Theoretical Analysis and Realistic Way of Religious Dialogue

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Abstract

The increasing importance of religious dialogue to resolve conflicts in the areas of inter-ethnic problems in the era of globalization context, therefore, the value and significance of the theoretical study of religious dialogue are important. In this paper, based on the analysis of the need for religious dialogue, the possibility of existing theory, trying to put forward feasible a comprehensive dialogue program that religious dialogue must be tolerant faith as the premise to start from the cultural level, the cultural isolation with the foundation on the face of the reality of mankind to seek a global ethic.

Key word: Religion; Dialogue; Belief tolerance; Global ethics

INTRODUCTION

Religious dialogue problem has become hotspot and frontier in religious studies, researchers did lots of discussions and papers from different subjects and perspectives. Furthermore, foreign scholars developed well in this field and formed various theories and solutions such as Religious exclusivism, Religious acquisitions, religious pluralism, religious compatibility, and religious practice. Domestic scholars also made achievements in religious dialogue from the study of philosophy of religion translation by John Harwood Hick. However, these theories and solutions didn't play much role in real practice, although religious dialogue widely spread internationally, it still has major challenge caused by beliefs. Hence, it's of great necessity and importance to realize its realistic feasibility.

1. SIGNIFICANCE OF RELIGIOUS CONFLICTS AND DIALOGUE

Religion has close relationship with human beings. Its founder Muller defined it as *infinite subjective talent,* since human has limited capability, there's definitely corresponding infinite idea. Because all human activities have specific limitations, it can evolve an infinite idea through rationality. Although Muller didn't consider it as consciousness or inference, it was a kind of comprehension. But we can be sure no matter rationality or comprehension, as human we did have inherent and obtained infinite ideas, it's the core of all religious ideas and final objective. Meanwhile, some mysterious experience in human feeling and consciousness cannot be explained till now even still like that in the future, all these mysterious experience became the concrete performance of infinite ideas. Thus, we can say religion won't disappear as long as human existing for one day.

With the development of scientific and technological progress, people are under the situation which can be ruined by the weapon created by themselves. Nowadays, regional conflicts and world peace are the first question people concerned with, while religious conflicts always play as blasting fuse and catalyst behind these problems. In order to stop violent confrontations and promote world peace effectively, it should be instant to develop wide range of religious dialogue and cooperation. It's just like what Kong Hansi said, "Countries cannot be peaceful without religious peace, and different religions cannot be peaceful without religious dialogue." From history, it

should experience painful conflict but the final outcome will promote further development. In today's situation, religious dialogue again becomes a globally hot issue, it deserves attention on dialogue pushing forward revival.

Smith divided religious content into "belief" and "expression of belief" two aspects in religious meaning and purpose, he thought religious belief is non-history, cannot be observed and defined level while expression belongs to religious and historical, can be observed and defined level. Religious thought is with transcendence and mystery, but it mainly relies in organization, behavior, manners, arts and so on but is objective. On idea, religious belief has absolute exclusivity so that each kind of religious belief is considered cannot be violated, the only way to infinite is devout faith.

"Justification by faith" in Christian, faith means the only god, "don't worship other gods, someone worship other god will destroy." Besides, "Believe in Allah" of Islam is the same thing, "you should obey with the class your lord inspired; nothing should be worshipped beside him; you should avoid people who manipulated by other things". Religious absoluteness led to fundamental contradiction between different religions. In reality, "the expression of faith" on the one hand is shown as a unique religious culture, including non-entity existence such as class, custom, historical inheritance, on the other hand shown as entity existence like social groups, organizations even nations. Historical reasons, differences in customs, interests between organizations are the real causes of religious conflict. Person with religious faith builds their own identity based on religious and ethnic social interest, while defending religious beliefs and realistic interests demand make it inevitable with conflicts between different religions. The conflicts between religion and religion, religious and secular have been accompanied by the development of human beings. With the leaping development of communication technology and traffic conditions, the space becomes smaller and smaller, religious conflict also developed from spark into prairie fire. Among these conflicts, Christianity, Judaism and Islam three Abraham system--conflicts are undoubtedly the most representative ones, from Middle East war to the gulf war, the long-term military confrontation between Israel and Palestine, Afghanistan to the Iraq war, recent Arab spring and the war in Libya, the wars between three religions throughout the second half of the 20th century and continued into the 21st century.

