Reflections on Enlightenment from Multiple Perspectives

Edited by

Wang Xingfu, Zou Shipeng & Zhang Shuangli

Table of Contents

Introduction

WANG XINGFU

I

The Enlightenment was a great intellectual movement of the 18th century in Europe; however, it belongs not only to Western and the past, but also to the world and today. What is Enlightenment? The "Arch-enlightener"[1] is a classic definition given by Immanuel Kant.

Enlightenment is humankind's exit from its self-incurred immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to make use of one's own understanding without the guidance of another. *Self-incurred* is this inability if its cause lies not in the lack of understanding but rather in the lack of the resolution and the courage to use it without the guidance of another. "*Sapere aude*!" (Have the courage to use your own understanding!) is thus the motto of Enlightenment.[2]

In Kant, the Enlightenment is one's intellectual maturity in using one's own reason and overcoming one's self-incurred immaturity. The positive dialectic of self-understanding and moral autonomy is captured by Jürgen Habermas. In *Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, Habermas gives a concise and clear explanation:

> In the tradition of the Enlightenment, enlightened thinking has been understood as an opposition and counterforce to myth. As *opposition*, because it opposes the unforced force of the better argument to the authoritarian normativity of a tradition interlinked with the chain of generations; as *counterforce,* because insights are gained individually and transposed into motives, it is supposed to break the spell of collective powers."[3]

In order to break the spell of social coercion, we must break the intellectual coercion of myth. In this sense, the Enlightenment has two interrelated elements: reason and freedom.

---

[1]Andrea T. Baumeister, "Kant: the Archenlightener*,*" in *Enlightenment and Modernity*, Norman Geras and Robert Workler, eds. (London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000).

[2] Immanuel Kant, *An Answer to the Question: What Is Enlightenment? What Is Enlightenment? Eighteenth-Century Answers and Twentieth-Century Questions*, James Schmidt, ed. (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996), 58.

[3]Jürgen Habermas, *Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, Frederick Lawrence, trans. (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1987), 107.

The Enlightenment has two key words: reason and freedom. Ernst Cassirer in *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment* (1932) considers the 18th century as an age of intellectual progress. He writes, "Perhaps no other century is so completely permeated by the idea of intellectual progress as that of the Enlightenment....'Reason' becomes the unifying and central point of this century, expressing all that it longs and strives for, and all that it achieves."[4] For Peter Gay, the core of the Enlightenment program is freedom,

> The men of the Enlightenment united on a vastly ambitious program, a program of secularism, humanity, cosmopolitanism and freedom, above all, freedom in its many forms -- freedom from arbitrary power, freedom of speech, freedom of trade, freedom to realize one's talents, freedom of aesthetic response, freedom, in a word, of moral man to make his way in the world.[5]

It seems to us that the Enlightenment was a decent intellectual and political program because it captured the values and norms that everyone wanted in order to have decent life and good society. But in the past two centuries, the Enlightenment has been blamed for many things. It was thought to be responsible for various irrational forms of modern totalitarianism; for the Enlightenment insists on human nature to be infinitely malleable, society can be remade by any form of totalitarian state which eradicates all traces of individuality from its subjects. It has also been accused of European imperialism and the most aggressive aspects of capitalism due to the European centralism. It would end in nihilism because skepticism of the Enlightenment denies all "absolute values" and traditions. It has been blamed for ecological disasters because of its anthropocentrism and productivism. In short, the project of the Enlightenment is not only suspicious in theory, but also harmful in practice. In the discourse of modernity, criticism of the Enlightenment has become a prosperous industry. From Hegel to Adorno, all aspects of the Enlightenment, for example, subjective reason, abstract universalism and atomic individualism, are considered to be causes of encroachment of objective reason and disintegration of the power of ethical community.

There are two typical forms of criticism on the Enlightenment: conservatist and radicalist. Edmund Burke accuses the Enlightenment of

---

[4] Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1951), 5.

[5] Peter Gay, *The Enlightenment: The Rise of Modern Paganism* (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1966), 3.

casting away our old prejudices. According him, prejudice is the essence of historical cultivation. Any ideas, "the longer they have lasted and the more generally they have prevailed, the more we cherish." If we cast away the coat of prejudice, we will "leave nothing but the naked reason"[6] and will fall into subjective madness as the French Revolution. Georges Sorel thinks that the Enlightenment is misleading in epistemology and dangerous in politics. For him, a fatal mistake of the Enlightenment is its reduction of a complicated society to a simple formula and a believe that once we have resolved all natural problems, we also have the capability to deal with all problems of ordinary life. The mentality of such a belief is based on that human beings are prone to fall into an ideology of elitism and statism.[7] According to Williams Leiss, the impulse of growth and the conquering of nature are rooted in the rationalization of the Enlightenment, which unifies the domination of nature with social progress.[8] In brief, in the mind of critics, rationalism, secularism, utopianism, materialism and scientism contained in the Enlightenment lead to not only the alienation of relations between human beings and nature but also the alienation of human relationships and the self-relation of individuals.

How should we respond to these criticisms? First, we have to confess that these criticisms are not pure groundless statements. In the Enlightenment tradition, there were some naive ideas about human nature, reason, history and science. These onesided ideas misled people to trust science and technology, capitalism, industrialization, individualism and instrumental reason, which, indeed, caused negative and harmful consequences in some circumstances. Reflections on the dialectic of the Enlightenment are reasonable corrections to its errors, but many critics went too far, because they did not just criticize the onesidedness of the Enlightenment, but rather totally abandoned the Enlightenment per se.

In order to understand the Enlightenment we should focus on its positive and progressive role in modern society. Stephen Eric Bronner correctly asserts that the "Enlightenment thinking remains the best foundation for any genuinely progressive politics not simply in the West but in those states that suffered most at its hands."[9] The Enlightenment is not a wrong road, but a pathway to freedom. Individuality, freedom, reciprocity and

---

[6] Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, J.G.A. Pocock, ed. (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 1987), 76-77.

[7] Georges Sorel, *Illusions of Progress* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1973; New edition).

[8] William Leiss, *The Domination of Nature* (Montreal, Quebec: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994).

[9] Stephen Eric Bronner, *Reclaiming Enlightenment: Toward a Politics of Radical Engagement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 159.

the cosmopolitan ideal of world order are not arbitrary and occasional ideas that we can throw away easily; rather they form a normative foundation of a politics of striving for a better society. Of course, "the twenty-first century is not the eighteenth, there is clearly no exact symmetry between past and present. The analog it might provide for engaged intellectuals, no less than its ethical model for resisting oppressive structures of power, needs reinterpretation to meet new conditions."[10] In this sense, the Enlightenment is still a program that has rational potential.

The conception of the Enlightenment as a project of self-destruction is a misunderstanding, which dismisses the unity of the Enlightenment and takes only one dimension of it. In the original presentation of the Enlightenment, morality and reason were interconnected with liberty and welfare. Condorcet, the father of the Enlightenment, argued that all social evils result from ignorance; all ignorance comes from the ignorance of natural science. The progress of the natural sciences will be followed by the progress of moral and political sciences. However, since Kant, philosophers almost all gave up the naive idea of the Enlightenment. Michel Foucault makes the difference between the spirit of the Enlightenment and the dogma of the Enlightenment. The former is critique and reflection, which recognizes the authority of social order and an absolute limit of human thought. Just as Kant said: dare to use reason and get rid of *self-incurred immaturity.* For Foucault, the Enlightenment means to transgress given limits, to explore uncharted territories and to live life in new ways. In this sense, the Enlightenment is the unity of critique and freedom. The latter is a blind faith to reason and progress, for it believes that we can discover objective truth by reason, get rid of contingency and prejudices by truth and realize Utopia by progress.

Today, we have witnessed that the naive Enlightenment is bankrupt due to the ecological crisis, loss of meaning, fascist disaster and the return of fundamentalism. However, we cannot throw the baby out with the bath water. The Enlightenment is not a mystery or a sublime thing; rather it holds both a critical attitude towards knowledge as well as practical efforts to improve our world. The spirit of the Enlightenment has two dimensions: cognitive and practical. The former is a cognitive attitude of knowledge, namely, all beliefs of objective and practical knowledge have to be at best justified by the better argument and insurmountable superstitions have to be eliminated. The latter indicates a normal position in praxis, namely, any social order shall be based on the non-coerced consent of the ruled, realize individuality and intersubjective reciprocity in the moral-practical level and eliminate "surplus injustice." The dogma of the En-

---

[10] Ibid., 1.

lightenment must be abandoned, but the spirit of the Enlightenment must be persevered.

II

In the modern history of China, enlightenment was a difficult and important problem. When Europe transformed from the Middle Ages to modern society through Renaissance, Reformation, the French Revolution and the industrial revolution, China still lived in its Middle Ages. The most dramatic point of world history was the "Great Divergence," namely, the rise of the West and the decline of China. Before the European Enlightenment was imported into China, China had an indigenous Enlightenment between the late Ming and early Qing Dynasties. Huang Zongxi (黄宗羲, 1610-1695), Wang Fuzhi (王夫之, 1619-1692) and Gu Yanwu (顾炎武, 1613-1682) are considered the "fathers of the Chinese Enlightenment of thought." Huang Zongxi developed the people-oriented thought in Confucianism and an indigenous theory of democracy. He argued that "the world is the world of peoples, not a world of imperial family," and that "the law is people's law, not a law of emperor." He boldly declared that "monarchy is harmful for people" and must be checked and balanced. Instead he proposed a constitutional monarchy. Wang Fuzhi was a great rationalist in the late medieval period of China. He opposed any dogmatism of blind faith in canons and obscurantism but proposed reductionism and comparison in scientific research. In ethics, Wang Fuzhi refused asceticism and insisted that morality cannot be divorced from human desires. He was also opposed to the theory of historical circulation and "returning to ancients" and claimed that the world can be changed and improved by human beings. Gu Yanwu was disgusted with absolutist monarchy but preferred democracy ruled by majority. According to Gu Yanwu, "the rise and fall of a nation rests with every one of its citizens." In terms of epistemology, he resisted impractical discussions but promoted "seeking knowledge for solving problems." He asked for a policy which would "enrich the state and bring benefits to people." In sum, on the one hand, their ideas played important roles in overthrowing the feudal system; on other hand, in terms of content and nature, their Enlightenment was a self-criticism of Chinese tradition, rather than the first voice of new times.

Since Western modern thought was introduced and spread into East Asia, some Chinese intellectuals ushered in the second wave of Enlightenment. Such intellectuals of the May 4th period as Chen Duxiu (陈独秀), Lu Xun (鲁迅), Hu Shi (胡适) and Li Dazhao (李大钊) deeply felt

China's backwardness and launched a New Culture Movement through the journal *La Jeuness*. The "anti-tradition, anti-Confucianism, anti-ancient Chinese" was the flag of this New Culture Movement. The new Enlightenment mainly sought for individual, woman and social liberation. Its symbolic slogan was Mr. D (Democracy) and Mr. S (Science). In order to construct an independent, free and democratic nation, those intellectuals boldly broke restrictions and said farewell to the past. However, this vigorous movement of Enlightenment did not complete. On the one hand, a serious conflict occurred between Marxism and liberalism about social development; the camp began to split. On the other hand, imperialists attempted to divide China and the Japanese launched the war to invade China, Chinese intellectuals had to put aside their dispute but made their first priority to save the nation and to find ways to build a strong country. Li Zehou (李泽厚), a contemporary Chinese philosopher, argues well: the modern history of China is a double strain between national salvation and thought enlightenment. Unfortunately, the former overwhelmed the latter.

