do not be prominent enough to cause greedy things, so that the hearts and minds are not confused. Therefore, the principles of Sage's governance are emptying the people's mind, filling the belly of the people, and weakening the people's competitive intentions. Sage according to the principle of "ruling inaction" naturally, then, the genius will not be out of peace. It is an ideal social model, and building the ideal statecraft of He Xie that mankind is striving for.

3.2.3 Debate between Taoism and Legalism

Legalist idea of statecraft is "to govern the country with law" (以法治國). The term "Legalists" is ubiquitous in studies of early Chinese political philosophy. It is the most important faction of the law in the Pre-Qin dynasties, advocating "states ruled by law", and bringing forward some methods and principles. To provide practical application of ascertainment in Centralization, the Qin Dynasty, and later the Han Dynasty transferred the Centralization of political and legal system from Qin Dynasty, becoming the main body of politics and legal system in ancient Chinese feudal society. The legalists attached importance to the law, opposed the Confucian "propriety", opposed the hereditary privilege of the aristocracy to monopolize economic and political interests, and demanded that the land should be privately owned and given official positions in accordance with merit. The function of law is to clarify the ownership of the object, encourages people to work, and make those wrongdoers fear, the final intent of the work will be to epitome the victory of the merger war. Angus C. Graham notices that Legalists are the first political philosophers in China "to start not from how society ought to be but how it is." (Graham, 1989, p.269).

Indeed, this was the most practical-oriented of all preimperial intellectual currents. The people's intrinsic selfishness constantly endangers social order; and to safeguard this order, the ruler should resolutely rein in his subjects through the law (fa 法 in this context refers primarily to punitive laws). The state should tightly control its subjects: the system of mandatory registration of the population and creation of mutual responsibility groups among the populace will ensure that every crime is denounced and the criminal--particularly those who abscond from the battlefield--will know that "there is no place to flee from the army ranks, and migrants can find no refuge." (*Commentary on Shang Yang's Book 18*: 108). Moreover, to overawe the people, the text advocates inflicting heavy punishments for even petty offenses, as only then will the people be sufficiently scared as to behave properly. Eventually, harsh punishments will eliminate the very need for punishments:

To prevent wrongdoing and stop transgressions, nothing is better than making punishments heavy. When punishments are heavy and [criminals] are inevitably captured, then the people dare not try [to break the law]. Hence, there are no penalized people in the state. When there are no penalized people in the state, it is said, then: "Clarifying punishments [means] no executions." (*Commentary on Shang Yang's Book 17*: 101)

Due to above pronouncements, Shang Yang (商鞅) gained notoriety as an advocate of oppression; but actually his attitude toward the people is much more balanced than is often imagined. The Book of Lord Shang frequently speaks of "loving/caring for the people" (ai min 愛民) and "benefiting the people" (li min 利民), echoing other contemporaneous texts which proclaimed the people's well-being as the ultimate goal of policy-making (Pines, 2009, p.201). The people are not just the potential enemy of the ruler: they are his major asset. Without their hard labor in the fields or their bravery on the battlefield, the state is doomed. Yet the people will not embrace tilling and waging

war just out of fear of coercion. A more complex system is needed: one that will introduce attractive positive incentives along with awe-inspiring negative ones. Shang Yang explains:

Human beings have likes and dislikes; hence, the people can be ruled. The ruler must investigate likes and dislikes. Likes and dislikes are the root of rewards and penalties. The disposition of the people is to like ranks and emoluments and to dislike punishments and penalties. The ruler sets up the two in order to guide the people's will and to establish whatever he desires. (Duyvendak, 1928, 9.3)

Guan Tzu (管子) or Guan Zhong (管仲, 720–645 B.C.) was a chancellor and reformer of the state of Qi during the Spring and Autumn period of Chinese history. Through Guan Zhong's reforms and skilful diplomacy Qi became the most powerful of the feudal states. He indicated “people-oriented (民為本)” thought for statecraft of He Xie, and carried out a series of policies and measures of “enriching the people (富民)”, “benefiting the People (利民)”, “loving the People (愛民)”, “carrying the minds of people (順民心)”, “meeting the desire of people (從民欲)” and “getting rid the evil of people (去民惡)”. These ideas had a great and far-reaching impact. They stressed that a sacred monarch should execute the law in accordance with principles, and thought that individual's accomplishments in his body and mind should be valued. The idea followed the idea of people's moral character that can reflect real morality, and cultivation of people's moral character was also closely related to the principle of keeping the doctrine and carrying out the morality in political behavior, showing a very close relationship in-between the doctrine and the morality. It is of great benefit in carrying out the idea of “people-oriented” governing the rule of governance for statecraft. Guan Tzu stated:

The first step of governing the state is to enrich the people. If the people are rich, then it is easy to govern them. If the people are poor, then difficult. Why do I know this? If the people are rich, then they value their home and family. If they value their home and family, then they respect the king and fear punishment. If they respect the king and fear punishment, then it is easy to govern them. If the people are poor, then they don't value their home and family. If they don't value their home and family, then they dare to offend the king and violate the prohibitions. If they dare to offend the king and violate the prohibitions, then it is difficult to govern them. (Guan Tzu, "Governing the State")²¹

Taoism indicates the idea "to govern with righteousness" (以正治國)" to oppose legalist political idea. Only the implementation of the "Be righteous in governance", will there be a revival, sparse without losing effect, and so that people gradually returns to the natural inaction. In view of the situation in the Spring and Autumn Period of Chinese ancient time, when the rulers were rampant, the evil law was prevalent, could not be dependent on by the people. Lao Tzu emphasizes that the root cause of the social disorder is the inability or lawlessness and the prevalence of evil laws. As the *Tao Te Ching* chapter 57 mentioned:

Govern the state with correctness. Operate the army with surprise tactics. How do I know that this should be so? Through this: The more taboos and prohibitions there are in the world, The poorer the people have, The more cunning and skill man possesses, The more vicious things will appear. The more laws and orders are made prominent, The more thieves and robbers there will be. (Chan's translation, 1963, pp. 166-167)²²

Huang-Lao Taoist thought of ruling legislation is not only the inheritance and promotion of Lao Tzu's political ideas, but also the view of Confucianism and Legalities. It reveals the origin, characteristics of law and the intrinsic relationship between legal and Tao, and discusses the specific problems of virtue and punishment,

²¹ Original text: 凡治國之道，必先富民；民富則易治也，民貧則難治也；奚以知其然也？民富則安鄉重家，安鄉重家，則敬上畏罪；敬上畏罪，則易治也；民貧則危鄉輕家；危鄉輕家，則敢陵上犯禁；陵上犯禁，則難治也。

²² Original text: 以正治國，以奇用兵。吾何以知其然乎？以此：天下多忌諱，而民彌貧；民多利器，國家滋昏；民多技巧，奇物滋起；法令滋彰，盜賊多有。奇物滋起；法令滋彰，盜賊多有。

legislation, judicature and so on. On the division of Huang-Lao Taoist thought, the authenticity of the works, and the academic circles are very controversial. “Righteous” has a recognized authority and impartiality, derived from the Tao and born out of the Tao. Huang Lao Taoist believes in the field of social and political, the Tao is impartial, fair and natural characteristics, it is reasonable to become the inherent stipulation of the legal. Huang-Lao Taoist thought of ruling legislation is not only the inheritance and promotion of Lao Tzu’s political ideas, but also the view of Confucianism and Legalities. It reveals the origin, characteristics of law and the intrinsic relationship between legal and Tao, and discusses the specific problems of virtue and punishment, legislation, judicature and so on.

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3.2.4 Debate between Taoism and Strategism

Strategist main concern is how to strengthen the country. It contains the wealth of ideas for ruling states, not only emphasis on the way to govern the states, but also the way to strengthen the army (強兵富國). Strategists thought together with other four Schools’ that ideas can coexist, or has no contradiction, Strategists mainly focus on the mode of war and the behavior of war, and does not evaluate the politics of the states. Therefore, any state rulers does not strengthen pursuit of excellence statecraft from four Schools’ of ideas of statecraft, but those state rulers prefer to comply with the Strategists thought on the way to strengthen the army, then make rich the state. The cruelty of war

has shaped Strategists to be down-to-earth, truth-seeking pragmatic characters of the military. Sun Tzu stated:

The art of war is of vital importance to the State. It is a matter of life and death, a road either to safety or to ruin. Hence it is a subject of inquiry which can on no account be neglected.²³

...

All warfare is based on deception. Hence, when able to attack, we must seem unable; when using our forces, we must seem inactive; when we are near, we must make the enemy believe we are far away; when far away, we must make him believe we are near. Hold out baits to entice the enemy. Feign disorder, and crush him. If he is secure at all points, be prepared for him. If he is in superior strength, evade him. If your opponent is of choleric temper, seek to irritate him. Pretend to be weak, that he may grow arrogant. If he is taking his ease, give him no rest. If his forces are united, separate them. Attack him where he is unprepared, appear where you are not expected. These military devices, leading to victory, must not be divulged beforehand. (Sun Tzu, "Laying Plans")²⁴

Strategists recognize the positive effects of war on the survival, and strive for or consolidate the status of the powerful states. On the other hand, they also recognize the dangers of war, so they have repeatedly advised that state rulers treat war with caution, without militarism or great joy.

Opposed to strategist idea of governance, Taoism indicates "good armaments will bring misfortune". (佳兵不祥). Lao Tzu stressed: "although the war is not a peaceful matter, as state rulers, when it is forced to do so, it is necessary to use war to achieve its own purpose. The victory should not be brave, not to use weapons to be the killing force. On the contrary, for those who died in the war, those state rulers should sincerely express their grief and sorrow, and arrange properly places for the deceased with the funeral." As the *Tao Te Ching* chapter 31 mentioned:

²³ Original text 《孫子·始計I》: 兵者，國之大事，死生之地，存亡之道，不可不察也。

²⁴ Original text: 兵者，國之大事，死生之地，存亡之道，不可不察也...兵者，詭道也。故能而示之不能，用而示之不用，近而示之遠，遠而示之近。利而誘之，亂而取之，實而備之，強而避之，怒而撓之，卑而驕之，佚而勞之，親而離之。攻其無備，出其不意，此兵家之勝，不可先傳也。

Weapons are instruments of evil, not the instruments of a good ruler. When he uses them unavoidably, he regards calm restraint as the best principle. Even when he is victorious, he does not regard it as praiseworthy. For to praise victory is to delight in the slaughter of men. He who delights in the slaughter of men will not succeed in the empire. (Chan's translation, 1963, p.155.)²⁵

Lao Tzu's doctrine is based on the struggle to keep soft, and of course it is against the war. First of all, war brings the greatest man-made disaster and violates the principle of natural interests. It is against the heavens to fight for the invasion and harm others. During the war, human life was like mustard, the people turned to gully, displaced, the land was ridiculous, the economy collapsed, and only death, disease and hunger came with the war. The true brave does not fight with others but has no choice to fight with kindness. Therefore, the people are attached, and the soldiers use their lives to win the battle. In the history of mankind, the battles are frequent, all out of the people's insatiable, false resumption, in order to eliminate the scourge of war, but the war is unsettled. That is to say, those who are good at being gentlemen are gentle and soft, those who are fine at combat are not angry, those who are fine at defeating the enemy, those who are not close to the enemy, those who are good at using people, and those who are good at rituals, this is the so-called indisputable virtue. Everything does not compete with people, as small as peoples, as large as states, then mankind can avoid confrontation and maintain long-term peace.

