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Cultural Tradition and Social Progress

Chinese Philosophical Studies, XXVIII

Edited by
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The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy

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Table of Contents

Preface	vii
<i>William Sweet</i>	
Introduction	1
<i>George F. McLean, Robert Magliola and William Sweet</i>	
<i>Part I. Identity as Frame of Reference</i>	
Chapter I. Globalization and Advanced Culture	13
<i>He Xirong</i>	
Chapter II. Cultural Integrity and Obligations	23
<i>William Sweet</i>	
Chapter III. The Modernization of Chinese Traditional Culture	37
<i>Ran He</i>	
Chapter IV. Multiculturalism and National Identity	49
<i>Chen Gang</i>	
Chapter V. Indian Identity and Cultural Continuity	55
<i>S.R. Bhatt</i>	
Chapter VI. The Doctrine of Retribution (Karma) in Chinese Buddhism and its Influence on Human Destiny	63
<i>Xia Jinhua</i>	
<i>Part II. Tradition as Resource for Society</i>	
Chapter VII. Tradition and Modernism: Our Cultural Heritage and the Onslaught of the Modern World	73
<i>Gholamreza Aavani</i>	
Chapter VIII. Cultural Heritage and Social Progress: An Islamic Recurrent Crisis	79
<i>Abou Yaareb Marzouki</i>	
Chapter IX. Practical Wisdom: On the Contemporary Value of Chinese Traditional Wisdom, and the Bewilderment of Modernity	91
<i>Zhang Yiming</i>	
Chapter X. Which C is Technology: Civilization or Culture: An Analysis of the Rationality of Technological Culture	99
<i>Yang Qingfeng</i>	
Chapter XI. The Predicament of Traditional Culture in Relation to Globalization	109
<i>Yan Mengwei</i>	
<i>Part III. Interaction among Cultures</i>	
Chapter XII. Chinese Thought and Hegel's Philosophy of Religion: A Complementary Relation	117
<i>Edward J. Alam</i>	

Chapter XIII. International Integration: Opportunities and Challenges for Traditional Values in the Conditions of Contemporary Globalization <i>Nguyen Trong Chuan</i>	127
Chapter XIV. Cultural Tradition and Social Progress in Present-Day Vietnam <i>Pham Van Duc</i>	135
Chapter XV. Asian Confluences and Encounters: Realities and Resonances of Values <i>S.R. Bhatt</i>	147
<i>Part IV. Social Change: Antecedents and Consequences</i>	
Chapter XVI. The Persistence of Modernity: Value Options amid Massive Historical Dislocation <i>Yu Wujin</i>	157
Chapter XVII. The Roles of Public Education in the Development of Contemporary Society <i>Elinor L. Brown</i>	169
Chapter XVIII. The Emerging East Asian Identification: A Cultural Perspective <i>Yu Xintian</i>	179
Chapter XIX. Globalization and Modernization in China <i>Ye Xianming</i>	193
Chapter XX. How Does the Transformation of Chinese Culture Participate in the Reconstruction of Global Modernity? <i>Zou Shipeng</i>	199
<i>Part V. Comparative Approaches</i>	
Chapter XXI. On a New Way for Comparative Study in Philosophy: Existential Analysis <i>Yu Xuanmeng</i>	205
Chapter XXII. The Effect of Social Time on Cultural Comparison <i>Chen Xinhan</i>	231
Chapter XXIII. Love: Partial or Equal? – A Comparative Study of Confucian, Mohist and Christian Love <i>Xu Changfu</i>	239
Chapter XXIV. Rationality and Understanding Others <i>Warayuth Sriwarakuel</i>	261
Chapter XXV. The Creative Cultural Tradition of India and Its Relation to Science <i>S. Panneerselvam</i>	273

Chapter XXVI. Why Do We not Direct Attention to 'Buddhata' in Modern Times? <i>Xu Donglai</i>	291
Chapter XXVII. Ideals, Traditional Values, and Social Progress <i>Tran Van Doan</i>	295
Chapter XXVIII. Cultural Identity and Cultural Tradition <i>Wu Xiaojiang</i>	309
<i>Part VI. Tenets and their Applications</i>	
Chapter XXIX. Communication and Interfusion East and West: Humanity and Modern Management Ideology <i>Li Jianqun</i>	337
Chapter XXX. Openness to the Other in Chinese Philosophy: Zhu Xi as an Example of Analysis <i>Vincent Shen</i>	345
Chapter XXXI. So-called Modal Freedom and Guo Xiang's Theory of Peripateticism <i>Huang Shengping</i>	359
Chapter XXXII. Culture, Tradition, and Social Progress <i>S.R. Bhatt</i>	365
Chapter XXXIII. On the Rights to Emigrate and Immigrate <i>William L. McBride</i>	375
Chapter XXXIV. Civil Society: The Reality and the Ideal <i>Huang Songjie</i>	381
Index	389

PREFACE

Tradition and social progress have often been regarded as being, at best, in an uneasy relation. Those defending tradition frequently consider those agitating for progress as, at the very least, naïve and idealistic, pursuing novelty at the cost of losing ‘the tried and true’ and, in the process, cutting themselves off from the culture that grounds their very identities. Conversely, advocates of progress generally see ‘tradition’ as something that serves only to delay or resist efforts to build the good – and, consequently, needs to be rejected. Traditions rooted in ethnic culture and religion have been particularly suspect, and are held to be conservative in the worst sense of the word – that is, as simply protecting the status quo and the privilege of those in authority.

It is clear that cultures and traditions have to respond, in some way, to the new – and sometimes foreign – ideas that they encounter and to the calls for change. And yet experience also reminds us that cultures will be ill-equipped to do so if they altogether abandon or reject tradition. Tradition not only provides people and communities with a means of making sense of the world around them, but is central to the identity of both the community and the individuals who are part of it.

What makes the question of the relation of ‘cultural tradition and social progress’ particularly pressing today is that it reflects a situation that seems to be beyond anyone’s control. There are many who claim to speak for tradition, but few – if any – actually do. Calls for social progress sound appealing, and yet there is no guarantee that the progress sought will provide any real benefit for the community. There is, moreover, fear that, in pursuing social progress, some voices will not be heard, many people will be left out, and that the net result will be merely a narrow and doubtful technological and economic progress together with a culture devoid of diversity and richness.

The clashing demands of cultural traditions, on the one hand, and social and economic progress, on the other, are especially acute in Asia. There, in less than a century, nations with deep-rooted traditions and cultures have been subjected to successive waves of change, each promising some kind of ‘progress’ – first, as colonies or tributaries of European powers, then as predators or prey in political and cultural conflicts with other Asian countries, later as the captives of dubious European political ideologies, and now as subjects in a world in which all ideologies seem to be yielding to the economic, cultural, and political forces of globalization.

How, specifically, is China to respond to the social, cultural, and economic changes in today’s world? How far can it preserve the heritage – the traditions and cultures – that is central to its identity? Can its customs and beliefs provide adequate resources to guide its reaction to pressure for change? Can its cultures or traditions serve to promote constructive

responses not only domestically, but also internationally, and contribute to the building of an international community? Finally, what implications do these calls for change have for cultural stability, sustainable development, democratic governance, and the movement of peoples as emigrants and immigrants?

To address these and related questions, one needs first to look closely at identity and culture, and to see how both are necessary to, and provide, a frame of reference for engaging difference, novelty, and demands for change. Cultures need to develop in order to thrive; cultural identity and continuity does not require cultural stagnancy. But how a culture can be 'modernized' and yet maintain integrity with its past, and how one discerns what should be kept and what should be discarded, are crucial issues. (One recent option has been to promote 'multiculturalism' – a policy whereby a community is marked by the presence of many cultures. Yet it remains to be seen how far such a model protects the cultures and identities that it proposes to respect.) In any case, it seems evident that, without a strong sense of what is essential to one's cultural identity, thoughtful response to novelty, difference, and change is not possible.

Cultural traditions are part of one's identity, and individuals cannot be separated from them. The traditions that constitute cultures are not just practices or sets of practices, but the products of environment and interpretations of experience. As experience and environment differ, then so obviously do cultures and traditions. This, however, raises a second important point. What are the consequences of such differences of culture and tradition for intercultural communication, and the possibility of trans-cultural ethics and values? The fact that cultures are rooted in particular contexts does not entail, as some have suggested, that relations across cultures are simply fortuitous or contingent, that there are no common cultural practices or attitudes, or that cultures can never adequately engage one another. The subjects of experience are human beings, it is human beings who are the producers of culture, and so one not only should not be surprised, but ought to expect, that when those from one part of the world encounter those from another, there can be a fruitful interaction of cultures. At the same time, the relation of culture to identity indicates the importance of the recognition of not only local or national cultures, but also regional ones – and these are, at least in principle, compatible with emerging global cultures as well.

A third point that needs to be addressed in responding to the preceding questions is how culture and traditions can – and ought to – serve as resources. They constitute, as noted above, the background, principles, and framework through which members understand themselves and their relations to their communities. Yet today human beings are increasingly aware of the differences of culture in the world, and one is no longer limited to drawing simply on one's own. The approaches and insights of one tradition or culture can plausibly be brought to bear on another, without a person abandoning the culture from which she or he comes. Our own

cultures and traditions influence, but need never fully determine, our response. Moreover, the fact that something can be used as a resource does not limit how that resource can be used. Culture and traditions can be drawn on, even when they have shortcomings and failings.

Perhaps one of the greatest challenges to cultures and traditions today is the phenomenon of globalization. Some fear that globalization will destroy local, if not also regional, cultures. It is certainly true that the technology that facilitates and accompanies globalization does introduce ideas which challenge local practices, cultures, and identities. Yet such technologies also help to nourish cultures, to protect artifacts of these traditions, and to link members living at great distances from one another. Globalization may, indeed, promote the creation of various 'layers' of cultures and tradition – of an international layer (for example, in popular entertainment and business practice) while, at the same time, enable regional and local 'layers' to thrive – and these layers themselves may interact with one another in different ways. People may find, then, an international multiculturalism – not just of the cultures of different ethnic or national communities, but of different sets of social practices. Whether this is liberating or disorienting, and whether this allows identities to flourish or to become anomic, are not matters that can be determined in advance.

There are also a number of practical questions that follow from the various demands of cultural traditions and social progress. Starting with the most general, one may ask how one might address these demands. Does philosophy have a distinctive role in this process of cultural contact, challenge, change, and response? What place might it have in the negotiation among conflicting demands and the like? More broadly, given the influence and impact of globalization, can cultures, in turn, affect or reconstruct globalization or global modernity? It seems implausible that culture must always be on the receiving end of economic and political power. Further, what effects do the demands for social progress, on the one hand, and for the preservation of cultural traditions, on the other, have on daily life? Is there a part to be played by 'civil society,' independent of political parties and government? What is the impact of these demands on matters such as the preservation of local or regional languages or on mobility rights? And how do they affect our understanding of administration, management, democracy, and democratic institutions?

The present volume – the twenty-seventh volume of *Chinese Philosophical Studies* published by the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (RVP) – consists of papers on the theme of 'Cultural Traditions and Social Progress.' This theme is of particular concern to Chinese scholars, and many of these papers were presented initially at a conference, sponsored by the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, the RVP, and the Department of Philosophy at Shanghai University. The competing demands of cultural traditions and social progress are not, of course, unique to China, and while most of the articles in this volume are by Chinese scholars, over a

third are by academics from other countries – from East Asia, India, North Africa, North America, and the Middle East.

It is clear – as the thrust of the various arguments and approaches in this book confirm – that a rich understanding of the value of tradition is essential not only to culture but to individual identity. It is clear as well that Asian traditions are a valuable resource in responding to the challenges of a globalized and internationalized and increasingly integrated world. But it is also clear, as many of the authors recognize, that cultures and traditions and related ideologies derive their value primarily from the ways in which they have contributed to, and continue to contribute to, human flourishing. Cultural traditions, and any ideologies which are part of them, must be able to respond, with integrity, to the challenges of the novel, the new, and the different. The papers in this volume offer evidence that such a response is indeed possible.

William Sweet

Vice President for Research

The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy

INTRODUCTION

The issues of Chinese cultural identity and the progress of its people are not new to China. Indeed it can be said to be the fundamental and sometimes tragic issue for this great nation for over a century. Today, however, it can be discussed in an especially positive and hopeful form.

No longer is it a desperate question of whether the nation can care for its people and stand with honour among the nations. As we enter the newly global age, China emerges as a great – potentially the greatest – industrial and economic power; its cities and infrastructure are being totally rebuilt and it foresees playing its rightful creative role in international relations (see: Yu Xintian, *Cultural Impact on International Relations: Chinese Philosophical Studies, XX*).

What appears to be emerging now, as in many nations around the world, is the issue of what we want to make of ourselves, what we want to become; what role in this should be played by our cultural heritage – and this less as coming from the past than from our present responsibility to reshape it and pass it on as guide and inspiration for the life of subsequent generations.

This will require a hermeneutic understanding of the nature of culture and tradition, scientific understanding of the nature of society and its transformation, and philosophical insight into the relation of the two as the responsible work of a great people.

Yet in this endeavour today, no people is alone. We live in a world of intensive interaction: economic and political, informational and cultural. Will there be room for each and all, or will the homogenizing impact of this interchange bleach out the humane elements that have given quality to life? Can the heritage of each contribute to a future that is richer for the progress of all? If it seems certain that the success of each people will depend upon its ability to relate creatively to others, what capabilities does the Chinese tradition bring to this challenge and how can these be creatively applied?

New opportunities and responsibilities open before us – which is as it should be. The purpose of this study is to explore these with appropriate philosophical means in order to generate the insight needed for the path ahead.

Part I, “Identity as Frame of Reference,” addresses issues and concerns regarding identity. In this section, the focus is directed to the important role of identity in a people’s way of understanding and evaluating situations. Interactions with others in a context that is characterized as global – because of the plurality of cultures – can prompt people to look into what might be unique in their identity.

Chapter I by He Xirong, “Globalization and Advanced Culture,” treats the problematic of globalization in view of current Chinese policy, which is to creatively synthesize the socialist system, the developing rules

of the socialist economy, and the developing rules of an open market economy. The author explains how the socialist system now respects, renovates and subsumes Confucianist and Taoist philosophy. The issue of dialogue between Chinese and Western philosophy is discussed in detail, especially the so-called “legitimacy” problem and the controversial charge (emanating from language analysis and some other Western schools) that “the Chinese have no philosophy.” The author is optimistic about the great “social reformation” now underway in China, and believes that great strides are being made in both its “material” and “spiritual” cultures.

Chapter II by William Sweet, “Cultural Integrity and Obligations,” discusses the interaction between tradition on the one hand and dignity and respect for the human person on the other. The author adds “Rights to be free from oneself” to the conventional two kinds, viz., freedom from external coercion and freedom from external restraint. In opposition to the widely held modern Western claim “that one has the right to do as one chooses so long as others are not harmed by one’s actions,” he argues that society should limit access to what would be clearly self-destructive choices on the part of the individual. In general, the thesis is advanced that the individual should work for the good of the community, and not claim a fundamental priority over the community.

Chapter III by Ran He, “The Modernization of Chinese Traditional Culture,” examines current Chinese society from a dissenting point of view. The author distinguishes among political, economic, and social culture, and argues that political culture is dominant in China – and, hence, will least yield to globalization – whereas the economic and social (popular) culture can be transformed with relative ease. Several ironies and paradoxes are put forth in this regard: for example, Chinese uphold the idea of “Big Unity,” but in fact are only committed to their families; Chinese find mutual cooperation very difficult, but this weakness in fact renders the government more stable; Chinese “bully the weak while fearing the strong, and bully the good while fearing the evil.” Opening the door wider to globalization is necessary, this paper maintains, in order that China reform its bad and conserve its good.

Chapter IV by Chen Gang, “Multiculturalism and National Identity,” examines multiculturalism in Canada, in order to discover a workable model for China’s multiculturalism. China has over 56 nationalities and minorities within its borders, and the model of Toronto, Canada, is presented as a successful example worthy of appropriation, since it is very welcoming to immigrants, and its more than 100 ethnic groups get along well with each other. Montreal, Canada, is presented as an example of Canada’s multiculturalism run amuck, since the author deems French-Canadian culture to be a minority culture that is only ‘permitted’ its French language by the Federal government. From this point of view, Montreal may be seen as authoritarian in its direct and indirect imposition of the French language and culture on all of Montreal’s inhabitants. The last part

of this paper attempts to appropriate the Toronto model for China's "new" multiculturalism.

Chapter V by S. R. Bhatt, "Indian Identity and Cultural Continuity," attempts to understand the notion of [Asiatic] "Indian-ness" in terms of its "cultural continuity from the hoary past to the eventful present." Since India is multi-ethnic and variegated, the author proposes several floating constants, much in the manner of Wittgenstein's notion of 'family resemblances'. Among the traits singled out are the *purusarthas* or four main values of life, and the *pancakosas* or five dimensions of individual personality. The paper closes with a treatment of Indian-ness and Nature, and an account of the traditional Indian scheme of education.

Chapter VI by Xia Jin-hua, "The Doctrine of Retribution (Karma) in Chinese Buddhism and its Influence on Human Destiny," explains the Chinese version of the Law of Karma and its positive and negative social effects. Chinese Buddhism extended the applicability of karma, so one's good and bad deeds affect not only one's own rebirths, but also influence those of one's descendants. Belief in karma thus heightened further the Chinese sense of family responsibility. Belief in karma also had a negative effect in that disabled people were publicly ridiculed and considered a shame to their families.

Part II "Tradition as Resource for Society," focuses on the contributions of tradition to society, especially as people encounter novelty along with the likelihood of disorientation. The chapters explore the use of cultural tradition as a resource – as providing possibilities and ideas which can be drawn on in navigating through situations in a pluralistic context.

Chapter VII by Gholamreza Aavani, "Tradition and Modernism: Our Cultural Heritage and the Onslaught of the Modern World," argues that Asian cultures (including those of the Middle East) must conserve Tradition for the sake of themselves and the whole world. The author describes several prominent features of Tradition, such as the recognition of being in becoming, the affirmation of a transcendent and its presence in daily life, and the cultivation of a rich, multi-valent language. The author also recounts the many flaws of Western modernism – for example, materialist reductionism, the masquerading of subjectivism as universalism, and the sterilization of language.

Chapter VIII by Abou Yaareb Marzouki, "Cultural Heritage and Social Progress: An Islamic Recurrent Crisis," maintains that the root cause of economic and social underdevelopment in Muslim states is due to the fossilization of Islamic thought and the rampancy of "superstition." The author examines the status of cultural heritage and social progress in the pre-modern and modern eras, favoring al-Ghazali's "liberal theology" and Ibn Khaldun's reformation (from the pre-modern era), and the reconciliation of *Nahdha* ("renaissance") and *Sahwa* ("rising-up") (from the modern era). The author proposes a solution, via the re-thinking of the nature of Shari'a and the re-establishing of a Khalifa political system.

Chapter IX by Zhang Yiming, “Practical Wisdom: On the Contemporary Value of Chinese Traditional Wisdom, and the Bewilderment of Modernity,” argues that the Western modernism is marked by two fatal flaws, the abstraction of reason from (1) the world, history, and society, and (2) human experience. Traditional Chinese philosophy is “superior” because of its “practical wisdom,” which is enabled by a truly “cosmic vision,” and “the correlation of the Tao and human nature.”

Chapter X by Yang Qingfeng, “Which C is Technology: Civilization or Culture: An Analysis of the Rationality of Technological Culture,” argues that technology assumes a metaphysics of ‘opposition’ or difference. Yang reviews Western metaphysics (e.g., Descartes, Kant, Hegel, and others) in relation to ‘opposition.’ Appealing in particular to two 20th century Chinese scholars, Qianmu and Liuyizhi, Yang maintains that Chinese thought better handles difference, and recognizes the ground of difference in Being. In this regard, he praises Heidegger’s critique of technology and his appreciation of Being. This is not to denigrate technology, as Yang explains, but to put limits on it.

Chapter XI by Yan Mengwei, “The Predicament of Traditional Culture in Relation to Globalization,” divides the cultural construction of globalization into four layers: techno-culture, the free-market cultural code, business culture, and humanistic culture. The author maintains that some humanistic values, such as “freedom, independence, equality, and human rights,” should be common-to-humanity, as should be the advances of techno-culture. Other values, he maintains, which are part-and-parcel of either Western commerce or the Western free-market code, threaten local humanistic culture, and China must be wary of them.

Part III, “Interaction among Cultures,” focuses on interactions between cultures and attempts to integrate contemporary trajectories on complementary areas. The contributors offer frames of reference for their respective viewpoints.

Chapter XII by Edward J. Alam, “Chinese Thought and Hegel’s Philosophy of Religion: A Complementary Relation,” culls correspondences between non-modernist Western thought and Asian, especially Chinese, thought, all in the interests of East-West dialogue and the contributions this dialogue can make. In particular, the author examines Hegel’s understanding of Christianity’s Most Holy Trinity: Hegel identifies the Father with Being, the Son with Nothingness, and the Holy Spirit as the dynamic Synthesis of the two. Alam then attempts a preliminary correlation to the Chinese metaphysical preference for process over permanence and for analogy over analysis.

Chapter XIII by Nguyen Trong Chuan, “International Integration: Opportunities and Challenges for Traditional Values in the Conditions of Contemporary Globalization,” reviews the past two globalizations – of the 15th century and of the 19th century – and demonstrates how the third, contemporary, globalization is the most comprehensive, so that all countries

are necessarily affected by it. The author argues that Vietnam must avoid the protective isolationism of Myanmar and Albania, yet retain its own culture more than those developing countries which have succumbed to Western 'soft power'.

Chapter XIV by Pham Van Duc, "Cultural Tradition and Social Progress in Present-Day Vietnam," explains and applies Ho Chi Minh's theory of progress to contemporary Vietnam, showing how his policy measures progress in terms of the political, the interpersonal, and the cultural, and not merely the macro-economic category of fundamentalist Marxism. Progress greatly depends on the elimination of exploitation by individuals, groups, and nations. The author argues that Vietnam must cultivate both its identity and, simultaneously, its friendship with the rest of the world.

Chapter XV by S.R. Bhatt, "Asian Confluences and Encounters: Realities and Resonances of Values," seeks to describe the core-values shared by Hinduism and Buddhism, and to demonstrate that the two religions establish the unique identity of [southern and eastern] Asia. The author points out that Hinduism and Buddhism did not suppress, but rather, subsumed, the religious modes preceding them; and both religions regard suffering and liberation from suffering as the fundamental human project. The concluding section of this paper appends a treatment of Buddhism in Japan, citing the contributions of Prince Shotoku, Saicho, Kukai, Dogen, Nichiren, and others.

Part IV, "Social Change: Antecedents and Consequences," locates social change between its antecedents and its consequences for society. The contributors employ diverse perspectives in handling their topic. The chapters employ different approaches concerning the phenomenon of social change, and some of them draw extensively on empirical data from the social sciences.

Chapter XVI by Yu Wujin, "The Persistence of Modernity: Value Options amid Massive Historical Dislocation," explains how Chinese philosophers are caught in a time-warp in relation to the West. China is at a historical stage which requires a shift from pre-modernity to modernity, yet its philosophers find that Western philosophers, especially Continental philosophers, are engaged in critiquing modernity from the viewpoint of postmodernism. The author urges that to navigate today through what is for China a difficult but promising stage, its philosophers should follow the compass of a genuine 'historicity', reflecting on everything and choosing what is best for the nation.

Chapter XVII by Elinor L. Brown, "The Roles of Public Education in the Development of Contemporary Society," analyzes how American public education perpetuates an ethnically, racially and economically stratified society instead of an egalitarian pluralistic society where all people have equal opportunity to share in prosperity. Using an empirical sociological method, the author demonstrates that African-Americans,

indigenous peoples, and Latino-Americans are systematically excluded from equal education by means of an antagonistic bureaucracy, deteriorating facilities, and inadequate staffing and funding. In particular, she advances the case that today's teachers must be unprejudiced "culture-brokers", trained in conflict-resolution, and that students must be trained in "critical thinking" so they can navigate in an oftentimes adversarial majority culture.

Chapter XVIII by Yu Xintian, "The Emerging East Asian Identification: A Cultural Perspective," explains the problems confronting the efforts of East Asian countries to form a regional bloc sharing mutual political and economic interests. There are large economic disparities among the nations involved; there is an increase in extremism; there are negative as well as positive effects of nationalism. Japan tends to condemn China as relatively 'undeveloped'; China, for its part, has trouble discerning how to filter foreign influence. Nonetheless, the surge of economic growth throughout East Asia requires that the region's nations learn to cooperate.

Chapter XIX by Ye Xianming, "Globalization and Modernization in China," argues that there can be a contradiction between the integration encouraged by technology and the pluralism which allows technology to function. The author urges China to use dialectical thinking when dealing with globalization: "Modernity with Chinese characteristics" means that China must critically absorb the "nutritious" elements of modernity while opposing hegemony and power-politics.

Chapter XX by Zou Shipeng, "How Does the Transformation of Chinese Culture Participate in the Reconstruction of Global Modernity?," argues that the West indeed entered 'material modernity' before China, but sowed conflict between classes and between Nature and humanity. China's transformation into material modernity must pay more attention to – and have more regard for – morality and social psychology. The third phase of human history shall be that of mutual 'existential understanding', and China can help the world towards this future condition.

Part V, "Comparative Approaches," presents comparative approaches to human action and norms, with an orientation toward the valorization of certain conditions in society. The chapters offer critiques of cognitive and moral frameworks that can influence action. Accordingly, the constructed nature of the frameworks is brought to the fore as the subject matter.

Chapter XXI by Yu Xuanmeng, "On a New Way for Comparative Study in Philosophy: Existential Analysis," argues that philosophy, understood as concrete existentiality, can be the ground for dialogue between Chinese and Western philosophy. Recently, Western philosophy has come to the realization that its historical emphasis on ontology has served to distance 'theory' from human reality; likewise, its emphasis on 'objective language' has served to distance philosophy from the human particular. Heideggerian existentialism can bring Western philosophy closer

to Chinese philosophy, since the latter regards ‘getting the Dao’ (a spontaneous and situational skill) as paramount: indeed, language and theory can even be a barrier in this regard. As Marx said, philosophy must learn to come down from ‘mere theory’ to ‘real life’.

Chapter XXII by Chen Xinhua, “The Effect of Social Time on Cultural Comparison,” invokes Karl Marx’s theory of ‘the three cultural formations’ to argue that China is in the transition between the first and second formation, a period that Western countries entered upon two or three hundred years ago. The second formation involves a ‘commodity economy’, and the cultural adaptation it determines is ‘individualism’. Thus, it is expected that Chinese citizens will become more ‘individualistic’, but in this and similar matters, a theoretical grasp of social time and its relation to cultural formation can be very helpful to the planning of public policy.

Chapter XXIII by Xu Changfu, “Love: Partial or Equal? – A Comparative Study of Confucian, Mohist and Christian Love,” explains the debate between Confucianists, whose *ren ai* is hierarchical, and Mohists, whose *jian ai* is absolutely impartial. The former argue that without ‘partial love’, social structure breaks down; the latter argue that so-called ‘partial love’ causes grave social abuse. The author argues that Christian *agape* or ‘equal love’ may very well be why the public sector functions more equitably in the West than the East. His own position is that Confucianism is best for domestic relations and Mohism best for governmental behavior and public policy.

Chapter XXIV by Warayuth Sriwarakuel, “Rationality and Understanding Others,” inquires into the nature of rationality, and probes into the question of whether understanding others is possible. The author reviews the work of Davidson, Rorty, and Rescher on ‘rationality’. In relation to ‘the possibility of understanding others, he strikes a middle position between Davidson’s ‘provincialism’ on the one hand, and radical ‘relativism’ on the other. The author argues that authentic understanding can only be attained via “*praxis*, loving-kindness, and *agape*.”

Chapter XXV by S. Panneerselvam, “The Creative Cultural Tradition of India and Its Relation to Science,” takes issue with C. P. Snow, who calls ‘science’ and the ‘humanities’ the ‘two cultures’. The author reminds us that the human cognitive process underlies both disciplines, and science no less than the humanities is a construct. India’s contribution to the contemporary world may very well be its ongoing appreciation of the mythic mode as the wellspring of all cognitive process, so that science should learn not to prioritize quantity over quality.

Chapter XXVI by Xu Donglai, “Why Do We not Direct Attention to ‘Buddhata’ in Modern Times?” explains the theories of Buddhata in Chinese Buddhism. Buddhata means ‘the nature of Buddha’ [Buddha-nature], and in practical terms represents the possibilities whereby a person can achieve Buddhahood (the aim of Mahayana Buddhism). The author contrasts two prominent definitions, (1) Buddhata accessed by return to one’s ‘original nature’, and (2) Buddhata accessed by ‘creativity’, a

'becoming new'. Up to the 1940s this debate received much scholarly attention, but subsequently interest in Buddhata declined, bringing about a moral decay in society. This paper urges a revival of interest, especially in the second definition, which is less immanentist and thus more socially engaged.

Chapter XXVII by Tran Van Doan, "Ideals, Traditional Values, and Social Progress," examines the problematic of 'progress'. The author holds that progress necessarily involves tradition because the latter has discovered, through a process of trial-and-error over centuries, which values serve humanity and which do not. These prime values bring a culture closer to its version of truth, beauty, goodness, and holiness (four noble ideals which are themselves long-range "constructs" of a given culture). Secondary values, the author argues, are more dependent on limited socio-political conditions, and are best understood as "customs." The confounding of mere customs (which sometimes should be annulled or changed) and prime values can greatly impede progress, especially in traditional societies.

Chapter XXVIII by Wu Xiaojiang, "Cultural Identity and Cultural Tradition," delves into cultural differences between China and the West, and offers an assessment of selected characteristics of the two cultures. A reaffirmation of Chinese identity emerges from the analysis.

Part VI, "Tenets and their Applications," offers analyses of viewpoints or tenets and their application or impact on selected issues in society.

Chapter XXIX by Li Jianqun, "Communication and Interfusion East and West: Humanity and Modern Management Ideology," sets forth Confucian values as the most congenial 'management-theory' for the Asian business-world. The author shows how Confucian 'beneficence' and 'harmony' can foster the health of a company or corporation while avoiding conflict between management and workers, and competition among workers. Citing Douglas McGregor's 'Y Theory', the author points out that even the West is learning this.

Chapter XXX by Vincent Shen, "Openness to the Other in Chinese Philosophy: Zhu Xi as an Example of Analysis," probes 'openness to the other' in Zhu Xi, the great 12th century Chinese philosopher. Zhu Xi was successful in the natural sciences because he looked for what is 'other' in things, rather than 'more of the same'. His account of ethical life focused on the other in teachers and friends, and explained our gratitude for them. Shen interprets the notion of 'Ghosts and Spirits' non-substantially, as principles of concentration and dispersion. He concludes with a penetrating critique of why substantialist definitions of God do not resonate with a Chinese understanding of reality.

Chapter XXXI by Huang Shengping, "So-called Modal Freedom and Guo Xiang's Theory of Peripateticism," proposes Peripateticism, the philosophy of the Chinese classical philosopher Guo Xiang, as the model for Chinese culture today, since it teaches a Taoist path whereby one

spontaneously celebrates him or herself and others in an ambience of peace, and without seeing others as mere things. The author argues that freedom is an exercise of one's authentic 'self-nature', and as such eludes scientism and commodification.

Chapter XXXII by S.R. Bhatt, "Culture, Tradition, and Social Progress," offers a program of eleven ideals towards which human beings should collectively strive if global peace and happiness are to be achieved. Beginning with the "goal of human life and the cosmic process," which must be necessarily global and not merely individual or regional, the program moves through definitions of "unity," "soul or spirit," "quality of life," an ethics of "giving," "tradition," and so on, until it reaches "beyond democracy." As is apparent from its challenges around the world, representative democracy is not working, and the author argues this is precisely because representative democracy has several "inbuilt" defects.

Chapter XXXIII by William L. McBride, "On the Rights to Emigrate and Immigrate," sets forth the principles characterizing non-hegemonic philosophical cooperation, and then applies this problematic to the Universal Right to Emigrate and Immigrate. This paper exposes in particular what it calls the "hypocrisy" of the mainstream American ideology, which professes the "equality" of all human beings and yet appropriates a kind of Divine Mandate for itself. In this regard, the culpability of "liberal democratic" philosophers such as John Rawls is carefully demonstrated. McBride argues that, Rawls, for example, sidelines the right to emigrate, and McBride shows how American 'liberalism', while proclaiming the freedom and equality of all human beings, carefully defends the exclusivity of the American nation-state.

Chapter XXXIV by Huang Songjie, "Civil Society: The Reality and the Ideal," argues that what is called civil society is part-and-parcel of a commodity economy, i.e., an economy which transforms all social resources into commodities so they can – at least if society functions *ideally* – be exchanged freely. Civil society cannot solve the *real* contradictions in a society, says the author, but, as a construct of the people's culture, it can cooperate in the pursuit of truth, beauty, and goodness.

George F. McLean

Robert Magliola

William Sweet

PART I

IDENTITY AS FRAME OF REFERENCE

CHAPTER I

GLOBALIZATION AND ADVANCED CULTURE

HE XIRONG

The current program is to promote traditional culture and create an advanced culture as a basic national policy. But whether we can, or cannot, raise the term “advanced culture,” there are some debates in academic circles. The objective opinion is that there are no distinctions among cultures. Neither can we say which culture is advanced – Indian culture or Chinese culture, Western culture or Eastern culture? Nor can we say which culture is more advanced, that of the ancient times or the modern times? Each nation has its own culture that is suitable for its people. In my opinion, we can still use, here, the term and idea of “advanced culture.” There are at least three reasons to support this point.

Firstly, let us investigate science and technique. Surely there are distinctions between advanced and backward. In the 19th century, it was advanced weapons which defeated China. Also, we can easily find that modern science and technique are more advanced than in the ancient times. Secondly, from the view of values, each nation has its own values that must be more suitable to its people. People would choose a better culture or an advanced culture because it is more useful to them. Thirdly, considering the role of culture in people’s freedom, human freedom includes material culture and spiritual culture. Only those advanced cultures can satisfy the human desire for freedom. From the above reasons I deduce what constitutes advanced culture and how to establish an advanced culture in China under the conditions of globalization.

THE INFLUENCE OF GLOBALIZATION ON THE WORLD’S CULTURES

The issues of globalization have been discussed from the beginning of the 1990s in Western academic circles. It was introduced first in 1993 by a professor from America. Later, there were some papers researching globalization published in the *Orient and Pacific Ocean College Journal* in 1994. But Chinese educational circles at that time did not pay much attention to the issues of globalization. We came in contact with this theme in 1995, at a meeting in Suzhou whose theme was tradition and modernization. At this meeting, it was mostly participants from overseas who talked about globalization. Professor George McLean introduced the concept noting strong impression when the Apollo spacecraft ascended to the moon and overlooked the Earth. This vision of the Earth as a ball made people aware clearly that we live in a limited world which constitutes a

whole. All factors in this whole make one system and interact with each other.

Along with the quick development of new techniques, the limitations of national boundaries were broken through by the increasing of investment, production, supply requirements, etc. The distance between countries shortened continuously. The high development of productivity made all productive factors and economic relations flow freely across countries. The economy of all countries became a close network. Thus, economic globalization was formed.

At the Suzhou meeting, participants brought up many questions, such as whether globalization is really possible. Who globalizes whom? Does economic globalization influence politics, the military, culture, etc., or just the economy? How does globalization influence other fields? Some participants thought that it is possible to support economic globalization, but not cultural globalization, because there is a core of values and ideology in cultures that are fundamental to a nation. Today, after more than ten years, globalization has become a worldwide phenomenon that is impossible to reverse. It is obvious that globalization is not only in geography and not only in economy, but includes thought, cultures and behavior. Globalization is closely related to each aspect of human life. It has already and will continue to influence every realm in the world.

What impact and influence has globalization produced in world culture? We have seen that, on the one hand, ten years after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the end of the Cold War, the quick development of economic integration, and the elevation of environmental protection, etc., human societies have moved towards integration in some aspects, but also have some consciousness of cultural identity and have valued identity which oversteps the native culture. Global ethics, global justice, the concept of widespread human rights, etc, have come into purview. Some scholars concentrate on world culture, as Ken Booth suggested – namely that the 21st century should establish a new global moral science. He said: “If this world can provide reasonable life for most of the people, we need a new reasonableness, a new justice, a new organization and a new political form, and have higher expectations in ethics”.¹ It is doubtless a good wish that pushes global culture towards world peace.

However, we have also seen that, in the process of globalization, some larger cultural systems in the world do not easily blend with other cultures because of their own deep traditions. There are characteristics which collide, and even cause war between different nations and traditional cultures. In the last ten years, these problems have become more and more serious, as in the Kosovo region, the middle-east region, Afghanistan, Iraq, etc. These issues are all related to cultures. At the same time, in the process of economic globalization, along with the stronger economy of the Western countries, cultural permeation and cultural invasion are gradually increasing. In the situation of Western cultural construction and its

excessive expansion, the cultures of developing countries are gradually edged out. Western culture is encroaching upon the cultures of minority and native cultures via many methods, such as movies, television, books, etc. Scholars from India and Africa use George Ritzer's term for this phenomenon: "McDonaldization". People even worry that along with the application of high-tech and the Internet, non-English culture will be gradually replaced by English, the stronger culture. The increasingly accelerative process of globalization will threaten greatly world cultures, languages and creativity. A report pointed out that now there are 5000 to 7000 languages in the world. Among them there are 4000 to 5000 native languages and about 2500 of them have suffered a serious decline. 100 years from now, 90 percent of the languages will have perished. That means that a language disappears every one or two weeks on the average. The disappearance of a kind of language means that a kind of civilization has perished from the earth, and it means that multiple cultural forms are replaced by competitive cultures with unitary, business, and individual capitalism. Most races do not wish this result, and this result is also unjust to the people of the world.

This will affect mankind's destiny in the 21st century. Do we strengthen different cultures's mutual comprehension in order to preserve world peace, or isolate cultures and even cause misgivings and wars. In the process of globalization, only humankind's kind beneficent actions can develop a real benefit for all races and regions. Developing countries particularly should pay more attention to expanding their national cultures – to develop the national ethos, to strengthen the coherence, and increase the ability of cultural competition. All these are the basics which guarantee they will not be assimilated by stronger cultures in the process of globalization.

CULTIVATING NATIVE CULTURE IS A BASIC INGREDIENT FOR CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

Culture generally has a broad sense and a narrow sense. The broad sense of culture is the summation of human material wealth and spiritual wealth created in the process of human practice. The narrow sense of culture is social consciousness and the system and organization that is accommodated in a society.² By this token, culture is not a static concept. It is, first, a historic phenomenon. Each society has a culture corresponding to it, and it develops with the growth of social material production. Secondly, a culture has its own nationality and it forms the national cultural tradition through the development of its national form. Thirdly, a culture has a historic continuity. A new culture is created and developed out of the inheritance of a nation's past culture.

The English word "culture" comes from the Latin word that means to cultivate and grow on land, and it is also used to describe the human soul and spirit. Even a rich and fertile soil, if no one plants it, only grows grass and is worthless. This is a metaphor for the human spirit, which requires

cultivation; otherwise, there is no good result.³ This remark of Professor McLean expressed several levels of cultural meaning by way of metaphorical language. China had a saying early – it was “It takes the humanities to convert people”. “One can know the changes of ‘time’ by observing astronomy. And one can reform and accomplish the human by viewing the phenomena of a society and humanity.”⁴ Enlightened by agricultural activities, ancient Chinese scholars combined observing natural phenomena with discussing the personal. It elucidated well for astronomy and humanities combined. In the evolution of Chinese history, so-called humanity was not only the culture of ceremony and music in the Xi Zhou Dynasty, but indicated generally the aspects of the social system, and at the same time the great creation of each person’s spiritual life. It means the virtue that is opposite to rudeness and barbarism. This creative spirit and virtue formed the whole connotations of “It takes the humanities to convert people”. Generally, Chinese culture hoped to “educate the world” by resolving the problems of people settling down and getting on with their work and the problems of human life, and how people comport themselves in society and nature.

China is a multi-racial nation. There are large differences among nations in language, customs, habits, historic traditions and religious faith, etc. Cultures can keep nationalities united for a long time and can keep the unity of cultural values and ideals, and, at the same time, it can keep the variety of cultures. It elucidates that there are very strong coherences and resources in Chinese history. It is a spiritual pillar that maintains Chinese unity. In history, the Chinese nation made a point of passing on culture. During ancient Chinese history for more than 2000 years, Confucian classics contained leading thoughts and values for all societies at all times. It is the embodiment of the ancient Chinese view of values. The classics were from five to thirteen in number. And the notions and explanations of the classics were an immense number of books. All important changes in thought required thinkers to return to the original classics in order to look for their spiritual source. We can have verification from classical learning in the Han Dynasty and as well as from the Neo-Confucian in the Song Dynasty. If it had no contents of Confucian classics in Chinese history, philosophy, the history of thought, the history of literature, etc., then it was considered to have no cultural basis and no authentic origin of values. But if it just passes the intact culture without replying to the challenges from ages and other cultural systems, then this culture becomes lifeless. Each culture would stand by the sources and, at the same time, receive and reply to the challenges and questions from all cultures. Like this, it can help us to initiate a new human intelligence, and it can make us in goodly fashion adjust the relationship between humanity and the environment. Then the cultural tradition will flourish for a long time and not enter into decline.

Taking a wide view of Chinese history, we find that in the 5000 years of our cultural growth, China has replied to challenges from different cultures. There are three special moments of culturally synthesized

creativities in our history. They are the period of the Spring and Autumn and the Warring States, around 500 B.C.E.; the Song Dynasty, 1000 C.E.; and the end of the 19th century and the start of the 20th century. For the first period “A hundred schools of thought contend”. The result of this contention was the formation of the three bigger headstreams of Chinese civilization represented by Lao Tze, Confucius and Xun Tze, and the completion of Chinese national multicultural integrative creation. The second time there arose a synthesizing creation between Chinese culture and foreign culture through interchanges, conflict, and melting among three schools of Confucius, Buddhism and Daoism, this synthesis lasted at least a thousand years. The third time was the synthesis between Marxist culture and Chinese culture, which process has not yet ended. The synthesis of Marxism, the Western culture and Chinese culture is ongoing.

Generally, when a social development is slow or stagnating, advanced personages emphasize more the opposition between tradition and actuality. Modern China is mainly in this mode. But when a society develops quickly, and people do not think that tradition is a barrier to social progress, the tension between tradition and the actuality would then be relieved. After its recent reformation and opening up, the Chinese economy is developing quickly its national power, becoming stronger. Since the 1980s China has attached importance to tradition more than ever. For example, Chinese traditional culture has been a hot topic from the 1980s until now. There are themes about contemporary transformation of Confucianism, the modern values of Confucianism, and Taoist study, all these prosper.

The truly hot topic is the “legitimacy” problem of Chinese philosophy, reported in 2003 by the media.⁵ The problem raised is, in fact, to freshly recognize and spread Chinese traditional culture. Under learning from the West, in modern times Chinese scholars have constructed Chinese philosophy according to a Western philosophical mode. Surely this phenomenon is ineluctable at the initial stage of cultural exchange. But along with the deep understanding of the Western philosophy, particularly its ontology (the core of the Western philosophy), we find that China originally had no philosophy that transcends experience and interfered with the logic constituted by pure concepts, as in the Western philosophy. If we check the Chinese history of philosophy, written according to the mode of Western philosophy, it would inevitably produce two results: Chinese philosophy was more and approaching Western philosophy including the system of concepts, its terms all followed Western philosophy. These concepts and words lost many connotations inside the Chinese philosophy, because they could not be put into the frame of the Western philosophic mode. Therefore, problems had to be addressed – including different philosophical types, the characteristics of Chinese philosophy, and how to rethink what is philosophy, etc.

But it is not appropriate to generalize as to the problem of the “legitimacy” of Chinese philosophy. This question of legitimacy is still

raised, apparently, by Western philosophy which continues to measure Chinese philosophy by the standard of Western philosophy. Now what we need to do is to start from the facts, to engage from the existing environment of human beings, to view from the life style, and then to rethink the two different philosophical modes. From this viewpoint, the focus is: the life style of human beings, how a person is to be a person, how one can be sage and Buddha, and how one agrees with nature and society. Do these insightful thoughts of Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism in Chinese traditional culture not count as philosophy? Anyway, Chinese scholars want to establish the system of their own discourse and to write the history of Chinese philosophy full with Chinese spirit. Philosophy is the elite of culture, and culture is the foundation of philosophy. Philosophy and culture are the impetus of the economy. Not only does China need to develop economy and technology, but it also needs to make a point of its cultural accumulations and creations.

China has entered into an important period of social transformation in the past two decades. During this period, Chinese society has been deeply changed because of the diversified structures brought by the trends of the 'free market', globalization, and information. The people's ideas, their view of the world, and cultural life have all changed; some spiritual problems have appeared, such as the decline in morals, mental instability, lost belief, etc. A grandiose and glorious cause needs most of the people's support and devotion. Therefore, how are we to enhance spiritual civilization, to set up a healthy philosophical idea of human life, and become the nation's 'spiritual pillars' – these are the important tasks of scholars who engage philosophy and social science. Standing in the contemporary era to view Chinese cultural tradition, there are three kinds of thought-streams which constitute Chinese philosophy – Marxist philosophy and Western philosophy respectively. Our historical mission consists in how to achieve a "synthesized creation", to make these resources of culture available to people's living intelligence and fresh language, and to form spiritual powers so as to encourage people to realize modernization. As I see it, among these three kinds of cultural resources, China has resources that are more open to discovery and expansion. Just as Professor McLean has said: "Regardless of how great the life styles in the past ages have been, it is important to improve and to transform them. In this context, people want the ancient culture to adapt to the new. In such a big transformation, those originally possessed as pre-eminent will become weak unless they are given meticulous care."⁶ Facing the conflict between different civilizations in the contemporary world, scholars researching Chinese philosophy should study the innate characters of the Chinese civilization and compare it with other civilizations. We must create an advanced Chinese culture which adapts to the contemporary age through explaining the Chinese nation's characteristics.

CONSTRUCTING AN ADVANCED CULTURE AND PROMOTING SOCIAL PROGRESS

Advanced culture is the crystal of human civilizations and progress, and a dynamic for impelling human society forward. It is a guarantee that a society can develop. It is the soul of a nation. Constructing a socialist culture with Chinese features is mainly a matter of creative development. An advanced culture should acclimatize the tidal current of history, reflect the watchword of the time, guide the direction of social development, and express the people's basic benefit. Now China is being placed in the tidal wave of globalization. Whether it is a question of the international pre-eminent economy – and this economy contains culture impacting China – or facing the cultural challenges in the transformational period, all call on us to increase our cultural integration and development. Cultural integration and development is necessary for a nation's synthesized competitive abilities. Engels wrote: "Once a society has a technical demand, then this demand can advance science more than ten universities."⁷ New social practice must produce the new and advanced cultures.

In contemporary China, developing an advanced culture means to face modernization, to face the world, to face the future national, scientific and public socialist cultures, so as continuously to enrich people's spiritual state, strengthen people's spirit power, and satisfy people's spiritual and cultural requirements. Advanced culture is not a vague concept and a theoretical assumption. It must be first taken as an advanced system of view with value as the core. The advancement of the culture and the view of value are all in development. Therefore, the 16th National Congress of the Communist Party of China pointed out that "the construction of the socialist culture and the view of value must join together the needs of the new age and their fulfillment, people's cultural and spiritual demands, and create new culture with positive attitude, making great efforts to make the advanced culture flourish, – attracting hundreds of millions of people under the great flag of socialist culture and the view of value that has Chinese characteristics."⁸

There are 3 main factors for constructing a contemporary Chinese advanced culture – namely, constructing a socialist view of culture and value with Chinese features. The first is unified within the basic characteristics of the socialist system. The second is identified with the developing rules for the socialist market economy. The third is to fit these together with the values of a market economy. We have established and are trying to consummate the system of market economy, and we have realized a great social reformation. There are huge changes in the people's view of value during this process. Economic development and social progress call this the "new system of values." This new system of values is included in Jiang Zemin's generalized five factors of consciousness and spirit (in his speech of July 1, 2002). They are: independent consciousness, competitive consciousness, efficient consciousness, democratic and legal consciousness

and developing creative consciousness. These five consciousnesses are also contained in the market economy system, and they are the “view of values” suited to the market economic system.

Advanced culture must still come from our native Chinese society. For thousands of years, the Chinese nation has created splendid cultures and formed a cultural tradition. Its invisible powers profoundly accumulate in our national mentality and national personality. Confucianism was a main trend in Chinese culture, which was the orthodox traditional thought of feudalistic society for more than 2000 years. Confucianism influenced the Chinese nation’s mentality, customs and habits, morals, ethics, the view of values, and the view of life. Under a socialist market economy, an advanced culture should refine the modern meaning of cultural values in traditional culture, such as the thought of regarding people as the basis, the thought of making a point to collective benefits, the thoughts of righteousness and unified benefits, seeing benefits for the sake of righteousness, sacrificing one’s own interests for the sake of others, giving even at the cost of one’s own pleasure, respecting elders and loving the young, etc. All these thoughts we need to inherit and develop today. They are important contents of thoughts for socialist spiritual values too, and should be promoted strongly in our age.

Advanced culture should be a unification of the characters of nation and history: this means the combination of tradition and the “spirit of the time”: “Facing the agitations among every kind of thoughts in the world, we must take the expanding and growing national ethos as the important task of cultural development, and bring it into the whole process of educating citizens, and bring it into the whole process of spiritual civilization developments – so as to make all people always keep the good state which is high-spirited and progressive.”⁹ This speech was delivered by Jiang Zeming at the 16th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. His speech explained the relation between the ethos of the nation and cultural development, and also brought up the target of cultural development and the path of completion. It indicated the direction for us to expand and grow the ethos of nation. There is a close contact between expanding the ethos of nation and developing an advanced culture. Both of them are interdependent, and complementary to, each other, and are to be promoted together. As the soul of the nation, the Chinese national spirit is profoundly in the outstanding cultural tradition of the Chinese nation. The Chinese nation is noted for its diligence, bravery, intelligence, kindness and justice. During 5000 years of multiplying and living, it has become a national personality trait with unceasing strength, capable of enduring hardships without complaining. In the combat of resisting foreign humiliation, it has shaped the national emotion of loving the state, sharing a bitter hatred for the enemy, and returning the land of our own country to ourselves. In the practices of labor and living, it has formed the spirit of respect for work and exerting oneself to the utmost to accomplish a task, and working hard regardless of unfair criticism or unjustifiable complaints. For thousands of

years this spirit has become the Chinese national basic aim and has melted deeply into the contents of the Chinese national spirit.

The advanced culture should be a unification of the characters of nation and the world. The advanced culture is not to be built by a closed door policy, but by the summarized, generalized, and refined practices of hundreds of millions of people. The world nowadays is an opening world. Opening to the outside world is a basic national policy of our country. Not only is this policy applicable to economic developments, but to the development of socialist culture. The development of socialist culture must absorb and use the outstanding results that were created by human societies, and insist on the principle that regards oneself as the basis. Every kind of scientific technique, every kind of beneficial knowledge and experience developed in the practices of people anywhere in the world should be absorbed and studied. Particularly under the circumstances of economic globalization and technical improvements, we should pay more attention to absorb advanced cultural results from abroad, and follow the advance of world cultures. If we do this, we will have a higher starting point for cultural developments and attain a higher level of the world's advanced culture as soon as possible. Thus we can prosper and enrich socialist culture with Chinese features. The culture of the Chinese nation is an open system. China is always good at absorbing the advanced cultural results of the world. We must insist on and develop this good tradition. We must speed up the process of modernization. National culture is a part of world culture. In the process of economic globalization, communicating cultural products is happening everyday in the world, in fields such as the legal system, the theories of environmental protection, economic thought, international rules and practice, etc. National culture is impossible to develop if it is separated from world culture. A society obtains an outstanding culture from other societies by extensive cultural contacts. Through continuous dialogue and communication, the boundaries between different cultures can be melted, and a philosophy that is worldwide seamlessly formed.

Because advanced cultures tally more with mankind's nature and more easily satisfy people's demands, they embody a higher degree of civilization. In fact, the whole history of human development is a history upheld by advanced cultures. Taking a comprehensive view both of China and abroad, whether it be the industrial revolution and its industrial civilization that pushed the developments of Western European society, or Marxism and the May 4th movement here, the great changes of Chinese society have been caused by advanced thoughts of science and democracy. Therefore, facing the fact of economic globalization, making a strong effort to create an advanced culture is the effective guarantee for encountering the cultural challenge from globalization and for making the culture of the Chinese nation prosperous and longlasting.

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NOTES

¹ Ken Booth, “Human Wrongs and International Relations”, *International Affairs*, Vol. 71, No. 1, 1995, pp. 103-126, at p.112.

² See *Dictionary* (Shanghai Dictionary Publishing House, 1989), p. 1731.

³ George F. McLean, *Tradition, Harmony & Transcendence*, trans. Gan Chunsong and Yang Fenggang (Hua Xia Publishing House 2001), p. 10.

⁴ *The Book of Changes, Bi Hexagram*.

⁵ See *Wen Hui Newspaper*, Jan. 5, 2004.

⁶ *Tradition, Harmony & Transcendence*, p. 2.

⁷ *Selected Works of Marx and Engels*, Vol. 4, p. 505.

⁸ See *The Report of the 16th National Congress of the Communist Party of China*.

⁹ See *The Report of the 16th National Congress of the Communist Party of China*.

CHAPTER II

CULTURAL INTEGRITY AND OBLIGATIONS

WILLIAM SWEET

INTRODUCTION

“Cultural Tradition and Social Progress” is – as we all know – an issue that is not new to China, for it is one that this country has been faced with from even before the revolution of 1911 and the changes that followed in its wake. Yet the recent challenges to culture and to cultural identity that have come with the rapid changes in technology and social relations, with the internationalization and international integration of trade and commerce, and with the revolution in the growth and availability of knowledge that is genuinely global, are challenges that face all of us. In general, we can safely say that virtually no part of any country, and certainly no country, can insulate itself from these challenges.

Challenges to our traditions and cultures are not necessarily negative. Indeed, they can be positive, for cultures thrive only when they are able to engage, and deal constructively with, what is new and different.

In this paper, I want to consider some implications of the recognition of the value of culture and tradition, on the one hand, and the emphasis on the dignity of and respect for human persons, on the other. I begin with a brief summary of how culture and tradition contribute to, and provide the parameters for, the growth of persons and societies – and I argue that persons have rights to participate in the construction of their traditions, cultures, and communities. Next, I discuss some questions concerning the nature of these rights to participate, such as how far these rights extend and whether there are obligations that are attached to these rights. Finally, I suggest that the answers to these questions tell us something about ‘cultural integrity’ – about what it is that makes tradition and culture objects of value, and what it is that should guide us in confronting the challenges to culture and cultural identity that affect us all today .

THE VALUE OF TRADITION AND CULTURE

What is it that leads us to insist on the value of culture and cultural traditions? Broadly speaking, it is that they make a truly human life possible. It is clear, for example – and I have argued this in earlier work¹ – that tradition and culture largely determine our moral practices, and are involved in our fundamental moral knowledge. Tradition lies at the root of our morals – our morals and moral norms were originally determined by our

religious or cultural traditions – and even the rejection of a tradition presupposes that tradition.

For example, moral and cultural and political reform – to be intelligible at all – requires tradition, at least in the minimalistic sense of providing the context from which the reform comes. To understand the teachings of Christianity, we have to understand what it is that the law and the prophets of the Hebrew Scriptures – the tradition out of which Jesus came, and in which he taught – said. To understand Marx’s account of history, we need to see that it is a response to Hegelian philosophy, and Marx’s claims cannot be adequately understood without understanding the philosophy that was, in great measure, their source and inspiration. Indeed, tradition is necessary for there to be any knowledge whatsoever. To make sense of our present experience, we have to be able to put it into relation with our past experience – with our concepts, our vocabularies, our stories, our patterns of thought or ways of thinking, our self-understanding, and our understanding of others – not merely as what preceded it, but as providing the perspective or form of life from which our present knowledge emerged. And this requires referring to perhaps many traditions. Conceptual and linguistic practices, like legal, philosophical, and religious practices, are themselves either traditions or are embedded in traditions.

Culture (which is more than tradition, for a culture draws on many traditions), too, has a value. Culture – “the whole way of life, material, intellectual, and spiritual, of a given society”² – is central to determining the meaning of one’s life and to human flourishing. By ‘culture’ I do not mean just the artistic and intellectual work of a group, or ethnicity, or race; ‘culture’ also includes that group’s customs, its mores and moral principles, its laws, its manner of educating its citizens, and its understanding of the nature of the spiritual life. Moreover, culture is not simply that which exists in a group or society at a particular moment. It is something that refers to the past, characterizes the present, and which normally is open to a future – and so is dynamic and growing.

In the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 (UDHR) we find an unequivocal recognition of the importance of culture. (It is, perhaps, ironic that many of the critics of the discourse of human rights have objected to it, alleging that it is inconsistent with the ‘cultural identity’ and the flourishing of some societies.) The UDHR reflects the view that culture is not just a mass of sociological facts about a people, but a wide range of activities and practices that we think all people do, or should, participate in, to a greater or lesser degree. This participation involves ‘care’ for the culture; we can say that to engage in cultural activities involves time, imaginativeness, conscious knowledge and action, seeing how things work together, and freedom. And it is because of its importance to human flourishing that we hear about the human right to engage in the social and cultural life of a nation.

There are two caveats that should be noted immediately. First, tradition is not just a matter of doing things exactly as they have been done.

Tradition is not rote repetition. It is not simple, unimaginative engagement in practices initiated long ago. Tradition involves ways of creatively responding to the challenges of difference and novelty (difference and novelty being just facts of life in the world today) by drawing on the past; it provides, as it were, an ‘anchor’ as we move into the future.

My second caveat (as I have argued in an earlier paper³) is that, while culture and tradition are valuable, they are not intrinsically valuable; they have value only in relation to persons. Specifically, I would insist that a culture has value only so far as it reflects the consciousness and will of those who constitute it, and so far as it permits human flourishing – that is, the growth and development of those who are members of it. If a ‘culture’ is static and is nothing more than the ‘status quo’ for many or for all, then it is not obvious how it could have value. (And so, in answer to the question of whether a culture should be preserved *just* because it exists, the answer is, I think, no. Cultures should be preserved presumably because they permit human flourishing or because they reflect or contain certain fundamental values [such as the recognition of human dignity] that I will outline below. But they need not be preserved just because they exist – and certainly not preserved at all costs.)

In short, then, I would say that it is so far as culture and traditions reflect integrity – i.e., so far as culture and traditions engage the new, without abandoning what they are, and are able to promote human flourishing – that they have a substantial prescriptive value. And it is for this reason that (I will argue) that cultural integrity requires a robust theory of human rights – i.e., the rights of those within the culture to participate actively in the construction of that culture and those traditions and, thereby, to contribute to human flourishing.

But what exactly are these rights? How far do they extend? And what, if any, obligations do we have in participating in the construction of cultures and communities? Do we have, for example, an obligation to respect and defend (our) culture and traditions? These are important questions, and they require a response.

THE PLACE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

I have claimed that cultural integrity requires that those within a culture (or, more broadly, the members of a community) participate in the construction and growth of that culture – and that this entails certain human rights. What are these rights?

I take these rights to be generally those identified in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights – to which all major nation states are signatory – and which are discussed at length and argued for in the work of the French philosopher, Jacques Maritain. I would describe these rights as including rights of three kinds:

Rights to be free from external coercion,

Rights to be free from external restriction, and
Rights to be free from ‘oneself.’

(This third kind of ‘right’ may sound very odd, but before I explain what I mean here, let me describe what I mean in general by such rights and, in particular, the first two kinds.⁴)

To begin with, presenting rights in such general terms is ‘shorthand’ for the specific kinds of rights a particular person may have in the particular situation that he or she finds him or herself.

My right to be *free from external coercion*, for example, is not a general, abstract right, but my right ‘in this situation’ (e.g., as a speaker at a conference) to be free from being forced to act (or to refrain from acting – e.g., to be quiet) by some other person, so long as I do not violate any fundamental moral (e.g., coercing, or doing violence to another) or social rule (e.g., violating the rules of the conference). But the right to freedom from external coercion does not mean that someone who has broken into a conference room, and has seized the microphone from the speaker, cannot and should not be stopped. So ‘general’ rights are reducible to sets of particular rights that particular individuals have in light of the activities they rightly engage in.

Nevertheless, these particular rights (and, more generally, all three ‘rights to be free’ listed above) reflect what we may (*out of convenience*) call a basic general right, and that is “The right to the pursuit of the perfection of rational and moral human life.”⁵ What this means is that each of us, through the particular circumstances we may find ourselves in, has a basic particular right to act in these circumstances in an appropriate way in view of this end – i.e., in view of human flourishing or (in other words) “the rational and moral human life” – even if we cannot say how exactly our act contributes to this end. Moreover, any limitation on this right must be justified in terms of this end (i.e., human flourishing).

Thus, a freedom from external coercion is a freedom from threats to a person’s life or psychological or physical well-being (i.e., the security of the person from harm), and from other direct interference in the actions of that person, so far as he or she is pursuing the “rational and moral human life.” This obviously includes a right to life, “to keep one’s body whole” (by denying others a right to injure me⁶), to “personal liberty” – and (normally) to conduct my own life as master of myself and of my acts.

Obviously, I can be restricted and punished when the exercise of my freedom threatens the legitimate exercise of the rights of others, or when it is inconsistent with a common good. In having such rights, then, I must recognize a responsibility to the human common good (which includes a responsibility both to the culture in which I live, and to the ends which give value to this culture). But since culture includes all those activities that are involved in giving life meaning and in human flourishing, restricting my activities when they do not have these consequences is to restrict not only

my growth and development but the growth and development of culture and traditions.

A right to be *free from external restriction* is more than a freedom from coercion or threats; it involves a freedom from the arbitrary and unnecessary limitations that may occur in the environment or culture in which I live – even though I am not being ‘forced’ to act or not act in some way. It is reflected in “the right of every human being to be treated *as a person, not as a thing*”⁷ (emphasis mine) – which goes beyond being free from coercion.

This freedom includes freedom of conscience and the free expression of conscience (including the exercise of spiritual activity, such as pursuing a religious vocation, without being subject to any disfavour). More broadly, includes the freedom to pursue whatever vocation I may have (such as the right to marry according to the free choice of the people involved, and to establish and raise a family).

This freedom also includes “the right of free investigation and discussion” without arbitrary or unnecessary restriction. It involves a right to pursue the truth wherever it may lie, to subject opinions (about which there can be reasonable disagreement) to searching analysis and critique, and to allow one’s own views to be subject to such critique as well. It may seem that this freedom can threaten culture and tradition – it may certainly challenge them. But so long as this analysis and critique are carried out in a fair way, and so long as it is ‘the truth’ at which one aims – and not one’s own ‘particular’ truth – cultures and traditions must allow questions, even uncomfortable questions. It is better to confront such questions openly, and learn from them or draw on whatever truth they contain, than to refuse to allow or to engage them.⁸ It is important, then, to remove arbitrary and unnecessary barriers to the pursuit of knowledge (whether it be artistic, philosophical, literary, political, and so on). Such a freedom is essential to the thriving of culture and tradition.

If we are to take the above freedoms seriously, however, freedom from external restriction also includes the freedom of people “to participate actively in [cultural and] political life,” “to determine for themselves their form of government,” to associate with others for these purposes “limited only by [a genuine] common good” – understanding also that the possession of these rights is not limited by arbitrary considerations such as sex, race, ethnicity, and religion.

But freedom from external restriction is more than this. The “right to keep one’s body whole” involves more than being secure from external threat or harm. This freedom requires that there be a certain minimum standard of living and conditions for life, without which it would be impossible to have or exercise other freedoms. I have in mind here, for example, a ‘right to food’⁹ – that is, a right to adequate nourishment in order to sustain one’s life. The “right to keep one’s body whole” also includes “The right to relief, unemployment insurance, sick benefits and social security.” And in virtue of having these rights, I have a right to do what I

can to secure them – which involves, for example, “The right freely to choose [one’s] work,” “The right to a just wage,” and perhaps “the right to joint ownership and joint management of ... enterprise.” Finally, because living is sustaining not merely one’s physical existence, but one’s existence as a person (or as a human being), this right further includes the “right to have a part [...] in the elementary goods, both material and spiritual, of civilization.”¹⁰

(Both of these freedoms – the freedom from external coercion and external restriction – may require the existence of other rights in order to be effective, such as the “right ... to the guarantees of an independent judiciary power” – i.e., to be judged by a body of citizens whose decision-making is free of interference by the state.)

The preceding rights to freedom are necessary for a person to participate in the construction of traditions and cultures – but perhaps these do not go far enough. Thus, I want to add a third right to freedom here – a *freedom ‘from oneself.’* What I have in mind by this notion is that we do not (and should not) have the right to be free to act in a wild, self-destructive manner, even if others are not obviously or directly harmed by our conduct. I am thinking of those situations where we may (attempt to) do things to ourselves that will render us incapable of exercising or benefiting from the first two rights to freedom; in such cases, whether we like it or not, we must be free *from* engaging in those actions – and we have a right to be free from them.

Such a freedom may sound rather paradoxical, risky or dangerous, and it certainly touches on some sensitive issues. This freedom is based on the character of human beings as social beings. A culture or a community is better off if individuals act in a way that reflects integrity – and the individual is better off as well. Indeed, the integrity of a culture – and also of an individual – is enhanced by the positive personal character of those who constitute it. But people do not always act in a way that develops their integrity and so, for their own sake, the members of a community or culture or tradition should be free from those things which interfere radically with or corrupt their character and the development of their virtue.

As noted above, this is a very delicate matter, for it seems as if this freedom could be used to justify restricting all kinds of freedom, and could interfere with the moral character it presumably seeks to promote.

For example, suppose that I have a character that is prone to addiction or excess. Suppose also that you produce a product (e.g., chess games) that is ‘neutral’ or even mildly advantageous for the (intellectual) well-being of a person. And suppose that, once I am given the opportunity to learn chess, I become a chess fanatic – ignoring all of my other responsibilities. But, surely, no one could plausibly claim that, because I (or many people) might become addicted to chess, you should be prevented from making chess games.

Moreover, we recognise that moral development, and particularly the development of character or virtue, cannot be accomplished in a

vacuum; it may require being tempted, struggling with temptation, yielding to temptation – and repeated moral failure. Often it is only out of such a process that character and virtue arise. It would be practically impossible – but surely it would also be wrong – to insulate a person from temptation so much that he or she would not be able to develop his or her own moral personality and character.

Nevertheless, I think that there are good grounds for speaking of a right to be free from ourselves. For it is to reject the claim that one has a right to do as one chooses so long as others are not harmed by one's actions. Moreover, to allow people to become addicted, to fall prey to their (irrational) desires and cravings, and so on, is not to give them freedom, but to hinder them in their development, and to hinder the achievement of human flourishing in general.

Of course, no one can make another person good or virtuous; no one can develop another person's character. But we can certainly contribute to the moral training and the moral education of others – our children, for example – and we do so by sometimes moving them out of situations where they may unknowingly or foolishly harm themselves. Of course, we may be ready to run the risk of some people doing evil to, or harming, themselves, in the hope that they will profit from the experience – that they will in fact do the good, or will learn from their mistakes. But they do not have a right to make mistakes or to do evil, even if the evil they do affects only themselves. (Thus I would disagree with the common law principle that a person cannot harm him or herself.¹¹)

To participate in the construction of our culture and traditions, then, we need to be free from the things that would exclude or eliminate our participation right from the start. To be free from ignorance may involve obligatory basic education; to be free from harming oneself may require restricting the non-medical use of drugs, or forbidding unhealthy activities, or limiting when we may engage in frivolous, risky or dangerous sports. Of course, how this right is interpreted and exercised are important matters. It may require a very intimate knowledge of a person's personality and capacities, and a very delicate balance of one's wishes with one's good. But to ignore or reject the possibility of such a 'freedom from oneself' may put us in a place where the right to participate in one's culture and traditions is a very empty right.

In short, these three categories of rights (understanding that what we are doing is using a shorthand way of talking about the particular rights to freedom that one has) are necessary for those within a culture to participate in the construction and growth of that culture – and, generally, for human beings to flourish. And so, these rights must be recognised within one's culture in order for it to possess the integrity necessary for it to have a substantial claim to value – i.e., to be worthy of preservation – particularly if it should wish to call on individuals to make some sacrifice to defend that culture and these traditions.

THE LIMITS OF RIGHTS

The social recognition of a robust set of human rights is required for a culture to exhibit substantial integrity, to defend the dignity of human persons, and to allow persons to participate in the construction of their communities and cultures. Moreover, the value of cultures and traditions is determined, in part, by the existence of such rights. But this does not mean that these rights can never be limited, that they do not involve responsibilities, and that they are the foundation of value.

First, the recognition of these rights by a community or within a culture is not an 'all or nothing' matter – i.e., it is not true that *either* they must be explicitly and formally recognised in law, have clear enforceable sanctions that are attached to their violation, and that such sanctions must be regularly and effectively employed, *or* they are not recognised at all. For the recognition of such rights may sometimes be explicit, sometimes be implicit, and sometimes may be able to be discerned and expressed over time, given social practices or other dominant ideas in a culture (e.g., the recognition of other rights or other persons, or of the value of art or of the environment). And virtually all cultures and communities will have some degree of integrity.

In some cases, then, the implicit recognition of rights and related values – at least as goals of a culture or a tradition – is sufficient to conform the value of that culture, and this may provide the basis for initiating a more explicit or developed recognition. For example, suppose that my work as a scholar requires access to books and articles that will enable me to pursue the specific topic in which I am engaged. I may not have an explicitly recognized right to such access, but it may still be the case that others recognise that it would be good for me to have such access (although perhaps I cannot because it involves unreasonable expense, or the violation of copyright, or whatever). Even if my research project is not acknowledged, it may still be the case that, if I brought this matter to the attention of others, they would 'see' my point and understand my claim. In these cases, there is some recognition (even if those in my culture do not act on my claim). Of course, a minimal recognition is just that, and it may provide only minimal support for the value of a culture.

Second, the importance of the existence of the human rights listed above does not entail that everyone has all of them, or that everyone has exactly the same set or package of them as everyone else. The reason for this is that, as noted above, rights are fundamentally particular rights, and so the set of human rights possessed by one person – a person who has certain needs or aptitudes – may be greater than those possessed by another. And the basic rights that must be satisfied from the start for the well-being and flourishing of one person may not be those that need to be satisfied first for another. The right of free expression of a novelist is more fundamental than the claim to such a right by a racist. And so, by extension, not all societies need secure or guarantee all of the above rights, and it may not be necessary

that one society or culture includes the same rights as another society or culture.

Third, the rights one has may be limited. Certain rights may be limited simply by the fact that the material conditions that exist in a society or culture do not allow for the possibility of satisfying these rights. In other cases, the necessity of guaranteeing the satisfaction of the most basic rights of certain persons might again justify not satisfying the less basic rights of others. (The right one person has to have the means to staying alive may justify not letting other people exercise a right to spend all of their salary as they wish.) And, in some cases, the fact that the exercise of certain rights will plausibly lead to a person to do irreparable harm to her- or himself would be sufficient to limit their exercise. (In general, then, these 'limitations' are imposed by the requirements of a common good, which includes the preservation of a truly human and just culture or community.) Yet we should also note that, in at least the first and second situations described above, the rights that are limited still have weight, and there must be (as it were) a promissory note attached to them – that is, if circumstances later do allow the satisfaction of such rights, then the community would have an obligation to ensure that they were satisfied. A culture or society that refused to (or simply could not) recognise or guarantee any of the most basic rights of a particular person (e.g., the right for that person to be free from mortal harm or injury; the right to be treated as a person) would scarcely have a moral or political claim on that person at all.

Nevertheless, because all individuals ought to participate in the construction of their culture – this is a consequence of their dignity as persons – we can say that they will generally (perhaps, inevitably) have common 'sets' of 'basic' (particular) rights. This is because certain rights seem to be the *sine qua non* of any pursuit of value, of any effort to develop one's character and virtue, and of any kind of participation in the construction of one's culture. And so – subject to the preceding limits – any society or culture that makes a claim to being just or 'a civil society' must seek not only to recognise, but to guarantee, as many of these 'sets' of rights as possible.

OBLIGATIONS AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

We see from the above remarks, then, that the recognition of and respect for the human person does not entail that the value of the individual is more fundamental than that of the community. Community, culture, and traditions are not simply means to an individual's interests – although neither is the individual simply a means to them. One's rights are determined broadly in terms of the contributions that he or she can or might be expected to make to human flourishing. These rights have limits, and the requirements of respecting them does not mean that they are absolute (e.g., that they must be protected and enforced, even at the expense of the very aims or goals that give them meaning).

What I would emphasize, however, is that the value of a culture with integrity, and the recognition of persons as beings of dignity, imply obligations on those who have (or who claim) the right to participate in the construction of their culture, traditions, or community.

As a social being (and therefore as the product of cultures and traditions), one has an obligation to one's particular culture and traditions – i.e., to one's community. This is because, in a very concrete sense, culture and traditions form the context from which we draw our identity as persons; it is by participating in one's culture that we contribute not only to the community and to human flourishing, but also to our own flourishing. Moreover, we have an obligation to contribute positively to our culture and traditions by engaging authentically with difference and novelty, so that that culture can continue as a context in which human flourishing is possible. Thus, we have an obligation to participate in the construction of our communities as far as we can, given the other obligations that we may have.

Of course, our obligations to our culture and traditions do not occur in a vacuum. They reflect and give meaning to (and, indeed, provide protection for) our other obligations. For example, we have an obligation to other beings so far as they are human beings and possessors of value – and, by extension, an obligation to recognise others and their rights. We have obligations to our family and our friends. We have obligations to those to whom we have made promises (or otherwise entered into distinct commitments). And there are general moral obligations, such as an obligation to the truth and to pursue the truth. (And so we must not be co-opted by the special interests of social and political institutions, and we should recognise our obligation to tell even very unpleasant truths.) Finally, we should not forget that we also have an obligation to ourselves – to ourselves as beings who are called to 'authenticity' (and some would say, to the salvation of our souls), to realise ourselves (by developing our moral, intellectual, and spiritual character), and to flourish. Each of the obligations we have is influenced by or reflects our other obligation. At times, our obligations may, or at least may appear to, conflict. Often, however, the culture and traditions in which we live will provide some indication of what even our own priorities are and therefore what we should do, what our obligations are, and how we should act on them. Consequently, not only do our obligations not take place in a vacuum, and not only are they dependent on one another, but we must always refer them to the culture, traditions, and practices in which they occur. We flourish when the culture in which we live flourishes.

This does not mean, however, that we are simply at the mercy of the cultures and traditions of the communities in which we live. For, in actively participating in culture and traditions, we 'make' that culture and those traditions. We will, then, normally have an opportunity to present new insights and alternatives. And fulfilling our responsibilities to our culture and traditions is not just blindly carrying out assigned tasks, but may involve reflecting on – and questioning – those tasks.

We may go even further. It may be that one's culture and traditions are corrupt or interfere with human flourishing, and that the culture in which one lives lacks, or possesses little, integrity. Or it may be that one's culture is blind to a grave immoral practice that is central to it (e.g., slavery, apartheid, and the like). It is this that those of exceptional moral insight and practical wisdom – such as the great moral and religious teachers – may recognise and respond to. Such a person might – rightly – oppose or challenge the culture and traditions from which she or he comes.

But it must be emphasised that this is not an option that can be appealed to by all. We are not all prophets or saints; we do not all have profound insight into the strengths and imperfections of our culture and traditions and the values they reflect, in comparison with what is demanded by the standard of human flourishing. Often, we respect our own opinions more than those of others, and are inclined to make exceptions to rules for ourselves. And so, in fact, most of us are in little position to see or advocate radical changes (though we may be able to recognise those moral visionaries, prophets and saints who do see the importance for radical change in our culture and traditions). As a result, we may contribute more to our culture by carrying out our responsibilities to it, than by thinking that we ought to challenge it. This also confirms our *prima facie* obligation to participate in the construction and preservation of our culture and traditions.

CULTURAL INTEGRITY AND HUMAN FLOURISHING

I have argued that the value of culture and traditions should not be underestimated. They are essential to individual identity, to engagement in intellectual, moral, and social practices, and to human flourishing. Yet it is fair to say that unless one's culture and traditions show integrity – which requires at least an implicit recognition of the dignity of and respect for human persons and a recognition that persons have rights to participate in the construction of these cultures and traditions – they have little moral claim on us.

Does this reflect an individualist model of the relation between the person and the community? I have claimed that it does not. Nevertheless, the preceding account does offer a robust theory of human rights. I have attempted to show what such a theory of our rights amounts to, what the limits of these rights are, and what kinds of obligations we have towards our cultures and traditions. It is here that the notion of cultural integrity is important.

A culture that exhibits integrity respects its past, for it is this that anchors how people are to respond to novelty, difference, and change, and which provides a basis for making any development a thoughtful, rather than an arbitrary, response. But such a culture must also be open to the insights and challenges of its present environment, and to the future.

Ultimately, what gives the basis of the value of a culture is its capacity to allow and provide for human flourishing. This is not merely an individual value, but a dominant idea in human consciousness.

It is this flourishing, which is a concrete manifestation of the recognition of human dignity, that makes tradition and culture objects of value – of objective, and not subjective (or relative), value. But it is also through one's culture and traditions that one has the means and the opportunity to flourish. It is this value, I suggest, that must be recognised in China – and everywhere – and which should guide us all in confronting the contemporary challenges to culture and cultural identity.

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NOTES

¹ In "The Future of Tradition," *Science et esprit*, Vol. 54 (2002), pp. 299-312. [Reprinted, with minor revisions, as "Philosophy, Culture, and the Future of Tradition," in *Philosophy, Culture, and Traditions*, Vol. 1 (2002), pp. 103-120, and as "Philosophy, Culture, and the Future of Tradition," in *Dialogue between Christian Philosophy and Chinese Culture*, eds. Paschal Ting, Marian Gao, and Bernard Li (Washington, DC: Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2002), pp. 53-69.]

² Raymond Williams, "Culture and Civilization," in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Paul Edwards (New York: Macmillan and Free Press, 1967), Vol. 2, pp. 273-276, at p. 273.

³ In "Universal Human Rights and Cultural Integrity," [in English and in Farsi] in *Human Rights and the Dialogue of Civilizations* (Qom [Iran]: Mofid University Publishing House, 2001), pp 287-296; reprinted, with revisions, as "Philosophical Foundations, Cultural Integrity, and Human Rights," [in Chinese] in *Universitas [Che hsüeh yü wen hua]: Monthly Review of Philosophy and Culture* [Fu Jen University], Vol. 30 (2003); also reprinted [in English] as "Cultural Integrity and Liberty Rights," in *Indian Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol 30 (2003), pp. 479-494. See also my "Globalisation, Cultural Integrity, and 'Participative Construction'," *Notes et documents: pour une recherche personnelle*, No. 64 (2002), pp. 14-24.

⁴ Note that these are all cast in the form of a 'freedom from', and not in the form of a 'freedom to.'

⁵ See Jacques Maritain, *Natural Law: reflections on theory and practice* (South Bend, IN: St Augustine's Press, 2001), p. 96, and compare the 'Preamble' to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948).

⁶ As distinct from a right to *punish* me,

⁷ See Maritain, *Natural Law*, p. 97.

⁸ One may ask whether this is not too naïve, or whether one's opponents are not likely to resort to exaggeration and manipulation. This is, of course,

possible, but – again – not to engage their views does not protect oneself from them either.

⁹ Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, Article 25 (1): “Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food ...” Cf. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization Intergovernmental Working Group to elaborate Voluntary Guidelines on the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food, <http://www.fao.org/righttofood/en/index.html>

¹⁰ See Maritain, *Natural Law*, pp. 71, 98.

¹¹ See Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Bk. 5, Ch. 9.

CHAPTER III

THE MODERNIZATION OF CHINESE TRADITIONAL CULTURE

RAN HE

This paper develops the following arguments: Culture is the reflection of social life. It is not an abstract thing or something high in the sky. According to the standard of ideology, culture can be divided into political culture, economic culture, social life culture, etc. Society is changing and developing, so the culture is different between advantage and disadvantage. China is a country in which politics decides everything. That's the reason why the Chinese people lack the spirit of real belief and seeking true knowledge. The Chinese people will not expand their cares to a larger scope than their family. They are in a state of disunity, but they uphold the idea of "a great unity". It is difficult for the Chinese people to cooperate, but the relationship between the officials and the common people is good and stable. The Chinese people have a strong life force, but the force just comes from the oppression of the totalitarian regime. They mostly bully the weak while fearing the strong, and bully the good while fearing the evil. This is the result of the political system. With the development of society, the traditional Chinese culture must be changed. The modernization of Chinese culture is the modernization of the Chinese system of politics. In China, what the anti-Westernization trend of thought opposes today is Western political culture and its political system. Each of the above points will be developed one-by-one in a detailed manner.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL QUESTIONING OF CHINESE TRADITIONAL CULTURE

The Chinese have a spiritual tradition of love which was advanced by the Chinese ancient sage Confucius more than 2500 years ago. The core of the spiritual tradition is the filial piety advocated by Confucius, and then extended to loyalty and kindheartedness. "I want to stand, so I help others to stand", "I want to succeed, so I help others to succeed", "What I do not want should not be forced onto others". These famous words embody this spirit. The Chinese people give presents to their parents and respect their elders – which are unique spiritual characteristics. They think much of affection, have good personal morality, understand and satisfy others' feelings, and always repay kindness. All these traits originate from the spirit.

However, the Chinese lack the spirit of true belief and true learning. So the Chinese people's spiritual tradition is not consummate. On

the contrary, the spirit of true belief and true learning seems to belong more to Western people's spiritual tradition. Observing Chinese history and the *status quo*, we can know that Chinese people have no belief basically. Such a thing as fighting for belief, as do the people in the Mideast and in the West, seems quite impossible for us. Chinese people fight only for power or money, and seem to always resort to tricks. In the heart of many Chinese people, "god" is only a useful tool at best. People pray to "god" and think of "god" only in situations of adversity. Indeed, the Chinese people also have belief. They believe in Buddha. They also believe in Dao, Allah, God, Confucianism, ancestors, ghosts, and witches. Believing in everything, they are superstitious, and have no true belief. Therefore, the Chinese people lack true belief and have no spirit of belief.

The essence of true belief is the abstract cognizance of the eternal nature of beings. Chinese people lack the abstract thinking of absolutization, and do not abstract the supreme and eternal nature of the beings in the world beyond experience. They have the 'eternity' of the supreme imperial power which is full of lies and fraud, while losing abstract supremacy and eternity. In the hearts of many Chinese people, supremacy and eternity do not belong to God, but to the emperor and the people who have power. The Jews esteem God, and the Chinese esteem the secular power. The Jewish belief in God seems to have made them lose their motherland then and forever, and the Chinese people's yielding to the secular power makes them humiliate their nation and forfeit their sovereignty, but again get a larger motherland. The Chinese people always put words expressing "supreme" and "eternal" into the secular authority – from Confucius' "great", "lofty", and "mighty," to "long life, long long life" hereafter, until "great", "tens of thousands of years of life" – without any stop. It is Confucianism that influences the Chinese people's spiritual life deeply. Confucius, the founder of Confucianism, only cared about the living, was indifferent to death, and intentionally avoided talk about such things as ghosts and god. Confucius said: "we have no knowledge of the living, how can we know about the dead?"; "We cannot [even] deal with man, how can we deal with ghosts?" Confucius had the intention to avoid thinking about abstract things, even "imaged" things. He only paid attention to man's concrete experience. The Chinese lack of belief is connected closely with the Chinese understanding of human nature. The Chinese think that human nature is good. They cherish all their good wishes for their leader, and project the most beautiful and lofty morality on their leader. Their conviction is so strong that the historical experiences and lessons of more than 2000 years cannot make them wake up. But practice has proved that what the people should give to the leader is not praise, but the effective restriction of his power.

The Chinese also lack the spirit of seeking real knowledge. That is why the Chinese did not initiate modern natural science. The spirit of really seeking knowledge is the spirit of seeking knowledge only for the sake of knowledge. For example, we seek literature only for literature; seek arts only for arts; seek science only for science. The Chinese sage, Confucius,

oriented the objects of knowledge towards ethics. To seek knowledge is to learn how to be a person. The aim of seeking knowledge is to become an official in the government. Confucius spoke of his mode of seeking knowledge in his “big learning”. The mode is: “studying things, thinking over, cherishing sincerity, correcting heart, mending morality, treating family, managing state, harmonizing the world.” Confucius began from studying things, and ended with harmonizing the world. The ancient imperial examination in China embodied the purpose of learning, and also regulated the purpose. This tradition continues until now. Chinese students today, whether majoring in arts or sciences, are all eager to be officials. Once they become officials, the aim is reached, and the life of the academy is over.

The knowledge of Confucius and other sages after Confucius basically belongs to knowledge as intuition, which lacks logic. Confucius’ theories are only of some quotations. No wonder the Chinese people do not resort to reason, but resort only to courtesy and feeling. However, the Chinese people have another kind of reason, the “great men’s” reason. The “great men” are always regarded as the men full of reason. Bigger power, more reasons; the biggest power, the most reasons. So, in China, power is superior to law. The Chinese rulers carry out a policy of fooling the people. The policy eliminates the possibility of people’s seeking knowledge by logic. From the ruler’s point of view, it is enough for the common people to live, as long as they can eat. If the common people are ignorant, the ruler need not worry about the stability of his power.

The Taoists said: “The wise Tao from the old times is not to let people become knowledgeable, but to fool them. It is knowledge that makes it difficult to manage people” (*Old Man*, chapter 48). “The sage’s ruling is to empty the people’s heart, fill their stomach, weaken their ambition, strengthen their body, and make them have no knowledge and desire” (*Old Man*, chapter 20). In the eyes of the Taoist, if the common people have no knowledge and desire like infants, the world will be governed successfully. The Chinese rulers have carried out this kind of ruling tricks for more than 2000 years. It is difficult to imagine how the Chinese people can have the spirit of seeking real knowledge in this social ecosystem.

The Chinese people will not expand their cares to a larger scope than their family. Their ray of light only illuminates this time and this place. At best, they only care for some limited scope of people, such as their parents, wife, son, daughter, brother and sister. Chinese people lack cohesion. As Mr. Sun-sen said, the Chinese people have been in a state of disunity. “Lacking unity” and the “great unification” interact as both cause and effect. A handful of several bad men competed for hegemony – who wins? who will be supported as king? “The winner is the king, the defeated is the bandit.” This is the truth, no matter if we look back in history or to the present days. “Lacking unity” makes the ruler’s governance very easy. The descendants of the Song Dynasty and the Ming Dynasty which were put out by the different clans also accepted Genghis Khan and Kangxi as their own

ancestor, and sang the songs of praise. The broad land of China is, paradoxically, the result of numerous losses of its land. In history, every time the Chinese lost their nation, the land would be enlarged. This phenomenon began with Qin Shihuang's unifying of China, and ended with the Qing Dynasty's unifying of China. The Chinese people do not care about the meaning and the nature of a change of regime. The struggle for power is limited to a very small group of the people. The mode of Qin Shihuang's unifying of China makes adventurers set the throne of the Chinese emperor as the target of struggle. The fundamental base and the validity of the Chinese autarchy are that power is the only cohesive force of Chinese society.

It is hard for the Chinese to cooperate. The common saying is: "One monk carries two buckets of water on the shoulder to make food, two monks carry one bucket of water on their shoulder together, three monks carry no water." The thought of the "evenness doctrine" is rooted deeply in the people's hearts. This kind of "evenness" is given by the ruler. It is not between the ruler and the ruled. It is "evenness", not "equality". The Chinese people will not and dare not demand equality from the ruler. Today, Chinese descendants in the United States all strongly feel that their group lacks cohesion in comparison with European peoples, even with the Japanese people. When those of Chinese origin try to be elected to public office in the United States, it is their own ethnic compatriots who dismantle them backstage. In the last years of the time of the Warring States, Su Qin's strategy of unifying the north and the south was defeated by Zhang Yi's strategy of unifying the west and the east. This determined the Chinese culture of unifying the far and attacking the near. If near, there is a comparison, then there is a desire for evenness. If no evenness, there must be jealousy. There is only one kind of cooperation between the Chinese people, namely the cooperation between the officials and the common people, in other words, between the master and the servant. This kind of cooperation is usually stable. It can last for many years, even for several generations. In history, the dynasties of the Han, the Tang, the Song, and the Qing were all maintained for more than 200 years. The servile Chinese people will not oppose the emperor and the master, unless they cannot survive at all.

The Chinese have an extremely strong life force. No matter in what kind of predicament they find themselves, they survive. In the 19th century, the United States created a great engineering miracle – the first railroad traversing the United States. The majority of the workers were the Chinese "piglets," as they were called. Their wages were only half the wages of the whites, but they did the most dangerous work. They stepped into eight-feet of accumulated snow, and continued to work. They risked working when the temperature was below zero. Few Americans could tolerate this hardship. Chinese workers could survive by eating dead rats and a few handfuls of rice. They were willing to work even when the wages were only ten cents. But Americans could not support their families at that rate.

The Chinese character “忍” has the meaning of “endure”. It has two parts – ‘knife’ and ‘heart.’ The knife is above the heart. It is as if there is a sword overhead, making people worry about its dropping down at any moment. In this situation, who would dare to do something with indiscretion? The indulgent totalitarians are the sword pending above the head of the Chinese people. Since Qin Shihuang unified China, China has had a totalitarian history for more than 2000 years. The life value of all the people in society spreads out from the core of power. Own the power, or obey the power. Knowledge and money cannot become the forces that match the power. Chinese Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism all advise people to submit to this unfairness – to suppress themselves and forbear. They make every effort to devalue people’s achievements (except those gained as an official), to attack people’s proper pride, and to tame them, so that they become busy animal-men, even robots, simply cramming themselves with food. Therefore, the Chinese people’s extremely strong life force comes from the political ecosystem and traditional thought. The Chinese people are the most law-abiding people in the world. They are a big piece of dough tweaked and kneaded in the hand of the self-indulging totalitarians.

The Chinese people mostly bully the weak while fearing the strong, and bully the good while fearing the evil. When a gangster robs, or insults, even rapes a woman, there is always a crowd, but no one stands up to uphold justice. The people are enthusiastic about bullying those who have already lost the strength to fight back. They love attacking the dead tiger. For half a century, the Chinese people have experienced numerous political movements. In every political movement, people would treat the criticized, the defeated, and the weak cruelly. When on the stage, they are praised by every one, but once knocked down, cursed and scolded by them all. This phenomenon has lasted for more than 2000 years. The Chinese people’s “goodness” is false. It comes from the long-term oppression from the mighty power. Once a mighty power is knocked down, the Chinese people’s evilness will run amuck in the world, like the devil coming out of Pandora’s opened box. This is the reason why the Chinese people cannot get away from totalitarianism, and also the reason why the Chinese people bully the good and fear the evil. The meaning of the Chinese people’s “goodness” is self-restraint, endurance, meekness, even inaction and ignorance. This kind of goodness is hypocritical. It is the result of oppression by totalitarianism. The goodness exists between the ruler and the ruled, and there is no such goodness between other relationships. What is more, the goodness of the majority becomes the source of doing evil deeds by a handful of men. The Chinese people have the tradition of fearing officials. It is inevitable for them to yield to the despotic power of the reasonless totalitarian, because they lack the spirit of real belief and real knowledge. What they lose by fearing evil is reasonableness and self-respect. The result of the fearing is to bully the good and the weak. People are accustomed to venting their anger

on people weaker than themselves to compensate for their own fear of the powerful.

WESTERNIZATION AND ANTI-WESTERNIZATION

Chinese culture nurtures the unique Chinese character. But since modern times, Chinese culture has been impacted violently by Western culture. In the field of ideology, westernization and anti-westernization are two outstanding extremes. Their influence goes beyond the field of ideology. They influence many fields, such as politics, the economy, education, academic study, literature, and publishing, as well as the people's customs and daily life. "Westernization" is of many kinds. Every Chinese person can discover that westernization occurs every day and at every hour of our lives. Learning English is the Chinese student's most important task today. In parts of some cities and some counties, English classes have been opened even in the primary schools. During their college years, students make the greatest effort to study English. An English test is required for entrance to higher education. English tests are required for a technical post. English tests are required to enter any competition for any occupation. In the past, when we translated Western words, we used to make them sound like Chinese words, but now many people westernize Chinese words. On the street, the advertisements and the products of Coca-Cola and McDonald's can be seen everywhere. On computers, the most commonly used word processor is the Chinese "Windows" made by the American Microsoft Company. Other important software also comes mostly from America. In literature and art, the novels, movies, music, paintings and animated drawings, which are very popular in the United States, are published in China at almost the same time, and are very popular. The movie "Titanic", invested in so enormously, was shown at the same time in the largest cities of China, the United States and other countries in the world, and drew the same crowd. The public figures of the United States, such as Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Michael Jordan, are also the subject of Chinese people's gossip. In the publishing field, a large number of famous books have become the essential books of the Chinese intellectual. The book "The Revolution of Learning" has a circulation of over 10,000,000. Almost every upper grade student in the primary schools of Beijing has one. The textbooks of management and the textbooks of economics of Harvard University are translated into Chinese and published in China. Almost every college student majoring in management and economics has one.

Chinese children today eat at McDonald's, drink Coca-Cola, play American games, watch Euro-American films, listen to Euro-American music, and say the "A, B, Cs". In their brain, there are no traditional myths, only the cultural signs of Donald Duck, Jurassic Park, and The Lion King. Even women living on the other side of the ocean in the Chinese countryside and who do not know where America is, unconsciously feel the

superiority of the United States. Many Chinese people, especially the young, think that all things in the United States are perfect. The life style, the economic system, the political system, the way of management, even the ideology and the humanitarian spirit, become objects to imitate and pursue. The United States has become many people's target to look forward to, and the "heaven" of their heart. Therefore, the "American Dream" has become the highest ideal of many young people who were born after the times of reform and openness. The American people, the American system, the American economy, the American culture, the American land – all of them have become so lovely, so respected, and so friendly. It seems that the American moon is rounder. Studying in America is the biggest wish for many young people and their parents. The first wish of studying abroad since China's reform and openness is to study in the United States. Becoming an American citizen is some people's greatest dream. Even people with very high status talk about America here and there, and send their children to America in succession.

What is more important is that the American view of value has become the view of value pursued by many Chinese people. These people's hearts have begun "Americanization". Since the 1980s, Chinese markets have been inundated by more and more merchandise labeled with an American brand – American movies, compact discs, country music, rock-and-roll music, Donald Duck, Mickey Mouse, and so on. What they reflect is American culture and values. The entertainment programs where overt ideology is light in fact influences the Chinese people – particularly the young people – intentionally or unintentionally, by bringing forth and advocating a Western life style. In recent years, the Internet has developed very quickly, making all sorts of information spread very quickly. The United States spreads its law, its interpretation of human rights and its standard techniques extensively. They are deeply influencing people's points of view of values on society, politics, law, etc.

Chinese society is being Westernized, but at the same time, the Chinese people strongly oppose Westernization. Anti-Westernization is the Chinese people's national "feeling," deeply rooted in the heart and cannot be dispelled. The history of the modern age, especially the revolutionary history of the Chinese Communist Party, we can say, is a history of fighting against the West and the United States. This "feeling" is responsible partly for the policy of closing the door of the country to the world during Mao Zedong's times. When the new policy of reform and openness was initiated, the anti-America "feeling knot" was alleviated. But since 1999, especially when NATO (led by the United States) bombed the Chinese embassy in Yugoslavia, and following the China-America plane incident in 2000, the "feeling" has reached a new height. If we look at the newspaper and books discussing international relationships, national culture and globalization, we find a large quantity of anti-America articles. Many Chinese people see America's scheme of "Westernization", and bitterly hate Americans acting as the world's police force, despise the Americans' arrogance and

ignorance, and satirize Westernized Chinese people, saying that they are “the slave of a foreign master”.

Some people think that after the former Soviet Union collapsed, the first strategic enemy of the United States changed from the former Soviet Union to China. Thus, suppressing China, trampling China underfoot, and blotting out socialist China from the map of the world, are chosen policies of the United States. In the aspect of strategy, the United States would regard force as the backing, and realize gradually the purpose of “conquering China politically”. According to these people’s viewpoint, almost every strategic act of the United States in the Pacific Asia region aims at China, directly or indirectly. Some people say that globalization is just Americanization. They think that globalization is a new tool of the United States to promote its hegemony, and is a trap. NATO’s invasion of Yugoslavia exposes the true nature of America’s globalization. Globalization is not the gospel of human beings, and also lacks inevitability. A young professor studying the problems of globalization says that what is behind globalization is power politics and economic hegemony. Its result lies in the single mode – a standard that comes from the United States. In some people’s hearts, all the products of American knowledge and culture contain the hostile purpose of Americanizing China and the world. Many American films blaze forth with the “American spirit” and the doctrine of the Big United States, while demonizing Chinese.

Anti-Westernization is embodied in the aspect of hating America, but also in the aspect of criticizing American society. It takes a great effort to make people believe that not only the systems of the United States are not suitable for the situation of China, but also the United States itself is full of serious problems and is not worth following at all. For example, not long ago there was a series of articles in the *Peking Evening Newspaper* which described American middle school life as a place of violence, murder and eroticism. Many intellectuals say that there is no true democracy in the United States. Democracy only belongs to the minority who has power and force. The American economy is in a predicament or crisis. The American people have lost their morality. They are negative and decadent.

Some people claim that a tougher foreign policy towards the United States should be adopted. Some years ago, some young reporters acclimatized the anti-American feeling, and edited a book entitled *China Can Say No*. This book caused great echoes. Even pirated editions appeared. Other booksellers took advantage of the opportunity hurriedly, and organized people to edit quite a few similar books, such as *Why China Says No*, *China Only Says No*, *Suppressing China*, *The Real Reason for Demonizing China*, etc. These books declare that the United States is still a paper tiger. It is outwardly strong but inwardly weak. China is the country with the largest population in the world and has owned nuclear weapons for a long time. The United States has no way of really dealing with China. What is more, the United States was defeated eventually by the Communist Party in the Chinese inner war before 1949 and in the Korean War. These

books even call for the people to remember the old hatred, and prepare to fight.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHINESE CULTURE AND THE PROGRESS OF CHINESE SOCIETY

Culture is a reflection of social life. It is not an abstract and empty thing. When we discuss Chinese traditional culture and the problems of Westernization and Americanization, we should not deviate from social life and discuss it fantastically. The cultural situation of a country is decided by many factors, including the geographical environment, the political system, the economic system, etc. Many people regard what the sage said as our culture. Of course, this is wrong. Culture is not something lying somewhere in the sky. It is stored eventually in people's minds, and embodied in people's conduct and actions. If we do not discuss cultural problems on this level, but regard culture as an abstract concept, we will distort culture. As a result, we will not promote but obstruct social progress, and make different nations and countries reject each other in terms of culture.

Culture originates in social life, so there are complicated cultural phenomena in the society, such as the food culture, the tea culture, the wine culture, etc. The meaning of culture is too broad, so people often steal and change the concepts when they discuss the problems of culture. It is necessary to make classifications of culture. According to the standard of ideology, culture can be divided into political culture, economic culture, social life culture, etc. The political culture reflects the political system. This culture has the strongest ideology. The economic culture reflects the economic system. This culture has the next strongest ideology. The social life culture reflects the social life. This culture has the weakest ideology. What the strong anti-American trend rejects is Western political culture. Because China has adopted and has already begun to carry out the market economy, and Marx's standard of system of ownership has been laid aside, Western economic culture has been accepted broadly, such as the principle of efficiency, the principle of contract, ideas of economic management, etc. As to the social life culture, there are food cultures, tea cultures, etc. The culture which is felt to be Westernized by all Chinese people is this kind of culture. This culture can be called neutral culture. What is opposed mainly in the anti-Americanization thought trend is not the neutral culture, or the economic culture, but the political culture which reflects the western political system. Indeed, there are a lot of people who oppose all American culture. In fact, what they oppose is only the conception of "culture". It is like a monster. It comes here to negate and extinguish me, so of course I will make every effort to fight against it.

