

经济之道

道法自然与经济自由

此符采自明代刻本《正统道藏》正一部《道法公元》卷三三五《正一玄坛飞虎都督赵元帅秘法》

如意符



右符念六合咒書畢於二圈內入天和神

張竭地和神柳通速降靈攝再念咒曰

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祖師六合無窮高明大帝律令

KUANG ANRONG Shanghai Peoples Publishing House

THE TAO OF ECONOMICS

Economic Freedom and the Taoist Idea of

“Tao Follows the Way of Itself” 匡安荣 著

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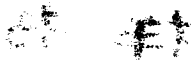
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序

《道德经》这部最早对道家思想进行系统论述的经典,把“道”作为哲学的最高范畴,视为天地万物的总根源和事物运动、发展变化的内在规律,也包括修身之道、齐家之道及治国之道。五千言《道德经》是一个包括道家世界观、人生观和方法论的博大而精深的学术体系,它对两千年中国社会的思想、文化发展产生了巨大的影响,而且远传西欧,对17—18世纪西欧的哲学、经济学发生了一定影响。

人们通常认为,道家主张“无为而治”,是纯粹政府不干预,这是对道家学说的误解。于光远同志曾经说:“其实整本《老子》的精神是积极的。它积极地宣传‘无为’,而积极地宣传‘无为’本身就是‘为’之一种。‘为无为’用一句现在的话说,就是‘积极地不干预’,或‘积极的无为’。实行‘市场经济’有一条,就是政府要懂得,对许多事应采取‘积极无为’的方法。在这里,‘积极’是根本精神,即要有一个把市场经济搞好的目的,而‘无为’是达到这个目的的手段之一。至今有一些人似乎还不懂得这个辩证法。”^①还有不少入——包括王夫之——将道家重要范畴的“无”理解为“虚无”,这种理解没有把握住道家的“无”与“有”相反相成的辩证法。

^① 于光远:《有关“市场经济条件下政府作用”的一个哲理》,《经济研究》,1997年第5期,第53页。

道家强调自然,提出了“人法地、地法天、天法道、道法自然”,这一“自然”范畴应是事物——人与万物——的本质和客观规律。道家的“无为而治”包括着对事物客观规律的顺应,既顺应又驾驭,达到“治大国若烹小鲜”。道家提倡“见素抱朴,少私寡欲”,“去甚、去奢、去泰”,实现人与自然、人与社会和人與人关系的协调,这些深邃思想有着重要现实意义。

宏扬中华文化,对《道德经》中丰富学术思想进行深入的、多视野的研究与发掘,无疑是十分有意义的事。本书是从经济哲学的角度来对道家学说进行新的诠释。作者进行了中西经济学的比较研究,分析了“人性之自然”与斯密“利己心”,“无为”与“看不见的手”,“无为而治”与政府干预,“天人合一”与“帕累托最优”,“道法自然”与“自生自发秩序”,太极图的经济分析等论题。作者掌握了大量的中外有关文献,不只是经济学的文献,而且涉及哲学、宗教、历史等学科的文献并进行论述,展示出理论的高度。这是细致的“求证”和深入学术探讨之作,可以说是有价值的“一家”之言。

刘符白

2007年5月

序 二

经济体系中最本质性的是秩序问题。外化为经济秩序的理念，始终是一切经济过程中最隐秘的规定性因素。因此我们说，“人类思想文化的最终功能，就是支持他的攫能过程。这个攫能过程是他和他的同类存在与发展的基本前提”^①。凯恩斯爵士曾就思想的这种内在制约性指出：“事实上统治世界者，就只是些思想而已。许多实行家自以为不受任何学理之影响，却往往当了某个已故经济学家之奴隶。狂人执政，自以为得天启示，实则其狂想之来，乃得自若干年以前的某个学人。”^②如果思想来自整个社会的气质，而不是出自某个头脑之冲动，它将引导社会进入一个可持续的自我繁荣的轨道。反之，若不顾“百姓心”^③，虽可陶醉一时，然终不可长久。

