Philosophy
and
the Life-world

Chinese Philosophical Studies, XXXIII

Edited by
He Xirong, Peter Jonkers & Shi Yongze

Table of Contents

Introduction

The Multiple Relations between Philosophy and the Life-world

Peter Jonkers

Philosophy between the Life-world and the Sciences

Since the publication of Edmund Husserl's *The Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Philosophy* in 1936,[1] the term life-world has become widely used in philosophy and social sciences, indicating the socio-cultural environment in which people lead their lives.[2] For Husserl, the life-world connotes a thickly experienced context of embodied human acting and knowing that is not readily able to be surveyed, nor fully objectified, but is rather pre-reflexive, with inescapably intersubjective and intertwined character.[3] With the term life-world, Husserl wants to highlight the importance of tradition, culture, and history as the ultimate horizon of all our understanding of and practical dealings with the world. The pre-reflexive character of the life-world implies that the terms 'culture' and 'history' are not used in the sense of academic disciplines, researching into a given culture or period of time, but as part and parcel of our immediate experience of the world, prior to any conceptualization. In other words, we not only have a cultural and historical legacy that we can study, but we ourselves are deeply marked by the culture and history of which we are part. They are the horizon against which our experiences and conceptualizations of the world are shaped.

Yet at the same time, according to Husserl's idea of philosophy as a universal science, philosophy should not take the life-world simply for granted, but has to examine it critically on the basis of the

---

[1] Edmund Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie. Eine Einleitung in die phänomenologische Philosophie, Husserliana, Band VI* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1954).

[2] See Carl Friedrich Gethmann, "Philosophie – zwischen Lebenswelt und Wissenschaft," *Lebenswelt und Wissenschaft. XXI. Deutscher Kongress für Philosophie. Kolloquienbeiträge* (Hamburg: Meiner, 2011), p. 3. See also: Dermot Moran, *Husserl's Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology. An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 180.

[3] Moran, *Husserl's Crisis,* p. 181.

principles of reason, which play a normative role for human acting and behavior. Hence, Husserl connects the concept of the life-world with a foundational philosophical project, implying that life-world is in a conceptual and functional dyad with philosophical science.

From this philosophical perspective, Husserl assesses the general situation of his time as one of crisis. With this assessment, he did not refer to the tragic personal and political events of his time, i.e. the rise of Nazism and the prospect of being expelled, as a Jewish scholar, from the University of Freiburg, but to the problematic developments of the sciences and their consequences for philosophy and humankind as a whole.[4] A first level of crisis results from the fact that the sciences have lost their awareness of being founded in the life-world. As Galileo had shown paradigmatically, natural science has lost its meaning for human life because of its mathematical approach to nature.[5] This has led to a second level of crisis, the devastating implications of the objectivism and naturalism of the sciences for the life-world. Because of this, people have become estranged from the technical outcomes of the sciences, and do not perceive anymore the latter's enlightening function, not only in theoretical, but also in practical respects. The third level concerns the crisis of European humanity, jeopardizing the whole complex of the Enlightenment, science, and humanism. This crisis does not so much concern Europe as a specific region, but rather the universality that is claimed by (Western) sciences.[6] Finally, this scientific approach of nature has also led to a crisis of philosophy, since it proved unable to withstand the objectivism and naturalism that was part and parcel of the scientific method, and failed to take into account the active role of the human subject in every process of knowing.[7]

In order to find a way out of this crisis, Husserl calls for a new kind of philosophy, which is critical of the life-world as well as of the sciences. Against this background, it comes as no surprise that he calls philosophers 'functionaries of mankind'.[8] Their task is to re-establish the foundational relationship between the life-world and the sciences, to foster the enlightening link between scientific knowledge and the

---

[4] Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften*, pp. 3f.

[5] Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften*, pp. 20ff

[6] Gethmann, "Philosophie – zwischen Lebenswelt und Wissenschaft," p. 6.

[7] Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften*, pp. 70ff.

[8] Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften*, p. 15.

convictions of the life-world, and to promote the formation of an effective, normative consensus about matters of the life-world as part of a scientific-technical culture. This means that, for Husserl, philosophy has an intermediate role to play between the life-world and the sciences. In particular, philosophy arises from the collapse of the self-evident certainties of the life-world, from the awareness that scientific knowledge is based on a number of implicit presuppositions, and from its aim to overcome the doubt that results from the previous points by giving a new, strictly philosophical foundation to human knowing and acting. Hence, philosophy should not yield to the inclination to downgrade itself to an edifying talk, uncritically confirming the (ideological) certainties of the life-world, nor to reduce itself to scientism and become a science among the other sciences.[9] Even though few people of our times agree with Husserl's idea to resolve the crisis of science and the life-world with the help of a strictly scientific philosophy,[10] the above clearly shows how important philosophy is for a correct understanding of the life-world.

The Problem of the Colonization of the Life-world

Social philosopher Jürgen Habermas has analyzed the crisis of the life-world in more detail by interpreting it as a result of one of the most important characteristics of modernity, viz. the rise of functional rationality. In a similar vein as Husserl, he characterizes the life-world as that which encompasses and holds us; hence, it is not theoretically present to our thinking, but rather appears as something, in which we find ourselves pre-theoretically. In other words, it is impossible to escape from the life-world, but at the same time, it is never present to us as an object. Habermas defines the life-world as the 'never transgressable' horizon of our experiences. Since it makes up the background of our experiences, the life-world is constitutive for our daily existence as personal, historically situated, corporeal, and communicatively embedded members of society.[11] A crucial aspect of

---

[9] Gethmann, "Philosophie – zwischen Lebenswelt und Wissenschaft," pp. 7f.

[10] See Roman Dichler, "Über das Verhältnis von Lebenswelt und Philosophie," *Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung,* 57, 3 (2003), pp. 373f.

[11] Jürgen Habermas, "Von den Weltbildern zur Lebenswelt," *Lebenswelt und Wissenschaft. XXI. Deutscher Kongress für Philosophie,* p. 64. See also Idem, *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns, Band 2* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1981), pp. 182, 188.

Habermas's idea of the life-world is that it is constituted by direct communicative interactions between equal social agents and oriented towards mutual understanding,

Because of the rise of functional rationality, the structural components of the life-world, viz. culture, society, and the individual person, become differentiated and uncoupled from one another. This explains why, in modernity, institutions of society become independent of worldviews, why interpersonal relationships become independent of social ones, and why personal identities become more reflective and less dependent upon tradition. At the same time, a similar process of differentiation takes place between the form and content of the life-world.[12]

For Habermas, the life-world is only one of the two constitutive elements of modern society, the other one being what he refers to as the 'system'. In contrast to the direct and equal communicative interactions and their orientation towards mutual understanding, which characterize the life-world, the 'system' organizes itself by way of more impersonal and strategic exchanges of money and power, within the context of the economy and the modern administrative state and judiciary.[13] In principle, Habermas welcomes these developments of the life-world and the 'system', but only insofar as they increase the effectiveness of society in a way that is advantageous to everyone, and to the extent that the life-world and the 'system' are related to each other in a balanced way.

The colonization of the life-world occurs when the relation between the life-world and the 'system' breaks down in such a way that the 'system' gets the upper hand. This development leads to an undermining of the communicative foundations of the life-world, and results in a situation, in which the system is increasingly 'colonizing' and thereby eroding the life-world. Habermas refers to the increasing involvement of the state and the economy in everyday life, as can be illustrated by the fact that more areas of life are now subject to legal regulation, or are produced, packaged and sold to individuals as commodities (e.g. the leisure industry). Technology is a third element

---

[12] Habermas, *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns, Band 2*, pp. 214f. See also: Timo Jütten, "The Colonization Thesis: Habermas on Reification," *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* 19, 5 (2011), p. 704.

[13] Nick Crossley, *Key Concepts in Critical Social Theory* (London: Sage Publications, 2005), pp. 37f.

of the 'system', which colonizes the life-world in yet another way. Instead of being just a help in the cultivation of the world, technology has become independent from the life-world, but at the same time it largely determines the way in which humans live their lives.

This impingement of economic, political, and technical structures upon the life-world destroys aspects of the life-world without being able to replace them by other ones, so that, eventually, the symbolic reproduction of the life-world is jeopardized. A case in point is the colonization of indigenous cultures and other substantial traditions as a result of a Western approach to organize the state, a capitalist economics, and the introduction of various new technological commodities. Hence, it is no wonder that colonization creates its own pathologies: it not only causes anomie and alienation, but also radically undermines the equal character of communicative interaction and its orientation towards mutual understanding, thus leading to various forms of oppression. In order to counterbalance the colonization of the life-world, Habermas puts his hope on new social movements, such as feminism, ecology, the anti-globalization movement, etc.

Set-up and Subdivision of This Volume

It is against this philosophical and societal background that the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences organized a conference on the complex relation between philosophy and the life-world,[14] and this volume comprises the proceedings of this conference. According to the organizers, philosophy traditionally claimed to be universal, necessary, and hence true, as well as the supreme principle for all the other kinds of knowledge. Yet, philosophy was also closely linked to the life-world as it critically examined the latter's ideological presuppositions. By doing so, philosophy succeeded in containing many conflicts, and it came to hold a favored position among human beings. Today, however, philosophy seems to have lost its vital, critical link with the life-world; it has yielded to the inclination of becoming a science among the other sciences, and has become so speculative that it has completely lost its contact with the life-world.

---

[14] The conference, organized by Professor He Xirong and Professor Shi Yongze, both of Institute of Philosophy of the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, took place on December 15-16, 2014.

However, the life-world confronts us with new problems every day, many of which cannot be answered by the positive sciences. For instance, implied in the notion of social progress is the idea of human freedom; is this the same as fulfilling our desires? If yes, what is the ultimate purpose of human life? If not, is there a reasonable limitation of desire; is it necessary and possible for human beings to restrain themselves? Such problems, which concern human destiny, cannot be resolved by the positive sciences. In a world that is ever more democratic, in which people are obliged to decide about their own future, it is urgent for everyone to have some understanding of the above questions. They concern all of us as well as our relation to the life-world.

In terms of traditional philosophy, the above problem is called the problem of human nature or human essence in its relation to the world. Although it is an ancient issue, the organizers of the conference in Shanghai wanted to examine this problem from a new perspective. As people see their lives as the result of their own choices, not satisfied with accepting life just as it comes to them, the relation between humans and the life-world has become far more dynamic and open to new opportunities and risks. To focus on the latter ones, human beings face more serious challenges than ever before, e.g., the threat caused by weapons of mass destruction and the worsening of the environment. Thus, human beings are responsible for their own crises as well as for their happiness, and it is time for them to become more aware of this. According to the organizers of the Shanghai conference, these questions constitute reasons to re-examine philosophically the relation between humans and the life-world.

To work on the above problems, this volume aims at examining the life-world from different philosophical perspectives. As shown above, Western philosophy has often proven unable to solve these problems or even to touch upon them at all. Therefore, there is an urgent need to complement it by other philosophies. Chinese philosophy can play an important role in this respect. As Zhang Zai, a Confucian of the Soon Dynasty indicated, philosophy calls people to be the heart of heaven and earth. To be sure, Chinese philosophy might not meet the definition of traditional Western philosophy, but it engages the problems of the life-world in a profound way. Furthermore, the fact that the life-world is by definition a cultural-

specific one presents an additional reason for the need to enrich this volume with insights from Chinese philosophy.

The first part of this volume offers a philosophical analysis of two different aspects of the life-world (the papers of Shen and Jonkers). Its aim is to develop further the multiple relations between humans and the life-world, thereby building on the general discussion of these relations in the first section of this Introduction. In his paper *Urban Life-world Manifesting the Dao*, Vincent Shen gives a phenomenological account of a specific aspect of the life-world, namely the fact that the infrastructure of a city structures the life-world, in the sense that the former enables people to engage in communicative interaction with multiple others and in various ways. Shen shows that the concept of the Dao is very apt to describe this interactive communication. The Dao literally means the way or law of nature and the way of that particular nature in us. Yet Dao can also mean guiding and directing, and, finally, the Way itself and the Origin of all things. The Dao is related to the movement of the human body, especially its 'de-distancing' (making distance disappear) and 'directionality' (taking a certain direction). These features highlight the specific character of the urban life-world, and become concrete realities in the streets, road signs, and even the trees of cities. In sum, the concept of the Dao is helpful to explain how we create a meaningful world by way of directing ourselves towards many others. Moreover, because we are directional, we are always in the process of de-distancing, getting closer to one another by means of making distance disappear.

According to Shen, the dynamics of the urban life-world eventually come together in the Dao, which is not only their origin, but also their ultimate end. For the Chinese mind, these patterns are revealed to human beings in the city by virtue of the presence of nature, especially through gardens and parks, which are part of people's everyday urban lives. Finally, the coming together of so many different elements, streets, bodies, languages and discourses, gardens and parks, buildings etc. in the well-structured space of the city reveals to us, although pre-conceptually, an invisible city, which can be identified with the Ultimate Reality or the Dao.

The second paper of the first part of this volume, *A Revaluation of Wisdom as a Way to Reconnect Philosophy with the Life-world* by Peter Jonkers, discusses the reasons why philosophy has lost its contact with

the life-world since the beginning of modernity, and under which conditions this relation can be restored. His starting-point is the mismatch between the pre-reflective character of the life-world and the claim of modern philosophy that scientific rationality could solve all moral and existential questions of humankind and thus serve as the only true wisdom. According to this paradigm, the ultimate goal and, hence, the highest wisdom is that all human behavior should be reoriented on a scientific basis and that the life-world should be redesigned accordingly. However, due to the inherent objectivism and reductionism of scientific rationality, this ambitious project resulted in philosophy's estrangement from the life-world, in particular from the latter's cultural and historical nature. Hence, in order to interpret the life-world more appropriately, we need a broader, more encompassing kind of rationality than the scientific one.

In the next section of his contribution, Jonkers examines whether philosophy can reconnect with the life-world by redefining the former as a reasonable quest for practical wisdom. Following French philosopher Paul Ricoeur, he defines the essence of practical wisdom as giving an existential judgment in the context of the life-world. Such a judgment holds at bay the ruinous alternatives of focusing only on the universality of moral principles, as well as on the historical contexts of the life-world. Only through a moral judgment in the context of the life-world can practical wisdom reach its final goal, namely to assist people in their search for a truthful orientation of their lives. Practical wisdom starts from a critical, philosophical examination of the general principles which are meant to orient human lives, and makes, from there, the transition to the contingency of the life-world. In order to realize this transition, deliberation is essential, which means that the connection of philosophy and the life-world is inevitably a fragile one.

The set-up of the second part of this volume is inspired by Jürgen Habermas' analysis and critique of the colonization of the life-world. The five essays that make up this part criticize the colonizing impact of the societal systems of politics (the papers of Sweet and Wamala), economics (the papers of Alam and Li Qin), and science (the paper of Chitoiu) upon the life-world.

In his paper, *Personhood and Property*, William Sweet criticizes a first aspect of the colonization of the life-world by politics and legislation,

namely the trend to define the human person as a being who has property, or owns oneself. He starts by analyzing an ambivalence about the value of the human body, its necessity, and even what it is. On the one hand, for some, the body is an impediment to the mind or the self, while, on the other hand, many also admit that one cannot be a self without a body. This ambivalence is not a purely metaphysical issue, but plays an important role in a number of contemporary ethical discussions that concern the human body (euthanasia, abortion, prostitution etc.). In many cases like these, the bottom-line of the argument is that someone can do as she wants with her body, because she has a basic right to it or, phrased differently, considers her body to be her property.

Although, on the face of it, this argument seems to express a basic moral fact that needs no further justification, Sweet argues that it rests on a number of assumptions that are anything but self-evident. First, our relations to our bodies are far more intimate and immediate than our relations to property, which is acquired through some kind of transfer or exchange. Second, one cannot alienate one's body absolutely, since this undermines one's status as an autonomous being. Thirdly, defining one's relation to one's body in terms of ownership also undermines the fundamental integrity of the person as an embodied and social being. Yet, these arguments against self-ownership do not mean that *others* can do whatever they wish with us. Rather than ownership, Sweet proposes the notion of stewardship as more fruitful to define our relations to our bodies.

In his paper on *Ethical Discourse in the Age of Human Rights,* Edward Wamala discusses the colonization of the life-world by international politics and diplomacy, in particular the burden that a Western interpretation of human rights lays on African societies. He discusses the condemnation of the Ugandan anti-homosexuality bill by defenders of the (human) rights of lesbian, gay, transgender, and bisexual people (LGTB). Although the Ugandan parliament had passed the bill, it was condemned internationally in very strong terms, resulting in the shelving of the bill.

Wamala argues that many third world countries support the protection of minorities, but have good reasons not to include LGTBs in these protective laws. If LGTBs would be granted specific rights, this jeopardizes the ethical discourse about substantial issues. In other words, if a society has no moral anchor anymore and fails to express

reprobation at a behavior deemed fundamentally inappropriate, this is almost tantamount to the 'moral death' of that society.

This leads to the paradoxical conclusion that, in a number of situations, the promotion of human rights contracts the space for ethical discourse in and among communities. When this happens, the risk of human rights abuses and violations increases. These abuses and violations occur when the rights in question have never been fully accepted at a fundamental level. Hence, human rights cannot be imposed on a society from outside, but have to be the result of a consensus within that society. Another aspect of this question is to find the right balance between individual rights and duties towards society. Wamala's conclusion is that the tendency to proclaim ever more human rights risks stifling the ethical debate about fundamental values in a specific socio-cultural environment and the efforts to reach a world-wide consensus.

A second aspect of the colonization of the life-world regards the impact of the economy on societies around the globe. In his paper on *Human Desire and International Global Capitalism: Challenges and Opportunities*, Edward Alam argues for the need to curb the wild tide of international global capitalism by *structurally* channeling human desire via early childhood education in the family towards 'the good life for all people'. In order to do so, he draws upon the work of René Girard on human desire and imitation. In contrast to animal instincts, the characteristic of human desire is that it has no essential or ultimate goal, but has to borrow these desires and their goals from role models by means of imitation. This can lead to a situation in which we not only want to imitate these role models, but actually become what the model is, thus creating an intense mimetic rivalry, as Girard calls it. This mimetic rivalry between individuals can easily spill over to society, eventually leading to violent chaos if it is not constrained. An important consequence of this process, which has become predominant in our times, is the reduction of freedom to mere individualistic liberties and *rights.* Freedom thus becomes the life/death force in international global capitalism, which poses a threat not only to the ecosystem and the economy, but also to the human being itself. In order to avoid this fateful outcome, Alam deems it essential to channel human desire towards what is good, true, and beautiful. This has to be done via early childhood education in the

family, giving priority to human relationships based on virtues, thereby assuming that they are knowable and definable and more or less recognized across cultures in each and every era. These virtues do not stand alone, but are related to the fundamental values of the good, the true, and the beautiful.

The second paper on economic colonization, Li Qin's *The Theory of Consumption 'Need' of Chinese Traditional Culture and Its Enlightenment,* criticizes the consequences of the affluent society on people's consumption psychology. Although consumption demand is the starting point of all economic activities, their excessive expansion not only diverts people from the ultimate purpose of consumption, namely to satisfy human wants, but also leads to the deterioration of the ecological environment and the spiritual, and to a value crisis. In his paper, Li Qin discusses a number of examples in Chinese culture, in particular from Han Feizi, of the expansion of human needs, and relates them to Maslow's theory of the hierarchy and infinity of human needs. So, from the perspective of the modern culture of consumption, ancient thinking about consumption, contained in traditional Chinese culture, can give us some useful ideas and inspiration. It is the advancing of social practice that determines and pushes the demand to higher levels. Almost all the traditional Chinese sages take a negative attitude toward unlimited consuming desire, which makes people physically and mentally confused and prone to indulge in the pursuit of material enjoyment, so that "Nothing can be blamed on the desire."

Yet, industrial civilization stimulates and encourages people to consume more. Especially in the consumer society, consumption behavior is regarded as the main form of self-expression and social identity, so that consumption has become the symbol of what people are. In sum, the basic need of survival is transformed into "desire by the desire." Therefore, we should completely change the traditional consumption concept and establish a new kind of sustainable green consumption ethic to meet the legitimate needs of people, curbing the false and excessive needs. The criterion to decide whether or not the desire for consumption is reasonable for people's self-development, is whether it ultimately improves people's ability and strength.

A final aspect of the colonization of the life-world is a direct consequence of the dominance of science and technology in our daily

lives. Dan Chitoiu's paper on *Philosophy as Life Inquiry and Existential Attitude* argues that contemporary science has reduced the original broad meaning of the term 'inquiry' to an experimental one. Eastern (Christian and Islamic) philosophies have succeeded in overcoming this reduction because of their experiential character. Chitoiu examines this thesis by taking spiritual experience as his subject of inquiry. Spiritual experience is creative, is able to found values and, hence, gives rise to a cultural tradition.

In order to get a clearer view of spiritual experience and its association with the ideal of human betterment, Chitoiu analyses the early Christian tradition, in particular its interpretation by neo-patristics scholars. This tradition focuses on the fact that the rationality of the world has multiple 'virtualities'. Man uses this rationality of the world in order to make progress in his communion with God and his fellows, as well as to have access to higher meanings and purposes of nature. Moreover, only in the human being do the indefinite virtualities of nature gain meaning. This results in an alternative model of rationality, viz. one that implies a plasticity of existence, as well as an alternative model of experience, which can be called interpersonal.

These alternative models lead to the idea of philosophy as an existential inquiry. According to this view, ultimate knowledge (and knowledge of any kind) involves the whole man and not just his intellect, and the act of knowledge has the shape of a relationship. This becomes manifest in man's vision of God: to have a vision of God becomes possible because God unites with man, sharing the knowledge that He has of himself. No worthy conception of God can be attained through the intellect alone, as true knowledge of God comes from God, leads to God, and conforms to God the one who acquires it. Obviously, this broad idea of experience breaks open the rather reductionist view of experience as experimental, which characterizes the sciences.

The third part of this volume examines various ways to rectify the colonization of the life-world. The contributions of Golubiewski, Zhao Qi, Yu Xuanmeng, He Xirong, and Singh explore various Western and Eastern philosophical and religious traditions, such as Thomism, Daoism, Confucianism, and Zen Buddhism, asking whether these traditions present viable ways to retrieve the life-world. In his paper

Art as the Source of Natural and Moral Goodness in Aquinas, Wojciech Golubiewski explores a view of the life-world that precedes its colonization by politics, the economy, and science through an analysis of Aquinas's account of the divine art as a source of the inherent goodness of the life-world. For Aquinas, the inherent harmony, beauty and goodness of all things of nature reveal a kind of practical wisdom, which opens a way to human virtuous life by imitation of nature's unfathomable generous source. Golubiewski starts his investigation with an analysis of Aquinas's metaphysical notion of the good as common to all things of nature. In this context, 'generosity' might explain the ultimate motives of natural generation and of the other laws of nature. These motives manifest a kind of universal practical wisdom, thereby not only referring to the principles of action that are common to different things of nature, but also to the voluntary mode of action proper to human nature. Hence, generosity is one of the basic laws of nature that belong to this universal practical wisdom. According to Golubiewski, this idea of the generosity of nature might open interesting perspectives for a dialogue with Daoism.

In his exploration of the inherent goodness in (the natural movement of) material things, Golubiewski focuses on Aquinas's understanding of art as an imitation of nature in the broad sense, thus including human actions. This understanding of art implies that it is derived from an intangible and invisible divine source, thus making this kind of art very different from human-made artifacts. Divine art constitutes things in their natures, by which they attain their natural goodness, as best in themselves and congruous in their virtuous operations. Considered under the aspect of generosity, morally virtuous actions are in harmony with the divine art's generosity of the good discovered in the natural changes of things.

In her paper, *The Universal Love and the Sustainability of Human Beings: a Comparative Study of Confucianism and Thomism*, Zhao Qi discusses how the ideas of two pre-modern thinkers, Thomas Aquinas and Confucius, can contribute to restore the life-world, in particular when it comes to the formation of moral virtues, such as the love for other beings, human as well as non-living things. For Thomas Aquinas, human beings are born in relationship with God and other human and non-human beings, but this relationship has been tainted because of the Fall. Only through real love or charity, which is a divine virtue, are humans able to recover this relationship. Hence, the highest

moral fruit is not that humans have a sound reason that persuades them to act morally, but that their whole being is morally good, as is exemplified by the virtue of charity. Charity is love in its real and most complete sense and includes love for persons as well as love of non-personal goods.

In comparison to Aquinas, Confucius himself was not interested in an ontological explanation of human beings, but the Confucian tradition has a clear view on the position of humans in the world, namely as related to heaven and earth. Confucianism considers *ren* (loving others) as the highest and universal moral virtue. *Ren* is also the foundation of Confucian ethics, because it enables humans to form good character or concrete virtues. All Confucian virtues can be reflected in acts, but most of all, they are inclinations or habits that make a person good.

A special question for Aquinas as well as for Confucius is the love for strangers. Aquinas thinks that only with God's grace, in particular through piety, are humans able to love everyone, including strangers, sinners and enemies. Zhao Qi argues that Confucius also advocates strongly the love of strangers, in particular by *shu*, the virtue of putting oneself in the other's position.

In his paper on the *Self-awareness of Life,* Yu Xuanmeng argues that philosophy can be defined as the self-awareness of life. This definition implies a critique of philosophy's one-sided focus on knowledge, which has marked its whole history. Self-awareness includes knowledge, but is much broader. Yu Xuanmeng demonstrates the one-sidedness of conceptual thinking throughout the history of philosophy, in particular in the debate between Plato and Aristotle about the knowledge of the universal, the opposition between rationalism and empiricism in modern philosophy, and phenomenology's suspension of the existence of the external world. From this perspective, Heidegger's thinking shows an important shift in western philosophy, since it changes the theme and the framework of philosophy, making a turn from the focus on knowledge to the phenomenon of life. Thus, in Yu Xuanmeng's view, Heidegger paves the way for changing the definition of philosophy and focusing it on the self-awareness of life, a question that eventually comes down to the question of the meaning of life.

The most important theme of traditional Chinese philosophy is, similarly, the self-awareness of life, as the book of *Yi Jing* and its

interpretation by Confucius shows. Confucius sees this book as focusing on human affairs. He used it to show various human situations and discussed how a wise man can catch the right moment.

In Neo-Confucianism, the focus on philosophy as the self-awareness of life became even stronger, as it called its teaching the doctrine of being a sage. Here the human being is not the object of knowing, but knowing itself, the way of existence of every one of us.

In sum, the self-awareness of life helps us to understand and overcome the colonization of the life-world, which threatens today's society, as is manifest in the damage to the (natural as well as social) environment and the conflicts among people. In this sense, to be self-aware means to keep in mind both oneself and the world.

In her paper *On the Non-Theoretical Characteristics of Chinese Traditional Philosophy from the "Zhong Dao" (The Mean Way)*, He Xirong focuses on the thinking mode of mean thought in Chinese traditional philosophy, and tries to show its non-theoretical or non-principled nature. Because of this the mean way can connect more easily with the life world than (idealist) Western philosophy, which is far more theoretical and principled. Moreover, this connection values that different ways of thinking are always deeply rooted in national culture and history. By taking this approach, Chinese traditional philosophy can contribute to finding a solution to the awkward situation that many Chinese people are facing, namely to have lost contact with their life-world, since they find themselves as being neither Chinese nor Western or being Chinese and Western at the same time.

In order to show how this approach is able to reestablish the link of Chinese traditional philosophy with the Chinese life-world He Xirong explores Zhongdao (the mean way), which is an important element in this mode of thinking. It focuses on integrity, blur, and conflict, thus highlighting its fundamental difference with the binary, antithetical mode of thinking, which predominates in mainstream Western philosophy. The Chinese traditional mode of thinking takes the world as a living entity, and human being as the smaller living entity, which should live properly in the world. Human's proper existence is changeable and relatively balanced, but because of the changes of environments and the emergence of new demands of people, this balance is regularly broken. This leads to the need of a

self-awareness of life, whose purpose it is to enhance people's living quality and cultivate a perfect personality.

The mode of thinking, characterized as Zhongdao, has three important dimensions. The first one is avoiding extremes and at the same time not doing one thing and neglecting another. The second one is righteousness, meaning that one takes a proper method to attain the best result, thereby taking into account the proper time and the circumstances. This method is able to solve the problem of the relation between principle and change. Finally, the third dimension of Zhongdao is unity of oppositeness and interdependency. This dimension is aimed at relating all things in the world with each other in harmony.

The Zhongdao mode of thinking is not only a method, but also a value of life and practical wisdom, as well as a spiritual realm, capable of maintaining stability and balance in an open environment. Applied to contemporary Chinese society, this mode of thinking cultivates the Chinese people's way of doing things and their ability to find a balance between traditional cultural values and the impact of modern science upon the lives of people, in particular scientism. This balance is an exemplar of how (Chinese traditional) philosophy is able to connect with today's life-world.

The last paper of the third part of this book is by Lalan Prasad Singh. He discusses the problem of *Philosophy and the Life-world from a Zen Buddhist Perspective* by focusing on the great intellectual and spiritual renaissance of the sixth century B.C., a period that saw the emergence of Indian Buddhism, Chinese Daoism and Confucianism, and Greek pre-Socratic philosophy. Singh examines the history of the complex relations between Indian Buddhism, Chinese Buddhism, and Confucianism and Daoism. He shows that in order to create cohesion and harmony in society, Zen Buddhism with its lofty philosophy and technique of meditation can integrate the fragmented life of man, which is necessary to build a better and just society. Zen goes beyond the conceptual teaching of philosophy. It emphasizes integrating the part with the whole and man with humanity. According to Zen Buddhism, the life-world consists of the whole truth.

The last paper of this volume is not related to its general theme. Bo Meinertsen discusses the intriguing philosophical question of our knowledge about the contingent future. His paper, entitled *A Note on*

Aristotle and Beliefs about the Future, falls into two main parts. In the first part, he considers the question of whether Aristotle believes that there can be true statements about what will happen in the future. Meinertsen first clarifies this question, which involves consideration of some logical and metaphysical notions in Aristotle. He then argues that the answer to the question is 'No' (with a qualification). In the second part, he argues that Aristotle's view is correct. He does so 'indirectly', by way of presenting and refuting three prominent objections to the view.

Bibliography

Crossley, Nick. 2005. *Key Concepts in Critical Social Theory.* London: Sage Publications.

Dichler, Roman. 2003. "Über das Verhältnis von Lebenswelt und Philosophie." *Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung,* Vol. 57, No. 3, 373-390.

Gethmann, Carl Friedrich. 2011. "Philosophie – zwischen Lebenswelt und Wissenschaft." *Lebenswelt und Wissenschaft. XXI. Deutscher Kongress für Philosophie. Kolloquienbeiträge.* C. F. Gethmann (ed.). Hamburg: Meiner, 3-16.

Habermas, Jürgen. 1981. *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns, Band 2.* Frankfurt: Suhrkamp.

Habermas, Jürgen. 2011. "Von den Weltbildern zur Lebenswelt." *Lebenswelt und Wissenschaft. XXI. Deutscher Kongress für Philosophie. Kolloquienbeiträge.* C. F. Gethmann (ed.). Hamburg: Meiner, 63-88.

Husserl, Edmund. 1954. *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie. Eine Einleitung in die phänomenologische Philosophie, Husserliana, Band VI.* The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff.

Jütten, Timo. 2011. "The Colonization Thesis: Habermas on Reification." *International Journal of Philosophical Studies.* Vol. 19, No. 5, 701-727.

Dermot Moran. 2012. *Husserl's Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology. An Introduction.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Part I
Philosophical Analyses of the Life-world

1.

Urban Life-world Manifesting the Dao

VINCENT SHEN

Urban Life-world

The city constitutes an urban life-world that is a relatively well-structured complex of gatherings in which human beings realize their desires through intensive communication and complicated infrastructure in order to fulfil human existence. By 'human existence' I mean the whole process of constructing a world of meaningfulness by an individual or a collectivity in a spacio-temporal context. For me, the infrastructures in the city – such as streets, transportation, schools, markets, administrative centers, parks, gardens, churches and temples – are there to structure a life-world.[1] These infrastructures make it possible for people to go outside of themselves to meet many others or, more properly speaking, to meet 'strangers', as Georg Simmel calls them, and to cultivate themselves so as to form a meaningful lifeworld for all.[2]

Simply put, human life is an unceasing process of self-extension by way of 'strangification' as well as self-awareness by way of reflection. I use the neologism 'strangification', or *waitui* 外推 in Chinese, to denote the act by which one goes outside of oneself to many others, from familiarity to strangeness, from one's own to strangers. On the other hand, people also need to spend time alone for the purpose of self-awareness and self-reflection, even if they naturally and inevitably live with many others and communicate with many others. (I use the term 'many others' or sometimes 'multiple others' to replace the term 'the Other', used by Jacques Lacan, Emmanuel Levinas,

---

[1] I use the term 'lifeworld'(*Lebenswelt*) in Husserl's sense (Vincent Shen, "Annäherung an das taoistische Verständnis von Wissenschaft. Die Epistemologie des Lao Tses und Tschuang Tses," *Grenzziehungen zum Konstruktiven Realismus* (Wien: WUV Universitätsverlag, 1993)), as well as its interpretation by J. Habermas as the correlate and background of communicative action (Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action. Vol. 1: Reason and the rationalization of society* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984), pp. 70-71.

[2] Georg Simmel, *On Individuality and Social Forms. Selected Writings* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), pp. 143-149.

Jacques Derrida, and Gilles Deleuze. For me, 'the Other' is a mere philosophical abstraction. In no moment of our life do we face, purely and simply, 'the Other'. We are all born into many others and grow up among many others. It is better for a life of sanity that we humans keep in mind the existence of many others and our relationship with them. This is true everywhere, whether the countryside or the city, on a mountain or at sea. However, it is particularly true for human life in the city, which is full of many others and strangers.)

The city is a complex hub of human existence in which multiple forms of life and directions of existence converge in diverse, complicated networks. In these networks human beings look for meaningfulness by way of strangification, from immanence to transcendence, from self-transcendence to border-crossing. They do this in order to extend unceasingly their own existence, with an increasing degree of self-understanding, self-awareness, and self-transparency.

Dao as the Way

Dao is the Way of nature and, therefore, also the way of that particular nature in us. It is our desire starting from our body to its eventual expansion to the universe. I tend to see the city as a complex structure of human gatherings that is the realization and hub of human desires. The city is a gathering of desires, and Dao is the Way or, better, the 'waying' of myriad things including human desire, the most natural thing in us. Still, Dao has a deeper meaning and prospect than the image of a pathway. It is true that, etymologically speaking, the Chinese character *Dao* (道) is composed of two components. The first, 首, signifies a human head, a representation that probably originated in imaging the visage of divinities. The second, 辵, signifies the act of running or walking along.[3] Together, they signify a pathway or a way for people using a thinking head to walk on, to go along, but with a way out. Therefore, taking the image of the way as metaphor, Dao is related to the road we walk on, the pathways that connect one village to another, that link village to city, or city to city, and the roads and streets on which we move ourselves in the city. It means a way on

---

[3] Xü, Shen. *Shuowen Jiezi* 說文解字 *(Explication and Analysis of Chinese Words). Reprinted edition* (Taipei: Yi-wen, 1966), p. 76.

which we could work out a direction and a way out. This image of a way is very suggestive for understanding the meaning of Dao, though Dao never limits itself only to the idea of a physical way. We understand Dao more broadly also as a way out of human desire, a way of life, the way for a society, the way of a civilization, the way for a people's future, and so on. As Heidegger says, it is improper to represent the Dao as a physical way, as the distance relating two *loci*. However, Dao might be the Way that puts everything on the way, or the 'way-maker'. Heidegger says, "Way-making understood in this sense no longer means to move something up or down a path that is already there. It means to bring the way…forth first of all, and thus to be the way."[4] The way reveals to us more than the way itself. Basically, the Dao is wherein our body and mind can seek a direction for meaningful existence. Dao is the way-making of desire.

Second, when used as a verb, *Dao* means also 'to direct', 'to guide', and 'to say', 'to tell', or 'to be told of'. The implicit sense of 'guiding' and 'directing' could be extended to a mean principle, reason, or even method, closely related to the concept of the way that we developed previously. On the other hand, the sense of 'saying' and 'telling' could be extended to mean discourse, speech, and even theory. But these later meanings, so important for the Greek concept of *logos* and for Western philosophy in general, are less important for Laozi and Chinese philosophy. That is why the first chapter of the received version of *Laozi* says, "Dao could be told of, yet the Dao told is not the constant Dao."[5] That which is told of is already a constructed reality by human language, not the Reality Itself.

Third, 'Dao' also means the law of becoming or law of nature. In Chinese cosmology, *Dao*, especially in the term *Tian Dao* (Heavenly Dao), means laws or patterns of nature, revealing itself in both its structural and its dynamic perspectives. The structural pattern says all things are structurally constituted of components different from, yet complementary, to each other, such as being and non-being, *yin* and *yang*, movement and rest, weak and strong. The dynamic pattern says that once a state of affairs is developed to the extreme limit in the process of change, then it will naturally move to its opposite state of

---

[4] Martin Heidegger, 1982. *On the Way to Language. Trans. Hertz* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1982), p. 130.

[5] Laozi, *Laozi Sizhong,* 老子四種 *(Four Versions of the Laozi). Reprinted edition* (Taipei: Da An Press, 1999), p. 1.

affairs. The patterns of nature are to be shown in the natural part of the city, not only through the sky above the city, the earth under the city, the mountain hills surrounding the city, the river(s) across the city, but also the parks and gardens in the city. These serve not only as the lungs of the city, but also as the locus in which the patterns and rhythm of nature are to be revealed to citizens of the city.

In pushing the meaning of Dao to its most speculative level, it becomes not only the way followed by all things and persons, but also the Way Itself, the Origin of all things and the Ultimate Reality. *Dao* means the Origin that gives birth to all things. The process of giving birth to all things by the Origin is its self-manifestation through a process of differentiation and complexification. As Laozi says, "The Dao gave birth to One. One gave birth to two. Two gave birth to three. Three gave birth to all things."[6]

Different doctrines of Ultimate Reality have been given in different accounts of Chinese philosophical schools. In Confucianism, this could be Heaven, or *ren* 仁 (humanity), or *cheng* 誠 (sincerity). In Buddhism, the Ultimate Reality could be the Emptiness, or, in order not to limit one's self to the emptiness, the Emptying of emptiness, or the Mind in Tiantai Buddhism and Chan Buddhism. In Daoism, it is the Dao, the ever self-manifesting Act of Existence, that is the Reality Itself. All that is said about the Dao is but a Constructed Reality, and Constructed Reality is not and never could be the Reality Itself. Here is the paradox revealed by Daoist philosophy: on the one hand, one should say 'Dao' in order to express it; however, once said, it becomes a Constructed Reality and not the Reality Itself and, therefore, should always be deconstructed. In order to keep one's mind open to the Reality Itself, all human constructions should be ready for further deconstruction.

Streets in the City and Trees along the Streets

We walk in the city. We walk from home to work, to school, to see friends, to go for dinner, or just for an outing. We walk along the street, under the trees. We walk in the park. We walk home. On this level, the way is the course of connection and direction on which we move to arrive somewhere. On the way, streets extend from one place

---

[6] Laozi, *Laozi Sizhong,* p. 37.

to another. The Way is that which puts people on the way, the way that 'ways'. The way-making of the Way basically relates to the movement of our bodies. Body movement is the simplest way of developing and fulfilling our act of strangification and self-awareness.

In the everyday life-world, we experience a tension creative of meaning between the original intimacy and the otherness of my body. The intimacy of my body means that I am my body, or at least my body is intimately related to myself and is an authentic part of my Self. It is on this level, and only on this level, that it is legitimate to say, as religious Daoist texts did, that *Dao* is my Self and my Self is my own body.[7] On the other hand, the otherness of my body manifests itself through the fact that my body is also different from my Self, resistant to my will and, basically, open to others in the world. The desire in my body always signifies many others; as Lacan says, "the unconscious is the discourse of the Other," and that "the desire of man is the desire of the Other."[8] However, for me this act of signifying many others is a positive and creative act, not to be conceived negatively, as Lacan did. In real life, my body, as the locus of origination and effectuation of desire, is always signifying multiple others in its basic movement, and thereby begins a project of meaningful life always going beyond any particular desired object, beyond any desired desire.

As I see it, body movement synthesizes and goes beyond this tension between intimacy and otherness of my body and is thereby productive of meaning. In this sense, we can understand the origin of meaning in the movement of body. Desire, as the original project of meaning, is first immersed in the body dynamism and body movement. Body movement, when elaborated by different non-linguistic forms, such as gestures, sounds or pictures, attains its first moment of meaningfulness. This is also the first step of the meaning

---

[7] As could be seen in the Daoist texts such as *Hsiang Er Commentary on the Laozi* (*Laozi Xian Er Zhu*; see chapters 4, 13, 21, 25, 29) and the *Middle Classics of Laozi* (*Lao Tzu Chung Ching*; see chapters 39, 12, 44). See Baotian Gu and Zhongli Zhang, *Xinyi Laozi Xian Er Zhu* 新譯老子想爾注 (*Hsiang Er Commentary on the Laozi: A New Translation*) (Taipei: Sanmin, 1997), pp. 4-29; and Daozang, "Lao Tzu Zhong Jing 老子中經 (Middle Classics of Laozi)," *Zhengtong Daozang. Vol. 37. Reprinted edition* (Taipei: Xinwenfeng Bookstore, 1985), pp. 302-314.

[8] Jacques Lacan, *Écrits* (Paris: Edition du Seuil, 1966), p. 814.

project by which our desire becomes intelligible, or, if you like, the first outlet of our desire towards meaningfulness.

In body movement, there is always a certain direction. We understand that people, in their everyday life, have directionality in their body movement, as Heidegger said. For him, the spatiality of being-in-the world consists first in "the characters of de-distancing and directionality."[9] Heidegger would put de-distancing as the first experience we have in our movement in a space:

> We use the expression of de-distancing in an active and transitive sense. It means a constitution of being of Dasein of which de-distancing something, putting it away, is only a definite factical mode. De-distancing means making distance disappear, making the being at a distance of something disappear, bringing it near. Dasein is essentially de-distancing.[10]

On the other hand, Heidegger says that being-in-the-world's spatiality consists also in its directionality. "As being-in which de-distances, Dasein has at the same time the character of directionality. Every bringing near has always taken a direction in a region beforehand from which what is de-distanced approaches so that it can be discovered with regards to its place."[11] And it is because Dasein is directional that signs are needed to give direction: "in the being-in the-world of Dasein itself, the need for 'signs' is already present. As useful things, signs take over the giving of directions in a way that is explicit and easily handled. They explicitly keep the circumspectively used region open, the actual whereto of belonging, going, bringing, fetching. If Dasein is, it always has directing and de-distancing, its discovered region."[12]

I should say that the pair of terms 'de-distancing' and 'directionality' are well put as the phenomenological characterization of the way, or the street, rather than that of spatiality in general. It is especially well conceived as characterizing streets in the city, where

---

[9] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*. Trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson (New York: SCM Press Ltd., 1962), p. 97.

[10] Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 97.

[11] Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 100.

[12] Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 100-101.

signs are everywhere, giving a concrete sense of directionality and de-distancing. Certainly, in the countryside, or on the mountain, or in the forest, we still have certain kinds of roads, such as a *Holzweg* or a sentinel, although usually signs appear only rarely. Freedom in nature allows people to find their own way by familiarity in a region, since everything seems to be nearby, with a sense of closeness, even with a sense of intimacy. However, in the city, where the environment is more a kind of constructed reality, signs are overwhelmingly present to give guidance to strangers, or people looking for efficiency without being able to get into a sense of nearness or closeness, not to say intimacy.

I agree with Heidegger that, in the city, those roads and streets, boulevards and avenues, are concretization of directionality and de-distancing, with all kinds of technological devices and transportational assistance. However, I do not agree with Heidegger's claim that de-distancing arises before directionality. For me, it is because our existence has a directionality that we begin to de-distance and know how to de-distance. This means that I would put directionality before de-distancing. Human beings are directional in the sense that we are dynamically related to one another. It is because we are being-with, relational, being-together with many others that we are directional. For Heidegger, de-distancing comes from being-with: "The circumspect de-distancing of everyday Dasein discovers the being-in-itself of the true world, of being with which Dasein as existing is always already together."[13] In fact, it is because we are in the ontological situation of being-with, existing in a dynamic ontology of relation, that we are directed to one another, that we desire many others, that we dialogue with and take action on one another. This is to say that we are directional because we are relational, and we create or constitute a meaningful world by way of directing ourselves towards many others. Because we are directional, we are always in the process of de-distancing, getting closer to one another by means of making the distance disappear.

Under this philosophical idea, in our everyday life, the trees alongside the streets, being the component of nature on the street, serve also as the directional signs to our movement on the streets. Trees on the streets usually are the first things that amaze visitors with

---

[13] Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 99.

green leaves and solid trunks on the ground that remind people that there is earth in the city. For Maurice Merleau-Ponty, it was on account of the poplar trees on the piers along the river, and the turnings of the Seine as he walked along, that Paris impressed him as a city and brought him the meaning of Paris as a whole.[14] In many old Chinese cities, weeping willows, standing on both sides of the streets, inspired romantic poems; more modern cities, such as Shanghai, Nanjing, and Wuhan, used to be populated with London plane trees – or, as they were often called, French planes, because of the fact that they were first introduced and planted in the French Concession of Shanghai. These trees were harmonious with city buildings. It was part of the everyday lives of common people to live under their cover. I feel very sorry that these beautiful and precious trees are now being cut down, thereby ceding more spaces for parking slots and buildings in cement, thus reducing the originally green space.

In fact, trees stand against the wind, along the streets, along highways or roads connecting cities or villages, alongside the streets in the parks, on school campuses, beside temples, within communities: their shade covers people with cool spaces, their green stands firmly on earth, inspiring people with their rootedness in nature. These trees have the function of purifying the air, reviving the oxygen and cleaning the dusty air, while accommodating the local weather, cooling down the heat island and increasing the relative humidity. They can also reduce the noise that adds to environmental stress, and they can replace machine noises by the more natural symphonies of woods and animals living in them. They also increase the security of driving by serving as signs, indicating the street lines and diffusing dazzling lights, not to mention helping the health of citizens by enhancing the negative ions and spreading phytoncide in the air. They not only render the city green and beautiful, in the jungle of concrete buildings, but they are also full of historical and cultural inspirations and interpretations that constitute a precious part of a city's collective memory.

---

[14] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception* (Paris: Gallimard, 1945), p. 325.

Dao as Discourse and Discourses in the City

As we saw earlier, *Dao* also means 'to say', 'to speak', or 'to discourse', as in the second use of *Dao* in this saying of Laozi's: "Dao could be told, but the Dao told is not the constant Dao." This shows a negative view of language and discourse in Daoist philosophy. Discourse, once pronounced, must be hushed; words, once written, must be erased, because the Ultimate Reality is never to be disclosed as such by any human language.

This is quite different from Confucian philosophy, which believes positively in the expressive function of language and the rectification of names so as to fit reality. Confucius said, "The use of language is simply a matter of expressing one's intents."[15] Also, he emphasized the learning of elegant language, to enhance one's ability of expression. "If you do not learn the *Book of Poetry*, you will not be able to say things properly."[16] Learning language and expressing ideas well are therefore a Confucian concern to be implemented in education. On the other hand, correction of names is to be implemented through political process:

> If names are not rectified, then language will not be in accord with truth. If language is not in accord with truth, then things cannot be accomplished. If things cannot be accomplished, then ceremonies and music will not flourish. If ceremonies and music do not flourish, then punishments will not be just. If punishment is not just, then the people will not know how to move hand and foot.[17]

For me, the city is a place of discourse or, better, a locus of many discourses in competition, in conflict, and, sometimes, in harmony. A city offers specific places for different kinds of discourse, such as the school system, from primary to middle school, to high school, to colleges and universities. Here is where languages and discourses of

---

[15] Confucius, *"Lunyu 論語 (the Analects),"* *Sishu Zhangju Jizhu* 四書章句集注 *(Collected Commentaries in Chapters and Sentences of the Four Books) Reprinted edition* (Beijing: Zhonghua Bookstore, 1983). My translation.

[16] Confucius, "Lunyu," p. 173. My translation.

[17] Confucius, "Lunyu," p. 142. *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy. Trans. Wing-tsit Chan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 40.

various kinds are learned, developed, created, and pronounced. People come to the city for these purposes. In fact, learning language and discourses is most important for the development of human desire for meaningfulness. As Wittgenstein says, different language games correspond to different life-forms. Our appropriation of a language gives us access to the life-form correspondingly implied in that language. From the time of our childhood, we appropriated a certain language, through the generosity of some significant others taking the initiative to talk to us, and thereby open us to a world of meaningfulness. Once we are grown up, we learn by appropriating different kinds of language – scientific, cultural, or that of everyday life. Most sophisticated forms of language – such as those of science, technology, history, arts, rites, social and cultural studies – are learned at various levels of school. By appropriating different forms of languages, we are allowed to enter into different worlds and thereby enrich the construction of our own world. The process of growth for us is not merely a physiological fact or educational progress, it is indeed a process of existential extension by the dialectic interaction between meaning construction and self-transcendence. This process thereby integrates both the inside and the outside, strangification and self-awareness, in the process of language appropriation, creation, and expression.

By learning artistic languages and performance, mostly through formal as well as informal education, our body movement is beautified and thereby becomes elegant and cultured. In fact, all forms of art have their origin in the dynamics of body movement and the desire of meaningfulness. Through diverse forms of intelligible representation, such as sounds, pictures, and gestures, the project of meaning in our desire is specified. The movement of the body through intelligible forms is the common origin of music, dancing, and performing arts. In this sense, body movement, especially body movement as elaborated by visual forms, sounds or gestures, transforms into the intelligible dynamism of our desire, insofar as it embodies our energy towards meaning as ways to work out intelligible representations. In all countries or cultural groups of the world I see different kinds of music, dancing, drawing and painting, performance arts, and even the art of making films – which synthesizes image, music, and body movement in presenting images moving in time so as to tell stories of different kinds – as 'inducers of

desire'. These art forms articulate and thereby determine our desire for meaning in particular images, sounds, and gestures, or their combination/synthesis in a storytelling configuration. In a certain sense, they determine, articulate, and give a particular direction to our desire for meaningfulness. The city – schools, opera houses, music halls, museums, cinemas, theatres, private homes, and public spaces – are all places in which we have access to these diverse forms of artistic language.

In the unending process of training, cultivation, and promotion of the human soul towards ever-higher levels of meaningfulness, education itself could be seen as a process of development and cultivation of human knowledge, culture and desire. It always strives towards the 'better', always moves beyond the border, always looks for higher perfection. The city is also the place, or indeed it contains a lot of places, for political discourses and economic or market discourses. Parliament, the town hall, and marketplaces everywhere remind us of these most secular functions of the city. We could say that these are the crucial functions of the city, or that they make the city function. Nevertheless, we understand also that, even if our desire for meaningfulness might be directed to and fixed upon the power of domination and the possession of more money, the energy and dynamism of this desire go much deeper. The unconscious fixation upon power and money could hinder the dynamism of desire of meaningfulness, thereby causing mental illness. The openness and determination to further unfolding of meaningfulness, on the other hand, is the way to sanity.

Indeed, a city is always the forum of political and economic discourses, the arena for the struggle for power and money, and therefore the place where people greedy for power and money tend towards self-enclosure in selfishness and struggle. Yet the city should not be seen as a pit of human selfish desires; nor should money and power be blamed for people falling into a sickness of soul. On the contrary, money could be seen as a system of publicly recognizable symbols representing certain exchangeable conventional values in a social community. Power, especially political power, is the institutionalized capacity to realize individual and collective subjectivity by the mobilization and organization of resources in view of a particular direction of realizing one's collective historicity. The selfish struggle for power and money and their abuses lead to violence. But the view

that political power can lead to the realization of one's genuine historicity, and that money can lead to the exchange of conventional values, means that both contain the possibility to go beyond domination, violence, and selfish possession, and move towards communication and co-construction of a meaningful world for every-one. All possibilities of self-transcendence and further strangification are also best implemented in the place that we call 'city'.

