

- (2) Assalayana Sutta, No. 93 of M.II.341
 (3) Suttanipata : Sutta, No. 7 verse 142
 (4) Sundarika sutta : Samyuttanikaya II.210
 (5) Aggannasutta (18) p. 87
 (6) Ibid. p.88
 (7) Cakkavatti-Sihanada Suttanta No. 26 of D.III. 74-75
 (8) A later work very popular in Southeast Asia till recently. In Thailand once a year every temple used to perform an all-day ceremony in which the Mahavessantarajataka was preached to the people from sunrise to sunset in the vernacular verse. Those who wanted to be reborn in the period of Metteyya were obliged to listen to the Jataka story without interruption.
 (9) D.III.250,281 : A.III.284,325,452
 (10) A Northern Thai scholar monk who has composed a number of Buddhist treatises in Pali. He lived in the 21st Buddhist Century
 (11) Khuddakapatha (Minor Readings) No.5 pp.2-6
 (12) Kedar Nath Tiwari, *Comparative Religion* (Delhi : Motilal Banarsidass, 1983), p.217.
 (13) Nathariel Micklem, *Religion* (London : Oxford University Press, 1948), p.194.

Paper III

The Concept of
 an Asian Community and
 the Unity of Religions Seen
 from Confucian Scripture

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Introduction

All things existing physically are different in appearance, but all are the same in essence, that is, having been created by the intangible God, and being developing incessantly in accordance with Divine Principle. All things are different in outside but the same in essence.

It is nothing but a matter of process to plan a community based on the phenomenal social sciences. The ultimate purpose should be achieved based on metaphysical Religion which teaches men to realize the Absolute and practice the highest good. On the standpoint of actual politics, we can hardly expect to overcome national egoism and racial differences.

Since every one, the man created by God, has the nature of goodness, if we could cultivate it through religious education, we could expect the overcoming of national egoism and coming to the unity of all nations in future.

Many of atheists have a great misunderstanding that human history has been developed by men alone, but in reality, God had in the past and has presently the decisive influence upon it, that

is to say, the history of mankind is the process of restoration in accordance with God's will.

We therefore should stand on the position of religion in order to approach to the community of the highest good.

My paper is composed of three parts. In the first part, I argue the restoration of human character through the revolutionary education which is based on religion instead of atheism or secularism, so that we might be able to overcome the crisis of the world caused by national egoism. After that, we can plan the Asian community as well as the true world peace.

In the second part, I have first described the religious conception of the ancient Chinese people, in which religion was closely connected with politics. They regarded the rule of King should accord with the Way of Heaven, Tian-dao. I have secondly described the gradual transformations in later eras when they came to understand God logically and, at last, regarded God as Logos.

In the third part, I state the historical fact that God has variously responded to man with the development of human civilization. And, as my conclusive opinion, I insist we must unite all religions so as to realize the one world under the one God. When all men would restore their intrinsic goodness through religious education and come back to God, we could plan the Asian Community as well as one world in peace. The Unity of Religions is the premise of our community.

In the following, I summarize, item by item, the contents of my presentation written originally in Korean.

I. The Major Premise to Plan the Community and Present Problems

(1) The Major Premise: To realize 'the one world of mankind' is the highest ideal that all intelligence has desired for a long time, and no one would deny the historical fact that, in spite of many difficulties and obstacles, human society has been incessantly and gradually developing toward unification.

Standing on the position of optimism that good would ultimately defeat evil, we could plan the community of all races. With God being on the side of good, this optimism is coincident with the faith that God desires mankind to establish the one world. Confucius said: Humanitarianism comes to flower all over the world, when men overcome selfishness and return to the truth of Heaven. But all men have been, in reality, fallen in deep crisis caused with national egoism, which is contradictory to God's love.

(2) The Present Problems of the Asian Countries

The most serious problems are:

< 1 > Racial Difference

< 2 > Differences of Ideologies and Political Systems

As long as we adhere to those differences, we have no hope to plan a community. Therefore, we must, through religious education, conquer racial differences, and have the same kind of consciousness under one God.

(3) The Egoistic National Absolutism and the Way to Overcome It

Every state has been recently changed to a monster so severely as to maltreat the people. Nowadays the state does not exist for the sake of the people: on the contrary, the people is enslaved by the state. The relation between people and state has been completely adversed. This is why I name national absolutism. At the same time, every state has so deeply fallen into nationalistic egoism that the stronger prey upon the weaker. Every state, therefore, pursues only physical power so as not to be defeated by others in international conflicts.