尝论“秩序就意味着攫能性；而伦理是这种用来组织社会成员秩序结构的制度。特定文明的伦理和价值取向产生于其所处的特定自然环境，而基于这种伦理和价值观所形成的社会秩序就蕴涵着这个社会所可能输出的社会能，以及相应的攫能性”^④。究竟什

① 姜生、郭武：《明清道教伦理及其历史流变》，成都：四川人民出版社，1999年，第142页。

② 凯恩斯：《就业利息与货币通论》，北京：商务印书馆，1983年，第330页。

③ 《道德经》四十九章：“圣人无常心，以百姓心为心。”

④ 姜生、汤伟侠主编：《中国道教科学技术史》汉魏两晋卷“导论”，北京：科学出版社，2002年，第67页。

么理念应该或可能被捡选为秩序的内在规定性因素呢？对这一问题的探索使经济学既兼科学又兼艺术。中世纪欧洲，基督教就是所有秩序的根据，原罪论信仰支配下的人们已经习惯于怀疑自我的可靠性，把生活的一切当作赎罪过程，而服从于一个神圣的更高秩序。近代欧洲，高扬理性，把人定义为理性的动物，莎士比亚盛赞：“人类是一件多么了不起的杰作！多么高贵的理性！多么伟大的力量！多么优美的仪表！多么文雅的举动！在行动上多么像一个天使！在智慧上多么像一个天神！宇宙的精华！万物的灵长！”^①每一个人都被认定具有不可置疑的理性本质，因而人们要求把所有秩序都建立在这个基础上。于是契约论把人放在平等位置上界定和解释社会秩序的合作本质。这就赋予了独立个体之间的空间，奠定了竞争机制的观念基础。于是，在韦伯所揭示的那个以清教徒精神为内在动力的西欧经济机体里面，从近代经济领域的市场竞争模式中，所谓“看不见的手”的理念浮现出来。斯密发现：“每个人改善自身境况的一致的、经常的、不断的努力是社会财富、国民财富以及私人财富所赖以产生的重大因素。”^②全球首富比尔·盖茨和世界第二富翁沃伦·巴菲特号称当今世界最能赚钱的人，同时也是全球最大慈善家。尤其是，巴菲特的致富方法非常简单，而其巨额捐赠是一种自愿状态下的道德选择，一种有强大智慧支撑的道德选择，可谓行动标杆。因此致富之路的目标应是致其德，这样才能最终达到尊其道而得崇高，从而推动社会经济向更高境界进步。

然而某些现代管理方法似乎越来越远离它本该拥有的自然基

^① 莎士比亚：《哈姆莱特》，《莎士比亚全集》第5卷，南京：译林出版社，2005年，第317页。

^② 亚当·斯密：《国民财富的性质和原因的研究》上卷，北京：商务印书馆，1994年，第315页。

础,对人类天性的可靠性越来越不相信,不愿认可这种基于人性的自我控制,而是试图用种种规则取代天性。这不仅体现在具体的企业管理中,也体现在现实的国际经济秩序中。面对世界范围内的这种“车同轨书同文字”式的地球村趋势,我们既要在适应中获得和保持进入公共经济空间的权利,又要通过文化独特性保持和扩展我们在世界经济空间中的不可替代性。

经济的生命力最终植根于文化的独特性。老子讲道法自然,无为而无不为,庄子相信只要任其自然,不要挖掘人性,让它像那七窍未开的浑沌圆融自在,社会的运行就能够如庖丁解牛般合理到位,如老子所谓“太上,不知有之”,在不知不觉中实现社会所期待的目标,而“百姓皆谓我自然”。这就是道家所追求的道法自然的实质。从这个角度看,道家是最相信并主张运用人之本然自性的学派。道家式秩序,并非简单地回归浑沌,而是唤醒内在的原生秩序,从而运用社会内部的生命力,去应对我们的对象世界,获得人为所不能达到的效果。