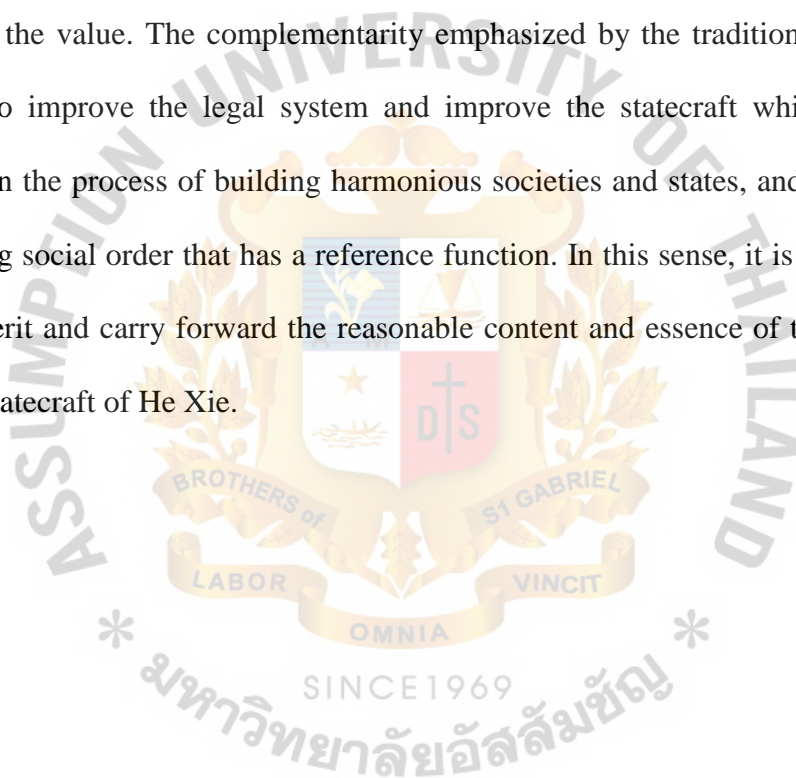
²⁵ Original text: 兵者，不祥之器，非君子之器。不得已而用之，恬淡為上，勝而不美；而美之者，是樂殺人也。夫樂殺人者，不可得志於天下矣。

3.3 Summary

To make a simple analysis of the reference and application of the Confucian, Taoism, Mohists, Legalists, and Strategists, these Schools' of thought are of the statecraft of He Xie. There are two of the greatest influences in Chinese philosophy, Confucianism and Taoism, as two obvious reactions to the political circumstance of society and state about 2,500 years ago in China. Chinese thinking pursued an essentially different course to that of the West. Neither Taoism, Confucianism, nor Chinese philosophical Schools ever strayed outside the humanist territory and into the spiritual and religious realms as many western philosophers did. It is of major signification to acquaint this plainly, especially ideas of Lao Tzu and the *Tao Te Ching* are concerned.

In line with the practice of social modernization in Asian countries, it puts forward the possibility of reasonable reference for the thought of the ruling government of those Schools in the process, and the concept of modern public administration and public policy with governance. In the process of promoting industrialization and modernization in the countries of the Han cultural circles such as Mainland-China, Taiwan, Singapore, Japan, South Korea, and Southeastern Asia countries, the essence of the modern world system of these Schools nowadays has achieved perfect combination, reflecting the universality of these Schools' thought of statecraft. The pursuit of He Xie is the profound ideal, the concentrated embodiment of the nucleus essence of hereditary culture, and the valuable historical inheritance. Even though the nucleus essence of hereditary culture cannot offer people with timely response of building harmonious societies and states, it can provide people with a historical intelligence and realistic reference to solve the contradictions between the present generation of people, man and

society, man and nature, and material civilization and spiritual civilization. For example, the inclusiveness advocated in the traditional thought of He Xie is instructive on how to mobilize all positive factors most widely and fully in the process of building harmonious societies and states, and to continuously enhance the vitality of the whole society and state. The balance advocated by the traditional thought of He Xie, to coordinate the interests of all strata in the process of building harmonious societies and states, effectively safeguard and realize social equity and justice, but also without reference to the value. The complementarity emphasized by the traditional thought of He Xie is to improve the legal system and improve the statecraft while promoting democracy in the process of building harmonious societies and states, and the conflicts of optimizing social order that has a reference function. In this sense, it is a meaningful work to inherit and carry forward the reasonable content and essence of the traditional thought of statecraft of He Xie.



CHAPTER IV

THE EMBODIMENT OF HE XIE AS STATECRAFT

4.1 Harmonious Statecraft in the *Tao Te Ching*

In the aspect of “Statecraft”, He Xie is also the basic principle of dealing with all kinds of contradictions. Such as, “moderating its ingenuity (挫其銳)”, “unraveling its complexity (解其紛)”, “softening its intensity (和其光)”, “merging into its ubiquity” (同其塵). The so-called “ingenuity”, refers to such as sharp knife spear that hurts people without unhappiness. The so-called “complexity” refers to the ribbon or disputes, because of its silky clutter, the extension of disputes, “States” are always in dispute of profit and harm, as the key to political conflicts for “Statecraft”. He Xie can also develop a huge mission of states governing manner. It is the assertion of relations between “States” which are dealt with in a peaceful manner. In dealing with the relationship between war and peace, the maintenance of peace is a fundamental prerequisite for the promotion of social development. The experience of history recorded that without a peaceful environment, the economic development and social progress of individual states are difficult to achieve.

At the same time, the development and prosperity of all states are a strong guarantee of peace. He Xie remains the greatest concern of all humankind, as it is the basis of continuation and development in human society and states civilization. In other words, He Xie is the prerequisite, development is the core, the promotion of common

development throughout the states, which is the historic task facing contemporary society.