2. THE PREMISE OF RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

2.1 Religious Dialogue at Faith Level

Religious dialogue is not only with wide range and complex content also it is a difficult cross-religious, cross-cultural and cross-conscious try. Each kind of religion includes belief and religious culture expressed through belief expression these two levels. From the perspective of belief level, religious dialogue undoubtedly is extremely difficult even impossible, it's decided by exclusive nature of religion, although such kind of exclusiveness will develop into different forms with social development, but as the essence it won't disappear. Meanwhile, it has inexpressible mystery, the mysterious experience produced by a variety of practices and ceremony is hard to understand and experience for those people outside, this is the unique religious relationship between man and god. Mature religion has formed a set of inherent thinking mode and value system, believers will live in this system. The above properties have been formed sincthe establishment and each religion is sacrosanct, changing religious belief means changing the religion itself, it may lead to greater confusion and conflict. Although we can put forward our questions such as enlightenment and rescue concepts to these religions philosophically and logically, but in real believers, they are the only ones who obtained grace and truth. Division of the Vatican, protestant reformation, the long-term conflict between Sunni and Shia Islam, they all caused by tiny controversy but led to longtime rivals. From the godfather age until the 16th century, Roman Catholic theology always insisted that "there's no rescue outside the church." Although beliefs have exclusiveness and the nature will develop into different forms, we cannot deny the necessity and possibility of understanding between different religions through dialogue. Every religious believer will regard truth coming from their religion, but we have to admit that nations all over the world created their own religious beliefs in a relatively isolated environment, they all insisted that they obtained the only truth, why we should admit this truth while deny that one, is there a common recognition of truth? These problems can be answered only in the equal dialogue.

2.2 Religious Dialogue at Religious Culture Level

Secularization brings a lot of pressure on the development of religion, at the same time under the crisis of rapid development of economy and globalization, in order to realize its true power and role, reconciling the conflicts are the necessary prerequisite. In religious culture level, it naturally has the characteristics of religious belief to it belonging to the expression of belief, but it will be limited by objective reality if transcendental belief should be expressed into real form, all religious cultures are inevitable. And historically, the people all of the world have the similar environment. We take this as the basis also the breakthrough of the religious cultural dialogue. In ancient China, each religion developed peacefully and maintained relative independence, "oriental model" provides a kind of model. (Surely, Western religious society is established on the basis of several thousand years of traditional beliefs, it's unrealistic to try to apply experience of one country globally.) Hence, many

religious scholars are devoted to finding commonalities between religions from the perspective of reality and agree with partial acceptable or acceptable code of conduct based on this. But in religious dialogue, historical grievances, realistic material benefits and difference of customs will definitely become the barrier; it must be solved at the cultural level. The so-called world ethics is a kind of minimal constraints which taking evasive attitude toward many topics easy to lead to conflicts. Also meanwhile, in the past dialogue we often didn't give full respect to the particularity of religions in order to find similarity, while those religious dialogue dominated by the western are always with national and ethnic cultural superiority, it has set the tone at very beginning, we can talk but we won't compromise.

3. WAY AND SOLUTION OF RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

3.1 Set the Religious Dialogue Scale and Participant

Before the purely religious dialogue we must figure out what is dialogue. That is to say, we must know the problem we are talking about, who is involved in the dialogue. Under current international situation, practical group interest is the direct reason for religious conflict while religious beliefs only play the role of catalyst. Therefore, we must strictly limit religious dialogue within spiritual life based on the belief and define those people who participate in the dialogue as pure believers. After the Treaty of Westphalia, liberalism gradually makes religion become individual creed, but in some countries with severe social problems, people will get together to maintain common identity for practical interests, then contradictions will be inevitable. In modern society, we can find "direct or pure religious conflict" if we look at the post-cold war international situation and make research comprehensively and specifically, those conflicts are caused due to the differences of beliefs or contradiction or conflict between religions, mostly have limited influence and not yet been developed into global situation. However, almost every international hotspot issue or major conflict accompanies with religion or religious background. Contestation of benefits among religions and denominations plays very important role in Middle East powder keg problem, actually fundamental factor still lies in economic and social interest conflicts. Through the national overall sanctified by religion, beliefs and values further combine with each other, thus religions become export for all kinds of comprehensive differences. Hence, before real religious dialogue, we must separate the religious contradiction from others and try to exclude effects of existing social cultural values, discuss religious issues in a relatively pure sense. Only in this way, dialogue can stand on real belief foundation.