We have said that the Chinese people lack the spirit of seeking true knowledge. This attitude of negating the whole is a manifestation of the spirit. Only on this point, must the Chinese culture be modernized. In Chinese society, political power is the fundamental power. Political power

is the only force that can unite the Chinese people. Also only political power can guarantee the normal operation of the whole social system. Therefore, the political culture is China's most hypostatic culture. We can eat at McDonald's and can learn the western experience of economic management, but we cannot change our political system. What anti-Westernization opposes is the Western political system. We must maintain our political system, so we oppose Westernization. We oppose Americanization, and the Europeans oppose Americanization, too. But they are different. What the European tries to protect is the neutral culture, such as the native language etc., while the Chinese protect their political system.

If we admit that culture is a reflection of society, and society is changing and developing, we must admit that culture is different between the advantaged and the disadvantaged. We say that culture has the nature of relativity, and the entire nation's culture is equal. Here culture refers only to a neutral culture. The Chinese people eat their meals with chopsticks, the European people with forks. We can say that there is no difference between the two ways. However, we cannot say that democracy and autarchy can coexist, and there is no difference between superior and inferior. In modern times, politics deciding the wholeness is not in accordance with the trend of the times, so the culture reflecting this kind of the reality cannot be said to be advanced. This kind of society has not reached the level of modern times. There is no power of the citizenry matching political power. Chinese culture today is brought up mainly by political power. All its kinds of irregularities can be explained by the political system. Therefore, the modernization of Chinese culture is not just a problem of culture itself. The reformation of the political system is the fundamental way of modernizing Chinese culture. Basically speaking, the modernization of the Chinese culture is the modernization of the Chinese political system.

Some people say that we must defend our cultural sovereignty, and ensure our nation's cultural safety. At bottom, we know that this mentality is the Cold War mentality. This way of thinking distorts "culture". It treats culture as a sign and conception. But the question is whether or not we really can be Westernized. The answer is "no". Today we can see McDonald's everywhere in China. The children's favourite place is McDonald's. But in China, is there any family which has abandoned Chinese dishes and has had a Western dinner every day? Which Chinese child cannot use chopsticks and only use a knife and fork? Every civilization will influence all the people of the nation deeply. Most people would like to protect their cherished traditions in every possible way, because people are always acted on naturally by the law of inertia. Therefore, it is not necessary for us to worry about losing the value of our own tradition. Japan accepted Western civilization without reserve, and Westernized completely, but its tradition was not lost at all. On the contrary, tradition is promoted. What is more important is that Japan reached modernization by way of Westernization completely, including the modernization of the political system.

Globalization creates the chance of a modernization of Chinese culture. Globalization is the unification of singleness and diversification. The singleness embodies the similarity between the different nations and the various systems of civilization in the aspects of life style, the mode of production and the point of view regarding value. Today, democratic politics has increasingly become the common political aim pursued by international society. The idea of respecting the human person and of pursuing freedom and equality has become a universal political value. The system of autarchy is not in accordance with the people's will. Only a few countries in the world today uphold this system. Singleness embodies universality. On the premise of accepting universality, we must accept diversity. Japan and South Korea are both democracies like the United States, but they carry out their democracy by way of a European-style parliamentary system. This system is different from that of the United States. If their system is measured by the standard of the United States, we cannot say that 'parliamentary' democracy is true. We cannot find two countries whose political systems are the same completely, although they both belong to the democratic country, and both exercise the system of the people's sovereignty. It is impossible to realize the development of Chinese culture and the progress of Chinese society if we only depend on our own strength. China must join the tidal wave of globalization actively. Globalization is not only the globalization of the economy, but also the globalization of politics and culture. Globalization of the Chinese culture will and must make positive contributions in the long run to the modernization of world culture.

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CHAPTER IV

MULTICULTURALISM AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

CHEN GANG

Multiculturalism is a matter of fact in the world because of the systematic immigration in the process of modernization and globalization. However, multiculturalism is a double-edged weapon. China has over 56 nationalities or minorities besides Han nationality. Multiculturalism is an important issue for Chinese-nationalities policy and for fostering the national spirit. Canada is a country where multiculturalism is well established and much practiced. A lesson we can learn from Canadian experience is that we need to keep a balance between divergence and convergence and a tension between “tender” and realist components in policies relative to national identity.

THE PRACTICE OF MULTICULTURALISM IN CANADA

Canada is a country of immigrants. The co-existence of diversified ethnic groups is a basic social fact. How to handle the difference in culture and to achieve harmony among various ethnic groups is a big social and political issue in Canada. The official attitude to multiculturalism is quite positive, as we find from the Ministry of State, Canadian Heritage website: “Canada’s cultural diversity strengthens the country socially, politically and economically in innumerable ways.” There Multiculturalism is defined as:

Canadian multiculturalism is fundamental to our belief that all citizens are equal. Multiculturalism ensures that all citizens can keep their identities, can take pride in their ancestry and have a sense of belonging. Acceptance gives Canadians a feeling of security and self-confidence, making them more open to, and accepting of, diverse cultures. The Canadian experience has shown that multiculturalism encourages racial and ethnic harmony and cross-cultural understanding, and discourages ghettoization, hatred, discrimination and violence. Through multiculturalism, Canada recognizes the potential of all Canadians, encouraging them to integrate into their society and take an active part in its social, cultural, economic and political affairs.

Another Definition of Multiculturalism: Canadians are not of any one cultural background, race or heritage. Instead, Canadians today reflect a vast diversity of cultural heritages and racial groups. This multicultural diversity is a result of centuries of immigration where differences are encouraged and no one way to live is enforced. The two definitions spell out quite well the positive benefits of advocating multiculturalism. However, we can find a tension or a contradiction in the official definition: if all citizens can keep their own identities and take pride in their ancestry, what kind of sense of belonging are they going to have? Definitely not something labeled “Canadian.”

However, we have no simple choice to make. On the one side, ethnic diversity indeed can enrich our culture and ideas, thereby strengthening the society in innumerable ways. Multiculturalism makes every new immigrant feel more comfortable during their gradual adaptation to the new country. Tolerance to difference and diversity should always be a good value for any society to keep. On the other side, too much multiculturalism, that is, too much divergence without convergence, could possibly encroach on national identity and national spirit. How to handle the tension and keep the balance between divergence and convergence is a matter of art. The practice of multiculturalism is different among provinces in Canada, and different results have been achieved in Toronto, Ontario, and in Montreal, Quebec.

MULTICULTURALISM IN TORONTO

Since the economic boom in the 1970s, Toronto has become the largest city in Canada and one of the largest metropolitan areas in North America. When Americans come up to Toronto, they find a place to envy: the city is clean, safe, well-organized, very low crime rate, good facilities for public service, full of handsome historical buildings, a street of theatres second only to London and New York. For many immigrants (42 percent percent), Toronto is the place of choice for their first landing in Canada. According to recent 1998 statistics, over half of the population was not born in Canada. In downtown Toronto, side by side you will find delicious food in China Town, a cup of cappuccino in Little Italy, loud party music in Portuguese Town, Kimchi and sizzling barbecue in Korean Town, artifacts in Japanese Town, magnificent synagogue in Jewish Town, etc. The most beautiful thing you can find is that they co-exist in harmony. There is no hatred between different ethnic groups. People are proud of being Torontonians, otherwise they may call themselves something like “a Chinese Canadian,” or “a Canadian originally from Korea.”

According to federal law, all government documents are provided in English and French. In actual practice, you can find public services in other popular languages. For example, you can fill application forms in Chinese, you can take a driver’s license test in Korean. If your English is not bad, you can find a job in the downtown commercial district. If you can

speaking only Chinese, you may find a job in China Town for the time being. Multiculturalism sets Toronto apart from other big North American cities. Toronto is home to virtually all of the world's culture groups and is the city where more than 100 languages are spoken. If you drive along the major express highways around the city, you will feel the might of the city. Many international companies have a division in Toronto, which manufactures most of the goods sold in Canada. Toronto is a successful example of multiculturalism in Canada.

MULTICULTURALISM IN MONTREAL

The fall of Montreal from French rule to British hands in 1760 is one of the major events in North American history. Then, Montreal was the largest city in North America. However, the British only took the city, and therefore got the military, political and economic control of the area. Over 80 percent of the population in Quebec province remains French-speaking. In the time of democracy, the Quebec independence movement gradually gained momentum. This led to violence in October 1971. The Prime Minister at that time, Pierre E. Trudeau, sent the federal army into Quebec to keep order. Since then, the independence movement has sought a peaceful solution. At the same time, in order to pacify the uneasy feeling of the French Canadians and to meet their demand for the preservation of French culture, the federal government began to adopt policies to promote the French language in business and culture. Bilingualism is one of them: all government documents and traffic and commercial signs must be both in English and in French. This is the beginning of multiculturalism in Canada.

Certain recent symptoms show that multiculturalism is over-compensated in Quebec. While most important traffic signs in Ontario are bilingual, all traffic and commercial signs in Quebec gradually have become French only. This is no longer true multiculturalism. Quebec demands more and more priorities from the federal government. Some French Canadians are very assertive. One vivid example is that, if you drive in Montreal and ask directions in English, the local people may ask you to speak French. However, if you speak French, some may say that you ruin their beautiful French. Since the Parti Quebecois came to power in 1976, two referenda have been held in Quebec. The first referendum in 1980 failed with only 40 percent support. The second referendum was held in October 1995, with an ambiguous question, "Do you agree that Quebec should have more sovereignty by way of negotiation with federal Canada for a new political and economic relation?" The federalists won the referendum by a marginal 0.8 percent. They also realized the risk embedded in the referendum. Subsequent information reveals that, if the separationists had won the referendum, they would have taken radical steps towards complete independence beyond what they had promised before the referendum. At the same time, facing the possible chaos in Quebec, military action was also planned by the federal government.

If Quebec achieves independence, the outcome will be grave for Canada. Some fear that it will cause a domino effect. Ontario and Quebec are the keystone for the confederation of Canada. An independent Quebec would separate the four small Atlantic provinces (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland) from the rest of Canada. It is possible that, as a result, they would eventually be incorporated into the USA. Because of the geography of Canada, it is easier to trade across the border with American states than with other provinces. The Pacific province (British Columbia) and the prairie provinces (Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba) would, perhaps, join the USA before long. Ontario would hardly be able to stand alone. The final outcome does not look good for the Quebec people either, in terms of this scenario. Surrounded by English-speaking states and provinces, they cannot make Quebec shift across the Atlantic Ocean to France. The White House would likely have little respect for their unique French culture. In the end, the much-appreciated Canadian values will disappear.

Jean Chretien's Liberal Party won the federal election with more seats in the Parliament in 1996. To reverse the momentum of Quebec independence, Ottawa adopted a set of new policies: 1) Review the Federal Constitution to clearly define the terms and conditions of referenda and similar actions. 2) Increase immigrants from Asia, mostly from China. Because Chinese immigrants are often well-educated, they can provide a good work force and are good citizens. It has been alleged by some that the reason for this is that the English-speaking interests may be trying to reduce French Canadians to the third largest ethnic group in Canada, so that they lose their standing in demanding priorities. Several other phenomena have also happened recently. Many national companies have moved their headquarters from Montreal to Toronto. Tens of thousands of people in Quebec lost their jobs within a few months. Because of political uncertainty, capital stopped flowing into Quebec. The unemployment rate in Quebec reached 15 percent in 1996, the highest in Canada. Quebec people feel the pain and have moved their attention gradually away from political issues to the pressing economic issues. Chretien's tough policies have thus worked quite well in the last ten years. The most important lesson we can learn from the Canadian experience is that multiculturalism is a double-edged weapon. There should be a balance between divergence and convergence and a tension between soft policies and tough policies.

Canada is the most liberal country in the world in terms of its positive attitude towards multiculturalism. Across the border, multiculturalism remains a controversial issue in the United States. With increasing numbers of immigrants from Asia and Latin America (from Mexico most of all), there is a call for multiculturalism in the Pacific states. The California state government now offers services in Spanish. However, a full-fledged multiculturalism is beyond expectation. The "orthodox" Americans in the Eastern area believe that too much multiculturalism will

be a threat to national identity and to the American ideology that is necessary for a strong “empire.”

NATIONAL IDENTITY IN CHINA

China is a country of 56 nationalities, all under the name of “Chinese” as their national identity. Except for the Han nationality, almost all other minor nationalities live either in remote or mountainous areas. They have developed their own unique culture and regional qualities, and a way of life characteristic of an isolated environment. In modern times, due to the increase in contact and exchange, the tolerance and understanding between different nationalities have become a crucial issue. The nationality issue is always an important part of the national political life. However, the nationality issues in XinJiang and Tibet have loomed large in the last ten years. What are the causes lying behind the scene?

There are external causes and internal causes. By “external causes” I mean the support and resources from outside China; by “internal causes” I mean our nationality policy and the handling of nationality issues. The external causes are definitely different in the last ten years, especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union. We need to figure out if there are internal causes, and if so, what we need to adjust in our multi-culture practice or nationality policy. Multiculturalism and nationality policy are two sides of the same coin. China is not a country of immigrants. But the issues are the same, i.e., tolerance, communication and understanding among the different cultures of the different nationalities.

In the first period of the new republic from 1949 to 1979, there existed a clear definition of nationality policy: on the one hand, we practice full tolerance and respect for the uniqueness in culture, religion and ways of life, that is the “sensitive” components of the policy; on the other hand, there is a uniformity in the political and economic policies – this is the serious or realist component of the policy. One of the important features of the political culture in the first period was the emphasis on ideology education. For government officials, no matter whether Han or Tibetan, one had to be a member of the Communist party. To carry out the policy of the Party without compromise was the paramount concern.

The uniformity in the political and economic policies caused some problems. Certain adjustments were advised following 1979. More attention has been paid to the uniqueness of politics and economy in the minority regions. More benefit policies are advised: for example, no one-child policy for minor nationalities, plus priority in promotion, a lower bar for college admission, a native language policy, etc. Some of those adjustments surely have achieved positive effects. However, an obvious fact is that ideology education has been diluted in the national context. The nationality policy has lost its convergence components. With an augmentation in ‘sensitive’ or ‘compassionate’ components and a dilution in realist components, and with our nationality policy getting more and more liberal, the nationality issue

has come again to the surface and the national identity is at stake. The Canadian experience shows that it is time to re-adjust our nationality policy, find the new points of convergence, and keep a balance between the compassionate components and the realistic components. We need to clearly define the elements of convergence.

THE TAIWAN ISSUE

The Taiwan issue is a bit different. It is not a nationality issue, it is a political issue. People on both sides of the Taiwan Strait are Han. They share the same language and same cultural tradition. The difference in culture is caused by the 50 years of political separation. In the 1950s and 60s, the connection was in the form of the periodic exchange of cannon fire. There was a cease-fire in 1979. We believed that since Taiwan had lost its diplomatic foothold, we would let the Taiwanese have space for economic growth. At the same time, we believed that the exchange of culture is better than the exchange of cannon fire in achieving communication and understanding. Popular music, novels, movies and TV programs flow from Taiwan to the mainland. It seems that when we enjoy these cultural products, we never worry how much the flow is in the opposite direction. It turns out that while we know much about Taiwan, people in Taiwan know very little about the mainland. The problem is that we have no influence on the politics and media in Taiwan.

The successful handover of Hong Kong from British hands makes us believe that the same policy can be applied to Taiwan. However, Taiwan is not Hong Kong. Taiwan is 180 km away, separated by the Taiwan Strait. The defense of Taiwan is much easier than the defense of Hong Kong. Taiwan receives support from the USA. The policy of “one country, two systems” may be applicable in Taiwan, but it will be applied in a very different way in the details. We need a way of new thinking, and we lag behind in the formulation of new thinking.

The lesson we can learn from the Canadian experience is that we need to keep a balance between “compassionate” policy and the realist policy.

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CHAPTER V

INDIAN IDENTITY AND CULTURAL CONTINUITY

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I

The present paper attempts to understand the notion of 'Indian-ness' or 'Indian Identity' in terms of its cultural continuity from the hoary past to the eventful present. It is a philosophical task to understand a culture, to evaluate its ideas, practices and norms of living and then to undertake an inter-cultural dialogue for mutual understanding, mutual appreciation and mutual supplementation. This is possible if one is steeped in one's own culture and is also sympathetically exposed to other cultures. The East-West Center at the University of Hawaii, with its avowed objective of the promotion of such dialogue, has contributed quite a lot in this regard under the able direction of the late Professor Charles A. Moore. His very perceptive remarks are worth notice. He writes: "Understanding is a very complicated matter. Genuine understanding must be comprehensive understanding. It must include knowledge of all the fundamental aspects of the mind of the people in question. Philosophy is the major medium of understanding, both because it is concerned deliberately and perhaps uniquely with the fundamental ideas, ideals and attitudes of a people, and also because philosophy alone attempts to see the total picture and thus includes in its purview all the major aspects of the life of a people."¹ Concerning Indian philosophy he writes, "...there are very significant ideas and concepts there – no matter how old they are – to which the rest of the world may well turn for new insights and perhaps deeper wisdom."² He further writes, "As said before, philosophy is our concern here. But philosophy is not merely an (or the) indispensable medium of understanding and of knowing a people or a culture. Philosophy is also and more basically, of course, the search for knowledge, for truth, for wisdom. In this respect, India provides the basis for a potential philosophical renaissance, if only the rest of the world, especially the West, will search out the new insights, the new intuitions, the new attitudes and methods which might well at least supplement, if not replace or correct and at least enlarge, the restricted perspective of the Western mind."³ In fact Professor Moore is echoing what the Yajurveda averred long back as "Sa prathama samskriti visva vara," i.e., "It is a culture which is primeval and yet worthy of preference by the world because of its perennial relevance."⁴

A question is often raised, more by Indian scholars than by non-Indian scholars, as to what is meant by the expressions 'Indian philosophy',

'Indian culture', etc. They argue that philosophy as a discipline does not admit of geographical confinements. Likewise, because of heterogeneity, there is no such thing as Indian culture. This in fact raises the problem of 'Indian Identity' in particular and 'Identity' in general. Any attempt to understand an entity or a phenomenon is to identify it in terms of its differential properties that constitute its very essence. However, in view of the dynamic and constantly changing character of every existence there cannot be absolutistic or static determination of an identity. The notion of identity, whether that of an individual or a collectivity, defies neat and precise categorization. The identity of an individual has some ostensivity and therefore it can be demonstratively referred to, but the identity of a collectivity does not admit even this type of reference. And yet our mind tries to look for and discern identities for practical purposes. Though experienced intimately and made use of in worldly behaviour, identity eludes determination in thought and language. It provides a basis for all empirical activities and yet its conceptual apprehension may not be adequately available. Thus there is a paradoxical awareness of an identity. We know what it is but we cannot clearly define or describe it through concepts and words. This is because the reality has a natural way of breaking down whatever walls of separation the human mind may erect between concepts.

II

The questions as to what is Indian-ness or what is to be identified as Indian, etc., are characterized by the same vagueness and relativism that pertain to other collectivities. In spite of this, Indian identity is so profoundly and vividly unique that there is some kind of demonstrativeness about it. Our perception of what makes an 'Indian' may be different, but none of us who is an Indian would deny the label of that identity, and on this logic none else would refuse such an ascription to an Indian. We may disagree over notions of democracy, socialism, secularism, etc., but may not do so in regard to Indian-ness. However, it must also be conceded that there is such a spatio-temporal vastness and wide variety about India that this identity cannot be seen in rigid and fixed terms. India is a geographical unit with changing boundaries at different periods of time. Initially having a habitational reference, Indian-ness soon transcended geography to spread far and wide with the stream of emigrants who zealously preserved, propagated and practiced all that India stood for. As a consequence, Indian-ness becoming quasi-geographical assumed a cultural overtone. It may appear to be naïve, but it must be made clear that Indian-ness is not to be confused with Indian nationality or Indian citizenship or even Indian ethnicity, though their evolution as concepts in actual practice has been so closely interspersed that they have often slipped from one to another. Thus Indian-ness is a matter of psychology, a unity of race and culture, of a view and a way of life.

III

Indian identity is embedded in the multi-faceted Indian culture, which has been a bedrock of India's glorious past, adventurous present and bright future. In order to discern Indian identity, one has to look precisely to the diverse cultural and sub-cultural traditions, which have evolved over time, in which the Indian people have been born and by which their general human sensibilities have been refined and shaped. India being multi-lingual, multi-racial, multi-religious and multi-sub-cultural, there cannot be any fixed parameters of Indian identity. Many elements which have contributed in the making of Indian identity. There is a generic identity and many specific sub-identities, each having its own unique nature and features. So only an organicismic approach to Indian-ness can enable one to understand it properly and fully. One may argue that, for an identity, there must be a common habitation or culture or way of living or pattern of thinking or language or race or religion, etc., but none is attached to Indian-ness in an indispensable way. The simple reply is that in practice we do understand what is meant by being an Indian, and it is a matter of common sense and logic that there is a consciousness of some principle of unity, howsoever vague and varied it may be, which enables us to apply this single individualizing appellation to a vast variety of ideas, practices and human beings.

Indian-ness is characterized by inclusive pluralism in which there is accommodation for each individual or unit. It has basic openness which is at once both centripetal and centrifugal. It is not a 'melting pot' but a unity-in-multiplicity ideally based on the principles of cooperation and sacrifice regulated by the spirit of duties and obligations rather than demands and rights. Unfortunately, this base is fast dwindling in modern times; and there is an urgent need to revive, revitalize and consolidate it. It has to be remembered that the Indian culture possesses inherent vitality and resilience, which has enabled it to survive the onslaughts of time and foreign invasions. This is due to its openness and catholicity to accommodate and absorb the diversity. It has displayed a remarkable symbiosis of two sensibilities of belongingness to the whole and of being a part of the whole of relatedness and of self-identity. It advocates a communitarian or participatory mode of living, implying distinctness of its members along with solidarity with the whole enjoying an individual existence and yet partaking and sharing experiences with the whole. It is an inclusive social pluralism in which every individual becomes a person.

There is an unbroken spiritual-material culture of India which is uniquely its own, which it has shared with the outside world for more than three thousand years known in history, which is multifarious and manifold, and which is living and has vitality to live. Because of its organicismic nature and character, it displays a unity-in-multiplicity and becomes conducive to self-identity and self-preservation, as well as group solidarity and group-cohesion. It has a vitalizing and animating force of its own and

yet it does not deny nourishment and nurture from extraneous sources, as well by incorporating and absorbing them as its own. Both its variety and continuous identity are the assets of Indian culture. This diversity is not to be looked at in terms of fragmentation of time, as ancient, medieval and modern, or in terms of associating these time fragments with racial or denominational segregations. Such a fragmentary and divisive approach to integral Indian culture is not only a superimposition and a distortion, but it also strikes fatally at the roots of identity and continuity. The very ideas of identity and continuity are at stake if Indian culture is taken to be disjointed pieces of multiple contributions from heterogeneous sources. Equally suicidal is the approach to confine India to the present and to negate all past inheritance.⁵

In the background of the foregoing analysis, it will be meaningful to present a brief outline of the pivotal bases of Indian culture which constitute a ground for Indian identity and a justification for cultural continuity both in India and abroad, and which may provide our existence with meaning and worth. On account of centuries of extension in time and vastness of space, the sources of understanding Indian culture are many and varied. Beginning with the Vedic and Sangama literature of the hoary past, they include the *Ramayana Mahabharata*, Sutra literature and their expositions, literary compositions in different languages, writings of saints, a vast storehouse of folk tales, exhibits and remnants of art, architecture, music, dance, paintings, sculpture, etc. One can go on enumerating and enumerating, and there may seem an unending line. In spite of such diversity, there is a fundamental unity running all through spatio-temporal expansion.

IV

Ever since the dawn of thought right from the Vedic times, the Indian mind has undertaken a search for ideals of life.⁶ For this it constructed elaborate systems of epistemology and logic, metaphysics and morals, social and political philosophies, language and hermeneutics, science and technology. This search for ideals of life implies that the seekers were not satisfied with the life they were living day to day. This dissatisfaction was not so much due to historical and natural circumstances that conditioned the society of the time, but it was generated by a search for a deeper meaning of life than could be found in day-to-day experience. It was due to a keen and critical sense of peace, perfection and beatitude developed by the people. The questions that they tried to grapple with were: What is human life? What is its meaning and purpose? How is the human being to plan life so that the *summum bonum* of life can be attained?

The ideological perspective and goal-oriented approach, which was discernible in the minds of Vedic people, continued to hold sway, and the same is reflected even in contemporary thinking. In classical Indian thought, the four main values of life (*purusarthas*), viz., *dharma*, *artha*, *kama* and

moksa, were prescribed.⁷ *Artha* stands for material prosperity and *kama* stands for material satisfaction. Both of them jointly are known as *preyas*. *Dharma* is regulative of both and is a means to *moksa*. *Moksa*, along with *dharma*, comes under *sreyas*. It is spiritual realization. Though the ideals of life admit of a distinction between *preyas* and *sreyas*, there is no incompatibility between the two, as there is no bifurcation between matter and spirit. *Preyas* provides the material base and *sreyas* constitute the spiritual summit of the same process of self-realisation. Since matter provides the arena for self-realisation, the *preyas* has a natural claim of being first catered to. But one should not remain entangled with *preyas* forever. After the necessary gratification of the *preyas* one should make a passage toward *sreyas*. Another thing to be remembered is that all the demands of matter do not constitute *preyas* and hence are not to be gratified. Only those demands are to be regarded as *preyas* which are not incompatible with *sreyas*. *Preyas* thus is the proximate value and *sreyas* is the ultimate value.⁸ The ancient thinkers established the *asrama-vyavastha* in order that there might be well-organised and balanced pursuit of both *preyas* and *sreyas*. The word *asrama* is suggestive of points of beginning and departure and stoppage.⁹

In this context we may fruitfully make a mention of the Upanisadic theory of Pancakoshas, i.e., the five dimensions of each individual's personality as physical (*annamaya*), vital (*pranamaya*), mental (*manomaya*), intellectual (*vijnana-maya*) and spiritual (*anandamaya*).¹⁰ An all-round development of the individual means the fullest development of all these aspects in a proper proportion. In the modern context, we can understand and appreciate this theory by reinterpreting it in a more meaningful way. The first and the foremost *kosa* is the gross physical body and the natural surrounding which are to be catered to by means of physical sciences and technology. The second one is that of vital breaths for which hygiene and medical sciences are helpful along with yoga. For the next two social sciences, humanities, fine arts and mathematics are to be resorted to. For the last one, we need higher spiritual pursuits in the form of contemplation and meditation and gradual withdrawal from hectic worldly activities.

V

From the above-described view of life, an appropriate way of life has also been prescribed. A way of life is the way man plans his life for realizing an ideal, whatever it is. It is called *yoga* or *marga*. Many *yogas* or *margas* have been recognized by the ancient thinkers of which *karma* (i.e. the way or action), *jnana* (i.e., the way of knowledge), and *bhakti* (i.e., the way of devotion), are prominent.¹¹ Human being is a complex of cognitive, conative, and affective elements, and therefore a good way of life must have a balanced view of all these three. For the realization of the ideal life, the whole person has to rise up and strive.¹² So all these three aspects, though distinct, are to be integrally united.

VI

After having discussed the traditional Indian view of life and the way to realize the same, we may briefly refer to the relationship between the individual and society. Indian thinkers always try to avoid the extremes of individualism and totalitarianism and emphasise a middle position¹³. They entertain no incompatibility between the individual and the society and advocate a harmonious relationship between the two. The society is conceived of as a whole, comprising the multiplicity of individuals as its parts. Society expresses itself only in and through individuals, and individuals, in turn, derive their being and living only from society. The two are regarded to have an organicistic relation and mutual appreciation.

VII

The organicistic relation, which binds the individual and society, is also regarded as the characteristic of the relation between the individual and nature. Individual being exists in and through nature, and nature, provides the needed nourishment to it. Nature has instrumental value because of its benevolence in serving us in infinite ways, selflessly. But it is also an object of worship and devotion for the same reason.¹⁴ The *Svetasvatara upanisad*¹⁵ declares, “*Ajamekam lohita sukla krsuam bahavi praja srjamanam namamali,*” i.e., “We salute the nature which is unborn, uniform, having the triple hues of red, white and black and who is the procreator of multiple off-springs.” So we have to respect and love nature by maintaining its cleanliness and by preserving its purity. The usability of nature should not be misunderstood as a misuse of nature; otherwise, as a consequence, it will lead to environmental pollution and ecological imbalance. Nature helps us only if we help nature. Of course, nature allows us to transform it, but this also has to be done in accordance with the laws of nature. This is the approach to nature, which has been handed down to us by the Vedic thinkers.

VIII

No account of Indian culture can be complete without a reference to the traditional Indian scheme of education. The ancient Indian system of education is theoretically the most compact and sound, and practically it is the most viable and useful. Its theoretical worth is on account of its broad, comprehensive and healthy vision with regard to the nature and destiny of human beings and the cosmos in their inter-relationship. Its practical utility is due to its flexibility to suit the needs and requirements of different ages and societies. It only provides a broad format to which content can be provided as per the requirements. Herein lies its perenniality and eternal relevance. Just as the Vedic wisdom is eternal, the Vedic mode of seeking wisdom is also eternal. It is really a matter of pity that we do not know what

the Veda means and what is the Vedic vision of reality, life and education. This is not an occasion to go into the details, but a brief outline is called for. The Vedic seers find an abiding and enduring place for values of existence in the very heart of reality. The description of reality as *sat, cit and ananda* implies that all existence (*sat*) and knowledge (*cit*) culminate in bliss (*ananda*), which is the ultimate value. In human beings, because of their finitude and imperfection, the values are only partially reflected. But every individual is potentially perfect and has the capacity to be perfect. So the ultimate end of every individual ought to be the fullest efflorescence of the value-essence lying hidden or dormant in him or her. It should be made clear that this realization of perfection is not a mere utopian dream, because the Vedic seers firmly believe that every individual has come forth from perfection. This is one of the implications of the famous Upanisadic Santipatha, “*Aum Purnamadah Purnamidam Purnatpurnamudacyate,*” etc.¹⁶

Values are realizable and they are to be realized through proper endeavour, and that is why this process of value-realisation is called *purusartha*. But this is not possible until and unless all impediments in the process of growth and perfection are removed. Here comes the role of education. Education is preparation for life. But life is not mere livelihood. Similarly, life is not mere catering to the needs of either matter or spirit. There is no exclusive “either-or” between general and technical education. No human being is merely a professional being, whether an engineer or a doctor or a scientist or a technician. He or she is above all a social and spiritual being. Hence the fullness of education must comprise all the facets, physical, vital, mental, emotional, intellectual and spiritual. The true and adequate system of education must aim at the total person. It should produce human beings and not living machines.¹⁷ This is what Indian culture stands for. Indian culture has been a source of inspiration for a way of life, which is integral and holistic, synthetic and accommodating. That is why it could survive the onslaughts of time and transcend the limits of space. Pt. Nehru very pertinently remarked that wherever in this wide world there goes an Indian, there also goes a bit of India with him. In this age of cultural pluralism, the Indians who have settled abroad may integrate themselves in the societies in which they live and yet they may preserve and promote their distinct cultural identity. Continued adherence to Indian culture in no way hinders their dynamic interconnectedness with their fellow beings belonging to different cultural groups. In fact, the Indian culture has sufficient built-in mechanisms of flexibility and receptivity to suit the conditions of its locale and time.

As Bhishma says in the *Mahabharata*, *dharma* needs to be modified according to the circumstances, demands and exigencies of time and place:

*Dharma bhahavidha loke sruti bheda mukhodbhava
Kula jati vayo desa guna kala svabhavatah
Etad dharmasya nanatvam sampad apjad vibhadatah*

Indian culture is alive to the fact that human situations impose on people the necessity to find ways and means to respond and adjust constantly to a never-ending sequence of events and circumstances affecting their welfare and happiness. Sometimes this generates tensions and conflicts within and outside an individual or groups of individuals in any given place and country. So there is a need to cope with negative forces in order to achieve a better livelihood and progress, and to attain harmonious human relationships, but all these adjustments are possible while remaining wholly within the ambit of Indian culture.

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NOTES

¹ *The Indian Mind*, pp. 2, 3.

² *Ibid*, p. 8.

³ *Ibid*, p. 9.

⁴ *Yajurveda*, 7.14.

⁵ No grateful nation should disown its past. But it should not carry the deadweight of outlived traditions. A discriminative awareness of what is living and what is dead is required.

⁶ “*Udvayam tamasapari svah pasyanta uttaram. Devam devata suryamaganma jyotiruttamam.*” *Yajurveda*, 20.2.

⁷ “*Dharmam samacaret purvam tato artham dharma samyutam. Tatah kamam caret pascat siddharthah sa hi tatparam,*” *Mahabharata*, Santiparva, 167.27.

⁸ “*Sreyasca preyasca manusyametah, tau samparitya vivinakti dhirah,*” “*kathopanisad,*” 1.2.2.

⁹ *Mahabharata*, santiparva, chapter 61. Also *Manusmrti*, chapters 2-6.

¹⁰ *Taittiriya Upanisad*, *Bhrguvalli*, 2-6.

¹¹ See, *Bhagavadgita*, chapters 3, 7, 12.

¹² “*Uttisthata jagrata prapya varan nibhodata,*” “*Kathopanisad,*” 1.3.14.

¹³ “*Madhyamam abhayam,*” *Satapata Brahmana*.

¹⁴ “*mata bhumi putro ’ham prthivyah,*” *Atharvaveda* 12-1-12.

¹⁵ “*Samudra vasane devi parvatastava mandale visnu patni namstubhyam padasparsam ksamasva me.*” *Visnu Purana*

¹⁶ First and the last verse of *Isopanisad*.

¹⁷ ‘*Manurbhava janaya daivya janam,*’ *Rgveda*, 10.53.6.

CHAPTER VI

THE DOCTRINE OF RETRIBUTION (*KARMA*) IN CHINESE BUDDHISM AND ITS INFLUENCE ON HUMAN DESTINY

XIA JINHUA

INTRODUCTION

In this paper, I wish to review the influence of the doctrine of karma (retribution) in Chinese Buddhist thought. According to the teachings of Buddhism, deeds of goodness and evil become the power of *karma*, and produce good and evil fruit when they 'ripen.' In addition to the law of "suffering for one's own acts" in Indian Buddhism, early Chinese Buddhism added the doctrine of collective retribution for good and evil deeds. One's deeds affected his family and descendants. This doctrine had a strong effect on Chinese traditional morality. This has long played an important role in Chinese thought. Buddhism emphasizes the importance of *karma* so as to lay stress on destiny as within the firm grasp of oneself and the result of one's own choices.

WHAT IS KARMA?

What is *karma*? *Karma* is a rule that differs from natural law. It is called 'the moral law of causation' in Buddhism. *Karma* is a kind of mental ability that hides in one's consciousness, and cannot be seen. *Karma* arises from the vital force in one's body. We cannot find it in our bodies or in consciousness when it operates at full speed. *Karma* lies low in one's consciousness, like an apple arising from an apple seed. When sundry conditions such as sunshine, water and soil are ripe, *karma*'s seeds will burst out of their shell and grow well. Karma is a product of one's daily good and evil actions. *Karma* is not destined or determined by gods, but is grasped in one's own hands, that is to say, in one's every word and deed. No external force can do anything to change the operation of *karma*, so people must not pray to God to change it. Some compare *karma* to an account with a bank. If one shows goodness, virtue and kindness in life, one has put good *karma* into his account. But one has to frequently make deposits; otherwise his deposits will run out. A person cannot blame others, neither can he complain about his destiny.

As is stated above, one's *karma* slowly forms by the accumulation of his deeds, words and mind. If one does good in one's quiet life, one will be born in a happy family or meet with success in a future life. Evil conduct or evil thoughts will lead to one being thrown into the earth-prison (*Naraka*)

or living a very miserable life in the future. The key-point of *karma* theory is not reward or punishment after death, but that people should carefully think, speak and act. Otherwise, people will endure hardships in the end.

Sometimes, one's conduct not only affects oneself but others. Much of one's conduct helps bring into being a similar result; for example, drawing on manpower and material resources to build a big project will have an effect on the nation and the people. Individual conduct not only affects oneself but produces a spin-off. Thus new common *karmas* are formed. Common *karmas* are a main motive force for changing society. Common (collective) *karmas* act on individual *karma* and each other. Those *karmas* play a role in society and nature. This influence may change or keep social form and natural environment. Likewise, the unequal phenomena of human society are due not only to inheritance, environment and nature, but also to the *karma* of people's words and conduct, etc. All in all, *karma*-power is one of the most important factors determining man's success or failure. Those *karmas* have given recompense when corresponding conditions were ripe. There are records in Chinese historical literature of such recompense occurring, just as it occurs nowadays.

AS YOU SOW, SO YOU WILL REAP

A man does good or evil year in and year out, and builds *karmas* in his consciousness. *Karmas* have recompensed good with good or evil with evil when the *karmic*-force is ripe. The recompense of good or evil is 'as a person sows, so shall he reap.' *Liao-fan's Four Teachings* by Yuan Huan in the Ming Dynasty expresses this as follows:

Once, there was an old grandmother in Putian in Fujian Province who did many good things. The poor got cakes free from her. She never tired of helping the poor. One god wanted to test her, and he took the form of a Taoist. The Taoist asked for three pieces of cake every morning. After three years, he was moved by her honesty. One day, he told her: "I want to thank you for your cakes. There is a special plot of land behind your house. If you are buried there after you die, your descendants will have glory, splendor, wealth and rank."

After the grandmother died, her son's family, named Lin, buried her remains in the backyard in accordance with the Taoist's words. Just as the Taoist's prediction foretold, among the grandmother's first descendants, there were nine men who were among the successful candidates in the test to choose government officials. Hereafter, for generations, many of the grandmother's descendants became famous.

This event, which happened in the Ming Dynasty is, indeed, real from Yuan Huang's honest and kind point of view. Nevertheless, there have been exceptions to the recompense of good or evil in Chinese history, and these exceptions became means for anti-Buddhist factions to vilify Buddhism. For example, Yen Hui, the best student of Confucius, died at a young age; Chi, a burglar, died of old age in Ch'un Ts'ew. These days, we

often see that the grandmother next-door, our neighbor, died in her boots though she practiced Buddhism for over thirty years. Being faced with the important problems in Buddhist theory, Reverend Hui Yuan in the Eastern Chin Dynasty explained:

The Buddhist *sūtra* says that the recompense of causation involves three kinds: *Xianbao*, *Shengbao* and *Houbao*. *Xianbao* is that recompense in one's life; *Shengbao* is that recompense in one's rebirth; *Houbao* is that recompense after two rebirths, three rebirths or many rebirths, when the *karmas* becomes ripe. The recompense comes earlier or later because *karmas* ripen one after another.¹

Hui Yuan's words mean that good actions lead to pleasant, uplifting effects for the doer. Bad actions lead to unpleasant karmic results. There is no necessarily pleasant or unpleasant result right away, but it is only a matter of time. When it is up, good or bad actions firmly lead to corresponding results. Three kinds of recompense in Buddhism respond reasonably to the problem that good actions lead to unpleasant results and bad actions lead to pleasant effects. The retribution in one's life may be the result of one's earlier good or evil deeds – i.e., effects of the maturity of *karma*-force from a former life. As all know, for some wrongdoers, everything goes off without a hitch. That is because their good *karmas* from a former life or in the past are greater than their bad actions in their present lives. They do not recompense bad results until they have recompensed pleasant effects. If their evil *karmas* were more than their good *karmas*, they would be punished by bad results at any time. That many corrupt officials are being brought to justice at present has proven the truthfulness of Buddhist *karma* theory. As to those corrupt officials who have escaped, they shall be punished when the fruit of their *karma* becomes ripe. It is a common saying: "The net of Heaven stretches everywhere, its meshes are wide, but no bad-doers can escape them." The purpose for which Buddhism advocates *karma*-reward is so people shall control their desire and exercise restraint in their words and deeds. The more they get, the more they want. You can never satisfy them.

KARMA-REWARD DOCTRINE AS AN INFLUENCE ON THE CHINESE

Retribution as part of the cause and effect doctrine has had a far-reaching effect on the Chinese. The influence is divided into positive and negative kinds. In respect to the positive, *Karma*-reward theory has played a very important role in establishing and improving traditional morality in our country. Since Buddhism came into China, good and bad ideas in Buddhism were combined with retribution for causation from the ancients in our country, and formed our country's characteristic "recompense" doctrine.

On the basis of absorbing the law of “suffering for one’s own act” in Indian Buddhism this recompense doctrine expanded the scope of retribution to include sons and grandsons. That is to say, the law of Buddhist retribution is that “every man receives the reward of his deeds.” Thus, *karma*-reward goes through past time, this life, and future lives. A man’s *karmas* do not disappear automatically. Retribution for loose living does not always come in this life. The Sakyamunigama *sūtra* says: “To suffer for one’s own act.” The Nirvana *sūtra* says: “A father did bad deeds, and his evil fruit could not be replaced by his sons; a son did evil actions, and his *karma*-reward could not be displaced by his father.” Obviously, this retribution has nothing to do with others besides the doer. Nevertheless, the retribution doctrine that has been present since the Ch’in period in China is different from the Indian. On the one hand, “Heaven” is the executive of *karma*-reward; on the other hand, the subject receiving the *karma*-reward is not only the doer but also his family. For example, people often sharply denounce evil-doers because they have dared “to break off their descendants.” This statement clearly has an impact on the way people view their good and bad actions.²

From the point of view of sociology, the Buddhist *karma*-reward has had a negative impact on the Chinese. The most obvious illustration is that men born with disabilities are identified just by their disabilities or are given nick names: a man losing his eye or becoming blind was given a nick name such as “A Dragon Only One Eye” or called Blind; a deaf or dumb man is seen simply as deaf or mute; a man losing a leg may be called a “cripple,” and so on. Many children jeer at the disabled. Judged from their point of view, a disabled man is what he is because he did evil deeds in a former life, and what is worse, many disabled men think so as well. This situation is more serious in some areas where belief in Buddhism is strong. A father or mother may say that he or she did bad actions to give birth to a disabled child and is being punished by Heaven, so disabled children are asked to stay at home and accept sympathy and help. They must not make a living independently, otherwise their families would be reproached by neighbors. Those neighbors think that there is nothing to be sympathetic about, nor do they feel responsibility towards the families of men with disability. Before they were called “Disabled Men,” we called them “Useless Men.” The word “useless” fully shows that the disabled men’s abilities are negated by the public. Owing to this wrong idea, society does not pay attention to the rights and interests of disabled men – for example, by way of welfare facilities, and so on. As far as many people are concerned, healthy men should not be given dangerous jobs but disabled men’s families should take them. That idea has something to do with the deep influence of the Buddhist tradition on the collective thought. This may not be orthodox and not pure Buddhism (which insists on compassion always to everyone), but it has a real effect upon the behavior of many Buddhist believers.

GRASPING ONE'S DESTINY IN ONE'S OWN HANDS

As indicated above, this idea runs completely counter to the instructions of Buddhism. Emphasizing that *karma*-reward is real, Buddhism draws more attention to one's words and deeds in this life (rather than drawing attention to the *karma* of others). Man is not beyond self-help because one's words and deeds act between his present life and his former lives. One may ask, "If everything is destined, should man not be hopeless?" This is obviously wrong. The most fundamental factors affecting the power of *karma* are one's striving and wisdom. If one does not make great efforts, one cannot essentially change one's wealth and spiritual life; by not doing everything possible to solve one's own difficulties or to make progress by hard struggle, one will never accomplish anything and can only await his *karmic* downfall.

Though someone could temporarily overcome his original *karma* fruits by his struggle, wisdom and other factors at special times and environment, he cannot avoid *karma*-reward sooner or later. So Buddhist *sūtras* remind people: One's power of *karma* does not spontaneously disappear. Sooner or later one shall suffer when his act becomes ripe.

In fact, many great men could not avoid the phenomenon – Confucius (551 B.C.E. – 479 B.C.E.) in China and Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869-1948) in India, for example. Confucius ran out of grain in Ch'en and Chai, and was besieged by people in Kuang; and Gandhi was assassinated, etc.³ These are good examples.

Being up against *karmas*, what should people do? According to Buddhism, they dare to admit their wrongdoings, undertake responsibility and put up with punishment first, since they have made a mistake. By avoiding responsibility premeditatedly or always complaining about conditions and other people, they are doing wrong. And next one ought to learn from experience and work carefully. Do not say that you are allowed to do a small evil or that it is not worthy to do a small good. Do not lose heart at the occurrence of failure, but try again. Do good things and raise your level of morality for a long time so as to gain good fruit. Except for the evil *karma* of taking life [killing], other bad *karmas* are easier to be eliminated by repentance, doing good and so on. As indicated by Yuan Huan above, he had done good things all his life to change his destiny. He believed a soothsayer named K'un because his many predictions had come true. Yuan Huan also changed his destiny by way of the advice of a master of meditation. This is why he wrote his famous book, *Four Teachings of Liao-fan* – to explain doing good things to change destiny by taking his own experience as an example.⁴

Everyone can make a mistake, but so long as he learns from past mistakes to avoid future ones, he will always be invincible. Confucius praised Yan Hui, by saying "Do not make the same mistake twice," Mencius said, "Being ashamed of oneself is close to [great] bravery." All these good actions are praised, that is, men are praised for correcting their

errors. How to correct one's misdeeds? First of all, one ought to feel shamed for doing evil. Man has many traits in common with animals, but man is superior to animals because man does something carefully or thinks deeply and sees far. Men are willing to put up with pain for their happiness in the future, even though this happiness is so distant. A man can become a Buddha (or a saint); he regards all beings (or things) as his compatriots (or friends). However, if a man becomes bad, he shall lose his nature and take the lives of others more cruelly than floods and beasts of prey do. Fortunately a man, unlike animals, can be ashamed at doing bad so as to prevent future misdeeds.

Second, men ought to be afraid of doing evil things. Although others may not know one's bad deeds, gods and ghosts between heaven and earth still clearly see them, even in the dark. An honest government officer in Song Dynasty refused bribes. The briber told him: "Nobody knows it." The officer answered: "Who says nobody knows? Heaven and earth know it; gods and ghosts know it; you and I know it. I do not see why you think that nobody knows it!" Thus the old adage: "Do not do bad even though nobody supposedly can see you in the dark."

A third principle is that everyone ought to "pull himself together." A man does not correct his error because he would muddle on in the old slipshod way of trusting chance. Therefore, he should make up his mind to change his thought, not to procrastinate, be hesitant and wait; otherwise there may be problems. The great Confucian Ch'eng Hao of the Song Dynasty very much liked to hunt when he was young. Afterwards he learned from Buddhism and Taoism that he should not like to hunt [kill]. He thought that he had abandoned the habit of hunting and told his friend Chang Tsai about this. Chang Tsai answered that he had not uprooted the habit but only inhibited it. Ch'eng Hao was not convinced. After some years, he went by chance through a mountain to see many people hunting, men and horses all shouting. He could not help feeling very happy and believed what Chang Tsai said. That story shows that it is not easy to uproot the errors of desire, hate and folly.

How does a man correct his error thoroughly and make a fresh start? Our bad deeds are various, and they begin in our minds. One man's first error is checked if he is not attracted by fame and gain. His evil desire shows up as long as he shows kindness of heart, does good things with undivided attention. Mistakes of words and deeds come from one's mind, so one ought to begin with one's mind, rooting out poisonous ideas, like weeds.

Buddhism, as an ancient religion, has been propagating the theory of recompense of cause and effect for over two thousand years. It is by doing good that people save themselves and benefit others. This doctrine has had a great effect on the Chinese people. It is essential to enhance personal moral character, and to safeguard social order and national stability. It is worthwhile to put the rational component of this doctrine to good use.

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NOTES

¹ Hui Yuan, *Three Kinds of Karma-reward Doctrine*. *Hung-ming chi*, Vol. 5, T. 52.34b.

² The ancient Chinese thought that one's forefathers' deeds could have a good or bad influence upon their sons and grandsons. As *Hou Han Shu* [Vol. 19] said "Daoism think that it is forbidden to become generals three generations, grandfather, father, son." *Shi Ji* [Vol. 56] said: "At the beginning of the Han Dynasty, Chen Ping said: 'I had too many dishonest and crafty plans to kill a great number of soldiers. That is forbidden by Daoism, so there is not any son in our family, and forever.'"

³ Ch'en, Chai and Kuang are three small states in Ch'un Ts'ew.

⁴ Yuan Huan, *Four Teachings of Liao-fan* [1 volume]. This is a typical work which describes Chinese folk morality. This book amalgamated the religious thought of Confucism, Daoism and Buddhism. The retribution-based causation theory of Buddhism is seen everywhere in the book.

PART II

TRADITION AS RESOURCE FOR SOCIETY

CHAPTER VII

TRADITION AND MODERNISM: OUR CULTURAL HERITAGE AND THE ONSLAUGHT OF THE MODERN WORLD

GHOLAMREZA AAVANI

The problem of the Oriental cultural heritage vis-à-vis modern Western culture is not peculiar to a single country in the East, but is a real global issue for every traditional culture including China, India and the other countries in the region. We in Iran, too, are much concerned with this issue, because it is a problem related to our cultural, nay, even to our personal, identity. It should be taken seriously and be given earnest scholarly and theoretical consideration.

The first problem which immediately poses itself is the issue of what we mean by the term “cultural heritage,” for unless this is given a definite answer, its connection with modernity will ever remain in the dark and will evade an intelligible and scholarly treatment. So we shall first try to give at least a tentative answer to this all important question. To give a rather nominal definition, we might say that a “cultural heritage” is what we inherit from our fathers and ancestors through the medium of our specific culture. It is one of the peculiar characteristics of culture that it can be inherited; or in other words, it is transmitted from one generation to the next, or passes on from one individual, institution, generation or community to another. This idea of “passing on to” – or, in other words, “transmission” – is the constitutive ingredient of culture.

A word also should be said about “culture” itself, without which the idea of “cultural heritage” would remain in obscurity. What do we really mean by the word “culture”? Perhaps by the clarification of this word, we can shed more light on this obscure notion of “cultural heritage”. The word “culture” in the European languages derives from the Latin word “*cultura*” which means “cultivation”, “rearing”, “bringing up”, and “education”. It is as if we are brought up, educated and perfected through culture. To the Romans who used this word, it had a much wider connotation and range of meaning. For example, they used it in connection with earth, in which case it was called “*cultura agri*” or cultivating the land, an equivalent of the modern agriculture. It was also used in connection with educating and cultivating the soul, “*cultura animi*,” and it was again used in connection with one's relationship with the Divinity or the Heaven (“*Cultura Dei*”). Needless to say “culture” has already lost its two latter significations and much of its first connotation.

Now I would like to use another word in lieu of culture, another word often used in European languages for ‘cultural heritage’ which,

unfortunately has lost its most essential meaning. I mean, the word 'tradition'. The word derives from the Latin infinitive '*tradere*' which means 'to hand over to', 'to pass on to', 'to transmit', meanings which are well in accord with what we said in connection with 'cultural heritage' so we shall use it interchangeably with the latter term, provided that we use it in the sense we shall explain, which in our opinion is the only proper sense to use in connection with our oriental cultures. Ordinarily, the word tradition is used to mean 'custom', 'usage', 'habit', 'a received opinion', 'mental and behavior patterns' and even 'transmitted superstitions'. Even if the word "tradition" has often been used with the above-mentioned significations, it does not do justice to the real meaning of the term. These might be some of the lexical definitions of the term, but they are far from being adequate to convey the meaning of tradition in such expressions as 'Chinese cultural tradition'. In the last century, tradition as a synonym for 'superstition' came into vogue, by the proponents of modernism who saw tradition as darkness, backwardness – and modernism as an age of enlightenment and progress.

How should we use tradition to take into consideration such great luminaries as Lao-Tzu, Confucius, Mencius and Chuang-Tzu and all the great sages of ancient China, on the one hand, and Zoroaster, Buddha, Jesus, Plato, Pythagoras and the great figures of the so-called Axial Age, on the other? How should we define tradition so as to be judicious about such works as the *Analects*, the *Book of Great Learning*, the *Tao-Te Ching* and the *Book of Changes*? We should tailor the word, so as to befit the majesty, dignity and grandeur of all the sages of such great civilizations as China and all the magnificent heritages she has contributed to the world. Tradition should be defined as comprehending fundamental doctrines – as wide as Buddhist dharma and the Taoist and Chinese conception of Tao, of which it can be considered to be an accurate Chinese synonym.

Tradition, in traditional cultures such as Iran and China, was a lived reality. It was not something abstract and alien. Being a concrete facticity in social and individual life, it was not even blessed by a definition. It was rampant just as the air which we breathe and do not call into question. It was like the water which the schools of fish swim in but do not feel. It was the warp and the woof of life in traditional communities and had a direct impact on the different aspects of life, such as on art, music, architecture, language, and all the other manifestations of culture and civilization. So it is pertinent to pinpoint some of the main features of tradition which set it apart and even against modernism, I mean traditions as represented by such great sages as Lao-Tzu and Confucius, who are among its great spokesmen and its best exemplifications. Tradition in the sense used above has a perennial and a primordial element. There is no doubt that we live in a world of change and becoming, but this world of change and flux is a manifestation of eternal and primordial truths. To use a Heraclitean simile, tradition is like a river in constant flux in which we cannot step even twice but nevertheless, it manifests the intrinsic features of the eternal Logos; or, in the poetic and

symbolical simile of the Persian Sufi poet, Rumi, it is like an ever-flowing stream in which is reflected the splendor of the full moon. That is why some traditionalists have set tradition on par with “*sophia perennis*” or the perennial wisdom.

Another distinctive feature of Tradition is that it is not secular and merely mundane, but has its origin and source in Heaven (“*Ti'en*”), in revelation, in the most universal sense. Tradition in all traditional societies draws its authenticity from truths and principles which have their roots in the Divine Reality and is mediated to mankind through messengers, prophets, avatars, sages and inspired saints. That is why an authentic tradition is almost always based on a Divine revelation, in the most universal sense of the word, and on scriptures which are considered by their followers to be sacred. This explains why – in traditional communities – religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism, Confucianism, Judaism, Islam and Christianity have always played a very crucial role in all aspects of human life.

A third feature of tradition is that it is essentially of a spiritual and sacred nature, reflecting the root in the branch, the principle in its manifestations, the Heaven on Earth, the eternal in the ephemeral and the transitory, and the Divine in the human. It takes on a sacred character, because the sacred is by definition the presence of the Divine, the Heavenly and the primordial in the terrestrial and the human order. Moreover, tradition, mirroring the celestial and the eternal in the terrestrial domain, communicates, so to say, a current of the Heavenly Grace to our human condition and blesses it with a kind of invisible beatitude, through a variety of channels.

Another basic feature of an authentic tradition, such as the Chinese, is that it is a lived reality; it is not an abstract doctrine to be written in books and learned by rote. It is rather based on the realization of the spirit, starting from the realization of the individual, filial and political virtues in the soul, and ending with the intuitive doctrinal knowledge as represented in the sapiential writings of the sage. Moreover, the principles contained in tradition have a wide range of application in realms as diverse as law and artistic production, methods of meditation and manners for the cultivation of a garden and the preparation of tea. Laws for the establishment of a traditional social solidarity are based on the principle of virtue and piety. There, the social law is not detached from the spiritual meaning of the whole tradition. The spiritual elements which concern man are not envisaged independently from society. Each man bears in himself the double obligation of duty in relation to the inferior and of piety toward the superior. This double obligation can be extended even into inanimate nature. Egoism is extinguished in between devotion and duty.

Moreover, human life, too, especially in connection with acting and making decisions, has been totally sacralized, giving significance and meaning to each action beyond the mere consideration of accidental and external results. In traditional cultures, the ultimate aim is the attainment of

perfection, beatitude and salvation and, hence, the realization of the Good and tradition is the medium for their actualization. A kindred doctrine in traditional China is that of Tao, both as propounded by Lao-Tzu in particular, and as it has been accepted by the majority of Orthodox schools in China. The idea of Tao is pervasive. It is the cause of everything. The Tao makes the Heaven and reflects it on earth. The Tao penetrates the deeper essence of everything. Tao, as a philosophy of life, means that one should keep to his Tao or his specific nature and let everything take care of itself. Tao, again, can be applied to the art of statesmanship. The best way to govern is not to govern at all (that is, not to foist oneself upon the people, but rather let them be ruled without noticing it). Lao-Tzu made the following enigmatic remark: "Rule a big country as you would fry a small fish". That is, according to his theory of Wu-Wei, he recommended the ruler not to disturb the people so that they could live happily and peacefully together. "I do nothing and the people are reformed of themselves; I love quietude and the people are righteous of themselves; I deal in no business and the people grow rich by themselves; I have no desires and the people are simple and honest by themselves." Tao, moreover, is like water which penetrates everything to the bottom and is the cause of nourishment for everything, itself being invisible. The utility of a clay vessel, the rim of a wheel, the bellows and a courtyard is their hollowness or emptiness. Tao, being the mother of everything, conquers everything by being soft and meek. So the wise man, like "the spirit of the valley" is lowly and meek.

Tao, needless to say, has a very deep metaphysical foundation. It is eternal, all-pervading, nameless, fathomless and in itself inexhaustible and, as such, has brought forth everything:

Out of Tao, one is born
Out of one, two
Out of two, three
Out of three, the myriad things

We see how deep is this doctrine of Tao is and an ample expression of tradition in China. The same could be said of the other great traditional schools in China.

Now the crucial question here is the following: can tradition, in the meaning mentioned above, be reconciled with modernism? I do not want to go into the historical roots or the intrinsic features of modernism, which is a purely Western phenomenon and which for some centuries has dominated the cultural arena all over the world, so that there is scarcely a culture which is not in one way or another impressed by it. But I think that in appraising modernism one should take tradition seriously into consideration. I want only to hint at some of the shortcomings of modernism.

1. Modern Western culture is secular in nature, and it has become increasingly so with accelerated speed. In Chinese terms, secularism means to cut one off from the blessings of Heaven ("*Ti'en*"). So the Heavenly has

been more or less eradicated from the vision of modern man. There could be nothing more hideous to our sages than this secularist conception. In traditional cultures, everything was related to its archetypal source in Heaven. Our traditions can show us the way to reconcile ourselves once more to Heaven.

2. Modern philosophy, which is supposed to enlighten us about the ultimate reality, concerns itself with mental schemes based on dubious presuppositions which have a claim to universality. But from a traditional viewpoint – that is from the point of view of the science of spiritual realization, so important in oriental cultures – these schemes are so many devices that are useless from a speculative point of view. What matters from the traditional standpoint is the Total Truth and hence Truth itself. In ancient traditions such as China, there have always been keys to open the door to truth. Modern philosophy is partial and fragmentary, which takes truths which are relative and determined by nature to be absolute. Moreover, starting from principles that are dubious or at least probable by nature, takes them to be dogmatically accepted as absolutely certain and indubitable. Oriental sages can help us in delivering ourselves from such trivialities and superficialities.

3. Another characteristic feature of modern culture is its reductionism. Being partial, it reduces reality to one of its possible and sometimes peripheral aspects. It is said: “Reality is nothing but...”, in which it is reduced to matter, mind, subject, object, soul, body, economics, history, and so on. One is immediately reminded of the aphorism of a Chinese sage (perhaps Lao-Tzu) that “in the end of time everything becomes ignoble and debased,” meaning that everything noble is reduced to its minimal aspect.

4. Philosophical and scientific terms have taken on a new but reduced signification. Take, for example, the concept of “method” in modern science, which in ancient Greek philosophy as “*metahodos*” was the Greek equivalent of the Chinese Tao. As another example, take the word “science” in its modern conception which has come to mean absolute knowledge and the sole type of knowledge which should authenticate all the other branches of knowledge. But for the Christian sages such as St. Thomas Aquinas “*scientia*” was the lowest degree in the hierarchy and was preceded by two others, that is “*disciplina*” or “*mathematica*” and the “*Sapientia*” or true wisdom. “*Sapientia*” was the supreme knowledge which alone deserved the epithet of “Divine Wisdom”. There is no sapiential knowledge in the modern West, but the Orient, including China, is rich in true wisdom. How can we wed again our modern culture with the *sapientia* of a Confucius, a Lao Tzu or of a Mencius? One can see again the same transformation in the key concepts of “reason” which has become mundane and secular. The concept of “enlightenment” is another example. How can we compare the 18th century German idealist conception of enlightenment, with the idea of enlightenment, illumination and awakening in Buddhism and Taoism? Modern man is in the direst need of spiritual awakening and illumination, and the sages of China have a lot to teach us here.

5. Traditional art is a basic part and parcel of our individual and cultural identity. Traditional art has the nobility of content as a spiritual condition apart from which art has no right to exist in traditional society; exactness of symbolism and the harmony of composition and the purity of style are necessary conditions for the traditional art which, on the one hand, emanates from a perfected soul and, on the other, bestows perfection to the soul which experiences it. Traditional art is not subjectivist, individualist, psychological and idiosyncratic, but rests on very profound metaphysical principles. The Tao we spoke of is manifest in every aspect of traditional art, from architecture to the art of calligraphy so well known in China, from the art of music to the art of psalmody. Artistic beauty is one of the major ingredients of a traditional culture. How then can we regain our traditional identity by turning back to our traditional, original and authentic conceptions of art?

6. Another constitutive element of a traditional culture, as indeed of any culture, is language. We are born in a language, grow up in a language, think in our language and finally consolidate our identity in a language. Language itself is an audible manifestation of the Tao. It can communicate to us the mysteries of the Tao, through verbal symbolism. The Greek sage, Heraclitus, a near contemporary of Confucius, used to say that an awakened man is one who is able to understand and communicate the language of “*Logos*” (*Tao*). Language divorced from its primordial source is sheer babbling and long-winded loquacity. So, in order to recover our tradition, it is quite significant that we recover and reinstate the true significance of our language.

7. Another important feature of traditional culture, in contradistinction to modernism, is its adoration and emulation of nature. Nature as the direct manifestation of the Tao, and as its physical and visible reflection, was considered to be sanctified and sacred. As a visible sign of Tao, it was made the object of metaphysical speculation and spiritual contemplation. The least we can say about modern man is that he has desacralized and even prostituted Mother Nature. The greatest miracle that has ever happened in the universe is the existence of man on this planet, which modern science and technology make more and more impossible. Profanation of nature is making human life increasingly impossible. It is time to adore once more the beauty of nature and love and emulate it as was the wont of the ancient wise sages.

There are many more points relevant to the importance of revivifying our traditional cultures in an age of modernism. But even this much, if taken seriously, would help us in regaining our heavenly identity.

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CHAPTER VIII

**CULTURAL HERITAGE AND
SOCIAL PROGRESS:
AN ISLAMIC RECURRENT CRISIS**

ABOU YAAREB MARZOUKI

INTRODUCTION

The Islamic World began its revival two centuries ago. Nevertheless, the economic and social underdevelopment of Muslims is indisputable. The crisis this civilization is experiencing continues to be critical, not only for Muslims, but for all mankind. Even if the superficial effects of this crisis are exacerbated by alien intervention, especially by Americans and Israelis, the core problems of our society stem from endogenous causes. The most important of these causes is the role of cultural heritage, which has lost its vital dynamic and constitutes a hindrance to social progress. We intend, in this paper, to answer two questions from an Islamic perspective

The first question deals with the relationship between cultural heritage and social progress in the current Islamic reality: The nature of the cultural heritage which hinders social progress: the fossilization of Islamic religious thought and popular superstition. The nature of the social progress hindered: Human Rights and democratic political life. The second question treats the relationship between cultural heritage and social progress in Islamic thought: a) in the Pre-modern era – from al Ghazali's diagnosis to the pre-scientific formulation by Ibn Khaldun and, b) in the Modern era – the revival in its secular (*Nahdha* = "Renaissance") and religious (*Sahwa* = "Rise") formulations.

We will diagnose the Islamic crisis in order to understand the situation of the modern Islamic World. This paper will propose some remedies to this situation. We believe that Muslims should simultaneously take two ways. First, the party of independence and defense of cultural heritage should clearly distinguish the struggle for national renewal and liberation from the viruses of terror inherited since the era of the Cold War: the secular terrorism used by the Soviet Union against the USA and the religious terrorism used by the USA against the Soviet Union. Second, the party of social progress should give in from time to time, in order to permit a sure and pacific evolution of Islamic society.

THE FIRST QUESTION: CULTURAL HERITAGE AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

The Nature of the Relationship

Nobody believes that cultural heritage as such is a hindrance to social progress, even if one thinks that some components of cultural heritage may sometimes hinder social progress. The determinant factor, I believe, is the perspective that sees cultural heritage as a hindrance to social progress. The struggle, when endogenous¹, is between those who would like to conserve the ancient social scheme and those who would like to have a new social scheme.

The struggle is double. The first is related to economic values and economic interests. The second is concerned with ethical values and ethical interests. These two struggles define civil society by its two essential dimensions: economic and ethical. Hence, we can define the relationship between cultural heritage and social progress as a struggle between the future and the past of a civilization translated in the proper double dynamic of its civil society. The political always aims at avoiding that this struggle become a civil war, by the pacific negotiation of a *modus vivendi* between the social forces, which represent the parties of the future and the parties of the past in the society concerned. However, when this double dynamic is alienated, the problems raised by the relationship between the past and the future of a civilization are no longer those of the same civil society, but those which stem from the failure of a violent transplant of the values of an alien culture.

Two kinds of interpretation have dominated the vision of this struggle as representative of the relationship between the cultural heritage and the social progress in a civilization. The first characterizes the philosophical thought from Plato until Kant. The second begins with Kant and has been defined as a principle of universal history in Hegel's *Philosophy of History*. The disputation of the truth and universality of this vision constitutes the very core of the post-modern thought.

The first vision – Plato's vision of history² – considers any natural evolution of the national civilization as a regress. Thus, the role of education and the state consists in the preservation of the cultural heritage, whose evolution and change are corruption and decadence. Plato's paradigm is the Egyptian state. The regress may be infinite or finite, so we have two visions of the regression: cyclical with possible regeneration (essentially ancient)³ or linear without regeneration (essentially medieval)⁴.

The second vision – Hegel's vision of History⁵ – considers the natural evolution of international civilization as progressive. Consequently, the role of education (instillation of objective spirit in the subjective one) and state (management of the contradictory interests in civil society) consists in the implementation of social progress and changes to cultural heritage. The progress may be infinite or finite: so we have two visions of

the progression: having a final stage (essentially modern)⁶ or lacking a final stage and being indefinite (essentially post-modern)⁷.

This is why one can say that the functions of education and politics are the same in opposed theories of history: how to implement reason in order to shape history and to determine the relationship between cultural heritage and social progress. This mission of philosophic teaching is the religious and moral dimension of human reason.

The Situation in the Islamic World

The vicious effects stemming from a distorted vision of the relationship between the cultural tradition and social development are illustrated by the very image of the crisis of the Islamic World, which is simultaneously particular and universal. The image caused by the prejudices towards the efforts aiming at the revival of the Islamic culture has excluded any possibility of understanding the dynamic of this relation, and, so, the ordinary phenomenon of the struggle between the forces of progress and the forces of conservatism in Islamic society becomes a universal crisis

The Image and its Vicious Effect. Notwithstanding the universal stakes which should encourage the pacific evolution of a great cultural tradition, namely the Islamic culture, the particular prejudices responsible for the distorted image of this struggle have harmed the independent development and solution of the crisis experienced by Islamic civilization. It seems that the originators of this image have forgotten two truths;

a. The bloody history of the modern West: from the religious revolution (the Reformation) until the philosophic revolution (the French Revolution), and, then, from the totalitarian experience between the two World Wars until the presumptive American democracy, blood has never ceased to be shed.

b. The terror groups and totalitarian movements in the Islamic world have been created and developed by those two powers in the era of the Cold War⁸ which have infected movements of national renewal and liberation, and have been used by certain nations as alibis, firstly to consolidate this image of terror and totalitarian behavior and, secondly, to legitimize the war and the occupation of the very heart of the Islamic World, renamed the Great Middle East.⁹

The Real Problems and their Significance. Independent of this image however, what is really at stake in the relationship between our cultural heritage and social progress is the historic struggle of the access to human rights and the democratic life. This struggle is not new. It began with the Islamic message, as practiced by the first generation of Muslims. This is why the first schism and civil war were about the nature of the political system: is it founded on a divine right or on the choice of the community?¹⁰

Each of the two main parties stemming from this schism has experienced another schism about human rights. The schism in the Sunni party was about the relationship between the role of reason and the role of faith in theoretical and practical thought – and in actual practice.¹¹ In the *Shi'i* party, the schism was about the subject of divine right: is it about any man who has a sound faith or is it limited to a predetermined house?¹²

This endogenous dynamic was accompanied by two successive exogenous wars whose consequences were the decline of Islamic civilization:

1. The first double war was with the Byzantine and Persian Empire.
2. The second double war was with the Catholic Church (Crusades and Reconquista) and the Barbarians of Asia (Mongols).

When the Islamic world restarted its revolution in the early eighteenth century, alien intervention via the expansion by the West did almost anything imaginable to hinder its renaissance. This intervention does not help to achieve the aims of the renewal, because it leads to a confusion, which reduces social progress to the acceptance of an alien cultural domination. Refusal of the first can lead to the refusal of the second.

Alien Intervention Hinders these Aims. But resistance to the imitation of the current alien civilization cannot be successful when it is reduced to an imitation of the past and the fossilization of cultural heritage. This principle is universal: the distance between the potential and the actual is not a distance between two real entities, but is a distance between an ideal entity, which is nowhere realized and a real potential entity. This phenomenon is twofold: 1- the ethical ideal, for moral action; 2- and the theoretical ideal, for technical action. Through its theoretical imagination, theoretical reason produces an esthetical and technical vision of being, and through its practical imagination practical reason produces an ethical and political vision of value. These are the transcendent conditions of civilizational creation.

Muslims believe that these two forms of ideal are not simple dreams invented by the human imagination. They are a trace of Divine transcendence defined as the divine brand: *fitrah*. When these ideals are identified with real entities (e.g., the current West and Islamic past as ideals), they become sources of idolatry: divine transcendence would be materialized in idols. This is the real *Shirk*. Muslims, both secularist and religious parties, are Mushrikun. They cannot be independent and, consequently, they are unable to be creative at any level of theoretical and practical thought, let alone in their symbolic and institutional applications. Our current being is thus reduced to an absolute ontological dependence. The unique possibility of spiritual and temporal liberation must stem from the deepening of Islamic revolutions: see the deep meanings of *Ijtihād* and *Jihād*.

SECOND QUESTION: ISLAMIC TREATMENT OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CULTURAL HERITAGE AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

Neither the crisis of Islamic culture nor its diagnosis is new. We will try to sketch rapidly the essential moments of this crisis and diagnosis.

The Pre-Modern Era: From Al-Ghazali's Diagnosis to Ibn Khaldun's Pre-Scientific Formulation

Al-Ghazali's Diagnosis. How did al-Ghazali diagnose the crisis of Islamic culture? He dealt with this question and determined the causes of the crisis (as two sources of totalitarianism) in two of his books: the theoretical or metaphysical causes in *Tahfut al Falasifah* and the practical or political ones in *Fadha'ih al Batiniyyah*.

In *Tahfut al Falasifah*¹³ – the contradiction of the philosophers – al-Ghazali refutes the core of metaphysics in order to lay the grounds of a liberal theology permitting a plurality of views and religious choice: that is, to oppose the metaphysical totalitarianism of the elite founded on absolute knowledge. This why he tries to realize the idea that Kant later illustrated in the introduction of the second edition of his *Critique of Pure Reason*: to limit theoretical knowledge in order to render possible a practical faith.

In *Fadha'ih al Batiniyyah*¹⁴ [*The Scandalous Behavior of the Batiniyyah*], al-Ghazali lays the grounds of a liberal political system permitting a plurality of views and political choice: that is, to oppose political totalitarianism of government founded on divine right.

Al-Ghazali tried to go forward and propose an Islamic religious reformation related to the disciplines he believed to be responsible for these two totalitarianisms: the reformation of the two theoretical sciences (philosophy and theology) and the two practical sciences (mysticism and law). He christened his reformation as *Revival of Religious Sciences (Ihya' "Ulum al-Din)*¹⁵.

Ibn Taymiyyah's Interpretation. The religious “*Aufklärung*”. The diagnosis and the remedy proposed by al-Ghazali, however, were not adequate to the situation and the crisis worsened. As a matter of fact, theoretical totalitarianism combined mystical and metaphysical absolutism in order to present a monolithic and absolute worldview by which free will was absolutely negated. Practical totalitarianism combined legal and theological absolutism in order to present a monolithic and absolute political system: the government as the shadow of God and the legitimization of dictatorship as *fait accompli*.

The negation of free will and political dictatorship became the sole vision of the cultural tradition and, hence, excluded any possibility of social and moral progress. The struggle over democratic government was the first

problem, which caused the Muslim *Ummah* to engage in an interminable civil war: the two alternatives were the Shi'ite and the Sunnite solutions.

The Shi'ite proposes a religious regime in which the Imam is designated and inherited, and not chosen by the nation. The Sunnite proposes a semi-secular regime in which the Khalifah is chosen by the elites of the nation (*Ahlu al Halli wal-'Aqdi* = the *Ulama'* and the *Wujaha'*, i.e., the scholars and notables who have the right to decide for the *Ummah*), but the source of law is religious. The civil war between these two visions has never ceased.

The situation has worsened since the displacement of the civil war. The Shi'ites, as we see it in Iran, are now trying to overcome the contradiction between the democratic legitimacy of the President of the Republic and the religious legitimacy of the Principal Scholar who is the mouthpiece of the Imam. The Sunnites, as we see it in the programs of the Islamic parties, are now trying to overcome the contradiction between the principle of the choice of government and the refusal of a democratic source of law.

Ibn Khaldun's interpretation: the philosophical "Aufklärung". Ibn Khaldun sees political arbitrariness in two fields:

- 1- material goods, i.e., confiscation of property and exploitation of the worker;
- 2- moral values, i.e., sharing of power and liberty as respect for the five rights of human beings defined by the five purposes of Shariah.

These purposes are religious formulations of Human Rights: 1. liberty of thought (العقل), 2. right of property (المال), 3. respect of human dignity (العرض), 4. right to defend one's belief (الدين), and 5. holiness of life (النفس). Our reading of Ibn Khaldun's thought¹⁶ is not an anachronic modernization. The reformation he proposed in his *Muqddimah* means the reformation of the moral and material civil society in order to eliminate the obstacles to *Istikhlaf*¹⁷ in its four meanings. The principle of this elimination is simple: it is grounded on preventing the cultural from dominating the natural, or preventing socialization from becoming subjugation and enslavement. The problem, in a nutshell, is how to rationally manage the natural force in individuals and collectivities, in order to shape and channel it without corrupting the original sovereignty of man, or his good *fitra*.¹⁸

Are we justified in talking of "contract" (=عقد) as a solution proposed by Ibn Khaldun to these problems? Here is the beginning of the text referred to:

People in any social organization must have someone who exercises a restraining influence and rules them, and to whom recourse may be had. His rule over them is

sometimes based upon a divinely revealed religious law. They are obliged to submit to it in view of their belief in reward and punishment in the other world (things that were indicated) by the person who brought them (their religious law). Sometimes, (his rule is based) upon rational politics. People are obliged to submit to it in view of the reward they expect from the ruler after he has become acquainted with what is good for them.¹⁹

Ibn Khaldun used the plural form عقود of the term عقد in his definition of the legitimate state, which can persist without *'Asabiyya*²⁰. Ibn Khaldun does not specify the double character of a religious contract. The distinction we introduce, however, is not arbitrary. Two reasons account for it: first, nothing excludes the possibility of religious authorities behaving as political authorities, using the religious law in the unique interests of the clerics; second, the bipartition of the rational contract implies that, in the two cases, a rational contract is germane to a religious one.

Modern Era: From the Nahdah vs. Sahwa to the Unity of the Renewal

The modern era or the Nahdah has tried to ground the renewal on this same analysis, the references of its initiators being essentially that of these three authors, particularly the third. The reformers were interested in the political and social reformations via the instauration of a democratic life and a liberal system of education. Their thought, however, was wrestling with two difficulties, each of which was the very concern of Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddimah*:

1. The first is related to the ambiguity of Islamic constitutions (possible and real): how to reconcile a democratic political regime with a divine *Shari'a* (divine source of law).

2. The second is related to the reinstatement of Islamic unity: how to reconcile the principle of secular national states instituted after the breakdown of the Khalifah and the necessary unity, *conditio sine qua non* of economic development and social progress in the era of globalization, and mega-economic anti-political entities, such as the E.U.

Solution Proposed for the First Difficulty. The evolution of Islamic *Fiqh* (divine source of civil, personal and constitutional law) has come to the theory of the *Shari'a* as the spirit and ethics of legislation, rather than codes and laws. As a matter of fact, the term, divine *Shari'a*, may be understood either materially or formally. This vision – the narrower one – materially coincides with the instauration of a disguised spiritual authority, represented by the *Fuqha'*, but without infallibility, the spirituality being that of the laws and not of the lawyers. The material character means the application of texts understood not in their universal meaning, but rather in

the meaning they have had in concrete situations whose archetypical privilege is generally advocated by the *Sunnah*.

This vision is formally the way out of the crisis of our culture: the divine *Shari`ah* is not reducible to the traditional *fiqh*. It may be generalizable to all legislation grounded on the universal purposes (مقاصد) and principles (مبادئ), common to the inexhaustible meaning of the revelation and the evolution of rational interpretation of the laws of human and natural phenomena under the light shed by the moral principle of *al-Qur`an al Karim*. Here, the *Ummah* is the unique spiritual authority and the *fuqaha`* (mere technocratic advisers) function, just as other scholars and experts function in their respective fields of expertise.

Indeed, the religious character is of two kinds:

1. It may mean the *Shari`ah* in its materiality, i.e., the laws whose legislator is God or the Prophet.
2. It may mean the holiness of the law established by those who believe in the truth and values, which the religion has defined as roots of terrestrial life, which is a preparatory phase to the celestial life: the spirit of the community of believers is the spirit of the law. This is the meaning presupposed by the closure of *Wahy* and the abolition of religious authority.

This is why Ibn Khaldun believes in the absolute adequacy between religious and rational principles of good governance. The binary structure of political power does not depend upon the nature of the regime: the moral and the material dimensions of the state are necessary. But these dimensions can be recognized or not recognized. When the people are aware of the distinction, power is balanced and it can never be dictatorial. This is why we must reestablish the Khalifah as defined by Ibn Khaldun who had studied its evolution and the sharing of power between the Khalifah and the Sultanate. We have to define the modes of election of the Khalifah and the mode of alternation of the head of government who is the chief of the party of the majority (by peaceful election and not by military coup).

Ibn Khaldun defined four meanings of *Istikhlaf*: the theoretical and practical, each of which is abstract and applied. The abstract meanings have the thrust of moral civil society, and the applied ones have the thrust of material civil society. The core of Islamic crisis is related to the misunderstanding of these meanings when used in theological, philosophical, legal and mystical thought or study. Ibn Khaldun's equation between theoretical and practical knowledge might be the way to transcend the antagonistic reduction of either ontology to axiology (which is the final telos of the Qadarite vision) or axiology to ontology (which is the final telos of the Jabrite vision). In order to get rid of this opposition grounded in the opposition between rational and revealed knowledge, Ibn Khaldun eliminates the opposition itself by virtue of his concept of man (whose being is essentially axiological because man is the very desire of auto-deification: (حب التآله). By virtue of his being what he is, man is also the

evaluator of domination because of the will to absolute sovereignty رئاسة. This is why Ibn Khaldun grounds his dialectical vision of the force as “being-value,” without which no realization of value is possible. He philosophically translates the Ash`arite solution which transcends the opposite reduction (*Qadarism/Jabrism*) by the new definition of politics as equation of the concept of *Istikhlaf* with the concept of *Kasb*. Human knowledge and action are individually and collectively the human concretization of sovereignty and, therefore, the concrete meaning of universal Khalifah: man *per se* is Khalifah.

Many texts of al Muqddimah underline this conception: the text related to the consequences of oppressive education (فقدان معاني الانسانية) and the text related to the decline of nations as consequence of the lack of sovereignty (السر = الانسان رئيس بطبعه بمقتضى الاستخلاف الذي خلق له) are the more eloquent ones: If positive resistance to domination is impossible, the negative one may, in these two cases, end up in a moral and even physical auto-destruction.

Solution Proposed for the Second Difficulty. We can distinguish five phases defining the essentials of the current Islamic situation and its implications in universal history: a. the first phase, before direct colonization (the second half of the 18th and the first half of 19th centuries); b. the second phase, the colonization (the second half of the 19th century); c. the third phase, the war of national liberation (the first half of the 20th century); d. the national reconstruction (the second half of the 20th century); e. the struggle for Islamic unification and the strategy of the Great Middle East and the enlargement of NATO as a real implementation of the strategy of the clash of civilizations (since the breakdown of the Soviet Union).

So far, Muslims, wittingly or unwillingly, are refusing to define their precise moral and political situation honestly. The relation of our present to the Western present and to our proper past cannot cease being pathological unless a universal bridge enables us to integrate without the complex human experiences which have overrun our moral and political development. Any attachment to a specificity opposed to the universal values is pathological and considered by Islam itself as bad – *Taqleed*. This Khaldunian proposition may be disputable, but it can constitute a good starting point. The binary structure of political power does not depend upon the nature of the regime: the moral and material dimensions of the state are necessary. These dimensions can, however, be known (i.e., people may be aware of them) or not. When people are aware of the distinction, power will be balanced and it can never be dictatorial. This is why we must reestablish a Khalifah political system achieving the symbolic unity of Muslims as defined by Ibn Khaldun who has studied its evolution and the sharing of power between the Khalifah (i.e., Head of State: symbolic and moral authority) and the Sultanate (i.e., Head of government: executive power). We have to define the modes of election of the Khalifah and the mode of

alternation of the head of government who is the chief of the party of the majority (by peaceful election and not by military coup).

CONCLUSION

We believe we have shown that what is happening now in the Islamic world is the simple and pure consequence of both these endogenous and exogenous factual and intellectual histories and the current international conditions that obtain in the Islamic renaissance. European states must understand that they cannot continue to perceive Islam as it was perceived in the medieval ages. Neither the USA nor Israel, however, has made this mental adjustment. If we succeed to help Muslims in the renewal of their civilisation, the outcome will be beneficial for all humankind. Let us give more time in order to permit a sure and pacific evolution of Islamic heritage and society.

The consequences of the two World Wars have convinced the world powers that peace and social progress cannot but be global. The role played by the USA in the democratization and unification of Europe has helped Western powers win the Cold War. Can we hope that the same role can help humankind win peace and social progress? This is the deep meaning of a possible *entente cordiale* between West and East in order to avoid the clash of civilizations and deepen the condition of peace and social progress. If the motivation of the same *entente cordiale* was the vision of Europe as origin and forefather of American civilization, we can claim that the Middle East is the origin of the origin and the forefather of all forefathers of the civilization of which the USA pretends to be the mouthpiece.

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NOTES

¹ It may be exogenous as is the case in the Islamic world where an exogenous civil society is substituted for an endogenous one. This substitution is imposed by an alliance between alien intervention and the alienated elite, which has decided to impose and precipitate social progress which has not had enough time to match with the cultural heritage.

² Plato, *Republica*, Book 8. The development of the political life is descendent. The descendent succession is defined by the scheme of the regimes as systematically determined by Aristotle in his *Politics*. The Greek classification common to Plato and Aristotle is founded on two principles: the number of governing and their morality. The application of the first principle produces three regimes: those with one governing person, those with some governing persons, and those with all citizens participating in the governing

body. The application of the second doubles the number of regimes: either good or bad. Thus, we have three good regimes: *Kingship*, *Aristocracy*, and *Republic* and three bad ones: *Dictatorship*, *Oligarchy* and *Democracy*. No doubt, there are many other nuances in this classification due to the combination and overlap of these simple kinds of constitutions, as Aristotle has affirmed, in *Politica*, Book VI.1.1316b35-1317a10.

³ The world being eternal, the corruption cannot but be infinite, by cyclical repetition.

⁴ The world being temporal will come at an end before the Day of Judgement.

⁵ Hegel, *Phaenomenologie des Geistes*, Werke, 8, s. 591: "Das Ziel, das absolute Wissen, oder der sich als Geist wissende Geist hat zu seinem Wege die Erinnerung der Geister, wie sie an ihnen selbst sind und die Organisation ihres Reichs vollbringen. Ihre Aufbewahrung nach der Seite ihres freien, in der Form der Zufälligkeit erscheinenden Daseins ist die Geschichte, nach der Seite ihrer begriffenen Organisation aber die *Wissenschaft des erscheinenden Wissens*; beide zusammen, die begriffene Geschichte, bilden die Erinnerung und die Schädelstätte des absoluten Geistes, die Wirklichkeit, Wahrheit und Gewißheit seines Throns, ohne den er das leblose Einsame wäre."

⁶ Modern optimism as represented by Hegel (i.e., absolute knowledge and liberation) and Marx (i.e., absolute justice and liberation).

⁷ Post-modern pessimism as represented by Heidegger (the hope that a God saves men) or, worse, indifferentism represented by Rorty (the equivalence of all worldviews and final vocabulary).

⁸ This is why they are of two kinds: the religious groups (the *ash'arit* or *Ikhwan muslimun* and the *wahabiwahabi* or the *salafi*) and the secular groups (the Arab nationalists and the Social-internationalists).

⁹ This euphemism has only one intention: to veil the definition of Islam and essentially of its Arabic trend as the Enemy of Western civilization as conceived of in the theory of the clash of civilization. The confirmation of this reading is found in the expansion of NATO and the encirclement of the area by its military bases and activities. There is no need to indicate that this is not the unique motivation of these belligerent attitudes: the domination of the sources of energy and the ways of communication between Orient and Occident, which are essentially situated in our land, are the underpinning of these inimical visions of the relationship between Muslims and the USA.

¹⁰ This is the essential distinction between *Sunnah* and *Shi'ah*.

¹¹ This is the essential distinction between *Sunni* and *Mu'tazili* (= those who go astray from the *Sunni* party). The principle of the separation is the following: if the definition of good and evil and the government are not a divine right, it should be founded either on force or on reason. The *Mu'tazili* are those who think that it should be grounded on reason and on force. The separation of the two components of the *Sunni* political power was the final stage of the constitutional evolution whose output was the separation of these two components. The Sultan will represent the temporal power and the *Kahalife* the spiritual one, but not in the meaning of an infallible spiritual authority: the two best instantiations of this model is the Buweiheed (in which the sultan is *Shi'i*

and the *Khalife* is Sunni!) and Saljukeed Sultanates. It is rather a symbolic power, such as the Queen of England. The real problem is that the sultan is not elected as a head of government but imposed by his 'Asabiyya, generally related to the military force of the Khalifate.

¹² This is the essential distinction between Shii and Khariji (those who go astray from the Shii party). The principle of the separation is the following: if the definition of the good and evil and the government are divine right, it should be the right grounded on the soundness of the faith and not on the appurtenance to a cast of a pedigree.

¹³ Al-Ghazali, *Tahafut al Falasifah* as refutation of the metaphysical dimension of rational theoretical knowledge defined by him as an ideological investment of the theoretical thought in order to impose an alternative paradigm of intellectual progress in complete contradiction with the cultural heritage of Islamic civilization.

¹⁴ Al-Ghazali, *Fadha'ih al Batiniyyah* as refutation of the metahistorical dimension of the rational practical knowledge defined by him as an ideological investment of the practical thought in order to impose an alternative paradigm of social moral progress in complete contradiction with the cultural heritage of Islamic civilization.

¹⁵ Al-Ghazali, *Ihya' "Ulum al-Din"*: "They [The 'Ulama] duped the people to believe that there is no other science than that of Fiqh [Jurisprudence]. ... They say that there is no learning except that of Munazara or debates. The present learned man cherishes hope to be victorious over his adversary and seeks means to make him silent. Or they informed the people that there is no learning except the science of scholastic theology by help of which a speaker seeks to influence the mind of the public. They see no other science except these three sciences. The sciences of the next world (= Tasawwuf) and the learning of the sages of early times (= Philosophy) have disappeared from the people and the learning, which was described by God in his Holy Book as theology, wisdom, light and guidance, has been immersed in the deepest recess of forgetfulness." Ghazali, *Ihya, Revival of Religious Learning*, tr. Al Haj Fazul Karim (Lahore, Pakistan: Sind Sagar Academic, 1982), vol.1, pp. 9-10.

¹⁶ This text defines that the relationship between his science and Fiqh is clear. Ibn Kaldun, *The Muqaddimah* (Beyrouth: Dar al Kitab al-Lubnani, 3rd. ed. 1967) p. 64.

¹⁷ *Istikhlaf* means the designation of the Man as vice-regent of God in Earth.

¹⁸ This means a liberal educational reformation, which has been proposed by Ibn Khaldun as ultimate end of his *Muqaddimah*.

¹⁹ Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, III, 50, tr. Franz Rosenthal (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), pp. 137-8.

²⁰ *Asabiyyah* means, as translated by Rosenthal, the "group feeling." This translation is a happy one because it allows the term "group" without more specification. The group may be natural (tribal groups) or religious (confessions and nominations) or political (parties).

CHAPTER IX

PRACTICAL WISDOM: ON THE CONTEMPORARY VALUE OF CHINESE TRADITIONAL WISDOM, AND THE BEWILDERMENT OF MODERNITY

ZHANG YIMING

Modernity starts with the belief that the present era is unique and superior to earlier ones. The past, as a whole or a series of periods, with its sacred order and value system, lies under investigation, suspicion and criticism. Thus, the future has been emancipated from the classical natural order and religious holy order, awaiting the creation of man. The present becomes the starting point of history and its ending point as well. Now that the present is sure to disappear with the progress of time, how can modernity go beyond its own time, the past and the future, and set the present as the standard? The first and most important objective of modernity is to establish its own certainty, making it an acceptable standard for the past and the present. Modernity arises from reflection on itself.

Modernity holds the belief that with the reflection of the human himself, man can restore his own reason and acquire a transcendental standard, which surpasses the past and fortuitous experience. The difference from the self-understanding of modernity is, however, that the self-reflection of modernity is not following only one approach. Reason is not the only starting point; it has other dependencies. Therefore, reflection has another access to instinct and desire. The duplicity of the reflection of modernity reveals its inner contradiction, resulting in the shift of modernity towards its reverse side.

To gain its own certainty, the reflection of modernity shows itself as a dual abstraction. For one thing, it abstracts reason from the world. With its dissimilation and isolation from the world, history and society, it lays down the role of the subject of human reason before nature and history. For another, it abstracts reason from human life and inner consciousness, establishing the superiority of human reason over perpetual experience and the life impulse. It also establishes the objective role of the inner world.

How abstraction is carried out can be seen from Descartes' method of doubt. Through doubt, Descartes returns to transcendental consciousness, setting up the self-dependence and the certainty of the transcendental subject. The transcendental subject of Descartes evolves into transcendental reason governed by self-consciousness. Based on this form of reason, modern people can acquire knowledge of the general inevitability of nature, which transcends all past doctrines and current controversies. Acquired

knowledge is, however, a pure theory that can only help people comprehend and expound nature. As to how to live, this knowledge does little good.

Wishing to acquire knowledge of how to live, namely, practical knowledge, modernity loses itself in reflection. Practicing living is a problem with complexities and varieties. With the introduction of reflection into practice, the certain result is a boundless division of the human city-state and a diversity of individual desires. How can a universal standard for human life in such a complicated and ever-changing world be laid down? The strategy modernity takes is to return from the various possibilities of lives to the starting point – self-preservation. Modernity holds that, first of all, human beings live in a natural condition. Every individual acts on the basis of self-preservation. Each one decides in terms of his own judgment which means are beneficial and which ones are harmful to human life. In addition, every person enjoys the right to take necessary actions to access benefits for himself and to remove risks including that of losing one's life. Consequently, in this so-called natural condition, a context is created wherein each person treats every other as his foe because of the pursuit of self-preservation. Ironically, modernity claims that the endangered state helps in striking a balance between people's self-defense and self-preservation, and makes the establishment of standards for living together possible.

Since the most important goal is to preserve oneself, which could threaten the safety of other people, the best approach is to have an isolated transcendent define standards for everyone's acts and foster security for all. Modernity requires the certainty that such a transcendent makes the final determination; thus, the right of the transcendent does not come from itself but from individuals handing over their natural right. Each individual creates the transcendent, namely, a civil society or a state based on primitive agreement. With the protection of the state, people are able to enjoy their rights and take actions to secure their safety and wellbeing.

On the basis of the certainty of transcendental reason itself and the certainty of life itself, modernity, through self-reflection, builds up its own boundary marker.

By the reflection of the certainty of itself, modernity gains superiority over ancient wisdom. As far as the subject is concerned, modernity's reflection is distinguished from ancient thought. However, the two share one thing in common – the acknowledgement of certainty. It is well known that Aristotle's metaphysics tries to establish certainty. In Aristotle, the aim of contemplation is to acquire the knowledge of the stationary and permanent noumenon, involving the permanent noumenon as the means of living a pure rational life. Accordingly, both modern and ancient thinkers consider some being of certainty as the fundamental target of intellectual exploration. From the view of theoretical reason that is the case; but from the view of practical wisdom, ancient and modern thought are fundamentally different.

As for the ancient philosophers, the exploration of practice starts neither from the same stable human nature nor from the isolated individual in his natural status. For our forefathers, the possibility and necessity of moral practice lies in the fact that human nature is changeable and liable to perfection. The objective of practice is not the continuity of life but the perfection of life. In order to classify the problem, the difference between Aristotle's theoretical reason and practical reason is what I shall address first.

The reason for Aristotle to distinguish between theoretical reason and practical reason originates from differences in ontology. For Aristotle, nature is divided into two different levels – a finite nature and an infinite nature. Infinite nature is the perpetual entity or ultimate noumenon and the object of theoretical reason for which a human's activity is of no help. From the contemplation on the unending noumenon, human reason is able to coexist with the permanent noumenon, isolating itself from the disturbance and obstacles of the finite and passive beings and enjoying a perfect quietness and freedom. This is speculative metaphysics springing from contemplation. Nature, including itself as a finite being, is a changeable being and therefore it is the field for people's activity. The process of the activity in question is applying the potential – the nature embodied within the finite things themselves – to practice. What is more, real practice of this activity is, according to Aristotle, just the process for human nature to achieve perfection.

As mentioned above, the practical philosophy of Aristotle does not spring from an individual. Moreover, the good achieved from practice is not the quality embodied within a single object. Practice occurs in its field – in the ancient city-state. The ancient city-state and the modern state are conditions for practical activities of humans. The two, however, are essentially different. The modern state only serves as the means for the survival and preservation of human life. The relationship with the individual is external. Man himself, totally unrelated to the state, sets the objective of personal practice. As the condition for human practice, the ancient city-state does not become the means for achieving private purposes. On the contrary, the objective of personal practice is laid down by the city-state. The practice of individuals is not only for the sake of the good for oneself, but for the city-state and for the public. The common good can be seen in collective activities and functions of the city-state and also in its customs and laws. Therefore, to practice means to participate in public affairs and the collective life in the city-state and thereby to realize the public good. It does not imply a neglect of personal values. It is also not the means for individuals to realize the good in public. In practice, innate human nature may be changed and fostered for virtue. According to Aristotle, one's virtue is constituted by one's behaviors and habits. Virtues contribute to good behaviors and habits. The ugliness of qualities exposes the weakening and corruption of virtues. Good habits and virtues develop with practice. Note that practice does not set the common good as the goal to pursue whereas

regulations and custom are not means for the sake of the objective. The immediate aim of acts is for the better and the more proper acts. The act makes itself the target and has no external goal. Agreement on regulations and customs and the pursuit of the public good are the requirements of the act itself. Accordingly, the act can go beyond itself, participating in the reality and creating and sharing the deserved wellbeing. In conclusion, the process of practice is for the transformation and expansion of human existence. It is also for mixing the private and the public together and thus for upgrading and expanding the being of the individual.

The process of practice is one of choosing and acting properly in different situations and of revealing hidden possibilities embodied in a special situation. Accordingly, what practice follows is not an unchanging and abstract formal rule. The most significant feature of formal rules lies in that all concrete things are pressed into a set framework according to whatever special characteristics they have. What practice really requires is practical wisdom, not the simple application of abstract rules, but the scheme, measurement, investigation, coordination and decision concerning different situations. It is not knowledge which can be acquired as a written rule but a wisdom developing gradually in and through practice. It needs its specified situations, that is, the city-state which is the space for its creation and perfection. The city-state is the carrier of wisdom. Practical wisdom transcends personal consciousness.

Unlike Aristotle, modernity does not make a substantial distinction between theoretical reason and practical reason. The famous distinction of Kant fails to change the situation. Although two different ways have been adopted to explore, respectively, the learning act and the practical act, the operative methods are the same, namely, to start from the unchanged being: to introspect into the knowledge based on the transcendental subject and to introspect into the practice founded on self-preservation. As a matter of fact, it is to shift the mode of thinking used in the learning act to the practical act, replacing practical wisdom with theoretical reason. It results in a serious consequence – the splitting of modernity itself.

According to theoretical reason, modernity regards the unchanging being, namely, the self-preserved life, as the starting point of practice. Consequently, all things, including other beings (society and state), are considered as means to maintain life. Reason also loses its depth of ancient metaphysics that comprises an independent life and becomes instrumental reason, a means of life preservation. Since the state and the individual are in a mutually external relationship and the state as means of preserving life must be sustained, the two have their respective interests and quests. Thus, a division occurs between individual and public life. According to the operational logic of power, a country develops into a bureaucracy, disciplining and suppressing the individual and depriving him of his freedom (a natural faculty) along with the significance and goals of life. As far as the relations between the individual and society are concerned, the

restraint of the economic system on the individual is also formed: thus, the bewilderment which modernity encounters.

In contrast with ancient philosophy, it can be seen that among the fundamental causes of the bewilderment of modernity is the loss of practical wisdom. Modernity sticks to metaphysics in such a way that each entity retains its unchanging nature no matter whether it is an ultimate being or one of the various things in the finite world. Because of the expansion of the metaphysical mode of thinking in the finite world – the finite nature and the city-state – the distinction of finite things becomes possible. The weakening of practical wisdom leads to the loss of the public space for communication and coexistence and to the abandonment of the possibility for the individual to perfect, improve, and surpass himself in public space. The individual, thereafter, becomes a being of “solipsism in solitude.” Under the control and disintegration of instrumental reason and system, the individual develops into fragments in different isolated conditions.

By reflection on itself, modernity does not realize the anticipation of surpassing its own special situation and it indulges in the fallacy of the Platonic cave. Does this mean that, with the restoration of ancient wisdom and the recalling of the city-state, people can overcome the bewilderment resulting from modernity? That is the problem concerning the extreme limitation of qualities of occidental thought. The metaphysics of certainty constitutes the basis of Western thought, giving rise to the restriction (by the special field of vision) of becoming needed for practice. In olden times, practice was limited to each enclosed city-state. Under the control of Western metaphysics, practice fails to fully expose itself with its wisdom. In modern times, however, practice is no longer restricted. It has to free itself from metaphysics to the outside world. Chinese ancient wisdom, with its breadth and height, provides a possible condition for the purification and thorough application of practical wisdom.

The unique characteristic of ancient Chinese wisdom lies in the following two points: it provides a cosmopolitan field of vision or cosmic field of vision to practice; and it claims that in practice the Tao and human nature are correlated. Chinese ancient wisdom thinks highly of practice, making it something that goes far beyond that in Western thought.