After thirty years of socialist construction by following the Soviet model, China began a policy of economic reform and opening to the outside world in the 1980s. Again Chinese intellectuals ushered in another new wave of Enlightenment: the third wave of Enlightenment. After the door opened to the outside world, students and intellectuals eagerly learned advanced knowledge of sciences and cultures from the Western world. Many books of Western philosophy and politics were translated and introduced into China. Errors of the Cultural Revolution were corrected; individuality and freedom of thought were respected. This Enlightenment was called an "emancipation of mind." In philosophy, existentialism, Friedrich Nietzsche, the Frankfurt School and Western Marxism became popular among the young people. Unfortunately, the "89" student movement was aborted and the third wave of Enlightenment was interrupted. In the 1990s, there was a "Great Discussion of Humanist Spirit," which aimed at defending humanism and the role of the humanities in commercial society. However, this movement focused on the role of the humanities only in universities. Spiritual independence of intellectuals themselves, issues of political reform and liberation of thought were all deliberately avoided.

After thirty years of reform and opening, China was able to improved the conditions out of poverty and backwardness via strengthening its economic development and international status. However, it is still a central question whether China's Enlightenment can be finished. There are two opposing positions. Cultural conservatives believe that the success of economic development has proven the advantage of Chinese culture and that our task for today is not enlightenment but the rejuvenation of Chinese

civilization. Developmentalists believe that the growth and modernization have proven the success of China's model of development, as well as the strength and vitality of its socialist system with Chinese characteristics. But modern society does not only entail changing economic structures and technology but also how to a develop modern political order and cultural values. In this background, the absorption and localization of "the Enlightenment" is a crucial topic that the Chinese people cannot evade.

III

This collection consists of three parts: (1) Modernization and Enlightenment in China, (2) Rethinking Marxism in Contemporary China and (3) Religious Reflection in Society. Just as in the Western world there are different views on the Enlightenment, in Chinese academia there are also different opinions about it. Below is a brief introduction of papers in this study.

In "On Enlightenment Thinking and the Construction of Chinese Culture Today," Yu Wujin starts with the concept of time. He argues that there are two concepts of time: chronological and morphological. The first term refers to ongoing 'click time'; the second how time is thought of structurally in different civilizations or social forms. If we take the Enlightenment to be the dawn of modern civilization, China is not "contemporary" with the 21st century; rather, it is in the same time as the 16th through the 19th centuries in Europe. Thus, Enlightenment is naturally a theme of Chinese society at present. What is Enlightenment? Yu argues, as a noun, the Enlightenment literally refers to an intellectual movement in Europe, particularly in France during the 18th century. Its general meaning denotes liberation of spirit and thought. Based on Kant's famous article and the work of other Enlightenment scholars, Yu summarizes four basic principles of the Enlightenment: 1. the authority of reason, 2. "disenchantment" of the world, 3. the pursuit of equality, and 4. freedom of personality. The former two principles are the intellectual liberation in the cognitive sense, while the latter two are the liberation of spirit in the moral and political sense. The Enlightenment prepared the leading principles for Europe and the Western world, as well as for the development of modern knowledge and the bourgeois revolution.

In the second part, Yu proposes a revised conception of Enlightenment and discusses how to restart a new Enlightenment. The original movement of the Enlightenment took place in the 18th century; throughout time, we have witnessed great achievements from the ideas brought up by the Enlightenment, but we are also aware of its onesidedness and limitations. Hence, we should revise and reconstruct the Enlightenment.

One way of revising it is to look at the framework consisting of the pre-modern, the modern and the postmodern. To correct modernity through the lens of premodernity and postmodernity, we should be more sensitive to the cost and risk of modernization and progress. According to "chronological time," China is in the 21st century, but in terms of "morphological time," Chinese culture is "contemporary" with 18th century European society. Thus, the task of the Enlightenment is still to be finished.

The reflection on the Enlightenment in Wu Xiaoming's paper starts from Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno's famous book *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Wu asks, after World War II, why the reflection of modernity has always been done by examining the Enlightenment. He argues that the Enlightenment was modernity's secret, birthplace, root, resource as well as essence. Since Hegel, philosophy always understood itself as a reflection of modernity and an answer to the questions of the Enlightenment. Wu agrees with *Dialectic of Enlightenment*'s claim that modern totalitarianism is not a casual result of the Enlightenment tradition but rooted in its essence and dynamic. Wu thinks that the Enlightenment is the "master spirit" of "domination," for human beings establish their subjectivity by means of controlling and manipulating nature and objects. The genesis of Weberian Enlightenment is the "disenchantment" of "subjective reason." Horkheimer and Adorno's criticism was supported by Nietzsche and Martin Heidegger. According to Nietzsche, modernity is nihilism resulting from "self-dethrone of the highest value." For Heidegger, modernity is "oblivion of Sein" and the blind domination of subjective metaphysics or humanism. The basic logic of the Enlightenment is from self-emancipation to self-extinction of humanity. In this light, we should transcend the Enlightenment and modernity. Further, Wu discusses the relation between the Enlightenment and China. He acknowledges *Dialectic of Enlightenment*'s contributions for its disclosure of subjectivist metaphysics as the origin of Fascism and totalitarianism. However, the book fails to touch on the ontological foundation of the Enlightenment and its breakout with the core principle of modernity. China is a developing and non-Western nation. Despite its late development, China has the sober consciousness of contradictions and limitations of the Enlightenment; however, with its rich cultural resources China can go beyond it.

Chen Xueming's paper discusses the Enlightenment in contemporary China. He argues that the economic reform and opening to the world have greatly transformed China: (1) from "class struggle" to "economic development," (2) from "closed borders" to "opening to the outside world," and (3) from "planned economy" to "market economy." He thinks that the reform is a double-edged sword, for it was a process of economic growth

and made many people rich, but it also led to social inequality and ecological crisis. If China wants to develop in a healthy way, it should be critical of the Enlightenment and modernity. How should modernity be treated? Chen suggests the importance of Western Marxism. Western Marxism holds a dialectical attitude towards modernity, it criticizes but not refuses it. Chen argues that modernization should be embedded in a socialist framework. By borrowing some ideas from Habermas' theory of communicative action and Andre Gorz's ecological Marxism, Chen criticizes negative aspect of modernization, but also recognizes its positive aspects of social prosperity and emancipation. Western Marxism provides a third way between liberalism and planned socialism and it the opposition to fundamentalism and post-modernism. Chen claims, "Once China finds the third way, maybe she can cultivate a new paradigm of human civilization."

Wang Fengcai's paper focuses on a theme from *Dialectic of Enlightenment*: "myth is already Enlightenment, and Enlightenment reverts to mythology." He defines the Enlightenment as a set of beliefs: technological rationalism, individual centrism and civilizational progressivism. *Dialectic of Enlightenment* reveals the dialectic of the Enlightenment spirit. The Enlightenment is an intertwined process of progress and regression, and civilization and barbarism. Thus, the Enlightenment is doomed to be self-destructive. However, Wang thinks that there are some misreadings in *Dialectic of Enlightenment.* First, it misunderstands instrumental reason and its onesided effect on the result of science and technology and reason and civilization. Second, in its critique of commodity fetishism, the Frankfurt School is too preoccupied with issues of culture and ideology, but not paying enough attention to economic analysis. Third, it often leads to pessimism and fatalism in its diagnosis of social reality. Therefore, we should go beyond *Dialectic of Enlightenment* and restudy it.

The last paper in this section is Luo Yaling's "Karl-Otto Apel and Enlightenment." Luo is one of Apel's students. According to her, Apel's philosophy defends the Enlightenment in terms of philosophical solipsism and moral relativism. Apel and Habermas both want to reconstruct the normative foundation for *praxis* philosophy as general pragmatism. To some extent, their pragmatism is to update the Kantian concept of transcendental reason. Luo takes Kant's definition of the Enlightenment as a starting point, for it not only captures the core meaning of the Enlightenment but also provides a clear definition. Apel's philosophy can be understood as a reconstruction of Kantian moral philosophy through transcendental pragmatism. As we known, Apel and Habermas' discourse ethics is based on the validity of communicative action. For them the communication is action oriented towards intersubjective understanding. Commu-

nication means to mutually take responsibility contained in agreement. Although Apel does not discuss the issue related to the Enlightenment directly, his theory actually has an internal connection with the Enlightenment: 1. Apel's discourse ethics provides a new insight about the connection between freedom and the Enlightenment. Kant had already offered an insight into the unity of freedom and Enlightenment in his second categorical imperative: treat a person as an end and not merely as a means. Apel rehearses the unity of freedom and reason with universal pragmatics. 2. According to Apel, the reason in communicative action does not provide a substantial principle or norm but a procedure of justifying any norms. The reconstruction of Kantian ethics means two things. On the one hand, we must give up the illusion of absolutism, because we are always involved in imperfect and limited communication. On the other hand, the Enlightenment has its normative requirement, that is to give up nihilism or relativism which refuses rational justification. (3) Although Kant had considered the Enlightenment a virtue, saying "Have courage to use your own understanding!," Apel takes it as "primordial" virtue. Based on these arguments, Luo thinks that Apel is enlightened.

Zou Shipeng's paper discusses the "spatial turn" of social theory that was introduced by Michael Foucault and Henri Lefebvre. According to Zou, "spatial turn" is a paradigm shift in humanities and social sciences. As we know, the main stream of modern philosophy is the philosophy of self-consciousness based on historicity and temporality. Lefebvre introduced "spatial turn" into social theory, which was developed by David Harvey, Manuel Castells and others. Zou's paper does not involve the discussion of the development of social theory, but focuses on the ontological dimension of "spatial turn." Zou argues that Karl Marx inaugurated "spatial turn." In the classical version of historical materialism, the spatial expansion underlying industrial capitalism was grasped as a social relationship of human beings in history. Space and time cannot be considered separate elements but a dialectic of unity. As Marx said: "The coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity or self-change [Selbstveranderung] can be conceived and rationally understood only as revolutionary practice."[11] According to Marxian anthropology, space is not only the natural condition of human life but also the object of human practice; material space is also social space. After Marx, many thinkers introduced new perspectives. Heidegger's contribution is to deny the conception of homogeneous time, but to consider time an existential horizon of humanity. Lefebvre is the first Marxist who introduced the concept of

---

[11] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Selected Works* (Beijing: People Press, 1995), 55.

"politics of space" and revealed the political significance of the production of space. Space is not only the location of production and consumption but also the field of class struggle and revolution. Foucault points out the main mistake of the dominant theory: "Space was treated as the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile. Time, on the contrary, was richness, fecundity, life, dialectic."[12] Actually, "We are in the epoch of simultaneity, of juxtaposition, of distance and approaching, of shoulder by shoulder, of scattering in all directions."

Space is not an empty place that can be filled with any contents; rather any space itself is filled with sensuous and historical contents. Zou argues that space should be rethought by returning to the notion of "einai" (to be). "To be" does not only refer to beings and becoming but also to the site of the happening of beings. "To be" is always to be in a site, which means that there is an essential connection between being and space. Within an existential understanding of space, we can set up a connection between Marxian *praxis* philosophy and the social theory of capitalism. "Spatial turn" provides us with a new perspective of understanding ourselves and the world since the Enlightenment.

Zhang Xiuqin's paper deals with Li Da's interpretation of the Marxian concept of ideology. Li Da (1890-1966) was a founder of the Communist Party of China and a famous Chinese Marxist philosopher. Although his interpretation of Marxist philosophy was influenced by Soviet textbooks, he tried to understand it creatively. Li Da defined ideology as a "social awareness," which is determined by both economic relations of society and social consciousness of people. Ideology is the unity of social condition and human subjectivity. Like Altrusserm, Li Da argued that ideology is an eternal phenomenon because every society has its ideology. In a class society, "it could not represent the social awareness of all members in society but is only class awareness."[13] In a classless society, ideology appears as "the common awareness of all individuals." The innovation of Li Da's interpretation is his emphasis that ideology is not only a system of theoretical but also practical consciousness, which consists of the common habits of popular life. Although Li Da's theory was fettered by Soviet Marxism, his interpretation of ideology as "social awareness" can give us an illumination of the Marxian discourse of ideology.

