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A Brief Analysis of *Tuiduo Qushao* 推多取少 in *Taishang Ganying Pian* 太上感應篇

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Venerable Master Shengmiao, Miss Deng, good morning. My name is Feng Yingran and I would like to share with you the topic on the analysis of *tuiduo qushao* 推多取少 in *Taishang Ganying Pian* 太上感應篇.

1. Introduction

In modern society, people are keen to protect their own interests from being infringed, they also hope to gain more personal interests. There are a lot of ideas on how to get rich in financial magazines or business channels, but these teachings are more about how to use your own thinking or means to get rich. In front of the big cake of social wealth, everyone wants to open his mouth and try to bite a bigger piece, but it is inevitable that people compete and cheat each other. However, while people dream of acquiring more wealth, few people are truly satisfied and happy. Why is that? There is a saying in *taishang ganying pian* 太上感應篇, *tuiduo qushao* 推多取少, which seems to be unacceptable at first glance, as if doing so would damage our own interests. Does it really mean that? Could there be a deeper truth to this? This article will do a simple exploration and discussion around this saying for solving these doubts.

2. Connotation

This saying seems to tell us that when sharing benefits with others, we should

give more to others and leave less to ourselves. On the surface, this statement seems difficult to understand, does this sentence mean that we give up our benefit to suffer a loss? If interpreted in this way, the true meaning of the sentence is misunderstood. In fact, it will not only not let our interests damaged, but will let us use a more reasonable way to obtain benefits, help us living a better and happier life. First of all, from the literal meaning of this sentence, what is *qushao* 取少? In fact, ‘what person get should not more than their due is the connotation of *qushao* 取少’.¹ What is more, why is this saying asking people to *tuiduo* 推多? Because most people are not satisfied, especially when sharing profits with others, people are afraid that they take less but the other party takes more. Then, the word *tuiduo* 推多 in this sentence is meant to warn people not to take their undeserved share because of their greed. Therefore, if people can recognize and implement this sentence, they can still stick to their own hearts when sharing profits with others, then they will not take others' interests. In addition, there is a deeper meaning to this sentence. This sentence uses conceptual vocabulary like more and less means not ask everyone give up their own profit, if this is the case, it is too unreasonable. What is *duo* 多? What is *shao* 少? Everyone has a different understanding. One gold is too much for the poor, ten thousand gold is not much for the rich. ‘There is no fixed number of more and less, just let everyone measure to take the deserved share of the profit’.² It is precisely because of the use of such conceptual words that they are more applicable to all groups of people. Everyone

¹ Translated by myself, *Ganyingpian Huibian* 感應篇彙編 (Taipei: The corporation republic of HWA DZAN Society, 2012) p.360

² Translated by myself, *Ganyingpian Huibian* 感應篇彙編 p.360

in the society has different wealth gap and moral level, but if different people can abide by this saying under different circumstances, a social atmosphere will gradually form. That is, people value righteousness more than profit and do not compete with others for personal gain. The people abide by their duty and do not want to take more undeserved benefits. Such a society will surely be more harmonious and friendly.

From what has been discussed above, the purpose of this saying is not to harm our interests, but to make us better handle our money and interests. Because if we live in a social environment full of fraud and competition, our money is not necessarily safe, we may be cheated by others in the same way. In such a big social background, no one can be immune from the influence of social trends and thus protect themselves alone. Therefore, this saying finally played the role of educating and persuading people to turn from evil to good virtue, and played the role of guiding social morality, which is far-reaching.

3. Significance

Why is this saying so far-reaching? Because it made a big difference in two ways. On the one hand, it reduces the competition for benefits among people. It seems that people can get along more peacefully when there are no interests involved. But when it comes to distributing profits, people find it hard to stick to their hearts. Because the temptation of interest is too big, so that at ordinary times the non-corrupt people will be tempted by the attract of interest, and the usually honest people will change their integrity when they meet the temptation of money. Therefore, a lot of people will take

risks at this time, even they will do a variety of illegal things because of greed. Some people will drill the loopholes of the law to protect their interests, some people will disregard the constraints of the law, would rather commit a major crime, such as fraud or murder, to obtain more interests. ‘Desire cannot be satisfied because it is like an abyss’.³

On the other hand, it will make us more aware of the truth of contentment. Because of the greed for profit, a person with excessive desire will correspondingly have a lot of distress. A man of little desires has no such worries, for he lives without desires. Therefore, a man who knows how to be content will enjoy his happiness, for he will not be bothered even though he has little money. ‘But the very greedy people will not be happy even they live in heaven. Because their desires are never end, and they will never be satisfied’.⁴ Thus it can be seen that whether a person is happy or not has nothing to do with how much wealth he has, but whether he is a satisfied person. In this process, ‘if we can do *tuiduo* 推多, then others will not compete with us for interests. If we can do *qushao* 取少, others will not envy us for our wealth’.⁵ Doing so can not only avoid many potential risks, but also bring many intangible benefits. Therefore, there is a saying that a loss is a gain, which is indeed very reasonable.

