

Correspondences of African Worldview to Taoist Integral View

I have discovered that the esoteric teachings of both the Hindu religion and Taoism are consistent with African views on spiritual development. For this reason I include here my reflections on Ni Hua Ching's version of the ancient Chinese classic, the Hua Hu Ching, originally attributed to Lao Tze. I've found this version of the original text to be an excellent guide to personal spiritual cultivation. I have summarized some of my understandings of the lessons for individual spiritual development for selected Books numerated in the Hua Hu Ching.

Book 1

Referring to the master teacher ... "His instruction was neither ordinary religion nor worldly wisdom, yet it revealed the truth of every aspect of the universe".

To realize our unlimited life, we need not add things external to our nature, as in religious creeds, doctrines and domineering human intermediaries to our own divinity. Our inner nature already has everything needed. Adding externals to our nature is like trying to wash water, or adding a finger to our hand.

Book 2

"How should men and women who are motivated to attain correct awareness of their true nature calm their minds?"

Being motivated to achieve correct awareness of our true nature is a start; however, knowing how to calm and manage the mind is essential. The mind can be an instrument of liberation or imprisonment. It can imprison by being stuck in the past, living in the imagined future, and trying to preserve the moment. It is said the way to

manage the mind is like imagining a smooth ball rolling along a smooth disk. Then let go this image of a ball and disk, and all other attachments of the mind. Added to the difficulty are all of the dualities created by the mind that separates us from perception of the Real. Intellectual knowledge and direct perception of the Real are not one and the same. In our runaway information age, there is a lack of guidance on how not to clutter or fixate the mind in groves of partial perception.

Book 3

"All lives are one life that can be called the One Great Universal Life". It is the same Source that courses through all forms. So no life form should be disrespected. Again it is the mind that establishes dualities, and notions of superior VS inferior, more sacred and special than the other, self versus other.

To achieve awareness of the true nature of life and Self, these dualities of the mind have to be dissolved. You may ask why treat others as yourself? The reason is because in ESSENCE, you and "other" are the same. Namaste. Yes there is diversity and distinction. Yet there is unity behind all diversity. Even more, there is a great Equality of the many and the One Source. Both the many and the One have to be embraced as Equal. God and Man are one. Embracing is not even the best way to put it. We need not embrace who we really are as in reaching out. We need to just realize who we really are with inner awareness, Integral Awareness. This is not the same as intellectual awareness. It is direct perception beyond thought and symbol.

We are the many and the One at once. Embrace that, but ultimately, just be THAT which you already are with Integral awareness. I think at the core of this

instruction is that we must maintain a non-discriminating mind. That is, maintain an awareness of the underlying unity behind diversity. To value one life form above another is harmful to achieving this awareness. I don't think it means ignore the fact that some need first aid over others. There are people, groups, whose condition are so poor, that they demand our service first. If someone, or some group is dying, regardless of color, nationality, social status, or any other distinction, that person or group needs our focused service first.

Dr. Claude Anderson, who wrote Powernomics, speaks against Blacks getting involved in horizontal issues. Issues that affect all groups like poverty, or the environment. He says Blacks need to focus on Vertical issues that effect Blacks directly, like economic racism. I understand his point, and I refer back to this point when I say that if someone, or some group is bleeding, that they should receive first aid. Blacks need to service themselves first in those areas that they are bleeding in. This for me does not contradict the instruction of unconditional service. It's a fine line. Equality and balance is not always in the middle. Some need more, and with a greater frequency, to strike a balance to the whole.

Book 5

"Kind prince the mind can be just as immeasurable as the universe itself. An integral being ... unites his mind with the Subtle Origin and its expression in which there is no past, present, or future. This is how an integral being deals with his mind."