道家这种思想,适用于任何时代。只要有道家在,人的天性就不至泯灭,或者说,就能够被唤回;经济活力、管理秩序和人的德性就可望回归炉火纯青之域。汉初,采黄老道家,从民之欲,与民无禁,无为而治,于是出现了人给家足、都鄙廩庾皆满、百姓和乐的“文景之治”,造就了汉帝国的伟大和强盛。唐初,认老子为李氏宗祖,定道教为国教,以“天地之道”^①、“存百姓”^②,简静而事,成就了历史上圉圉常空、马牛布野、外户不闭、“九夷重译,相望于道”的“贞观之治”。20世纪80年代,罗纳德·里根信奉老子的无为而

① 《易经·系辞下》云：“天地之道，贞观者也。”

② 《贞观政要·君道》曰：“为君之道，必须先存百姓，若损百姓以奉其身，犹割股以啖腹，腹饱而身毙。”

治思想，公开倡言“治大国若烹小鲜”，引领美国走出经济滞胀之泥淖，为后来的发展奠定了坚实基础，以至于克林顿上任之时，人们还试图根据《老子》去审视他。

《经济之道》是一部有独创性理论和观点的学术力作。该书建立在全面系统地搜罗总结中外已有研究的基础上，作者信守学术规范，遍访时贤始立其说，历时多年，苦心孤诣，数易其稿，展读之际可见矣！

要写出一部好的著作，是要有些圣贤之心的。此心高洁，立视高远，才能做到对读者对社会负责任。是书所论乃经济天下之大事，正如所有高尚之士所追求的，是以天下之利益为利益。虽然所论乃经济，实兼治身，信读者诸君可于兹获益，是为序。



2007年6月

ABSTRACT

The Tao of Economics: Economic Freedom and the Taoist Idea of “Tao Follows the Way of Itself”

The author systematically and comprehensively compares the economic views implied in “Tao follows the way of itself” with the ideas of economic liberalism so as to illustrate the similarities between the two based on normative, demonstrable and historical analyses. He systematically and objectively analyses the economic principles of Taoism for the first time and illustrates the similarities between the economic views suggested in “Tao follows the way of itself” and the ideas of economic liberalism. This book not only examines the history of Taoist thought, Chinese economic thought and traditional Chinese culture, but also the history of Western economic thought and contemporary Western economic theories. Through comparative study, the author attempts to establish a new system of interpretation to search for the Chinese ideological sources of economic liberalism, elaborate the significance of “Tao follows the way of itself” and “Tao invariably does nothing, and yet there is nothing left undone” in the present-day world, and find out the basis on which the link between Chinese tradition and the modern world exists for the economic and social development of China today.

Thus he makes some constructive explorations for the Chinese model of contemporary economics and the reconstruction of Chinese economy. The book consists of three sections, in which there are eight chapters altogether. Chapter 1, which is the first section, defines the concepts and meaning of “Tao follows the way of itself” and economic liberalism, and traces the origin of economic liberalism in China. The second section, which includes chapters 2 through 7, systematically and comprehensively compares the economic ideas contained in “Tao follows the way of itself” and in economic liberalism, and analyses the similarities between the two. The third section, comprised of chapter 8, analyses the economic model utilized during the Han dynasty as a case in point.