Cosmic Patterns Revealed through Parks and Gardens in and near the City

In Chinese cosmology, *Dao*, especially in the term *Tian Dao* (Heavenly Dao), means cosmic patterns or laws of nature. Daoist wisdom shows that nature follows laws or patterns that have their structural, dynamic, and teleological perspectives. The structural pattern of nature says that all things are structurally constituted of elements that are different yet complementary, such as being and non-being, *yin* and *yang*, movement and rest, weak and strong, straight and winding. The dynamic pattern says that once a state of affairs is developed to the extreme limit in the process of change, it will naturally move to its opposite state of affairs, such as movement into rest or vice versa. On the level of cosmic teleology, all things return to the Dao at the end of their existence by way of death or passing away; that which was given birth always must pass away and return to its origin. All things, as begotten by the Dao, which is their origin, have to return to the Dao also as their final end. Therefore, corresponding to the process of differentiation, there is the process of conversion. Laozi said, "All things come into being, and I see thereby their return. All things flourish, but each one returns to its origin. This returning to its origin means tranquility. It is called returning to its destiny. To return to destiny is called the constant."[18]

The fundamental principle of nature is best synthesized by Laozi's saying that "Reversion is the action of the Dao."[19] Here, reversion has two connected meanings: one means opposition, reversal, while the other means returning, conversion. This differs, therefore, from the principle of causality in Western philosophy, which presupposes the

---

[18] Laozi, *Laozi Sizhong*, p. 13.
[19] Laozi, *Laozi Sizhong*, p. 35.

before/after linear temporal scheme in structuring the precedent phenomenon and the consequent phenomenon with a kind of determinist necessity. In contrast, Laozi's principle of nature is based on the dialectical movement of opposing elements and their mutual interaction as fundamental to all natural phenomena. We read in the *Laozi*, for example, texts such as these:

> Being and non-being generate each other; the simple and the difficult complement each other; the long and the short compensate each other; the high and the low incline towards each other; the tones and the melodies constitute harmony one with another; and the earlier and the later follow one another.[20]

> The heavy is the root of the light; The tranquil is the ruler of the hasty.[21]

Opposing yet complementing, differentiating yet unifying, distancing yet co-belonging, these structural and dynamic contrasts are constitutive of Laozi's fundamental principle of nature. For the Chinese mind, these patterns are revealed to human beings in the city by virtue of the presence of nature in the city: by the sky above, by mountains, hills, rivers valleys, ravines, forests, and by the change of weather and seasons, but mostly through the gardens and parks in residential neighborhoods that are therefore part of people's everyday urban life. Parks and gardens are the spaces in which citizens have direct contact with nature in their daily lives. Both in China and in the West, private gardens in the past were enjoyed only by people of power or wealth (or both) whose aesthetic appreciation of nature and its patterns were preserved in their own residences. With the rise of modernization and democratization, the private luxury of gardens led to the emergence of parks for the use of common citizens, although those parks remained susceptible to diverse kinds of control. For instance, the notorious sign that "Dogs and Chinese Not Admitted" to enter the Huangpu Park in Shanghai in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.[22]

---

[20] Laozi, *Laozi Sizhong,* p. 2.

[21] Laozi, *Laozi Sizhong,* p. 23.

[22] A recent discussion of this sign could be read in Robert Bickers and Jeffrey Wasserstrom, "Shanghai's "Dogs and Chinese Not Admitted" Sign: Legend,

Indeed, parks are essential to the public, cultural life of a city. Many historical monuments are located in parks, and cultural events take place there. In parks, one finds all kinds of reminders of the collective memory of the local community and even of broader reflections of national or humanist values. Also, parks and gardens are seen as the lungs of the city. They contribute enormously to rendering the city green, to purifying the air, and to the process of exchange of material energy between human constructs and nature. Parks and gardens respond to the need of communication between human beings and nature, and human beings with many other human beings, including strangers in the city. Plants specific to the area and local cultural histories are revealed in the parks and gardens to all citizens of the city. Among all these functions, the most important is the citizens' experience with nature, and their understanding of the patterns of nature, inspiring life's meaningfulness in their body movement and communication process in the parks and gardens.

Take the example of Chinese gardens under the inspiration of Chinese philosophy and aesthetics, specifically focusing on the contrast and dynamism of being and non-being, yin and yang, movement and rest, which are always core to people's experience in parks and gardens. If we take water as *yin*, as quietude, as calm, as mirror reflections of things as they are, then hills are *yang*, challenges to human effort to climb upon, a goal to overcome, featuring a mounting object on the earth. The change of seasons is seen in these gardens. Spring makes everything tender and green; summer brings all trees and flowers to exuberance and prosperity; autumn renders all vegetable life mature and ready for harvest while the leaves start to fall; and winter sees the foliage disappear, giving all citizens the most intuitive experience of things changing from being to non-being, and again from non-being to being.

Usually, the Chinese mind prefers the idea of comprehending movement in rest of quietude, and the rest or quietude in the dynamics of movement. After a period of movement, one is led to calm and quietude, and after a period of rest, one is invited again to move on. Water invites human meditation, flowers attract butterflies, mountain rocks invite mists, and tracks seduce always more tentative

---

History and Contemporary Symbol," *The China Quarterly*, 142 (June, 1995), pp. 444-466.

adventures. In cities that are naturally bestowed with hills, rivers, lakes, and ponds, there are more possibilities for miraculous design to transform the city into a huge garden, or a city with many beautiful gardens.

Indeed, the fact that there is no motion without rest, and no rest without motion, is revealed both in natural phenomena and in human constructs. To a person sitting in a pavilion, the racing clouds and flowing water, the flying birds and falling petals are all in motion; to a sailing boat or a strolling person, the hills, rocks, trees, and woods are all at a standstill. Fish swimming leisurely in calm water is an example of the interaction of motion and repose; beauty naturally results. Here we understand the Chinese wisdom that myriad things, when looked at with quietude, will be left each to their own being.

Sometimes the straight way from one spot to another is indeed the most direct and short, as proved by geometry. Nevertheless, in parks and gardens, the winding and the straight exist with each other and co-exist naturally and with ease. Indeed, in the parks and gardens, winding bridges, paths, and corridors were originally intended to facilitate communication between places. All kinds of curving paths were meant to bring to the sight of people in promenade in the gardens and parks a variety of pleasant scenery, thus rendering the walks on the paths more interesting and revealing the unexpected. It is, in some ways, better for the roads in the garden or parks to be winding rather than straight. Among the hills and forests, narrow paths and trails should predominate over main roads, to allow for numerous spots of seclusion, so visitors may scatter all over the area. People need to look for their own favorite retreats where they can linger, listening to flowing springs, taking short rests on the rocks, or lapsing into a contemplative mood and giving play to their imaginations and poetic impulses.

The changing presence of clouds and waters, flowers and trees, waters and rocks, and the sound of wind going through trees, of the murmuring of water, the singing of birds and barking of dogs, the fragrance of grass, flowers, trees, and earth, so penetrating and so convincing for human sensibility, both sensational and spiritual – all these bring people to transcendent imagination and poetic sentiments, creating thereby a sense of infinite space within a limited area. To create a taste of the infinite from finite space: this is the essence of designing a park or garden in the city. Why? Because here, in the parks

and gardens, people in the city can have a limited experience of nature in the city. Here in the parks and gardens, people can see the charm of nature, and expect also, if you like, to be seen by nature. Here people's minds come most spontaneously, and therefore most naturally, to their own self, in mutual enrichment with nature, which is the most natural way to conduct strangification, and to get back to one's own self in the act of self-reflection.

The City and the Ultimate Reality

When we come to the question of the ultimate dimension of existence, the city has a deeper meaning. The gathering of so many desires in a well-structured space and their different orientations and destinies are astonishing when we ponder it philosophically. So many bodies move in the city, so many souls seek meaning in their lives, with the rhythmic dialectics of strangification and self-reflection, familiarity and strangeness, immanence and transcendence. The energy – both individual and collective, emerging and vanishing and re-emerging unceasingly in various times and spaces – is imbued with some common origins and targets some ideals dreamed of individual and collective imaginations.

Because of this utopian, imaginative, and dream function, a city – as visible in its streets, architectures, trees and parks, and in particular in its sacred places, such as churches, temples, and shrines – reveals to us an invisible city, at least in terms of human beings' affectivity and pre-conceptual awareness. An invisible city as the fulfillment of all of the deepest human desires, somewhere in the always retreating and therefore inaccessible horizon, exists always in human existential expectations. There, the visible city could be metamorphosed into an invisible city through the mediation of human affectivity, revealing the totality of human existence. That is why Hölderin is able to say that "poetically man dwells."[23]

In the city, we have our lives of joyfulness, sadness, anger, melancholy, ambition, anxiety, effort, repression, exuberance, calculation, decisions – whole lives, both intellectual and affective, forming personalities and relations with many others. All things

---

[23] Martin Heidegger, "Dichterisch wohnt der Mensch" Idem, *Poetry, Language, Thought* (New York: Perennial Classics, 2001), p. 211.

considered, it is in the city that we have the joy of existence, in particular the spiritual joy of seeing all things as beautiful, good, true, and holy. Eventually, we have the hope of that which is announced now only in a vague promise, where the search for our existential origin and finality could eventually converge: i.e. the encounter with the Ultimate Reality supposed to be the origin and the final end of our life, or, more precisely, of our desires.

That is why the city is also a place full of religious presence of all kinds. In all religions, there is always the supposition of an Ultimate Reality, such as God for Christianity and other forms of monotheism, *tian* or Heaven for Confucianism, Dao for Daoism, Buddha or the Mind or Emptiness for Buddhism. Ultimate Reality is revealed to people in the diversity of their religious experiences. This is usually expressed as the revealing of the sacred, or hierophany, as Mircea Eliad called it.[24] People may experience the sacred in churches, in temples, in synagogues; they may also experience it on the mountain, under the sky; they may experience it in the presence of a Great power, or that of the Origin, that of the true being of all things, or when sensing the transcendent. A magnificent waterfall, an immense tree, a powerful animal, or an amazing mass of rock always fills us with a sense of awe in the presence of a great power or a terrible strength of life. An ancestral hall or temple, or even a solidly grounded root of a huge tree, shows us always a sense of the origin. Even in the city, under a night sky, we still have access to what Kant describes as "the starry sky above me and the inner moral principles within my heart." For Chinese common people, the manifestation of lucky and unlucky omens (*jixiong* 吉凶) in the temple or in the act of divination is a manifestation of the holy and the Ultimate Reality.

The memory of the city of our childhood or our hometown always brings us to the origin, always in our heart and our imagination. We recall the most cherished memory of all our beloved, of all those who,

---

[24] The term 'hierophany' comes from 'hiero' (meaning 'sacred') and '-phany' (meaning 'manifestation'). It is used by Mircea Eliade when he writes: "To designate the act of manifestation of the sacred, we have proposed the term hierophany. It is a fitting term, because it does not imply anything further; it expresses no more than is implicit in its etymological content, i.e., that something sacred shows itself to us." See Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion. Trans. Willard R. Trask* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1959), p. 11.

from our childhood, so generously talked to us and allowed us thereby to learn our first language, to build up a meaningful life and to orient our desire accordingly. They stirred up in us the first original generosity to go outside of our self-enclosure to many others.

The Original/Ultimate, even experienced profoundly each in its own way for those who live in the city, is still unfathomable and, therefore, hidden. There is an unceasing interplay between transcendence and immanence, strangification and self-reflection, for not only is everything imbued inherently with the Dao, but also everything manifests the Dao and becomes thereby a concrete and particular manifestation of the Dao.

The Dao, while unfathomable, exists also in myriad things. All natural phenomena, all orientations of human desire, all cultural values and all social and historical processes are but occasions for the manifestation of the Dao, the meaningfulness of their existence consisting always in the manifestation of Dao and marching towards Dao. Even if Laozi attributed some characteristics to Dao – such as the undifferentiated whole, inaudible, invisible, independent, immutable, pervasive, ceaseless, great, acting everywhere, far-reaching, and cyclical or spiral – nevertheless, all these are given reluctantly. The unfathomability of the Dao tells us that all we can say of it is the '*il y a*,' which points silently, poetically, and eloquently to the Way. Martin Heidegger says,

> This unknown-familiar something, all this pointing of Saying to what is quick and stirring within it, is to all present and absent beings as that first break of dawn with which the changing cycle of day and night first begins to be possible; it is the earliest and most ancient at once. We can do no more than name it, because it will not be discussed, for it is the region of all places, of all time-space-horizons…It yields the opening of the clearing in which present beings can persist and from which absent beings can depart while keeping their persistence in the withdrawal.[25]

Thus, Dao is manifesting itself in a 'Saying,' yet still unfathomable. The city is visible and we live in it, yet it is still invisible and brings us

---

[25] Martin Heidegger, *On the Way to Language*, Hertz, trans. (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1982), 127.

beyond. Human desire is always craving and longing to determine itself in the desired desire. Still, the desiring desire is moving on, insatiably, infinitely, and unfathomably, to a destiny that is beyond all borders.

Bibliography

Bickers, Robert A. and Wasserstrom, Jeffrey N. 1995. "Shanghai's "Dogs and Chinese Not Admitted" Sign: Legend, History and Contemporary Symbol." *The China Quarterly*, No. 142 (June), pp. 444-466.

Chan, Wing-tsit (ed.). 1973. *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Daozang. 1985. "Lao Tzu Zhong Jing 老子中經 (Middle Classics of Laozi)." *Zhengtong Daozang. Vol. 37, reprinted edition.* Taipei: Xinwenfeng Bookstore, pp. 302-314.

Eliade, Mircea. 1959. *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion. Trans. Willard R. Trask.* New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Gu, Baotian, and Zhang, Zhongli. 1977. *Xinyi Laozi Xian Er Zhu* 新譯老子想爾注 (*Hsiang Er Commentary on the Laozi: A New Translation*). Taipei: Sanmin.

Habermas, Jürgen. 1984. *The Theory of Communicative Action. Vol. 1: Reason and the rationalization of society.* Boston: Beacon Press.

Heidegger, Martin. 1962. *Being and Time. Trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson.* New York: SCM Press Ltd.

Heidegger, Martin. 1982. *On the Way to Language. Trans. Hertz.* San Francisco: Harper & Row.

Heidegger, Martin. 2001. *Poetry, Language, Thought.* New York: Perennial Classics.

Lacan, Jacques. 1966. *Écrits.* Paris: Edition du Seuil.

Laozi. 1999. *Laozi Sizhong,* 老子四種 *(Four Versions of the Laozi). Reprinted edition*. Taipei: Da An Press.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. 1945. *Phénoménologie de la perception.* Paris: Gallimard.

Shen, Vincent. 1993. "Annäherung an das taoistische Verständnis von Wissenschaft. Die Epistemologie des Lao Tses und Tschuang Tses." *Grenzziehungen zum konstruktiven Realismus.* F. Wallner, J. Schimmer, M. Costazza, eds. Wien: WUV Universitätsverlag.

Simmel, Georg. 1971. *On Individuality and Social Forms. Selected Writings.* Donald N. Levine ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Xü, Shen. 1966. *Shuowen Jiezi* 說文解字 *(Explication and Analysis of Chinese Words. Reprinted edition.* Taipei: Yi-wen.

Zhu Xi. 1983. *Sishu Zhangju Jizhu* 四書章句集注 *(Collected Commentaries in Chapters and Sentences of the Four Books). Reprinted edition.* Beijing: Zhonghua Bookstore.

A Revaluation of Wisdom as a Way to Reconnect Philosophy with the Life-world

PETER JONKERS

Introduction

The observation – or complaint – that philosophy is out of touch with the life-world is, by itself, not new. Since the rise of modernity, philosophy has followed the paradigm of the sciences, and even claimed to offer an indubitable foundation to all scientific knowledge. Whereas ancient philosophy accepted the life-world as the domain of the unsettled, contingent, modern philosophy rejected this kind of knowledge as fundamentally unscientific. This approach not only resulted in a redefinition of the essence and task of philosophy, but also in an objectivistic restructuring of the life-world. However, especially since Husserl's *Crisis of the European Sciences* and Heidegger's writings there has been a growing awareness that the paradigm of scientific objectivism and philosophical foundationalism has had a reductionist effect on the life-world. This paradigm has actually functioned as a kind of Procrustean bed, chopping off all those aspects of the life-world that resist objectification, quantification, and representation, in particular the qualitative, emotive and valuing aspects of the life-world. Hence, it is no wonder that many contemporary philosophers interpret the impact of scientific objectivism and philosophical foundationalism on the life-world in terms of colonization (Habermas) and forgetfulness of being (Heidegger). Similarly, on a day-to-day level, ordinary people have the impression that science is unable to answer the pressing questions that arise from the life-world. To give only two examples: the inability of science to predict, let alone control the impact of its own offspring, namely technology, on the environment, and the fact that a lot of scientifically based solutions of all kinds of societal problems have created a host of new, unforeseen problems, have shocked people's trust in science.

The concept 'life-world' refers to various dimensions of human existence, such as: a pre-scientific experience of the natural world, the

historicity of human existence, kinesthetic corporeality etc.[1] In this paper, the focus will be on the life-world as the human's practical environment, shaped against the horizon of time and space, and in which people give meaning and orientation to their lives.[2] From this definition, it becomes clear that the mismatch between the this aspect of the life-world and the objectivism of modern science and the foundationalism of modern philosophy does not so much concern technical or factual issues, but has primarily to do with existential matters, which crop up when science tries to answer questions about the meaning of objective facts for human life. Especially, 'scientism', which was very influential during the first half of the twentieth century, is a case in point in this respect: it claimed that scientific rationality was able to solve all moral and existential questions of humankind, from how to define and evaluate social progress to offering a solution to the more fundamental problems of human freedom and destiny. Because, in the course of the twentieth century, it turned out that scientism has failed to live up to its claims, many people nowadays feel disappointed with science and scientific philosophy as such, and, on the rebound, are driven back on all kinds of unreflective convictions and attitudes when it comes to trying to answer existential questions. Therefore, paradoxically, the turn to scientific rationality, which characterizes modernity, has, in our times, led to the rise of all kinds of irrationalism when it comes to responding to the questions and challenges that arise from the life-world.

The leading question of this paper is how the rift between philosophy and the life-world can be bridged, thereby starting from the problems, with which philosophy is confronted once it has adopted the scientific paradigm and tries to answer existential questions from that perspective. The thesis of the German philosopher Hans Waldenfels deserves to be quoted in this respect: he is convinced that philosophy's loss of contact with the life-world, as well as its dwindling societal relevance has to do with its repression of the love

---

[1] Paul Janssen, "Lebenswelt," *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie, Band 5* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1980), p. 152.

[2] Edmund Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie. Eine Einleitung in die phänomenologische Philosophie, Husserliana, Band VI* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1954), pp. 314f.

of or the search for wisdom.[3] Against this background, the thesis that I want to examine in the second part of this paper is whether a revaluation of practical wisdom is able to retrieve philosophy's relation to the life-world. As will be argued in more detail below, practical wisdom can be defined as a life orientating kind of knowledge, which implies that it is closely related to the life-world. Yet insofar as it claims to give a *true* orientation to human lives, wisdom also needs to examine critically the presuppositions of the life-world in order to stave off the ideological distortions of this life-world. This aspect, in turn, links wisdom with philosophy.

In order to examine whether wisdom can serve as an intermediary between philosophy and the life-world, I start by analyzing, in the next section, why modern philosophy adopted the paradigm of scientific knowledge, and show how this development has affected the meaning of wisdom and had a ruinous effect on philosophy's relation with the life-world. In particular, I will criticize the fact that scientific rationality, because of its reductionist and objectivist character, has separated itself from the life-world. Furthermore, I will argue that philosophy can only relate positively to the life-world if it adopts the idea of reasonableness, which is a broader kind of rationality than the scientific one. In the section thereafter, I propose to return to philosophy's original self-definition, namely as the love of wisdom, and investigate whether the idea of practical wisdom can serve as an intermediate to reconnect philosophy with the life-world.

It has to be noted that this investigation will remain within the realm of Western philosophy, admittedly, the only one I am familiar with. Yet I think that a revaluation of the idea of wisdom can help to bridge the disjunction between Western philosophy and other philosophical traditions, in particular Eastern ones, as well as between religious and secular traditions of wisdom.

A second preliminary remark concerns the philosophical nature of the investigation into the life-world. In fact, the relation between philosophy and the life-world confronts us with an important underlying problem, which will be a major point of attention throughout this paper. Fundamentally, philosophy's relationship with the life-world always has been and always will be an ambivalent

---

[3] Hans Waldenfels, "Thesen zur Weisheit. Aus der Perspektive Asiens," *Philosophie und Weisheit* (Paderborn, München, Wien, Zürich: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1989), p. 9.

one. If anything, the fierce debates between Socrates and the sophists have made clear that the godfather of the philosophers consistently tried to suspend the seeming wisdom of the sophists, which was actually nothing more than a justification of the existing order, by disqualifying it as mere opinion, unable to stand the test of critical examination.[4] A similar ambivalence holds true for philosophy's relation with the life-world. The life-world can be defined as the cultural environment that is shaped by humans, and, therefore, is inevitably a mixture of appearance and reality. We should be mindful of the fact that philosophy turns into ideology, in the sense of a false consciousness, if it refrains from critically examining the life-world. Instead, it should keep in mind the Socratic motto, according to which only the *examined* life is worth living, which, by extension, means that one has also to examine the life-world.

The Rift between Modern Philosophy and the Life-world

Why has philosophy, since the beginning of modernity followed the paradigm of scientific knowledge, how has this affected its relation with the life-world, and what influence did this have on the definition of knowledge and wisdom? My reasons for asking these questions are not historical; rather, they are aimed at a better understanding of the roots of scientific rationality, expecting that this will enable us to find a way to retrieve philosophy's link with the life-world. In my historical sketch, I will mainly focus on the philosophy of Descartes, because his views are paradigmatic for the complex relation of the whole of modern philosophy with the life-world, as well as for the claim that science can provide true wisdom. In his *Discourse on Method*, Descartes writes that he was "delighted with the mathematics, on account of the certitude and evidence of its reasoning," while at the same time being utterly disappointed with the ancient moralists and masters of wisdom, who built "very towering and magnificent palaces with no better foundation than sand and mud."[5] In order to solve this problem, Descartes takes the fundamental decision, with far-reaching consequences, to expand the mathematical method to all other

---

[4] Günther Bien, "Einige Bemerkungen zum Verhältnis von Philosophie, Wissenschaft und Weisheit," *Philosophie und Weisheit*, p. 39.

[5] René Descartes, *Oeuvres de Descartes. Tome VI: Discours de la méthode* (Paris: Vrin, 1996), p. 8.

disciplines (an approach called 'mathesis universalis'). This leads, first, to a redefinition of philosophy as foundational and scientific, because it rests on an indubitable foundation, thus serving as the groundwork of all (other) sciences, and because it is able to produce a knowledge that has the same degree of certitude and clarity as mathematics.

Descartes also redefines the word wisdom and identifies it with scientific knowledge: from now on,

> by wisdom is to be understood not merely prudence in the management of affairs, but a perfect knowledge of all that man can know, as well for the conduct of his life as for the preservation of his health and the discovery of all the arts, and that knowledge to serve these ends must necessarily be deduced from first causes.[6]

Therefore, if one wants to reach the highest degree of wisdom, one needs, first of all, a perfect knowledge of all things, and this can only be obtained if one starts from the principles, taking into consideration that they "are very clear, and […] that we can deduce all other truths from them."[7]

This shows how the Cartesian method of the mathesis universalis has affected the very nature of philosophy: it becomes truly scientific and foundational, because it rests on a limited number of absolutely clear and certain principles or axioms, from which all other truths, including those of the other sciences and morality, can be deduced. Descartes compares his idea of philosophy with

> a tree, of which metaphysics is the root, physics the trunk, and all the other sciences the branches that grow out of this trunk, which are reduced to three principal, namely, medicine, mechanics, and ethics. By the science of morals, I understand the highest and most perfect which, presupposing an entire knowledge of the other sciences, is the last degree of wisdom.[8]

---

[6] René Descartes, *Oeuvres de Descartes. Tome IX/2: Principes de la philosophie* (Paris: Vrin, 1996), p. 2.

[7] Descartes, *Principes de la philosophie,* p. 9.

[8] Descartes, *Principes de la philosophie,* p. 14.

The above shows, first, that Descartes follows the Aristotelian line of thought, according to which theoretical philosophy is true wisdom, in particular the scientific knowledge of the first causes and principles of things.[9] Descartes thereby disregards Plato's distinction between the perfect knowledge of the Gods, who possess true wisdom and, hence, do not have to philosophize, and the imperfectness of human knowledge, implying that humans are always striving for wisdom.[10] Second, Descartes' comparison of the whole of philosophy with a tree shows that practical wisdom is a derivative of theoretical wisdom or scientific knowledge. Hence, scientific knowledge not only becomes paradigmatic for the way in which we should understand the life-world, but also for living in it. Descartes thereby not only overlooks Aristotle's distinction between theoretical and practical wisdom, but also ignores the latter's notion of prudence, being the instrument of practical wisdom.[11] In sum, the ultimate goal of the Cartesian project is to upgrade practical to theoretical wisdom, i.e. to a form of scientific knowledge, built on metaphysics and (mathematical) physics. But in order to guarantee that such a practical, yet scientific wisdom can be applied at all to the life-world, the latter has to be shaped in complete accordance with the ideal of scientific knowledge as well. This results in a reduction of the natural world to merely 'res extensa', and of human emotions, behaviors, relations, etc. to something purely physical. Hence, for Descartes, the highest moral good and the scientifically true eventually coincide. In line with the general enthusiasm of those times about the success of mathematical physics and its applicability to all other fields of knowledge, he considers this so-called definitive science of morals, which is, indeed, scientific in the strict, above analyzed sense of the word, within reach.

But Descartes realizes that such a definitive morality is not yet available for the time being. Nevertheless, "since in action it frequently happens that no delay is permissible, it is very certain that, when it is not in our power to determine what is true, we ought to act according to what is most probable."[12] Hence, as long as scientific philosophy is unable to fulfill its promise of a definitive science of

---

[9] Aristoteles, *Metaphysica* I, 1, 982a; Idem, *Ethica Nicomachea* VI, 7, 1141a.

[10] Plato, *Symposium* 204a f.; Idem, *Phaedrus* 278d.

[11] Aristoteles, *Metaphysica* I, 1, 981b f.; Idem, *Ethica Nicomachea* VI, 5-7, 1140a-1141b.

[12] Descartes, *Discours de la méthode,* p. 25.

morals, Descartes accepts that there has to be made, in real life, a distinction between the true, which is indubitably certain, and the good, which is only more or less probable. Therefore, as he writes in his *Discourse*,

> I formed a provisory code of morals, composed of three or four maxims, […] so that I might not remain irresolute in my actions, while my reason compelled me to suspend my judgment, and that I might not be prevented from living thenceforward in the greatest possible felicity.[13]

These maxims reflect a high degree of prudence and traditional, practical wisdom. This means that they lack the indubitable and absolutely clear foundation of the first principles, which characterizes the definitive science of morals. Nevertheless, these maxims are absolutely necessary if humans want to live in felicity. They comprise

> to obey the laws and customs of my country, adhering firmly to the faith in which […] I had been educated from my childhood and regulating my conduct in every other matter according to the most moderate opinions, and the farthest removed from extremes; […] to be as firm and resolute in my actions as I was able, and not to adhere less steadfastly to the most doubtful opinions, when once adopted, than if they had been highly certain; […] to endeavor always to conquer myself rather than fortune, and change my desires rather than the order of the world.[14]

In the course of the history of modern philosophy, the paradigmatic character of the Cartesian program to identify philosophy with scientific knowledge, thereby reducing the life-world to what is intuitively or demonstratively certain, and to see wisdom as the fruit of this kind of knowledge has become apparent in many ways. Examples of this approach are Leibniz' definition of wisdom as "a perfect science of all those things that are in the reach of the human

---

[13] Descartes, *Discours de la méthode*, p. 22.
[14] Descartes, *Discours de la méthode*, pp. 22-25.

heart,"[15] Fichte's project to replace philosophy as the love of wisdom by the doctrine of science,[16] as well as Hegel's programmatic statement in the *Preface* of his *Phenomenology of Spirit:* "To help bring philosophy closer to the form of Science, to the goal where it can lay aside the title *'love of* knowing' and be *actual* knowing – that is what I have set myself to do."[17] In twentieth century philosophy, this paradigm also resonates in the term 'scientific worldview', which was the catchword of the Vienna Circle and of the official Marxist-Leninist state doctrine in the Soviet Union.

In the above, I have shown that the relation between modern, foundational philosophy and the life-world is a multifaceted one. First, the analysis of Descartes' philosophical project has made clear that the radical disconnection of philosophy from the life-world was, in his view, a necessary, preparatory step to put a radical end to all forms of false life orientations or seeming wisdom. He was convinced that, after this preparation, philosophy could be connected with the life-world again on a more solid, in particular mathematical foundation. In my opinion, the fundamental reasons of this strategy are still valid today, although its concrete development is highly problematic. Above, the life-world was defined as the practical, cultural environment in which humans act, and which is situated against a temporal and spatial horizon. Inevitably, the life-world and the variety of narratives underpinning it are a mix of truth and falsehood, appearance and reality, truthful life orientations and ideological distortions. It is an essential task for philosophy to examine the life-world critically, especially in times of upheaval, and to purify it, if need be. This is also true for what presents itself as wisdom, because, from time to time, it turns out to be self-conceit and leading to a false consciousness. Therefore, against all odds, Descartes'

---

[15] Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, "Von Glückseligkeit," *Philosophische Schriften, Band VI:3* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1980), pp. 645f. It deserves to be noted that, in this text, Leibniz refers approvingly to Descartes' comparison of wisdom with the fruits of the tree of philosophy.

[16] Johann Gottlieb Fichte, "Über den Begriff der Wissenschaftslehre oder der sogenannten Philosophie," *Werke, Band 1: Zur theoretischen Philosophie I* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1971), pp. 38f.

[17] Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Gesammelte Werke, Band 9: Phänomenologie des Geistes* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1980), p. 11.

real aim was not to disconnect philosophy from the life-world once and for all, but instead to reconnect them in a more truthful way.

But, second, the concrete approach and content of the Cartesian project also led to a reductionism with regard to the life-world, and brought about philosophy's estrangement from it. In particular, Descartes' attempt to base human's relation with the life-world on an indubitable, unshakable foundation actually resulted in the 'scientification' and objectification of the life-world. However, this is completely at odds with its cultural and historical nature, as well as with the fundamental subjectivity and historicity of human existence. Against this background, it is no wonder that science has proven unable to serve as a beacon in human's quest for orientation in the life-world, and to answer the question of the moral and existential meaning of the results of scientific inquiry. The reason for this is that the enormous benefits of science, viz. its exactness and certainty, and, above all, its link with technology goes at the cost of radically abstracting from the inexhaustible richness of the life-world.

Again, Descartes gives an intriguing example of the consequences of the scientification and objectification of the life-world. Impressed by the discovery of the blood circulation, in 1628, by William Harvey, he redefines the human body in purely mechanical terms, and compares the heart with a pump.[18] Although many of his views about the functioning of the body are outmoded, his mechanistic approach of the human body is still paradigmatic for contemporary medical science and its reductionist relation to the lived body. But, because the lived body is our prime access to the life-world, the scientific and objectivistic approach of the body works counterproductive. The effects of cardiac arrhythmia on the life quality of the human person go far beyond the objective fact that a pump in the human body is malfunctioning. From a phenomenological perspective, Merleau-Ponty has shown that the Cartesian, objectivistic approach of the body is unable to explain the experience of our own body, which characterizes the way in which we relate to the life-world:

> The experience of our own body […] reveals to us an ambiguous mode of existing. If I try to think of it as a cluster of third person processes – 'sight', 'motility', 'sexuality' – I observe that these

---

[18] Descartes, *Discours de la méthode,* pp. 46f.

'functions' cannot be interrelated and related to the external world, by causal connections, they are all obscurely drawn together and mutually implied in a unique drama. Therefore, the body is not an object. […] Whether it is a question of another's body or my own, I have no means of knowing the human body other than of *living* it.[19]

This critique of scientific objectivism and reductionism should not be misunderstood as a plea to return to pre-scientific irrationalism, but is meant to highlight the problematic consequences of (scientific) rationalism and objectivism, which have become paradigmatic for the interpretation of the life-world. Interpreting the life-world requires a broader, more encompassing kind of rationality, which is in accordance with the encompassing character of the life-world itself. What is at stake here is the difference between 'understanding', which is characteristic of the scientific approach of reality, and 'reason', which characterizes the encompassing rationality that inheres, among others, the life-world. Building on the origins of this distinction in the philosophies of Kant and Hegel one can say that reason is capable of producing "a self-subsistent unity, in which […] every member exists for every other, and all for the sake of each, so that no principle can safely be taken in *any one* relation, unless it has been investigated in the *entirety* of its relations to the whole employment of pure reason."[20] In Hegel's philosophy, this unifying and integrating function of reason is extended to all domains of being. Whereas he defines understanding as "the capacity to set limits"[21] and hence to produce all kinds of dichotomies, "the sole interest of reason is to suspend such rigid antitheses."[22] Obviously, it was not Hegel's intention to play off reason and understanding against each other: on the contrary, in order

---

[19] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception* (Paris: Gallimard, 1945), p. 231 (italics mine).

[20] Immanuel Kant, *Werke in zehn Bänden. Band 4: Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1968), p. B XXIII. Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* is quoted according to the pagination of the second edition (=B) of 1787.

[21] Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, "Differenz des Fichteschen und Schellingschen Systems der Philosophie," *Gesammelte Werke, Band 4: Jenaer kritische Schriften* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1968), p. 12.

[22] Hegel, "Differenz des Fichteschen und Schellingschen Systems der Philosophie," p. 13.

to avoid a kind of vague, undifferentiated knowledge or to remain entangled in the irrationality of immediate intuitions and edifying talk it is essential to start with the definitions and distinctions of understanding.[23] However, in order to understand the life-world, the restricted rationality of the scientific worldview needs to be superseded in reason, which is capable to grasp the interconnected character of the life-world and the complex relations of humans with it. In sum, philosophy can only reconnect with the life-world through reason. This implies a critique, from the perspective of such a more encompassing form of rationality, of reductionist rationalism and objectivism, which is characteristic of the way in which science and foundational philosophy approach the life-world.

Practical Wisdom as a Way to Reconnect Philosophy with the Life-world

The main results of the previous section are that philosophy has an essential critical role to play with regard to the life-world, while at the same time it has become clear that modern, scientific philosophy has been unable to relate to the life-world in a fruitful way. On this basis, I want to explore in this section whether an interpretation of philosophy as *a reasonable quest for practical wisdom* can serve as an intermediate to reconnect philosophy with the life-world.

As a start, let us return to Plato's characterization of philosophy as the love of wisdom, thereby distinguishing it clearly from the divine knowledge of the Gods, the only ones who are truly wise. As noted above, Aristotle differentiates the Platonic idea of wisdom by making a distinction between theoretical and practical wisdom: theoretical wisdom deals with investigating the first principles and causes, whereas practical wisdom is about human acting.[24] But in order to give a proper orientation to human acting, practical wisdom has to combine a practical knowhow of the contingencies of the life-world with a theoretical, reasonable insight in and a critical examination of the true nature of the good in general. Precisely because of this combination, the Aristotelian idea of practical wisdom is to be

---

[23] I developed this idea further in Peter Jonkers, "Redefining Religious Truth as a Challenge for Philosophy of Religion," *European Journal for Philosophy of Religion,* 4 (2012), pp. 139-159.

[24] Aristoteles, *Metaphysica,* 982b, 5-10.

preferred over Descartes' scientific and objectivistic approach of the life-world, because the latter tends to ignore the inevitable contingent and contextual character of the life-world. Contemporary philosophers, too, highlight the dual character of practical wisdom: it is not simply knowing how to steer one's way through life, cope with difficulties etc. in order to become happy,[25] but also involves a reasonable insight and a critical appreciation of the deepest significance of whatever occurs.[26] This shows that practical wisdom can indeed serve as an intermediate between the life-world and philosophy: it is related to the life-world, because it orientates the lives of people towards the good life; it is also related to philosophy, because the latter critically examines whether the final goal of what presents itself as wisdom is indeed the good life.

However, the relation between philosophy and practical wisdom is also an ambivalent one. In order to elucidate this, I want to analyze Kant's views on this matter. He combines the Platonic line of thought, defining philosophy as (love of) wisdom and the Aristotelian idea of theoretical philosophy as the (love of) science.[27] In his *Critique of Practical Reason* Kant suggests to return to the ancient definition of philosophy as a doctrine of wisdom, in particular as

> an instruction in the conception in which the highest good was to be placed, and the conduct by which it was to be obtained. It would be well to leave this word [i.e. philosophy] its ancient signification as a doctrine of the highest good, so far as reason endeavours to make this into a science. For on the one hand, the restriction annexed would suit the Greek expression (which signifies the love of wisdom), and yet at the same time would be sufficient to embrace under the name of philosophy the love of science.[28]

---

[25] For the importance of the link between wisdom and human flourishing see Odo Marquard, "Drei Betrachtungen zum Thema 'Philosophie und Weisheit'," *Philosophie und Weisheit*, pp. 280-282.

[26] Robert Nozick, "What is Wisdom and Why do Philosophers Love it so?," *The examined Life. Philosophical Meditations* (New York: Touchstone Press, 1989), p. 275.

[27] Bien, "Einige Bemerkungen zum Verhältnis von Philosophie, Wissenschaft und Weisheit," p. 49.

[28] Immanuel Kant, "Kritik der praktischen Vernunft," *Werke in zehn Bänden. Band 6: Schriften zur Ethik und Religionsphilosophie: Erster Teil* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1968), p. 236.

So, wisdom rests on an idea of the highest good, and orientates human conduct towards obtaining it, thus showing that wisdom is closely related to the life-world. But in order to prevent wisdom from producing sophisms, a philosophical doctrine of the highest good is needed, which serves as the narrow gate, through which one has to pass in order to attain true wisdom. In order to emphasize the systematic character of a philosophical critique of wisdom, Kant calls it a science; it is the only instrument at our disposal to distinguish true wisdom from what he calls fanaticism (*Schwärmerei*), superstition, and other kinds of immediate revelations of presumed wisdom. What appears to be wisdom does not always orientate people to the highest good, but may lead them astray. Therefore, every claim to wisdom has to be examined critically by philosophy. In particular, Kant disqualifies those, who want to pass their immediate infusions off as pearls of wisdom, but repudiate scientific scrutiny of them, as misologists. It has to be avoided at all costs that these people dominate the philosophical and, even more importantly, the public debate.[29]

But at the same time it is clear that, especially in his later works,[30] Kant does not put science on a par with wisdom. Rather, he points out that philosophy has an instrumental relation with regard to wisdom, being philosophy's final goal:

Its [i.e. philosophy's] sole preoccupation is wisdom; and it seeks it by the path of science, which, once it has been trodden, can never be overgrown, and permits of no wandering. Mathematics, natural science, even our empirical knowledge, have a high value as means, for the most part, to contingent ends, but also, in the ultimate outcome, to ends that are necessary and essential to humanity.[31]

---

[29] Immanuel Kant, "Logik," *Werke in zehn Bänden. Band 5: Schriften zur Metaphysik und Logik* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1968), p. 449.

[30] See Marquard, "Drei Betrachtungen zum Thema 'Philosophie und Weisheit'," p. 277.

[31] Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft,* B 878. See also the conclusion of Kant, "Kritik der praktischen Vernunft," p. 302: "Science (critically undertaken and methodically directed) is the narrow gate that leads to the true doctrine of

In contrast to Descartes, who was convinced that scientific philosophy could directly bear the fruits of wisdom, Kant is far more modest in this respect. In his view,

> philosophy as well as wisdom would always remain an ideal, which objectively is presented complete in reason alone, while subjectively for the person it is only the goal of his unceasing endeavours; and no one would be justified in professing to be in possession of it so as to assume the name of philosopher who could not also show its infallible effects in his own person as an example.[32]

Kant's reserve with regard to philosophy's capacity to positively produce wisdom is a consequence of the critical nature of his thinking. The role of philosophy (or science) with regard to wisdom is, in the first place, a negative one: it has to curb the overblown pretentions of human reason, which is by its very nature dialectical. In particular, science "prevents the devastations of which a lawless speculative reason would otherwise quite inevitably be guilty in the field of morals as well as in that of religion."[33] In other words, science only serves as a means, a path, a narrow gate, an organon for wisdom, but does not coincide with wisdom itself. This shows that Kant is aware of the gap that separates (scientific) philosophy from wisdom, and hence, avoids a reduction of wisdom to scientific knowledge. But, secondly, philosophy also has a positive role to play with regard to wisdom, although, admittedly, a modest one. Insofar as it is a systematic doctrine of the highest good, philosophy can only make hypothetical propositions concerning the idea of the highest good, since it belongs to the noumenal sphere, and therefore surpasses the

---

practical wisdom […]. Philosophy must always continue to be the guardian of this science; and although the public does not take any interest in its subtle investigations, it must take an interest in the resulting doctrines, which such an examination first puts in a clear light." See also: Kant, "Logik," p. 449: "For science is of an intrinsic value as an organon of wisdom only. But, as such, it is indispensable to it; so that it may well be maintained that wisdom without science is a shadow of a perfection which we never shall reach."

[32] Kant, "Kritik der praktischen Vernunft," p. 236.

[33] Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft,* p. B 877.

reach of human understanding. Hence, human reason cannot positively know the highest good, thereby implying that wisdom, indeed, always remains an ideal. But as an ideal of practical wisdom, the highest good has an "excellent, and indeed indispensably necessary regulative employment,"[34] since it orientates us in all our moral actions.[35] In sum, through its negative and positive role with regard to wisdom, philosophy connects itself with the life-world.

Kant's nuanced position with regard to the complex relation between philosophy, wisdom, and the life-world needs to be made more concrete. First of all, philosophy is not itself a form of wisdom, but rather a *doctrine* of wisdom, whose task is to give a critical, theoretical account of the highest good, which is imperative in order to prevent its ideological distortion. But, as Kant pointed out, wisdom is more than possessing the idea of the highest good and conveying it to others, it also comprises the ability of orientating one's own or somebody else's concrete conduct towards it. This dimension of wisdom requires another task from philosophy as a doctrine of wisdom, namely to give a theoretical reflection on the idea of moral orientation.

In order to elucidate this last aspect, I will give a short comment on a text of Kant, in which he explicitly addresses this issue, viz. *What Does It Mean: to Orientate Oneself In Thinking?*[36] In the previous section, wisdom has been defined as an orienting kind of knowledge for humans in the life-world, specifically in practical matters. Well, every kind of orientation requires a subjective principle. To take an example from another part of the life-world: if one wants to orientate oneself geographically, the awareness of the difference between one's left and right hand is essential. By analogy, to orientate oneself with regard to another aspect of the life-world, namely in moral matters or, as Kant calls it, in thinking, means "to be guided, in one's conviction of truth, by a subjective principle of reason where objective principles of reason are inadequate."[37] The term 'subjective' does not mean that such a principle is nothing but the expression of a private whim, but refers to

---

[34] Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft,* p. B 672.

[35] Kant, "Kritik der praktischen Vernunft," p. 256; Immanuel Kant, "Was heißt: sich im Denken orientieren?" *Werke in zehn Bänden. Band 5: Schriften zur Metaphysik und Logik,* pp. 271-274.

[36] Kant, "Was heißt: sich im Denken orientieren?," pp. 267-283.

[37] Kant, "Was heißt: sich im Denken orientieren?," p. 270, footnote.

a need of practical reason to make the highest good to the object of my will.[38] This principle is necessary when it comes to orientating ourselves in existential or moral situations, because we feel on the one hand an urgent (subjective) need to pass a true judgment about our life-orientations, while on the other we are painfully aware of the lack of objective knowledge that would make such a judgment univocally and universally true. In other words, to orientate oneself in the life-world is neither a matter of just doing whatever come to one's mind, nor of scientific knowledge.

Furthermore, insofar as wisdom is a specific kind of orientation, this analysis also shows that wisdom is, indeed, an intermediate between philosophy and the life-world. The subjective character of the principle for orientation means that practical wisdom always has to take into account the specific situation of persons and communities in the life-world, implying that their ways of acting on the basis of the principle of the highest good is always dependent on their individuality. That is why wisdom always requires deliberation, and, hence, cannot be superseded in science or scientific philosophy. But in order to offer a truthful orientation in the life-world, wisdom also needs to be based on a critical examination of what presents itself as such. This is the essential role of philosophy: it cannot claim to define positively what wisdom is and even less produce immediate wise insights, but, as the doctrine of wisdom, has merely a negative role as the narrow gate through which all insights have to pass in order to qualify as true wisdom.

A Contemporary View on Practical Wisdom

On the basis of the analysis of Kant's views about the relation between philosophy and wisdom, I will examine the idea of practical wisdom and its relation to the life-world. In our times, we see that practical wisdom is needed more than ever, because people have come to realize that, in spite of the enormous growth of scientific knowledge and technical knowhow, not much progress has been made in solving the existential conflicts that predominate the life-world. These conflicts result from the confrontation between the one-sidedness of moral principles and another one-sidedness, namely that of the

---

[38] Kant, "Kritik der praktischen Vernunft," pp. 256, 276.

contextual and complex nature of human lives.[39] This causes the tragic character of human existence.

Against this background, the task of practical wisdom is precisely to overcome human tragedy by making the transition from insight in and a critical examination of the true nature of the good life with and for others to the concrete condition of individual and collective human lives. This means that someone who has a vast knowledge about moral principles, but is unable to relate these appropriately to the complexities of concrete human lives, would not be termed wise, but makes himself guilty of a hubris of practical reason. Similarly, someone who is sensitive to the complexities of people's concrete situations without taking into account the importance of moral principles as objective standards of the good life, yields to the illusions of the heart, and would not be considered wise either.[40]

Hence, the essence of practical wisdom is to respond to the above existential conflicts by giving a moral or existential judgment in the context of the life-world. Such a judgment holds at bay the ruinous alternatives of focusing only on the universality of moral principles, leading to the illusion of the univocity of these principles, as well as on the historical contexts of the life-world, which leads to arbitrariness.[41] Only through a moral judgment in the context of the life-world can practical wisdom reach its final goal, namely to assist people in their search for a truthful orientation of their lives. However, this does not mean that practical wisdom would be able to put an end to these existential conflicts once and for all, because they result from the conflicting nature of human existence itself.[42]

---

[39] Paul Ricoeur, *Soi-même comme un autre* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1990), pp. 318f.

[40] Ricoeur, *Soi-même comme un autre*, p. 281. In this context, it deserves to be noted that several authors deplore the fact that, since modernity, the tension between theoretical, detached knowledge and life-oriented, engaged love of wisdom has widened to a complete rift, which has obviously gone at the cost of the more holistic idea of knowledge. See: Nozick, "What is Wisdom?," p. 273; Brenda Almond, "Seeking Wisdom. Moral Wisdom or Ethical Expertise," *Where Shall Wisdom Be Found?*, pp. 202-205; Daniel Kaufman, "Knowledge, Wisdom, and the Philosopher," *Philosophy* 81, 1 (2006), pp. 129-151.

[41] Ricoeur, *Soi-même comme un autre*, p. 291.

[42] Ricoeur, *Soi-même comme un autre*, p. 291. In this study, Ricoeur gives several examples of these conflicts between general principles and contextual situations of human lives, which all come down to the problem of how to apply a general rule in a plurality of concrete, existential contexts. The essential task of practical

The capacity to deliberate is essential for practical wisdom, precisely because it aims at a moral judgement in a concrete life-world situation. To phrase it in Aristotelian terms, the objects of practical wisdom are – unlike those of theoretical wisdom – the things that are not of necessity and, hence, are capable of being otherwise. Practical wisdom starts from an examination of the general principles of the good life and connects them with the particularity and plurality of the life-world. Just implementing universal principles and propositions concerning the good life in the life-world is anything but wise, because such a way of doing yields to the illusion that these principles can univocally be applied to the contextual realities of the life-world. Instead, practical wisdom has to be based on a refined deliberation, aimed at a careful assessment of these contextual realities in the light of general principles.[43] This explains Nozick's remark that the notion of wisdom always has to take into account the constraints of feasibility, that is, the negative aspects of the best alternative, the value of the next best alternative, and the limits on possibility themselves, which exclude certain alternatives as feasible objects of choice. Furthermore, a wise judgement has to incorporate and balance each of the partial evaluative factors thought relevant.[44] But it is equally essential not to reduce wisdom to a kind of practical knowhow or to drawing up an inventory of the contingencies and pluralities of human life, since practical wisdom also involves a fundamental reflection on the true nature of the good.[45]

In my view, the main reason that many traditional as well as contemporary views on practical wisdom are so problematic is that they actually negate the transitional character of wisdom's moral judgments in the context of the life-world. Most traditional forms of wisdom are rather theoretical, focused on the universal principles of the good life, thereby raising themselves above human passions and the complexities of his existence. Wisdom thus seems to be something

---

wisdom, in this respect, is to mediate this antinomy by a situational judgment. See Ricoeur, *Soi-même comme un autre,* pp. 291ff.

[43] Wolfgang Welsch, "Weisheit in einer Welt der Pluralität," *Philosophie und Weisheit*, pp. 241ff.

[44] Nozick, "What is Wisdom?," pp. 270f; 277f.

[45] Sharon Ryan, "Wisdom, Knowledge and Rationality," *Acta Analytica* (2012) 27, p. 103.

which is imposed on the world from above it.[46] But in this way, these traditions give the impression that wisdom is a simple univocal affair, so that it risks to become severed from the concrete lives of people.[47] Contemporary manifestations of wisdom, by contrast, focus on the spatio-temporal settings of human lives, thereby failing to critically examine the hidden assumptions of these settings, in particular the need to relate them to universal moral principles. Consequently, such a kind of presumed wisdom risks to be nothing more than an ideological justification of the existing order.[48] It is clear that neither of these two views on practical wisdom is able to truly orient human lives; the popularity of these approaches, then and now, probably stems from the fact that they give us the illusion of being able to find a definitive solution, albeit in opposite ways, to the existential conflicts that haunt us, and thus create the erroneous impression that either one of these approaches can make human life easy. But by doing so they negate the very nature of practical wisdom, which consists in the fragile nature of every judgment in situation.

Conclusion

In sum, what is the answer to the leading question of this paper, namely to bridge the rift between philosophy and the life-world and what role can practical wisdom play in this respect? In the preceding sections, I have argued that philosophy has unintentionally separated itself from the life-world ever since it has adopted the paradigm of modern science. Although philosophy wanted to put a final end to all unfounded kinds of orientation in the life-world, and claimed to be able to give a univocal orientation to people's lives on a solid base, its objectivism in fact resulted in philosophy's estrangement from the life-world. More in general, the objectivism of science and the philosophies based on it are responsible for the fact that many people turn their back to the scientific worldview and erroneously think that unreflective ideas and immediate emotions could orient their lives. Against this background, I developed the thesis that practical wisdom is an intermediate between philosophy and the life-world, and, hence,

---

[46] Robert Song, "Wisdom as the End of Morality," *Where Shall Wisdom Be Found?,* pp. 299-302.

[47] Welsch, „Weisheit in einer Welt der Pluralität," p. 227.

[48] Almond, "Seeking Wisdom," p. 199.

can bridge the gap between them. This is so, because practical wisdom starts from a critical, philosophical examination of the general principles, which are meant to orient human lives, and makes, from there, the transition to the contingency of the life-world. In order to realize this transition, deliberation is essential, which means that the connection of philosophy and the life-world is inevitable a fragile one.

Bibliography

Almond, Brenda. 1999. "Seeking Wisdom. Moral Wisdom or Ethical Expertise." *Where Shall Wisdom Be Found? Wisdom in the Bible, the Church and the Contemporary World.* St. C. Barton (ed.). Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 195-209.

Aristoteles, *Metaphysica*

Aristoteles, *Ethica Nicomachea*

Bien, Günter. 1989. "Einige Bemerkungen zum Verhältnis von Philosophie, Wissenschaft und Weisheit." *Philosophie und Weisheit*, W. Oelmüller (ed.). Paderborn, München, Wien, Zürich: Ferdinand Schöningh, 39-53.

Descartes, René. 1966. *Oeuvres de Descartes. Tome VI: Discours de la méthode*, C. Adam et P. Tannery (éd.). Paris: Vrin.

Descartes, René. 1966. *Oeuvres de Descartes. Tome VII: Meditationes de prima philosophia*, C. Adam et P. Tannery (éd.). Paris: Vrin.

Descartes, René. 1966. *Oeuvres de Descartes. Tome IX/2: Principes de la philosophie.* C. Adam et P. Tannery (éd.). Paris: Vrin.

Descartes, René. 1976. *Discours de la méthode. Texte et commentaire par Etienne Gilson.* Paris: Vrin.