According to Confucianism and Taoism, heaven gives birth to human virtue. The Tao forms the fundamental principle of human nature, which is the revelation and realization of the Tao. The perfection of human nature lies in its return to the Tao, to which practice is the access. The Tao as a breeding force provides nourishment for all living things. The extreme height of human nature, the revelation of the Tao, is that human beings help heaven and earth cultivate all living things. Accordingly, the Tao is the true height for practice to achieve. The notions of the Tao and human nature in Chinese traditional thought add practical wisdom with relatively farther-reaching connotation than that in occidental practical philosophy.

First, the Chinese traditional theory of Tao and human nature spreads before us a world with the unity of heaven and human beings. The

Tao is an active power, only showing itself in its evolution. Thereafter, the gap between the transcendent world and the world of life is filled. One can ascend into the Tao through practice. Consequently, in practice, the extent for an individual to achieve perfection goes beyond the boundary set by Western metaphysics.

Second, Chinese traditional thought helps practice develop a cosmological background and a cosmopolitan field of vision, surmounting an enclosed and narrowly defined field. Since the aspiration for practice to achieve is the Tao itself, what practice needs to realize is not only the public good in the city-state but also reality for globalization. Each being has to surpass not only the boundary of him or herself (and coexist in a city-state), but all boundaries – fully enjoying the wellbeing of coexistence and shared glory.

Finally, the interaction of heaven and human nature makes the general field of vision in practice not the formal reason beyond the individual being. It is known to all that modernity has the bearing of the pursuit of cosmopolitanism surmounting the present condition. Confined by speculative reason, cosmopolitanism shows itself as abstract formalism. General formalism fails to infiltrate human life and thus hurries toward instrumental reason as the means of life preservation. With no shelter for general reason, individual life becomes disintegrated and isolated into fragments – an entity in solitude. Consequently, human life is confined to the level of the animal, failing to upgrade itself. With the change from a general field of vision to practice and the emergence of an endless force, the gulf between general reason and individual life is to be bridged and individuals are able to foresee the height they can achieve.

The unique feature embodied by Chinese ancient practical wisdom and its revelation of possible aspiration for human nature reminds people today of emancipation from the restrictions of Western metaphysics and enables them to apply themselves to a borderless practical wisdom. Globalization makes people encounter a cosmopolitan field of vision, but this is broken up by formal reason. Globalization and further divisions are in line with the distinction among peoples. By starting with the general field of vision revealed by Chinese ancient practical wisdom, another way of action is obtained.

Ancient Chinese wisdom let people learn the ideal way to act, that is a definite living status drawn from formal reason that should not be used to change the world. On the contrary, we should start with possibilities of the being of people in order to create conditions in which man's potential could be realized and perfected, so that we can achieve the common good and people's co-existence.

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CHAPTER X

WHICH 'C' IS TECHNOLOGY: CIVILIZATION OR CULTURE: AN ANALYSIS OF THE RATIONALITY OF TECHNOLOGICAL CULTURE¹

YANG QINGFENG

One thing emerges in the contemporary world, though not clearly. This is technology. Like running water, it polishes a nation's edge; like the soil, it fills up a nation's chasms. Its universality is sweeping over the whole world, permeating various cultures and taking root in them. We can feel its existence in every place, not only in China, but also in other countries. Half a century ago, many scholars such as Hushi, Qianmu, and Liuyizhi in China thought about the problem of Chinese culture. They thought of the nature of Chinese culture, the difference between Chinese culture and Western culture, and the superiority of one culture to another. LiuYizhi said: "What is Chinese culture? Where is Chinese culture? How is Chinese culture different from Indo-European culture? That is the problem scholars must inquire about first . . . The constitution of any country must have some peculiarity, otherwise, it is the same as that of other countries. Why does a country bear its own name?"²

Qianmu said: "Which is gained, which is lost? Which is superior? Which is inferior? All Chinese for one hundred years have been puzzled by this question. I am also puzzled by the question; . . . This question has filled all of my life."³

They sharply noted one fact: culture is different, nation is different. But they never anticipated the emergence of a special phenomenon. Differences between nations are disappearing. Today, this change is happening. We are familiar with delicious Kentucky Fried Chicken, are accustomed to Hollywood movies, and even adapt to resolve the question of life by law.

The problem of technology is strange. One aspect is that technology expresses conflict, for its roots in metaphysics emphasize contradiction. The other aspect is that technology decreases differences and conflict. How should one understand technology as coming from conflict but eliminating conflict: this is the problem we must resolve.

OPPOSITION, INCOMMENSURABILITY AND TECHNOLOGY

Opposition is an important notion in understanding technology. Technology comes from the stress in metaphysics on opposition as the final form of the metaphysic. The nature of metaphysics is opposition and

contradiction. There is opposition between ego and non-ego, expressing the limit of ego from non-ego. This opposition and contradiction has puzzled Western philosophers. When ego and rationality became philosophical principles, Hegel called it the establishment of philosophy in a new world. René Descartes, the founder of this principle, has been given an important role, here, by G.W.F. Hegel: “From Descartes, we enter into an independent philosophy”.⁴ By the establishment of principle, ego and rationality, the ego is endowed with the highest status – freedom is given infinite possibility. After Descartes, Kant, J.G. Fichte, Hegel and Heidegger all proved the principle. But the same problem exists. The free nature of the ego is limited by the non-ego. Descartes begins from the independence of a human being, but, in the end, he returns to a belief in God. Kant establishes the notion of human being as purpose, but finally makes certain of the thing-in-itself and God; Hegel appreciates the ego as the principle of philosophy. But the absolute spirit becomes the end of his doctrine of philosophy. Heidegger names *Dasein* as original being, but *Dasein* is possible in the shadow of *Ereignis*. For them, the contradiction of ego and non-ego never goes away.

Actually, the philosophers never resolve this contradiction when real being is ego and rationality, the independence of the outside world and the ego from each other is a puzzling problem. If the nature of ego is freedom, the freedom of ego is limited prior to its independence from the outside world. So, freedom is limited. This contradiction is hidden in the traditional ego, reason and outside reality – it constitutes the Sphinx of Western philosophy.

The whole history of Western metaphysics focuses on opposition and difference. For Kant, the notion of antagonism is used to describe the same thing. He said, nature’s way to develop the interests of all mankind is antagonism in society. But it is limited by the fact that antagonism is becoming the reason of human lawful order. Then, we can see concrete expressions of the opposition. This is the problem: how does it exist in a nation? Opposition exists in a special manner. In order to keep its independence, a nation should be opposite to others. It is impossible to communicate with every nation in nature. In order to describe it, the notion of incommensurability is present. Because of opposition, nations can keep themselves and are different from others; because of opposition also, they cannot communicate with one another; and because of opposition, they are in a struggle.

Before the emergence of human beings, bodies (not “organisms”) on earth were divided into the organic and the inorganic. The organic were animals like cats, dogs, vegetables, flowers, grasses, etc; the inorganic were stones and metals. They had various modes or alternative ways of existence, yet they existed peacefully. The condition of peace is a miracle which we cannot explain but only be surprised by. With the emergence of human beings, rational and practical beings, a new thing called organization was produced, different from the organic and the inorganic. The world has since been changed. People made nations, made law and ethical law. From then

on, something happened. The once peaceful condition was broken by struggle. Struggle became the key condition. It seems as if people could only exist in struggle. On the one hand, they struggled against nature, not only the organic but the inorganic, that is, they struggled with nature. On the other hand, they struggle with one another – among themselves – that is, they struggled against one another.

So, struggle exists in a nation. In other words, nations are incommensurable.⁵ It is obvious to them that the question is, “What is meaning?” What does “incommensurability of a nation” mean? Is this *a priori* or *a posteriori*? This principle can be proved even by the proposition, “A human being is selfish by nature.” Selfishness determines that human beings cannot communicate. So, there are incommensurable entities in different nations. The nature of opposition is rooted in the culture. Culture makes a nation itself, in struggle and conflict; a nation can express an incommensurable character.

For Heidegger, technology is a complete formation of metaphysics: metaphysics is the foundation of technology. These two are identified in nature. Heidegger thought the whole of metaphysics forgets “being.” Modern technology has its nature as identified with metaphysics. This factor in Heidegger has been accepted and been widely used by Gadamer. For him, in technological society something is forgotten.⁶

UNIVERSAL CULTURE, TECHNOLOGY, AND THE WORLD CITIZEN

In this age, the great achievement of technology is eliminating differences among nations. It eliminates not only differences among nations but also opposition between nations. Therefore, a universal culture is gradually emerging. The picture of a global citizen has been created. In this utopian picture, incommensurability among nations is decreasing. The disappearance of difference and the appearance of identity is the fact we must confront and acknowledge. We can see Kentucky Fried Chicken everywhere around the world; we can taste delicious KFC food. Of course, the strongest feeling is from law. The notion that everyone is equal before the law is rooted in the mind of everyone. One thing can prove what we have said. When globalization and modernity are produced and discussed, we notice one problem, which pertains to difference and identity. In this phenomenon, one problem implied is that difference is *covered over* by identification. Globalization and modernity make identity obvious. It seems that we can sense the Hegelian idea, absolute spirit, which is coming in these times. Absolute spirit is sweeping the whole world in the formation of Identity.

Faced with the disappearance of difference and the appearance of identity, one delicate mind is ‘producing’ and is being ‘produced’. Difference expresses the nature of a nation. Difference means difference between itself and “the other”; it means its own existence. Chinese and

English are different. Culture attains its status so that a necessary connection can be felt. Meanwhile, identity expresses universality. In this notion, the power of history is present. In the West, universality is the most prevalent notion. The biggest question Kant raised in *Idea of a Universal History (Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte, 1784)*, is how to build civil society on universal law. He said the most important problem that nature makes mankind resolve is: mankind must establish a civil society of universal law. For him, the biggest problem is the most difficult problem, the final problem that mankind can and must resolve. After him, Hegel described the same notion by the “absolute spirit”. This notion exists in the form of Reason. If universality exists in the abstract mode described above, then we can feel the power of this notion in empirical notions, such as the world citizen, civil society, universal culture.

Like a rider, technology rides its horse. In the lead of universality, it sings freely. We can feel it from Heidegger’s description, though there are some dissonant feelings in their description:

The technological scientific rationalization ruling the present age justifies itself every day more surprisingly by its immense results. But this says nothing about what first grants the possibility of the rational and the irrational. The effect proves the correctness of technological scientific rationalization. But is the manifest character of “what is” exhausted by what is demonstrable? Does not the insistence on what is demonstrable block the way to “what is”?⁷

So, technology means the establishment of the world citizen; it means the establishment of the civil citizen; it even means the establishment of a universal culture. Suddenly the problem of culture appears – so what does culture mean for universality?

TECHNOLOGY: CIVILIZATION OR CULTURE?

Civilization and culture will become the object of reference for our understanding of technology. But it is difficult to understand them because of the conflation or complication of civilization and culture. Civilization and culture are easily confused. To a certain degree they are seen as synonyms. But in order to clarify our goal, four statements need to be given below:

First of all, culture is historical. Culture expresses itself not as a plane, but as stereoscopic. Culture expresses itself in a temporal and historical way. Without temporality and history, culture is dead, – there exists no vital thing but only a formation. Qianmu said: “In normal meaning, culture is the life of mankind. We can name it as culture if the various aspects of mankind are summed up. But these various aspects do not refer to a certain time plane, but include continuity over a long time.”⁸ So,

from this view, we can see that culture is the life of a nation. Then historicity is the life of culture.

Secondly, culture is the essence of a nation. This can be understood by being connected with how to understand a human being in the history of philosophy. In philosophy, philosophers try to know what is the essence of a human being. Before Hegel, rationality was the inherent principle. After Hegel, this principle took a different turn. Practice was noticed widely (Karl Marx). After him, Heidegger thought the way of *Dasein's* existence was being-in-the-world. Whether reason, practice or anything else without them, human beings lose their existence.

For a nation, the question is the same. In order to understand it, we must find its essence: this is the culture. Culture in relation to nation is similar to reason in relation to human beings. Qianmu says just so. All cultures must have their traditional historical meaning. So we refer to culture, not as a plane, but as stereoscopic. In this plane and big space, various lives constitute the whole life of a nation. That is the culture of a nation through continuity in time. A country without culture is like a country without life.⁹

Thirdly, culture expresses fully the character and particularity of a nation. Herder thought culture was not universal nor a grand description, but was rather a certain way of life – every life has its law of development.

The fourth point is that culture has a spiritual nature. Qianmu clearly refers to it. He said:

Civilization and culture both refer to the adult human life. Civilization is inclined to the outside, belonging to the material. Culture is inclined to the inside, belonging to the spirit. So civilization can spread outside and be accepted, culture must produce by accelerating spirit inside the adult.¹⁰

According to this, we can distinguish civilization from culture. Civilization belongs to the material level – it can spread and be accepted. But culture belongs to the spiritual level, accelerating inside the nation.¹¹ But the important difference is that civilization eliminates differences but culture keeps them. Thus, if technology is absorbed in the frame of civilization and culture, we will confront one question, namely, what is technology, civilization or culture? Normally, technology is connected with civilization. Technology is regarded as an artificial thing. This makes technology connect with material things. This is the case for Qianmu. He said:

For all modernity is operated by Europeans. This means the civilization of modern Europe and America, its spirit of culture, but this machine can be used everywhere if it is operated. The ship, train, lamp, wire, bus, plane, etc, all are

used, which means modern civilization has spread worldwide. Or the civilization of Europe and America has spread but this does not mean that the culture of modern Europe and America has been accepted. When we know what produced this machine: that is culture; what used this machine: that is civilization. Culture can produce civilization, but civilization cannot produce culture. Scientific spirit produces many kinds of new machines. But many people using machines do not share the same scientific spirit.¹²

Technology can be understood with the notion of civilization. Technology can eliminate the differentiating characteristics of a nation and differences among nations.

ANALYSIS OF THE RATIONALITY OF TECHNOLOGICAL CULTURE

A new notion is used to put a limit upon technology, namely, technological culture. The purpose of this notion is to understand technology, to express it in its original form. Technological culture is helpful to explain the problem above. That is the way to understand technology; it comes out of opposition but it decreases opposition. The study of the relationship between technology and culture is a logical statement ready for research on the rationality of technological culture. But the problem is: there are three modes of this notion, namely: technical culture, technoculture and technological culture. Which one do we choose to express our purpose? We will study these notions in turn.

The first notion is technical culture.¹³

The second is technoculture.¹⁴ It is used widely in England, America, etc. The present volume, for example, explores the impact of the worldwide technological revolution of our era in the cultural context.

The third notion is technological culture.¹⁵ We can see its use in Benoit Godin's and Yves Gingras' paper.¹⁶ Their use is based on scientific culture:

In the last decade, scientific culture has become a theme much discussed at all levels of public discourse. Most policy makers now integrate the notion into their statements on economic growth or social progress. All scientific and technological policies developed in the last few years in OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) countries have included scientific culture as one of their aims, principles or objectives. Despite the ubiquity of the term, there is little agreement on its content.¹⁷

Which can we choose to express the meaning? It must come from a philosophical view and explain the problem above. In order to choose one, we must analyze the relationship between technology and culture. Two analyses are useful here, namely, those of Martin Heidegger and Terry Eagleton.

Terry Eagleton noted culture's connection with nature.

In English, culture has an original meaning, that is, husbandry, or managing the growth of nature.¹⁸ The Latin root of nature is *colere*, it expresses any meaning of husbandry, habitus, or protection.¹⁹

Heidegger's analysis can also be noticed. He fully analyzed technology. He said:

I ask in return: What does *ratio*, *nous*, *noein*, *apprehending*, mean? What do ground and principle and especially principle of all principles mean? Can this ever be sufficiently determined unless we experience *aletheia* in a Greek manner as unconcealment and then, above and beyond the Greek, think of it as the opening of self-concealing?²⁰

His notion of technology stems from a Greek analysis. We can see this in two places: *The Question Concerning Technology* (1971) and *Building, Dwelling, Thinking* (1951). In Greek, this word has no immediate connection with the meaning above but has a deeper meaning. "To the Greeks *techne* means neither art nor handicraft but rather: to make something appear, within what is present, as this or that, in this way or that way. The Greeks conceive of *techne*, producing, in terms of letting appear."²¹

Heidegger's idea is that to express *τεχνή* by technology is not accurate. We should use *hervorbringen* to express it. But the interesting thing is that *hervorbringen* means "to produce." Here, it is necessary to see that Heidegger's analysis of the question of technology is connected with his whole thought, which is beyond the usual resources. Confronting the foundational question, he thinks the only way is to transcend. He said:

This prospect strikes us as strange. Indeed, it should do so as persistently as possible and with so much urgency that we will finally take seriously the simple question of what the term 'technology' means. The word stems from the Greek. *Technikon* meaning that which belongs to *techne* (*τεχνή*). We must observe two things with respect to the meaning of this word. One is that *τεχνή* is the name not

only for the activities and skills of a craftsman, but also for the arts of the mind and the fine arts: τεχνή pertains to bringing-forth, to *poiesis*; it is something poietic.

... Thus what is decisive in *techne* does not lie at all in making and manipulating nor in the using of means, but rather in the aforementioned revealing. It is as revealing, and not as manufacturing, that τεχνή is a bringing-forth.²²

We can see the relationship between culture and technology. Culture means husbandry or managing the growth of nature; technology lies not in making or manipulating, but in producing. This means to manage the natural thing, a notion that results from analyzing the relationship between culture and technology, as described above.

As we have seen, culture is a national notion – it has a strong dimension of nationality. Technology expresses its real aspect – it is a cultural *thing*. The term, “technological culture” expresses this meaning and its establishment has a real aspect. Hence, technology is singular rather than universal as most people have thought, while culture puts a limit on technology. This is our notion of technological culture.

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NOTES

¹ [Abstract]: Technology stems from metaphysics, which emphasizes contradiction. It results in difference and incommensurability according to a notion close to technology. But it is obvious that the difference in notions is decreasing. A possibility from technology is: notion is commensurable; difference is decreasing. How is one to understand technology, which is coming from contradiction but decreases difference? This becomes the key question. The notion ‘technological culture’ is a frame for the understanding of this question. In this view, technology will be understood validly. Meanwhile the nation applies a way to develop culture itself.

² LiuYizhi (ed.) *The History of Chinese Culture*. (Dongfang Publishing Center, 1988), p. 2. (柳诒徵编著: 《中国文化史》, 东方出版中心, 1988年版, 第2页.)

³ Chenyong. *Qianmu*, (Renmin, 2001), p. 317. (陈勇著: 《钱穆传》, 人民出版社, 2001, 第317页.)

⁴ http://www.class.uidaho.edu/mickelsen/ToC/Hegel-Hist_%20of%20Phil.htm. G.W.F. Hegel. *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*.

⁵ Incommensurability is the term used by Kuhn; who put forward this notion in *The Structure of Scientific Revolution*.

⁶ This question has been discussed by Gadamer. But this factor establishes his critical attitude.

⁷ http://www.msu.org/e&r/content_e&r/texts/heidegger_endphil.html. *The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking* (1969).

⁸ Qianmu. *Introduction to the History of Chinese Culture*, (Shangwu, 2002), p. 231. (钱穆, 中国文化史导论, 商务印书馆, 2002年, 第231页.)

⁹ *Introduction to the History of Chinese Culture*, p. 231.

¹⁰ *Introduction to the History of Chinese Culture*, p. 1.

¹¹ <http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/cgi-local/DHI/dhiana.cgi?id=dv1-73>. For writers such as Kant, Coleridge, and Matthew Arnold, culture represents essentially the moral condition of the individual, while civilization means the conventions of society. Invariably the former is also associated with “spiritual” values, the latter with “material” values.

¹² *Introduction to the History of Chinese Culture*, p. 1.

¹³ <http://www.jesusradicals.com/library/ellul/bluff/Culture.html>. *Is There a Technical Culture?*

¹⁴ <http://technoculture.ucdavis.edu/>; http://project.cyberpunk.ru/idb/exploring_technoculture.html

¹⁵ <http://www.esst.uio.no/maastrichtspec1.html>; <http://www.esst.unimaas.nl/ESSTTC/Introduction/Introduction.html>; <http://www.cst.gouv.qc.ca/reCultST.html>.

¹⁶ Benoit Godin is professor in science studies at INRS, Montreal (QC), Canada. Yves Gingras is professor of history and sociology of science and member of the Centre interuniversitaire de recherche sur la science et la technologie (CIRST) at Université du Québec a Montreal.

¹⁷ Benoit Godin and Yves Gingras, “What is scientific and technological culture and how is it measured? A multidimensional model,” *Public Understanding of Science*, 9 (2000), pp. 43-45.

¹⁸ Terry Eagleton, *The Idea of Culture* [Chinese translation, Nanjing University Press, 2002], p. 1.

¹⁹ *The Idea of Culture*, p. 2.

²⁰ http://www.msu.org/e&r/content_e&r/texts/heidegger/heidegger_endphil.html. *The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking* (1969).

²¹ <http://acnet.pratt.edu/~arch543p/readings/Heidegger.html>. “Building, Dwelling, Thinking”, in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, tr. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), pp. 143-61.

²² *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*. tr. William Lovitt (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), p. 13.

CHAPTER XI

**THE PREDICAMENT OF TRADITIONAL
CULTURE IN RELATION TO GLOBALIZATION**

YAN MENGWEI

The theory of “post-Colonialism” which arose at the end of the 1970s has opened up an important problem that exists in the cultural relations between Orient and Occident. The problem is that, since the age of colonialism, the idea of “historicism” in European historical philosophy has dominated the research on cultural relations between the Orient and the Occident. This idea resulted in the obvious tendency of “Euro-centrism”, whose main approach is to use the concept of system, the theoretical mode and the logical method of Western culture, to comprehend the traditional cultures of developing countries (including China). Thus it brought traditional culture into the context of Western culture, as did the Hegelian history of philosophy. The conclusion drawn from Hegelian ‘historical philosophy’ is that only Western culture is advanced and is the highest stage of world civilization; in contrast, the traditional cultures of developing countries fall behind Western culture: they are a kind of historical relic or a “living fossil” of ancient civilizations. This manner of understanding traditional cultures has resulted in “language power” – even language hegemony – of Western culture over non-Western culture. Thus it did not foster equal relations of discourse between Western culture and the cultures of developing countries. The West has spread a kind of idea that the modernization of developing countries is synonymous with westernization. This is cultural-imperialism or cultural-colonialism.

With its special ‘cultural’ point of view, the cultural criticism of post-colonialism reviews the deep contradictions in global cultures and affects the cultural practices of nations around the world. This draws much attention in the contemporary realm of international scholarship. But on my view, the cultural criticism of post-colonialism cannot account for the predicament which traditional cultures may face. The essence of economic globalization is that the market economy mechanism oversteps the boundaries of nations to expand globally. This expanding process is not isolated, but inevitably is accompanied by the construction of processes conformable to the market economy mechanism. We can divide the cultural construction of globalization into four layers: techno-culture, regulation culture of the market system, commerce culture, and humanities culture. The predicament of traditional cultures obviously or potentially exists in the construction of culture.

Although the idea of “historicism” or “Euro-centrism”, derogating the traditional cultures of developing countries, is not reasonable, the

developing level of the techno-culture in the nation-states of the Third World has fallen behind the developing level of the techno-culture of Western countries. This is an indisputable fact. Certainly, science-and-technological culture is not Western culture. We can regard it as a common culture that belongs to humanity. But, another indisputable fact is that the advantaged position of Western developed countries in the contemporary world-system and the language-power of Western countries over the developing countries to a large extent depend on their leading position in the development of science and technology. Especially, since the end of World War II, scientific technique has become the main dynamic power pushing economic progress. Every great scientific discovery and technical invention makes the social economy increase to a new high degree. Even today, every link of economy, such as the exploitation of resources, the manufacture of crafts, the management of production, and the distribution of products, etc., universally depends on the progress of modern science and technology. The contrast of economic strength between different countries has become a bout of scientific and technological levels. The leading position of science and technology has brought great economic advantage to the developed countries. By this advantage, the developed countries are able to extend their economic and political influence to every corner of the world. At the same time, the economic development of backward nations is inevitably limited by the developed countries because of the backward nations' dependence on modern science and technology. Against this background, if backward nations want to escape their dependence on developed countries, they must raise themselves to the advanced stage of world science and technology. This necessarily demands that developing countries not only learn and grasp the technique of modern science, but also eliminate all kinds of cultural factors that block the development of scientific technique, and create beneficial and unrestricted cultural conditions for the development of scientific technique. Talking vainly about the superiority and gloriousness of national culture has no significance. Whether it benefits the development of science and technology is a basic dimension by which to measure whether national culture is excellent.

The expanding global process of the market mechanism is the process of establishing a regulation culture for the market economy. The abstract rules of the market system, i.e., the "rules of the game" of the market economy, constitute the cultural condition in which the market mechanism normally exerts its function. If we say that a market economy is necessary for the realization of an economy, it is necessary for us to obey the "rules of the game" of the market economy. In this respect, a difficult problem which the cultural criticism of post-colonialism must face is that obeying the regulations of the market system means changing the traditional economic system, political system, the mode of production, and the life style of a nation state. This necessarily challenges the traditional culture which is the basis of the traditional system and traditional life style.

This is especially because a relatively complete market system exists only in Western developed countries, and so the regulation culture of the world market system is also chiefly explained in the language system of the West. Therefore, the cultural shock is felt as a kind of cultural invasion by Western culture into non-Western culture. However, no matter how this fact is comprehended, when the natural and spontaneous developing road has been disturbed by the process of globalization, a nation which does not want to refuse modernization must have enough courage to accept the cultural shock that the market system brings to traditional culture, and to accept the changes brought by this kind of shock. This is not to say that the globalization of the market economy will make traditional cultures go up in smoke: the market system will take different cultural shapes in different cultural systems. But it must be made clear that the characteristic cultural tradition could be preserved to the extent that, at least, it does not contradict the abstract rules of the market system. Therefore, a nation that wishes to participate in the world market system must consider how to perfect its home market system, and how to strengthen continuously its competitive ability in the world market system. Only by strengthening continuously the ability to participate in the world market system is it possible for a nation to make space for the development of its national culture.

Commercial culture is an object of concern for contemporary theories of the cultural criticism of post-colonialism and “culture imperialism”. Indeed, along with the development of the world market, varied commodities bearing the cultural signs of Western culture and popular media, which come from Western developed countries (such as Coca-Cola, McDonald’s fast food, Hollywood movies, advertising, magazine publications, television dramas, the Internet, etc.) have flowed into the Third World, imperceptibly spreading Western views of value, life style and interests. This is also noiselessly changing the consumption mentality of Third World residents – even causing them to identify with Western cultures and to doubt their own. This situation usually makes people who pay attention to the destiny of national culture anxious, even angry. The significance of the theories of cultural criticism of post-colonialism and “culture imperialism” consists in their seeing the latent influence of these cultural products and disclosing the language power hidden in these phenomena. However, the difficult problem is that the commercial culture is able to occupy the mind of peoples because it is able to occupy the market. Perhaps we have enough and proper reasons to protect the fine tradition of our national culture, but if the national industry cannot provide competitive commodities, we can hardly resist the inundation by western commercial culture, because the carrier that spreads commercial culture is the merchandise which has good ‘competitive ability’. The market quota of this kind of merchandise determines its ability to occupy the consumer’s mind. Facing the law of the market, purely theoretical criticism – regardless how deep its content – always seems to be very weak.

The humanities culture is a culture that mainly opens up the value or meaning of human existence. People usually think that the humanities culture differs from the scientific culture. To a large extent, the humanities culture expresses a people's understanding of the value or destiny of the existence of human beings, and it is the embodiment of a people's pursuit of moral value, political ideas, spiritual beliefs, and an authentic life. Therefore, it is very difficult to find a final objective criterion that could be used to measure the humanities culture. In addition, the humanities culture always exists deep in the history and the cultural tradition of a nation, and constantly draws spiritual resources from the cultural tradition itself: Thus the basic spirit and the representative shapes of humanities cultures are different in each nation, and there are different religious systems, etc., in different regions. This means that the humanities cultures represent an obvious variety within the scope of the world. This kind of variety cannot disappear in the process of globalization. Certainly, such comprehension of humanities cultures is quite right. But I think that the humanities culture pursues the basic value or meaning of the existence of a human being. This does not mean that in this realm there is no fundamental measure which can be used to measure the progress of humanities culture. The development of humanities cultures is based, after all, on the practical essence of persons and their social life. The activities of human beings as "free and conscious" determine that the basic value of the existence of a human being is personal independence and freedom. The unremitting progress of civilization, in terms of the 'root,' is a continuously expanding and deepening process of personal independence and freedom.

Certainly, earlier in human history this kind of basic value did not have a complete and conscious cultural shape. Especially in traditional society, which was based on a nature economy (because of an underdeveloped market economy), it was easy to form the autarchy system and produce a despotic culture which suppressed a person's character, strangled his freedom, and dominated and crushed the basic value of his independence and freedom. In this sense, the global expansion of the mechanism of market economy necessarily causes it to cross swords with despotic cultures in the world, and particularly so in nations in which the market system and democratic system are not yet perfect. In this crossing of swords, some developing countries keep to their own cultural battlefield, outwardly resisting the "infringing" by Western culture into their own national culture, but inwardly supporting their autarchic system and despotic culture. The theory of cultural criticism of post-colonialism seems to neglect this problem. Over-emphasis on cultural diversity hardly lets them notice the dimension that measures the progress of humanities culture – thus weakening the more important task of reforming their national culture while they emphasize distinction and the superiority of their national culture. In the globalization of the economy, unreformed national culture cannot produce a strong competitive capability, and also cannot resist the

“infringing” by the hegemony of Western language upon their national culture.

The theoretical predicament which the cultural criticism of post-colonialism has to face involves these problems: cultural clashes against the background of globalization; governing relations of Western cultures to non-Western cultures; and the hegemony of Western language in the cultural construction of a global culture, etc.. Although these problems have deep historical relations with the culture which constituted the colonial age, they are not only the historical shadow left by the age of colonialism but also products of economic globalization. If we lack enough sober awareness of the cultural effect produced in the process of expanding the market mechanism globally, we cannot provide dependable cultural strategies for resolving the problems described above.

The theoretical predicament which the cultural criticism of post-colonialism has to face also shows its one-sidedness in terms of historical philosophy. Criticizing “historicism” and deconstructing “Euro-centrism” are indeed very important practices of culture. But the other side of the problem is that when we demonstrate the variety and diversity of national cultures, we cannot neglect the common characteristics among them, the fact that economic globalization itself has been pushing the culture promoting each person’s independence and freedom, and the possibility and necessity of using the scientific dimension and humanistic dimension to measure the degree of progress of national cultures. Although a series of cultural ideas, such as “freedom”, “independence”, “equality”, “human rights,” etc., were primarily articulated in the language system of Western countries, this does *not* mean that every idea coming from the West belongs exclusively to the West. The humanistic culture embodying personal independence and freedom, just like scientific culture, is a ‘common’ wealth that belongs to every human being. This kind of culture refuses dominating relationships and denies any cultural hegemony or language hegemony. Therefore, to escape from the dominating attitude of Western culture, the most basic strategy is to perfect the ‘market economy’ system, to continuously increase our nation’s competitive ability in the world, and, in this process, to reform thoroughly our own national culture, making it really become an advanced culture beneficial to the expansion and deepening of each person’s independence and freedom.

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PART III

INTERACTION AMONG CULTURES

CHAPTER XII

CHINESE THOUGHT AND HEGEL'S PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION: A COMPLEMENTARY RELATION

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Exactly eighty years ago, the Beijing Lecture Association invited Rabindranath Tagore to China where he gave talks in the months of April and May to students and teachers on a variety of subjects ranging from progress and civilization to the meaning of beauty. In one particularly powerful, and I would say, prophetic moment, while expressing his deep gratitude to his hosts, Tagore said

Amongst you my mind feels not the least apprehension of any undue sense of race feeling, or difference of tradition. I am rather reminded of the day when India claimed [the Chinese] as brothers and sent you her love. That relationship is, I hope, still there, hidden in the heart of all of us – the people of the East. The path to it may be overgrown with the grass of centuries but we shall find traces of it still. When you have succeeded in recalling all the things achieved in spite of insuperable difficulties, I hope that some great dreamer will spring from among you and preach a message of love and, therewith overcoming all differences, bridge the chasm of passions which has been widening for ages. Age after age in Asia great dreamers have made the world sweet with showers of their love. Asia is again waiting for such dreamers to come and carry on the work, not of fighting, not of profit-making, but of establishing bonds of spiritual relationship. The time is at hand when we shall once again be proud to belong to a continent which produces the light that radiates through the storm-clouds of trouble and illuminates the path of life.”¹

For some, phrases like “making the world sweet with showers of love,” will sound far too idealistic and superficial, but Tagore was aware of this, and that is why he referred to those who believed in such projects as “dreamers.” However, he then describes such “showering of love” as “the work” of “establishing bonds of spiritual relationship.” Thus Tagore, although a dreamer himself, operates under no illusion: the dreamer’s work is of utmost importance and requires the greatest amount of effort, self-sacrifice, and even suffering.² At about the same time Tagore was

delivering this message here in China, another dreamer from the gateway of Asia was delivering a very similar message in America. I am speaking of the Lebanese poet, Gibran Khalil Gibran, who has often been compared to Tagore,³ and whose writings and influence are perhaps just as prolific.

Gibran, too, spoke of establishing global bonds of spiritual relationship; he spoke to his own people of the East, who had left Lebanon and planted roots in America. Thus, I am compelled to mention him, as I have the honor here today in China of representing that Biblical land of Lebanon whence came Gibran, and, being the land of my ancestry, has now become my home.⁴ It is interesting to note that after the Great War, while the winds of discord were blowing around the globe, and the great powers were desperately in search of greater and more destructive weapons, the winds of wisdom and reconciliation were also blowing gently and quietly around the globe: Tagore in China, Gibran in America, and countless others elsewhere. The work of “establishing bonds of spiritual relationship” has always been underway, but given the effects of modern globalization,⁵ there is a particular urgency in this work. And with respect to our present context, I must mention the many volumes of the Asia Series of the Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change project, produced jointly by the Chinese Philosophical Studies editors and the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy. This has been a great resource for me, a newcomer of sorts to the great work of establishing bonds of spiritual relationship, and I would like to take this opportunity to publicly express my gratitude to all those who made such a wealth of wisdom available in writing.

I have for a long time been interested in what I shall call, broadly speaking, the East/West dialogue, though I am fully cognizant of the limits and ambiguities in such terminology. As a Christian of the Maronite-Syriac Catholic Church, an ancient Church with strong Jewish origins that flourished primarily in Syria and Lebanon during the first seven centuries of Christianity, I have long been attracted to the ways in which Eastern and Western Christian Philosophy and Theology can complement and strengthen each other. Another more recent interest of mine has been the dialogue between Christian philosophy and Indian culture. At one time I did some work on the activities of the Syriac Christian “missionaries” in India and in China, which predated the modern Christian missionary activity in these countries by 1600 years in India and by 1000 years in China. Surprisingly enough, these Syriac Christians were in India by the first or second century and the Syriac Church seems to have reached China at the beginning of the seventh century. By 635 of the Common Era, we find an active and thriving Syriac Church in China. I was fascinated by this phenomenon for a few years, but time and the difficulty of research in this field prevented me from going very deep into the subject.

My most recent interest within the East/West dialogue, largely due to my association with George McLean and to being invited to this conference, has been in the dialogue between Christian philosophy and Chinese culture. Today, I would like to address, in very brief and general

terms, a feature of Hegel's philosophy of religion that may contribute to the dialogue between Chinese culture and Christian philosophy, and may shed some light on why some Chinese intellectuals were attracted (and are still attracted, as is evidenced by the present revival of Marxist philosophy in China) to the philosophy of Karl Marx. First, please allow me to create the general context for this brief exposition of Hegel's philosophy of religion.

It is safe to assume that any fruitful dialogue between Chinese and Western culture must be rooted in the recovery of what has been most essential and valuable in these cultures. To speak of "recovery" here assumes that something has been either un-intentionally lost or positively rejected. In the case of both China and the West, perhaps it has been a combination of the two. The point is to identify what has been most valuable and then to retrieve it without falling prey to any sort of static traditionalism. China's experimentation with democracy, modern science, and Marxism in the twentieth century has had its effect on Chinese intellectuals, who have somehow returned, though not in any simplistic way, to Confucianist, Taoist, and Buddhist sources. In the West, too, many have attempted to recover those pre-Enlightenment philosophical insights into being, which allowed both the Greco-Roman sense of "democratic" citizenship and the Christian philosophical sense of the person to flourish in a dynamic and complementary way. To begin the dialogue without first being deeply informed by Confucius, the Buddha, Moses, Plato, Aristotle, Christ, Augustine, St. John of the Cross, Aquinas, and many such others is to fail miserably from the outset.

In this context, I want to briefly examine, then, Hegel's role in overcoming the Enlightenment view of God and being. My claim is that Hegel's philosophy of religion, a philosophy which he articulated in the lectures he gave in Berlin between 1821 and 1831, goes a long way in breaking down the deism of the Enlightenment, a view of God which subsequently affected, and I would say affected in a negative way, virtually every other branch of knowledge, including philosophical anthropology, political philosophy, and especially, history. If a dynamic and relevant recovery of tradition in Chinese and Western culture is essential to a fruitful Chinese-Western dialogue, then at least as far as the West is concerned, Hegel's philosophy of religion may prove to be invaluable in this recovery. This is not only, as we shall see, because he so significantly challenged the Enlightenment's near rejection of the dogma of the Trinity as contradictory. It is also because in placing the dogma of the Trinity back into the center of respectable philosophical and theological discourse, he also enabled philosophical discussion of God's intimate involvement in the history of the peoples of the world to flourish in a new way – which amounts to a direct rejection of deism.

While it is the case that Hegel thought deeply about China and her history, and had some quite provocative insights into the relation between Chinese history and what he calls the "Chinese abstraction of the Trinity,"⁶ I shall not focus on this here. What I want to say is that given what has often

been characterized, perhaps most notably today by people like David Hall and Roger Ames, as the “Chinese way of thinking,” with its “emphasis on the perception of the concrete and particular, a fondness for complex multiplicity expressed in concrete form, and a tendency towards practicality and harmony.”⁷ I believe that Hegel’s philosophy of religion may be a very good starting point for a fruitful dialogue between Chinese culture and Christian philosophy.

For Hegel, the concept of being is determined by a universal philosophical insight. Now a predominantly powerful religious representation of this universal philosophical insight, according to him, can be found in a philosophical interpretation of the Holy Trinity. Of course, for Hegel, all concepts, including the concept of being can only be determined in relation to its opposite. Thus, in his interpretation, the divine Father is a religious representation of being, whereas the divine Son is a religious representation of the opposite of being, namely, nothingness. The same holds true then for the concepts of identity, absoluteness, and necessity, wherein the Father represents identity, absoluteness, and necessity, and the Son represents non-identity or difference, relativity, and contingency or chance. The Holy Spirit, as may be guessed, is the synthesis of these opposites and represents that which makes God to be God, namely, God’s ability to return to himself in his own opposite: “For Hegel, then, the Holy Spirit represents the fact that, even, in his opposite, God remains in himself.”⁸ The Holy Spirit is the synthesis of being and nothingness, of identity and non-identity or difference, of absoluteness and relativity, and of necessity and contingency or chance.

Now such a view is a far cry from the “Enlightenment critique of the dogma of the Trinity, which for the most part took the dogma to be contradictory and non-logical.”⁹ And since no one during the Enlightenment wanted a contradictory and non-logical dogma, theistic Trinitarian belief was eventually replaced by various forms of deism. There God’s existence, though not positively rejected, was relegated at least to a place of irrelevance, except in the sense of providing some ultimate determining agency, which more often than not, was described as a static principle. Hegel’s philosophy of religion begins, as I have said, to overcome this view, and re-introduces philosophically a much more dynamic account of being represented by a Triune God. Needless to say, one’s understanding of history changes drastically depending upon which view of being or of God one accepts. Hegel’s philosophy of religion naturally allowed for a new philosophy of history wherein the possibility of God’s or Being’s profound and intimate involvement in the world became much more than a mere principle; it became indeed a dynamic interchange between powerful and profound forces, of which the human mind was able to catch glimpses through concepts.

Now I think that a Chinese mode of thinking, in the degree that we can speak of just one mode, will find itself more comfortable with a Hegelian philosophy of religion, than with an Enlightenment one. Or to be

more precise, the Chinese mode of thinking “accepts the priority of change or process over rest and permanence ... and that seeks to account for the states of affairs by appeal to correlative procedures rather than by determining agencies and principles.” This has much more in common with Hegelian, and thus, with more traditional philosophical accounts of being – traditional, that is, when compared to the attack on traditional metaphysics that we get in the Enlightenment. And this may also be one of the reasons why Chinese intellectuals were attracted and are still attracted to the philosophy of Marx. What I am suggesting here is that what really attracted (and still attracts) many Chinese philosophers to Marx is not so much Marx *per se*, but Hegel's dynamic and dialectic account of being, which although developed quite differently by Marx, is nonetheless presupposed by him.

One may object to this on at least two obvious fronts: the first is that, if what such intellectuals were (are) really attracted to in Marx is what he borrows from Hegel, then why not just accept Hegel and forget about Marx? The other objection stems from the concrete fact that Chinese intellectuals were (are) genuinely interested in the political dimensions of Marx's thought and have been able to translate Marxism into a Chinese context in a remarkably impressive and successful way.

Cognizant of these and other serious objections, I will nevertheless insist on at least this much: it was not Marx's atheism that attracted (attracts) Chinese intellectuals, but something transcendent, religious, and even metaphysical, that only the very keen can detect in Marx. At one level, as many have shown, Marx enjoyed universal appeal because there was a strong dimension of *hope* in his philosophy that carried with it a very basic and natural attraction; he promised a good society for all. The great Marxist scholar, Ernst Bloch, developed this dimension into a full fledged philosophy of hope,¹⁰ thereby infuriating his fellow Marxists, for as one of them said, “The Philosophy of hope is religion.”¹¹ In this light there is special significance to the great and long tradition in Chinese culture of belief in, and hope for, “heaven,” (one needs but a few minutes at the great “Temple of Heaven” in Beijing to get an idea of how pervasive and developed was this notion). The Chinese attraction to the dimension of hope, in the sudden absence of an emperor, who until the beginning of the twentieth century still offered the yearly sacrifice, may come as no great surprise. Indeed, one could say that the void created by the discontinuation of the religious practices of the emperor was simply filled by this new “religious” Marxian hope. In addition to this “religious” dimension, I am suggesting that the metaphysical dimension, rooted primarily in Hegel's philosophy of religion, was what really accounted for (and is still accounting for) the wide-scale acceptance of Marxian philosophy in China. The Chinese cultural, religious, and intellectual tradition is simply too deeply imbued with a sense of the transcendent to claim that by one simple stroke it was all brushed away in favor of materialistic atheism.

Obviously, with these few thoughts, I have simply attempted to facilitate some fruitful dialogue and discussion. Clearly, such a vast subject

demands many years of study and analysis, and, may I add, genuine contemplation. I would like to end where I began: by quoting part of an address that Rabindranath Tagore gave in China eighty years ago to a group of students. The same idea was also being delivered by Gibran in America at precisely the same time. Given the theme of this conference and of my paper, and the work that the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy has been engaged in for many years now, this is a particularly relevant and powerful idea:

[The peoples of the East] must unite, not through some mechanical method of organization, but through a spirit of true sympathy. The organized power of the machine is ready to smite and devour us, from which we must be rescued by that living power of spirit which grows into strength, not through mere addition, but through organic assimilation. That we should borrow science from the West is right. We have a great thing to accept from the people of the West – their treasure of intellect, which is immense and whose superiority [in one regard] we must acknowledge. But it would be degradation on our part, and an insult to our ancestors, if we forgot our own moral wealth of wisdom, which is of far greater value than a system that produces endless materials and a physical power which is always on the warpath. I have keenly felt the degradation and disaster that has overcome the world. Men's souls have become hypnotized and their knees are bent before idols – the idols of money and power. I have found in my travels that in a campaign against this organized cultivation of egoism, mere preaching is of no use. I came to the conclusion that what was needed was to develop and give form to some ideal of education, so that we might bring up our children in the atmosphere of a higher life. For some time [now] past education has lacked [ideals] in its mere exercise of an intellect which has no depth of sentiment.¹² The one desire produced in the heart of the students has been an ambition to win wealth and power – not to reach some inner standard of perfection, not to obtain self-emancipation. Such an ideal is not worthy of human beings. For the last century and a half the cultured nations of the earth have given up their faith in a spiritual perfection of life. Their doom is upon them, and when we in the East become enamored of the glamour of their success, we must know that the terrific glow we see upon the Western horizon is not the glow of sunrise, or of a new birth-fire, but is a conflagration of passion. Of that, only those who have lost their mind, gazing at the sudden eruption of a

flaming success, can be enamored, as the victim is enamored of the glittering serpent's eyes.

I say again that we must accept truth when it comes from the West and not hesitate to render it our tribute of admiration. Unless we accept it, our civilization will be one-sided, it will remain stagnant. Science gives us the power of reason, enabling us to be actively conscious of the worth of our own ideals. We have been in need of this discovery to lead us out of the obscurity of dead habit, and for that we must turn to the living mind of the West¹³ with gratefulness, never encouraging the cultivation of hatred against her. Moreover, the Western people also need our help, for our destinies are now intertwined. No one nation today can progress, if the others are left outside its boundaries.¹⁴

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NOTES

¹ Rabindranath Tagore, *Talks in China* (New Delhi: Rupa & Co., 2002)

² I want to suggest that Tagore's understanding of "sacrifice" is somewhat commensurate with that of St. Augustine's, and with many of the early Christian Fathers, who understood 'sacrifice' as 'transfiguration.' Sacrifice here means 'making room' for the divine spirit, who enters into the deepest recesses of the creature in order to transform and perfect the creaturely nature. Such "making room" necessarily involves suffering and self-denial. Though the divine is understood here as purely "spiritual" and thus higher than any creaturely spirit or matter, its role is understood *not as destroying* the creaturely nature, but in perfecting it, and if necessary, purifying it, which also necessarily involves "suffering." Thanks to the efforts of the great German theologian, Matthias Joseph Scheeben, Catholic theology was to recover this more dynamic sense of sacrifice. See especially Hans Urs Von Balthasar's treatment of Scheeben's theology in Von Balthasar's *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics* Volume I: *Seeing the Form* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1982) 115. For that matter, Von Balthasar's own monumental effort to restore "beauty" to its proper place in Christian theology, is also somewhat commensurate with the vocation of Tagore in trying to restore "beauty" to its proper place in Hindu discourse on the divine realities. All genuine projects aimed at restoring 'beauty' to its proper place, must necessarily, I believe, involve "sacrifice" as described above.

³ See the *Proceedings of the International Conference on Ameen Rihani and Khalil Gibran* (Beirut: Notre Dame University Press, 1989).

⁴ The following is a message that Gibran gave to Young Lebanese Americans in Brooklyn, New York, in 1926, and one that had a considerable influence upon me as a young teenager of Lebanese descent growing up in America:

I believe in you, and I believe in your destiny. I believe that you are contributors to this new civilization. I believe that you have inherited from your forefathers an ancient dream, a song, a prophecy, which you can proudly lay as a gift of gratitude upon the lap of America. I believe you can say to the founders of this great nation, "Here I am, a youth, a young tree whose roots were plucked from the hills of Lebanon, yet I am deeply rooted here, and I would be fruitful. And I believe that you can say to Abraham Lincoln, the blessed, Jesus of Nazareth touched your lips when you spoke, and guided your hand when you wrote; and I shall uphold all that you have said and all that you have written" I believe that you can say to Emerson and Whitman and James, "In my veins runs the blood of the poets and wise men of old, and it is my desire to come to you and receive, but I shall not come with empty hands." I believe that even as your fathers came to this land to produce riches, you were born here to produce riches by intelligence, by labor.

And I believe that it is in you to be good citizens. And what is it to be a good citizen? It is to acknowledge the other person's rights before asserting your own, but always to be conscious of your own. It is to be free in thought and deed, but it is to know that your freedom is subject to the other person's freedom. It is to create the useful and the beautiful with your own hands, and to admire what others have created in love and with faith. It is to produce wealth by labor and only by labor, and to spend less than you have produced that your children may not be dependent on the state for support when you are no more. It is to stand before the towers of New York, Washington, Chicago and San Francisco saying in your heart, "I am the descendant of a people that built Damascus, and Biblus, and Tyre and Sidon, and Antioch, and now I am here to build with you, and with a will. It is to be proud of being an American, but it is also to be proud that your fathers and mothers came from a land upon which God laid his gracious hand and raised His messengers.

⁵ Globalization, I believe, is a phenomenon that has been happening since the beginning of human life upon the planet, only given the technological changes over the last three centuries, the pace of globalization has increased dramatically.

⁶ *Hegel's Philosophy of History*, III, "The Course of the World's History:" 67.

⁷ See Peter C. Phan's "Inculturation of the Christian Faith in Asia through Philosophy: A Dialogue with *Fides et Ratio* of John Paul II" in *Dialogue between Christian Philosophy and Chinese Culture: Chinese Philosophical*

Studies, Series III, Asia, Volume XVII (Taipei: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2002), p. 139.

⁸ Michael Schulz, *Communio*, 29 (Summer 2002) 29/2, p. 412.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 412.

¹⁰ From Bloch's early work in 1918, *Geist der Utopie*, and continuing into his later works, the subject of hope is the main impetus in Bloch's thought.

¹¹ Manfred Buhr, "Kritische Bemerkungen zu Ernst Blochs Hauptwerk *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*," *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie* 8 (1960), p. 366.

¹² C.S. Lewis devotes an entire book to this in his *The Abolition of Man*. See, in particular the first chapter, "Men without Chests." Interestingly enough, Lewis begins the book with a quote from Confucius' *Analects* (II. 16): "The Master said, He who sets to work on a different strand destroys the whole fabric." He then goes on in the same chapter to show similarities in Chinese and Hindu philosophy and religion. And if I may be allowed to bring Hegel in one last time, I think Tagore may be echoing something here found squarely in Hegel. If so, this gives us a very different picture of Hegel, who, thanks primarily to Kierkegaard, is usually conceived of as a hard and cold, rationalist, without any genuine sentiment.

¹³ This is particularly relevant for my exposition of Hegel, as one representing, in my judgment, the "living" mind of the West, rather than the "Static" mind of the Enlightenment. This is overstated for obvious reasons.

¹⁴ Rabindranath Tagore, *Talks in China* (New Delhi: Rupa & Co., 2002) pp. 52-54.

CHAPTER XIII

INTERNATIONAL INTEGRATION: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR TRADITIONAL VALUES IN THE CONDITIONS OF CONTEMPORARY GLOBALIZATION

NGUYEN TRONG CHUAN

Human history had witnessed globalization thrice before the present globalization. The first globalization occurred in the 15th century when European developed countries started to subjugate the new world after Christopher Columbus discovered America. The Japanese used the conquest of Asia by the Europeans in the second globalization, starting from the middle of the 19th century, to effectuate their modernization. The result of the two subjugations was that, for a while, it was said “the sun never sets on the British Empire”. The third globalization took place after the end of World War Two, when a large group of Asian, African and Latin American nations gained their political independence and started to engage in various activities of the world community. As a result, a new world order came into existence. The common and remarkable feature of all three globalizations is that they were brought about as a consequence of wars and colonial policies.

Different from previous globalizations, the current globalization is extremely strong, due to the impact of science and high technology, primarily information technology. Modern means of information technology, particularly the Internet, global information networks, the network of information super highways, etc., have created a technical infrastructure for globalization. In this regard, globalization is a product, an achievement of human civilization. Therefore, all countries and nations worldwide not only get access to it, but also have their right to participate in it in order to promote the common progress of humankind.

However, besides that feature, globalization also contains other elements. It is also a product of a modern market economy governed by policy-lines of many countries, particularly those of developed nations, primarily the USA. It is not accidental that M. Sorrel, from Britain, and the president of one of the biggest broadcasting companies in the world, stated that the world has been brought into a process of “Americanization.”¹ American strength is evident not only in the field of economy and commerce but also in the field of culture and education: there are only three British universities (Oxford, Cambridge and London), among the world’s so-called “best” 20 universities,— the rest are said to be American. At the moment, there are about 450,000 foreign students studying in the USA. Immediate economic benefits brought about by those students to America are obvious. It is not difficult to predict what will happen when they

graduate and return to their countries. R. R. Stil, an American researcher, writes that American cultural signals, by means of Hollywood and McDonald's, are spreading throughout the world and destroying the foundations of many other societies. Or, according to another source, more than 85 percent of the movies currently watched in the 22 most developed countries are American. And 100 percent of the movies in England, Egypt, Argentina, and Brazil are American. The threat of globalization in culture has been so strong that French President Jacques Chirac had to admit in 2002 that globalization is a destruction of culture. The power of the richest nation on earth determines not only the character of the present globalization but also the attitude, the rate of participation, cooperation, integration, as well as elaborated policy-lines of many nations, especially underdeveloped countries.

In order to avoid identifying the ongoing globalization with those preceding, as well as to standardize scientifically the terminology of globalization, we use the notion of "present globalization" instead of the popular term of "globalization." In our opinion, the present globalization is an objective, open, dynamic, changing, continually developing process, but also an immutable, closed, complete phenomenon. It contains in itself diverse components and many contradictions.

Being distinct from previous globalizations, the present globalization takes place in all sectors of social life, most obviously in the economic and information fields. These two possess very strong powers of attraction and have an impact on all countries, communities and individuals. However, the ability to take advantage of the opportunity to participate and integrate into the present process of globalization is not the same in different countries, due to the gap existing in their level of development, inner forces and resources, and especially the severe imposition by international financial powers on poor and disadvantaged nations. As a result, challenges, risks, and even traps are various for different countries and communities.² Therefore, achievements and benefits are more likely different. The richest countries gain the most profit from the present globalization. Meanwhile the number of people, worldwide, being directly and negatively influenced by it, is very significant. According to some statistics, the number can be up to four billion people, or two thirds of the world's population. This very fact impacts strongly on the attitude, effort and determination of many countries, especially small countries with limited resources and potential, to integrate into the world. That is also the reason why, besides strong and unconditional supports given to the ongoing globalization process, there have been many fierce and even bloody riots against it. In recent years, demonstrations against globalization have been held not only in the places where the big international economic forums were organized, like Washington DC, Prague, Quebec, Doha, Geneva, Johannesburg, but also in other countries and territories like England, France, Taiwan, Korea, Australia, etc.

However, it should be realized that the present globalization is an objective process reflecting a forward development of human history. Therefore, it would be an error for any country to isolate itself from this process, and refuse to cooperate and integrate, or to close all doors to the world. In order not to be expelled from the common development and progress of human history, every country should access its development objectives and realistic ability to map out the most beneficial policy for international integration in the conditions of the present globalization. Taking full advantage of the opportunities brought about by the present globalization is the best way for nations to progress and develop. It is also an effective method for underdeveloped countries to carry out rapid development and to be in a position to narrow the gap with economically advanced countries and keep pace with them. The lesson drawn from the development experiences of NICs (Newly Industrialized Countries) is the most obvious evidence for the above-stated point. Learning from these lessons, Vietnam has decisively chosen the way to international and regional integration in the context of the present globalization.

By contrast, some conservative nations have been so exceedingly threatened by the negative impact of openness and international integration on their political stability that they have decided to close their doors to the world. As a result, they have faced innumerable difficulties, including not only economic slowdowns and poverty, but also cultural, scientific, technical and technological backwardness. Complete isolation from the world, at whatever time, brings about negative results to the people intending to do so. Isolation cannot give rise to cultural prosperity and new values.

In ancient times, as we know, Athens, owing to its openness to influences from everywhere, became the symbol of prosperity in all fields including the arts, philosophy, politics, history and cultural values in general. Sparta, however, closing its doors to prevent all outside influence due to the wish to preserve its distinctiveness, remained the only city in Greece without a single famous thinker or cultural figure who was able to create outstanding cultural or scientific work. There existed similar cases in the 20th century. For example, Myanmar in Asia and Albania in Europe have gone to extremes to isolate themselves in order to prevent outside influences which could erode their national values and challenge their political stability. As a result, their culture and science have been disastrously retarded, and even absolutely ruined as some scholars claim. Therefore, there is much evidence to state that international cooperation and integration are imperatives, and serve as tests of the adaptability of a nation's vision and ability to govern itself.

Of course, every medal has its reverse. International integration in the conditions of the present globalization is not an exception. International integration in all fields – first of all, in the economic sector, in the present context of too many existing inequalities, injustices and also under the rules of some rich nations – promises only good things to the countries with a low

level of development like Vietnam. Therefore, while taking advantage of opportunities to develop their country, people reduce the disadvantages and negative impacts and overcome the challenges and traps caused by integration and globalization.

We will focus hereafter only on some opportunities, positive features and challenges for values, especially traditional values, which a nation will encounter in its engagement in international cooperation and integration in the conditions of the present globalization. Vietnam has lost (or been the victim of the theft) of great material and immaterial cultural values during its thousand years of being invaded and dominated. It is possible that some of those values are preserved somewhere in the world. Owing to our integration into the world, some of the cultural heritage that has been lost in Vietnam has been either returned to us or at least been known to be preserved somewhere in the world. It seems that the same situation happens in other countries. It is certain that, in the future, there will be more lost or appropriated heritages in different periods to be returned and restored. Those heritages are invaluable, beyond any price.

The above-stated are not all positive things that international integration has brought to disadvantaged countries. Apart from economic values (though there exists a big disparity in different countries), those countries have also acquired many modern values in the fields of science and technology, literature and arts, etc. These values themselves contribute to change the national image and promote social progress. After all, international integration, cooperation and globalization have created opportunities and possibilities for countries worldwide to interact, exchange and understand each other. As a result, they can promote the cultural standards of their people as well as assert themselves in the world community. In the past, many people in the world knew that Vietnam was a country suffering from uninterrupted war, but the Vietnamese overcame this. Owing to our efforts to extend international exchange and integration into the world, Vietnam is presently also known as a country loving peace, independence, freedom and tolerance – a dynamic nation with a treasure of material and non-material cultural heritage and imbued with a distinctive identity. Many Vietnamese and East Asian values, such as the fondness for learning, diligence, a high sense of community, commitment to family, and clan ties, are well-known in the world. Asian countries are alike in culturological as well as politico-geographical terms. Patriotism should be mentioned as a prominent value of the Vietnamese, without which our country would have been annexed a long time ago.

It is appropriate to acknowledge that the above-mentioned traditional values are honored by the majority of our people. However, one should not ignore that traditional, regional, as well as common human values have experienced certain transformations and changes during the development of our civilization. It is obvious that the number of common human (global) values has accumulated during that time. Once common human (global) values are on the increase, other regional or national values

will follow. It sometimes seems that the increase of the former is proportional to the reduction of the latter, and it also sometimes seems that the value hierarchy remains completely unchanged. Therefore, it is understandable that a nation will suffer from clashes, or, at least, contradictions, between global, transnational, and national traditional values if it concerns itself only with its own interests and identity – or on the contrary, ignores and tramples on its own values.

It is not so difficult to realize that when a nation is involved in international integration, particularly in the condition of the present globalization, values, including the traditional, are no longer bound or limited to national borders. Owing to their vitality, both material and non-material cultural values may be able to sustain themselves. However, it is difficult for them to escape from being commercialized because the widespread exchange and the advertising of those values, in order to attract the attention of the international community, have become important to national economic development. This means that it is difficult for values, especially material and non-material cultural values, to preserve their original value when they are subject to commercialization..

All the above-mentioned Vietnamese values, such as patriotism, fondness for learning, diligence, high sense of community, commitment to family and clan ties, as well as other values, have been transformed and subjected to real challenges under the impact of international integration in the context of globalization. People, in these circumstances, are aware of the development level of other nations, and realize where they really are and how far they are lagging behind – and they also know what to do in order to erase the insult of being poor and underdeveloped. Now the value of patriotism will be measured by practical contributions to the cause of national development and the narrowing of the gap with economically advanced countries. This task sets up very high intellectual, scientific and technological requirements. These requirements, which are challenges as well, are quite different from those of previous historical periods. Only by rising to meet them can a nation hope to bridge its development gap with other countries, and avoid lagging-further-behind, primarily in economic terms.

The fondness for learning as a value is generally still preserved, but somehow it has acquired new features. In the past, it was motivated by the desire for knowledge and discovery, as well as being part of what it was to be a (good) man. But, in the present, there are changes in people's motivation to learn. Apart from the fact that many people still keep the original motivation of fondness for learning, there exist, unfortunately, a number of people, most of them young, who find learning as a means to gain knowledge or to be a (good) man as less important than as a means to get more money, and have a better material life. It cannot be judged that something is wrong with that kind of motivation. The real concern is that the humanistic and tolerant components – or, in other words, the essential parts that constitute Vietnamese cultural identity – are threatened with

marginalization. An anti-value way of thinking of learning is expressed nowadays in the saying – “It is better to be ignorant but with lots of money than to be good at literature and have fine handwriting”; sadly this saying is popular in our society. The increase of extreme pragmatism and short-sighted habits threatens to eliminate the true values of learning. It cannot be denied that this problem is related to the exchange and unselective acceptance of various points of view and lifestyles existing in the world during the process of integration. Therefore, the task here is to make all people, especially the young, understand and sustain the true value and meaning of learning. They should be aware that fondness for learning is a value in the tradition of our nation, and that learning is a way to contribute to the progress of society, rather than only to an individual’s benefit.

Similarly, respect for family and clan, expressed in many things such as the sense of responsibility, the exemplary behavior of parents, the respect to seniors and elders, filial piety, faithfulness and affection in married life, originated thousands of years ago in Vietnam. Family is an important cornerstone for the Vietnamese and their society in the triad of family, village and country. According to many researchers, family stability is still regarded as a value and the centre of the network of social relations in Vietnam, and this has been the case throughout many severe social upheavals in our history.³

However, it should be realized that the value, durability and scope of the family have changed under various influences. The number of large families with more than two generations living together is decreasing, not only in urban but also in rural areas. The durability of married life is also changing: the number of divorces is on the increase. Here the concern is that the time between wedding and divorce is shorter and shorter in proportion to the age of the married couples. We cannot explain this phenomenon simply by a single reason. But it can be seen that the pragmatic tendency with mercenary, egoistic, and money-driven motivations is on the rise within the family and marital relations. People get married, in some cases, primarily with the plan of getting more material benefits and a better social position. A typical illustration of the point is the recent tendency of young Vietnamese girls to marry foreigners, regardless of the bridegroom’s age, personality or whether they are either mentally or physically disabled, as long as the brides are given a promise of being financially comfortable. It is shameful that a lot of families tend to encourage rather than dissuade their daughters to do so, with the hope that their family will live a new life once their daughter goes abroad. Recently there was a case in our Supreme Court where a 20 year old girl sued local officials for not registering her marriage with a foreign businessman because he was over 70 years old. It is not difficult to predict the outcome of such a marriage.

A similar situation also happens to many all-Vietnamese marriages. It is obvious that the impact of unhealthy imported lifestyles, which come to us via international exchange and integration as well as mass media, is not insignificant. It seems that the problems relating to family are global

concerns, challenging many countries worldwide. People are looking for the right solution to prevent them from blocking social progress. For example, in a research survey conducted in May 2004, in Japan, the almost-unanimous answer given to the question “What are the Japanese most concerned with in the present and coming years?” was “Family problems and durability.” The Vietnamese, and probably most people sharing Asian values, have the same concerns (relating to family) as do the Japanese. This is understandable because once a family is shaken many social vices will occur. Divorce will deprive children of parental support and care. As a result, children become psychologically traumatized. That will give rise to young people’s vices like drug addiction, homicide, prostitution, underworld gangs, etc. Actually, not only children but also all family members suffer from the consequences of divorce. Therefore, one of the important components of the basis of social progress, namely the family, is threatened and traumatized.

So far, we can see that in the conditions of globalization, international integration in all fields itself contains many positive elements. It contributes to foster progress in all sectors of socio-economic life, as well as development of national culture. At the same time, a nation, during its integration with the world, can realize which traditional values should be preserved and promoted, as well as which negative elements of traditional values can potentially stand in the way of progress. However, within the present globalization, under the pressure and imposition of some powerful countries as well as the spreading of counter-values via modern media, many long-standing national or regional traditional values are challenged and are even on the edge of being eroded. Therefore, the task to safeguard and enrich traditional values through a selective acquisition of values from other cultures is as important as the measure against cultural assimilation through the so-called “soft power” of those nations with more advanced development. In the context of the present globalization, if a nation manages to combine harmoniously its traditional values with modern values on the basis of the preservation of its cultural identity, if a nation retains its quintessence while eliminating obsolete elements, if a nation enters into intensive dialogue with the world – then it will overcome challenges and be able to maintain traditional values. Such a nation sets the stage for a prudent combination of the modern and the traditional, and can be a driving force for greater national development and progress.

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NOTES

¹ M. Sorrel, “Branding the New Era,” *Foreign Policy*, Summer 2000, p. 1.

² Nguyen Trong Chuan, “Challenges of globalization or confrontations of humankind in the problems of globalization,” in *Contributions to Understanding the Contemporary World* (Hanoi: The National Political Publishing House, 2003).

³ For example, Russell J Dalton, Pham Minh Hac, Pham Thanh Nghi, Ong Thuy Nhu Ngoc, “Social Relations and Origin in Vietnam: World Value Research 2001,” *Journal of Human Studies* (2002), pp. 27-42; Le Thi, *The Role of Family in the Formation of Vietnamese Individuality* (Hanoi: The World Publishing House, 1999).

CHAPTER XIV

CULTURAL TRADITION AND SOCIAL PROGRESS IN PRESENT-DAY VIETNAM¹

PHAM VAN DUC

ON THE CRITERIA OF SOCIAL PROGRESS

Etymologically speaking, the word 'progress' in some languages can be traced back to its root, related to the Latin word '*progressus*' meaning 'a forward movement,' a kind of development characterized by a steady advancement toward a higher and better stage. Its antonym is 'regress' (*regressus* in Latin) indicating a backward movement characterized by a process of disintegration, destruction and degradation from the established structure of an object.

The notion of progress is closely related to the notion of development in Marxist literature. In some cases they are not even differentiated because the latter is defined as a movement toward a higher and perfect stage. However, while dealing with the nature of the notion of progress we should pay attention to the two following points:

First, the notion is often employed in relation to the context relating to social process. Here progress means a social tendency advancing toward a higher and better stage within a society, while other kinds of progress taking place in nature are expressed in the notion of development. On the other hand, the intention of the notion of development is wider than that of progress: while the former includes both forward and backward movements, the latter is understood as a forward tendency only.

Second, social progress, under any consideration, is related closely to the evaluation of events and processes happening in a society. This is a very important activity for the existence and development of human beings. A comparison between the present stage and the stage to come serves as a foundation for this kind of evaluation. What is considered as progress is something valuable to the evaluating subject.

The notion of progress is a widely-used term and concept in many social sciences, including philosophy. So here the problem is how to determine the criteria of social progress rather than to find out what social progress is. There are various points of view concerning the criteria of social progress in the history of philosophy. Philosophers usually approach social progress from a certain aspect of social life; moral or legal or even economic criteria have served as foundation for the evaluation of social progress. However, in general, there have been two approaches to the criteria of social progress: one which understands social progress primarily

as spiritual progress and the progress of social consciousness, and the other with which puts emphasis on the progress of the mode of production.

The Marxist materialist understanding of history is the official view of social progress in Vietnam. Against the view of social progress as a progress of spiritual elements, Marx is the first thinker to emphasize the material factors of social progress. Marx conceived that social progress is a one-by-another replacement of socio-economic formations, a natural historical process, in which the later formation is always more progressive than the earlier. The development of the mode of production serves as a foundation for social progress. However, while considering social progress, besides material progress, Marx also paid attention to other aspects of social life, including political, interpersonal and cultural progress. The ultimate aim of social progress is to serve humanity and, more importantly, the free development of every man is the condition for the development of all others.

Apart from the above-stated Marxist view, there is also the view of social progress elaborated by Ho Chi Minh. First of all, it should be said that there is no clear definition or theoretical explanation of social progress in Ho Chi Minh's writings and speeches. However, it is easy to discern what he means by this concept. Emphasizing Marxist ideas on social development as the result of a natural historical progress, Ho Chi Minh claims that the development of human society is law-following, in which the more progressive societies will replace previous (less progressive) ones. He wrote, "Since the early history, the collapse of Primitive Communism was caused by the presence of slavery. Then slavery collapsed and was replaced by feudalism. Feudalism's collapse was caused by the occurrence of capitalism. This is a determinate law in the development of human society". "From Primitive Communism, through Slavery, Feudalism and Capitalism to Socialism (Communism) – in general, human (society) develops according to such a certain law."² Ho Chi Minh was convinced that capitalism will certainly be replaced by a new and more progressive type of society (socialism) in due course, given the law-following development of human society. He stated "it must be understood that Feudalism was an obvious social advancement. [Human] society has developed from its primitive way of life through Slavery, Feudalism and Capitalism, then toward Socialism."³

What are the characteristics of the new society, which Ho Chi Minh called socialist? We can see, through his writings, a concise expression of the new society that the Vietnamese want to build: "a society with more and more advancement, more and more material wealth, better and better spiritual life;"⁴ in which "every person is provided with enough food and clothes and which is happy and free;"⁵ "every person is financially comfortable happy and has good schooling;"⁶ "all people and nations are to be more and more comfortably off, our children to be more and more happy;"⁷ "workers and masses no longer experience poverty and all are provided with jobs and enjoy a comfortable and happy life,"⁸ etc.

Then how can the criteria of social progress be manifested concretely in the different sectors of social life? First of all, while talking about social progress, Ho Chi Minh pays attention to the economy, because the economic sector is a foundation of social life and the basis for human development. A strong and wealthy nation, in which the material and spiritual life of its people are increasingly improving, is an ultimate aim of social development. In order to build such a society, advanced forces and relations of production are needed; in other words, a new mode of production must be built up. The mode of production will serve as a basis to change the material and spiritual life of society.

However, social progress finds its best expression in social relations. Ho Chi Minh claims that a progressive society is one in which man's exploitation and unjust oppression are to be reduced and then completely eliminated; justice and social equality are to be established steadily step by step,— the gap between cities and rural areas are to be bridged gradually and people are to have more opportunities to develop fully their potential. In his understanding, an economically wealthy society may not be progressive in social terms if there is still human exploitation, oppression and social injustice, etc. A society cannot be described as progressive if its citizens are still being trampled on, exploited, enslaved and reduced to poverty.

Therefore, from the social perspective, social progress is closely linked with human and social liberation. And it was not by accident that Ho Chi Minh cited famous statements from the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen and the American Declaration of Independence in his Declaration of Independence. This document marked the birth of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, confirming man's inherent rights, such as preservation of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. In the political field, Ho Chi Minh paid special attention to issues relating to state and jurisdiction. He understood that political progress can be manifest in the progressiveness of state government: those who are in charge of the state, whose interests that government serves. In his view, a progressive government is a peoples-democratic state belonging to the people, governed by the people and which serves the people's interests; all its powers must belong to the people. He claims that a democratic government is the one that "serves wholeheartedly people's interests";⁹ "People are the real masters in power."¹⁰

The progressiveness of government also expresses itself in its ability to realize freedom and democracy for the masses. A society cannot be politically progressive if its power belongs to a minority, and only the minority can get access to freedom and democracy while the masses are deprived of these rights or have access to these rights on paper only (but, in reality, are completely deprived of freedom and democracy).¹¹ Besides, democracy also manifests itself in the freedom to put forward innovative ideas, and to have freedom in the creation of new material and spiritual values. It is the very aspiration of humans to develop themselves fully.

Social progress also expresses itself in cultural progress. Culture, in Ho Chi Minh's view, is a vital component of social life. Culture should go side by side with the economy and politics. Ho Chi Minh repeatedly said, "In the cause of the reconstruction of our nation, we must address to the last and with the same attention the four following issues: political, economic, social and cultural."¹²

There exists indeed disparity between economic and cultural development, both in the history of humankind generally as well as in the social development of every nation separately. In some stages of its development, a society may give priority to either political or economic development, and even sometimes to cultural development. But for Ho Chi Minh, in order to build up steadily and harmonically a new society, the same importance should be attached to the economy, politics and culture. Ho Chi Minh prized the role and contribution of culture to the progress of society in general. Social progress, according to him, must rely on foundations of new knowledge, science, technology and culture. A new culture is the one which preserves national cultural values and acquires the positive cultural values of humankind at the same time. It is a scientific and popular culture with a typical national identity.

Ho Chi Minh thought that an uneducated nation was a weak one. Therefore, due attention should be paid to the development of national culture and the promotion of the educational level of the masses in order to overcome backwardness. The building of a new progressive culture, in this context, cannot be separated from social, economic and political construction. This is why culture is not outside of economy and politics. Relying on Ho Chi Minh's thought, we can draw the following conclusions relating to the criteria of social progress:

First, social progress should be addressed from a comprehensive point of view, including all socio-economic, political and cultural aspects of social life. Relying on such a point of view, one can overcome one-sidedness and partialness in consideration of social development. As we have discussed, progress is related to the category of value and standards of evaluation. The progressiveness of a society or of any of its stages is determined through a comparison with its previous state, in which economic, political, social and cultural indicators serve as four criteria. There should be a close link among these criteria. A society cannot be recognized as progressive if it is successful only in its economic development, even though this is considered a foundation for social progress, while ignoring other aspects of social life.¹³

Second, social progress, in Ho Chi Minh's view, is closely related to human progress. Ho Chi Minh devoted his entire revolutionary cause to making "our country entirely independent, our people fully free, our compatriots provided with food and clothes, and everyone with access to education."¹⁴ Though Ho Chi Minh did not address the question of social progress directly, we can see that his notion of social progress always goes together with the cause of national liberation and the liberation of the

masses from domination. Even in his ideas on the development of a new society, Ho Chi Minh focuses on living conditions. All aspects of the people's development (being comfortable, free, happy and having access to education, etc.) have become important criteria of social development and progress. In other words, the ultimate goal of social progress is to serve human beings.

The criterion of comprehensive development should be an important measure of social progress in the present context. Man should be recognized as a driving force as well as the objective of social development. This means that while all changes and developments taking place in various fields of social life, including the economic, political, social and cultural, are somehow related to the participation of human beings, these changes and developments are ultimately oriented to provide better life for everyone. This is a very humanistic measure of social progress.

As for cultural tradition in social progress, in its general meaning "heritage" means property that is passed from preceding to subsequent generations. Cultural heritage includes cultural properties, and masterpieces of architecture and literature, as well as other spiritual riches.¹⁵ Being understood in such a way, cultural heritage implies a material heritage (such as famous sights, architecture, etc.) and an immaterial heritage (works of arts, cultural tradition and custom, etc.).

We will not discuss here the value of the heritage of material culture because that value is relatively well established and undisputable. Our focus will be on the role of the value of the heritage of spiritual (immaterial) culture to social progress. Needless to say, the notion of the heritage of spiritual culture is intentionally (connotationally) rich. Therefore, here, we would like to analyze only the role of cultural tradition (one of the important components of cultural heritage) in social progress.

First of all, it must be stated that cultural tradition, as part of cultural heritage, is something that is passed down from preceding generations to us. In this way, cultural tradition is something that belongs to the past, but is still impacting on and influencing the present.¹⁶ Recently the role of cultural tradition has been widely discussed in many national as well as international seminars and conferences held in Vietnam. According to some scholars, the so-called cultural traditions contribute positively to development and social progress; there is no negative or valueless tradition. On the contrary, other authors claim that a tradition always contains both positive as well as negative features: the former is manifested in that the tradition contributes to promote social progress and consequently crystallizes in traditional values, while the latter can contribute nothing and is an obstacle to social progress.

In Vietnam as well in some other Asian countries, there exist different attitudes to cultural tradition: negative attitudes intending to negate completely cultural tradition, regarding it as something belonging to the past and to be eliminated, but also conservative attitudes insisting that all that belongs to cultural tradition is positive and valuable. We are basically in

agreement with the view that tradition in general, and cultural tradition in particular, always contain both positive and negative features: some cultural traditions contribute positively to social progress, while others may stand in the way of social progress. There exist both positive as well as negative elements within each cultural tradition.

The problem is, what criteria do we have to evaluate a tradition? In other words, what are the standards by which we can judge whether a cultural tradition is valuable? If we accept the above-stated criteria, then only those cultural traditions which satisfy these criteria (namely those which are able to serve and promote progress in various sectors of social life) can be recognized as valuable and positive. This means that a cultural tradition is acknowledged to impact positively on social progress if it can promote development in the economic, political, social and cultural sectors of social life.

Besides, social progress means primarily human progress. Therefore, the criteria of human progress and development should be the standards used to verify and evaluate the values of cultural traditions. It is indisputable that social progress serves human beings and is for the sake of their development. Human beings here are, of course, not only one particular stratum or class but entire masses – the citizens of (any) society in general. Any tradition can endure in time, even when its socio-economic conditions have long disappeared. But tradition itself is not something unchanged once established; yet it has been constantly verified by concrete socio-economic conditions. Therefore, the traditions that can impact (positively) on social progress are only those that can “accommodate” to new socio-economic conditions.

We do not mention here those cultural traditions, obsolete customs and habits influencing social progress negatively. These traditions should be overcome and eradicated as soon as possible. What we count on here are those cultural traditions that develop fully the human potential. In other words, we honor and preserve only those traditions which serve human interests and, more importantly, always generate new values. However, every cultural tradition, which has already accommodated to new socio-economic conditions, contains both positive and negative features. Even those highly valuable traditions, which seem to possess only positive components, cannot avoid this duality.

For example, fondness for learning is a fine tradition of our nation, as well as many other nations worldwide. It is a positive tradition for the national cause of building and development and should be brought into play. However, in the past, the ultimate aim of learning has been to become a mandarin or master worker. This kind of mentality, despite certain changes during our period of “renovation” in Vietnam, still influences strongly our people and society today. Its manifestation can be seen in the fact that nowadays most Vietnamese families do their best for their children to be successful in their entrance examination to tertiary education; very few parents want their children go to vocational schools. This very attitude leads

to an unbalanced situation in Vietnam: we have more tertiary-graduate students than skilled workers and many tertiary-educated people have to take manual labor or very simple jobs. It is a total waste for society in general and people in particular. Therefore, while respecting and upholding the fondness for learning we should change the long-standing mentality of our people standing behind this fondness, namely the mentality of preference of master over worker.

Another long-standing tradition in Asia, including Vietnam, is the respect for the elderly. It is a very fine tradition, honored and preserved by the Vietnamese. According to Professor Tran Van Doan, this tradition is honored by many Asian nations not under the pressure of any traditional power but simply because it serves the interests of all people and not a particular individual, group or class. More than that, the benefit from the tradition is not limited only to the moral sector, but spreads to all other sectors of social life and achieves a “universal” significance. It means that, for example, government can save expenses on pensioners’ subsidies or on building nursing houses for the elderly; the elderly can be less worried about their usefulness; parents can save money spent on childcare and security of their houses, etc.

However, according to Professor Tran Van Doan’s analysis, excessive honor to the elderly would lead to conservative dogmatism, obstructing us from new approaches to problems, thinking instead that we can count on the elderly. The youth may lack bravery, and become passive towards the world around them when they encounter difficulties. On the side of the elderly, when respect and honor to the elderly become identical with blind obedience, they may think that only they themselves are capable to solve problems raised by contemporary society. But in a real situation, the elderly can become obstacles to social development when their knowledge and experience cannot help them to deal with new difficulties.¹⁷ Therefore, there exists duality even within the tradition of honoring one’s elders. Inability to promote its positive elements, and to limit and overcome negative components can cause this fine and honorable tradition to be a stumbling-block to social progress instead of promoting it.

From the above sketchy analysis of some fine Asian and Vietnamese traditions, we can conclude that even honorable and valuable traditions can contain, apart from positive features, certain negative components, which should be identified and overcome. The problem here is to uphold positive elements while restraining and gradually eradicating negative ones. The reason that a tradition contains both positive and negative elements is that it belongs to the past. Therefore, when it enters the present, some of its elements can satisfy the new conditions while others cannot do so and should be eliminated.

The eradication of the negative and inappropriate elements of cultural tradition can be done in two main ways: a spontaneous eradication and an intentional eradication. A spontaneous eradication usually takes place naturally without any concrete plan or orientation. Social custom,

habit and mentality which cannot meet the demand of new socio-economic conditions will be gradually eradicated and replaced sooner or later by new appropriate customs, habits and mentalities. Usually the process of replacement and transformation of elements within a tradition takes place slowly.

The more effective way is an intended eradication, in which all inappropriate elements are to be eradicated and all positive elements are encouraged to develop. This is an intended orientation of values. There exist various measures of this kind of orientation: from economic measures impacting directly on material interests to educational and propagandistic ones influencing spiritual factors and interests. It is a more positive, effective and faster way of the selection of tradition. For example, with the appropriate policy to impact on students's interests in order to encourage them to enroll in vocational school together with certain educational and propagandistic measures, we can step by step change the long-standing mentality of preference of master to worker in the tradition of fondness for learning.

In the present context of the worldwide-impact of globalization, the problem of selection of tradition becomes very important. The right solution to the problem can contribute to not only preserve the cultural identity of a nation but also guarantee its development. A nation will develop progressively if it is able not only to inherit valuable traditions (which have established its essence), but also to promote and uphold them through the quintessence of human culture to enrich its traditions. Both extreme attitudes to the world exist in the history of humanity: either total closure to all international relations to protect its own tradition, or unselective acceptance of other cultures. Both lead a nation to an unpredictable catastrophe, bring it to a sort of alien isolation from the rest of the world or change a nation into the shadow of another nation.

With the open foreign policy implemented in the cause of our country's renovation since 1986, Vietnam is willing to make friends and, more than that, to be ready to become friends with all countries and nations worldwide on the basis of mutual respect of national independence, sovereignty and mutual benefit. Moving in this direction, Vietnam has the opportunity to acquire the quintessence of cultures worldwide to enrich its own cultural tradition. As a result, the fine cultural traditions of the Vietnamese have been continuously enriched, while backward and inappropriate traditions to social progress have been gradually eradicated. In this context, cultural tradition has played a more and more important role in social progress.

CONCLUSION

Cultural tradition can impact positively or negatively on social progress. A cultural tradition positively impacts on social progress if it helps people find solutions to the socio-economic problems raised by

contemporary society. In this way, cultural traditions actively influence various sectors of social life as well as contribute to promoting man's comprehensive development. Every fine cultural tradition of a nation, be it the most valuable, contains a duality: both positive as well as negative aspects. After all, tradition belongs to the past, and when it enters the present, some aspects can meet the demands of new circumstances. But some cannot, and are subject to eradication. Therefore, the problems of how to select a tradition, promote its positive aspects, restrain and overcome gradually its negative aspects, are vital to social progress.

The right way to select a cultural tradition consists in preservation and promotion of national identity simultaneously with intensive integration and cultural exchange with the world. A good method builds the cultural quintessence of the world and enriches simultaneously one's national culture. The development of cultural tradition, in its turn, strongly contributes to overall social progress.

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NOTES

¹ [Abstract]: This paper focuses on two problems: the criteria for social progress and the place of cultural tradition in the course of social progress. In the first part of the paper, relying on ideas from Ho Chi Minh, the author claims that, first, social progress should be approached comprehensively from all aspects of social life, including the socio-economical, political, social and cultural. There exists a close link among the economic, political, social and cultural criteria. A society cannot be recognized as progressive if it is successful only in economic development (which is a foundation for social progress), while ignoring other aspects of social life. Second, social progress is closely related to human progress because the ultimate goal of social progress is to serve humanity. In present conditions, the criteria of comprehensive human development should be an important measure of social progress.

Man should be recognized as a driving force as well as an objective of social development. This means that while all changes and developments taking place in various fields of social life (including the economic, political, social and cultural) are somehow related to participation of human factor and governed by human beings, these changes and developments are ultimately oriented to serve humanity. This is a humanistic measure of social progress.

In the second part of this paper, the author concentrates on analyzing the role of cultural tradition. First, cultural tradition can impact either positively or negatively on social progress. A cultural tradition positively impacts on social progress if it helps people find solutions to the socio-economic problems raised by contemporary society. In this way, a cultural tradition actively influences various sectors of social life as well as contributes to promote man's comprehensive development.

Every cultural tradition in a nation, even the most valuable, contains a duality: it has both positive as well as negative aspects. After all, tradition belongs to the past, and when it enters the present, some of its aspects can meet the demands of new circumstances but others cannot and are subject to eradication. Therefore, the problems of how to select a tradition, promote its positive aspects, and restrain and overcome gradually its negative aspects, are vital to social progress. The right way to select a cultural tradition consists in the preservation and promotion of national identity simultaneously with intensive integration and cultural exchange with the world. This is a good method to acquire the cultural quintessence of the world in order to enrich national culture. The development of cultural tradition, in its turn, will impact more positively on social progress.

² Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works* (Hanoi: The National Political Publishing House, 1995), Vol. 7, pp. 246-247.

³ Ho Chi Minh, *op cit.*, p. 54.

⁴ Ho Chi Minh, *op cit.*, Vol. 10, p. 591.

⁵ Ho Chi Minh, *op cit.*, Vol. 8, p. 396.

⁶ Ho Chi Minh, *op cit.*, Vol. 10, p. 97.

⁷ Ho Chi Minh, *op cit.*, Vol. 10, p. 317.

⁸ Ho Chi Minh, *op cit.*, Vol. 10, p. 17.

⁹ Ho Chi Minh, *op cit.*, vol. 10, p. 73.

¹⁰ Ho Chi Minh, *op cit.*, vol. 7, p. 218.

¹¹ Nguyễn Trăn Chuên (Editor). *Social progress: some actual issues* (Hanoi: The Social Sciences Publishing House, 2000), p. 79.

¹² Ho Chi Minh, *Artistic Culture as a battle field* (Hanoi: The Literature Publishing House, 1981), p. 345.

¹³ Today, in order to evaluate the development of a nation, the UNDP works out the criteria of the human development index, including such indicators as GDP, the educational index, and life expectancy. And according to these criteria, despite its underdeveloped economy, Vietnam is among the group of nations with an average human development index: Vietnam is ranked as high as 110 among 174 nations worldwide (UNDP. Human development report 1999 [New York: Oxford University Press, 1999], p. 260).

¹⁴ Ho Chi Minh, *op cit.*, v. 4, p. 161.

¹⁵ *Vietnamese Encyclopedia* (Hanoi: The Center for Compiling the Vietnamese Encyclopedia. 1995), p. 667 (in Vietnamese).

¹⁶ Tran Van Doan defines tradition “as a part of our life, what lasts for generations, what could be passed on to the next generation, what may benefit tradition is called tradition only if it forms a part, a necessary part of our life; only if it preserves our life; and only if it could further or prolong our life. Hence, the main issue here is what could be called, or regarded, or categorised as tradition, must be seen from three aspects of human life: tradition as a part of life, tradition as a means for life-preservation, and tradition as a force stirring the development of life.” Tran Van Doan, “What can be called tradition?” paper presented at the International Conference on *Traditional Values and the Challenges of Globalization*, organized by *The Council for Research in Value and Philosophy*, Washington D.C. and *The Institute of Philosophy*, Vietnam,

May 14-15, 2001, p. 4. According to George McLean, tradition is “The development of values and virtues and their integration. As a culture of any depth or richness takes time, it depends upon the experience and creativity of many generations. The culture which is handed on, or *tradio*, comes to be called a cultural tradition; as such it reflects the cumulative achievement of a people in discovering, mirroring and transmitting the deepest meanings of life. This is tradition in its synchronic sense as a body of wisdom.” George F. McLean, *Tradition, Harmony and Transcendence* (Washington DC: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1994), pp. 9-10.

¹⁷ Tran Van Doan, op. cit, pp. 32-33.

CHAPTER XV

ASIAN CONFLUENCES AND ENCOUNTERS: REALITIES AND RESONANCES OF VALUES

S.R. BHATT

I

Though human thought and value-pursuits know no geographical boundaries or barriers, there is something unique and distinctive in each culture that gets shared or may remain unshared at trans-geographical spheres. In the process of sharing, there are also encounters and confluences, a submerging or overpowering of identities. The values posited and pursued in each individual culture are global and universalizable, and yet the way they are posited, pursued and realized are uniquely local to their base. There is a bewildering diversity and yet also a striking similarity among all the cultures. The universe is also a “multi-verse.” To use a Vedic expression it is *vicitra* (wondrous).

The dichotomy of paired opposites of ‘Asian and Non-Asian’, or of ‘East and West’, or ‘oriental or occidental’, etc. may be regarded as dated, blurred and false if put in terms of anti-theses or monolithic contrasts like “The East is spiritual and the West is material” or “The East is introverted and the West is extroverted”. But setting aside such flotsam, one can discern some characteristic modes of thought and behavior patterns on the basis of which one can talk of Asian cultures or confluences of cultures within Asia in a specific and delimited way. The multiple cultures of Asia are quite varied. They display some commonalities as well as differences, similarities as well as dissimilarities. Without proper understanding and appreciation of these, and without a thorough grasp of these, one should not undertake generalizations and comparisons: they may not be legitimate and helpful. In this enterprise one should take judicious care to avoid false anti-theses and monolithic comparisons. However, the variety of cultures have broad similarities which may enable us to use the term ‘Asian Mind’ and call for a need for co-existence with mutual re-enforcement.

The present paper sketches the history of ideas of Asian cultures primarily from the Indian perspective, with the hope that someone else will draw upon the Chinese, the Japanese and other perspectives. As a student of Indian and Buddhist philosophy, I have my own limitations and I shall operate within that only. It is my firm belief that all cultural contacts are mutually beneficial and serve to benefit the world at large. Our sense of belonging to one world has been voiced in ancient times by Vedic seers: “Let the entire universe be one family” (“Vasudhiva Kutumbakam”) or “Let the whole cosmos be a single nest” (“Bhavati Visvaikanidam”), but now

this has been accentuated in modern times by the rapid modes of communication and transportation. As a consequence, there is greater need for cultural contacts, interfaces, dialogues and exchanges.

II

One of the most remarkable phenomena in the history of human relations is the introduction, spread and influence of Vedic Dharma, which later acquired the names of Hinduism and Buddhism in Asia and the rest of the world. The transmission to and pervasive acceptance, assimilation, modification and trans-creation of Hinduistic-Buddhistic ideas and ideals, beliefs and practices in the countries of Asia in the course of several centuries, are most fascinating. This evinces a common Asian mindset, shared modes of thinking and ways of living in spite of the differences and distinct identities. Had there been no commonality of thought, belief-systems and value-patterns, such a reception, absorption and intermingling would not have been possible. It is therefore not an exaggeration to say that there is something called the Asian mind, howsoever pluralistic and diversified it may be. One can discern an underlying commonality that has made cross movement of ideas possible. Furthermore, the way, the ease, and the swiftness with which this cultural appropriation and assimilation took place in the local cultures, atmospheres and environments, are suggestive of the metabolic dynamism of the Asian psyche.

After their introduction into Asian countries from India, the place of their origin, Hinduism and Buddhism were so transformed and identified with the cultures of the respective Asian countries that in most cases they lost their original shape. Hinduism in fact became almost completely absorbed in the local cultures except in some pockets. The cultural interface between Hinduism and the traditions of countries like Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam etc.; the absorption of Visnu, Siva, Indra and other Indian Godheads and the religious cults surrounding them; acceptance of Sanskrit names and words; the influence of Ramayana, Mahabharata and puranas and several such interesting features all testify to the prevalence of Hinduism in these countries in ancient times. The influence of Buddhism on Asian countries is tremendous and unmitigated. It also did not retain its original form and was transformed. In several countries like Japan and China, it coexisted with native religious traditions, something that is unique in world history. Once receptive of Buddhist thought, they became its innovators and exporters themselves.

III

It is pertinent to establish that, in the beginning, there was no separation between Hinduism and Buddhism. Both have been two distinct phases of the same pluralistic Indian culture. The word 'Hinduism' itself is a very late coinage. It is a name assigned to the later Vedic and Brahmanic

tradition. Hinduism and Buddhism like Jainism and other religious sects of India possess the same spiritual genius. As species, they differ only in emphasis. They share the same stock of culture, have a common source of ideas and practices and therefore, in spite of the shift of emphasis, they have no cleavages. Perceptive western Indologists have very categorically stated this fact and have adduced evidence in support. For them, all these sects are parallel branches stemming from the same root. So Buddhism did not grow in India in a cultural vacuum or in isolation. It sprang up out of the prevalent Vedic thought as a protestant or reformist movement just like many other such thought systems in the vast temporal canvas of Indian cultural history. The Vedas are the common stock for all subsequent Indian philosophical traditions that argued for or against them.

Gautama, the Buddha, was a very well read and well-versed person, and he was fully exposed to the rich and varied cultural milieu of his time. As Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, in the foreword of the book *2500 Years of Buddhism* (p. 68) has opined, “Buddha did not feel that he was announcing a new religion. He was born, grew up and died a Hindu. He was restating with a new emphasis the ancient ideals of Indo-Aryan civilization“. It was not for nothing that long before Varaha, Agni and other puranas accepted the Buddha as an Avatara of Visnu, the most significant Mahayana text, Lankavatara Sutra, itself identified the Buddha with Visnu and Rama. Dr. S. Mukherjee, in his paper in the *Cultural Heritage of India*, states: “It will not be incorrect to say that every Hindu is a Buddhist. Buddhism has permeated the entire religious and philosophical thought of India and percolated into the deepest recesses of the religious mentality of the present-day Hindus”.

IV

We do not know the exact date of the introduction of Buddhism outside India, and there are no definite historical records available to this effect. But there are positive evidences of Indian settlements in many parts of Asia practicing the Vedic faith and the Vedic mode of living, and this must have paved the way for the spread of Buddhism in those places. The prevalence of Vedic Dharma before the rise of Buddhism must have provided a fertile ground in Asian countries for the acceptance and spread of Buddhism both through land and sea routes. It will be really interesting and significant to know how and why Buddhism could get a strong foothold in Asia outside India. It is not unlikely that a fertile ground was already prepared by the prior influence of its parental Vedic thought. It will be pertinent to draw support from Dr Richard Wilhelm for this conclusion. In his paper entitled “On the Sources of Chinese Taoism” (in the *Journal of the North China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. XIV), he writes, “The suggestion lies near that Taoism and pre-Buddhistic Brahmanism may have something in common. It seems that many Brahmanic gods have found their way into Taoism even more easily than into Buddhism. Even the central notions of Taoism, Tao and Te, have an analogue in Brahman and

Atman. So we venture the suggestion that the affinity of Buddhism and Taoism may have for its reason certain Brahmanic influences on Taoism.”¹ Whatever is true of China is also true of the rest of Asia.

It may also be that the introduction of Buddhism might have been a matter of psychological necessity, as the inflictions of the trials and tribulations of the worldly life and the possible way out attracted the Asian mind. The doctrines of *duhkha*, *karma*, *samsara*, *punarjanma*, *nirvana*, etc., appealed to the literati and the illiterates alike. The hope of freedom from suffering and the enjoyment of the eternal bliss of nirvana were so enchanting that they fascinated elderly people all over Asia.

From the point of view of the cultural history of humankind, it is indeed significant that, originating in India, Buddhism soon spread to almost the whole of Asia, captured the hearts of the masses, influenced the intellects of the elites, and won over the spirits of the powerful rulers. Its intermingling with the local cultures and *mores*, its deep and pervasive impact on the minds of the native people, have been so intense and immense that it has not only moulded and reformulated the original thoughts, ideas and ideals, beliefs and practices of the countries of its locale, but also brought about profound changes in their social, cultural and religious lives. Buddhism fascinated the Asian mind and provided solace and succor to it.

Asian people who became Buddhist were convinced that it had something ennobling, enlightening and emancipating to offer. They accepted the truths imparted by Buddhism and imbibed them into their life. They assimilated whatever they thought was significant, transformed whatever was non-essential for them, and discarded what they felt as not congenial to their traditions. This resulted in a happy cross-fertilization and brilliant synthesis of Indian Buddhism and respective cultures. Even though Buddhism was transformed, or rather reincarnated, in the countries of its introduction, its spirit has remained the same but its form has changed. The spread and influence of Buddhism in Asian life and thought have been deep and manifold. It was the characteristic of Buddhism that it was intermingled and integrated with the rich and ancient local cultures and became part and parcel of them. So much has been the pervasive influence of Buddhism in Asia that Asian cultural traditions cannot be properly understood if Buddhism is ignored or misinterpreted.

This apart, Buddhism also acted as a catalytic agent in transforming the social conditions, in forging national unity and in bringing about political solidarity in those countries. It would be of great academic and pragmatic significance to know how this could be achieved and what lessons we can derive from this. In this grand cultural interface, there are a few other points that also deserve the serious attention of world scholarship. The transmission to and acceptance, assimilation, modification and trans-creation of Buddhism outside India, its birthplace and homeland, have been interesting and astonishing, and need meaningful and gainful intercultural studies to find out a ground for world brotherhood. For Indians, it is quite significant to know how and why Buddhism could arouse such fascination

and gain such a strong foothold in foreign lands with notable and unmitigated impact on the thought and culture of these countries and their people. For the people of these countries, it is instructive to be aware of the Indian roots of their Buddhist view and way of life.

There is another point that should be brought to the fore and attended to. The Asian contribution in the preservation, propagation and furtherance of Buddhist thought and culture cannot be underestimated. As stated earlier, once receptive of Buddhism, these countries themselves became its exporters, so to say. The Indian seed yielded a rich harvest on Asian soil. Not only this, it can further be said with great satisfaction that some of the valuable Buddhist literature lost in India due to travesties of history have been found preserved elsewhere, either in original or in translation, etc. Some laudable efforts have been made to resurrect it, but much is yet to be done. It is a needed task for Indian scholars to translate them back into Indian languages. It is a well known fact that China and Tibet have the proud privilege of preserving the largest and richest Buddhist cultural heritage. India, along with Japan and Korea, and with the assistance of countries like Germany, United States, Taiwan, and Thailand, etc., may join hands with Chinese and Tibetan scholars and do a lot in this grand task. Some of the literature has great literary, artistic, philosophical and religious value and can be regarded as classics in world literature, culture and civilization.

V

It will be appropriate to this occasion to write a few words about the history of Buddhism in Japan, as we know it, though to illustrate the analysis done above, such an analysis can be put forth in respect of other Asian countries as well. In 552 AD, Buddhism was officially introduced into Japan from Korea at the behest of the king of Paekche, a kingdom in South-West Korea, who sent a mission to the emperor of Japan with some presents and a message which is as follows:

The religion (Ho, Sanskrit, Dharma) is the most excellent of all teachings, though difficult to master and hard to comprehend; even the sages of China would not have found it easy to grasp. It brings endless and immeasurable blessings and fruits (to its believers), even the attainment of the supreme enlightenment (*bodhi*). Just as the *cinta-mani* jewel is said to fulfill every need according to desire, so the treasures of this glorious religion will never cease to respond in full to those who seek for it. Moreover, this religion has come to Korea from India, and the people (in the countries between the two) are now ardent followers of its teachings, and none are outside its pole.²

Thereafter Prince Shotoku, following the Lotus Sutra, appreciated the Buddhist conception of universal benevolence and distinguished it from the Confucian conception of propriety. He advocated the Buddhist ideal of the eradication of egocentricity and cultivation of existential openness based on the principle of the interconnectedness of all phenomena (*pratityasamutpada*). He emphasized the importance of realizing Buddhist truths within a concrete human nexus by establishing unity with the ultimate truth in daily life. This was world-affirming Buddhism, down to earth and practical. His ideas are of great relevance to contemporary times in bringing about universal peace, prosperity and well-being.