This tells me that to un-tie the knots of the mind, the hang-ups, the habitual grooves or whirlpools we get stuck in, requires joining our minds with that which is

above these limiting mental constructs, the Subtle Origin. This goes back to the previous idea of having a non-discriminating mind that does not regard the dualities of life as irreconcilable, and all encompassing. One then rises above the countless dualities, gain/loss, success/failure, beauty/ugly, and life/death, becoming free and unlimited.

Book 7

"To hold the mind with any rigid framework is to immediately become trapped in the bondage of duality. If one does not discriminate between what is labeled as sacred and profane, one is liberated from the bondage of all concepts."

Again the instruction is not to be fixated on any mental constructs. Allow the mind to move freely like a smooth ball on a smooth disk, and don't be fixated on the image of a smooth ball and disk. Religious doctrine causes the mind to get stuck, fixated and crystalized. This state becomes a self-accepted prison from the wider realization of universal oneness and Being. Not everyone will break free from this kind of bondage; yet there are beings that have and can support this evolutionary growth.

Book 8

"All the far-reaching, un-faded teachings of the ancient sages come from the same source: the subtle truth of great oneness".

Behind the words, the sacred texts, recorded experiences, are the same un-faded Source that sustains all life, that IS all life. This Source exists without the need of our individual minds to image or fix it into concepts, precepts, or doctrines. It outstrips all of these, and so can we with a non-discriminating mind. This same Source, which sustains

us, is within us. We need only go past the symbolic language and images created by the mind to perceive it. It IS our TRUE SELF, for we are one with IT.

Book 15

"Kind prince, to a universal integral being there is nothing that needs to be tolerated or labeled tolerance. Tolerance exists only in the relative sphere. Why is this? If you have risen above the relative concepts of the mind, there is no self and others, no longevity or brevity, no life or death in your mind, so there is no hatred or resentment. What, then, is the necessity for tolerance? One who is highly evolved is attached to nothing and does not depend on any particular mental concept or form in his relations with people or in serving them. "

The practice of this way of perception would almost be like starting life over. We have to unlearn so much to have correct perception. We have to let go of so much in order to embrace an unlimited life. The place to start is our insistence on holding on to the dualities of the mind that separates us from the underlying REALITY of oneness. All dualities are expressions of the same essence between the polar opposites. Though focusing on one end of the pole is a means of rising above the other pole, as in focusing on the positive to rise above the negative, this still keeps us bounded to the relative realm of dualities.

Once we keep to one end of a pole, there will always be the suggestion in the mind of the opposite end of the pole. The way out is to see the oneness that is behind the dualities. Don't reject the many for the One, or the One for the many. That is another

dichotomy. See the many and the One as an integral WHOLE. In seeing THAT, realize your THAT as your essence because all of existence and non-existence is THAT.

Book 32

"The world and the particles are not separate, isolated things. The particles could be gathered to become the world, and the world could be dispersed to become particles. One small particle contains the nature of the world, and the world contains the nature of each small particle; the nature of each is the same. Although they are not one in the same, neither are they different."

I've pondered over this question deeply for many years. Here is the position I arrived to on this question after much mental struggle. The force of attraction and repulsion speaks to the pervasive oneness of life that is behind all diversity. The universe is made of particles, electrons, protons, neutrons, quarks, etc. How do these particles know to organize themselves in relation to the "other"? It is by the force of attraction and repulsion. Now for one particle to relate to another, to know the other through attraction or repulsion, there must be a medium between that shares in the essence of each. If this were not so there could be no communication, no relation. More so, this medium, sharing in the essence of each particle can thus be said to be on some level, identical or indistinguishable from the particles they join. If this were not so there would be a break in the path of communication, preventing communication. But what we see is that everywhere, all the time, there is communication of attraction and repulsion. Therefore all that exist is integrated in oneness by this shared subtle medium. Life is backed by oneness, while at the same time expresses in diversity. Because of the integral oneness of life, I am one with all, and life is unlimited. From this understanding come my courage,

clarity, peace, strength, power, and transcendence of ego, pain, and even the dissolution of death.