Fichte, Johann Gottlieb. 1971. "Über den Begriff der Wissenschafts-lehre oder der sogenannten Philosophie," *Werke, Band 1: Zur theoretischen Philosophie I*, I.H. Fichte (Hrsg.). Berlin: De Gruyter.

Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich. 1968. "Differenz des Fichteschen und Schellingschen Systems der Philosophie," *Gesammelte Werke, Band 4: Jenaer kritische Schriften.* Hamburg: Meiner.

Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich. 1980. *Gesammelte Werke, Band 9: Phänomenologie des Geistes.* Hamburg: Meiner.

Husserl, Edmund. 1954. *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie. Eine Einleitung in die phänomeno-logische Philosophie* (Husserliana, Band VI). The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff.

Janssen, Paul. 1980. "Lebenswelt." *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie, Band 5*, J. Ritter und K. Gründer (Hrsg.). Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 151-155.

Jonkers, Peter. 2012. "Redefining Religious Truth as a Challenge for Philosophy of Religion." *European Journal for Philosophy of Religion.* Vol. 4, No. 4, 139-159.

Kant, Immanuel. 1968. *Werke in zehn Bänden. Band 4: Kritik der reinen Vernunft,* W. Weischedel (Hrsg.). Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.

Kant, Immanuel. 1968. "Logik," *Werke in zehn Bänden. Band 5: Schriften zur Metaphysik und Logik,* W. Weischedel (Hrsg.). Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.

Kant, Immanuel. 1968. "Was heißt: sich im Denken orientieren?" *Werke in zehn Bänden. Band 5: Schriften zur Metaphysik und Logik,* W. Weischedel (Hrsg.). Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.

Kant, Immanuel. 1968. "Kritik der praktischen Vernunft," *Werke in zehn Bänden. Band 6: Schriften zur Ethik und Religionsphilosophie: Erster Teil.* W. Weischedel (Hrsg.). Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.

Kaufman, Daniel. 2006. "Knowledge, Wisdom, and the Philosopher." *Philosophy.* Vol. 81, No. 1, 129-151.

Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm. 1980. "Von Glückseligkeit," *Philosophische Schriften, Band VI:3.* Berlin: Akademie-Verlag.

Marquard, Odo. 1989. "Drei Betrachtungen zum Thema 'Philosophie und Weisheit'," *Philosophie und Weisheit,* W. Oelmüller (ed.). Paderborn, München, Wien, Zürich: Ferdinand Schöningh, 275-308.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. 1945. *Phénoménologie de la perception.* Paris: Gallimard.

Nozick, Robert. 1989. "What is Wisdom and Why do Philosophers Love it so?," Idem, *The Examined Life. Philosophical Meditations.* New York: Touchstone Press, 267-278.

Plato, *Symposium*

Plato, *Phaedrus*

Ricoeur, Paul. 1990. *Soi-même comme un autre.* Paris: Editions du seuil.

Ryan, Sharon. 2012. "Wisdom, Knowledge and Rationality," *Acta Analytica.* Vol. 27, 99-112,

Song, Robert. 1999. "Wisdom as the End of Morality," *Where Shall Wisdom Be Found? Wisdom in the Bible, the Church and the Contemporary World*. St. C. Barton (ed.). Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 299-302.

Waldenfels, Hans. 1989. "Thesen zur Weisheit. Aus der Perspektive Asiens" *Philosophie und Weisheit*, W. Oelmüller (ed.). Paderborn, München, Wien, Zürich: Ferdinand Schöningh, 9-23

Wolfgang Welsch. 1989. "Weisheit in einer Welt der Pluralität." *Philosophie und Weisheit*, W. Oelmüller (ed.). Paderborn, München, Wien, Zürich: Ferdinand Schöningh, 214-274.

Part II
The Colonization of the Life-world
by Politics, Economics, and Science

3.
Personhood and Property

WILLIAM SWEET

Introduction

The notion of life-world is a broad one. For some, as we see in the work of Edmund Husserl,[1] it refers to the "world for all" that is the "pre-given" world and the dynamic context in which human beings live and act. It also refers to the notion of *Lebenswelt* used by Alfred Schütz – the intersubjective world that human beings both construct and are formed by.[2] One finds the notion as well in Jürgen Habermas who, drawing on Schütz, is concerned that this world is being 'rationalized' – where people are increasingly reduced to a limited number of roles – and 'colonized' by media – where the few dominate others, and thereby limit communication and exchange.[3] One of the ways in which this rationalization and colonization occurs is by the propagation of a reductionist view of the human person – specifically, of the human being as a being who has property in, or owns, itself.

This paper takes up this theme of self-ownership or having property in oneself and the implication that one has a basic right to do with oneself as one pleases – notions that are present in Western and, increasingly, in Asian contexts – and asks whether the idea of 'a right to do with oneself as one pleases' is plausible or even coherent. In order to do this, I present an alternative sketch of the self and the body, and of the putative right to one's body. Specifically, first, I offer a brief description of some dominant modern understandings of 'the self' from what we may call (for sake of convenience) 'East' and 'West'. Then, I outline some of the arguments given for self-ownership and for seeing the right to oneself and one's body as property rights. I

---

[1] See, for example, Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, trans. David Carr (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970).

[2] See Alfred Schütz and Thomas Luckmann, *Structures of the Life-World*, Vol. 2, trans. Richard Zaner and David Parent (London: Heinemann, 1974).

[3] Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, tr. Thomas McCarthy, 3rd corrected ed. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985), Vol. 2, 330, 332ff.

argue, however, that there are a number of problematic assumptions in such arguments, and I conclude by offering an alternative view of the human person that better reflects our privileged relation to our selves and our bodies.

Challenges on Understanding the Self

If we look at the history of philosophy and religion – in the West, but also beyond – we see an ambivalence about the material and, by extension, the body. In particular, there is an uncertainty about the value of the body, its necessity, and even what it is.

On the one hand, for some, the body is a problem or an impediment, particularly to what we might call 'mind' or 'the spiritual' or 'the self.' This can be seen in a number of authors from West and East.

For example, according to Plato, the body is the source of the passions, and the passions must be subdued in order for any genuine knowledge to be obtained. Not only do the demands of the body interfere with the search for knowledge, but the bodily senses are unreliable and prone to deceiving us. Plato writes that the body "fills us with wants, desires, fears, all sorts of illusions and much nonsense, so that, as it is said, in truth and in fact no thought of any kind ever comes to us from the body."[4] Thus, in the *Phaedo,* he famously calls on would-be philosophers to free themselves from the body and its pleasures, such as food, drink, and sex.[5] Philosophers must 'train for dying', looking forward to a time when one's soul is separated from the body.[6]

We find a similar view of the body in the First Prapathaka of the *Maitrayana-Brahmaya-Upanishad*. There, we read:

> The King, touching the Saint's feet with his head, recited this Gatha: 'O Saint, What is the use of the enjoyment of pleasures in this offensive, pitiless body – a mere mass of bones, skin,

---

[4] Plato, *Phaedo* 66c.

[5] Plato, *Phaedo* 64d-65a.

[6] Plato, *Phaedo* 67e.

sinews, marrow, flesh, seed, blood, mucus, tears, phlegm, ordure, water, bile, and slime![7]

In his *Divan-e Shams*, the 13th-century Islamic Sufi mystic and Persian poet, Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī (1207-73), echoes this view of the body. He writes:

I am a bird of Paradise, I am not of the earthy realm
For a few days imprisoned in my cage of flesh and bone.
My soul is my guide, for my soul is of that abode
I will not speak of the earthly, I am of the unknown.
The fragrant morning breeze brings news of union
With joy and with song I'll leave this cage, this earthly throne.[8]

We find this view of the body as 'impediment' in explicitly religious texts as well. For example, in the Christian New Testament, we find passages critical of the body, particularly in Saint Paul, where the author writes: "the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want."[9]

In many religious traditions even today the view of the body as a problem or impediment continues, with the practice of the "mortifica-tion of the body," as at least a form of spiritual self-discipline.[10]

In short, for many thinkers, the self, or what is most important about human beings, is separate from the body; the body is a place of confinement of the self; and the self should seek a liberation from the body.

Yet, on the other hand, many also admit that one cannot be a self without a body, and that the body is necessary to mind or the spiritual.

---

[7] *Maitrayana-Brahmaya-Upanishad*, in *The Sacred Books of the East*, tr. and ed. F. Max Müller (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1884), Vol. 15, 288.

[8] Rumi, *Divan-e Shams, Poem 114.* http://www.bahaistudies.net/asma/divane *shams.pdf (1 March 2017)*

[9] Galatians 5:17-18, New International Version.

[10] See, for example, Pope John Paul II who, in 1981, wrote: "In earthly life, the dominion of the spirit over the body – and the simultaneous subordination of the body to the spirit – can, as the result of persevering work on themselves, express a personality that is spiritually mature"; see "The Resurrection Perfects the Person," Address at the General Audience, 9 December 1981. http://www.ewtn. com/library/papaldoc/jp2tb66.htm *(1 March 2017)*

In Plato, for example, we also see a fundamental link between body and soul, whereby training the body trains the *psyche* which, in turn, enables the body to develop even more; there is a reciprocal influence, then, between the two parts.[11] In the Hindu traditions, the performance by human beings – embodied beings – of their social obligations (*pravritti dharma*) to other embodied beings is essential in their spiritual progress. In St Thomas Aquinas, it is the soul and body together, in a unity, that constitute the individual human person; it is through their bodies that human beings experience and know. Without the body, the human self is fundamentally incomplete. Indeed, to have life – to have "the capacity for growth, reproduction, functional activity, and continual change"[12] – entails having a body.

Today, it is likely that the majority of philosophers in the West hold not only that the mind is dependent on the body for its contents, but that mind is a product of matter. Some go further, and hold that the mental and the physical are not mutually exclusive, and that mental phenomena are either features of, or processes in, the brain. This is 'biological naturalism' or materialism. On this latter view, to be, to exist, is to be material and entirely subject to natural laws. What is not material does not exist.

What the body is, what its relation is to the self, and what such a relation entails – all these issues are, arguably, speculative or metaphysical, and difficult to resolve.

The Self and the Body in Contemporary Ethical Debate

This ambivalence about the body in relation to the self is not merely a metaphysical issue; we see it in a number of contemporary ethical debates – concerning euthanasia, assisted suicide, abortion, sexual labor or prostitution – particularly in the West. A common view today is that it is up to the individual concerned to do as she or he wishes in these matters *because* each individual has a basic right to his or her self and, thus, to his or her body.

This appeal is rooted, implicitly or explicitly, in the principle, articulated by John Stuart Mill almost two centuries ago, that "over

---

[11] See Plato, *Republic*, 424a.

[12] See *Oxford Living Dictionaries* (English) https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/us/life (1 March 2017).

himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign,"[13] but it can be traced back to John Locke's view that "Every man has a property in his own person. This nobody has a right to, but himself."[14]

Interestingly, one finds traces of a similar view in contemporary Asian social discourse. Consider the right to privacy.

In a recent book-length study of family relations in Shanghai, entitled *Children, Rights and Modernity in China: Raising Self-Governing Citizens* (2014), the author, Orna Naftali, notes that there seems to have been a shift from the negative connotations of the "private" (*si*) in late imperial China, to a "deepening awareness of the idea of self-ownership in contemporary urban Chinese society."[15] Thus, today in China, we find the 'social construction' of a person's "right to self-ownership," manifested in the emphasis of the value of privacy (*yinsi*), individual privacy (*genen yinsi*), and the right to "a free personal space."

We find a similar case in contemporary India – a shift, apparently, from the dominant view a little over half a century ago. In 1954, an eight judge Indian Supreme Court Bench declared that the right to privacy was *not* a constitutionally-protected, fundamental right. This judgement – in the case of M.P. Sharma versus Satis Chandra – held that "the state's power of search and seizure was 'overriding', and necessary to the protection of social security."[16] This decision was in keeping with the then-prevailing interpretation in India of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights – that "An individual's freedom of thought, expression of opinion, conscience and religious activity are governed by his or her dharma and family tradition."[17] Recently, however, there has been resistance to this view in some quarters, and the Court revisited the question recently (in 2015), by

---

[13] John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003 (original 1859)), Ch. 1, paragraph 9.

[14] John Locke, *The Second Treatise of Civil Government* (Adelaide: University of Adelaide Press, 2014 (original 1764), Section 27.

[15] See Orna Naftali, *Children, Rights and Modernity in China: Raising Self-Governing Citizens* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

[16] See Krishnadas Rajagopal, "After 60 years, SC to take a relook at right to privacy," *The Hindu*, Oct. 9, 2015. http://www.thehindu.com/ todays-paper/tp-national/after-60-years-sc-to-take-a-relook-at-right-to-privacy/article7740412.ece (1 March 2017).

[17] See William Owen Cole, *Moral Issues in Six Religions* (Oxford: Heinemann Educational, 1991), 110.

setting up another Constitution Bench to look again at the question, because of the controversy over the Aadhaar project – the assigning of a 12-digit unique identification number (called "Aadhaar") to all residents of India, using their particular biometric and demographic data[18] – and the claim that it is an invasion into citizen privacy.

The idea of a right to privacy, based on the presumption that an individual 'owns' him- or herself, and therefore cannot be constrained to act in ways that would undercut or compromise that ownership, seems now to be as much a reality in the East as it is in the West.

Nevertheless, one may well ask why anyone should accept such a principle – why anyone should hold that there is a right to privacy and that it is up to the individual to do with himself as he wishes?

In reply, one might first say that this principle is just a basic moral fact – that a person has a basic moral right to him or herself (and, by extension, to his or her body) that needs no further justification. This basic moral fact seems to have been recognised in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights – in the recognition of the right to life, the rights to personal liberty, and the freedoms from arbitrary interference with privacy, family, and home.[19]

Or, second, one might say that one's self and one's body is one's property – i.e., as expressed in the Lockean phrase that I have "property in myself" – and that this right to property entails a right to dispose of it as the owner chooses unless it harms another. (In other words, I can do with my body – and, arguably, myself – as I choose *because* it is *my* property.) This is consistent with how we normally understand property – which we can use, dispose, and transfer generally as we wish.

Or, third, a person may say that she has a right to her body – and thus herself – because she *is* her body (i.e., a person's body *is* that person) and because no one or nothing else has a similar relation to her body; only she can have the special relation of "dominion" over it.

Or, fourth, one may say that because human beings are free, they therefore have a right to, and a right to use, those things necessary to

---

[18] See Ujjwal Singh, "Surveillance Regimes in Contemporary India," *Surveillance, Counter-Terrorism and Comparative Constitutionalism* (London: Routledge, 2013), 53-54. See also Vijay Joshi, *India's Long Road: The Search for Prosperity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 206-207.

[19] *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, Article 12.

their freedom and well-being – and these things include themselves and their body.

Finally, the claim of a right to oneself and to one's own body is not only widely held, but rests on another good humanist principle, and that is that human beings are autonomous beings. To be a human self entails that one can pursue, has a right to pursue, and ought to be able to pursue one's own good in one's own way.

Thus, for all of the above reasons, and perhaps more, an individual is held to have a just and justified prior claim to him or herself and his or her body, and may do with him or herself as she or he pleases. This obviously bears on the moral issues enumerated earlier – euthanasia, prostitution (or sexual labour), abortion, and so on.

Self-Ownership and the Right to One's Body: Some Assumptions

There is, then, a certain plausibility to the view that individuals may do with themselves as they wish – that they own themselves, and that this includes a right to one's body and a right to do with it as one wishes. Given its lengthy philosophical pedigree, particularly in the West, this view seem to be almost self-evident, particularly in a secular context.

Yet, if we reflect on this for a moment, we will see that several assumptions are being made.

A common, *first* assumption here is that, if I own myself – and if my body is my property – then I possess a right to my body, *and* that right is (like) a right to property. But that one's body is one's property is, however, far from obvious, and there is some reason to believe that people do not have *property* rights in their body. For example, our relations to our bodies are not identical to our relations to property. Property is normally acquired through work, or gift, or some kind of transfer or exchange, but one's body is *not* acquired in any of these ways. (Indeed, how could a person have acquired such "property" in the first place? Obviously, there was no pre-existing "self" to acquire it.) Moreover, many religious traditions in West and East would hold that, if there is a creator being, then no creature can have an absolute right to oneself and one's body. Thus, it does not – at least, it does not automatically – follow from *having* a body that it is one's property, that one has property in it, or that one can claim a right to it that is akin to a property right.

A *second* assumption when one talks about a right to oneself or to one's body is that (and this is regardless of whether one has property in oneself) people can do as they wish with themselves – i.e., as they choose – so long as they do not harm others. This assumption is, again, far from obvious. To begin with, even those who speak of one's sovereignty over oneself would deny that people can do whatever they please with their bodies. John Stuart Mill, for example, would say that people cannot alienate their bodies or their minds absolutely; thus, he provides an explicit injunction against slavery.[20] Mill's reasons are not fully spelled out, but one reason against allowing such actions is that they would negate the very 'origin' of one's liberty and freedom. In other words, there is something about *me* that gives me a basic liberty. To give up this basic liberty is to deny something objective about myself – and, thus, would be irrational. Moreover, recall Mill's argument about *who* can claim liberty.[21] His view is that beings who have reached a stage of 'maturity' – we may call it, full 'autonomy' – can legitimately claim liberty. By choosing to alienate one's body or oneself (e.g., in Mill's example, 'choosing' slavery), one is undermining one's status as an autonomous being and, hence, one's liberty.

Yet even if a right to one's body were a property right, having property in oneself does not entail that one can do whatever one wishes with one's body any more than it entails that people can do whatever they want with their property. In some cases, using one's property in certain ways might rightly be limited by the rights of others or by the 'common good.' {This seems to lie behind the reasoning in the 1954 Indian Supreme Court decision, referred to above, challenging the right to privacy as a fundamental right.)

Indeed, simply having the power or *physical* liberty to treat one's body as property and, thereby, to do as one wishes with it, is no reason to say that one has the *moral* liberty to do this. It should also be noted that there are some unpleasant consequences of thinking of the body as property or as something that a person can do with as he or she chooses. For example, when I possess (a title to) land, there may be circumstances where the state can expropriate that land for a public good – e.g., to build a highway. So, if one's body can be 'held' as

---

[20] Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, ch. 5, paragraph 11.
[21] Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, ch.1, paragraph 10.

property, could it not also be alienated or expropriated – possibly, without one's consent?

The notions of body ownership and the right to one's body rest on a *third* assumption: that there is nothing in one's relationship to one's body that prevents using it in certain ways. But a so-called right to one's body ignores questions of the ontological and epistemological relations between mind and body. Notions of body ownership and rights to one's body assume that there is no fundamental integrity of the body (or, for that matter, of the person) – and they seem to ignore that, as a person, I am not just a self conscious, rational, free, morally aware, free, and independent being, but I am also an embodied being. (When we look at conceptions of the human person after Locke or even Descartes, we often see that the focus is on mind and consciousness, not on being incarnate flesh and blood – and this Modern conception of the human person is far from obvious.) Finally, these notions of self-ownership seem to ignore that the human person is a social being. To be a human being implies a relation to other beings; I depend on others for my birth, education, social and moral development (e.g., development of language and conceptions of the good), and so on. It does not follow, then, that one does or should have absolute control over oneself.

In short, the idea of owning oneself or owning one's body makes a fundamental assumption about what it is to be a human self. While there is no definition of selfhood that is consistently adopted by philosophers, it is fair to say that, for many of our contemporaries, a self is fundamentally an autonomous being – that is, a being who is self-consciousness and has a concept of itself as a continuing self, who is rational, free, morally aware, and capable of framing and acting upon a 'plan of life', and who is capable of entering into emotional relationships with others.

What are we to make of this basic assumption about the self?

Some Problems

The first difficulty with the preceding assumption about the self is that no reason is given for it – and, arguably, no independent reason can be given for it, except that it simply seems to align with what many people today take selves to be.

Second, the notion of the self described above lacks a clear sense of the integrity of the person – of the person as a 'whole'. It also lacks a sense of the integrity of *the body*. On this view, the body is something malleable and instrumental, and it lacks any distinctive or intrinsic value or status. Thus, while one speaks of a right to one's body and states that one's body is one's 'property', there is no requirement to treat the body in a particular way, any more than there is to treat any other property in a particular way. If people have, as it were, absolute sovereignty over their bodies, the use and value of the body are determined by the subject's own interests and are, therefore, contingent and relativistic. There is no basic (e.g., Kantian) duty to treat our bodies in certain ways (e.g., keep healthy, refrain from self-destructive actions, develop talents). Moreover, if people think of themselves as simply their own property, then their *value* is similarly contingent and relativistic. In other words, there is no inherent value in myself, only the value that I subjectively give to it. The idea of a natural or intrinsic human dignity is excluded.

In short, the claims of body ownership and one's right to one's body, as common as they are, rest on what are, at the very least, questionable assumptions.

Still, the defender of self-ownership may argue that, if we deny such a right, then we will leave human beings vulnerable. If one does not have a right to one's body or if there are limits on one's right to one's body, then how can we have any voice over ourselves and our lives, and how can we argue against the intrusion and interference of others into our lives?

I would demur from this inference.

While the criticisms that I have raised challenge the claim that people have an absolute right to their bodies – at least so far as this right is some kind of property right – it does not mean that *others* can do whatever they wish with us.

First, if a human person cannot own his or her body, then, arguably, no other human being can own it. (That is, human bodies cannot be owned, and so others cannot exercise ownership over oneself.)

Second, the denial of self-ownership does not deny that the individual has a prior claim to his or her body and to use it – within the limits of what it is to be an embodied self.

One may well ask, then, what is one's relationship to his or her body? Rather than ownership, I would propose the notion of 'stewardship' – i.e., to live, act, and so on, within the limits of the kind of being that one is, and to 'manage' oneself in a way that promotes flourishing. It is to look after or care for oneself. On this view, since the body is not property that is owned, it is not a commodity and cannot be used as a commodity.

By extension, then, the view that I am presenting here rejects the subjective sense of autonomy as 'doing what one wants' – which, I would argue, is a highly problematic understanding – and reflects a more Kantian notion of autonomy, which involves the recognition of an objective moral principle and the willingness by a person to apply it to him- or herself. Those familiar with Kant's ethical philosophy know that autonomy is not 'doing what you want,' but a '(self-)willing to do what one *knows* is one's duty.' Indeed, if accepted, such a Kantian view would not only help to restore the notion of human dignity as something objective, but have significant implications for a number of other contemporary debates involving the body (e.g., euthanasia and abortion) – since these would not obviously be simply matters of an individual's so-called 'right to choose.'

Conclusion

In this paper, I have argued that the predominant view of the person – one that seems to underlie much modern and contemporary Euro-American thought but also, increasingly, Asian thought – with its understandings of self-ownership, of having property in oneself, and having a right to oneself, is problematic. I have also suggested that the account of the person and of the body offered in the latter part of this paper is more consistent with the phenomenon of the human self and with moral experience. Indeed, it is congenial with what philosophical and religious traditions, both East and West, have long told us. Thus, at a time when Habermas' concern that the lifeworld is being 'rationalized' and 'colonized' seems to be supported by the presence of a reductionist view of the human person as a being who

has property in, or owns, itself, this alternative may be of some help in responding to it.[22]

Bibliography

Habermas, Jürgen. 1985. *The Theory of Communicative Action*, tr. Thomas McCarthy, 3rd corrected ed. Boston: Beacon Press.

Husserl, Edmund. 1970. *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, trans. David Carr. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī, *Poems.*

John Paul II. 1981. "The Resurrection Perfects the Person: Address at the General Audience, 9 December 1981." http://www.ewtn.com/library/papaldoc/jp2tb66.htm *(1 March 2017)*

Joshi, Vijay. 2017. *India's Long Road: The Search for Prosperity.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Locke, John. 2014 (original 1764). *The Second Treatise on Civil Government.* Adelaide: The University of Adelaide Press.

Maitrayana-Brahmaya-Upanishad. 1884. *The Sacred Books of the East*, tr. and ed. F. Max Müller. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Mill, John Stuart. 2003 (original 1859). *On Liberty.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Naftali, Orna. 2014. *Children, Rights and Modernity in China: Raising Self-Governing Citizens.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Owen Cole, William. 1991. *Moral Issues in Six Religions.* Oxford: Heinemann Educational.

Plato, *Phaedo.*

Plato, *Republic.*

Rajagopal, Krishnadas. 2015. "After 60 years, SC to take a relook at right to privacy." *The Hindu, Oct. 9.*

Schütz, Alfred and Luckmann, Thomas. 1974. *Structures of the Life-World.* Trans. Richard Zaner and David Parent. London: Heinemann.

Singh, Ujjwal. 2013. "Surveillance Regimes in Contemporary India." F. Davis, N. McGarrity, and G. Williams (eds.) *Surveillance, Counter-Terrorism and Comparative Constitutionalism.* London: Routledge.

4.

Ethical Discourse in
the Age of Human Rights

EDWARD WAMALA

Introduction

On October 14, 2009, a legislator in the Ugandan parliament tabled the anti-homosexuality bill, which sought among other things to outlaw and criminalize homosexuality. The massive internal applause for this action, from a wide spectrum of legislators, parents, school administrators, religious leaders and many ordinary citizens, has only been matched by the international condemnation of the bill. It took no less a personality than the president of the United States and his foreign secretary to condemn the bill and to advise parliament to discard it. After so much international uproar and condemnation, the bill has been shelved; homosexuals in Uganda can now exercise their freedoms unencumbered by the law. Now that the dust has settled, we can pick up the pieces and look at the issues in a less charged and passionate atmosphere.

If the matter of homosexuality has been extensively discussed in the past, what is the point reasserting the debate in the 21st century? What new ideas are we going to add, and what will be their worth?

The idea we advance and attempt to explain in this paper is that as homosexuality and the whole agenda of Lesbian, Gay, Transgender and Bisexual, in short LGTBs, and related practices have become human rights issues and as such protected by law, space for ethical discourse in and among communities on those issues are contracting. We are, in contemporary societies, increasingly committed to legally recognize, respect and protect social practices, but against a background of massive social and cultural misgivings about the ethical appropriateness of those practices. The corollary argument is that in the same measure as ethical space contracts, space for human rights abuse and violations expand. We attempt to explore these twin propositions in this paper.

Philosophical Foundations of Ethics and Human Rights

But why should protection and promotion of some rights clash with ethical sensibilities when at a fundamental level, both ethics and human rights draw on the same sources? We note in this regard that Kant's second formulation of the categorical imperative, "so act as to treat humanity whether in thine own person or that of any other, in every case as an end withal, never as a means only," lays the ground work for the formulation of first article of the Universal declaration of human rights, "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights." Kant's call on rational beings to treat each other as ends in themselves and never as means rings in our ears when we read the first article of the Universal Declaration. It is because he saw man no matter what his station in life, as imbued with inherent rationality and consciousness that made Kant develop his second formulation. It was that conceptualization that made Kant see man as inherently dignified. If human rights as contained in the Universal Declaration and ethics as contained in Kantian metaphysics of morals are both agreed on the worth of the human person, why should emerging human rights constrain ethics' spaces?

First, although both ethics and human rights emphasize the dignity of the human person and account for the fact that he, among creatures has a rational will and consciousness, different cultural traditions have tended to emphasize different aspects of the implication of man's rationality and consciousness. Hence, while western philosophers have tended to emphasize libertarian ideas drawing on man's rational nature and consciousness; their Sub-Saharan African counterparts have tended to emphasize the religious element, arguing that man's rationality, which is the basis of his dignity, can only draw from something deeper than man, and that something deeper is God.

The different emphasis namely, the libertarian and divine sources grounding the rational nature of man has inadvertently influenced the way these two cultural traditions have appreciated human rights; hence, for the western philosophers, and human rights scholars, the emphasis has been on the negative function of rights, limiting or at least severely regulating the state from impinging on the liberties of the individual. Civil and political rights ought to be appreciated against that background. The state should play a minimal role, and let individuals, who are after all rational agents, manage their lives as

best they can. The state patronizing individuals would imply that their rationality was doubted or if not, then deliberately impinged on. Human rights observance in the western traditional has followed that libertarian philosophical position.

In Sub-Saharan Africa and several developing areas, the emphasis has not been so much on the liberties of the individual defining their rights; rather rights have tended to emphasize the religious element, namely that a human person should be respected, because he is created in the image of God. Man's rationality which undergirds his dignity is derived, from his God like image. The emphasis here therefore is not to emphasize man's individuality or liberties; but dignity understood in a religious sense. But apart from that religious sentiment, there is a very strong sense among many developing communities that an individual is because society is. An individual imagining himself isolated from the community is simply not the way people think. The thinking is I am because we are

It is helpful to recall that the emphasis on the different ways of legitimizing human rights has a historical precedent: even as the Universal Declaration was being drafted, different groups sought to influence the wording of the declaration by drawing on their religious, cultural, and even ideological backgrounds. In an *Awake Magazine* article titled, "A long job finished," the author points out concerning the drafting of the Universal Declaration that, "from the start, deep disagreement mired the 18 member commission in endless disputes. The Chinese delegate felt that the document should include the philosophy of Confucius, a Catholic Commission member promoted the teaching of Thomas Aquinas, the United States championed the American Bill of Rights and the Soviets wanted to include the ideas of Karl Marx – and these were just a few of the strong opinions expressed."

From the earliest point of the drafting of the Universal Declaration, we can already see how the different groups thought human dignity could best be promoted and protected, at the international level, using the Universal Declaration. Embedded in those different emphasis was the related issue of what rights were to be protected and relatedly how they were to be protected. So, whereas there was universal consensus needed to promote, protect and respect human rights, there was no such consensus on which constituted rights needed promotion, protection and respect. To illustrate this point: initially and for a long

time, state parties from western democracies contested and rejected third world and socialist state parties call for the recognition of Economic Social and Cultural Rights, looking at them as communist strategies to smuggle into universal human rights ideologically based economic policies that would compel states to do what individuals were supposed to do themselves. According to western states, as long civil and political rights were formally in place, individuals could very well utilize them to meet their economic, social and cultural rights. The emphasis, highlighted earlier, on individual liberties as taught by John Stuart Mill is evident here. But what is further evident is the emphasis on specific people using their rationality and consciousness to do for themselves whatever they wanted, without the state patronizing them.

Third world states, on the other hand, while endorsing civil and political rights, nevertheless felt that those rights by themselves were inadequate, if economic, social and cultural rights were not attended to. The dignity of man could not be ensured, so the argument went, if individuals were hungry, unclothed, sick, uneducated, homeless etc. The idea of human dignity, which inspired the Universal Declaration, could only be ensured if economic and social aspects of wellbeing were at the same time addressed. Man would not be a creature created in the image of God if he was starving or sick. Today, Western states have been convinced of the need and importance of economic, social and cultural rights, and millenniums development goals are formulated and steps initiated for executing them, drawing on those economic, social and cultural rights.

LGTBs and Related Issues

Coming to the more recent minority rights namely the lesbian, gay, transgender and bisexual rights (LGBTSs), we encounter the same traditional philosophical disagreements rearing their head again. Whereas in principle third world states support the protection of minorities, their conceptualization of minorities does not extend to each groups like LGTBS; rather, it is confined to ethnic minority tribes, hunters and gatherers in forest or mountain areas, those who are excluded from main stream political and economic processes. Ethical sensibilities have clashed with human rights sensibilities not on questions of principle, but concerning what those principles imply.

For Sub-Saharan African states, LGTBS are not minorities who need or even deserve to be protected; rather, they are peddlers of contested values, who should be criminalized. Uganda's attempted legislation, with which we opened our paper, should be appreciated in this context.

But Sub-Saharan African states have other reasons to contest LGTBs as minorities, not least because their contemporary practices have many new variables, making traditional philosophical discourse on the subject obsolete. Initial philosophical discourses focused on practices of prostitutes and homosexuals, but they are between consenting adults who operate in the secure confines of their privacy. Today there is the emergence of information and communication technologies, enabling the wide dissemination of messages to unlimited numbers of recipients in unlimited ways. And this last point brings us to the inadequacy of Mill's harm principle in relation to such practices like homosexuality. Mill, it will be recalled, stated that

> The only purpose for which power can rightfully be exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good either physical or moral, is not sufficient warrant. He cannot rightfully be compelled to do or forbear because it will be better for him to do so, because it will make him happier, because in the opinion of others to do so would be wise or even right…The only part of the conduct of any one, for which he is amenable to society, is that which concerns others. In the part which merely concerns himself, his independence is of right, absolute (Mill, 1940, p.73).

Mill's argument has been that consenting adults, engaging in prostitution or homosexual unions, in the secure confines of their homes, should not be the concern of the public or law maker. Even where society felt those practices were reprehensible, that would not be sufficient ground to justify interference into the privacy of others.

The days that homosexuality was seen as a private affair, which did not affect others, are past. As a result of globalization and the emergence of ICTs, homosexuals, prostitutes and many others who are engaged in different forms of alternative lifestyles are now able to share their experiences with larger and varied populations, and in ever distant areas of the world, even as they remain locked up in their

bedrooms. Their cause is no longer local or regional, it has become universal. Away from the bedroom that Mill may have thought about in his harm principle, the activities of such groups have now become a public and universal phenomenon often with serious political and diplomatic significance. The biggest challenge, at least in the third world, is that these activities are targeting youth, affecting and shaping their lifestyles. The right of freedom of thought for some is affecting in some very serious way the right to education of the young who have often been lured by these lifestyles. For all practical purposes and from a human rights perspective, states do not conceive minorities in that way. Because, as I pointed out above, minorities will be those out of the mainstream, not those reaching out to the youth in schools teaching them about their practices. "Minoritiness" is not something we impart to others by teaching them about it!

The Problem: What space is left for ethical discourse when what were traditionally ethical issues and therefore mediated through ethical dialogue or as in traditional society mediated by consensus formation and institutions of taboo, are all now subsumed under human rights? Human rights, we do well to recall, are universal and a historical. Morals are not. Every society can and often does develop its own moral beliefs. Devlin (1965 p.9) has perceptively noted that, "what makes a society of any sort is a community of ideas, not only political ideas but also ideas about the way its members should behave and govern their lives; these latter are its morals…" Devlin uses the institution of marriage as it is in England to make his point. He notes that:

> Whether a man should be allowed to take more than one wife is something about which every society has to make up its mind one way or the other. In England we believe in the Christian idea of marriage and therefore adopt monogamy as a moral principle. Consequently the Christian institution of marriage has become the basis of family life and so part of the structure of our society (Devlin, ibid, p.9).

Devlin shows here how the Christian values of monogamy have informed the structure of marriage in England. It is conceivable that in another society, where e.g. due to demographic characteristics, more girls than boys are born, but where in addition, religious values

strictly forbid extramarital affairs, polygamy will be the recommended family structure. In both cases, societies have to think about how best to organize themselves (in moral terms), drawing on their traditional values, cultures, demographics or other factors. The baseline is that in both cases, there must be dialogue (which could be ongoing), but which must, whatever the case, be allowed to thrive. Whatever positions society take, they should be the result of what they have agreed on in a free discourse.

The challenge I am highlighting in this paper is that the terrain where each society can "make up its mind one way or the other" on moral and ultimately value issues is increasingly contracting. Social practices which were once viewed as immoral and reprehensible are now viewed simply as alternative life styles; what were once taboo practices, not to be talked about openly, let alone be practiced, have increasingly gained legitimacy and protected as human rights. A prostitute is no longer viewed as a social deviant in need of rehabilitation and correction, she is a service provider who can only be faulted for failure to file his/her income tax returns to the tax office. Homosexuals whose activities were viewed as aberrations of nature to be quietly ignored, are now viewed as acceptable and are on streets holding public demonstrations and rallies, calling for not only recognition of their life styles, but respect and protection by law.

Whereas traditionally homosexuality and prostitution were ethical issues and part of ethical discourses, within and among ethical or moral community, today, they have become diplomatic and human rights issues to be mediated by law, and protected as human rights. They are now a key element in diplomatic relations and states which do not respect such rights often risk losing Development Aid.

In these circumstances, individual citizens who think differently about these practices can no longer express their disgust, disapproval or reprobation. Yet, disgust and reprobation cannot be dismissed or wished away if society, and any society whatever, is going to claim to have any moral anchorage informing its daily interactions. Points of disgust and reprobation indicate the watershed, beyond which boundaries of good moral taste are being overstepped. Failure to express disgust and reprobation at behavior deemed fundamentally inappropriate is almost tantamount to the "moral death" of the community. Disgust and reprobation indicate the end point beyond which no society can still lay claim to be a moral community.

The Catch 22 Situation

I have already pointed out in my opening remarks that as space for ethical discourse contracts, space for human rights abuse and violations expands. How so? First human rights demand from states and individual agents that they observe, recognize, protect, and promote them. The obvious challenge in the circumstances is how states and individual agents will recognize, respect, protect and even promote what they morally disapprove of or contest?

A careful study of human rights abuses and violations will reveal that these normally occur where the rights in question have never been fully accepted at the fundamental level. In societies which are very hierarchical, and have strong filial obligations, the idea of equality before the law may not command the same level of respect as in societies, where people strongly believe in equality of all before the law. In such a society, civil and political rights may not receive the same degree of respect like say economic and social rights. We can understand the western castigation of China on human rights abuses and violations against that background.

Similarly in Sub-Saharan Africa where deference to authority is taken as a virtue, masses may not rise up against what the rest of the world will see as dictators. The rationale will be the same.

The point we are making here is that for any right to be promoted and protected, different communities, where the particular right in question is needed, must agree upon the fundamental values that inform the particular rights. If LGTBs are to be protected and promoted in Africa there is need for Africans to be fully convinced about the values informing the LGTB rights. We are witnessing serious problems with these rights in the regions, in which some states are outlawing them, because those communities are not convinced of the values underlying these rights. Imposing these rights therefore rather than ensuring their eventual recognition, protection, and promotion, will only lead to more violations and abuses.

Another element of the catch 22 situation touches on issues of duties and obligations.

Whereas the focus of ethical discourse has always been the setting of norms and promotion of the common good and how individual wellbeing fits in with the social wellbeing; whereas both ethics and rights emphasize individual duties to the common good, more often

when we stride to human rights, the focus has tended to be more on individual rights and entitlements and less on their duties. The unfortunate development in the way human rights have been received, at least in this part of the world, has been that individuals have over-emphasized their entitlements and rights and totally ignored their duties to their societies.

Even the language has changed. So although the initial ethical question was: what ought I to do, this is now replaced with what am I going to get? What are my duties is replaced with what are my entitlements? Whereas in the traditional ethical order individuals looked forward to how they could contribute to the common good, with the focus on individual's rights there is of course the attempt to respect others' rights (whatever those rights are), but more importantly, there is the ego-centric, inward focus on what one's rights, benefits and entitlements are. The loss in these developments is that we can no longer ask "as the ancients did about the moral conditions of the good and exemplary life," (Habermas 1973, p.50). In situations where we are forever locked up in the search for our entitlements and rights, a question stares in our faces namely, what kind of society are we ultimately creating?

Specifically looking at LGTBs, whereas there is now a call to all to respect and promote their rights; what on the other hand are the duties of the gay, lesbians etc. to the larger societies to which they belong? Of course the LGTBs may ask: what are the duties of minority, mountain, and forest people to the communities to which they belong? The answer may not be immediate, but we shall see that forest and mountain minority communities are so called minorities precisely because they are out of the mainstream social circles. If therefore there are any social programs in which they are involved, the focus will be how to get them to be more actively engaged. These categories will meet their duties to the larger communities the moment they are integrated into the mainstream.

The point of integration raises another point about LGTBs, namely that whereas the focus, on the basis of what are minorities understood as such in Sub-Saharan Africa, is to see where they can meet the rest of their community members, LGTBs are out more to emphasize their difference and not their similarities or their meeting point with others. The ethical question in these circumstance is what ethical threat do they bring to the social fabric when the emphasis is on difference?

Philosophers have thought about the need for social cohesion if societies are to stick together. Patrick Devlin has been very insightful in this regard. If men and women try to create a society in which there is no fundamental agreement about good and evil they will fail. If, having based it on common agreement, the agreement fades away, the society will disintegrate. For society is not something that is kept together physically; it is held by the invisible bonds of common thought. If the bonds were too relaxed, the members would drift apart. A common morality is part of the bondage. The bondage is part of the price of society; and mankind, which needs society, must pay its price (Devlin, ibid, p. 10).

The argument of this paper is that we weaken bonds that keep society together when we increasingly encroach on territory that is traditionally the preserve of a discussion of ethical norms. Human rights which all of us praise as a unique feature of contemporary life are ultimately aimed at protecting human values. There is need to continuously discuss these values that inform the different rights. We inadvertently close off that discussion when what was still a contentious ethical issues is made a matter of human rights and to be protected as such. Habermas adds his voice to this concern when he notes that

> By opening up the legal space for pursuing personal preferences, individual rights release the entitled person from moral precepts and other prescriptions in a carefully circumscribed manner. In any case, within the boundaries of what is legally permitted, no one is legally obligated to publicly justify her action (Habermas, 1998, p.87).

The question here is what is left of social bonds when "no one is legally obligated to publicly justify their actions? If individuals can no longer be obligated publically, will they be obligated privately, and if not legally, will they be morally?

Human Rights and Values

Kelly Wright has noted concerning moral transitions that, "…every age has to some extent been one of transition. No generation has ever seen moral issues precisely as their fathers did" (Wright, 1929, p.3). It

is possible to look at the current focus on LGTBs as a human rights issue merely as a case of changing emphasis, and as part of the normal transition brought about by generational changes? The point labored so far is that what were once ethical issues are no longer so. Traditional ethical debate hovered over the appropriateness of action in relation to the larger social interest. Passionate and animated debates on issues like abortion, euthanasia, and nowadays the contested LGTBs in Sub-Saharan Africa, put the interests of the individuals side by side the interest of community. If society allowed open expression of LGTBs, what would the larger consequences for society be? If some people were committed to some forms of lifestyles, should they also actively recruit the young and impressionable? If these spirited practices were so rational after all, why did they need advocacy to make them acceptable?

The value of that debate, if it can still go on, is increased awareness and information. That kind of debate is diminishing in respect to many ethical issues. If what once were ethical issues now become matters of human rights, the first casualty is debate, discussion and dialogue. Human rights are not debated; they are recognized, respected and protected, fulfilled. Before we declare some practice a human right, our position is that the issue must be discussed in a critical way, on what values we are trying to promote. The very first preamble statement of the universal declaration of Human Rights talks about recognition of the inherent dignity (of every man), equal and inalienable rights (of every man), freedom, justice and peace (for all) in the world. Each of these concepts is a value and the universal declaration is an attempt to protect them. So, as we protect LGTBs and related rights, exactly what values are we protecting? How are those values going to be dealt with in respect of other cherished but contradictory values?

There is a risk of construing this discussion as opposed to human rights. It is not. Positive human rights have enhanced ethical principles. The very first article of the universal declaration, "All human beings are born free and equal in rights and dignity" has for example paved the way for a whole series of rights that emphasized equality, justice and human dignity. Except for slave owners, anti-abolitionists and apartheid perpetrators in South Africa. The fact that people are born free and equal in rights and dignity has never been a rationally contested issue in an open and rational discourse.

Accordingly therefore, translating the moral precepts in Article One of the Universal Declaration to human rights has never been problematic. Much the same is true with economic, social and cultural rights. These rights might have met some resistance in Western societies due to "cultural traditions based on a strong faith in full economic liberalization and a severely constrained role of the state in matters of welfare" (Asbjorn Eide, 2001, p. 11).

Whatever fears there were regarding these rights, there has never been serious contestation of the appropriateness of ensuring economic, social and cultural rights of large numbers of people in the erstwhile developing regions. Even here, what started off as ethics (matters of economic justice, equity, (equitable sharing of resources), benevolence, etc. was translated into human rights without spirited contest. The right to education, health, housing etc. are all examples of what are essentially ethical concerns that have been translated into human rights. There is almost universal consensus about the appropriateness of these rights. Also, the so-called third generation rights, like the right to a clean environment and self-determination, have likewise not been contentious. Again what started as ethical principles have been translated into human rights principles without a fight.

Fear, Ethics, and Rights: The Case of the Headscarf

Failure to reach consensus does not only undermine the observance of human rights. Such a failure can similarly limit the evolution of rights or the expansion of the number of people protected by some rights, as well as marginalize and discriminate some. In such situations, people will suffer from abuses but without recourse to some lawful means of address.

What I specifically have in mind here are proponents of religious symbols and dress like the headscarf or veil. Proponents of the veil, like those who reject LGTBs, have their cultural and moral reasons for their beliefs. In his discussion of the politics of the veil, Lilla Abu Lughod cautions many from the West who construe the veil as an imposition on women. He notes, "not only are there many forms of covering, which themselves have different meanings in the communities in which they are used, but also veiling itself must not be confused with or made to stand for lack of agency" (Lughod, 2002,

p. 786). Quoting the *Anthropological Studies* of the Bedouin community in Egypt he notes, "Pulling the black head cloth over the face in front of older respected men is considered a voluntary act by women who are deeply committed to being moral and have a sense of honor tied to family. One of the many ways they show their standing is by covering their faces in certain contexts. They decide for whom they feel it is appropriated to veil" (Lughod, ibid).

A critical theorist or Marxist can very well explain this away and argue that though they seem to do what they do freely, they have, because of decades of manipulation, reached a point, where, to borrow from Habermas, "directives lose their form of commands and are translated by means of sociotechnical manipulation in such a manner that those forced to obey, now well integrated, are allowed to do, in the consciousness of their freedom, what do they must." (Habermas, ibid, p.196) That observation may very well be true, but this criticism will apply will nilly to any other kind of social practice anywhere and cannot be confined to adherents of the headscarf or veil.

On the contrary, scholars of the veil have seen it as symbolizing women's modesty and respectability (Lughod ibid); an artifact marking off symbolic separation of men's and women's spheres (Lughod, ibid), a sign of propriety that required among other things the covering of one's hair. In yet some other communities, the burqa was a sign of respectability and indication of social status. Women who put it on were "strong women from respectable families who were not forced to make a living by selling on the streets" (Lughod, ibid).

It is conceivable that veiling may take on many different forms and will signify different values/virtues in different settings. The baseline is that those who advocate for that manner of public dress have their reason (which may not necessarily be shared by others), but which need to be recognized and respected. The minorities who therefore dress in headscarves and veils in Europe, away from the "traditional homelands" of the veils/headscarves should be protected like all other minorities. Why are they not? Our implicit assumption is that we have not generated adequate discourses to generate consensus.

The upshot of this discourse is that although both issues touch on minority sensibilities, in one case a minority is strongly supported by western powers and everything is being done to protect that minority;

in another case, another minority is criminalized by those same powers that feel very strongly about protecting the first minority. What kind of minorities should be protected, and who will decide? Do all people of the world have a contribution to make to an appreciation of human rights? If so, what is or should be the nature of that contribution? If in the course of the evolution of society we found a minority, like the adherents to the headscarf who moreover have good moral reasons and cultural values attached to their practice threatened. Is it not or would it not be the time to have a right specifically developed to protect such a people instead of criminalizing them? These should be the kinds of questions informing the discourse with an aim of reaching consensus.

Conclusion

As we conclude, we do well to note the part of fear and anxiety that are involved in our appreciation of human rights and ethical discourse, and how they can cloud both. In the Ugandan bill referred to earlier, what has not been sufficiently focused on in that bill is the element alluded to in the principle of the bill, the element of fear of "emerging internal and external threats to the traditional heterosexual family." Fear of threats to culture and ways of life is a key element defining social relations in contemporary global culture. It is this fear of new cultural practices and ways of life that is forcing some states to criminalize homosexuality, just as the same fear is forcing others to criminalize the veil or headscarf. In our appreciation of the anti-scarf and anti-homosexuality bills, we would benefit more if we searched for the underlying anxieties and fears the bills sought to allay.

The element of fear can explain what would otherwise appear contradictory. States championing the observance of the rights of homosexual minorities and willing to use every means available to achieve that objective, are ironically trying to criminalize the wearing of the veil or headscarf. Often the official explanation given is "the protection of the secular nature of the state" or the secular values. But that explanation ignores that secularism does not mean homogeneity, and among those who constitute the "secular state" there are some who put on veils! So, the real reason for banning the veil can only be fear of what happens to "our lifestyle and culture" when we are massively invaded by the "other."

Fear is a normal human reaction in situations of uncertainty; it is understandable and should not be ignored; however we need to approach it in a more sober way especially as it becomes a major element in contemporary global society.

Often fear is hidden behind statics that are quoted to show percentages of the population who are for or against the veils and headscarves, ignoring the fact that minority rights are precisely to guard the minorities against the tyranny of the majorities! So clearly the question of numbers and percentages does not matter here. In any case, if these were important, why not look for them in respect to homosexual practices as well?

As globalization accelerates, minorities who will live among majorities are likely to increase. Initially there will be cultural shocks and fears and these may cloud our sense of fairness and equity. The virtue of tolerance is going to be in greater demand in the circumstances than ever before.

Finally both philosophical (and ethical ideas) plus human rights evolve as a result of encountered problems. We are identifying a new problem, fear and anxiety raised by the emergence of global culture. Philosophers and ethicists have a task at hand to develop theories and new types of rights receptivity, to deal with the new kinds of fears and anxieties. The need for more ethical discourse is now more urgent than ever before, having realized that if we get rights, but without buttressing them in consensus reached after exhaustive discussions, those rights will not be protected or even promoted. But failure to develop consensus will further mean that certain categories of people will be denied rights, simply because their views were not adequately put on the table for discussion.

Bibliography

Awake Magazine, November 22, 1998.

Devlin, Patrick. 1965. *The Enforcement of Morals.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Habermas, Jürgen. 1973. *Theory and Practice*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Kelly Wright, William. 1929. *General Introduction to Ethics*. New York: The Macmillan Company.

Lughod, Lila Abu. 2002. "Do Muslim women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and its others." *American Anthropologist* Vol. 104. No. 3, 783-790.

Mill, John Stuart. 1940. *Utilitarianism, Liberty and Representative Government.* London: J.M. Dent and Sons, Ltd.

Parliament of Uganda. 2009. *The Anti-homosexuality Bill 2009*.

http://www.wikipeida.org/wika/Uganda-Anti-Homosexuality _Bill.

5.

Human Desire and International Global Capitalism: Challenges and Opportunities

EDWARD ALAM

Drawing upon both ancient and modern philosophical insights into human nature and human desire, this paper argues for the need to curb the wild tide of international global capitalism and its corresponding industries (weapons industry, pornography industry, auto industry, education industry, medical industry) precisely by *structurally* channeling human desire via early childhood education in the family towards what Aristotle called the transcendentals of being, and what Zhang Zai[1] referred to as "the good life." In this regard, deep philosophical reflection on the categories of *imitation* and *desire* and their respective relations, both of which presuppose and are presupposed by, the mystery of human freedom, can help to re-build the structures which will allow this channeling to take place.

I apologize from the outset for not being able to probe the categories of *imitation* and *desire* in the light of Chinese philosophy; I am still a mere student when it comes to Chinese thought. My one reference to Zhang Zai draws a parallel between his conviction that one of the goals of "thinking" is to lay the foundation for building up "the good life," and that of Aristotle's, who has a similar conviction. For both thinkers, this "good life" cannot be limited to simply *my own* good life, but must necessarily be translated into the good life of the community, given the radically social nature of what it means to be human. This is not an insignificant point especially given the ultimate goal of this paper, which is to curb and critique what I have called the wild tide of international global capitalism, since individualistic[2]

---

[1] An 11th century neo-Confucian Chinese philosopher interested in the relation between thinking, cosmology, and living a good life.

[2] In showing disdain for "individualism" I am not thereby applauding all forms of communitarianism, communism, or socialism. "Individualism" as a phenomenon of modern "western" civilization does point in my view to something genuinely good and can, at one level, be spoken about as an authentic development of the spiritual nature of the human being. For more on this, see

consumerism is one of the anthropological pillars upon which this international movement is based. But to really get to the heart of this quintessentially modern philosophical anthropology, the one foundational concept that cries out for critical examination most is the notion of *freedom*. There is, of course, already a plethora of deep philosophical analyses of this concept in the history of both eastern and western philosophy, but my particular angle shall be to approach the notion of freedom as a great mystery, which only partially comes to light when we critically reflect upon the relation between two other great mysteries: human desire and human imitation. I draw here upon the work of René Girard, a contemporary cultural anthropologist, philosopher, literary critic, and exegete who has been thinking and writing about these themes for over five decades now. Girard has focused attention on the categories of imitation and desire in the context of his general philosophical anthropology while theorizing about the role of violence in the mystery of human origins. Though many before him have thought and wrote seriously about these themes, they take on new significance in the hands of Girard, as he suggests that something profoundly intense and extremely significant happened millions of years ago to the pre-human creature on the threshold of becoming human.