3.2 Identity Problem, Keep Oneself but Tolerance as Premise

Among current religious dialogue, humanism and scientism are the most important ideological background. Lots of scholars agree that the ultimate pursuit for different name can become a deep foundation of religious dialogue and the contradiction and performance of religion are just some external forms. For example, Ramakrishna from Hinduism advocated "human religion", religions are different forms, names and ways but the same target. Cupitt's non-realism regarded religion as Myth symbol and ceremony rather than the only truth. It may relieve conflict between religion and civilization to some extent, but it's still a question to make internal religious people recognize the model. If they accepted the god is just a kind of cultural form, god would not be in heaven but on earth. A nation's culture means its way of life, including conventions, social system, language and literature, ethics, and fundamental values, etc. it often be regarded as some sort of divine origin or divine approval, therefore it cannot be given up or changed. When the neighboring nation also sanctifies their own cultural, then two ethnic differences could become entrenched and irreconcilable. Religious dialogue is a process of seeking common ground while putting aside differences, if Hans Kung's global ethic is seeking common ground while respecting for religious pluralism is putting aside differences, I think now we should emphasize differences. "The core of each culture is the traditional religion", each religion has its own unique spiritual core value, it is not just from classics also from the national and social interaction during religious development expansion. Pursuing for identity blindly and neglecting historical background and social cultural background, any attempt to unify or assimilate other religions with certain kind of superiority, no doubt it's the biggest obstacle for religious dialogue theory.

At this point, we should learn the tolerant attitude of Ashoka to treat all religions, "cannot only respect our own religion, but to despise other religions. We should also respect other religions, which, in this way, cannot only improve growth of our own religion, but also fulfill obligation for other religions. Otherwise, it can not only dug grave for our own religion, but also hurt other religions. Anyone who respects their own religion and not blames other religions, naturally is to be loyal to their religion and carry forward it, but, on the contrary, he hurt his own religion more seriously. Therefore, harmony is good. "Everyone should listen, and willing to listen to other religious doctrine." The problem to be solved by religion is humanity's common problem, and religious thinking ways also have many similarities. Different religions express their beliefs with different discourse systems, and religious language fundamentally cannot be recognized, but people always live in the experience of the real world, and people accepted are all from the world.

Even if different religious people are not willing to use other's discourse system for dialogue, as a matter of fact, there still exists conceptual system that a religion based on others, which make people of different religions can know and understand each other. This kind of conceptual system is not philosophical, but of reality and experience. Therefore, in the real religion dialogue, scholars and religious leaders certainly have played an important role, but in order to bridge contradictions and conflicts between religions, and enhance trust and understanding between the believers, it becomes extremely necessary to face the problem and have general level of dialogue. This point is particularly noticeable when we treat the growing emerging religion. Differences between the traditional religions and the emerging social group will far exceed that of each religion, because all of the traditional religious experience is mysterious and beyond purpose. As for emerging religions, its experience tends to be realistic, and objective is also realistic. However, both sides are same to contend for believers. Because of the reality of emerging religions, it often has a great attraction in the short term. Traditional religion and new religions should strengthen communication with realistic problem, and shared mature religious theoretical model and establish intimacy based on common experience. Such a kind of intimacy will undoubtedly promote religious dialogue, and at the same time can prevent a few extreme religion or sect from developing in the direction of heresy against the society and human beings. Hans kung declared in his *Human Responsibility—World Declaration*, "freedom of religion must be guaranteed. But religious spokesman has special responsibility to avoid biasing talk and discriminated act against different faiths. They shouldn't encourage hatred, fever and religious wars, but to keep tolerant and respect each other for all mankind.

3.3 Religious Dialogue Should Focus on Practice and Cooperation, Group Loneliness and Cultural Barrier From the Essence of Religious Belief

Nowadays, religious dialogue mainly has three theories: religious exclusivity theory, religion merging theory, religious diversification theory, and also the religious compatibility theory of Hans kunduz as well as religious practice theory of Paul Nita. The latter two have close relationship with religious diversification theory—religion compatibility theory try to promote religious diversification theory, and religious practice theory try to implement the religious compatibility theory. From the perspective of religious philosophy, the religion has a so-called center, which constitutes the ultimate origin of all religions, no matter what its name is, it has a kind of transcendence and divinity. John heathcliff puts forward two kinds of "divinity": One is "beyond the experience and understanding of human, and in its infinite depth", the other is "limited experience for human beings"; the former divinity is a root of all religions and are "the