Since defeat is downfall, every state must strengthen physical power in order to survive, and this power is based on three elements, i.e. military, science and economy. This is why every state has fallen into nationalistic egoism and materialism.

(4) Restoration of Humanity and Reformation of Education

We must restore humanity, which is corrupted with the politics

of nationalistic egoism and physical power, to the sacred nature endowed by God. With atheism and secularism, politics has been so immoral. We, accordingly, have to reform our education in accordance with Heaven and the Way of Heaven (Tian Dao: the Truth of God). In the *Book of Great Learning*, one of the fundamental classics of Confucianism, we find the illustrious method of education in accordance with the Way of Heaven, which enables the restoration of humanity and the ultimate realization of one world in peace. The *Book of Great Learning* educates a man to be a great man who overcomes his egoism and contributes himself to the one world in peace.

II. Heaven in Ancient China and Rationalization of Heaven in Later Eras

(1) The Faith of Ancient Chinese People and the Unity of Religion and State

The faith of the ancient Chinese people was monotheism. They believed in Heaven as only one. We can find many illustrations in Chinese classics.

(2) The King of Heaven (Tiandi) and the Rule of Virtue & Morals (Wangda Dezih) Described in the Shi-jing and the Shu-jing

The ancient Chinese Heaven, equal to God in Christianity had the will to create and develop the Universe.

< 1 > Heaven is the Creator of the Universe and moral rules.

< 2 > Heaven loves people. Jehovah in the Old Testament loves only Jews as the chosen people, while the Chinese Heaven loves all people on earth equally as long as they observe Him and follow the Way of Heaven. In Christianity, God saves people through the Messiah, while in Chinese, Heaven appoints the man of the highest virtue as the son of Heaven (Tian-zi) to rule all the people and the world on behalf of Heaven. The son of Heaven must deify Heaven and practise the will of Heaven. If he does not, he would be deprived

of the appointment, and must concede to another virtuous man.

< 3 > The Rationalization of Heaven and the Way of Heaven in Later Eras

During the transition between Yin dynasty and Zhou dynasty, the Chinese conception of monotheism gradually had been changed and developed into the teachings that man had better reasonably observe the Way of Heaven as truth rather than worship Heaven blindly without reason. Later Confucius more strongly taught to observe the Way of Heaven reasonably and realize politically the one ideal world in accordance with Heaven, as if scientists nowadays observe natural law. Under the following items, I added some descriptions on the rationalization of Heaven, which will be omitted.

< 1 > Heaven and the Way of Heaven

< 2 > Li and the Rule of Li

< 3 > Tai-ji (The Absolute) and Logos

III. The Development of Mankind and God's Response

(1) The Existence of God and the Recognition of Man

The laws in natural science exist and function though they are invisible. In the same way, for those who have learned and have been enlightened, God exists. Atheists are ignorant, because they are not enough learned and not been enough enlightened.

(2) The Development of Mankind and God's Response

God is one, and His essence is invariable. However, He alters His response depending on His objects. The development of human society and (growing) human recognition of God can be divided generally in the following stages.

< i > Polytheistic worship of all things of nature

< ii > Worship of ancestral gods

< iii > The common supreme God of a nation or a tribe

< iv > Nation-unifying God and the God who founded the nation

(3) The Single Global God Who Unifies and Rises

God is one. He varies only in His manifestation depending on time and place. In all men, who are the lords of creation, God is dwelling. Only the way of His manifestation varies. Also the manner of recognition of God varies depending on one's environment and education. <The atheists are born and die not beyond the Heaven or the way of Heaven only because they are atheists.>

"Tai-ji" dwells in minute things as well as in the universe as a whole. The central point in a plane space rises along with the flow of time. And along with the width of the bottom plane, the summit and the height come to change.

Human history and culture have developed and risen in territorial width, numerical amount, and qualitative height. They will continue developing and rising without limit in the future. Accordingly, the phase (stage and aspect) of God, who is the unity of time and space, has also changed and will continue rising even more. However, it does not mean that the essence of God as the "one summit and supreme Goodness" changes. This fact can be illustrated in the following diagram.

- a (clan) → b (tribe) → c (national state) → d (mankind, the world)
- a' (low culture) → b' (a group of people) → c' (national culture) → d' (global culture)
- a " (clan God) → b" (tribal God) → c" (founding God) → d" (God of the Great Harmony of mankind: God in the stage of the unity of religions)