This pre-human creature, according to Girard, *lost* something precisely in order to *gain* access to something else. What was lost was *part* of its animal instinct; what it gained was an access to *desire*.[3] Once this potential was activated, and only then, did this pre-human creature become human. In addition to losing some of its instincts, the retained instincts are also somewhat diminished to make *space* as it were for this radically new and inexplicable and properly human and even spiritual power called *desire*. But what makes this new power so unique and curious is precisely that it has no essential or ultimate goal; human desire, unlike mere instinct, is without an obvious and fixed object. Girard draws this insight out of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* and then justifies the move by developing another insight from Aristotle's *Poetics* concerning the centrality of *imitation* for the human animal. Girard is on solid ground here because it may very well be, in fact,

---

Vladimir Solovyov's remarkable book, *The Meaning of Love* (Great Barrington: Lindisfarne Books, 1985).

[3] See René Girard's *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning,* tr. James G. Williams (New York: Orbis Books, 2001), p. 15.

that Aristotle's most important insight regarding how man differs from the other animals comes not in his biological works,[4] nor even in his *De Anima*, but in his *Poetics* for there we read:

> It is clear that the general origin of poetry was due to two causes, each of them part of human nature. Imitation is natural to man from childhood, one of his advantages over the lower animals being this, that he is the most *imitative* creature in the world, and learns at first by imitation. And it is also natural for all to delight in works of imitation.[5]

Girard then claims that since human desire has no object per se, human beings must *borrow* their desires from others; these others are called role models. The term he coins here is "mimesis" or "mimetic desire" – a *desire* that emerges through the *imitation* of the desires of others.[6] As a cultural anthropologist, Girard is most interested in how what he calls the "mimetic nature of human desire" is the cause of violence, and how violence operates in the very genesis of human culture. I shall not explore this latter in any detail, but as it does provide what I take to be a very important insight into the nature of human freedom in the context of the relation between imitation and desire, I would like at least to point out the following: Girard claims that when the desire to be like our role model becomes so intense that we desire to not only have what the model has, but even to be what the model is, then we become rivals of our role models. Now the energy of this rivalry phenomenon on the individual level is compounded on the societal level and can lead any given society, if not constrained, to all out competition and eventually violent chaos. The constraint usually comes by way of religious taboos and cultural activities that regulate the competitive energy through ritual and controlled sport and games. This had led many to conclude that Girard considers mimetic desire to be an intrinsically negative or even

---

[4] Depending on how you classify them, and there is still some disagreement, Aristotle's biological works constitute about a third of all the writings that have come down to us.

[5] Aristotle, *Poetics* 1448b:4-9 (my emphasis in italics)

[6] For a precise summary of Girard's thought see the Foreword by James G. Williams *in I See Satan Fall Like Lightning.*

evil power that inevitably leads to violence, but a careful reading of his work shows this not to be the case. He clearly states, in fact, that:

> Even if the Mimetic Nature of human desire is responsible for most of the violent acts that distress us, we should not conclude that mimetic desire is bad in itself. If our desires were not mimetic, they would be forever fixed on predetermined objects; they would be a particular form of instinct. Human beings could no more change their desire than cows their appetite for grass. Without mimetic desire there would be neither freedom nor humanity. Mimetic desire is intrinsically good.[7]

There is not sufficient time to show how Girard's account of freedom in the twentieth century fits into the enormously vast and complicated story of how the concept of freedom developed in the nineteenth century, but there does seem to be a line of development from, or at least commensurability with, two great philosophers of freedom in that era, namely, Friedrich Schelling and Karl Marx; I shall address a few aspects of both Schelling's and Marx's philosophy momentarily. All three provide insights into the modern notion of freedom that go a long way in constructively criticizing those tendencies to absolutize freedom by tearing it away from rich philosophical anthropologies grounded in, and guided by, the Aristotelian transcendentals of being. Without such qualifications, the modern meaning of freedom is reduced to mere individualistic liberties and *rights* and thus becomes the life/death force in that wild tide of international global capitalism which threatens to seriously disrupt not only the ecosystem and the economy, but threatens to destroy the human being itself.

In his book, *Philosophical Investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom*, Schelling introduces two different ways of being: (*ground* – the principle of contraction) and (*ex-istence* – the principle of expansion); these principles can be found everywhere in Nature and capture the ways in which things "are" in the world. The balance in Nature emerges when these two "opposing"[8] principles maintain

---

[7] Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*, 15.

[8] Not so much in terms of contradictory opposition but in terms of contrary opposition, though even this distinction does not fully capture the nature of the relation between the two principles here.

their proper relation. That is, when *ground* (or contraction) remains the "condition for" *existence* (or expansion) then the whole remains balanced and harmonious, but when *ground* becomes that *for which* the whole is conditioned, disorder (or evil) emerges. In some ways perhaps this echoes Zhang Zai's point about the work of the philosopher in harmonizing the spirit of heaven with that of earth. At any rate, this order in Nature for Schelling is rooted in what we may call a divine and eternal struggle/tension between ground and existence, contraction and expansion, inwardness and out-wardness, hiding and revelation. Human beings, too, as part of Nature, tend to exist or to move towards non-existence within this struggle. At the divine level, the struggle always remains in the proper balanced tension, but at the human level, the outcome of the struggle is far from secure: evil or disorder often emerge because the contracting principle seeks to dominate the principle of expansion. In spite of Schopenhauer's scathing critique of Schelling, claiming, as he does, that Schelling is simply aping Kant while pretending to be original, I suggest that, on the contrary, Schelling goes much deeper than, and even reveals the inherent weaknesses in, Kant, by identifying evil with a distortion of the *relation* between *ground* and *existence* whereby *ground* (or inwardness) becomes the perversely self-conscious, *rational* will of the *individual* no longer in real relation to anything but itself. In this, it is possible to read Schelling as criticizing a particular form of Kantian rationalism. In any case, if Schopenhauer's criticisms of Schelling are not accurate, there is still room for criticism of Schelling in that he never really tells us why the proper relation is maintained at the divine level and not at the level of nature and for human beings. In this, although his account of freedom is weightier than virtually any other philosophical account in the nineteenth century, it is by no means the final word.[9]

---

[9] Schelling's work has always reminded me of certain trends in the mystical traditions of the Abrahamic religions. In particular, the Lurianic School of Kabbala with its emphasis on the teaching of *tsimtsum* (divine withdrawal) wherein God (in order to create out of nothing) becomes absent to himself in a kind of contraction so that "the void" or "nothingness" can come into existence, sounds a lot like Schelling's *ground/existence* distinction since this void (in the Lurianic School) then becomes the "place" where freedom originates. In Christian mysticism, too, one finds echoes of this in both the ancient and modern periods. One contemporary Christian mystic, Fernando Rielo, writes in terms strikingly close to what we find in the Lurianic School and is certainly commensurate with

When we turn to Marx, we also find a philosophical account of freedom that goes way beyond freedom as mere *democratic* freedom. Marx steadily criticized such superficial accounts of freedom and was exceedingly uncomfortable with the overly polite and domesticated notions of freedom that seemed much too controlled in Anglo-Saxon constitutional democracy; he yearned for an indivisible, complete, and extreme freedom that would result in an unprecedented and radical independence for each and every individual. For Marx, genuine freedom had to be indivisible and thus it could not really exist unless it existed for all. In a particularly compelling expression of this, he writes,

> [f]reedom is so much the *essence* of man that even its opponents realize it…No man fights freedom; he fights at most the freedom of others. Every kind of freedom has therefore always existed, only at one time as a special privilege, another time as a universal right.[10]

It was precisely the promise of a radical, all-encompassing realization of individual freedom that made the ideas of Marx so attractive in the nineteenth century, and my hunch is that this promise is still behind much of the attraction, if any, that his thought may still hold today. The real crucial insight and turning point with respect to freedom in Marx's thought was this: he sincerely believed that the fight for freedom was being fought on the wrong front. The battle for the *rights* of individual citizens vis-à-vis the state was simply the wrong war to be waging, he argued. The limited freedom one wins, if one wins at all, is restricted and fleeting. The fight for freedom must be fought on another more crucial and universal front: nothing less than the struggle to change the very *structures* of the world, and one

---

what Schelling proposes. And who could ever forget that incredibly pregnant statement by none other than Nicolas Berdyaev in his famous work, *The Destiny of Man*, when he wrote, "Freedom is not determined by God; it is part of the nothing out of which God created the world." (London: Semantron Press, 1937), p. 33.

[10] Quoted in R. Dunayevskaya's *Marxism and Freedom* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1958), p. 19. I am tempted to claim here that Marx, like Freud, may have been much more influenced by his own religious Jewish tradition than is usually supposed. His praise of freedom at this ontological level echoes (at one significant level) what one finds on freedom in the kabalistic tradition.

of the first structures that had to be overcome was the industrialist/ capitalist structure that alienated human beings from their very own selves by turning them into commodities.

I must say that in a recent rereading of Marx's four *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, I was struck by how convincing and inspiring his arguments still are today. His existentialist humanism[11] rooted in a profound appreciation for, and celebration of, the dignity of man seems to be rooted in a view of the human being very close to that of the Jewish religion of his ancestors, and certainly commensurate with both Aristotle and the philosophical anthropology of someone like Zhang Zai. His critique of democracy, moreover, is more relevant now than it ever was, as many philosophers who are rethinking Marx today claim. And even the highest authorities in long-established religious traditions, such as the German philosopher and theologian, who went on to become Pope Benedict, have contributed to this new appreciation for Marx's thought. In a particularly powerful passage of an historical treatment of the concept of freedom, Ratzinger states:

> The Marxist critique of democracy cannot simply be brushed aside: how *free* are elections? To what extent is the outcome manipulated by advertising, that is, by capital, by a few men who dominate public opinion? Is there not a new oligarchy who determine what is modern and progressive, what an enlightened man has to think? The cruelty of this oligarchy, its power to perform public executions, is notorious enough. Anyone who might get in its way is a foe of *freedom*, because, after all, he is interfering with the free expression of opinion. And how are decisions arrived at in representative bodies? Who could still believe that the welfare of the community as a whole truly guides the decision-making process? Who could doubt the power of special interests, whose dirty hands are exposed with increasing frequency? And in general, is the system of majority and minority really a system of freedom? And are not interest groups of every kind appreciably stronger than the proper organ of political representation, the parliament? In this tangled

---

[11] See Erich Fromm, *Marx's Concept of Man* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co, 1961)

power play, the problem of ungovernability arises ever more menacingly: the will of individuals to prevail over one another blocks the freedom of the whole.[12]

In any event, I am not trying to claim that there is a clear line of development from Schelling to Girard through Marx nor am I trying to turn Girard into a Marxist; I am just highlighting what I take to be commensurate insights into the essence of freedom found in some of the most important western thinkers in the last two centuries. It is the case, however, that Lucien Goldmann, the most influential Marxist critic in France in the decades after World War II, praised Girard's early work in Literary Criticism for doing the very thing that Marx's whole life was devoted to, namely, criticizing materialistic consumerism in order to praise the dignity and unique value of individual life and freedom.

In conclusion, I return to my opening statements wherein I suggested that one fundamental way of stemming the influence of unbridled capitalism and its corresponding industries was to *structurally* channel human desire via early childhood education in the family towards what is good and true and beautiful, giving priority to human relationships based on the virtues. I assumed much here. I assumed that unbridled capitalism was something dangerous for the world and something to be critiqued and curbed. I named its corresponding industries without evidence or qualification. I assumed that there is a right and wrong way of living and of being human. I used the definite article to qualify the term *virtues*, assuming that they are knowable and definable and more or less recognized across cultures in each and every era. I assumed at least this much, too, with respect to the transcendentals of being. Clearly, I cannot demonstrate the truth of all these assumptions here, and acknowledge that some may not even be provable, but I have tried to provide some philosophical evidence for my claim concerning the importance of teaching our children what to desire, by drawing upon the thought of philosophers whom I consider to be genuine lovers of wisdom and seekers of truth.

---

[12] Joseph Ratzinger, "Truth and Freedom," *Communio* 23 (Spring 1996) 24.

Bibliography

Aristotle, *Poetics.*

Berdyaev, Nicolai. 1937. *The Destiny of Man.* London: Semantron Press.

Dunayevskaya, Raja. 1958. *Marxism and Freedom.* New York: Bookman Associates.

Girard, René. 2001. *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning,* tr. James G. Williams. New York: Orbis Books.

Williams, James G. 2001. "Foreword," R. Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning.* Orbis Books, Maryknoll, N.Y.

Solovyov, Vladimir. 1985. *The Meaning of Love.* Great Barrington: Lindisfarne Books.

6.

The Theory of Consumption "Need" of Chinese Traditional Culture and Its Enlightenment

Li Qin

Introduction

With the advent of affluent society characterized by the abundance of products and services, people's consumption psychology generally tends to shift from meeting basic needs to pursuing the desire for endless consumption. The excessive expansion of consumption desire not only diverts people from the ultimate purpose of consumption, namely to satisfy human wants, but also leads them to ecological, environmental, spiritual and value crises. The insight into consumption needs and desire implied in Chinese traditional consumption culture can provide a beneficial, enlightened reference for us.

Confirming People's Normal Consumption Needs

Consumption demand is the most basic need of human survival and reproduction, and plays a very important role in people's social needs. If there were no production of consumer goods, there would be no possibility to meet the individual's consumption demand in the first place, and, hence, human beings would not survive, nor would society develop and make progress.

Consumption demand is the starting point and destination of all social and economic activities. The material need to survive, reproduce the essential material conditions for human life, comes down to the need to constantly meet old material needs, constantly generate new ones, thus causing the material production and creating material civilization through material production. Engels asserted:

according to materialism, the determining factor in history, in the final analysis, is the life production and reproduction.

However, the production itself has two. One is food, clothing and housing…and therefore the necessary tools of production; the other is the production of human beings themselves, the propagation of the species.[1]

Xunzi, the main representative of Chinese traditional Confucianism, affirmed the need of human consumption, and identified it as: hunger and the desire to eat, have cold and desire to get warm, labor and desire to have a rest, liking benefits and disliking evils. Everyone is born with this kind of consumption desire. Due to the pursuit of higher living standards, consumption desire remains the same:

The human natural state, such as eating wants meat food, clothing wants luxury, traveling wants to have carriages and horses, and to accumulate as much wealth as possible to be rich, however years after years, still not content with what one has owned, is the human nature.[2]

Han Feizi, a great thinker of Chinese traditional legalism, is also sure that clothing, food, shelter, and other basic consumption demands are normal human needs, and should be met, because it is human nature. Therefore, Han Feizi pays great attention to human basic consumption,

the human being without feathers, (if no clothing there) must be very cold, neither heaven nor earth, (gives to the stomach as a fundamental), if no eating, one dies.[3]
   (If) People do not eat, ten days later they will be dead; if too cold and no clothing also, one will die die. That is (why) people need 'food and clothing', one cannot do without it, it is fundamental to survival and existence.[4]

---

[1] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Selected works. Volume 1* (Beijing: People's Publishing Press, 1995), p. 2.

[2] Qixiong Song, *A Brief Explanation of Xunzi* (Beijing: Zhonghua Publishing House, 1983), p. 43.

[3] Han Feizi annotation groups, *The Works of Han Feizi* (Nanjing: Jiangsu people's Publishing Press, 1982), p. 142.

[4] Han Feizi annotation groups, *The works of Han Feizi,* p. 221.

Consumption Demand is Gradual & Hierarchical

American psychologist Maslow divided human needs into five levels: physiological needs, safety and security needs, social belonging needs, self-esteem needs as well as self-actualization needs.[5] Maslow believed that, along this hierarchy of needs in development, people's animal instincts will become less and less, will become more and more human. A person will not develop to a higher level of need until a certain level of more basic needs is satisfied fully; only when a certain level of need is met, he can move forward to a higher level of needs. Maslow also thinks that, no matter how high the level of needs develops, if the lower level of needs is not satisfied for a long time, he will return to this level and stay at it until this level of needs is satisfied.

Human needs are hierarchical and gradual, always moving forward. As a human property, the infinity of individual practices determines the unlimited nature of demands. Human practice is constantly developing in depth, meeting the demands of the subject and creating new demands at the same time. As long as the social practices go on, the new kinds of demands will be generated constantly. Moreover, the infinity of human development continues to produce a serious lack of status, which explains why the demand constantly continues to higher levels.

Han Feizi was the first to point out that there is a hierarchy and stage for people's consumption demands.

> If the raw beans are not enough to eat, do not seek delicious meat; if a complete suit of clothes is not available, people will not expect luxury clothes.[6]

That is to say, people's consumption demand is restricted by the current economic situation, financial status or the existing level of consumption. People's consumption demand is layered, step by step, always moving forward. Human desire is endless, but the desire to meet needs and to generate new ones is a step by step process.

---

[5] Abraham H. Maslow. "A theory of human motivation," *Psychological review* 50, 4 (1943), p. 370.

[6] Han Feizi annotation groups, *The works of Han Feizi,* p. 672.

As early as two thousand years ago, Han Feizi proposed the hierarchy of needs, which is a great contribution. People's consumption demand is constantly changing and developing, the original need being satisfied, this will produce a new consumption demand. The constant emergence of new kinds of consumption products is a manifestation of this law.

When a person satisfies certain requirements, he will have to seek for higher levels or demands. Survival needs, enjoyment needs and development needs are three levels of demands from low to high, when food and clothing are not the problem, people will naturally produce enjoyment and development needs. As the old Chinese saying goes: "eating seeks to fill, then (to be) delicious; clothing to be warm, then beautiful; housing seeks safety, and then happiness."

Against Unlimited Consumption Desire

The Chinese great philosopher Laozi, the founder of Taoism, advocates that people should have fewer desires, even restrain the desire for consumption: "less private desire" is the basic requirement of life.

Laozi thinks the reason why people seek to enjoy life and pursue material wealth, is caused by human desire, "nothing can be blamed more than the desire." The reason why people have the desire to possession is affected by the luxury stimulation and unhealthy life style, he asserted:

> … more colors just make people see things in a blur, more noises just make people's hearing less, strong flavors hurt people's taste; gallop-hunting makes people mad, rare products spur one to do illegal activities. Therefore, the saint is committed to the basic living conditions, not to indulge in sensual pleasures.[7]

That is to say, too many desires just make people physically and mentally confused and indulged in the pursuit of material enjoyment, so that "Nothing can be blamed than the desire." In this sense, to

---

[7] Shangkuan Rao, *The works of Laozi* (Beijing: Zhonghua Publishing Press, 2006), p. 29.

restrain the consumption desire should eliminate the objects that awaken the desire.

Another great representative of Taoism, Zhuangzi also takes a negative attitude toward the desire to consume. In the consuming life, Zhuangzi stressed "ignorance" and "no desire."

If everyone is stupid and without wisdom, human instinct and nature will lose; if everyone is ignorant without desires, this is called "raw silk" and "crude wood"; to maintain its natural color like raw silk and wood, human instinct and nature must be fully handed down…If human nature and inheritence does not deviate, why do we need the ritual? Color is not confusion, who can bring up color? The sound is not matching, who can play the wonderful music?[8]

In addition, Zhuangzi also put forward five kinds of loss of nature, specifically:

Now there are five things that produce (in men) the loss of their (proper) nature. The first is (their fondness of) the five colors which disorder the eye, and take from its (proper) clearness of vision; the second is (their fondness for) the five notes (of music), which disorder the ear and take from it the (proper) power of hearing; the third is (their fondness for) the five odors which penetrate the nostrils, and produce a feeling of distress all over the forehead; the fourth is (their fondness for) the five flavors, which deaden the mouth, and pervert its sense of taste; the fifth is their preferences and dislikes, which unsettle the mind, and cause nature to go flying about. These five things are all injurious to life.[9]

From a dialectical point of view, Zhuangzi completely denied basic human need for consumption, denied people's consumption life-world, especially the material life, as an illusory ideal; on the other

---

[8] Tonghai Sun, *The Works of Zhuangzi* (Beijing: Zhonghua Publishing Press, 2007), p. 45.

[9] Zhuangzi. James Legge trans. "Heanven-and-Earth," http://ctext.org/zhuangzi/heaven-and-earth (10 December 2014).

hand, the restraint of consumption desire can prevent it from excessive expansion, and hence has a positive role.

The Neo-Confucianism Master Zhu Xi also proposed the "heat of desire," namely to curb consumption desire. He said:

> To curb desire is just like waterproofin…at the beginning desire is little, gradually blazing, hence the saying: 'curb. "Curb" means to plug up early…'curb' is not really to plug holes, rather, the overwhelming thing is…stop Desire just like a dirty environment, including the chaotic solution of dying, (curbing) should fill a room and as such fill us.[10]

However, there is a hierarchy of consumption needs. Human practice is constantly developing in depth, which satisfies people's needs and generates new needs at the same time. As long as the individual's practices keep on, new needs will emerge endlessly. Moreover, the infinity of human development continues to produce a senior lack of status, which determines people's needs constantly move to higher level development. According to Engels's view, there are survival needs, development needs and enjoyment needs. So does Zhu Xi want to curb all the consumption needs? No, not at all. Zhu Xi said: "the private desire is not necessarily bad." "Just as hunger, thirst, cold, warm is the basic rule of survival; foolish people even know this."[11] It can be inferred that Zhu Xi proposal of "curb the desire" does not curb the natural needs or survival needs, but only the enjoyment needs.

Modern Enlightenment of Traditional Consumption Ethics

Taking into account the original meaning of consumption, the purpose of consumption is to meet human demands. The "need" in essence, is associated with the use of value, what we need is to use the value of products; we are also using the value of consumption when consuming them. "Need" is what all the members of society should have. Marx in "labor employment capital" elaborates the social character of consumption:

---

[10] Jingde Li, *Zhu Zi Yu Lei* (Beijing: Zhonghua Publishing Press, 1986), 1833.
[11] Li, 2013.

> The needs and enjoyment are produced by society, therefore, the needs and enjoyment should be measured on the social scale, rather than on the scale of the goods that satisfy people's needs. Because the needs and enjoyment have a social nature.[12]

However, the "desire" represents a variety of demands arising from social stimulants or personal interests. The primary obligation of society is to meet the basic needs of the human existence, otherwise the individual cannot become the complete citizen of the society. Human needs may not be marginal, but can be roughly divided into two kinds. One is the absolute need people in any case would not want to lack, the other is relative demand, which pursuits the unlimited desire to meet the sense of superiority, so it is endless.

With the rapid development of social economy, people's consumption behaviors nowadays shift from satisfying the basic needs to meeting the endless desire. The expansion of endless consumption desire has dominated modern consumption, so that, to some extent, consumption has deviated from the original order to satisfy people's basic needs, and developed into the endless consumption driven by the desire. The purpose of consumption is not to meet the actual needs, but the constantly stimulated desire. People's consumption of goods and services always is not pointed to the use value of goods, but their symbol value in which objects stand for their owner's taste, preference, social states and identity.

Industrial civilization stimulates and encourages people to consume more as an important driving force and ultimate goal of commodity production. In this social circumstance, life is seen as equal to consumption, which establishes the pursuit of pleasure as the goal of consuming values. Especially in the consumer society, consumption behavior is regarded as the main form of self-expression and social identity, consumption has become the symbolic meaning of what people own, the basic demand of survival, transformed into "desire by the desire." That is to say, to consume the desire itself. As a result, unlimited pursuing of improving material living conditions is seen as the inherent nature of consumer behavior, so much so that consumption has become a kind of pathological

---

[12] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Selected Works of Marx and Engels. Volume 1* (Beijing: People's Publishing Press, 1995), p. 368.

behavior, a   kind   of excessive demand   and   possession   of goods, consumed for its own sake.

People are   addicted   to various satisfactions   by   virtue   of consumption, but   always   turn   out   to   feel spiritual   emptiness and loneliness. Excessive   consumption not   only   causes alienation   of humanity, but   also   makes   that   global environmental   issues have become increasingly   prominent, over time, so that the human being will eventually be punished by nature. This distortion and deformity of the alienated consumption makes mankind lose itself, makes that it becomes   dependent   on the   goods   purchased   in   the   market. Mass consumption did   neither   serve   the expansion of human needs nor enhance the well-being of the whole community, it just downscaled individuals to a member of their given class,[13] so that the relationship between individuals becomes materialistic, and people, once used to this one-sided development, sink into survival trouble.

Therefore, we should completely change the traditional consumption concept rooted in industrial civilization. We ought to establish a new   kind   of sustainable   green consumption   ethic   to   meet   the legitimate needs of people, curbing the false and excessive needs. We should   vigorously promote   moderate and   reasonable   consumption, in   order   to   prevent   a   one-sided material   consumption that damages people's physical and mental health. In this way, we will place human   survival, safety, self-esteem, development, and enjoyment needs as the starting point and destination of human existence. We should continue to meet people's various needs so as to promote the   comprehensive   development   of   humankind.   From   this perspective, the   criterion   to   decide   whether   or   not   the   desire   for consumption is   reasonable   for   people's self-development and   self-realization, is   whether it ultimately improves people's ability and strength.

Bibliography

Buğra, Ayşe, and Gürol, Irzik. 1999. "Human needs, consumption, and social policy." *Economics and Philosophy*. Vol. 15, No. 2, 187-208.

---

[13] Ayşe Buğra and Irzik Gürol, "Human needs, consumption, and social policy." *Economics and Philosophy* 15, 2 (1999), pp. 187-208.

Han Feizi annotation groups. 1982. *The Works of Han Feizi*. Nanjing: Jiangsu people's Publishing Press.

Li Jingde. 1986. *Zhu Zi Yu Lei*. Beijing: Zhonghua Publishing Press.

Marx, Karl and Engels, Friedrich. 1995. *Selected works of Marx and Engels. Volume 1*. Beijing: People's Publishing Press.

Maslow, Abraham H. 1943. "A theory of human motivation." *Psychological Review.* Vol 50, No. 4.

Rao Shangkuan. 2006. *The Works of Laozi*. Beijing: Zhonghua Publishing Press.

Song Qixiong, 1983. *A Brief Explanation of Xunzi*. Beijing: Zhonghua Publishing House.

Sun Tonghai. 2007. *The Works of Zhuangzi*. Beijing: Zhonghua Publishing Press.

7.

Philosophy as Life Inquiry and Existential Attitude

Dan Chitoiu

Understandings of Inquiry

There are several current understandings of the act of *inquiry*; the modern usage of this term refers to "examination," "exploration," "investigation," or "research." The term implies for us the pursuing of something rather systematic, taking the shape of a demonstration or an experiment. When used in philosophy and science, inquiry is defined differently: in science the experimental inquiry is the only one considered valid, but in philosophy, inquiry rather has the signification of a demonstration pursuing a systematic approach. But there is a special situation, that of Eastern philosophies (like Eastern Christian or Islamic). Recent research has clarified the meaning of the term "philosophy" in the Eastern context, arguing that these philosophies succeed in overcoming the interpretative impasse, in which modern exegesis was stuck regarding the cultural paradigm. One reason is that the Eastern philosophies can be described as experiential ones, so when we talk about inquiry in this case, the meaning of the term is rather close to what is now the understanding of the role of inquiry in science.

To provide an argument for this statement, I will mention some of André Scrima`s remarks. The Romanian author gives reasons for considering spiritual experience as a subject of inquiry. First, spiritual experience is the manifestation and sign of a possibility of a fundamental aspect of the human condition. The human being is an experiential being. As Scrima indicates, the term "experience" derives from Greek, from *peira*, that means "tryout," and its root seems to be identical to the term *pyr*, *fire*; and the Latin added the prefix *ex*, "starting from." Experience would be then what comes out of a 'tryout', knowledge by tryout.[1] Scrima states that the spiritual

---

[1] André Scrima, *Experiența spirituală și limbajele ei (The Spiritual Experience and its Languages)* (București: Humanitas, 2008), p. 198.

experience must also represent a studied object because any experience of this kind is creative, founding values, bearing a vision of the world, and therefore a way of founding a cultural tradition (the cultural tradition being understood as live communication and a progressive manifestation of a global truth). Eventually, to approach spiritual experience means to approach a different actuality than the current one ('actuality' derives from act, from transposing into act, from what is being done: spiritual experience comprises a dimension as it actualizes what is our nearest into our furthest, it allows us to understand the actuality of humanity).[2]

Betterment as Mystical Goal

In the Eastern mystical traditions, inquiry described as a form of tryout (experiment/exercise) is associated with the ideal of human *betterment*. This radical sense of experience must have a goal. This goal is not described as a kind of definite and ultimate perfection, but as a continuous process. Human betterment is not something to be stopped at some point, once a target is attained (the state of perfection), it is endless and has particular characteristics to every person pursuing this spiritual path. For a proper understanding of this ideal it is necessary to follow some of the statements made in the Early Christian tradition, known under the name of Patristics, about the ontological dimension of human inquiry as a path to betterment. The authentic message of this perspective on human inquiry and betterment received a proper interpretation in a movement of revaluing the Christian Fathers' writings, a movement named neo-patristics. This interpretative approach aimed the restoration of some profound meanings stated in the patristic period, regarding the true spirit of Christianity. Authors like Dumitru Stăniloae, George Florovsky or Justin Popovič described the authentic dimension of the Eastern Christian Spirituality, which cannot be put into the descriptive frames resulting from the modern cultural imaginary (produced mainly by the Enlightenment). But, at the same time, this renewal of the patristic message took place in the need for an opening to the values and the paradigms of Late Modernity. The above authors drew attention to that kind of understanding which stands under the

---

[2] Scrima, *Experiența spirituală și limbajele ei,* p. 199.

sign of *intuition*. According to the texts of the Eastern Christian Tradition, among which the texts by Maxim the Confessor hold a special place, this is so because, when the eternal rationalities of things comprised in the divine *Logos* are invoked, they are understood as ever higher meanings, hidden within things. I will discuss here the perspective offered by Dumitru Stăniloae, because I consider it especially relevant for this discussion. The rationality of the world has multiple virtualities, and is especially *malleable*, *contingent*. "The malleable rationality of the world, full of multiple virtualities, corresponds to the indefinite virtualities of reason, to human imagination and creative and progressive power."[3] Here also lies the essential difference with previous understandings (made in the philosophy of Classical and Late Greek antiquity) of the world's rationality, especially because now it is *man* who uses and reveals the world's rationality. Man uses this rationality of the world in order to make progress in his communion with God and his fellows, as well as to accede to higher meanings and purposes of nature.[4] Moreover, only in the human being the indefinite virtualities of nature gain meaning; though the human, the world's rationality is completely fulfilled. We should also make a special note with reference to human nature as a space that is always open to the exercise of human freedom.

Stăniloae talks about a *human growth through things*, for it is through things that God's loving intentions are progressively revealed. In this context, one can talk about the progress of both human spirit and the world via relationships among things.[5] These statements by Dumitru Stăniloae are the best expression that Modernity has produced in its understanding of what the Patristic tradition proposed on the topic of the world's rationality. Stăniloae`s texts must not be seen as theology only, just like patristic writings must not be made to fit the narrow canons that rationalism imposed on the modern acceptance of theology. Stăniloae explicitly argued for the need to recover an *integral spirituality*, a discourse that would go beyond fragmentation and be able to meet the recent challenges that research has posed. In any case, as far as the relationship between theology, philosophy and science is concerned, in its current terms, this perspective on the world's

---

[3] Dumitru Stăniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă (Orthodox Dogmatic Theology)* (București: E.I.M.B.O.R., 1996), p. 247.

[4] Stăniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă*, p. 238.

[5] Stăniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă*, p. 249.

rationality has an exceptional importance. This model of rationality implies a *plasticity* of existence that must always be considered, yet without omitting the factuality of the *person*. What humans do entails consequences such as their ability to master and manipulate reality in ever better ways, following progress in knowledge; yet the true consequences refer to bringing into existence certain potentialities of the world that otherwise could have never become *manifest*. This interaction with reality, with its degrees, leads to another type of experience, which can be called interpersonal, or, put it differently, the experience of *communion.*

The possibility of this kind of inquiry is given by the understanding of the nature of reality in the Eastern Christian Tradition. The Creation, the World, is described as having *logoi*, what we describe as *rationalities* rather than as a unique rationality. These rationalities of the world are seen as having multiple virtualities. But their malleability and contingency are brought to the light and put into action by man, the one who uses these dimensions. Only in man the rationality of indefinite virtualities has a meaning.[6] Insofar as the discussion about the rationality of the world also implies the matter of meaning, the answer offered from this perspective might be surprising for the present-day man, who is dominated by the objectivistic vision of nature. This answer clearly states that the establishment of a meaning, or even more radically, the possibility of a meaning of the world depends on man. This perspective ultimately leads to the outlining of a certain meaning of the world's rationality, which gradually reveals itself among us, within us, but it also impresses itself upon the world. This meaning makes us understand that this rationality comes from the supreme Person and is addressed to another person, the human person. As Dumitru Stăniloae said, the rationality is the intelligible way of a person to communicate itself to another person, in order to realize and to develop their communion[7]. The particular aspect that characterizes the understanding of rationality within the Eastern Christian philosophy is that this rationality is not a given thing, a fixed and irremovable frame to decide the running of the world.

---

[6] Stăniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă,* p. 238.

[7] Stăniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă,* p. 245.

Radical Human Experience

This kind of inquiry as an existential human act implies also the paradoxical experience of *rapture*, as the peak and the goal of any experience. In the Seventh Century A.D., Isaac of Nineveh offers the paradigmatic description of rapture, and this view always played the role of a guide in establishing the real goal of philosophical exercise. Philosophy represents much more than a theoretical explanation of the world, and is not an act pertaining solely to the mind. This is the major lesson given by the Greek-Byzantine and Syriac traditions. Not only can we talk about an Eastern Christian philosophy, but this vision about the effective tasks of philosophy can provide answers for the big questions of today. Isaac`s writings are of an exceptional importance, not only because they offer a description of the stages of spiritual life, but also for a number of other reasons, an important one being the specific and distinct vision about man and, in general, about reality. Isaac provides a radical anthropology and a description of reality that assume the presence of different and dynamic levels of being. The decisive aspect that makes the difference in Isaac`s description of mystical life is what he calls *rapture*. It is hard to understand his affirmations about the state of rapture if we are not aware about his use of words like mind, intelligence, soul. He often uses expressions like "the movements of mind" or "the movements of intelligence": these expressions cannot be understood as psychological ones. They are not descriptions of psychological processes, but a dynamic access to different levels of reality, and more than that, to different levels of being (however a level called psychic is described).[8] The state of rapture cannot be understood as a psychologically induced experience, or a kind of autosuggestion, but as an effective moment of radical discontinuity with time and space (the discoveries made quantum physics gave a scientific support for this possibility). So all Isaac`s affirmations about what precedes and what characterizes the state of rapture are made from an ontological perspective. In this way, we can explain the careful distinctions between different states of the mind or more precisely, between movements of the mind.

---

[8] For example, Isaac says: "Prayer stays not only in the repetition of words, but into the movements towards (divine) Being springing from the depths of intelligence." Isacco di Ninive, *Discorsi Spirituali, trad. P. Bettiolo* (Bose: Qiqajon, 1985), pp. I. 55.

That`s why philosophy should not be understood as just a theoretical exercise, but as an existential active attitude towards reality. Philosophy is the way of training, preparation, and orientation not only of the mind, but of the whole person, a privileged way that makes possible a movement and an existential change of the entire human being.

The Role of Body

Isaac of Nineveh`s writings, among others, played the role of a presupposition in constituting the philosophical discourse in the Eastern Christian world, and this fact became manifest six hundred years later, when Constantinople was again the location of a famous debate, in the fourteenth Century A.D., about the role of philosophy. The controversy opposed Balaam, a sustainer of an intellectualist approach of philosophical exercise, and Gregory Palamas, defender of philosophy as an existential inquiry. Gregory Palamas affirmed that the ultimate knowledge (and the knowledge of any kind) involves the whole man and not just his intellect, and that the act of knowledge has the shape of a relationship – here is an anti-essentialism corresponding to anti-realist position of actual physics. Palamas developed a *realistic doctrine of supernatural knowledge*, one given to the whole man (soul and body). In this way, Palamas offers a justification of the psychophysiological method of prayer, opposing the Platonic spiritualism of his opponent, Balaam. Balaam's criticism was that Palamas identified *supernatural* with *immateriality*. This kind of criticism is even now accepted by many interpretors. But the "return to self" of the hesychast prayer method was understood not just in the spiritual sense, but also bodily. Palamas rehabilitates matter, which spiritualist tendencies of Hellenism had always been inclined to despise. He does not preclude the spiritual to the material, but the *supernatural to the created world*. Palamas opposes a supra-rational knowledge to Balaam's rationalism.[9] Knowing God does not require a certain correspondence between the subject of knowledge and the object known, but a *union* in the uncreated light; man has no faculty, with the help of which he is able to see God; to have a vision of God

---

[9] John Meyendorff, *A Study of Gregory Palamas*, *Trans. George Lawrence* (New York: St. Vladimir`s Seminary Press, 1998), p. 204.

becomes possible because God unites with man, sharing the knowledge that He has of himself.

A decisive term in explaining the non-essentialism of the hesychast doctrine is *energeia*, which Gregory Palamas takes over from Aristotle. By using the notion of *energeia* to create a distinction from essence or nature, Palamas does it cautiously because the vocabulary of that time was too deeply marked by the essentialist categories of Greek philosophy in order to express the reality of Being. The doctrine of the immanent energies implies an intensely dynamic vision of the relationship between God and the world. When discussing *energeia*, Palamas states that it is *a natural symbol*, and not *a created one*.[10] The doctrine of immanent energies implies an intensely dynamic vision of the relationship between God and the world. The whole cosmos is a vast burning bush, permeated but not consumed by the uncreated fire of the divine energies.[11] These energies are the power of God at work within man, the life of God, which he shares.[12] Palamas` description of Light is not a one which makes use of rational concepts to express abstract realities, but is, on the contrary, the apophatic expression of an experience culminating in the beholding of God. Thus, we understand better what is at stake when Gregory Palamas uses the term in explaining a critical aspect of his doctrine: the signification of the ultimate reality (in other words what content can be given to reality when the ultimate instance is looked for). If *energeia* or the divine light has this meaning, then what we call a natural (or physical) reality has a much-enlarged meaning. The physical reality is not a static, inert one, but matter plus energy: it is something that can be described as an active living process, where we find the presence and the intentionality of a Person and that as a *natural dimension*. On the other hand, we can state that in this description reality is constituted by experience in the most radical way: the ultimate reality is the human experience of the uncreated energies. Any statement that would aim at something beyond the content of this experience, such

---

[10] The argumentation is that a natural symbol always accompanies what it symbolizes, and its existence depends on it, just like the aurora accompanies the sunset, and the heat accompanies the burning power of the fire because of the innate association.

[11] Kalistos Ware, "God Hidden and Revealed: The Apophatic Way and the Essence-Energies Distinction," *Eastern Churches Review* 7 (1975) 2, p. 121.

[12] Ware, "God Hidden and Revealed," p. 121.

as the direct knowledge of an essence, is rejected. In the same vein, gnoseological pessimism is rejected: transcendence does not make the Ultimate Reality unknowable, because it makes itself known by these manifestations called *energeia*.

For Palamas, the act of knowledge has the dimension of a relationship (between man and God), understood as a *dynamic process* and not as an essential view of a stable nature. Here is an anti-essentialism which corresponds to the anti-realist position in quantum physics. In terming his unmediated experience of God a vision of "light," language is understood as a "pointer," and not in a descriptive sense. In the Palamite language the terms "light" and "darkness" are both appropriate: light indicates the supreme positive character of the experience, and darkness indicates its radical transcendence vis-à-vis all else that we know.[13] When talking of *ultimate personal reality*, we cannot speak with exact precision, but only through symbol, image and analogy.[14] It is an unavoidable amount of ambiguity. Ordinary language, while conceptualizing created beings` experience of God, must also pay attention to its own shortcomings. No worthy conception of God can be attained through the intellect alone, as true knowledge of God comes from God, leads to God, and conforms to God the one who acquires it.[15] Any statement that would aim at something beyond the content of this experience, such as the direct knowledge of an essence, is rejected. At the same time, gnoseological pessimism is rejected: The Supreme Reality is not unknowable due to its transcendence, because it makes itself known by these manifestations called *energeia*. Stăniloae thought it very important to insist on the importance of the palamite doctrine for the spiritual and cultural identity of the Christian East, and he also offered central elements for the constitution of the neopatristic vision of reality. At this point we have to clarify the meaning of the Eastern Christian meaning of human, defined for the first time as "person."

---

[13] Grégoire Palamas, *Défense des saints hésychastes. Introduction, text critique, traduction, et notes par Jean Meyendorff* (Louvain: Spicilegium sacrum lovaniense, 1959), p. 234.

[14] Kalistos Ware, "The debate about Palamism," *Eastern Churches Review* 9 (1977) 1-2, p. 53.

[15] Palamas, *Défense des saints hésychastes,* p. 657.

Human as a Person

To discuss this description of the human requires today to re-clarify and recuperate the prevailing meanings of a word thanks to which man was understood in a historically unprecedented way: that of *person*. This is not a simple task, because as time passes, the notion of person has been increasingly used in weak, collateral or greatly re-signified meanings. The onset of modernity, with its specialized languages, meant the beginning of an interval marked by an even deeper fragmentation in the use of the concept. Over the last two centuries, human sciences have been using especially words that were re-scaled according to specialized interests. Quite frequently, the paradoxical outcome was the indistinctive and non-critical use of terms such as person, personality, and individual. The increasingly stringent need for a positive discourse and an analytical perspective has recently led to a certain instrumentalization that has lost holistic perspectives and the original meaning of the notion of the person. In fact, no discipline under the umbrella of human sciences offers a description of man starting precisely from the understanding of the human as a person. This is so because the notion is too vague, too much deprived of the positive dimension required by a specialized discourse. The more restrictively the concept of person was used, the more difficult it was to preserve an acceptation that would cover the entire understanding of the human dimension.

The term "person" comes from the Latin *persona,* as a translation of what the Greek Fathers understood as the true designation of man, by linking two concepts formerly working in Greek language: *hypostasis* and *prosopon*. The patristic authors of the fourth century A.D. found themselves in the need of describing man as bearing the image of God, and additionally having freedom. Greek classicism did not know the idea of freedom, especially regarding man, because it is dominated by the idea that the world is a *kosmos*, an order that cannot miss anything. Man's freedom came into conflict with the harmony and order dictated by *moira*. Thus, Gregory of Nyssa and Basil the Great took those two concepts, frequently used at the time, and used them in a different meaning, in a different way. The notion *hypostasis* was used in classical Greek philosophy and Hellenism as an equivalent to *ousia,* but received a number of nuances that reinforced a particular understanding of the reality essence. In the first centuries after Christ,

the term received a more real and concrete meaning, that of a real being as opposed to the apparent and evanescent being. Gregory and Basil used this term in order to indicate a difference in the acceptance of such essences, thus indicating a way of being. The Cappadocian Fathers made a real and significant move in understanding the signification of the term – reality can only have a hypostatic dimension, there is no pure essence. However, the identification between *hypostasis* and *prosopon* is very significant. The term *prosopon* belonged to the old Greek vocabulary, and signified the part of the head right under the forehead – what we call today "face." It was especially used to mean *mask*, as part of the props used by actors in the ancient Greek theater. According to Zizioulas, theater and especially tragedy is the meeting place of human freedom and the necessity under which the world stood in the old Greek vision.[16] It is known that, from the perspective of Greek philosophy, one cannot find the grounds to argue about the real essence of the free human act, because what obsessed the mentality of Greek antiquity was the order and harmony of a world that was essentially *cosmos*. For the Greeks who lived during that age, the world necessarily obeyed the power of an order that was conceived rather from a logical perspective, which allowed no deviance from the laws of the harmony of the whole. Greek tragedy exploited the conflict between man's attempts to act according to his own will, to avoid his destiny and disregard God's will, although this attitude is necessarily doomed to failure; the closing scene of an ancient tragedy always recorded the fulfillment of necessity. We are concerned here with what could be termed *limited freedom*, a phrase that represents, in fact, a logical contradiction. What matters is that the tragedy actor feels the meanings of the state of freedom, and steers – though in a limited and unsuccessful way – towards assuming the state of a *person*, characterized by freedom, uniqueness, and non-repeatability. The mask, in the sense of ancient tragedy, proves to be a superimposed element and not something that pertains to his true being. However, this meaning of *prosopon* was exploited by the Cappadocian Fathers in order to confer the desired dimension to the understanding of the personal modality of the existence of God in Trinity and of people. An identification of the two

---

[16] Ioannis Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (New York: St. Vladimir`s Seminary Press, 1985), p. 32.

gives an ontological dimension to "face"; to what was previously a mere *mask*. Here, it is not just a transmutation of understanding; it is the use of the words at another level: the movement from *concept* to *sign*.

Let`s note that there are recent perspectives coming from philosophy of the last decades, approaching this original under-standing of the person, albeit sometimes indirectly. This is the case of the French phenomenology which, through its representatives, Michel Henry, Jean-Luc Marion, or Jean-Yves Lacoste, takes a direction that leaves the search for a human essence in favor of a radical phenomenology. Michel Henry says that man should not be understood as a body possessing a soul, but as an *embodied being*. What should characterize man's life is not the biological instinct, but the power to try himself. Such an assertion is based on a distinction between the *body* (corps) and *flesh* (chair). The body is the *inert body of universe*, which does not try and does not feel anything, a composition of physical-chemical elements of our material dimension. The flesh is *trying to*, suffering, and enjoying, is able to feel that it is outside the body, touch it and be touched.[17]

Conclusion

Human life described as a continuous inquiry and search for betterment provides the perspective of a dynamic anthropology, one different from the anthropological framework issued by the Enlightenment. It is not correct to talk about a generic human nature. Rather, there are concrete and different stages or realization of human nature in concrete human persons. The person is not a static reality; it is rather something that can be intuited. However, what we might call *dynamism* in this case is not exactly simply to describe or frame. This dynamism is not similar to flux or flow; it is something more radical, an ontic dynamism. The person is a reality that "does not stand" in its very fundamental grounds. It is "in the making," it becomes that which it was not. Man is not; he *becomes*, for he is called to go beyond himself. The apophatism of the person is a phrase that must be interpreted in the light of this statement. The language of negation is more appropriate when one aims to talk about something that

---

[17] Michel Henry, *Incarnation. Une philosophie de la chair* (Paris: Seuil, 2000), p. 43.

ceaselessly makes oneself and is beyond oneself in union with something above the self.

Bibliography

Henry, Michel. 2000. *Incarnation. Une philosophie de la chair*. Paris: Seuil.

Isacco di Ninive. 1985. *Discorsi Spirituali. Trans. P. Bettiolo*. Bose: Qiqajon.

Meyendorff, John. 1998. *A Study of Gregory Palamas. Trans. George Lawrence*. New York: St. Vladimir`s Seminary Press.

Palamas, Grégoire. 1959. *Défense des saints hésychastes*, *Introduction, text critique, traduction et notes par Jean Meyendorff.* Louvain: Spicilegium sacrum lovaniense.

Scrima, André. 2008. *Experiența spirituală și limbajele ei (The Spiritual Experience and its Languages)*. București: Humanitas.

Stăniloae, Dumitru. 1996. *Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă (Orthodox Dogmatic Theology)*. vol. I. București: E.I.M.B.O.R.

Ware, Kalistos. 1975. "God Hidden and Revealed: The Apophatic Way and the Essence-Energies Distinction." *Eastern Churches Review*. Vol. 7, No. 2.

Ware, Kalistos, 1977. "The debate about Palamism." *Eastern Churches Review*. Vol. 9. No. 1-2.

Zizioulas, Ioannis. 1985. *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church*. New York: St. Vladimir`s Seminary Press.

Part III
Rectifying the Colonization of the
Life-world

Art as the Source of Natural and Moral Goodness in Aquinas

Wojciech golubiewski

I would like to respond here to Professor Vincent Shen's invitation to take part in a Thomism – Daoism dialogue.[1] First of all, I would like to thank him for his inspiring article "From Gift to Law: Thomas's Natural Law and Lao Zi's Heavenly Dao."

My response will be from the perspective of a researcher of Aquinas. I do not intend to offer any direct or conclusive comparisons between the two philosophies. I would only like to emphasize certain aspects of Aquinas's account, some of which Vincent Shen signals in his article, in order to suggest a possible scope for a comparative study. I will draw here especially on the commonality of the concept of "generosity," indicated by Vincent Shen.[2]

In order to convey Aquinas's account of the divine art as a source of the inherent goodness of things I will also place his doctrine of natural law in light of what I believe can be described as the "mimetic natural goodness" of things. In Aquinas's view, physical nature reveals some kind of "practical wisdom." The wisdom of nature opens a way to human virtuous life by imitation of nature's unfathomable "generous source." For Aquinas, the "generosity" of "the source" manifests itself in the natures and spontaneous natural movements of sensible things, the remote effects of its art. The "art" means here not so much a technical skill, but rather a cosmological foundation of inherent harmony, beauty and goodness of all things.[3] Imitation of the

---

[1] Vincent Shen. "From Gift to Law: Thomas's Natural Law and Lao Zi's Heavenly Dao," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 53 (September 2013), pp. 251-270.

[2] See ibid., 256.

[3] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I q. 9 a. 1 ad 2.: Nothing can exist which does not proceed from the divine wisdom by way of some kind of imitation, as from the first effective and formal principle; as also works of art proceed from the wisdom of the artist. The English text of Aquinas's works follows, in most cases, already existing translations edited by Joseph Kenny at the website URL: http://dhspriory.org/thomas/ and Alfred J. Freddoso's "New English Translation

visible and tangible "mimetic nature" can shape human life in harmony with a higher art, which Aquinas conceives as the source of all other things and of the good they can attain by their operations.

To discuss these points, I will proceed in three steps. First, I will make some methodological remarks and necessary reservations. Then, I will convey some insights of Aquinas's metaphysical account of the good insofar as it is based on a human experience of the changes and movement of things.[4] Finally, I will convey the notion of divine art in its broad sense of all-pervasive wisdom that shapes things in their virtuous dispositions and directs each thing to its proper goodness. I will also show that, in Aquinas's interpretation, the moral good of human actions can be seen as harmony with an unfathomable source of "generosity" manifested through the variety, movement, and change of natural things.

Methodological Remarks

I must admit that I am not a specialist in Chinese philosophy, and only an apprentice of Aquinas's immense intellectual heritage. I realize therefore that I might unintentionally tend to "read into" Lao Zi's Dao some ideas that I find in Aquinas's account of nature and natural law. However, I share with Vincent Shen the conviction that bringing into conversation the accounts of these two great thinkers, Lao Zi and Aquinas, might be significant and fruitful. Aquinas's doctrine of natural law, although sometimes neglected, remains one of the important medieval resources of Western anthropology, moral philosophy and jurisprudence. From the perspective of a student of Aquinas, dialogue with Daoism seems promising because it might help to rediscover especially those aspects of Aquinas's philosophy which otherwise might remain unnoticed or taken for granted.

---

of St. Thomas Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae* (*Summa Theologica*)," http://www3.nd.edu/~afreddos/summa-translation/TOC.htm.

[4] Although for Aquinas goodness is intelligible, it is an extra-mental (non-conceptual) feature of things. For reasons why for Aquinas intelligible things and their goodness are "outside the order of intelligible being" see Lawrence Dewan. "Is Truth a Transcendental for St. Thomas Aquinas?," *Nova et Vetera, English Edition*, 2 (2004), pp. 15-16; for Shen's arguments why Dao cannot be interpreted as "merely a conceptual being" cf. Shen, "From Gift to Law," 255.

Consequently, the dialogue might provide some new insights into what he understood as natural law.

Due to the obvious historical and cultural distance between Aquinas and Lao Zi, one may only presume that, since their philosophies have a sapiential dimension, the two great thinkers would not consider their positions as incommensurable. Following the interpretation of Vincent Shen, there seems to be some commonality of both author's accounts of "generosity," which suggests also that they both accept to a certain extent its "source."[5] I dare to assume here that they might agree that all things, including different cultures themselves, are at least in some sense manifestations of an ultimate and ineffable "generous source."[6]

The accounts of what humans might say or know about the ineffable "source" would certainly differ for Lao Zi and Aquinas.[7] The very meaning of the word "source" is quite ambiguous. Here I mean by this what C. S. Lewis calls the *Tao*: "a sole source of all value judgments" to which, as he believes, all great cultures give a common witness.[8] According to my understanding of Aquinas, the meaning of "the source" as proposed by Lewis, would not only concern our value judgments about things, but also the inherent value of things. For Aquinas, who has a profoundly metaphysical way of understanding and describing reality, there is an "ultimate" transcendent principle of providential action in the world, a generous source of things' "natural goodness."[9] What would be the meaning of "the source" of generosity

---

[5] Cf. Shen, "From Gift to Law," 252-256.