In Chapter 1, the author defines “Tao follows the way of itself” and economic liberalism. First of all, he does textual research on Tao and spontaneity in Taoism. In his opinion, in Lao-Tzu’s philosophy, Tao is the ultimate category and spontaneity is the key concept, with “Tao follows the way of itself” as the foundation of his philosophy. In the eyes of Lao-Tzu, spontaneity means that “it is so”, “it is the case”, or “it is usually like this”. It refers to the spontaneity of things that remains and proceeds without any interference of the outside world. In other words, spontaneity refers to the internal laws of things, including their spontaneity, originality and predictability. Understanding the diverse senses of spontaneity is the key condition and procedure to redefine spontaneity so that it can be adapted to modern market economic society. Moreover, the new definition of spontaneity can help us

analyze economic activities rationally and make sound decisions when we are faced with possible solutions. It is the rational concept of modern economics. Through textual research on the development of the theories of economic liberalism, the author shows that the idea of economic liberalism can be traced back to ancient Greece and Rome as well as Lao-Tzu's theory: "By handling affairs on the principle of noninterference, everyone will do well." Thus he puts forward his idea that the nature of economic liberalism lies in government's decreased interference in the economic life of a nation and that economic liberalism is pursuing the maximum of profit or benefit under such conditions as altruism and non-harm by taking advantage of the limited resources. His research indicates that there are internal connections between ancient Chinese philosophy and modern economics, and there is something in common between "Tao follows the way of itself" and Francois Quesnay's "Physiocrats" and Smith's "invisible hand". The more that we study the two cultures, the deeper we can sense that the two theories are like symphonies by two different composers with a similar tune. Therefore, economics cannot be regarded as something only of Western pedigree. Instead, it must be seen as a blend of Chinese and Western cultures in the 17th and 18th centuries.

In the second chapter, after making a comprehensive analysis and comparison of "Tao follows the way of itself" and economic liberalism, the author discovers that the essence of Taoist philosophy is the theory of Tao in the macroscopical sense as well as individualism in its microscopical sense. In the research

on Yang Zhu, Lao-Tzu and the *Book of the Great Peace*, the author finds that Taoism holds the idea that humanness is natural and it should be individual-oriented when it comes to the moral relationships between people. In a word, it is “serving oneself” and the significance of collectivity lies in the realization of individuals. Objectively speaking, being self-concerned is claiming individual allowable rights and interests for survival, which is something he has to do. Lao-Tzu thinks that the nature of a society is based on individuals. He accepts the selfishness and desires of people. All this is because Heaven has no personal interests in which private ends are fulfilled. In fact, it is the simultaneous transcendence of both public and privacy. Lao-Tzu affirms that humans should reduce selfishness and hold few desires. Furthermore, he opposes having excessive desires and hopes people naturally enrich themselves, so that people can live a happy life — “delight in their food, dress in beauty, dwell in comfort, and enjoy their life”. As far as ethics are concerned, Yang Zhu’s theory of valuing oneself is individualism rather than selfishness. The theory of “inherited burden” from the *Book of the Great Peace* is the integrated ethic interpretation of comeuppance as well as good and evil. It suggests that the ethic principles of early Taoism cannot be understood without considering the harmonious relationships between person and person, between humans and nature, and between humans and society. Such Taoist ethical principles contribute to self-cultivation and perfection, and to the human responsibility to younger generations, which make people behave more carefully.

In the meanwhile, the theories of economic liberalism hold that the human being is primarily an individual. It is the cause of exchange, while altruism is the effect of such exchange. Adam Smith brought forward the hypothesis of "homo economicus" based on the individualism. The first principle of economics is that every motivation of a human being derives from individualism. If *The Wealth of Nations* is read from an individualistic viewpoint, the key idea of this great thinker can be understood as individualism. One of Smith's most important ideas is that under competitive conditions the human tendency to pursue personal profit should be the focus of economic analysis. It is still the most essential proposition in all economics. This idea, which has been conveyed differently, parallels the Taoist idea of "Tao follows the way itself".