Passion for totality is a theoretical strive for modernity. For Hegel, a characteristic of the modern world is the collapse of spiritual and social

---

[12] Michel Foucault, *Space, Knowledge and Power*, Colin Gordon, trans.; reprinted from Colin Gordon, ed., *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977* (New York: Pantheon, 1980), 63-77, 177.

[13] Li Da, *The Collection of Li Da's Writings*, Vol. 1, 289.

unity; the task of philosophy is then to recover totality. Marx also tried to diagnose this historical dilemma. A new element that Marxism has added in the discourse of totality is not just to blame the collapse of ethic community, but to take capitalism as a historical preposition of human emancipation. György Lukács is a key figure in the Marxist discourse of totality. Zhang's paper studies Lukács' theory from the perspective of Ernst Bloch's utopian philosophy. In *History and Class Consciousness*, Lukács is basically a Hegelian, but he also tries to transcend Hegel by giving dialectics of Marxian interpretation. Lukács' breakthrough point is his emphasis on the difference between alienation and objectification. But this is not all. An important intent of the book is to redeem utopia. As Ernst Bloch says, "There are parts and ideas in *History and Class Consciousness* which are expressions of a common point of view and which really came from me."[14] This gives us a clue to rethink Lukács and his magnum opus. If we admit that Hegel is not just a speculative philosopher of metaphysics but also a thinker who is extremely sensitive to crisis of modern praxis and ethical life, Lukács' theory of totality can be conceived as a solution to the problem left by Hegel. Lukács' theory of totality originnated from Hegel's famous statement: "Truth is a totality." However, unlike Hegel, totality is not an object we ponder, but a state of freedom that must be realized by revolutionary practice. For Lukasc and Bloch, passion for totality is a passion for "the other." "The world will always be other than what we have thought; the future will always be other than what we have planned." In this sense, Marxism endowed the Enlightenment but with an alternative role: to figure out and to try reaching totality in the future.

There are four papers in the last section, "Religious Reflection in Society." Wang Xingfu's paper is a tentative research on the relation between politics and religion in contemporary radical philosophy. As we know, Marx began his theoretical career by criticizing religion. In "*On the Jewish Question*," Marx detects a political theodicy in the liberalist theory that the liberal state stands over society as heaven does over earth. However, the opposite is true; the real foundation of religion is our secular life. The mature program of Marxism consists of historical materialism and political economy. The former gives us a secular interpretation of human history, while the latter explains the destiny of capitalist society. The collapse of socialism has caused some suspicions. According to Warren Breckman, "The collapse of the Marxist project of emancipation

---

[14] Michael Lowy, "Interview with Ernst Bloch," in *New German Critique* (1976), no. 9, 38.

in the late 20th century brought with it the collapse of confidence in the secularizing project that had accompanied it."[15]

The radical philosophy attempts to connect politics and religion with Marxism and theology in a framework of theological politics. We can call this "returns to religion." Why are radical thinkers and post-Marxists so interested in religion? To some extent, the "returns to religion" is a compensatory response to the crisis of socialist politics. When the secular world is dominated by neo-liberalism, the revolutionary intent has to be saved by the surrealist power of religion. The first part of the paper discusses the classical Marxist interpretation of religion. Marx criticizes religion from the perspective of radical humanism: "man makes religion, religion does not make man," "religion is a sign of the oppressed creature, the feeling of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless circumstances. It is the opium of people."[16] Engels gives a more positive valuation of religion. He points out that the history of early Christianity has notable resemblance with the modern working-class movement; they all expressed the people's discontent and anger towards an unjust social reality. In general, the Marxian project is atheistic and secular. In classical Marxism, we can dispel superstition and reveal the objective law of history with science so as to realize emancipation through the development of productivity and rational organization of society.

The history of the 20th century denied this secular project. Walter Benjamin was the first one who radically broke with the ideology of progress and secular Marxist tradition. In his "Theses on the Philosophy of History," Benjamin argues that historical materialism should serve theology. He gives radical thinkers two connecting ideas: historical passimism and messianic redemption. Based on these ideas, Slavoj Žižek and Giorgio Agamben construct an alternative to theological Marxism. The team of "returns to religion" in radical philosophy is splendid, including Alain Badiou, Žižek, Agamben, Antonio Negeri and Terry Eagelton. According to John Roberts' research, the politicization of Christianity in radical thought has two branches: Jesus tradition and Pauline tradition. Broadly, Badiou appeals to Pauline tradition and Žižek appeals to Jesus tradition. Badiou wants to recover fighting universalism, while Žižek tends to recover the idea of messianic revolution. They all insist that religion is a necessary resource in order to transcend neo-liberalist globalization. But, secular politics and religious practice ultimately are two distinctive activities. Marx-

---

[15] Warren Breckman, "Democracy between Disenchantment and Political Theology: French Post-Marxism and Return of Religion," in *New German Critique* (2001, Winter), 104.

[16] Karl Marx, *Early Writings* (London: Penguin Group, 1992), 244.

ism is a secular discourse of history and politics; any insights from religion must be integrated into historical materialism and a political program of humanist emancipation. In this sense, religion and Marxism can keep a positive dialogue, but we cannot obliterate the boundary between the two and displace secular politics with religion.

In modern intellectual history, the theory of art and aesthetics is important in criticizing social reality and prefiguring a better state. Most scholars are interested in the cognitive and moral dimensions of the Enlightenment, but the aesthetic Enlightenment has not been treated properly. Lu Kaihua's paper deals with this problem. In "*The Outline of a Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*," Marx makes a fascinating statement: the development of art as a form of ideology is uneven with the forces of production. In the classical framework of historical materialism, this statement is a difficult problem. Lu is interested in both methodology and substance. In the substantial issue, the author valuates Marx's interpretation of Greek art and its relation with Greek mythology. In terms of methodology, Lu intends to answer the problem: why does Greek art still remain eternal charm for us although its time was far distant from us? According to Terry Eagleton, the eternal charm of Greek art is just an illusion. If one has a deeper knowledge of the brutal fact and the real background that Greek tragedy based upon, its charm would disappear. Eagleton's radical sociological interpretation denies that the art product has any aesthetic feature that is independent of its social condition. Lu argues that we can turn to Hegel's aesthetics in order to resolve this puzzle. In Hegel's typology of art, there are three kinds of arts: symbolic, classical and romantic. Greek art belongs to classical art. According to Hegel, "classical" art expresses a perfect fusion of content and form, for "content and form is meant to be adequate to one another"; thus, it constructs "a totality and independence in itself." Lu's paper does not resolve the contradiction between historical materialism and Marx's statement on Greek art in a satisfactory way.

Zhang Qingxiong's "The Market Dimension and the Transcendent Dimension of Religion" tries to look at religion and its complicated significance in a contemporary situation. The author argues that we live in a secular society where the market mechanism has penetrated all parts of social life, including the religious arena. The most difficult problem is how religion adjusts itself to society while maintaining its transcendent inclination towards eternal reality. The coexistence of religion and the market economy has lasted for several centuries in the Western world, but it is a new phenomenon in China. For only forty years, China has finished the process of marketization. The challenge of religion is more serious in China than in Western society. Interestingly, the law of "supply and

demand" in the market is a useful tool to understand the current situation of religion. From the perspective of demand, the more people's lives are controlled by the arbitrary force of the market, the more they need the soul consolation that religion offers. From the perspective of supply, the more the market develops, the more religious institutions show its interest in the paid service. The interaction between supply and demand causes religion to be a part of the market. The author does not blame this phenomenon; instead, he tries to give an objective analysis. He reminds us that religion is a product of culture. Like art, it has two dimensions. The elegant dimension of religion tries to purify one's spirit and enhance one's morality and sentiment. The vulgar dimension of religion keeps one's attention merely on one's own material and secular needs. Nowadays, the problem with the religious development in China is that the promotion of elegant religions is far less sufficient.

The Enlightenment and Marxism have not made sufficient analyses of this situation. For Marx, religion is the opium of the masses, and any need for religion can be explained by its social background. But religion has a transcendent dimension which is anchored in human nature rather than in material desires. Similarly, the Enlightenment has its blind spots: "Modern Enlightenment tries to substitute religion with reason by replacing all the religion-related social functions with law, moral education and psychological treatments constituted by reason." Many facts have proved that this is a credulous belief, because abiding by the law and behaving decently are based on not only on reason but also on intent and desire, which are not created by law or morality. The dilemma of modernity is that it wants to replace religion with reason, but reason cannot fulfil all functions of religion. We should not give up the illusion of eradicating religion but try to find out a rational way to co-exist with it.

The last paper is written by Wang Xinsheng, in which he interprets Thomas Aquinas from the perspective of Karl Rahner. Rahner's thought is a response to Kant's critical philosophy. According to Kant's first Critique, we can only have a strict knowledge of phenomena; in terms of transcendental objections like god and the universe, we have only regulative concepts. A critique of all theology must be based upon a speculative principle of reason. Rahner tries to transcend Kant's negative attitude towards metaphysics. For Rahner, knowledge is not restricted to the possible empirical phenomena; it can reach a kind of dim but real knowledge of being itself. In order to establish this position, Rahner appeals to Aquinas' doctrine of "Conversio ad Phantasmata." Like Kant's critique philosophy, Aquinas' doctrine is a theory of the possibilities and limits of human knowledge. Unlike Kant, Aquinas does not converse being itself to a subject. Rahner insists on the legitimacy of metaphysics, that being and

knowing are a primordial unity: "Knowing is the being-presence-to-self of being and this being-presence-to-self is the being of the existent."[17] Every concept is empty without some intuition of being. If the convention to subject falls into phantasmata, theology is a method of the "retrieval" of transcendent existence. At first, truth is not a subjective organization of experience, but it resides in the adequate understanding of an object. Pure being and pure knowing are the same thing; it is what we call God. Through Wang's introduction, we can come to some critique of the Enlightenment with Christianity. The Enlightenment sets up the authority of subjective reason. According Aquinas and Rahner, the Enlightenment is also a new phantasmata. For the new phantasmata, religion and Scholasticism are an antidote.

This collection is not a consistent work. It simply represents serious thinking on the Enlightenment, religion and philosophy from the perspectives of China. The Enlightenment is an open project that invites all people to join, even its critics. Xunzi (荀子）once said in *On Learning*: the biggest mistake of humanity is that it is limited by oneside views and blinded to comprehensive ideas. The Enlightenment is an endeavour to overcome all kinds of blindness. Any sincere thinking is welcome.

---

[17] Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica* (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1996), 69.

Part I

Modernization and the Enlightenment in China

1.

On Enlightenment Thinking and the Construction of Chinese Culture Today

YU WUJIN

Indeed, other cultures bear essential significance for contemporary Chinese people. On the one hand, they have to take in a variety of new phenomena and new ideas drawing from their rapidly changing surroundings and try to adapt to them. On the other hand, they must reflect seriously upon and summarize the momentous ideological and cultural events that Western society, especially European society, has experienced. The concept of "Enlightenment" is so crucial a topic that we cannot pay less attention to it while considering the construction of the present-day Chinese culture.