[6] Cf. ibid., 255: "Dao is the original self-manifesting ultimate reality, it tends to manifest itself."

[7] For an account of Aquinas's negative theology see e.g. Thierry-Dominique Humbrecht, "La théologie négative chez saint Thomas d'Aquin," *Revue Thomiste* 93 (1993), 535-566.

[8] "The Tao, which others may call Natural Law or Traditional Morality or the First Principles of Practical Reason or the First Platitudes, is not one among a series of possible systems of value. It is the sole source of all value judgments. If it is rejected, all value is rejected. If any value is retained, it is retained." C. S. Lewis. "The Abolition of Man; or Reflections on Education with Special Reference to the Teaching of English in the Upper Forms of Schools," *The Essential C. S. Lewis* (New York: Touchstone, 1996), 445-446.

[9] See Rudi Te Velde, *Aquinas on God: The 'Divine Science' of the Summa Theologiae* (Aldershot, Hants, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2006), p. 46; cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I q. 6 a. 4 co., q. 44 a. 4 co.

in the interpretation of Lao Zi's Dao, as proposed by Vincent Shen? As Vincent Shen argues, if pushed to metaphysical interpretation, it can be conveyed as "the impersonal ultimate reality and the origin of all things."[10]

Natural "Generosity" of the Good

In order to convey what "generosity" might entail in Aquinas's metaphysics, I move now to the second point – Aquinas's metaphysical notion of the good as common to all things of nature and manifest in the operations of sensible things.

In his *Summa Theologiae* Aquinas explains the primary meaning of nature as *nativitas*, which means generation of one living thing by another. In this account, he clearly draws on Aristotle's rich meaning of nature, found especially in Aristotle's *Physics* and *Metaphysics*. Nature by extension of its primary notion concerns also the movement and changes of things, and more precisely, the inherent principles of things by which they move in certain ways.[11] I think that in Aquinas's account, the primary "generative" notion of nature entails therefore some kind of "generosity," although in a cosmological rather than a directly moral sense. Generosity might explain the ultimate "motives" of natural generation and of the other "laws of nature."

I also think that Vincent Shen's interpretation of "generosity preceding law" corresponds with some aspects of Aquinas's account of the general notion of the good. Various interpreters have pointed out that the intelligible good of human moral actions, directed by natural law of reason, should be placed within Aquinas's broader ontology of the good that "all things desire."[12]

---

[10] Shen, "From Gift to Law," 254; Vincent Shen states also that "Dao as the ultimate reality is the self-manifesting original act of existence" (ibid., 255).

[11] See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I q. 29 a. 1 ad 4: According to the Philosopher in the fifth book of Metaphysics, the word "nature" was first used to signify the generation of living things, which is called nativity. And because this kind of generation comes from an intrinsic principle, this term is extended to signify the intrinsic principle of any kind of movement. In this sense he defines "nature" in the second book of Physics.

[12] Ibid., q. 5 a. 1 co.: The essence of goodness (ratio boni) consists in this, that it is in some way desirable. Hence the Philosopher says in the first book of Nicomachean Ethics: "Goodness is what all (omnia) desire."

For Aquinas, good is not synonymous with "generosity," but good has its "generous" transcendental nature, which he conveys by the term *ratio boni.* I will partly translate it as the "natural *ratio* of the good" so as not to confuse it with the specific or individual natures of things. Aquinas notices that sensible things, especially bodily things lacking knowledge, pursue their proper goods in spontaneous unimpeded movements, each by a mode or way proper to its nature.

> We observe that each of these is carried to its proper place when it is not prevented, i.e., the heavy are carried downward and the light upward. This shows that place has a certain power of preserving the thing that is in place. For this reason, an object tends to its own place by a desire of self-preservation.[13]

Therefore, Aquinas explains the natural *ratio* of the good by pointing to the phenomena of natural movement of things like fire, earth or water.[14] He seems to believe that in the movements of nature, especially of its simple elements, the human mind can best apprehend the basic laws of nature as a kind of universal "practical wisdom."[15] This is not "practical wisdom" in the sense limited to Aristotelian prudence – phronesis (φρόνησις), which Aquinas conveys by the term *prudentia*.[16] The term "practical wisdom" concerns here principles of action that are common to different things of nature, according to Aquinas's analogical notions of nature and action.[17] For Aquinas, human intellect can apprehend these principles of action as *universal*

---

[13] Idem, *Commentaria in octo libros Physicorum Aristotelis,* IV, lect. 1, n. 412 [7].

[14] E.g. Idem, *Summa Theologiae* II-II q. 26 a. 6 co: We observe in natural things that a natural inclination in each thing is proportionate to the act or movement that befits (convenit) the nature of that thing: thus in earth the inclination of gravity is greater than in water, because it is belongs to earth to be beneath water.

[15] E.g.: On the similar notion of universal practical wisdom see also Stephen L. Brock, "The Primacy of the Common Good and the Foundations of Natural Law in St. Thomas," *Ressourcement Thomism* (Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 2010), p. 242.

[16] Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum*, VI, lect. 6, n. 1-14; cf. Idem *Summa Theologiae* II-II q. 47 a. 2 ad 1. where the author notices that someone prudent reasons "to living a whole life well" and that "prudence is wisdom for man (sapientia viro), but not wisdom absolutely (sapientia simpliciter)."

[17] On Aquinas's analogy of action see Stephen L. Brock, *Action and Conduct. Thomas Aquinas and the Theory of Action* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark Int'l, 1998).

for all things of nature regardless of different modes of action proper to their specific natures. These common principles "direct" things *through their natures* as if they were intrinsically ordered by some kind of wisdom (*sapientia*). It is *practical* wisdom because it sets principles of *action* manifest in the usual *inherent directedness* of the operations of natural things proceeding orderly toward certain ends in attaining what is naturally good for each of them.

> One finds in the works of nature that they proceed along determined ways to determined ends, with order and in a most fitting way (*ordine et modo congruissimo*), like those things which are made by art, so that the whole work of nature seems to be the work of someone wise. For this reason nature is said to work wisely (*sagaciter operari*). But the work of someone wise ought to be well-ordered; for we say rightly that this is characteristic of the sage, that he disposes of all things harmoniously (*convenienti ordine disponat*).[18]

Although the principles of "practical wisdom" can be primarily apprehended and considered by speculative reason from natures of merely physical things, such principles concern also the voluntary mode of action proper to human nature. In this way, common principles of action regard also contingent instances of free human action directed by practical reason.[19]

One of the basic laws of nature that belong to this universal "practical wisdom," I think, is generosity itself. As in the earlier mentioned case of the good of self-preservation manifest in the tendencies of heavy and light things to be in certain places, the good of generosity is also manifest in all natures of sensible things according to each thing's inherent principle of generation and movement. Aquinas describes the natural *ratio* of the good drawing on the nature of fire and the way of its generation. The generation of fire manifests a "generous good" of the fire's nature. The good is

---

[18] Thomas Aquinas, *De operationibus occultis naturae*.

[19] Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum*, VI, lect. 3 n. 11.: Only the practical sciences are concerned with contingent things precisely as they are contingent, that is in the area of the particular. The speculative sciences, on the other hand, do not deal with contingent things except according to universal reasons (*nisi secundum rationes universales*).

"generous" because by means of natural generation fire shares what it has best in itself – its own form of being, passing it to another thing that becomes fire as well. On the one hand, the "generosity" of the good precedes the actual generation of the fire, constituting fire in its nature. On the other hand, the "generosity" becomes fully manifest in fire as a sign of its complete natural perfection by which it can produce its like.[20] The "generosity" of the good shapes the whole nature of fire by setting the natural finality of its operations: the generation of fire itself. "Generosity" in this account has the finality of the good, which brings about the perfection of each thing, beginning with the very first act of its being, through its natural operations, to passing its own perfection on others.[21]

Let us consider another example of sensible nature to see what the "generosity" of the good entails. A tree attains its perfection through its natural growth from a seed. When it reaches maturity of growth, it bears fruit as a sign of the "generosity" of its nature, or rather the fruits manifest the "generosity of the good" in the nature of the tree.[22] Then the cycle of natural "generosity" of the good continues.

In this interpretation, "generosity" of the good manifests itself first as "a force" or "a source" (cause) by which things attain the whole good of their natures. Finally, it results in diffusion of nature's own goodness to others.[23]Aquinas believed that all things as natures have

---

[20] Idem, *Summa Theologiae* I q. 5 a. 4 co.: We see that what is first in causing, is last in the thing caused. For example fire heats first of all before it induces the form of fire; though the heat in the fire follows upon its substantial form. Now in causing, the first thing that we find is the good and the end, which moves the efficient cause; secondly, the action of the agent moving to the form; thirdly, comes the form. Hence in that which is caused the converse ought to take place, so that there should be first, the form whereby it is a being; secondly, we consider in it its effective power, whereby it is perfect in being, for a thing is perfect when it can reproduce its like, as the Philosopher says (Meteor. iv); thirdly, there follows the nature of the good (ratio boni) through which the perfection in the entity is founded.

[21] Cf. ibid., a. 1 co. & ad 1.

[22] Aquinas will draw on the "generosity" of the good manifest in nature of a tree and its fruits to explain the moral good of properly human virtuous actions (cf. ibid. I-II q. 70 a. 1 co.).

[23] Commenting on Pseudo-Dionysius's *dictum* that good is self-diffusive, *bonum est diffusivum sui*, Aquinas points out that it is rightly said so in the sense that an end is said to move: "Goodness is described as self-diffusive in the sense that an end is said to move" (ibid. I q. 5 a. 4 ad 2; cf. arg. 2).

this kind of tendency or inclination to share with others what best they have, and in this way to be "generous":

> Natural things have a natural inclination not only towards their own proper good, to acquire it if not possessed, and, if possessed, to rest in it; but also to diffuse their own good among others, so far as possible. Hence we see that every agent (*omne agens*), in so far as it in act and is perfect, produces its like.[24]

When Aquinas speaks here about "all agents," he means firstly a cosmic variety of changes and movements of things, according to the modes of the natures of things as inherent principles of their operations. In his account however, the generosity manifest in things' numerous natural modes of agency, has also its "generative" source beyond themselves. The natural good of things, even their own generosity, is always a sign of the "generosity" of another. For Aquinas the inherent goodness of all things shares in the "generosity" of the good of another.[25] It belongs to the natural *ratio* of the good to be desirable, but also to be "generous" in imitation of the generous source of all. Accordingly, "generosity precedes law" inasmuch as law concerns things' natures, which are themselves results of the generation and "generosity of another."

I believe therefore that placing the cosmological aspect of "generosity" of nature as related to Aquinas' account of the good might open interesting perspectives of dialogue proposed by Vincent Shen with Lao Zi's Dao.[26]

Art as Source of Goodness in Things

In the above analysis of the "generosity" of the good, I aimed to show that Aquinas's interpretation of law, especially of eternal law, is closely related to the cosmological dimension of the desire of the good found in material things and manifested in their natural movement.

---

[24] Ibid. I q. 19 a. 2 co.: For natural things have a natural inclination not only towards their own proper good, to acquire it if not possessed, and, if possessed, to rest therein; but also to diffuse their own good toothers, so far as possible. Hence we see that every agent, in so far as it is perfect and in act, produces its like.

[25] Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I q. 6 a. 4 co.; q. 44 a. 4.

[26] Cf. Shen, "From Gift to Law," p. 252.

In his view, unless things are impeded in their spontaneous movement, they pursue their good as if they generously followed some kind of "wisdom of generosity" applied to their natures. Aquinas interprets this wisdom as an inherent "practical measure" of each nature shaped by eternal law, which concerns also natural law regarding human actions.[27]

Vincent Shen notices that Aquinas's concept of natural law concerns only human beings directly, while Lao Zi's Dao is the origin that "gives birth to all things, and resides in each of them by their *de* (creative power)."[28] Shen therefore rightly draws attention to Aquinas's broader concept of eternal law, which directs all kinds of good actions and movements.[29] He describes Aquinas's account of eternal law by means of three models of God's relation to creature: technician, governor, and motivator.[30] At this point, I would like to draw especially on the "technician's model" and emphasize Aquinas's understanding of art, as imitation of nature and a model of causality.[31]

Some authors have noticed that Aquinas's understanding of art as imitation of nature in a broad sense, regards principles of human actions and natural law, the seeds of human virtue.[32] Here I mean to say that, by imitation of nature, works of human virtue share in the generosity of the good common to all things. It seems that Aquinas's

---

[27] Cf. ibid., q. 91 a. 2 co: the natural law is nothing else than the rational creature's participation of the eternal law.

[28] Shen, "From Gift to Law," 257, 268.

[29] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I-II q. 93 a. 1. co.: The eternal law is nothing else than the conception (ratio) of the divine wisdom, as directing all actions and movements.

[30] Shen, "From Gift to Law," p. 258.

[31] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I-II q. 71 a. 2 ad 4: The eternal law is compared to the order of human reason, as art to a work of art; cf. ibid. I-II q. 64 a. 1 co; although Aquinas in the *Summa Theologiae* distinguishes between a formal aspect of *ratio artis* and an efficient aspect of *ratio legis*, by which things are directed to the good of their actions, both aspects are entailed in the divine art causality (cf. idem *Sententia super Metaphysicam,* VII, lect. 6, n. 1381: If it is a proper cause, it is either the principle of motion intrinsic to a thing, and then it is nature, or it is extrinsic to the thing, and then it is art; for nature is a principle of motion in that in which it exists, but art does not exist in the thing produced by art but in something else).

[32] See esp. Stephen L. Brock, "Ars imitatur naturam: un aspecto descuidado de la doctrina de la ley natural en Sto. Tomás," *El Hombre. Transcendencia y imanencia, Vol. I* (Pamplona: Universidad de Navarra, 1991), pp. 383-395.

broad concept of the imitation of nature might open a possibility of dialogue with Lao Zi's idea of "technique" and the "structural and dynamic laws of nature."[33]

In the *Commentary on Aristotle's Physics*, Aquinas draws on what Aristotle says regarding art imitating nature.[34] In the *Commentary on Aristotle's Politics*, Aquinas explains the concept of imitation of nature with regard to practical measures of human actions.[35] His use of this Aristotelian concept seems to include the neo-platonic dimension of things' natural or specifically moral goodness as derived from "the source" of all goodness.[36]Although natural operations in the views of both Aristotle and Aquinas follow an intelligible order, only Aquinas provides a metaphysical explanation of nature as caused by divine art. In the commentary on Aristotle's *Physics*, Aquinas explicitly states that physical nature is "a kind of art, namely divine, instilled in things, by which they are moved to their determinate ends."[37] In the Commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, Aquinas explains the way of

---

[33] See Shen, "From Gift to Law," p. 266: "Using laws of nature, we can understand Lao Zi's idea of 'technique,' which, as ways of operating with things according to the laws of nature, take into account, first, the structural law that all beings are constituted of the opposites and that one's operation should allow things to exist as such." Cf. ibid., 268.

[34] Thomas Aquinas, *Commentaria in octo libros Physicorum Aristotelis,* II, lect. 4, n. 171 [6]: The reason for saying that art imitates nature (*ars imitatur naturam*) is the following. Knowledge is the principle of operation in art and all of our knowledge is gathered through the senses from sensible and natural things. Therefore, in works of art (*in artificialibus*) we operate similarly (*ad similitudinem*) to natural things. And so, natural things are imitable (*imitabiles*) by art, because all nature is ordered to its end (*tota natura ordinatur ad finem suum*) by some intellective principle, and thus the work of nature seems to be the work of intelligence, as it proceeds to certain ends through determinate means. This is what art imitates in its operation.

[35] See Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Politicorum,* pr., n. 6.

[36] Cf. Plotinus, "Ennead V.8.1. Transl. H. A. Armstrong," *Enneads* (Cambridge, London: Harvard University Press 2001), p. 237: If anyone despises the arts because they produce their works by imitating nature, we must tell him, first, that natural things are imitations too. Then he must know that arts do not simply imitate what they see, but they run back to the forming principle from which nature derives.

[37] Thomas Aquinas, *Commentaria in octo libros Physicorum Aristotelis*, II, lect. 14, n. 268 [8]: Nature is nothing other than concept of some art (*ratio cuiusdam artis*), namely the divine, instilled in things (*indita rebus*) by which things are moved toward a determinate end.

generation of things by art as distinct from the generation by nature.[38] Consequently, for Aquinas, tangible and visible nature as the inherent source of things' natural movement is at the same time derived, by generation of art, from an intangible and invisible source.

This kind of art, as Vincent Shen rightly observes, is very different from the art of human-made things, because unlike the *ratio* of human art, which depends on the natures of already existing things, the *ratio* of divine art does not presume any existing nature apart from itself.[39] The "art" of the first principle considered in its uncreated essence is not really distinct from its utmost simplicity, which remains beyond our comprehension.[40] The traces it "generates" and leaves in the works of its "art" remain in the intelligible order of nature, manifested in the movement and changes of sensible things.[41]

Aquinas's metaphysical account of how divine art generates the natures of things sheds light on the source and the teleology of natural desire in things. It cannot be assumed however that everyone grasps nature and its "laws" *as* traces of the divine art. The explanation of the divine art as a cause of the inherent good of natural things and of morally virtuous human actions is a sublime consequence of Aquinas's refined philosophical theology.[42]

---

[38] Idem, *Sententia super Metaphysicam,* VII, lect. 6, n. 598: The cause of generation is either a proper cause or an accidental one. For if it is a proper cause, it is either the principle of motion intrinsic to a thing, and then it is nature, or it is extrinsic to the thing, and then it is art; for nature is a principle of motion in that in which it exists, but art does not exist in the thing produced by art but in something else.

[39] Cf. Stephen L. Brock, *Action and Conduct*, p. 98; what precedes inducing the *ratio* of the divine art in things, is "a void" in sense of lack of their actual being, not however non-being in sense of lack of the art that creates them; cf. Shen, "From Gift to Law," pp. 253, 258-259.

[40] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I q. 15 a. 2 co.: For the form of the house in the mind of the builder, is something understood by him, to the likeness of which he forms the house in matter. Now, it is not contrary to the simplicity of the divine mind that it understand many things; though it would be contrary to its simplicity were His understanding to be formed by a plurality of images. Hence many ideas exist in the divine mind, as things understood by it.

[41] Cf. Thomas Aquinas, S*umma contra Gentiles*, II, cap. 2, n. 859: Things made by art are representative of the art itself, being made in likeness to the art.

[42] Aquinas admits in the beginning of the Summa Theologiae that without faith "the truth about God such as reason could discover, would only be known by a few, and that after a long time, and with the admixture of many errors" (idem, *Summa Theologiae* I q. 1 a. 1 co.).

Divine art constitutes things in their natures, by which they attain their natural goodness, as best in themselves and congruous in their virtuous operations.[43] For Aquinas therefore, "myriads of things," along with their movements and changes, inasmuch as they are in harmony with the virtuous dispositions of their natures, are the way of remote self-manifestation of their unfathomable source to us. This is the case even when "the source" itself remains unknown to us and hidden under the intelligible order of nature.[44] As I showed earlier in this paper, "generosity" is one of the aspects of this self-manifestation of the uncreated source of nature. By generosity of its goodness, "the source" generates and instills in things the *ratio* of its art, by which each thing moves and pursues the natural ends of its desire.[45] Therefore, in Aquinas's view, the divine art causes natural virtuous dispositions, by which each thing pursues its proper good.[46] Humans and all other created things are shaped in their natures by that art and they naturally follow its *ratio* in their proper virtuous operations.[47] Things *naturally* pursue their proper good by virtuous dispositions according to the modes of their natures.[48] Indeed, Aquinas considers the "virtues" of things as effects of the *ratio* of divine art, instilled in

---

[43] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I q. 5 a. 1 ad 1; q. 6 a. 4 co.; idem *Commentaria in octo libros Physicorum Aristotelis*, VII, lect. 5, n. 918 [6]: For in general the virtue of a thing is what makes it good and renders its work good.

[44] Clearly, Aquinas does not use these expressions, "myriads of things" and "unfathomable," which may be somehow misleading since he writes in his own metaphysical terms.

[45] Cf. idem, *Summa Theologiae* I q. 13 a. 2 co.: It does not follow that God is good, because He causes goodness; but rather, on the contrary, He causes goodness in things because He is good.

[46] Ibid., q. 91 a. 3 co.

[47] I deliberately paraphrase here Vincent Shen's account of the Dao. See Shen, "From Gift to Law," 254-255: "For Lao Zi human, together with all other things in the universe, were all given birth by Dao, and therefore they should follow the heavenly Dao and lead their life accordingly."

[48] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I-II q. 71 a. 1 co.: Virtue implies directly a disposition whereby the subject is well disposed according to the mode of its nature: wherefore the Philosopher says in the seventh book of Physics that "virtue is a disposition of a perfect thing to that which is best; and by perfect I mean that which is disposed according to its nature." That which virtue implies "consequently" is that it is a kind of goodness: because the goodness of a thing consists in its being well disposed according to the mode of its nature. That to which virtue is directed is a good act.

them as their natures, shaping the natural mode of goodness pursued in their virtuous operations.[49]

I think that the "generosity" of the good is an aspect of what Aquinas considered human natural knowledge of things. For Aquinas, in spite of human incomprehensibility of the divine art itself, natural things and their movement as its virtuous "products" and "imitations" are means of communication of their source, whereby the human mind can learn "generosity" of the good attainable in morally virtuous actions. Consequently, by means of the harmony and congruency of "virtuous actions" manifest in sensible nature, divine art also disposes human nature to its virtuous operations ordered to reason.[50] Sensitive experience and knowledge of the world of nature opens to the human mind an immense horizon of "wisdom" deriving from the generous source of the natural harmony of things. Considered under the aspect of "generosity," morally virtuous actions are in harmony with the divine art's generosity of the good discovered in the natural changes of things. Moral virtues directing human life towards the generosity of goodness imitate nature, because they follow the same all-pervasive wisdom, which manifests itself and shapes the generosity of the natural goodness of things. Moral virtues, which render human actions good, are somehow a special and properly human share in the all-pervasive "practical wisdom" manifest in sensible natures. Moreover, the congruency of human moral life and of things' natural operations is equally mimetic with respect to their ultimate source.[51] Consequently, Aquinas conceives morally virtuous life as a harmony with "the generous source," which leaves traces of its wisdom and goodness in movement and changes of nature.

For Aquinas "generosity" as an aspect of the good of nature entails an intellectual principle. Nonetheless, natural manifestations of

---

[49] There might be some scope of comparison between Aquinas's account of natural virtuous dispositions induced in things' natures generated by causality art on the one hand, and the Lao Zi's account of *de* as creative power residing in and giving birth to each thing. Cf. Shen, "From Gift to Law," 254-255.

[50] In the *Summa Theologiae* II-II q. 31 a. 3 co. Aquinas explicitly states that virtues imitate nature.

[51] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* II-II q. 64 a. 4 ad 1: God universally operates in all things whatever is right, yet in each one according to what is congruent to it. Each thing should therefore imitate God in that which is specially befitting to it.

"generosity" in the spontaneous movements of things might be comparable with what Vincent Shen interprets as Lao Zi's account of the self-manifestation of Lao Zi's non-personal Dao.

Conclusion

Aquinas's account of natural law, as the properly human (rational) share in the universal order of the good, and as a specific mode of pursuing goodness in harmony with the impenetrable riches of the divine art, seems to me comparable with some aspects of Vincent Shen's interpretation of Lao Zi's Dao. What seems to be common to both accounts of generosity is the cosmological all-pervasiveness of "practical wisdom" as the divine art (Aquinas) and the heavenly Dao (Lao Zi) regarding a "myriad of things" and the harmony of human moral life.

Although Aquinas and Lao Zi both seem to connect philosophy of nature with philosophy of life, notwithstanding all apparent similarities, their understanding of nature and of life bears on very distant philosophical cultures. Respectively, the ways of life the two philosophies open may also be significantly different. Would they not agree however, that the hermeneutical contexts of their own cultural phenomena derive from and somehow reflect a generous source of wisdom manifest in the movement and changes of things?

I think that philosophical dialogue with Daoism can draw the attention of Aquinas scholars to what could be described as the mimetic generosity of nature, and might lead to a recovery of the cosmological dimensions of the moral good based on some kind of "natural wisdom" in imitation of the "wisdom" manifest in nature and its operations. I believe also that it might be interesting to compare the generosity of Dao, as conveyed by Vincent Shen, with other intelligible aspects of the good common to all natures as Aquinas conceives them.

Bibliography

Aquinas, St. Thomas. 1888-1906. *Summa theologiae. Opera omnia iussu impensaque Leonis XIII P. M. edita*. T. 4-12, Rome: Typographia Polyglotta S. C. de Propaganda Fide.

Aquinas, St. Thomas. 1961. *Liber de veritate catholicae Fidei contra errores infidelium seu Summa contra Gentiles*, T. 2-3, Marc, P., Pera, C., Caramello, P. (eds.), Turin-Rome: Marietti.

Aquinas, St. Thomas. 1976. *De operationibus occultis naturae ad quendam militem ultramontanum. Opera omnia iussu Leonis XIII P. M. edita*, T. 43, Rome: Editori di San Tommaso, 159-186.

Aquinas, St. Thomas. 1884. *Commentaria in octo libros Physicorum Aristotelis. Opera omnia iussu impensaque Leonis XIII. P. M. edita*, T. 2, Rome: Typographia Polyglotta S. C. de Propaganda Fide.

Aquinas, St. Thomas. 1969. *Sententia libri Ethicorum. Opera omnia iussu Leonis XIII P. M. edita*, T. 47, Rome: Sancta Sabina.

Aquinas, St. Thomas. 1971. *Sententia libri Politicorum. Opera omnia iussu Leonis XIII P. M. edita*, T. 48 A, Rome: Sancta Sabina.

Aquinas, St. Thomas. 1971. *In duodecim libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis expositio*, Cathala, M., Spiazzi, R. (eds.), Turin-Rome: Marietti.

Brock, Stephen L. 1998. *Action and Conduct. Thomas Aquinas and the Theory of Action.* Edinburgh: T&T Clark Int'l.

Brock, Stephen L. 1991. "Ars imitatur naturam: un aspecto descuidado de la doctrina de la ley natural en Sto. Tomás" *El Hombre. Transcendencia y imanencia, Vol. I.* Pamplona: Universidad de Navarra, 383-395.

Brock, Stephen L. 2010. "The Primacy of the Common Good and the Foundations of Natural Law in St. Thomas" *Ressourcement Thomism.* R. Hütter and M. Levering (eds.). Washington D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 234-255.

Dewan, Lawrence. 2004. "Is Truth a Transcendental for St. Thomas Aquinas?" *Nova et Vetera, English Edition.* Vol. 2, 1-19.

Humbrecht, Thierry-Dominique. 1993. "La théologie négative chez saint Thomas d'Aquin." *Revue Thomiste.* Vol. 93, 535-566.

Lewis, C. S. 1996. "The Abolition of Man; or Reflections on Education with Special Reference to the Teaching of English in the Upper Forms of Schools." *The Essential C. S. Lewis.* L. W. Dorsett (ed.). New York: Touchstone, 428-466.

Plotinus. 2001. "Ennead V.8.1, transl. H. A. Armstrong." *Enneads.* J. Henderson (ed.). Cambridge, London: Harvard University Press.

Shen, Vincent. 2013. "From Gift to Law: Thomas's Natural Law and Lao Zi's Heavenly Dao." *International Philosophical Quarterly.* Vol. 53, 251-270.

Te Velde, Rudi. 2006. *Aquinas on God: The 'Divine Science' of the Summa Theologiae.* Aldershot, Hants, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.

9.

The Universal Love and the Sustainability of Human Beings: A Comparative Study of Confucianism and Thomism

ZHAO QI

We live in a world of paradox. On the one hand, booming productivity enables contemporary society to produce a thousand times more products than pre-modern society; on the other hand, there are still many humans suffering from hunger and poverty. All sorts of discoveries and inventions not only lead to greater happiness, but also to greater self-detriment, such as the contamination of water, food, and air. With the rise of nuclear weapons, a small number of people have the ability to annihilate the whole population. When the malaise of modernity for Charles Taylor becomes the most poignant existential predicament, what can philosophers do?

It seems as if we have all kinds of resources to make life better for some people, but, at the same time, the whole flourishing of humankind is at risk due to the lack of concern for all human beings, including future generations. However, modern philosophy is not capable of solving this problem since it is mainly devoted to speculative problems. Mainstream modern and contemporary Western ethics like utilitarianism and deontology considers "doing" as the key element of morality. Based on this fundamental understanding, mainstream modern ethics takes the individual act that is ordered by reason as moral and praiseworthy. However, without a clear view of the "being" of humankind and its position in the universe related to other beings, humans do not know what are proper moral ends to pursue.

Nevertheless, there are ethical traditions in Western and Eastern philosophy that take much sounder meta-ethical standpoints. In this paper, I focus on the two traditions 'Confucianism' and 'Thomism'. Despite all sorts of differences, they consider humans as relational beings. Based on this meta-ethics, they both aim at forming good character or virtues, especially the love for other beings, including

humans and non-living things. The two traditions might enlighten us to find a way out of our contemporary plight.

Starting Point of Thomism: Humans as Relational Beings

For Thomas Aquinas, human beings are born in a relationship with God and others. As members of God's Kingdom, humans are supposed to be related to other fellow beings (rational and irrational) of God's kingdom in a "good" way.[1] Since human beings are metaphysically and originally relational beings, their task of life is to recover this good relationship they once had before the Fall. To recover the relationship is a spiritual and moral journey.

According to Aquinas, only through real love or charity, humans are able to recover their relationship with God and others. Unlike many contemporary assumptions that the Christian God is an external judge, Aquinas holds that the creator of humans is not a dictator, but a friend who helps humans to correct and better their will in such a way that humans eventually only will the good.[2] Thus the vital element of morality is more than "acting" morally, but forming good characters, in particular virtues that are constitutive of a good state of being. Aquinas says that the most important virtue, 'charity', is a 'friendship'[3] between God and the human, because true love is a uniting power that pulls the lover closer to the beloved, not only spatially but also spiritually. When humans love God freely, their will is moved closer to their beloved God's will. In this sense, charity unites humans' will and God's will in the same way as secular friendship does. Although the difference and gap between humans and God is hard to get over, through God's grace and humans' endeavor, humans' will is able to get closer and closer to God's will, which is the whole goodness. When humans mainly, or only, will the good, they will not wrong other beings, including other humans,

---

[1] Here "good" means something more than "moral" for contemporaries. "Perfect" might be a better word in this case. It means that humans should deal with others according to their position in the universe.

[2] Although this task can only be fully completed in the afterlife, humans are supposed to make every endeavor in this life.

[3] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica (ST)* (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1947), IIaIIae. 23.1. I will follow the common way to quote passages from *Summa Theologica* afterwards, which is *ST* IIaIIae. 23.1. in this case.

animals and non-living things like the environment. This is similar to the ideal state of "being" embraced by Confucianism –"at seventy I followed my heart's desire without stepping on the line"[4]. Thus, the recovery of human-God relationship is not only a theological problem. It is also a moral issue. The highest moral fruit is not that humans have sound reason that persuades them to act morally, but that their whole being is morally good and that they are able to act well, even without careful reasoning.[5]

Although loving God is theoretically the highest good, in reality loving others is the other side of loving God. Since persons of charity have a will similar to God's will, they must love others with charity like God does. If they fail to love others, they have not yet reached charity. Therefore, Aquinas's relational "love" *for* persons plays a central role in his moral theory.

Charity: Main Character in Thomistic Virtue Ethics

For Aquinas, charity is the most important virtue, since it is able to lead one to the real end of life: recovery of human-God relation and eternal happiness. Love (*amor*) is a general term. It is a movement towards the beloved. When love is qualified as a virtue, it is called charity (*caritas*). Charity is love in its real and complete sense. Charity is constituted of two parts: 1) the desire for the good of the beloved[6] and 2) the desire for union with the beloved.[7] To love a person is to

---

[4] Roger T. Ames and Henry Jr. Rosemont (trans. and eds.), *The Analects of Confucius: A Philosophical Translation* (New York: Random House, 1998), 2.4.

[5] The highest moral fruit is not gained through reason, but mainly through grace and humans' relationship with God, but this does not mean that reason does not work. Rather reason works better since it becomes an internal power in one's will rather than an external judge.

[6] See *ST* IaIIae. 26.4; 28.4. Philosopher Eleonore Stump summarizes Aquinas's love theory through these two desires. She argues that Aquinas's love theory is much better than all contemporary theories of love – the responsiveness account, volitional account, and the relational account. See Eleonore Stump, *Wandering in Darkness: Narrative and the Problem of Suffering* (New York: Oxford University Press), 91. See *ST* IaIIae. 26.2; 28.1. For details, see Eleonore Stump, "The Non-Aristotelian Character of Aquinas's Ethics: Aquinas on the Passions," *Faith and Philosophy* 28 (2011), 29-43.

[7] *ST* IaIIae. 26.2; 28.1. For details, see Stump, "The Non-Aristotelian Character of Aquinas's Ethics, 29-43.

have both desires. As to the first desire, according to the Christian tradition, only through the real love *for* God and the real love *for* others, humans are able to treat God and others, morally. Love as a virtue is primarily the love for persons, and secondarily the love of non-personal good.[8] In other words, love is always love *for* someone. "Love" is directed to non-personal things when and only when they are loved for the happiness of others. For instance, if Joel loves other humans, he naturally loves or desires the things that are good for them such as their health and wellbeing. Similarly, if managers of an international corporation love other humans, they would not export industrial waste to an underdeveloped country to avoid spending more money on recycling. One might argue that spending money on recycling is not good for the profit of shareholders, though it is good for the environment of other countries. Then why should a company sacrifice the interests of some rather than others? This is because good is something hierarchical for Thomism. Those things that promote the whole flourishing and the moral goodness of humans are considered higher goods than those short-term and material goods. The wellbeing of humans depends a lot on environment. Thus to save money for some at the cost of environment is to sacrifice higher good for the sake of lower one. This is morally evil rather than good.

The second desire of charity is also based on Thomism's meta-ethical understanding of persons as relational beings. In order to have real "love," a person must desire a union proper to his or her relations with the beloved. There are two aspects of union: mode and intensity. For love to be real, namely a virtue, the mode of union must be appropriate to their relations. For instance, the union between cousins of opposite sex is very different from the union between lovers. The characteristics of relational others also require the proper intensity of love. Aquinas says that, "we ought out of love to love more those who are more closely united to us, both because our love for them is more intense, and because there are more reasons for loving them."[9] Aquinas's view is against the so-called common understanding of Christian love – equal love towards every human being. On Aquinas's account, some relations require a more intensive love than others, and these are usually blood relations. Furthermore, people can love some

---

[8]*ST* IaIIae. 26.4.

[9]*ST* IIaIIae. 26.8.

more intensely for their good character, such as intelligence, virtues, even beauty, as long as they love others for their own sake.

Charity is the root of all virtues. It directs Aquinas's whole virtue theory under the guidance of loving others. One must have charity in order to have all the other virtues, because only through loving good under the guidance of loving persons, can human's desires and actions be directed to the right end of life – the recovery of relationship with God and other beings. To conclude this part, Aquinas builds his ethics on love *for* others. To be morally good is to be able to have the character of loving others for their own sake and of cherishing the non-rational beings out of love for persons. This renders all morally good desires and actions guided by the character of love *for* persons.

Understanding of Persons from Confucian Viewpoint

Confucius himself was not interested in raising an ontological explanation of human beings, but the Confucian tradition did give some explanation for the position of humans in the world. In general, Confucianism describes humankind as existential beings related to *heaven*天 and *earth* 地. Although various thinkers and scriptures have different interpretations, in general this idea originates from *the Book of Changes*《易》. This book explains nature and universe through 64 *gua*卦 in which each is composed of three couples of *yao*爻 and each couple of *yao* represents heaven, humans and earth from the top to below. The structure of *gua* shows at least two things: 1) humans are constitutive of the universe like many other things; 2) any of the three (heaven, humans, earth) exerts influence upon others. Humans thus have to consider the consequences of their actions upon each of the three, namely human selves, heaven and earth, and also the impact on the whole of nature. *The Book of Changes* suggests that humans should follow the nature of heaven and earth to improve their existential environment.

From the *Book of Changes*, many ideas are developed. Another important scripture of Confucianism, *Doctrine of the Mean*, says that "when humans reach the mean, heaven and earth are in their proper positions, and myriad things are nourished."[10] It suggests a virtuous cycle between humans and the rest of nature. Humans are able to do

---

[10] Xi Zhu, *Variorum of the Four Books* (Beijing: China Press, 1983), 18.

good to heaven and earth because they are spiritual beings, capable of feeling and following the principles of heaven and earth. Most Confucians in the Song dynasty[11] believed that humankind and heaven are related because both follow the same principle, *ren*仁. Wang Yangming thinks that humankind and heaven are able to unite as one, since they both have *ren* as their heart. When humans treat other humans with *ren*, they are able to unite with them in a proper way; when humans treat animals, plants, and environment with *ren*, they are able to unite with them by taking them as part of their body. To sum up, humans are able to realize the good by treating all others with *ren*. This is what morality means for Confucianism.

Forming Good Character in Confucianism

For Confucianism, to be morally good is to form good characters that consummate in *ren*. *Ren* is the highest moral virtue that embraces and transcends all concrete good characters. Confucius never defines *ren*. Among his direct explanations of *ren*, the most recognized explanation is to "love others"[12]. *Ren* is not only a human virtue, but also a truth-like principle that heaven and earth follow. Heaven and earth provide the conditions proper for life, thus plants germinate, animals grow, and humans multiply on earth. Lives were not possible, if heaven and earth would not 'love' all sorts of beings. Since *ren* is always love *for* other beings, it is, like charity, a virtue directed to others.

For humans, *ren* is the highest moral virtue transcending all concrete good characters such as honesty or loyalty. The relation between *ren* and concrete virtues is complicated. In the long period of development, most Confucians agree that *ren* is a universal virtue since it is a fundamental moral ability that humans should make every effort to develop. The famous early Confucian Master Mencius thinks that all humans by nature have the tendency to love others. He raises an example to show this.

When an infant were about to fall into a well, anyone would be upset and concerned. This concern would not be due to the fact that the person wanted to get in good with the baby's parents, or because

---

[11] Song dynasty dates from 960 A.D. to 1279 A.D.

[12] Ames and Rosemont, *The Analects of Confucius,* 12.22.

s/he wanted to improve his/her reputation among the community or among his/her circle of friends. Nor would it because he/she was afraid of the criticism that might result from a show of non-concern. From this point of view, we can say that if you did lack concern for the infant, you would not be human.[13]

Mencius thinks that anyone is able to react to an unacquainted baby for its own sake. According to the well-known Confucian interpreter Zhu Xi's explanation, this concrete concern is the beginning of *ren.* It is possible, because *ren* is a natural tendency all humans potentially have. This natural tendency to love others makes concrete virtues possible. Thus, *ren* is not only considered as a virtue, but also the foundation of Confucian ethics. On one hand, only a morally perfect person with all the concrete good characters can be called a person of *ren*; on the other hand, *ren* is a character that enables one to have all concrete virtues.

Since Confucianism considers humans as beings related to different kinds of other beings, the concrete characters are also developed in dealing with concrete relations. For instance, *xiao*孝 (filial piety) is the good character of children loving their parents; *ti*悌 (fraternal deference) is the good character of younger brothers loving their elder siblings. For Confucianism, these two virtues are most basic in developing other concrete characters as well as the universal *ren*. Confucius says, "as for filial and fraternal responsibility, it is, I suspect, the root of *ren*" (*Analects* 1.2). This means that loving parents and siblings are first and foremost in obtaining *ren*, the universal virtue, since they are most coherent to humans' natural emotions. Those who do not love their parents and brothers are not able to love anyone outside the family.

Some virtues are extended from familial virtues. For instance *zhong* 忠(loyalty) is the virtue of ministers performing their duties to the utmost for their lords and it is extended from filial piety; and *shun*順 (compliance) is the virtue of loving all elders extended from fraternal deference. *The Book of Reverence* records the early Confucian view about how *zhong* and *shun* extend from familial virtues.

The Master said, "It is only because exemplary persons君子(*junzi*) serve their parents with family reverence that this same feeling can be extended to their lord as loyalty (*zhong*). It is only because they serve

---

[13] Charles Muller (trans.), *Mencius* (Tōyō Gakuen University, 2003), 2A:6.

their elder brothers with deference (*ti*) that this same feeling can be extended to all elders as compliance (*shun*).[14]

Apart from these four virtues, there are a lot of other virtues that indicate the loving habit towards people in certain relations. For instance, *xin*信 (trustworthiness in words) is the habit of always being faithful to friends; *gong* 恭 (deference) and *jing*敬 (respect) are love for superiors no matter their status or age; *kuan*寬 (tolerance) and *hui*惠 (generosity) are the proper way rulers and ministers should treat common people.

All the Confucian virtues can be reflected in acts, but most of all, they are inclinations or habits that move one to do good things in concrete acts. That is why ancient Chinese and Confucian texts usually say that a son is person of *xiao* (filial piety) or of *kuan* (tolerance) rather than that a single act is of *xiao* or *kuan*. Similarly, when a person commits some crime, Confucians would tend to think primarily that there is a lack in his or her characters rather than that only this or that act is wrong.

In sum, the ethics of Aquinas and Confucius both aim at forming good character in order to maintain proper relationships with others. For Aquinas, the friendship between God and humans is the model for all human relations. For Confucianism, when one develops the universal *ren*, he or she is able to act properly in any situation and with different relationships.

How is Love for Strangers Possible? *Pietas* and *Shu*

No matter love or *ren* for others develops from family love or from friendship with God, Confucius and Aquinas are faced with the same problem: can love originating from some relations be extended to strangers who seem to have no relations with us? If the answer is positive, how does love extend to these persons? Aquinas and Confucius both think *ren* or love should be extended to all human beings, even strangers. However, their approaches are quite different.

Aquinas thinks only with God's grace humans are able to love everyone, including strangers, sinners and enemies. Love itself is a

---

[14] Henry Jr. Rosemont and Roger T. Ames (trans. and eds.), *The Chinese Classic of Family Reverence: A Philosophical Translation of the Xiaojing* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008), ch. 14.

virtue infused by God through friendship with Him, as I mentioned above. When humans receive God's grace, they establish a friendship with God. The gifts of the Holy Spirit come into them at the same time. *Pietas* (piety) is among the gifts from the Holy Spirit. It enables humans to extend their love to those people they do not know. *Pietas* was a Roman virtue of sons. The model of it is Aeneas, who struggled to save his father and brought him out of the fallen Troy. In the world of Christianity, *pietas* was transformed into a duty one owes to God, the Father of Heaven.

On Aquinas's account, *pietas* belongs to the virtue of justice.[15] Since justice is "a habit whereby a man renders to each one his due by a constant and perpetual will"[16], *pietas* is also about giving others their due. God deserves *pietas* more than anyone else for his supreme excellence, and for being the first principle of all existence. Therefore, God holds the first place among the objects of *pietas*.

Parents who have given us birth and nourishment hold the second place for our being. They are similar to God in being the principle of one's existence, so they deserve *pietas* after God. *Pietas* extends to one's relatives and fellow-citizens. People love and honor their relatives for they descend from the same ancestors; they respect fellow-citizens for they are friends of their countries. If *pietas* only extends to those people who one owes something, it is not qualified as a holy gift. In theory, it extends to all human beings, since all are members of God's kingdom. Aquinas writes,

> As by the virtue of piety, man pays duty and worship not only to his father in flesh, but also to all his kindred on account of their being related to his father, so by the gift of piety he pays worship and duty not only to God, but also to all men on account of their relationship to God.[17]

In fact, all humans are related to God by being God's creatures. *Pietas* does not only belong to the domain of justice, but is also higher than justice, because on account of *pietas,* everyone deserves our love and beneficence. Even if we do not know them, they are still potentially our friends. In this sense, Aquinas maintains that *pietas* is

---

[15] *ST* IIaIIae. 101.3.
[16] *ST* IIaIIae. 58.1.
[17] *ST* IIaIIae. 121.1.

a "protestation of charity."[18] Everyone deserves our *pietas* and love because of their relations with God. It becomes more apparent if we look at Aquinas's account of loving sinners.

Two things may be considered in the sinner, his nature and his guilt. According to his nature, which he has from God, he has a capacity for happiness, on the fellowship of which charity is based, as stated above, wherefore we ought to love sinners, out of charity, in respect of their nature.[19]

In the gospels, "loving your neighbor as yourself" is the commandment given by Jesus. A neighbor includes every human being, even sinners. In respect of the guilt of sinners, they are supposed to be hated, for their guilt is against goodness that is God himself. Nevertheless, their nature or existence as human beings is good. Thanks to their nature, they are able to enjoy the union with God. To love sinners is not to become like them, but to convert them to goodness and thus repair their union with God. Unless there is no hope to make them better, those who are strong in morality should try to help sinners to give up evil and return to good.

How is *ren* for strangers possible in Confucianism? Although *ren* is a universal virtue, it can only be developed from some concrete virtues such as *xiao* and *ti.* Some scholars hold that Confucians in reality pays much more attention to the appropriate union between people who are related in some way. This view is also the source of critique against Confucianism. However, I think that Confucius also advocates strongly the love of strangers. *Shu*恕 (putting oneself in other's position) is the term he uses to describe the virtue of loving others broadly. *ShuowenJiezi*《說文解字》(*the Classical Lexicon*) defines *shu* by referring to *ren*. *Shu* is the method of reaching *ren*, while *ren* is the desired outcome of *shu.* It occupies a central position in Confucius teaching.

Zigong asked, "Is there one expression that can be acted upon until the end of one's days?" The Master replied, "There is *shu*恕: do not impose on others what you yourself do not want."[20]

From the text, *shu* is not to impose on others what one does not like. By avoiding what one does not want, he or she is being *ren* to others. How could one discover what is preferred and not preferred

---

[18] *ST* IIaIIae. 101.3.

[19] *ST* IIaIIae. 25.7.

[20] Ames and Rosemont, *The Analects of Confucius,* 15.24.

by others? The method of *shu* is an analogy: to figure out what others wish or do not wish to be done to them by putting oneself in the other's situation.[21] By putting oneself in the others' position, one is able to feel what others' dislike and like. And then it is possible to avoid doing what others do not like.

Shu can be applied to those one knows and also to people one meets for the first time. If people already have a certain relation with others and know their characteristics, to act most properly, they combine this information with *shu*. However, *shu* is also a virtue, especially for treating those people of whom one does not have much knowledge. In order to treat strangers properly, putting oneself in their positions is the only way one can hope to deal with others in a manner of *ren*. As Confucius says,

> Persons of *ren* establish others in seeking to establish themselves and promote others in seeking to get there themselves. Correlating one's conduct with those near at hand can be said to become a person of *ren*.[22]

"Those near at hand" means oneself and also the experience of getting along with different kinds of people. We can also establish general relations with strangers. For instance, suppose Michael meets an old lady who needs to find her glasses, lost in the garden. Since Michael does not know her, how does he know the proper words and mood to greet her and to talk with her? According to Confucianism, Michael is supposed to resort to former experience of getting along with his grandmother, and meanwhile creatively use it in getting along with this particular old lady. Therefore, *shu* recognizes the complexity and ambiguity of a moral situation, and requires creativity and experience to find out the most appropriate response.

Shu is not only putting oneself in the other's place. The most important thing of *shu* is the spirit behind it: to "establish others in seeking to establish themselves and promote others in seeking to get there themselves" in the quotation above. It is also the core of *ren*. It makes *ren* a universal and consummate virtue. If some people respect parents greatly, but do not extend the love towards the multitude,

---

[21] Ames and Rosemont explain this correctly. See Ames and Rosemont, *The Analects of Confucius*, 59.

[22] Ames and Rosemont, *The Analects of Confucius,* 6.30.

Confucianism does not consider them having *ren*. People of *ren* treat others like a part of their own selves; they consider others' flourishing as a precondition for self-flourishing. In this way, it is possible for them to take others' needs as their own needs, and to promote others as a way to promote self.

As we have seen, Aquinas and Confucius develop a universal love towards all humans in a very different way. *Pietas* is a gift coming with the love of God; *shu* is the belief that other's well-being is something helpful and necessary to our own well-being. In this sense, *shu* is also like faith. It is based on the ontological view that all beings are related and thus one's flourishing is related and dependent on the flourishing of others.

Conclusion: Possible Solutions for Modern Crises

In spite of the difference between culture and belief systems, Confucius and Aquinas both understand humans as beings related to other beings. With this kind of meta-ethics, forming good characters that lead proper relations with other humans is the major task of morality. Thus, moral life is not so much the struggle of an autonomous individual in every separate single act. Instead, other human beings are the necessary condition of one's own moral life. To love others and to promote the flourishing of others becomes the route necessary for self-flourishing. In the light of this view, the unending selfish desires which often end up harming others to benefit oneself miss the point of real happiness.

Even if we do not live in a world that advocates a kind of meta-ethics that defines humans as Thomism or Confucianism do, we are still able to believe that humans are relational beings by examining how much one depends on others. Care Ethics, a relatively new trend of moral theories, takes relationships among humans as the starting point and basic existential fact of human beings. It raises many useful ideas for taking other humans and the environment seriously. In the face of increasing modern crises, I believe that, if philosophy turns to ancient wisdom, like Confucianism and Thomism, it will have more resources to deal with contemporary problems and even find a way out.

Bibliography

Aquinas, Thomas. 1947. *Summa Theologica*. New York: Benziger Brothers.

Aristotle. 1984. *The Complete Works of Aristotle.* J. Barnes (ed.). Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Cheng, Shude (ed.). 1990. *Collected Commentaries on Analects*. Beijing: China Press.

Confucius. 1998. *The Analects of Confucius: A Philosophical Translation*. R.T. Ames and H. Rosemont Jr. (trans. and eds.). New York: Random House.

Freeman, R. Edward and Liedtka, Jeanne. 1991. "Corporate Social Responsibility: a Critical Approach." *Business Horizons*, Vol. 34, No. 4, 92-98.

Held, Virginia. 2006. *Ethics of Care: Personal, Political and Global*. London: Oxford University Press.

Huang, Shouqi and Shanwen Zhang (eds.). 2004. *The Book of Changes*. Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Books Press.

Muller, Charles (Trans.). 2003. *Mencius*. Tōyō Gakuen University.

Rosemont, Henry Jr., and Roger T. Ames (trans. and eds.). 2008. *The Chinese Classic of Family Reverence: A Philosophical Translation of the Xiaojing.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Slingerland, Edward. 2003. *Confucius Analects: With Selections from Traditional Commentaries.* Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company.

Stump, Eleonore. 2010. *Wandering in Darkness: Narrative and the Problem of Suffering.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Stump, Eleonore. 2011. "The Non-Aristotelian Character of Aquinas's Ethics: Aquinas on the Passions." *Faith and Philosophy* Vol. 28, No. 1, 29-43.

Yang, Bojun. 1980. *Comments on Mengzi*. Beijing: China Press.

Wang, Yangming. 2011. T*he Complete Work of Wang Yangming*. Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Books Press.

Xu Shen. 1963. *The Classical Lexicon*. Beijing: China Press.

Zhu, Xi. 1983. *Variorum of the Four Books*. Beijing: China Press.

10.

On the Self-Awareness of Life

Yu Xuanmeng

Introduction

I have studied philosophy for thirty years. But I am always asking myself what philosophy is. Because, there are so many schools and disciplines, each of them very different. I read ancient Greek philosophers, such as Plato and Aristotle, modern philosophers, such as Descartes, Hume, Locke, Kant, Hegel, and I also read contemporary philosophy, such as analytic philosophy, phenomenology, existentialism, etc. They have different themes, methods and conclusions. Even by the end of 19th century, there came a cry that philosophy has come to its end or metaphysics should be eliminated. Engels said "philosophy ends in Hegel."[1] We can find the same view in Heidegger's thesis *The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking*.[2] Eliminating metaphysics is another expression for the end of philosophy; it touches the reason why philosophy should be ended, for metaphysics had been taken as the core of traditional philosophy. It has to be noted that, even when people fight against metaphysics, their understanding of it is different. For, as we know, Heidegger is against traditional metaphysics, but in R. Carnap's famous paper *The Elimination of Metaphysics through Logical Analysis of Language*,[3] Heidegger's philosophy or thinking is criticized as the standard example of metaphysics. Never has there been a science, like philosophy, whose object could not be defined.

