

Think and Thank



André Simon

The Silence

Many years ago, on a hot sunny day, under the shade of an old tree, a teacher and his pupils were resting. There was silence in the air. Suddenly, one of his pupils asked: «What is the meaning of silence?»

«Let's consider the virtues of an aged turtle, which is the symbol of universe, longevity and endurance. Turtles crawl over the Earth on their bellies, but their shells, with their dome shaped backs, are like a vault to the sky, representing the universe. Their incredible longevity and endurance leads one to believe they are everlasting. The shell pattern describes their ability to pass on their virtues for posterity. A turtle's greatest virtue is silence ...».

In silence, the turtle overcomes the storms. In silence man overcomes the stormy times.

The world is old, the silence is even older.

The Almighty communicate to all beings, in the unique mode understood from everyone – with the voice of Silence.

Silence is the evidence of inner knowledge, and the joy of a deeply satisfying inner awareness. By reaching into the inner silence, one achieves just the right sense of serenity and realization of utter bliss and perfection.

Fruits ripen in the sun; noble thoughts ripen in the silence. In the silence of the silent mind there is nothing to hear but peace.

Word is born

Long time ago a peace reined in the Empire. In a small town nearby to the Yellow River, lived the warrior XIE (谢). The way of life there was very simple. The small town was silent, with barely a column of smoke seen to reveal a human presence. One day, when the sun was shining, XIE decided to take a walk. On his way he dropped in at the main marketplace. There he noticed a charming white turtle for sale. He felt sad to think that this amica-

ble turtle was all alone, like himself. So he bought the turtle and brought it to his humble home.

He placed the turtle in the courtyard pond. A warrior has his body armour; the turtle has his shell. The warrior wears it occasionally, whereas the turtle wears it always. The amicable turtle was like a brother to the lonesome warrior, so he named him XIE (谢) after himself.

As the years passed the turtle grew and the good-hearted XIE decided to release the turtle back into the great river. In the great river, he was quite sure; the turtle would find a life companion.

Several years later, canaries and nightingales forgot their songs, and wartime returned. XIE's army unit fought a major battle, resulting in a terrible defeat. All the surviving warriors were driven into the great river. Most of them drowned, because they were weighed down by their heavy armour. XIE was also driven. When he was just about to drown, he felt his feet touched what felt like a giant rock. He looked down and perceived that a giant rock under his feet was in fact a giant turtle XIE. The same turtle, he released into the great river some years ago, now rescued him. The turtle brought the warrior XIE safely to the river bank. After this, as a sign of gratitude, the turtle continually nodded and the thankful warrior spoke the only word known to the turtle and cried out: «XIE-XIE».

The story about grateful turtle spread in a short time over the whole Empire. Consequently, a new manner of relationship based on mutual gratitude became a reality. Up to the present day turtle XIE and a grateful warrior XIE symbolize the expression of gratitude. Chinese meaning of the word XIE-XIE 谢谢 is «Thank you».

Billions of people around the world declare their sense of gratitude many times daily: knowing, that only in this way, they approach to the essence of happiness.

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