He Xie is the basic spirit of Chinese cultural tradition, and also the ideal realm of the unremitting pursuit of the Chinese “promising politics” and “inaction politics”. He Xie in Wei (Deeming Action) or Wu Wei (Non-deeming Action) for statecraft. “Harmonious Statecraft” is becoming a new motive of Chinese politics and a new intent developing for many state-leaders’ leadership since ancient times up to now. “Harmonious Statecraft”, should be democracy rules and regulation under fair and just legislation, full of accredit and affection, brimming with vitality, steady and orderly, and He Xie (Harmony) with the self-so naturally. There are related chapters in the *Tao Te Ching* that are the highest goal to be achieved in the statecraft of He Xie as mentioned.

4.1.1 Governing the State According to Tao

Lao Tzu and later Taoist scholars unanimously affirmed the universality, connotation and dependence, pointing out the universe, cosmos, and then thousand things get along simultaneously. Everything is related to mankind’s rest, not to be separated, and to live and die. This kind of possession of Taoism, the unity and the combination of each other, since human beings and nature and all things are a harmonious organic unity; what reason does humanity have to violently destroy everything and shared by human beings. Human beings can consciously assist the natural development of all things without interference, and obtain a living space where all things coexist, and reflect the true value of life. As the *Tao Te Ching* chapter 70 mentioned:

My doctrines are very easy to understand and very easy to practice, But none in the world can understand or practice them. My doctrines have a

source (Nature); my deeds have a master (Tao). It is because people do not understand this that they do not understand me. Few people know me, and therefore I am highly valued. Therefore the sage wears a coarse cloth on top and carries jade within his bosom. (Chan's translation, 1963, p.172)²⁶

“Tao in expression” (道用 dào yòng) refers to the motion and the cultivation of Tao, so the *Tao Te Ching* becomes the fundamental classic nurture of Tao, it will achieve amicable and cheerful life harmoniously. This is the highest goal to achieve the statecraft of He Xie.

4.1.2 Small State with Few Population

The ideal commonwealth society in the ancient Chinese states, it is most of rulers according to their intelligence and knowledge. So egotistic crafty is restrained, and bandits, traitors and other wrongful persons no more subsist, therefore inhabitants need not to close those whose outer doors, it is called the “commonwealth”. For Lao Tzu's ideal society is “Small State Few People” almost like it. People are always self-so naturally, and everything is in harmony, but they do not know that there is a heavenly constraint, and whether the ruler bothers with them or not.

In Taoism, the best state of states is without sufficient development, and the perfect state of human society is the original one that gets along well with little interference. The *Tao Te Ching* chapter 80 mentioned:

Let there be a small country with few people. Let there be ten times and a hundred times as many utensils, but let them not be used. Let the people value their lives highly and not migrate far. Let them relish their food, beautify their clothing, be content with their homes, and delight in their customs. Though neighboring communities overlook one another and the crowing of cocks and barking of dogs can be heard. Yet the people there may grow old and die without ever visiting one another. (Chan's translation, 1963, p.175)²⁷

²⁶ Original text: 吾言甚易知，甚易行。天下莫能知，莫能行。言有宗，事有君。夫惟無知，是以不我知。知我者希，則我者貴，是以聖人被褐懷玉。

²⁷ Original text: 小國寡民，使有什伯人之器而不用，使民重死而不遠徙。甘其食，美其服，安其居，樂其俗。鄰國相望，雞犬之聲相聞，民至老死不相往來。

For Taoism and Lao Tzu's ideal society of commonwealth is contrary to the advancement of human society, its small state has few populations, non-overbearing, mostly needing no outside help in satisfying inhabitants' basic needs, especially with regard to the production of food, and regulating themselves without intervention from external bodies. This is the highest goal to be achieved in the statecraft of He Xie.

4.1.3 Governing a Great State as Frying Small Fish

Governing a great state can't easily disturb people, the effective government requires minimal intervention. It should be like frying small fish; when it is cooked enough, it can be turned over and then continue frying, otherwise, it is easy to fry the small fish as broken or as burning. The *Tao Te Ching* chapter 60 mentioned:

Ruling a big country is like cooking a small fish. If Tao is employed to rule the empire, Spiritual beings will lose their supernatural power. Not that they lose their spiritual power, But their spiritual power can no longer harm people, Not only will their supernatural power not harm people, But the sage also will not harm people. When both do not harm each other, Virtue will be accumulated in both for the benefit [of the people]. (Chan's translation, 1963, p.168)²⁸

Governing a great state is necessary to follow the natural way of heaven. Tao, to be quiet and inaction, not to be rude to interfere with people of the subject-matters, just to interfere with the “self-so naturally”, otherwise to make people's lives dysfunctional, and people's livelihood are erratic, and the state is in ruin. Naturally, people will conform to the self-so way of self-improvement, self-richness and self-reliance. The combination of Lao Tzu's thought of Wu Wei, and the rule of “governing a great state”, to express the way of governance is very clear, to govern a great state should not be

²⁸ Original text: 治大國若烹小鮮。以道莅天下，其鬼不神。非其鬼不神，其神不傷人；非其神不傷人，聖人亦不傷人。夫兩不相傷，故德交歸焉。

turned around, do not often disturb, let alone toss. This is the highest goal to be achieved in the statecraft of He Xie.