The condition goes from bad to worse, if we try to find the definition of philosophy in the various popular books about Chinese philosophy; for almost all those books describe the history of Chinese philosophy according to the notion, framework and the themes of

---

[1] Friedrich Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of German Classic Philosophy (Chinese translation)* (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1972), p. 11

[2] Martin Heidegger, *The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking*, Idem, *Basic Writings* (Harper: San Francisco, 1977), pp. 472-449.

[3] Rudolf Carnap "The Elimination of Metaphysics through Logical Analysis of Language," *Logical Empiricism (Chinese translation)* (Beijing: Commercial Publishing House, 1982), pp. 13-36.

Western philosophy. For instance, during quite a long period after the Liberation, the history of Chinese philosophy was seen as the struggle between two lines: materialism and idealism, a framework fetched from later 19th century Europe, via the former Soviet Union. After the 1980s, scholars began to imitate western philosophy directly. One can think, for example, of the most popular books, written respectively by Professor Fung Yu-Lan and Professor Feng Qi, which take Hegel as the model.

Feng Qi, professor of East China Normal University, maintained that the history of philosophy could be defined as "the dialectical knowing movement rooted in the human being's social practice and focused on the issue of the relationship between thinking and existence."[4] Obviously, the discussion between materialism and idealism is preserved here. It seems Professor Feng Qi accepts the dominance of epistemology to do philosophy. But when he talks about the logical development concerning the history of Chinese philosophy, he cannot but have the logical determined categories in mind, for only these logical categories could perform the logical movements. He even maintains that logical development shows itself as a spiral moving upward, an expression borrowed from Hegel. Another famous Professor Fung Yu-Lan maintained that "philosophy is the reflection of the human spirit."[5] He stated: "Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* is completely a philosophical work in both form and substance."[6] "Hegel's *Logic* is a more abstract abridged version of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*."[7] Obviously for both professors Hegelian philosophy is the model. There is no need here to go deeply into the issue whether the history of Chinese philosophy could follow the Hegelian approach, which is now criticized and rejected in the West. Currently, we also see others try to formulate the history of Chinese philosophy on the basis of phenomenology, analytic philosophy, and even symbolism. Never has there been a science, other than philosophy, that has no accepted definition!

---

[4] Feng Qi, *The Logical Development of the Ancient Chinese Philosophy. Vol. 1 (Chinese version)* (Shanghai: Shanghai Publishing House, 1983), p. 11.

[5] Fung Yu-Lan, *A History of the Chinese Philosophy. Vol. 1 (Chinese version)* (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1982), p. 9.

[6] *Ibid*, p. 11.

[7] *Ibid*, p. 11.

The present condition of philosophy confuses the students of philosophy. But at the same time it leaves plenty of room for scholars to search the new meaning of philosophy. I read the Chinese classics, and rethink what I have learned from the West. Gradually I get the idea that, at the deepest level, philosophy is the self-awareness of life. In this short paper it is impossible to give a comprehensive argumentation for this point. That would require checking the whole history of philosophy both in China and the West, which is beyond my competence. Moreover, whatever is said here is the personal experience of one who has been studying philosophy for many years.

Western Philosophy: Toward the Awareness of Life

If we abstract from the framework of the traditional Western philosophy, it is relatively easy to make the judgment that the theme of Chinese philosophy is being self-aware of life. Arguing for it, I have plenty of material to cite. But, it seems that the theme of being self-aware of life has nothing to do with Western philosophy. Most probably, people would say that the meaning of philosophy, as the word originally shows, is the love of wisdom. However ever since Plato and Aristotle, who mark the beginning of Western philosophy,[8] the discipline has been taken as the direction of knowledge, which dominates the history of the western thought up to Hegel. So, in a sense Levinas is correct when criticizing traditional philosophy, he says: "knowledge is not the first philosophy," "ethics is the first philosophy."[9] But why should knowledge be moved from its position of first philosophy and put under suspicion? Since Plato, knowledge has been supposed to lead to the truth, the essence of things and the law of nature, from which the term science is derived. Generally speaking, the term science can be substituted with the term

---

[8] When Hans-Georg Gadamer discussed the beginning of philosophy, he wrote, "the crucial thing in my lectures on the Pre-Socratics is that I begin neither with Thales nor with Homer, nor do I with the Greek language in the second century before Christ; I begin instead with Plato and Aristotle. This, in my judgment, is the sole philosophical access to an interpretation of the Pre-Socratics. Everything else is historicism without philosophy." See Hans-Georg Gadamer, *The Beginning of Philosophy. Translated by Rod Coltman* (New York: Bloomsbury, 1988), p. 10.

[9] Quote from Richard A. Cohn, "The Face of the Other, Ethics as the First Philosophy" Unpublished paper, presented at the pre-conference "Culture and Philosophy," of the 23rd world philosophy conference, Athens, 2013.

knowledge. If we enjoy a better life due to science, isn't this also due to knowledge? What is wrong with knowledge as first philosophy?

Knowledge, eventually, is the result of knowing the world. Knowing the world is a method for human beings to survive in the world. To put it another way, in order to survive in the world, human beings need to know the world. Knowing the world helps very much for human survival. Or, the action of knowing is the main part of the ways of human's survival. Therefore people rarely think of knowing and survival as two different dimensions. Knowledge tells us from where comes the human being, the biological structure of human body, the cure of disease, etc. It seems that nothing is outside the purview of knowledge, and everything can be grasped by knowledge. We can know the things in the world as this or that, but the same thing might be recognized differently due to various ways of knowing. Then what is the reason people deal with things differently?

If the above issue shows that, besides the question of "knowing what," there is the question of "knowing how," the latter question goes deeper than the former. Still there is the issue about a person's feeling, willing and sentiment, which are something inside a person. They are not the object of knowledge, but they are not senseless for the meaning of life. In short, knowledge cannot cover the totality of human life; there are many things that we cannot know through knowledge, but should nevertheless be understood in our life. Something might be unknowable but understandable, most probably because it is not knowledge of some object, but, rather the condition of one's own self.

We are aware of all the things that we can know and understand. This awareness is the awareness of me as the totality of life. If the awareness is inevitable for life, nothing can suppress or conceal it. Knowing is part of awareness. Though knowing takes a very important role in human life, it can never substitute other elements of awareness. This condition shows itself in the history of philosophy.

When philosophy considers knowledge as its main task, it pushes the other aspects of awareness aside, and even conceals them. Especially, for Plato, knowledge is strictly defined. He distinguishes knowledge from opinion. What we initially know about our world is only opinion, while knowledge is the knowledge of the idea world. At first, it seems very strange to have such point of view: how could there be an ideal world which is substantial? For Plato, our perception of

the world is varying and changeable, therefore we cannot have a real grasp of the world. What he presents as the universal concept is the model for the same kind of the various concrete things. For instance the term "shape" as an idea is supposed to cover all the different shapes whether round, square or triangle etc., the term "virtue" covers all the concrete virtues, such as moderation, braveness, justice etc.[10] Since we can only see the concrete shape or experience the concrete virtue, when the idea 'shape' or 'virtue' is grasped we use in our consciousness a kind of faculty which is called thinking. Idea is something "one out of many," and "the unchangeable among the changeable." It helps people to grasp the things and communicate with each other more easily. For in order to cover all the things of the same kind, the idea itself must not be one of them, it is beyond the concrete things and hence is universal. But a single idea is not knowledge yet, since knowledge is the link of ideas to a proposition. This kind of knowledge, in contrast to opinion or daily common sense, is called universal truth or absolute truth. Operating the link between ideas results in logic, Gadamer said: "The relationship of ideas to one another is the most interesting point. Only in this way does the *logos* exist. It is not the simple appearance of an individual word but the link of one word with another. Only in this way is logical proof possible…"[11] It is Plato who opened for us a world of truth. At the same time he stimulates us to discover in our mind a special way of consciousness, i.e., conceptual thinking.

We can comment on the significance of Plato's philosophy from various points of view. From the perspective of this paper, it is conceptual thinking, which opens a special dimension of human existence. This existentiality functions greatly in natural science, as Kant elaborates in his *Critique of Pure Reason*. However, although conceptual thinking shows one aspect of human being's vitality, it can never represent vitality as a whole. Human being's life contains multiple aspects. He has to keep the whole vitality ready for responding to all kinds of challenges according to various living conditions. Though conceptual thinking, that is rational thinking, plays a significant role in life, human beings will not let it conceal the

---

[10] See Plato, *Meno*.

[11] Gadamer, *The beginning of Philosophy*, p. 55.

other aspects of vitality. This tendency shows itself in the disputation of philosophy. Four events should be highlighted in this respect.

The first event is the dispute between Plato and Aristotle. According to some scholars, the dispute did indeed happen between the two great philosophers. In the *Parmenides,* Plato made up a fiction about a dialogue between Parmenides and the young Socrates. In this story what the young Socrates challenged to the theory of ideas actually represents Aristotle's point of view.[12] Another example is Aristotle's *Metaphysics,* in which he openly criticized Plato's theory of idea by rejecting the existence of the world of ideas. But because he thought that to reach the level of universality is the most important characteristic of philosophy, he said: "Now of these characteristics that of knowing all things must belong to him who has in the highest degree universal knowledge."[13] As knowledge, art is higher in degree than experience, "The reason is that experience is knowledge of individuals, art of universals."[14] It is to be noted here that what Aristotle meant by "universal knowledge" is the "knowledge of all things" that is, something generalized from the experience, while what Plato meant is the universal apart from all the individual things. To show the difference between the two: universal is the word for Plato, while general, which is not absolute but relative, is for Aristotle. In the course of history, neither of the two positions disappears. Each has its own supporters. They extended into two separate philosophical schools: rationalism and empiricism. If one theoretically stands on one side, one would hold that the opposite is wrong. But actually none of the two can defeat the other. The fact justifies that: doing philosophy in the way of rationalism and of empiricism is contained in the human being's way of existence. They are constitutive of human being's vitality.

The second event, I would like to mention here is the so-called "epistemological turn" of philosophy in modern times. The focus is how we get knowledge. Actually, the two different schools understand knowledge differently. For one school, represented by Descartes, while talking about knowledge with clearness and clarity, it often took mathematics as paradigm. So we can see that, by knowledge, this school meant knowledge with the characteristics of

---

[12] Plato, *Parmenides,* 127d-135c.

[13] Aristotle, *Metaphysics,* 982a21.

[14] *Ibid.,* 981a15.

universality and necessity, though these terms did not come to the fore clearly until Kant. This school is called rationalism. The other school, empiricism, represented by a group of English philosophers, like John Locke, David Hume etc., did not agree with the rationalistic approach of knowledge in the above sense. This school challenged rationalism: how can we get concepts of universality and necessity, which are needed for formulating universal knowledge? Descartes, answering the challenge, said that we had those concepts as innate ideas. But Hume argued that, we cannot find those universal concepts on the basis of experience. The famous example is the concept of causation. There is no winner in the debate. Later, Kant summarized that perceptual experience and transcendental categories, i.e., the concepts with universality and necessity, are needed for the formulation of knowledge with necessity and universality. From the perspective of Western philosophy, this event is called the "epistemological turn," i.e., to turn from ontology to epistemology. One could see it as the change of topic within philosophy, and the change from the known to the knower is implicated in the meaning of philosophy. But if we bear in mind the strict definition of philosophy made by Plato or Aristotle: the search for truth in the world of ideas, or dealing with the being as being, then we cannot but think that philosophy breaks through for the first time its limitation. From this time on, philosophy does not only focus on knowledge, but also the knower. Thus, philosophy enlarged its scope.

The above story shows the tendency that philosophy is talking to the human being. But as the knower entered the philosophical scene, the way we do philosophy has not changed. It approaches the knower as the one who is seeing the object. This results in the knower as object, while the real knower was left behind and concealed. What would be the next step?

We see the third event in phenomenology. When Husserl developed phenomenology, he tried to explain how, in our consciousness, the intended object and our intentionality are related to each other. Here the object is not separated from our intention. But the object is not something outside consciousness. All we have been talking about here is a phenomenon of consciousness. Therefore, phenomenology is also called phenomenology of pure consciousness. The problem of the existence of the outside world is suspended. What matters is essence, i.e., what the thing is or the meaning of the things

is, not the existence of the things. Yes, human being's consciousness is the outstanding feature of human life compared to other living beings. However, human being has both body and consciousness. The two are integrated. He can never have consciousness without body. Besides, at the most part of a human being's operations, consciousness is accompanied by action, and all the actions of human being have consciousness with them. Therefore it is not enough to consider only the phenomenon of consciousness. Such a consideration anticipates the phenomenon of life.

The above consideration leads us into the fourth event of philosophy, namely Heidegger's thinking. The phenomenon of human life can only exist when there is a suitable environment to nourish the living body and, in turn, the body bears consciousness. The fact is, the phenomenon of life integrates two basic elements: environment and vitality. Vitality can become manifest as desire, will, imagining, thinking, spirit, consciousness, etc. According to a different type of vitality, the environmental side shows itself as nature, world, material, object, concept, body, etc. It is impossible to understand one side of the pair without the other. How can we reach such an understanding in language? In response, we find such an understanding in Heidegger's work. He proposes the term Dasein to denote every person, me. 'Da-' means 'here', the natural environment. The '-sein' means Being. It has to be noted, that Being in the Heideggerian sense does not have the same meaning as in traditional philosophy. In traditional philosophy, being means the most universal and the highest category, and as a category it is logically determined. But for Heidegger, Being is not a category but grammatically 'to be' (Zu-sein), the possibility of being this or that. It is a phenomenon which occurs here and discloses itself as it enters into the 'here'. This is just the phenomenon of life, the phenomenon of everyone, of mine. 'To think' means, I come to this world (Da-, here) to disclose for me the world as it is, to be a person with identity while comporting myself toward the world and others. The question of the meaning of being is enquiring the meaning of life (in Heidegger's early works). Heidegger's thinking shows a great turn of western philosophy. It changes the theme and the framework of philosophy, making a turn from knowledge to the phenomenon of life, pushing the traditional first philosophy backward by substituting fundamental philosophy for ontology. In his later works, the meaning

of being enlarges and means providence or Dao. The task of Dasein is to follow the Dao. Isn't it the theme of self-awareness of life?

Superficially, it is seemingly a surprise to change the theme of knowledge, the epistemology and phenomenology of consciousness to the theme of self-awareness of life. But in retrospect we find in the history of the Western philosophy, that it is just natural to go from the early to later themes. Philosophy begins with knowing the knowledge of the world, whether it is the truth of the world or the knowledge of the perpetual world. A deeper question is how we know the world. It leads to inquire the condition of the knower, the subject. Such an enquiry is formulated by epistemology. Behind this inquiry, the relationship between the subject and the object is granted. What stimulated Husserl is a special relationship between subject and object; that is the relation with the object as a category, essence or idea. They cannot be found in the perpetual world. It forced Husserl to take a step backward into pure consciousness, where he reveals the relation between the object as intended and the subject as intending. If the subject and the object are integrated in one point, i.e., me, it naturally leads to the question: since I am not existing as pure consciousness, what other kinds of existentiality do I have. Where am I from? What can I be? Where am I going to? These are the questions concerning the meaning of life. Heidegger formulated them in the analysis of the existence of Dasein. And, as I can see, the structure of Dasein in Heidegger is an enlargement of the structure of Husserl's intentionality.

Since we are human beings, there is no theme more important than the meaning of life. How can philosophy leave apart the theme of the meaning of life forever? Though the western philosophy begins with the inquiry of knowledge of the world, it reaches the theme of the meaning of life eventually. Because, in doing philosophy, people understand that this is a discipline inquiring both the deepest and the most important questions. Every road leads to Rome, because Rome is the destination for the travelers. The theme of the meaning of life is the ultimate aim of philosophy, since it goes to the deepest and the most important questions.

Yes, there is still a question, whether Heidegger's philosophy could represent the direction of the future of western philosophy? Indeed, we see in the present day many other philosophies. All of them go deeper than before in some sense, otherwise they cannot exist. But as

to whether they are also the most important ones, we are not sure, since they solely go into the direction of linguistic analysis, a logical, technical way of thinking, which is only one possible way of human being's existence. Compared to the analytic philosophy, some French philosophers are close to the theme of the meaning of life, except not so correctly and exactly expressed. For instance, at the beginning of this paper, I mentioned Levinas' theme: "knowledge is not the first philosophy," "ethics is the first philosophy." The first sentence does not express correctly the condition of traditional philosophy. For not all sorts of knowledge are considered as first philosophy. First philosophy is also called the first principle of knowledge. Only pure knowledge with universality and necessity could be first principle, i.e., ontology, which governs all knowledge in various domains. It is contradictory to say that ethics is the first philosophy, for as a doctrine, ethics also belongs to knowledge. If knowledge is not the first philosophy, how can a special kind of knowledge be the first philosophy? Nonetheless, there is something positive in Levinas' saying. He at least rejected knowledge as the first philosophy, and tried to find the 'real' first philosophy, the most important theme of philosophy, on the side of human being. But future philosophy cannot lose the theme of the human being as well as the world, i.e. -sein and Da-. Only understood as a phenomenon, the theme of future philosophy is present to us.

Self-Awareness: The Main Theme of Traditional Chinese Philosophy

If I am asked what the theme of the traditional Chinese philosophy is, I would have no hesitation in responding that it is being self-aware of life. It is true for both Confucianism and Daoism, except for some differences in degree. To verify this point requires a complete survey on the history of Chinese philosophy, which is impossible in this short paper. As a start, we can check the book of *Zhou Yi*, which is recognized as the origin of both Confucianism and Daoism. The book says: "The sages made the *Yi* for the purpose of being in conformity with the principle of life." Again, "[the trigram is made] to harmonize with the way and virtue, to recognize righteousness according to the vein (Li). It exhausts the vein (Li), let the nature (of every man and

thing) put into full play, hence to reach the destiny of life."[15] The theme is recognized by later scholars. In the preface of the commentary of this book, Chen Yi (A.D. 1033-1107), a Confucian in the Song Dynasty, wrote: "What the book contains, covers the whole without anything missing; It yields to the principle of life, clarifies the cause from the dim to the bright, exhausts the nature of all things and shows the Dao opening the world and completing human being's cause."[16] The key phrase here is 'the principle of life' (性命之理)，which shows that this book is focused on the self-awareness of life.

The book is composed of two parts. The first one is called *Yi Jing*, and consists of sixty-four hexagrams. Each hexagram has six positions from bellow to the top, so the diagram is more appropriately called hexagram (Gua). Each position is filled with a sign, either Yin- or Yang-. Since the hexagrams can have different signs in each of their positions, they differ from each other, and the total number of such hexagrams is sixty-four and no more. The diagrams (as trigram) is said to be created very early in the legend time by King Fu Xi. The document recorded that the founder of the Zhou Dynasty, King Wen, rearranged the hexagrams – before him there were two different arrangements of the hexagrams, which is called *Lian-Shan* in Xia Dynasty and *Gui-Zang* in Shang Dynasty respectively – and gave each of them a name. The above story happed before app. the 11th century B.C. The function of those hexagrams was used to do divining or sorcery. So *Yi Jing* is originally the book of divining or sorcery to predict the destiny of the people.

The decisive step for the book is to turn from a divine to a philosophical book, which was done by Confucius. He studied the book for long time. He put down the notes, the commentary or the appendix of the book. All the additions that Confucius made contain ten parts, which are called the ten accessories （十翼）. What we can read now is this version of the text; it is called *Zhou Yi*, containing *Yi Jing* and the ten accessories. It is due to Confucius' work that *Zhou Yi* has become a great philosophical book, otherwise it might have disappeared early.

As a matter of fact, there has been the dispute among Chinese scholars about whether Confucius wrote the ten accessories. Some

---

[15] Zhou Yi, Shuo Gua, *Appendix of remarks on the trigrams* (《周易,说卦》).

[16] See Preface of *Brothers Cheng's Commentary on Zhou Yi* (《周易程氏传 易传序》, 见《二程集》下卷, 中华书局, 1981, 第689页.

held that *Zhou Yi* was composed much later than Laozi and Confucius' Analects.[17] This issue is about whether *Zhou Yi* is the origin of Chinese philosophy. As far as I can see, it is beyond doubt that, besides Confucius, there could be no one who composed the ten accessories. More than one document said that Confucius in his later times expressed his resolution to make a thorough study of *Yi Jing*. We can read in the Analects many points that are in direct accordance with *Zhou Yi*. In the ten accessories, we read "Zi(子) says" again and again which in many ancient classics denotes Confucius' saying. What is more, we find in 1974 verifications, stemming from the new discovery of relics from a tomb of the Han Dynasty. It is a fragment of *Zhou Yi*, written down on several pieces of silk. In one of the pieces entitled *"Yao"* (meaning the main points), there is a story about when Confucius began to study *Yi Jing* and what achievement he got. It says, Confucius began to study *Yi Jing* in his late years (According to *Analytics*, it was after his fifties). Since he did not touch the *Yi Jing* before and was even against talking about the divine, one of his disciples, Zi Gong, wondered, why he changed his mind and turned to *Yi Jin*, because the master had taught the disciples not to touch sorcery or the divine. Confucius replied:

> I am behind the sorcerer and diviner in learning *Yi*. But what I intend is the integrity and meaning of it. For me, to operate the hexagram is to get the astronomic tendency; to clarify the astronomic tendency is to reach integrity. Then I will keep benevolence and act morally. I would have been a sorcerer if operating the hexagram without reaching the astronomic tendency; and I would have been an official historian if knowing the astronomic tendency without reaching the integrity. The divination of the sorcerer and the official historian is not something that can be realized by following. As you enjoy it, it will turn out to be wrong. Maybe in the future there will be someone wondering about Qiu (Confucius' self-address by his name), it is perhaps of *Yi*. However, what I am pursuing here is

---

[17] This dispute has begun since the Song Dynasty and lasts up to now. Today the negative side is still active. For instance, Professor Fung Yu-lan in his last book *A New History of the Chinese Philosophy* put *Zhou Yi* as a book composed in the period of *Warring States*. See Fung Yu-lan, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy* (Washington: Free Press, 1977), p. 324.

integrity only. I take the same way as the sorcerer and the historian do, but I have a destination different from them. The gentleman gets the good fortune by moral action, so he rarely does sorcery; the gentleman gets the favor by benevolence and righteousness, therefore the divination is hardly to be seen.[18]

This passage gives us a lot of information. It confirms Confucius' work on *Zhou Yi*. What is more it reveals his purpose of working on the book. He does not take it as a divine or sorcery book. Rather he changes it into a book focusing on human affairs.

For instance, the first hexagram is Qian, formulated by six lines of Yang, depicting the performance of an active force by the metaphor of a dragon's experience. It begins in hiddenness, appears in the fields as growing, leaps up in the sky or dives deep into the water to show its ability, then, gives a full play of itself, at last it regrets for his exceeding the proper limits. The story shows by the symbolic hexagram Qian the process of all the living things in nature. The further explanation of the story is made by Confucius and refers to the attitude of human existence. It says: "Heaven moves as the hexagram Qian denoted. The gentleman, in accordance with this, acts with his own strength ceaselessly." "It is the sage who knows to advance and to retreat, to maintain and to let perish; and that without acting incorrectly. Yes, it is only the sage who does so."[19] The essential meaning here is that a person should act according to the moment of his situation. The situation of a person is always changing. Confucius used the *Yi Jing* to show various possible situations and discussed how a wise man can catch the right moment.

Taking the above for granted, some people maintained that *Zhou Yi*, hence Confucianism, is only a kind of morality. Since moral philosophy, according to the usual classification of western philosophy, belongs to practical philosophy, it is lower than metaphysics. Despite the present suspicion of metaphysics as the first

---

[18] The silk book is written with characters in the Pre-Qin style, so it is difficult to be read. Dr. Liao Mingchun, an expert in this area, has made the text accessible. I made the translation according to his accessible text. The original Chinese text see "A Silk text 'Yao' accessible," in Liao Mingchun, *A Treatise on Silk Book Zhou Yi* (Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Book Publishing House, 2008), p. 389 ("帛书'要'释文," 见廖名春:《帛书〈周易〉论集》, 上海古籍出版社, 2008, 第389页.)

[19] *Zhou Yi*, Qian.

principle of philosophy, *Zhou Yi* has never limited itself to morality. It "covers the whole and without anything missed." However, it must be very difficult to express in language the idea that nothing has been left. Confucius was clearly aware of the difficulty, in *Yao*, he said, "*Yi* dealt with the Dao of heaven, but it could not be exhausted by listening to the sun, the moon, the creation and the time. Therefore Yin and Yang was formulated. It dealt with the Dao of earth, but it could not be exhausted by listening to water, fire, metal, soil and wood. So it was defined into strong and weak. It dealt with the Dao of human affairs, but it could not be exhausted by listening to father and son, emperor and minister, husband and wife, and the antecedence and subsequence. Therefore, it was summarized as lofty and petty. It dealt again with the change of the four seasons, but it could not be exhausted by listening to all things. So the eight trigrams were formulated. *Therefore, as a book, Yi could not cover the whole (all) by any one of the parts (kinds) except by focusing on the issue of change* (Italicized by translator)."[20]

The above way of doing philosophy is very different from that of traditional western philosophy. Traditional western philosophy is formulated by a kind of knowledge, i.e., universal knowledge. However universal it might be, it caused a division between the knower and the known. The knower is always outside the known. Even man himself becomes the object of knowing, he is still behind as the knower. The universal knowledge cannot exhaust all. The above citation shows that Confucius knew the key point. Therefore he did not want to generalize from the heaven, the earth and the human being into general (or universal) knowledge separately, because that will be separated into different areas and cannot cover the whole. Instead, he focused on the issue of "change," which will integrate heaven, earth and human being into one process. Nothing is missed in the discipline. Therefore we read in *Zhou Yi* not only the change of the human being, but also the change of nature (heaven and earth). Chinese philosophy traces all kinds of phenomena from the

---

[20] See "A Silk text 'Yao' accessible ," in Liao Mingchun, *A Treatise on Silk Book Zhou Yi*, p. 389 (廖名春："帛书'要'释文," 见《帛书〈周易〉论集》, 第389页. 原文如下: 故"易"又天道焉，而不可以日,月,生,辰尽称也, 故为之阴阳; 又地道行焉, 不可以水,火,金,土,木尽称焉, 故律之以柔刚; 又人道焉, 不可以父子, 君臣,夫妇,先后尽称, 故要之以上下; 又四时之变焉, 不可以万物尽称也, 故为之八卦. 故《易》之为书也, 一类不足以亟行之, 变以备其请者也.)

interaction of two forces: Yin and Yang, which in turn originates from one ultimate, Tai-Ji. Heaven and earth are created from the interaction of Yin and Yang, which in turn creates human being. Therefore heaven and earth are the ground for human being's action. The human being could be accountable with heaven and earth as the ground. We read in *Zhou Yi* that usually every hexagram represents a natural phenomenon, at the same time it implies the sense of human life. For instance, the hexagram of Qian, the beginning of the whole book, we cited above, describes the moving of heaven, it also says how a gentleman should act. Again, the hexagram Sun (损), the Chinese character Sun (损) meaning decrease, represents the natural phenomenon of the turning of the weather from autumn to winter. But it should not be understood as absolute decrease, for while the strong element is decreasing, the weak element increases. To be in accordance with this situation, a man should put himself in a humble position. Thus he can get more help and by the end he would not lose. Another hexagram Yi (益), the character means increase, represents the turning of spring to summer. This is the season for the living beings to grow. It begins with helpful and ends with harmful, for it is getting old and begins to decrease. Wang Bi (A.D. 223-249) remarks: "located in the ultimate of Yi, it is exceeding."[21] This makes sense for both the weather and human affairs.

It has to be noted that human affairs cannot be separated from natural phenomena, as *Zhou Yi* shows, but there is no doubt that the emphasis lies in human affairs. To put it in other words, though *Zhou Yi* talks about nature, it is not a book about the sheer knowledge of nature. The general picture of nature is as follows: "Therefore *Yi* has Tai Ji (太极，the Great Ultimate), it yields two elements. The two elements produce the four symbols, which again produce the eight trigrams. The eight trigrams serve to determine good and evil, and in turn, cause the great business of life."[22] It is the world outlook in Chinese philosophy, which is in accordance with the scientific theory of the explosion of the cosmos, though very dimly.

As the beginning of Chinese philosophy, it shows many differences compared with traditional western philosophy, which we cannot

---

[21] A Proof-reading and Remarks of Wang Bi's Collection, by Lou Yulie, p. 430. 《王弼集校释》下册，楼宇烈 (中华书局，1980，第430页).

[22] See The Appendix, Section one, *Zhou Yi*, the original text reads: 是故《易》有太极, 是生两仪, 两仪生四象, 四象生八卦, 八卦定吉凶, 吉凶生大业.

discuss here in detail. But one thing we have to mention is that the theme of Chinese philosophy determines its own way of doing philosophy. That is, since human being, heaven, and earth (nature) come from the same origin, or consequently the former one originates from the later, human being cannot act at will. Basically one should follow the way of nature. It results from the idea of Dao which is the main task of Chinese philosophy. To fulfill the task, self-cultivation is needed. So we can see that the great philosophers in Chinese history are always those ones who are the examples of doing self-cultivation in both body and mind.

Confucianism, with a period of interruption in Sui and Tang Dynasties, revived in Song and Ming Dynasties as Neo-Confucianism. The philosophical theme of self-awareness became more and more obvious in Neo-Confucianism. They call their teaching the doctrine of being a sage.[23] To be a sage means to be self-aware of one's life. Many issues were discussed in this topic, one of the key points is the very nature of human being. For instance, the brothers Cheng explained "What the great learning teaches is, to illustrate the illustrious virtue[24]…" by the following: "the illustrious virtue is what man has been endowed with by heaven. It is virtual but not blind, and it keeps all principles with it to respond to the changes of all affairs."[25] Notably, "to illustrate the illustrious virtue" is the first of the three requirements of a Confucian initiator.[26] As far as I understand, "illustrious virtue" means the nature of a man in the sense that he illustrates everything. It is not in the direction to know the world but to be aware of the self. It tells the theme of Chinese philosophy: being self-aware of life.

---

[23] "The Doctrine of being a sage" see Liu Zongzhou (1578-1645), *The Complete Collections of Liu Zongzhou*, vol.2, p. 192, 228. 见《刘宗周全集》(浙江古籍出版社，2007, 第192, 228页).

[24] This is the first sentence from *The Great Learning*, the first of the four basic Confucianism classics, selected by the Confucians in the Song Dynasty. The original text reads: 大学之道，在明明德…

[25] See Zhu Xi, *A Commentary on the Four Books*, The original text reads: 明德者，人之所得乎天，而虚灵不昧，以具众理而应万事者也.

[26] The other two requirements are, to be akin to the people, to rest in the highest excellence.

New-Confucianism developed into two branches, Li-Confucian-ism and Heart-Confucianism[27]. Though Li-Confucianism was stronger than Heart-Confucianism, the real successor of Confucianism was the latter one, as Professor Mou Zongsan[28] said. I think he is right, for the former puts the emphasis on Li, the principle (knowledge) governing both nature and mind, though being a sage is also a theme for them. The latter is focused on the heart, the organ in charge of thinking. It leads directly to self-awareness, which touches the ground of knowledge, for knowledge is the result of the encounter of man and the surroundings. In this encounter, human being shows himself more and more active. His way of comporting himself into the surroundings determines largely the realm, shape and the form of knowledge. The issue of human being is deeper than that of knowledge. Here the human being is not the object of knowing, but the knowing, the way of existence of every one of us.

Though the theme self-awareness is attractable, the Heart-Confucianism has not been known widely. Will it fade together with the other schools of philosophy? All depends on whether self-awareness comes to be the theme of our life.

To Be the Heart of Heaven and Earth

Practical life is always calling human beings to self-awareness of life. In the ancient times, the so-called sages take this responsibility for the masses. As society becomes more and more democratic, this task is up to every individual.

When we realize that not all human civilizations have survived up to now, we might understand the importance of the self-awareness of life. We find through archaeology and legend that some of the civilizations disappeared in the course of history. To our knowledge,

---

[27] Li-Confucianism and Heart-Confucianism is my translation of 理学和心学, the usual translation is rationalist Confucianism and idealist Confucianism (see Wing-Tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton University Press, 1963), which is too western. Li is not reason, since the character 理 comes from the vein of rock or jade. The character 心 is not mind, because it is the organ heart, while the ancient Chinese hold that the organ for thinking is heart not brain. Mencius said, the function of the organ heart is thinking.

[28] See Mou Zongsan, *Heart and the Nature of human being* (牟宗三,《心体与性体》（第一卷）(古籍出版社, 1999).

the causes of their fall might be natural disasters and war, which is either invasion from outside or domestic fighting. We know that the earth underwent great climate changes, which caused a large amount of species to become extinct. We also know that, even in modern times, certain civilizations were eliminated brutally by colonialism. Hence, survival must have its own way to overcome all difficulties and challenges. Survivors produced their own supplies, built houses to keep themselves from bad weather, developed medicine to protect and cure decease. They were told or forced to behave properly towards the others within and to protect against invaders from outside, so that society would be organized. I don't think that everyone gets to know all these things by birth. There must be some teachings from the ancestors. The customs, festivals and all sorts of cultural things are accumulations of human beings' experience of life. In ancient times, because of the low productive forces, most people lived in their culture without a real understanding of it. Only a few persons preserved the tradition, renewed it and taught the people to live in this or that way. They had a real understanding of the meaning of the ways by which people lived. They led the people to live successfully. People called them sages in a secular sense or prophets in a religious sense. Actually they were men with the self-awareness of life.

Today the situation has changed greatly. As a member of society, the average person also has the right to choose his way of life and can express his opinions in public. In short, in a time more and more democratic, the way of life is determined not by a few people but by all. This requires everyone to be self-aware. Only in this way people can establish a reasonable society and have a proper and better life.

Every generation has its concrete implications of self-awareness according to the situation it finds itself in. What situation do we have today? As far as I can see, the most conspicuous features of the current situation are the development of science and reverence of human life. Science and technology help people to extend the scope of life; strengthen the power to transform nature. The reverence of human life becomes manifest in the increasing of the world population and individual's freedom after the Second World War. But still we face many challenges, even some deadly ones. One of the serious challenges is the damage to the environment. The soil has been polluted, the climate turned warmer and warmer. It further harms the

food that we eat every day. People might worry about whether the earth can be the suitable place for living in the future. Another big challenge concerns the conflicts among people. Terrorism is the extreme manifestation of this. Though the terrorists are few, their actions cannot be explained simply by calling them crazy when they are killing innocent people. We should check the traditional view about human nature and the ideal on the basis of which society is established. All these elements call upon us to be self-aware of life.

To be self-aware of life does not mean to be aware of oneself as a sheer individual. For life is a phenomenon. This phenomenon is contained in the vitality and the environment, which nourishes and supports vitality. Without the latter, there could not be life. Therefore to be aware of life means at the same time to be aware both of the vitality of the individual and the environment. The environment contains both nature and society. Indeed, society exerts influence on human life no less than nature. In this sense, to be self-aware means to keep in mind both myself and the world. We have heard the saying by Zhang Zai (1020-1077), a Confucian in the Song Dynasty: "[one of the four tasks for a Confucian is] to be the heart of heaven and earth."[29] This means as being self-aware, I am not only the master of myself, but master of life as a phenomenon. It is needed because life cannot exist without a suitable environment. The master of life must at the same time be the master of the environment. Among all the animals, only a human being can be such a master. This is why we say that a human being is the essence among heaven and earth.

One might wonder how the human being's heart could be the heart of earth and heaven. If he limits himself to his body, he would not experience himself as the master of heaven and earth. However, practically, in many cases he will consider himself as the master beyond his body. For instance, when presenting some big occasion he will consider a decent coat as an inseparable part of him. He is the master of the coat. On a very cold day, when he feels uncomfortable, he will try to make the room warm or wear more clothes. He is the master of the survival condition. Again, in driving, he is absolutely the master of the car. The same holds true in social life. In

---

[29] Quoted from Zhu Xi, *Recent Contemplations* (引自《朱熹《近思录》》) see *The Complete Works of Zhu Xi* (《朱子全集》) vol. 13 (Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Book Express and Anhui Education Publishing House, 2002), p. 190. The original text reads: 为天地立心.

communicating with others, he is the master of speech. And if he wants others to have something done, he should consider the effect of his saying, which includes a consideration of others. He is the master of the business. He has already been the master of heaven and earth, positively or negatively. Self-awareness is to be aware of such a position that already has been.

Now it is urgent that human beings should be master of their own living condition, i.e., the master of the survival environment. Most probably we are aware of this task through negative elements; say the pollution of the earth, the air, water, climate and food, and the reduction of the non-reproductive of natural resources. These conditions not only harm the present being of life, but also harm the survival of future generations. It is a problem whether human beings' survival can be sustainable in this planet. An idea that is developed now is that maybe human beings can move to other planets in the future. This does not seem to be a fiction, for some scientists are working on this task, they are busy searching in the cosmos a suitable planet and improving the means of communication. Suppose we can realize this dream in the future, if we live in the same way in another planet as we live in this one, it is sure that we will damage that planet as we have been doing with the earth. If that will the case, why do we not protect this earth to be sustainable for living beings rather than playing the tragedy again in the future? I believe that human being has the wisdom to change the situation. Human beings need to unite as a whole, to rectify some of their ways of existence. One of the obstacles here is individualism, which restrains everyone within his own interest. People are divided into different classes. They consume different amounts of energy according to the properties they own. The rich lead a comfortable, even luxury way of life. The rectification of existence requires more of them than the poor in order to cut off some of their consuming. So it is not only a problem of inequality between the rich and the poor, but also a problem concerning the destiny of the whole human race. Fortunately, many problems concerning the environment become an international political issue. This shows human being's awareness of life. The key issue here is to establish the idea of life as an integral phenomenon. From this perspective, our earth is a living body, for it can sustain the survival of the species, and it seems that the earth is consciously doing this. Indeed, the earth has a heart; it is the human being who is the product of its own.

In the social realm, the condition seems to be more complex. There are quarrels between opposite '-isms' such as liberalism vs. conservatism, collectivism vs. individualism, democracy vs. authoritarianism, etc. These problems need to be studied in another paper. But here we need to ask what the grounding for each position is. Only then can we get to the root of the issue. To compare this with the grand idea of the phenomenon of life, I dare to say that the grounding of all the above arguments must be very narrow.

I believe that the idea that the phenomenon of life will be realized, because human beings have wisdom. Humans have already seen the challenge. Though people have different interests now, they can see that the greatest interest is the sustainable survival of human beings. If the earth is damaged, no single person can survive. A Chinese proverb goes: how can a single egg survive if the net is broken? The most convincible argument is the fact. The fact will teach people to rectify their way of life. However, it is philosophy's due to tell the truth on beforehand. The ancient Chinese philosophers did not see today's condition, but they rendered to us the idea of the self-awareness of life. Western philosophy is going in the same direction. As we mentioned earlier in this paper, Heidegger's term for human being is Dasein. By this term the essence of the human being is considered not from the perspective of the object, nor the subject, but from the perspective of the Being of Dasein, that is, from the way and how human beings comport themselves in the world. This is the phenomenon of life. One might say that Heidegger calls for the authentic Being of Dasein which seems to be more individualistic. But there is more to his thought. In Heidegger's later work, though he still insisted that the issue of the meaning of Being was still his main theme, he actually put Being on a broader ground than Dasein, – to use his own words, providence, destiny or the way. This means that a human being can choose his own way to exist, but those choices are not rendered by him, alone. Every human being is thrown into the world by some force, the force called Being. "Man is the shepherd of Being," Heidegger says.[30] Obviously, he does not think that man could act as he wills. However, man should not act blindly either. This

---

[30] Martin Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," *Basic Writings* (San Francisco: Harp, 1977), p. 234

points to self-awareness. Though he does not use the word "self-awareness," the point is very clear.

I would like to cite Zhang Zai's words as the end of this paper: "By enlarging his heart, one can experience all the things under heaven. If there is something missing, it is because there is still room outside his heart."[31]

---

[31] Zhang Zai：《正蒙 大心篇》the original test reads: 大其心则能体天下之物。物有未体，则心有其外。

11.

On the Non-Theoretical Characteristics of Chinese Traditional Philosophy from the "Zhong Dao" (The Mean Way)

HE XIRONG

According to Hegel's comments on Chinese philosophy, Confucianism, as represented by Confucius himself, was just moralizing and not speculative philosophy. He was of the opinion that, although *The Book of Change* included abstract thinking and pure categories, it lacked thoroughness and conceptual thinking. He said that the concept of the five elements (metal, wood, water, fire, and earth) in the Book of Documents (尚书) is a mixture of existence, not the starting principle. *Dao* in Daoism is only a general abstraction, which is not at the beginning stage of abstraction, so it might only be called the 'original reason.'[1]

Hegel's comments on Chinese Philosophy run counter to those of philosophers in the 17-18th Century Europe such as Leibnitz, Voltaire, and Diderot, who especially appreciated Chinese ethical philosophy. This phenomenon reflects that idealist philosophy, as represented by Hegel, was the completion of the general philosophical stance with regard to Chinese philosophy at that time.

According to the idealist view of Chinese traditional philosophy it is surely a non-philosophy. In fact, from the end of 19th century, in the tide of learning from the West, this negative view on writing and developing Chinese philosophy was dominant in western philosophy, as it was heavily influenced by idealism.

Now, from the results of more in depth comparative studies between Chinese and Western philosophy, it is clear that Chinese and Western philosophy follow two different patterns. Yet, although ways of expression and the paths of construction are different, idealism and non-idealism are both reflections of human existence. In particular, they are ways of pursuing spiritual energy, as well as life attitudes and life pursuits.

---

[1] See Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, in Chinese version translated by He Lin and Wang Taiqing (1959), pp. 135-137.

This article focuses on the 'mean' thought (which is a thinking mode) in Chinese traditional philosophy, based on descriptions of mean thinking, and tries to show its non-theoretical or non-principled nature.

We know that different nationalities generate their own modes of thinking from different living practices, and at the same time specific modes of thinking determine the ways of living of these very nationalities. Nevertheless, on the way to modernization in China from the 19th century onwards, some traditions, including traditions of thought have disappeared. As a result, the Chinese people are facing the awkward situation of being "neither Chinese nor Western" or "being Chinese and Western at the same time."

Zhongdao (中道, mean thought, or the middle way, or the middle course), the mode of Chinese traditional thinking, avoids dualism and takes *Tian* (天, heaven), *Di* (地, earth) and human beings as a whole. In such notion, human beings are in an important position, because they can change their ways of existence according to their thoughts and establish *Tian Di* (inclusive society) and harmony. An interpretation of such thinking may be helpful to solve the problems of human beings in the life-world today.

Raising the Question

Thinking, about major kinds of people's conscious activity, including ways of observing and mindfulness, is an effective means for developing persons and society. Specific modes of thinking are formed historically. Therefore, because of different living environments, ways of practicing, and cultural conditions, Eastern and Western modes of thinking have appeared differently. In consequence, their ways of knowing and practicing that are directed by thinking are different. However, a judgment about which mode is better cannot be made, they are just different.

From China's defeat in 1840 onwards, Western technologies, institutions and thoughts have been the examples that the Chinese learned from the West. Many Chinese intellectuals, like Gong Zizhen, Liang Qichao, Yan Fu, Hu Shi, Lin Yutang, Lu Xun, Liang Shuming, Chen Duxiu, Li Dazhao etc., have made comparative studies between the West and China, and they concluded that almost in every aspect China lagged behind the West. As a result, derogatory terms like

ignorance, naivety, senility, etc., have been used to identify China and the Chinese. Therefore, criticism of the Chinese people's character and advocacy of a revolution of thinking have been the fashion of that time.

The May Fourth Movement in 1919 was the first time that all the Chinese intellectual elites thoroughly rethought Chinese traditional culture. They made a systematic criticism of Chinese traditional politics, economics and culture. The New Culture Movement, holding the doctrine to "overthrow Confucian thought and learn from the West," swept across the country. New subjects, such as vernacular Chinese, simplified Chinese characters, science and democracy, became to be known by the masses quickly through the intellectual elite's advocacy. There is no doubt that the Chinese people were enlightened by this movement and that Chinese society made progress because of it. However, this movement also brought some extreme viewpoints to the fore, such as "there's no need for a young man to read Chinese books" (Lu Xun), "China is backward in everything" (Hu Shi), "abolish Chinese characters"(Qian Xuantong) and "throw Chinese traditional books into the toilet" (Wu Zhihui) etc. The situation was just as Hu Shi's saying *in Renaissance in China,* "there is revolt everywhere and tradition is thrown away. The authorities and traditional faith are oppugned…an amount of cheap beliefs of anti-idol and new-worship are emerging." In order to change the Chinese mode of thinking and learning from Westerns, Yan Fu translated J. S. Mill's treatise of logic into Chinese and introduced it to the Chinese people. Because philosophy is the ground of the mode of thinking, later scholars also did their best to study Western philosophies. Even in the present age, criticism of the Chinese tradition is still concentrated on the criticism of the Chinese mode of thinking. The representative issues are provided by Bo Yang and Chu Yu, who think that the essential reason of China's backwardness is the Chinese mode of thinking and that the Chinese must learn the Western scientific mode of thinking in order to make progress.[2]

However, the mode of thinking of one nation is deeply grounded in its history, and it cannot be uprooted totally by a simple advocacy of rejection and revolution. Therefore on the way to modernization,

---

[2] Bo Yang has published a book on *The Ugly Chinaman* (Taipei: Linbai Publishing House). Chu Yu has published a book on *Critique of Chinese Thinking* (Chinese People's Publishing House, 2010).

we find that the Chinese traditional mode of thinking is receding, while the Western mode of thinking is not established simultaneously as its supplement. That means that the Chinese people fall into embarrassment, "neither Chinese nor Western" or "being Chinese and Western at the same time."

There have been many expositions on the differences between a western mode of thinking and Chinese. For example, the Chinese mode of thinking emphasizes synthesis, entirety, induction, hint, implication, ethics, intention, intuition, imagery, and circle, whereas Western mode of thinking emphasizes analysis, individuality, deduction, exactness, clarity, recognition, objectivity, logic, demonstration, and linearity. Chinese traditional thinking seeks a common ground while keeping differences, but Western traditional thinking seeks common ground while reserving difference. Just as Ludwig Feuerbach's asserted, "the Easterner sees unity without differences, whereas the Westerner sees differences without unity."[3]

In fact, a specific mode of thinking has molded into a specific living environment of one nation and functions in solving existential problems. So one mode of thinking has its own reason and is the motivation of formulating a kind of national character. Nevertheless, it is objectively so that the Western mode of thinking and the Chinese one have their own merits and shortcomings. For instance, from a positive perspective, Chinese traditional thinking is good at shaping an integral, systematic and active grasping of the world and things, and at the same time Chinese medicine, Qigong (气功) and the Chinese way of preserving health all have important relations with the characters of Chinese thinking, which emphasizes intuition, blur, and conflict. At the same time, from a negative perspective, Chinese traditional thinking lacks the spirit of science and cannot formulate the scientific form of knowledge, thus implying that Western modern science cannot prosper in China. The dual character of Western thinking also presents itself clearly in the sense that reason has, on one hand, been the great impetus of modernization, while, on the other hand, it restricts more and more the integrated development of human being.

---

[3] Ludwig Feuerbach, *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy*, inserted at *Selected works of Feuerbach* book 1 (Commercial Press, 1984), p. 45.

Because it originates from live activities, accompanied by the changes of existence, the mode of thinking should also change when the conditions of existence change. It is not rational to use one kind of thinking in order to address the other, while abandoning one's own mode of thinking and advocating an unfamiliar one. An either-or method should be avoided, because it results in a thinking of binary oppositions that has been strongly criticized and abandoned by contemporary philosophies. Therefore, what we have to do is clarify the different aspects of one mode of thinking in order to grasp the ways, in which it occurs and progresses. The ground of this method lies in that "man is the producer of his own notions, thoughts and so on,…, consciousness in any time is the conscious being, and the being of man is his actual living process."[4] This is the basic view of historical materialism and of Marxism.

Zhongdao (mean way) as the Chinese Traditional Mode of Thinking

The thinking of *Zhongdao* is the common ground of thinking modes that focus on integrity, blur and conflict, and that are specific compared to the Western mode of thinking. Western philosophy is necessary "the other" when one wants to determine the traits of Chinese thinking. Binary thinking, making an antithesis between subject and object, phenomenon and substance, reason and perception and so on, is characteristic of mainstream Western philosophy, whereas there is no such pattern in Chinese traditional thinking. As mentioned above, Chinese thinking takes *Tian*, *Di* (天地) and human being as a whole and gives an important function to the human. To an important extent, the functioning of human beings' lies in the awareness of existence as an interactive process with environments that include nature and society. People should be "the heart of *Tian Di.*" That means, the world is taken as a living entity, and human being as the smaller living entity, which should live properly in the world. The proper existentiality is changeable and relatively balanced. Because of the changes of environments and the emergence of new demands of people, the balance is regularly broken. Therefore, the

---

[4] Karl Max & Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology* (Chinese People's Publishing House, 1961), p. 19.

importance of human beings lies in the awareness of life, just as Lao-tzu's saying: "He who knows others is wise, he who knows himself is enlightened, he who conquers others has physical strength, he who conquers himself is strong."[5] A wise and strong person should know him/herself better and win him/herself more than others. The attitude of self- awareness should not only be taken by a person, but also by a nation.

The purpose of self-awareness of life is to enhance people's living quality and cultivating a perfect personality. People could change their ways of living to attain Dao (道) and see their world more clearly. Such a mode of thinking implies great vital energies. Good examples of such thinking can be seen from the long history of the Chinese way of overcoming important challenges, from the rapid development of China during the recent thirty years and from the flourishing of some Asian countries, e.g., Singapore and even Japan, as well as some districts, e.g., Hong Kong and Taiwan. All one way or another holds Confucian doctrines.

The so-called thinking of *Zhong* or *ZhongDao* is constructed with the three following dimensions:

The first is right, proper and impartial. The word "Zhong"(中) emerged early in China and represented the central position of a mast in carapace-bone-script and bronze-script. The ancient meaning of this word is the vital part of a mast that ensures the mast's upright standing in order to make distant people see flags.[6] So then "Zhong" has the meaning of grasping a proper point to stand up in an unbeaten state. The original meaning of Zhong was later translated into a philosophical term "holding the two and using the middle"[7]（执两用中. It means listening to both sides and choosing the middle course.

The mainstream of Chinese traditional culture had formed itself in the process of conflict and fusion of Confucian, Taoism and Buddhist, and the thinking of *ZhongDao* is the common way. In the *Book of*

---

[5] Lao Zi, *Tao Te Ching*, Chapter 33, the English quote is taken from Wing-Tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 156.

[6] *Origin of Chinese Characters* (说文解字), first Chinese dictionary, compiled by Xu Shen, 121 A.D. It explains "Zhong (中), inside, from mouth, through up and down." The *Source Dictionary of Chinese characters*, edited by Gu Yankui (Hua Xia publishing House, 2003), also explains that "Zhong, its original meaning is the flag of clan society."

[7] *The Book of Rites, Doctrine of the Mean.*

Changes Confucius indicates that locating oneself in "Zhong" is proper, and means avoiding extremes and at the same time not doing one thing and neglecting another. A well-known remark states, "Yun Zhi Jue Zhong"[8] (允执厥中, keep to the centre) which was handed down from the oldest emperor Yao (尧) to Shun (舜), to Yu (禹) to Tang (汤), to Wenwang (文王), to Wuwang (武王), to Zhougong (周公), to Confucius and to Mencius, For instance, when emperor Yao (尧) abdicated the throne to emperor Shun (舜), he told him "YunZhiQueZhong" (允执厥中, keep to the centre), and emperor Shun also told emperor Yu (禹) "YunZhiQueZhong" when he demised. In the orthodox passing, from Yu to Tang (汤), to Wenwang (文王), to Wuwang (武王), to Zhougong (周公), to Confucius and to Mencius, the instruction "Yun Zhi Que Zhong" was passed too, so this saying has been taking as an essence of Chinese cultural tradition. Confucius held that all things had their own extent and that turning excessive and insufficient situations into harmony was the mean thought. He said, "Since I cannot get men pursuing the due medium, to whom might I communicate my instructions? So I must find the ardent and the cautiously-decided. The ardent will advance and lay hold of truth; the cautiously-decided will keep themselves from what is wrong."[9] Excessiveness and insufficiency, extreme tendencies or wrong tendencies are objected by Confucius. For instance, one's conduct is neither reaching for what is beyond one's grasp nor having no ambition at all. Too strict or too loose administration should be rejected. In the book *Confucius's Precepts to his Family*, he said that "tampering force with mercy is the harmonic way of administration."[10] Later Mencius passed on a Confucian saying, saying, "A great artificer does not, for the sake of a stupid workman, alter or do away with the marking line. Yi did not, for the sake of a stupid archer, change his rule for drawing the bow. The superior man draws the bow, but does not discharge the arrow. The whole thing seems to leap before the learner. Such is his standing exactly in the

---

[8] Zhu Xi, *the Preface on Passages of Doctrine of the Mean*. See *Collectively The Four Books* (Shanghai Classics Publishing House, 2006), p. 21.