In the Nara period, the Buddhist ideal of universal spiritual communion, centred in Vairocana Buddha, became prominent following the teachings of the Avatamsaka Sutra. Afterwards came Saicho, who followed the Tien-tai school in advocating the universality of salvation based on the Ekayana theory. He insisted on the realization of ultimate unity of the whole universe in this very life in terms of 'Tathata'. Then Kukai came on the scene to establish an esoteric Buddhism called Shingon, in which individual mystical vitalities were coordinated with the cosmic vitalities centered in Mahavairocana Buddha. This form of Buddhism is known as Vajrayana, according to which one can attain Buddhahood in one's lifetime through the three practices of body, speech and mind. With the help of two mandalas – Vajra and Garbha – Shingon Buddhism explains and correlates empirical (*samsara, samvrti*) and trans-empirical (*nirvana, paramartha*) worlds.

In the later Heian period and the Kamakura period, Sukhavati Vyuha Sutras and Amitayur-dhyana Sutra gained prominence, and meditation on and worship of Amitabha Buddha was popularized in what is known as Pure Land Buddhism, believing that Pure Land Faith is the proper way of obtaining universal salvation. In this period, it has been a debatable issue as to whether 'awakening' (i.e. enlightenment) is innate or acquired. To this, Dogen, a brilliant mind, provided the following synthesis:

- This Dharma is amply present in every person, but unless one practices it is not manifested; unless there is realization, it is not attained.

- To think that practice and realization are not one is the heretical view. In the Buddha Dharma, practice and realization are identical. Because one's present practice is practice in realization, one's initial negotiation of the way in itself is the whole of original realization. Thus, even while one is directed to practice, he is told not to anticipate realization apart from practice, because practice points directly to original realization. As it is already realization in practice, realization is endless; as it is practice in realization, practice is beginningless.

Dogen further clarified that instead of saying that "All sentient beings have Buddha-nature," it should be said, "The whole of being is Buddha-nature". Similarly, he pointed out that emancipation from *samsara* is not to be confined to the sentient world, but it is to be extended to all existence. Thus he widens the basis of *nirvana* from human to cosmic and makes it trans-anthropocentric. He gave a very illuminating understanding

of *nirvana*. It is not transcendence of impermanence, but realization of impermanence as impermanence. Mere transcendence of impermanence and reaching the state of permanence is not Buddhist. Genuine *nirvana* consists in the realization of impermanence and working for the enlightenment of suffering-affected *samsara*-bound beings. This is the flow of Mahakaruna in which *samsara* and *nirvana* become one, as Nagarjuna has taught. This is what is meant by saying that, "Do not abide in *samsara* or *nirvana*". This no-abiding is the true Buddhata. It is not turning away from *samsara* but realizing *nirvana* in *samsara*, a symbiosis of Mahabodhi and Mahakaruna.

After Dogen, Nichiren came on the scene. He restored the faith in the Lotus Sutra and wanted its promulgation all over the world. He declared himself to be an incarnation of the Bodhisattva of Supreme Action. In the Tokugawa period we find a number of Buddhist leaders who revived, restated or reformed their own traditions and popularized Buddhism. Mention can be made of Sujuki Shosan who emphasized this worldliness and social action. On the pattern of the Gita doctrine of *svadharma*, he advocated faithful pursuance of one's own vocation. Realization of the Buddhist truth in mundane activities entails appreciation of the practical activities of Buddhism within the human social nexus. But he warned that care has to be taken that this should not degenerate into sheer utilitarianism or profit-seeking activities. In modern times, Nishida Kitaro, D.T. Suzuki and Hajime Nakamura have made significant contributions towards the proper understanding of Buddhism. All these three thinkers have influenced and shaped contemporary Japanese philosophy, although the richness of their thought is yet to be adequately evaluated and fully appreciated.

The entire growth and development of Buddhism in Japan, since its inception, has been directly or indirectly influenced by the long Buddhist tradition. However, it must be acknowledged that the contribution of Japan in the propagation and furtherance of Buddhism has been immense. Japanese innovations cannot be underestimated. Particular reference has to be made of Zen in this connection. Once receptive of Buddhist thought, Japan became its zealous preserver and protector. It enriched and trans-created it and became an exporter itself. Buddhism, it is hoped, will continue to thrive in Japan, and with a missionary zeal Japan may spread Buddhist universal values of peace, brotherhood and cosmic unity and well-being in the service of humankind in particular and the cosmos as a whole. This is what the Buddha preached, practiced and aspired to. This is what the noble ideal of Bodhisattva stands for. It is now for Japan to lead the world in the field of spirituality, apart from the fields of science and technology.

In present times we are in such an unhappy situation that Asian countries, instead of looking to each other directly and interfacing with each other in a common way, view each other through a *tertium quid*. It is high time that we have direct cultural understanding, throwing off the glasses of Occidental Indologists. In the hoary past we had direct linkages and cultural exchanges along with trade in material goods through land sea routes. Trading in material goods has an ephemeral and transient value, but

exchange in thought and culture has had a lasting impact. However, this should not be misunderstood as the promotion of regionalism. Regional understanding is only a base for universal solidarity. The Asian cultures have something significant to contribute to solve the present riddles and problems of humanity.

Though all of them face the danger of extinction of native cultures under the impact of Western consumerism and materialism, they do not bother to share a common platform and start a direct interface and dialogue or polylogue. A renewal of cross-cultural interactions will not only help and contribute to build up mutual understanding, mutual trust, mutual empathy and mutual enrichment, it will also consolidate and vitalise the common spiritual roots and resources. It will enable us to appreciate more the spiritual, integral and holistic Asian perspective, as against the divisive and dichotomous Western world-view. If we look back to our long past, the wisdom of those times will help us to understand each other more intimately for our mutual benefit.

Buddhism has been a universal religion and its ecumenical character has been essential to it. It has displayed these features in its long history. It has tremendous potential to pave the way for world peace and co-existential beatitude among humans, sub-human species and nature on the basis of its cardinal principle of *pratityasamutpada*, that is, the principle of universal interdependence, interconnectedness and interrelationship. Perhaps at no other time in human history is this message of the Buddha more needed than at present, to redeem a distracted humanity.

All intellectuals, scholars, and experts in various fields and walks of life in the whole of Asia are, therefore, called to look at each other more closely, to discover our commonalities, to take stock of each other's strength and weakness, and to learn from each other's experiences and lessons. Thereby, India along with other Asian countries may march into the future centuries and millennia as partners in universal well-being, as intimate neighbours and cultural cousins. India is the homeland of Hinduism and Buddhism, and the whole of Asia is the repository of Hindu and Buddhist thought and culture; this pan-Asian cultural platform is the need of the times.

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NOTES

¹ Richard Wilhelm, "On the Sources of Chinese Taoism," *Journal of the North China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 45 (1914), pp. 1-12, p. 11.

² Masaharu Anesaki, *History of Japanese Religion* (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1930), p. 53.

PART IV

**SOCIAL CHANGE:
ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES**

CHAPTER XVI

THE PERSISTENCE OF MODERNITY: VALUE OPTIONS AMID MASSIVE HISTORICAL DISLOCATION¹

YU WUJIN

HOW SHOULD WE RESEARCH CONTEMPORARY CHINESE CULTURE?

Concepts of value always play a key role in culture. If we want to deeply understand a culture, and not be content with intuiting its various phenomena, such as tools, technical abilities, customs and institutions, then we must inspect its values. In contemporary Chinese culture, there are different trends of thought behind which hide various ideas of value, and even value systems. If we try to analyze all cultural trends one by one, we will be bound to lose ourselves in the minute differences between them. And in fact, many scholars have lost themselves in this way in studying contemporary Chinese culture. They have been researching the so-called “culture of tea,” “culture of wine,” “culture of games,” “culture of prostitution,” and so on, so that the whole culture has been broken to pieces. In other words, real contemporary Chinese culture as a unified whole has disappeared from their field of vision. So we must turn our attention back to important cultural problems, especially grand ideas of value, and away from these marginal cultural phenomena. Which problems are important for us to consider in order to understand contemporary Chinese culture? To answer this question we must reflect seriously on the historical situation of contemporary China.

Another difficulty in the study of culture lies in the fact that a scholar always has his own prejudices, which affect his research into everything, based on his own conceptions of value. In fact, scholars always place their own conceptions of value onto all objects they study, consciously or unconsciously. If the scholar fails to reflect critically on his own conceptions of value, but simply brings his own subjective ideas of value into his field of study, then his study will necessarily give rise to the wrong results. Hence a scholar must inspect his own conceptions of value before studying anything. And to make this critical self-inspection effective, he must have objective and reasonable value coordinates in advance, in order to inspect or reflect on his own conceptions of value. So how does one obtain objective value coordinates? In my opinion, these coordinates depend on understanding the historicity that hides in all basic trends of contemporary Chinese society. In order to firmly grasp this historicity, we must also seriously observe contemporary Chinese society.

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF “MASSIVE HISTORICAL DISLOCATION”?

By “massive historical dislocation” we mean the great time lag between contemporary Chinese society and contemporary Western society, as seen through the theory of morphology. This dislocation can be recognized in the following two historical stages of modern and contemporary China’s development. The first stage lasted from the late 1800s to the 1940s. Intellectuals of the late Qing Dynasty and the Republican period opposed invasions from and oppression by Western capitalist nations. They insisted on developing China’s domestic capitalist industry and commerce, in order to pursue wealth and power, and so resisted this foreign pressure. However, coincidentally, an influential socialist movement appeared in Western societies, exposing and criticizing the overall essence of Western capitalism. Consequently, intellectuals were in a quandary. Just as they sought Western capitalism as a great ideal, capable of solving China’s ills, the Western socialist movement was ripping capitalism to pieces in the lands of its birth. So, the question arose, should China develop capitalism or not? In this massive historical dislocation, most intellectuals lost their way, and began to naively accept socialist ideals. For example, Sun Yatsen (孫中山), who was a political representative of the national bourgeoisie, not only put forward such slogans as “equalizing land rights and controlling capital,” but also expressed explicitly his desire “to unite Russia, to unite the Communist Party and to help peasants and workers.” He thus became a quasi-communist.

During this period in China, a dual socialist influence was felt: externally, from the Soviet Union, and internally, from the newly revived traditional ideal of Datong (大同, meaning Great Harmony, an ideal and perfect society), which was seen as a primitive form of communism. Under this dual influence, many intellectuals accepted Marxism, under the name of socialism. For instance, the *Shen Bao Monthly* (申葆月報) published an influential special issue on “the modernization of China” in Shanghai in July of 1933, which discussed the problem of modernization in explicitly socialist terms.² The majority of scholars who took part in this discussion maintained that the realization of China’s modernization could not and should not rely on the sort of individualism which had been prevalent in Western countries for so long.

A second stage of this dislocation started in the 1950s, and continues today. The government began to put Soviet-style socialism into practice in China in 1949, particularly after the remoulding of capitalist industry and commerce in 1956. However, due to fear of the restoration of capitalism,³ this model of socialism regarded markets and the commercial economy with hostility, and tried to set up an ideal society using supra-economic forces. The failure of “the Great Leap Forward” (大躍進大跃进) in 1958, gave rise to so-called “natural calamities”

which lasted three years, and still the Chinese government was not able to rid itself fully of this model of socialism, even though a great controversy between China and Soviet Union arose in the sixties. Indeed, the government did not fully recognize the harm coming from this model of Socialism until the end of the Cultural Revolution. At that time they raised the slogan of “Four-Modernizations.” (四个现代化) These included the modernization of industry, agriculture, national defense, and science and technology; but all this was only empty talk in the disorder of the period.

Since 1978, modernization has truly become a goal and part of the common understanding for all China’s people. However, at the beginning of this transformation, the Chinese who sought to get rid of Soviet-style socialism could only imitate other models of socialism, such as that of Hungary, Yugoslavia, and Northern European, and so forth. Finally “socialist modernization with Chinese characteristics” became the new flag and rallying cry for reformers.⁴

Meanwhile, however, the new movement of post-modernism was appearing in the West, starting in the 60s and 70s, and becoming significant in the 80s and 90s. This movement reviewed the overall historical process of Western modernization, and acutely criticized the whole value system which guides modernity. As a result, another massive historical dislocation appeared. Westerners began the historical process of modernization several centuries ago, even as the Chinese fell into the deep sleep which Napoleon described, frozen in a traditional society based on an agricultural economy. Then, just as the Chinese made the historic decision to pursue modernization in the 70s and 80s, Westerners began to question the results of their own modernization. As a result, the contemporary Chinese have lost their way again. They now ask whether China needs to seek modernization or not.

By reflecting on this massive historical dislocation, we can recognize at last the real historicity of contemporary Chinese society, which is still engaged in the painful process of transition from a traditional to a modern society. The most essential events in contemporary China’s life-world lie in the development of her market economy and modernization, and in her transformation from a primitive ethical spirit centered on the family, to a spirit of modern law and morality centered on the individual and society.⁵ After understanding this real historicity of modern and contemporary Chinese society, we can see that the trends of cultural thought in contemporary Chinese society can be divided into three main periods or value systems: pre-modern or traditional, modern and post-modern. So long as we firmly grasp these three value systems, it is impossible for us to lose our way in minute cultural problems. At the same time, as critics of Chinese culture, we can get clues as to an objective and rational value coordinate, based on real historicity.

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF PRE-MODERNITY, MODERNITY AND POST-MODERNITY?

We find that these three concepts of “pre-modernity”, “modernity” and “post-modernity” are often used ambiguously. For example, in his book, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, J.F. Lyotard writes: “I will use the term modern to designate any science that legitimates itself with reference to a meta-discourse of this kind, making explicit appeal to some grand narrative, such as the dialectics of Spirit, the hermeneutics of meaning, the emancipation of the rational or working subject, or the creation of wealth.”⁶ Later, he writes “Simplifying to the extreme I define postmodern as incredulity toward meta-narrative. This incredulity is undoubtedly a product of progress in the sciences; but that progress in turn presupposes it.”⁷ Although these two passages give some indication of the concepts of “modern” and “postmodern”, their meanings are still not clear, at least not complete. In my thinking, it is better and clearer for us to regard these three concepts as three different leading value systems.

By the concept of “pre-modernity,” we mean the leading value system of a traditional society, in which a universal consciousness of modernization has not appeared, and a rigorous approach to the natural sciences also has not arisen. As a result, people maintain a special psychology of a fearful admiration of nature. Thus, ancient scholars, in general, insisted on concepts of harmony between nature and man. For instance, Lao Tzu says: “Tao obeys nature.”

Meanwhile, in traditional societies, people lived in communities based on blood lineage and hierarchical institutions. Everyone had a fixed status. Maybe he was a grandfather, a father, a brother, a son in a certain family, or a subject in some dynasty. But he was absolutely not a real individual or an independent personality. Such social structures were also mutually supported by official belief systems. Why was Confucianism given such weight by the ruling classes of so many dynasties in Chinese history, for instance? Because it is based on *xiao* (孝, a son’s filial obedience to his father) and *ti* (悌, a man’s love and respect for his elder brother). Both these beliefs were well-suited to the existence and development of those communities and hierarchical relationships which depended upon blood lineage. Another related concept, so-called *zhong* (忠, the relation of subjects to an emperor) was in turn based on *xiao*. This created a system which attempted to ensure that every family was stable, that is to say, all sons obedient to their fathers. And in turn, the whole country would be stable, because every subject was loyal to the emperor. Compared with men, women had no position in traditional Chinese society. They submitted themselves to their husbands, or to their sons after their husbands died.

By contrast, why were not the theories of Mohism and Legalism given more emphasis by the ruling classes? Precisely because the Mohist

concept of *jian ai* (兼爱, equal love, non-hierarchical love), and the legalist concept of *fa* (法, law), especially the consciousness of rights championed by Legalism, were in basic conflict with the fundamental values of traditional society. It became a truism among Chinese historians that the Qin Dynasty lasted only 15 years because its ruling thought stemmed mainly from Legalism. As a result, egalitarian Legalism was seen as a threat, and hierarchical Confucianism became the leading school of thought for the ruling classes of most historical periods in ancient Chinese society. In a sense, it can be said that the value system of Chinese pre-modernity was mainly embodied in ideas of Confucianism. So we can say that the leading value ideas in “pre-modernity” are as follows: harmony between nature and man, blood lineage, human feeling, hierarchical relationships, status institutions, worship of administrative power and ancestors, attaching importance to men and looking down on women, stressing agriculture and despising commerce, and so forth.

Now, what is the meaning of the concept “modernity”? This means the leading value system of a society that is seeking modernization, or has basically realized modernization. To my thinking, modern Europe (from the 16th century to the 1940s) represents such a society. Such a society has the following features:

First, the link between nature and man has undergone a decisive change. Together with the rise of the natural sciences in the 17th century and the invention of technology, a new set of ideas became popular: that natural resources are limitless, that man can completely conquer nature and ask for everything from nature infinitely. “Knowledge is power,” in the exciting phrase of Francis Bacon, and this embodied in full the heartfelt wish of human beings as conquerors. It reminds us of Caesar, the great commander of Rome, saying: “I came, I saw, I conquered.”

Second, along with the development of industrialization and commercialization comes a reform or revolution of traditional political institutions. Independent individuals or personalities, and contractual relationships among persons become the basis of the new society. If Leibniz’s ‘monad’ was a philosophical symbol of such individuality, then Defoe’s Robinson Crusoe was its literary symbol. In such societies, blood lineage and hierarchical relationships declined in importance, and the legal state becomes uniquely essential in daily life. The state and legal relationships affect family life; the poetic dignity of king and father in traditional society gives way to the popular point of view, “Everyone is equal before the law”. In some sense, Montesquieu’s *The Spirit of Law* describes the fundamental spirit of modern society and modernity.

Third, individuals in turn come under the protection of a new ‘civil society,’ which forms the basis of this state. Under the guidance of rationality, a complete set of political and social institutions suited to modernity were set up.

So we may say that the leading value ideas of modernity are as follows: admiration of science and technology, the belief that man can and

should conquer nature, the worship of rationality and of contractual relationships, human rights, individualism, freedom, equality, democracy, justice and so on.

By the concept of “post-modernity” we mean the leading value system which has been put forward by some Western intellectuals living in highly developed modern societies such as Western European countries, the United States, and so forth. Post-modernity comes from a comprehensive criticism of the leading value systems of modernity. The idea of modernization and its historical background has the following negative features, according to these critics:

First, modern technology controls the whole life of human beings. In *The Question Concerning Technology*, Heidegger points out that modern technology is not a neutral element in social life, and its essence is *Gestell* (which means ‘enframing’ in English): “where enframing reigns, there is danger in the highest sense”⁸ because the consciousness of enframing compels people to conquer nature unceasingly. Meanwhile, however, people are under the rule of modern technology. In his later works, Heidegger believed man should limit the infinite extension of his own subjectivity, and be peacefully coexistent with nature.

Second, National Socialism, especially the phenomenon of genocide, has become a touchstone for reflection on and criticism of modernity. How, critics ask, could the totalitarianism of National Socialists and their extermination camps have appeared in modern Europe, with all its long traditions of civilization, the spirit of freedom, justice, equality and universal love? In their work *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Horkheimer and Adorno see the Enlightenment as the origin of modernity, and show us how the spirit of the Enlightenment degenerated from reason, freedom and democracy into barbarity, totalitarianism and extermination. As is well known, in later years Heidegger was criticized severely by his students because he not only took part in the National Socialist movement, but also kept silent on its crimes.

Third, seen from a philosophical standpoint, Derrida’s theory of deconstruction, Wittgenstein’s anti-essentialism, Adorno’s negative dialectic, Foucault’s doctrine of knowledge and power, Levinas’ idea of the absolute other and Rorty’s negation of capital philosophy form a strong backlash against the value systems of modernity.

With the help of this critique, the leading value system of post-modernity comes into being. Its main content is: to cancel grand narratives, attack rationality, suspend universality, shake up certainty, negate essentialism and fundamentalism, deconstruct logo-centralism, eliminate the privileging of Western culture, and so forth.

HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE RELATIONS AMONG PRE-MODERNITY, MODERNITY AND POST-MODERNITY

First of all, we give our attention to the phenomenon that

Westerners are more interested in the relations between modernity and post-modernity, and are almost unconcerned about pre-modernity.⁹ By contrast, contemporary Chinese are more interested in the link between pre-modernity and modernity, and less interested in post-modernity. The discussion on the connection between modernity and post-modernity in Western countries has two antagonistic views. On the one hand, Jürgen Habermas' standpoint is to insist on modernity, and he put forward the theory of communicative action in order to overcome and transcend passive aspects of modernity. On the other hand, Derrida and Rorty try to set post-modernity against modernity. The former pays more attention to the continuity between these two concepts, but the latter notices more discontinuity.

As for the other discussion on the relations between pre-modernity and modernity in developing countries such as China, there are also two antagonistic views. Some scholars persist in believing that if the Chinese try to realize modernization in China in the future, then they will have to fundamentally discard traditional culture, especially the Confucianism which was so consistent with the basic ideas of pre-modernity. Other scholars believe that, supposing the Chinese want to promote the development of modernization, they must draw all invaluable elements from traditional culture, particularly from Confucianism. The former group only sees the gap between pre-modernity and modernity. However, the latter only take note of the union or continuities between the two.

According to my point of view, the above phenomenon is natural, because people always consider any problems from their own actual need and standpoint. As contemporary Chinese, we ought to put more weight on the relations between pre-modernity and modernity, but not to rule out post-modernity. In effect, only if we observe the overall connection among these three concepts, will it be possible for us to understand deeply the relationships between pre-modernity and modernity.

Then, we also pay attention to the phenomenon that the common enemy of pre-modernity and post-modernity is modernity. On the one hand, scholars who insist on pre-modernity often look for new ideas from post-modernity; on the other hand, scholars who insist on post-modernity always gain various inspirations from the literatures of pre-modern societies. In this situation, modernity has to struggle at the same time against pre-modernity and post-modernity. As far as modernity itself is concerned, certainly, there is an essential difference between the standpoints of pre-modernity and post-modernity. Pre-modernity criticizes modernity from the right, and hopes that Chinese society will stay in traditional form forever. Post-modernity criticizes from the left, and it tries to correct the errors of modernity.

THE PERSISTENCE OF MODERNITY: OUR CHOICE

How are we to choose our standpoint in the conflicts among pre-

modernity, modernity and post-modernity? This is a problem we cannot avoid. First, it is difficult for us to choose. If as a mother we regard traditional society and are concerned with pre-modernity, we perceive contemporary Chinese society and concern with modernity as a 'son' seeking modernization. Modernization is like a beautiful but flawed woman. Contemporary Western society concerned with post-modernity is like that son's friend who is divorced from that woman, modernity. The son's difficult position is: on the one hand, he loves this woman, modernity, very deeply. On the other hand, his mother and his friend try to persuade him not to love her, because she has many shortcomings. How does the son rid himself of this difficult situation? As Hamlet says: "To be or not to be".

Second, in our choice we must try to avoid the wrong attitude that we can call "standpoint drift." By this we mean that the majority of contemporary Chinese scholars do not take their own standpoint seriously enough, or recognize the value of their deep understanding of the real historicity of contemporary Chinese society. As a result, their standpoints are floating everywhere like drifting duckweed on a river. Some of them substitute the contemporary Western standpoint for their own. They worship post-modernism and deny completely the leading value of modernity and the idea of modernization. However, others put themselves into the standpoint of the ancient Chinese, whose conceptions were based on pre-modernity. When they do so, it is necessary for them to deny the leading value system of modernity in order to safeguard the main value ideas of pre-modernity. Obviously these two attitudes, or two different "standpoint drifts," are both wrong, and these scholars ought to go back to their own standpoints, based on real historicity, in order not to lose their way in the massive historical dislocation of contemporary Chinese society.

Third, we should persist in modernity and modernization as goals despite this great historical dislocation. It should be recognized that contemporary Chinese society is quite different from contemporary Western society, which has basically realized modernization. After realizing modernization, it goes without saying that contemporary Westerners want to reflect on and criticize negative elements of modernization and modernity. This is the current Western imperative in finding a better way of life and thinking, suited to this new world, so greatly changed by science and technology, as well as in the political, social and cultural environment.

However, for the contemporary Chinese, the process of modernization has just begun. They must persist in modernity. If they allow their own standpoint to be shaken under the influence of post-modernity or pre-modernity, China's modernization will be in danger of being aborted. History and practice have indicated that the value systems of modernity have some weaknesses by nature, and we will revise modernity in the process of China's modernization through absorbing rational elements from the critical inspection of pre-modernity and post-modernity.

In a word, as contemporary Chinese, we should adhere to seeking modernity and modernization over time, not allowing ourselves to be

shaken. Meanwhile we shall not refuse to study and understand both pre-modernity and post-modernity. Here we ought to bear in mind the saying of Dante, the great Italian poet:

Segui il tuo corso, e lascia rir le genti!
(Go along your own road, and let others laugh.)

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NOTES

[Abstract]: There is a time lag between the Chinese and the Western engagement of modernity. It is well known that while the Chinese have just begun to pursue modernization and modernity; Westerners have long systematically reflected and criticized modernity. What course of action shall we follow? That is a question every Chinese must quickly decide for himself. Either the Chinese should give up the search for modernity and modernization, hence satisfying the traditional idyllic life that holds to the identity of nature and man, or the Chinese should continue to pursue modernity.

The point of view in this paper is that the Chinese must start from the concrete situation of contemporary China, and persist in affirming the basic standpoint of “seeking modernity”; meanwhile they should absorb rational elements from the fact that modernism and post-modernism have criticized and reflected modernity, in order to revise and re-write modernity in the background amid this massive historical dislocation.

¹ It is said that Westerners first put forward the concept of “modernization” in the 1950s or 1960s. If so, Chinese intellectuals raised it earlier than Westerners. However, the consciousness of modernization of the Chinese was not of a rational type, but rather an emotional one, which was actually a protest against repression by Western capitalism.

² Lenin put forward an influential view, claiming that even small-scale commercial production tends to bring capitalism into being, night and day. Under the influence of this point of view, Mao Zedong was on careful guard over commodities, the commercial economy, and capitalism. In my opinion, China never had powerful large-scale capitalism, so why discuss “the restoration of capitalism”?

⁴ This is, in fact, also idle talk, because any country’s modernization necessarily has its own features.

⁵ Many people fail to understand this social phenomenon. The moral quality of Lei Feng (雷锋) had a great impact on Chinese in the sixties, but this was lost in nineties in the background of the market economy. Why? In my opinion, his moral quality belonged to the primitive ethical spirit emphasizing simple obligation, however, the spirit of the times has greatly changed. Now, people place more stress on the spirit of modern law and morality, and on emphasizing individual rights.

⁶ Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*, pp. xxiii-xxiv.

⁷ Lyotard, pp. xxiii-xxiv.

⁸ Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology*, p. 28.

⁹ R.J. Bernstein writes: “During the past decade – in virtually every area of cultural life – there has been an explosion of discourse about ‘modernity’ and ‘post-modernity’”. See Bernstein, *The New Constellation*, p. 199.

CHAPTER XVII

THE ROLES OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

ELINOR L. BROWN

The research of Dench (1986), Kymlicka (1995) and Lapidoth (1997), centered on the social, economic, and political structure of various nations, documents the prevalence of a tiered social-economic class system within virtually all modern societies. The foundation for these systems (ranging from progressive to autocratic and from inclusive to exclusionary, with many variations in between) is, moreover, effectively instilled and reinforced by public education. This article analyzes the foundation of a tiered class system, examines the role of public education in promoting and sustaining this practice in American society, and explores the appropriate roles of public education in transforming the tiered class system into an ethical pluralistic structure where all citizens receive an opportunity to fully participate in and reap the benefits from the social, intellectual and economic advantages of a dynamic contemporary society.

THE CLASS SYSTEM

Societies historically categorize, separate and integrate/marginalize cultural groups based on the economic, ethnic and religious biases of those in power. Brown (2005), Dench (1986), Kymlicka (1995) and Ogbu (1988) have identified four predominant variables that foster the acceptance, successful integration and upward mobility of some ethnic and cultural groups into the mainstream of a society: (1) ability to neutralize information deemed detrimental to the well-being of their community, thereby retaining control over the content and context of information their offspring are exposed to, (2) autonomy to preserve and practice their cultural traditions, which allow them to disseminate their authentic history to their offspring, (3) willingness by the established social order to value, respect and accept some of their customs, which minimizes the cultural conflict between the home and school and fosters cultural pride in their offspring, and (4) ability to compare their historic political and economic status with future opportunities and conclude that prospects would improve for their offspring.

Those marginalized or excluded from the mainstream occupy the least influential ranks in the hierarchy of a society and, therefore, are restricted in their pursuit of political and economic upward mobility which is precursor to acceptance by and inclusion in the core society. In the

writings of Freire (1970), Kymlicka (1995) and Spindler and Spindler (1989), one finds five detriments that keep these groups near the bottom of the social, economic and political echelon of society, namely: (1) their physical characteristics, religious commitment, or access to capital (race and lack of economic power make these cultural groups easily identifiable and controllable), (2) coerced relinquishment of cultural autonomy which subverts the cultural mores and historic frames of reference for their offspring, (3) systematic erosion of their ability to recognize and neutralize adverse communications, which fosters the pervasive economic exploitation and political dominance of their offspring, (4) refusal by those in power to affirm, value and integrate those cultural values deemed compatible with mainstream society which promotes social-cultural perversion, and (5) belief that current and future opportunities will not improve or increase within the existing societal structure, which precipitates the proclivity of their offspring to develop detrimental social and academic behaviors.

As McLaren (1994), Ogbu and Gibson (1991) and Spring (2004) have observed, the primary responsibilities as perceived by the privileged class are to ensure internal political stability, advance the economic agenda of its class members, promulgate their own traditions and beliefs, and enhance their nation's international prominence and power. Ogbu (1988), Shor (1992) and Spring (2001) contend that by manipulating the educational process, the privileged class can create and redefine history to influence and control the cultural frames of reference of all other social and economic classes within a society, regulate the context in which all other cultures function in relation to itself, dictate which cultures enter mainstream society and which remain marginalized, and make certain that power and wealth pass primarily to its own offspring.

Though the agendas of the privileged classes tend to be universal, the method of indoctrination via public education systems varies from nation to nation. Dench (1986), Freire (1985), Hirsch (1996), McLaren (1986) and Oakes (1985) have identified three historically common practices: (1) denying access to free public education (in, for example, Israel, Nigeria and India), (2) providing limited or inferior facilities and resources (in, for example, South Africa, England and China), and (3) divisive manipulation of history and culture (in, for example, Nazi Germany, Communist Poland, and Italy). America has used public education to apply all three strategies to different segments of its population and has, as recently as 1998, attempted to legislate the denial of access to public education for some (i.e., the children of undocumented workers in California).

Admission to mainstream American society was originally reserved for those of Northern European descent who embodied Anglo-Saxon culture and had reached middle or upper class economic status. But the rise of the industrial age, and the need to quickly develop a significant dependable, urban labor force elevated many Eastern Europeans and Irish Catholics (but

few people of color) to working and middle class status in mainstream American society.

TWO CENTURIES OF AMERICAN PUBLIC EDUCATION

Cremin (1970) and Franklin (1978) reported that colonial America saw a need to collectively educate its young white males as early as 1642. This initial entry into free public education was meant to redirect the moral, social and religious attitudes and behaviors of incoming groups, institute an Anglo-Saxon-centered national culture, and maintain the social and economic status of the privileged class. The colonists intended to accomplish these goals while also cultivating national economic independence and promoting awareness of and respect for colonial law. Later, the end of the Civil War brought, for the first time, access to free public education for the nation's former slave population. But "free" did not mean "equal", nor were equality and equity the intent of public education. Brown (2005), Banks (1995), Comer (1989), Cremin (1988), Giroux (1988) and Spring (2004) contend that the formal education process in America's public schools then and now reinforces those societal standards dictated by the privileged class, while negating the worth of values and traditions advanced by those on the lower spectrum of the social and economic echelons.

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the children of newly arrived Eastern European immigrants experienced a segregated and standardized public educational process. Unlike Blacks and American Indians, however, these newcomers sensed the promise of economic prosperity and assimilation into the mainstream society. Katz (1987), Oakes (1985) and Shor (1992), among others, depicted the expanded role of free public education during this age of industrialization as an interdependent blending of economic development and social engineering. Public schools served to: (1) develop, train and deploy a large immigrant urban workforce, (2) instill a work ethos of punctuality and compliance, (3) sort, label and track the various cultural groups into economic classes, (4) reinforce the division of labor and distribution of wealth, and (5) maintain the political and economic status quo. To a remarkable extent, these purposes survive in America's public schools today, as documented by, for example, Banks (1995), Gay (1993), Kozol (1991), McLaren (1994), Shor (1992), and Spring (2001).

Gollnick and Chinn (2004), Katz (1987) and Tyler (1944) used the treatment of Eastern European and Irish Catholic immigrants to illustrate the utilitarianism of public education in the United States – a tool for indoctrinating cultural requisites, religious prejudice, and a social class hierarchy. Public education provided a persuasive argument for inducing immigrants and their children to condone, embrace, reinforce, and perpetuate the established social and economic structure while fostering their belief that through assimilation and diligence they too would achieve economic and political stature. By the third generation, many of these

immigrants had indeed divested themselves of much of their cultural traditions and been absorbed into mainstream society. However, those in power continued to use this same educational system to stigmatize, ostracize and marginalize such peoples of color as African Americans, indigenous groups and Latinos.

America ushered in the twentieth century with advances in mass communication, transit and production. The associated and increasing demand for unskilled labor induced many marginalized people to move to large metropolitan areas seeking employment for themselves and a better education and future their children. But even in the large urban cities, public education remained separate and blatantly unequal, and it continued to nurture and reinforce the division between the haves and have-nots.

The Civil Rights movement of the 1960s included with it the demand by marginalized groups for educational equity, legal redress, political control, and the right to full participation in the educational process and economic prosperity of American society. Accordingly, the contemporary precepts of multicultural education at last reached into the public schools. Though some advances in educational equity have since occurred, many of the sustained deculturalization and discrimination practices found by Bennett (2003), Franklin (1978), Kozal (1991), Spring (2004) and Takaki (1993) remain evident in schools today. There is a failure to advocate for the right of all children to participate fully in mainstream society. Public education continues to protect the rights of the privileged to participate fully in the economic prosperity, political freedom, and cultural independence of mainstream society. At the same time it conveys the message that children of color and those in poverty are culturally inferior, intellectually incompetent, and therefore, will continue to be economically dependent.

By the 1970s, American technology brought all of American society into the information age. Although southern peoples of color continued to migrate north seeking the American dream in the factories and sweatshops of urban ghettos, the market for unskilled labor was being replaced by the demand for a labor force trained in science and technology. Additionally, the mass media provided the lens through which both privileged and marginalized groups became delineated in the popular mind – stereotyped, their societal roles reinforced. Cultural groups could now visualize themselves and those outside of their frames of reference in the media, and those who controlled the media could redefine class and acceptable culture almost at will by stereotyping, excluding and discriminating against the poor and peoples of color. Moreover, the distribution of wealth along racial lines became more apparent and the inequities in public education became more blatant. This growing disparity added another function to the roles of public education: the imposition of the “hidden curriculum” of social welfare dependence and learned helplessness for students of color and those in poverty.

Comer (1989), Kozol (1991), Shor (1992) and Spring (2004) characterized today's urban public schools attended by children of color and the poor as institutions burdened by inadequate staffing and funding, deteriorated facilities, and an antagonistic bureaucratic system. Gay (1993), McLaren (1986), Ogbu (1992) and Tatum (1992) found students of color systematically indoctrinated with the perception of being socially, culturally and intellectually inferior to their white peers. Their rewards include social and economic apartheid, core culture dependence, and a perceived belief that they are helpless to improve their ranks within society. On the other hand, Kozol (1991) and Barnard and Burner (1975) both observed that public schools in the mainstream culture functioned in well equipped and adequately funded buildings with full competent and attentive staffs. They validated the community culture and presented a curriculum that prepared students to succeed in higher education, assume positions of management and ownership, and become socially responsible contributors to society.

THE REALITIES OF A CLASS-DRIVEN PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM

American public education has perpetuated the division of society into four major social and economic classes: the privileged elite, the middle class, the working class, and the impoverished. Gollnick and Chinn (2004), Kozol (1991) and Takaki (1993) contend that the working and middle classes often appear to serve as buffers between the poor and elite. Many economic, political and cultural benefits, however, can be attributed to the social class engineering practiced by the public school systems in America.

In little more than 200 years of independence, America has risen from 13 colonies to a united global economic, political and military power. Today, America influences the governmental policies and practices of nations around the globe. Its ingenuity and progress in technology, biological sciences, agriculture and e-commerce have brought to the world numerous advances in medicine, conservation, space exploration and communication. Admission to its institutions of higher education is sought after by students and professionals the world over.

However, the long term pernicious effects of public K-12 education upon contemporary American society are becoming painfully apparent both nationally and globally. One can quickly enumerate at least seven such consequences: (1) an increasing dependence on external intellectual and skilled human capital, (2) the exportation of financial resources by an imported labor force, (3) a marked increase in internal civil unrest among marginalized groups and white middle class youth, (4) a swelling number of disenfranchised and poverty-stricken children, (5) the continued drain on shrinking resources by a growing incarcerated population, and (6) an excessive demand for alcohol, drugs and illegal substances by broader segments of the mainstream population. As a result (7) many nations now perceive America as an adversary that is attempting to spread its social class

structure and culture throughout the globe. Finally, the working classes and lower middle classes have begun to slip more toward poverty than true middle class status, the economic gap between rich and poor is widening and the children of the middle classes, for the first time, are economically no better off than their parents.

EQUITABLE PUBLIC EDUCATION IN A CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

Contemporary scholars such as C. Banks (2001), Brown (2000), Hirsch (1996) and Pang (2001) suggest that the primary responsibility of educators should be to motivate each student to make a positive transition from the community to mainstream society. This is to be done by providing an intellectually challenging, culturally relevant, and compassionate educational environment conducive to both the social and academic learning process. Social anthropologists, psychologists, and others like Allport (1979) and Brown (2005) suggest that the education and socialization process begins with the inculcation of the family culture, and then depends on that foundation to foster the first social interaction within one's own community. Giroux (1988) reasoned that formal education should, and often does for some, reinforce and build on these foundations to blend the student's traditions and values with core societal standards. One who reads Freire (1985) and Spindler and Spindler (1989) notices that this educational process equips the child with the tools to successfully transition into mainstream society and will eventually promote global political and economic order and equity.

It seems apparent that societies must recognize public education's appropriate role in and responsibility for the academic and social development of its children and their eventual productive participation in mainstream society and the global community. There are both political disagreement about the role of education and debate over the role of higher education in developing competent classroom teachers to promote the appropriate role of public schooling. Many educators now advocate replacing the traditional function of education with one that achieves, in McLaren's (1994) words, a "socially conscious and culturally neutral" learning environment that encourages both teachers and students to become social transformation agents. Some advocate the theory that public education's only legitimate mission is to provide today's learner with the "basic" critical thinking and interpersonal skills they need to matriculate to higher education and meet the demands of tomorrow's commerce. Feirer (1970), Gay (1993) and Pang (2001) emphasize the importance of using experience as the primary frames of reference for developing a knowledge base and modifying behavior deemed incompatible with the core society.

But while each of these proposals has validity, in a contemporary society they must act collectively if public education is to prepare all future generations, regardless of their class status, to become productive, fulfilled

citizens. This requires that they possess the ability to establish and perpetuate a non-exploitive society, and ensure all citizens an opportunity to reach their intellectual limits. Furthermore, educators must convey in their conduct the credibility and value of a pluralistic society that supports legal decision making based on moral and ethical judgment.

Elements that influence moral and ethical judgment and conduct include those factors that, according to Kohlberg (1976), regulate the behavior and thinking patterns of individuals. Kohlberg (1976) further suggested that moral decision-making requires both social interaction and role-taking. When multicultural information and cross-cultural social interactions conflict with the values and traditions of educators with limited cross-cultural experiences, the motivation toward multicultural cognitive and moral teaching can be impeded (Bennett, 2003; Brown, 2004; Gay, 2000; Giroux, 1988; Gollnick and Chinn, 2004). Hence, contemporary educators must become competent cultural brokers and develop, maintain and disseminate effective cultural, moral and ethical conflict resolution strategies for themselves and their students.

For cultural conflict resolution to occur, C. Banks (2001), Brown (2004), Gollnick and Chinn (2004) recommend that educators remain cognizant of their own personal biases toward “others”, society’s apathy toward the plight of those in poverty, and the hidden agenda of those who currently control the formal dissemination of knowledge. Educators can accomplish this with directed and intensive pre-service training.

On another note, to influence the intellectual and moral judgment of youth in contemporary society, educators must compete with the compelling pull of the mass media, various national and local agendas, and many nontraditional cultures. Therefore, to maximize the positive influence of schooling, teacher training must also help classroom instructors develop strategies that (1) constructively reinforce and expand respect for the community from which the students come, (2) encourage the formation of critical thinking skills among all students, (3) nurture the use of moral and ethical judgment to analyze, blend or neutralize information, and (4) provide each student with the ability to recognize and resist efforts to relegate any cultural group to the fringe. In this way, educators can become both advocates for and active participants in the development of a non-exploitive, legally and morally just contemporary nation that promotes freedom of thought and the rights of all citizens to participate in and benefit from the economic prosperity of a pluralistic society.

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CHAPTER XVIII

THE EMERGING EAST ASIAN IDENTIFICATION: A CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

YU XINTIAN

An important result of the international division of labor in recent decades is the formation and rise of the East Asian region. "Region" not only refers to a geographical, economic and political formation but also includes psychological and cultural identification. Without the latter, the concept of region is incomplete and infirm. People have noticed that East Asian identification has taken shape. Thus, the causes and characteristics of this identification, its significance to East Asian international relations, and its problems and prospects are worth an in-depth study. This paper will present my views in order to solicit suggestions.

CAUSES AND CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF EAST ASIAN IDENTIFICATION

What is meant by identification? It can be divided into domestic and international domains. Here it refers to international identification, also called collective identification. Identification is a cognitive process in which the Self-Other distinction becomes blurred and at the limit is transcended altogether. Collective identification merges the Self and the Other into a single identity. Collective identity involves shared characteristics, but not all shared characteristics involve identification. The French and the Algerians both speak French, but they do not identify with each other. Collective identity, in short, is a distinct combination of role and type identities, one with the casual power to induce actors to define the welfare of the Other as part of that of the Self, to be altruistic. Altruistic actors may still be rational, but the basis on which they calculate their interests is the group or team.¹ The identification of East Asian countries is a kind of regional collective identification and, to a considerable extent, is related to economic globalization and regional integration. We have found regional organizations and identification of all forms in the world. The birth of the East Asian identification or identity is something that has happened only in recent years. East Asia includes Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia. Southeast Asia was integrated through the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in the 1970s and 1980s. Soon afterwards, Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir set forth the proposal of setting up the East Asian Economic Caucus in 1991, to which the Chinese government responded. Though developed countries such as the U.S. took exception to and even

obstructed it, at the time of the first Eurasian meeting, East Asian countries held consultations on this proposal and naturally formed the framework of the enlarged ASEAN plus China, Japan and the Republic of Korea (ROK). East Asian regional cooperation in an embryonic form thus appeared.

In the meantime, academics in these countries explored a number of plans and ideas for East Asian cooperation, such as the China-Japan-ROK Economic Cooperation Circle, 10+1, 10+3, the Tumen River Area Development Zone and the Mekong River Delta Development Project. The Asian financial storm in 1997 spurred East Asian countries in resisting the negative effects of economic globalization, and leading the possibility of an East Asian identification to enter a new phase. Japan has signed the Free Trade Agreement with Singapore and is discussing a similar agreement with the ROK. China and the ASEAN have declared that they will set up a free trade zone in 2010, and China is intensifying its efforts to reach China-Japan-ROK and China-Japan-ROK-ASEAN free trade agreements. Close economic intercourse between East Asian countries is unprecedented and economic interdependence between them is growing. Interest interrelation is the basis of regional identification, while recognition of shared interests is the key to promoting identification. Around 1997, the economic intercourse between East Asian countries did not undergo qualitative change immediately, but their leaders and peoples made a leap in the process of cognition, understanding that only by relying on collective strength can the negative effects of economic globalization be resisted. As a result, regional identification was intensified. Moreover, the vigorous development of regional cooperation mechanisms also raised regional identification to a higher level. For example, after the Chinese government decided to set up a free trade zone with the ASEAN, in 2002, it decided to exempt Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam from debts totaling US\$ 3 billion. This is obviously an act of combining China's interests with those of other countries.

The first characteristic of the East Asian identity is the position of East Asian countries on modernization. The enthusiastic pursuit of modernization and learning from Western culture are the bases of the East Asian identity. East Asian cultures are rich and diversified, but in the current international system, they have accepted international standards coming mainly from the West, such as sovereign equality, nonaggression and mutual respect, providing, therefore, a combination of self-interest and the Other's interest. A Western theorist holds that when the world is considered in a state of anarchy, because of differences in identity, state-to-state relations can be defined as three different kinds of anarchy: Hobbesian anarchy, Lockean anarchy and Kantian anarchy, i.e., enmity, rivalry and friendship. The process of East Asian countries changing from enmity in the Cold War period to rivalry and friendship, or from Lockean anarchy to Kantian anarchy, is a great leap forward. If relations among East Asian countries were still those characterized by Hobbesian anarchy — the state of the weak being the prey of the strong — East Asian identity would have

never been achieved. After World War II, sovereign equality has been achieved by the majority of countries in the world, and this has laid a foundation for identification, though it will not lead to it with certainty.

East Asian countries have moved a step further. Their achievements in modernization are not only economic growth but also reforms in system and ideology. To accept the market economy means to recognize individual rights, individual values and competition. East Asian countries not only have set up a modern political system in the light of the Western model, but also have actively pushed for democratization, particularly after the end of the Cold War. Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir has often been criticized by Westerners for criticizing the West and advocating Asian values, but he repeatedly stresses in his works the necessity of learning from Western culture. He said that the fact that one champions Asian values does not necessarily mean that Western values are bad. They could also be good; we do not live in a simplistic either-or world. But we live in a culture different from the Western one, and, hope that cultures besides Western culture can be respected. Everyone should be open-minded enough to ponder other possibilities. Mahathir does not agree with calling the 21st century “the Asian Century,” advocating instead that this is a “world century” and that all countries, nations and regions should enjoy the same opportunities.² There is no need to cite the views of other Asian elites. The majority of them know that East Asian countries must learn from the West to give impetus to the process of modernization. Mahathir’s view is representative, that is, Asians, like the majority of peoples in developing countries, tend to cultural relativism and want to contend for an equal position with Western culture.³

The second characteristic of East Asian identity is that it embodies the commonalities and similarities of East Asian cultures. East Asia is the converging point of the Chinese cultural circle, the Indian cultural circle, and the Islamic cultural circle. In their long historical intercourse, the three cultures have influenced one another, changed their respective faces and extended to include features of one another. The things in common among them surpass those between them and Western culture. For instance, Buddhist culture not only dominates in some Southeast Asian countries but also has had a huge influence on China, Japan and the ROK. Under the impact of Chinese culture and Indian culture, the formation of Islamic culture in East Asia is quite different from that in the Arabian Peninsula. The basic creed is the same, but cultural manifestations and explanations are different. Arabia lays stress on tribe, while Southeast Asia stresses family and clan, respect of parents, respect of the state, and emphasis on education. Arabia advocates force and blood revenge, while East Asia values harmony and peace. East Asian cultures have many common tendencies, such as social harmony, cliquism based on clan, emphasis on education, and respect of authority. They not only have exerted impact on the psychology and behavior of the broad masses of people, but also have given birth to a political culture with East Asian characteristics. East Asian countries have

learned from and absorbed Western values in the process of nativization, just as light is refracted by glass. In this process, native cultures have been renewed and transformed, taking new shapes. On this basis, the cultural values of the East Asian elite have much commonality.

In 1994, David Hitchcock, former Director for East Asia and Pacific Affairs at the US Information Agency, circulated a questionnaire to the elite in the U.S. and East Asia. He asked them, including this author, to choose six societal values and five personal values that they think are the most important. The order of societal values which East Asia thinks are the most important was as follows: 1. having an orderly society; 2. societal harmony; 3. ensuring the accountability of public officials; 4. being open to new ideas; 5. freedom of expression; and 6. respect for authority. But the order of the U.S. was different. 1. freedom of expression; 2. individual rights; 3. individual freedom; 4. open debate; 5. thinking for oneself; 6. accountability of public officials. Obviously, East Asia placed more emphasis on order, harmony and respect for authority, while the U.S. paid more attention to individual rights, open debate and freedom of expression. As for the most important personal values, 39 percent of East Asian respondents and only 19 percent of Americans chose “fulfilling obligations to others” while 59 percent of U.S. respondents and only 33 percent of East Asians chose “individual achievements”. And 69 percent of East Asians and only 15 percent of Americans stressed respect for learning, and 48 percent of East Asians and only 22 percent of Americans emphasized self-discipline.⁴ Not a few surveys have shown that East Asia has shared or held similar cultural values – values that are quite different from Western ones. This is the cultural source of the East Asian identity.

East Asian values have influence not only on the elite but also on the youth, which shows the strength of cultural inheritance and indicates the future of East Asian cultures. This is the third characteristic of the East Asian identity. Scholars of China, Japan and the ROK made a survey of values of the youth, the result of which is very interesting. The values of the youth in these three countries are clearly modernization-oriented. Less than 10 percent of young respondents approved of the traditional family with the authority of husband. More than 50 percent thought that relations between generations were friendly. Less than 20 percent held that politics be dealt with only by politicians. Less than 25 percent considered it necessary to generally extend respect to authorities. Meanwhile, traditional Confucian culture exists in their values. Over 77 percent of respondents were proud or relatively proud of their own country and 80 percent of them were strongly or relatively strongly willing to serve their country. Most of them welcomed foreigners as their neighbors, which indicated an openness in their private life. But when dealing with national and foreign relations, more respondents in China and the ROK chose national interests, while the proportion of respondents choosing world interests in Japan was the highest. More than 80 percent of young respondents in the three countries advocated inheritance of traditional national culture but showed no hostility to Western

culture. Less than 20 percent considered Western culture as one that made people hostile.⁵

The fourth characteristic of the East Asian identity is that Japan is quite different from other East Asian countries in cultural diachronism. As is known to all, besides synchronism, culture has the feature of diachronism, that is, manifestations related to the degree of social development. In this regard, the ideological trends and value judgments of the Japanese are closer to those of Western developed countries, but of course they also have the characteristics of Japanese culture. Other East Asian countries are closer to one another and are farther away from Japan in cultural diachronism.⁶ For example, Japanese youth pay more attention to global interests, while the youth in other countries lay more emphasis on national interests. This is an issue we cannot ignore in understanding the East Asian identity.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EAST ASIAN IDENTITY

As Alexander Wendt points out, without interests identities have no motivational force, without identities interests have no direction.⁷ Identification gives East Asian countries collective identities, guiding them to seek interests through cooperation. According to Realism, every country is egotistic and wants to pursue its interests as far as possible. This is to some extent correct, but it cannot explain many issues such as why European countries have renounced part of their national interests to form the European Union. Interests naturally have their objectivity, but they also have subjectively recognized factors, behind which is the role of culture. The gap in strength between Japan and Malaysia is very wide and no doubt both of them seek their respective national interests, but they are quite different in cultural psychology of cognizing and defining interests. In World War II, Japan invaded Malaysia, but now Japan forges friendly relations with Malaysia. National interests refer to the possibility of countries maintaining subsistence, security, development and dignity. In all these respects, identification will change people's definition of national interests and the channels of seeking these interests. The ASEAN from a beneficial position has conducted with skill free trade cooperation respectively with India, China and Japan. This is related to drastic changes in the mutual definition of interests. The ASEAN no longer feels apprehension about any big power, and it is impossible for any big power, to regard the ASEAN as being in its sphere of influence.

Security is the most sensitive issue in sovereignty. On this issue, the definition of interests by East Asian countries has changed subject to identification. In fact, there still exist territorial, border and sea area disputes among East Asian countries, but they have begun to settle these disputes through peaceful consultation. In those cases where they have been unable to resolve the disputes, they have shelved them for a short while. Singapore and Malaysia as well as Malaysia and Indonesia have peacefully resolved their border and other disputes. After the 1970s, when oil was discovered in

the South China Sea, six countries and regions respectively occupied several islands and there were signs that further actions would be taken. Following the Asian financial crisis, China and the ASEAN discussed this problem for years and issued the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, adopting a code of conduct for maintaining the status quo.

The September 11 attacks again sounded a warning to East Asian countries and spurred their new understanding of nontraditional security. Terrorism, drug-trafficking, weapons-trafficking, transnational crime, AIDs and other activities all transcend borders, so leaders of East Asian countries have no choice but to join hands. With Singapore outlawing Islamic underground organizations and the bombings in Bali as catalysts, East Asia has set up a framework of exchanging and sharing intelligence about terrorist activities and money laundering. In the field of environmental protection, as the destructive smoke resulting from Indonesia burning the grass on wasteland caused other countries' economies to suffer, an agreement on cooperation in preventing the destructive smoke was signed. In 2003, when the SARS occurred, leaders of China and the ASEAN met and jointly adopted effective measures to fight against the disease. They planed to set up an Asian fund into which China pledged US\$ 1.2 million and Thailand US\$ 0.25 million. At the same time, nations also reiterated their commitments to keep their borders and economies open, showing their will for mutual understanding and working together. It was at this summit that Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao declared that China decided to enter into the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia. The identification between China and the ASEAN has been further enhanced. Nontraditional security has pushed ahead cooperation on matters of traditional security. It is important to note that since 2002 China has attended the Cobra Gold military exercises in Thailand as an observer.

It goes without saying that identification can promote common development. East Asia has formed multilevel and multiform cooperation mechanisms. Indeed, the ASEAN was once worried about foreign investment transferring to China. In the 1990s, the foreign capital the ASEAN absorbed accounted for 30 percent of that flowing into Asia, but in 2000 it dropped to 10 percent. Most has transferred to China. Lee Kuan Yew, Singaporean Senior Minister, said that though China had absorbed more foreign capital than Southeast Asia, its economic growth would benefit countries in this region. He predicted that in the coming 30 to 50 years, Southeast Asia, China, the ROK and Japan would form a chain production and operation group, which would re-divide the Asian economic territory. This identification has produced obvious results. China's market demands have brought along East Asian prosperity. In 2001, China's trade volume with East Asian trade partners (excluding Japan) accounted for 40 percent of its total volume and its foreign investment from East Asia accounted for 67 percent of its total.

When East Asia was in contact only with the U.S. and Japan, the industries in East Asian countries had the same structure and lacked

horizontal contact. After China's rise, East Asian horizontal economic contacts have been greatly strengthened and endogenous economic variables are gradually becoming the leading force of development. Between 1990 and 2001, exports from Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia to China increased by 600 percent, while that to Japan, Europe and the U.S. only 250 percent. China has had a deficit in its trade with the ASEAN, so ASEAN countries have benefited a lot. It has also supported the economic resurgence of Japan and the ROK. Osamu Watanabe, Chairman of the Japan External Trade Organization, recently pointed out that East Asian economy is rapidly developing and a new Pacific industrial zone from Japan and China to Southeast Asia is taking shape. The strategy of the Japan External Trade Organization will no longer focus on Europe and the U.S. but has transferred its focus to Asia. In 2002, Japan's economic leaders changed their views of "the China threat" and "hollowed industry", holding that Japan should upgrade their knowledge-related industries rather than complaining about neighboring countries. This is also a drastic change in interests and identification.

East Asian identification will further enhance the confidence of East Asian countries as the success and affirmation of East Asian cultures is the motive force of promoting economic success. Max Weber summarized the Western capitalist spirit, that is, individualism, market competition, *laissez faire*, etc. However, the East Asian work ethic and corporate spirit are very different. Individuals are meaningful only in organizations. Everyone must observe his or her responsibilities and obligations in organizations and attach importance to mutual cooperation. An American scholar, Michael Bond, investigated 40 values in 22 countries and found that East Asia placed special emphasis on respect, humbleness, frugality, will-power, sense of shame, mutual courtesy, steadiness, reputation, tradition and others. Yu Shaohua, of the National University of Singapore, investigated the values of enterprise managers in Singapore and Malaysia and agreed about the interrelation between cultural background and economic development. Of course, the importance of political system and economic structure is not excluded. Samuel P. Huntington affirmed East Asian cultures' role in the economy in his latest work. He found that around 1960 the economic level and structure of the ROK was similar to Ghana. Thirty years later, the ROK became an industrial giant in the world, while Ghana's per capita GNP was only one fourteenth of the ROK. There were many reasons, but culture was an important factor.⁸

In the same work, three scholars from developing countries maintained that poverty, autocracy and injustice in Africa and Latin America had resulted from traditional cultural values.⁹ Although after the East Asian financial crisis many people rejected East Asian cultures and their values, many experts have strengthened the positive evaluation of East Asian cultures. Du Weiming wrote that the West is the source of modernization, but East Asian modernization has a cultural form quite different from that of Western Europe and North America. If the West

seriously understands the modernity of East Asia, it will be sharper in seeing the strong and weak points of its model to the rest of the world. This will be a big step for the West and other areas of the world towards promoting real exchanges. Without such exchanges, there will be no basic trust and effective cooperation between civilizations.¹⁰ The successful experiences of East Asian countries are inspiring for other ethnic groups. Culture cannot be simply transplanted but can nevertheless be learned from. After the Asian financial crisis, East Asia has no longer simplistically regarded culture as the cause of economic development, but rather the chance of understanding economic development and the background of improving institutions. The deeper people think, the better they can explore the role of culture in economic development.

Another significant feature of East Asian identification is that it has enhanced the East Asian position in the international arena as well as its collective self-esteem. While the U.S. is making efforts to establish a Pan-American free trade zone and Europe will become a stronger actor, East Asia is able to match them in economic strength, but it lacks mechanization. Only deepened identification can promote strengthened organization and only an integrated East Asia can play a bigger role in the world. In the past hundreds of years, the Western powers have destroyed most of the civilizations and societies in the world and negated or changed local cultures and morals by means of Christianity, law, and trade, besides force. The West has presented itself as the spiritual teacher of other ethnic groups and determined the destiny of them in accordance with its standards. While dominating the world with its hard power, the West has also taken precedence in soft power. The rise of East Asian countries will enable East Asia to get its thought, cultures, and value systems onto the international stage, to set forth its propositions, to participate in the reform of the international order, to establish international organizations, to adjust international mechanisms and to distribute international interests as well as to affirm its existence with its unique political culture. This has made the West strongly feel the challenge of heterogeneous cultures and the overturn of the rule of its culture. As early as 1980, the famous British politician Roderick MacFarquhar pointed out that in the next century the Russian challenge will come from the military, the Middle East challenge will come from the economy, while only East Asia will pose an all-round challenge to the West, from the style of economic development to basic values. Indeed, only East Asia, in its high-speed economic growth, clearly put forward "Asian values", which aroused hot debates and will also arouse debates in the future. I always hold that the proposal of the "Asian values" itself is of political significance, which will increase rather than decrease.

The development of the current East Asian cultures has undergone two phases. The first phase was from the 1960s to the end of the Cold War, in which a new East Asian culture was formed and "Asian values" were put forward. Since the end of the Cold War, East Asian cultures entered the second phase, in which an East Asian identification has taken shape and

developed. This phase may take decades. East Asia will strive for its due rights and have a louder voice in the international political arena. Its unique cultural identification will be one of its weapons. However, this is definitely not Huntington's so-called clash of civilizations. The reason is that the East Asian people have undergone painful colonial and semicolonial rule and cultural coercion. Western countries have no such experience. For this reason, it is difficult for them to understand the excellence and greatness of the diversified cultures of the world, which is their misfortune. Judging from the present phase, the East Asian identification has just started and is still paving the way for East Asia striving for international position. Even if it achieves this objective, East Asia will not advocate autocracy. It is not only because East Asian ethnic groups have suffered from enslavement and are unwilling to impose sufferings on others, but also because the values East Asian cultures stress can better contain the essence of human thought and cultures. Arnold Toynbee pointed out that the peace and unity he foresees are bound to center about the geographic and cultural spindle and to continuously crystallize. He had a premonition that the spindle is not in the U.S., Europe and the Soviet Union, but in East Asia.¹¹

PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF EAST ASIAN IDENTIFICATION

The East Asian region is full of hope, but there are crises and challenges as well. First, East Asian identification is in its embryonic stage and has to grow, blossom and bear fruit in fighting against hardship. East Asian integration is still a difficult matter. There is a wide gap in the level of economic development and political system between countries, which is the objective cause. The special emphasis of countries on their own national interests is the subjective cause. All countries have obviously recognized the necessity of integration, but the process of realizing it will be one of balancing and coordinating their respective political wills. Challenges are greater on the matter of security. How two divided countries can move to reunification is one conspicuous instance. Disputes over borders and territorial waters between countries have not yet been finally settled. Arms expansion does not proceed from actual need but rather from the desire to surpass neighboring countries. What impacts will bilateral or multilateral military alliances have on regional security? Tense relations between ethnic groups and religions and unequal distribution of wealth, which may ferment nontraditional security threats, have also perplexed countries in the region. As many problems cannot be resolved simply through bilateral efforts, countries tend to move in the direction of regional integration. The EU is one example of regional integration, but it is not clear what model East Asia will adopt. This depends not only on East Asia's further development in politics and economy but also on the depth and characteristics of East Asian cultural identification.

Second, though East Asian religions are in general modest and plural, extremism is rising inside them, creating an atmosphere for such nontraditional security threats as terrorism. In Northeast Asia, the emergence of churches such as the Falun Gong and the Aum Supreme Truth arguably reflects the influence of extremism. In Southeast Asia, problems are more complicated. Most Southeast Asian countries have a dominant religion, which plays an official or tacit role in societal life. A religious renaissance has quietly taken place during the period of economic growth and social progress. Economic globalization has promoted people's self-awareness and regression to the vernacular culture. Many Malaysian students have returned to their homeland, where they have taken a more active part in Islamic activities; of course, they do not oppose modern science and technology. Southeast Asian Muslims are very proud of the important role the Middle East Islamic countries play in the international arena. To make their complicated and diversified societies more cohesive, some governments of Southeast Asian countries declare that they are protectors of Islam. Though the heads of governments are unwilling to see the situation of religion overriding politics, their policies are conducive to this situation.¹² In the Buddhist movement, there are also ultra-Left and ultra-Right leaders. The extensive religious renaissance has tolerated religious extremism, which can easily become a hotbed of terrorism. East Asian religious diversity may directly or indirectly influence identification. For example, on the anti-terrorism issue, the countries most active in supporting the fight against terrorism are Singapore and the Philippines, rather than the Islamic countries. In the Southeast Asian Islamic countries, the sentiments of the broad masses of the people impact on governmental policy making. Only by prudently dealing with sensitive religious issues, can identification between East Asian countries be promoted.

Third, nationalism is still rising in East Asian countries, and this has had positive effects, but we must watch out for negative effects. Except for the DPRK, the ROK and Japan, most East Asian countries have many ethnic groups. Indonesia has more than 100, Myanmar has 135, Vietnam over 60 and Thailand more than 30. With the progress of modernization, the peoples of East Asian countries have enhanced their national self-confidence and increasingly identify with their national states. The generalization of mass media, the consolidation of state power, industrialization and urbanization have all become strong forces pounding at traditional national groups. At present, in East Asia as a whole, nationalism still has positive effects, but it is imperative to control its negative effects. In nontraditional security threats, some activities are often related to particular ethnic issues. For example, the drug traffickers in the Golden Triangle between Myanmar, Laos and Thailand are mainly Shans in Myanmar, Miaos in Laos and Thailand, and remnants of the Kuomintang. The immature level of political modernization and the unfinished national integration in East Asian countries may sometimes lead to social clashes and turmoil, and may even spill over the borders. For instance, in social

riots people of Chinese descent often bear the brunt. Without a correct direction, nationalism in big powers and large countries may cause the corrosion of regional identification. So it is a major topic for achieving identification to advocate positive nationalism and prevent negative and destructive nationalism.

Lastly, thinking deeply about this issue, East Asian cultural identification also needs to consider the interplay of cultural diversity and unity. Its long-range objective is to seek universal significance and the value of East Asian cultures. At the present stage, when Western culture dominates, what East Asia demands is cultural tolerance, recognition and respect. However, the search for universality denies cultural tolerance; from a static point of view the two are not synchronous. East Asia mainly remains in the former, but with the passage of time, the latter will be put on the agenda. If the result of East Asian identification is the replacement of the universalization of Western culture with that of East Asian culture, this will be evidently unfavorable to world peace and development, and will also not favor the progress of East Asian culture. Therefore, we must place the East Asian identification within limits, that is, cultural identification should not violate the principle of cultural tolerance, either within the East Asian region or in the world as a whole. The UNESCO issued a report written by an expert group, pointing out that humankind needs diversity and also unity. At present, large cultures are the home of diversity, but they have not yet encouraged unity. Unity is not identity and is based not on eliminating differences but rather on integrating these differences into a harmonious whole. Without integration, there will be no growth, evolution or development in the most profound sense.¹³ I wrote an article years ago, holding that common values should be formed in the future. That is to say that all cultures should contribute their highest values and turn them into ones accepted universally by mankind. The dissemination of Western cultural values all over the world is a good model. But other cultures have a similar potential for generalization. However, they must first undergo an upgrade in modernization and then be shared with the rest of the world.

As far as the present is concerned, the East Asian identification is not enough and needs to overcome the above-mentioned problems and to intensify efforts to develop identification among the peoples of all countries. The development of economic interdependence among East Asian countries has laid the material base for an East Asian identification, but the identification cannot be naturally increased. Only by making the idea of achieving win-win results through cooperation to take root in the hearts of the people can the original definitions be gradually changed. Mutual support in adversity can touch people's hearts and change their ideas. On those issues of vital importance, providing timely help, and appreciating them as a personal favor, are conducive to shaping a real community. Intercourse between leaders of governments and peoples of countries should be strengthened, and all forms of meeting, exhibition, matches and celebration in all walks of life should be promoted. Research in sociology and

psychology shows that human memory exists not because of what has happened recently, but because it is the shared idea of groups. All contacts including sports games and youth cultural activities set up new collective memories, making participants examine matters from the perspective of the group, accepting its benefits and following its inclination for rethinking. This will cultivate collective identity once and for all. Generally speaking, people consider creation as an individual matter. In fact, on the contrary, creation takes root, to a great extent and even completely, through collective phenomena. All these joint activities are not static, but rather ferment to produce an atmosphere for East Asian innovation.¹⁴ Compared with all forms of activity taking shape after World War II, East Asian contacts and collective activities are astonishingly few.

In enhancing East Asian identification, the role of China and Japan, the two big powers in the region, is of vital importance. Japan has been the example of modernization in East Asia. As the second largest economic power in the world, its investment in, trade with, and aid to East Asian countries are irreplaceable. In the past decades, like the lead goose, it has led a flock of geese. But since the 1990s it has fallen into doldrums for more than ten-years, and it is still exploring the path of readjusting its economic and political systems. This has to some extent weakened Japan's role as the goose in the lead and broken the model of the flying formation of geese. In reality, the more profound cause is that Japan has regarded global economic expansion as its foundation and taken a passive attitude to regionalism. After the 1985 Plaza Accord on currency realignment, though East Asian regionalization with Japanese investment as the motive power made progress, Japan did not try regionalism. Japan's traditional understanding of "separating from Asia and joining Europe or the U.S." impeded its adaptation to new changes. However, the direction of the wind has changed. In the economic competition between Europe, the U.S. and Asia, Japan must find its backing. At the 2002 Annual Conference of the Boao Forum for Asia, Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi delivered a speech, saying "[A] great challenge that faces Asia is to collectively speak to the world and jointly contribute to world prosperity." For this reason, he asked Asian countries to combine their individual efforts to create a more organic and expanded regional economic integration. Just as Shiraishi Takashi, a Professor from Kyoto University, said, firstly Japan must regain vigor through reform and become a wealthy, stable and reliable country, and secondly this kind of result can interest ASEAN countries and even other East Asian countries. The former determines Japan's openness to East Asia, and the latter determines Japan's leading role in the East Asian community.¹⁵ As the Japanese have always taken pride in putting themselves in the ranks of the Western world, in order for them to identify with East Asian countries they regarded as backward, they still have a long way to go.

China is quite different from Japan. Since the beginning of its reform and opening-up to the rest of the world, China has integrated itself

into the world system and has constantly sought to have its domestic system dovetail into the world market system and international practices. This has made great progress. Although China has worldwide influence, it remains a developing country and its influence is bound first to be felt in the East Asian region and then be extended to other regions. China's development in the last twenty years and East Asian prosperity are like boats rising up with the level of water. Now, according to the needs of national interests, it is improving relations with its neighboring countries. China and most East Asian countries have had a similar historical experience, and are all in the developmental stage, so their minds are in harmony.

But this does not mean it is easy for China to cultivate regional identification. China has long had the dominant idea of being the Central Kingdom, and this exerts an influence on people's thinking. This self-centered inclination is unintentionally revealed in people's mentality. The fact that China lacks the experience of being an equal member in the international system has also cast a shadow in peoples's minds of worshipping the West and looking down on the East. The cultural nihilism of ultra-Left thinking not only has had effect at home but also has affected foreign relations, damaging the people's attitude of enjoying, respecting and learning from other cultures. Therefore, China needs a broad education for its people, allowing the change of ideas and understanding national interests against the background of regional identification.

This may be effective for that generation which underwent the war, but is not so effective to those born after the war. Criticizing aggressive war should proceed from the more universal stand of humanism and respect of human rights, which will be easily accepted. The value of achievement is basic for the Japanese, so they admire the strong and look down upon the weak. A professor said that China is a noble nation, but it has not defeated Japan, so the Japanese hold China and other developing countries in contempt.¹⁶ In history, China was in the position of cultural center, so national cultural departmentalism was deep-rooted, and the urgency and flexibility of learning from and absorbing foreign cultures have not been adequate. Following the revolution and the successful overthrow of foreign rule, ultra-Left thinking has regarded Western culture as imperialism. Besides, the majority of the Chinese population are still peasants and less-educated, and among them non-science and irrational sentiments play a great role.

To sum up, there is a long way to go before China and Japan can establish a cultural identification. It is also very difficult for them to reach collective identification with the rest of the East Asian region. But we have no other choice. The rise of East Asia calls for unity and cooperation between China and Japan and also a qualitative leap in their thought, cultures, and identity.

NOTES

¹ Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 229.

² Mohamad Mahathir, *A New Deal for Asia* (Peladuc, 1999), pp. 68, 135.

³ See my paper "Outline of Research in International Culture", *Academic Quarterly of Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences*, No. 1, 1999.

⁴ David Hitchcock, *Asian Values and United States: How Much Conflict?* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1994).

⁵ Wu Luping et al., *Convergence and Clash of East Asian Social Values—comparison of social awareness between the Chinese, Japanese and South Korean youth* (Social Sciences Documents Press, 2001), pp. 10-12, 144-155.

⁶ See my paper "Similarities and Differences between Chinese and Japanese Values and their Impacts on Bilateral Relations", *Pacific Journal*, No. 1, 2000.

⁷ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, p. 231.

⁸ Samuel P. Huntington, et al., *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress* (Xinhua Publishing House, 2000), Preface, p. 1.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 383.

¹¹ *Dialogue Geared to the 21st Century between Toynbee and Daisaku Ikeda* (International Culture Publishing Company, 1985), p. 294.

¹² *Religion and Southeast Asian Modernization* (China Today Press, 1995), p. 180.

¹³ Ervin Laszlo et al., *The Multicultural Planet—A Report of a UNESCO International Expert Group* (Social Sciences Document Press, 2001), pp. 230-231.

¹⁴ Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory* (Shanghai People's Publishing House, 2002), pp. 92, 44.

¹⁵ Shiraishi Takashi, "'Japanization' and 'Chinanization' are Key to Formation of East Asian Order", *Chuokoron*, No.1, 2003.

¹⁶ Zhong Shaohua ed., *Previous Students Studying in Japan Talk about Japan* (Shandong Pictorial Press, 1996), p. 170.

CHAPTER XIX

GLOBALIZATION AND MODERNIZATION IN CHINA

YE XIANMING

In recent years in discussions of the relationship between globalization and modernization in China, one finds a widespread view in China's academic community that the economy is being globalized while politics and culture are being pluralized – something which goes against extreme globalism. According to this view, with globalization clearly “pantographed” in the economic world, and pluralization strictly “confined” to the realm of politics and domain of culture, globalization and pluralization turn out to be two opposed extremes. Extreme globalism is, of course, wrong. Yet if we follow such an ‘anti-extreme-globalism’ way of thinking, logically the relationship between globalization and modernization in China will consciously or unconsciously be divided into two “modes”: (1) in terms of economy, China should plunge into globalization; (2) in terms of politics and culture, we should insist on pluralization and should resist and repel globalism. This way of thinking in academic circles has trapped research on the relationship between globalization and modernization in China in a series of contradictions, and therefore, many “false problems” have emerged. In fact, pluralization also exists in the economic world, and globalization happens in the fields of politics and culture as well, though they are manifested differently. Methodologically, this issue concerns the problem of how to understand and grasp the basic contradiction of globalization. A scientific account of the basic contradiction of globalization is a logical foundation for research on the relationship between globalization and modernization in China. It is certain that without a thorough understanding of the problem, it will be difficult for us to go deeply into the relationship between globalization and modernization in China, as well as that between cultural inheritance and social development.

The history and the logic of globalization clearly indicate that globalization is a complex course of world history, and that it is not merely a process of global integration, nor a process of gradual decline of nations and states, but a process in which integration and pluralization intertwine and develop in the motion of the contradiction that they constitute. The basic contradiction of globalization, made up of integration and pluralization, is both the internal motive force of globalization and the motif of its progress. A great variety of contradictions concerning globalization either revolve around this “basic contradiction” or are prescribed by it: the contradiction among “core”, “secondary core”, “borderline”, and “the

farthest borderline”, the contradiction between cultural universalism and cultural relativism (or cultural particularism), the contradiction between globalism and multipolarism, the contradiction between those defending globalization and those against it, the contradiction between nations and states and the world market, and the conflicts of different civilizations – those between the North and the South, the North and the North, and the South and the South. Globalization points to the trend of the increasing interdependence of nations and states and the trend of fiercer competition for particular interests and values among nations and states (or groups of nations) that are getting more and more interdependent on each other – that is, the trend of nationalization in the course of globalization. Some foreign scholars call it global localism. From the perspective of theory, the basic contradiction of globalization is the essential question that the theory of globalization should answer. This point of view has been verified through research by David Herd and other British scholars on the evolution of historical forms of globalization (e.g., pre-modern globalization, early modern globalization, modern globalization and contemporary globalization).

At present in the academic community there is a mistaken idea of methodology in research on globalization: globalization is regarded as the equivalent of integration. Integration points to the state and to trends of coordination, convergence and dependence which includes regional integration. Pluralization refers to the state and trends of separation, decentralization, friction and conflict in globalization. Integration is not globalization; pluralization does not deviate from globalization. According to some foreign scholars, “globalization can be put in a proper continuous unity with territorial, national and regional characteristics. One aspect of the unity is social and economic relations and networks built on its territory and nation; the other is extensive social and economic relations and networks due to global and interregional contacts.”¹ Although this point of view deserves further consideration, it at least illustrates that integration alone is not the same as globalization. Integration separated from pluralization does not exist, and neither does pluralization from integration. From the perspective of “basic contradiction“, globalization is the unity of the opposites: integration and pluralization. Integration and pluralization do not exist except within the unity. Thus, “We should regard globalization as a process made up of both the power of the tendency toward convergence and the force of disintegration”.²

The reason why integration and pluralization form the basic contradiction of globalism is that the essential subjects of globalization are nations and states, which are also the essential subjects of international relations. Although various non-state subjects emerge and begin to play a more and more important role in the process of globalization, it is nations and states that actually support them and enable them to function.³ Once the essential subjects of globalization are no longer nations or states, the globalization known today will not remain. As the whole world is further

interconnected, on the one hand, a national "behavior" or "event" is becoming more international. Economic, political and cultural exchanges beyond a national or regional boundary tend to be a common form of "survival and development" for nations and states. They are getting more interdependent in economy, politics and culture, and they find more matters of common concern, thus leading to more points of interest for each. On the other hand, the development, value tropism and interests that every nation and state pursues demonstrate pluralization, and all sorts of clash and conflict are going on, to a greater extent and on a larger scale. The closer the connections between two parties, the more clashes and conflicts there are, and the stronger the tendency of separation grows which is caused by those clashes and conflicts. As a result, nations and states find "self-identity" more essential. In brief, increasing close global contacts have transformed the previous "static differences" among nations and states into frictions and conflicts, so that the differentiation of interests, the diversification of value tropism and "self-identity" have become an increasingly apparent trend in the process of globalization. Thus, integration and pluralization in essence are the integration and pluralization of nations and states in international living.

Undoubtedly, integration and pluralization are interactive and penetrate each other. "Integration" refers to the interdependence of nations and states, the coordination of actions and movements, and the relevance of interests and relations, but it is definitely not absolute identity without any difference (otherwise, there would be no "integration"). "Pluralization" refers to relative independence, particularity of actions and movements, differentiation in the aspects of interest and relationship, as well as diversification of value orientations in international relations for different nations and states, but they are certainly not incompatible. It is in the manifesting of forms of interaction and in the interpenetration of integration and pluralization in globalization that nations and states realize their self-interest and self-value in the process of "integration", and seek compatible points of different interests and relations, and the mutual identification of various values in the process of "diversification".

Nevertheless, it should be noted that the relation between integration and pluralization is frequently shown in the forms of control and anti-control, hegemony and anti-hegemony on many occasions in a world historic era in which capitalist manufacturing modes play a controlling and dominating role and under a condition that the international economic and political order is in favor of developed capitalist nations. This greatly increases the difficulties of dealing with the basic contradictions in globalization for different nations and states, especially for developing countries. In spite of this, an appropriate position that nations and states should take in the process of globalization is as follows: in properly dealing with the complex relationship of integration and pluralization, they should find ways suitable for their own development, seek and realize an independent development, and gradually improve their own position in

globalization so as to obtain a wider developing space and have a greater role or influence in the course of globalization.

As for China, an important methodological insight put forward by the basic contradiction in globalization lies in grasping the following point: modernization in China can only be realized in the process of properly handling the basic contradiction in globalization. The history and the logic of the development of globalization and modernization have shown that, for a nation, globalization does not equal modernization, that it is not certain for a country in globalization that it will achieve modernization, and that the nature of modernization determines that modernization will surely be attained in globalization. Globalization regulates the space for modernization. For this reason, modernization in China does not equal globalization, but it has to be achieved by globalization. However, this is not the crux of the matter. What needs to be further considered is how to realize modernization in China through globalization. A scientific answer is that the first and foremost thing is to properly deal with the relationship between integration and pluralization in globalization. From the perspective of “internal cause”, with a thorough comprehensive observation of the history of world modernization, particularly the history of modernization of late developing countries, the most dangerous risk for globalization is caused by improperly handling the relationship between integration and pluralization. This is mainly manifested by the following: a sense of the loss of oneself in integration and of being controlled by developed countries in economy, politics and culture, inevitably result in loss of independence for development. At the other extreme in pluralization, namely, rejecting “modernization” in all aspects of economy, politics and culture, and going against the trend of world modernization eventually lead to a loss of the world historic conditions and opportunities for development. These two apparently contradictory – and wrong – trends of dealing with the relationship between integration and pluralization will ultimately lead to the same result, that is, sinking in globalization and being trapped in modernization.

“Modernization with Chinese characteristics,” “rising in peace” and “a great responsible country” are three different levels for understanding the modern social development occurring in China. Seen from the perspective of methodology, they are an organic whole related to each other, which in fact leads to one point: the relationship between globalization and modernization in China. Yet, the core of the relationship between globalization and modernization in China is the relationship between the basic contradiction of globalization and the modernization in China. If we identify and grasp this key link, the complicated relationship network between globalization and modernization in China is easily and clearly seen. “Modernization with Chinese characteristics” is a necessary choice made by the Chinese people toward the general routes, strategies, goals and value orientations for the development of China when dealing with the basic contradiction in globalization. “Rising in peace” is a necessary choice made

by the Chinese people toward realizing the general routes, strategies, goals and value orientations for the development of modern China when properly dealing with the basic contradiction in globalization. “A great responsible country” is a long-term orientation made by the Chinese people for China in the framework of international relations when properly dealing with the basic contradiction in globalization, which is determined by the general routes, strategies, goals and value orientations, as well as the realizing mode for the development of modern China. Of course, the above-mentioned three are interactive.

Since China began to reform and open up, the old international economic and political order has not changed essentially. The reason that China has made such great achievements in modernization in such an international environment – one which attracts the world’s attention – is chiefly due to the fact that we can hold the dialectic relationship between integration and pluralization, and properly deal with the basic contradiction in globalization on the whole. In the process of pluralization, China sticks to melding into the trend of world modernization step by step, pays attention to, and absorbs critically the nutritious part of “modernity” in the aspects of politics, economy and culture, and is good at grasping the world historic chances to develop itself. Meanwhile, in integration, China conforms to the rules of staying in peace with each other and benefiting one another, opposes hegemony and power politics, persists in self-development in the aspects of politics, economy and culture, and holds tightly the initiative of development. And because of all these China has improved its position in globalization, continuously expanding its own developing space and strengthening its influence in the course of globalization. Otherwise, if we make great mistakes in handling the basic contradiction in globalization, the construction of modernization in China will be damaged greatly. (See the following chapter by Yu Xuanmeng.)

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¹ David Herd, *Global Revolution* (China Social Science Document Press, 2001), p. 21.

² Xinyezhaoji, *World Politics in Change* (China Xinhua Press, 1999), p. 448.

³ See also my thesis “Four Chains of Problems in the Context of Globalization,” *China People’s University Journal*, Volume 3, 2004.

CHAPTER XX

HOW DOES THE TRANSFORMATION OF CHINESE CULTURE PARTICIPATE IN THE RECONSTRUCTION OF GLOBAL MODERNITY?

ZOU SHIPENG

In the opinion of many, and in the face of the state of Western modernity, China still has not rid itself of its weak condition. Even in the context of its relatively recent involvement in economic globalization, China has not freed itself from its role as the “alter ego,” the “other ego.” In this paper, however, I want to provide another analysis and point out a different opinion, that is, in the modern age, the transformation of Chinese culture that is based on Chinese modernization is precisely a process of ridding itself of the role of ‘other ego’. China has formed a favorable mode of modernization, together with a kind of modernity that can be described as self-determined modernity. Furthermore, in the age of globalization, the transformation of Chinese culture has been an organic part of the reconstructing of global modernity; in other words, in the reconstructing of global modernity, China plays an important role.

We can regard modernity as the rule of the modern. But if we think of the complexity, fluidity and differences of modernization, we can see that it is very difficult to define modernity. However, for convenience of analysis, we can still differentiate modernity in terms of three aspects. The first aspect is material modernity, that is, if we talk of modernity, we should have a material condition in which we can exceed an agricultural base and live an affluent life; this is a necessary condition, but not the only condition. We can also refer to a second aspect – the reflecting on and examining of material modernity, together with a self-understanding of the modern condition. And then there is a third aspect of modernity: reason can be historically reconstructed and humanity’s existential understanding can be realized.

In a way, the history of Western modernity has developed these three aspects serially. The 19th century (together with earlier capitalism) belonged to the first modernity. Then, against the background of great industry, market economics, civil society, contract ethics, and also the legitimating institutions, the West came into the modern age and at the very time that alienation picked up, the second aspect of modernity arose. In turn, postmodernity arose from this latter condition. Postmodernity looks like a substitution for modernity, but it is also concomitant with modernity, because it cannot transcend modernity. The dialogue and interaction between modernity and postmodernity express the self-transcendence of the Western culture tradition, but the self-transcendence is still in the frame of

Western culture. Contemporary western culture cannot be representative of the whole human being. The reconstruction of Western modernity should tend to rebuild human reason, and the reconstructing of global modernity should include the transformation of non-Western culture.

After an independent modernization, the transformation of Chinese culture became an indispensable portion of the transformation of the culture of the whole human being. Furthermore, the transformation of Chinese culture has been beneficial to the reconstructing of global modernization. The transformation of culture is an inter-adjustment of different traditions to globalization. Xu Laoyun (a scholar from Hong Kong) once said: "Every cultural tradition should be transformed in the face of globalization so as to accommodate itself to the times". So maybe we can conclude that there is not a timeless order between the contemporary transformation of Western culture and the contemporary transformation of Chinese culture. The transformation of Chinese culture has participated in reconstructing global modernization; in other words, if there were no participation by Chinese culture, global modernization would be unilateral and unwholesome.

In Western countries, the first side of modernity has been realistic, but if we think of the real condition of non-Western regions (together with China), we find that the global material modernity and the corresponding social system is just a feint. In China, material modernity and the social system are still objects being re-worked. If China has been puzzled in adjusting to the modern condition, we cannot talk about modernity in China. So the material modernization is the premise of Chinese modernity, and the difference and possible advantage of Chinese cultural tradition should be appealed to in relation to the situation of the economy and polity. Only in proportion to the increase of national power, can we say that Chinese culture will contribute actively to the whole world.

The first aspect of modernity (material modernity) and the second side of modernity (as a reflection of material modernity) are not divided in two, but the problem of Western modernity has fastened on material conditions more than any other field. Furthermore, we find that the maturity of material conditions does not relate only to life conditions, but most of all to the psychogenic and desirable. Western modernity, on the one hand, did not consider non-Western modernity equally; on the other hand, Western modernity led to conflicts between human beings and nature and human beings and society. Thus, the transformation of Chinese culture ought to seek a constructive modern project, not only by drawing some experiences from the West, but also avoiding the problems of Western modernity.

Actually, in China, many people, estates and districts have gained a material modernization, but the material modernization seems not to lead to a valuable life. Some argue that one must give up culture and tradition in developing material modernization, but, on the other hand, more and more people refuse this kind of modernization. In fact, some phenomena, such as the so-called 'rich but not noble' events occurring in recent years in China should be reflected on thoroughly. We think the particularity of Chinese

culture and traditions, such as harmony, tolerance, and morality, should play an important role in the reconstructing of global modernity. Max Weber used to regard the reason for capitalism's rising as the Protestant work ethic, and therefore formed a main tradition in western academe that refused to explain modernization in a way suited to non-Western cultural traditions. Now this thought should be corrected in some degree. There is a determinate relation between the Protestant ethic and capitalism, but if we think of the nihilism of the post-religion age, maybe we can draw the conclusion that the Protestantist ethic does not suit modernization comfortably.

The problem is not the thought mode that explains modernization from the point of view of culture, but rather, the power that comes from Western material modernization: the latter fights off the interaction between the transformation of non-western cultural traditions and modernization. But fluidity in thought, an important particularity of the Chinese tradition, has been neglected. We usually regard Chinese culture as conservative, but in the Chinese tradition, the conservatism could not be regarded as an appropriate attitude about culture. Actually, conservatism ought to insist on the ability to adjust to the times; the radicalism that wants to reform the tradition totally has neglected the fluidity of Chinese culture and traditions.

From the success of the 'four small dragons' of East Asia (Singapore, Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong), we can conclude that the transformation of the Chinese cultural tradition is suited to modernization: "In fact, the cultural tradition can adjust itself to modernization, and at the same time, modernization can adjust itself to a suitable mode", said Dr Lin Ganwu (a Taiwanese scholar). Now more and more scholars trust that the Confucianist Culture Circle will play an important role in the reconstructing of global modernity.

The transformation of the Chinese cultural tradition should consider the condition of the modern polity. Modernity should include a sensible political system. In general, the system of point in China has not completed its modern transformation, and Chinese life still remains in the traditional mode of an agricultural society. The transformation of Chinese tradition is still frustrated by some of the negative contents of the cultural tradition, such as, for example, regarding morality but neglecting self-morality and public morality, regarding behavior but neglecting practice, regarding relationships but neglecting legal contracts, and so on. There is a complexity in the Chinese tradition (especially the characteristic that fuses politics together with education) which still blocks the full construction of a modern civil society. So a polity civilization should be regarded as a platform on which the transformation of culture and tradition can be realized. But the Chinese polity should not choose the way that Western nations have followed: the reason is not owing to polity, but to morality and social psychology. Contemporary polity in China must consider polity and social system sufficiently. In other words, the transformation of Chinese polity ought to consider the continuity of the Chinese cultural tradition. The

second aspect of Western modernity is reflecting on the contemporary system: the contemporary polity system insists on public criteria and reason as tools, but at the same time it neglects morality – especially, it overlooks the evil which exists as the ethical supposition of Western tradition (namely, the grave sin of capitalism). From the view of the social culture system, we find that the primary problem of Western modernity is the extensiveness of its polity system and the neglect of the human being's self-enlightenment. In fact, the outer habits which come from the polity system should be transformed into inner discipline; in this, the solidarity, spirit, morality and harmony of Chinese tradition will be beneficial to global modernity.

The third aspect of modernity is the historical reconstructing of philosophical reason. This is the issue not only of Western modernity, but also of humanity's modernity, so that it is a really *global* modernity. As we know, today a dialogue between Western culture and non-Western culture is coming into being. By this dialogue, each culture presents its variety and difference: through the dialogue, a new idea of human being's co-existence and also a new human cultural mode is coming into being. This new idea is not the transcendental and substantial ontological paradigm, nor the dualism and essentialism of the epistemological paradigm, but an existential paradigm based on the *life-world* and the modern social existential mode. But this existential paradigm is not yet realized, though it is now the practical direction of human beings: we find, in seeking for this direction, that the Chinese cultural tradition will play an important role. Compared to the Western tradition, the Chinese tradition is more than just existential: rather, the *core* of Chinese culture is existentialism. This latter is what we hope to spread everywhere, in this global age. (See the following chapter by Yu Xuanmeng.)

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PART V

COMPARATIVE APPROACHES

CHAPTER XXI

ON A NEW WAY FOR COMPARATIVE STUDY IN PHILOSOPHY: EXISTENTIAL ANALYSIS¹

YU XUANMENG

TIME TO RENEW THE NOTION OF PHILOSOPHY

The first thing in doing a comparative study of Chinese and Western philosophy is to clarify the two sides. However, as we can see, different versions of the so-called history of Chinese philosophy have been guided by the concepts and the framework of Western philosophy, according to which various authors are selected from Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism in which terms they are considered as doing philosophy. It was considered right to follow the Western pattern in doing Chinese philosophy. Since Western philosophy has been taken as the standard here, the histories of Chinese philosophy would differ from one another according to the authors' respective understanding of western philosophy, be it deep or superficial.

Furthermore, it has turned out that, in following Western philosophy, ontology, which is indeed the core of traditional Western philosophy, comes to the fore more and more as the model for Chinese philosophy. But having carried out a sustained investigation on the topic, we hold that, in fact, there is no ontology in traditional Chinese philosophy.² Therefore it is a problem whether we can formulate Chinese philosophy according to the patterns of Western philosophy, which has ontology as its core. Hence, can Chinese philosophy be formulated in a way that reflects its real figure? What is more, having no ontology in itself, can Chinese philosophy be considered as philosophy? On the other hand, if we do not follow the example of Western philosophy, then there arises the problem, what is philosophy? Our predecessors asked this question; now we face the same question again. In short, the quality of Chinese philosophy as philosophy has not been certified under the standard of Western philosophy.

To our surprise, nowadays, the same question comes to the fore in the West – where philosophy has a long tradition of two thousand years – by the occasion of the corruption of ontology. Ontology has encountered opposition ever since its beginning, however none of its opponents could defeat its place as the first philosophy. Rather, the disputation between ontology and its opponents, together with the problems raised in the disputation, inspired the development of Western philosophy, and caused the emergence of various schools of philosophy. Up to the nineteenth century, Marxism held that all ideas, thoughts and theories originated from

humanity's practical life; after that, Heidegger, with the method of phenomenology, explicated in detail the origin of the categories of ontology – that is, the origin of the so-called first philosophy could be expounded by the analysis of human being's own existence. Thus the position of ontology as the first philosophy crashes. As the result, here and there came the statement: "Philosophy is at an end!"

After a shower of astonishment, people find out that not only do we still have philosophy today, but we shall have philosophy in the future. What we learn is that it is time to renew the notion of philosophy. In this circumstance, a comparative study among the different types of philosophy is especially important. Its purpose is not only to figure out the real faces of the different philosophies with their respective origins, but also their development in the future. We may say that the future philosophy will develop through comparative study. Having not noticed, or taken little notice, of the change of Western philosophy in contemporary life, the notion of philosophy in our predecessors was mainly that of traditional Western philosophy, which had ontology as its core. There were some historical reasons for them to do so. Regretably, up to this day, there are still some people who cannot get rid of the notion of traditional Western philosophy. Thus, when it is evident that we cannot construct Chinese philosophy in accord with Western philosophy, instead of looking into the real features of Chinese philosophy, they present various opinions without hitting the point. To cite some of them: 1, Some hold that what we Chinese have is 'thought' rather than 'philosophy'; 2, Since there is no definition of philosophy recognized by all even in the West, some try to reject the search for the origin or essence of philosophy; 3, Others consider philosophy to be a common name, and Western philosophy and Chinese philosophy to be particulars under that common name, without realizing that this way of classification is itself from traditional Western philosophy and hence it is not fit to explain philosophy in general; 4, Some hold that we must go back to the way the ancient scholars did their learning; 5, Some hold an attitude of monologue: let both sides (the Chinese scholars and the western philosophers) say something themselves respectively, "self speaks, speak self." I do not think the above opinions intend to devalue Chinese philosophy, but they do reflect a kind of anguish for the legitimacy of Chinese philosophy, as some media have expressed.

Perhaps this so-called anguish is not a fiction created by the media. In any event, it does not properly reflect the present situation in comparative studies, but rather veils our task in philosophy. The real situation is the following: it has turned out that the construction of Chinese philosophy cannot follow the way of Western philosophy, and the crisis of traditional Western philosophy, with ontology as its core, has been revealed in the realm of Chinese study. Our task now is, by comparative study, to renew the notion of philosophy, so as to push philosophy forward in the new era. But the so-called the anguish of legitimacy takes our attention in a different direction. If there were some scholars who really anguish over the

legitimacy of Chinese philosophy, it is evident that they must have Western philosophy as the standard. Such anguish is unreasonable, because it is an issue of fact whether or not there is Chinese philosophy, not an issue of whether it is legitimate or not. To advocate such anguish means nothing but legitimating the pseudo anguish itself, which is sure to lead in the wrong direction.

The key problem here is: What is philosophy? Without resolving this problem there would be no way for us to do a comparative study, and we could only leave philosophy to its fate. When one asks the question, "What is philosophy?" one might know nothing about philosophy except the term "philosophy." But most probably, in some other cases, when one asks this question, it does not mean that one knows nothing about philosophy, but that he wants to go deeply into philosophy. This is our case. We are not fully ignorant of philosophy, nor are those who suspect the legitimacy of Chinese philosophy, for, anyway, they are doing a comparative study. The so-called "legitimacy" problem is based on their knowledge of philosophy. What we mean to do in answering the question "What is philosophy?" is to go "deep" into philosophy. Given this fact, we should consider what "deep" means. For there are two different ways to go deep into philosophy. Trained by Western philosophy, people usually think that to go deep into philosophy means to grasp the essence of philosophy. But the other way is to find out its origin, which accords with the Chinese saying, "Not only know it as it is, but also know why it is so." This is to ask the reason for being of something. According to this, if we can work out the origin of philosophy, we would understand why philosophy exposes itself with such and such features. The first way we mentioned is essentialism; the second way, we call existential analysis. We are going to take the second way instead of the first. We should elaborate the reason why we would like to take the second way and describe its features. Let us begin with the failure of essentialism.

FAILURE OF ESSENTIALISM

Impacted by traditional Western philosophy, people usually think that the deepest inquiry into something would be the inquiry into its essence. Therefore, to our problem here, there rises the question, "What is the essence of philosophy?" In a comparative study, if Chinese philosophy is considered as something different from Western philosophy, then, we have the further question, what is the essence of Chinese philosophy and of Western philosophy respectively? Is this the right way to do a comparative study? First of all, we should ask, what is essence? It is said in the Dictionary of Philosophy that, "essence is the innate, universal, relatively stable relationship of the thing."³ Another dictionary expounds further that, "essence is the basic attribute of a thing, the relatively stable and innate relationship of the elements which form the thing."⁴ Since essence is something innate, it means that essence has nothing to do with the attitude

in which a human being comports himself toward the thing. That makes it difficult for human beings to know the essence. Indeed, it is stated in the Dictionary that we cannot know essence directly; essence is hidden behind the phenomenon. It is suspected whether there is a realm of essence separate from the realm of phenomenon in Chinese traditional philosophy. Essence is said to be grasped by pure thinking, but for the Chinese, even Tao is not something of 'pure thinking'; rather, it is something which should be experienced personally. What is more, when we ask "what is the essence of philosophy?" does it mean that philosophy is separated into two parts: phenomenon and essence? Then what is philosophy as phenomenon? And what is philosophy as essence? Actually, essence is a mystic cloud for people who are not used to thinking "essentially." It is necessary to trace the origin and development of the term 'essence' in Western philosophy.

Generally, people trace "essence" to Aristotle. As I can see, in his time there was no word in Greek for "essence". What he wanted to ask about is "*ousia*," by which search he sought "what a thing really is." *Ousia* is the participle of *eimi*. For Aristotle, the same thing could be different beings. For instance, its shape could be a being, and its color, matter, function could be beings respectively. But among various beings, there must be one being which is decisive for the thing being what it is. This decisive element can remain self-identical through change. All other elements are accidents of the thing. This decisive being is *ousia*. What he mentioned as *ousia* in his *Metaphysics* were: form, individual, species, kind, and subject, etc. which, as we know today, depend on how people comport themselves toward the thing. When *ousia* is translated into Latin "substance", which means something sustaining beneath, its relation with the copula "to be" has been lost.

In ancient Greek, there was no word meaning "essence" and "existence" separately. Both were expressed simultaneously with the word "to be." There is nothing strange here from the viewpoint of daily language even today. For instance, when we say, "It is the Yangtze Bridge", this means at the same time that there is something across the Yangtze River and this something is a bridge. In reality, an actual thing must both have its existence and be what it is. The accordance between practical condition and daily language was a barrier when Aristotle tried to distinguish what a thing "is" from "that a thing exists."⁵ It is interesting that in Arabic there is no word corresponding to the Greek copula "to be"; to the contrary, they have two words to denote what it is and that it exists respectively. Thus when Aristotle's work was retranslated into Latin from Arabic, the above two points were expressed by "existence" and "essence" respectively.⁶ Though Aristotle is the first person who tried to distinguish "essence" from "existence," this is by no means to say that essence for him is something separated from our world as he rejected Plato's theory of 'ideas'.

Essence as a logic-determined category comes from the Platonist tradition. By logic-determined category, we mean those concepts which get their meaning from their logical relationships. These concepts do not denote

real things. They depart from the empirical world and form an “independent language realm.”⁷ In Plato’s dialogue *Parmenides*, we find that an idea needs to participate with other ideas; otherwise it would be impossible for itself to be such an idea. The system of the ideas participated represents the truth of our world, while what we get from our world is only opinion. This usage of language originated from Platonism; in Plato’s dialogue, ideas were something in their own world and they owed their meaning from mutual participation. Later in ontology, “essence” and “existence” and other concepts became pure categories. As a pure category, “essence” does not mean the essence of this or that thing, but the essence itself which get its meaning through logical determination. For instance, in Hegel’s *Science of Logic*, “essence” is deducted from “measure”. “Measure” is the unity of “quality” and “quantity”, by which “measure” is no longer immediate but self-subsistent. Therefore the sublation of measure logically leads to essence, because, “essence is at first, simple self-relation, pure identity.”⁸ This is the source of the “innate relationship” as people talking about the essence. But we should make clear that what Hegel talked about as “essence” here is the logical determination of the concept “essence.” Even when he talked about “phenomenon,” he did not mean the phenomenon as we perceive it, but a logical determination derived from “essence”. I really do not know how to use this sort of essence to analyze philosophy.