ultimate existence" above all belief, the latter divinity is "the sub-ultimate existence" of "god, Allah, Brahman, doctrine" from the religious experience. Heathcliff, according to Kant's point of view, thinks that religious people only realize the supreme realistic "phenomenon", and experienced "experience", and add a variety of names as the object of faith, but not the nature of these beliefs as the final real existence. That is to regard all religions as a kind of ultimate real experience, and in order to achieve the ultimate purpose of mankind. It's just of different forms due to the different conditions, and in this way to eliminate religious centralism and achieve religious diversification. But we have to realize that we used to think that logos exist behind all things, making the phenomenon unified in a consistent manner under the schema of consciousness. But in the religious dialogue, we must regard all religions as a fully independent reality. As for religious believers, there are no common ultimate logos hidden all religions, and each object of faith itself is an ultimate logos. As a result, it is a kind of unrealistic idea limiting to doctrines and teaching dialogue to seek the intercommunity of each religion either from the "ultimate concern" of Tillich or triple body of Buddha theory that Abe spread. The limit is easy to make religious dialogue as talking to itself, because the uniqueness of faith object is the basis for them to keep authenticity of faith groups. To find the common features of all religions to some extent can undoubtedly strengthen the understanding and communication between the religions, but this is likely the wishful thinking of researchers. The non-realism philosophy of religion may to some extent reduce the contradictions due to different settings, and have resonance in the common ideal world, thus leading religious believers to pay more attention to the real world, gradually exceed the particular religion in the secular contact with each other. From the psychological root, the foundation of any religion is to realize the bitterness and change of life, namely the finiteness of life, and attempt to get the spiritual comfort through worship for the infinite and upright man. Religious dialogue requires understanding of doctrine and teachings, and compromise and tolerance of culture and tradition, which can undoubtedly strengthen the trust between religions and ease religious conflicts, but it's fundamental to solve the realistic problems people faced. The subject of religious dialogue is person, so finally we should solve the problem of man, rather than compete for the leadership of the world for god. We could not reach an agreement on the understanding of god at the very beginning, so we can try to directly face the person itself. Expression ways of different religions are completely different, and they have unique perspective on the understanding of ultimate reality, and god's way of role in the world. We must always carry out on people's dialogue itself, rather than the comparison or compromise of faith. At the same time, the dialogue must be based on the full religious

spirit, instead of various kinds of realistic interest factors of nationalities and areas. After all, religions are based on realistic society, so global ethics has to be established on the deep attachment of the person's survival needs. The religious compatibility theory of Hans Kunduz has led the religious dialogue to moral practice, and religious practice theory of Paul Nita regards "liberating practice" as "priority principle" and "central task". However, we must take it seriously that, for the general religious believers, to religiously believe in the god of their own religion is the only way to be saved, and this fully commitment cannot be digested by limited commonality in function and form.

In addition, under the current social background, there is a remarkable dialogue tendency, that is the religious alliance under group loneliness. Group loneliness refers to, along with the information explosion and individual freedom promotion, individual differences become bigger and bigger. The characteristics of people as social animal, however, will not gradually vanish as such individualism, on the contrary, due to the need of personal identity, people will be more inclined to form a variety of groups and develop all kinds of rituals to strengthen their own difference, even produce new religion or quasi-religion. In the social groups under such an extreme individualism tendency, the differences between group and group will be bigger and bigger, and finally reach the situation that people couldn't understand each other. The conceptual differences between the groups have reached irreconcilable situation, and conflicts cannot be resolved. The only solution is to make each social group in a relatively isolated state, and reduce the communication and dialogue with other groups as far as possible, only remaining substances connection between social groups, under the governing of country and law. In some countries or regions where religion is vulnerable relative to other cultural forms, some relatively mature and tolerant religions can enhance understanding by secular contact, and form a loose alliance of religion. However, the solution under this kind of idea is clearly apparent, and its feasibility is lack of practical ethics support. It is still unpredictable whether relatively isolated communities will inevitably move towards loose alliance, and whether the alliance gap is enough to hold its internal tension. Therefore, our goal is to create a kind of cultural barrier between religions through dialogue. It was produced before common global ethics, and its nature is common convention beyond belief, and a moral law system based on human animality and social stability. In this way, the religious circle actually is smaller than the culture, and people of different religions can keep relatively independent in their own belief system. This cultural barrier can provide guarantees and space for religious freedom, especially the freedom of no belief. This kind of cultural gap, in fact, has reserved place for people of different religions to find common principles of ethical practice, because it is impossible for people to find the

principle with a thinking that is completely filled with belief and under the condition of no buffer zone.

CONCLUSION

Religious revival worldwide have enriched people's belief world, but at the same time brought about the inevitable contradictions and conflicts between believers. This problem must be solved by means of the establishment of religious dialogue theory and the corresponding practice. The big differences between religions caused by incommensurability of different belief and value systems cannot be overcome by one single way, but need a hierarchical and comprehensive solution. Dialogue on simple faith level is unlikely to achieve results, which is determined by the uniqueness of belief. Simple cultural dialogue has made religion lose its holiness, and made the religious dialogue become a dialogue between religious groups and cultural system, we believe that it is necessary to establish a common global ethics, and the criterion and principles are the foundation of the harmonious coexistence between different religions. But it must be hierarchical to seek global ethics between each religion which is very different and has intense conflict, must take purely religious dialogue under the premise of faith tolerance, must strengthen contact and understanding in the practice and cooperation for the common problems, and reserve space for belief integration through the buffer of cultural barriers.

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