Comparative Study: Enlightenment as the Theme

It is well-known that the Enlightenment arose in Europe during the 18th century. When spoken of by contemporary Chinese people, the topic of the Enlightenment implies a comparison between Chinese and Western cultures. Comparative study has been anarchic for a long time. Any researcher could make a comparison between two minds merely by arbitrarily selecting one from the Chinese culture, such as Chuang-tzu and the other from the West, like Heidegger. In fact, comparisons of this kind just pay attention to surface similarities and share "in appearance" without considering whether they have something in common "in spirit," or what the essence of their thoughts is. An approach to breaking this "state of anarchism" is to introduce a new concept of time so that the comparative study can develop into a science.

There are two distinct concepts of time operating in the comparative study of Chinese and Western cultures. One is the type of "chronological time," according to which what goes on in China in 2009 should be "contemporary" with that in Europe. The other type is "morphological time." Morphology is a branch of biology, specializing in shape and structure of animals and plants, as well as their components. Morphological time can be further subdivided into two types:

One is in the sense of biology, initiated by Oswald Spengler, the German philosopher of history. In *The Decline of the West*, he illustrated in tables of "parallel columns of culture" the four cultural patterns: Egyptian, Classical, Western and Arabic. Each of these cultures passed through

the phases of pre-culture, culture and civilization. In his view, only by the same phase, could different cultural patterns be compared. This morphological time was inherited by Arnold J. Toynbee, a British philosopher and historian.

The other type is morphological time in the sense of sociology, which originated with Karl Marx. He brought forward the theory of "three general social forms": first, dependence of the human upon nature; second, dependence of the human upon things; and third, the development of a free personality. Today's China is at the second form. In this sense, China is "contemporary" with the cultural mentality of European society from the 16th to 19th centuries.[1]

The development of comparative study of cultures into a science requires that it be carried out on the basis of the concept of "contemporary," which is implied in "morphological time in the sense of sociology." In terms of "morphological time in the sense of sociology," Today's China is "contemporary" with European society in the 16th to 19th centuries. This means that Enlightenment is now a theme of Chinese society to introduce the concept of morphological time, however, is not to deny the concept of chronological time, which also has an effect on our cultural mentality. What we have to do is to appeal to the concept of morphological time when trying to thoroughly grasp the cultural mentality of contemporary Chinese people, especially their deeper cultural mentality.

Next, we turn to the meaning of the "Enlightenment" and the leading spiritual elements implied in that movement. Etymologically, the verb "enlighten" has its original meaning, "to give light" with a derivative meaning of the inspiration and illumination of the spirit. The Allegory of the Cave by Plato, the Idol of the Cave by Francis Bacon and the metaphor of the Dark Room by Lu Xun, all imply that one should break away from darkness and embrace the illumination and guidance of brightness. Immanuel Kant, the German philosopher, proposed in his *What is Enlightenment?* (1784) that

> Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-imposed immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one's understanding without guidance from another. This immaturity is self-imposed when its cause lies not in lack of understanding, but in lack of resolve and courage to use it without guidance from another. Sapere Aude! 'Have

---

[1] Refer to another paper of mine, "The Comparative Study on Cultures and the Morphological Time in the sense of Sociology," in Yu Wujin, ed., *The Pursuit of A New Coordinate of Value* (Shanghai: Fudan University Press, 1995), 382-389.

courage to use your own understanding!' -- that is the motto of enlightenment.[2]

The Enlightenment is often explained in Kant's terms; in fact it was brought up by the contemporary French philosopher, Michel Foucault, when he writes *What is Enlightenment?*,

I do not by any means propose to consider it as capable of constituting an adequate description of Enlightenment; and no historian, I think, could be satisfied with it for an analysis of the social, political, and cultural transformations that occurred at the end of the 18th century.[3]

However, Kant's interpretation of the Enlightenment as a spiritual movement of man's emergence from his self-imposed immaturity expressed its core. As a noun, "the Enlightenment" basically refers to an intellectual movement that happened in Europe, particularly in France during the 18th century, while in general, it denotes the liberation of spirit and thought.

To put the ideas of Kant and other Enlightenment scholars together, we could find that there are mainly four ideal leading principles of the Enlightenment:

First, the authority of reason. During the long night of the Middle Ages, Europeans had been lulled to sleep by the Christian faith. With the rise and development of modern science, the reason sleeping within man began slowly awakening. Consciously using reason as a supreme principle, Enlightenment thinkers not only encouraged individuals to think independently, but also claimed that the whole society should take reason, rather than faith, as the standard to judge what is right or wrong. Thus, "the court of reason" came into being, and the authority of reason was set up, at least in the people's mind. Galileo Galilei, the Italian scientist, was imprisoned by the Inquisition because of his advocacy of Copernicus' "heliocentric theory." He was compelled to swear to the Holy Bible to re-

---

[2] Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace, and Other Essays on Politics, History, and Moral Practice*, Ted Humphrey, trans. (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 1983), 41.

[3] Du Xiaozhen, ed., *Foucault's Works* (Shanghai: Shanghai Far East Press, 1998), 532. Translation referred to Michel Foucault, *What is Enlightenment?*, in *The Foucault Reader*, P. Rabinow, ed. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 32-50. Source: http://foucault.info/documents/whatIsEnlightenment/foucault.whatIsEnlightenment.en.html.

nounce heliocentricism. Since his mind was dominated by reason, he muttered: "And yet it (the earth) moves." Similarly, Giordano Bruno, the Italian scientist, was burned alive in the Campo de' Fiori, a central square in Rome, because he defended, on the basis of reason, Copernicus' and Galileo's heliocentricism and firmly rejected bending to the Church's doctrines of faith. Likewise, a Spanish scientist, Servetus defended the truth based on reason about blood circulation and was sentenced to be burned in Geneva by order of Calvin, a leader of the Reformation.

Great minds of the Enlightenment in France were devoted to the intense critique of the Church's faith during the 18th century. Regarding the punishment of heresy by the Inquisition in *Théologie Portative*, Baron Holbach wrote these lines in a mocking tone,

> (The Inquisition's sentence, the stake) is a delicacy occasionally served to God. It is roasted ceremoniously with the flesh of the heretic and the Jews, with a purpose of securing a salvation of their souls, while teaching the onlookers a lesson as well. Needless to say, merciful Father always has a partiality for this dish.[4]

Holbach exposed the nature of religion as the elimination of reason:

> For a rational being, there is nothing ever more harmful than reason. God gives reason to whom he destines to suffer an afterlife punishment; but to whom God will save or whom God will allow to be in favor of the Church, God kindly deprives of reason. Beat reason down! This is the foundation of religion.[5]

---

[4] Baron Holbach, *Théologie Portative*, Shan Zhicheng, trans. (Beijing: The Commercial Press, 1996), 20. The British scholar Gibbon mentioned in Chapter 47 of his book *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, a lady who "adhered to the Neoplatonic philosophy and devoted her talents to mathematics. She was 'torn from her chariot, stripped naked, dragged to the church, and inhumanly butchered by the hands of Peter the Reader and a troop of savage and merciless fanatics: her flesh was scraped from her bones with sharp oyster-shells and her quivering limbs were delivered to the flames. The just progress of inquiry and punishment was stopped by seasonable gifts'." Referred to Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1945), 368. In his book *The Right to Heresy: Castellio against Calvin*, Stefan Zweig made a description on how Michael Servetus, the Spanish scientist, was burned in Geneva by the order of Calvin. Stefan Zweig, *The Right to Heresy*, Zhao Tai'an, trans. (Beijing: Sanlian Bookstore, 1986), 143.

[5] Holbach, *Théologie Portative*, 58.

Denis Diderot, another Enlightenment French scholar, said, "If reason is a gift from heaven, and the same thing can be said of faith, then heaven has given us two incompatible and contradictory presents."[6] He continued with these words:

> Lost in an immense forest during the night I only have a small light to guide me. An unknown man appears and says to me: "My friend, blow out your candle so you can better find your way." This unknown man is a theologian.[7]

These critiques of religious superstition by Enlightenment scholars freed European minds. After the publication of *The System of the World* in 1796, Pierre-Simon Laplace, the French scientist, was questioned by Napoleon on why his work on the universe did not have any mention of the world's Creator. He replied, "I had no need of this hypothesis, Your Majesty."[8] All of these suffice to demonstrate that, by the end of the 18th century, the authority of reason had been fully acknowledged.

Second, the disenchantment of the world. The concept of "disenchantment" (Entzauberung), initiated by Max Weber, the German sociologist, indicates an emergence from the ideas of mysticism, especially from "the city of God" that is built and sanctified by the religion. (It is also the title of a book by St. Augustine, a philosopher and theologian, known as a "Father of the Church.") It is a view on everything from man's perspective instead of God's, that is, a return to a secularized life based on human nature. As early as in the Renaissance, Giovanni Boccaccio, the Italian scholar, wrote in *Decameron* many readable and popular tales about disenchantment. For example, a pious Christian gave away all his possessions to the church after the death of his wife. He took his son with him to the top of a mountain for a devoted service to God breaking his boy's connection with any other people. One day when the son reached manhood, his father took him down from the mountain into the city for alms. He got excited when seeing young women. His father explained to

---

[6]Denis Diderot, *Diderot Selected Works*, Chen Xiuzhai, trans. (Beijing: Sanlian Bookstore, 1956), 36. Translation referred to Denis Diderot, *Thoughts on Religion* (Addition to the "*Philosophical Thoughts*"). Source: Oeuvres Complètes, Vol I. (Paris: Garnier Fréres, 1875), Mitchell Abidor, trans., Creative Commons (Attribute & ShareAlike) marxists.org 2005, revised 2008. Source: http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/diderot/1770/religion.htm.

[7] Ibid.

[8] W.C. Dampier, *A History of Science*, Li Heng, trans. (Beijing: The Commercial Press, 1979), 259.

him that these young women were young geese, a kind of wicked things. Back to the mountain, the son still could not get these young geese out of his mind. This suggests that human nature and desires cannot be changed by asceticism sanctified by religion, rather the more oppressed they are, the stronger they become.

In the Enlightenment, "disenchantment," to a broader extent, became the theme of the spiritual movement. This significant theme runs through the book, *The Persian Letters,* by the French scholar Montesquieu. The book is about a Persian nobleman named Roxana, who left his harem at home in the charge of eunuchs and came to Europe for a visit. Under the torture of desires, his wives tried all means to keep a tryst with their lovers. When Roxana, Usbsk's favorite wife, was having a tryst. Her lover was caught and killed by the eunuchs; then she poisoned all the eunuchs to get even. Before she killed herself with poison, she wrote a letter to Usbek saying, "I have lived in slavery, but I have always been free. I reformed your laws by those of nature, and my spirit has always held to its independence."[9] *The Persian Letters* expresses that no mystical or sanctified constraint could restrain natural and worldly human desires. In *A Philosophy of Art* Hippolyte Taine claims that the Olympian gods are no more sanctified than a secular family. This is a profound revelation that all sanctified things are the products of alienation of secular things. By the 19th century, two products came from the Enlightenment disenchantment: 1. A panorama of secular capitalist society was illustrated by the French novelist, Honoré de Balzac, in his book *The Human Comedy*. 2. God and Christian theology asserted by the German philosopher, Ludwig Feuerbach, in his book *The Essence of Christianity* (1841) as the product of alienation of human nature and that the essence of theology was anthropological.