As to our problem here, we are talking about what philosophy really is. If by this question we are searching for the essence of philosophy, we should be puzzled. For if philosophy, according to the notion of Western philosophy, is supposed to deal with the essence of everything, how could it deal with its own essence? In a broad sense, all the categories in ontology, including “existence”, “phenomenon”, etc., are in a world other than our own. Therefore, people are suspicious of whether the category system in the other world could be used in our world, and, is the category system something real? For Husserl, the problem turns out to be about the evidence of the category. He starts from the analysis of intentionality, which holds that, as the essential feature of psychology, every psychical phenomenon holds in itself both the intention and the object intended. In light of this theory, Husserl maintains that each category is in accord with its form of intention. Husserl’s motivation is to demonstrate the objectivity of the category, however, his method shows that the way of human being’s own intentionality is decisive in the forming of the category.

This leads Heidegger to go ahead. In his *Being and Time*,⁹ he maintains that what is decisive for a being as that it is, which is our own way to deal with things. That is to say, a thing could be different beings according to our different ways of comporting with it. These different ways of comporting with things are our own ways to be, and hence the essence of beings should be sought for in our own ways of existence. The mystery around essence has thus disappeared. What a thing is, lies in its way and its process to be. Heidegger opens a new way for us in searching for the essence. Here, essence is no longer a category, but our ways of comporting

with things. Here lies both the essence of things and the essence of our own being. This means that if there is anything like the essence of philosophy, we should search for it in our own way of doing philosophy rather than following a definition. Implied in this point of view, is that both Chinese philosophy and Western philosophy are recognized as historical facts. They are the result of human being's own action. What we need is to find out the unique way in doing philosophy, different from that in doing other sciences and disciplines. We shall argue that when people philosophize, there is a structure of existence which is the same in both Chinese and Western philosophy, and their distinctive characters could be depicted as the different ways of transcendence.

One objection might be, since we have acknowledged that it is improper to formulate Chinese philosophy in terms of Western philosophy, why again do we follow Heidegger here? Yes, Heidegger is a Western philosopher, but he asks us to follow the facts, not the definition. Accordingly, both Chinese philosophy and Western philosophy are considered equally 'facts'. There is no conflict with our point. Furthermore, there is plenty of evidence to show that it is by importing Chinese thinking that Heidegger created his philosophy.¹⁰ He had read Lao Zhi and Zhuang Zhi. Earlier from 1924, he began to discuss with the Japanese scholars frequently. To say this does not mean, as a Chinese saying, "Either the east wind dominates the west wind, or the west wind dominates the east wind"; rather, in the future, each type of philosophy could only develop through mutual exchange and communication, whether it is Western or Eastern philosophy.

FROM DEFINITION TO THE ANALYSIS OF EXISTENTIALITY

The analysis of existentiality is contrasted sharply with definition. The former distinguishes itself from the latter as the method of historicism from the logical method. Nowadays, people have summarized many sorts of definition, such as descriptive definition, generic definition, functional definition, analytic definition, contextual definition, conventional definition and so on. All sorts of definitions are but providing us with information about what we want to know. To speak rigorously, what we are expecting in a definition is more than to know something, but the real being of the object, that is, the "essence" of the object. Plato's idea is something related to the definition of the things, which we can find in his early dialogues. We read from the dialogue that the Sophists, as the teachers, taught people all sorts of knowledge. They made assertions about all kinds of things, especially about virtues. But they usually made assertions using concrete examples. For instance, to the question 'What is courage?', they would say, it means 'not to retreat when enemy attacks.' This made it easy for "Socrates" to argue against the Sophists. He would suggest the different conditions, such as when the enemy retreats, or in occasions other than battles, in which "not to retreat" could not be accounted as courage.

Actually, what “Socrates” wanted was the universal notion of courage, not the courage in some concrete case. Plato came to know that definition had to be something universal which could not be reached in the perceptible world. So he suggested that there must be ideas. They had the same names as the perceptible things, but existed in a separate world. The thing in our world shared the idea in order to be what it is.

Though we do not find the term “universal” in Plato’s dialogues, ‘idea’ is something universal. Because it is not something perceptible, it is supposed to be in another world. Thus we can understand a definition only as expressed by the idea, conceptually. That is to say, when we try to go into the essence of things, we should turn ourselves from perceptible things to concepts. Aristotle specialized the notion of definition in the formulation: ‘genus and difference.’ For instance, the definition of human being is ‘rational (difference) animal (genus).’ Obviously, in order to practice this way of definition, one should have in mind a priori a system of universal concepts with different levels, in which, the more universal concepts contains the essence of the less universal concepts. In short, on this view, essences are expressed in concepts.

There is an opinion that philosophy is a common term, of which Chinese and Western philosophy are particulars, respectively. The aim of this saying is to respond to the challenge to “the legitimacy of the Chinese philosophy”. But, is a “common term” a mere symbol or does it contain some common content and implications? If it is a mere symbol, it cannot resolve the problem of the comparative study of the two philosophies; if it contains a common content and implications, then, there should be a universal notion of philosophy. But what does it mean to speak of “universal philosophy”? Ever since Aristotle, philosophy has been defined as universal knowledge. In his metaphysics, Aristotle divided knowledge into different levels: the more general the knowledge is, the more valuable it is. The intensive pursuit of generality naturally leads to the absolute generality, i.e., universality. As a result, ontology is just that kind of philosophy. It is supposed to be absolute knowledge, the first principle. If the common term ‘philosophy’ represents the sense of Chinese philosophy and of Western philosophy, it has to be universal knowledge. What else could universal knowledge be but ontology? Since Western philosophy has claimed *itself* to be the most universal knowledge, we cannot generalize it, just as the most universal term, “being,” in Western philosophy, contains all genera in itself, but is not a genus.

Therefore, we cannot start our comparative study by definition. We will try a new way, i.e., the analysis of existentiality. This is the turn from the way of logic to the way of history. Our new way requires us to start with the facts. It is a historical fact that we have both Western philosophy and Chinese philosophy. Though the two philosophies are facts, we are not quite clear about why they differ from each other in type. This urges us to go deep into their origin and way of formulation. This is what we want to do in a comparative study.

Facts happen within time and space, so they have a temporal character. A clue into Chinese philosophy can be clearly seen through its history: beginning from various schools and their exponents in pre-Qin, through the study of Confucian classics in the two Han Dynasties, *Wei-Jin* “dark learning”, Sui and Tang Buddhism, to Song and Ming Neo-Confucianism, etc.. We can also recognize the temporality of a theory through the author’s development of his thinking. But people might wonder whether any point of view has the characteristic of temporality. If we recognize that any idea is a creation – it comes from nothing – this makes us believe that whatever we say for the first time is a creation, an illumination from nothing. It is a process from non-being to being, hence it is temporal. What does it mean,–“creation from nothingness”? Laotzu (chapter 40) said: “All being comes from being, and being comes from non-being.” We cannot understand this as “everything comes from empty nothingness,” for we have not got the relevant evidence.

The latest theory about the evolution of the cosmos demonstrates that the earth and stars as we know them today are the result of the evolution of the cosmos itself. But if there were no human beings, there would have been no human awareness concerning the existence of the world, nor the consciousness about the distinction of being and non-being. Only when there are human beings, is there the distinction between “I” and “other”, and the further distinction among “others” – hence various kinds of being. From the point of matter, it is impossible that being comes from non-being. But from unawareness to awareness together with what it is aware of, we have a process from non-being to being. With awareness, the world is illuminated – hence there is being. The occurrence of human being, as a Chinese saying puts it, “set the heart for the world”. There is heart, there is being. As another Chinese saying goes, “had heaven not birthed Confucius, the world would be in darkness forever.” The so-called sages are but those who were eminent in leading people from the dark night to the bright day.

From factual temporality, we may trace the phenomenon of going from non-being to being. In the phenomenon of going from non-being to being, there lies the deepest roots of all problems. Everything reveals itself in consciousness and becomes a being – even consciousness itself comes from the background of non-being. But logic, as the rule of thinking, is absolutely a kind of being when people are aware and practice it. If philosophy is deservedly the most profound learning, it should deal with the origin of all things, including the origin of logic. Philosophy as a theory is a kind of being created by human beings. The origin of philosophy should be its own theme. This suggests that we go to the question of how people do philosophy. Put in another way, we need to know the structure and the way of human practice from which philosophy comes.

THE ANALYSIS OF EXISTENTIALITY AS HISTORICISM

The analysis of existentiality is essentially the methodology of

historicism. What I mean by historicism is that, by tracing the origin of Chinese and Western philosophy, one can release the common existential structure for philosophy and explicate the different characters of the two philosophies according to the various possible ways of existence based on the same structure of existence. This is essentially a way of description rather than conceptual deduction. In its main aspects, the methodology of existential analysis is in accordance with Marx's way, namely historical materialism. As known to all, Marxism holds that "The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness."¹¹ Marx repeated the above point of view from various angles, for example, in the *German Ideology* (co-authored with Engels), it says: "Men are the producers of their conceptions, ideas, etc. – real, active men, as they are conditioned by a definite development of their productive forces and of the intercourse corresponding to these, up to its furthest forms. Consciousness can never be anything else than conscious existence, and the existence of men is their actual life-process."¹² It could not be clearer that men produced their concepts and ideas, and philosophy as ideas should be included. However, dominating for two thousand years, Platonism has maintained that philosophy represented the highest principle covering the whole of nature and the society. Since philosophy was considered as the highest principle, it was the ultimate source to explain everything, but it could not be explained by anything else. Therefore, philosophy for Platonism was tantamount to something a priori. With this situation as the background we can see the revolutionary significance of Marxism which is to go deep into the origin of the principle. Marxism points out that the ultimate source of theory is not theory itself, but practical life.

In fact, Marx even went deep into the existential structure and its function. In the manuscript of *The German Ideology*, there is a paragraph that was deleted later. It reads:

The ideas produced by those individuals are those concerning to their relation with nature, or of the relation about themselves, or of the ideas about their own body organizations. Obviously, in those cases, all those ideas are the conscious representation of their actual relationships and activities, their production, their intercourse, and their social political organizations (no matter whether the representation is real or illusory).

Here we have three aspects from which come forth men's ideas: the relation between man and nature; the relation between man and man; the awareness of man's own body. The analysis of the first aspect explains the world as world; the second aspect, "who" the man is; the third, about human feeling and sentiment. All three aspects show the relation of man to the outer world

– even feeling or sentiment, being in relation to the body, is not mere subjectivity, for the body is a part of the nature. Though the above paragraph is omitted in the manuscript, it is of great significance. What Marx says here is just the analysis of existentiality. Marx used this way to criticize idealism. We would use it for the comparative study between Chinese philosophy and Western philosophy.

Based on the above quotations, it is reasonable to say that historical materialism and existential analysis are ways of historicism, not of logic. The latter differs from the former by practicing conceptual deduction. The latter, however, would go deep into the origin of logic. People usually think that it is the correct way to combine the way of history and logic, as if the two were on the same level. They even try to bring about a unity between the two. The so-called unity or combination, as far as I can see, came from Hegel. For Hegel, the kernel of philosophy is logic, which represents absolute spirit. The absolute spirit, developing itself logically, is the universal principle covering nature and social life. But the problem is how could human beings know the absolute spirit? To respond to the challenge, Hegel wrote the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. In this book, he demonstrated that the individual's perception could ascend to universal spirit by overcoming alienation; thus, there is no barrier to man's thinking entering into the absolute ideal world revealed in his *Logic*, so as to prevent his theory from being criticized as thought without human being's thinking. On the other hand, he introduced into logic the concept of "externality" by which the absolute ideal system would represent itself in natural law and "return" to the human spirit. Compared to the earlier rationalism in the pattern of the pure realm of conceptions, Hegel provided for philosophy of a logical character a historical methodology. His purpose is to maintain the arbitrary rational world. However, having pointed out the source of all idea, theory and thinking, we could not only expect him to clarify the origin of all kinds of consciousness, but also to develop the new idea, thinking and theory springing from the source; for what purpose if one came back by combining logic and history? I do not think it necessary to do so, except so far as it reminds us of the old form of theory and feeling of missing the soul without the "first" principle. We have learned the ineffectiveness of using the method of combination in the construction of Chinese philosophy.

Perhaps people would cite Engels to argue for the combining of logical methodology and historical methodology. Indeed, in Engels' Review of Karl Marx's *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, we read: "the economic categories would appear on the whole in the same order as in the logical exposition."¹³ But we should not forget the following saying by Marx: "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness."¹⁴ More important, talking about rent and capital according to their emergence in history and comparing with the theory in which capital goes first than rent, Marx wrote: "It would thus be impractical and wrong to arrange the

economic categories in the order in which they were the determining factors in the course of history.”¹⁵

Facing the facts, analyzing the facts, and being determined by facts, the methodology of existential analysis has a historical character. With this method, Marx criticized idealism. At that time, these different philosophies did not yet really encounter each other. Today, different civilizations have come together as never before. For the survival of the nation, for the preservation of cultural identification, it is all the more urgent for the non-Western nations to produce an apologetics [defense] for the philosophy permeating the culture. The comparative study of Chinese and Western philosophy has in fact the characteristic of a defense. As to whether the analysis of existentiality would be adequate for such a defense, this depends on whether we can perform it competently. I will try to depict a rough outline of the analysis as follows.

TRACING THE ORIGINAL SOURCE OF PHILOSOPHY

The analysis of existentiality aims at tracing back the original source of philosophy to explain the authenticity of philosophy, and, hence, to interpret the differences between Chinese philosophy and Western philosophy. This analysis can be carried out in two stages: first, analyzing Chinese philosophy and Western philosophy as facts, and working out the basic existentiality and their common existential structure, out of which comes philosophy; and, second, based on the various possible ways of existence included in the common structure, interpreting the different types of philosophy in China and the West.

Let's begin with Chinese philosophy. To begin with the facts here means to begin with the theme and the way people perform philosophy. There are various schools and numerous classics in ancient China. Though we have Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism as the three most influential schools in history, the main theme of the three schools is concentrated on how to live – that is, in Confucianism it is to be a sage; in Taoism it is to be an immortal; and in Buddhism it is to be a Buddha. All of them could be called the “man of having Tao.” Therefore, the essential theme of Chinese philosophy could be generalized as the doctrine of Tao. The problem posed becomes: why should man follow Tao, and, what is Tao? It seems impossible to reach a definite answer, since there are various sayings about Tao. Nevertheless, we should try.

Literally, the issues about the Tao are relatively clear. In a wordbook called “Shuo Wen”, it says “Tao, the way to go; Tao is that by which something can pass through.”¹⁶ Tao here means way. But philosophically Tao does not restrict itself to the sense of way to walk. Everything, when it occurs, reveals a way for it passing through – that is, “by which something can pass through”. There is passing through, there is a way for things to be. Were there no passing through, there would be no possibility for things to be. In this sense, Tao is the source or ground for

everything to be. There is much evidence arguing for such an understanding of Tao. In Lao Tze, it says: “Tao produced the One. The One produced the two. The Two produced the three. And the three produced the ten thousand things” (Chapter 42). Again, we read: “Tao, that which existed before heaven and earth”, “It may be considered the mother of the universe” (Chapter 25).¹⁷ In *Guan Tzu*, Tao is described as “Though its shape could not be seen, its sound could not be heard, Tao is that according to its order everything comes forth.”¹⁸ Han Fei Tzu says: “Tao is the source of everything and the ground of all reasons.”¹⁹ Tao is the source from which everything becomes what or that it is. The same is for human beings. This explains that Tao is the ground of being a man. To be a man properly is to follow the Tao.

There is a consensus in ancient China that, as we probe deep into Tao, we reach the point where we see that, in the source of Tao, nature and man are inseparably one. An essential idea held by the ancient Chinese is that, once upon a time, heaven, earth and all kinds of things had not yet been distinguished. It was chaos at that time. Lao Tzu (Chapter 25) says: “There was something undifferentiated and yet complete, which existed before heaven and earth. Soundless and formless, it depends on nothing and does not change. It operates everywhere and is free from danger. It may be considered the mother of the universe. I do not know its name; I shall call it Tao. If forced to give it a name, I call it Tao.”²⁰ Since everything was undifferentiated in the chaos, Tao is called Wu (nothing), as Lao Tzu (Chapter 40) says: “All things in the world come from being, and being comes from non-being.”²¹ Thus, we may say that, with the notion of Tao, the issue of the origin of all things is at the core of Chinese philosophy. In the very beginning was a primitive unity as well as chaos.

How would everything be differentiated in this primitive unity, so that man could have something to say about them? This question leads us to Zhuang Tzu. In his “Equality of things,” Zhuang Tzu compared human speech with the sound we hear when the wind blows through all sorts of holes existing in nature. His real point is that, human speech is nothing but an expression of nature, since man and nature are originally or primitively in unity. Just as natural sound comes from the wind flowing over holes, human speech, from the academic point of view, also comes from certain function, namely: other-me relation. So said Zhuang Tzu: “Without the other there would not be ‘I’. And without ‘I,’ who will experience the other.”²² Here a structure, which comes from human speech, is revealed – the “I-other” structure. The initial differentiation of “I-other” is the breaking of the original unity. The distinction between I and other is the ground for all other distinctions. This distinction could be expressed as “this-that” structure: “There is nothing that is not the ‘that’ and there is nothing that is not the ‘this’. Things do not know that they are the ‘that’ of other things; they only know what they themselves know. Therefore I say that the ‘that’ is produced by ‘this’ and the ‘this’ is also caused by the ‘that.’ This is the theory of mutual production.”²³

It seems audacious to say that speech comes from the differentiation of the original unity but not a human being's own will. For this Zhuang Tzu gave the following argument. He said, people generally maintained that speech is what I want to say, I am the lord. But where is the real lord of me? I have several sense organs; each of them has its own duty. Which one of them is the real lord? Or, is each of them the real lord in turn? We cannot find the so-called lord, not to say the "real". Since I am not the lord of my speech, speech must come from the differentiation of the unity. "The universe and I exit together, and all things and I are one. Since all things are one, what room is there for speech? But since I have already said that all things are one, how can speech not exist?"²⁴

From what Lao Tzu and Zhuang Tzu said, we have the impression that the origin of philosophy is a key issue for Chinese philosophy. But they are all Taoists. What about Confucianism? Indeed, Confucianism cares very much about social life. (That is why modern philosophers are always trying to formulate a kind of metaphysics for it.) But we cannot conclude that there is no metaphysics in Confucianism. Confucius, a great teacher, advised all sorts of people about life. How could he advise people without knowing the ultimate ground for all speech? He must know that. Just as he said: "...At forty, I had no doubts. At fifty, I knew the decrees of Heaven. At sixty, my ear was an obedient organ for reception of truth. At seventy, I could follow what my heart desired, without transgressing what was right."²⁵ It is very likely that, since the ultimate purpose of knowing is for practicing, Confucius would put stress on the practical problem directly when he talked with the masses.

This does not mean that he did not know the metaphysical ground. Actually, the commentaries of the Book of Change (i.e., "ten wings") is full of metaphysics and was written by Confucius, or at least, reflects the ideas of Confucius. One of the main points in the Book of Change is to trace the beginning of our world philosophically. Tai Ji and Wu Ji are two words serving for the notion of the very beginning. "Therefore, the Yi incorporates the Great Axis (Tai Ji) which produces the two primal forces. The two primal forces produce four images (*xiang*). The four images produce the eight trigrams."²⁶ According to Zhang Dainian: "The two forces mean heaven and earth, Tai Ji was the unity when heaven and the earth had not been differentiated."²⁷ The doctrine formulated by the sages in the Book of Change is nothing but following the change of the nature. Another Confucian classic, the Doctrine of the Mean, also holds that man and nature are one. It begins with the saying: "What Heaven has conferred is called NATURE; and accordance with this nature is called THE PATH of duty; the regulation of this path is called INSTRUCTION."²⁸ The point is that human nature and physical nature are of the same origin. Again: "It is only he who possesses the most complete sincerity that can exist under heaven, who can give its full development to his nature. Able to give its full development of his own nature, he can do the same to the nature of other men. Able to give its full development of the nature of other men, he can

give their full development to the nature of animals and things. Able to give full development to the natures of creatures and things, he can assist the transforming and nourishing powers of Heaven and Earth, he may (with Heaven and Earth) form a tern.”²⁹ This says that not only does man show that human being is out of the same origin of the nature, but also that, by accordance with nature consciously, man can live in harmony with the Heaven and Earth.

But to the question what is human nature, Confucius has no answer. In fact, the unity of man and nature is the ground for Confucius to maintain that all men should practice Jen (benevolence). In its depth, human nature and physical nature are in unity, it is impossible to state what the human nature is. For as Zhuang Tzu would say, “Since all things are one, what room is there for speech?” It is alleged that Mencius developed Confucius’ theory.³⁰ He tried to elaborate human nature as good³¹ so that all men should practice Jen and be able to be saints. But the point was challenged by Hsun Tzu. He maintained “the nature of man is evil”. Man’s nature as evil is no less supported by the facts than that of good supported by the facts. In metaphysics, the specialization of man’s nature from the unity of physical nature and man to that of good and evil, becomes superficial. That is why, as I can see, Confucianism as philosophy could not advance in the long period until Song and Ming Dynasties. It goes far from the original source of philosophy.

The Neo-Confucianism of the Song and Ming Dynasties is recognized as the peak of Confucianism. It goes back to the source of philosophy with the help of Buddhism. Buddhism aims at being a Buddha. Buddha is a kind of man who is conscious of his own life. But what is one’s own life? We have life, so we are able to see, hear, smell, touch, and taste. Life is the power beneath the seeing, hearing, smelling, touching, tasting, and makes them possible. To search life itself, we abandon what we have seen, heard, smelled, touched and tasted. After that we focus on the five sense consciousnesses. But that is not all. Still, we find there is another kind of consciousness which combines the former five consciousnesses into complete images (dharma). This sixth sort of conscious is called sense-center consciousness. To analyze it deeply, we find that, the former six consciousnesses might temporarily stop while our life continues. Therefore there must be still a sort of consciousness which keeps life going ahead without a break. It is the seventh consciousness, called thought-center consciousness (*manasvijnana*). The eighth one is called storehouse consciousness (*alaya*) which, with itself undifferentiated, is the source of all sorts of consciousness. Since it is undifferentiated in the eighth consciousness, we can sense nothing in this phase. This accounts for the fact that all the senses come from nothingness. Another way, just opposite to the above, is to begin with darkness, gradually open and develop, by twelve steps, to all beings we have. This is called twelve causations, “so as to account for where life comes from, and the beginning of the cosmos.”³² Having assimilated Buddhism teachings, neo-Confucianism goes deeper

into the root of life. The difference of neo-Confucianism from Buddhism is that the former does not stay in nirvana, an experience of life source. Rather, it requires a more active engagement in practical life. This is what they mean by self-conscious life.

Therefore, Confucianism, Taoism or Buddhism – whatever is to serve as Chinese philosophy – all take the issue of tracing the source of everything, including the source of philosophy, as the main theme. It turns out that, for Chinese philosophy, the original source is something undifferentiated, where the root of life and of all beings lie. This, as the ultimate ground of the Chinese philosophy, determines the basic attitude of the three schools toward life, whether living as a hermit or taking active part in political affairs. In short, they take the accord of man and nature, though understood differently, as the way of getting Tao.

As to the question, how could the original source differentiate itself into the colorful world that we have? – Zhuang Tzu would say it is because at the bottom there is something like a structure of “I-other” or “this-that”. Buddhism and neo-Confucianism (especially the neo-Confucianism of the Ming Dynasty) would attribute it to the mind. But I do not think they would deny the existence of the outer world. What they emphasize is the dynamic role of the mind in recognizing the world. The difficulty for them, as I see it, is that they do not have distinct words for “there is” and “that it is”. Actually, it is clear that the eighth consciousness – “*alaya*” – in Buddhism is not pure consciousness. Rather, like a seed, it will reveal itself as the mind and the world. When a Chinese philosopher meditates, the ultimate goal is the situation of nothingness: the description of the situation “mergence of me and the world” reveals the structure “I-other”, from which everything we have comes forth. Only so far as the “I-other” structure is implied in the original source, can it develop into the colorful world and life; as Heidegger says: “only what already is can really be accomplished.”³³

UNCOVERING THE VEIL OF OBLIVION

With a rough glance, it seems that what we have analyzed in Chinese philosophy is far from Western philosophy. Western philosophy has been marked as seeking universal knowledge since the time of the Greeks. Universal knowledge not only covers and has effects throughout the world, but also has the characteristics of objectivity and necessity. That is to say, universal knowledge is the objective truth. It cannot be changed by anyone, not the least by a human being’s own ways of existence. What is more, universal knowledge is said to be the essence of the things. Essence deals with those the attributes which belong to things in virtue of their own nature. Nature, as we know, is something which we cannot but recognize. Universal knowledge concerns the essence of the things, it is objective knowledge. How, then, can we do existential analysis in Western philosophy? Let’s try.

To begin with, I would like to distinguish the universal from the general. In practical usage, people usually do not distinguish the two terms rigorously. As I see it, the term ‘general’ can denote knowledge derived from experience, for we have the verb “generalize”. The term ‘universal’ could be used to mean absolute knowledge. What we mean philosophically by objective knowledge is the latter. This distinction also shows us that philosophy is the discipline dealing with being as being, while the natural sciences deal with some particular beings – so said Aristotle. Knowledge reduced from experience is not real universal knowledge. For it is limited by our experience. Therefore it is not real objective knowledge, because Kant defines objectivity by universality and generality. That is to say, objective knowledge should be without exception as well as acknowledged by all. However the knowledge derived from experience cannot match the above requirements.

If we could find no other than deductive knowledge as objective knowledge, the problem would be easier. We are required to show how deductive knowledge could be objective knowledge, and hence the essence of the world by its own nature, without any attitude of human beings toward it. In fact, absolute universal knowledge is ontology, which is the core of Western philosophy. Ontology, in the classical sense, deals with the categories, with being as its core. Here the categories are the most universal concepts; the propositions logically formed by those concepts are supposed to be first philosophy as well as the most universal knowledge. Throughout history, ontology was seen as the purest philosophy. It was the essence and the truth of the world. That is to say, whether or not human beings understand it, the world is always what it is, and it shows this in ontology. Objectivity means something that it is separate from human beings. Therefore if there is something objective, such as a proposition, it should be valid for all, without exception. Deductive knowledge has the character of objectivity due to logic. In logic, we have the secret of so-called objectivity. That is, when one accepts and follows logic, the standard for truth and falsity depends on logic, not the person who practices logic. No matter how many people make judgments, logic as the measurement is the same, and so the conclusion will be same for all, just as all sportsmen would accept the same regulations in the games they play.

The secret of ontology as objective knowledge lies in its method of logic. If logic is the only way for us to carry out judgment and assertion, we have no way except to follow it. It has been always a problem to determine what logic is and why we should follow logic. Today, though logic is still an enigma in many aspects, it is not as mysterious as it was before. Instead of being the formal structure of the world, logic is revealed as the rules in a language-game, as Wittgenstein said.³⁴ The story of logic demonstrates what Wittgenstein says. If logic is the formal structure of the world and reflects the essence of the world, then there would be only one form of logic, for the world is supposed to have only one essence. But as we know, even in ontology, there has been more than one form of logic. In the

ontology criticized by Kant, it is formal logic, i.e., syllogistic. According to this view, a conclusion could be drawn from two premises. One of the reasons that Kant criticized ontology is that, since the premise is something given, what if we have two opposite premises? We can go from each premise to the conclusion without any violation of logic, but two opposite premises are not allowed by formal logic. Kant's criticism reveals the confusion of thinking in the practice of ontology. To improve ontology, Hegel introduces dialectical logic. According to this view, contradiction is not something illegitimate. Rather, it is the dynamic of logic itself. It holds that, in dialectical logic, the two opposite categories could be overcome by a higher level category, thus driving logic to develop itself. Therefore we see different forms of logic in Hegel and before Hegel. Both forms of logic work, if accepted within a certain realm. The fact reveals the truth that the form of logic is established by philosophers. One more story we can tell is of Plato. In his dialogue, *Parmenides*, he discusses the participation of ideas. The way of participation could be seen as one kind of logic. Of course, there was no syllogism in his time. For him, one of the reasons why the idea "one" should participate with the idea "is", is that "One is" is a complete sentence in Greek. This suggests again Wittgenstein's assumption that logic is determined by the language game. When one practices logic, he gives himself up to the rule of logic. As a result for all people who practice logic, thinking gains the form of objectivity.

However, there might be still one enigma: given the above explanation, why and how are scientific presuppositions logically justified? What we are discussing here is logic with pure concepts, but without any data of experience. It is pure conceptual thinking, i.e., metaphysics. To the utmost, it reveals the pure possibility of thinking. However, science absolutely does not limit itself to pure conceptual thinking.

Our aim in this section is to argue that Western philosophy as well rests on the basic existential structure of "I-other". The practice of logic is a special mode of "I-other". Here, "I" is the logical subject, while "other" is the rational world formulated by logic. The logical subject and the rational world is a variation of the primitive structure of "I-other". We hold that whatever kind of world we have, there is at the same time a certain existentiality correspondent with that world. Toward the rational world formulated by the pure concepts, man is in a state of pure thinking. As Descartes said: "I think of myself as a thinking and un-extended thing".³⁵ Or: "I know that I am a real, existing thing, but what kind of thing? As I have said, a thing that thinks."³⁶ A thinking thing is what Descartes meant by the man who is doing rational thinking, as opposed to the man engaged with his senses. Husserl says much the same about the transcendental ego: "I stand now above all worldly existence, above my own human life and existence as man."³⁷ Here, the transcendental ego means the man who performs the category 'thinking.'

There is a difference between the man who is thinking logically and the man who thinks and perceives in daily life. When thinking logically,

people use the words or terms in a special way – that is, the meaning of the logical terms do not come from the things or objects they are denoting. Rather, as logical terms, they get their meaning from a mutual determination. That is to say, the logical determinations are their meaning. The terms used in logic are not the terms used in daily life, though they could be the same words in many cases. The key point here is that, the logical term is out of time and space by character. People usually think that when we think logically, we enter into the realm of necessity, and because of the necessity, people further think that it is valid for all, hence totally objective without any preference or distinction of man. But by thinking so, one fact is neglected. The “essence” of logical objectivity lies in that people have given up their rights of making decisions willingly and have committed themselves, instead, to the same logic. Just as in doing problems in mathematics, if people follow the same theorems and the operational rules, they are sure to reach the same conclusions.

I am not going to deny the existence of the “logical subject” or “transcendental ego”. What I hold is that the “logical subject” or “transcendental ego” is a possible way of existence which has its root in the primitive structure as “I-other”. There is in so-called objective knowledge nothing absolutely separate from man. Whatever the world might be, it is always with man’s way of comporting with it. Therefore the objective world (a pure conceptual world) only reveals itself to those who comport themselves logically toward it. When we commit ourselves to logic, we cannot but feel that it is not I who thinks, but it is logic by itself that develops. This makes Hegel believe that philosophy is the development of categories along its own way.

As one commits oneself to logic, the mode of existence changes, that is, from the daily manner to the level of conceptual thinking. However people rarely are aware of the change on their own side, for people are used to noticing what is revealed to consciousness rather than consciousness itself, especially when what they see is considered as something with the character of objectivity. According to Heidegger, we call this the oblivion of Being. According to phenomenology, people begin to “see” into the activity of their own consciousness. In his work *Being and Time* Heidegger writes that, by looking into conscious activity, we see in the existence of man the inseparable structure of “Being-in-the-world”. Here, Being is different from being (that it is). Being is the way by which being reveals itself as what it is. As far as I can see, the essential meaning of Heidegger here is that he talks about the original source of all the beings presented, though in the terminology of traditional Western philosophy.

THE DIFFERENT WAYS OF UNFOLDING FROM THE SAME SOURCE

The Existential Structure as the Common Ground

According to the above analysis, we come to the point that at the root of different types of philosophy, there is a basic structure called “I-other” or “Being-in-the-world”. It is the ground of the different ways of existence. If philosophy is a discipline inquiring deeply enough into the source, it should touch this ground wherein lies the source of all kinds of ways of human existence, including the source of philosophy itself. In reflecting into the ways of existentiality, philosophy as a phenomenon occurs. To argue the above point, we need to demonstrate how the different ways of existence lead to the different types of philosophy. If we are to succeed in doing so, not only can we resolve the query about the legitimacy of Chinese philosophy, but we can also have hope to get a better understanding of the two different types of philosophy – Chinese philosophy and Western philosophy. Our task here is to explicate why, from the same ground, Chinese and Western philosophy show themselves to be so different.

As universal knowledge, Western philosophy holds in itself an existentiality of “thinking-subject” vs. “conceptual world”. This is by no means the primordial structure, for in “thinking subject”, the essence of man is defined as ‘rational animal’ – which is only one of the possible ways of human existence. To be in such existentiality is most probably the result of education, especially education in Western philosophy. For ordinary people, it is not easy to be in that existentiality as people naturally live within their environment. On the other hand, the fact that man can survive in this world shows that the environment is a fitting place for man. Man and the environment form a unique phenomenon. If the environment is as obtrusive to man as the world outside us, the unity of man and environment would thus be broken. In this case, man transcends the primordial structure of “I-other” to the “subject-object” structure. This break occurs in language when one says something about the environment separately. Zhuang Tzu reflected the break as: “Since all things are one, what room is there for speech? But since I have already said that all things are one, how can speech not exist?”³⁸ But there is a further problem: since it is a fact to both the Chinese and to the people of the West that in speech the unity has been broken, why was the structure of “subject-object” attributed particularly to Western philosophy?

Different Ways of Reflection

The difference lies in the different ways of reflection. This means, the different targets to be reflected, and how to do reflection, i.e., by conceptual thinking or experience. The Chinese way of reflection laid stress on the structure of the original source. It always reminds people to experience the structure of “I-other” as the unique one. Whereas Western philosophy puts its eye on the obtrusive things presented, but hence has missed the original source. The great philosopher Plato took a great role in the Western way of reflection. Led by the impulse to give a definition of

things, Plato proposed 'idea' as the truth of things. This "conduct" led Plato to a new existentiality, say, to comport oneself toward things by "seeing" through the phenomenon to the essence. Notably, in Greek, the verb "*idein*", which means "to see", is of the same root as the term "idea". (Another case is the Latin term "theory". It comes from the stem "*theor-*", which also means "to see".) What Plato taught people to see is not that we can see with the naked eye; rather, he demanded to see the universal with the eyes of soul. This universal is supposed to be the essence of things; it is unchangeable compared to sensible things. The more conspicuous the essence is, the less noticeable is the position of the "I". By this way, man is taken as the rational animal with innate concepts. However, people still have a vague remembrance about their coming out of the unity of man and nature when they recall, in the metaphor of the sun or the luminous that it is only when we are out of the darkness that we understand what we understood. It is the luminous which has enlightened the world.

On the Chinese side, we have seen that the ancient Chinese philosophers held the unity of man and nature as the ultimate source of all things. Therein lies the cause and origin for human being's existence. It is the ground as well as the starting point for human beings to live. As Zhuang Tzu said, one could say nothing if engaged in the unity itself. The real understanding of the unity is to experience silently. But this does not mean that one should be always in a state of nothingness. The experience of nothingness is to remind us that since originally we are one with the world, it is the appropriate way of living, and so we should comport ourselves to the world appropriately. The position of fitting with the world properly is what is called "getting Dao". Of course, no one can really trace back to the moment when the earth began to bear the living beings (it is too early for any civilization to trace). Nor could one say that today the world and human being are no longer a unity. Even Zen as a religion holds that one could get Dao in daily housework. Therefore, we have various kinds of Dao: Dao in politics, business, learning, in doing all kinds of arts, even "the robber has his own Dao", as Zhuang Tzu said. Since the original source is the ultimate ground for human life, it is important to experience the primitive unity. This accounts for the way of Chinese philosophical reflection being self-cultivating, and not as in Western philosophy. If we could say that the Western way of doing philosophy is to see the opposite, then, the Chinese way of doing philosophy is to experience the unity of "I-other". To experience is a process of self-cultivation. Here, one should experience the current appropriation of the outer world and himself as a unity, instead of holding (noticing) the outside things. This requires one to ascend from the visible concrete things to a situation in which one can experience the accordance of man and world. It is said in Yi Jing: "Ascended from form, it is called Dao; descended from form, we get concrete things ("vessel" in Chinese, named *Qi*)." ³⁹ "To ascend from form" is pronounced as "Xing Er Shang"; the learning of "*Xin Er Shang*" is "metaphysics" for the Chinese.

DIFFERENCE IN METAPHYSICS AND TRANSCENDENCE

From the standpoint of going beyond concrete things, it seems that Chinese philosophy and Western philosophy have the same understanding of metaphysics. For both of the philosophies have the characteristic of transcendence, which is supposed to be the true meaning of metaphysics. But if we inquire into what kind of transcendence each philosophy has respectively, we find a sharp difference here. For in Western philosophy, transcendence means the objects which go beyond visible things. But in Chinese philosophy, people have maintained that Dao is something, whether visible or invisible. Rather, Dao is often said to be the generative process of everything. It would be impossible to grasp the Dao if one stares only at concrete things. But concrete things cannot transcend themselves, it is man—comporting himself toward things—who can transcend visible things, so as to grasp the Dao. In short, transcendence for Western metaphysics is a description of the objective essence of things; while for Chinese metaphysics, transcendence describes the change of man's own existentiality, that is, from seeing things to understanding their generative process.

Furthermore, in Western metaphysics, essence is expressed in universal concepts. For Chinese metaphysics, the real generative process of things could only be grasped in man's dealing with them properly. This accounts for the fact that Dao is never something expressed in universal concepts; rather, it is in one's own experience. The true meaning of Dao is not what Dao is, but how deeply one experiences Dao. For this reason, I would say that if there is metaphysics in Chinese philosophy, it is not of the pure knowledge. It is an existentiality in which man adjusts his way toward the world for the sake of getting Dao, that is, to be in accordance of man and world. It turns out that we have two types of transcendence, one is characteristic of the object understood by conceptual thinking, and the other is characteristic of the man who transcends. Only as man transcends, can there be a transcendental world. It is man in a special way of transcending; who adjusted himself to the position beyond the sensible world and set an essential world – the essential then becoming the transcendental world in reflection. In the final analysis, man is the source of transcendence; transcendence is the nature of man.

This is demonstrated by Kant. He mentioned metaphysics “as a natural disposition of reason.”⁴⁰ Even clearer is Heidegger's *What Is Metaphysics?* He traced the origin of metaphysics as the discipline dealing with beings as a whole, and held that: “Human being can relate to beings only if it holds itself into nothing. Going beyond beings occurs in the essence of *Dasein*. But this going beyond is metaphysics itself. This implies that metaphysics belongs to the ‘nature of man’ It is neither a division of academic philosophy nor a field of arbitrary notions. Metaphysics is the basic occurrence of *Dasein*.”⁴¹ Again, he wrote: “If the question of the nothing unfolded here has actually questioned us, then we have not simply

brought metaphysics before us in an extrinsic manner. Nor have we merely been ‘transposed’ into it. We cannot be transposed there at all, because insofar as we exist we are always there already.”⁴²

The difference in metaphysics between the two philosophies is determined by their different aims. Chinese philosophy aims at being an accordance of man with nature; Western philosophy aims at universal knowledge. This basic difference shows itself in many other aspects. When Western philosophy was introduced into China, its terms seemed novel to Chinese scholars. Therefore, there occurred a number of misunderstandings, about which we cannot talk in so short a paper as this.

THINKING-TRAINING VS. SELF-CULTIVATING

One of the conspicuous features showing the different types of philosophy is in the way of doing philosophy. We Chinese did not know the word “philosophy” before Western philosophy introduced it into China. When a Japanese scholar first translated the term with Chinese characters at the end of the 19th century, it was pronounced as “Xi Xian Xue” but not “Zhe Xue”. “Xi” means “to wish” or “to hope”, “Xian” means “sage”, “Xue”, a learning. Obviously, the Japanese scholar, based on traditional Chinese culture, could only pick words familiar to the Chinese. Indeed, Confucius, Lao Tzu and other famous figures were respected by people as saints or sages. It means that they were respected, not because the sages had great learning, but because of their deeds and of their morality. As great teachers, sages taught people how to deal with all kinds of things happening. Though they had different points of view even on the same cases, they were trusted as the persons of depth, that is, the men with Dao. To be such a man, a process of self-cultivation is required. Many reflections in Chinese history focused on the way of self-cultivation. The issue of consistency of action and knowing was thus raised. Since Dao prevails everywhere and in everything, self-cultivation concerned various aspects of life. Today we still have the saying of the ‘Dao of being a moral person’, the ‘Dao of administrating the country’, the ‘Dao of serving tea’, the ‘Dao of traditional medicine’, etc.

With universal knowledge as its aim, Western philosophy established in its core the first principle, that is, ontology. Ontology is the most universal knowledge, it does not concern particulars. Since it is the most universal and concerns nothing particular, it uses the categories of logic in formulating the theory. The categories used in ontology could be the same words as we use in daily life, but eventually they are totally different in meaning. They have their meaning, so to speak, not as our daily words gain their meaning. For the terms in ontology do not denote anything in the sensible world; they do not gain their meaning by the denoted things. Rather, their meaning comes from mutual relationships. For instance, as pure concept, “large” does not mean any large thing, but it is the opposite of “small”, the meaning of “large” and “small” is thus determined through

mutual relationships. So in ontology, a special name, “determination”, is used to mark the meaning of the category. It is quite difficult for ordinary people to think with the words so defined. So a necessary step for learning philosophy is to have thinking-training. Plato’s cave metaphor implies the difference between the trained and the untrained. Hegel in his *Logic* also calls for a thinking-training as the first step for entering into philosophy.

The language of ontology is so-called objective language; it has logic as its character. Marx, in his criticism of Hegelianism, disclosed this secret. He writes: “Just as philosophers have given thought an independent existence, so they were bound to make language into an independent realm. This is the secret of philosophical language, in which thoughts, in the form of words, have their own content. The problem of descending from the world of thoughts to the actual world is turned into the problem of descending from language to life.”⁴³

Compared to Western philosophy’s language understood as the objective language, it is interesting that in Chinese philosophy so-called objective language is objectionable. Chinese philosophers usually take language as the usher of the real process. They commonly hold that a word as name must denote some *thing*. Otherwise, the name would be meaningless. Obviously for Chinese philosophers, more stress is put on real things and processes. There is the saying that to point to the moon with a finger is not to call the attention to the moon but to the finger. Language works just like the finger here. Sometimes they even feel language is a barrier. They have their reasons, for the highest situation of philosophy is gaining Tao. In that situation, it is rare for a man to speak, for man would be totally in concordance of man and the world. Any saying would destroy the situation. Another interesting feature of the Chinese language is that there are lots of words reflecting the situation, both subjective and objective. For instance, there are several different words meaning death depending on the status of the person who died. The death of an emperor is articulated as “*Beng*”, prince as “*Hong*”, minister as “*Zu*”, a gentleman as “*Bu Lu*”, and ordinary people as “*Si*”. Though the same fact that someone has died is the meaning of the words, the different words show the degree of respect of the speaker to the dead. The speaker has the real feeling of that kind when he speaks. Again, “kill” can be expressed by different Chinese characters. It is distinguished by whether the action of killing is from the superior to the inferior or from the inferior to the superior. Of course, these meanings were designed according to the ethical norms of the ruling class.

NOT A SUMMARY

Both Chinese philosophy and Western philosophy are in crisis now. For the Chinese, it is impossible to formulate their own philosophy by following Western philosophy, which was considered the right way in the past century. Western philosophy has been in crisis since Hegel. The authority of rationalism has been suspect. The crisis is even more serious as

it encounters the philosophy of other nations. The more people seek the legitimacy of another nation's philosophy, the more conspicuous the question comes to the fore: What is philosophy? We should not start from the definition of philosophy at hand, nor can we set a definition arbitrarily. The only way is to base things on the facts. Chinese philosophy and Western philosophy, and any other possible philosophy, are historical facts. What we can do is to go deeply into their respect roots. In the root, we find that philosophy as a phenomenon, like the other kinds of culture, comes from human being's own existence. Philosophy is a reflection into man's existentiality. Reflection could be done in other areas – say literature, religion, the arts, and so on. Philosophical reflection differs from the reflection in other areas in that in philosophy it is the reflection of the ways or forms of man's existentiality, while others might reflect directly into the existentiality.

The analysis of existentiality discloses not only the same existential structure in the origin of philosophy but also the reason why Chinese philosophy and Western philosophy have developed into different types. This paper is far from a detailed analysis. But its author believes with confidence that philosophy, whether in China or in the West, will achieve a greater development through comparative study.

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NOTES

¹ [Abstract]: This paper holds that the analysis of existentiality is the appropriate way for the comparative study of Chinese and Western philosophies. The author presents reasons for doing existential analysis, explains its features, and depicts a brief way of using this method.

² Yu Xuanmeng: *A Study of Ontology*, chapter 3 (Shanghai People's Publishing House, 1999).

³ "Essence," see *Philosophy Dictionary* (revised edition) ed. by Feng Qi (Shanghai Dictionary Press, 2001).

⁴ "Essence and Phenomenon," see *Chinese Encyclopedia*, (Philosophy Volume) (Beijing /Shanghai, The Chinese Encyclopedia Publishing House, 1987).

⁵ A.C. Graham, *Unreason within Reason* (Open Court, 1992), p. 86.

⁶ *Ibid*, p. 87.

⁷ Marx and Engels, *German Ideology* (in Chinese) (People's Publishing House, 1961), p. 515.

⁸ *Hegel's Science of Logic*, tr. A.V. Miller (New York: Humanity Books, 1999), p. 409.

⁹ M. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, tr. J. Macqarrie and E. Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1962).

¹⁰ There are many books which could be mentioned. As I see it, two books deserve to be noticed: one is *Heidegger and Asian Thought*, (ed. by Graham Parkes, University of Hawaii Press, 1987), the other is *Heidegger's Hidden Sources* (by Reinhard May, tr. Graham Parkes, London and New York, 1996).

¹¹ Marx, *Critique of Political Economy*, see Marx, *Engles: Selected Works* vol. 2 (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1972), p. 82.

¹² Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, Ed. with intro. C.J.Arthur, (New York: International Publishers, 1970), p. 47.

¹³ Engels, *Karl Marx's 'Critique of Political Economy'*, see Marx, *Critique of Political Economy*, appendix (People's Publishing House, p. 181) (my translation).

¹⁴ Marx, *Critique of Political Economy*, p. 3 (my translation).

¹⁵ Marx, *Introduction to 'Critique of Political Economy'*, Ibid, p. 222 (my translation).

¹⁶ 《说文》：“道，所行道也，一达谓之道。”

¹⁷ See *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, tr. Wing-Tsit Chan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963).

¹⁸ 《管子·内业》：“不见其形，不闻其声，而序其成谓之道。”

¹⁹ 《韩非子·解老》：“道者，万物之所然也，万理之所稽也。”

²⁰ “有物混成，先天地生，寂兮寥兮，独立而不改，周行而不殆，可以为天下母。吾不知其名，字之曰道，强为之名曰大。”译文见Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*.

²¹ “天下万物生于有，有生于无”。译文见Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*.

²² Reference to Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 181. But I substitute “other” for “them”, and ‘I’ for ‘me’. For “them” is the third person, but Zhuang Tzu did not intend to mention the third person here. What he did was to make the original unity into full division: ‘I’ and the ‘other than I’. This is the very beginning of the differentiation of the unity. This accords with the division of “this” and “that” in the same essay.

²³ 原文：“物无非彼，物无非是，自彼则不见，自知（是）则知之。故曰彼出于是，是亦因彼。”译文见Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*. p. 182.

²⁴ 原文：“天地与我并生，万物与我为一。既已为一矣，且得有言乎，既已谓之一矣，且得无言乎？”译文见Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*.p. 186.

²⁵ The Confucian *Analects*, Ch. 2. 原文“...四十而不惑，五十而之天命，六十而耳顺，七十而从心所欲，不逾矩。”译文据湖南出版社《汉英四书》理雅各译，1992。

²⁶ “是故易有太极，是生两仪，两仪生四卦，四卦声八象。”《易·系辞传上》

²⁷ Zhang Dainian: *The Essential Concepts and Categories in the Classic Chinese Philosophy*, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Press, 1989, p.47

²⁸ *The Doctrine of the Mean*, tr. James Legge, Hunan Publishing House, 1992, p.25. 原文如下“天命之谓性，率性之为道，修道之为教。”

²⁹ Ibid., p. 49. 其原文: ”唯天下至诚, 为能尽其性; 能尽其性, 则能尽人之性, 能尽人之性, 则能尽物之性; 能尽物之性, 则可以赞天地之化育; 可以赞天地之化育, 则可以与天地参矣。”

³⁰ Feng Yu-lan *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy* (New York: The Free Press, 1976), p. 69.

³¹ Mencius said: “All men have a mind which cannot bear to see the sufferings of others.” “If men suddenly see a child about to fall into a well, they will without exception experience a feeling of alarm and distress.” *The works of Mencius, Gongsun Chou, Part one*, tr. James Legge.

³² Xiong Shili: *Cun Znai Notes*, p. 4. (熊十力, 《存斋笔记》, 上海远东出版社, 1994)

³³ Heidegger: *Letter on Humanism*, see *Martin Heidegger Basic Writings*, ed. D.F. Krell, p. 217.

³⁴ Ludwig Wittgenstein: *Philosophical Investigations*, part 1-7. tr. G.E.M. Anscombe (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1958).

³⁵ Descartes: *Meditation on First Philosophy*, see *Introduction to Philosophy*, ed. John Perry and Michael Bratman, second edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 121.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 115.

³⁷ Husserl: *Shorter Works*, P. McCormick and F. Elliston, eds. cited from *Dictionary of Western Philosophy*, English-Chinese, ed by Nicolas Bunnin and Yu Jiyuan (Beijing, 2001), p. 1014.

³⁸ Chuang Tzu, ch. 2, *The Equity of Things*, cited from *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, tr. Wing-Tsit Chen (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 186.

³⁹ Wing-Tsit Chen translated this as: “Therefore what exists before physical form (and is therefore without it) is called the Way. What exists after physical form (and is therefore with it) is called a concrete thing.” Ibid, p. 267. This translation needs to be discussed. It seems as if the things themselves could get Dao. Such an idea is *never* that of Chinese philosophy. For Chinese philosophy, only man can carry out Dao; Dao does not force man to carry Dao. (人能弘道, 非道弘人)

⁴⁰ Kant: *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, tr. Lewis White Beck (Indianapolis, IN: The Library of Liberal Arts, 1997), p. 116.

⁴¹ Heidegger, *Basic Writings*, p. 109.

⁴² Ibid., p. 110.

⁴³ Marx and Engels, *German Ideology*, p. 515 (my translation).

CHAPTER XXII

THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL TIME ON CULTURAL COMPARISON¹

CHEN XINHAN

TIME AND SOCIAL TIME

In his theory of natural philosophy, Newton pointed out that “absolute, true and mathematical time, of itself and from its own nature, flows equably without relation to anything external”; similarly, “Absolute space, in its own nature, without relation to anything external, remains always similar and immovable.” This is the famous Newtonian “absolute time and space.” This principle was shown to be false by Einstein. But before Einstein, Hegel had also criticized Newton's absolute time and space from the philosophical point of view, in his book *Philosophy of Nature*. Hegel pointed out that object and motion cannot be separated, “Never anywhere has there been matter without motion, or motion without matter,” and therefore there is no time or space that is apart from motion. Although Hegel understood matter as attached to the self-development of absolute concepts, which was determined by his objective idealism, his thought of connecting time and physical motion² was profound. This can be shown in two aspects. First, time does not flow equitably; rather, what flows is motion, transformation and development of matter, hence “time itself is changeable.” Second, some temporal relationships developed in certain motions have shown motion in a concrete form. In order to understand such a relationship, we must understand the ‘more concrete form’ of motion.

Since the appearance of human beings on the scene, the real world has been composed of the natural world and the social world. There are different types of motion in the natural world, and therefore time, referring to different motions, has correspondingly different characteristics. The famous Lorenz formula shows that as anything approximates the speed of light, time expands. In human society, time, as the existence-form of the motion of social matter, does not have this character. Thus, time in the natural world is called natural time, while time referring to human society is known as social time.

Different types of motion are combined with different types of special contradiction. The special contradictions in society are contradictions between productive forces and productive relations and between economic base and a superstructure. The essence of the development of contradictions is constituted by people’s practical activities. Labor is the basic form of social practice and the eternal foundation of people’s existence and development. Marx explained social time in relation

to labor. Labor is the living, form-giving fire; he wrote. "It is the transitoriness of things, their temporality, as their transformation by living time." Hegel combined time and such transformation together, while Marx combined social time and development – that is, the transformation due to people's practices – together. Hence, Marx proposed his famous proposition about social time, "Time is the active existence-form of mankind; it is not only the measure of life but also the development-space of mankind."

The active existence of mankind or transformation and development of mankind are closely connected with the contrasting self-relationship. This is the essential distinction between man and animals. The natural world cannot spontaneously meet the needs of human beings. Practical activities are ways for people to achieve their goals and meet their requirements. Therefore the subjects in such a self-relationship are categorized as cultural products. In this sense, a relationship with oneself is a cultural relationship, and is also a relationship with the cultural world. It even includes relationships with various forms of matter and relationships with concepts pertaining to, and based on, matter. As it pertains to the object, the essence of social time is the active existence of mankind; as it pertains to the subject, it is the construction of culture. Therefore, social time is a movement of the 'active existence' of mankind and also a motion of culture construction.

Spengler saw this character of social time. He introduced the morphology of biology into comparisons of culture: he distinguished the most essential developments of culture paradigms (Egyptian, classical, Western and Arab cultures) as 'pre-culture', 'culture' and 'civilization'. He interpreted the contemporary character of social time from the viewpoint of a similar stage of development. He considered that a comparison could be made between different paradigms of culture only on the basis of similar developmental stages – otherwise they would not be comparable. Toynbee agreed with Spengler's view of the contemporary. Marx proposed the theory of three social formations from the viewpoints of 'the human's dependent relationship', 'the human's independence on the basis of matter dependence' and 'the freedom of people constructed on the basis of individual development and the common social productive force as social wealth'. Marx's theory of the three social formations is actually a theory of three cultural formations. The time theories of Spengler and Marx are both based on the discovery of the essence of social time.

People live in the social world, but can never leave the natural world. Therefore, people live in social time as well as natural time. In the consciousness of mankind, there is not only the concept of social time, but also that of natural time. People's concept of natural time is represented by the 'chronological time view'. This view has existed for a long time. Although different paradigms of culture have different chronological times, most of them define the time that the sun runs once around the earth as one year³, the time that the moon runs once around the earth as one month, and one day is the time that the earth turns once around itself.⁴ Definitions of time

as hours, minutes, seconds, etc. are used as the units of chronological time. People's social time is represented by the understanding of the development or construction of culture or cultural formations: we call this the 'culture-formation time view'. Such a cultural formation time view has existed for a long time, although at the beginning it was indistinct. On the cultural formation time view, the unit of measurement is the stage of development of the culture.

CULTURE COMPARISON AND THE TIME VIEW OF WORLD HISTORY

There are about two thousand nations in the world. During the long years of development, different nations have formed their particular cultures, and adjacent nations together have formed a paradigm of culture. Different cultures come down to several paradigms of culture. In the culture conformation time of Marx's 'relationship of human dependence', "force of production can only be developed within limited and isolated areas." There is very limited communication between different paradigms of culture. In the culture conformation time (that is, in Marx's 'on the basis of dependence on the material'), "the further separate spheres that interact with one another extend in the course of this development, the more the original isolation of separate nationalities is destroyed by the developed mode of production and intercourse – the more history becomes world history." World history is tied up with the geographical discoveries of the 16th century, the conformation of the world market and cultural communications between different areas. Hence, 'world history does not exist in the past; rather, the history of world history is a consequence.' World history has now developed into a new global phase. The whole world is closely combined together: different countries and areas depend on each other; the world greatly extends the sight of peoples, and it makes it possible to compare paradigms of culture. Comparison of cultures started to make sense after the establishment of a unified view of time in world history.

From the view of world history, all types of paradigm of culture are under the constraint of two unified views of time: that of natural (chronological) time and that of the social (culture-conformation) time. Although different paradigms of culture existed in different areas in the same natural time, there was little or no communication with one another. Thus, before history became world history, each paradigm of culture had its own chronicle time, so that it was impossible to have a globally unified view of chronological time. Therefore, although there was a dim 'culture-conformation time', it was impossible to realize that different paradigms of culture essentially represent different stages or conformations of the development of human culture. Hence there was no unified view of culture-conformation time with which to criticize different paradigms of culture in the world. It was possible to establish only a unification of the 'two time' view of the time of world history.

According to the establishment of a unified chronicle-time view, it is easy to understand that a unified chronological time is necessary for the people under different culture paradigms to communicate with one another. At present the 'Anno Domini' (A.D.), a unified chronological time, is in use and is accepted by most people in the world.

It is more difficult to understand a unified 'culture conformation' time. The establishment of a unified culture conformation time is combined with the comparison between different paradigms of culture within a unified chronological time. World history means communications and conflicts between different paradigms of culture. Such communications and conflicts are the basis of comparison between paradigms of culture. Time and space, as forms of the movement of matter (that is, of motion), are inseparable from each other: one time always connects with one space. One time in the unified chronological time means communication – conflicts of different paradigms of culture can be shown on the same spatial plane before us. This is like the appearance to the astronomer of many stars in the universe; some of them are in the creating period, others are in the growing period, still others are in the dying period. Thus, the astronomer can study and compare different stars, and find out laws of repetition and regularity. This means mentally looking at the stars at the different stages of development – stages within which the growing process of one star occurs. In the study of the comparison of different paradigms of culture that occur simultaneously in world history, people have found that many paradigms of culture are in different social times.

In the *History of Philosophy*, Hegel arranged geographically different paradigms of culture within the same chronological time in world history. He found a rule, namely, that different paradigms of culture arranged in the order from low to high, lay geographically from East to West. Therefore, he transferred the geographic concepts 'East' and 'West' to the temporal concepts in the culture conformation as 'history's start' and 'history's end'. '[H]istory does not scatter around [the earth]', 'there is a deciding East' and a West as 'history's end'. World history has experienced the development of culture conformation from 'east' to 'west'. Hence, he found the regularity of history and cultural development, and this was a great contribution of Hegel. At the time when history turned to be world history in the process of the comparison of different paradigms of culture, Marx proposed the above mentioned theory of three social conformations or culture conformations. According to this theory, the current paradigm of culture of Chinese society and that of Western society are not contemporary [in the sense that they are not in the same social time].

If bare comparison of paradigms of culture at different development stages or conformations forms only a dim view of culture conformation in the time of world history, the comparison of paradigms of culture in one plane can form a vivid view of culture conformation. Such a vivid view of culture-conformation time implies 'unification'. This is the same as the 'unification' in the unified view of chronological time. 'Unification' here

means to criticize time with a unified-time view, and concretely, use a unified culture-conformation view of time as the criterion, to criticize the social time of different culture paradigms on the same plane. These are all for the purpose of determining the development stage of a given paradigm of culture. Of course, such a unified criterion can be the culture-conformation view of Spengler, or that of Marx or others.

CONTEMPORANEITY AND UN-CONTEMPORANEITY IN CULTURAL COMPARISON

We can find the concepts of contemporaneity and un-contemporaneity in both the chronological time view and the view of culture-conformation time. In the chronological time view, modern China and Western countries are contemporary, but un-contemporary with the Western countries of two or three hundred years ago. In the view of culture-conformation time, modern China is contemporary with the Western countries of two or three hundred years ago, but un-contemporary with Western countries today. Culture comparison refers to the comparison of cultural conformations of different paradigms of culture. In this paper, we have been dealing with contemporaneity and un-contemporaneity in terms of culture conformation.

In modern and contemporary Chinese history, people have studied the cultural differences between China and Western countries twice. The first time occurred in the middle of the 19th century. The British opened the Chinese door with cannons and ships, and the Chinese were forced to 'open their eyes to see the world'. Some scholars began to study Western culture and made comparisons. But they did not propose, let alone solve, what the essential problem should be vis-à-vis cultural comparison. The second time began in the 1980s, when China started its economic reform. This time, many scholars understood the essential problem in the comparison of culture conformations: They agreed with Spengler's idea that different paradigms of culture are contemporary if they are at a similar stage of development (no matter the temporal distance in terms of chronological time): Contemporary paradigms of culture have common characteristics and comparisons make sense. This is a profound point of view.

In the current comparative study of Chinese and Western culture, we are interested not only with 'similar in the shape' but also with 'similar in spirit'. In order to achieve this goal, we have to first identify the development stage of a given paradigm of culture, and then compare it with its contemporary counterparts. This is the foundation of culture comparison. Before the economic reform, according to the theory of 'five social forms', people considered that the Chinese had escaped from becoming a capitalistic society and in the interim had adopted Communism. Through discussions of the criteria of truth, people now recognize that China is at the primary stage of socialism. This stage is almost identical to Marx's interim phase between the first stage and the second stage in his theory of three

culture conformations. Marx's theory of three *social* conformations here is the theory of three *culture* conformations: therefore, contemporary Chinese society, which is in the interim phase between the first and the second culture conformations, is contemporary with the paradigm of culture of the Western countries of two or three hundred years ago.

With such confirmation, we are able to compare many cultural problems in today's China with those of contemporary Western countries, so as to perform a correct analysis. For example, consider the problem of individualism. Eight years ago, there was a proposal which said that China was in the interim phase between the first and the second stages in Marx's theory. This corresponded to the commodity economy in Western countries, and the adaptive culture relative to the development of such a commodity economy is the culture of individualism. Accordingly, we must therefore 'encourage individualism' as an urgent need for social development'. Of course, such individualism is not the same as extreme individualism. Such a proposal has not yet been recognized by the mainstream ideology. One reason may be the improper localization of the current Chinese paradigm of culture in the culture-conformation time.

The contemporary paradigms of culture have the property of being comparable, and such comparison makes sense. But we cannot say that un-contemporary paradigms of culture are not comparable, or that such a comparison is meaningless. As mentioned above, during the comparison of different paradigms of culture (although they are likely to be un-contemporary on account of their respectively different development stages of culture conformation) on the one plane of world history (that is, in the same chronological time), people discover the regularity that the development of culture conformation is from 'East to West'. This reveals the methodology that only comparison between contemporary culture paradigms can make or sense. There is a further background for the comparison between different paradigms of culture on one historical plane: it is that the past, the present and the future of social time are dialectically related. In natural time, the present is decided by the past, and the future is decided by the present – this is a one-directional causal relationship. In the social realm, the process and direction of historical development is irreversible: it is absolute. But such a mechanically determined understanding of the irreversibility of world history may lead to an extremely limited historic view. According to such a point of view, the past decides the present, and past and present decide the future, so that the historical causation relationship is only one-directional. This limited historical view implies pre-determination – namely that all that exists in the present time has been decided long before in the past. Surely, this cannot explain the infinite extensiveness and creativeness of history.

In fact, people's practical activeness does not restrict itself to the original determinative production and re-production. The past, the present and the future in social time are multilaterally determinative. Marx studied the components of the past, the present and the future in the labor process

and obtained this conclusion: that in the process of labor, the means (tools) are products of earlier labor; the means represent the concretization of previous labor. The object is the current existence (it may also be the product of previous labor), while the goal is the future result that exists as a concept in the human brain. The goal as a reflection of the future, is a reasonable blueprint in the present, so that 'it, as a regularity, decides the methodology and methods of [the labor subject, or the worker]'. Here the concurrence and interaction of means, object and goal during labor represent the concurrence and interaction of the past, the present and the future during the labor process; not only the determinativeness of the past, but also that of the future play a role. The result of labor is the codeterminative result of the past, the present and the future. The dialectical relationship of the past, the present and the future in the labor process shows dialectical causation relationships of the past, the present and the future in history: This means that they transform between cause and result; or interaction among the past, present and future. Thus, social time flows not only downstream from the past to the present, but also upstream from the future to the present.

Such a dialectical feature of social time determines that the comparison among different paradigms of culture, and of different culture-conformation times, is not only possible but necessary, because such a comparison makes sense. Frankly, the culture conformation of modern China lags behind that of Western developed countries. Recognition of such a difference is the first requisite for changing China's culture. However, such recognition is obtained from comparison. The comparison and the analysis of the culture conformation according to Marx's latter part of the second social conformation are helpful to us for planning our 'ideal blueprint' and for avoiding tangents in practical activity. At present, the practice of a serious comparison between cultural paradigms is seldom performed. But there is a premise for such a comparison to make sense, namely, that this is a comparison of different cultural paradigms in different cultural 'conformation times'; for if such a borderline becomes blurred, then no meaningful comparison can be performed.

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NOTES

¹ [Abstract]: People live in natural time and in social time, and accordingly have two ways of viewing time. Cultural comparison starts to make sense after the establishment of a unified view of time in world history. "Contemporary" refers to the similar advancement of different cultures, and "comparison" can be made between different contemporary paradigms of culture. Comparison between non-contemporary paradigms of culture also makes sense. The basis of

such comparison is the dialectical relationship among the past, the present and the future. During the study of traditional culture and modernization, there is a problem of comparison between Eastern and Western cultures. With the development of Chinese economic reform, such a problem has shown its practical and theoretical meaning. In this paper, we want to discuss the methodology of cultural comparison from the viewpoint of social time.

² Henceforth, “motion” refers to the movement (change of location) of a material object unless a different meaning is explicitly denoted or determined by the context.

³ One revolution of the earth around the sun makes one year, and this period corresponds to the return of the sun – as it is viewed from the earth – to an identified reference point.

⁴ This means one rotation of the earth.

CHAPTER XXIII

LOVE: PARTIAL OR EQUAL? A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CONFUCIAN MOHIST AND CHRISTIAN LOVE¹

XU CHANGFU

The thesis of this paper is that if people are to love each other, what is the right way? Should love be partial or equal? Partial love means that the love one gives to others is unequal – to some all, to others none, or to come more, to another less; while equal love means that the love one gives to others is equal. As a matter of fact, this question was addressed by Motse (c. 468-376 B.C.E.) more than two thousand years ago. Though our times are so remote from that of Motse and modern life is quite different from ancient life, the question Motse addressed is still alive in the world; it is included in everybody's feelings and deeds. So I wish to remind people of this ancient question, analyze it, and seek some answers. In this paper, I will discuss this question with a comparison between Chinese and Christian thought. The paper consists of the following: 1. Motse's thoughts of equal love versus partial love; 2. the Confucian refutation of Motse; 3. the transformation of the question in later times in ancient China; 4. the resource of partial love and equal love in the Bible; 5. the influence of the Christian principle of love in modern Western society; 6. the problems concerning this question in today's world; and 7. my suggestion: a theoretical demarcation and practical harmony between the two kinds of love. Please note that as the quotations of Chinese materials are taken from different translators, translations of the same concept may not be completely consistent with one another.

MOTSE'S THOUGHTS: THE ACADEMIC BEGINNING OF THE QUESTION – PARTIAL LOVE OR EQUAL LOVE

The problem of partial love or equal love exists objectively. However, Motse was the first scholar who treated it as an academic issue. Mohism was one of the most important schools in the pre-Qin days. Han Feitse said: "Confucianism and Mohism are the most distinguished systems of the time."² Mencius had to acknowledge the fact that "The words of Yang Chu and Mo Ti fill the empire. If you listen to people's discourses throughout it, you will find that they have adopted the views of one or the other."³ But today, when people mention Chinese culture, they always speak of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism, and seldom speak of Mohism. Most Western scholars know Confucianism, but hardly know Mohism. The best example is that the dictionary in the software program, Microsoft Word does not recognize the word Mohism. For the sake of those

who are not familiar with Motse's thoughts, I would like to start the discussion with an introduction of some Mohist basic concepts.

THE TRANSLATION AND THE CONNOTATION OF MOTSE'S CENTRAL CONCEPT

It is a common understanding for scholars that *jian ai* is the central concept of Mohism. But there is no common translation of this Chinese term. Some translators interpret it as universal love – for example in *The Ethical and Political Works* of Motse translated by Yi-Pao Mei⁴ – while others translate it as all-embracing love, for example in *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy* written by Fung Yu-Lan. I do not want to judge which one is better, but I want to emphasize that each of them shows some aspects of the connotation of the concept, and that there is no perfect translation. So, no matter how we translate the concept, the most important thing is to grasp the deep understanding of the connotation itself. In the following, I will tentatively use 'universal love' as the English translation of *jian ai*; of course, its connotation is not limited to what the word 'universal' implies. According to my understanding, universal love is rich in implications. In other words, it contains many properties. In the controversy between Confucianism and Mohism, equality is one of the implications or properties of universal love, which is what I will focus on in this paper. I will concentrate on one implication or property of universal love, namely equality in universal love. Only in this sense do I say that universal love is the same as equal love.

The Meaning of Equal Love

In brief, equal love means that all the people love each other equally, and this kind of love is without any partiality, favoritism, bias or discrimination. Motse said: "It is to regard the state of others as one's own, the houses of others as one's own, the persons of others as one's own self."⁵ "Every one regards the states of others as he regards his own, ...every one regards the capitals of others as he regards his own, ...every one regards the houses of others as he regards his own..."⁶ Based on this teaching, we can say that one's love is not equal love if he loves only himself but not others; or loves himself more than others; or loves only his parents, brothers, sisters, children and relatives but not those of others; or loves himself/herself more than he/she loves others; someone loves only his goods, house and land but does not love those of others; or loves his own possessions more than those of others; or loves only his community, party, class and nation but not that of others; or loves his own attributes more than those of others; or loves only his opinion, morality, religion, culture and civilization but not those of others; or loves his own ideas more than those of others.

The essence of equal love is the relationship between oneself and others. If you treat anyone or anything belonging to others as your own, no matter who or what is involved, your love may be called equal love. Motse's equal love does not deal mainly with the situation of love being more or less, but with the situation of love being all or none.

Partial Love and Kindheartedness in Confucianism

The opposite of equal love is partial love. Partial love can be divided into two kinds: one is that people may love themselves but not others; the other is that people may love themselves more than others. The former is the logical extreme of the latter, because the end result of decreasing love must ultimately be no love. Motse's criticism was aimed directly at the former, though it is logically related to the latter. Motse said:

At present feudal lords have learned only to love their own states and not those of others. Therefore they do not have any scruple about attacking other states. The heads of households have learned only to love their own household and not those of others. Therefore they do not have any scruple about usurping other houses. And individuals have learned only to love themselves and not others. Therefore they do not have any scruple about injuring others.⁷

In Motse's view, feudal lords, heads of households and individuals were those who practiced partial love. Then, who advocated the viewpoints of partial love theoretically? Motse condemned Confucians. It is well known that the central concept of Confucianism is *ren (jen)* or *ren ai*, which is usually translated as benevolence or kindheartedness. Fung Yu-Lan's translation is human-heartedness.⁸ I would use kindheartedness as the translation of *ren* or *ren ai*. In all fairness, the focal point of kindheartedness is not the partiality of love, but the extension of love. In other words, Confucianism did not guide people to love others as little as possible; on the contrary, it urged people to extend their love to others as much as possible.

On the other hand, the root of the kindheartedness of Confucianism is the love of children for their parents, and the model is the proper relationship between father and son. Confucianism has another important concept, *qin qin*, of which the second *qin* is a noun and means 'parents,' the first *qin* is a verb and means 'regarding someone as parents in a proper way,' and the meaning of the concept is that everyone should treat his parents as well as possible. On the basis of this kind of feeling, people should do their best to expand their scope of love to all the others under the sun. Thus the distribution of love is objectively graded and is unequal among people. So it is clear that kindheartedness contains an implication or property as gradation or partiality. In this sense, it is right when Motse regarded the kindheartedness of Confucianism as partial love. Motse had a

slogan: “Partiality is to be replaced by Universality.”⁹ Of course, Confucians would prefer its love to be regarded as graded love rather than as partial love.

In fact, Motse did not oppose kindheartedness at all. What he opposed was the partiality within kindheartedness. A Confucian named Wu-ma Tzu said to Motse: “I cannot practice all-embracing love. I love the men of Tsou (a nearby state) better than I love those of Yueh (a distant state). I love the men of Lu (his own state) better than I love those of Tsou. I love the men of my own district better than I love those of Lu. I love the members of my own clan better than I love those of my district. I love my parents better than I love the men of my clan. And I love myself better than I love my parents.”¹⁰ This passage can be regarded as a self-vindication of Confucian partial love with the exception of the last sentence which does not accord with Confucian filial piety.¹¹ Mencius said: “Treat the aged in your family as they should be treated, and extend this treatment to the aged of other people’s families. Treat the young in your family as they should be treated, and extend this treatment to the young of other people’s families.”¹² The difference between the two statements is that Wu-ma Tzu’s deduction is from distance to closeness, and from outside to inside, hence it seems to be negative, while Mencius’s deduction is from closeness to distance, and from inside to outside, hence it seems to be positive. In any case it is clear that graded love or partial love is a principle of Confucianism which Motse opposed.

The reasons of Motse’s argument

Motse opposed partial love and advocated equal love because he thought that partial love was the root of calamities in his times, while equal love is the way of eliminating the calamities and procuring benefits for the world. Let us listen to what Motse had to say:

Motse said: The purpose of the magnanimous is to be found in procuring benefits for the world and eliminating its calamities. But what are the benefits of the world and what its calamities? Motse said: Mutual attacks among states, mutual usurpation among houses, mutual injuries among individuals; the lack of grace and loyalty between ruler and ruled, the lack of affection and filial piety between father and son, the lack of harmony between elder and younger brothers – these are the major calamities in the world. But whence did these calamities arise, out of mutual love? Motse said: They arise out of want of mutual love. ...When feudal lords do not love one another there will be war on the fields. When heads of houses do not love one another they will usurp one another’s power. When individuals do not love one another they will injure

one another. When ruler and ruled do not love one another they will not be gracious and loyal. When father and son do not love each other they will not be affectionate and filial. When elder and younger brother do not love each other they will not be harmonious. When nobody in the world loves any other, naturally the strong will overpower the weak, the many will oppress the few, the wealthy will mock the poor, the honored will disdain the humble, the cunning will deceive the simple. Therefore all the calamities, strife, complaints, and hatred in the world have arisen out of want of mutual love. Therefore the benevolent disapproved of this want. Now that there is disapproval, how can we have the condition altered? Motse said it is to be altered by the way of universal love and mutual aid. ...When feudal lords love one another there will be no more war; when heads of houses love one another there will be no more usurpation; when individuals love one another there will be no more mutual injury. When ruler and ruled love each other they will be gracious and loyal; when father and son love each other they will be affectionate and filial; when elder and younger brothers love each other they will be harmonious. When all the people in the world love one another, then the strong will not overpower the weak, the many will not oppress the few, the wealthy will not mock the poor, the honored will not disdain the humble, and the cunning will not deceive the simple. And it is all due to mutual love that calamities, strife, complaints, and hatred are prevented from arising. Therefore the benevolent exalt it.¹³

In this paragraph, there are two levels of love: the first level of love is mutual love, and the second level of love is universal love. The want of mutual love is a general reason of calamities, while the want of universal love is a particular reason of calamities. If we bypass the second level of love, we can think there is no divergence between Confucianism and Mohism, but if we give consideration to the two levels of love, we shall find that there are both common-ground and divergence between the two schools. However, both Mohists and Confucians would focus on the divergence rather than the common ground between them, so that Motse reduced Confucian kindheartedness to partial love and put all the faults on partial love, and thereby to Confucianism. Then Mencius dealt with Mohism as Mohists had dealt with Confucianism, even doubly. My opinion is that mutual love is the common ground of Mohism and Confucianism, and the divergence is not as big as is generally thought, though neither Motse nor Mencius would agree with me.

Distinctions among relationships

It is necessary to distinguish the relationship between partial love and equal love from the relationships between kindheartedness and universal love and between Confucianism and Mohism. The latter two relationships are very complicated, and the former relationship is a single aspect of the latter two. We can abstract the first relationship from the latter relationships, however, we cannot equate the first relationship with the latter relationships, including not equating partial love with kindheartedness, let alone with the whole school of Confucianism. Likewise, we cannot equate equal love with universal love, let alone with the whole of Mohism. The discovery of the relationship between partial love and equal love is Motse's contribution to human thought. This dialectical relationship as an academic issue had evoked heated discussions and led to grave consequences throughout history.

MENCIUS'S REFUTATION OF MOHISM

Mencius (c. 372-289 B.C.E.) is the lesser sage, named second to Confucius (551-479 B.C.E.) in Confucianism. Some modern scholars have called him the Paul of Confucianism.¹⁴ Mencius regarded it as his duty to oppose Yang Chu and Mo Ti, and his criticism was very sharp and bitter. He said: "Yang's principle of 'each one for himself' amounts to making one's sovereign of no account. Mo's principle of 'all-embracing love' amounts to making one's father of no account. To have no father and no sovereign is to be like the birds and beasts. ...These pernicious opinions mislead the people and block the way of human-heartedness and righteousness."¹⁵ Let us try to have a further understanding of our topic through analyzing this quotation.

The social and political reasons for Mencius's criticism

Mencius opposed Yang directly for defending the status of sovereigns, and opposed Mo directly for defending the status of fathers. In the ancient Chinese society, two kinds of systems dominated the whole society: one is family system (or systems of family and clan) of which father is ruler, and the other is social estate system or hierarchy of which sovereign is ruler. The former is the foundation of the latter. In such a society, it seems only natural and normal that the status of father is higher than the status of son, and the status of sovereign is higher than the status of subjects. In other words, in this kind of society, the sovereign is expected to have legitimate love from everybody with no exception. But Yang's principle of "each one for himself" implies that everyone has the right not to love others, including the sovereign. Mencius found this principle to be wrong. Both father and sovereign expect more love from each of his family members or subjects than any other family members or subjects can get

from one another, but Mo's principle of universal love instructs people to love each other equally. Mencius also found this principle to be intolerable. "A great part of Confucianism is the rationale of this social system, or its theoretical expression."¹⁶ Confucius said long ago: "Let the ruler be ruler, the minister be minister, the father father, the son son."¹⁷ In the Han Dynasty, Tung Chung-Shu's "three cardinal guides" – that ruler guides subject, father guides son, and husband guides wife – extended Confucius's original idea further. It is thus obvious that what Mencius defended is not only a basic principle of Confucianism, but also a common ethic of the society he lived in. We can see that the systems Mencius argued for are the social and political foundation of practicing graded love or partial love.

The philosophical or metaphysical reasons for Mencius' criticism

Mencius' social and political criticisms are direct, but these criticisms would be invalid once these social and political systems ceased to exist. Would Mencius' argument for graded or partial love be invalid as well? My answer is no, because Mencius had based his criticism on other reasons – philosophical or metaphysical reasons. When Fung Yu-Lan talked about the fundamental difference between Confucianism and Mohism, he said: "To extend the love for one's family so as to include persons outside it as well, is to practice that 'principle of *chung* (conscientiousness to others) and *shu* (altruism)' advocated by Confucius, which in turn is equivalent to the practice of human-heartedness. There is nothing forced in any of these practices, because the original natures of all men have in them a feeling of commiseration, which makes it impossible for them to bear to see the suffering of others. The development of this 'beginning' of goodness causes men naturally to love others, but it is equally natural that they should love their parents to a greater degree than they love men in general."¹⁸ This paragraph is a brief interpretation of Mencius' philosophical and metaphysical reasoning for why he opposed equal love and advocated graded or partial love. The latter emerges from the human heart, is a natural feeling, is a beginning of kindheartedness, and is carried out from loving parents.

This reasoning is very convincing and goes beyond the limits of social and political conditions. As long as human beings exist, it is absolutely certain for everyone to have the natural tendency of loving their parents, and loving their parents more than others. By comparison, Motse's reason of equal love is mainly utilitarian. According to Mencius, graded or partial love is a moralizing instinct or unity of necessity and oughtness, while according to Motse, equal love is a way to procure benefits and eliminate calamities for the world, and a result of intelligent consideration without intrinsic authority, though it has its grounds in human nature.

The establishment of the principle of partial love: one of the consequences of Mencius' criticism

There are at least two obvious consequences of Mencius' criticism of Mohism: one is the establishment of graded or equal love as an important moral principle, and the other is the decline of the Mohist school and the lack of equal love in Chinese society – though Mencius' criticism may not be the sole cause of these consequences. From ancient times to the present, children naturally love their parents and also naturally love their parents more than they love others, and all parents naturally love their children and also naturally love their children more than they love others, but only Confucianism raises this natural human feeling to a system of moral principles, among which graded or partial love is the key principle. In Confucian academic history, the principle of graded or partial love was first put forward by Confucius and was completed by Mencius, for which Motse's principle of equal love was the antithesis.

A famous story is reported in Confucius' *Analects*. Duke Ye said to Confucius: "Among the people of my country there is an upright man. His father stole a sheep, and he bore witness against him." Confucius responded: "Among the people of my country the upright men belong to another sort. Father and son screen each other from blame and punishment. Their action is just due to uprightness."¹⁹ According to Confucius, true uprightness refers to the moral feeling that emerges directly from the human heart such as the love for parents, and this sort of feeling is obviously partial love. In other words, in Confucius' mind, partial love for parents or children is more moral than equal treatment and justice in social life and legal practice. Mencius followed Confucius and said: "The benevolent loves everyone, but takes the emergency of his parents and worthy persons as his top priority task."²⁰ In later ages, Confucians took delight in talking about this principle, and even set up Shun, a legendary sage king in ancient China, as the best example of practicing partial love.²¹ According to the legend, Shun's father committed murder, and he carried his father to escape. From then on, partial love or priority of parents and worthy persons as a moral principle had become a very popular and the usual standard for Chinese people to deal with every affair in their lives.

The decline of equal love: another consequence of Mencius' criticism

It is undoubted that Mencius' criticism was a heavy blow to Mohism, and was one of the causes which led to the decline of the Mohist school and doctrine. In fact, the effect of Mencius' criticism is that he discovered theoretically the conflict between equal love and the morality of the family system, and proposed a good reason for people to refuse equal love. It is a pity for the Mohists to have made no powerful response to Mencius' challenge. Of course, we cannot exaggerate the effect of Mencius' criticism upon Mohism. Other causes of the decline of Mohism merit equal

attention. For example, in Confucianism, the social and political foundation is the family system and hierarchy; what, then, is the social and political foundation of Mohism? Fung Yu-Lan said: "During the feudal age of the Chou Dynasty, kings, princes, and feudal lords all had their military specialists. These were the hereditary warriors who constituted the backbone of the armies of that time. With the disintegration of feudalism that took place in the latter part of the Chou Dynasty, however, these warrior specialists lost their positions and titles, scattered throughout the country, and made a living by offering their services to anyone who could afford to employ them. This class of people was known as the *hsieh* or *yu hsieh*, terms which can both be translated as 'knights-errant.'"²² "Mo Tzu and his followers, however, differed from the ordinary knights-errant in two respects. In the first place, the latter were men ready to engage in any fighting whatever, only provided that they were paid for their efforts or favoured by the feudal lords. Mo Tzu and his followers, on the contrary, were strongly opposed to aggressive war; hence they agreed to fight only in wars that were strictly for self-defence..."²³ "For Mo Tzu, *jen* and *yi* signify an all-embracing love, and the man of *jen* and man of *yi* are persons who practice this all-embracing love. This concept is a central one in Mo Tzu's philosophy, and represents a logical extension of the professional ethics of the class of *hsieh* (knights-errant) from which Mo Tzu sprang. This ethic was, namely, that within their group the *hsieh* 'enjoy equally and suffer equally.' (This was a common saying of the *hsieh* of later times.) Taking this group concept as a basis, Mo Tzu tried to broaden it by preaching the doctrine that everyone in the world should love everyone else equally and without discrimination."²⁴ Since a powerful centralized government was established in Qin and Han, *hsieh* as a class dissipated, so Mohist school lost its original social and political support, and Mohist doctrine became a lost body of knowledge.

AN UNSOLVED QUESTION: PARTIAL LOVE OR EQUAL LOVE?

Although the Confucian principle of graded or partial love became a dominant idea in the Chinese mind, while Motse's principle of equal love was almost forgotten, the question concerning partial love and equal love, in fact, was not settled, but was only shelved. First, Motse only indicated the possible consequences of partial love and equal love. However, he does not tell us: If partial love is a part of human nature, how can we get rid of it? If one's inherent nature cannot be gotten rid of, while the portion of love for one's parents is the same as each of the ones of others' parents, would not all parents in the world be very angry at their children? On the analogy of this, if a Chinese person does not love China more than he loves Canada but loves them equally, or if some Christian does not love Christianity more than he loves other religions but loves them equally, would not other Chinese or other Christians be angry at him? Anger is undoubtedly a negative feeling, and is one of the roots of calamities. The real intention of

practicing equal love is to eliminate calamities, but its factual results are probably a number of new calamities.

Second, even though Confucian partial love fits with popular needs in ancient Chinese society, Confucians did not find the way to solve the problems condemned by Mohists. Partial love, indeed, may undermine the foundation of social equality and legal justice, suppress the growth of public spirit, and even lead to conflict or wars. Whatever does partial or graded love mean? Whatever does equal love mean? What is the real relationship between the two kinds of love? What is the respective sphere for each of the two to be applied in? What problems will be involved with them in the course of social development? All these questions are extensions from the same kernel – love: partial or equal? The question of partial love or equal love was like a partly bloomed flower in the ages of Motse and Mencius, of which more petals would burst forth in the much later ages.

The transformation of this question in the later times of ancient China

Although the discussion between Motse and Mencius did not continue in the later periods of Chinese history, the tension between partial love and equal love continued to exist in people's lives. It is worthy of emphasis that the model of the tension between the two sorts of love was transformed from the controversies between different schools into the coordination between different points inside Confucian doctrines. These include the relationship between loyalty to sovereign and filial duty to parents, the relationship between righteousness and feeling, the relationship between public and private interests, the relationship between principle and desire, the relationship between justice and perversion, and so on. These theoretical difficulties involve more complicated social problems which included the relationship between the public sphere and the private sphere, the relationship between the systems of politics and law and the systems of the family and the patriarchal clan, and so on. It is clear that the former ones are almost related to equal love while the latter ones are almost related to partial love. As a matter of fact, Confucians did their best trying to solve these problems, but failed, because they could not have two contradictory foundation stones in their moral system. In a general survey of Chinese history, it is not difficult to find that the principle of partial love is the dominant principle and has been long supported by a solid ontological idea and a strong cultural tradition. To practice equal love has always been extremely hard in Chinese society, because it lacks the powerful supports of ontological ideas and cultural traditions ever since the decline of Mohism. Perhaps the difficulty in practicing equal love is just the price for abandoning Mohism.

THE RESOURCES OF PARTIAL LOVE AND EQUAL LOVE IN THE BIBLE

Is it necessary to discuss the above topic from the perspective of Western culture? I have to say that while it is not necessary for a particular article, it is absolutely necessary for the question itself. Though our discussion begins from some basic concepts in ancient Chinese thought, the ideas concerning the question of partial love or equal love arise from the awareness of certain problems not only in modern China but in the world. In other words, given the issue of Westernization and globalization, the petals of this question burst forth fully. Is it necessary to discuss this question from the perspective of Christianity? Yes, certainly. Christianity is not only one of the two main fountainheads of Western culture, it also plays a very important role in modern Western society. To make the question manifest itself in the context of Christianity, I would like to focus on the relevant resources in the Bible.

A general survey

In Western society, the system of family and clan has never been so powerful and so important as in ancient Chinese society. Even though there are some unsystematic teachings and instances of partial love, there is no distinct moral or religious system advocating partial love in the Western world. In other words, if partial love is natural and normal for human beings, Western people are no exception, but no Western school regarded partial love as a basic moral or religious principle. Due to the lack of theory of partial love in the Western world, there is no contention on the question of partial love or equal love among schools, as there is in China. We can, at least, affirm that the debate on this question as an academic event has not occurred in Western academic history. It seems that Western people are not as interested in this issue as the Chinese. This also reveals some important differences between the Chinese and Western social systems, between Chinese and Western moral ideas, and between Chinese and Western academic interests. The awareness of these differences is the premise of our further discussion. The resources in Western thought, including Christian thought, are indispensable for us to deepen our understanding of this issue. It is not only because there are a number of schools of thought concerning equal love, but also there exist potential conflicts between partial love and equal love.

Instances relative to partial love in the Bible

The basic idea of love in the Bible, especially in the New Testament, is undoubtedly equal love. In fact, if we regard love in the Bible as a concept containing a broad connotation, equal love, not partial love, is certainly one of its implications or properties. It is interesting to note that

there are many vivid stories of favoritism, bias or partial love in the Bible. When Isaac was old and his eyes were dim, he wanted to bless his elder son Esau, but his wife Rebekah showed favoritism to their younger son Jacob, and taught Jacob to disguise himself as Esau. So Jacob gained Isaac's blessing by cheating. (Jacob was renamed Israel by God after he wrestled with God.²⁵) Another story is about Joseph, Israel's son.

Now Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, because he had been born to him in his old age; and he made a richly ornamented robe for him. When his brother saw that their father loved him more than any of them, they hated him and could not speak a kind word to him."²⁶ Then Joseph was sold to Egypt by his brothers, and having gone through all kinds of hardships, he became the prime minister in Egypt. Many years later, as Joseph "looked about and saw his brother Benjamin, his own mother's son, ... Deeply moved at the sight of his brother, Joseph hurried out and looked for a place to weep. He went into his private room and wept there. After he had washed his face, he came out and, controlling himself, said, 'Serve the food.' ... When portions were served to them from Joseph's table, Benjamin's portion was five times as much as anyone else's."²⁷ "Joseph gave them carts, as pharaoh had commanded, and he also gave them provisions for their journey. To each of them he gave new clothing, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred shekels of silver and five sets of clothes."²⁸

With these instances, I do not want to claim any strong similarity between Chinese culture and Christianity, but simply want to argue that partial love is natural and normal in human life, which is understood, tolerated or acknowledged by God. Meanwhile I have to emphasize that, on the one hand, Rebekah's partial love for Jacob and Israel's partial love for Joseph resulted directly in rivalry between brothers. – Do not forget Motse's condemnation! – On the other hand, Joseph's partial or graded love on Benjamin touches us to the depths of our souls.

Honor one's parents and love one's neighbor as oneself

Christianity also emphasizes filial piety. In the Ten Commandments, the first four deal with the God-man relationship, and the rest are for the man-man relationship. The first commandments on human relationships are about filial piety. "Honor your father and mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you."²⁹ Nevertheless, this kind of filial piety does not imply partial or graded love. In other words, Christianity does not address filial piety from the

perspective of partial or graded love. At the same time, Christianity emphasizes another more famous principle, namely “love your neighbor as yourself”. The Lord spoke to Moses, saying:

Do not defraud your neighbor or rob him. ...Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly. Do not go about spreading slander among your people. Do not do anything that endangers your neighbor's life. ...Do not hate your brother in your heart. Rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not share in his guilt. Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.³⁰

These words state clearly that Christianity advocates justice, fairness and equal love between others and oneself, and opposes perversion, partiality and favoritism. In this sense, the Bible shares this Mohist idea.

The command, “Love your neighbor as yourself”, is an important teaching of Christianity. Furthermore, the following rationale behind this command calls us into deeper thought. “When an alien resides with you in your land, do not mistreat him. The alien living with you must be treated as one of your native-born. Love him as yourself, for you were aliens in Egypt. I am the Lord your God.”³¹ “You are to love those who are aliens, for you yourselves were aliens in Egypt.”³² This is a concise and comprehensive statement which accommodates all the joy and tears of generations of Israelites as aliens in Egypt. It is thus clear that equal love as a moral principle or even a religious creed is natural and understandable to Israelites who had a deep experience as aliens, just like partial or graded love is natural and understandable to Chinese people who lived in the systems of family and clan.

The development of the idea of love in the New Testament

In both the Old Testament and the New Testament, the essence of the Christian idea of love is identical. Under this condition, we should notice that there are some differences in the idea of love between the Old Testament and the New Testament. In the Old Testament, there was a big gap between Israel and other states who fought alternately against Israel; God loved only Israel but did not love those hostile states. In other words, God's universal principle is equal love, but when the Israelites face an emergency, He shows favoritism to His chosen people. There seems to be some tension between equal love as principle and partial love as expedient. This case is contrary to the Confucian case in which equal love is usually regarded as expedient while partial love is naturally regarded as principle. Of course, this tension is better interpreted as a tension belonging to Judaism. In any case, in the New Testament, this tension disappeared.

The way of releasing the above-mentioned tension in the New Testament is that Jesus put forward a completely new idea: Love your enemy. This new idea, according to my understanding, distinguished Christianity from Judaism, and took Christianity beyond the limit of a single nation to become a world-wide religion. What is more important, this idea carries through logically the principle of equal love. Jesus said:

You have heard that it was said, ‘eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If some one strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you. You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.³³

“Do to others as you would have them do to you” is called the Christian Golden Rule, and is always thought to be the Western version of “Do not impose on others what you yourself do not desire” of Confucius. But as a matter of fact, the statement by Jesus is a foundation of equal love, while the statement by Confucius is a foundation of partial or graded love, though they sound very much alike.

Jesus strengthened the idea of equal love. “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”³⁴ It is equivalent to say that “Love the Lord your God” is the cardinal principle of dealing with the God-man relationship while “Love your neighbor as yourself” is the cardinal principle of dealing with man-man relationship. There still are many similar expressions in the other parts of the New Testament. “The commandments, ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not covet,’ and whatever other commandments there may be, are summed up in this one rule: ‘Love your neighbors as yourself.’ Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.”³⁵ “The entire law is summed up in a single command: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”³⁶ These expositions

integrated Jesus's new thoughts of equal love with those in the Old Testament, and brought the principle of equal love to a new horizon.

The climax comes when Jesus gave his disciples a new commandment: "Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."³⁷ "This is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another. Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother's were righteous."³⁸ "Love one another" reveals more clearly the equality of Christian love.

A restricted sociological view of equal love in the Bible

I mentioned before that the principle of partial love of Confucianism is closely related to the systems of family and clan, while the principle of equal love of Mohism is closely related to the community of knights-errant. By contrast with the above two schools, the principle of equal love in the Bible, I think, is closely related to the Israelites' social formation and particular experiences, and perhaps is related to the organization of the early Christian church. According to the Old Testament, Hebrew society was a nomadic society, and consisted of twelve tribes. The conflicts between early Israelites and other nations, to some extent, were conflicts between nomadic tribes, who hoped to have a fixed place to live, and agricultural nations, who had a fixed place to live and were not willing to share with others. In nomadic life, the boundaries between individuals or families are not as clear as those in agricultural life, so boundary disputes are common. I used to research Tibetan tribes, and am familiar with these cases. For this reason, just the relationship between neighbors but not any other sort of relationships was focused on by the Israelites. By comparison, ancient Chinese society was settled and agricultural. Family system and hierarchy made the relationships both between father and son and between sovereign and subject a general concern. The latter two relationships are unequal while the former relationship is naturally equal. Another very distinct factor raising the concern about relationships between neighbors to the level of moral and religious principle is the Israelites' special experiences as aliens in Egypt, as mentioned above.

As for the intention of the new command "Love one another", Jesus's expression is clear: "By this all men will know that you are my disciples." "Love one another", at least, places emphasis on solidarity and on the unity of Christians which is necessary for a newborn religious group to maintain its existence and to develop. Furthermore, "Love one another" was pronounced as a new universal principle, and even the relationship between Jesus and his followers was transformed from that of master and servants into that of friendship. Jesus said: "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command.

I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit – fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. This is my command: Love each other.”³⁹ This transformation is very important, and it means that there are two models of love: one is the love between neighbors, and the other is the love between friends. Both of the models are characterized by equality. Confucianism also regards the relationship between friends as one of five basic social relationships, of which the others are sovereign-subject, father-son, elder brother-younger brother, husband-wife, but this kind of relationship between friends, according to Yung Yu-Lan, can be conceived of in terms of the one between elder and younger brothers.⁴⁰ So there still is some subtle difference between the Confucian idea of the friend-friend relationship and the Christian idea.

In short, the term “love” in Christianity, as well as in Confucianism and in Mohism, has many connotations. If we apply the question of equal love or partial love to it, we can see clearly that the Christian principle of love is equal love, in spite of the lack of the controversy between equal love and partial love. At the same time, I have to indicate that the Christian principle of equal love does not imply that the people who believe in Christianity have only equal love in their mind and practice, and not partial love. As the above-mentioned instances prove, partial love, even if not as a moral or religious principle, exists naturally in human mind and practice, and Christians are no exception.

The influence of the Christian principle of love in modern Western society

In later ages, Christianity was gradually disseminated in Europe and the whole Western world, and the Christian tradition became one of the two important traditions of Western civilization, besides the Hellenic tradition. Directly or indirectly, the Christian principle of equal love involved itself in all of the modern Western ideologies, laws, politics and so on which take equality as their essence. In other words, Christian equal love is a foundation stone for all systems in the modern West that defend equality. For example, in the famous slogan “liberty, equality and fraternity”, equality and fraternity are related to the Christian principle of equal love. “All are equal before the law”, as a legislative and judicial principle, is certain to have carried forward the tradition of Christianity. In Western society, it is quite easy to notice that equal and mutual aid between members in various communities is common, and the Christian church and groups play an active role in many communities.

If we divide social life into a private sphere and a public sphere, equal love may be rated as a basic principle of the public sphere. A remarkable feature of social development is the expansion and multiplication of the public sphere. It is quite evident that a solid and

powerful principle of equality is an important driving force for social development, especially for modernization. Hence this opinion may lead to a new explanation of why Western modernization succeeded while Chinese modernization has been so difficult, which, perhaps as a hypothesis, can parallel Weber's proposition on Protestant ethic and the capitalist spirit.⁴¹ On the whole, the influence of Christianity, hand in hand with other resources, explains why modern Western society is noted for equality or equal love.

PROBLEMS RELEVANT TO THIS QUESTION IN TODAY'S WORLD

Based on the above analysis, we can reach a simple conclusion: after the controversy on the issue of partial love or equal love between Confucianism and Mohism, the Chinese chose partial love as a basic moral principle while, without the context of a similar debate, Western peoples, with the help of Christianity, formed another basic moral and religious principle: equality or equal love. The above comparison has not yet, however, solved the basic issue both in this paper and in today's world.

Relevant problems in modern China

For half a century, China has been a socialist society. Under socialism, equality is a basic principle, upon which the Chinese had built a system covering nearly every field of society. This is a revolution against the traditional principle of partial love. But this revolution did not achieve the desired results. Nowadays, we have lost many good elements of partial or graded love, yet cannot establish the principle of equal love. In the private sphere, people are, in common, short of human sympathy, while in the public sphere, phenomena such as appointing people by favoritism and perverting the law for favoritism can be found everywhere. Chinese society needs both partial or graded love and equal love, and must put each of them in their proper positions.

Relevant problems in the modern Western world

Western countries, especially the U.S.A., are dominant powers in today's world. For the West, particularly Americans, even though equality is a human right, the voice appealing for more equal treatment has not weakened.⁴² Moreover, because there is no influential dimension with respect to partial or graded love in Western morality, religion and culture, individualistic indifference within the members of a family or 'clan' is common in America and the West in general.

Relevant problems in international relationships

We are living in the age of globalization. What is the real equality

among nations or countries? Shall the Americans, who flaunt the banner of equality, love other countries as equally as they love their own country? Shall Muslims love other religions as equally as they love Islam? If everyone impossibly loves one another equally as he or she loves his or her own, how could we avoid those problems evoked by Motse? On the other hand, if everyone does not love his or her country more than other countries, especially if the people in poor and backward countries do not hold more responsibility for their country than for other countries, would not Mencius condemn the bleak prospect of “no motherland” just as he did “no father, no sovereign”? In a word, rather than to say that the issue of partial love or equal love has been solved, it is better to say that it has burst forth into human reality with full force.