[9] *Analects*, 13.21 (James Legge's translation).

[10] *Confucius's Precepts to his Family*, see Zhou Shan and Da Hao, eds., *Approaching Confucius: Confucius quotations in addition to the Analects* (Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences Press, 2007), p. 240.

middle of the right path. Those who are able, follow him."[11] *ZhongDao*, right in there, needs people's searching and practicing, that means people should adapt to the mean thought, but the mean thought should not adapt to people.

In Taoism, Lao-tzu also said, "Much talk will of course come to a dead end. It is better to keep the mean (*Zhong*)."[12] *Tao* (道) is the central notion in Lao-tzu's thinking, but the mean (*Zhong*) is the way of grasping Tao. The meaning of mean (Zhong) is grasping unchanging thing in changing things in order to deal with different matters. An important methodological principle of thinking of ZhongDao is to avoid extremes and one-sidedness, so in Lao-tzu's thinking there are many discourses on "things turning into their opposites when they reach the extreme." Chuang Tzu also applied the thinking of ZhongDao (mean thought) to solve life issues. He said that the humanness and handling of affairs should "grasp one to deal with many"[13] and "take the mean thought to attain harmony." Then he took the story of dismembering an ox as skillfully as a butcher as an example to explain "Pursue a middle way as your principle"[14] (缘督以为经). That means ZhongDao is the way of preserving one's life. In the view of Buddhism, ZhongDao is the highest truth, namely to avoid extremes. At the same time it is the standard of behavior, the only way of emancipation through cultivating.

Buddhism regards the mean way as the supreme truth, which is the result of synthesizing two sides, while it is used as a code of conduct. The mean thought in *Madhyamika-sastra* (Knowledge of the Middle Way) written by Nagarjuna had a great influence in China. The mean thought opposes the extremes and absolutism of secular ideologies, it advocates "to suppose that [everything consists] of two sides, including being and non-being." Kumārajīva (who translated *Madhyamika-sastra*) explained that "being and non-being are all not mean way." Master Zhiyi, Founder of Tiantai Sect, proposed "three parts harmony" which means "not in the empty, not in the false, it is

---

[11] *The Works of Mencius*, 13.41 (James Legge's translation).

[12] *The Lao Tzu*, Chapter 5, Wing-Tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p.142.

[13] Zhuangzi, *On the Equality of Things.*

[14] Zhuangzi, *Health Advocate.*

the mean way" (zhongdao).[15] Master Zhiyuan compared the mean way between Confucianism and Buddhism and he thought that both languages are different, but the ideas are the same.

Consequently, the difference between the thinking of ZhongDao and that in terms of binary opposition needs to be clarified. The former emphasizes harmony of multi-elements and avoiding extremes. ZhongDao and the similar thinking of *ZhongYong* (中庸) and *ZhongHe* (中和) together constitute the core of Chinese traditional thinking. All have become rich sources of the Chinese wisdom and have deeply influenced the life-attitudes of the Chinese people. This kind of thinking provides a very broad horizon of possible findings. That means proper adjustment and right ways become possible.

The three schools, Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, as the main streams of the Chinese traditional culture, all think in the way of ZhongDao. This fact has laid foundations of the Chinese mode of thinking.

The second character of ZhongDao is *Yi* (righteousness, 义). That means proper and reasonable: in proper time one takes a proper method to attain the best result. When Confucius spoke about how to become a gentleman, he said, "When the person in authority is beneficent without great expenditure; when he lays tasks on the people without their repining; when he pursues what he desires without being covetous; when he maintains a dignified ease without being proud; when he is majestic without being fierce,"[16] "being expressive of enjoyment without being licentious, and of grief without being hurtfully excessive"[17] and "the superior man is dignified, but does not wrangle. He is sociable, but not a partisan."[18] These are not only standards of conducting people, but also standards of administrating a country.

To grasping proper method should also pay attention to *ShiZhong* (时中, taking a proper time) and *Quanbian* (权变, acting according to circumstances). "ShiZhong" (taking a proper time means taking way of Zhong in right time. Here the notion of time was introduced by Confucius. In his opinion, there is no abstract Zhong, and presence

---

[15] Tang Yongtong, *The history of Buddhism in Sui and Tang Dynasties* (China Publishing House, 1982), p. 168.

[16] *Analects* (translated by James Legge, 20.2).

[17] *Analects* (translated by James Legge, 3.20).

[18] *Analects* (translated by James Legge, 15.22).

and historicity are characters of the Mean (Zhong). That means taking way of Zhong should apply in a flexible way and take actions that suit concrete circumstances. "Quanbian" (acting according to circumstances) introduces change, but not without principle. That means grasping the right way in concrete changing circumstances. "ShiZhong" and "Quanbian" include judgments of value and arts of administration in the following ways: following a comprehensive assessment, advancing with the times, seizing the opportunities and finding something new in what is old. In Mencius' view, ZhongDao's concrete application is solving the problem of what the relation between principle (Jing, 经) and change (Quan, 权) is. Change should come from principle. If persisting in principle and neglecting concrete circumstances, change becomes impossible and the real Mean (Zhong) is not accessible. In his book, Mencius took the story of "saving sister-in-law falling into water" and "Shun (舜) saves his guilty father" as examples to interpret the problem solving the relation between principle and changing.

The third character of ZhongDao (mean thought) is unity of oppositeness and interdependency. *The Book of Changes* recorded, "The Yin [阴] and the Yang [阳] make up the Dao." That means all things in the world are pairing, transforming between Yin and Yang and coexisting in harmony. According to the records in the *Great Appendix of The Book of Changes*, early in Chinese high antiquity, people "Looking up, they observe the pattern of the Tian; looking down, they examine the order of Di," "changing according Tian Di to go under the way of Tian Di." The meaning of ZhongDao, acting according to Tian Di, is initiated here. Confucius also said, "Am I indeed possessed of knowledge? I am not knowing. But if a mean person, who appears quite empty, asks anything of me, I set it forth from one end to the other, and exhaust it."[19] This is the description of Confucius' searching ZhongDao. The saying in *The Doctrine of the Mean*, "so raise it to its greatest height and brilliancy, so as to pursue the course of the Mean"[20], has the same meaning.

Therefore, the core of ZhongDao, the Chinese traditional mode of thinking, is a notion of Du (度, degree). People who think in this way

---

[19] *Analects* (translated by James Legge, 9.8).

[20] *The Doctrine of the Mean* (translated by James Legge, Chapter 2).

change existentialities properly according to the concrete circumstances to get into situations of peace and harmony.

The Thinking Mode of ZhongDao and the Spirit of China

There have been many controversies on how traditions should be treated, but it is clear that apart from the ground of tradition, innovation cannot be made. It seems to me that the advocacies of the revolution of thinking and of the reforms of the modes of thinking express deep reflections on the limitations of traditional thinking and worries about the blocking of people's integrated development. Actually, "the integrated development of people" should be advocated directly. This is so, because the mode of thinking is still an abstraction, while the integrated development of people should include all kinds of activities of innovation of human beings.

On the basis of the above mean thinking, we can see that the mean way (Zhong Dao) is not only a method, but also a value of life and practical wisdom, and moreover a spiritual realm. ZhongDao is to seek and to establish corresponding communications and coordination in varieties of complex and contradictory relations and then to maintain stability and balance in an open environment. The mean way (ZhongDao) is actually a peaceful and wise life style, life attitude and life realm. It has cultivated the Chinese people's way of doing things and their ability to find a balance. It is not only traditional, but also has positive modern value. In today's view, we need to adjust the thinking mode of people, both in the East and in the West. The reason of this transformation lies in the fact that a deviation of people's thinking has been occurring and the circumstances have changed. These two facts are actualities now. On the one hand, the deviation of the way of thinking of the Chinese people from early modern times onwards has created a situation of "neither Chinese nor Western." On the other hand, it is very essential that the existentiality of science has become decisive today and the meaning of human lives has been enriched unprecedentedly. This reality of the relevant existentialities cannot be ignored.

In the Chinese traditional thinking, the lack of scientific thinking has caused the advocacy of science during the May Forth period. The tremendous development of science and technology in China, the geniture of many excellent scientists, taking science and technology as

the primary productive force, have occurred in this context. Because of the inertia of traditional thinking, this kind of scientific thinking should be consciously insisted. Therefore, the thinking of ZhongDao could play an important role here. It should be aware that scientific thinking is not the only kind of effective thinking. We should value and fully use the intuitive and organic characteristics of the Chinese traditional thinking. This is what concrete changeable life demands from us. Hence, we should reject the harm of scientism, and the consequence of an extreme development of scientific thinking.

Every nation is facing the challenge of transforming its mode of thinking in today's era of globalization. Radical changes of people's ways of living have taken place since the development of science and technology, especially since the development of information technology. At the same time, transformation in the mode of thinking has also occurred, in which multi-dimensional interaction and open innovation are the main tendencies. That means that people should search for a balance between integrating and analyzing, logic and intuition. Therefore, in the background of the comparison between Chinese and Western modes of thinking, revaluing the merits and deficiencies of the two ways and creating an active wisdom to solve problems are the mission and responsibility of all of us today.

Indeed, today, our discussion of the value of Asian culture could be very significant. The domination of Western culture in recent centuries should be overthrown. In fact, even in the West, many people of insight have begun reflecting on their own culture and finding new sources in the East. In order to keep the identity of one's own nation, without assimilating Western culture, people should sort out their own cultural heritage first. Only then, can effective communications between different nations become real contributions to world harmony.

12.

Philosophy and Life-world:
The Zen Buddhist Perspective

LALAN PRASAD SINGH

In the Western philosophical tradition life-world is understood as the universe that is self-evident or given, the world that is experienced by the subject. According to Husserl, "The life-world is the fundamental of all epistemological enquiries." This concept has its root in biology. The concept of the life-world is referred and used both in philosophy and social sciences like sociology and anthropology. The concept of life-world, which is called in German *Lebenswelt*, has been further developed by Martin Heidegger and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. The life-world is a dynamic concept. It refers to the life we live. It is an experience of "lives with us." There is a lot of debate and discussions of life-world in Husserl's phenomenology and Max Weber's sociology. Marxist concepts of *alienation* and Habermas's perspective present a general phenomenal life-world 'colonization'.

To my mind, the Western concept of philosophy and life-world does not represent the proper understanding and meaning of life-world. Life-world comes within the purview of ontology, which is the study of existence and being. Philosophy is a quest for truth, reality and one's own identity. In the quest of identity and destiny man discovered philosophy and enlightenment.

Sixth century B.C. is known to world history as an era of *renaissance.* History has never before or after witnessed the presence of a galaxy of great thinkers who have changed the course of history by regenerating mankind spiritually, morally and intellectually. The wheel of change was set in motion in history by the Buddha of India, Lao-Tzu and Confucius of China, Parmenides, Heraclitus and Zeno of Greece. All of philosophy of the world is an elaboration, evaluation and examination of the issues and the principles that have been formulated by these thinkers. Asceticism is considered as the *conditio sine qua non* for mystical experience and spiritual enlightenment. This has been the hallmark of the Indian sages, Greek thinkers and Taoist and Confucian sages of China. They all considered continuity of life,

immortality of self, the cycle of birth and death as the kernels of philosophy and life.

The Buddha, Lao-Tzu and Confucius are the greatest philosophers that the world has produced to date: Lao-Tzu, a philosopher and Confucius, an ethical teacher.

Chinese philosophy has exercised great influence in making life richer and fuller. We have to examine Taoism and Confucianism in the modern context. The term Tao has been interpreted by different thinkers at different periods of history in different ways. Tao is sometimes translated as a path or way. It is sometimes translated as absolute reality. It is considered as totality of all things and beings. Tao is sometimes equated with order or the principle of order and harmony and unity. In the *Tao Te Ching* this word *Tao* has been used seventy six times with different meanings and connotations. According to Wittgenstein, the meaning of a word is determined in a cultural context and to understand the word *Tao* we have to know in which cultural context this word is being used. Sometimes it is used as a doctrine or as a natural law. However, *Tao* is not used in the sense of a name, since a name is personal and connotes individuality. Tao has been used in the sense of mother, also without any kind of anthromorphic connotations; in the *Tao Te Ching*, Tao is used as a mysterious female or mother.[1]

Confucius's wisdom and knowledge captivated both the ruling elites and the masses of China; his teachings created a political upheaval in late second and third century A.D. The intense intellectual activity and the resulting political awakening forced the Chinese mind to accept Confucianism as official ideology. The whole Chinese political and state craft derived moral and ethical ideas from him, which regulated the behaviors and the social conduct of the ruler and the ruled. However, in the beginning of the third century Confucianism started waning and lost much of its glory and political appeal, because it could not save the empire from schism and disintegration. The Chinese intellectual and the ruling elites became disenchanted with Confucianism for some time and started searching new political and moral grounds for the revival of both the Chinese empire and the social system. In search of new ideals and goals they started revising

---

[1] *The Essential Tao, Translated and Presented by Thomas Cleary* (Harper: San Francisco, 1993), p. 11.

legalism with its insistence upon measure to re-establish a law and order system. These intellectuals started reinterpreting Taoism. However, this intellectual awakening and movement neither re-established Taoism nor rejected Confucianism. In this dialectical movement of thought and ideas, Confucianism lost its metaphysical basis and Taoism supplied the philosophical and speculative philosophy to sustain the Chinese philosophical provenance.

This intellectual awakening and movement gave birth to the system which dominated the intellectual and cultural life of China. One of these two systems emphasizes the importance of social duties, rituals and the practical affairs of the government in maintaining cohesion and progress of both individual and society. This system was the outcome of the cultural metamorphosis of Confucianism and legalism and it assumed a new name called "Ming-Chiao" (The doctrine of names). The other system stressed the importance of an ontological and metaphysical commitment. It considered the quest for permanence behind substratum. Permanent substratum behind the phenomena of change and flux. According to this philosophical tradition there is an impersonal principle which is unlimited, unchanging, and indescribable behind all temporality. This movement imbibed the basic ideas and support, both from Taoism and Confucianism, and gave birth to a new school of thought known as Hsuan Hsuch ("Dark Learning").

When we examine the social and cultural life of China, we find that Confucianism and Taoism have played the most dominant role in creating systems of both political and moral value, which keep the Chinese people together. Confucianism imparted knowledge on social and moral values to define the individual's place in society. It helped both the individual and the state in maintaining the cooperate life by providing the value system and social reality, which bind man with society, husband with wife, state with subjects, ruler with the ruled.

Chinese society is one of the most ancient and it is but natural that there have been innumerable systems of rituals and customs even before the advent of Lao-Tze and Confucius. It is evident from all available historical materials and data that Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism have influenced the Chinese mind and culture and they have kept Chinese philosophical, political, social and cultural traditions alive. These systems are still influencing the Chinese moral system and social conduct. Buddhism played the part of moderating

the moral behavior of the Chinese people. Buddhism with its middle path kept the Chinese mind from going astray. It avoids the life of extremes, that is the life of indulgence and the life of renunciation. It says that middle path is the only way to deliverance. We can live in society only through observing the moral and the social conduct. For the observance of moral conducts both the inner urge and external pressure are required. We cannot enforce any moral conduct to people in absence of an inner urge. The inner urge is created by the implicit faith in the system and the pattern of values. This inner urge can be created only by creating a faith in the system. Buddhism, with its profound philosophy and doctrines of *Karma Re-birth*, Nirvana and *Paticcasamuppada,* created faith in a life of goodness. *Karma* says "as you saw, so you will reap." This doctrine creates an earning for moral life to get deliverance and emancipation from the cycle of birth and death. Chinese society gets the moral support both from Confucianism and Buddhism to lead a life of filial piety. On the other hand, Confucianism with its political philosophy and doctrine, provided the system of external pressure to keep the behavior of the individual within the four walls of political value system.

Confucianism is concerned with the outer manifestation of human conduct and behavior whereas Buddhism was more concerned with inner purification of the human mind and consciousness, and in this way one is complementary to the other. Chinese Buddhism is not the true copy of Indian Buddhism. It blossomed under the moral and the spiritual care of Confucianism and Taoism. It was but natural that Chinese Buddhism assimilated some of the moral teachings and the spiritual teachings of Confucianism and Taoism which resulted into a new form of Chinese Buddhism which is called Ch'an Buddhism or Zen Buddhism.

Zen Buddhism deeply influenced neo-Confucianism. The renaissance of Confucian philosophy in Song dynasty (960-1279), which is called in Chinese the learning of the Tao, was the result of Zen Buddhism's impact on Chinese philosophy and learning. With the wedlock with Zen Buddhism, Confucianism acquired a universal dimension and greater acceptance. The confluence of three religions ushered into an era of creativity and renaissance. The three religions "San Chiao," which became a very popular movement during Song and the Ming dynasty of China, created a composite culture, mixing the Confucian ethics with Taoist system of merits and Buddhist

concept of reincarnation. The book of goodness. "Shan-Shu" as the Kan Ying Pi-ien ("Tract on actions and retributions"). One of the products of these movements of thought and ideas is known as the schools of three religions. In this renaissance movement both the Confucian and Buddhist followers of Taoism welcome the cultural metamorphosis of three religions. In spite of the initial resistance by followers of Confucianism the process of interaction and mutual understanding continued, and the Taoist participation widened the horizon of the Chinese mind. In this process of interaction, Buddhism had undergone a process of "Taoisation" and "Confucianisation" for its adaptation to Chinese conditions. However, the Ch'an Buddhist maintained its philosophical and religious identity because of its profound metaphysical, moral and mystical foundation. Buddhist ideas of purgatory have had a great impact on Chinese religions. The schools of three religions ultimately culminated in a new synthesis of thought and practice, which is known as Zen Buddhism. Thus the Ch'an (Zen) Buddhism sheds the align characters of foreign religions for the Chinese masses and elites and in this way Buddhism was absorbed by the Chinese people without any opposition and resistance. Confucianism created the background by widening the mental horizon of Chinese mind and emphasizing the spiritual and philosophical profundity of Buddhism. Humanistic Confucianism worked as catalytic agent for the acceptance and assimilation of Buddhism into Chinese culture and way of life. Buddhism, on its part, provided the Chinese mind a way of life and a spiritual technique to divinize life and attain *Nirvana*. The concept of *Paticcasappada* and the *Nirvana* bewildered the Chinese creativity and they have been left with no other choice but accept it as a way of life, a way of deliverance, and a way of enlightenment.

Confucius formulated his ideas and philosophy similar to those of Lao Tze, but he speaks a different language. The opening passage of Chung-Yung, one of *The Four Books* presenting the Confucian Philosophy, described Taoist ideals as living in accordance with one's own nature. This is called self-realization in a Confucian sense. The pursuit of self-realization is called maturation. One cannot disown his own nature. If one can disown his own nature, it would mean that it would not be one's own nature. Therefore the virtuous man is concerned about his own self. According to Confucius, the wise man retains his own nature whereas the foolish man does the opposite. The

wise man retains his own nature because he is wise, and he is wise because he retains his own nature. The foolish man does the opposite because he is foolish, and he is foolish because he fails to appreciate what is good. One's own true nature is self-sufficient, but it is very difficult to maintain it for long. Nature's way is to be genuine, and authentic is to act sincerely and truly and without effect, which would lead automatically and spontaneously to realize one's own nature.

According to Confucius, only such a man is wise. However, he believes that more self-concern is not sufficient for realizing the fullness of life. Man is a social being. He finds his expressions only through his association with others. According to Confucius a man undisturbed by pleasure, anger or grief or joy is living according to his true nature. If he is stimulated by such things as pleasure, anger or grief in its appropriate way he is living according to his true social nature. This true nature is the primal source from which springs all social affairs. This true social nature is the means for attaining happiness by humility. The Confucian would greatly emphasize genuineness. He considers genuineness as self-sufficient. According to him genuineness pervades the whole being of man from beginning to end. Nothing can be attained without genuineness. According to Confucius, genuineness is the chief characteristic of a wise man. Genuineness promotes self-realization. It is the means by which one develops his relations with others. Self-realization involves associating oneself with others. Associating with others creates sympathetic insight and abilities in which one realizes his own nature. One's whole nature (Tao) integrates both external relations (social relations) and internal processes. According to Confucius, genuineness is full, when both of these abilities are appropriately integrated.

Confucius devoted his whole life observing the practice of various royal societies and studying the records of previous societies, to discover and formulate the most successful ways of organizing human relationships and the attitude required for conducting a better corporate life. He considers these ideals to imitate others, which made that he was recognized as a teacher of customary morality. According to him, there are four chief characteristics of a wise man. These are referred to as *Yi, Jen, Li* and *Chih*. (1) *Yi* stands for how the things behave when they act in accordance with their own nature, and this is the best way of all things to act. No man is wise until he understands.

It is a natural way of things to behave. We must keep in mind the basic tenets of Lao-Tze that nature and human nature are good. Nature provides each being with a nature that is self-sufficient and self-fulfilling, thus as good as it can be. Trying to change is artificial and making it artificial will bring it to an unnatural end. (2) *Jen* means good will. It is to do with what is best for society as we know it and acting in accordance with one's own nature. This is best for each person, as good will consists basically acting in accordance to one's own nature. (3) *Li* is propriety or a way of giving overt expression of inner attitudes. It involves here a basic principle, namely that one's inner nature and one's external behavior are or should correlate when man's intentions are sincere. (4) *Chih* is wisdom. No man is wise until he is happy. Wisdom consists in confident living. Living confidently involves consenting to things as they are, i.e. to *Yi*, *Jen* and *Li* three characteristics of the wise man. Wisdom does not require encyclopedic knowledge.

Zen monks were students of Confucianism and as staunch Chinese they could not be anything else. The difference between Confucian scholars and Zen masters was that the Confucians based their philosophy on the native system, while Zen Buddhists adhered to the basic teachings of Buddhism as enunciated by Bodhidharma, but they started speaking Buddhist in Confucian language. The Zen monks interpreted Confucian texts in a Buddhist way and they commented on Buddhist literature from a Confucian point of view. Zen Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism were assimilated into one philosophy which is known as Sung philosophy.

D.T. Suzuki says, "Suffice it to state here that Zen is, in fact, the Chinese way of responding to Indian thought and represented by Buddhism and that this being so, Zen, as it developed in the Tang and later flourished in the Song, could be nothing else but a reflection of Chinese mentality – by which I mean it was eminently practical and ethical. In this respect, there was very probability of Zen's taking on Confucian coloring. But in the beginning of Zen's history its philosophy was Indian, that is, Buddhist, for there was nothing corresponding to it in the traditional teaching of Confucianism. And this was the element that later Confucian thinkers consciously or unconsciously wished to incorporate into their own system."[2]

---

[2] D.T. Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture,* pp. 43-44.

In short, Zen adopted the practical teachings of Confucian morality and social reality and Confucianism absorbed the abstract speculation of Buddhism. The latter provided metaphysical foundation for the waning teachings of Confucianism. It was a normal practice for the Zen monks to become advocates of Confucianism in addition to preaching Buddhism.[3] Nonetheless, we do not agree with D.T. Suzuki's observation that Zen Buddhism dos not have philosophy of its own.

Suzuki has made a contradictory statement about Zen Buddhism. At one place he says that Zen Buddhism provided a metaphysical foundation to the teachings of Confucians, and at the same time he says, strictly speaking, that Zen has no philosophy of its own.[4] Zen Buddhism has a profound metaphysical basis which provided infrastructure for both the Confucianism and Taoism. It is another fact that Zen Buddhists are sometimes Confucians, sometimes Taoists and sometimes even Shintoists. This explains the universal philosophical outlook and the mystical basis of Buddhism, which can even be adopted and explained by Western religious experience. This form of new Buddhism incorporated the naturalistic mysticism of Taoism and down to earth philosophy of Confucianism. The concept of Buddha-nature and Tao represents the same reality. Taoism has also incorporated Zen technique to find out the truth. In an endeavor to find out the truth, Zen Buddhism is greatly influenced by the Taoist emphasis on natural life. However, Zen Buddhism owes its origin and development to Indian Buddhism. The technique of meditation and the concept of Buddha-nature have definitely been borrowed from the original teachings of Lord Buddha, making certain conceptual changes and developments suited to the creative Chinese mind. Zen Buddhism came to Japan in the 7th century. Japanese Zen Buddhism owes its development and progress to two great Zen masters, namely Risai and Dogen. These two Zen masters were men of profound spiritual attainment and they transformed Zen into a living religious reality. These two Zen masters were so great and powerful that they are acclaimed as the founders of the two schools of Zen Buddhism namely Rinzad and Soto. These Zen masters, Risai and Dogen, were so much inspired by Zen that they made a pilgrimage to China in

---

[3] Ibid, pp. 43-44.
[4] Ibid, pp. 43-44.

search of the authentic and the real form of Zen Buddhism. They visited many monasteries and met many Zen masters of great spiritual attainments with a purpose of gaining knowledge and testify to their own meditational technique and spiritual attainments. After returning from China, Risai introduced socio-religious elements in his new form of Buddhism, which attracted the warrior class of Japan to defend the state against all sorts of invasions and schism, which was considered as religious duty of this new school.

Gradually it covered the whole gamut of Japanese cultural life. Its impact can be traced in the '*no play'* of Japanese poetry *Ikebana* the flower arrangement *cha-no-ya*, *tea ceremony*, etc., all of which emphasize grace and spontaneity. Dogen, the founder of Soto school visited Tendai monastery of mount Hiei in China in search of truth and meaning of life like his teacher Risai. After his return, he introduced a method of meditation known as Zazen. He considered scriptural knowledge and philosophical disputation as an exercise in futility. *Dhyana* is the core-concept of Zen Buddhism. *Nirvana* or *satori* does not mean to comprehend *Buddha-nature* in an intellectual or objective sense. It means to become one with it and feel the existence of *Tathata* in all things and beings. This concept of Dhyana has been taken from Mahayana scriptures such as *Prajnaparamita* and *Vimalakirtinirdasa* and *Lankevatara Sutra*.

According to the Chinese tradition, Bodhidharma's long nine years of meditation at the Shao-Lin-ssu temple on the mount of *Saung-Shan*, during which he neither studied and read scriptures nor performed any rituals and ceremonies, but kept himself engaged and engrossed in deep meditation proved the efficacy of meditation as the only means of experiencing *satori*. The spirit of this new form of Buddhism in China introduced the practice of *Zazen* and upheld the importance of sacredness of Chinese family life. Thus, Zen Buddhism, integrating the meditational technique of Bodhidharma with the down to earth philosophical approach of Chinese creative mind, became a harbinger of a new religious awakening and renaissance. The characteristics of Zen Buddhism are that it does not give any credence to philosophical abstraction and conceptualization. It lives in facts. The objective of meditation is to integrate the part with the whole, the conscious mind with the unconscious mind, and in this process of unification and transfiguration *satori* is experienced. This process of unification has been termed as an art of walking with no path, with no walker and

with no goal. This nonsensical statement contains great sense and awareness: though the intellect is a brilliant tool to understand the thought and knowledge, there is something which is beyond the reach of this truth of transcendental nature, which can best be expressed through the language of silence. Just like all the mystical schools, such as Suficism, Hindu's Sahajiya cult, and Upanishadic teachings, Chinese Taoism believes that the supreme reality, which forms the basis of all existence and all beings, cannot be put into words. It is to be experienced, because it is mystical. Language and reason can lead to a certain point, but it cannot take us to the core of reality which is called *suchness*. Intellect however, serves its purpose by pointing towards the unknown like an arrow mark. This is why the Zen masters say that if you want to experience *satori* you should get yourself dissociated from the process of conceptualization and abstraction. The process of Dhyana is a process of freeing the mind from all kinds of dispositions. In Zen Buddhism it is called emptying yourself. There is a famous saying of a Zen master "Those who know do not speak – those who speak do not know."

The twentieth century world has tried many experiments and it has come to the conclusion that neither Consumerism nor Western philosophy, neither Existentialism nor Positivism, neither Depth Psychology nor Comparative religion could unite man with himself. To create cohesion and harmony in society, Zen Buddhism with its lofty philosophy and technique of meditation can integrate the fragmented life of man, which is necessary to build a better and just society. Zen goes beyond the conceptual teaching of philosophy. It emphasizes in integrating the part with the whole and man with humanity.

This concept of oneness is the essential part of the Buddha's life and teachings. Zen takes life as a whole. It imparts practical techniques to transfigure one's own personality and, in this process of transfiguration, it fills every moment of life with grace, spontaneity and significance.

Thus Zen Buddhism is not an institutionalized religion. It is a way of life. It is a way of transformation and transfiguration of human personality. According to Zen Buddhism, in each of us there is a Buddha who wants to get himself awakened. Zen Buddhism is nothing but a meditational technique to get our dormant divinity or

the Buddha awakened and realized. This is the way through which we can create one world and one humanity.

To me, Zen Buddhism represents the correct and the proper understanding of philosophy and life-world. Zen Buddhism originated in China with Bodhidharma's visit in 520 A.D. Bodhidharma is considered by one tradition as the first patriarch. This new Buddhism incorporates in itself the naturalistic mysticism of Taoism and down to earth philosophy of Confucianism.

The concept of Buddha nature and Tao represent the same reality. Taoism has also incorporated Zen technique to find out the truth. Zen Buddhism is however greatly influenced by Taoist emphasis on life-world. According to Zen, *nirvana* or *satori* doesn't mean to comprehend Buddha nature (*Bodhicitta*) in an intellectual or objective sense. It means to become one with it or feel the existence of life-world in every things and beings.

Zen Buddhism doesn't believe in philosophical abstraction and conceptualization. It believes in living and experiencing life-world. The object of meditation is to integrate the part with the whole. With the life-world and in this process of unification and transfiguration *satori* is experienced. This process of unification has been termed as an art of walking with no path, with no walker and with no goal. This nonsensical statement contains great sense and awareness: though the intellect is a brilliant tool to understand the thought and knowledge, there is something which is beyond the reach of this truth of transcendental nature, which can best be expressed through the language of silence. Ludwig Wittgenstein rightly observes, "There are indeed, things that cannot be put into words. They make themselves manifest. They are what is mystical."[5] "My propositions serve as elucidations in the following way: anyone who understands me eventually recognizes them as nonsensical, when he has used them as steps to climb up beyond them. (He must, so to speak, throw away the ladder after he has climbed it). He must transcend these propositions and then he will see the world alright."[6] "What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence."[7]

---

[5] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus,* 6.522

[6] *Ibid,* 6.54.

[7] *Ibid,* 7.

Zen Buddhism is very much rooted in the life-world. It always lives in the midst of the nature. It does not propagate the philosophy of keeping oneself away from life-world.

For Zen, humble blade of grass is also a *Bodhicitta*. The Zen insight and philosophy go deeper into the very source of life and existence. Zen lives and feels the life-world as we feel the sensation of our pulses.

According to Zen Buddhism the concept of emptiness (*Sunyata*) or (*Bodhicitta*) is not philosophically speaking a concept, it is an experience which binds man with life-world. From this concrete experience originates the philosophy of love and *satori*.

After realizing the limitation of thought and language in communicating the experience of a life-world, reflected in *satori,* the Chinese Zen masters developed a new concept of *Wu* to describe this state of consciousness that is beyond the realm of discrimination and differentiation. The literal meaning of this Chinese term *Wu* is nothingness or no mind. The introduction of *koan* into Zen Buddhism is a technique to throw the mind off its familiar way of logical reasoning and to start the process of emptying it from all sorts of metapsychosis. The Zen master does not use any statement to transmit his teachings; rather he carefully uses a so called nonsensical device, a riddle, known as a *koan*. According to Zen Buddhism, the life-world consists of the whole truth. There is no difference between *nirvana* and *samsara*. Nirvana is sansar and sansar is nirvana. The use of a koan is to solve the riddle of 'I' and the world, *nirvana* and the samsara. With the practice of *koan,* the mind undergoes complete metamorphysis, it is an act of integration of *nirvana* and *samsara*. Indeed, it is the total experience of true philosophy and life-world.

Part IV
Nonthematic Paper

13.

A Note on Aristotle and Beliefs about the Future

BO MEINERTSEN

Introduction

This paper falls into two main parts. In the first part, I shall consider the question of whether or not Aristotle believed that there can be true statements about what will happen in the future. I will first clarify this question, which will involve consideration of some logical and metaphysical notions in Aristotle. I will then argue that the answer to the question is 'No' (with a qualification). In the second part, I shall argue that his view is correct. I will do this 'indirectly', by way of presenting and refuting three prominent objections to the view.

Does Aristotle Believe That There Can Be True Statements about What Will Happen in the Future?

The statements about what will happen in the future, which we are considering, are statements (sentences, propositions) about events (or states of affairs) that are not either necessary or impossible (roughly, in the sense of 'inevitable'), i.e. statements about so called 'future contingents' (*future contingentia*).[1] In what follows, I shall understand this. Aristotle's famous example is that of the statement 'There will be a sea battle tomorrow'.

Why is the truth (or falsity) of such statements an issue for Aristotle (and us)? Is it not a trivial consequence of his theory of truth that there can be true statements about what will happen in the future? For Aristotle is often credited with the first formulation of some version of the correspondence theory of truth with his famous passage 'To say that that which is is not or that which is not is, is a falsehood; and to say that that which is is and that which is not is not, is true'

---

[1] If they were either necessary or impossible it would trivially follow that they were either true or false.

(*Metaphysics* 1011b26). In a more simple and modern formulation, this is as a minimum the position that 'p' is true if and only if p. How much of the correspondence theory this formulation captures is controversial (Kirkham 1992). Someone might, therefore, not think that there is an obvious and 'formal' answer to our question: if 'p' here is allowed to be statements about future events and states of affairs, i.e. 'p will be the case', there obviously *can* be true statements about the future (what will happen in the future): 'There will be a sea battle tomorrow' is true if and only if there will be a sea battle tomorrow.

Such a 'formal' answer is available to deflationists and minimalists theories of truth (Horwich 1998) – that is, philosophers who maintain that all there is to truth is what is captured by the principle that 'p' is true if and only if p. Such an approach to truth contrasts radically with the theory of *maximalist truthmaking*. This theory of truth is very much the contemporary inheritor of the classical correspondence theory of truth, which, as least in one version, goes back to Aristotle, as we saw above. Roughly, it is the view that for any truth, there exists something in the world which makes it true. Clearly, the maximalist truthmaker theorist must deny that there is something in the world that makes true statements about the future. For obviously there is *nothing* to make them true: the future event or state of affairs does not exist. Since Aristotle does not consider such an answer, it seems plausible that he is a truthmaker maximalist. We shall return to maximalist truth-making shortly. In any case, it seems clear that the question of whether or not Aristotle believes (or should believe) that there can be true statements about the future is not a trivial one.

However, the fact that the question is non-trivial does show that it should *matter* to us (if we are not historians of philosophy). Why, then, is it important – if indeed it is? The reason has to do with the importance of the *principle of bivalence*. Roughly, according to this general principle, any statement is either true or false. More formally, either 'p' is true or 'not-p' is true.[2] This is prima facie a plausible principle. When applied to future contingents (contingent events and states of affairs in the future), the principle reads as follows. If any statement is either true or false, at any one time, then – assuming the principle – any statement about future contingents is true or false now.

---

[2] Assuming that (i) 'p' is true or 'p' is false and (ii) 'not-p' is true or 'not-p' is false.

In other words, it is either true or false now if an event in the future will occur. This sounds less appealing than the general principle, but as it stands, it is not obviously false.

But unfortunately, if Aristotle is right, it has an unacceptable consequence. His famous argument, which occurs in *De Interpretatione* (Ch. 9) can be rendered as follows. Suppose that today someone says that there will be a sea battle tomorrow and someone else says that there will not be a sea battle tomorrow. Then either what the first person says is true or what the second person says is true. But if so, it is necessary that a sea battle takes place tomorrow or it is necessary that a sea battle does not take place tomorrow, and similarly in other cases. Whatever happens, it is necessary that it does.

This consequence, (logical) *fatalism*, is highly implausible, since we firmly believe that many actual events need not have become actual and, in particular, that as agents we could have acted otherwise than what we actually did.[3] For the purposes of this paper, I shall assume that it is false.

However, Aristotle avoids this unpalatable consequence. Referring to the statement about the future event and its negation, he simply rejects the principle of bivalence:

> One [statement] may indeed be more likely to be true than the other, but it cannot be either actually true or actually false. It is therefore plain that it is not necessary that of an affirmation and a denial, one should be true and the other false (*De Int*. 9).

What *is* necessary is that the *disjunction* of them be true:

> A sea-fight must either take place to-morrow or not, but it is not necessary that it should take place to-morrow, neither is it necessary that it should not take place, yet it is necessary that it either should or should not take place to-morrow (ibid.).

---

[3] See Taylor (1962) for a different, much-discussed argument for fatalism.

In other words, Aristotle denies that statements about the future (excluding the disjunction of an affirmation and its negation) can be true.[4]

Is His View Correct?

In this section, I shall defend Aristotle's view by considering and rejecting three objections to it. Consider first his argument that the principle of bivalence leads to logical fatalism – which – rightly – is an important reason to him for denying that there can be true statements about the future (and accordingly allows for exceptions to the principle of bivalence).

One way of opposing this move is of course to reject the very argument for logical fatalism. Is this plausible? At first sight, the argument seems sound. However, as we have seen, it moves from truth to necessity, as it were. Roughly, it maintains that any statement's being true (or false) means that it is a necessity that it is true (or false). Someone might object that this is a fallacious move. Indeed, is it not similar to the fallacy of arguing that necessarily if 'p' is true, then 'p' it true; so if 'p' is true, then necessarily 'p' is true (cf. Rice 2015)? No, Rice argues (ibid.), Aristotle's position is just a consequence of his view that 'What is, necessarily is, when it is, and what is not, necessarily is not, when it is not' (quoted in Rice, ibid.), in turn, arguably a consequence of his correspondence theory of truth (and, in effect, a maximalist view of truth-making) that there must (i.e. by necessity is) something in the world that makes statements true. There is no logical fallacy involved in this.

Secondly, consider instead the objection that even if the argument for logical fatalism is sound, Aristotle's solution (which, as we have seen, requires rejecting bivalence) is untenable, on the grounds that bivalence should be *upheld*. This however is a weak objection. For bivalence is controversial. It is rejected by polyvalent logics (logics that has more truth-values than 'true' and 'false'.[5] And indeed Łukasiewicz (1967) formulated a system of three-valued logic, with the third truth-value being *indeterminate*, precisely in order to avoid the conclusion of Aristotle's argument for fatalism. This system and

---

[4] See Whitaker (1996) for alternative interpretation on which Aristotle does not deny the principle of bivalence.

[5] And it is neither affirmed nor denied in intuitionistic logic.

its philosophical underpinning was further developed by Prior (1962, 1967).[6]

Thirdly, however, a different kind of objection is prima facie strong. It is the objection that in pre-theoretical thought and talk we treat (atomic) *predictions* as having a truth-value: if someone says in 1972 that 'Red Rum will win the Grand National Next year' and Red Rum wins, then this is true, not just in 1973, but in 1972 as well (Rice 2015).

It seems correct that our intuitions about (atomic) predictions work that way. In general, of course, when assessing a philosophical theory, one of the things we consider is how it takes our pre-theoretical intuitions into account. Now, Aristotle could simply reject the intuition at issue as in fact being wrong. He could simply 'bite the bullet', as we might say. However, there are in my view independent *theoretical* reasons to reject such predictions as having truth-value. They come from the theory of truthmaking (Armstrong 2004), specifically *truth-maker maximalism* (Cameron 2008, 2011). Truth-maker maximalism is the view that if a truth is true (at a time t), then there is something in the world (at t) that makes it true. Thus, if 'Red Rum will win the Grand National Next' is true in 1972, then there must be something in the world that makes it true. But – assuming of course our rejection of fatalism and that it is not now already determined that if (that) Red Rum will win – there is *not* anything in the world that makes it true in 1972. What we would have to be prepared to accept is that it suffices to make a statement true that there *will,* at some point in time, be an event or state of affairs in the world that makes it true (Rice 2015). Rice (ibid.) maintains that this is the stance we should take. He thus rejects the principle of 'truth-maker maximalism.' However, since there are strong independent reasons to believe in this principle (Cameron 2008), the objection from the pre-

---

[6] There is an interesting technical issue of whether rejection of the principle of bivalence is compatible with not rejecting the closely related *law of excluded middle* (either 'p' or 'not-p'). Rice (2015) argues that it is, and argues that Aristotle only rejects the former. However, assuming for the sake of argument this kind of logic with *indeterminate* as the third truth-value (specifically, Van Fraassen 1966) he points out that it suffers from some logical problems, viz. a lack of equivalence between '*p*' and '*p* is true' and a failure of truth-functionality for 'or' and 'and'. It is beyond the scope of this essay to consider these alleged problems.

theoretical status of predictions, in my view, fails. Simple (atomic) statements about the future do not have any truth-value.

Conclusion

Having clarified what is meant by the question of whether or not Aristotle believes there can be true statements about the future, I first explained why his correspondence theory of truth does not allow him to answer this trivially. I then outlined an interpretation of Aristotle on which he denies that statements about the future (with a qualification) can be true. Next, in the second part of the paper, I went on to consider three objections to Aristotle's stance on this interpretation. I argued that each of them fails and can thus conclude that Aristotle's view is correct.[7]

Bibliography

Armstrong, David. 2004. *Truth and Truthmakers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Aristotle. 2015. *De Interpretatione*. Translated by E.M. Edghill. eBooks@Adelaide. https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/a/aristotle/interpretation/ (10 August 2015).

Cameron, Ross. 2008. "How to be a Truthmaker Maximalist." *Nous.* Vol 42, No. 3, 410-21.

Cameron, Ross. 2011. "Truthmaking for Presentists." *Oxford Studies in Metaphysics. Volume 6.* K. Bennett and D. Zimmerman (eds.). 55-100. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Horwich, Paul. 1988. *Truth*, 2nd edition. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Kirkham, Richard. 1992. *Theories of Truth*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Łukasiewicz, Jan. 1967. "On Determinism." *Polish Logic 1920-1939*, S. McCall (ed.). 19-39. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Prior, Arthur. 1962. *Formal Logic*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Prior, Arthur. 1967. *Past, Present and Future*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

---

[7] For comments on an earlier draft of this paper, I am grateful to Prof. Jan Faye.

Rice, Huw. 2015. "Fatalism." *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*. http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2015/entries/fatalism (summer 2015).

Van Fraassen, Bas. 1966. "Singular Terms, Truth-Value Gaps and Free Logic." *Journal of Philosophy* Vol. 63, 28-35.

Whitaker, C. W. A. 1996. *Aristotle's De Interpretatione: Contradiction and Dialectic*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

List of Contributors

Edward J. ALAM is Professor at Notre Dame University-Louaizé (NDU), Lebanon, in the Faculty of Humanities, where he has taught philosophy, cultural studies, and theology since 1996. He was General Secretary of the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy from 2009-2012, and now is Director of the Council in Lebanon and the Near East. Alam is also a founding member of the International Institute of Ethics and Contemporary Issues, housed at the Ukrainian Catholic University, in Lviv, Ukraine. He is Professor and Program Consultant at the *Cedars Institute*. He holds NDU's Benedict XVI Endowed Chair of Religious, Cultural and Philosophical Studies. He has published widely in the fields of philosophy, theology, religion/science, and metaphysics/mysticism. He was appointed by Pope Francis in 2014 as Consultor on the Pontifical Council of Culture.

Dan CHITOIU is Professor at the Faculty of Philosophy and Social-Political Sciences, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, Romania. He teaches the Spirituality of the Christian East and Byzantine Philosophy. His recent publications include "The Patristic Notion of Person and its Importance for Modern Culture" (in: *Religion and Culture in Dialog. East and West Perspectives*, 2016), "St. Gregory Palamas' Critique of Nominalism (in: *Triune God. Incomprehensible but Knowable – The Philosophical and Theological Significance of St Gregory Palamas for Contemporary Philosophy and Theology*, 2015), and "Значение реальности в учении Паламы" [The Meaning of Reality in Palamite Doctrine] (in: *Verbum*, 2015).

Wojciech GOLUBIEWSKI is currently a Research Associate of the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw. His primary area of research is Aquinas's moral doctrine, especially the account of the imitation of nature as a source of right moral reasoning.

HE Xirong is Research Professor, Graduate Supervisor, Former Deputy Director of the Institute of Philosophy, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, and Chief Editor of *Philosophy Analysis.* She also holds a concurrent post of vice president of the Council for Research

in Values and Philosophy in China, vice president of the Association for Philosophy in Shanghai, and vice president of Association for Comparative studies between Chinese and Western Philosophy and Culture in Shanghai. Her research interests are History of Chinese Philosophy, Comparative Studies between Chinese and Western Philosophy, and Women's Studies. Her main publications: *Research on Female Ethics; Structure Each Other between Buddhism and Chinese Traditional Philosophy; The Course of Chinese Philosophy Since 1949; A Contemporary Significance on Chinese Traditional Mode of Thinking; Confucius's Ethical Wisdom.*

Peter JONKERS is a professor of philosophy at Tilburg University, the Netherlands. He teaches contemporary continental philosophy, metaphysics, and philosophy of religion. He is coordinator for Western Europe of the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy. His research interests include value diversity in a pluralist society, (religious) truth and wisdom, tolerance, and Hegel and his contemporaries. Some of his recent publications: "A Reasonable Faith. Pope Benedict's Response to Rawls" (in: *Rawls and Religion,* 2015); "Can Reciprocity be the Principle of a Global Ethics?" [Chinese translation] (in: *South China Quarterly,* 2016); "'Do We just Have to Put Up With All That?' Cultural Diversity, Value Conflicts, and Tolerance in the Netherlands and Europe" (in: *The Global Challenge of Value Pluralism,* 2017); "Religion as a Source of Evil" (in: *International Journal for Philosophy and Theology*, 2017).

LI Qin teaches at the Department of Philosophy, Tianjin Academy of Social Science, which he joined in 2005 as a fresh graduate. Before that, he finished his BA and MA degree in history at Tianjin Normal University. His research area focuses on consumer culture and the ethics of consumption, in which he has published *The Research on Chinese Traditional Consumption Culture* (2014), as well as more than twenty articles, such as "The Difference between Eastern and Western Consumer Culture: based on Luxury Consumption" (2012), and "The Philosophical Thinking on The Relationship of Subject and Object of Consumption" (2010).

Bo MEINERTSEN is assistant professor at the Department of Philosophy, Tongji Universiy, Shanghai. He holds a MA in philosophy

and psychology from the University of Copenhagen (1998), a MPhil in philosophy from the University of Cambridge (1999) and a PhD in philosophy from the University of Leeds (2005). Prior to coming to China in 2011, he taught philosophy and medical ethics at the University of Leeds. He is specialized in analytic metaphysics, but has recently also published papers on philosophy of value and environmental ethics.

Vincent SHEN holds the Lee Chair in Chinese Thought and Culture, University of Toronto. His research interests lie in the area of Chinese Philosophy, Comparative Philosophy, Phenomenology and Philosophical Problems of Technology, Culture and Religion. Recently he has published *Generosity to the Other: Chinese Culture, Christianity and Strangfication* (2004); An *Anthology of Vincent Shen* (2005); *Technology, Humanities and Cultural Development* (2014); *From Matteo Ricci to Heidegger* (2014). He edited *Wisdom in China and the West* (2004), *Confucian Ethics: Retrospect and Prospect* (2007), *Dao Companion to Classical Confucian Philosophy* (2014). He served as President of the Chinese Philosophical Association (1995-1999,1999-2003); President of the International Society of Chinese Philosophy, USA (1997-1999), and executive director (2001-2011); Vice-President of the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (2012-).

SHI Yongze is Assistant Research Fellow and Academic Secretary of the Institute of Philosophy, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences. He holds a BA in Law, Hebei Normal University (1999), a MA in Western Philosophy, Fudan University (2004), and a PhD, Fudan University. His main fields of interest are ancient Greek philosophy, Arabic philosophy, comparative Chinese and Western philosophy. Some of his recent publications are "Philosophy of the Present Era is Being Updated" (*Journal of Social Sciences*, 2006), "Nietzsche's Threefold Critique of Metaphysics" (*Journal of East China Normal University*, 2007), "Thinking Western philosophy from the perspective of the Chinese tradition – Describe François Jullien" (*Latest Studies of Social Sciences of Foreign Countries*, 2007), "Human Nature and Its Flexibility: Primal Confucian on Human Nature" (*Comparative Philosophy: East and West*, 2012), "Islam and Freedom of Religion" (*China Muslim*, 2013).

Lalan Prasad SINGH holds a Ph.D. in philosophy from Ranchi University, India, and was (visiting) professor of philosophy at numerous universities in India and abroad. He is the co-founder of the Inter Faith Dialogue – A Center of Knowledge, and has been convened and participated in various international conferences on philosophical and cultural topics. He has supervised more than twenty dissertations. His publications include *Zen Buddhism* (1986), *Buddhist Tantra: Philosophical Reflection and Religious Investigation* (2010), AND *Tantra: Its Mystic and Scientific Basis* (2010).

William SWEET is currently Professor of Philosophy and Director of the Centre for Philosophy, Theology, and Cultural Traditions, at St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Canada. A Past-President of the Canadian Philosophical Association, he is currently Vice President of the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, and a member of the Steering Committee of the Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de Philosophie [International Federation of Philosophical Societies]. Among his more recent books are *Intercultural Dialogue and Human Rights* (2011), *Responses to the Enlightenment* (2012), *Migrating Texts and Traditions* (2012), *Ideas Under Fire* (2013), and *Care of Self and Meaning of Life* (2015). He is a fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society and of the Royal Historical Society.

Edward WAMALA is lecturer in philosophy at Makerere University. He holds a BA from Makerere University, a MA and M.Phil from Delhi University, India, and a PhD from Makerere University. His academic interests are in the area of Philosophy of Development, and Ethics and Human rights. He has taken keen interests in Development ethics as well. Currently he is working on a project on Ethics for Sustainable Livelihoods. He is also a member of the Social Sciences Ethics Committee in the College of Humanities and Social sciences of Makerere University.

YU Xuanmeng was Research Professor of The Institute of Philosophy, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences (1982-2009, retired in 2010). His initial field of interest was Western Philosophy, resulting in the publication of *Beyond Contemporary western philosophy---Heidegger's Philosophy* (1989); *A Study on Ontology* (1999) (all in

Chinese). After that, he shifted the focus of his research to the comparative study between Western and Chinese philosophy.

ZHAO Qi is an assistant professor at Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, where she has worked since 2013. She received two bachelor degrees in philosophy; one from Fudan University in Shanghai and the other from Pontifical Salesian University in Rome. She holds a Ph.D. in religion. She visited Calvin College for a year and did her postdoctoral research with Professor Eleonore Stump at Saint Louis University. Her publications are mainly on late medieval philosophy, ethics, and philosophy of religion. As a Chinese scholar, she also has great interest in traditional Chinese philosophy and culture. Her first book on Aquinas's thought of friendship was published in August 2017.

Index

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 impacts 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 Research 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 5 to 10 week crosscultural and interdisciplinary seminars is coordinated by the RVP in Washington.

3. *Joint-Colloquia* with Institutes of Philosophy of the National Academies of Science, university philosophy departments, and societies. Underway since 1976 in Eastern Europe and, since 1987, in China, these concern the person in contemporary society.

4. *Foundations of Moral Education and Character Development.* A study in values and education which unites philosophers, psychologists, social scientists and scholars in education in the elaboration of ways of enriching the moral content of education and character development. This work has been underway since 1980.

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.

Publications on Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change

Series I. Culture and Values
Series II. African Philosophical Studies
Series IIA. Islamic Philosophical Studies
Series III. Asian Philosophical Studies
Series IV. Western European Philosophical Studies
Series IVA. Central and Eastern European Philosophical Studies
Series V. Latin American Philosophical Studies

Series VI. Foundations of Moral Education
Series VII. Seminars: Culture and Values
Series VIII. Christian Philosophical Studies

****

CULTURAL HERITAGE AND CONTEMPORARY CHANGE

Series I. Culture and Values

I.1 *Research on Culture and Values: Intersection of Universities, Churches and Nations*. George F. McLean, ed. ISBN 0819173533 (paper); 0819173525 (cloth).