Third, the pursuit of equality. The political dimension of the Enlightenment revealed itself in its rejection of hierarchy and privilege as well as in its dream and pursuit of a bourgeois democratic republic on the basis of equality. The Italian scholar Niccolò di Machiavelli, the Dutch scholar Hugo Grotius and the British scholar Thomas Hobbes began looking upon worldly political arrangements from the perspective of man instead of God. European socio-political institutions and state systems threw off the veil of mystery. In the 18th century, the French thinker Jean-Jacques Rousseau, in his *The Origin of Human Inequality* (1755), made an analysis of two kinds of inequality in human society: one is natural or physical inequality, and the other is mental or political. He attacked the

---

[9] Montesquieu, *The Persian Letters*, George R. Healy, trans. (Hackett Publishing Company, 1964), 272.

latter and directly pointed the finger at monarchy and hierarchy in France, thereby provoking the French Revolution. In his *On the History of Religion and Philosophy in Germany* the German poet Heinrich Heine said that

> Mark this, ye proud men of action: ye are nothing but unconscious hodmen of the men of thought who, often in humblest stillness, have appointed you your inevitable task. Maximilian Robespierre was merely the hand of Jean Jacques Rousseau, the bloody hand that drew from the womb of time the body whose soul Rousseau had created. May not the restless anxiety that troubled the life of Jean Jacques have caused such stirrings within him that he already foreboded the kind of accoucheur that was needed to bring his thought living into the world?[10]

After the Enlightenment, not until the 19th century, did people generally come to realize that it was the capitalist market economy that was the most forceful terminator of traditional rank and privilege, and it was currency as a universal equivalent to the most powerful egalitarian. In *The Communist Manifesto* Marx and Engels mentioned the historical part that the bourgeoisie played,

> All fixed, fast frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real conditions of life and his relations with his kind.[11]

Fourth, the freedom of personality. Rousseau claimed his famous words in *The Social Contract* (1762), "Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains."[12] The search for freedom of personality, as the main theme of the Enlightenment, was embodied fully in both the *Declaration*

---

[10] Heinrich Heine, *Heine Selected Works*, Zhang Yushu, ed. (Beijing: People Literature Press, 1983), 291. Translation referred to Heinrich Heine, *Religion and Philosophy in Germany: A Fragment*, John Snodgrass, trans. (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1959). Source: http://www.archive.org/details/religionandphilo01161 6mbp.

[11] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (New York: New American Library, 1998), 54.

[12] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, Christopher Betts, trans. (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 1994), 45.

of Independence in the United States and the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen* in France. In *The Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807), Hegel described how European society turned from an original ethical substance into a legal one based on individuality. This transformation was marked by Montesquieu's *The Spirit of the Laws* (1748). We would find in the pre-enlightened society that individuals were restricted to a hierarchical system of identity and had no actual freedom. As a contract in the enlightened society its system based on equality took the lead; freedom of personality was universally recognized and established. The Danish philosopher and theologian Søren Kierkegaard even had his own epitaph signed with "the individual."

The above-mentioned four leading principles of the Enlightenment had been represented over again in the Enlightenment movements of different nations.

The Absence of the Enlightenment: History and Status Quo (Current Situation) in China

The Enlightenment of modern Chinese society, against the background of saving the nation from extinction, had been carried out in terms of a "trilogy" since 1841. The first stage may be called "Westernization Movement," with representative figures such as Zeng Guofan and Li Hongzhang. Drawing lessons from the two defeats in both the first and the second Opium Wars, intellectual leaders decided to embark on the path of "learning from the Westerners' fortes to compete with the Westerners," proposed by Wei Yuan. In their view, once they acquired foreign technologies, especially military technology, they would be able to keep out the foreign invaders. However, the Chinese Northern Navy's defeat in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895 brought the Westernization Movement to naught. It came to light that only through the reform of the political system, could China be saved. The second stage can be called "Political Reform," with Kang Youwei, Liang Qichao and Tan Sitong as its exponents. Yet the failure of the Wu Hsu Reform Movement of 1898 led to the end of this stage. In practice, the history of modern Europe had already revealed that neither political reform nor revolution could succeed without Enlightenment thought and culture as guides. At that time, Chinese intellectuals learned the lesson from painful experience and believed that to overcome China's crisis, the starting point must be a reform of the national characteristics of the Chinese people. The third stage can be called the "New Culture Movement," with Chen Duxiu, Li Dazhao, Lu Xun and others as its representatives.

It is well-known that traditional Chinese society used to be patriarchal and hierarchical based on blood lineage. In such a society, nation and family were the sovereign authorities, so much so that there was no place for individual freedom or personality. For that reason, during New Culture Movement, the theme of Enlightenment was rather expressed in individuals' dreams and their pursuit of freedom. This is also the theme of the well-known classical novel, *A Dream of Red Mansions*, which mainly focuses on both Jia Baoyu's search for freedom of personality (including free love) and his departure from the Grand View Garden. Although Jia Baoyu could go to Buddhist imagery to grasp spiritual freedom, he rebels against the conventional Confucian and feudal ethical codes. The topic of "Nora's leaving" in Henrik Ibsen's play, *A Doll's House*, discussed by Lu Xun, also had a universal significance for Chinese society at that time. In fact, both Ba Jin's novel series *Family, Spring, Autumn* and Qian Zhongshu's *Fortress Besieged* contain the subject of the main character's departure. The former expresses this topic in Jueming's and Juehui's departures, while the latter in that of Fang Hongjian. The meaning of all these works is to convey that people can achieve their freedom of personality through their individual pursuit.

However, in contrast to European society in the 18th century, Chinese society has never had the theme of Enlightenment conceptualized. Rather this important theme has been pushed aside constantly and remained marginalized. Here we will investigate the phenomenon of lacking enlightenment in real life in present Chinese society:

First, the spread of religious ideas and the overflow of superstitious thinking. No one denies that quite a number of thoughts and behaviors are still superstitious. Palm reading, face reading, fortune telling, belief in and fear of supernatural beings and fondness of talismans and mascots all have been unfading topics in everyday conversations. For instance, numbers can be divided into two categories. On the one hand, people would like to possess the number "8" regardless of license plate number, street number, mobile number, landline number, etc. They even invest a good sum of money to get this 8. Almost all festival activities are held on either the 8th, 18th, 28th of a month or other auspicious days. On the other hand, people try to avoid the numbers such as 4, 14 and 24 as they were avoiding a plague. In many buildings, the 4th, 13th and 14th floors are not marked. In rural areas, especially places where there is lack of enlightened culture, different kinds of superstitions survive -- the domination of witch-doctors, witches and fortune-tellers. Superstitious thoughts are most reflected in funerals and interments. Things often go as follows: although the deceased had not received proper cares and medical treatments when they

were alive, they would receive great honor after death. They would be buried with full honors by their family, even furnished with some exquisite things such as ladyloves, mistresses and housemaids, as well as motor vehicles, TVs, bank notes, etc., so that the deceased could live a luxurious life in the afterworld.

Unlike superstition, religious belief is protected by law. Equally recognized by law, atheism exercises actively or has leading effects on social life. In recent years, in China there has been a sharp increase in the number of people with religious beliefs, especially belief in Buddhism. Most people, particularly scientific and technical personnel who are lack of classical human nurture, travel abroad and convert to Christianity. Within China, quite a number of government officials try to burn the first stick of incense and strike the first ring of the bell in the temple, wear a mascot and even donate money to "coat the Buddha statue with gold." The customs of the whole society sink into a smoky religious atmosphere. This is a negative proof of how feeble and pallid the sense of Enlightenment is in the social consciousness of contemporary China.

Second, the revival of hierarchy and the sense of privilege. As proposed by Marx, socialism aims to eliminate classes and realize political equality among people. Yet we find that in present Chinese society, both hierarchy and privilege are reinforced. In a planned economy, resources are to be distributed in accord with the level of a unit or a person. For example, it makes a great difference in distribution of resources in a unit whether it is on the bureau level or vice-ministerial level. Hence, to compete for a job in a higher level is one of the most common phenomena in the administrative career in China. For individuals, especially for cadres, the competition for a higher level of a section, a department, a bureau, or a ministry becomes the covert motive of one's entire life and, hence, determines one's behavior. Due to different levels of jobs one's salaries, houses, medical care, and other resources vary quite differently. This idea of hierarchy is rooted so deeply in people's minds that even a monk has his name card printed as "provincial department level monk"; and a retired official has his name card printed as "equal to a bureau level inspector."

Under the condition of an ideal market economy, distribution of resources is supposed to be determined by the market. But in the Chinese mode of market economy, the administrative power determines the distribution which leads not only to the solidification of the established hierarchy, but also to the greater reinforcement of the sense of privilege. The administrative power, if applied improperly or misused, could collude with lawless businessmen or gangs in rent-seeking. On the other hand, in order to expand their interests and domains, those lawless businessmen

and gangs try all kinds of means to corrupt the administrative power. This results in the distorted distribution of resources, great losses of national assets and the rapid widening of the gap between the rich and the poor. These unhealthy phenomena indicate that the Enlightenment atmosphere is rather thin in contemporary China.

Third, the prevalence of nostalgia and the reenchantment of traditional ideas. Compared with the United States which is a burgeoning nation, today's China is tended to confront more resistance against the renewal of thought and culture, because of the fact that China bears a traditional culture of thousands of years. During its cultural development, the Chinese have been used to "looking back nine times every ten steps," and constantly "chasing the fleshpots of Egypt." Prior to the Cultural Revolution, Mao Zedong once criticized the Central Propaganda Department and the Ministry of Culture for their performance as the ministry in favor of emperors and generals and the ministry only for talent and beauty as well as for the dead. This is the exact situation to which we are returning. Nowadays as soon as we turn on the TV, the barometer of contemporary culture, we immediately see all kinds of historical, nostalgic and chivalrous soap operas. Although the historical period in which characters live and the clothes they wear vary in different dramas, the structures and the themes of these dramas conform to a conventional pattern of regalism, hierarchy and male chauvinism, which indicate that man is superior and woman inferior. There are also the Code of Brotherhood, heroic romance of saving the beautiful and the fondness of bravery and fighting. The moral teaching implied in these dramas, namely, "Bad as well as good deeds may redound on the doer," is so lean and pale that it does not have any truly profound critical sense. Movie directors, such as Chen Kaige, Zhang Yimou, etc., not only do they inevitably fail to make any extra-contributions to the development of contemporary Chinese films, they themselves have become sour, fermented and rotten.

As the rush for development spreads across the country, various traditional ideas are ready to be reenchanted. In intellectual and cultural circles, we do not see any truly weighty critical works, but merely so-called "merits singing" or "praises chanting." Traditional cultures are extolled indiscriminately, while the contemporary scene is denounced as ignorant or naive in a promiscuous manner. There is an odd phenomenon emerging in contemporary Chinese thought and culture: on the one hand, people are talking about "originality and innovation"; on the other hand, they fall on their knees before the idol of traditional cultures at each historical turn. It seems they were Faust with two hearts in their chest beating in opposite directions.

Fourth, the ruling of collectivism and the submergence of free personality. In contemporary Chinese thought and culture, collectivism is often taken as the acute antithesis of free personality. For instance, "the spirit of devotion" means interminably evacuating one's personality and individual life so as to devote them to some kind of abstract collectivism. People seldom go deep into this issue to ask; What if a collective does not aim at protecting its individuals' lives and values, but rather, it depends itself on its individuals' lives for its own nourishment? Is it legitimate for such a collective to exist? Is it true that the existence of an abstract collectivism has more values than a specific life? Another moderate expression, "the spirit of devotion" or "the spirit of the screw," regards individuals as purely passive beings with no rights but merely obligations. This kind of spirit emasculates individual independence and integrity. In views of comtemporary Chinese culture, "individuality" is still confused indiscriminately with "extreme-individualism." In fact, the former confirms the legitimate rights and obligations of an individual, while the latter has an anti-social tendency, with which people should be against.

In reality, collectivism is not as praiseworthy in all cases as people suppose it to be. For instance, "regional protectionism" is an expression of collectivism. The Xiamen Smuggling Scandal has also taken the form of collectivism. An enterprise which produces fake and shoddy commodities, or a corporation which engages in financial legerdemain, often shows itself in the guise of collectivism. Rather than taking for granted that collective=good and individual=wicked, what the Enlightenment tried to do arouse is to recognize individual's independent personality and freedom.