When sharing profits with others, these two relationships are more common, one is a brotherly relationship, the other is a friend relationship. In the case of a brotherly

³ Translated by myself, Chen Yueding 陳岳鼎 *Taishang Ganyingpian Baihuaqie* 太上感應篇白話解 (Xingming Yanjiushe 性命研究社), p.40

⁴ Translated by myself, *Ganyingpian Huibian* 感應篇彙編 p.358

⁵ Translated by myself, *Taishang Ganyingpian Tuzheng* 太上感應篇圖證 (Germany: The Bavarian State Library, 1849), p.43

relationship, disputes often arise over the division of the parents' inheritance. But brothers often quarrel with each other because of their divided interests. Many people will call each other names, and some will even fight, which is not uncommon in today's news media. If they understand the principle of *tuiduo qushao* 推多取少, not only will they not quarrel with each other, but will be more harmonious. 'When two people are of the same mind, they have the power to cut through metal'.⁶ The same goes for friends. And when friends share the benefits, they will trust each other more. Therefore, *tuiduo qushao* 推多取少 will promote harmony and mutual assistance among people, which is far more powerful than tangible assets.

When faced with the distribution of benefits, China's sages taught the people to fight against their own greed, to be content with their duties and not to compete with others for benefits. This is a fundamental practice, for a man's actions are governed by his thoughts. However, 'In western society, the fair distribution of benefits depends on political parties or political procedure'.⁷ We can also explain that 'distributive justice is the fair distribution of benefits and burdens, achieved by way of the mechanisms and tools provided by procedural justice'.⁸ However, this is a more factitiously treatment. If people do not want their wealth to be distributed, they will try many ways to protect their own interests as far as possible. With the new policies of the government, people under the government will have corresponding countermeasures.

⁶ Translated by myself, *the Book of Changes* (Hangzhou: Xilingyinshe Chubanshe 西泠印社出版社, 2012), p.162

⁷ Translated by myself, Dou Yupei 董玉沛, *Exploration on the Reconstruction of Chinese Social Security System* (Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 2001), p.163

⁸ Flavio Francisco Marsiglia, *Diversity, Oppression, & Change: Culturally Grounded Social Work* (England: Oxford University Press, 2021), p.286

This problem cannot be fundamentally solved.

4. Conclusion

To sum up, being able to *tuiduo qushao* 推多取少 inward can make us more aware of the truth of contentment, and we are more likely to feel joy no matter what kind of situation we encounter. When communicating with others, they will not compete with us or be jealous of us, which can not only reduce a lot of hidden dangers, but also make people get along more harmoniously. In addition, there is a deeper meaning to this saying. ‘There is no unity in the source of wealth, and the wealth we see at present may not be available in our destiny’.⁹ If we are greedy for the benefits we should not get, it may bring us unnecessary disasters, and ‘the property obtained by unfair means will eventually be lost in an improper way’.¹⁰ Therefore, if we can stick to our heart in the face of benefit distribution, in fact, what we lost here will be made up in other ways. Therefore, people do a lot of evil things because they do not understand the truth. If we understand this truth, we will continue to cultivate our own morality, ‘the gentleman carries all things with profound virtue’.¹¹ Therefore, ‘the way to get less is the way to get rich’.¹²

This is all for my presentation, any feedback and suggestions would be appreciated.

Thank you for listening.

⁹ Translated by myself, *Ganyingpian Huibian* 感應篇彙編 p.360

¹⁰ Translated by myself, *the Doctrines of the Means* (Tainan: Nengren Chubanshe 能仁出版社,2016), p.15

¹¹ Translated by myself, *the Book of Changes* (Hangzhou: Xilingyinshe Chubanshe 西泠印社出版社,2012), p.20

¹² Translated by myself, *Ganyingpian Huibian* 感應篇彙編 p.361

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