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Surachet Phinyo

Laozi

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From the history, there were prominent philosophers existed in each times. For Roman, there was Socrates who was a prototype of roman. For China, Laozi must be the most renowned philosopher which had most influence at that time. His name has been recognized for more than 2000 years until today. His ideal of taoism was transferred into the book called 'Tao Te Ching'. Laozi's most contribution to mankind was Tao Te Ching. This book had play a crucial role to ancient China and still in print until today.

Laozi lived during 600 BC. He was in Zhou dynasty which at that time was a philosophy war. Originally, Laozi's name is Li ER¹. 'Laozi' is the name that people gave to him. Lao means old. The reason of 'old' is that laozi spent eight years being in his mother womb. Normally, it would take only nine months in womb². When he was born, he came up with white hair. 'Zi' means teacher. He was a government officer in national library who archive history data. By his position, he became teacher of himself by seeking knowledge from library. He always shares his knowledge to other people which led people to revere him. As a result Laozi became his name.

¹ "Laozi (Chinese Daoist Philosopher) -- Britannica Online Encyclopedia." *Encyclopedia - Britannica Online Encyclopedia*. Web. 12 Feb. 2012. <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/330163/Laozi>>.

² "Laozi." *Chinaculture*. Web. 12 Feb. 2012. <http://www.chinaculture.org/gb/en_madeinchina/2005-09/27/content_73460.htm>

During spring and autumn period, there was a chaos in state. The Zhou dynasty was diminishing its power. Laozi wanted to avoid a riot, and he decided to leave a city. On the way out, he met with a guardian of city. The guardian had heard of notable Laozi and ask him to write his wisdom to a book before he left. Laozi wrote Tao Te Ching which contains 81 verses and 5000 letters. Laozi provides his wisdom and morality including good administration through Tao Te Ching.³ This book plays a significant role to Chinese. The context is about assimilation of nature and political philosophy. The main idea of Tao Te Ching is that everything is related by depend or oppose on each other.

Tao Te ching is widely read today because it is easy to understand and implies valuable though. To be able to understand Tao Te Ching, one must understand concept of it first. Tao Te Ching, Tao is referred to 'the way', the way that people should be or the way that nature should be. This section concerns with philosophy regard to Tao. Te is referred to virtue and moral. This part discusses the problem of governing the country from the view of Tao people also presents the art of governing the country. The principle of Tao Te Ching has two widely know, the simplicity of Tao through nature and the concept of emptiness⁴. Tao Te Ching describes how should be in accompany with nature such as harmony and simplicity. In verse 37 of this book, it states that 'man should be satisfy with his simple life, live in harmony and no desire. When there is no desire, people will not be polluted by complexity in their mind. Accompany with simplicity, this book teaches emptiness. It means that not to attach to the outcome that one has already done.

³ "Laozi." *Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*. Web. 12 Feb. 2012.
<<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laozi>>.

⁴ "Tao Te Ching: Taoism – InfoRefuge.com." *Info Refuge*. Web. 12 Feb. 2012.
<<http://www.inforefuge.com/tao-te-ching-taoism>>

In the Tao Te Ching, there is an implication of how to govern people. It implies that all should be consolidation to one another, verse 39⁵, describe about 'oneness'. Under oneness concept, it suggests that everything should be untied. For example, Earth reach united and become stable and the valleys attained oneness become fertile. This principle implies that the oneness is the fundamental of successful. It is concrete definition that can apply in any situation. For example, a country should have the same goal. The same objection that is to develop their own country will lead nation into brighter day. Each unit will do his own duty. Government would try to improve citizen's well-being instead doing for their own benefit. People governed should comply with the rule. By being oneness, all people would feel happy to see their nation grows.

Tao Te Ching has been contributed its benefit until today. Many renowned people used Ta Te Ching as a tool to achieve their goals. Tao Te Ching offer specific advice for those who govern a country. Even President Obama was preached about governing country by Tao Te Ching⁶. In business view of Tao Te Ching, it is concerned with management of how to lead people in most efficient way. In reality, people usually looking the newest information to cope with their deal. As people live in the information age, their always ignore the old information since it might give a wrong concept or interpretation, however, the wisdom of laozi still apply in the present day. Warren buffet, the billionaire, he shared the same idea as Tao Te Ching⁷.

⁵ "Accurate Translation of the Tao Te Ching." *Taoism.net / TrueTao.org*. Web. 14 Feb. 2012. <<http://www.taoism.net/ttc/complete.htm>

⁶ "Tao Te Ching Say Stop Sniping at Political Leaders - Technorati Lifestyle." *Technorati*. Web. 12 Feb. 2012. <<http://technorati.com/lifestyle/article/tao-te-ching-say-stop-sniping/>>.

⁷ "Amazon.com: Warren Buffett and Tao Te Ching: A Modern Investor and an Age-Old Philosophy (9780979626401): Yingpei Zhang: Books." *Amazon.com: Online Shopping for Electronics, Apparel,*

He illustrates Laozi's philosophy with actual examples in business management. As a result, Warren Buffett wrote many books about him and Tao Te Ching.

What would it be if there was no Laozi? Ancient China would not have a principle to hold. People might do terrible things. King would lack of morality to rule people. The whole country would be famine. City would have gone to chaos. China would have been harmony if lack of Laozi. Moreover, there will not be a Buddhism Mahayana exist in this world because it is an aggregation of Buddhism and Taoism⁸

In conclusion, Laozi had contributed his master piece written in a book called Tao Te Ching. It is a valuable philosophy that has a repercussion on society from time to time. It a powerful book, who ever read it will succeed in any work. If merchant, he will be rich, if ruler he will be king of if philosopher he will be the head of doctrine who will destine people's ideal

Computers, Books, DVDs & More. Web. 12 Feb. 2012. <<http://www.amazon.com/Warren-Buffett-Tao-Ching-Philosophy/dp/0979626404>>.

⁸ "Buddhism Beliefs - Taoism and Buddhism." *Know Buddhism*. Web. 13 Feb. 2012. <<http://www.knowbuddhism.info/2009/02/buddhism-beliefs-taoism-and-buddhism.html>>.