In contemporary Chinese culture, individuality and personality are marginalized. The former is often attributed with the collective noun "people," a term that does not suggest any proper respect for each individual's legal rights. Does the phrase "serve the people" mean to serve each individual person? What is required in real life is not empty slogans such as "serve the people," but rather a respect for the rights of all people whose rights are inviolable. Usually, people interpret human rights as right for life and development, but this interpretation is problematic. Human rights means that one lives one's life in the world with dignity and is able to develop oneself. If human rights merely meant to let people survive, then slave society could have justified itself. Both history and practice tell us that the more deficient a culture is in terms of understanding of individuality and personality, the more problematic this culture is due to the fact that it has not been baptized by Enlightenment.

The Absence of Enlightenment: An Exploration of its Causes

The causes of the absence of enlightenment in modern and contemporary Chinese society are the followings:

The first cause is that enlightenment was being extruded from the national salvation. As stated before, since the first Opium War in 1841, Chinese society had been subjected to repeated foreign invasions, and thus was constantly vulnerable. In other words, political attention was always given to the theme of national salvation, thus enlightenment was automatically marginalized. The values that enlightenment advocated were superficially contrary to those of national salvation, for salvation emphasized on collective strength and iron discipline, while enlightenment supported personal independence and individual freedom. For national salvation, an individual was often taken as being ready to sacrifice him/herself for the collective. In terms of enlightenment, personal independence and individual freedom were the supreme goals. In order to promote these values, individuals had to fight against or even break away from the collective in order to achieve a free space. Before 1949, when national salvation was overwhelmingly important, enlightenment was, thus, always marginalized. After 1949, when enlightenment could have had a chance to become the primary value, people followed the thought produced during the salvation time and insisted on the abstract antagonism between the collective as the positive value and the individual as the negative. Until now, the leading values of enlightenment, especially personal freedom, remain marginalized in thought and culture in China.

The second cause is the lag in the development of commodity economy. Traditional Chinese society "stressed on the root (agriculture) and restrained the branch (trade)." The social order was ranked as "scholars, farmers, artisans and merchants." People thought that commerce was almost the equivalent of fraudulence. In such a cultural atmosphere, it would certainly have been difficult to develop a commodity economy. Chinese bourgeoisies, such as Sun Yat-sen as its representative, made great efforts to develop national industry and commodity economy. Utopian socialism gradually infiltrated Chinese culture through the spread of Marxism. After Lenin founded the first socialist state in the world through the October Revolution, Chinese intellectuals, including the bourgeois, took the Soviet Union as their ideal. Lenin's idea of small producers producing capitalism daily and hourly had a great influence on contemporary Chinese society. After 1949, "cutting the tail of capitalism" became the supreme goal; it was impossible for the commodity economy to be dev-

eloped. However, after the economic reform and opening-up to the world in 1978, commodity economy has been promoted vigorously. At the same time, the legitimation of individual interests is also fully valued in addition to national and collective interests. This provided conditions for the reconstruction of the broken Enlightenment spirit in the realm of thought and culture. However, due to the particularity of the Chinese modes of commodity economy where the administrative power is much strong, the task of enlightenment is twofold: on the one hand, enlightenment is supposed to promote individuals' rights and obligations; on the other hand, it has to struggle with the privilege coming from hierarchy and rent-seeking. As the commodity economy is still in its initial stage, enlightenment lacks the corresponding economic foundation.

The third cause is the shrinkage of natural sciences in contemporary Chinese society. Because there was not enough room for the commodity economy to develop in modern Chinese society, the study and development of natural sciences also lost its force, and the imperial examination system established since the Sui and Tang Dynasties led most talented intellectuals to take up official careers. In his book *The Development of the Logical Method in Ancient China* Hu Shi points out that "to investigate things is to attain knowledge." Here the word "things" refers to physical objects, and "knowledge" natural sciences. But this understanding was gradually distorted. The meaning of "things" changed into social networks, and "knowledge" turned into how to keep an official position and get promoted. That is to say, the Chinese intellectuals became worldly; to a large extent, they looked down upon the study of natural sciences. Due to the lag of study in this field, religious and superstitious ideas overflowed, and reason behind things could not be proclaimed. Thus, it was difficult for enlightenment to become a permanent and powerful driving force in China.

The fourth cause is an acute opposition between the socialist value system and the universal values implied in the Enlightenment, such as to cherish life, to respect persons and human rights, to value freedom and democracy, to promote equality and justice, to pursue the truth, to advocate for science, etc. People strove to set an opposition between Marxism and humanitarianism, socialism and capitalism and to accuse the Enlightenment and its universal values as false. They overlooked the internal relation between the socialist value system and the universal values of the Enlightenment and thought that only when all the fruits derived from the Enlightenment were abandoned could the socialist value system be establish-

ed. This antagonist attitude suppressed all the Enlightenment ideas in the social life. This is contradict to Marx's theory on historical materialism.

The universal values of the Enlightenment provide the historical foundation for the construction of the socialist value system. Lenin had already told us in his book *The Tasks of the Youth Leagues* (1920):

> a proletarian culture…is not clutched out of thin air; it is not an invention of those who call themselves experts in proletarian culture. That is all nonsense. Proletarian culture must be the logical development of the store of knowledge humankind has accumulated under the yoke of capitalist, landowner and bureaucratic society.[13]

According to Lenin, the socialist value system is formed on the basis of universal values of the Enlightenment. Without this foundation, the socialist value system would degenerate into the value system of traditional society. Only when collectivism, as the core value of socialism, is baptized by the Enlightenment can the abstract antagonism between the collective and the individual be averted and the individual's personality and human rights be identified and respected universally.

The fifth cause is that Western scholars' reflections and critiques of the Enlightenment movement hinder the contemporary Chinese to accept the Enlightenment. In his book *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel had already reflected comprehensively on the Enlightenment movement. According to Hegel, the Enlightenment movement, along with its spirit, had the following problems: first, the Enlightenment just simply renounced tradition, especially religion, while in practice, religion was still indispensable for human survival and development; second, the Enlightenment onesidedly advocated for scientific thinking, which was easily diverted to utilitarianism and also neglected the importance of rationality which played a role in people's effort to unite body and soul; third, the Enlightenment attacked absolute freedom, which led to the terror of the French Revolution.

After Hegel, there were quite a few thinkers who reflected on the Enlightenment by reviewing the experience and drawing lessons from it. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, written by Horkheimer and Adorno, is a representative work of this type. The authors called Fascism a "myth" and

---

[13] Lenin: *Lenin Selected Works Volume IV* (Beijing: People's Press, 1995), 285. Translation referred to: Vladimir Lenin, "The Tasks of the Youth Leagues," from *Collected Works*, Volume 31, 1920; online version: marx.org, in 1997 and 1999. Source: http://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1920/ oct/02.htm.

sought its origin in the Enlightenment. As Homer's *Odysseus* contained myths; the Enlightenment was also a myth in its negative values, for instance, the deification of reason and the like. The post-modernists attacked the Enlightenment and modernity which led the contemporary Chinese more vigilant against the Enlightenment.

The above causes explain the deficiency of enlightenment in contemporary China. The situation of thought and culture of the contemporary Chinese people can be truly said to be "poor."

The Enlightenment Spirit: Reconstruction and Revision

The reconstruction of Enlightenment in the title of my paper does not mean a reconstruction of the Enlightenment movement. As an historical movement, the Enlightenment happened and developed due to a series of both subjective and objective conditions. The reconstruction of Enlightenment I refer here is the reconstruction of the Enlightenment spirit, which always keeps revision. As stated before, according to morphological time, contemporary Chinese society is "contemporaneous" with European society in the 16th-19th centuries; for this reason, it is called a reconstruction. However, according to chronological time, today's China is "contemporaneous" with contemporary European society. Hence, it is necessary to learn ideas from contemporary European intellectuals about their reflections on the Enlightenment movement.

For the reconstruction of the Enlightenment spirit, the following measures could be constructive:

First, we should study the works by the French materialists of the 18th century, criticize religious and superstitious ideas and establish the authority of reason and science (not only natural science, but humanities and social science).

Second, we should inhibit hierarchical privilege and rent-seeking by power, develop the middle class in order to form a civil society to counterbalance the state power and compose and publish a Civil Code as soon as possible in order to establish individuals' rights and obligations in legal term.

Third, we should promote the leading spirit and universal values of the Enlightenment and establish the socialist value system on the basis of these universal values.

Fourth, we should find similarities between the Enlightenment and the traditional culture, review the traditional values from the contem-

porary viewpoint and select and retain the Enlightenment spirit and values and creatively transform them.

Fifth, we should develop education, promote humanism and endow persons with rights as the subject of moral practice.

In order to revise the Enlightenment we should take these steps:

First, to be conscious of the "time difference (historic dislocation)" between contemporary Chinese society and contemporary European society. On the one hand, we should start with China's specific conditions while attending to the basic position of the Enlightenment and modernity and then develop the market economy and advance modernization. On the other hand, we must study the post-modern vision, so that we can adjust modernization and make it fit into China's reality.

Second, to study the critiques of the Enlightenment by Western modern and post-modern scholars and reflect on the contributions and limitations of the Enlightenment spirit. Meanwhile, we should draw lessons from the Enlightenment movement, in order to avoid the negative factors and the old way of the spiritual development of European society in the process of reconstruction of the Enlightenment spirit.

(Translated by Kong Hui, the School of Philosophy, Fudan University, Shanghai, P.R. China.)

2.

The Critique of Modernity and the "Dialectic of Enlightenment"

Wu Xiaoming

After the Second World War, the critique of modernity was again thematized in a highly tense fashion in the manner of thoroughly examining the "Enlightenment" and its tradition. Why should the critique of modernity come down to the investigation of the "Enlightenment"? Because the Enlightenment was considered modernity's secret and birth-place, its root, source and essence. In his essay *What Is Enlightenment?* Michel Foucault says that the question "that modern philosophy has not been capable of answering, but that it has never managed to get rid of, either" is what exactly the "Enlightenment" was.[1] It is Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment* that gives an important response to this question in the middle of the 20th century.

While the critique of modernity in György Lukács' *History and Class Consciousness* is primarily directed against the "reified structure" in the modern world, Horkheimer and Adorno's critique attempts to unfold the historical dialectic of the Enlightenment tradition in the background of an different era. That is, how the "Enlightenment" contained within itself the essential moment of self-negation reverted to myth and resulted in the "self-destruction of the Enlightenment." The background of this thought was Nazism, world wars and Auschwitz, but miseries of that time were, of course, more than these, for these are only some symptoms or representations that are expressive and appalling and fundamentally signify the growth and spread of "totalitarianism" as a universal and basic principle. Such a universal and basic principle is, in no way, restricted to spheres such as politics, war, the state, etc., or to the so-called modern civilized world, but also to the universal state of that world and its general practice and rule. Such totalitarianism is fundamental because it neither originated from the opposite of the principle of the modern civilized world, nor was it a disaster that accidentally or exteriorly fell upon our planet; rather it was the very implication of modern civilization following the Enlightenment and the result of the Enlightenment according to its nature. In another word, totalitarianism appeared as a certain form of political rule is essentially the leading principle of the modern

---

[1] Michel Foucault, *Works* (Shanghai: Far East Publishing House 2003). *The Foucault Reader*, Paul Rabinow, ed. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 32.

world. It is not a mere negation of the Enlightenment values or an immediate opposition of liberalism, but the dialectical unfolding of the inherent character and dynamic of the Enlightenment. Therefore, "dialectic of enlightenment" means nothing but that the civilization of modernity began from the Enlightenment and aimed at the Enlightenment is by nature dialectically transformed into the opposite of the "Enlightenment," that is, myth, superstition and barbarism.