4.1.4 The Easy Downward Course

In the universe, most of the things are no weaker than water, attackable and strong but cannot be beaten, because of its incompetence, and there is no way to change its weak nature. Lao Tzu was far away from the court, did not give up thinking about state political conflicts in the depths of thought, he reflected from the natural peace of water to the drawbacks of real political conflicts at that time. Lao Tzu believes that the route of water followed by the way of Nature, is as towing a bow; “the high one suppresses it, the lower one raises it” (高者抑之下者舉之), that is, so-called “loss is more than enough to make up for the lack” (損有餘而補不足), and at that time the society was just the opposite, showing “there is more than enough damage (損不足而奉有餘)”, it is a lack of fairness. Thus, Lao Tzu advocates politicians should implement fair political policies with generous and inclusive attitude, and propose politicians follow the course of water and pursue fairness, and political results will be to achieve the statecraft of He Xie naturally. As the *Tao Te Ching* chapter 78 mentioned:

There is nothing softer and weaker than water. And yet there is nothing better for attacking hard and strong things. For this reason there is no substitute for it. All the world knows that the weak overcomes the strong and soft overcomes the hard. But none can practice it. Therefore the sage says: He who suffers disgrace for his country is called the lord of the land. He who takes upon himself the country's misfortunes becomes the king of the empire. Straight words seem to be their opposite. (Chan's translation, 1963, pp.174-175)²⁹

The route of water naturally is the indication as in light of all status, mankind should express as the water-course, keeping calm and its changeless character which

²⁹ Original text: 天下柔弱，莫過於水，而攻堅強者莫之能勝，其無以易之。弱之勝強，柔之勝剛，天下莫不知，莫能行。故，聖人云，受國之垢，是謂社稷主；受國之不祥，是謂天下王。正言若反。

represents itself true nature, Taoist adept follows the model of water-course to all life circumstances. To sum up, non-doing is not the genuine truancy or prevented from disturbing with matters, but a doing way meet the very course of the matters, actually, it is known as the minimal intervention. This is the highest goal to be achieved in the statecraft of He Xie.

4.1.5 Three Treasures

Lao Tzu's idea of "Three treasures" is to ask the monarch rulers to imitate, such as, to be merciful, to be kind, to be frugal, not to wage war, and to meet the interests of the common people. It puts forward in the position of the common people, represents the interests of the civilian population, its ideas and theoretical value should be affirmed, in this regard, Lao Tzu explained the problem uses more of fable to expound his own ideas. Lao Tzu added: "I have the three treasures, hold the treasure: deep love, frugality, and, not to dare to be ahead of the world." As the *Tao Te Ching* chapter 67 mentioned:

I have three treasures. Guard and keep them:
The first is deep love. The second is frugality. And the third is not to dare to be ahead of the world. Because of deep love, one is courageous. Because of frugality, one is generous. Because of not daring to be ahead of the world, one becomes the leader of the world. Now, to be courageous by forsaking following Behind—This is fatal. For deep love helps one to win in the case of attack, And to be firm in the case of defense. When Heaven is to save a person, Heaven will protect him through deep love. (Chan's translation, 1963, p.171)³⁰

Lao Tzu's idea of "deep love, one is courageous" (慈，故能勇), that monarch rulers not only have benevolent heart, but also will be able to understand the sufferings of the common people and the public. The state must be consolidated. It shows that monarch rulers are with loving heart, they will never kill the innocents, and they will

³⁰ Original text: 我有三寶，持而寶之。一曰慈，二曰儉，三曰不敢為天下先。慈，故能勇；儉，故能廣；不敢為天下先，故能成器長。今捨慈且勇，捨儉且廣，捨其後且先，死矣！夫慈，以戰則勝，以守則固，天將救之，以慈衛之。

win the hearts and minds of the common people, and the innocents. For the political ruling of states, such a pity for the common people, cherish the people's compassion, it will be able to thrifty self-care, integrity, really in teaching without saying, therefore, it is prosperous states naturally. Tao is inaction naturally, it is merciful to ten thousand things, in order not to fight and win, not to attack and grams, therefore can be courageous, "frugality, one is generous" (儉，故能廣), "not to dare to be ahead of the world" (不敢為天下先). This is the highest goal to be achieved in the statecraft of He Xie.

4.1.6 Superior States Positioned Downstream

The superior states should live in the filth of the rivers, which is the place attached to the world, and the status of females. The female often beats the male quietly, just because she lives quietly. Therefore, the superior states, with the humility of small states, can gain the confidence of small states. Small states, with the humility of the superior states, can gain the trust of the superior states. Therefore, humility can be trusted. Superior states do not demand too much to lead small states, small states do not demand too much to serve superior states, these are appropriate to meet their own requirements, then, the superior states should pay special attention to humility. As the *Tao Te Ching* chapter 61 mentioned:

A big country may be comoared to the lower part of a river. It is the converging point of the world; It is the female of the world. The female always overcomes the male by tranquility. And by tranquility she is underneath. A big state can take over a small state if it places itself below the small state. And the small state can take over a big state if it places itself below the big state. Thus some, by placing themselves below, take over (others). And some, by being (naturally) low, take over (other states) After all, what a big state wants is but to annex and herd others, And what a small state wants is merely to join and serve others. Since both big and

small states get what they want, The big state should place itself low.
(Chan's translation, 1963, p.168)³¹

In Lao Tzu's ideas, water is "highest good", because water is dirty (and humble), will moisturize life, give life love, and accumulate small flow for the sea, to accommodate a hundred rivers. Therefore, "dirty" represents great love, only with an inclusive heart of evil, can achieve the love of the world, this great love is not only the root of the growth of all things, but also the highest realm of morality. This is why love can overcome hate, why can the weak eventually overcome the strong, everything from the weak to strong, all things of reincarnation grow without stopping the way of life. This natural highest moral realm, applied to the intersection of the states is humility, (below) tolerance is the best way to communicate between states. Because the superior states are in strong status it needs to be "dirty", so that superior states can be far away, so that small states can trust and support the surrender. Similarly, small states are humbled by the superior states and can likewise gain the trust and protection of the superior states. To pursue such humility as great doctrine, especially as strong side of the superior states, but also need to adopt humility and indecent policies. This is the highest goal to achieve the statecraft of He Xie.