I.2 *The Knowledge of Values: A Methodological Introduction to the Study of Values;* A. Lopez Quintas, ed. ISBN 081917419x (paper); 0819174181 (cloth).

I.3 *Reading Philosophy for the XXIst Century*. George F. McLean, ed. ISBN 0819174157 (paper); 0819174149 (cloth).

I.4 *Relations between Cultures*. John A. Kromkowski, ed. ISBN 1565180089 (paper); 1565180097 (cloth).

I.5 *Urbanization and Values*. John A. Kromkowski, ed. ISBN 1565180100 (paper); 1565180119 (cloth).

I.6 *The Place of the Person in Social Life*. Paul Peachey and John A. Kromkowski, eds. ISBN 1565180127 (paper); 1565180135 (cloth).

I.7 *Abrahamic Faiths, Ethnicity and Ethnic Conflicts*. Paul Peachey, George F. McLean and John A. Kromkowski, eds. ISBN 1565181042 (paper).

I.8 *Ancient Western Philosophy: The Hellenic Emergence*. George F. McLean and Patrick J. Aspell, eds. ISBN 156518100X (paper).

I.9 *Medieval Western Philosophy: The European Emergence*. Patrick J. Aspell, ed. ISBN 1565180941 (paper).

I.10 *The Ethical Implications of Unity and the Divine in Nicholas of Cusa*. David L. De Leonardis. ISBN 1565181123 (paper).

I.11 *Ethics at the Crossroads: 1.Normative Ethics and Objective Reason*. George F. McLean, ed. ISBN 1565180224 (paper).

I.12 *Ethics at the Crossroads: 2. Personalist Ethics and Human Subjectivity*. George F. McLean, ed. ISBN 1565180240 (paper).

I.13 *The Emancipative Theory of Jürgen Habermas and Metaphysics*. Robert Badillo. ISBN 1565180429 (paper); 1565180437 (cloth).

I.14 *The Deficient Cause of Moral Evil According to Thomas Aquinas*. Edward Cook. ISBN 1565180704 (paper).

I.15 *Human Love: Its Meaning and Scope, a Phenomenology of Gift and Encounter*. Alfonso Lopez Quintas. ISBN 1565180747 (paper).

I.16 *Civil Society and Social Reconstruction*. George F. McLean, ed. ISBN 1565180860 (paper).

I.17 *Ways to God, Personal and Social at the Turn of Millennia: The Iqbal Lecture, Lahore*. George F. McLean. ISBN 1565181239 (paper).

I.18 *The Role of the Sublime in Kant's Moral Metaphysics*. John R. Goodreau. ISBN 1565181247 (paper).

I.19 *Philosophical Challenges and Opportunities of Globalization*. Oliva Blanchette, Tomonobu Imamichi and George F. McLean, eds. ISBN 1565181298 (paper).

I.20 *Faith, Reason and Philosophy: Lectures at The al-Azhar, Qom, Tehran, Lahore and Beijing; Appendix: The Encyclical Letter: Fides et Ratio*. George F. McLean. ISBN 156518130 (paper).

I.21 *Religion and the Relation between Civilizations: Lectures on Cooperation between Islamic and Christian Cultures in a Global Horizon*. George F. McLean. ISBN 1565181522 (paper).

I.22 *Freedom, Cultural Traditions and Progress: Philosophy in Civil Society and Nation Building, Tashkent Lectures, 1999*. George F. McLean. ISBN 1565181514 (paper).

I.23 *Ecology of Knowledge*. Jerzy A. Wojciechowski. ISBN 1565181581 (paper).

I.24 *God and the Challenge of Evil: A Critical Examination of Some Serious Objections to the Good and Omnipotent God*. John L. Yardan. ISBN 1565181603 (paper).

I.25 *Reason, Rationality and Reasonableness, Vietnamese Philosophical Studies, I*. Tran Van Doan. ISBN 1565181662 (paper).

I.26 *The Culture of Citizenship: Inventing Postmodern Civic Culture*. Thomas Bridges. ISBN 1565181689 (paper).

I.27 *The Historicity of Understanding and the Problem of Relativism in Gadamer's Philosophical Hermeneutics*. Osman Bilen. ISBN 1565181670 (paper).

I.28 *Speaking of God*. Carlo Huber. ISBN 1565181697 (paper).

I.29 *Persons, Peoples and Cultures in a Global Age: Metaphysical Bases for Peace between Civilizations*. George F. McLean. ISBN 1565181875 (paper).

I.30 *Hermeneutics, Tradition and Contemporary Change: Lectures in Chennai/Madras, India*. George F. McLean. ISBN 1565181883 (paper).

I.31 *Husserl and Stein*. Richard Feist and William Sweet, eds. ISBN 1565181948 (paper).

I.32 *Paul Hanly Furfey's Quest for a Good Society*. Bronislaw Misztal, Francesco Villa, and Eric Sean Williams, eds. ISBN 1565182278 (paper).

I.33 *Three Theories of Society*. Paul Hanly Furfey. ISBN 9781565182288 (paper).

I.34 *Building Peace in Civil Society: An Autobiographical Report from a Believers' Church*. Paul Peachey. ISBN 9781565182325 (paper).

I.35 *Karol Wojtyla's Philosophical Legacy.* Agnes B. Curry, Nancy Mardas and George F. McLean, eds. ISBN 9781565182479 (paper).

I.36 *Kantian Form and Phenomenological Force: Kant's Imperatives and the Directives of Contemporary Phenomenology*. Randolph C. Wheeler. ISBN 9781565182547 (paper).

I.37 *Beyond Modernity: The Recovery of Person and Community in Global Times: Lectures in China and Vietnam*. George F. McLean. ISBN 9781565182578 (paper)

I.38 *Religion and Culture*. George F. McLean. ISBN 9781565182561 (paper).

I.39 *The Dialogue of Cultural Traditions: Global Perspective*. William Sweet, George F. McLean, Tomonobu Imamichi, Safak Ural, O. Faruk Akyol, eds. ISBN 9781565182585 (paper).

I.40 *Unity and Harmony, Love and Compassion in Global Times*. George F. McLean. ISBN 9781565182592 (paper).

I.41 *Intercultural Dialogue and Human Rights*. Luigi Bonanate, Roberto Papini and William Sweet, eds. ISBN 9781565182714 (paper).

I.42 *Philosophy Emerging from Culture.* William Sweet, George F. McLean, Oliva Blanchette, Wonbin Park, eds. ISBN 9781565182851 (paper).

I.43 *Whence Intelligibility?* Louis Perron, ed. ISBN 9781565182905 (paper).

I.44 *What Is Intercultural Philosophy?* William Sweet, ed. ISBN 9781565182912 (paper).

I.45 *Romero's Legacy 2: Faith in the City: Poverty, Politics, and Peacebuilding*. Foreword by Robert T. McDermott. Pilar Hogan Closkey, Kevin Moran and John P. Hogan, eds. ISBN 9781565182981 (paper).

I.46 *Cultural Clash and Religion*. William Sweet, ed. ISBN 9781565183100 (paper).

Series II. African Philosophical Studies

II.1 *Person and Community: Ghanaian Philosophical Studies: I.* Kwasi Wiredu and Kwame Gyekye, eds. ISBN 1565180046 (paper).

II.2 *The Foundations of Social Life: Ugandan Philosophical Studies: I.* A.T. Dalfovo, ed. ISBN 1565180062 (paper).

II.3 *Identity and Change in Nigeria: Nigerian Philosophical Studies, I.* Theophilus Okere, ed. ISBN 1565180682 (paper).

II.4 *Social Reconstruction in Africa: Ugandan Philosophical studies, II.* E. Wamala, A.R. Byaruhanga, A.T. Dalfovo, J.K. Kigongo, S.A. Mwanahewa and G. Tusabe, eds. ISBN 1565181182 (paper).

II.5 *Ghana: Changing Values/Changing Technologies: Ghanaian Philosophical Studies, II.* Helen Lauer, ed. ISBN 1565181441 (paper).

II.6 *Sameness and Difference: Problems and Potentials in South African Civil Society: South African Philosophical Studies, I.* James R. Cochrane and Bastienne Klein, eds. ISBN 1565181557 (paper).

II.7 *Protest and Engagement: Philosophy after Apartheid at an Historically Black South African University: South African Philosophical Studies, II.* Patrick Giddy, ed. ISBN 1565181638 (paper).

II.8 *Ethics, Human Rights and Development in Africa: Ugandan Philosophical Studies, III.* A.T. Dalfovo, J.K. Kigongo, J. Kisekka, G. Tusabe, E. Wamala, R. Munyonyo, A.B. Rukooko, A.B.T. Byaruhanga-akiiki, and M. Mawa, eds. ISBN 1565181727 (paper).

II.9 *Beyond Cultures: Perceiving a Common Humanity: Ghanaian Philosophical Studies, III.* Kwame Gyekye. ISBN 156518193X (paper).

II.10 *Social and Religious Concerns of East African: A Wajibu Anthology*: *Kenyan Philosophical Studies, I.* Gerald J. Wanjohi and G. Wakuraya Wanjohi, eds. ISBN 1565182219 (paper).

II.11 *The Idea of an African University: The Nigerian Experience: Nigerian Philosophical Studies, II.* Joseph Kenny, ed. ISBN 9781565182301 (paper).

II.12 *The Struggles after the Struggle: Zimbabwean Philosophical Study, I.* David Kaulemu, ed. ISBN 9781565182318 (paper).

II.13 *Indigenous and Modern Environmental Ethics: A Study of the Indigenous Oromo Environmental Ethic and Modern Issues of*

Environment and Development: Ethiopian Philosophical Studies, I. Workineh Kelbessa. ISBN 9781565182530 (paper).

II.14 *African Philosophy and the Future of Africa: South African Philosophical Studies, III*. Gerard Walmsley, ed. ISMB 9781565182707 (paper).

II.15 *Philosophy in Ethiopia: African Philosophy Today, I: Ethiopian Philosophical Studies, II*. Bekele Gutema and Charles C. Verharen, eds. ISBN 9781565182790 (paper).

II.16 *The Idea of a Nigerian University: A Revisited: Nigerian Philosophical Studies, III*. Olatunji Oyeshile and Joseph Kenny, eds. ISBN 9781565182776 (paper).

II.17 *Philosophy in African Traditions and Cultures: Zimbabwe Philosophical Studies, II*. Fainos Mangena, Tarisayi Andrea Chimuka, Francis Mabiri, eds. ISBN 9781565182998 (paper).

II.18 *Universalism, Relativism, and Intercultural Philosophy: Nigerian Philosophical Studies IV*. Joseph C. Achike Agbakoba and Anthony C. Ajah, eds. ISBN 9781565183162 (paper).

II.19 *An African Path to a Global Future*. Rianna Oelofsen and Kola Abimbola, eds. ISBN 9781565183230 (paper).

II.20 *Odera Oruka in the Twenty-first Century*: Kenyan Philosophical Studies, II. Reginald M.J. Oduor, Oriare Nyarwath and Francis E.A. Owakah, eds. ISBN 9781565183247 (paper).

Series IIA. Islamic Philosophical Studies

IIA.1 *Islam and the Political Order*. Muhammad Saïd al-Ashmawy. ISBN 156518047X (paper); 1565180461 (cloth).

IIA.2 *Al-Ghazali Deliverance from Error and Mystical Union with the Almighty: Al-munqidh Min al-Dadāl*. Critical Arabic edition and English translation by Muhammad Abulaylah and Nurshif Abdul-Rahim Rifat; Introduction and notes by George F. McLean. ISBN 1565181530 (Arabic-English edition, paper), ISBN 1565180828 (Arabic edition, paper), ISBN 156518081X (English edition, paper)

IIA.3 *Philosophy in Pakistan*. Naeem Ahmad, ed. ISBN 1565181085 (paper).

IIA.4 *The Authenticity of the Text in Hermeneutics*. Seyed Musa Dibadj. ISBN 1565181174 (paper).

IIA.5 *Interpretation and the Problem of the Intention of the Author: H.-G. Gadamer vs E.D. Hirsch*. Burhanettin Tatar. ISBN 156518121 (paper).

IIA.6 *Ways to God, Personal and Social at the Turn of Millennia: The Iqbal Lectures, Lahore*. George F. McLean. ISBN 1565181239 (paper).

IIA.7 *Faith, Reason and Philosophy: Lectures at Al-Azhar University, Qom, Tehran, Lahore and Beijing; Appendix: The Encyclical Letter: Fides et Ratio*. George F. McLean. ISBN 1565181301 (paper).

IIA.8 *Islamic and Christian Cultures: Conflict or Dialogue: Bulgarian Philosophical Studies, III*. Plament Makariev, ed. ISBN 156518162X (paper).

IIA.9 *Values of Islamic Culture and the Experience of History, Russian Philosophical Studies, I*. Nur Kirabaev, Yuriy Pochta, eds. ISBN 1565181336 (paper).

IIA.10 *Christian-Islamic Preambles of Faith*. Joseph Kenny. ISBN 1565181387 (paper).

IIA.11 *The Historicity of Understanding and the Problem of Relativism in Gadamer's Philosophical Hermeneutics*. Osman Bilen. ISBN 1565181670 (paper).

IIA.12 *Religion and the Relation between Civilizations: Lectures on Cooperation between Islamic and Christian Cultures in a Global Horizon*. George F. McLean. ISBN 1565181522 (paper).

IIA.13 *Modern Western Christian Theological Understandings of Muslims since the Second Vatican Council*. Mahmut Aydin. ISBN 1565181719 (paper).

IIA.14 *Philosophy of the Muslim World; Authors and Principal Themes*. Joseph Kenny. ISBN 1565181794 (paper).

IIA.15 *Islam and Its Quest for Peace: Jihad, Justice and Education*. Mustafa Köylü. ISBN 1565181808 (paper).

IIA.16 *Islamic Thought on the Existence of God: Contributions and Contrasts with Contemporary Western Philosophy of Religion*. Cafer S. Yaran. ISBN 1565181921 (paper).

IIA.17 *Hermeneutics, Faith, and Relations between Cultures: Lectures in Qom, Iran*. George F. McLean. ISBN 1565181913 (paper).

IIA.18 *Change and Essence: Dialectical Relations between Change and Continuity in the Turkish Intellectual Tradition*. Sinasi Gunduz and Cafer S. Yaran, eds. ISBN 1565182227 (paper).

IIA.19 *Understanding Other Religions: Al-Biruni and Gadamer's "Fusion of Horizons."* Kemal Ataman. ISBN 9781565182523 (paper).

Series III. Asian Philosophical Studies

III.1 *Man and Nature: Chinese Philosophical Studies, I*. Tang Yijie and Li Zhen, eds. ISBN 0819174130 (paper); 0819174122 (cloth).

III.2 *Chinese Foundations for Moral Education and Character Development: Chinese Philosophical Studies, II*. Tran van Doan, ed. ISBN 1565180321 (paper); 156518033X (cloth).

III.3 *Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, Christianity and Chinese Culture: Chinese Philosophical Studies, III*. Tang Yijie. ISBN 1565180348 (paper); 1565180356 (cloth).

III.4 *Morality, Metaphysics and Chinese Culture (Metaphysics, Culture and Morality, I)*. Vincent Shen and Tran van Doan, eds. ISBN 1565180275 (paper); 1565180267 (cloth).

III.5 *Tradition, Harmony and Transcendence*. George F. McLean. ISBN 1565180313 (paper); 1565180305 (cloth).

III.6 *Psychology, Phenomenology and Chinese Philosophy: Chinese Philosophical Studies, VI*. Vincent Shen, Richard Knowles and Tran Van Doan, eds. ISBN 1565180453 (paper); 1565180445 (cloth).

III.7 *Values in Philippine Culture and Education: Philippine Philosophical Studies, I*. Manuel B. Dy, Jr., ed. ISBN 1565180412 (paper); 156518040-2 (cloth).

III.7A *The Human Person and Society: Chinese Philosophical Studies, VIIA*. Zhu Dasheng, Jin Xiping and George F. McLean, eds. ISBN 1565180887.

III.8 *The Filipino Mind: Philippine Philosophical Studies II*. Leonardo N. Mercado. ISBN 156518064X (paper); 1565180631 (cloth).

III.9 *Philosophy of Science and Education: Chinese Philosophical Studies IX*. Vincent Shen and Tran Van Doan, eds. ISBN 1565180763 (paper); 1565180755 (cloth).

III.10 *Chinese Cultural Traditions and Modernization: Chinese Philosophical Studies, X*. Wang Miaoyang, Yu Xuanmeng and George F. McLean, eds. ISBN 1565180682 (paper).

III.11 *The Humanization of Technology and Chinese Culture: Chinese Philosophical Studies XI*. Tomonobu Imamichi, Wang Miaoyang and Liu Fangtong, eds. ISBN 1565181166 (paper).

III.12 *Beyond Modernization: Chinese Roots of Global Awareness: Chinese Philosophical Studies, XII*. Wang Miaoyang, Yu Xuanmeng and George F. McLean, eds. ISBN 1565180909 (paper).

III.13 *Philosophy and Modernization in China: Chinese Philosophical Studies XIII*. Liu Fangtong, Huang Songjie and George F. McLean, eds. ISBN 1565180666 (paper).

III.14 *Economic Ethics and Chinese Culture: Chinese Philosophical Studies, XIV*. Yu Xuanmeng, Lu Xiaohe, Liu Fangtong, Zhang Rulun and Georges Enderle, eds. ISBN 1565180925 (paper).

III.15 *Civil Society in a Chinese Context: Chinese Philosophical Studies XV*. Wang Miaoyang, Yu Xuanmeng and Manuel B. Dy, eds. ISBN 1565180844 (paper).

III.16 *The Bases of Values in a Time of Change: Chinese and Western: Chinese Philosophical Studies, XVI*. Kirti Bunchua, Liu Fangtong, Yu Xuanmeng, Yu Wujin, eds. ISBN l56518114X (paper).

III.17 *Dialogue between Christian Philosophy and Chinese Culture: Philosophical Perspectives for the Third Millennium: Chinese Philosophical Studies, XVII*. Paschal Ting, Marian Kao and Bernard Li, eds. ISBN 1565181735 (paper).

III.18 *The Poverty of Ideological Education: Chinese Philosophical Studies, XVIII*. Tran Van Doan. ISBN 1565181646 (paper).

III.19 *God and the Discovery of Man: Classical and Contemporary Approaches: Lectures in Wuhan, China*. George F. McLean. ISBN 1565181891 (paper).

III.20 *Cultural Impact on International Relations: Chinese Philosophical Studies, XX*. Yu Xintian, ed. ISBN 156518176X (paper).

III.21 *Cultural Factors in International Relations: Chinese Philosophical Studies, XXI*. Yu Xintian, ed. ISBN 1565182049 (paper).

III.22 *Wisdom in China and the West*: *Chinese Philosophical Studies, XXII*. Vincent Shen and Willard Oxtoby. ISBN 1565182057 (paper)

III.23 *China's Contemporary Philosophical Journey: Western Philosophy and Marxism: Chinese Philosophical Studies, XXIII*. Liu Fangtong. ISBN 1565182065 (paper).

III.24 *Shanghai: Its Urbanization and Culture: Chinese Philosophical Studies, XXIV*. Yu Xuanmeng and He Xirong, eds. ISBN 1565182073 (paper).

III.25 *Dialogue of Philosophies, Religions and Civilizations in the Era of Globalization: Chinese Philosophical Studies, XXV*. Zhao Dunhua, ed. ISBN 9781565182431 (paper).

III.26 *Rethinking Marx: Chinese Philosophical Studies, XXVI*. Zou Shipeng and Yang Xuegong, eds. ISBN 9781565182448 (paper).

III.27 *Confucian Ethics in Retrospect and Prospect: Chinese Philosophical Studies XXVII*. Vincent Shen and Kwong-loi Shun, eds. ISBN 9781565182455 (paper).

III.28 *Cultural Tradition and Social Progress, Chinese Philosophical Studies, XXVIII*. He Xirong, Yu Xuanmeng, Yu Xintian, Yu Wujing, Yang Junyi, eds. ISBN 9781565182660 (paper).

III.29 *Spiritual Foundations and Chinese Culture: A Philosophical Approach: Chinese Philosophical Studies, XXIX*. Anthony J. Carroll and Katia Lenehan, eds. ISBN 9781565182974 (paper)

III.30 *Diversity in Unity: Harmony in a Global Age: Chinese Philosophical Studies, XXX*. He Xirong and Yu Xuanmeng, eds. ISBN 978156518 3070 (paper).

III.31 *Chinese Spirituality and Christian Communities: A Kenotic Perspective: Chinese Philosophical Studies, XXXI*. Vincent Shen, ed. ISBN 978156518 3070 (paper).

III.32 *Care of Self and Meaning of Life: Asian and Christian Reflections: Chinese Philosophical Studies, XXXII*. William Sweet and Cristal Huang, ed. ISBN 9781565183131 (paper).

III.33 *Philosophy and the Life-World: Chinese Philosophical Studies, XXXIII*. He Xirong, Peter Jonkers and Shi Yongzhe, eds. ISBN 9781565183216 (paper).

III.34 *Reconstruction of Values and Morality in Global Times*: *Chinese Philosophical Studies, XXXIV*. Liu Yong and Zhang Zhixiang, eds. ISBN 9781565183278 (paper).

IIIB.1 *Authentic Human Destiny: The Paths of Shankara and Heidegger: Indian Philosophical Studies, I*. Vensus A. George. ISBN 1565181190 (paper).

IIIB.2 *The Experience of Being as Goal of Human Existence: The Heideggerian Approach: Indian Philosophical Studies, II*. Vensus A. George. ISBN 156518145X (paper).

IIIB.3 *Religious Dialogue as Hermeneutics: Bede Griffiths's Advaitic Approach: Indian Philosophical Studies, III*. Kuruvilla Pandikattu. ISBN 1565181395 (paper).

IIIB.4 *Self-Realization [Brahmaanubhava]: The Advaitic Perspective of Shankara: Indian Philosophical Studies, IV*. Vensus A. George. ISBN 1565181549 (paper).

IIIB.5 *Gandhi: The Meaning of Mahatma for the Millennium: Indian Philosophical Studies, V*. Kuruvilla Pandikattu, ed. ISBN 1565181565 (paper).

IIIB.6 *Civil Society in Indian Cultures: Indian Philosophical Studies, VI.* Asha Mukherjee, Sabujkali Sen (Mitra) and K. Bagchi, eds. ISBN 1565181573 (paper).

IIIB.7 *Hermeneutics, Tradition and Contemporary Change: Lectures in Chennai/Madras, India.* George F. McLean. ISBN 1565181883 (paper).

IIIB.8 *Plenitude and Participation: The Life of God in Man: Lectures in Chennai/Madras, India.* George F. McLean. ISBN 1565181999 (paper).

IIIB.9 *Sufism and Bhakti, a Comparative Study: Indian Philosophical Studies, VII.* Md. Sirajul Islam. ISBN 1565181980 (paper).

IIIB.10 *Reasons for Hope: Its Nature, Role and Future*: Indian Philosophical Studies, VIII. Kuruvilla Pandikattu, ed. ISBN 156518 2162 (paper).

IIIB.11 *Lifeworlds and Ethics: Studies in Several Keys*: Indian Philosophical Studies, IX. Margaret Chatterjee. ISBN 9781565182332 (paper).

IIIB.12 *Paths to the Divine: Ancient and Indian: Indian Philosophical Studies, X.* Vensus A. George. ISBN 9781565182486 (paper).

IIIB.13 *Faith, Reason, Science: Philosophical Reflections with Special Reference to Fides et Ratio*: Indian Philosophical Studies, XIII. Varghese Manimala, ed. IBSN 9781565182554 (paper).

IIIB.14 *Identity, Creativity and Modernization: Perspectives on Indian Cultural Tradition: Indian Philosophical Studies, XIV.* Sebastian Velassery and Vensus A. George, eds. ISBN 9781565182783 (paper).

IIIB.15 *Elusive Transcendence: An Exploration of the Human Condition Based on Paul Ricoeur: Indian Philosophical Studies, XV.* Kuruvilla Pandikattu. ISBN 9781565182950 (paper).

IIIC.1 *Spiritual Values and Social Progress: Uzbekistan Philosophical Studies, I.* Said Shermukhamedov and Victoriya Levinskaya, eds. ISBN 1565181433 (paper).

IIIC.2 *Kazakhstan: Cultural Inheritance and Social Transformation: Kazakh Philosophical Studies, I.* Abdumalik Nysanbayev. ISBN 1565182022 (paper).

IIIC.3 *Social Memory and Contemporaneity: Kyrgyz Philosophical Studies, I.* Gulnara A. Bakieva. ISBN 9781565182349 (paper).

IIID.1 *Reason, Rationality and Reasonableness: Vietnamese Philosophical Studies, I.* Tran Van Doan. ISBN 1565181662 (paper).

IIID.2 *Hermeneutics for a Global Age: Lectures in Shanghai and Hanoi.* George F. McLean. ISBN 1565181905 (paper).

IIID.3 *Cultural Traditions and Contemporary Challenges in Southeast Asia.* Warayuth Sriwarakuel, Manuel B. Dy, J. Haryatmoko, Nguyen Trong Chuan, and Chhay Yiheang, eds. ISBN 1565182138 (paper).

IIID.4 *Filipino Cultural Traits: Claro R. Ceniza Lectures*. Rolando M. Gripaldo, ed. ISBN 1565182251 (paper).

IIID.5 *The History of Buddhism in Vietnam*. Chief editor: Nguyen Tai Thu; Authors: Dinh Minh Chi, Ly Kim Hoa, Ha thuc Minh, Ha Van Tan, Nguyen Tai Thu. ISBN 1565180984 (paper).

IIID.6 *Relations between Religions and Cultures in Southeast Asia*. Gadis Arivia and Donny Gahral Adian, eds. ISBN 9781565182509 (paper).

Series IV. Western European Philosophical Studies

IV.1 *Italy in Transition: The Long Road from the First to the Second Republic: The Edmund D. Pellegrino Lectures*. Paolo Janni, ed. ISBN 1565181204 (paper).

IV.2 *Italy and the European Monetary Union: The Edmund D. Pellegrino Lectures*. Paolo Janni, ed. ISBN 156518128X (paper).

IV.3 *Italy at the Millennium: Economy, Politics, Literature and Journalism: The Edmund D. Pellegrino Lectures*. Paolo Janni, ed. ISBN 1565181581 (paper).

IV.4 *Speaking of God*. Carlo Huber. ISBN 1565181697 (paper).

IV.5 *The Essence of Italian Culture and the Challenge of a Global Age*. Paulo Janni and George F. McLean, eds. ISBB 1565181778 (paper).

IV.6 *Italic Identity in Pluralistic Contexts: Toward the Development of Intercultural Competencies*. Piero Bassetti and Paolo Janni, eds. ISBN 1565181441 (paper).

IV.7 *Phenomenon of Affectivity: Phenomenological-Anthropological Perspectives*. Ghislaine Florival. ISBN 9781565182899 (paper).

IV.8 *Towards a Kenotic Vision of Authority in the Catholic Church*. Anthony J. Carroll, Marthe Kerkwijk, Michael Kirwan, James Sweeney, eds. ISNB 9781565182936 (paper).

IV.9 *A Catholic Minority Church in a World of Seekers*. Staf Hellemans and Peter Jonkers, eds. ISBN 9781565183018 (paper).

IV.10 *French Catholics and Their Church: Pluralism and Deregulation*. Nicolas de Bremond d'Ars and Yann Raison du Cleuziou, eds. ISBN 9781565183087 (paper).

Series IVA. Central and Eastern European Philosophical Studies

IVA.1 *The Philosophy of Person: Solidarity and Cultural Creativity: Polish Philosophical Studies, I.* A. Tischner, J.M. Zycinski, eds. ISBN 1565180496 (paper); 1565180488 (cloth).

IVA.2 *Public and Private Social Inventions in Modern Societies: Polish Philosophical Studies, II.* L. Dyczewski, P. Peachey, J.A. Kromkowski, eds. ISBN. 1565180518 (paper); 156518050X (cloth).

IVA.3 *Traditions and Present Problems of Czech Political Culture: Czechoslovak Philosophical Studies, I.* M. Bednár and M. Vejraka, eds. ISBN 1565180577 (paper); 1565180569 (cloth).

IVA.4 *Czech Philosophy in the XXth Century: Czech Philosophical Studies, II.* Lubomír Nový and Jirí Gabriel, eds. ISBN 1565180291 (paper); 1565180283 (cloth).

IVA.5 *Language, Values and the Slovak Nation: Slovak Philosophical Studies, I.* Tibor Pichler and Jana Gašparí-ková, eds. ISBN 1565180372 (paper); 1565180364 (cloth).

IVA.6 *Morality and Public Life in a Time of Change: Bulgarian Philosophical Studies, I.* V. Prodanov and A. Davidov, eds. ISBN 1565180550 (paper); 1565180542 (cloth).

IVA.7 *Knowledge and Morality: Georgian Philosophical Studies, 1.* N.V. Chavchavadze, G. Nodia and P. Peachey, eds. ISBN 1565180534 (paper); 1565180526 (cloth).

IVA.8 *Cultural Heritage and Social Change: Lithuanian Philosophical Studies, I.* Bronius Kuzmickas and Aleksandr Dobrynin, eds. ISBN 1565180399 (paper); 1565180380 (cloth).

IVA.9 *National, Cultural and Ethnic Identities: Harmony beyond Conflict: Czech Philosophical Studies, III.* Jaroslav Hroch, David Hollan, George F. McLean, eds. ISBN 1565181131 (paper).

IVA.10 *Models of Identities in Postcommunist Societies: Yugoslav Philosophical Studies, I.* Zagorka Golubovic and George F. McLean, eds. ISBN 1565181211 (paper).

IVA.11 *Interests and Values: The Spirit of Venture in a Time of Change: Slovak Philosophical Studies, II.* Tibor Pichler and Jana Gasparikova, eds. ISBN 1565181255 (paper).

IVA.12 *Creating Democratic Societies: Values and Norms: Bulgarian Philosophical Studies, II.* Plamen Makariev, Andrew M. Blasko and Asen Davidov, eds. ISBN 156518131X (paper).

IVA.13 *Values of Islamic Culture and the Experience of History: Russian Philosophical Studies, I.* Nur Kirabaev and Yuriy Pochta, eds. ISBN 1565181336 (paper).

IVA.14 *Values and Education in Romania Today: Romanian Philosophical Studies, I.* Marin Calin and Magdalena Dumitrana, eds. ISBN 1565181344 (paper).

IVA.15 *Between Words and Reality, Studies on the Politics of Recognition and the Changes of Regime in Contemporary Romania: Romanian Philosophical Studies, II.* Victor Neumann. ISBN 1565181611 (paper).

IVA.16 *Culture and Freedom: Romanian Philosophical Studies, III.* Marin Aiftinca, ed. ISBN 1565181360 (paper).

IVA.17 *Lithuanian Philosophy: Persons and Ideas: Lithuanian Philosophical Studies, II.* Jurate Baranova, ed. ISBN 1565181379 (paper).

IVA.18 *Human Dignity: Values and Justice: Czech Philosophical Studies, IV.* Miloslav Bednar, ed. ISBN 1565181409 (paper).

IVA.19 *Values in the Polish Cultural Tradition: Polish Philosophical Studies, III.* Leon Dyczewski, ed. ISBN 1565181425 (paper).

IVA.20 *Liberalization and Transformation of Morality in Post-communist Countries: Polish Philosophical Studies, IV.* Tadeusz Buksinski. ISBN 1565181786 (paper).

IVA.21 *Islamic and Christian Cultures: Conflict or Dialogue: Bulgarian Philosophical Studies, III.* Plament Makariev, ed. ISBN 156518162X (paper).

IVA.22 *Moral, Legal and Political Values in Romanian Culture: Romanian Philosophical Studies, IV.* Mihaela Czobor-Lupp and J. Stefan Lupp, eds. ISBN 1565181700 (paper).

IVA.23 *Social Philosophy: Paradigm of Contemporary Thinking: Lithuanian Philosophical Studies, III.* Jurate Morkuniene. ISBN 1565182030 (paper).

IVA.24 *Romania: Cultural Identity and Education for Civil Society: Romanian Philosophical Studies, V.* Magdalena Dumitrana, ed. ISBN 156518209X (paper).

IVA.25 *Polish Axiology: the 20th Century and Beyond: Polish Philosophical Studies, V.* Stanislaw Jedynak, ed. ISBN 1565181417 (paper).

IVA.26 *Contemporary Philosophical Discourse in Lithuania: Lithuanian Philosophical Studies, IV.* Jurate Baranova, ed. ISBN 1565182154 (paper).

IVA.27 *Eastern Europe and the Challenges of Globalization: Polish Philosophical Studies, VI*. Tadeusz Buksinski and Dariusz Dobrzanski, eds. ISBN 1565182189 (paper).

IVA.28 *Church, State, and Society in Eastern Europe: Hungarian Philosophical Studies, I*. Miklós Tomka. ISBN 156518226X (paper).

IVA.29 *Politics, Ethics, and the Challenges to Democracy in 'New Independent States': Georgian Philosophical Studies, II*. Tinatin Bochorishvili, William Sweet and Daniel Ahern, eds. ISBN 9781565182240 (paper).

IVA.30 *Comparative Ethics in a Global Age: Russian Philosophical Studies II*. Marietta T. Stepanyants, ed. ISBN 9781565182356 (paper).

IVA.31 *Lithuanian Identity and Values: Lithuanian Philosophical Studies, V*. Aida Savicka, ed. ISBN 9781565182367 (paper).

IVA.32 *The Challenge of Our Hope: Christian Faith in Dialogue: Polish Philosophical Studies, VII*. Waclaw Hryniewicz. ISBN 9781565182370 (paper).

IVA.33 *Diversity and Dialogue: Culture and Values in the Age of Globalization*. Andrew Blasko and Plamen Makariev, eds. ISBN 9781565182387 (paper).

IVA.34 *Civil Society, Pluralism and Universalism: Polish Philosophical Studies, VIII*. Eugeniusz Gorski. ISBN 9781565182417 (paper).

IVA.35 *Romanian Philosophical Culture, Globalization, and Education: Romanian Philosophical Studies VI*. Stefan Popenici and Alin Tat, eds. ISBN 9781565182424 (paper).

IVA.36 *Political Transformation and Changing Identities in Central and Eastern Europe: Lithuanian Philosophical Studies, VI*. Andrew Blasko and Diana Janušauskienė, eds. ISBN 9781565182462 (paper).

IVA.37 *Truth and Morality: The Role of Truth in Public Life: Romanian Philosophical Studies, VII*. Wilhelm Dancă, ed. ISBN 9781565182493 (paper).

IVA.38 *Globalization and Culture: Outlines of Contemporary Social Cognition: Lithuanian Philosophical Studies, VII*. Jurate Morkuniene, ed. ISBN 9781565182516 (paper).

IVA.39 *Knowledge and Belief in the Dialogue of Cultures, Russian Philosophical Studies, III*. Marietta Stepanyants, ed. ISBN 9781565182622 (paper).

IVA.40 *God and the Post-Modern Thought: Philosophical Issues in the Contemporary Critique of Modernity, Polish Philosophical Studies, IX*. Józef Życiński. ISBN 9781565182677 (paper).

IVA.41 *Dialogue among Civilizations, Russian Philosophical Studies, IV.* Nur Kirabaev and Yuriy Pochta, eds. ISBN 9781565182653 (paper).

IVA.42 *The Idea of Solidarity: Philosophical and Social Contexts, Polish Philosophical Studies, X.* Dariusz Dobrzanski, ed. ISBN 9781565182961 (paper).

IVA.43 *God's Spirit in the World: Ecumenical and Cultural Essays, Polish Philosophical Studies, XI.* Waclaw Hryniewicz. ISBN 9781565182738 (paper).

IVA.44 *Philosophical Theology and the Christian Traditions: Russian and Western Perspectives, Russian Philosophical Studies, V.* David Bradshaw, ed. ISBN 9781565182752 (paper).

IVA.45 *Ethics and the Challenge of Secularism: Russian Philosophical Studies, VI.* David Bradshaw, ed. ISBN 9781565182806 (paper).

IVA.46 *Philosophy and Spirituality across Cultures and Civilizations: Russian Philosophical Studies, VII.* Nur Kirabaev, Yuriy Pochta and Ruzana Pskhu, eds. ISBN 9781565182820 (paper).

IVA.47 *Values of the Human Person Contemporary Challenges: Romanian Philosophical Studies, VIII.* Mihaela Pop, ed. ISBN 9781565182844 (paper).

IVA.48 *Faith and Secularization: A Romanian Narrative: Romanian Philosophical Studies, IX.* Wilhelm Dancă, ed. ISBN 9781565182929 (paper).

IVA.49 *The Spirit: The Cry of the World: Polish Philosophical Studies, XII.* Waclaw Hryniewicz. ISBN 9781565182943 (paper).

IVA.50 *Philosophy and Science in Cultures: East and West: Russian Philosophical Studies, VIII.* Marietta T. Stepanyants, ed. ISBN 9781565182967 (paper).

IVA.51 *A Czech Perspective on Faith in a Secular Age: Czech Philosophical Studies V.* Tomáš Halík and Pavel Hošek, eds. ISBN 9781565183001 (paper).

IVA.52 *Dilemmas of the Catholic Church in Poland: Polish Philosophical Studies, XIII.* Tadeusz Buksinski, ed. ISBN 9781565183025 (paper).

IVA.53 *Secularization and Development of Religion in Modern Society: Polish Philosophical Studies, XIV.* Leon Dyczewski, ed. ISBN 9781565183032 (paper).

IVA.54 *Seekers or Dweller: The Social Character of Religion in Hungary: Hungarian Philosophical Studies, II.* Zsuzsanna Bögre, ed. ISBN 9781565183063 (paper).

IVA.55 *Eurasian Frontier: Interrelation of Eurasian Cultures in a Global Age: Russian Philosophical Studies, IX*. Irina Boldonova and Vensus A. George, eds. ISBN 9781565183186 (paper).

IVA.56 *Religion, the Sacred and Hospitality: Romanian Philosophical Studies, X*. Wilhelm Dancă, ed. ISBN 9781565183254 (paper).

IVA.57 *Identity and Globalization: Ethical Implications: Lithuanian Philosophical Studies, VIII*. Dalia Stanciene, Irena Darginaviciene and Susan Robbins, eds. ISBN 9781565183261 (paper).

Series V. Latin American Philosophical Studies

V.1 *The Social Context and Values: Perspectives of the Americas*. O. Pegoraro, ed. ISBN 081917355X (paper).

V.2 *Culture, Human Rights and Peace in Central America*. Raul Molina and Timothy Ready, eds. ISBN 0819173576 (paper).

V.3 *El Cristianismo Aymara: Inculturacion o Culturizacion?* Luis Jolicoeur. ISBN 1565181042 (paper).

V.4 *Love as the Foundation of Moral Education and Character Development*. Luis Ugalde, Nicolas Barros and George F. McLean, eds. ISBN 1565180801 (paper).

V.5 *Human Rights, Solidarity and Subsidiarity: Essays towards a Social Ontology*. Carlos E.A. Maldonado. ISBN 1565181107 (paper).

V.6 *A New World: A Perspective from Ibero America.* H. Daniel Dei, ed. ISBN 9781565182639 (paper).

Series VI. Foundations of Moral Education

VI.1 *Philosophical Foundations for Moral Education and Character Development: Act and Agent*. George F. McLean and F. Ellrod, eds. ISBN 1565180011 (paper).

VI.2 *Psychological Foundations for Moral Education and Character Development: An Integrated Theory of Moral Development*. Richard Knowles, ed. ISBN 156518002X (paper).

VI.3 *Character Development in Schools and Beyond*. Kevin Ryan and Thomas Lickona, eds. ISBN 1565180593 (paper).

VI.4 *The Social Context and Values: Perspectives of the Americas*. O. Pegoraro, ed. ISBN 081917355X (paper).

VI.5 *Chinese Foundations for Moral Education and Character Development*. Tran van Doan, ed. ISBN 1565180321 (paper).

VI.6 *Love as the Foundation of Moral Education and Character Development*. Luis Ugalde, Nicolas Barros and George F. McLean, eds. ISBN 1565180801 (paper).

Series VII. Seminars on Culture and Values

VII.1 *The Social Context and Values: Perspectives of the Americas*. O. Pegoraro, ed. ISBN 081917355X (paper); 0819173541 (cloth).

VII.2 *Culture, Human Rights and Peace in Central America*. Raul Molina and Timothy Ready, eds. ISBN 0819173576 (paper); 0819173568 (cloth).

VII.3 *Relations between Cultures*. John A. Kromkowski, ed. ISBN 1565180089 (paper); 1565180097 (cloth).

VII.4 *Moral Imagination and Character Development: Volume I, The Imagination.* George F. McLean and John A. Kromkowski, eds. ISBN 1565181743 (paper).

VII.5 *Moral Imagination and Character Development: Volume II, Moral Imagination in Personal Formation and Character Development*. George F. McLean and Richard Knowles, eds. ISBN 1565181816 (paper).

VII.6 *Moral Imagination and Character Development: Volume III, Imagination in Religion and Social Life.* George F. McLean and John K. White, eds. ISBN 1565181824 (paper).

VII.7 *Hermeneutics and Inculturation*. George F. McLean, Antonio Gallo, Robert Magliola, eds. ISBN 1565181840 (paper).

VII.8 *Culture, Evangelization, and Dialogue.* Antonio Gallo and Robert Magliola, eds. ISBN 1565181832 (paper).

VII.9 *The Place of the Person in Social Life*. Paul Peachey and John A. Kromkowski, eds. ISBN 1565180127 (paper); 1565180135 (cloth).

VII.10 *Urbanization and Values.* John A. Kromkowski, ed. ISBN 1565180100 (paper); 1565180119 (cloth).

VII.11 *Freedom and Choice in a Democracy, Volume I: Meanings of Freedom*. Robert Magliola and John Farrelly, eds. ISBN 1565181867 (paper).

VII.12 *Freedom and Choice in a Democracy, Volume II: The Difficult Passage to Freedom*. Robert Magliola and Richard Khuri, eds. ISBN 1565181859 (paper).

VII.13 *Cultural Identity, Pluralism and Globalization* (2 volumes). John P. Hogan, ed. ISBN 1565182170 (paper).

VII.14 *Democracy: In the Throes of Liberalism and Totalitarianism*. George F. McLean, Robert Magliola and William Fox, eds. ISBN 1565181956 (paper).

VII.15 *Democracy and Values in Global Times: With Nigeria as a Case Study*. George F. McLean, Robert Magliola and Joseph Abah, eds. ISBN 1565181956 (paper).

VII.16 *Civil Society and Social Reconstruction*. George F. McLean, ed. ISBN 1565180860 (paper).

VII.17 *Civil Society: Who Belongs?* William A. Barbieri, Robert Magliola and Rosemary Winslow, eds. ISBN 1565181972 (paper).

VII.18 *The Humanization of Social Life: Theory and Challenges*. Christopher Wheatley, Robert P. Badillo, Rose B. Calabretta and Robert Magliola, eds. ISBN 1565182006 (paper).

VII.19 *The Humanization of Social Life: Cultural Resources and Historical Responses*. Ronald S. Calinger, Robert P. Badillo, Rose B. Calabretta, Robert Magliola, eds. ISBN 1565182006 (paper).

VII.20 *Religious Inspiration for Public Life: Religion in Public Life, Volume I*. George F. McLean, John A. Kromkowski and Robert Magliola, eds. ISBN 1565182103 (paper).

VII.21 *Religion and Political Structures from Fundamentalism to Public Service: Religion in Public Life, Volume II*. John T. Ford, Robert A. Destro and Charles R. Dechert, eds. ISBN 1565182111 (paper).

VII.22 *Civil Society as Democratic Practice*. Antonio F. Perez, Semou Pathé Gueye, Yang Fenggang, eds. ISBN 1565182146 (paper).

VII.23 *Ecumenism and Nostra Aetate in the 21st Century*. George F. McLean and John P. Hogan, eds. ISBN 1565182197 (paper).

VII.24 *Multiple Paths to God: Nostra Aetate: 40 years Later*. John P. Hogan and George F. McLean, eds. ISBN 1565182200 (paper).

VII.25 *Globalization and Identity*. Andrew Blasko, Taras Dobko, Pham Van Duc and George Pattery, eds. ISBN 1565182200 (paper).

VII.26 *Communication across Cultures: The Hermeneutics of Cultures and Religions in a Global Age*. Chibueze C. Udeani, Veerachart Nimanong, Zou Shipeng and Mustafa Malik, eds. ISBN: 9781565182400 (paper).

VII.27 *Symbols, Cultures and Identities in a Time of Global Interaction*. Paata Chkheidze, Hoang Thi Tho and Yaroslav Pasko, eds. ISBN 9781565182608 (paper).

VII.28 *Restorying the 'Polis': Civil Society as Narrative Reconstruction*. Yuriy Pochta, Gan Chunsong and David Kaulemu, eds. ISNB 9781565183124 (paper).

VII.29 *History and Cultural Identity: Retrieving the Past, Shaping the Future*. John P. Hogan, ed. ISBN 9781565182684 (paper).

VII.30 *Human Nature: Stable and/or Changing?* John P. Hogan, ed. ISBN 9781565182431 (paper).

VII.31 *Reasoning in Faith: Cultural Foundations for Civil Society and Globalization*. Octave Kamwiziku Wozol, Sebastian Velassery and Jurate Baranova, eds. ISBN 9781565182868 (paper).

VII.32 *Building Community in a Mobile/Global Age: Migration and Hospitality*. John P. Hogan, Vensus A. George and Corazon T. Toralba, eds. ISBN 9781565182875 (paper).

VII.33 *The Role of Religions in the Public-Sphere: The Post-Secular Model of Jürgen Habermas and Beyond*. Plamen Makariev and Vensus A. George, eds. ISBN 9781565183049 (paper).

VII.34 *Diversity and Unity*. George F. McLean, Godé Iwele and Angelli F. Tugado, eds. ISBN 9781565183117 (paper).

VII.35 *The Secular and the Sacred: Complementary and/or Conflictual?* John P. Hogan and Sayed Hassan Hussaini (Akhlaq), eds. ISBN 9781565183117 (paper).

Series VIII. Christian Philosophical Studies

VIII.1 *Church and People: Disjunctions in a Secular Age, Christian Philosophical Studies, I.* Charles Taylor, José Casanova and George F. McLean, eds. ISBN9781565182745 (paper).

VIII.2 *God's Spirit in the World: Ecumenical and Cultural Essays, Christian Philosophical Studies, II*. Waclaw Hryniewicz. ISBN 9781565182738 (paper).

VIII.3 *Philosophical Theology and the Christian Traditions: Russian and Western Perspectives, Christian Philosophical Studies, III*. David Bradshaw, ed. ISBN 9781565182752 (paper).

VIII.4 *Ethics and the Challenge of Secularism: Christian Philosophical Studies, IV*. David Bradshaw, ed. ISBN 9781565182806 (paper).

VIII.5 *Freedom for Faith: Theological Hermeneutics of Discovery based on George F. McLean's Philosophy of Culture: Christian Philosophical Studies, V*. John M. Staak. ISBN 9781565182837 (paper).

VIII.6 *Humanity on the Threshold: Religious Perspective on Transhumanism: Christian Philosophical Studies, VI*. John C. Haughey and Ilia Delio, eds. ISBN 9781565182882 (paper).

VIII.7 *Faith and Secularization: A Romanian Narrative: Christian Philosophical Studies, VII.* Wilhelm Dancă, ed. ISBN 9781565182929 (paper).

VIII.8 *Towards a Kenotic Vision of Authority in the Catholic Church: Christian Philosophical Studies, VIII.* Anthony J. Carroll, Marthe Kerkwijk, Michael Kirwan and James Sweeney, eds. ISBN 9781565182936 (paper).

VIII.9 *The Spirit: The Cry of the World: Christian Philosophical Studies, IX.* Waclaw Hryniewicz. ISBN 9781565182943 (paper).

VIII.10 *A Czech Perspective on Faith in a Secular Age: Christian Philosophical Studies, X.* Tomáš Halík and Pavel Hošek, eds. ISBN 9781565183001 (paper).

VIII.11 *A Catholic Minority Church in a World of Seekers: Christian Philosophical Studies, X.* Staf Hellemans and Peter Jonkers, eds. ISBN 9781565183018 (paper).

VIII.12 *Dilemmas of the Catholic Church in Poland: Christian Philosophical Studies, XII.* Tadeusz Buksinski, ed. ISBN 9781565183025 (paper).

VIII.13 *Secularization and Development of Religion in Modern Society: Christian Philosophical Studies, XIII.* Leon Dyczewski, ed. ISBN 9781565183032 (paper).

VIII.14 *Plural Spiritualities: North American Experience: Christian Philosophical Studies, XIV.* Robert J. Schreiter, ed. ISBN 9781565183056 (paper).

VIII.15 *Seekers or Dwellers: The Social Character of Religion in Hungary: Christian Philosophical Studies, XV.* Zsuzsanna Bögre, ed. ISBN 9781565183063 (paper).

VIII.16 *French Catholics and Their Church: Pluralism and Deregulation: Christian Philosophical Studies, XVI.* Nicolas de Bremond d'Ars and Yann Raison du Cleuziou, eds. ISBN 9781565183087 (paper).

VIII.17 *Chinese Spirituality and Christian Communities: A Kenosis Perspective: Christian Philosophical Studies, XVII.* Vincent Shen, ed. ISBN 9781565183070 (paper).

VIII.18 *Care of Self and Meaning of Life: Asian and Christian Reflections: Christian Philosophical Studies, XVIII.* William Sweet and Cristal Huang, ed. ISBN 9781565183131 (paper).

VIII.19 *Religion and Culture in the Process of Global Change: Portuguese Perspectives: Christian Philosophical Studies, XIX.* José Tolentino Mendonça, Alfredo Teixeira and Alexandre Palma, eds. ISBN 9781565183148 (paper).

VIII.20 *Seekers and Dwellers: Plurality and Wholeness in a Time of Secularity: Christian Philosophical Studies, XX*. Philip J. Rossi, ed. ISBN 9781565183155 (paper).

VIII.21 *Renewing the Church in a Secular Age: Holistic Dialogue and Kenotic Vision: Christian Philosophical Studies, XXI*. Charles Taylor, José Casanova, George F. McLean and João J. Vila-Chã, eds. ISBN 9781565183179 (paper).

VIII.22 *Narrating Secularisms: Being Between Identities in a Secularized World: Christian Philosophical Studies, XXII*. William Desmond and Dennis Vanden Auweele, eds. ISBN 9781565183223 (paper).

The International Society for Metaphysics

ISM.1 *Person and Nature*. George F. McLean and Hugo Meynell, eds. ISBN 0819170267 (paper); 0819170259 (cloth).

ISM.2 *Person and Society*. George F. McLean and Hugo Meynell, eds. ISBN 0819169250 (paper); 0819169242 (cloth).

ISM.3 *Person and God*. George F. McLean and Hugo Meynell, eds. ISBN 0819169382 (paper); 0819169374 (cloth).

ISM.4 *The Nature of Metaphysical Knowledge*. George F. McLean and Hugo Meynell, eds. ISBN 0819169277 (paper); 0819169269 (cloth).

ISM.5 *Philosophhical Challenges and Opportunities of Globalization*. Oliva Blanchette, Tomonobu Imamichi and George F. McLean, eds. ISBN 1565181298 (paper).

ISM.6 *The Dialogue of Cultural Traditions: Global Perspective*. William Sweet, George F. McLean, Tomonobu Imamichi, Safak Ural, O. Faruk Akyol, eds. ISBN 9781565182585 (paper).

ISM.7 *Philosophy Emerging from Culture.* William Sweet, George F. McLean, Oliva Blanchette, Wonbin Park, eds. ISBN 9781565182851 (paper).

The series is published by: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, Gibbons Hall B-20, 620 Michigan Avenue, NE, Washington, D.C. 20064; Telephone: 202/319-6089; e-mail: cua-rvp@cua.edu; website: http://www.crvp.org. All titles are available in paper.

The series is distributed by: The Council for Research on Values and Philosophy – OST, 285 Oblate Drive, San Antonio, T.X., 78216; Telephone: (210)341-1366 x205; Email: mmartin@ost.edu.