THEORETICAL DEMARCATION AND PRACTICAL HARMONY BETWEEN PARTIAL LOVE AND EQUAL LOVE

There is no way to solve the question of partial love or equal love completely, but we should try our best to solve problems relevant to this question. I would like to suggest a tentative solution.

The essence of theory and the essence of practice

Every theory seeks logical unity, lest it fall into a contradictory state. For this reason, neither Motse nor Mencius could hold both equal love and partial love, lest their theories be self-contradictory. So according to theoretical logic, Mohist theory and Confucian theory cannot accommodate each other. On the other hand, every kind of human practice involves innumerable substances and attributes, of which each theory can reveal some certain aspect but not the whole. So no theory could be sufficient for even a single activity. For this reason, Confucianism or Mohism alone cannot solve the problems of the practice of love. In other words, any theory of love is not symmetrical with any practice of love, and any practice of love needs many theories of love as their guide. Confucianism and Mohism each wanted to exterminate its rival, but history has proved that monopoly without rivalry is not good.

The essence of partial love and the essence of equal love

Both partial love and equal love is based on human nature, and each has both positive and negative value. Generally speaking, partial love is necessary and suitable for the private sphere, while equal love is necessary and suitable for the public sphere. So the moral principle of partial love, like the Confucian principle, ought to limit its practice in the private sphere, while the moral principle of equal love, like the Mohist or the Christian principle, ought to limit its practice to the public sphere. Both Confucianism and Mohism wanted to apply their own principle in both

private and public spheres respectively, but history has also proved that the effect is not good.

Theoretical demarcation and practical harmony

Mohism is Mohism, Confucianism is Confucianism, and Christianity is Christianity, no matter how they change and develop themselves. If every theory is one-sided relative to practice, a demarcation among them is important. As long as we limit every theory to its proper scope, we can profit from all of them and reduce their demerits to a minimum. Different theories, which are logically independent from each other, can be integrated into a harmonious state in practice in order to improve human life. Suppose someone is a son, a husband, and a father, and he has to deal with the relationships between his family members, he had better, I think, be a Confucian; thus he can fulfill his family duty and can enjoy family happiness. Suppose this man is an official at the same time – he had better to be a Mohist; thus he will “not gang up with father or elder brother, not side with the rich and noble, not favor handsome looks,”⁴³ but just act with justice, and become an upright official. Supposed the man is still concerned about all mankind and the other world, perhaps it is a good choice for him to be a Christian, so that he can “be brought to complete unity”⁴⁴ for, with, and by God. Such cases can be supposed more and more, and the theories involved in human life are not limited to the above three. In short, just as for this person, the state of harmony in diversity is a better ideal, even though the theories he follows alternately in his life are logically different from each other. Balance! Both between partial love and equal love and between theoretical demarcation and practical harmony! This is my suggestion.

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NOTES

¹ [Abstract]: This paper discusses the following issue: if people love each other, should the right way of loving be partial or equal? Partial love means that the love one gives to others is unequal, while equal love means that the love one

gives to others is equal. This issue was first addressed by Motse who advocated equal love and condemned Confucianism for its allowing partial love. Mencius defended Confucianism against the Mohist challenge, and charged Motse, saying that equal love ignores one's father. Confucian partial love, rooted both in the Chinese family system and in human nature, has been received as a basic moral principle by the Chinese, while equal love has been ignored since the decline of Mohism. If this issue is applied to the Bible, we can see that the love in the Bible is equal love – this is a Christian contribution to the Western civilization. However, neither partial love nor equal love alone is sufficient for human life, so a theoretical demarcation and practical harmony between partial love and equal love may be a good choice for people in this age of globalization.

² *Han Feitse*, chap. 1.

³ Mencius, chap. iiiib.

⁴ *The Ethical and Political Works of Motse*, tr. Yi-Pao Mei (London: Probsthain, 1929).

⁵ Motse, *Universal Love II*. This translation is from *Selected Readings from Famous Chinese Philosophers with Annotations and English Translation*, volume 1, General Editor Shi Jun (Beijing: People's University of China Press, 1988), p. 76.

⁶ Motse, *Universal Love III*. The translation is from *Motse, Neglected Rival of Confucius*, by Yi-Pao Mei (Westport: Hyperion Press, Inc., 1973), pp. 89-90.

⁷ Motse, *Universal Love II*. This translation is from the same book as note 4, above, p. 74.

⁸ *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy, Selected Philosophical Writings of Fung Yu-Lan* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1991), p. 236.

⁹ Motse, *Universal Love III*. The translation is from *Motse, Neglected Rival of Confucius*, p. 89.

¹⁰ Motse, *Gengzhu*. This translation is from the book as note 7, above. p. 269.

¹¹ Fung Yu-Lan noticed this point. *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy, Selected Philosophical Writings of Fung Yu-Lan*, p. 270.

¹² Mencius, chap. ia. *Ibid.*, p. 270.

¹³ Motse, *Universal Love II*, pp. 75-77.

¹⁴ Motse, *Neglected Rival of Confucius*, p. 87.

¹⁵ *Mencius*, chap. iiiib. This translation is from the book as note 7, above. p. 269.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 215.

¹⁷ *Analects of Confucius*, xii. *Ibid.*, p. 236.

¹⁸ *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy, Selected Philosophical Writings of Fung Yu-Lan*, pp. 270-271.

¹⁹ *Analects of Confucius*, xiii.

²⁰ *Mencius*, chap. viia.

²¹ *Collected Commentaries on the "Four Books"*, by Zhu Xi (Changsha: Yuelu Press, 1985), p. 179.

²² *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy, Selected Philosophical Writings of Fung Yu-Lan*, p. 246.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 248.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 250.

²⁵ *Genesis 27:1-29, 32:28. The NIV Study Bible, 10th Anniversary Edition* (Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), pp. 45-46, p. 56.

²⁶ *Genesis 37:3-4. Ibid.*, pp. 61-62.

²⁷ *Genesis 43:29-34. Ibid.*, p. 71.

²⁸ *Genesis 45:21-22. Ibid.*, p. 74.

²⁹ *Exodus 20:12. Ibid.*, p. 115.

³⁰ *Leviticus 19:13-18. Ibid.*, p. 169.

³¹ *Leviticus 19:33-34. Ibid.*, p. 170.

³² *Deuteronomy 10:19. Ibid.*, p. 255.

³³ *Matthew 5:38-48. Ibid.*, pp. 1446-1447.

³⁴ *Matthew 22:37-40. Ibid.*, p. 1472.

³⁵ *Romans 13:9-10. Ibid.*, p. 1728.

³⁶ *Galatians 5:14. Ibid.*, p. 1788.

³⁷ *John 13:34-35. Ibid.*, p. 1621.

³⁸ *I John 3:11-12. Ibid.*, p. 1910.

³⁹ *John 15:12-17. Ibid.*, pp. 1623-1624.

⁴⁰ *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy, Selected Philosophical Writings of Fung Yu-Lan*, p. 215.

⁴¹ See Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958).

⁴² See *Equal Treatment of Religion in a Pluralistic Society*, ed. Stephen V. Monsma and J. Christopher Soper (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1998).

⁴³ Motse, *Exaltation of the virtuous*, ii.

⁴⁴ *John 17:23. The NIV Study Bible*, p. 1627.

CHAPTER XXIV

RATIONALITY AND UNDERSTANDING OTHERS

WARAYUTH SRIWARAKUEL

Among contemporary social scientists there are two central questions that have been frequently raised. First, is social inquiry scientific or philosophical? Second, is understanding others possible? In attempting to answer the first question, some may say that all kinds of social inquiry are scientific because they are empirical and can be measured by scientific methods or empirical approaches. Others may say that social inquiry is philosophical because it deals with human beings and cannot escape from normative approaches. Still others may say that it is both scientific and philosophical, in the sense that it can be described in terms of both causal theories and intentionality. Still others may say that social inquiry is neither scientific nor philosophical in the sense that it does not deal with “theoretical rationality.” They may argue that it is phronetic in the sense that it deals with “practical rationality.” However, this first question is not the main concern of this paper. In this paper I will inquire into the second question, “Is understanding others possible,” together with the concept of rationality.

WHAT RATIONALITY MEANS

“Rationality” seems to be one of the most confusing philosophical concepts. It can mean different things to different people. In order not to get lost, we may study it through the long history of its usage, especially by great philosophers. We may date this back to Aristotle who first made a distinction between *theoria* (theoretical rationality) and *phronesis* (practical rationality). Kant followed this distinction and developed it in his *Critique of Pure Reason* and *Critique of Practical Reason*. Aristotle, Kant, Descartes, and other great philosophers considered reason as something “given” to human beings only, not to other animals. However, even though reason is believed “given” and considered central to the conception of human being, everybody must have the resolution and courage to use it in order to reach maturity. Kant defines the meaning of the Enlightenment with the Horatian motto, “*Sapere aude*,” “Think for yourself.” As he puts it,

Enlightenment is man’s emergence from his self-incurred immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one’s own understanding without the guidance of another. This immaturity is self-incurred if its cause is not lack of

understanding, but lack of resolution and courage to use it without the guidance of another. The motto of enlightenment is therefore: *Sapere aude!* Have courage to use your own understanding!¹

Richard Rorty has explored various meanings of rationality. On his view, rationality can mean capability of self-adjustment. Rationality of this kind belongs to both man and animal. But rationality may also mean tolerance, which is a moral virtue or qualification which can be acquired through practice. Rationality of this kind is an ability to live among differences without prejudices. Third, rationality may mean the special faculty given to man only. Rationality of this kind is believed immortal; it remains even though a man dies.² Harold Brown also makes a general survey of various concepts and models of rationality, from the classical to what he calls “the new model.”³ However, in this paper I will investigate two meanings of rationality: rationality as a potentiality and as a virtue.

First, rationality may be considered as a given potentiality to establish certain goals and choose appropriate means to reach them. In this sense, I will follow the model proposed by Donald Davidson and Nicholas Rescher. A rational action is one that stands in a certain relation to the agent’s beliefs and desires, that is, their reasons for acting.⁴ For instance, if person X has a desire to bring about goal B, and believes that action A is the most effective means to goal B, then the person acts rationally if he/she brings about action A for those reasons. To make it clearer, we may illustrate this by the following schema.

1. X has goal B.
 X acts rationally if
2. X believes that action A leads to goal B effectively.
3. X does action A.

According to this model, we can see that rationality is related to beliefs, desires and individual actions.

Second, rationality may be considered as a moral virtue, namely an Aristotelian golden mean between the two extremes: scepticism and credulity. An agent will be considered as a person of rationality if and only if, after his or her profound reflection through praxis, it is neither too hard nor too easy for him or her to believe or deny things in question. Rationality in this sense follows those of the Lord Buddha in his Kalamasutta⁵ and of Anthony Kenny who paraphrases Aristotle’s concept of moral virtue.⁶ Like all other moral virtues proposed by Aristotle, rationality in this sense can be acquired only through practice. Like courage, we never call a person courageous if he or she never does brave deeds. In sum, the difference between rationality as a potentiality and as a moral virtue is that rationality as a potentiality is “given” or “innate”, whereas rationality as a virtue is “acquired” or “learned.”

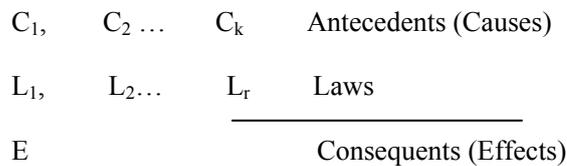
WHAT UNDERSTANDING IS

Understanding is one of the key concepts in the human and social sciences. Dilthey makes a distinction between natural sciences and human sciences⁷ (*Geisteswissenschaften*). He recognizes that Kant provided a critique of pure reason to demonstrate how natural sciences are possible. Thus Dilthey aims at providing a critique of historical reason to show how human sciences are possible. In other words, while Kant develops epistemology as the foundation of natural sciences, Dilthey develops hermeneutics as the foundation of human sciences. Epistemology deals with explanation, but hermeneutics deals with understanding.

What is understanding? In order to understand understanding, we may compare the human sciences with the natural ones. Natural sciences, on the one hand, try to explain natural events. Natural scientists use causal laws and theories in their explanations. Thus one main task of natural scientists is to discover scientific laws; as Hempel put it:

To explain the phenomena of the physical world is one of the primary objectives of the natural sciences. Indeed, almost all of the scientific investigation ... were aimed not at ascertaining some particular fact but at achieving some explanatory insight. ... Explanatory accounts of this kind will be called explanations by deductive subsumptions under general laws, or deductive-nomological explanations. The laws invoked in a scientific explanation will also be called covering laws for the *explanandum* phenomenon, and the explanatory arguments will be said to subsume the *explanandum* under those laws.⁸

Once scientific laws are discovered, they can be used to explain natural happenings. To understand or explain natural events, we do not need to know their history. Hempel’s D-N Schema is demonstrated as a model of scientific explanation. It may be shown as follows:



Since scientific explanations are based on laws, we may say that natural sciences are based on nomologicalism. Human sciences, on the other hand, try to understand human actions in their inquiry. It may be asked, “What are human actions?” “Are they different from natural events?” “If so, how are they different?” To give answers to these questions, we should turn our interests to our own actions first. When we go on a retreat, we usually

ask ourselves these questions: “Who are we?” “Where are we from?” “Where are we now?” “Are we satisfied with our present position?” “What have we done?” “What should we do next?” “What are our goals?” “What is our ultimate goal?” and so on. No matter whoever we are, these questions will inevitably lead us to ends and means. Let’s say for example, X is a businessman who has a retreat every quarter. His strategy is somewhat under a cycle of “plan, do, check and improve,” and this cycle deals inevitably with ends, means and established time. We can say that X’s actions are always purposive and intentional. X understands his actions in terms of ends and means through time. A question that can be raised here is: Are X’s actions natural movements? Surely, we will say yes to this question. X’s actions as natural events, like other natural happenings, may be explained by causal laws or theories which transcend all different cultures and civilizations.

However, human actions are not only natural events but also intentional happenings. As natural events, human actions can be explained by causal laws or theories from kinetic and potential energy to gravity, so in this sense they are based on nomologicalism. As intentional happenings they must be explained in terms of ends and means through history and time; therefore, they are based on historicism. Suppose we see two boys standing thirty meters ahead. We see one boy handing a five-dollar note to another. In terms of nomologicalism, we can explain their movements by causal laws, but deductive-nomological explanations are not sufficient for us to understand their behavior. We do not know whether the boy pays his debt or lends his money or gives his money to another for free or something else. We can understand their behavior only through historicism. Hence Dilthey is right when he wrote, “No doubt the human studies have the advantage over the physical sciences because their subject is not merely an appearance given to the senses, a mere reflection in the mind of some outer reality, but inner reality directly experienced in all its complexity.”⁹

THE POSSIBILITY OF UNDERSTANDING OTHERS

It is obvious that one never asks whether understanding oneself is possible. We do not doubt or ask ourselves about the possibility of self-consciousness because we can reach this “inner reality” directly. We are the only ones who actually have our own consciousness or mental states. Nobody else can ever reach, steal or take away our mental states. As Fay put it, “Mental phenomena are invisible; they take place ‘inside’ where no one else can go. Philosophers have described all of this by saying that each person has privileged access to his or her own mental states and processes.”¹⁰ We can understand our own deeds with regard to our desires and beliefs. We know directly our own reasons why we do such and such deeds. Thus a question to be raised here is not about self-understanding but about the possibility of understanding others.(1) Is understanding others possible? All sceptics will say no to this question, and, therefore, they do

not need to answer the next question: (2) How is understanding others possible? But for those who say yes to question (1), they need to answer question (2).

It is true that all of our sense experiences and mental states are private or personal. All sensations and feelings belong to the consciousness of each particular person. However, since we are by nature social animals, we need to understand and communicate with others. Often we want to share what we see or feel with others, and often want others to share what they feel or see with us. In other words, as social animals, we want to understand others, and we want others to understand us. How can we share our private mental states with others? In other words, how can we communicate our inner feelings with them? To communicate our private feelings and sensations with others, we need to have intersubjective media such as concepts, models, signs, symbols, metaphors, and the like. It is obvious that people who belong to the community that shares a “language game” under the same “form of life” can understand and communicate with one another through the concepts and models used in their communities. As we all know, sometimes misunderstandings can happen, but usually they can be solved. Thus it is easy to say yes to question (1) if “others” means members of the same community. To answer question (2) is also not so difficult if “others” means people in the same culture or civilization. As human beings – or to use Heidegger’s term *Dasein* – we are always “thrown” into some form of life on earth. We have been formed by socio-cultural beliefs, norms and practices through our own traditions. If X, for instance, was born a Thai, he would know what “wai” means, and he would know how to “wai” different people in different ways. Thus it is not difficult for X as a Thai to understand the behavior of Thai people in general. It seems difficult, if not impossible, for us to understand and communicate with others or those who live in cultures or civilizations different from our own. The only way to understand others who live in different cultures or civilizations seems to be what Quine and Davidson called “radical translation” or “radical interpretation.” How is this possible?

HOW IS UNDERSTANDING OTHERS OF DIFFERENT CULTURES POSSIBLE?

In his book *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation*, Davidson argues that there are no such things as incommensurable human cultures. When we confront the task of translating the language, hitherto unknown, of another culture, we should proceed according to the Principle of Charity which asserts that:

1. Most of the doings and sayings of the people whose language is being translated are rational.
2. Most of the beliefs of those people are consistent and true by our standards.

3. Their beliefs and desires are largely similar to ours.

Since human actions express beliefs and desires, to determine the meaning of an act, we must determine the relevant beliefs and desires behind it. How can this be done? Davidson says only by assuming that other people in different cultures and civilizations are rational, like us, in the sense that their beliefs and desires are connected in the ways we connect them, and only by assuming that most of their beliefs are true by our own standards. Davidson writes:

The methodological advice to interpret in a way that optimizes agreement should not be conceived as resting on a charitable assumption about human intelligence that might turn out to be false. If we cannot find a way to interpret the utterances and other behavior of a creature as revealing a set of beliefs largely consistent and true by our own standards, we have no reason to count the creature as rational, as having beliefs, or as saying anything.¹¹

Davidson's assumptions seem to endorse the thesis of provincialism which holds that "Everyone is just like us." The provincialist thesis is opposite to that of multiculturalism which holds that "Everyone is just different from us." Relativists adopt the multiculturalist thesis and deny the provincialist one. Thus they will disagree with Davidson's assumptions. Cultural relativism typically holds that "(1) norms of rationality differ across cultures; that (2) judgments of the rationality of a given action are relative to the governing norms of the local particular culture; such that (3) two people, depending on their cultural locations, might disagree about the rationality of the same action, one judging it to be rational and the other irrational, and both judgments would be equally correct."¹² We can use two models to support the assumptions of cultural relativism: (1) Wittgenstein's model of language games and forms of life and (2) Kuhn's model of incommensurability. According to the later Wittgenstein's work, we may summarize that: (1) all language games which belong to certain forms of life have a logic of their own; that (2) each form of life has its own criteria and sets its own norms of intelligibility and rationality; and that (3) words have their meaning only in the contexts of these different language games. Thus, if Wittgenstein's assumptions are correct, namely, if other cultures do have very different cultural norms and criteria, we have to try to understand them in their own terms. According to Wittgenstein, it is nonsensical for us to try to impose our categories and criteria on other different cultures.¹³ It is ridiculous if we try to use basketball rules to judge soccer, and vice versa. Therefore, we should keep basketball rules to judge basketball matches, and soccer rules for soccer games. There are no such things as neutral rules which are applicable to all different games. Davidson goes too far when he asserts that most beliefs of people in different cultures are consistent and

true by our own standards. In fact, our own standards must be used in our own contexts only. There is no such medicine that can cure all kinds of diseases. This is what Kuhn calls “incommensurability.” We may paraphrase Kuhn by saying that one culture and another are incommensurate because they are completely non-translatable into one another. However, this also goes too far.¹⁴

In fact, Davidson’s assumptions are not all wrong. It will be all right if he asserts that most of the beliefs of the people in different cultures are consistent and true in their own contexts.¹⁵ I agree with him that radical translation or interpretation is possible only if we assume that other people in different cultures are rational like us, in the sense that their beliefs and desires are connected in the way we connect them. If all people are not rational in this sense, how can we understand and communicate with them? All people know how to set certain goals and choose proper means to achieve them. All people are given a potentiality to do so when they are born. However, even though all human beings are similar in this aspect, they are different in another. Any extreme ideas seem to be improper and misleading. Let us consider the theses of provincialism and multiculturalism as mentioned above. Both theses are false because they are extreme. To correct these extremes, we should say, “Everyone is like us in some aspects and different from us in another.” If we are alike in some aspects and different in another, then our cultures will also be alike in some aspects and different in another. The similar aspect is translatable, so it is commensurable. Only the different aspect is non-translatable and, therefore, incommensurable. Thus we need to understand others in their own terms only in those non-translatable domains.

BEYOND NATURAL AND HUMAN SCIENCES: FROM RATIONALITY TO AGAPE

On the one hand, scientific positivists – including all schools of materialists and behaviorists – hold that human actions and other natural events are not different in kind. If all natural events can be explained by causal laws and theories, then human actions, in principle, also can be explained by causal laws and theories. Thus the main task of all scientists is to try to discover those laws. If we are lucky in discovering them, then we will be able to predict human actions just as we do with other natural events. On the other hand, according to human and social scientists, human actions and other natural events are different in degree, if not also in kind. Even though we are lucky in discovering causal laws, they are not sufficient to make us understand human actions. Since human actions are considered as both natural events and intentional happenings, we need something more for understanding others. Surely, we need causal laws to explain human actions as natural movements, but we also need hermeneutical historicism to understand human actions as intentional activities. In other words, according to the human/social scientists, we need deductive-nomological

explanations for the physical aspects of human actions, and, simultaneously, we also need hermeneutics for the mental/psychological aspect of human actions. If we can explain the physical aspect and understand the mental aspect of human actions, then there is nothing more for understanding others.

Are natural and human sciences sufficient for understanding others? My answer to this question is no. It is not wrong for the positivists and the human/social scientists to search for causal laws and theories of interpretation. It is their duty to do so, and they should be highly encouraged and supported. But they are mistaken if they think that their missions are sufficient for understanding others. Comte and the positivists are wrong to equate (Western) modern science with rationality. In fact, rationality belongs to all humankind in the sense that it is a potentiality given to everyone. Moreover, every culture and civilization has its own science which can be validly and soundly justified by its own norms and criteria only. Thus rationality and science are not completely identical. Rationality includes science, but not vice versa. Metaphorically speaking, science is to rationality as metaphysics is to philosophy.

Do human beings have only physical and mental dimensions? No, there is still another dimension, namely, the spiritual dimension. This dimension of man cannot be reached by natural and human sciences. It is beyond both nomologicalism and historicism. In other words, it is beyond rationality at the intellectual/cognitive level. It can be reached only through religion and art, namely, through Truth and Beauty. Feyerabend wrote,

...subjective events...are beyond the reach of the most sophisticated physical or biological theory. However, they are not beyond the reach of artists, painters, poets, writers of plays. Now love, disappointment, desire play a large role in the lives of people. They also play a role in the process of scientific research...Hence, if you really want to understand the sciences and not merely write dry and abstract fairytales about them – and remember, by ‘understanding the sciences’ I mean both the context of discovery and the context of justification – then you have to turn to the arts and the humanities, i.e. you have to abandon these artificial classifications most philosophies and ‘rational accounts’ are full of.¹⁶

One of the main problems of the positivists and the human/social scientists in understanding others is probably that they ignore the meaning of understanding as sympathy and empathy on account of its subjectivity. For them, if anything is subjective, it is not scientific or rational. This is their big mistake. In fact, in the world of knowledge, no one can throw away their subjectivity from their epistemological framework. That is the reason why Hawking once said, “Things are as they are because we are.” As a

matter of fact, subjective events play a large role in our lives, as Feyerabend put it above.

Comte and the positivists are also mistaken when assuming that the spiritual/religious dimension is the lowest stage of human epistemic development. Eastern people in general usually consider an “enlightened” person¹⁷ as the one who is truly in the highest position. Metaphorically speaking, those who are not enlightened are at the bottom or somewhere between the top and the bottom of the mountain, but those who are enlightened are at the top. Thus the enlightened people can transcend all barriers and limitations. To use Nietzsche’s phrase, they are “beyond good and evil.” There is a story about two monks. One day two of them walked by a river. They met a girl crying by the river bank because she could not swim across the river. One of the monks carried her across the river. The other monk complained about this activity because it is against a discipline: a monk should never touch any woman. He kept on complaining until they reached their temple. The monk who carried the girl, after he had kept silence all the way back to the temple, finally said, “I laid her down quite a long time ago. Why have you been still carrying her?” From the story, who should be considered as the enlightened one? Enlightened people have no sin in their minds, so they can transcend everything with their loving kindness and compassion. They are beyond “good and evil,” “right and wrong,” “disciplined and undisciplined,” “rational and irrational,” etc. They could do as Jesus Christ said, “The Sabbath day is for man, not man for the Sabbath day.”

We can observe in our daily lives that all kinds of love, no matter whether *eros*, *philia* or *agape*, help us transcend differences. For example, if someone falls in love with a woman, his love will transcend all differences in race, color, nationality, religion and her historical background. His love can transcend everything in the sense that nothing can prevent it. It is borderless and limitless. Similarly, if we love our friends, no matter who they are and where they are from, we will certainly transcend all differences. And for those who have heavenly love or *agape*, they can love even their enemies and be ready to help them, like the good Samaritan and Jesus Christ himself.

In summary, understanding others in terms of causal laws and theories of interpretation is not sufficient because it is still under the game of rationality and irrationality. To transcend this game and arrive at authentic understanding we have no way except through loving kindness, compassion and *agape*.

CONCLUSION

Understanding presupposes knowledge. We usually understand and love those whom we know. Knowledge is a necessary condition for love and understanding. That is the reason why we need to support the natural and the human/social scientists in their diverse missions. Then what is

knowledge? Knowledge can mean different things. First, knowledge may mean “being able to identify.” Second, it may mean “being able to describe and explain.” Third, it may mean “having the same experience as.”¹⁸ Knowledge from the natural sciences and human/social sciences can and does reach only “knowledge” as “being able to identify” and as “being able to describe and explain.” It cannot come up to “knowledge” as “having the same experience as”, because “knowledge” in the third sense can be arrived at only through practice. Scientists usually ignore the third sense of knowledge because they think that it is not relevant to their missions, as Fay put it “...we understand others not when we become them..., but only when we are able to translate what they are experiencing or doing into terms which render them intelligible. When Freud wished to understand the nightmares of the Rat Man, it was not necessary that Freud have these nightmares himself... To know someone else or even ourselves requires not the ability to psychologically unite with them or ourselves at an earlier time but the ability to interpret the meaning of the various states, relations, and processes which comprise their or our lives.”¹⁹ It is true that it was not necessary for Freud to have the nightmares himself in order to understand the nightmares of the Rat Man, if he was simply satisfied with his “intellectual” understanding. But if Freud wants to reach “authentic” understanding, it is necessary for him to have such nightmares. If the Lord Buddha had never experienced suffering, how could he have had authentic understanding of the sufferings of other people and other creatures in the cycle of life? To have “authentic” understanding is different from to have “intellectual” understanding. Moreover, to have “authentic” understanding is always something “more” than to have “intellectual” understanding. That is the reason why Buddhadasa Bhikkhu once said, “There is no salvation inside a university,” because following the Way and talking about following the Way are different things. Understanding others through causal laws is understanding at the physical level, whereas understanding others through human sciences is understanding at the socio-psychological level. But both kinds of understanding are just necessary conditions, not sufficient for authentic understanding. Then how can we reach authentic understanding? Genuine or authentic understanding can be acquired only at the spiritual level. There is no way to reach authentic understanding at the spiritual level except through praxis with compassion, loving kindness and *agape*. Thus if rationality is considered as a moral virtue, our rationality will come to the peak, namely wisdom and enlightenment, only through such practice at the spiritual level.

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NOTES

¹ Immanuel Kant, "An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?" in Lawrence E. Cahoon, *From Modernism to Postmodernism: An Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 1996), p. 51.

² See Richard Rorty, "A Pragmatist View of Rationality and Cultural Difference", *Philosophy East & West*, Vol. 42, No. 4 (Oct. 1992), pp. 581-96.

³ See Harold I. Brown, *Rationality* (London: Routledge, 1990).

⁴ See Nicholas Rescher, *Rationality* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988).

⁵ The Lord Buddha gave advice on how to investigate a doctrine in his Kalamasutta. 1. Be not led by report. 2. Be not led by tradition. 3. Be not led by hearsay. 4. Be not led by the authority of texts. 5. Be not led by mere logic. 6. Be not led by inference. 7. Be not led by considering appearances. 8. Be not led by the agreement with a considered and approved theory. 9. Be not led by seeming possibilities. 10. Be not led by the idea, "This is our teacher." The Buddha suggested that we adopt or deny things in question only after our deep reflection on them through practice. See Phra Dhammapitaka (P.A. Payutto), *Dictionary of Buddhism* (Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Press, 2000).

⁶ See Anthony Kenny, *What is Faith?: Essays in the Philosophy of Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992).

⁷ For Dilthey, human sciences include both humanities and social sciences.

⁸ Carl G. Hempel, *Philosophy of Natural Science* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966), pp. 47-51.

⁹ Wilhelm Dilthey, "The Development of Hermeneutics" in David E. Klemm, *Hermeneutical Inquiry*, Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986, p. 93.

¹⁰ Brian Fay, *Contemporary Philosophy of Social Science* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), p. 10.

¹¹ Donald Davidson, *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), p. 137.

¹² Lawrence H. Simon, "Rationality and Cultural Relativism," in Edward Craig, ed., *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 82.

¹³ See L. Wittgenstein, *Remarks on Frazer's Golden Bough*, ed. Rush Rhees, tr. A.C. Miles and Rush Rhees (Atlantic Heights: Humanities Press, 1979).

¹⁴ I do not think that all new and old paradigms are incommensurate because they are completely different. In fact, there would be always, more or less, some similarities and differences between the old and the new paradigms. The model of incommensurability works well only with the different parts, but it does not do so with the similar ones.

¹⁵ According to fideism, (1) All judgments are relative to a particular culture or particular form of life; (2) Concepts and models cannot be exported beyond the boundaries of the particular form of life in which they function and have meaning; (3) The norms of rationality of a particular culture can be judged rational only from within that particular culture; and (4) If other cultures do have very different norms and practices, we have to attempt to understand them in their own terms. See Lawrence H. Simon, op. cit., and see Dan R. Stiver, *The*

Philosophy of Religious Language (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), pp. 69-72.

¹⁶ Paul K. Feyerabend, *Three Dialogues on Knowledge* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991), p. 148.

¹⁷ What I mean by “an enlightened person” is one who achieves *satori*. It is different from the sense used by Kant.

¹⁸ Brian Fay wrote, “‘Know’ might mean ‘be able to identify’ (as in ‘I know that they are members of Parliament’); alternately, ‘know’ might mean ‘be able to describe and explain’ (as in ‘I know why Italian governments are so unstable’); or ‘know’ might mean ‘to have the same experience as’ (as in ‘I know what it’s like to give birth to a child, as I, too, am a mother.’)” See Brian Fay, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-13.

¹⁹ Brian Fay, *Ibid.*, p. 25.

CHAPTER XXV

THE CREATIVE CULTURAL TRADITION OF INDIA AND ITS RELATION TO SCIENCE

S. PANNEERSELVAM

This paper basically aims at answering the following issues:

- Can we accept the view that science is absolutely objective?
- What are the limitations on the objectivity of science? Can we say that technology is applied science? Can it possess autonomy?
- If science and technology are value-laden, then what are their internal and external values?
- Will the challenge of science and technology to traditional Indian culture produce a creative response? Or will science and technology become a universal solvent dissolving traditional values?
- Should science be religious? Though some like Professor Amit Goswami argue that science and spirituality can be reconciled, some like Professor D.P. Chattopadhyaya argue that “the Godless view of science is not new.”
- What does the cultural model of science mean? Can there be an interaction between the two?

India consists of a rich tradition of ethical values and a deep cultural background, which will always see the means and the end together. India is a country where there is a plurality of cultures. It always appreciates each and every culture, whether it be small or big, sharing each culture and giving each culture its due. Culture adopts itself to the situation. It takes into account the changes that are taking place outside. It is slow but steady. Culture unites men into one cultural group. The development of many cultures is due to various causes like physical habitants and resources, which are outer, and causes that are a range of possibilities inherent in various areas of activity, which are inner. All cultures are cultures because they have some essential elements in common. These essential elements common to all cultures will constitute the universal world culture analogous to the universal grammar in the sphere of language. A world culture is yet to be developed. But this does not mean that the many cultures are opposed to one another. Their plurality is real and their unity is unreal. Cultural sustainability as the sustainability of economic activities must concentrate on both individual as well as community. The individual values and the values of the community or the cultural group must be safeguarded. Though community integrates its values with the individual, it should be understood that individual values cannot be sacrificed. Moreover the culture carries the

values to the future generations and hence its values must be preserved. Individual as well as the social values constitute the culture.

India seems to be living in two or more conceptual worlds at the same time: (1) the world of the Great Tradition in which the mythological past lies in the present, time exists in a mosaic of different periods, matter and mind appear on the same continuum, and the dominant conceptions are of groups, clusters, and patterns; and (2) the modern world of science and technology in which mathematics plays a major role in describing the world, matter and mind though related are discrete entities, and conceptions are deductive, linear and of individual events. We need to develop alternative world-views, alternative metaphysics, as the basis for reflection on technology vis-à-vis society and civilization. The way towards understanding the metaphysical roots of technology must lead through the creation of an alternative world-view which will enable us to grasp sharply and clearly ramifications and consequences of present technology for a future human society. It is here that people from non-western cultures have much to contribute.

Culture in the final analysis may be considered to be one of many instruments man has inherited, but it is an instrument of quality. The fundamental contrast between science and culture is that while science is concerned with the quality of life and the quantitative aspects of the universe, culture is concerned with the quality of life and the qualitative aspects of the universe. Development while preserving the cultural values is essential. In the economic and scientific world, culture is a “disvalue” – at best, an “externality.” As long as our model of development remains scientific and economic, culture will inevitably be a casualty, and indirectly as repositories of culture we shall be its victims. The cultural model recognizes a plurality of values and science is one of the positive values. We must adapt the cultural models as the basis for future development. Science will become a stimulus to cultural growth rather than universal solvents reducing culture to a meaningless homogeneous world of uniform practices. India can give a direction and serve as a model for the West and other developing countries of how science and culture can interact for the good of humankind.

Commenting on the individuality as well as the universality of human nature Professor G.C. Pande says: “The individuality of Indian culture must be so interpreted as not to militate against the universality of human nature and value-seeking. At the same time, the unity of Indian culture has to be interpreted with sufficient catholicity to include numerous communities, regions and epochs, which have historically entered into its making. This search for the cultural identity of India, individual but aspiring after universality, one but inclusive of differences, continuous but developing, arises from the awareness of India's historic traditions.”¹ Culture is the guardian of the people. It reacts whenever there is a threat to it. When the rights of the cultural group are affected or violated, there is always protest.

We always find different conceptions of culture. The culture of people takes into account the language, ideas, customs, taboos and other related components. One must always consider the following aspects with regard to culture: (1) culture unifies men into one cultural group and (2) the development of many cultures is due to various external causes, like physical habitats and resources, and inner causes, like range of possibilities inherent in various areas of activity. If conflict among cultures follows from the very concept of culture, then there emerges a theory where there is a relation between culture and rationality. The difference between cultures and rationality is that a culture unifies all those who belong to that culture, whereas all men are united in rationality by sharing this essential feature. Culture endows people with their identity. Scholars like G.C. Pande emphasize that there are three approaches to culture, namely the scientific, the historical and the metaphysical. The scientific approach according to him is essentially modern, whereas the historical is both modern as well as traditional, depending on one's approach to history. The metaphysical approach is basically traditional and has two varieties. The first one is identified with orthodoxy and the other is identified with the content of mystical revelation or intuition.

Technology always has been part of the social structure, belonging to a larger cultural framework in which man functions as a human being. There is and always has been a continuous dialogue concerning society, its needs and aspirations and the technical means potentially contained in technology for satisfying those needs and fulfilling those aspirations. The nature of technology cannot be understood without understanding the nature of this dialogue. The place of technology in the scope of human knowledge is determined by the nature of the dialogue concerning the aspirations of society and the potentials of technology. It is in this sense that we can talk about the dialectical approach to technology. The crucial questions are: How do the forms of technological knowledge arise? What are they? How are they developed? In what sense do they represent knowledge? All these questions must be answered in relation to the peculiarities of this dialogue.

The relation between science and human life or culture has long been emphasized by both philosophers and scientists. The following questions are inevitable when we talk about the above relations. This paper basically aims at answering the following issues: (1) Can we accept the view that science is absolutely objective? (2) What are the limitations upon the objectivity of science? (3) If science and technology are value-laden, then what are their internal and external values? (4) Will the challenge of science and technology to traditional Indian culture produce a creative response? (5) Or will science and technology become a universal solvent dissolving traditional values? (6) Should science be religious? (7) What does the cultural model of science mean?

Science plays an important role in modern society. Science is often seen as possessing the absolute objective character that God held in medieval theology. It is often claimed that technology is nothing but applied

science. According to A.N. Whitehead, there is a “fallacy of the detached observer” by which, modern science had wrongly separated the experimenter from the experiment. The traditional view of science – that it is absolutely objective – is a myth, and we need a more humanistic view of science. The view that science is absolutely objective and completely removed from the cultural context of the scientist has been questioned by the philosophers of science. Kuhn formulated the view that social and institutional factors directly influence the nature of scientific theories. Similarly, socialists who have studied scientific knowledge claim that science arises from the “social construction of facts.” For them, different social conditions will produce different facts. This, to some extent, implies that because of cultural differences, Indian science is different from Western science because of different facts. This rejects the fundamental assumptions of the universality and objectivity of science. Similarly Latour and Woolgar, by adopting the role of anthropologists, looked upon the laboratory as the site of an unknown native tribe called “scientists.”

SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES AS TWO CULTURES

Science and technology are humanistic disciplines, but, of course, one can make a distinction between science and technology. In science, we investigate the reality that is given to us, the empirical reality, and the world around us. In technology, we create a reality according to our designs. It is a man-made reality. In other words, science deals with what is, whereas technology deals with what is to be. In science we have reality first and then its description, whereas in technology we have description or design first and only afterwards reality – the object that is produced according to our design. Though we consider the fact that science and technology are humanistic disciplines, scholars like C.P. Snow have made the distinction between the worlds of science and the humanities into “two cultures.” It must be understood that the same human cognitive process underlies both disciplines, and that this process is necessarily value-laden. Science not only expresses internal values but also produces external values through its impact upon society and the world. The claim that science is value-neutral cannot be correct. Science depends upon and expresses human values. Not only is science shaped by human motives and attitudes, but this knowledge process depends heavily and is properly infused with human values. These values are not external values imposed upon science from outside, but honesty, beauty and knowledge as intrinsic values stand at the very heart of the scientific enterprise. Those thinkers who claim value-neutrality for science dehumanize science and distract us from the realization that the very choice of what constitutes a scientific explanation is value-laden. Science without internal human values could not be science.

Philosophers have tried to explain the distinction between science and non-science. Popper, for example, has explained the progress of science in terms of bold conjectures which scientists attempt to falsify rather than

confirm. What makes a conjecture a scientific one is that it is open to being tested and perhaps refuted. Theories, which are in principle immune to the refutation, are not scientific. Similarly, Kuhn describes a psychological experiment, which explains the nature of scientific discovery. The history of science is characterized by periods of normalcy within which scientists work. Scientists working within the received paradigm will not give it up easily, even in the face of anomalous results. Feyerabend attacks science and scientific education. He claims that science is simply a form of ideology like any other ideology.

India lives in two or more conceptual worlds at the same time: (1) the world of the Great Tradition in which the mythological past lies in the present, time exists in a mosaic of different periods, matter and mind appear on the same continuum, and the dominant conceptions are of groups, clusters, and patterns; and (2) the modern world of science and technology in which mathematics plays a major role in describing the world, matter and mind, though related, are discrete entities, and conceptions are deductive, linear and of individual events. But which one is the need of the hour?

We need to develop alternative world-views, alternative metaphysics, as the basis for reflection on technology vis-à-vis society and civilization. The way towards understanding the metaphysical roots of technology must lead through the creation of an alternative world-view which will enable us to grasp sharply and clearly ramifications and consequences of present technology for a future human society. It is here that people from non-western cultures have much to contribute. But how to start? The starting point is that we must re-examine our intellectual heritage and tradition in the light of our present situation. Tradition is always hermeneutical and accommodates new interpretation and understanding. This reconstruction means reconstructing the present categories of knowledge. Man's mode of being-in-the world helps a person to evaluate tradition. It is not possible for a person simply to follow tradition, but he has the right to evaluate tradition. The world of historicity will have an impact on tradition and it accepts evaluation and reinterpretation. This does not mean that we are revolting against tradition, but interpreting tradition in the context of present historicity. The cultural world, to which one belongs, allows a radical interpretation of the tradition. This sort of interpretation teaches a way of looking at tradition afresh, from a new perspective, which will suit our present situation. Husserl, for example, who used phenomenology to investigate the a priori of the life-world, develops a concept, "the surrounding world" to explain this. It is a concept that has its place exclusively in the mental-spiritual sphere. He argues that we live in our particular surrounding world, which is the locus of all our cares and endeavours. Our surrounding world, according to Husserl, has a spiritual structure in us and in our historical life. It is absurd to look upon the nature of the surrounding world as something alien to the spirit. This explains how a particular person is placed in the surrounding world or tradition though his

physical world is supported by scientific and technological society. Every man is placed in a tradition or culture, which cannot be avoided.

CULTURE AS THE CRITIQUE OF REASON

In science as well as in post-metaphysical thinking, the role of reason is unique. It is said that progress and reason always go together. But the role and definition of reason differ among those who talk about this relation. Some, like Rorty, consider it as a social phenomenon. "We have to resist the urge to see social practices of justification as more than just such practices."² Foucault attempts to disempower the ideas of reason by totally objectivating them. "What is this reason that we use? What are its historical effects? What are its limits, and what are its dangers?" asks Foucault.³ Derrida attempts a totalized critique of reason. He believes that the ideas of reason are built into thought and give rise to illusions, and therefore he wants to renounce the ideas of reason by interrogating, disrupting and displacing them. Similarly, Habermas reconstructs the Kantian notion of reason so as to explain the importance of comprehensive reason. As a critic of scientific-technological rationality, he constructs social rationality. He, for example, has rejected both Adorno and Horkheimer who considered the development of Western rationality as the totalisation of reification, domination and repression. Against this background, Habermas defended the positive aspects of the Enlightenment and also of modernity and western rationality. He wanted to emphasize the role of rationality in the economy, culture and morality. This means that for him social rationality has implications in social life, which cannot be neglected. In his comprehensive concept of rationality, different dimensions of social life, i.e. values, norms, interests, are studied and preserved.

Marcuse defines reason as "the fundamental concept of philosophical thought, the only one by means of which it has bound itself to human destiny... it is not only a category of bourgeois philosophy, but a concern of mankind."⁴ Horkheimer and Adorno in their *Dialectic of Enlightenment* attempted a critique of instrumental reason. Instrumental reason is now not identified with a particular period of history, society or class. Rationalization has thus moved from a historically specific to global context, thus expanded its scope to the whole of human society. Both Horkheimer and Adorno argue that unfortunately, the Enlightenment project, which had the agenda of liberating humanity, has turned into a new and powerful force of domination. In *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, both Horkheimer and Adorno explain how reason turned into its opposite and resulted in new rationalized forms of social domination. Social rationality turned into irrationality and enlightenment into deception. Not only this, Enlightenment reason has resulted in domination and regression. Thus for them, instrumental reason and science have become myths which resulted in worship and praise for superior powers and social domination. Habermas wanted to revise the project of Enlightenment rationality. His idea was to

offer an alternate to the subject-centered tradition of rationalism. Along with Horkheimer and Adorno, Marcuse also criticized scientific-technological rationality and instrumental reason. He argued that the very form of technical reason is ideological and believed that not only the application of technology, but technology itself is domination. He says: "Specific purposes and interests of domination...enter the very construction of the technical apparatus. Technology is always a historical-social project; in it is projected what a society and its ruling interests intend to do with men and things. Such a purpose of domination ...belongs to the very structure of technical reason."⁵

We need alternative views of knowledge. For example, philosophers, futurists, and others who are interested in the future of technology, and thus with the future of culture, would benefit by a dialogue with the alternative world views of Indian culture in which alternative bases for knowledge and life are admitted. Western or technological society is based to a great extent on quantitative instrumental values. It is true that on the basis of these values, social and political assessments are made. As long as the quantitative instrumental basis remains unchanged and channels its imperative via descriptive science, through industrial profit-efficiency-oriented technology, the order of things will remain the same. It must be noted that even the prevalent approaches to values cultivated by the majority of contemporary philosophers are reductions, and indirectly serve the cause of the quantitative world-view. Some of the reductionist approaches are (1) the Linguistic approach (for example, J.L. Austin); (2) the Formalist approach (for example, Georg Henrik von Wright); (3) the Simple-minded approach (for example, E. Mesthene); and (4) the Simplistic Mathematical Approach (for example, A. Rosenstein). What is interesting is that, in all these approaches, values are reduced to something other than they are, whether linguistic utterances, logical structures, technological commodities or mathematical functions. Thus, to change the predominantly quantitative temper, our civilization will require a through-going change in our modes of understanding.

The West is now in search of quality of life. It has understood the emptiness of the quantitative approach. The modes of life governed by quantity are simply not sufficient. Quality of life is hard to define, although its absence is readily apparent. We know what is within the structure of our experience of it. Quality of life adds to our stature as human beings. Quality of life cannot be understood without a purpose in life. The purpose in life cannot be secured unless we ascribe some meaning to the world or at least some meaning to human life beyond the immediate gratification of our sensual desires. This means that the quality of life requires a transcendental dimension of life. Traditional cultures and religions, by providing these transcendental dimensions can contribute to our experience of the quality of life.

The issues connected with the quality of life can be known through the issues connected with needs. Needs, here, include both the genuine and

the artificial. Under genuine needs one can include basic needs, cultural needs and subjective needs. The biological needs are the needs which are necessary for survival, and the subjective needs are the needs which make the individual unique. But what is important are the cultural needs which are the specific needs, and which contribute to the well-being of human beings as socio-cultural entities. They are specific to a given society at a given time. They may vary from society to society and from epoch to epoch in the same society. Although acquired, they are not subjective but rather trans-subjective, for once a culture develops a certain set of needs, an individual raised in this culture regards these as necessary. Artificial needs appear to contribute to our well-being, but in reality they do not. They may be seen as an outgrowth or continuation of cultural and individual needs. But they are parasitic. Their satisfaction not infrequently leads to the suppression of other significant needs. People spend more time with computers and the internet than with nature or with other human beings.

We talk about the “universality of science” and the “diversity of cultures.” Often we think that science is reliable, whereas culture is ephemeral. But the fact is the other way round. It is culture that is enduring and universal, whereas it is science that is transient and ephemeral. The only viable framework for development is culture and not economics fused with technology, as at present. Development must mean the fulfillment within a culture that nourishes and sustains. It is argued that the scientific method is infallible. This reliability condition is used by the scientists to claim the superiority of science over culture. Can this be a proper criterion? Often it is shown that the scientific method is a myth. It is not possible to define the scientific method adequately, and also it is difficult to show exactly what makes the scientific method scientific. For Popper and others, scientific method does not exist. Also there is no one single method in science. There is a multiplicity of methods. For example, astrophysics has its own method of exploring phenomena like quasars, blackholes, the origins of the universe, etc. Physics and Chemistry differ in their methods. The methods used for understanding the Newtonian universe are different from those of the universe of subatomic particles. Similarly, the scientific method as applied to social sciences cannot be a mere transposition of the methodology of physics. Here also one can ask a further question. Which physics? Is it quantum physics or classical physics?

Here one may give a counter argument. Even if there is no single method for science, science proceeds within well-ordered structures called paradigms, which are conceptual structures that outline the territory and provide strategies for scientific endeavors. But even this argument cannot be right for the main reason that each scientific revolution is different from the other and each seems to have been guided by the logic specific to it. In our over-enthusiastic mood to make science universal and to make the scientific method hold for all realms of human inquiry, we have simply distorted the nature of phenomena. In reality, science is as diverse as other modes of knowledge. But in the scientific frame of reference, culture has been

claimed to be relativistic, pluralistic, diverse and transient. This may be so at the superficial level of appearance, but there is also the essence and purpose of culture. It has a purpose of uplifting human beings. There is an underlying unity among seemingly diverse cultures, and this is the unity of purpose to assure a quality of life to the individuals within a culture. Culture in the final analysis may be considered to be one of many instruments man has inherited, but it is an instrument of quality. The fundamental difference between science and culture is that, while science is concerned with the quantity of life and the quantitative aspects of the universe, culture is concerned with the quality of life and the qualitative aspects of the universe. The model of development used in present-day society fails for the main reason that it is concerned only with quantity. "Development while preserving cultural values" should be our motto.

In the scientific model, there is only one value, which is measured in monetary terms. In such a model, culture is a disvalue. It is outside of the model; it is one of the externalities. The cultural model, on the other hand, recognizes a plurality of values, and science is one of the positive values. It is of secondary importance whether we regard religion as part of culture or as a phenomenon more important than culture and, in fact, determining the nature of culture. We must adopt the cultural model as the basis for future development. As long as our model of development remains scientific and economic, culture will inevitably be a casualty, and as repositories of culture indirectly we shall be its victims. We must adopt the cultural models as the basis for future development. Science will become a stimulus to cultural growth, rather than a universal solvent reducing culture to a meaningless homogeneous world of uniform practices. India alone can give a direction and serve as a model for the West and other developing countries of how science and culture can interact for the good of humankind.

The increasing awareness that Western culture may be breaking down has made us search for causes and examine facets of modern society which we have hitherto ignored, neglected and overlooked. In technology, there is a focal point, in which conceptual and ideological paths meet. To understand these converging paths is to understand the main configurations of the network within which our civilization operates. For example, notions like progress, nature, invention, rationality, efficiency, etc. have a link with culture. To put this in simple terms, the philosophy of culture is the philosophy of society, a philosophy of man in a civilization which has found itself at an impasse, which is threatened by excessive specialization, fragmentation and atomization, and which is becoming aware that it has chosen a mistaken idiom for its interaction with nature. All these problems to some extent are due to our wrong approach to science and technology.

We live in a civilization that is threatened by the uncontrolled growth of technology, deriving from the empirical sciences, which have nothing to say about human values. As modern civilization is radically troubled, only a complete transformation in theory and practice could cure it. The environmental crisis facing industrial society is so grave that man

has to do something to save human society, as well as nature and other living beings. In the present society, there is a public demand for particular ethics for each profession or vocation, a demand which is as unwarranted as if one were to demand specific civic rights and laws for different groups or communities within the same political entity called state. The different professions and communal groups of people may have different mores, but there should only be one underlying set of ethical maxims or principles obligatory for all human beings, irrespective of race, religion, nationality or other secondary qualities. In our present scientific technological civilization, there is a need for protecting man as well as the environment. Every individual and every creature has intrinsic dignity and inalienable rights, and each one of them has an inescapable responsibility for what he does.

Promethean science and Faustian science were in quest of knowledge, but because of their differing views of man's nature and life's goal they have entirely different purposes. For Promethean science, knowledge was an instrument of liberation and self-perfection leading to the divine, whereas for Faustian science, knowledge was an instrument of power, untrammelled and absolute, over everyone and everything, leading to self-destruction and perdition. Ultimately Promethean science lost out to Faustian science, first in the West and later all over the world. Technology is not a thing-in-itself. It is and always has been part of the social structure, belonging to a larger cultural framework in which man functions as a human being. There is and always has been a continuous dialogue concerning society, its needs and aspirations, and the technical means potentially contained in technology for satisfying those needs and fulfilling those aspirations. The nature of science cannot be understood without understanding the nature of this dialogue. To consider science as entirely autonomous is wrong though it has secured for itself a great deal of autonomy. It is a mistake to think that the technological system is self-justifying. There should be a dialogue between science and culture.

In India, scholars like Professor Sundara Rajan criticize the Eurocentric bias of science, and explore the possibility for a new path. Rajan talks about the "European themata," i.e., the general features of style and motivation, which seem to characterize the modern sciences, and to explain the need to develop a conceptual framework for the understanding of science and also to support the relationship between science and philosophy. He wants to develop a four-fold framework of science – science as a possibility, science as a fact, science as a problem, and science as a hope,⁶ which he thinks can solve the crisis of the natural sciences. In the first context, i.e., science as a possibility, philosophy is facilitative. Here the critical approach of philosophy is helpful to science. In the second, science as a fact, there is a radical change in the relation between philosophy and science.⁷ Philosophy has to help science by analyzing social reality. Analysis and the clarificatory procedures of philosophy are immensely helpful in understanding the basic principles and methods of sciences. The third context, i.e., science as a problem, calls for the critical function of

philosophy. Here philosophy undertakes a critique of sciences in terms of a normative understanding of life. The crisis of the sciences is approached by philosophy to solve it. For example, the role of science in the politics of domination and colonization has been questioned, and philosophy comes to its rescue. In the fourth and final context, i.e., science as hope, we allow new possibilities, taking into consideration its failures and limitations. This means one needs new self-understanding. This is possible through the “thematic dimensional approach,” which Holton, for example, prescribes.

There is a relationship between philosophy and the human sciences. This relationship is quite often not approached seriously. But one needs the other and one is not a threat to the other. Each discipline must enter a dialogue with the other, thus giving the scope for new thinking both in philosophy and science. Taking two paradigms of Popper and Kuhn, Sundara Rajan argues that for Popper, science and philosophy are very close in spirit and motivation.⁸ But for Kuhn the relation is a variable one and sometimes they are also indistinguishable. The difference between the two thinkers is that while Popper insisted on the role of philosophers in science, Kuhn is of the view that philosophy misses the rhythm of science.

D.P. Chattopadhyaya emphasizes interaction between science, technology, and culture. This interaction according to him can be approached in many ways.⁹ First, it can be shown from the commonsensical or pre-theoretical point of view that every man combines in his world-view the basic aspects of his life, scientific, technological, geographical, historical and economic. Second, one may try to redo the same thing in a more systematic and refined way on the theoretical plane. Third, we may focus on the distinction as well as the relation between civilization and culture, between the material and the spiritual aspects of human life. Fourth, one may explain the importance of the relationship between man and the environment and in the process show that even the higher forms of culture cannot be free from the environmental conditions. Fifth, one may argue that even the disciplines like mathematics are influenced by practical and social considerations. Sixth, comments may be offered to show that there is a close relation between the environment, human nature, medicine, ethics, language, technology, and philosophy. Lastly, one may try to say that philosophy, science, technology and culture are in fact, an interwoven fabric of human civilization and that their specialization, differentiation, etc., are mainly due to theoretical needs for specialization. According to Chattopadhyaya, man has a past behind him and a tradition to support and regulate him. His very being is embedded, or, one might even say, he is born in a culture, marked among other things by its tradition and modernity, language and culture. Since man is sustained by tradition and culture, he questions them both. His sense of values can never be completely dominated and determined by his tradition and culture. He cannot transcend the challenge of modernization. Because of this, he questions his own tradition and cultural past. Chattopadhyaya very rightly says: “Continuous growth of knowledge, particularly of its scientific form, and advancement of

technology often make us question our own traditional heritage and cultural past.”¹⁰ In his interesting paper, “Rationality, Culture, and Values,”¹¹ he deals with the relation between rationality and culture. He rejects the claim that there is a unique and universal relation between culture and rationality. He believes that culture-bound rationality is a sort of relativism. He examines the three different concepts of rationality developed in the three branches of human knowledge namely, economics, evolutionary biology and psychological behaviorism. By examining all the three concepts Chattopadhyaya comes to the conclusion that all these concepts of rationality are limited, and underestimate the diversity of human nature born out of freedom and cultural circumstances. There are outer and inner aspects of human nature. Since all the theories of rationality are derived from human experience, their validity and correctness must be tested only through human experience.

CULTURE, TRADITION AND PROGRESS

This part of the paper deals with the question of how far we can go in order to interpret and understand tradition in a better way. My concern here is to see the way in which religion enters into the life-world, into man’s mode of being-in-the world. Life-world is included in myths and beliefs in God, etc., and is always characterized by tradition and historicity. In other words, it can be said that tradition is the constitution of the life-world, and language is the vehicle of tradition. It is language, which gives unity to tradition by taking into account its historical dimension.

Being in the Hindu tradition, I would like to see how far tradition allows new interpretation and understanding. I feel that it allows the participant to see the different dimensions of understanding. The Habermasian distinction between system and life-world is useful here. The uncoupling of the system and life-world is essential so that one can know the importance of life-world. We have already seen that a system has structure and the life-world has a hermeneutic interpretation. A system is always rigid and fixed and allows no changes, whereas life-world is flexible and allows changes and hence it is hermeneutical. It allows a discourse of understanding. Tradition is always hermeneutical and accommodates new interpretation and understanding. Here it may be mentioned that though in Habermas we find the distinction between structure and life-world and the tension involved between them, scholars like S.S. Barlingay attempt to overcome this tension by presenting a unified perspective of both.¹² The life-world of my tradition always allows interpretation and reinterpretation, since the life-world is always linguistically constituted. The Hindu tradition appreciates the role of language and also how language can be viewed as a pointer to the knowledge of God. Thinkers like Dilthey, Husserl, Heidegger, Habermas and others have shown the way to go from consciousness to language, from egoism to intersubjectivity, from fact to meaning and from system to life-world. The life-world is a shared one and it alone can explain

how shared meanings are transmitted in religious traditions. Multiple expressions of human life are made possible by it. The stories, legends and myths need interpretation. They need some sort of constructive, interpretive activity of thinking to arrive at a coherent understanding in ordinary language of the life-world from which they sprang. What it means is that to interpret the stories, legends, and myths in a new perspective, one must be in the present situation and context.

Life-world is a critique of functionalist reason. It allows for an evaluation of tradition. Man's mode of being-in-the world helps a person to evaluate the tradition. It is not possible for me to simply follow the tradition, but I have the right to evaluate my tradition, which those who are outside of the tradition cannot do. Moreover, it is for the good of my tradition to grow and adopt changes whenever necessary. The surrounding world or the world of historicity will have an impact on the tradition, and it accepts evaluation and reinterpretation. This means that when I try to understand my religious tradition I may have to reject those dogmas which are not necessary. This means I have the capacity or right to transcend some of the dogmas which are not acceptable at present. This does not mean that I am revolting against my religious tradition, but interpreting it in the context of present historicity. The life-world, which I belong, allows a radical interpretation of the tradition. This sort of interpretation teaches a way of looking at the tradition afresh from a new perspective, which will suit our present situation. Husserl, for example, who used phenomenology to investigate the apriori of the life-world, made a systematic understanding of the life-world or worked for an "ontology of the life-world purely as experiential world." He develops a concept, "the surrounding world" to explain this. It is a concept that has its place exclusively in the mental-spiritual sphere. He argues that we live in our particular surrounding world, which is the locus of all our cares and endeavours. Our surrounding world, according to Husserl, has a spiritual structure in us and in our historical life. It is absurd to look upon the nature of the surrounding world as something alien to the spirit. This explains how a particular person is placed in the surrounding world or tradition. Every man is placed in a tradition, which cannot be avoided. Tradition and historicity play a significant role in the understanding of the myths and symbols of a religion that is expressed by language. It is language, which carries the tradition from one to the other. In the life-world, it is language which ultimately interprets things, and passes the message from one generation to the other. It is the hermeneutics of facticity, which interprets factual life afresh. The tradition, which I belong to, shapes my life-world, and this is common to all traditions.

All the time, the myths, legends, stories connected with a particular religious tradition need interpretation, and it is inevitable because of the fact that the life-world demands it, and hence there is a connection between a particular religious tradition and a particular life-world. For example, a hermeneutical understanding of the study of myths would suggest that they are used as a form of discourse.

The role of myths in human experience and reality cannot be easily rejected because to some extent they shape our life-world. Myths have relevance in the social context. They transcend time and also first order reference. They are always used as a form of symbolism and ordinary language. They suggest something invisible. Mircea Eliade says: "Images, symbols and myths are not irresponsible creations of the psyche; they fulfill a function, that of bringing to light the most hidden modalities of being."¹³ Life-world is concerned with the phenomenology of religion. It is the sharing of a religious life-world – a shared life-world with others. There can be friction but not collision. It can be explained in this way. Religion contains certain mythical modes of experience. The relation between them is so implicit that one cannot be isolated from the other. The myths are taken away from their religious content and the world tries to give a new meaning. Individuals and collectives interact with each other; thus there is a dialectical movement. It is the philosophy of participation. It is the transformation of meaning. In a philosophy of participation, criticisms are inevitable. Criticizability is the essence of free and rational creativity of "what is objective" and also of "what is subjective".¹⁴

It should be remembered that there may be different approaches to the tradition, but the inner meaning should not be lost. For example, a text like the *Bhagavad-gita* has different approaches. It is said that according to Gandhi, the *Bhagavad-gita* is a move in *dharma*, i.e., a move in religion and morality. But for Bankim, the *Bhagavad-gita* is a move in history. In other words, Gandhi never placed the *Bhagavad-gita* in history, but Bankim did. For Bankim, Krishna was a historical person, and the Mahabharatha was a real war. But Gandhi believed that this sort of understanding would deprive the *Bhagavad-gita* of its status as a religious text of the Hindus.¹⁵ The question whether the text is a historical or religious one is not very important in this context. What is important is the truth conveyed by the text. Bankim tries to emphasize the fact that his historical interpretation would substantiate the truth, namely, the text has some purpose for which it is written. This means whether it is a historical or religious, a text which has some sacredness in it must be understood by the role it plays in the life-world situation. Similarly, the mythologies must be interpreted in the life-world situation. The stories mentioned in it need not be true, but the inner meaning, which is conveyed, must be understood to preserve the tradition.

Faith in the tradition is essential for life. We can go back to the sacred texts of our own tradition and creatively interpret them afresh and make them more meaningful to the existing situation. For this, one must have faith in the tradition; it is a reconstructing of the tradition to make it more meaningful. For this, we must disregard or bracket the conceptual elaborations imposed on them, dismantle some of the concepts or ideas which are no longer relevant and acceptable, and then interpret them afresh from a new perspective, to suit our present situation. Since understanding is ever new and always creative, this must be done to preserve the tradition to which we belong. But here one may ask the question whether our

understanding is always complete. Two scholars who have discussed this issue explain the role of participational understanding in the following way. D.P. Chattopadhyaya says that when people understand meanings by participating in a life-form, their participation can never be complete or total ensuring unanimity in their understanding of the concerned cluster of meanings.¹⁶ Similarly Margaret Chatterjee says: “The participation-understanding of a live tradition may be partial; it may show differences from the participant understanding of an earlier generation, but it would illustrate neither distancing nor fusion of horizons, but a continuity which would accommodate both change and encapsulation of the experience of earlier generations.”¹⁷ The above two views must be taken seriously in the interpretational understanding of the tradition.

The basic question, which one faces while grasping the meaning of the tradition is this: what are the conditions of possibility of discursive understanding and of the correctness and validity of interpretations? The role of objectivity and intersubjectivity may be the answer. Already we have seen that in the Habermasian conception of the life-world, the objective, social and subjective worlds operate at the level of culture, society and personality. In my dialogue with others, I take the responsibility for rational persuasion by which I try to understand and interact with others. In other words, in my dialogue with others two things are taking place: (1) I persuade others and (2) I am also persuaded by others. Therefore while dialoguing with others, I make certain claims and they become not only my claims but are claims made for the sake of others. Very rightly Schutz says that intersubjective experience involves the bodily presence of the other. This implies that in intersubjectivity, there is always the life-worldly presence of the other.

Husserl’s approach to this is interesting. “...This world is there for me not only as a world of mere things, but also with the same immediacy as a world of objects with values, a world of goods, a practical world. ... All that which holds me for myself holds, as I know, for all other human beings whom I find present in my surrounding world ... the surrounding world and mine are objectively one and the same world of which we are all conscious.”¹⁸ The life-world is the basic structure of understanding. It is that by which the social, political and cultural gain their meaning. It is what relates the individual to the society and vice-versa. The private and the public are united by the life-world. Habermas also says that it is the ground for the speaker and hearer to meet based on their validity claims. They either agree or disagree and settle their dispute in a meaningful way. In the life-world it is the communicative action which plays a significant role. Only in the context of life-world is there a narrative presentation of events, which makes self-understanding possible and acceptable. Here one can think of Sundara Rajan’s (1) distantiating and (2) participatory modes of thinking. In the former, the object is held at a distance, there is a dissociation of the self from the object and the bond between them is replaced by a spectatorial mode of understanding, whereas in the latter

there is a fellowship with the other. There is an interior or indwelling understanding of the object.¹⁹

Very rightly Schutz says that the intersubjective experience involves the bodily presence of the other. This implies that in intersubjectivity, there is always the life-worldly presence of the other. Husserl's approach to this is interesting. "...this world is there for me not only as a world of mere things, but also with the same immediacy as a world of objects with values, a world of goods, a practical world. ... All that which holds me for myself holds, as I know, for all other human beings whom I find present in my surrounding world ... the surrounding world and mine are objectively one and the same world of which we are all conscious."²⁰ The life-world is the basic structure of understanding. By it the social, political and cultural gain their meaning. It is that which relates the individual to the society and vice-versa. "The private and the public are united by culture. The universal culture of man is not constituted simply by science and humanism but even more deeply by spiritual wisdom without which man would not be a moral being and humanism will prove a mirage," says G.C. Pande.²¹ The uniqueness of the Indian cultural tradition is that in it we find the synthesis of spirit and matter.

Let me conclude this paper with the quotation from Kireet Joshi, who rightly traces the cultural roots of India in Vedic tradition as follows:

The earliest preoccupation of India, as expressed in the Veda, was the exploration of the Spirit in Matter and of Matter in Spirit; the intermediate preoccupation was with the seeking and experiment in a thousand ways of the soul's outermost and innermost experience, marked by various conflicts and even exclusive affirmations and denials under an overarching tendency towards multi-sided development of the spiritual, ethical, intellectual, aesthetic, vital and physical parts of the being and some kind of synthesis.²²

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NOTES

¹ G. C. Pande, "Culture and Cultures," in *Science, Philosophy and Culture*, Part I, ed. D.P. Chattopadhyaya and Ravinder Kumar, (New Delhi: PHISPC in association with ICPR, 1996), p. 153.

² Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), p. 390.

³ Michel Foucault, "Space, Knowledge, and Power," in Paul Rainbow (ed.) *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), p. 249.

⁴ Herbert Marcuse, "Philosophy and Critical Theory," in *Negations* (Boston, 1968), pp. 135, 147.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ R. Sundara Rajan, *Beyond the Crisis of European Sciences* (Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1998), p. 203.

⁷ Ibid., p. 21.

⁸ Ibid., p. 17.

⁹ D.P. Chattopadhyaya "On the Nature of Interconnection between Science, Technology, Philosophy and Culture" in *Science, Philosophy and Culture*, Part I, ed. D.P. Chattopadhyaya and Ravinder Kumar (New Delhi: PHISPC in association with ICPR, 1996), p. 35.

¹⁰ D.P. Chattopadhyaya, *Societies and Cultures* (Bombay, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1973), p. x.

¹¹ D.P. Chattopadhyaya, "Rationality, Culture and Values," *Journal of Indian Council of Philosophical Research*, Vol. VIII.

¹² S.S. Barlingay, *Beliefs, Reasons and Reflections* (Pune: Indian Philosophical Quarterly Publications, 1983). According to Barlingay, the structure and life-world are known as (i) cosmocentric and (ii) anthropocentric standpoints respectively. One presupposes the other and hence there is no tension between them. The relation here is not between the social and natural but between two aspects of the social itself, and hence there is no conflict, says Barlingay.

¹³ Mircea Eliade, *Images and Symbols* (London: Haveill, 1961), p. 12.

¹⁴ D.P. Chattopadhyaya, "Itihosa, History and Historiography of Civilization," *Journal of Indian Council of Philosophical Research*, Special issue, 1996, p. 12.

¹⁵ Suresh Chandra, "Religion and History: Gandhi-Bankim Controversy on Bhagavad-Gita," in *Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences*, Vol.VII, No,1, 2000, p. 29.

¹⁶ D.P. Chattopadhyaya, "Reflections on Papers" in D.P. Chattopadhyaya, Lester Embree & J.N. Mohanty (eds.) *Phenomenology and Indian Philosophy* (New Delhi: Indian Council of Philosophical Research, 1992), p. 364.

¹⁷ Margaret Chatterjee, "Towards a Hermeneutic of Centrality in Indian Art," in *Phenomenology and Indian Philosophy*, op. cit., p. 337.

¹⁸ Husserl, *Ideas towards a Pure Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy*, tr. F. Kersten (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1983), pp.51-52.

¹⁹ R. Sundara Rajan, *Innovative Competence and Social Change* (Pune, Indian Quarterly Publications, University of Pune, 1986).

²⁰ Husserl, *Ideas*, pp. 51-52.

²¹ G.C. Pande, p. 156.

²² Kireet Joshi, "Significance of the Veda in Indian Religion and Spirituality," in *Science, Philosophy and Culture*, part I, ed. D.P. Chattopadhyaya and Ravinder Kumar, (New Delhi: PHISPC in association with ICPR, 1996), p. 175.

CHAPTER XXVI

WHY DO WE NOT DIRECT ATTENTION TO 'BUDDHATA' IN MODERN TIMES?

XU DONGLAI

Buddhata is an important conception in Buddhist study. Researchers in different ages and areas have been interested in it. Whenever they pay attention to it, they find new meanings in it, which can have an important influence on one's epoch. After we review the history of the development of the word *buddhata*, we can draw such a conclusion. In other words, we may say that if we show more concern with *buddhata* in different times, we can do something for the benefit of the society in which we live. But now, in modern China, we find that people pay no regard to the *buddhata*; this disregard brings many problems to modern China in its mentality, and produces chaos in social life. The goal of this paper is to deal with this problem. After a review of the relevant phenomena in contemporary China, I will undertake an explanation of it.

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF "BUDDHATA"?

Buddhata is a Sanskrit word; there is an equivalent word, *Buddhatva*, which means "the nature of Buddha" or "the virtue of Buddha". In its most common sense, "*buddhata*" refers to the possibility of being Buddha. Buddha has perfect virtue, he/it is the destination of every Buddhist believer. But in Hinayana Buddhism, most believers think that Buddha is a holy being – those who live in the mundane world cannot become him, no matter how hard they cultivate themselves according to religious doctrine. So, in Hinayana Buddhism, *buddhata* is the holy one's virtue, and we cannot achieve this. It reflects a privilege that only one who lives in the supramundane could achieve. *Buddhata* is an object for people living in the mundane world to respect and admire, but not to practice. In this Hinayana doctrine on *Buddhata*, we find that people are not equal; Buddha could have privileges, but the common people not. In a way, the Hinayana theory about *buddhata* could explain the reasons for an unequal society.

Mahayana is developed from Hinayana. It has much more influence in the world. One reason for this is the Mahayana theory of *buddhata*. Unlike Hinayana, discussed above, Mahayana Buddhism expresses the desire of most people, that human beings in the world are all equal. It says that every one could have the same *buddhata*, and all could be Buddha if they cultivate themselves as hard as the doctrines required. The general meaning of *buddhata* was analysed more particularly after it spread to the Chinese mainland. When Buddhism moved to China, Taoist discourse was

flourishing. Mixed with Buddhist theories, traditional Chinese thought about Xuanxue (玄学) had a new life. Based on the two sects' thought, there developed a new kind of Buddhism – Chinese Buddhism. The outstanding character of Chinese Buddhism is that it is closely connected with political affairs. Compared with Indian Buddhism, Chinese Buddhism is unique. There have been many discourses on the meaning of *buddhata*.

According to Chi-tsang (吉藏, 549-623), in his time in China there were already 11 different schools debating about the meaning of *Buddhata*. Each had its own definition of the word *Buddhata*. The main point they were concerned with was the exact meaning of *Buddhata*. Some regarded it as the whole being; some regarded it as the heart (心), and the others thought it was the reason to be Buddha.

According to Lai Yonghai (赖永海, 1949-), a contemporary scholar specializing in Buddhism and a professor at Nanjin University, there are two different viewpoints on *Buddhata*. One is represented by the sects of Tiantai, Huayan (华严) and Chan (禅). They all use *Zhenchangxin* (真常心) to explain the *buddhata*. The other is the Faxiang sect (法相宗), which explains *Buddhata* by *anasravah bija* (无漏种子). There are important differences between the two explanations, which led to severe debates in the history of Chinese Buddhism. It dominated discourse in the 1940s, between two famous scholars, Lvcheng (吕澂, 1896-1989) and Xiong shili (熊十力, 1885-1968).

The Debates between Lvcheng and Xiong Shili in the 1940s

The debates between the two were influenced by other matters, which were not concerned with academic problems. The focus, however, was the nature of *Buddhata* Xiong's opinion based on the traditional attitude of the nature of *Buddhata* in Chinese Buddhism. In Chinese Buddhism, according to the book "Awakening of Faith" (大乘起信论), which is looked upon as the main sutra of Tiantai, Huayan, and Chan, the nature of *Buddhata* is "Jue" (觉, awakening). It takes the nature of *Buddhata* as "Zhenxin" (真心, mind-heart), and that the mind-heart is the origin of everything in the world. It starts in a situation of awakeness, is fulfilled with wisdom, and can be realized by itself. Everyone has such *Zhenxin*. When one lives in a *prthag-jana* (凡夫) state, the *Buddhata*'s awakeness is beclouded by *klesa* (烦恼). As soon as ignorance (*klesa*) has been eliminated, the *Buddhata* will obtain its original nature. Therefore, the way we get Buddhahood resembles one who has gone astray for a long time, and then found the way back to his own home.

Lu's opinion represents the attitude of the Faxiang sect, whose theories were mainly inherited from the Indian tradition. He sees the nature of *Buddhata* as "Ji" (寂, silence). In his opinion, *Buddhata* is not combined with *klesa* (unlike *Jue*, which is always combined with *klesa*); *klesa*'s effect

on it is accidental. To us, achieving Buddhahood is not like a person who has been astray finding his way home, but rather, it is like someone finding a new way, what he *should* be. The action required to achieve Buddhahood is creativeness.

By now, we can see that the difference between the two is obvious: One is to get back to the original way that he missed because of *klesa*; the other is to find a new way to go. Some other results, which are important to mundane society, can be derived from this difference. I think this is the meaning of Buddhism for human beings, and will give the greatest benefit to society. So, this paper deals mainly with the results derived from their difference, for it has far-reaching effects on modern society, especially in contemporary China.

The two different attitudes about *Buddhata* lead to different results. If we think the *Buddhata* is awakening, what we should do is to erase the ignorance – *klesa*'s brother – which is combined with it always. In that condition, the way we get to Buddha is to take our own feelings into account. In that way, we act according to what we remember or feel not clearly, and we cannot pay more regard to the environment we live in. This cuts us off from mundane society. That is the precise reason why Buddhism has been blamed in modern times. For many people think Buddhism does not care about mundane affairs – what its believers want to do is to leave for a remote place to train their own mind-heart and to find the way back to the pure *Buddhata*.

On the contrary, if we regard the *Buddhata* as silence, which was not always mixed with ignorance (*klesa*), what we should do is to take more action to practice, for we cannot find any subtle 'feed lines' from an original mind-heart. So, more action brings us more knowledge, and gives more wisdom to us. To those persons, one could get Buddha only when one takes an action connected with living society. It gives believers creative energy to make themselves adapt to society. It gives one dynamic energy to move forward, make great progress, and in some way, create a new harmonious public world. To me, the latter attitude is positive, while the theory of 'original nature' is negative.

WHY DO WE NOT PAY ATTENTION TO BUDDHATA IN MODERN TIMES?

Buddhism is a kind of religion – thus it can have a deep effect on social life. Many countries have recognized its functions, and use it to pacify the different competing groups in social life. In China, the government has a policy on religious belief, which insists on equality – we have the same right to choose or not to choose religion. The policy on Buddhism in our country has taken a tortuous way during the last fifty years. Now, we are permitted to have a broad mind and to accept different religions. But the fact is obvious that Buddhism does not have much social influence in modern China. I think it is a result of ignoring the doctrine of

Buddhata. For example, the latest debate about Buddhist theory between Lu and Xiong took place in the 1940s. The result of that stormy argument is clear: the character of *Buddhata* is “ji” (寂), not “jue” (觉), what we should train on, moreover, is to act so as to achieve positive effects in our society, and not to train to pay more attention to the mind-heart itself. But the reality of these years tells us that in general in China Buddhists have taken a wrong way. So, I think that today, in China, we have not paid enough regard to *Buddhata*. There are several explanations of why we have not done so:

The first is a political reason. For a long time after the foundation of the People’s Republic of China, the government regarded religion as a superstition, and it was forbidden. During the “Cultural Revolution” in the 1960s, many temples were destroyed, many Bhikkus and Bhikkunis were forced to give up their religious faith, leave the temple they lived in, and find another way to live, e.g., get married or join another social group, and stop studying Buddhist doctrines. For example, Lu Cheng, though he died in 1989, did not write any papers on Buddhism after the 1960s. And there were no academic specialists in Buddhism at any university or institute before the 1980s on the mainland. For some time, few persons held Buddhism as their religion faith, and so the creative spirit of Buddhism was abandoned. Nowadays, though we have a broader view of religion, we have not researched or taken seriously the problematic of *Buddhata*. For now we have freedom to believe, but we still have not addressed the crucial issue of the meaning of *Buddhata*.

Second, besides Buddhist values, there are many other values in modern China. Other religions, like the Cross [Catholicism] and the Crescent [Islam], and many emergent religions like Protestantism, etc., flourish in the mainland. They attract many people’s interest, and so they do not pay attention to *Buddhata*. Believers think that if they openly practice Buddhism, they will not have the ‘good life’ in China. They think it is safer to believe in a new religion than to believe in Buddhism. After the new policy called “Reform and Opening up,” the younger generation thinks it more fashionable to believe in ‘newer’ religions like the “Cross” and the “Crescent.”

Another problem is that today people pay more attention to material things. With the rapid development in the economy and globalization, economic interest plays a greater role in social life, and people do not have time and energy for *Buddhata*.

Neglecting *Buddhata* has brought about a great social crisis. Nowadays, the government has stressed the building of a moral foundation for young people. The government is increasingly aware of the moral crisis in modern China. The government is very concerned, and all Chinese people should take note of the problem. It is my position that only the doctrine of *Buddhata* can solve China’s contemporary mental malaise.

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CHAPTER XXVII

IDEALS, TRADITIONAL VALUES, AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

TRAN VAN DOAN

PROGRESS AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

Progress, in its etymological sense of “*progrēdi*,” means “a step forward.”¹ The question now is: Can a simple step forward make progress? Surely not! One may make many steps forward but, if they go nowhere, then they are either futile or lead to the reverse, namely regress. Therefore, the question is “forward to what?”; this may explain what we mean by progress or regress. This question points to the very essence of progress: progress means a step forward closer to a certain goal. It is, then, the goal that determines progress. This leads us to the idea that our examination of social progress should centre on the goal (and its nature) set by our society, to see whether this goal is the real factor determining progress. We know that a step forward to a goal of a negative character, like destruction, sickness, death, and the like, can hardly be hailed as progress. Such a step would be despised and condemned – in a mild case, as “regress” or “decadence,” and in a serious case, as “crime.”

In this context, progress made in technology could not be seen as genuine progress if it leads to human self-termination, even if it would indisputedly involve an invention or a discovery. Highly developed techniques of mass-murder or terror would not be “progress,” but rather a mocking “technical breakthrough.” This plays an essential role in social regress, and, doubtless, contributes nothing to progress. Similarly, the proclamation of the success of terror as “progress” is a caricature of bad taste. Such a kind of “progress” does not mean social progress, but social regress, since it brings humankind closer to self-annihilation. We know that Nazi scientists and scientists working for the military industrial complex, the inventors of weapons of mass-destruction (gas chamber or rockets, etc.), and the “fathers” of mass-destroying bombs did not contribute anything to social progress, since their goal was, in contrast, the destruction of a certain society, a certain race. Despite their claim of being the “defenders of peace by means of violence,” they have indirectly participated in the hideous unpardonable extinction of million of innocents. How can they clean their hands tainted with the blood of their victims? Their claimed progress, if there is any, then is “a step forward” to the destruction of humanity. It would be absurd to claim that the estimated 50 million human beings (including German civilians, Jews, Gypsies, Poles, homosexuals, and others) have, through their own deaths, “certified” the scientific “progress”

of Nazi scientists. So, what we have to accept is, the “progress” made in the field of technology is not “progress” in the strict sense, but rather a breakthrough, and in the field of technology only. Scientists contribute nothing to social progress, if the purpose of their scientific inventions (or discoveries) is either fully alien or hostile to human life. In contrast, only inventions (or techniques or new ideas) serving mankind, warranting world peace, reducing human suffering, prolonging human life, and bettering society could be hailed as a real contribution to social progress.

From the above consideration, progress is understood as both a step forward, in the sense of being far away from being menaced by destruction, and a step forward closer to the noble goals of developing human life and human happiness. Progress makes sense only if it satisfies these double functions. Now the point we want to argue further is that a step forward closer to noble goals is rather a step backward, since these noble goals are not the products of our present, or the prophecy of future society. They are “immanently” in and inseparable from human life. They are certainly not identified with our ordinary goals of being better, smarter, richer, happier, and the like.

As a step backward, the constant striving forward towards noble goals – truth (*veritas*), goodness (*bonitas*), beauty (*pulchritudo*) and holiness (*sanctitas*)² – would be the real factors deciding progress, since the first aspect of progress, i.e., “going away from” or a step forward far from the evil (*malum*), is actually a necessary condition to progress. And, interestingly, precisely this factor was and still is the dynamic force behind the human construction of different sets (or systems) of values. Are not Asian values (Chinese, Indian, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese, Indonesian, Thai, Filipino, Malaysian, etc.) the products of this permanent construction of means and purposes for these ultimate ends (noble ideals)? Are not Western values based on them? Are not African values and the human values in general judged by the yardstick of the truth, the good, the beauty and the holy?

In this context, my paper argues that social progress is determined by noble goals (truth, goodness, beauty, holiness) which are ardently desired, zealously searched for by humanity, and constantly applied to our society.³ That means that social progress is made first through the human search for (i.e., human invention of) these noble ideals, and then by the human continuous effort to realize them in a concrete form, to make them flourish, and to cultivate them. A society makes real progress only when it is trying to take “a step forward”, closer to the ideals of truth, goodness, beauty, and holiness, i.e. when it attempts to transform itself, fitting their forms, i.e. various sets of values. As forms, which are already tested and accepted by a certain society, traditional values are conceived of, first, as the ideals of this society, or of a certain nation, or more universally, of humanity. Then, after a long history of being tested by their life-worlds, these ideals took the forms of values, which are “passed on” (*traditio*) to the next generation. As such, traditional values do not exist a priori (since they

are not innate), but are worked out, tested, used and reused by generations of people. In a word, as both the witness and the soul of history, traditional values are the real testaments of social progress. We argue further that, since traditional values represent the ideals of a certain society, and since we are always oriented towards the ideals, then a step closer to traditional values also means social progress. Precisely in this context we may say that progress means both “a step forward” and “a step backward.”

THE DIALECTIC OF PROGRESS: A STEP FORWARD AND A STEP BACKWARD

Progress, as we have mentioned, is often characterized in spatial terms by its “advance”, or in ordinary language, “a step forward.” “Forward” means “going farther” than the *hic*, i.e., the present position. “Forward” means also “later” in terms of temporality: going further than the *nunc*, i.e., the present time (moment). “Looking forward” bears at the same time a temporal and spatial dimension. But, as we will see, the “temporal forward,” often understood as the future, does not clearly point to progress, because our existence is limited by our own insurmountable end. To go farther than the present (the *hic*) means also to approach our own end, i.e., death. Hegel’s analysis of human *Dasein*, like Heidegger’s analysis of temporality (*Temporalitaet*), points to the tragic destiny of human existence: existence is limited by death. There is nothing more paradoxical and tragic than the reality of human existence: it is defined by non-existence.⁴ Man is born in order to die. This a truth which no one denies but nobody would happily accept. Such a bleak future is, of course, not the goal that human beings are seeking. Our burning desire for a bright future, i.e., an unlimited future, and our “march forward” toward it, means also taking the effort to prolong our end. Progress in biological sciences would be measured by the human effort to prolong our own end. Therefore, progress now means a step forward closer to longevity – the ideal sought by all of us; it is a cardinal virtue for Chinese – i.e., closer to the unlimited, the absolute, i.e., an *aeternitas*, or, in a religious expression, to a “never ending now time” (*infinitus hic et nunc*).⁵ Hegel’s attempt to overcome this fateful end with his search for the absolute, the infinite (i.e., the absolute) *Geist* must therefore be understood as a progressive approach.⁶

Similar to the dialectic of life, a step forward closer to the good means also a step farther from the evil, a step closer to beauty a step farther from the ugly, and a step closer to the holy a step farther from the unholy. As we will argue in the next section, the search for noble ideals of truth (*veritas*), goodness (*bonitas*), beauty (*pulchritudo*) and holiness (*sanctitas*) has always been the most urgent task. It takes a double and dialectical course, the first is the *via negativa*, while the second is the *via positiva*. The first demands that we take a step far from evil, untruth, the ugly and the unholy, while the second is a step closer to truth, beauty, the good and the holy. Consequently, the human construction of values must be guided by

these two approaches. However, at bottom, they must be based on the second ones, namely on the ideals of truth, goodness, beauty and holiness. In this sense, it is clear that noble ideals serve both as our ultimate goals and as the metaphysical foundation of all values.

The Paradox of Progress as a Step Forward

There is no doubt that the future is always prior to and posterior from the present moment. In other words, our future existence comes later than our present existence; tomorrow comes after today, and so on. However, there is no warrant that what comes later will be closer to our ideals, and consequently, would make progress. Our future existence makes “progress” only in comparison with the achievement of our present existence, just as our claimed progress is verified by the present success in comparison with that of the past. That means that it is the “what”, and not the temporal dimension, that counts here. Hence, the future, understood as a “temporal forward”, would lose its sense if it is restricted in the measure of time.

Let us begin with the ordinary understanding of progress as “a step forward,” and a step forward as the future. If progress is defined by its temporal advance, then this “logic of advance” determines progress. Such a logic forces us to accept the premise of “no advance, no progress.” It is usual to find the belief that human history is striving to a certain future. Such a tacit understanding of progress leads us to the conclusion that the future must be the objective of human seeking. It is the human ultimate end.

Of course, such a conclusion is fully consistent with the “logic of advance”. The point we have mentioned above is that it is not the temporal dimension but the content of our existence – i.e. the “what” – that counts; and consequently, our question is whether the “logic of advance” would be appropriate for any understanding of progress at all. As we see, progress or regress is measured by the different quality or quantity between the content of the present moment and that of the future. The difference of quality or quantity of the content would be the sole criterion determining progress or regress. And this is tacitly accepted by mankind as reflected in the motto of ‘*altius, fortius et longius*’ of the Olympic games: the better or the best are those who jump higher, who are stronger, and go longer. That is, those who achieve better results in terms of quantity and quality represent progress.

In this sense, a “logic of advance” based on a temporal dimension would yield no meaning, since the future is a vague concept, lacks any concrete content, and, as such, is “unreal” even if it is “true” in theory. The future can at best point to an unknown, not yet happening event, not yet existing life and not yet coming world. This means that the content of the future is void so long as we do not reach it. As a consequence, one encounters a very dubious and paradoxical reality, best expressed by Samuel Beckett in his *Waiting for Godot*: the future life is certainly coming (true in the “logic of advance”), but it never exists for us. We are uncertain

of our future life despite its unquestionable reality. Sticking to the “logic of advance”, protagonists of the view of progress as an advance toward the future brush aside this paradox. And to convince themselves of its “truth”, they must “imagine” and “design” a future which they force themselves to believe in. To them, this future must advance farther than the present in terms of quantity and quality. Charles Darwin is certainly not the sole defender of this view, though he is unquestionably the best one.

Now, the question is whether what they “regard” as “real” and “true” is a product of our imagination and our, perhaps, arbitrary design. If the future does not yet exist, and if the real is what already exists, then such an imagination remains a pure product of the phantasma. Could we judge progress or regress by comparing the existing to the non-existing? That means, by taking the future as the goal of progress, and by conceiving of “a step forward” closer to the future as a sign of progress, one is obliged to accept non-existence as our ultimate goal. As such, we are either facing the bleak prospect of “abyss” (Heidegger), “nihilism” (Nietzsche), or “absurdity” (Sartre), or we must embrace a certain utopia (a sort of a terrestrial paradise, or the total triumph of the proletariat) as the ultimate goal of history.⁷ The fact is that we can never arrive at it, simply because the future is unreal (even if it is true), and its content is void. The future is a true idea, but a void concept. This dilemma forces us to renounce the thesis of progress in terms of the “logic of advance”: such progress seems to be a self-portrait of the madman of Nietzsche, or of expressionists like Renoir and Van Gogh who painted in a state of hopelessness.

This consideration forces us to go a step further in arguing that it is not the logic of temporal advance, i.e., not the future, but the ideals and our effort to realize them that decide progress or regress. By rejecting the thesis of temporal advance as progress, and by arguing that the real content, i.e., the “what” of the present cannot be measured or compared by the yardstick of (the contents of) the future, we conjecture that a step forward closer to the ideal is the real sign of progress. This means that not just any step forward means progress, but only “a step forward” closer to a certain goal of ideal character. In the case of evolution and transformation, one may apply the same argument; it is not evolution *in se* that is the sign of progress, but an evolution to a certain higher (in quality), better goal. A blind evolution, like a kind of natural law, can hardly be praised as progress.

Progress as a Step towards Ideal Goals

This thesis demands further investigation into human goals, as well as into the qualitative differences among human goals. We will argue further that, although progress can be judged by the degree of success, i.e., by the closeness to the goal, social progress is possible only if the goal set by us is noble in character. Let us return to the Darwinian view. If the goal of the human race is simply a continuous self-transformation, and if the course of self-transformation is natural, then any claim of progress seems to

be meaningless. We know that such a goal is implanted in all living beings and is not set by us because we have nothing to do with it. Or we might better say that we are entirely impotent in dealing with it. Is the fact that a baby is born, grows up, gets old, and finally dies, human progress? By no generous standard can one take this natural fact as an example of progress. Growing old reflects a course determined by natural law, but growing old is not our goal, just as death is certainly not our goal, even if it is fully natural, marking the end of life. Hence, one can say that simple natural transformation or evolution is not the goal of human life, and much less of human society. Consequently, if the future is marked (or better, predicted) by what we are transforming to, then such a future is rather a repetition of time, and our life is only a repetition of the same thought in different forms.

More tragically, would we be willing to accept death as a sign of “progress”? One may say, we are conscious of our fate, but we object to the idea of death as the human ultimate goal. Death is the concluding moment of life, but it is not our goal. Similarly, the future is not our goal, even if we are passively moving toward the future. One would argue against us by noting the Darwinian logic of evolution (and transformation) and Freud’s analysis of unconsciousness. Natural instinct is always oriented to a certain goal, either conscious or unconscious. In the case of suffering and dying, then, one may say, ironically, that any step closer to them is natural, and as such they can be legitimately considered as a human “goal.” The goal conceived by the defender of this view is certainly not different from the goal implicit in nature. Nature is blind, but as a bat in the darkness. If so, any step forward to this goal can be regarded as “progress.”

Of course, such an argument is absurd. Closer to the death means not progress but regress. This is so simply because, even if death is deliberately chosen as the goal by someone, this goal is certainly not ideal. Suicide reveals only the state of hopelessness and not the reverse, i.e., hope. Hope is not a symptom of illness but the expression of a better life, better work, better chances, etc. In other words, hope reflects ideals. By ideals, one understands what is the best, perfect – or in milder terms, fewer mistakes, a lighter burden, etc. Our normal understanding about death and our categorical objection to death is a case in point, showing that it is certainly far from ideal. In contrast, it is generally identified as the evil of evils. Indeed, it is the worst! Since it is evil, we would therefore call progress a certain recovery from illness, a longer distance from death, or a farther distance from the region where death reigns. We make progress in our work of keeping death from coming, and of preventing diseases from attacking us. Biologists make progress in discovering bacteria and viruses – not simply for the sake of pure understanding or curiosity, but rather for practical purposes: to slow down death, to go a step forward from the tragic “future.” Similarly, politicians make certain progress in reducing the death rate of their people, or in keeping their country from being involved in affairs where death presents (e.g., war). In a word, death, suffering, and the like are not human goals because they oppose the ideals.

If progress is understood as a step closer to our ideals and to a certain future, then the question here is, is the ideal set by us in the future, or is it already immanent in our society, or is it in our own existence? I would opt for the second view, arguing that our noble goals neither exist *a priori* nor lie in the future. They are immanent in our existence and our society. 'Immanent' here is understood in the sense that they were constructed by human beings during a long process, and remained inseparable from our own existence, even if we were unconscious of them. They were constructed not to satisfy the present moment, but for a lasting history, i.e., for a long lasting existence. As such, our ideals are not to be found only in the distant future, but also in the past and in the present. Our future life-world means not a life after the present moment, but an encompassing and multi-dimensional life. Consequently, searching for ideals need not look to the future, but perhaps is to be found in our own life-world.

German idealists like G.W.F. Hegel and Friedrich Wilhelm Schelling discovered this truth long ago. Nostalgic for the Homeric spirit and the Renaissance vitality, they took *Fortschritt* (literally, a step forward) as the logic of the world (and nature). To them, *Fortschritt* carries a double function: striving forward and receding back to the most substantial values. History in their eyes must obey the law of progress, i.e. has to walk towards the end required by reason. As such, *Fortschritt* here does not mean a step forward to the future in the Darwinian sense, but a step forward-and-backward, in the sense of a step closer to the "end," i.e. the absolute, i.e. human ultimate goal. Actually, Hegel still conceived of the absolute as what Homer dreamed, as what Plato sought, and as what the protagonists of the Renaissance attempted to revive: ultimate harmony as the goal (the end) of history. This ultimate end is immanent in history, but it is not placed at the end of history, i.e. in a future, or in the final day of judgement. It poses itself as the beginning and the end. To use messianic language, it is the alpha and the omega of human destiny. Walter Benjamin, a writer famous for his kabbalistic melancholy and mysticism, has blended messianic flavour with his repugnant surrendering to the (Heideggerian) "abyss." He "foresaw" the ultimate end of history immanent in our now-time (*Jetztzeit*).⁸ He thus took the stand against an optimistic Marx who, still clinging to a certain kind of messianism, predicted its coming in the form of a proletariat society.

Understood in this sense, progress reveals the right course of history. Whenever history approaches the final end, then it has made a certain progress. And in this logic, history is conceived of by Hegel as history only due to its quality of progress, and progress can be judged only in its *Fortschritt* towards the ultimate goal of history. The *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807) wants to demonstrate such a logic. In this logic, world history is a dialectical accumulation of periods (*Zeitgeist*) and a dialectical synthesis of the diversity of people's minds and habits (*Volksgeist*) in accordance with the logic of reason, the essence of which is progress. In other words, if spirit is the universal form of history, and if reason is its law

that forces all phenomena to orient or to go toward this universal form, then a step further, close to this universal is called *Fortschritt*, i.e., progress.⁹

Our concern is not with Hegel's identification of spirit with reason itself, but rather with his understanding of progress as its "characteristic." We may have here two quite contradictory views: the one *contra* and the other *pro* Hegel. The *contra* argument goes to the direct consequence of Hegel's logic: if progress is the characteristic of reason and if reason is absolute then progress means a step close to the absolute. However, if the absolute is unreachable, or simply a void concept (as embraced by nihilists and Marxists), then progress means ironically (or paradoxically) a step either to nowhere or to nihilism, i.e., self-destruction (as seen in the prediction of Marx about the doomsday of capitalism). In this logic, progress remains either an impracticable utopia or a dangerous illusion. Not only the pessimist existentialists, like Albert Camus and Jean-Paul Sartre, but also post-modernists would heartily welcome this Nietzschean prophecy; not only writers like Samuel Beckett and Franz Kafka but also some historians would enthusiastically embrace it as the unavoidable consequence of Hegelian logic in the reverse. Oswald Spengler was certainly neither the first nor the last historian,¹⁰ just as David Bell and Francis Fukuyama were surely not single voices in the "desert." These voices are repeated in a polyphonic post-modern chorus loudly sung by people like Derrida and Lyotard.¹¹ The second view *pro* Hegel begins where Hegel left off: progress means a step closer to the absolute, but absolute here reflects rather an ideal which is reachable only in its temporality and historicity. That means, the ideal is a concept that appears in history and makes history. Since history is proceeding to the absolute, the ideal reveals a part of the absolute indeed. Progress in this sense means the process of realization of the ideal in history, as Karl Löwith describes: "As a spirit which continuously surrenders and recollects, it is *per se* historical, even though the dialectic of becoming does not proceed in a straight line toward infinity, but rather goes in a circle, so that the end is the consummation of the beginning."¹²

IDEALS AND TRADITIONAL VALUES

So far, we have pointed out the close relationship between social progress and noble goals, i.e., human ideals. This part goes a step further to identify human noble goals with human values, and to show that traditional values were constructed so as to attain noble human goals.

As we have argued above, progress means "a step forward," far from destructive force, and a "step forward" closer to noble goals, i.e., our ideals. Actually, these two steps are the two faces of the same coin. They bear the imprint of the same essence. To live longer means to keep distance from death, just as to live better means to reduce misery, and so on. In this sense, to be closer to the ideal is tantamount to being far from the undesired reality. Hence, one may adopt two different tactics for the same goal. The

first approach is to change unfavourable conditions, to dismiss the obstacles, or to reduce the factors which may hinder, endanger or destroy our lives; while the second would be positive, to discover and take the means which help us to attain these noble goals. Progress could be seen from these two aspects, or judged by the success of these two different approaches. Now, keeping us far from the factors (conditions, milieu) which may endanger us, and reaching to the ideals which benefit us, make sense only if one knows exactly what these ideals are. In a word, noble ideals are what one conceives of as the best goals serving as principle guiding our lives, and at the same time, on which one constructs methods to attain them.¹³ In the manner of Giambattista Vico who, in his now classic *La scienza nuova*, rightly elevates sex (marriage), death (the funeral) and religion to the rank of the “trinity” of the social sciences,¹⁴ we can also categorically claim that truth, goodness, beauty and holiness have been, still are and will always be the most noble goals human beings are seeking. They become the “quattronity” of human life.

These most noble and highest ideals do not lie in the future; they are not a product of the past either. More importantly, they are not the products of a particular people, or a particular nation. They are neither single-handedly constructed nor invented by a genius, nor are they randomly or arbitrarily imposed by someone on us. Great philosophers did not invent them, but attempted to defend them, and to work out various methods in order to attain them. So, Socrates did not invent truth, just as Plato did not discover beauty. Similarly, Buddha did not create goodness, and certainly Confucius had not worked out the ideal world based on moral tenets. We know that the reason for Socrates’ attack on the Sophists is certainly not a vulgar vanity showing his superiority over them, but his defence of (the ideal of) truth. He considered truth as a noble goal not because it might produce the best effect, but simply because of its eternal and universal rightness. Simply speaking, truth is identified with justice. Kant has brilliantly defended Socrates’ position when he repeatedly argued for its eternal rightness: even if all men lie, that does not change eternal truth, and consequently, the command of “you should not lie” must be always valid.¹⁵ To Socrates, Kant and philosophers like them, truth is the most desired goal. It is the ideal and remains ideal even if none can attain it.