4.1.7 The Great Rivers and Seas are Kings of All Mountain Streams.

The highest state of the political conflict is He Xie. As the *Tao Te Ching* chapter 61 mentioned:

The great rivers and seas are kings of all mountain streams. Because they skillfully stay below them. This is why they can be their kings. Therefore, in order to be the superior of the people, one must, in the use of words, place himself below them. And in order to ahead of the people, one must, in one's own person, follow them. Therefore the sage places himself above

³¹ Original text: 大國者下流。天下之交，天下之牝。牝常以靜勝牡，以靜為下。故大國以下小國，則取小國；小國以下大國，則取大國。故或下以取，或下而取。大國大過欲兼畜人，小國小過欲入事人，夫兩者各得其所欲，故大者宜為下。

the people and they do not feel his weight. He places himself in front of them and the people do not harm him. Therefore the world rejoices in praising him without getting tired of it. It is precisely because he does not compete that the world cannot compete with him. (Chan's translation, 1963, pp.170-171)³²

The idea of He Xie, in human life is between man and nature, as well as the thought of governing the country in a passive manner and in accordance with the principle. Taoists believe that He Xie, is the norm of all things in heaven and earth, and discord is temporary, disharmony between man and nature, in social life, and statecraft are mainly caused by human misconduct.

4.2 The Contemporary Significance of He Xie

The world situation nowadays seems more complicated and difficult than the age of Lao Tzu. Could the old Chinese wisdom be applied to our contemporary world? If it is the real wisdom, it should provide some useful suggestions which are beyond the limitation of time and space. Lao Tzu's concept of He Xie

4.2.1 The Age of Globalization

The contemporary world is often called the "age of globalization". "Globalization" is an overwhelming phenomenon of hyperlinking and deterritorialization since 1970s. It is mainly marked through "global capitalism" and "development of new technologies". Under this situation risk and crisis become a "normal" state of society. (Wang, 2018, pp. 64-65). Because of the convenient and rapid transportation of people and commodities

³² Original text 《老子》：江海所以能為百谷王者，以其善下之，故能為百谷王。是以聖人欲上人，必以言下之；欲先人，必以身後之。是以聖人處上而人不重，處前而人不害，是以天下樂推而不厭。以其不爭，故天下莫能與之爭。天下皆謂我道大，似不肖。夫惟大，故似不肖。若肖，久矣其細也夫。

many societies in the world have more and more various people and become plural-valuable.

4.2.2 The Conflicts between People and Values

If most people and groups insist their own believes and values, then conflict will be the inevitable result. One of the most serious conflicts nowadays is the religious one. Conflicts between religions have existed for long time in the history of the human beings. In the age of globalization, however, the range and intensity of religious conflicts become bigger and bigger. Most religions advocate the ideas of love and piece. But when they meet some conflicts, most of them forget what they advocated.

In 2019 there were two sad cases about this. On 15th March 2019 there were two consecutive terrorist shooting attacks at mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand. The gunman even live-streamed the attack on Facebook Live. 51 people were killed and 49 injured by the attack. According to report the shooter's motivation was white supremacy over Muslims. (Koziol, 2019)

Just as people were still not out of the sorrow of the shooting in Christchurch, on 21st April 2019, Easter Sunday, bombings happened in three churches and three hotels in Sri Lanka. In the bombings 259 people were killed and at least 500 injured. According to Sri Lankan State Defence Minister Ruwan Wijewardene, the bombings were retaliation for the Christchurch attack. (Wade, 2019)

Through the terrorist attacks mentioned above, people can really understand that irrational conflicts in the world are extremely strengthened through the efficiency and power of globalization.

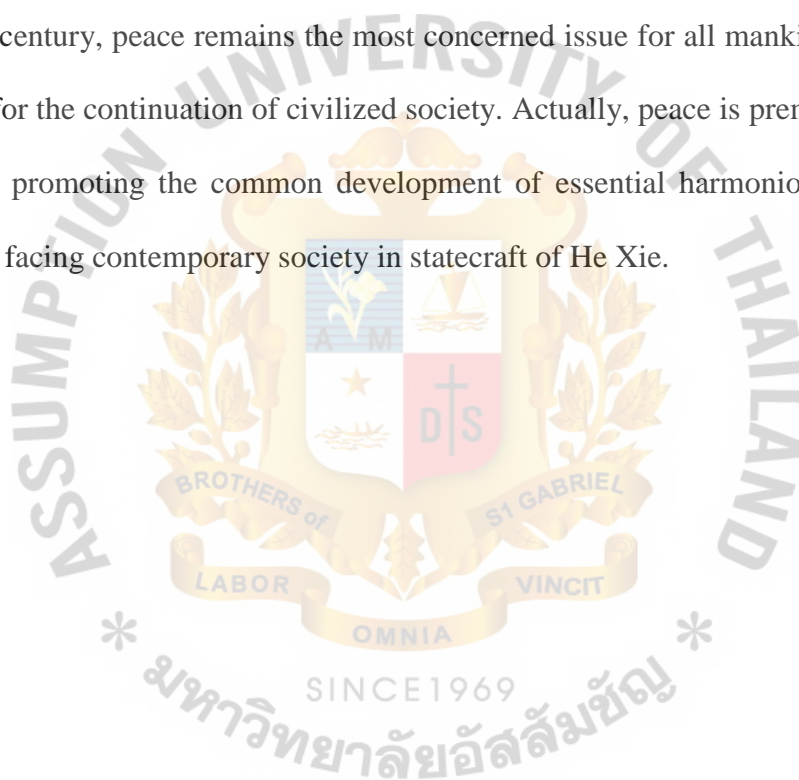
4.2.3 He Xie as the Positive Postulate of Humanity

In the contemporary world, which is full of fights and conflicts, the concept of He Xie seems has its more important significance of the age. He Xie or “harmony” doesn’t mean “unity”. A good example of harmony is musical harmony, in which several different tones sound together, not harsh but pleasant. In the age of globalization the plural values and various opinions should be kept and respected, then the symphony of humanity can be well performed on the stage of world. The concept of He Xie should be promoted in our contemporary world as a positive postulate of humanity.