This thought is quite profound. Compared with positivists or liberalists who are totally uncritical of modernity, the degree of the depth they run into themselves is even incalculable. For positivists or liberalists, such disasters, crimes or "devils" as totalitarianism, nihilism, terrorism in recent times, etc., are not only contrary to the Enlightenment principle of modern civilization, but had nothing to do with it. There was no causal connection between them. They are full of indignation to denounce various crimes committed by "devils" as if they were a purely unexpected and accidental invasion from other planets.

In contrast, the critique of modernity in the position of 'dialectic of enlightenment' thinks that the Enlightenment principle and its self-strengthening development provide the widest and deepest basis for the myth and the barbarian state in the 20th century. Although freedom in modern society and all the fruits of modern civilization are related to the Enlightenment inherently and intimately, "the very concept of the Enlightenment thought" is contained in a potential manner, a kind of secret, the seed of regression in the later development. "If enlightenment does not assimilate reflection on this regressive moment, it seals its own fate."[2]

It was on the basis of this fundamental position that *Dialectic of Enlightenment* criticizes the Enlightenment principle itself that established modernity. A "critique" means to grasp the nature of things by means of elucidating their premises and drawing their boundaries. According to Kant's classic definition, the "Enlightenment" means that "the public use of man's reason must always be free."[3] The general conclusion of *Dialectic of Enlightenment* is: the nature of the Enlightenment thought implies the "master spirit" of "domination" or "rule." The tradition of this spirit could trace back to the beginning chapters of *Genesis* in terms of its origin

---

[2] Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, (Shanghai: People's Press 2003), 3. Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Gunzelin Schmid Noerr, ed., and Edmund Jephcott, trans. (Redwood City, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), p. xvi.

[3] Immanuel Kant, *Writings on the Critique of Historical Reason* (Beijing: Commercial Press 1990), 24. Immanuel Kant, *Political Writings*, H.S. Reiss, ed. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 55.

and match what Max Weber called the process of "disenchantment" in terms of its unfolding process. The essence of such Enlightenment spirit, the "spirit as master," is that a world imbued with instrumental rationality is unfolded. Although instrumental rationality dispelled almost all traditional myths and authorities, the new world relations especially between man and nature shows more clearly their characters to be "rule" and "domination." Although such rule and domination are at first mostly limited to certain spheres, such as that of economy, they in their unfolding process expand in a direct and non-economic way into the remotest margins and corners of social life and completely infiltrate the configuration of individual experience. In this situation, although the Enlightenment claims to have surpassed the ignorance of the mythological era through the introduction of rational analysis, the Enlightenment itself falls victim into a new kind of myth due to the principle of rule and domination inherent in its essence -- the "spirit as master." This kind of myth first appears as the dualistic confrontation between the human subject and the natural object (subject: consciousness, self, internality, etc.; object: pure matter, material, etc.) and as the tyranny of quantitative identity over qualitative difference (abstraction, formalization and rationalization; calculability becomes the principle of the rule of nature). What emerges here is exactly the totalitarian secret of the Enlightenment tradition:

> Myth becomes enlightenment and nature mere objectivity. Human beings purchase the increase in their power with estrangement from that over which it is exerted. Enlightenment stands in the same relationship to things as the dictator to human beings.[4]

Initially the Enlightenment's program was to replace mythological injustice with rational justice, that is, to awaken the world and dispel myth through the Enlightenment reason, or to substitute knowledge for fantasy. Francis Bacon famously said at the beginning of the modern era that knowledge is power. *Dialectic of Enlightenment* testifies that this famous saying exposes all ambitions and the true essence of the Enlightenment, namely, that knowledge and power are equal. Thus, the Enlightenment embodied and unfolded a kind of "master spirit" whose goal is domination and rule.

Although Horkheimer and Adorno trace the hidden essence of the Enlightenment tradition with regard to its source of modernity, we can also supplement this with its result, that is, the accomplishment of modern philosophy. Hegel's phenomenology grasps and finishes knowledge as

---

[4] Horkheimer and Adorno, *op.cit.*, 6-7 (p. 6).

"absolute knowledge." The fundamental thrust of "absolute knowledge" is that the object of consciousness is none other than self-consciousness; in other words, object is no more than self-consciousness or objectified self-consciousness. On the one hand, the question is to overcome the object of consciousness -- the object itself is something vanishing for consciousness; on the other hand, man or the essence of man is none other than self-consciousness -- man is "a non-objective, spiritual being."[5] This means that self or self-consciousness as a spiritual being realizes its domination and rule of objects through "absolute knowledge." Such domination and rule imply the absolute domination and rule because it indicates the nullification of objects as something to vanish for consciousness.

Nietzsche's greatness resides not only in his prediction of the approach of nihilism (God was dead: the supersensible world of ideas lost its binding force), but also in the way he sees through the essential source of nihilism. Nihilism, or "the most scary guest of all guests," is not an intruder from outside the rational world opened up by the Enlightenment tradition; on the contrary, it is in truth rationality brought to the extreme. In this sense, Horkheimer and Adorno's critique of modernity is "backed by Nietzsche." Their critique traces the source of modern totalitarianism not from outside modern civilization but with respect to the dialectical transformation of its intrinsic essence and importantly connects the extremity of rationalism with the essence of its remotest opposite. While Kant in a classic fashion defines the Enlightenment that "the public use of man's reason must always be free," dialectic of the Enlightenment in its unfolding process turns "its own reason" into something entirely foreign and alien and realizes such reason as a kind of domination and rule by totalitarian coercion. It is in this sense that the Enlightenment reason is transformed into the myth of modern ignorance and barbarism, the freedom of the use of reason into the extrinsic coercion by already ossified reason and the extremity of rationalism into nihilism, which, according to Nietzsche, is the "self-deposition of the highest value." "Self-deposition" expresses exactly such transformation that is dialectical in character. Heidegger says in the same sense that only when we finally recognize reason, which has been praised for centuries, to have actually become the most stubborn enemy of thought, could we start to think again. It should stress here that Heidegger's critique of "reason" does not rest on irrationalism or anti-rationalism.

---

[5] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Collected Works*, vol. 3 (Beijing: People's Press, 2002), 321-22. Karl Marx, *Selected Writings*, David McLellan, ed. (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2000), 110.

Concerning its logic of theorization, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* reveals the way of realizing the "master spirit" as a ruling principle in the sense of the reduction to numbers, the control and manipulation of the world was the process of its "disenchantment," that is, the process of its digitalization (the goal of calculation and pragmatism). All these mean that the inner secret of the Enlightenment spirit is "identity," namely, the banishment of various gods and multiple qualities by means of quantitative identity in order to achieve the rule -- manipulation, conquest and plunder. Thus, the critique of modernity pointing to the Enlightenment reason concentrates on the critique of "identity" as such. Adorno's *Negative Dialectics* is in fact the true logical inheritor of *Dialectic of Enlightenment* and further deepens the philosophical critique of the principle of modernity. What Adorno focuses upon in that work is to carry on the liquidation of "philosophy of identity" through "negative dialectics," which is "a phrase that flouts tradition"[6] and the general critique of modern metaphysics, the kernel of which is "concept imperialism."

Matters of true philosophical interest at this point in history are those in which Hegel, agreeing with tradition, expresses his disinterest. They are non-conceptuality, individuality and particularity, which since Plato have been used to be dismissed as transitory and insignificant, and which are labeled by Hegel as "lazy *Existenz*." "Philosophy's theme would consist of the qualities it downgrades as contingent, as a *quantité négligeable*. A matter of urgency to the concept would be what it fails to cover, what its abstractionist mechanism eliminates, what is not already a case of the concept."[7] This critique is at the height of principle, for it testifies that entire Platonism as the core and regime of the philosophical tradition deprives itself of nonconceptuality, individuality and particularity in the name of concept. It also degrades quality to conceptually fixed quantity and undermines all real contents, that is, what is not a case of the concept with "abstract mechanism" of the logical scheme.

Thus, Hegel's phenomenology as the "science of the experience of consciousness" is to reduce to cases of the concept or category of empirical contents that could not be reduced at all solely through the mediation of the concept. As mentioned above, there is the tyranny of "absolute knowledge" as true identity over difference and content, or such identity's totalitarian rule over nonconceptuality, individuality and particularity. The kernel of such totalitarian rule is that, for identity as such, the real

---

[6] Theodor W. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, E.B. Ashton, trans. (New York and London: Continuum, 2007), xix.

[7] Theodor W. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics* (Chongqing: Chongqing Press, 1993), 6. Adorno, *op.cit.*, 8.

individual is "something vanishing" as insignificant and replaceable. This critique of Adorno is directed against not only Hegel or Schelling's "philosophy of identity," but also a critique of philosophy as a whole as metaphysics (especially modern metaphysics) as well as modern knowledge that takes it as its principle. First, Hegel's philosophy is not a species of metaphysics but the whole of metaphysics, or the accomplishment of modern metaphysics. Second, as Heidegger points out in his essay *The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking*, philosophy as metaphysics has ended in modern science of understanding.

However, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* and *Negative Dialectics* still prove themselves insufficient throughout their critique of modernity. We do not mean that their critique is not sufficiently vigorous or thorough, since it, on the contrary, is rather vigorous and thorough enough. What the truly important problem is that the foundation on which this critique rests -- first and foremost its ontological foundation -- is still quite obscure and needs further clarification. Martin Jay argues in his *A History of the Frankfurt School* that "dialectics was superb at attacking other systems' pretensions to truth, but when it came to articulating the ground of its own assumptions and values, it fared less well."[8] This critique sees some weak points of Critical Theory, though its wording itself is not accurate, because what matters is not something like "assumptions" or "values," since every "assumption" or "value" always has to rely on some metaphysical preposition. Critical Theory is indeed insufficient in terms of its foundation, such insufficiency consists partly in the fact that real life itself at the moment is still greatly bound by the principle of modernity, and partly in the fact that the fierce and radical critique mentioned above to a great extent hurriedly bypasses the clarification of its ontological foundation.

The difficulty resides in the following contradictory situation. On the one hand, the essence of the Enlightenment is metaphysical for Horkheimer and Adorno, and even "more metaphysical than metaphysics," thus, the problem is to reject or avoid metaphysics. On the other hand, it is impossible for any avoidance of metaphysics, but in order to hit metaphysics some kind of "philosophical" approach is always needed. As Heidegger says every metaphysics of metaphysics always falls below metaphysics in the most reliable way. If it is the case, how is it possible to get rid of such a contradictory situation? With respect to philosophy, a most thorough elucidation of the ontological foundation must be done at any rate. Just as Marx's philosophical revolution involves this moment in the

---

[8] Martin Jay, *A History of the Frankfurt School* (Guangzhou: Guangdong People's Publishing House, 1996), 76. Martin Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination*, (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996), 63.

most essential manner, Heidegger's fundamental ontology articulates the possibility of the project of thinking without relying on metaphysics. All reasons for opposing philosophy as metaphysics and thus refusing to examine the ontological foundation are seriously problematic, because everything in the modern world, even what is taken as most positivistic, has been already premised on or grounded in modern metaphysics in a secret and unannounced way.