Similarly, Aristotle and almost all great philosophers have found in goodness (happiness) the ideal. Various moral systems have been based on goodness, and still are. Of course, all of them are fully aware of the fact that there is no clear-cut definition of happiness, just as there is hardly a complete set, or a perfect system of truth, holiness and beauty. This seeming paradox is found in the essence of human beings: their ideals remain human and surpass human limits at the same time. That means that, even if ideals are constructed by human beings, they transcend the limits of human experience. Here is what we mean by saying that ideals are constructed by generations of human beings, but lie immanently and transcendently in us.

More interestingly, they existed already in the future as the goals we were and are striving for.

Since the purpose of this paper is to prove the dialectical relation between progress and traditional values, I will not go into details on the process of construction of ideals, and will be content to say that, without these noble ideals, our system of values would not be stable, and since these ideals are internal, the values based on them are always valid. As such, one may find in traditional values ones based on these ideals. They are eternally valid. Here is the reason and the value of the present inquiry into traditional values.

Before moving to the next section, discussing the relationship between progress, ideals and traditional values, I would reiterate our thesis: namely, progress is achieved only when we approach the noble purposes – truth, goodness, beauty and holiness. These ideals serve as both the foundation and the goal of our activities. These ideals serve also as the conditions and criteria of any system of values – if values are understood as those which satisfy humanity’s most basic needs and most intimate aspirations; as those which fulfill our expected or planned future; and in a word, as those which give life, fulfill our lives and make our lives flourish.

CONCLUSION: PROGRESS AS A STEP FORWARD TO IDEALS AND BACKWARD TO TRADITIONAL VALUES

Traditional values, as we understand, may consist of two sets of values, one based on the ideals, and the other on temporal needs and deeds. In the first set of values based on ideals, one finds similar characteristics between ideals and traditional values: they all are essential (necessary) and long lasting (universal). They serve as the foundation of all values. Without them, the idea of values would become vague and confused. Hence, they are necessary. Since these ideals were not a product fabricated by a certain age, they are eternal, and since they were certainly neither a property of the Greeks nor a possession of the Chinese or of the Hindus, they must be the common property of human beings. Furthermore, since they are neither the products of a *creatio ex nihilo* nor that of pure experiences, they must be transcendently known (or recognized) by us in the course of life. Based on the ideals, and sharing the same essences, the first set of traditional values is not the product of a certain period, a certain history or a certain group. And, to be sure, they are not the property of a certain genre or a certain culture as “cultural imperialists” would claim. To be more concrete, traditional values, say of the Chinese, like benevolence (*Jen*), fidelity (*Chung*), filial piety (*Hsiao*), rightness (*Yi*), etc., are based on the ideals of goodness and truthfulness (sincerity).¹⁶ Traditional values (virtues) like happiness, justice, etc., laid down by Aristotle, are no doubt founded on the ideals of goodness and truth, and perhaps, even on the ideals of beauty and holiness. Of course, we may recite a horde of values (virtues) which, by any means, we cannot deny as groundless.

The second set of values may be constructed to suit temporal tastes, to solve temporal needs, to satisfy sudden emerging desires, needs and so on.¹⁷ The values of democracy, autocracy, or monarchy in politics are, doubtless, not traditional values based on the ideals of truth or absolute goodness and rightness. They are nonetheless guided by some ideals of lesser values (in the sense that these values are not universal and necessary) like the ones of temporal and spatial urgency (stability, power and the like). Since they are of a rather temporal and regional character, Plato once rightfully argued that each of these lesser ideals would generate values only in certain conditions; they may endanger human life (or society) if they step over their own limit. Just as in Greek society, each society and each people would construct many sets of minor values depending on their temporal, spatial and racial ideals, and depending on their taste. The ideal beauty for black people would be, for example, a lady of black skin, while the reverse is true of white people. The ideal food for someone Chinese, in most case, is Chinese food, while it would not normally be the case of, say, an Indian or an African.

These ideals could be changed or transformed once their social conditions, knowledge about them, and other factors were diminished, expanded or deformed. In a globalized world, many of them, especially minor groups or races, are simply wiped out and replaced by others from stronger or bigger groups. The spread of (American) fast food chains and beverages in every corner of the globe, just as the triumph of Western luxurious goods in the world, is certainly not an isolated case. The slow and quiet death of many dialects of African tribes, just as the silent explosion of new (sometimes bad) taste among young people everywhere, are both eloquent and tragic examples and show that ideals of minor values cannot resist change. However, one cannot, and has no right to claim that it is the English (American) language which is the new absolute ideal language, that the American television network CNN is the absolute news channel, and so on. The fact that they are “globalized” does not prove their universal and necessary character, since they can never become our noble ideals. In contrast, we can make progress without CNN and fast food, just as we may acquire knowledge without the American language and universities. In some case, it could be the reverse that is true.¹⁸ To identify Coca Cola, McDonalds and Kentucky Fried Chicken with American culture displays not only a naïve and superficial understanding of Americans, it is a malicious insult to them.

Americans, just as Chinese, Japanese, and others, may have some kind of commercial culture, but that is not their essence. Their merit (values) is found in their strength, their strong will is nourished by their ideals. The essence of American culture must be found in their ideals (respect for human rights, equality among races, and belief in God) which Abraham Lincoln brilliantly represented and defended. Similarly, the essence of the cultures of the Chinese (and Vietnamese, Koreans, and Japanese) is the ideals of harmony, benevolence, righteousness, etc., while

that of the Thai would be peace and tranquillity. Of course, we can find similar essences in the culture of the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia. There is no doubt that all would contribute to real social progress if we first possessed these ideals. A strong sense of self-consciousness, a firm belief in our own faith, a self-confidence in our own values, etc., have always been, and still are the ones for excellence.¹⁹

As seen in our above analysis, traditional values belong to one of two set of values: one of *a priori* characteristics and the other of *a posteriori* characteristics. The first are constituted in our consciousness and become what we may call “good conscience” (*liang-chih* in Chinese), or “good will” (Kant), or “divine will,” while the latter are constructed by us in accordance with social and temporal conditions. They form what we may call “morals” (in the sense of customs), social values, national values, political values, and the like. It is important to make this distinction, since we have by no means to take all traditional values for granted, and put them in the same rank. When we insist on the essential relation between traditional values and progress, we have in mind the traditional values of noble ideals, and not those of lesser values, namely, those of the second set of values which are restricted by temporal and spatial as well as social conditions. Only the highest ideals would be at the same time the dynamic forces and the goals which attract us and force us to march forward, to search for the means to attain them. Precisely by these real factors social progress is understood as a step forward closer to the ideal; and precisely because of their transcendental characteristics social progress is truly understood as a step backward from them.

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NOTES

¹ Note that *progress* is different from *development*. By development, I understand a growth of a quantitative character, while progress is a step closer to perfection. In the Encyclical *Sollicitudo rei socialis*, sect. 4, John-Paul II makes clear that *sviluppo* (development, in Italian) surpasses a simple *crescita* (growth, in Italian). Actually, the term *sviluppo*, used by the Pope, bears the same meaning of progress that I am discussing.

² Aristotle himself had elaborated a great many ideals, like *eudemonia* (happiness, blessedness, prosperity), *logos* (‘kata ton orthon logon’, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1138b25), *phronesis*, *dike* (justice, 1155a), *episteme*, etc.

³ It is interesting to note that the empirical research on the structure of development (Jean Piaget) and moral development (Lawrence Kohlberg) both point to the fact that human development (progress) is dictated (or guided) by noble values. An inter-disciplinary research group of scholars in Taiwan (TARGTI Group) states the same fact – that the view of values among the

Taiwanese (Chinese) is oriented by the most basic values and supreme values. See Louis Gutheinz, ed., *Quality of Life in The Bioregion of Taiwan* (Taipei: Faculty of Theology, Fujen University, 1994).

⁴ Martin Heidegger, *Was ist Metaphysik ?* (Frankfurt a. M.: Klostermann, 1957); Jean-Paul Sartre, *L'Être et le Néant* (Paris: Gallimard, 1947).

⁵ The theme once explored by Plotinus, St. Augustine, Meister Eckhart and most recently by Walter Benjamin and Emmanuel Lévinas. See Emmanuel Lévinas, *Totalité et infini. Essai sur l'extériorité* (1961).

⁶ See the interpretation of Alexandre Kojève in his *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: Lectures on the Phenomenology of Spirit* (English translation, 1971). It is well-known that contemporary philosophers, the prophets of the earlier existentialism, like Jean-Paul Sartre, Jacques Derrida, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, have been heavily influenced by Kojève's reading.

⁷ The works of Daniel Bell, *The End of History* (New York, 1976), and Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free, 1992) may best depict the tragedy of an immanent "end of history."

⁸ Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of the German Tragic Drama* (tr John Osborne) (London: New Left Books, 1973). The concepts of *aura* and *Jetztzeit* were also developed by Benjamin in other works like *Illumination* (New York: Schocken Books, 1969) and *Charles Beaudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism* (London: New Left Books, 1973).

⁹ G.W.F. Hegel, *Phaenomenologie des Geistes* (1807). Karl Loewith summarises brilliantly Hegel's view of history as constant progress towards the absolute spirit as follows: "This pathway of the eternally present spirit through the previous nature of history is not a detour to be avoided, but the only practicable way to the consummation of knowledge. The absolute or spirit, not only has its external history, as a man has clothing, but is, in its deepest nature, as a movement of self-development, an entity which exists only by becoming." See Karl Loewith, *From Hegel to Nietzsche – The Revolution in Nineteenth-Century Thought* (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964), p. 32.

¹⁰ Oswald Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* (Hamburg, 1972).

¹¹ See Jean-Francois Lyotard, *La condition postmoderne – Un rapport du savoir* (Paris, 1978); English translation by G. Bennington and B. Massumi, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Minneapolis, 1984).

¹² Loewith, op. cit., p. 32.

¹³ Note that in the Homeric tradition, the ideals are understood almost as virtues. *Arete* in its most original sense means "excellence," "the best." *Areteai* are regarded as the virtues in the Homeric times (such as courage, physical strength, goodness, and the like). See Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), 2nd. ed., p. 141 ff. Similarly in the Confucian tradition, the ideal man is a *chun-dzu* (gentleman, noble man, moral man), i.e., the one who possesses virtues like benevolence, loyalty, filial piety, etc.

¹⁴ Giambattista Vico, *La Scienza nuova*. English tr.: *The New Sciences*, 332-333. In this work, Vico demands a new understanding of science grounded on the three most basic factors (forces), i.e. marriage, funeral and religious rites.

¹⁵ Actually, Kant in his *Grundlegung der Metaphysik der Moral* (1785) had conceived of the ideals as something of an *a priori* and absolute character. He conjectured that it is the good will, i.e., a will of unconditional and absolute good, the necessary condition of every case or form of goodness. It is in this context that Kant apportioned happiness, truth, etc. to the good will (which is tantamount to the *summum bonum* of the medieval philosophers).

¹⁶ See Tran Van Doan, “The Dialectic of Tradition and Modernity” in *Philosophical Review* (Also: Tran Van Doan, “What can be called Tradition?” in George F. McLean, ed. (Washington, DC: CRVP, 2002), and Tu Weiming, *Modern Spirit and Confucian Tradition* (Hsian-dai Ching-shen yu Ru-chia Chwan-tung) (Taipei: Linking, 1995).

¹⁷ Actually Aristotle had constructed his ethical principles in accordance with Greek tastes. His attempt to construct an ethics that can be demonstrated in the geometrical way is certainly motivated by the Greek aesthetic cultivation of harmony and proportionality. His conception of goodness in terms of *not* deficient, not bad, not excessive is clearly the result of the Greek view of beauty. We know, in the Homeric tradition of heroes, honour is a taste. And as such, it was declared to be an *arete* (virtue). Similarly, following Plato, even political ideals, in Aristotle’s view, must conform to these tastes. In books 7 and 8 of *Politeia*, his ideal state is neither too large nor too small, and the number of citizens must not be excessive. Only an ideal state can provide its citizens with a leisurely life, an enjoyable luxury. Thus, the main aim of the city is not “mere wealth,” but a pleasurable life: “importing her needs and exporting her surplus.” *Politeia*, 1325 b 33 – 1326 b 24.

¹⁸ The report of the *Hongkong Bureau of Education* in 1999 issued a warning to responsible educators and politicians about the deterioration of Hongkong students and residents on many subjects, especially in language and morals. It is stated that Hongkong students are “so good” in language; they speak English “like” Chinese and Chinese “like” English, that is, they are speaking the so-called “Chinglish,” a corrupted English mixed with bad Chinese.

¹⁹ The success of the first and second generations of Asians in the United States is a strong case in point to support this view. The most successful Asians (Nobel laureates, millionaires, etc.) in the US are those who master their own native (mother) languages and are fluent in English, fully conscious of their values, and nourished by their ideals. A recent study of the third generation of Asian immigrants (2000) has revealed a not very bright prospect: they are less successful, less motivated and lack moral values. Furthermore, they are unable to express their own thought in their mother tongue. Many of them feel “alienated” from their own American society.

CHAPTER XXVIII

CULTURAL IDENTITY AND CULTURAL TRADITION

WU XIAOJIANG

In recent years, “cultural identity, pluralism and globalization” and “cultural heritage and contemporary change”¹ have been the main themes of many an international academic research seminar held in Europe, Asia, and America by Professor George F. McLean, the General Secretary of the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy.² They are central problems for contemporary international academia, especially for those on the frontier of the contemporary philosophy of culture. Delving into these two problems has a special theoretical significance for several reasons. One is, in order to properly take the pulse of the developments of our age. Another is to respond to the problem posed by the clash of civilizations – along with the needed dialogue and coordination of civilizations in the contemporary world. It is also important for purposes of accurately estimating the cultural status and values of different nations. Further, it is helpful to both non-Western and Western nations for making appropriate choices between a modern and a post-modern path, each with its own characteristics. In addition, it can contribute to the design of joint responses to problems arising in globalization; and it can add impetus to the promotion of social progress.

This paper examines three facets of philosophical thinking, including “cultural identity and cultural comparison,” “multi-cultures and universal culture,” and “cultural tradition and cultural renewal.” It also offers opinions on the question of “cultural traditions and social progress”.

CULTURAL IDENTITY AND CULTURAL COMPARISON

The word “identity” became especially important in the 1960s in European and American academia. From the *Bibliography of Cultural Identity, Pluralism and Globalization* compiled by George F. McLean in 2000, we can see that there have been more than 60 monographs on “identity” published at the end of the 20th century.³ But it was Samuel Huntington, one of the West’s most eminent political scientists and international strategy specialists, who raised “cultural identity” to a new height, with the core problem of the clash of civilizations at the end of the Cold War. In the beginning of his bold and provocative book, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, he points out: “The central theme of this book is that culture and cultural identities”, “are shaping the patterns of cohesion, disintegration, and conflict in the post-Cold War

world.”⁴ From the theme of cultural identity, he provides detailed explanations, divided and classified in five different parts in the book. In 2000 I took part in an international seminar entitled “Cultural Identity, Pluralism and Globalization” sponsored by the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy in which the term “cultural identity” became a keyword in the study of contemporary international philosophy of culture.

Complicated Meanings of “Cultural Identity”

For most Chinese, the word “identity” is a concept with a complicated connotation and significance. In the Chinese language it can have three layers of interpretation: first, as “status”; second, as “individuality” or “characteristic”; and third, as “oneness”, “sameness”, or “consistency”. Here, “oneness” involves identification, authentication, confirmation and attribution; for example, out of some characteristics or status, it is possible to distinguish the properties someone has with that of a given race of human beings. Therefore, the definition of identity not only has the meaning of attribution, classification and commonness but also of specialty, differentiation, and individuality. As I understand this meaning, identity is comparison; a recognition of difference. Such being the case, the characteristics or status of a person or a certain group of human beings can only be discovered and known through comparison with “others” and finding out differences between oneself and “others”.

As regards cultural identity, the cultural characteristics or status of a given nation can be confirmed and known only by comparing it with that of another nation. Cultural identity is meant to illustrate the specialty or differentiation of a culture. Constructing and maintaining a nation’s cultural identity is equivalent to constructing and maintaining the nation’s uniqueness or independence. In the context of attribution and classification, cultural identity is meant to illustrate the intrinsic unity and commonality of a nation’s culture, and it embraces the meaning of maintaining the sense of belonging, and the sense of common understanding, affinity and cohesion of that nation.

Cultural Comparisons and the Cultural Identity Crises

In the context of a nation as “closed” and “open,” cultural identity has two contradictory manifestations. In the “closed” situation, when it is viewed as the basis of elements that constitute the cultural uniqueness or cultural status of a given nation, language, custom, literature, art, religion, philosophy, institution, and values, cultural identity is seen as relatively stable. But its particularity is hard to define because there are no comparisons with other nations. In the “open” situation, the particularity of a given nation can be defined by means of comparing its cultural identity with that of other nations. But the nation then becomes vulnerable to an

inclination toward cultural sameness or a tendency of assimilating into another nation (which would bring about a cultural identity crisis).

The modern world and the contemporary world experienced the tides of globalization twice. The first one found expression in large-scale colonial invasive expansions by Western European countries in various places throughout the world in the 19th century. The source of these expansions can be traced to the success of industrialization in Western civilization and their modernization movements which spread all over the world so that all national production and consumption were engulfed in the world market. Then in the late 20th century, the second tide of globalization brought about the opening of developing countries, including China, the end of the Cold War, and tremendous growth of transnational production, investment and trade. There was also international scientific and technological cooperation and cultural exchanges, and the breakneck development of global television, telecommunication, the Internet, and transcontinental high-speed transportation. Along with these were massive increases in international association and immigration, and the ubiquitous spread of the advanced technology of Western developed countries, extending industries and economic forces towards developing nations.

China experienced both tides of globalization, during which she implemented two measures of opening. (The first one was compulsory and the second has been voluntary). It twice encountered challenges to its cultural identity and out of these challenges came controversies in which Eastern culture engaged Western culture.

The first opening occurred in the period from the Opium War to the New Culture (including the May 4th, 1919) Movement. In this period, we find the Westernization Movement of the late Qing Dynasty which identified with Western implemental culture via industrial technology; the Western institutional culture through the Hundred Days Reform (1898) in the late Qing Dynasty which tried to identify with the Western institutional culture of constitutional monarchy; and the Revolution of 1911, the Chinese bourgeois democratic revolution led by Dr. Sun Yatsen which tried to identify with the Western institutional culture of the constitutional republic. The New Culture Movement identified with Western democracy, sciences, freedom, equality, progress, awareness of human rights, awareness of the rule of law, liberation of individuality, and other elements. What the New Culture Movement identified with had begun with the comparison of Eastern culture with Western culture (in essence determining whether Chinese culture was superior or inferior to Western culture). The leaders of the New Culture Movement, Chen Duxiu and Li Dazhao, came up with influential writings, such as *Fundamental Differences of Thought between Eastern Nations and Western Nations*, and *Fundamental Different Points between Eastern Civilizations and Western Civilizations*. Members of the May 4th / New Culture Movement saw basic differences between Eastern culture and Western culture, respectively, as “static civilization” and “dynamic civilization”, from which the following differences were noted:

“easeful” versus “onrushing”, “passive” versus “positive”, “inherited” versus “creative”, “conservative” versus “progressive”, “concessive” versus “competitive”, “peaceful” versus “belligerent”, “dependent” versus “independent”, “chimerical” versus “experiential”, “imaginative” versus “practical”, and “humanity submitting to nature” versus “humanity mastering nature”.⁵ Moreover, basic differences of Eastern culture and Western culture also found expression in “emphasizing hierarchy” versus “emphasizing equality”, “emphasizing the past” versus “emphasizing the present”, “emphasizing family” versus “emphasizing the individual”, “emphasizing actual strength” versus “emphasizing vanity articles”, “emphasizing law” versus “emphasizing emotion”, “emphasizing art” versus “emphasizing science”, and “emphasizing intuition” versus “emphasizing reason.”⁶

What the above comparisons describe are the putative differences of national temperament, national mentality, and value orientation of the East and the West. From these we can visualize the differences between agricultural civilization and industrial civilization, and between feudal civilization and capitalist civilization. Some of these differences, I believe, do not entail a division of superiority and inferiority. To support this position, one may examine and agree that “emphasizing art” and “emphasizing science” and “emphasizing intuition” and “emphasizing reason” supplement each other. But placing these differences under the setting of historic progress, of moving from agricultural civilization to industrial civilization and of capitalist civilization conquering feudal civilization, a division of superiority and inferiority became visible. In the light of the then historic environment in which the progressives were saving the nation from doom, ensuring its survival and promoting social reform, the New Culture Movement acutely disclosed and unrelentingly emphasized the negative and laggardly side of Chinese traditional culture, national temperament, national mentality and values that have a bearing on progress. But, it is also true that, on the method of comparison concerning judgments of value which entirely relied on Western culture for reference, emphasized the negative side of Chinese traditional culture – with the result that Chinese culture suffered an identity crisis. At that time the Westernization clique advocated not only getting rid of Chinese thread-bound books in the garbage, but also getting rid of one of the pillars of our national cultural identity, namely the Chinese language and characters, by promoting the Latinization of Chinese characters.

Our second opening starting with the 1980s once again brought a serious challenge to our cultural identity. In the waves of reform and opening, Chinese academia jumped into the debate on Eastern and Western cultures, and the comparison of Chinese culture with Western culture came to a head. Facing a harsh environment where our sciences, technology, and economy were far behind that of the West, due mainly to our long-standing closed policy at that time, China found no alternative but to pick up speed to close the gap with the Western developed countries. What accompanied the

opening-up was the revival of the controversy concerning the same topic as in the New Culture Movement, centered on the differences, particularity, and superiority/inferiority between Chinese and Western culture. There were strong criticisms about the negative side of Chinese traditional culture, and the advanced side of Western culture. During this process Chinese traditional culture encountered an over-reactive war of words that lacked cool-headed analyses. The backlash of it was that the symbols of Chinese cultural identity, such as the Yellow River, the Great Wall, and the Dragon, were rejected, and Western civilizations were regarded as the only model of modernization. Together these contributed to the decline of our national self-confidence and self-esteem, and brought our national cultural identity to a crisis.

Reaffirmation of the Positive Value of the Chinese National Culture

With the 1990s, the momentum for reassessing the status of Chinese national culture and for resurrecting the excellence of Chinese traditional culture emerged in Chinese academia. During the first half of the 1990s, Chinese philosophical circles engaged in many discussions about the Chinese national spirit and traditions; more than ten volumes of a collection on *Contemporary Neo-Confucianism* were published in Mainland China, and an international academic conference held in China to commemorate the 2545th anniversary of Confucius' birthday was attended by both Eastern and Western scholars. Not long after, several volumes on *Chinese Traditional Morality*, written and compiled by the Chinese Ministry of Education, were published. Then this hot topic arose in international academia. An intensive series of international seminars, entitled, e.g., "Humanization of Technology and Chinese Culture", "Traditional Culture and Modernization: Morality and Value", and "Modernization and Chinese Culture", was organized jointly by the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy with the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences and Fudan University and held alternately in and out of China in Tokyo, Manila, Bangkok and India, Shanghai and Suzhou. This renaissance of the spirit of Chinese culture also compared Eastern and Western cultures. Emphasis was laid on the excellent and vigorous elements of Chinese culture and noted also the drawbacks of Western culture. From this we were able to rediscover the beneficial values of the positive elements of Chinese traditional culture relative to the modernization of China (which had been relying on the market economy as a driving force) and upon the global culture. There is a saying that, for Eastern and Western cultures, a situation has emerged wherein "their superiority and inferiority are inter-changeable in a given cycle of times." However, in the mainstream, we did not see a replay of ideas like "returning to the ancients" or the "theory of the superiority of Eastern culture" or "the theory of the circle of history." These ideas had spread over the late stage of the controversies about Eastern and Western culture during the New Culture/May 4th Movement.

As far as I can see, this comparison of Chinese culture with Western culture and the renaissance movement of Chinese culture have highlighted the basic characteristics of Chinese culture. These characteristics include seeking harmony: the harmony of nature, harmony between humans and nature, harmony between human and human, and harmony between mind and body. From this basic characteristic, a few important characteristics of Chinese culture can be derived as: “emphasize the group”, “emphasize the whole”; “appreciate cooperation”, “emphasize integrity”, “appreciate common recognition”, “respect public interest”; “respect morality”, “value kindheartedness”, “emphasize honesty”, “appreciate helping each other”, “value amity”, “value modesty”, “appreciate the golden mean”, “emphasize appropriateness”; “emphasize peace and stability”, “value ease and relaxation”; “respect art”, “emphasize sentiment”. In Chinese culture, “harmony” is the fundamental truth among all others. This can be seen from the names given to the three Halls at the center of Beijing’s Forbidden City: “the Hall of Supreme Harmony”, “the Hall of Central Harmony”, and “the Hall of Preserving Harmony,” and from the names given to the seven city gates of ancient Beijing (“*Tian anmen*”, “*De anmen*”, etc. whose meanings are “heaven and earth peace”, “extensive safety”, and “forever stability”, etc.). We can infer from these ancient cultural symbols that the characteristics of our culture put emphasis on harmony, peace and stability.

What is different from our culture is, for example, the Western “Triumphal Arch” – from the name of which we can visualize victory in war, an utterly different connotation from ours. The root of the word “Republic” in the People’s Republic of China, in English language is from the word “public” which means “owned by the people in general”, “done by the people in general”, “known by the people in general” and the prefix “Re” is the repeated emphasis on the meanings of the root.⁷ When the word “Republic” was transplanted on the soil of Chinese civilization which respects the harmony of a whole, its meaning in Chinese characters managed to become the “Common and Harmony”. “Confucian civilization” entails neither an intention of outward expansion nor values that lead to war. Samuel Huntington in his book entitled *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* worries that the Chinese economy, gathering strength, will seek to become hegemonic, and “the rise of China would pose a more fundamental challenge to the United States.”⁸ This manifests that he does not at all understand Chinese culture or the basic spirit of the “appreciation of harmony” of our “Confucian civilization.” In fact the significance of comparing Chinese with Western culture is to help Western people to understand better the particularity of the Chinese culture and its cultural status, apprehend the meaning of the peaceful rise of China, and dispel the myth of “Chinese threat” and of “clash of Confucian civilization with Western civilization”.

MULTI-CULTURES AND UNIVERSAL CULTURE

As stated above, “cultural identity” contains the meanings of confirmation and maintenance of the cultural uniqueness and multiplicity of nationalities in every country. In the global context wherein extensive and frequent exchanges – and sometimes conflicts – often transpire among countries and nations, another question of “cultural identity” is: do commonality and unity exist in the cultures of all countries and all nations? Can there be an agreement on a universal culture so as to make peaceful coexistence possible? From here a further question is derived: How do we view the relation between the existence of many cultures in which a nation still holds on to its unique identity, and a universal culture in which many nations are merged into commonality and congruence? For this, we may start by looking into the cultures tending to commonality and difference.

Move to Coexistence: Inclination to Commonness and Inclination to Difference

Because Western countries took the lead in modernization and dominated the tides of globalization, contemporary international academia has two judgments on the direction that the cultures of nations take under the influence of globalization. Some scholars believe that different cultures and nations are moving toward commonness: accepting common values, beliefs, orientations, practices and institutions. They consider that, in the course of modernization, more and more non-Western countries identify with Western culture. Increasingly they believe that Western culture embraces universal meanings. Other scholars think that globalization has not brought an inclination toward commonness in different cultures: As non-Western countries modernize they reassert their own cultural values and intensify their cultural identity and status rather than become Westernized. Thus, Western culture has not become a universal culture or civilization.

Western countries dominate the modernization movement and the process of globalization. Consequently, many non-Western countries are inclined to adapt to Western culture. On the level of implementation, what these non-Western countries offer are modern science, technology and modern industries pioneered by Western countries (information technology, energy technology, biotechnology, to astronautics, military, transportation, construction and household appliances). One can see commonness in these. In applying Western science and technology – as in industrialization – these non-Western countries cannot help but accept a corresponding social structure, social system, way of living, and values. One can see the evidence in urbanization, in gradual increases in the working populations in the second and third industry, in the multiplicity and complexity of the structure of employment, in the market economy, in a democratic society, in the rule of law. Transparent politics and public participation, the concepts of

efficiency, competition, equality, self-independence and self-governance, credit consumption, popular education, respecting and protecting human rights, protecting the legal rights of privately-owned corporations, among others, would give a similar picture. The social structure, social system, and concept of values that come through the Western modernization movement have the appearance of a universal culture.

Lashed by the waves of modernization, these non-Western countries eventually saw the uniqueness of their culture ebb. Take China and some East Asian cities, for example: in the reconstruction during modernization not a few national landmarks, historic monuments and historic scenes with regional cultural significance and characteristics were destroyed or demolished. One result is that the individuality of cities is getting diminished, in many places becoming “concrete jungles.” No matter where one goes, one can see “cities with the same face”; there is a feeling of monotony. Many a city and region of China mimics European architecture, European gardens, and “Europe” parks. Upon our opening-up, Western movies, television programs, music, literature, arts, entertainment culture, and fashion have come to stay in China. These have made Chinese folk song and dance, drama, folk arts, folk custom culture, and national apparel face the threat of declining and disappearing. Increasingly more adolescents regard Western traditional festivals such as Thanksgiving Day, Valentine’s Day, Mother’s Day, April Fools Day as their own festival. The fast food, commercial, and advertisement cultures extensively influence Chinese life.

However, in the process of modernization some non-Western countries have not moved toward Western culture. Rather, they have found the need to reorient and reaffirm their cultural values, and intensify their cultural identity and cultural status. As a result, their culture tends toward maintaining its differences from those of the West. In recent years along with China’s remarkable economic achievements, it regained its national self-confidence; protected its culture and cultural status; and built a momentum of national culture renaissance. Characterized with a sense of our national cultural identity, and carried out as a historic cultural heritage, our ancient cities and towns, streets, architecture, gardens, historic monuments have drawn the attention of our government and our people: They need to be properly repaired, rehabilitated, and preserved. Some have even added folk custom cultural streets and towns to our vast landscape. The endangered folk arts are saved and preserved: the shadow play, puppet, dough modeling, paper-cut, bamboo carving, hide carving, New Year’s woodcut, facial makeup in the Chinese traditional merry-making festivals, lantern-making, and the minority nationalities’ language, character, arts and other oral or nonmaterial elements of their culture. Recently, the vigor and vitality of our ethnic dance and music, Beijing opera and local dramas, folk dance, music, and clothes, and traditional festivals have been rejuvenated. The grandiose dance dramas like *Great Tang Dynasty’s Carol*, *Dunhuang in the Vast Desert*, and *Tang Dynasty’s Grand Palace Dancing* have come on the scene in succession. In Beijing and in Shanghai the “Performance of

Reciting Tang Dynasty and Song Dynasty Poems”, and the “Programme of Reciting Chinese Ancient Poems and Literatures” are competitively set up. Many adolescents shift their interests in piano and other Western music instruments to Chinese musical string and wind instruments. The pomp and sacred memorial ceremony for the Chinese common ancestor was held at the enlarged mausoleum areas of “Emperor Huang” in the last Tomb-sweeping Day. There was a reenactment of the ancient ritual of “ringing the bell at dawn and beating the drum at nightfall” at Xian Ancient Castle. Scenes like the Dragon King’s Palace of East Sea, the Fairyland of Emerald Lake, and the Grand Assembly for Peach of Immortality in the classical novel *Pilgrimage to the West* available in Shanghai Ancient City during the holiday of Spring Festival of the Year of Monkey attract trainloads of local and foreign tourists. The heat of *Yunan’s Lifestyle*, a collection of the original songs and dances of this Chinese ethnic minority, comes to a climax. The number of those appreciative of ancient and famous Chinese calligraphies, paintings, crafts and other arts is increasing. Chinese ancient cities, ancient towns, ancient villages, and historic monuments become key points of interest for tourists. Also, we cannot fail to notice that “Europe” parks in many places in China closed one after another. All these stir an ardent sense of finding the roots of our nation’s traditions and the identity of our national culture.

This proves that an inclination to commonness and an inclination to difference exist side by side in the era of globalization. While countries and nations agree in a universal culture, their search for the identity and uniqueness of their own culture is intensified. Neither the theory of relativism in a multicultural context nor the theory of an absolutist universal culture can be supported.

The Profound Meaning of Multi-cultures: Multi-modernity and Multi-values of Social Progress

The retention of the many cultures of countries and nations in the era of globalization is not limited to retaining cultural traditions like local language and lifestyle, to preserving cultural heritage like local literature, arts, architectures, and ethnic etiquette and customs. It is not rejecting “modernity” and “social progress” that entail universalistic values. The deeper meaning of retaining multi-cultures is to keep multi-modernity and to keep multi-values of progress.

The first and most important connotation of keeping multi-modernity and multi-values of social progress; and is that Eastern nations should reject those values by which Westerners have attempted to expand their power.

The “perspective of progress” in the case of Western modernization entails three major elements: first, satisfying humans’ increasing material needs as an objective of modern social progress; second, using growth in the

GDP as a benchmark for social progress; third, relying on mass consumption as the engine for growth in the GDP.

Yet, the current crisis in the global environment and resources indicates that human life on the planet with limited natural resources and spaces cannot survive unchecked growth in the demand for materials to consume. The resources in the ecosystem are available to us after natural evolution of more than 3.8 billion years, yet in the tides of industrialization in the past two centuries or so the resources and the ecosystem have been either consumed or destroyed. If unchecked consumption is encouraged to stimulate GDP growth, and if the expansive ambit of one's own freedom to dominate objects is not limited, the earth's remaining resources which took 3.8 billion years to take shape will be completely depleted and exhausted in the coming century. GDP growth at the expense of havoc on the ecosystem and largely consuming natural resources is nothing but a pretended growth. Production methods and lifestyles that cater to unlimited growth of human desire for material goods have no significance for boosting social progress. Rather, it will accelerate the wreck and ruin of the platform upon which human survival depends.

China represents one-fifth of the world's total population, yet its per capita farmlands, fresh water resources, forests, and petroleum are relatively scarce. Thus, it can never achieve the "modernized" lifestyle of a high-spending America. China has the experience of high consumption in electrical home appliances, such that air-conditioners and refrigerators, recognized as representative symbols of modern lifestyle. China is a country in dire need of energy and electric power – for example, new nationwide installations of plants capable of generating forty million kilowatts of electricity are mostly consumed by air-conditioners.⁹ At present, China is on a spending spree for automobiles admired as a symbol of a modern lifestyle. In 2002, China jumped to become the world's fourth largest automobile-producing country and the world's third biggest automobile sales market.¹⁰ Correspondingly, the total length of highways in China rose to second place in the world.¹¹ In terms of crude oil import, China is second in the world, just behind that of the U.S.¹² It is estimated that about one third of the aggregate increase in crude oil worldwide is drawn by China.¹³ Not only does the popularity of the automobile accelerate the depletion of oil resources; it also engulfs a lot of agricultural lands. The Washington Global Policy Study Institute once estimated that for every additional one million cars twenty thousand hectares of land have to be paved as roads. And if these paved roads ate up farm lands, it would mean that eighty thousand tons of produce would have been given up. Some economists estimate that if China's highways and car parking spaces reach the level that America has now, we would see an area of about the whole of Shandong and Jiangxi provinces paved with concrete and asphalt. Even if we take the average of Europe and Japan for our comparison – that is a car for every two persons – when automobiles in China reach six hundred million by this measure, it

will eat up thirteen million hectares of land, surpassing one half of the total area of its rice paddies.¹⁴

The second most important connotation of keeping multi-modernity and multi-values of social progress is: the Eastern nations should recognize that Western values of “social progress” excessively demand efficiency and over-emphasize competition.

Compared with Eastern countries, Western countries took the lead to become industrial and commercial societies, which strove towards business opportunity, profit, extraordinary wealth – attaching importance to competition, efficiency, and quicker paces of life and work. With evolutionism becoming a popular philosophical idea in the West, competition is seen as the greatest driving force for social progress. Bertrand Russell said that the difference between Western peoples and the Chinese lies in the fact that the former “put too much emphasis on the success of competition and see it as one of the major sources of happiness in life.”¹⁵ Competition and efficiency are the makings and values needed to boost modernization, yet contemporary society with its Western styles of living, fierce competition, tension and hard work, over-worry and overburden has triggered “illness and death due to over-work”. These have brought about the human predicament of the “anxiety-ridden society”. These deviate from the demand for humanized social progress and the original intent of welfare.

Yamato, who adopts the Western philosophy of competition and the values of efficiency, sacrifices immeasurable leisure and amusements to struggle for the lead in international competition. The average working hours of Japanese employees, already over 2,300 hours, rose to the top compared with all other developed countries.¹⁶ According to estimates made by the Japanese Ministry of Labor overburden due to workloads has damaged the health of about three hundred thousand employees.¹⁷ Accompanying the overburden workload is keen competition that taxes the exhausted employees’ mind and body – and often resulting in suicide.¹⁸ The Japanese income per capita has risen five times more than in the past, but their average feeling of happiness fails to go up correspondingly. Fiercely competitive America registered five years ago about 3 percent of the population feeling loneliness and today that figure has risen to an astounding 13 percent. Today, the figures indicate that patients of psychological depression in Western countries numbers 10 times more than 40 years ago.¹⁹ The original objective of technological innovation and the liberation of production is to allow people to have more leisure opportunities. Yet their time for sleep, rest, relaxation, and life with family and friends has decreased unrelentingly. Increases in material wealth in the era of high-technology have failed to raise human spiritual happiness and spiritual welfare. This is a paradox of “progress”. Nowadays, people in the West have increasingly come to realize that leisure time, health, and friendship are more important than money.²⁰

In the process of chasing rapid economic growth, the Chinese must learn to use the values of life in the traditional culture of their nation so as “to reduce those unnecessary things – to minimize over-spending”, “to value a peaceful mood by not overly pursuing fame and wealth”, “to hold back one’s over-desires”, and “to value a leisurely and carefree mood” so as to counterbalance the modern community’s distorted competition and the maddening rhythm of living, to heal all sorts of psychic illnesses seen in our “anxiety-ridden society”, and to acquire a harmonious development for a “healthy mind and body”, “material life” and “spiritual life”.

The Necessity of Maintaining Multi-Cultures

Maintaining multi-modernity and the various values of social progress is significant for safeguarding peaceful coexistence among countries and nations.

An ancient Chinese philosophical adage says: “The gentleman agrees with others without being an echo. The small man echoes without being in agreement.” It is my firm belief that the values of the contemporary multi-culture should be “harmony but not sameness”. We can imagine that if, through modernization, Eastern countries all mimic the model of Western modernization without appropriate adjustments, almost all countries in the world will tend to have similar ways of living, spending, and using resources. Such a situation is very dangerous because all countries will demand at the same time the limited natural resources, and the consequence will be nothing less than international military conflicts. For example, according to recent estimates based on current levels of production, the proven oil reserves in the world will be depleted in forty years or so.²¹ Around 60 percent of the total oil reserves are located in and around the Persian Gulf, which supplied about half of the world’s total oil consumption in the initial stage of the 21st century. Under the condition that the economies and modernized ways of living in the industrialized countries must depend on limited oil resources, the Persian Gulf area will become a strategic stronghold of international military conflicts. When China exploited oil resources in the East China Sea and in South China Sea, disputes emerged from other East Asian and South East Asian countries which were also hungry for the oil within Chinese maritime sovereignty. The worst outcome of these disputes is war.²² If the technology and lifestyle of various countries are different, or if the differences in their development are recognized, then it will be possible to reduce the risk of conflict attributable to the tight supply of resources and thus to reduce the risk of international confrontation.

Maintaining the multi-modernity and the various values of social progress is also determined by the given natural geographic conditions and the given historical and cultural traditions of different countries and nations.

Culture and nature are relative. Viewed as lifestyle and as outlook on value, the culture of a given nation is the product of the people’s creative

dealing with the challenges from the natural environment. As different countries and different nations live in different geographic areas, different cultural traditions like histories of societies, customs, languages, ways of thinking, beliefs, and ways of acting take shape. As long as there are diversifications in the geographic environment and in the national history, there must be diversification of culture. The era of globalization brings about ubiquitous exchanges and associations among different nations. It is impossible to eliminate differences in terms of their geographic environment and national history; nor is it possible to impede cultural diversification. When a nation is forced or induced to give up its lifestyle and values that correspond to its geography – and to give up cultural traditions with indigenous roots – the survival of that nation faces a great threat.

The discourse to “retain cultural diversification” or “to retain the world with multi-culture” is proposed in the era of globalization. This is to counteract the stance posed by Western culture which embraces the face of “universal culture” and the stance of “hegemonic culture” that are oppressing non-Western cultures at an unprecedented scale. As a matter of fact, Western culture is a complicated combination of different values. It consists of some positive ideas since the Enlightenment of the 18th century, such as respecting and valuing rationality and the sciences, applying science and technology to benefit human beings, esteeming democracy, rule of law, freedom, equality, restriction of power, and awareness of one’s civil obligations. Undoubtedly, these basic ideas contain a universal sense. But Western culture also contains some negative values such as the desire to conquer and dominate nature, the desire to conquer and dominate other countries, the desire to expand one’s power. These are exactly the things with which non-Western countries and nations cannot identify. Even the Western cultural elements such as languages, customs, literatures, arts, religions, and philosophies cannot entirely be accepted and digested by non-Western countries and nations as a kind of universal culture.

History demonstrates that obliterating the value of the existence and significance of the rationality in other cultures or civilizations in order to make a given culture be regarded as a universal culture will trigger conflicts among those civilizations and nations.

True enough, Huntington wrote: “Western civilization is valuable not because it is universal, but because it is unique. The principal responsibility of Western leaders, consequently, is not to attempt to reshape other civilizations in the image of the West, which is beyond their declining power, but to preserve, protect, and renew the unique qualities of Western civilization.” “Western universalism is dangerous to the world because it could lead to a major intercivilizational war between core states.”²³ He sees that “Imperialism is the necessary logical consequence of universalism”²⁴ and believes that “a multicultural world is unavoidable because global empire is impossible”, that “the security of the world requires acceptance of

global multiculturalism”²⁵ and that “an international order based on civilizations is the surest safeguard against world war.”²⁶

The Danger of Cultural Relativism and the Meaning of Universal Culture

To be sure, maintaining cultural diversification or multi-culture, and rejecting cultural hegemony and cultural imperialism, are critically significant for avoiding cultural conflict and safeguarding the world’s security: When cultural diversification is emphasized, we must prevent cultural relativism and prevent conflicts among cultures that arise because of the lack of mutually shared values, or of a pervasive morality, ideals and beliefs.

Huntington observed the negative effect upon the enervation of national coherence caused by “multiculturalism” in America, and pointed out that the multiculturalists “denied the existence of a common American culture, and promoted racial, ethnic, and other sub-national cultural identities and groupings;” they are “very often ethnocentric separatists.”²⁷ He also pointed out: “They wish to create a country with many civilizations, which is to say a country not belonging to any civilization and lacking a cultural core. History shows that no country so constituted can long endure as a coherent society.”²⁸ Likewise, without a common ground among different cultures, it will be hard to avoid a clash of civilizations, and it will also be hard to safeguard the world’s stability and peace.

“Instead of promoting the supposedly universal features of one civilization, the requisites for cultural coexistence demand a search for what is common to most civilizations.”²⁹ “The common ground of most civilizations” is nothing but human common values, and human universal culture, which does not rest on one culture, nor on some predominant cultures but on all cultures with rich diversifications.

Then, what are the basic connotations of universal culture? The following are four brief definitions:

Firstly, *mutual values for morality*, including kindheartedness, mercy, leniency, honesty, and responsibility that are mutually shared by religions and moral ideas in all nations.

Secondly, *mutual values of benefit*, such as the preservation of the world’s eco-environment in order to protect common interests, the right of co-existence for all human beings. Therefore, human beings, irrespective of their nationality, must agree to the identity of “global citizen”.

Thirdly, *mutual values for politics*: for example, the safeguard and respect of human rights, democracy, freedom, equality, the rule of law, and the identification with the guidelines of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. In particular: “Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his nation, directly or through freely chosen representatives;” “Everyone has the right to equal access to public service in his country;” “The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government,” and so on.

Fourthly, *common guidelines for behaviors* – for example, to abide by international laws, international pacts, and international norms for the realization of common human interests, common guidelines, and common values. In the course of globalization, China has increasingly paid attention to the link between domestic and international legislations by making reference to international laws, international pacts to revise her internal laws, rules and regulations. Such action embodies the dialectic of relations between various cultures and universal culture.

CULTURAL TRADITION AND CULTURAL RENEWAL

National cultural traditions are long-standing and historically accumulated; they are the foundation on which national characteristics and status can be retained. However, tradition is not just a simple continuation of the past, nor an unchanging heritage. Rather, as time changes, it should be injected with new contents so that it could be renewed and gain vitality.

One of the important paths to renewing the traditions of Eastern and Western cultures in the era of globalization is selectively to absorb, retain, and identify with rational elements in both traditions. Organic integration and creative development can then be added to these elements. The basic principles for the selection of, and identification with, the rational or essential elements in a traditional culture are: First, their contribution to social progress in one's own nation; Second, their contribution to harmonious relations with other nations and to mutual development.

The renewal of Eastern and Western traditions through selection and identification have the following four aspects.

Integrating the Rational Elements of Eastern Holism with the Positive Elements of Western Individualism

Representative actors of the Chinese New Cultural Movement in the early 20th century, representative actors of contemporary Neo-Confucianism after the New Cultural Movement and participants in the studies of comparison between Eastern and Western culture in the Mainland of China in the 1980s recognized that one of the major differences and particularities of the two cultures were that the former pays attention to the whole; the latter, to the individual.

The representative actors of the New Cultural Movement first pointed to the positive meanings of the “individual as an entity” and “individuality development” in Western culture. Chen Duxiu believed that in the West “all ethics, politics, and laws, the orientation of society, [and] what the country is hoping for advocate the right of individual freedom and welfare. The freedom of speech and thinking is the search of individual development; everyone is equal before the law; the right of individual freedom is written in the Constitution that even the state cannot deprive the people of that right.” Eastern patriarchal society which relies on a holistic

cultural tradition holds that the family “disgraces the independent and respectable personality”, “suffocates the freedom of individual thinking”, “deprives the people of equality before the law”, and “encourages dependence upon others and mars the productive capacity of individuals.”³⁰

Li Dazhao also believed that “the Easterner regards sacrificing oneself as an obligation of life while the Westerner regards satisfying oneself as a demand of life. And therefore Eastern morality keeps on suppressing individuality while Western morality is to pursue the movement of the liberation of individuality.” Eastern nations “very seldom respect individual authority and power” but “often regard [the] individual as an incomplete part of a whole so that the value of individual survival is entirely gulfed by the whole.”³¹

Representative actors of contemporary Neo-Confucianism also manifest the positive connotation of the concept of “individualism” in Western culture. Du Weiming, a noted American scholar of Chinese origin, remarked: “In the course of the development of Western democracy, a major force which had started since the Middle Ages and evolved from Enlightenment to Modernization, by degrees, to become an irresistible trend in 19th century was individualism. Up until today, it remains hard for us to apprehend Western individualism by whatever translation. Now some even think [that] ‘individualism’ in the Chinese language should not be as currently translated because it is easy to associate it with self-concern, [being] profit-driven as soon as [it is] mentioned, Western ‘individualistic’ in its original sense is a very solemn perspective which does not just relate to the individual’s independent personality, ... honor, ... right and power free from infringement, but also relates to [the] individual’s indomitable spirit of justice, equality before God, and equality before the law. All these basic values are implied in the original meaning of ‘individualistic’ in Western culture.”³²

Participants in the studies of comparison between Eastern and Western culture in the mainland of China in the 1980s completed in-depth research on the relationship between “individual” and “community”. Some noted scholars have suggested that the Theory of Man in Western humanism propounds that “man is an independent individual who contains reasoning, sentiment, and will; and the understanding of the above concept of Man includes love, friendship, freedom, equality, dignity, and right”; that “everybody is a creature with his own intrinsic elements and responsible for his own fate.” However, the Theory of Man in Chinese humanism sees it this way: “From relationships one feels for everything, and man is seen as part of a community or as having a role in a community, and not just as an individual; so it is concluded that man is an interactive individual, needing the survival of the community to which he belongs, ethics, and morality. Moreover, the understanding of this concept of man includes kindheartedness, justice, leniency, harmony, obligation, and the ability to make a contribution, so that each man is a product of the community he belongs to and to which his fate is closely linked.”³³

Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* points out that individualism is one of the eight major characteristics that differentiate Western from other civilizations. The values of this individualism are the values of the individual right to choose, otherwise known as "the Romeo and Juliet revolution," which pointedly refers to the equal rights of all.³⁴

Eastern people often despise "individualism" in Western culture and equate it to "egoism". Actually, the connotation of the Western concept of individualism is very complicated as it contains the meaning of "individuality", "individual characteristic", and "emphasizing or persisting in the uniqueness of an individual". At the same time, it connotes the sense of "egoism". In a positive sense, the spirit of individuality in the West implies adhering to self-respect, self-confidence, self-dependence, self-determination, self-striving, self-conscious, self-discipline, self-responsibility, and self-improvement. These are different from "egoism" which entirely represents "self-interest" and "self-centeredness".

The gravity of "individualism" is the emphasis on the individuality and uniqueness of the individual. Contemporary society is fraught with diversified opportunities for development. Scientific and technological explorations of the possible world, and diversified inventions and innovations, need to encourage every man to bring his individuality, uniqueness, initiatives, and creativity into full play. This requires respect for our personal interest, courage and decision. Moreover, the difference, diversity and free development of the individual must be treated and accepted as a valuable thing or a kind of wealth. The pioneers of American high-technology enterprises (Microsoft and Intel, for example) conspicuously embrace individuality with self-determination and independence, so that they could initiate unprecedented undertakings. The proportion of Americans expressing willingness to establish or having established self-owned businesses not only is far higher than that of non-Western countries, but also three times higher than that of the EU. These facts prove that the American cultural tradition of "individualism", mainly connoting self-confidence, self-dependence and self-striving has become one of the great sources of culture supporting the national scientific and economic strengths. The negative side of the Eastern or Chinese tradition of "holism" is that things stifle individuality and the development of creativity, and regard for "esteeming and pursuing commonness." "Echoing and obedience" are usually seen as virtues which suffocate the individual's independent thought, and freedom of speech. Some people in the West have said: "The Chinese are usually concerned about what others are doing but are unaware of what they should do themselves; Americans do not care about what others are doing but know what they will have to do."³⁵ This saying may be biased in some measure, but it points to the personality in Chinese cultural tradition that lacks self-determined and self-appointed individuality and has a submissive mentality. It is beneficial for us to

understand into the lack of independent innovation and entrepreneurship in the field of science and technology.

In the holism of Eastern culture, however, what is worth while and should be passed on are its underlying positive values, including emphasizing the interests of the majority, appreciating fraternity, friendly and harmonious relations, promoting concern about the overall situation, intensifying social responsibility, feeling for and aiding the have-nots, implementing public equality, overcoming egoism and law-of-the-jungle competition, maintaining social stability and improving living standard for all. In 1989, the Singaporean government publicized four basic values for its citizens: “placing society above self, upholding the family as the basic building block of society, resolving major issues through consensus instead of contention, and stressing racial and religious tolerance and harmony.” It encouraged extensive discussions in all walks of life in Singapore on the values which put emphasis upon holism. The result was that for the purpose of recognizing the social standing of individual value “as against Confucian values of hierarchy and family, which could lead to nepotism”, the White Paper added to the list of Singaporean values one more requirement, that is to say, “regard and community support for the individual”³⁶ A Singaporean legislator stated that this philosophy of the government did not lie on the foundation of Confucianism but on the philosophy of Western democracy. He specifically highlighted: “Our institutional system of public administration is built on the concept of the Western individual rights, and on the foundation of a special understanding of the individual.”³⁷ Thereby, Singapore has created an economic miracle and realized a modernization that does not merely develop the positive values of holism in Confucian culture but integrates organically the progressive aspects of individualist values from the Western Enlightenment movement with the rational elements of the values of Eastern holism.

The Integration of the Values of Respecting the Family in the Eastern Cultural Tradition, along with the Values of Respecting the Individual's Self-dependence in the Western Cultural Tradition

Eastern nations have been agrarian societies for a long time – societies which rely on the family acting as the production unit and on families constituting a community. This social structure pays attention to the patriarchal blood relationship, respects the authority and standing of patriarchs so that the freedom of personality of family members is contained and suppressed by patriarchy and the power of the father/husband. The leaders of the Chinese New Culture Movement highlighted the view that one of the fundamental differences between Eastern and Western nations is that the former takes the family as an entity while the latter takes the individual as an entity. Likewise, representative personnel of the contemporary Neo-Confucianism expressed the idea that “the standing of ‘family’ in Chinese social life is of importance without comparison.” Under

the influence of the New Culture/May 4th Movement, progressive intellectuals in literature and art circles opposed the feudal cultural traditions, crusading fiercely against “family” which disabled individual freedom of choice, freedom of thought, even life. *Family*, an *opus magnum* of Ba Jin who was a remarkable writer in China, gained extensive influence on society because it exposed the decay of the traditional culture of the feudal family. It criticized the culture without reservation. Many intellectuals at that time to “get away from the family” subsequently became a starting point for a democratic revolution.

In industrialized society, the family is no longer a unit for basic production, the members of a family often receive equal educational opportunities and gain relatively equal opportunities in terms of economic and social standing. The power of patriarchy and that of the father/husband substantially fade out. That is a phenomenon of social progress. But, on the other side, some social problems come to light. Along with the fading of the family concept come increases in the individual’s independence, in cases of divorce, in the number of single-parent families increases, while children of single-parent families lack proper guidance and family education. Along with the decrease in the number of three-generation families, increasingly the aged live on their own without care or attention from their offspring, so that they are lonely and pessimistic. The number of highly educated and high-income single females also increases; they want children but prefer not to get married, have artificial insemination (“giving birth without marriage”), with the result that they can be a “mother without a husband”.

For Eastern society to avoid the burgeoning of these features, which took shape in the long course of modernization in Western societies, it is necessary selectively to identify and retain the positive elements in cultural traditions that attach weight to the family. While Singapore identifies with the Western concept of individual rights, it also stresses the ethical norms that define the rights and obligations of father and son, husband and wife, and siblings; the responsibility of taking care of and teaching the next generation, filial piety to seniors, honesty to peer groups, and placing family interest above individual interest. In Japan, we find that that women are to acquire certain academic credentials and social standing, but they must also act as good helpmates to their husbands, guardians to their children; be a filial daughter-in-law, lovely wife, and respectable mother.³⁸

When Eastern countries are moving forward on their path towards industrialization, family-style corporations brought the positive elements of their traditional culture into full play. For example, some well-known Japanese firms blended family-style human warmth and loving care into their business management. They adopted lifetime employment and salary paid according to seniority that were beneficial in order to enhance the employees’ sense of belonging and loyalty to the firm and to boost team spirit. The results were guaranteed product quality, rising market shares, and an established brand loyalty. But upon entering into the era of the

information revolution, for some industries this Japanese family-style culture is found to be disadvantageous to innovation in corporations. Gradually competitiveness decreased to levels below those of their Western counterparts. Right now, some well-known manufacturers, such as Matsushita (Panasonic), are in the process of transforming their corporate culture, in which “they are shifting to put a premium on employees who are enriched with individuality and remarkably talented, as the global society in the 21st century is going to be more individualized, irrespective of industry or profession. Only those corporations with talents full of individuality and creativity can survive in international competition.”³⁹ Matsushita (Panasonic), Fujitsu, and others have set off to reform their management and distribution system, and encouraged their employees to bring their individual talents into full play. Other giant Japanese corporations like Honda also try to diminish family-style management by stressing that corporations are not family businesses, and must forsake the past hereditary system which “passes to the son and not to a capable successor”. These corporations select the virtuous and talented for office, and appoint people on their merits, in order to intensify their competitiveness.⁴⁰

Industrializing countries in Asia are also realizing that the values linked to the patriarchal system such as nepotism, decision-making according to seniority rather than ability, do not fit globalization, and fail to meet the requirements of the information age. Lee Kuan-Yew, Minister Mentor of Singapore, spoke of the catastrophic losses in the Asian financial crisis in the late 1990s, that some Asian countries had valued nepotism so that their decision-making in investments depended not on the validity and soundness of the investments themselves but on whether they were connected with someone the decision-makers were familiar with. Singaporean government and financial institutions adhere always to a transparent economy and to the rule of law so that they could ride out the financial storm. He also pointed out that in the information age a certain limitation exists in the value of “respect the aged” in Confucianism, and that the makings of the success in information technology needs “persons in their prime, full of vitality, mentally active, thoughtful and courageous.” A father is not necessarily more talented, more imaginative, or more knowledgeable than his son”. “In the era of information, youth and the quick-wittedness are a tremendous advantage.” If decision-making is to be done by the slow-paced or the aged, many opportunities will slide away.⁴¹

Integrating the Positive Elements of the Value of “Rule by Morality” in Eastern Cultural Traditions, with the Values of “the Rule of Law” in Western Cultural Traditions

The Qin Dynasty, which practiced a general policy of “relying on extremely harsh penal laws to govern the nation” and “entirely using laws to replace morality to govern the nation” lasted for just two generations until its fall. The Han Dynasty in ancient China adopted a Confucian general

policy – “rule by morality” – in governing the nation. The Chinese tradition of “rule by morality” consists of two meanings: “morality politics” and “morality education”. Morality politics itself also consists of two layers of understanding: First, for a country to govern well, it takes people first, and is concerned about the people’s welfare. Second, for government officials, only men of virtue, of justice, and of honesty and integrity are suitable. Confucianism stresses that officials must take themselves as examples and use their behavior to educate others. They must be upright so that they can set top-down examples of what a right social climate should be. Up to this time, it still has positive value and deserves acceptance and to be passed to later generations. But Confucianism regarding the “virtue and morality” of rulers of a country as a premise of governing a country and advocating the “politics of a virtuous person” gradually gives way to the “rule by man.” Even if laws are imperfect, the government and society will be fair; as long as they are ruled by a virtuous person. When the virtuous person is lacking, things will be of no help – even if the laws are perfect. Therefore, values like “the virtuous person is superior to ‘perfect laws’” and “‘rule by man’ carry more weight than does the ‘rule by law’” in the Confucian traditional concept of “rule by morality”. They are incompatible with the contemporary construction of political civilization, the core of which is democracy and rule by law.

Both laws and morality function to normalize and regulate human behavior; they differ in scope only. Chinese traditional “rule by morality” boundlessly magnified the coverage of the function of regulating morality so as to enable political life to become ethical, to become “rule by man”. But the construction of political civilization today requires us to get rid of the negative influence of the traditional “rule by morality”, and to practice the institutionalized, normalized, and proceduralized “rule by law”. In China, not a few people believe that the Western “rule by law” is boundlessly applied. Categories and clauses of statutes are becoming increasingly complicated; costs of legislation, enforcement and litigation are high; and the functions of moral regulation, moral education, and moral norms are often neglected. Moral education in the Chinese traditional “rule by morality” emphasizes persuasion and the cultivation of morality to raise people’s moral quality, and it often relies on literature and the arts such as poems and music to nurture and cultivate people’s moral sentiment and lofty idea. These are inherited cultural capital that is still required to boost social progress today. But experience tell us that merely relying on education and cultivation to make morality work to regulate people’s behaviors and interrelationships is not sufficient. We still need institutional arrangements and institutional protection (such as moral pacts and guidelines, regulatory systems, a credit system, monitoring systems, and a system for evaluation, incentives and punishment that take shape on the basis of laws) of the rule of law as a foundation to enable the integration of moral education with social management, and of self-governance with being governed by others. In reality, the experience of today’s Western society in

the establishment of ethical systems, and measures for “rule by morality” that are based on the “rule by law” should be blended into the Chinese contemporary culture of “rule by morality”.

It is worth noting that in the Chinese traditional concept of “law and punishment are synonymous” and “morality and law are separate”, from which some people misunderstand that “rule by law” is merely to punish evils, to be governed by others, and to take stop-gap measures, whereas “rule by morality” is to promote virtue and self-control as well as to take radical measures. This improper concept that “rule by law” is passive and “rule by morality” is positive distorts the understanding of the essence and function of contemporary laws and “rule by law”. In essence, contemporary laws and “rule by law” also embrace the function of promoting virtue and self-control, and taking radical measures. In history, as the Chinese lived in feudal society under the “rule by man”, pernicious elements of this “rule by man” tradition still haunt the people’s mind. What contemporary China is facing is insufficiency in the construction of the legal system – not complexity. In general, in the making of our nation one of the major problems is that the concept of “rule by law” is dim and obscure. Thus our ethical climate and social order lack protection by the law. Given China’s lack of the contemporary spirit of “rule by law”, it is worthwhile for us to put additional resources into our legal system for the purpose of governing and making the nation prosper. In fact, the rule of law has brought about huge returns of economic prosperity and social stability. Conversely, any construction of morality without proper protection from a “rule by law” is a “rule of morality” with no grounds underneath to support it, and can be characterized by high costs with low returns. Therefore, integrating the Chinese sentimental, art-style and poetic traditional morality education with the contemporary Western rational, institutionalized ethics and “rule of law” can become a cultural strength to boost social progress.

Integrating Eastern “Static Civilization” with Western “Dynamic Civilization”

In the controversy regarding Eastern and Western cultures before the May 4th Movement, some well-known scholars pointed out that the fundamental difference between Chinese civilization and Western civilization lay in the former being a “static civilization” and the latter being a “dynamic civilization”. The life of “static civilization” is inward; it values competition less and advocates a relaxed mindset. But the life of a “dynamic civilization” is outward, which values victory in competition and whose normal state is war. Li Dazhao, one of the pioneers in the New Culture Movement at that time, basically agreed with this perspective and believed: “For Easterners, their daily lives are oriented to a static state, whereas a dynamic state is an exception. For Westerners, their daily life is oriented to a dynamic state, whereas a static state is an exception.” The Easterner believes that “all things have no value for us to compete for” and the

Westerner seeks “progressive evolution, firmly believing that human society is progress irrespective of one’s purpose, is forward-looking, and regards advancement and struggle as the most important goal”.

In the controversy regarding Eastern and Western culture after the May 4th Movement, Liang Shuming, a representative of contemporary Neo-Confucianism, published the famous work, *The Eastern & Western Cultures and their Philosophies*, in which he asserted that Chinese and Western cultures represent different directions: “Western culture’s fundamental spirit shows that its intention is to go forward and look to the future; the fundamental spirit of Chinese culture shows that its intention is always oriented to harmony and moderation.”⁴² The “dynamic civilization” of the West sees unlimited progress and unlimited development as the highest value, and endless exploration and adventures as *joie de vivre*, so that Westerners are ceaselessly trying to conquer nature, to transform the environment, and to make every effort to get the things they want. The Chinese “static civilization” takes an attitude of “harmony between humans and nature”, “feeling at ease under all circumstances”, “contentment bringing happiness”.

It was the Western “dynamic civilization” that brought about sailing around the earth and the eventual discovery of a new continent; and immeasurable developments in the fields of science and technology in the past four centuries. This created an industrial civilization with astounding productive capacity, and started the age of economic globalization and ubiquitous association among human beings. The Chinese “static civilization” caused us to remain in a state of stagnation for a long time. Worse than that is that from the late period of the Qing Dynasty until the 1940s our laggardness and poverty pushed us to a predicament where we became passive and vulnerable to being bullied. “Progress” is a core concept or value in Western modernization that started as early as the Enlightenment in the 18th century. This is not different from what Yu Ying-Shih, a famous American scholar of Chinese origin, had pointed out – namely, that the Chinese culture characterized as stability and tranquility, can no longer adapt to contemporary life, and Chinese modernization cannot afford not to “act” or “progress.”⁴³ The makings of the Western “dynamic civilization” – including ceaseless exploration, progress, exploitation, and endless innovation – is exactly what we need to speed up our modernization. The transformation of Chinese culture must take in more of the “act” and the “progress” from the spiritual elements of Western civilization.

Nevertheless, in the course of the Western modernization, spiritual unrest like anxiety, fear, a sense of homelessness, and distant human relations have occurred in the heart of some Western people. Along with their excessive desire for competition, their orientation toward efficiency and speed, they work hard to achieve material wealth. In his comparison of Eastern and Western cultures and their philosophies, Liang Shuming said: “Western people striving at a great speed like gale and lightning has made

them feel a loss of spiritual fulfillment so that they sink into a depressive mood; although they get a lot, in fact they have not enjoyed the fruits of their labor.”⁴⁴ Yu Ying-Shih profoundly remarked that the Western current crisis is that they can “act” but they cannot be “calm”; they can “progress” but they cannot be “still”; they can “prosper” but they cannot be “tranquil”; they can “bustle” but they cannot be “stable”. “If it is said that in the early stage of modernization values like ‘tranquility’, ‘stability’, ‘calmness’ and ‘stillness’ are unsuitable; upon entering the stage of post-modernization, such values are worthy of our attention.”⁴⁵

Therefore people in the contemporary West can acquire a mindset that “can show high ideas by frugal living”, “can keep a peaceful mind and have lofty aspiration”, and “can adopt a simple and unadorned style of life”. To heal their spiritual anxiety caused by overwork and competition, this mindset “can reduce excessive desire for material profit” as outlined in the Chinese cultural tradition, so as to rectify their “search for wealth”, “movement”, and “progress” – these are values that distort humanity. While China is in the process of accelerating its modernization, we must cool-headedly rethink the Western value of “progress”; we must rely on the dialectical wisdom of our national cultural tradition to recalibrate and get hold of the proper relationship between “action” and “restful calm”, “progress” and “stillness”, “prosperity” and “tranquility”, and “bustle” and “stability” in an age of economic, scientific, and technological development that proceeds at a breakneck pace. We must realize social progress with humanity and a poetic life on the foundation of three harmonies: harmony between humans and nature, harmony between human and human, and harmony between mind and body.

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NOTES

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PART VI

TENETS AND THEIR APPLICATIONS

CHAPTER XXIX

COMMUNICATION AND INTERFUSION EAST AND WEST: HUMANITY AND MODERN MANAGEMENT IDEOLOGY

LI JIANQUN

In modern management theories, anthropological ideas have gained an increasingly prominent position. People are the principal part of both society and enterprises, and their qualities, such as behavior patterns, psychological states, emotional tendencies, and values have a profound influence on business management and the advancement of society. Therefore, it is particularly important to probe the values and theories of modern management by research on cultural traditions and psychological characteristics. This article is intended to carry out a tentative exploration of the significance of Western anthropological ideas and the spirit of Confucianism to modern management theories.

I

Though derived from the development of the capitalist enterprises, the Western management thought was influenced by Western “humanism” and related anthropological ideas. The anthropological ideas originally stemmed from the humane spirit of ancient Greece. During that period, people had already reflected on the status and nature of the individual. Many philosophers, such as Aristotle, Plato, and Protagoras, stated their points of view, which can be summed up as follows:

1. A human being is a small but complicated world with independent cognitive values, as expressed in the classical proverbs “Know yourself” (Socrates) and “A human being is a world” (Democritus).
2. A man’s nature consists of his mind. Heraclitus proposed that every person has his own thought and the ability to understand himself.
3. Every human being is endowed with the right to pursue happiness and pleasure.

These ancient anthropological ideas have established a special status for the individual human being in the history of thought and opened up new Western anthropological ideas. Along with these ancient ideas, the development of humanism and materialism in France in the 18th century and the classical philosophy of Germany in the 19th century, Western rationalist humanism reached a new level. It deeply affected a variety of ideological theories, and thus boosted the transformation of Western society from

feudalist autocracy to capitalism. As we can see from the development of anthropological ideas in these several periods, there was a transition from being controlled by the religious and feudal autocracy, to disavowing the Deity and emphasizing reason and individual will. In the above mentioned stages of the development of anthropological ideas, the explanations of essence, human nature and humanity vary, but they shared the following essential ideas:

1. The human being is a rational animal with the ability of independent thinking and understanding. Humanists, like representative figures of classical philosophy of Germany such as Kant, Hegel, and Feuerbach, elaborated their opinions in this respect.

2. Human nature reflects instincts, and people's rights are endowed by nature, which has been described as "natural rights" by Jean Jacques Rousseau. He believed that protecting one's existence and self-respect were part of people's nature.

3. Human nature is also connected with social environment. Materialists in France had explored it, but Kant's discussion about people as means or as ends had a far-reaching significance for Western anthropological ideas. He argued that there were "natural people" and "rational people". The latter were true human beings, who had absolute value and were the masters of themselves. Rational people could issue decrees to themselves and could never be controlled by others. Such people would have dignity, personality and value. In this sense, people are ends not means. Though abstract, this thought is useful for the management of modern enterprises. Regardless of the types of management, this thought, which is based on the definition of people as ends, not means, influences the patterns and methods of management directly, and ultimately affects results in competition.

The discussions of human nature have broken out of the bondage of religion and theology to address the problems of people and have made public the theoretical status of rationalism as man's unique nature. This offered a theoretical background for the development of Western capitalism. Rational anthropological ideas, however, have their obvious limitations because of too much philosophical color. They over-emphasize people's rational nature and overlook the irrational factors in people's behavior and thinking, and consequently lead to an incomplete understanding of people.

As a modification to rational humanism, Western anthropological ideas at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of 20th century provoked discussions of people's irrational nature. They stopped focusing only on the abstract and empty aspects. Instead, they reached the depth of man's irrational domain from the ways of existence, inner desires, individual will, psychological experience and even the original desires of the creatures. This expanded man's understanding of himself. The study of the "irrational" by humanists focused on human nature deepened by the

following aspects: 1. People's behavior is not controlled by rational rules but by irrational factors like feelings, desires, impulses and habits. 2. Man is considered free. 3. "Man" here is not a human being in the general sense, but a unique individual who is an individualized social unit and an end. He holds responsibility for himself. 4. Man has the right of free will and free choice in his existence. Rational social rules and laws should not restrict people. They should allow the largest extent of freedom in individual choice and for the realization of individual will. The above thoughts were expounded by the idealism of Arthur Schopenhauer, the existentialism of Martin Heidegger, the life philosophy of Henri Bergson and the psychological analysis of Freud.

Western humanist thought reflects the explanations and answers to the questions of human nature by means of rationalism, naturalism, sociology and irrationalism. It has influenced the formation and development of Western management theory implicitly or explicitly. If traditional humanist thought and theory still remain at the abstract level of discussion of human nature, the theory of modern management has made this study break away from the framework of speculative philosophy and connect with the actual organizations, the process of production, the patterns of management, market competition and economic benefit. Different opinions on human nature have helped the formation of various theories and patterns of management, which also have been demonstrated in market behavior. Some problems, such as the transformation from human nature to human behavior, the influence of psychological desires on the performance of enterprises and the abstract notions of human nature, achieved authentic significance and can be tested in the management of modern society.

In the history of modern Western management, the opposition and conflicts between the employer and employee owing to the difference in interests and status were much more drastic in early capitalist times than in modern capitalist society. At that time, private ownership and labor alienation reflected cruel and inhuman control in the organization and management of enterprises. The well-known "Taylor System" is a case in point, which distinguished itself by a large gap between the employers and employees. The theoretical premise of this pattern was summarized as the "X Theory" by the behavioral scientist, Douglas McGregor. Although it has had a role in Western management, its limitations are obvious. We cannot find any inner conformity between the theory and Western humanist thought out management patterns. In fact, it would be difficult for it to play a positive role in the practice of the actual management of enterprises.

With the development of modern society and the changes in the content and style of the management of enterprises, the need for a more humane management is called for. Among the many theories and practices, management with a Confucian spirit in Japan and the "Y Theory" – again summarized by McGregor – stand out because of their humanist considerations. Japanese enterprises succeeded in incorporating the Eastern

culture, especially Confucianism, into the management of modern enterprises, and consequently a unique enterprise spirit has come into being. The myth of Panasonic, Hitachi, and Sony has spread over the world. Similarly, the rationality and validity of Y Theory have been manifested by the reality and future of American enterprise management. It has bridged the rift between the cognitive school and the behavioral school in which the ideology of human management stood out.

The author of the book, *American Enterprises in the 21st Century*, described the prospects for the American management patterns in the future as follows: Employees will work under the rhythm of the Y Theory in the 21st century when a rigid social class system will disappear; equality and respect for every person will be more practical than before, and the satisfaction of each individual's need will become the first concern of each company. We see the renaissance of the Western anthropological ideas and the emergence of East and West people's spirit in the theory and practice of modern management. At the same time, Confucian culture and modernization, the Confucian humane spirit and anthropological ideas of management, and its influence on the theory and practice of modern management have received much attention.

II

As an ancient ideology and cultural phenomenon of feudal society in China, Confucian culture has played an important role in the course of the development of China for thousands of years. It has permeated the Chinese national spirit, mode of thought and behavior and has become part of the cultural and psychological deposit. With the great changes and development of Chinese society in modern times, as an ideology of feudalist society, Confucian culture weakened with the disintegration of the feudal system. The people's life and the social reality of China, however, have showed that it has positive and valuable aspects, and that these are still influential. The great achievement and successful management of the "four Asian tigers" in the 1970s and 1980s are such a remarkable example that many literary and management scholars have paid much attention to the incorporation of Confucian culture into the modern economic system.

Here the first problem to address is the relationship between Confucian culture and modernization. There are two opposite views. One critic is Max Weber. He holds, in his book *Confucianism and Taoism*, that Confucianism pursues the perfection of individual morals and self-control. It puts individuals into an idealized society where they do not undertake any social duties and responsibilities. This pursuit of self-control and individual dignity has resulted in a general distrust in interpersonal relationships. Therefore it is difficult to motivate competition and endeavor. The contemporary American scholar, Joseph Lewiston, argues that the modern world is incompatible with the Confucian spirit because the latter advocates stability and harmony, but the former promotes competition and creation.

On the contrary, however, many scholars have affirmed the value of Confucian culture. The creator of the Dissipative Structure theory has appreciated Confucianism. He argues that modern science should emphasize the combination of Western science characterized by experiments, analysis and measuring formulas and traditional Chinese philosophy. Professor An Bingzhou, the leader of the Korean Confucianism Association, said: "It is the Confucianist thought that promoted the modernization and economic development of Korea. The success of the East Asian economy and the rise of some East Asian countries also demonstrated its vitality and inner value" (*Guang Ming Daily*, October 6, 1994). Confucian culture is not only the original Confucianism of the pre-Qin Dynasty, but also the historical cultural spirit from the Qin Dynasty and Han Dynasty to the Ming and Qing Dynasty together with the thought of Buddhism, Taoism, Fohism, and Mohism. Undoubtedly, many aspects of these traditions are incompatible with modernization, but most of the traditions can coexist with modernization. For instance, humane spirit, the emphasis on harmony, the optimistic outlook of consideration of oneself and others, the cultivation of one's morality combined with self- and other-discipline, all constitute part of the Chinese national spirit and complement modern civilization.

From the perspective of management, the essence of Confucianism is of great value to the theory and practice of modern management. The opposition of employers and employees is incompatible with the development of modern management and the demands of market competition. The emphasis of the new management pattern is not control, but the concern for employees in their enterprises and the creation of "a relaxed culture". The goal of an enterprise is to create a harmonious atmosphere between administrators and workers, which will lead to the employees' passionate dedication and production, and service will no longer be a kind of rational behavior but a job full of love. In this environment, human resource is the key factor in the success of an enterprise. This management thought and pattern is consistent with the spirit of Confucianism, which is demonstrated in the following respects:

The first is the humanism of man being most important and focused on love for others. The competition of modern enterprises, with the competition for human resources and the management of enterprises, are also humanized. The idea of humanism is consistent with the spirit of Confucianism. Xun Zi, a great ancient thinker, argued "Man can breathe, live and is full of knowledge and justice, so he is superior in the world" (Xun Zi, *Imperial System*). Meng Zi, another great thinker, advocated love and protection of people. Confucius promoted the idea of loving others. He thought that if one could not love others, one could not be a person, less likely be a kind person. When his disciple, Fan Chi, asked what he meant by "kindness", he said: "to love others". "A real kind person is the one that cares for the old, wins trust from friends and attachment from children" (*The Analects of Confucius, Gong zhi chang*). In this way, harmony can exist among people. The creator of "Guan Xue," Zhang Zai said, "Love

begins from your relatives, and then to others” (*Heng Qu, Book of Changes, Book 1*). In general, it is to love everybody, which is “to benefit mankind and do good to the poor, to your society, and to the whole world!” (*Zheng meng: zhi dang*). Although Confucian benevolence has its limitations because of the different times, it is in essence humanitarian. Compared with Western humanitarianism, the benevolence of Confucianism is more practical. It suggests that people love others in action. The adoption of it in management requires that the administrators show their love for the employees, and that a favorable working environment be created in which a harmonious relationship and a cooperative and optimistic company culture be cultivated. This kind of culture can be found in many examples at home and abroad. The emotional investments include attention and love shown to the workers as well as their families, for birthdays, weddings and funerals. There are tremendous potential benefits. In general, this ancient thought is full of humanism and has proven to be of great value in the management practices of East and the West.

The second is the idea of holism and harmony. There is an instruction in Confucianism to construct order and entirety. Harmony here means the neutralization of conflicts and contradictions. Confucianism proposes a series of unique measures and demands in accordance with different objectives to fulfill the overall goals. The concept “*Guo Jia*”, “country” in English, has two holistic categories: “country” and “family”. “*Jia*” refers to families, and “*Guo*” to country. The ultimate goal is to make the family harmonious and the country prosperous. To fulfill the former goal, the Confucian doctrine of filial piety and love and respect for one’s brothers and sisters should be observed. As to the latter one, people should submit themselves to the hierarchy and principles between the monarch and his subjects; this is the first item in the three cardinal guides¹ of Royalism. The enforcement of feudal hierarchy is meaningless today, but the thought of holism and harmony and the way to achieve the order of the internal factors and the whole are still significant to modern management. Under the modern situation of mass production with its elaborate divisions of specialized work, diverse objective system, and different values, how to coordinate the rational and irrational ways to achieve the overall goal is the key part of modern management and strategy design. Confucianism, especially its ethical spirit, will be of practical value to coordinate the relationship between the inner and outer organizations, the employers and employees, and average people in general.

The third is the means and rules of competition. Many foreign scholars who have remarked on Confucianism invariably insist that Confucianism is incompatible with competition in modern society. In fact, Confucianism has never rejected competition. The point is that it was confined by its particular time and problems in it. Confucius lived at a critical time in China when proprieties no longer existed, wars broke out frequently, and people lived miserably, so he had to go from country to country to advocate reform of society. In addition, desires are the origin of

competition. Many Confucians do not deny human desires, but hold that desires should be controlled and directed. People should cultivate themselves, handle affairs and administer things with humanism. The so-called “five constant virtues”, namely benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and fidelity, have profound philosophical significance to the competition strategy of modern management. In tough market competition, the most important thing is not to emphasize competition, but to regulate competition. Many virtues of Confucianism are important to regulate and rationalize competition, which can be regarded as the rules. For instance, “benevolence” means taking one’s competitive opponents as friends and companions. Just like the relationships between human beings and other creatures who compete against each other for survival, if there are no other creatures, there are no human beings. “Righteousness” means being honest. Companies should keep their word; otherwise they will lose not only their market, but people’s faith. “Propriety” is necessary to enhance the image and competitive power of enterprises. “Wisdom” refers to resourcefulness and skillfulness in competition, and so swindling is excluded. Such ideas and virtues are helpful to the construction of a rational competition system.

The fourth is the emphasis on the “humanistic spirit”. Confucian culture attend to humanism. (But it will interfere with the formation of scientific thought and hold back scientific technology if pushed to an extreme. This is a major limitation of Confucianism.) With the development of modern science and economy, people have to face such problems as impatience and anxiety caused by the desires and the distortion of human nature. These problems stick out in the construction of enterprises, and especially their culture in China. If the ideology, image and behavior of a company’s culture are not based on a humanist spirit, the company cannot achieve its goals. The humanist spirit of Confucian culture includes anthropological ideas, the ethical tradition of mind cultivation, the spirit of being ambitious and the matter-of-fact attitude, positive outlook, a relationship of care for oneself and others, and the consciousness of connecting an individual’s life with family, community and society. It will have a profound influence on China’s enterprises and their development if the humanist spirit is combined with the modern spirit and offered a scientific explanation.

Despite the great cultural differences between the Confucian spirit and Western anthropological ideas, we can find similarities from the above analysis. Instead of being regarded as ends not means, people should be treated according to principles of humanism. The link between the Western anthropological ideas and the Eastern Confucian culture has embodied the tendency of the development of the modern society and basic aspects of the modern management. In conclusion, it is a direction for our future research to seek the support of modern enterprise management and establish an enterprise management culture based on the foundation of the national culture, and all this in order to ensure a greater vitality.

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NOTE

¹ The three cardinal guides (ruler guides subject, father guides son, and husband guides wife) and the five constant virtues (benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and fidelity) as specified in the feudal ethical code.

CHAPTER XXX

OPENNESS TO THE OTHER IN CHINESE PHILOSOPHY: ZHU XI AS AN EXAMPLE OF ANALYSIS

VINCENT SHEN

OPENNESS TO THE OTHER

A “spirit of strangification”, etymologically speaking, means the act of going outside of one’s self to the other, to strangers. In this paper I will focus on Zhu Xi, the greatest Chinese philosopher in the 12th century, as my example of analysis. The objective is to identify some resources of “openness to the other” in Chinese philosophy, here through Zhu Xi, and to examine its limitations and possible remedies.

A person for the Other manifests intellectual generosity to others and relentless interest in the religious dimension of all cultural heritages exemplify for us an altruistic ethics and a virtue of religiosity. This gives us a new clue to understand and reinterpret the religious thought of Zhu Xi. We could point out here that Zhu Xi’s interest in natural knowledge presupposes his recognition of the alterity of nature that invites the human being to go out of himself and conduct investigations on it. In his ethical life and ethical theory there exists always recognition of the Other and gratitude toward others. Last but not least, Zhu Xi has also some spiritual religiosity and openness to the Ultimate Reality. We will come back to all these a bit later.

Especially, this paper will rethink Zhu Xi’s religious thought by reference to his concept of “Ultimate Other”. We will begin by situating Zhu Xi’s relation with the Other in the context of his natural knowledge and ethical relation, and then enter the world of his religious thought. Zhu Xi’s interest in natural knowledge, to be understood in the philosophical context of his notion of “investigation of things to extend knowledge”, is in fact recognition of the principles inside the otherness of things. The investigation of things is a process of detouring which, by first going outside of one’s self to the other, and then by truly knowing the other, comes back to one’s own self. In his ethical life, Zhu Xi’s relation with his significant others shows us his deep respect and thankfulness to other persons. But, a question in the philosophy of religion might emerge here: did this concern with the Other and curiosity of the Other bring Zhu Xi to an inquiry of the Ultimate Other? This is the question we will ask in the end of this short paper.

The concept of “the Other” is proposed by French post-modern thinkers such as Levinas, Derrida and Deleuze, in order to replace the

priority of “subjectivity” in modern times – the Cartesian “*Je pense, donc je suis*” which has laid the foundation of modernity. This is the background out of which I ask the question whether or not there is a dimension of the Other in Zhu Xi’s philosophy. My concern is not to demand something beyond Zhu Xi’s times but rather to inquire about something “universalizable”¹ from Zhu Xi’s philosophy which might lead his ideas beyond his own time and bring us, indeed, some sort of *philosophia perennis* in his thought.

But, on the other hand, we are sometimes struck by the frivolity in the postmodern currents of thought. For me, instead of any philosophical frivolity, the systematic character of a philosophy represents its responsibility in the process of thinking. Zhu Xi, as a systematic thinker in medieval China, must have something to say for the post-modern. Also, in some sense, to be post-modern, because of its discontent of modernity, is to return to the pre-modern, that is, to return to a certain mediaeval ethos and spirituality. This is somehow true on the religious level.

The concept of the Other developed by Deleuze, Derrida and Levinas puts their emphasis much more on the ethical and religious dimensions of the Other, all in neglecting Nature as the Other. But without taking nature as the Other, humankind has been self-enclosed in its own subjectivity since the dawn of modernity, these tending to dominate nature and causing the environmental problems of our day. Modernity has exploited and dominated nature and caused the ecological crisis and is environmental catastrophe. That is why nature is also a component of the Other constituted of nature, the other people and finally the Ultimate Other in the religious realm.

THE OTHER IN ZHU XI’S NATURAL KNOWLEDGE

Let us begin by analyzing the problem of the Other in Zhu Xi’s natural knowledge and ethical life. Though living in the 12th century, Zhu Xi made himself well acquainted with quite a lot of natural knowledge. In fact, we can say that mediaeval China’s knowledge of nature and its philosophical foundation could be said to have been synthesized in Zhu Xi’s works. We should notice that he lived in a time much earlier to Western medieval thinkers such as Robert Grosseteste (1175-1253), Roger Bacon (1210-1292), Albert the Great (1200-1280), St. Bonaventura (1217-1274) and St. Thomas of Aquinas (1225-1274). Therefore it would be unfair to judge his natural knowledge by Western science, especially by the standard of Western modern science.

From Zhu Xi’s *Collected Writings and Classified Conversations*, we can read his rich natural knowledge in the domain of calendrical astronomy, botany, music and harmonics, geomancy, medicine ...etc. Also he liked to discuss with his disciples matters of natural knowledge, sometimes for the sake of natural knowledge itself, sometimes for explaining related matters in Chinese classical scriptures. Some of his

observations on natural phenomena were quite interesting and true. For example, Zhu Xi said, "Mountains were formed by the elevation of sea bottom", then he proceeded to prove it by the presence of seashells on top of mountains, in saying that "On high mountains there were quite often seen shells of oyster and shellfish in the rocks. These rocks must be earth in ancient times, and those shells from oysters and shellfish in the water. The lower becomes the higher, the softer become the harder. This phenomenon is worthy of pondering upon, for these facts can be verified."² On this particular case, Joseph Needham admires Zhu Xi in saying that, "Zhu Xi recognized the fact that the mountains had been elevated since the day when the shells of the living animals had been buried in the soft mud of the sea-bottom."³ It should be noticed that Zhu Xi's remarks here concern mountain formation as well as discovery of sea animal fossils. Apart from these, Zhu Xi also observed correctly that the source of moonlight was from the sun and he correctly, from today's point of view, explained the phenomena of tides, eclipse of sun and moon, etc.

Zhu Xi was familiar with ancient Chinese cosmological texts and the works of Shao Yong, Su Song, Shen Gua, Cai Yuanding and his two sons, etc., who wrote on calendrical astronomy and other natural knowledge. His cosmological vision might be of metaphysical rather than scientific character, it therefore should be seen, as to natural knowledge, merely as hypothesis rather than as sure natural knowledge. For example, Zhu Xi's saying in the *Classified Conversations* that beyond heaven there lies supreme empty void and that the shape of heaven and earth is like a bird's egg. In what sense can we call this Zhu Xi's natural knowledge? This could at best be seen merely as a higher order hypothesis. But even on this level, Zhu Xi has shown his rationality by correcting the previous hypotheses, such as the Hemisphere Dome hypothesis (the Gai-tian teaching), the Celestial Sphere hypothesis (the Hun-tian teaching) and the Infinite Empty Space hypothesis (the Xuan-ye teaching) in referring to their possibility of modelization. He accepted the Celestial Sphere hypothesis because this was already modeled in the armillary sphere of Zhang Heng. Yet he refused to accept the Hemisphere Dome hypothesis because it could not be modeled. Even if one tried to modelize it in the form of an umbrella, this would not work because an umbrella could not cover the whole hemisphere and the *qi* or winds would leak from the uncovered parts. This way of testing hypothesis by models is quite a rational way of thinking. In fact what Zhu Xi proposed was the Celestial Sphere hypothesis in combination with the teaching of infinite empty space by his concept of non-substantial Heaven. He corrected Zhang Heng, a proponent of the Celestial Sphere hypothesis, who said that the earth was surrounded by water, first by saying that the earth was surrounded by *qi*, and second by saying that the Heaven was *qi* and non-substantial. Though what he sustained was the outmoded earth-centered vision of the universe, he was admired by Joseph Needham for having a certain concept of infinite space in saying that Heaven is non-substantial. Joseph Needham said, "Finally,

Zhu Xi gave to these views his great philosophical authority – the Heavens, he said, are bodiless and empty (*t'ien wu t'i*).⁴

But, even if Zhu Xi was very interested in natural knowledge and his attitude was serious and rational, we have to say that he was not satisfied with the technical dimension of natural knowledge and he preferred deeper understanding in exhausting the principles of all things and having a holistic vision of reality. In fact, his interest in natural knowledge should be understood in the philosophical context of his notion of “investigation of things to extend knowledge”. For Zhu Xi, *li*, which meant principle, reason or order...etc, could be found in everything, and was worthy of investigation. He said, “As high as the Ultimate Infinite, the Great Ultimate, and as low as one herb, one tree, as tiny as one insect, each has their principle.... If we leave one thing not investigated, then we are in lack of one principle.”⁵ According to my interpretation, the object of Zhu Xi’s investigation of things was the principle existing in other things, which presupposed certain “otherness” of things and their principles, whereas the attainment of knowledge would include knowledge of self and knowledge of others, or better said, return to oneself via the detour of the other, so that one might finally get sudden penetration into the nature of things and attain transparent self-knowledge. That is to say, investigation of things is a process of detouring that, by first going outside of one’s self to the other and by knowing the Other, one could finally come back to one’s own self.

The Other in Zhu Xi’s Ethical Life

Yet, the formation of one’s self is always in relation with other people in ethical life. If human intellectual curiosity leads us to go outside of ourselves to a relentless concern with nature, ethical life is the way we live with the Other in respecting the otherness of other people and by fulfilling the goodness of life together with them. Without the Other and without interaction with the Other there will be no ethical life. If in one’s own life there is only concern with one’s self and no concern with the Other, this kind of life cannot be said to be ethical. Here, in this short section, I would like to discuss the ethical life of Zhu Xi rather than his ethical theory.

As we said before, the relation with the Other might have been a special feature of Zhu Xi in comparison with other idealist Confucians such as Lu Xiangsan and Wang Yangming. But how was the relation with the Other fulfilled in his ethical life? We can take here the example of Zhu Xi’s writing in which he was expressing his gratitude to his significant others.

Contrary to what some might presume that Zhu Xi’s philosophical system was an invention of his own without substantial influence from others, even without influence from his Master, Li Yenping, in fact Zhu Xi was quite conscious of his relation with others and recognized others’ positive influence on himself. In his *Collected Writings and Classified Conversations* we find a lot of texts in which he expressed gratitude to

others. For example, his gratitude to the emperor, who allowed him the possibility to realize his political ambition and to put into practice his ideas in his office and not to become a mere scholar useless to society. Zhu Xi wrote, "Your subject has been, since long years, receiving your sage recognition, despite my mediocrity and clumsiness. This is especially the case in recent two years, when what I have received from your grace is doubled from the past...my gratitude is much deeper than whatever I can express by any language."⁶ Also we find that Zhu Xi in many places expressed gratitude to his colleagues or higher officials who had supported him in political struggles and assisted him in passing through critical dangers. For example, he wrote to a high officer that "I am thankful in my whole life to your generous act of conserving my life and will never forget."⁷

More important for Zhu Xi was his relation with his teacher Li Yenping and his scholarly friends who had inspired him by teaching him or by discussing with him matters of interest to him. Zhu Xi in the beginning did not understand much his master's teaching, but later he appreciated and became deeply thankful to his master. What Li Yenping had taught him was not to talk about abstract principles but to face the irreducible Other that appeared in everyday life, no matter it be a human person, things or events, all had to be treated sincerely and properly.⁸ For Li Yenping, it was easy to feel the humanness within oneself, but more difficult to realize it in dealing properly with different things and different persons. Li Yenping even went so far as to say that only in treating others properly in each one's own difference and irreducible otherness could be shown the true bearing of a Confucian. In other words, Li Yenping emphasized the realization of Confucian value in concrete situations. For this, one should, on the one hand, go outside of one's self in order to discover different things and events in their distinctive features. On the other hand, one should be able to realize Confucian value in the multiplicity and difference of things. This was essentially Li Yenping's understanding of Cheng Yi's "Principle is one, yet manifestations are many."

In the beginning, it was hard for Zhu Xi to understand his master, because in his early intellectual life, Zhu Xi was more interested in studying texts and their meaning,⁹ but not in the practical context as in the case with his Master Li Yenping. That was the reason why he did not learn much at that period of time from Li. It was not until he took responsibility for the office of Tong An and thereby had the chance to face the reality of the practical context that he began to appreciate better his master.¹⁰ After the death of his master, Zhu Xi's regretted not having understood much earlier his master, and his gratitude towards his master grew unceasingly with his age. This could be shown in many of his writings,¹¹ and his writings in memory of his master, where we find sentences such as, "Xi has received your education long since and for me your teaching is profound and your grace deep."¹²

Concerning Zhu Xi's expression of thankfulness to his friends, we will pick up here only the case of Zhang Jingfu with whom Zhu Xi was in intensive discussion and felt enlightened by their conversations. Zhu Xi wrote to Zhang to thank him for his enlightenment, saying that "If not by your going directly to the point and revealing my self-enclosure with your admonition in patience, never giving me up because of my stupidity, how can I understand up to this point? How lucky I am! My pen is not enough for saying thank you."¹³

We find a lot of this kind of writings expressing his gratitude to others, which shows that Zhu Xi is an ethical person in his own life. We could say that to be positively influenced or affected by others, or to receive gifts from other's generosity, is in itself an existential joy, whereas to be able to express one's gratitude to others would just redouble this joy. This is to say that affection and gratitude constitute a source of creativity in our ethical life.¹⁴ Zhu Xi in receiving positive influences from others and in giving thanks for what he had received, had realized his own self in relation to the Other.

For Zhu Xi, our knowledge of nature and knowledge of one's self could be related and eventually unified. In our cognitive process, we know other things first before we have self-awareness and knowledge of ourselves. For Zhu Xi, one should go unceasingly outside of oneself to the other and investigate things in order to grasp the principles therein and then come back to self-understanding thereby. One could return to the knowledge of one's self by way of knowing other things, or in Zhu Xi's terms, in investigating one thing today and another thing tomorrow, one could finally understand all things as if by a sudden enlightenment. This presupposes, philosophically, a certain homogeneity, relatedness and responsiveness between the principle of physical nature and the principle of human nature, by which they become compatible and interpenetrable. These might be the presupposition of Zhu Xi, in reason of which his tendency to search for the sameness and the unity among all things would overwhelm his tendency to search for difference among things and to let the others be themselves. Here we may find certain limitation in Zhu Xi's concept of the other, both in his natural knowledge and his ethical philosophy.

ZHU XI'S NON-SUBSTANTIALIST VISION OF GHOSTS AND SPIRITS

But, a question essential to our rethinking Zhu Xi's religious thought is: did his concern with the Other and his curiosity of the Other bring him to an inquiry of the Ultimate Other? To say it briefly, Zhu Xi's Ultimate Reality is *li*, which means rational principle and reason. But this is not the Ultimate Other, which has always a sense of being hidden and unfathomable.

Concerning religious matters, Zhu Xi had discussed the phenomena of ghosts and spirits (*guei-sheng*), and he was very concerned with religious

feeling. But the philosophical system he achieved under the core concepts of *li* and *qi* was, as I see it now, more a system of immanence than that of transcendence. His interpretation of the Great Ultimate as *li* deprived his concept of the Ultimate Reality of the Ultimate Other, though not without openness to it. Also he tended to explain the phenomena of ghosts and spirits by appealing to his theory of *qi*. Although we would not go so far as to say that Zhu Xi was without an openness to the Ultimate Other, his rational system, finally speaking, brought him to a self-consistent and self-reliant system of thought with a tendency to reduce the Ultimate Other to two explanatory elements within his system, rather than allowing its ambiguity and unfathomability, say its otherness.

Zhu Xi would look at ghosts and spirits as belonging to natural phenomena and interpret their meaning by his theory of *qi*. For Zhu Xi, the phenomena of ghosts and spirits were but the stretching and contracting of *qi* according to the rhythmic change of *yin* and *yang*. He said, "Ghosts and spirits are nothing but the growth and diminution of *yin* and *yang*." Sometimes Zhu Xi saw ghosts and spirits as the stretching and contraction of *qi*. He said, "Ghost and spirit are but *qi*, those which stretch and contract, come and go are but *qi*." More specifically, the stretching of *qi* is spirit, whereas the contraction of *qi* is ghost. He said, "Spirit means to stretch (*shen* [a homophone]), whereas ghost means contract."¹⁵ In this sense, they belong to natural phenomena and should not be seen as the Ultimate Reality.

Further, Zhu Xi would see ghosts and spirits as more sophisticated phenomena in the process of becoming of *qi*'s stretching and contracting, coming and going, movement and rest, etc. He said, "Wind and rain, dew and thunder, sun and moon, day and night, all these are traces of ghosts and spirits, ... they are either beings or non-beings, coming or going, concentrating or dispersing. Besides, there are cases in which one prays and is responded to, one beseeches and gets what one wants, and these are also called ghosts and spirits, the principle of them is all the same. All events in the world appear under the same principle, but they might be different in being sophisticated or raw, big or small."¹⁶ In general, we could say that Zhu Xi looked at the problem of ghosts and spirits from the becoming of *qi*. Instead of supposing ghost and spirit to be sorts of substances, he would explain them in terms of the non-substantialist principle of *qi*'s becoming, saying that the concentration and dispersion of *qi* had its mysterious and sophisticated traces. The concentration of *qi* explained the emergence of life, whereas its dispersion explained the happening of death. The phenomenon of ghost could be understood as the returning of *qi* once concentrated and dispersed. Although *qi* had its period of concentration and its period of dispersion, the principle of its concentration and dispersion was always there and could be evoked to re-appear again. Zhu Xi even said that the descendants, through sincerity of prayer and ritual in sacrificial offerings, could feel and respond to the presence of the spirits of their ancestry. The reason for this consisted in the fact that the principle by which

the *qi* of their ancestry once concentrated and dispersed existed always. By reason of their homogeneity and responsiveness, descendants could have mutual affective response with them because of the sincerity and piety of their sacrifices. Zhuxi said,

Human being and all things share the same *qi* under Heaven and earth. When *qi* concentrates, there is human life; when it disperses, there it becomes ghosts. But even when *qi* is dispersed, its rhythmic change by *yin* and *yang* in the universe continues to reproduce itself unceasingly. The spirits and souls of ancestry though dispersed, their descendants' souls and spirits still keep some resemblance with it. Therefore, when following the *li* of sacrificial offerings, by doing it with sincerity and respect, then the souls of ancestry could be attained. This kind of thing is hard to say. When one sees it seemingly going to become nothing after being dispersed, yet when one can do it with the highest sincerity and respect, then one can still feel and achieve it again. The reason for this is that its principle exists always there.¹⁷

In short, there is the principle of concentration and dispersion of *qi*, but there is no substance of ghosts and spirits. Zhu Xi did not look on the existence of ghosts and spirits from a substantialist point of view. Instead, he took a non-substantialist position and explained them with his rationalist system, consisting of his theory of *li* and *qi*. For him, ghosts and spirits were but manifestations of the principle of concentration and dispersion, stretching and contracting, movement and rest, by which the homogeneous *qi* of descendants could attain and render stretched again the dispersed *qi* of their ancestry with sincerity and respect.