4.3 Summary

In the aspect of personal relations, harmony is also the basic principle of dealing with all kinds of contradictions. The so-called “dispute”, refers to the ribbon. Because of its silky clutter, the extension of disputes. Human things are always in dispute, profit or harm, as the key to interpersonal problems. Harmony can also perform immense mission in the action or manner of governing states. The way of the state of the country is not to be sharp, to hurt the things, and to hurt the people by not disturbing them. Since ancient times, China has had the idea of He Xie (Harmony) between countries, nationalities, people and people should be united and have mutual love, friendly coexistence as the highest realm; and different means that a country, a people can not only accommodate the existence of different civilizations, but also retain their own excellent civilized tradition; that only when different civilizations absorb and learn from each other can cultural relics be new and the progress of civilization be promoted. “Harmony” is the basic spirit of Chinese cultural tradition, but also the ideal realm of the unremitting pursuit of modern world.

Maintaining peace is the basic prerequisite for promoting social development in dealing with the relationship between war and peace. Historical experience tells us that without a peaceful international environment, economic development and social progress in all countries are difficult to achieve. At the same time, the development and prosperity of all countries is a powerful guarantee for world peace. After World War II, the reason why world peace can be maintained is the significant elements in the rapid dynamic of the political diversification. Obviously, in the new millennium, entering the twenty-first century, peace remains the most concerned issue for all mankind because it is the basis for the continuation of civilized society. Actually, peace is premise, progress is core, and promoting the common development of essential harmonious value is a historic task facing contemporary society in statecraft of He Xie.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

5.1 Conclusion

5.1.1 Overview

Lao Tzu in the early movement of civilized society, due to the idea of naturalism, foresaw the possible side effects in the process of civilization, and carried out a profound reflection on it. This Taoist sense of distress is the ultimate concern for the future and destiny of mankind as a whole. Modern human beings are facing serious problems in many aspects, while the ancient wisdom of naturalism as the basic spirit in Lao Tzu's thought can be used as a source of new wisdom for modern people to find cultural countermeasures and solve the crisis of life. Lao Tzu's thought contributes to Chinese culture and even to world culture in many ways, the idea and theory of nature is core. Naturalism is the soul of Lao Tzu's thought, the basic attitude and principle that Lao Tzu provides to people to deal with all affairs and is also the main embodiment of Lao Tzu's thought in the world and modern significance. In the process of the formation and creation of Chinese culture, Lao Tzu's thought is also the thoughts of Confucius and other pre-Qin philosophers who have had an important influence. Since modern times, Lao Tzu's thought has been that the world has gained widespread communication and has begun to truly become a common human spiritual wealth. There is no doubt that Lao Tzu and his representative Taoist culture is not only an extreme of China but also

of all mankind's precious ideological and cultural heritage. The most profound thing about Lao Tzu's thought is that he reveals the side effects in the early footsteps of human civilization developing and makes a comprehensive reflection on it. The Confucian sense of distress is often praised, and the Taoist reflection on the progress of human civilization, which is mainly represented by Lao Tzu, is in essence a sense of distress, and a deeper sense of distress. Because the Confucian sense of distress only focuses on the future and destiny of states, and the Taoist sense of distress is the ultimate concern for the future and destiny of the whole human race. Lao Tzu stood on the high level of all mankind and even the whole universe, had a different vision from Confucianism, the issues that raises and ponders often have a more universal and timeless meaning for humanity, therefore, from today's point of view, Lao Tzu's thought has a wide range of universal and modern significance. Lao Tzu's philosophy takes nature as its core value, takes inaction as the principled method to achieve its core value, and provides metaphysical arguments and empirical support for natural inaction of Tao and Te, with the dialectics of odd and positive dependence and mutual transfer. The profit is enchanting practice in standard championing of Lao Tzu's well-known political ideas, "ruling inaction" and "statecraft of He Xie", which can be elaborated more fully in Taoism. Taoism is a philosophical approach to life-based on the observation of nature that mostly appeared in the Taoist scripture, *Tao Te Ching*, as an appropriate way of life. At first glance, Taoism may be likened to science, however, scrutinizes nature objectively, detached from the observer; while Taoism, on the other hand, perceives nature subjectively, recognizing oneness between the perceiver and the perceived; one holistic system with humanity being an integral part of the system. As mankind is part of nature, it is natural to meet those own needs, in fact, nature is not a favor to mankind

of the desire to satisfy, and it is difficult to fill those desires are bottomless. Finding the root, mankind must imitate nature, but now those are confused, the reason why those are not in happiness is conquering nature, and those are determined to win the universe. In short, Taoism is the life pattern that tried to contain aptness of nature, but it is not limited in extent to the independent, this manner is not a genuine backtrack to the nature (self-so).

To understand such harmony is to understand the always-so, to understand the always-so is to be illumined, but to fill life to the brim is to invite omens, if the heart makes calls upon the life-breath, rigidity follows, whatever has a time of vigor also has a time of decay, such things are against Tao, and, whatever is against Tao is soon destroyed. (Waley, 1999, P.119)

It is one of Lao Tzu's objective principles of the universe, which means that human beings can retain their own subjectivity, therefore Lao Tzu proffered that to solve the social dilemma he perceived in his era, humanity must seek to reunite with the Tao, the reality that creates and sustains all in nature (from Tao, returning to Tao). When individuals achieve harmony through following self-so naturally, they in turn affect the social order, living environment will prosper, and prosperity then comes to all eternally.