The third chapter is about significant operational principles, namely, "non-interference" and the "invisible hand". Non-interference does not mean doing nothing. Rather, it means not doing anything violating economic rules or regulations. In Chuang-tzu's words, it means that the natural function of things in the universe relates to nature's mystery and inexplicability ("Autumn Water" of Chuang-tzu). In other words, all things in the universe follow the way themselves. The thought of "Tao invariably does nothing, and yet there is nothing left undone" is found throughout the *Tao Te Ching*. Non-interference is the interpretation of Nature in Taoism and the radiation and embodiment of the idea of "Tao invariably does nothing, and yet there is nothing left undone". This refers to human behavior

patterns in opposition to the principles of nature. It can be interpreted as a guideline for human behavior. Anything violating the internal laws of the universe cannot be done. Instead, things can only be done following the Tao itself. As a way of thinking, non-interference is significant in a methodological sense. It instructs people that they must try to compromise under certain circumstance, especially when there is common interest amongst themselves. The “invisible hand” is an imagined means of economic functioning. Under certain economic circumstances, the voluntary behavior of people is adjusted by the price system without any government guidance. Prices fluctuate around values of commodities and services, which become the conditions of trade. As they balance all the forces operating on the economy, markets are finding a market equilibrium of supply and demand. Such an idea indicates that freedom should be given to the people, that problems in the economy can be solved by the market, and that the price system can be self-regulated by trade. Therefore, the best policy is the self-development of things, so that individuals can pursue their profits in their own way. Lao-Tzu said that it is the best for one to know that he does not know, whereas it is an illness for one to pretend to know when he actually does not know. The crisis in an economic planning system or in an autarchy is essentially that of information. Realizing the limitations of its knowledge, the best administration might follow such a policy — “By handling affairs on the principle of noninterference, everyone will do well”, so that the “invisible hand” can play its role automatically. Adam

Smith saw order and harmony where others only saw chaos. He discovered the combination of general order and individual freedom — spontaneous “noninterference”. In the context of Eastern and Western cultures, there exists the market operation principle of “noninterference” and the “invisible hand”. Even John Maynard Keynes, the father of the theory of state interference, reminded contemporary economists that the classical teachings embodied some permanent truths of great significance. He stated in an article published by the *Economic Journal* after his death, in June 1946: “There are in these matters deep undercurrents at work, natural forces, one can call them, or even the invisible hand, which are operating towards equilibrium. If it were not so, we could not have got on even so well as we have for many decades past. . . . And if we reject the medicine from our systems altogether, we may just drift on from expedient to expedient and never really get fit again.” It indicates that in spite of the fact that he admitted the importance of economic policy, it does mean that Keynes thought it could take the place of the market spontaneity. Rather, he realized that economic policy could play a minor role in economy.

In the fourth chapter, the author discusses the economic operating conditions — the governmental functions and the concept of “By handling affairs on the principle of noninterference, everyone will do well”. There are indications that “By handling affairs on the principle of noninterference, everything will do well” is the ideal of administration. Its implications lie in “Effective weapons of the state cannot be easily

displayed to others”. Non-interference refers to non-actions or appropriate measures. It is “the eternal” and “the unavoidable”. As a whole, the conceptions of Lao-Tzu are not so “tranquil” as those overstate, nor so “filled with tricks for political power” as those depreciate. “Governing a great state is like frying small fish” is the best interpretation for the principle of non-interference. In the West, the common people think that one cannot do without the government while one would get into trouble with it. “North paradox” indicates that the existence of the government is key to economic growth whereas the state is the cause of economic depression. The government itself represents the over-interfering force with aggressiveness, which should be restrained within certain areas. The governmental duty is to provide conditions so that people could gain what they need with their efforts. The government is the “night watchman” for market economy, whose duty and obligation is “restrain itself”. With the compulsion of the government, “Governing a great state is like frying small fish”. There is something in common between the concept — “By handling affairs on the principle of noninterference, everyone will do well” — and the invisible hand, which indicates that the government must be cautious about the interference in economy. In Lao-Tzu’s opinion, the boarder of “non-interference” and interference lies in caring for the spontaneity of everything while being afraid of meddling. It illustrates the definition of “noninterference” and “interference”. In other words, noninterference suggests caring for the spontaneity of everything while being afraid of meddling;