Ruler of the Universe, Ultimate Reality and the Ultimate Other

Concerning whether or not there is a spiritual ruler of Heaven and Earth, Zhu Xi took the same non-substantialist position. He did not presume the existence of a spiritual substance governing the whole universe. Some one asked him, "Is the Mind of Heaven and Earth spiritually intelligent or not? Or is it merely apathetically taking no action?" Zhu Xi answered, "We should not say that the Mind of Heaven and Earth is not spiritually intelligent, but it does not think and deliberate as a human being does."¹⁸ On the other hand, Zhu Xi took *li* as the Ultimate Reality, and it is allowable for him to call *li* the Ruler of Heaven and Earth. Here it is clear that he tries to avoid any anthropomorphic vision of the Mind of the universe. He said, "The so called Mind inherently has the meaning of rulership, but what we call ruler here is but the principle, not that there is a principle outside of the Mind or a Mind outside of the principle."¹⁹ And again, "The so-called *di*

(God on high) is the principle taking the role as ruler.”²⁰ For Zhu Xi, the non-substantial *li*, or principle was the ruler of the universe. *Li* was a sort of non-substantial Ultimate Reality. But he was against any vision that looked on *li* as a kind of intelligent person that could think and judge the good and evil in the world. He said, “The blue sky on high moves circularly without end...we cannot say there is someone who is judging evil deeds up there; although we cannot say there is no ruler up there, either.”²¹ What Zhu Xi would like to say here is: in the universe, there is some non-substantial, non-personal ruler, which is the *li*, which is not a personal God.

For Zhu Xi, *li* was the Great Ultimate; therefore it represented for him the Ultimate Reality. But for us, recognizing the *li* as Ultimate Reality does not mean unambiguously that there is an Ultimate Other. We have to distinguish “Ultimate Reality” from “Ultimate Other”. In all religion and philosophy there is some sort of Ultimate Reality, like the Heaven in Confucianism, the Dao in Daoism, the emptiness in Buddhism, God in Christianity...etc. But what we mean by “Ultimate Other” is more like a Mysteriously Mysterious Mystery, a *Deus Absconditus* or Hidden God, which cannot be seen as a personal God or as any human construction. The Ultimate Other, even when revealing itself to us, keeps always some alterity, some unrevealedness, some unfathomability. For Zhu Xi, *li* was the Ultimate Reality, but not the Ultimate Other.

Nevertheless, Zhu Xi, in his younger days, could be said to have been attracted by the Ultimate Other. According to the *History of the Song Dynasty*, when Zhu Xi began to talk as a child, once his father pointed to the sky and told Zhu Xi, “That is Heaven”. To that Zhu Xi responded, “What is there beyond Heaven?” So it seemed that he was attracted by an Ultimate Other in his younger days. Later, when he gave commentary to Zhou Dunyi’s *Diagram of Taiji* (Great Ultimate), he would read right from its beginning sentence “the Infinite Ultimate therefore the Great Ultimate”. All these showed that Zhu Xi was open to the Ultimate Other. But his final philosophical system was achieved through the building up of his theory of *li* and *qi*, and his interpretation of the Great Ultimate as *li*. As Julia Ching has pointed out, “The concept of the Great Ultimate (*taiji*) marks the climax of Zhu’s philosophical system ... the concept became famous especially with his own contributions, which transformed its meaning by relating it to *li* and *chi*.”²² Although Zhu Xi’s concept of the Great Ultimate was not totally deprived of openness to the Ultimate Other, his philosophical system was a system of immanence, in which *li* served as the Ultimate Reality and there was no place for the Ultimate Other.

Yet we should notice here that, philosophically speaking, even the term “Great Ultimate” in Zhu Xi was not totally without ambiguity. Sometimes, Zhu Xi meant by “Great Ultimate” the “Ultimate Reality”, whereas those particular principles of all other concrete beings such as natural beings and human beings would be seen merely as participative manifestations of the Great Ultimate. The relation between particular principles of particular beings and the Great Ultimate, as Zhu Xi put it

metaphorically, was like the moon itself and all moons reflected on ten thousand rivers. This kind of part-whole relation was expressed in the saying that “Principle is one, yet manifestations are many.” As to particular manifestations, each human being and each natural being had their own principle which became thereby the nature of that particular being. As to the totality, the whole universe had a common principle seen as the Ultimate Reality by Zhu Xi. On this level, Zhu Xi looked on the principle as the Great Ultimate, taking therefore *li* or principle as the Ultimate Reality. Normally Zhu Xi did not call particular principles the Great Ultimate, but, since they were all principles, no matter the particular one or the common one, Zhu Xi sometimes would confuse the common principle with particular principles and said, “Each person is a Great Ultimate, each thing is a Ultimate Great.”

Concerning the relation between *li* and *qi*, simply put, first, we can say that *li* belongs to the realm of the metaphysical, whereas *qi* belongs to the realm of the physical; which means they have different ontological status. Theoretically speaking, *li* could exist without *qi*, even in a case when the physical world is destroyed, *li* still could give birth to another universe by its own power.²³ Second, in the real cosmic process, *li* could not operate without *qi*. On the contrary, *li* in harmony with *qi* gives birth to concrete beings. Zhu Xi would say that, “*li* operates by attaching itself to the *qi*”.²⁴

Wrapping up, we can say that, although Zhu Xi did not exclude certain openness to the Ultimate Other, what he himself had achieved at the end was a philosophical system of immanence built upon *li* and *qi*. His interpretation of the Great Ultimate, though integrated the Ultimate Reality into his system and let it become the leading core of his system, but in the meanwhile he had lost sight of the otherness of the other or the hiddenness and the unfathomability of the Ultimate Other. Concerning the relation of human being with the Ultimate Other, we should always keep an eye on both the manifested side and the unrevealed side of the Ultimate Reality.

CONCLUSION

Zhu Xi explains natural phenomena by appealing to his own theory of *li* and *qi* which ultimately presupposes the homogeneity, the relatedness and the responsiveness of all things, making thereby all things and their *raison d’êtres* to be mutually compatible and penetrable. That is why, by investigating unceasingly all things, one could attain at the end self-enlightenment. Homogeneity, relatedness and responsiveness, all these three characterize Zhu Xi’s vision of the world, both physical and human. Because of these presuppositions, he has the tendency to know the unity of things rather than their differences. Because of them, his investigation of things might lead to the unity of all things without paying enough attention to their difference and their alterity. Today, how to promote the respect of difference among things, the generosity towards the Other and the liberality of letting others be themselves is an essential question for the future

development of Chinese culture. In other words, how to open the dimension of the Other in Chinese culture and the generosity towards the Other would be the most important task of Chinese culture.

In this respect, George McLean's enthusiasm for the Other is very inspiring. I presume that his openness and generosity to the other should come from the tradition of Christianity, which could be seen as a religion for the Other *par excellence*. In Christianity, God has created the world by an act of generosity, and Christ has died for the redemption of humankind.

Unfortunately, since Christianity was introduced to China at the end of the 16th century, this has not been well understood. Under the influence of the onto-ousio-theological constitution of metaphysics, Christian theology tends to understand the Ultimate Other as a divine substance, which is not compatible with the non-substantial vision of Ultimate Reality as exemplified by Zhu Xi's religious thought. Also, the concept of God as divine substance offers no help to China's openness to an Ultimate Other. This could be seen from Matteo Ricci's criticism of Zhu Xi when Ricci introduced Christianity to China after his arrival there in 1583. Matteo Ricci criticized Zhu Xi's notion "The Great Ultimate is *li*", by explicitly referring to Aristotle's concept of substance and accidents. He said that Zhu Xi's *li* was but a kind of accident, and therefore could not give birth to all things. As only substance can give birth to anything, God, as the first cause of all things, must be a substance and not an accident. For Matteo Ricci, God was the first Substance, the highest Substance and the first Cause. All these are quite similar to what Heidegger calls the onto-theological constitution of metaphysics,²⁵ or what I myself in *After Physics* term the "onto-ousio-theo-logical" concept of God. This concept of God is very compatible with the idea of God as the Grand Geometer, God the Great Horologist, who gives the whole world its ultimate rationality and organization. This line of thinking God constitutes a totally rational world picture, giving support to the development of rational science and rationalistic ethics.

Yet, in comparison with the world vision of Man-Heaven inner-connectedness sustained by most schools of Chinese philosophy, which sees Heaven as within the dynamism towards divine perfection in human nature, this onto-ousio-theo-logical concept of God would appear too weak to encourage and warm the human spirit. In any case, both the rational concept of God and the inner-connected concept of Man-and-Heaven have led finally to immanentism, or negligence of the Ultimate Other.

Summing up, we can say that the example of Zhu Xi reveals on the levels of natural knowledge and ethical life, his openness to the other and brings him to investigate nature and to pay respect and gratitude to others. Also, through going outside of oneself and going towards the other, one can attain self-knowledge, even self-enlightenment. But I would point out that this openness to the Other should proceed, even unceasingly, towards the Ultimate Other, otherwise both science and ethics would be finally self-enclosed within a system of immanence. The dynamism of rationalist

attitude at its best could only build a system of immanence without further self-transcendence. Without unceasing openness to the Ultimate Other, human religious feeling might be simply expressing a passionate feeling within the boundary of immanence.

We should say that generosity towards the Other constitutes the essence of ethical life, and the query for the Ultimate Other constitutes the essence of religious life. A rational system might appear crystal clear to human intellect, but never be able to catch the ambiguity of Reality Itself, which reveals and hides in the meanwhile. Zhu Xi's interpretation of the Great Ultimate as *li*, though bringing thereby the Great Ultimate into his system, has the effect of missing the hidden dimension of the Ultimate Other, in relation to which a more reasonable and profound idea of religion could be found. The spirit of unconditional openness to the other and the ethical virtue of generosity to the other is the new cultural and ethical dynamism we should learn, not only for remedying the insufficiency of Zhu Xi's philosophy in particular, but also for Chinese philosophy and Chinese culture in general.

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NOTES

¹ I make the distinction between "universalizable" and "universal". I do not proclaim a universality pure and simple, rather I accept only "universalizability" in terms of the effort of strangification.

² Zhu Xi, *Classified Conversations* (in Chinese), Vol. 5, Chapter 94 (Beijing: Zhonghua Books Store, 1999), p. 19.

³ Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilization in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), Vol. III, p. 598

⁴ Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilization in China*, p. 221.

⁵ Zhu Xi, *Classified Conversations* (in Chinese), Vol. 15, in Book 1, (Beijing: Zhonghua Books Store, 1999), p. 295.

⁶ Zhu Xi, *Collected Writings*, Vol. 11 (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Press), pp. 1143-180.

⁷ Zhu Xi, *Collected Writings*, Vol. 25, pp. 1143-536.

⁸ Zhu Xi recalled Yenping once said to him, "You understand many things abstractly, but you have things facing you that you know nothing about. The Dao is not very sophisticated, just try to experience and understand it in the practical things of everyday life, you will see it by yourself" (my translation). A quotation by Chen Lai, *An Inquiry on Zhu Xi's Philosophy* (Taipei: Wenjin Press, 1990), p. 224.

⁹ Zhu Xi, *Collected Writings*, vol. 38, pp. 1144-92.

¹⁰ Zhu Xi, *Collected Writings*, vol. 40, pp. 1144-154.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 1144-15; see also *Collected Writings*, vol. 39, pp. 1144-111.

¹² Zhu Xi, *Collected Writings*, vol. 87, pp. 1146-40.

¹³ Zhu Xi, *Collected Writings*, vol. 32, pp. 1143-713.

¹⁴ Here the Chinese term *ganxie* 感謝 means both “being affected” and “gratitude”.

¹⁵ Zhu Xi, *Classified Conversations*, Vol. 3, in Book 1 (Beijing: Zhonghua Books Store, 1999), p. 34.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 34-35.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Julia Ching, *The Religious Thought of Chu Hsi* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 33.

²³ Zhu Xi, *Collected Writings*, Vol. 58, pp. 1145-4.

²⁴ Zhu Xi, *Classified Conversations*, Vol. 94, in Book 6, p. 4926.

²⁵ For Heidegger, ontology considers the most common aspect of all beings – their beingness, whereas theology considers God as the highest being serving as the first cause of all things. These two aspects make up an onto-theological constitution of metaphysics. See, Heidegger M., *Identity and Difference*, trans. by T. Stambaugh, (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), pp. 70-71. In my *After Physics – the Development of Western Metaphysics*, I have explored the development of Aristotle’s metaphysics in three moments: first as ontology, then as ousiology, and finally as theology. See, Vincent Shen, *After Physics – the Development of Western Metaphysics* (Taipei: Newton Publishing Co, 1987), pp. 116-130.

CHAPTER XXXI

SO-CALLED MODAL FREEDOM AND GUO XIANG'S THEORY OF PERIPATETICISM

HUANG SHENGPING

Guo Xiang was a famous Chinese philosopher in the Xi-Jin dynasty. In his main work, a commentary on Chuang Tzu, Guo Xiang developed Chuang Tzu's theory of peripateticism, and offered his own original explanation on. Through the argument, which is the self-transformation of the mysterious object in the situation of the mysterious unification, Guo Xiang very exactly summed up his whole philosophy and especially his theory of peripateticism. Peripateticism is modal freedom, and it is an important element in the ancient Chinese intellectuals' practice of freedom. Guo Xiang's theory of peripateticism is his embedded meditation on the "practice of freedom" in his own times (3rd-4th century C.E.). Through it, we can understand the inner meanings of the so-called modal freedom directly and typically.

A Brief Account of Modal Freedom

The ancient Chinese intellectuals have a tradition of retreat (*yin*) and ease (*yi*). This tradition, in my opinion, should be understood from the angle of modal freedom, and we also should understand so-called modal freedom from the angle of the retreat (*yin*) and ease (*yi*) tradition. In theory, both could be traced back to the thought of Chuang Tzu, a thinker of the pre-Qin dynasty.

In the first chapter of his work, Chuang Tzu illustrated his theory of peripateticism. To him, peripateticism mostly means the realization of people's highly immaterial existence, which can be gained only from one's coincidence with Tao. Tao, in Chuang Tzu, could be thought of as the macrocosmic entity of this natural world. So, coincidence with Tao, according to Chuang Tzu, means an absolute and pure form of transcendence from man's limited existence. As Chuang Tzu said, man can acquire a feeling of self-enjoyment and self-sufficiency in the process of practicing this sort of freedom, and this sort of peripateticism can be thought of as an example of so-called modal freedom.

Modal freedom, compared with rational freedom, has a special meaning. First, this kind of freedom can realize itself only in a harmonic situation. To evade hostile circumstances, man needs retreat (*yin*), while in concordant surroundings, man can relax and realize himself automatically, which is ease (*yi*). Retreat (*yin*) is the obligatory condition of ease (*yi*), while ease (*yi*) is the so-called modal freedom; secondly, this kind of

freedom is a state of self-transformation. In the process of this self-transformation, it is man's natural existence that is spontaneously realized. To realize his life naturally, man should not control or overindulge himself. The only thing he needs to do is relax, relaxing himself in the situation of unification; thirdly, this sort of freedom is a modal one. It emphasizes the existent feelings in the process of self-transformation, and is opposed to the rational cognition of itself or others. The idea of the modal freedom can be a useful conception for our study of the traditional theory of peripateticism.

THE SELF-TRANSFORMATION OF THE MYSTERIOUS OBJECT

During the period of the dynasties of Wei and Jin, especially in the times of the seven ZhuLin solons, the prevalence of Chuang Tzu among the intellectuals was prominent. Studying this trend, we find that the reason lay in the special demands of the intellectuals in that period. With Ji Kang and Ruan Ji as outstanding representatives, individual freedom became a deeply practical belief in many intellectuals' lives. The intellectuals' individual practice, on one hand, led to the generalization of individual Peripateticism, which is the essence of the so-called Wei-Jin poise; on the other hand, it also brought some serious problems. These problems, such as how to deal with vicious political realism when needed, how to deal with social liabilities while the individual is an officer, how to realize one's natural life really and truly, etc – all needed to be answered in that epoch.

Guo Xiang succeeded Ji Kang and Xiang Xiou and, in his Chuang Tzu commentary, sought to solve these problems synthetically. His theory, as said before, can be summed up in one phrase: the Self-transformation of the mysterious Object in the situation of the mysterious unification. The mysterious Object, in Guo Xiang's philosophy, according to careful differentiation, should not be thought of as politics or the ethical code, but as every unique object. As Guo Xiang said, these unique objects can realize themselves perfectly and spontaneously, which is so-called self-transformation. According to its own nature, such self-transformation can only be completed in the harmonic situation, and the concept of mysterious unification is used to describe the subtle and tacit agreements between objects. With self-enjoyment and self-sufficiency, in the situation of mysterious Unification, every unique object can realize itself respectively—this is the so-called peripateticism. Peripateticism is the model freedom. In Guo Xiang's theory, this kind of freedom can be divided into two sorts: one, the dependent, which belongs to the masses; and the other, the fully independent, which can be possessed only by the sage. To understand peripateticism completely, we need to analyze these two sorts of freedom respectively.

Dependent Peripateticism

The concept of modal freedom comes from the work of Professor

Cuei Da-Hua. In his study of the Chuang Tzu school, Cuei Da-Hua summarized Chuang Tzu's theory of peripateticism as modal freedom. He also compared modal freedom with rational freedom and with volitional freedom in detail. In his opinion, Chuang Tzu was describing the concept of freedom through the angle of individual experience. This sort of individual experience, which mainly is unburdened and ease-ful, can be called the modal one. Of course, as we have said, to Chuang Tzu, peripateticism mostly means the realization of people's highly immaterial existence.

In this paper, we agree with Cuei Da-Hua's idea of modal freedom, and also wish to broaden its application. For us, not only people's highly immaterial existence, but also their wholly natural existence, can realize itself respectively and spontaneously. During the process of realizing one's natural life, people can have a taste of the modal experience, a taste of joviality, enjoyment and self-sufficiency. Guo Xiang's theory of dependent peripateticism can offer a good account of our concept of so-called modal freedom.

On the question of the content of peripateticism, Guo Xiang stressed the coincidence with each thing's nature. As the bird's nature is based on the wing's flying ability, and while the horse's nature is its living happily on the grassland, the content of this nature is found in the natural and inherent existence of every unique object. The nature of every unique object, according to Guo Xiang, is unfeigned and self-contained, so in Guo Xiang's theory, it is the inherent and natural existence of every unique object that is realized, and the question is to realize it perfectly and truly. How can we arrive at this objective?

On the question of the realizing mechanism of peripateticism, Guo Xiang said:

Because the nature of every unique object is automatic, we say that it is active, genuine and veracious.

Every unique object realizes itself spontaneously, so it need not give thanks to others.

Heaven and Earth also run themselves automatically and involuntarily.

According to the above quotation, the realizing mechanism of every unique object is self-transformation. Self-transformation, in this place, means every object realizes itself firstly involuntarily, then automatically. Because it is involuntary, it can be automatic.

On the question of the property of peripateticism, Guo Xiang thought that it is a modal one. There is a taste of so-called self-beneficence in the process of self-transformation. As to this self-beneficence, Guo Xiang said:

Being harmonious, every object is self-beneficent.

Everyone is focused on self-benefit, so all are in a state of harmoniousness.

Obviously, in Guo Xiang's description, the taste of self-beneficence is joyous, harmonious and appropriate. This taste is not an irritant, but peaceful and gentle. Of course, joy in this process cannot be obtained by "minded" deeds. Its realization needs to be unintentional and spontaneous.

On the question of the condition of peripateticism, Guo Xiang pointed out that self-transformation needs to realize itself in the situation of unification. In harmful circumstances, the so-called unintentional and spontaneous actions are both impossible. For the little bird, the situation of mysterious unification is wood, while for the roc, the situation is the big herring pond. The little bird should not admire the roc for the big herring pond; it needs to be satisfied with its own nature and the small wood. So, the small wood is the condition of the little bird's peripateticism. With the little bird as a good example, the masses' peripateticism is dependent, for the nature of every unique object is limited, and the self-transformation of the masses can only be finished in a tacit and agreeable circumstance. But, compared to the masses' dependent peripateticism, the sage's nature is unlimited, and his self-transformation is fully independent.

Fully Independent Peripateticism

Fully independent peripateticism, compared to dependent peripateticism, has a special signification. In the Chuang Tzu commentary, Guo Xiang said:

For the sage, riding on Heaven and earth's regular trail is to conform to everything's natural existence, and reining up the six gases' differentiation is to wander in the road of transformation. He improvises around in this style, and the range will be boundless. No matter what is encountered, the sage is free. So his freedom is fully independent. If dependent, then either the roc's upswing or Lie Zi's springiness, would be limited. ...

Where, then, is the difference between the sage and the masses? The sticking point, obviously, is that the sage's peripateticism is independent, and his rambling is boundless. As we know, in Guo Xiang's eyes, according as the natures of the masses, all are self-sufficient; all have their situation of self-realization. In the situation of self-realization, the relations of objects are all tacit and concordant, and by reason of this, Guo Xiang also named the situation as the mysterious unification. It shows "unification," for the relations are all tacit and concordant; it is "mysterious," for such results are all on the basis of the finitude of every unique object. The natures of the masses all have their respective poles.

Their poles are all limited. They prescribe the realizing scope of the masses strictly. Within the scope, the relations are concordant; going beyond the limit, the relations are unconformable, and the subject will barge up against the dissident existences. Self-realization needs tacit and agreeable circumstances. As we said above, in a circumstance of harm, the so-called unintentional and spontaneous actions are both impossible.

But, for the sage, his pole is unlimited, and nothing harms him. In light of Guo Xiang's thinking, the pole of the sage is a sublime immaterial area. With this immaterial area as his nature, no matter what he encounters, the sage can have a harmonious relation with it. In other words, for the sage, any situation is one of unison, and the self-transformation of the sage is unlimited. Guo Xiang said:

The masses are all inclined to be superior to others, while the sage is in common with all others. For this reason, the sage will be the leader of the masses.

Everything has its contradictory existence, but for the sage, there is nothing contradictory to him.

To gain the sublime immaterial area, the sage needs to dispel first the idea of right and wrong, then any other idea, and then the idea of dispelling, till at last there is no difference between his dispelling and un-dispelling actions.

To teach the masses that they should dispel their immaterial bewilderment by the knowledge of truth.

Of course, as a sublime immaterial area, the sage's nature is mostly self-sufficient. In theory, this nature is congenital; but in practice, it is the result of an immaterial upgrading. Having this immaterial area as his nature, the inner-sage naturally becomes the outer-king that is political. During the period of the dynasty of Wei and Jin, because of the inclemency in the political weather, it is in this area that the intellectuals mostly perceived the sage of the circumstance. To avoid the harmfulness in politics, with Ji Kang and Ruan Ji as the outstanding representatives, the intellectuals mostly chose the road of retreat (*yin*) and ease (*yi*). Guo Xiang admitted that the road of retreat (*yin*) and ease (*yi*) is genuine, admitted that Ji Kang and Ruan Ji were the outstanding example of modal freedom, but also deepened the logic of this road, and thought that Ji Kang's and Ruan Ji's peripateticism were all dependent. Compared with their retreat from political areas, for the sage's peripateticism, there is no opposite object to limit his freedom. The sage's peripateticism could show itself prominently in any realm, and he needs mainly to practice his peripateticism in the political world.

The Realistic Significance of Guo Xiang's Theory of Peripateticism

Let us summarize Guo Xiang's theory of peripateticism:

First, Guo Xiang's theory of peripateticism is absolute. He thought that the modal mode should be exclusive. For this reason, he strongly argued against the rational "realizing manner" in man's world. As the rational realizing manner is based on the cognition and the grasping of the object of recognition, Guo Xiang denied the possibility and necessity of recognizing anything, especially of recognizing the realizing subject itself. Of course, since Chuang Tzu, peripateticism is a mode of modal freedom, and if freedom is achieved through rational deeds, then it is not peripateticism.

Secondly, Guo Xiang's theory of peripateticism is useful for our practice of freedom. For a long time, modal peripateticism has been a deep part of ancient Chinese intellectual tradition. Studying Guo Xiang's theory of peripateticism, then, can be helpful not only for understanding our predecessors, but for use as a reference in the field of our own practice of freedom. Man is a composite being. The ways of the practice of freedom also should be varied. We need to highly praise Guo Xiang's academic contribution to the development of the ancient theory of peripateticism; at the same time, we need also a level-headed and multifaceted analysis of his theory.

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CHAPTER XXXII

CULTURE, TRADITION, AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

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Humankind at the present juncture of time is passing through turmoil and facing a crisis, which is manifold and multi-dimensional. Humanity is stationed at a crossroads and is in a fix. On the one hand, there are marvels of science and technology that are bewitching and bewildering; on the other, there are the value-erosion, moral degeneration, and different types of deprivations leading to tensions, strife and sufferings. The ratiocinative human mind is faced with a dilemma as to how to respond to the present scenario. There is no doubt tremendous material progress, but has it been able to usher in the aspired peace and prosperity at the physical, mental and spiritual levels? Some people do have enormous means of material and mental comforts, but do they also not feel the evanescence of all this? The crux of the situation is that the present-day distracted humanity is suffering from exhaustion of spirit and languishing in the narrow and rigid confinements of ego-centrism, parochialism and disastrous materialistic consumerism. So long as one is entangled in the labyrinth of materialism, one does not feel the pinch of it. But the moment one gets out of it, one is exhausted and lost. It is a paradoxical feeling of having and not-having, likes and dislikes, seeking and shunning.

The notions of 'goodness' and 'Quality of Life' have been projected and nourished in different cultural traditions of the world, so that all that is true, good and beautiful, which is worth reckoning and emulating, may be brought together and synthesized for the pursuit of individual happiness, social progress, world peace and cosmic well-being. These are the ideals cherished by humankind at all times all over the world, but they have always eluded effective realization. In the context of the present day quest for globalization and universal harmony in the strife-ridden and divided world, such a renewed attempt may help in generating a conducive climate and congenial mind-set through proper and adequate education and other means of mass communication. Thought motivates action and good thoughts will certainly result in good deeds. It is pragmatic to live by ideals even though they may not be easily or fully realizable. They are not to be in the form of utopia, but attainable through human endeavor. Ideals need to be projected and pursued. There have been seers, sages, saints and knowledgeable persons in every known historical age and in every region, who have on the basis of their subliminal intuitions given us noble ideas and ideals for universal welfare. It is prudent to go by their precepts and practices that have eternal relevance and utility.

GOAL OF HUMAN LIFE AND THE COSMIC PROCESS

The pursuits of excellence, striving for betterment and attainment of quality of life have been perennial human concerns and aspirations. All human endeavors in diverse fields of culture and civilization have been directed towards realization of this goal. Freedom from imperfection and consequent suffering have been the chief motivating factors for all cognitive enterprises and technological advancements. Though every human being cherishes and strives for these and posits them as goal of life, their realization requires planned corporate efforts. It cannot be an individual enterprise. A single individual may work out a plan but its execution has to be collective. Moreover, this goal implies attainment of excellences and best possible quality of life not only of the individual but also of the entire cosmos. The two are interrelated and interdependent and constitute an organic whole, and therefore, also, it calls for collective efforts. This apart, one cannot attempt to realize a good quality of life for only an isolated individual, society, nation or region. It has to be a global vision and a universal realization without any prejudice to any one section of the universe. Everyone has to participate and partake in the fruits of this venture that is a collective enterprise. Everyone should be able to contribute by manifestation of their capabilities through a dynamic discovery of their potentials, being assisted in this process by the society and natural surroundings. So when we plan for social progress our outlook should be global, though our performance has to be at the local level. Genuine social progress consists in the realization of universal well-being, in a sense of care and concern for all, a feeling of oneness with all, an attitude of sharing and cooperating.

Nature of the Universe

The universe is an undivided whole. There is organic interdependence, cooperative partnership and supportive mutualism in community living. There is reciprocity between living beings and inanimate things. All living beings have to coexist in the universe but it has to be a regulated co-existence just like the nest of a bird wherein the young ones coexist in a regulated way. The bird-parents operate with the attitude of distributive justice and selfless sacrifice, and the young ones also coexist in mutual co-operation and co-sharing. They do cry for food but do not quarrel with one another. The parents see to it that their needs are satisfied but they do not feed their greed. If little creatures can have such a harmonious living why can we who claim to be rational not do so?

Nature of Human Existence

Human existence is multi-dimensional, multi-layered and multi-relational. It is a mind-body complex animated by a principle of

consciousness called soul or spirit. It has individual, social and cosmic aspects. It is intimately related with nature, sub-human beings and human beings. Human identity, therefore, cannot be determined by any one of these facets. It is the totality and intricate unity of all these with subtle and fine inter-netting, interdependence and interaction of the three which constitute human personality.

Added to this is the social dimension that is a highly complex, complicated and subtle network of relations. Society provides the ground and sustenance for human existence and also the basic structure and materials for human evolution. But there is no dichotomy or chasm between individual existence and social environment. Further, the human being is essentially 'natural' in the sense that he/she is an inalienable part of nature, is sustained and nourished by nature and ultimately reaches his/her culmination and consummation in and through nature. Nature environs human being, provides a basis for human evolution, as also for excellence. But in spite of all this, nature does not exhaust human existence nor does human existence exhaust nature. The human being is bound by nature and yet he/she can transcend the bonds of nature. He/she is aware of being natural but also of the capacity to overcome and go beyond nature. Even though dependent upon nature he/she can be liberated from nature with the help of nature itself. Thus he/she has a paradoxical awareness of dependence on nature and possible freedom from nature. It is a prerogative of the human being to acquire this self-awareness and shape his/her life and existence accordingly.

We have the experience that apart from the physical we possess vital, mental, intellectual and spiritual dimensions that are all equally important. They are all interrelated and mutually supportive. They are distinct but not separate and cannot be reduced to any one of them. They may have existential hierarchy from gross to subtle, but they do not have value-based hierarchy, as all are of equal value. The quality of life is to be attained in terms of catering to the legitimate needs of all these in a balanced and proportionate way. In fact lop-sided development of any one or a few of them is harmful to the total human person and is detrimental to perfection, whatever be the degree of its realization. The physical, vital, mental and intellectual belong to the empirical world and can be approached with the help of science, but the spiritual belongs to a different category. It is trans-empirical and beyond the ken of empirical sciences. There are, therefore, two realms of human existence, empirical and trans-empirical, one constituting the base and the other the apex. Both are organically interrelated. Wise persons differentiate between the two but do not ignore one for the sake of the other. There can be priority and posterity or there can be simultaneity in their pursuits, depending upon the situational requirements. But there is no chasm or gulf between the two. The spiritual is trans-empirical but it is not anti-empirical. Rather it is the fulfillment of the empirical. The empirical is a prerequisite and stepping stone for the trans-empirical. One cannot be realized without the other. There has to be a

symbiosis of science and spirituality, the former seasoning and tempering the latter.

Meaning and Significance of Human Life

Human life is a prized possession, the best product of evolution to emerge so far. It has been a remarkable biological evolution through genetic endowment, ecological interaction and cultural transformation, through innate competence and overt performance. Reflective awareness and self-consciousness are its unique features. On the basis of his/her planned endeavor and successful behavior the human being has been able to achieve wonderful feats. A mechanistic understanding of human ontology and human evolution cannot do justice to the spontaneity, creativity and goal-oriented human pursuits. Reality is experienced to be through and through telos-embedded, and human life, being its part and parcel, has to reflect this feature. The teleological approach alone can support a viewpoint that coordinates work and welfare, possession and enjoyment with a spirit of sacrifice, social progress and social justice, material well-being and spiritual enhancement.

Quality of Life and Globalization

Quality of life in its perfect and highest form is the *summum bonum* of human existence, and globalization is its corollary since its realization requires propagation, profession and practice of global ethics. The principle of 'universalizability of ethical norms' and their adherence without exception stem from this. But globalization is not to be understood in materialistic terms only, that is, in the sense of liberalization of trade and commerce. Basically it is a spiritual ideal. It is an inculcation of concern for all, leading to global unity. It is realization of the fundamental unity of the entire cosmos, not just of human beings or living beings. It is a mode of cosmic coexistence with a spirit of mutual support, mutual sacrifice, mutual caring and sharing. It is an enlightened conduct and contented life like that of a bodhisattva or jivan mukta who is constantly engaged in universal well-being, who is happy in the happiness of others and feels miserable in the miseries of others, who always thinks of the good of others and acts for their welfare. The seers and sages, spiritual and religious leaders, all over the world have enjoined this mode of living. The moral codes prescribed in all the cultural and religious traditions in all ages and places aim at cultivation of this mindset of universal affinity and self-sameness. We possess vast literature in this regard, but human nature is such that it has to be constantly reminded about this and persuasively goaded to this practice. This accounts for the need and relevance of the present endeavour.

Globalization is not monopolistic patenting or bulldozing of multiplicity in overt or covert form, but accommodating and harmonizing it within the organic unity of the entire cosmos. It stands for coordination

rather than uniformity of thought and action. It envisages no antagonism or incompatibility between one part and the other, like one organ and the others in an organism, since all are perceived and conceived as interconnected, interrelated and interdependent elements of one and the same whole, constituting a single field or continuum or unity. That is why the analogy of a living organism is put forth where there is 'multiplicity-in-unity' (not 'unity-in-multiplicity'); that is many situated in One, not as separated, segregated and scattered elements, but in mutual openness and reciprocity supplementing and complementing one another. Here conflicts and disorders may not be unnatural but their resolutions and harmony may also not be unrealizable.

Means of Achieving the Goal

Globalization is both a viewpoint and a course of action, a policy instrument and a world-wide movement for a new world order. This must be based on enlightened principles of conduct aiming at enhancement of 'Quality of Life', and not just of human beings but of the entire cosmos. This calls for newer formulations of global ethical norms that may regulate the entire gamut of human conduct in relation with one human being and another and also between human beings and the rest of the cosmos of multiple animate beings and inanimate things. This is the precursor of the emergence of a global society in which the entire world can be experienced as one single family. It is possible through the realization of selfsameness and the cultivation of the spirit of sacrifice. But this necessitates a transvaluation of values, a paradigm shift in values, a changed mindset, an enlarged vision of cosmo-centricity, an enlightened view and way of life by a proper training of body and mind, by illuminating knowledge and liberating wisdom. It calls for a total transformation of matter and mind and realization of spiritual oneness. It is a broadening of the self as totality, from 'I' to 'We', from one self to total self, from individual to cosmos. Here there should be no deprivation and exploitation, no sorrows and sufferings that are unmitigated, no injustice and discrimination unabated. This is a realization of heaven on earth, to use figurative language. The cosmos is full of splendors and can provide sustenance to all its inhabitants, but we have to ensure that this is done in a just, fair and equitable manner. But this is possible only through the postulation of a new value-schema other than the one we are presently pursuing. It is the restoration and reformulation of the classical value-schema that we have forgotten. It is the practice of new ethics that tends all and cares for all. This has been the cherished desire of the enlightened mind. It is not a utopian dream, but an ideal realizable in actual practice through proper and adequate education.

VALUE-SCHEMA FOR INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

The quest for perfection and realization of values of life that reflect

meaning and purpose of our existence have been perennial human concerns. Any consideration of such value-schema should be based on concrete social and historical realities and past experiences of the concerned individual and society. Values are not just to be known and posited, they are to be realized as well and lived in action. This calls for a symbiosis of knowing, doing and being. There can be no realization without skillful means. This implies a cataloguing of resources, preserving and enhancing the existing ones and generating new ones without depleting what exists. Skillful employment of means also implies judicious use of the resources without depriving others of the present and future generations. It further implies proper management of action and the fruits of action with equitable and just distribution.

Progress as Evolution Banking on Tradition and Rooted in Culture

Change is the law of reality, but it has to be a change for the better, the more perfect, and greater wellbeing. Not all change is necessarily healthy and good. In order to be beneficial it has to be in the form of evolution rather than revolution. It must be based on the solid foundations of the past, its experiences, concerns and commitments. But this process of bringing forward from the past requires a judicious discrimination as to what should be accepted and what should be rejected. This brings us to the consideration of tradition. Tradition is a movement (*parampara*). It is embedded in the past, but it must live through the present and flow into the future. It is an embodiment of values and norms handed down from the past. It is an accumulative process of transmitting, adjusting and applying the values and norms cherished in a culture. It is not static, but has continuity as well as change. It admits of creative freedom and innovative changes. It is never a threat to individual and social freedom unless it is dead, dated and outlived. Therefore a constant reflective review of tradition is necessary. A live tradition provides for freedom and is amenable to change and improvement. Tradition makes a person and society and, contrary wise, a person and society make a tradition. So there is mutuality between the two. Similarly, change and modernity do not mean breaking away from past experience. What is needed is a correct understanding of the nature and role of tradition.

Tradition is rooted in a culture. Culture, in all its dimensions, is a crucial constituent of human progress, both individual and social. Culture is a matter of being, a mode of living, a set of commonly shared values and belief patterns and practices. It is a complex whole, comprising knowledge, beliefs, conduct, morals, law, customs, artistic, scientific and technological pursuits, humanities and social sciences. It is an individual as well as social affair. It is a total heritage borne by a society and contributes to the discovery of the meaning of life. Cultural life consists in the pursuit and realization of values that enhance the quality of life of a human being and his society. Therefore culture has to enrich, enlarge and encourage fullness of life, delight of mind and plenitude of peace. Culture is a living

phenomenon coming from the past like a tradition. It is a crystallization of material and spiritual wealth created and preserved by a group of people and a society. There can be no genuine progress without cultural backing and cultural regeneration preceding and consolidating it.

Holistic and Integral Approach to Progress

A meaningful planning for progress has to be all-round, graded and gradual realization with balance and proportion. Economic progress is basic to human progress, but economic aspect is only one of the multiple aspects and cannot claim exclusive attention. Human development is not to be confined to economic development and mere economic development cannot be equated with human development. Further, in order to ensure just and equitable partaking in the fruits of economic progress it should be dharmic in nature and regulated by 'business ethics'. No doubt pragmatism and utilitarianism are the guiding principles of economics, but they should be seasoned and tempered by concerns for human. Unbridled economic growth gives rise to moral crises and many problems crop up which may seriously imperil society and its health. It may appear to be a growth, but may not be conducive to well-being. There has to be value-orientation of economy in tune with human well-being and cosmic welfare. Economy has an instrumental worth and it should not be taken as an end in itself. It is also to be remembered that not only is economic development to be guided by morality, but it should also help in enhancing moral capacity. Morality should not remain confined to precepts but should be translated into practice.

Science, Technology and Social Progress

Like economy, science and technology are important components of human culture. Science directs technological innovations, and technology accelerates progress of science. The two are thus interdependent: both are needed and are essential to human existence and social progress, but they are not value-neutral. They should serve the ultimate human good that is also the cosmic good. They are means and, therefore, are of instrumental character. They should be humane and humanizing and should be harnessed for social progress and cosmic wellbeing. They should not be allowed to technologize human being; rather they should be humanized. In this respect a clear distinction should be drawn between humanism and humanitarianism. Humanism is anthropocentric and is vitiated by human fallen-ness whereas humanitarianism is cosmo-centric. Only by a spiritual orientation of science and technology can they be made humanitarian and such an orientation can come from traditional culture. At present there is a see-saw between traditional culture and science and technology, instead of a thaw. There is a need for 'great harmony'.

SOCIAL PROGRESS, DEMOCRACY AND BEYOND DEMOCRACY

The hallmark of social progress and of civil society is respect for human dignity and human freedom within an ordered cosmos. This involves such values as liberty, equality, justice and fairness. It should be realized that each individual has immense potentialities and capabilities and should be given freedom and opportunities to manifest them. In different individuals there are diverse capabilities and all are useful for social progress. Every human individual is a potential person and should be given scope to cultivate their personhood. Personhood is an achievement concept. A person is one who is a knowledgeable, ratiocinative, free and responsible agent. He has to be an integrated, creative and freely acting social and moral being. He must know and realize the meaning of life, justify his existence and make it valuable and worthwhile to himself and the society. The criterion of social progress is the achievement of democratic spirit, democratic mode of thinking and living, not just a democratic state or form of political governance. Genuine democracy prevails only when diversity is fully and well accommodated in an overall unity. In the unity differences are to be protected, preserved and enriched. They should receive natural and reasonable place and respect within the unity. Democratic process is not suppression of thoughts, feelings and aspirations of any section of people, but their unfolding, reinforcement and realization. In other words, democracy and social progress have to be in the form of inclusive pluralism, having multiplicity well situated in unity, like the organs surviving and thriving in an organism.

In the ultimate analysis, though this is only an ideal, there should be no difference between 'one and the other' or between 'I and the other'. On the front gate of the Parliament House of the Republic of India in New Delhi a verse from the traditional Indian culture is inscribed which states that notions like, 'This is mine or this is that of others' are nurtured only by a person of mean mentality and narrow mind. So the implication is that instead of viewing differences as 'I and the other', they should be viewed as 'I and mine'. Here the other is not an alien, an adversary, a competitor or a threat to one's existence but a partner, a companion, a fellow being, an aid or help. The other also does not resist or repel but reciprocates with a feeling of coexistence and cooperation. Democracy in all its present forms does not ensure any of the above stated aspirations and requirements. Democracy is supposed to be a system of rules and rule of law made legitimate by the will of the people, and is supposed to serve the best interest of the people,— a government of the people, by the people and for the people. But in actual reality has it been so anywhere in the world? A system that has built-in infirmity cannot be said to be the best. As society progresses the human mind should also develop the capacity of innovative thinking, and therefore the question is can we not think of a system better than democracy, a system in which all the merits of democracy are well preserved and demerits are negated. Though we have come to stay with democracy as the best available

form of political governance, this cannot be treated as the end of history. The human mind has experimented with various forms of political governance, like anarchy, monarchy, aristocracy, oligarchy and so forth and has reached to the stage of democracy. But the rational mind of the human being should not entertain the idea of the end of human reason and the thinking capacity of human mind. It should be possible for the ingenious human mind to think of going 'Beyond Democracy', to think of a state higher and better than democracy, a state which encapsulates all the virtues of democracy but discards its vices and defects. It is high time that we prepare a blueprint of a dharmic state of this desired type.

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CHAPTER XXXIII

ON THE RIGHTS TO EMIGRATE AND IMMIGRATE¹

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In a very real sense I am at present living out a long-time dream, a long-time hope. My position in the International Federation of Philosophical Societies (“FISP”) makes me an official representative, so to speak, of the idea of philosophy as a global practice, transcending national borders and not to be identified exclusively with any one region of the world. There is a variety of philosophical traditions, all deserving of respect; I regard it as part of my job description to uphold this idea and to encourage discussion among philosophical colleagues the world over.²

I feel especially honored to have been asked to fill this position because of the disadvantage, as I see it, that is connected with my nationality. My country, the United States, is generally, and quite rightly, regarded as the global hegemon, the “hyperpower,” of today. It is also a country in which nationalism, by which I mean an attitude of regarding one’s own country as being superior to, of far greater value than, any other, is especially widespread and deeply rooted. A relatively small country in which a nationalistic spirit prevails, such as Serbia a few years ago, can wreak great damage; an hegemonic power that is also highly nationalistic is a menace to the entire world. While there have been some philosophers who were also nationalists, to be sure – and it would be worthwhile to analyze this phenomenon in someone like Martin Heidegger, for example – I believe that the notion of philosophy as a global enterprise that I have articulated is ultimately incompatible with the spirit of nationalism as I have defined it. I should point out that the by-laws of our organization, FISP, are explicit in their insistence that all the members of our governing body, the Steering Committee, are expected to take a global perspective even though the majority of them were originally nominated by national member societies. Therefore, the fact of my having been asked to represent philosophy as a global enterprise implies a certain confidence on the part of my colleagues in my being immune to the nationalist virus.

I believe that I do have such immunity. By virtue of my educational background, it is true, I am more familiar with the history, philosophies, and cultures of the West than with those of other regions and traditions, and I am far from dismissing those with which I am familiar as worthless. But I am highly critical of many aspects of them and especially of certain of their specifically American forms, the ones with which I am most familiar. I could catalogue some of the more salient reasons for this, but I shall not do

so here. Let me just, as a way of hinting at what some of my reasons might be, recall the final words of the school song, "Bright College Years," of Yale University that was attended by both Presidents Bush and at which I myself studied and then taught for some years. The words are: "For God, for country, and for Yale." While there is an English language dictionary, I am told, in which these words are cited as an outstanding example of what is meant by "anti-climactic," and this is true, what I wish to emphasize is the very close linkage that they establish between the United States and God. This is a linkage that has always been popular in my country. It can be extremely offensive, and usually is, although sometimes it can serve a more positive purpose, as we shall see.

No doubt the most famous words in the United States *Declaration of Independence*, a document written by a slaveholder by the name of Thomas Jefferson, are the following: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights..." Thus a story about universal equality and about a divine infusion of rights into everyone – everyone, be it noted, not just White Americans – was incorporated into the founding document of this highly hypocritical, self-contradictory country of which I happen to be a citizen.

Such claims about equality and unalienable rights, the existence of which is said to be "self-evident," clearly constitute a philosophical doctrine, one might even say a "dogma," of a metaphysical sort: God-given rights, this document asserts forcefully and unqualifiedly, really exist. But philosophers, as philosophers, have a professional obligation to challenge and question all such assertions, not just in terms of their truth or falsehood, but more fundamentally in terms of their meaning. For example, what kinds of entities are "rights"? May not this word be understood in several different ways? What are the implications of saying that rights are part of our "endowment"? And so on.

Next, after having tried to resolve all the theoretical issues concerning the alleged existence and nature of rights, it becomes important for us to confront, both as philosophers and as human beings, additional problems concerning the implementation of this theory of rights, to the extent to which we may accept it – or, in other words, the relation of the theory to actual practice. Suppose, then, that we are finally able to settle on some relatively complex definition of "rights" as claims that everyone may make against being harmed by anyone else in a certain number of specifiable ways; does this automatically entail a universal moral obligation to respect such claims? One might have thought so. But neither the slaveholding so-called Founding Fathers of the United States who nevertheless asserted universal human equality, nor the Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court, Roger Taney, who shortly before the War between the American States opined that the Negro has no rights that the White Man is bound to respect apart from specific legal statutes, nor former President George W. Bush, who has been reluctant to agree without qualification that

torture is immoral – in other words, that there exists a right not to be tortured. None of these appear to have accepted the intuitively plausible idea that if someone has an unalienable right then everyone else is morally obligated to respect it. (Former President Bush, by the way, has insisted that he never authorized the violation of American laws concerning the treatment of prisoners. But in view of his admitted exclusion of so many prisoners from the protection of conventions and treaties intended to govern such treatment, together with the finding of a high legal official in his government that the word “torture” should be very narrowly applied only to extreme, death-threatening forms of physical violence, this is no vindication at all.) Well, it may be said, but all these people to whom I have been referring are just politicians; philosophers, on the other hand, are defenders of truth and consistency, at least in their reasonings, if not always in their personal lives. Thus, philosophers at least would presumably have to agree that, if someone has a right, then everyone else is morally obligated to respect it. Let us see whether this is in fact the case.

It has been the fashion of many of the best-known American and British philosophers of recent times, including political philosophers, to say that they can carry on their philosophical work without making any metaphysical assumptions. This is certainly true of two philosophers who have devoted a great deal of attention to rights – Ronald Dworkin, the title of one of whose early books is *Taking Rights Seriously*, and John Rawls, whose work Dworkin regards as reinforcing his own. Dworkin’s view of rights, as a lawyer as well as a philosopher, is that they are just vital parts of certain constitutional traditions, such as those of the United States and of Great Britain, rather than having any metaphysical status. Rawls emphasizes, in the title of one of his articles, that the liberal democratic ideology, which he espouses, is to be considered “political, not metaphysical.” Both of these philosophers, then, like many of their Western contemporaries, reject the implicit metaphysical claim made in the well-known sentence of the United States *Declaration of Independence* to which I have alluded. Instead they favor a conception of rights that is in part derived from actual accepted legal documents, such as the U.S. *Constitution* and – at least in the case of Rawls in his late work, *The Law of Peoples* – the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. This is in part the outcome of philosophical reasoning about what others should expect of us and we of others by way of fair treatment in complex modern societies. Neither one feels the need to affirm any story concerning Divine endowment.

I mention all this by way of background for examining philosophical consistency as it relates to the issue featured in the title of my paper, an issue that is raised briefly in *The Law of Peoples* and that is of major significance, in my opinion, for the maintenance of global dialogue and for some of the most important international policy questions of our time, namely, the rights to emigration and to immigration. I shall say no more here about Dworkin, whom I introduced only because of his

conception of rights that are not, however, metaphysical in nature, as well as his close intellectual affinities with Rawls.

There is a clause in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, Article 13, part 2, which reads: “Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.” I have always contended that it makes sense to treat this as a right in the real world if and only if there is at least one other country that is willing to receive the emigrant. In short, with all due consideration being given to the possibility of establishing some regulations designed to deal with questions of physical security, job security, the need to avoid dangerous overpopulation in one particular city or region, etc., the right to move from one country to another has been established, through this clause of the *Universal Declaration*, as a human right that is guaranteed by international law – has it not? Well, no, not according to philosophers such as Rawls, for example. In a footnote on p. 74 of *The Law of Peoples*, he acknowledges the possibility that an argument along the lines that I have just indicated – that a right to emigrate implies a right to immigrate – could be made, but then immediately dismisses it by saying that “many rights are without point in this sense: to give a few examples, the right to marry, to invite people into one’s house, or even to make a promise. It takes two to make good on these rights.”

I am not opposed in principle to arguments from analogy, and indeed I believe that true masters of analogy, such as Aristotle, often contribute to thought by making brilliant and illuminating connections. Rawls’ analogies here, however, certainly do not fall under that description. His three examples of supposed “rights,” which are rather odd choices and in fact not even very similar to one another, have little in common with the precise rights to emigration and, at least by implication, immigration that are specified in Article 13 of the *Universal Declaration*. Why does this quintessential liberal democratic philosopher take such an intellectually sloppy and dismissive stance on such an important issue? A book by a British philosopher, Phillip Cole, entitled *Philosophies of Exclusion: Liberal Political Theory and Immigration*, which won the 2001 Book Award of the North American Society for Social Philosophy, helps us better to understand this, though not to excuse it. In his book, Cole does not, in fact, take account of the text I have cited from *The Law of Peoples*, though he expresses doubt about the consistency of Rawls’ liberalism with regard to this issue on the basis of Rawls’ earlier writings. Cole’s sweeping and forceful conclusion, after 200 pages of careful review of older and recent literature on the topic, is that immigration policy is the reef on which liberal democratic theory as a whole founders. As he says: “Any solution that has been offered to justify exclusive membership – and therefore immigration and naturalisation regulations – has given rise to an incoherence between the liberal polity’s internal and external principles: those within its boundaries are subjected to liberal principles and practices, while those at the border are subjected to illiberal principles and practices.”³ Liberalism is centrally committed to the freedom and equality of all human beings, and

yet liberal thinkers have constantly attempted to defend the nation-state's alleged right to maintain its own exclusivity, that is, to restrict its own membership, like a private club.

At the present time, thanks in large measure to terrorist threats but also thanks to a certain resurgence of xenophobia in many countries, a regression in policies and attitudes concerning emigration and immigration is taking place throughout the world. The United States government, for example, has instituted new border control measures which are supposed to promote domestic security, but the clear effects of which are to humiliate, to treat as suspect, and generally to make much less welcome than before all potential visitors to the country. It is no surprise that other governments are strongly tempted to retaliate in kind, though on the whole this development has not been as widespread as I would have expected it to be (or, I am almost but not quite tempted to say, as it ought to be). Since this trend is obviously a serious threat to global dialogue as well as one more facet of the moral degeneration that is being experienced on a global scale and of which the notorious Abu Ghraib tortures are a particularly stark example, I feel a strong commitment to combat it, both in theory and in practice, to the best of my ability. That is the principal contribution that I have wanted to make to this discussion. A secondary purpose, about which, because of time limitations, I have not been able to elaborate as much as I would like to have done, is to make some contribution to the discussion of what should be understood by "human rights" – what they are, what their conceptual status is, and so on. This is a discussion into which I have entered on some of my earlier visits to China, as well as with Chinese philosophers in the United States – for example, with respect to the familiar question as to whether there exists an idea, or set of ideas, within the Confucian tradition that is equivalent to the Western concept of "rights," even if the terminology is foreign to it. At the very least, I hope to have made clear my strong belief that it is essential to respect complexity and to avoid the simplistic assumption that the meaning of such rights is univocal and obvious – even "self-evident" – to everyone.

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NOTES

¹ [Abstract]: I shall begin with a brief overview of my role and my hopes as Secretary General of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies. FISP, includes in particular my understanding of what genuine, non-hegemonic cultural, particularly philosophical, exchange and co-operation involve. I shall then discuss the question of the rights mentioned in my title, rights that are at least implied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. I have written and spoken about this issue in the past, but I believe that it needs to be revisited in

view of the alarming tendencies worldwide to restrict these rights further and, in general, to make international travel itself more difficult through bureaucratic and security procedures. I shall make special reference to a remarkable recent book by a British philosopher, Phillip Cole, entitled *Philosophies of Exclusion*.

² This paper was read originally at a conference on Cultural Traditions and Social Proress, sponsored by the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences and the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (RVP).

³ Phillip Cole, *Philosophies of Exclusion: Liberal Political Theory and Immigration* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), p. 202.

CHAPTER XXXIV

CIVIL SOCIETY: THE REALITY AND THE IDEAL

HUANG SONGJIE

I

Up to now, Chinese and non-Chinese scholars have not agreed on a clear definition of the conception of civil society. However it is doubtless that this conception is relevant to theories of social structure and of social formation. Certainly, different theories of social structure and social formation can be put forward from different angles and in different ways. But, on my view, generally speaking, social structure includes three aspects – economic, political and spiritual cultural – and civil society means the non-political aspect. And if considered in relation to social formation, civil society is connected with the society of commodity economy.

Every society is made up of individuals, every individual must unite with others to make up society, and every individual depends on society. Furthermore, in order to develop, every individual and society must take up productive activities. People engaged in productive activities have always formed some relations, such as those formed during the course of production and consumption, and among which the most important is the relation which connects people with productive resources, i.e., the relation of “productive resources ownership.” This relation has decided the nature of productive relations, and it is the totality of these productive relations which forms the socio-economic structure and the basis of social existence and development.

Ever since the beginnings of human society, there has been a distance between the poor and the rich, and with this, classes and a class-stratum formed. As the result, all kinds of conflict between government and non-government have formed. State power is the tool by which the governors govern, and with which they can manage society to make it exist and develop according to some kind of productive relation. This includes governmental organizations, armies, the police, jail and all kinds of corresponding organizations and installations, all of which are the specific manifestation of social-political structure. Generally speaking, the political structure of a society is decided by the economic structure, i.e., the nature of the social productive relations decides those who are in the dominant position in the productive relations, and they utilize state power to defend their own benefit. So state power always reflects the economic relations of a tiered society, and politics is the concentrated or tiered manifestation of economy.

In addition to economy and politics, a society cannot go without a spiritual-culture, which includes science, education, ideology (philosophy, morality, religion, art, political thought, thought about law, etc.) and corresponding institutions and organizations. To some extent, the spiritual culture is decided by the economy and politics, but at the same time, it acts on and influences both. So each of them is not simply decided by the other, but they are mutually interbalanced and interacting.

In the society of natural economy, production was carried out within very narrow communities and within the limitations of territories. It was in a "closed state." The relations between humans and nature and that among humans were not fully developed, and blood relations and relations of territories were dominant. Social life was very simple and state power controlled almost all social life. People lacked independent personality and their self-consciousness was in a primitive state. Generally they counted on a good emperor or an honest and upright official to ensure the stability and development of the society. They either were obedient subjects or, under unbearable conditions, revolutionaries. Under the conditions of a natural economy, there were almost no social organizations and social activities independent of state power. Social members had not demanded a kind of social force which mediated between state power and individuals. So the conception of civil society only appeared during the course of the rise of commodity economy, the awareness of people's self-consciousness and gradual formation of people's independent personality. It acquired a great development only with the development of commodity economy.

The most basic principle to which a commodity economy conforms is an exchange of equal values, and the law of "value" is the most basic rule. A commodity economy demands that all social resources, whether they be humans or things, must be changed into commodities so that they may be exchanged freely and equally. This is social justice in the sense of a *commodity economy*. The development of a commodity economy necessarily conflicts with hereditary and consanguineous privilege in the economy and in politics and with hierarchical systems. However, with the development of social productivity, the appearance and development of a commodity economy is unavoidable; it cannot be held back for it is a historical necessity. All cultural and political movements such as the Renaissance, the religious reformation, and the subsequent bourgeois revolutions resulted from the development of a commodity economy. The commodity economy has necessarily produced a great number of bourgeoisie (and, relatively speaking, more proletarians). They are citizens in the modern sense. They differ from aristocrats and others enjoying privileges in that they lack political power, but have economic strength. Through contesting against each other, especially through revolution, some of them acquired positions to govern. From the middle of the 17th century to the middle of the 19th century, Western countries have, one after another, completed the transformation from a natural economy to a commodity economy and from autocratic politics to democratic politics, and have

established capitalist societies of commodity economy based on the private ownership system. The ultimate difference between the new governors and the old governors lies in that the power of the former is neither endowed by God or nature, nor is hereditary or hereditary, but is produced by an election by the people.

Theoretically speaking, all social members have independent personalities and they are free and equal. However, *in fact* none of the rights of freedom and equality have been fully realized because of *unequal* social property and the acute social contradictions and conflicts. The socialization of production and the private possession of productive resources have constructed the greatest contradiction of capital commodity society in modern times. Based on this, Marx criticized capitalism and advocated that the private ownership system must be abolished. The two world wars in the first half of the last century are specific manifestations of the acuteness of this contradiction. The wars destroyed much material property, but they did not destroy the commodity economy. On the contrary, people brought the commodity economy to a more developed and more mature state following these two wars. Furthermore, having based their conclusions on an absorption and summing up of present and past experiences and lessons, domestic and foreign, the Chinese people represented by Deng Xiaoping advanced the notion that the market and the commodity economy do not belong to capitalism exclusively and that socialism, dominated by a public ownership system, can also establish a market economy and develop commodity production. Directed by this idea, the Chinese economy has improved dramatically for more than a decade. Up to now, developing a commodity economy has become the common realization of most people throughout the world.

II

With the development of a commodity economy, the attention of scholars moves to “civil society“. There are at least two reasons: first, the commodity economy has broken the close character of the natural economy, and the limitations of territories and of personal dependent relations. It has substituted blood relations and relations of territories with economic connections, substituted personally dependent relations with relations of “things,” and has made market, commodity and currency the most important connective ties among humans. The communications and connections between humans under the condition of a commodity economy is incomparable with the interpersonal relations under the condition of a natural economy; and the social life, social activities and corresponding framework and organizations have also been enriched in an unprecedented fashion. In the society of a commodity economy, state power cannot control or even take on everything about social life, and many problems have appeared in economic and spiritual-cultural matters which had never occurred in the society of natural economy. For example, in the economic

aspect, although state power can interfere, constrain and regulate the economy with administrative power and by making all kinds of laws and rules, the disposition of all kinds of resources and all the links from production to consumption are regulated by the market. Many things in the economic field cannot be solved exclusively by state power.

The same is the case with the spiritual-cultural aspect. The commodity economy has enriched not only people's material lives, but has also widened and enriched people's spiritual-cultural lives. The spiritual culture now cannot be compared with the condition of natural economy, whether in content or in form, and all of this cannot be attained by state power. As for discussion and disputes in theories and academic studies, they are no longer soluble by way of state interference and administrative order. In the society of a commodity economy, there will appear continually in the field of economy and spiritual culture all kinds of non-governmental, non-political, people-to-people specialized and guild communities and organizations. The number of members of these kinds of communities and organizations is becoming bigger and bigger, and they concern all kinds of specialists in all kinds of professions. It can be said that they are the backbone of society, or we can call them "middle-bourgeoisie" or the "small and peaceful stratum". This is the social basis of civil society. Second, the commodity economy has broken not only the closedness and limitedness of the natural economy, but also autocracy and hierarchical privileges. And it has established freedom and equality and constructed the independent personality in the modern sense, greatly widened people's horizons, and changed people's ideas.

Individuals have got rid of the limitations of blood relations, patriarchal clans, nations and territories. Abilities, freedom and democratic consciousness have been developed and improved in unprecedented fashion, so they wish that there were a kind of social force to constrain and supplement state apparatus and political power, and to realize their own rights and values.

III

At present, in some developed societies having a commodity economy, civil society is both a reality and an ideal. It is a reality because the civil society and the state are compatible to some extent and this means that with the aid of social forces state power wishes to solve some important and complicated problems such as natural disasters, initiating charities and cultural education, setting up some infrastructure, welfare programs, etc. In addition to this, there are others which state power is unfit to solve or in which it ought not to interfere, such as disputes of academic theories, conflicts among religions beliefs, conceptions of cultural and physical educational activities, judgments of some moral actions, etc. In effect, in many Western countries, there are many social problems including some important ones which are dealt with and solved by social forces alone. That

is to say, “civil society” has already played an effective role. For instance, to decide some important problems concerning benefits to people by citizens’ voting is to some extent the manifestation of civil society’s role. However, it must be pointed out that the non-governmental, non-political forces cannot deal with and solve problems thoroughly independent of the state. For example, the Olympic Games undertaken by a non-governmental organizing committee cannot go on unless the state comes forward to solve security and traffic problems, etc. Therefore the civil society plays an important role, but this does not mean that state power must be put aside.

In addition to this aspect of compatibility, civil society and state power are also *incompatible* in some regards. This means mainly that state power will not allow another social force to contend with its existence, and will not permit the existence of social organizations which contest it. In Western countries, religions are very universal social organizations. State power attaches much importance to them, respects all kinds of religions and provides guarantees of freedom of religious belief and religious activities. Some government officials, and even state leaders, often are involved in them. But state power will never permit any religious communities or organizations to enjoy, interfere or replace the enforcement of state power. We take religious communities and organizations, which can be considered as a component of civil society, as an example to illustrate the limitations within which state power permits the real existence of civil society. However, civil society is neither an effective, specific organization or community just like religion, nor another society within the general society. So it is neither part of the general society which is held as the whole, nor a small society which comes into being within the large society as a totality. We would rather say that there are two different conceptions resulting from two different points of view. As was explained above, the structure of the general society includes an economic aspect, a political aspect, and a spiritual-cultural aspect. Civil society is a conception generalized from all kinds of non-governmental, non-political communities and organizations. As far as its extension is concerned, it is smaller than that of the general society, but as far as its effects are concerned, it is deeper than that of general society.

One of the characteristics of development of modern society is that, on the one hand, citizens have more and more rights and democracy, their initiatives are becoming greater and greater, and social life is becoming more and more abundant. On the other hand, this does not mean the weakening of state power; on the contrary, state power has been strengthened in many aspects. This strengthening does not mean adding the deterrent force of violence, but improving work efficiency by improving the performance of governmental functionaries and armed personnel with the aid of modern economic, scientific and technological means so that it could control the aspects which were uncontrollable before, and solve problems. Civil society can play an active role in the development of the whole society, but it cannot solve the contradictions and unfairness of society in

production consumption, distribution and other aspects *at the root*, nor can it solve the basic contradictions of the society of a commodity economy. It is both a good aspiration of citizens to have a more democratic, just and reasonable society and an idealized pattern. But up to now, the specific content and stages of this good aspiration are still very obscure. As far as this is concerned, civil society is still only an “ideal” of citizens in the society of a commodity economy.

However, commodity economy has become an irresistible trend of the contemporary world; driven by benefits, it is developing vigorously and rapidly. But with the development of commodity economy, citizens’ rights of freedom and democracy will necessarily become more and more expansive, the independence of their personality will become more and more obvious and social activities will become more and more abundant. Then the state will necessarily, in many aspects give place to some kind of social force. Therefore the problem of civil society will necessarily appear in every society with a commodity economy, no matter what political system they have. Certainly, we may substitute another name for “civil society”, but this cannot change the essence of the problem. In China, although we hesitate about the conception of civil society, relevant problems have become more and more the focus of attention and are perceived by officials at all levels and by all citizens. In recent years, China has vigorously developed the notion of spiritual civilization, many contents of which reflect Western “civil society”. Some Chinese cities and special districts have put forward the policy of “small government and big society,” the aim of which is to exert social forces to make the governmental set-up simplified and highly efficient. Shanghai is now changing the original basic administrative units – “residential district” and “neighbourhood committee” – into “social district (community).” The aim of this change is to exert social forces fully, so that social districts might become peaceful places for the cultivation of people in body and mind and in all-around development.

China is now groping for a mechanism, a system to enable economy, politics and spiritual-culture to develop harmoniously and to produce a dynamism within which there are both centralization and democracy, both discipline and freedom, both the united mind and the individual’s ease of mind. This is both an ideal and an enforced reality. It is quite possible that the Chinese people, good at applying theories, can deal better with the problems facing Western civil society, based on absorbing the experiences and lessons of Western modernization, and making great contributions to human civilization. At bottom, the existence and practical activities of humankind are to pursue harmony in truth, goodness and beauty. And with the development of civilization, this pursuit becomes more and more obvious, more and more self-conscious. But what are truth, goodness and beauty, what are falseness, ugliness and vice, and how can one pursue the harmony of truth, goodness and beauty? All of this cannot and ought not be solved by the force of the political state. People do not wish some official to tell them what to do, but demand instead to find out

the way to truth, goodness and beauty through their own practical activities; inter-subjectivity can carry out such a communication and practice, and civil society can play an active role in this. However, civil society is not a fixed and ready-made thing which is just put there; it needs to be constructed and perfected through people's communication and practice. This pursuit is in agreement with the pursuit of truth, goodness and beauty: they complement each other. They are both a kind of reality and a kind of ideal.

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INDEX

A

absolute sovereignty, 86
absolutism, 38, 83
Adorno, 162, 278
Afghanistan, 14
agape., 7, 269, 270
Ahlu al Halli wal- 'Aqdi, 84
al-Ghazali, 3, 79, 83
Allport, 174, 176
al-Qur`an al Karim, 86
altruistic, 179, 345
Americanization, 43-45, 169-173
Ames, 120
Amitabha Buddha
 Pure Land Buddhism, 152
Amitayur-dhyana Sutra, 152
Analects, 74, 125
Anglo-Saxon, 170-171
antagonism, 100, 369
Aquinas, 77, 119
Aristotle, 88, 119
Artha, 58-59
Asabiyya, 89
ash`arit, 87, 89
aspiration, 96, 137, 332, 386
asrama-vyavastha, 59
assimilation, 122, 148, 150, 171
atheism, 121
Augustine, 119, 123
Austin, 279
autocracy, 185, 187, 305, 338, 384
autonomy, 169, 170
Avatamsaka Sutra, 152
awareness, 56, 62, 113, 171, 176,
 188, 192, 212-213, 249, 274,
 281, 311, 321, 350, 367, 382
axiology, 86

B

Bacon, 161, 176, 346
Bankim, 286, 289
Barnard, 173

beatitude, 58, 75, 76, 154
beauty, 8, 9, 78, 117, 123, 276,
 296, 297, 303, 304, 305, 308,
 386
Beckett, 298, 302
being-in-the-world, 103
benevolence, 60, 152, 218, 241,
 304-305, 307, 342, 343, 344
Benjamin, 250, 301, 307
Bennett, 172, 175, 176
bhakti, 59
Bhisma, 61
Blacks, 171
Bloch, 121, 125
bodhisattva, 153, 368
Book of Changes, 22, 74
Book of Great Learning, 74
Brahmanism, 149
Brown, iv, 5, 169, 171, 174-178,
 262, 271
Buddha, 7, 18, 38, 68, 74, 119,
 149, 152-154, 215, 218, 262,
 270-271, 291-293, 303
Buddhism, iii, 3, 5, 7, 17-18, 41,
 63-69, 74-75, 77, 147-154, 181,
 188, 205, 212, 215, 218-219,
 239, 271, 291-294, 341, 353
Buhr, 125
Buweiheed, 89
Byzantine, 82

C

Camus, 302
Capitalism, 136, 166, 259, 307
ceremony, 16, 317
Chatterjee, 287, 289
Chattopadhyaya, 273, 283, 288,
 289
Chinese culture, 2, 13, 16-22, 37,
 39-53, 73-78, 117-119, 121-125,
 148-151, 154, 170
Chinn, 171, 173, 175, 176

- Christianity, 4, 24, 52, 75, 118, 124, 186, 247, 249-257, 353, 355
- Chuang-Tzu, 74
- citizen, 43, 56, 101, 102, 119, 124
- Civil Rights movement, 172
- civil society, 9, 80, 84, 86, 88, 92, 102, 161, 176, 201, 372, 381-387
- civilization, 4, 15-21, 28, 34, 46-47, 74, 79-82, 87-90, 102-104, 107, 109, 112, 117, 123-124, 127, 130, 149, 151, 162, 224, 232, 240, 254, 265, 268, 274, 277, 279, 281, 283, 289, 330, 333, 341, 356, 366, 386
- co-existence, 49, 96, 147, 202, 366
- cognitive, 6-7, 59, 175-179, 268, 276, 337, 340, 350, 366
- Cold War, 14, 46, 79, 81, 88
- collectivity, 56
- colonialism, 87, 109-113
- Comer, 171, 173, 176
- commercialization, 131, 161
- common good, 26, 27, 31, 93, 96
- commonality, 148, 182, 310, 315
- communication, v, viii, 8, 21, 53-54, 89, 95, 148, 172, 173, 210, 233, 234, 387
- Communism, 19-22, 43-44, 53, 136, 158, 170, 235
- community, vii-viii, 2, 25, 28-33, 73, 81, 86, 127, 130-131, 169, 173-175, 189-190, 193-194, 240, 253, 265, 273, 320, 324, 326, 343, 366, 385-386
- compassionate, 53-54, 174
- competition, 8, 15, 42, 181, 185, 190, 194, 316, 319, 326, 328, 330-331, 338-342
- Comte, 268-269
- conflict, 6, 8, 17-18, 32, 99, 101, 161, 175, 194-195, 210, 246, 275, 289, 381-382
- Confucianism, iv, 7-8, 16-18, 20, 32, 38, 41, 75, 95, 99, 101, 160-163, 205, 212, 215-219, 239-248, 253-258, 307-308, 313-314, 323-326, 328-331, 334, 337-343, 349, 353, 379
- Confucius, 17, 37-39, 64, 67, 74, 77-78, 119, 125, 212, 217, 226, 244-246, 252, 258, 303, 313, 341-342
- conscience, 27, 306
- consciousness, 14-15, 19, 25, 34, 57, 63-64, 91, 94, 136, 160-162, 167, 212-214, 218-219, 222, 232, 264-265, 284, 306, 343, 367, 382, 384
- conservatism, 81, 201
- consumerism, 154, 365
- contemplation, 59, 78, 92-93, 122
- contradiction, 6, 50, 83-84, 90-91, 99, 100, 193-194, 196, 221, 231, 383
- cosmopolitanism, 96
- cosmos, 60, 147, 153, 212, 218, 366, 368, 369, 372
- courage, 111, 210, 261, 262, 307, 325
- Cremin, 171, 176
- Critique of Pure Reason, 83, 261
- cultural heritage, 3, 57, 73, 79, 80-82, 88, 90, 150-151, 169, 172, 365
- cultural identity, viii, 309-316
- curiosity, 300, 345, 348, 350
- customs, 16, 20, 42, 169, 370
- D**
- Dao, 7, 38, 224-227, 230, 353, 356
- Daoism, 17
- Darwin, 299
- Dasein*, 100, 103, 225, 265, 297
- Datong, 158
- Davidson, 7, 262, 265-267, 271
- death, 38, 64, 227, 295, 297, 300, 302, 305, 319, 349, 351, 377
- Defoe, 161
- Deism, 119
- Deity, 338
- Deleuze, 345, 346
- democracy, ix, 9, 21, 44-47, 51, 56, 119, 137, 162, 305, 311, 321-

322, 324, 326, 329, 372, 385-386
 Democritus, 337
 Dench, 169-170, 176
 Derrida, 162-163, 166, 278, 302, 307, 345-346
 Descartes, 4, 91, 100, 221, 230, 261
 desire, 13, 39-40, 65, 68, 86, 91, 122, 124, 131, 151, 158, 187, 248, 252, 262, 268, 291, 297, 318, 321, 331, 369
 development, viii, 14-15, 19-21, 25, 27-29, 33, 37, 47, 59, 81, 85-88, 103, 110-112, 128-144, 153, 158-161, 163, 171, 175-176, 180, 183-189, 191, 193, 195-196, 205-208, 212-213, 217, 222, 228, 231-238, 245, 248, 251, 254, 269, 273-275, 278, 280-281, 288, 291, 294, 306-307, 311, 320, 323-325, 331-332, 337-341, 343, 355, 357, 364, 367, 371, 379, 381-386
 Dharma, 58-59, 61-62, 74, 151-152, 371, 373
 dignity, 2, 23, 25, 30-34, 74, 84, 161, 183, 282, 324, 338, 340, 372
 diligence, 20, 130-131, 171
 Dilthey, 263-264, 271, 284
 diversification, 47, 195, 321, 322
 divine right, 81-84, 90
 Dogen, 5, 152, 153
 dualism, 202
duhkha, 150
 Dworkin, 377
 dynamism, 148, 355, 356, 386

E

Eagleton, 105
 education, 3, 5, 29, 42, 60, 61, 73, 80-81, 85, 122, 127, 138, 140, 169-174, 176-177, 181, 191, 201, 223, 277, 316, 327, 329-330, 349, 365, 369, 382, 384

Einstein, 231
 Ekayana theory, 152
 Eliade, 286, 289
 empathy, 154, 268
 emptiness, 76, 279, 353
 Engels, 19, 22, 213-214, 228-230
 England, 89, 170
 Enlightenment, 74, 77, 119, 120, 125, 151-153, 162, 202, 261-262, 270-271, 278, 321, 324, 326, 331, 350, 354-355
 environment, viii, 14, 16, 18, 21, 27, 30, 33, 45, 53, 64, 67, 164, 174, 197, 223, 282, 283, 293, 312, 318, 321-322, 331, 338, 341-342, 367
 epistemology, 58, 263
 equality, 4, 9, 40, 47, 113, 137, 162, 171, 176, 180, 240, 248, 253-255, 293, 305, 311, 316, 321-326, 340, 372, 376, 378, 383-384
 essentialism, 162, 202, 207
 ethics, viii, 9, 14, 20, 39, 82, 85, 199, 247, 282-283, 308, 323-324, 330, 345, 355, 368-369, 371
 evil, 2, 29, 37, 41, 63-68, 89, 90, 202, 218, 252-253, 269, 296-297, 300, 353
 evolution, 16, 56, 79-81, 85-89, 96, 189, 194, 212, 299, 300, 318, 331, 367-368, 370
 existentialism, 6, 202, 307, 339
 existentiality, 6, 210-215, 221-228
 exploitation, 5, 84, 110, 137, 170, 331, 369

F

Fadha'ih al Batiniyyah, 83, 90
 Fahism, 341
 fairness, 241, 251, 372
 faith, 16, 82-83, 90, 122, 124, 132, 149, 153, 286, 294, 306, 343
 family, 3, 16, 27, 32, 35, 37, 39, 46, 63-64, 66, 69, 130-132, 147, 159-161, 174, 181-182, 242,

244-246, 248-258, 312, 319,
324, 326-327, 342-343, 369
 favoritism, 240, 250-251, 255
 feeling, 39, 43-44, 49, 51, 68, 90,
101, 117, 161, 213-214, 227,
230, 241, 245-248, 316, 319,
326, 331, 351, 356, 359, 365-
366, 372
 feudalism, 136, 247
 Feyerabend, 268, 269, 272, 277,
338
 Fichte, 100
 filial piety, 37, 132, 242, 250, 304,
307, 327, 342-344
 Fiqh (Jurisprudence), 90
 fitra, 82, 84
 Foucault, 162, 278, 288
 Franklin, 171, 172, 176
 freedom, v, 2, 4, 8-9, 13, 24, 26-29,
34, 47, 93-94, 100, 112-113,
124, 130, 137, 150, 162, 172,
175-178, 182, 232, 284, 294,
311, 318, 321-326, 332, 339,
359-367, 370, 372, 378, 383-
386
 Freire, 170, 174, 176
 French Canadians, 51-52
 Freud, 270, 300, 339
 Fukuyama, 302, 307
 functionalist, 285
 fundamentalism, 162
 Fung Yu-Lan, 240-241, 245, 247,
258-259
 fuqaha`, 85-86

G

Gandhi, 67, 286, 289
 Gay, 171, 173, 174, 175, 176
 generosity, 345, 350, 354, 356
 Genghis Khan, 39
 Gibson, 170, 177
 Gingras, 104, 107
 Giroux, 171, 174, 175, 176
 globalization, iii-iv, vii, ix, 1, 2, 4,
6, 13-15, 18-19, 21, 43-44, 47,
49, 96, 101, 109, 111-113, 118,
124, 127-134, 142, 144, 179,

188, 193-200, 249, 255, 258,
294, 309, 311, 315, 317, 321,
323, 328, 331-334, 365, 368-
369
 Godin, 104, 107
 Gollnick, 171, 173, 175-176
 goodness, 8-9, 41, 63, 76, 245,
296-297, 303-308, 348, 365,
386
 Grosseteste, 346
 Guo Xiang, v, 8, 359-364

H

Hall, 120
 Hamlet, 164
 Han nationality, 16, 49, 53
 happiness, 9, 62, 68, 137, 257, 296,
303-308, 319, 331, 337, 365,
368
 harmony, 8, 49-50, 78, 120, 160-
161, 181, 191, 201-202, 218,
239, 242, 257-258, 301, 305,
308, 314, 320, 324, 326, 331-
332, 340-342, 354, 365, 369,
371, 386
 Hawking, 268
 heaven, 43, 65-68, 73, 75-76, 95-
96, 121, 212, 216-217, 252, 314,
347, 352-355, 361-362, 369
 Hegel, iii, 4, 80, 89, 100, 102-103,
106, 117, 119-121, 124-125,
209, 214, 221-222, 227-228,
231-234, 297, 301-302, 307,
338
 hegemony, 6, 39, 44, 109, 113,
195, 197, 322
 Heidegger, 4, 89, 100-107, 162,
166-167, 206, 209-210, 219,
222, 225, 228-230, 265, 284,
297, 299, 307, 339, 355, 357,
375
 Hempel, 263, 271
 Heraclitean, 74
 Herd, 194, 197
 hermeneutics, 58, 160, 263, 268,
284-285
 Hinduism, 5, 75, 148, 154

- Hirsch, 170, 174, 177
 historicism, 109, 113, 210, 213, 214, 264, 267, 268
 historicity, 5, 103, 157, 159, 164, 277, 284-285, 302
 Ho Chi Minh, 5, 136, 137, 138, 143, 144
 holiness, 8, 84, 86, 296, 297, 303, 304
 Hollywood, 99, 111, 128
 Holy Spirit, 4, 120
 hope, 29, 88, 89, 90, 117, 121, 125, 131, 132, 147, 150, 181, 187, 202, 223, 226, 282, 300, 375, 379
 Horkheimer, 162, 278
 human capital, 173
 human flourishing, x, 24-26, 29, 31-34
 human freedom, 13, 372
 human rights, 4, 14, 24-25, 30, 33-35, 43, 79, 81-82, 84, 113, 162, 167, 191, 305, 311, 316, 322, 377-379
 humanism, 191, 288, 324, 337, 341, 343, 371
 humanitarianism, 342, 371
 humanity, v, 4, 6, 8, 16, 110, 136, 143, 154, 199, 202, 206, 228, 278, 295-296, 304, 312, 332, 334, 338, 365
- I**
- Ibn Khaldun, 3, 79, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 90
Ibn Taymiyyah, 83
 identity, 1, 5, 23, 24, 32, 33, 34, 101, 130, 131, 133, 138, 142, 143, 178, 179, 189, 190, 195, 209, 274, 275
 ideology, 9, 14, 37, 42, 43, 45, 53, 181, 236, 277, 340, 343, 377, 382
 ignorance, 29, 41, 44, 292, 293
 Ijtihād, 82
Ikhwan muslimun, 89
 imagination, 82, 299
 immanence, 351, 353, 354, 355
 immaturity, 261
 immigration, 49, 50, 171
 incommensurability, 99, 100, 101, 266, 271
 incompatibility, 59, 60, 369
 India, 3, 13, 15, 55-58, 60-62, 73, 117-118, 148-151, 154, 170, 372
 individualism, 7, 60, 158, 162, 185, 236, 324, 325
 individuality, 161, 274, 310, 311, 316, 323, 325, 328
 industrialization, 161, 171, 188, 311, 315, 318, 327
 information, 18, 43, 51, 127, 128, 169, 172, 175, 210, 315, 328
 integration, 6, 23, 128-133, 143-145, 177, 179, 187-190, 193-194, 196-197, 323, 329
 integrity, viii, x, 23, 25, 28-33, 314, 329
 intelligence, 16, 18, 20, 124, 184, 266
 interconnectedness, 61, 152, 154
 interdependence, 154, 366, 367
 interpretation, 43, 80, 84, 86, 120, 245, 265-269, 277, 284-286, 307, 310, 348-349, 351, 353-356
 interrelated, 366-369
 intersubjectivity, 284, 287-288
 Iraq war, 14
 irrationality, 269, 278, 339
 Islam, 75, 79, 81-89, 188, 256, 294
 Istikhlaf, 84, 86, 90
 Italy, 50, 170
- J**
- Jainism, 149
 Jesus, 74, 124
 Jiang Zemin, 19
 Jihād, 82
 jivan mukta, 368
 jnana, 59
 John of the Cross, 119
 Joshi, 288, 289

Judaism, 75, 251, 252
 judgment, 92, 125, 175, 220
 justice, 14, 20, 41, 65, 74, 89, 137,
 162, 246, 248, 251, 257, 303-
 306, 324, 329, 341, 366, 368,
 372, 382

K

Kafka, 302
 Kangxi, 39
 Kant, 80, 83
 karma, iii, 3, 59, 63-67, 69, 150
 Katz, 171, 177
 Khalifa, 86-87
 kindheartedness, 7, 20, 37, 63, 68,
 241, 242-245, 269-270, 314,
 322, 324, 341
 Kitaro, 153
 Kohlberg, 175, 177, 306
 Korean War, 44
 kosa, 59
 Kozol, 171, 173, 177
 Kuhn, 106, 266, 276-277, 283
 Kukai, 5, 152
 Kymlicka, 169, 170, 177

L

labor, 20, 124, 141, 170, 172-173,
 179, 232, 236, 332, 339
 language, 2-3, 6, 15-18, 46, 51, 53-
 58, 74, 78, 109-113, 208-209,
 220, 223, 227, 265-266, 273,
 275, 283-286, 297, 301, 305,
 308, 310-317, 324, 349, 369,
 376
 Lankavatara Sutra
 Mahayana, 149
 Lao-Tzu, 17, 74, 76, 77
 Lapidoth, 169, 177
 Latinos, 172
 Latour, 276
 Leibniz, 161
 Levinas, 162, 345, 346
 Lewis, 125
 liberalism, 9, 378

liberation, 5, 79, 81-82, 87, 89,
 137-138, 176, 282, 311, 319,
 324
 life style, 18, 43, 47
 literature, 16, 38, 42, 58, 64, 130,
 132, 135, 139, 151, 228, 310,
 317, 327, 329, 368, 378
 Lotus Sutra, 152, 153
 love, iv, 7, 37, 41, 60, 76, 78, 117,
 124, 160-164, 239-258, 268-
 269, 324, 341-342
 Löwith, 302
 loyalty, 37, 242, 248, 307, 327

M

Mahabharata, 58, 61-62, 148
 management, ix, 8, 28, 42-43, 45,
 80, 110, 173, 327, 329, 337-343,
 370
 Mao Zedong, 43
 Marcuse, 278, 289
 Maritain, 25, 34-35
 Marx, 5, 7, 17-18, 21-24, 45, 89,
 103, 119, 121, 136, 158, 205,
 213-215, 227-237, 301-302, 383
 materialist, 3, 136
 Matteo Ricci, 355
 McDonaldization, 15
 McGregor, 8, 339
 McLaren, 170-174, 177
 McLean, iii, 9, 13, 16, 18, 22, 118,
 145, 308-309, 313, 332, 355-
 356
 Mencius, 67, 74, 77, 218, 230, 239,
 242-248, 256, 258
 mental (manomaya), 59
 metaphor, 15, 224, 227
 metaphysics, 4, 58, 83, 92-96, 99-
 101, 106, 121, 211, 217, 221,
 224-226, 268, 274, 277, 355,
 357
 modernism, 3-4, 74, 76, 78, 159,
 164, 167
 modernity, iii-iv, ix, 4-6, 73, 77-78,
 91-97, 101, 103, 119, 159-167,
 186, 197, 199-202, 278, 283,
 308, 317, 319-320, 346, 370

modernization, iii-iv, 2, 6, 13, 18-19, 21, 37, 46-49, 84, 97, 109, 111, 127, 158-164, 167, 180, 182, 185, 188, 189-190, 192-193, 196, 199-201, 238, 255, 283, 311-320, 324, 326-327, 331, 340, 386

Mohism, 3, 7, 84, 160, 239-240, 243-246, 248, 253-258, 341

moksa, 59

monarchy, 305, 311, 373

Montesquieu, 161

Montreal, 2, 50-52

Moore, 55

morality, 6, 37-39, 44, 63, 65, 67, 88, 159, 167, 201, 226, 240, 246, 255, 278, 286, 314, 322, 324, 328-329, 330, 341, 371, 382

Moses, 119

Mu'tazili, 89

Mukherjee, S., 149

multiculturalism, viii, ix, 2, 49-53, 194, 266-267, 322

Muqaddimah, 85, 90

Mushrikun, 82

mysticism, 83, 301

myth, 276, 280, 314, 340

N

Nagarjuna, 153

Nakamura, Najime, 153

Naraka, 63

naturalism, 339

Needham, 176, 347, 356

Nehru, 61

New Cultural Movement, 323

Newton, 231, 357

Nichiren, 5, 153

Nietzsche, 269, 299, 307

nirvana, 150, 152, 219

noble, 8, 77, 153, 191, 200, 257, 296-297, 299, 301-307, 365

nothingness, 120, 212, 218, 219, 224

O

Oakes, 170-171, 177

obedience, 141, 160, 325

obligation, iii, 2, 25, 31-33, 75, 167, 324, 376

Occident, 89, 109

Ogbu, 169-170, 173, 177

oneness, 310, 366, 369

ontology, 6, 17, 86, 93, 205-206, 209, 211, 220, 226-227, 285, 357, 368

openness, v, 8, 43, 57, 129, 152, 182, 190, 345, 351, 353-356, 369

organism, 369, 372

Orient, 13, 77, 89, 109

orthodox, 20, 52, 66

ownership, 28, 45, 173, 339, 381, 383

P

Pancakosas

Upanishadic theory, 59

Pande, 274-275, 288-289

Pang, 174, 177

paradigm, 80, 90, 369

Parmenides, 209, 221

parochialism, 365

Parti Quebecois, 51

participation, 24, 29, 31, 128, 139, 143, 172, 174, 200, 209, 221, 286-287, 315

particularity, 103, 194-195, 200-201, 310, 313-314

peace, 9, 14-15, 58, 88, 100, 130, 152-154, 181, 187, 189, 196, 295, 306, 365, 370

Peking Evening Newspaper, 44

perfection, 26, 58, 61, 78, 93-96, 122, 282, 306, 340, 355, 367, 369

peripateticism, v, 8, 359-364

Persian, 75, 82

Phan, 124

Plato, 74, 80, 88, 119

pleasure, 20, 337

pluralism, 1, 5-6, 57, 61, 83, 148, 175-177, 193-194, 197, 273-274, 309, 372
 political system, 3, 37, 43, 45, 46, 81, 83, 87, 119
 Popper, 276, 280, 283
 potentiality, 262, 267-268
 pragmatism, 132, 371
pratityasamutpada, 152, 154
 prejudices, 81
 preyas, 59
 Prince Shotoku, 5, 152
 Propriety, 86, 343
 Protestant, 201, 255, 259
 provincialism, 7, 266, 267
punarjanma, 150
 punishment, 64, 67, 85, 246, 329, 330
 puranas, 148, 149
 purusartha, 61
 Pythagoras, 74

Q

Qadarite vision, 86
 Qin Shihuang, 40, 41
 qualification, 262, 376
 Quality of Life, 365, 368, 369

R

Radhakrishnan, S., 149
 Rama, 149
 Ramayana, 58, 148
 rationalism, 214, 227, 279, 338, 339
 rationality, iii-iv, 4, 7, 100, 103-104, 161-162, 166, 261-262, 266, 268-271, 275, 278, 281, 284, 289, 321, 340, 347, 355
 Rawls, 9, 166, 377-378
 realist, 49, 53-54
 reasonableness, 14, 41
 reciprocity, 366, 369
 reductionism, 3, 77
 relativism, 7, 56, 181, 194, 266, 284, 317, 322
 relativity, 46, 120

religion, vii, 27, 53, 57, 68, 81, 83-84, 86, 119-121, 125, 149, 151, 154, 170, 188, 201, 224, 228, 240, 252, 255, 268-269, 281-282, 284-286, 293-294, 303, 310, 338, 345, 353-356, 382, 385
 renaissance, 3, 55, 79, 82, 88, 188, 301, 313, 314, 316, 340, 382
 Renoir, 299
 Rescher, 7, 262, 271
 respect, viii, 2, 20, 23, 25, 31, 33, 37, 52, 53, 55, 60, 65, 84, 105, 110, 118, 132, 141-142, 151, 160, 169, 171, 175, 180-182, 185, 189, 191, 227, 228, 255, 291, 305, 314, 322, 324-325, 328, 338, 340, 342, 345, 352, 354-355, 371-372, 375-376, 379
 retribution, iii, 3, 63-66
 revelation, 75, 86, 95-96, 275
 righteousness, 20, 244, 248, 305, 343-344
 rightness, 303-305
 Ritzer, 15
 Rorty, 7, 89, 162-163, 166, 262, 271, 278, 288
 Rosenstien, 279
 Rousseau, 338
 Rumi, 75

S

sacred, 75, 78, 91, 286, 317
 sage, 18, 37-39, 45, 74-78, 90, 151, 212, 215, 217, 226, 244, 246, 349, 360, 362-363, 365, 368
 Sahwa, 79
 Saicho, 5, 152
 Sakyamunigama, 66
 salafi, 89
samsara, 150, 152
 Sangama, 58
 Sanskrit, 148, 151, 291
 Santipatha
 Upanishadic, 61
 sapiential, 75, 77
 Sartre, 299, 302, 307

- satisfaction, 31, 59, 151, 280, 340
 Scheeben, 123
 Schelling, 301
 schism, 81, 82
 Schopenhauer, 339
 Schutz, 287, 288
 science, 7, 13-14, 18-19, 21, 38, 58, 77, 90, 107, 110, 122, 127, 129, 130, 138, 153, 159-161, 164, 172, 188, 191, 221, 268, 273-283, 288, 307, 312, 315, 321, 326, 331, 341, 343, 346, 355, 365, 367, 371, 382
 secularism, 38, 56, 76
 self-consciousness, 91, 368, 382
 self-dependence, 91, 325
 self-emancipation, 122
 Selfishness, 101
 self-realisation, 59
 self-respect, 41
 separationists, 51
 Shari`ah, 3, 84-86
 sharing, 6, 20, 57, 84, 86-87, 94, 133, 147, 184, 273, 275, 286, 304, 366, 368
 Shi`i, 82
 Shingon, 152
 Shor, 170-171, 173, 177
 silence, 269, 292-293
 Siva, 148
 slavery, 33, 136, 176
 Snow, 7, 276
 social progress, 3, 19, 45, 79, 80-85, 88, 365-366, 368-369, 371-372
 socialist, 1, 19-21, 44, 136, 158-159, 162, 255
 soft power, 5, 133, 186
 solidarity, 57, 75, 150, 154, 202, 253
 solipsism, 95
 Song Dynasty, 16-17, 39
 Soviet Union, 14, 44, 53, 79, 87, 158-159, 187
 speculation, 78
 Spengler, 232, 235, 302, 307
 Spindler, 170, 174, 177
 spirituality, 2, 13, 15-16, 18-20, 24, 27-28, 37-38, 57-59, 61, 67, 75, 77-78, 82, 85-86, 89, 103, 107, 112, 117-118, 122-123, 136-139, 142, 147, 149, 152-154, 186, 268, 269-270, 273, 277, 283, 285, 288, 345-346, 352, 365, 367-369, 371, 381-283, 385-386
 Spring, 17, 170-173, 177
 sreyas, 59
 stability, viii, 39, 68, 129, 132, 170, 305, 314, 322, 326, 330-332, 340, 382
 stereotyping, 172
 Su Qin, 40
 subjectivism, 3
 subjectivity, 162, 214, 268, 346, 387
 Sujuki Shosan, 153
 Sukhavati Vyuhā Sutras, 152
 Sun Yatsen, 158, 311
 Sunnah, 85, 89
 Sunni, 82, 89
 Sun-sen, 39
 superstition, 3, 38, 74, 294
 superstructure, 231
 sustainability, 273
 Suzuki, 153
 svadharma
 Gita doctrine, 153
 Svetasvatara upanishad, 60
 sweatshops, 172
 symbol, 129, 161, 211, 318
 symbolism, 78, 286
 sympathy, 66, 122, 255, 268
 synthesis, 17, 120, 150, 152
- T**
- Tagore, 117, 122-125
Tahafut al Falasifah, 83, 90
 Takaki, 172, 173, 178
 Tang dynasty, 40
 Taoism, 4, 18, 39, 41, 68, 74-75, 77-78, 95-96, 149, 154, 160, 205, 208, 215-216, 219, 239, 340, 359

Tao-Te Ching, 74
 Taqleed, 87
 Tasawwuf, 90
 Tathata, 152
 Tatum, 173, 178
 technology, 4, 6, 18, 23, 59, 78, 99,
 101-106, 110, 127, 130, 138,
 159, 161-162, 164, 172-173,
 188, 273-284, 295-296, 343,
 371
 temporality, 102, 212, 232, 297,
 302
 territory, 184, 194, 280
 Thahfut al Falasifah, 83
 theology, 3, 83, 90, 123, 275, 338,
 355, 357
Ti'en, 75-76
 Tien-tai school, 152
 tolerance, 53, 130, 189, 201, 262,
 326
 Toronto, 2, 50-52
 totalitarianism, 37, 60, 83
 tradition, 9, 13, 15-18, 20-21, 37-
 39, 41, 45-46, 54, 73-78, 81, 83,
 109-110, 117, 119, 121, 149,
 163, 370-371
 traditionalism, 119
 transcendent, 3, 82, 121
 transformation, 1, 6, 17-18, 77, 94,
 142, 159, 174, 199-201, 231-
 232, 239, 248, 254, 281, 286,
 299-300, 331, 337, 339, 359-
 363, 368-369, 382
 Trinity, 4, 119, 120
 Trudeau, 51
 truth, 8-9, 27, 32, 39, 55, 77, 80,
 86, 123, 152-153, 209, 217, 219,
 220-221, 224, 235, 286, 296-
 299, 301, 303-305, 308, 314,
 363, 376-377, 386
 Tyler, 171, 178

U

ugliness, 93, 386
 Ultimate Other, 345-346, 350-356
 Ultimate Reality, 345, 350-355
 Ummah, 84, 86

unification, 20-21, 39, 47, 87-88,
 233-234, 359-360, 362
 unity, 9, 16, 37, 39, 56-58, 85, 87,
 95, 150, 152-153, 187, 189, 191,
 194, 209, 214, 216-217, 223-
 224, 229, 245, 253, 256-257,
 273-274, 281, 284, 310, 315,
 350, 354, 367-368, 372
 universal, 47, 75, 80-82, 85-87, 92,
 101-103, 106, 120-121, 141,
 152-154, 160, 162, 170, 189,
 191, 207, 211, 214, 219, 220,
 223-226, 240, 243-245, 251,
 253, 273-275, 280-281, 284,
 288, 301, 303-305, 356, 365-
 366, 368, 385
 universality, 3, 47, 77, 80, 99, 102,
 147, 152, 162, 189, 194, 211,
 220, 274, 276, 280, 321, 346,
 356
 utilitarianism, 60, 76, 153, 171,
 365, 371

V

Vajrayana, 152
 values, viii, 3-5, 8, 13-14, 16-20,
 25, 30, 33, 43, 52, 58, 61, 80,
 84, 86-87, 93, 107, 129-133,
 137-142, 145, 147, 153, 157,
 161, 171, 174-175, 181-182,
 185-186, 189, 194-195, 273-
 276, 278-279, 281, 283, 287-
 288, 294, 296-297, 301-302,
 304-310, 312-317, 319-330,
 332, 337, 342, 369-370, 372,
 382, 384
 Van Gogh, 299
 Vedic, 58, 60, 147-149
 Vico, 303, 307
 virtues, 75, 93, 145, 210, 262, 304,
 307, 325, 343, 344, 373
 Visnu, 62, 148, 149
 Von Balthasar, 123

W

wahabi, 89

Wahy, 86
Westernization, 42-46, 76, 249,
311, 312
Whitehead, 276
Wilhelm, 149, 154, 271, 301
wisdom, iii, 4, 33, 55, 60, 67, 75,
77, 90, 92-96, 118, 122, 145,
154, 270, 288, 292-293, 343-
344, 369
Wittgenstein, 3, 162, 220, 230,
266, 271
Woolgar, 276
Wright, 279
Wu-Wei, 76

X

Xi Zhou Dynasty, 16
Xun Tze, 17

Y

Yajurveda, 55, 62
Yamato, 319
Yan Hui, 67
yoga, 59
Yuan Huan, 64, 67, 69

Z

Zen, 153
Zhang Yi, 40
Zhu Xi, v, 8, 258, 345-357
Zhuang Tzu, 216-217, 219, 223-
224, 229
Zoroaster, 74

THE COUNCIL FOR RESEARCH IN VALUES AND PHILOSOPHY

PURPOSE

Today there is urgent need to attend to the nature and dignity of the person, to the quality of human life, to the purpose and goal of the physical transformation of our environment, and to the relation of all this to the development of social and political life. This, in turn, requires philosophic clarification of the base upon which freedom is exercised, that is, of the values which provide stability and guidance to one's decisions.

Such studies must be able to reach deeply into one's culture and that of other parts of the world as mutually reinforcing and enriching in order to uncover the roots of the dignity of persons and of their societies. They must be able to identify the conceptual forms in terms of which modern industrial and technological developments are structured and how these impact upon human self-understanding. Above all, they must be able to bring these elements together in the creative understanding essential for setting our goals and determining our modes of interaction. In the present complex global circumstances this is a condition for growing together with trust and justice, honest dedication and mutual concern.

The Council for Studies in Values and Philosophy (RVP) unites scholars who share these concerns and are interested in the application thereto of existing capabilities in the field of philosophy and other disciplines. Its work is to identify areas in which study is needed, the intellectual resources which can be brought to bear thereupon, and the means for publication and interchange of the work from the various regions of the world. In bringing these together its goal is scientific discovery and publication which contributes to the present promotion of humankind.

In sum, our times present both the need and the opportunity for deeper and ever more progressive understanding of the person and of the foundations of social life. The development of such understanding is the goal of the RVP.

PROJECTS

A set of related research efforts is currently in process:

1. *Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change: Philosophical Foundations for Social Life*. Focused, mutually coordinated research teams in university centers prepare volumes as part of an integrated philosophic search for self-understanding differentiated by culture and civilization. These evolve more adequate understandings of the person in society and look to the cultural heritage of each for the resources to respond to the challenges of its own specific contemporary transformation.

2. *Seminars on Culture and Contemporary Issues*. This series of 10 week crosscultural and interdisciplinary seminars is coordinated by the RVP in Washington.

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The personnel for these projects consists of established scholars willing to contribute their time and research as part of their professional commitment to life in contemporary society. For resources to implement this work the Council, as 501 C3 a non-profit organization incorporated in the District of Columbia, looks to various private foundations, public programs and enterprises.

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