5.1.2 Summary

From Lao Tzu's perspective, the objective principle of the universe, human beings can retain their own subjectivity, therefore, their autonomous activities can employ the principle of Tao as a tool to set up several actions of non-interference. The Chinese ancients' emphasis on morality has a far-reaching consequence for society, Wu Wei (Inaction) and He Xie (Harmony), for life, for family, and for traditional values, in order to persuade people, they must return to kindness and righteous thinking before people can have a bright future. Lao Tzu pointed out that the supreme ruler should have a leisurely and self-satisfied manner, even if it is rarely given the command, because the

achievement originated from natural dedication of mankind. As the *Tao Te Ching* chapter 17 mentioned:

The best (ruler) are those whose existence is (merely) known by the people. The next best are those who are loved and praised. The next are those who are feared. And the next are those who are despised. It is only when one does not have enough faith in others that others will have no faith in him. [The great ruler] value their words highly. They accomplish their task; they complete their work. Nevertheless their people say that they simply follow Nature. (Chan's translation, 1963, p.148) ³³

It means that most brilliant governors are to make their presence almost indiscernible to people, moreover, people are willing to be close to them and to respect them; the worrier rulers are, that people are afraid of them; and that worst rulers are that people simply look down on them. In this philosophical view of the universe, Tao is the dominant category which Lao Tzu was as opposition to the up-to-date notion of ruling inaction naturally. Rooted in the traditional culture of China, the *Tao Te Ching* and its Tao have to be seasoned, it refers to power surrounding and flowing as a result of ten thousand things, and it also adjusts to natural courses and excites equilibrium in the cosmos. Through reflection on history, facing the 21st-century humans have recognized the limitations of this radical anthropocentrism. Expressed in Lao Tzu's ideas of life on the unity of the universe, apparently on this radical transcendence of anthropocentrism, are above all things to people, superior to everything of value paradigm subversion. Then, to maintain balanced and harmonious societies and states, in order to make national stability, people's happiness, it is the highest goal in the statecraft of He Xie.

³³ Original text: 太上，下知有之；其次，親而譽之；其次畏之；其次侮之。信不足焉，有不信焉。悠兮，其貴言，功成事遂，百姓皆謂我自然。

5.2 Recommendations for Further Research

This research systematically demonstrates the fundamental and critical differences between Taoism and Chinese philosophical Schools, like, Confucianism, Mohists, Legalists, Strategists, and Western philosophies; not only enabling to have profound understanding of these philosophies but also offer a frame of reference for the scholars of Chinese academic history to prevent them from applying. Within the scope of the research references, books, and articles, it can be perceived that the material used by ancient Chinese scholars has been worked over time and again through many epochs of Chinese civilization, preparing the way for a somewhat unified approach in Chinese philosophy.

In this research there is a short section 4.2 “The Contemporary Significance of He Xie”, which deals with the application of Taoist philosophy to the contemporary world. In this section we can find that Taoism and even the whole Chinese philosophy are an important part of the cultural heritage in the world. The old Chinese wisdom should contribute its strength to solve the problems in the world nowadays. If we want to let Chinese philosophy be accepted by more people, the primary step is the problem of language: These Chinese classics need more comprehensive translation into European language. “The Chinese world-view is that performing translation is not complete before the reader has read the text while taking full account of the context of the situation under review. In other words with full circumspection of the communication by standing in the shoes of the communicator and viewing the communication from the perspective from which it was written.” (Hall & Ames, 2003, p.235). “Therefore, the translators should refrain from inflicting their own nurtured standards of thinking on the

communication undergoing translation; the communication should remain in its own context throughout the translation.” (Hall & Ames, 2003, p.190).

The predominant way of reading Taoist classics, which take Western notions and their literal application towards Chinese characters, has increasingly come under criticism. It is justly argued that as the Chinese tradition lacks a concept of strict transcendence; translating for readers nurtured in Western metaphysical traditions terms. To avoid reading Taoist classics as metaphysical is alert to the hazard in re-appropriating Tao, the ongoing process of impermanence and change of everything in the world, back into the metaphysical tradition, Tao as the principle of impermanence which remains permanent as a guiding principle itself. “Since Tian and Tao are both Zi Ran (self-do), they need no further postulation of transcendence: There is no God, Heaven, or eternal Way out there for Chinese to follow; Tian and Tao are only ongoing processes of reality in its myriad of transformations, nothing more than the Wanwu (myriad events), things, and processes that constitute reality.” (Hall & Ames, 1998, p.190). Although this brand of thinking has not been foremost throughout the history of Western interpreters or Chinese commentaries, it would, nonetheless, be remiss in assuming that this understanding was not present in both early and later Chinese thinking. This nonexistence of transcendence is not a case for negative theology; Chinese thought should not be regarded as the usual of opposite of transcendence and immanence. Hall and Ames have argued that “it is the language of both transcendence and immanence that confound Western ideas of Chinese sensibilities.” (Hall & Ames, 1998, pp.191-192). They argue that the contrast between transcendence and immanence is founded in theological tradition and are part of the framework of the Western world

view that is the source of Western infusion of ideas, and thus, improper understanding of the distinct Chinese ancient philosophy.

What's more, it is not confounding that such partial theory seeks to its logical completion, its limitation became some obvious points, limited to the analysis and the criticism relevant to "Statecraft of He Xie (harmony)". The researcher would like to recommend that any further research should take in study the original works of the *Tao Te Ching* and should practically use Lao Tzu's political ideas of understanding on empirical grounds. Research should also try to find the links to Lao Tzu's critical philosophy of Taoism and what other Chinese Schools hold, and which model is practicable. The present study does not allow the researcher to elaborate "Statecraft of He Xie" in the *Tao Te Ching* with more details because of the limitations on the research. The researcher would also like to suggest that synthesis thought from Confucianism, Mohists, Legalists, Strategists, and Western philosophies deserve the attention of researchers as their thought seems a culmination of human wisdom, that makes integration of contributions made by various philosophers on this research. It could be suggested that Chinese philosophy is distinctive for a remarkable absence of censorship, there is hardly any other classical literature of that period in human history which plumbs these lower depths of existence with as much sovereign calm.

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