We do not mean that the critique of modernity in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* or *Negative Dialectics* completely fail to touch on those fundamental ontological questions. In fact, both works proceed more or less around such fundamental questions. Due to the contradictory situation mentioned above, their critique becomes hesitant in the face of the most fundamental ontological subjects. For example, various statements in *Negative Dialectics* about the subject, the object and their relations with each other, seem to be reflexive associations. Because the "internality of consciousness" is not truly broken through, they are not adequately formulated according to the ontological foundation. The relations between the subject and the object in Adorno are still in naiveté of reflection. Moreover, when Adorno reveals the original meaning of dialectic as the "consistent consciousness of nonidentity," he could not wait to claim that such consciousness is not a "standpoint"[9] in order to draw a clear line with anything whatsoever suspicious of identity. It is precisely for this reason that, in spite of its outstanding achievements, Adorno's critique conceals the ontological root that always belongs to dialectic. Due to the simple assumption about "ontology" -- it only means something identical with itself -- it delays the breaking through of the internality of consciousness, hence covers the ontological horizon that "negative dialectics" might truly unfold.

In sum, the critique of modernity *à la* "dialectic of enlightenment" is in one aspect profound and significant, for it discloses that the opposite of the Enlightenment -- totalitarian rule and domination -- is the intrinsic outcome and necessary product of the development of the modern Enlightenment itself. This insight should be regarded as a major and lasting achievement of the critique of modernity in the 20th century. Today it is still to be further understood and absorbed. However, this critique is still insufficient and not yet complete (though its completion is in no way limited to the theoretical field), for it fails to go deep into the ontological foundation to make clarification and examination in a truly conscious manner, and thus to grasp the core essence of modernity and to break it through consistently. In this regard, the extent of the further active and productive

---

[9] Adorno, *op.cit.*, 5; translation modified.

unfolding of the critique of modernity will depend on the deep analysis of the ontological foundation. For a nation which is still undergoing its modernizing transformation and especially whose roots of civilization are rather different from those of the West, its modernization process will inevitably encounter "postmodern" problems. The critique of modernity, that is, the elucidation of its premises and the drawing of its boundaries, is undoubtedly of extraordinary significance. Without such an elucidation it would be impossible to truly understand the nature of modernity or to fundamentally grasp our own situation, objective and destiny.

3.

China at the Turning Point Again: Enlightenment from "Western Marxism"

CHEN XUEMING

China has had three great social transformations since the late 1970s and early 1980s: the first is from the "class struggle" to the "economic development"; the second is from the "closed door" to the "fully opening"; and the third is from a "planned" to a "market" economy.

The first transformation enabled China to change the traditional Marxist route based on politics and to lead China to a new path focused on the development of economy and productive forces. How did this unfold? The second transformation answered this question by fully opening China's door to the Western world. Good things from Western countries have been introduced in order to develop the productive forces of China. The first thing we learned from the West was the market economy.

These three transformations had led China onto a road of modernization with Western characteristics and realized China's long-cherished wish to become rich and powerful, beginning in the late 1800s. These three transformations have two main features: the Western mode of modernization has made China rich, but the process of modernization has been rooted in the soil of Chinese society. People had thought that China would have continued along this path. However, some Chinese people realized that the Western model is like a coin with two sides: while it makes China rich, it can also lead China to disaster.

On the surface, this doubt and awareness result from the American financial crisis. China has been a student of the West for about several decades, but this financial crisis tells us that the Western model of development is not perfect. This financial crisis has revealed the potential paradox rooted in the Western model of development. Learning from this crisis, some Chinese people began reflecting upon the Chinese model of development and questioning whether China still needs to follow the Western model.

In essence, this doubt and awareness results from Chinese social reality. On the one hand, Chinese people have become richer, more skyscrapers and highways have been built and Chinese people have deposited more money in foreign banks and bought more foreign bonds. On the other hand, Chinese people have paid a heavy price for this development. Such a high cost will soon become intolerable for currently three main problems have emerged in China:

First, polarization is becoming worse. Only a few people have become rich in one night by means of this kind of modernization model, while many others have been pushed to the bottom of society. The gap is widening between urban and rural areas, as well as coastal and inland districts. In prosperous cities the rich lives in befuddled lives while the poor dress in rags.

Second, natural surroundings are becoming worse. In recent years, natural surroundings have been destroyed more than one can imagine the more industrialized, the more destroyed natural surroundings. The extensive and high-wasted productive modes develop without restraint and hence destroy the natural environment without restraint; and high-polluting industries have been moved into China. Chinese people think Chinese ecological capacity will be exhausted soon.

Third, Chinese people increasingly become "one-dimensional" consumption machines. China had the tradition of working on spiritual factors, such as self-cultivation and inner-accomplishment. Chinese people had been in pursuit of "harmony" and "balance." However, everything has changed now. Many Chinese people only look to "consumerism" as their living principles and try their best to pursue material interests. Capitalist logic mercilessly pushes Chinese people into a "rat race" where values and morals are distorted.

Although these three problems do not seem threatening, they do exist. As time goes by, they will become worse. As a result, some Chinese people begin to reflect upon the Chinese modernization model. They think that China is at another historical turning point and a new reform is unavoidable, namely, how to deal with "modernization."

There seem to be only two alternatives:

The first is to abandon the pursuit of modernization and to look for a paradigm without it because modernization has brought much discomfort to the country. As a result, some people started to advocate stopping modernization in the late 1970s in China.

The second is that since modernity has both positive and negative sides it is unavoidable for China to go the same way as the West. We cannot solve the negative sides of modernity until Chinese modernization has been accomplished.

In fact, these two choices are "dead ends." The former is a kimd of retrogressive history, while the latter destroys China before she can enjoy the outcomes of modernization.

There are other choices based on "Western Marxism." "Western Marxism" was introduced to China in the late 1970s and early 1980s. It has influenced China for almost 40 years. But it has always been limited to academia and hardly influenced Chinese practical reality. Some Chinese people realized its practical value in the 21st century, especially in 2009. "Western Marxism" can help China escape the current impasse and lead to a right historical choice.

I focus on the theory of critique of Western Marxism. The main characteristic of Western Marxist theory of critique is to cure modernity instead of rejecting it. It tries to substitute the relationship between products and human beings with relationships between human beings alone. It believes that we can avoid the pitfalls of modernity if we set up a new social system, a new model of social organization and new ideas of values. It believes that modernization should be connected with socialism instead of capitalism. Western Marxist critique of modernity is related to a pursuit of socialism.

Jürgent Habermas, a "Western Marxist," thinks that we should deal with modernity dialectically and try to "cure" it. He criticizes modernity, modernization and modern civilized society, but does not consider them irredeemable. He says that we have to deal with modernity as Marx had dealt with Hegel and that we "must be careful, don't pour out baby with the bathwater and hover in an irrational leaven."[1] Modernity could not be abandoned, but it can be cured. He announces openly that he would "not abandon the project of modernity" and "not be subjected to post-modernism and anti-modernism."[2] Habermas thinks that the only way to save modernization is to change from subject philosophy to language philosophy and from instrumental reason to communicative reason. As he says "a change of the research point from cognitive-instrumental rationality to communicative rationality."[3] He regards the concept of communicative reason as the general one to understand modernity. In his opinion, the concept of "communicative action" enables people to understand that the sources of the crises of modernity do not come from modernity itself but from the imbalance between communicative reason and instrumental reason in a capitalist society. Thus, a way out of the modern impasse is through the development of communicative reason. The form of modernity is thus far "an unaccomplished project," because its rational potential

---

[1] Jürgent Habermas, *Habermas Interview* (Shanghai: Shanghai People's Press, 1997), 37.

[2] Ibid., 56.

[3] Jürgent Habermas, *Theorie des Kommunikativen Handelns* (Berlin: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1988), 525.

is limited by capitalist social systems. Hence, it is necessary to change the capitalist social structure.

"Ecological Marxism" as the newest model of "Western Marxism" takes up Habermas' thoughts on modernity. Post-modernism does not deny modernity completely, but it distinguishes the negative aspects of modernization from modernity itself and is in pursuit of a "more modern worldview." That is a strong motivation to repair the collapsed modernity and try to continue to pursue cultural, social and economic modernity. The best-known "Ecological Marxist" is André Gorz who, in his *Critique of Economic Reason*, seeks to limit modernity. He believes that the problems of modernity do not lie in modernity itself but in taking modernity beyond its limit. "What we are faced with is not modernity's crisis. What we should do is to modernize modernization's premise." "Current crises do not mean modernization is at its dead end and we have to retrogress. Rather we need to modernize modernity itself."[4]

> The sign of the end of modernity put forth by 'post-modernists' and the so-called crisis of reason are, in fact, alternative and unilateral rationalization, namely, the crisis of quasi-religious and irrational contents which are the basis of so-called industrialism.[5]

Gorz argues that the process of modernization has not been accomplished, and that the boundaries of modernity are being constantly broken. If we stubbornly think the current crisis to be that of modernity itself, we will be absorbed in feelings of nostalgia and cannot endow the old reforms which have made our old faith collapse with new meanings in order to escape the crises. The crux is to change our idea of modernization to something which can be used without limit. Gorz says that "I want to prove that modernization has ontological limits and these limits just can be broken through by pseudo-rationalized and irrational means which push rationalization to its opposite." "Here one of the main goals is to limit the field which we can modernize."[6] It is to assure what we can and cannot do in the course of modernization.

If we compare the Western Marxist theory of critique with post-modernism, we can understand that Western Marxism functions much better. To some extent, both Western Marxism and post-modernism come from a critique of modernity's negative aspects. But they are two different kinds of critique. The post-modern critique of modernity and modernization has

---

[4] Andre Gorz, *Critique of Economic Reason* (London: Verso, 1989), 1.

[5] Gorz, *Critique of Economic Reason*, 2.

[6] Ibid.

four main characteristics: First, it denies modernity completely including its positive aspects which brought us modernization. Second, it does not analyze modernization historically nor see the negative aspects of modernization as being formed historically. Third, it believes that all problems appeared in the course of modernization have resulted from modernity and modernization themselves and are necessary outcomes of modern logic. Fourth, post-modernism asks us to go back to the pre-modern state.

Western Marxists may have realized the negative aspects of modernization before post-modernists, but their critique of modernization does not show the same characteristics. On the one hand, Western Marxists criticize the negative aspects of modernization; on the other hand, they praise material civilization brought by modernization because it has opened up new time and freed human beings from natural and historical constraints. They think modernization as the main power in making the historical revolution of the East in the past 200 years. By analyzing the historical process of various negative aspects of modernization, they see that these results come not only from modernity itself but also from social conditions and the social system in which modernization is rooted. As far as Western Marxists are concerned, to criticize modernity means to criticize capitalism. They believe that if we overthrow the capitalist system and live in a socialist system, it will be possible to develop fully the positive aspects of modernity and decrease dramatically its negative aspects.

If we reflect on the modernization of China, we can conclude as follows: First, we must not abandon the pursuit of modernity, because modernity has positive values and problems appeared in the course of modernization are not the result of modernity itself. Second, we must not abandon the critique of negative aspects of modernization. We should find the sources of these negative aspects and try to solve them in order to minimize their negative effects.

It seems that the third choice based on "Western Marxism" has become the consensus in China. China will not stop developing "modernization" nor neglect the difference between "modernization" and "Westernization." Rather, China will find her own road to "modernization" which is different from "Westernization." Once China finds her new path, she will leap to the new "historical turning point" successfully.

4.

"Myth Is Already Enlightenment, and Enlightenment Reverts to Mythology": On the Enlightenment Spirit from the Perspective of *Dialectic of Enlightenment*

WANG FENGCAI

Among the three parts of the main text of *Dialectic of Enlightenment,* the first part on "the concept of enlightenment" (including its two appendices: "Odysseus or myth and enlightenment" and "Juliette or enlightenment and morality") reveals the theme that "myth is already enlightenment, and enlightenment reverts to mythology." The second part on "the culture industry: enlightenment as mass deception" criticizes the cultural industry and, at the same time, elucidated the retrogression of enlightenment in ideological respects. The third part on "elements of anti-Semitism: limits of enlightenment" depicts the retrogression of enlightenment in reality from civilization to barbarism. Accordingly, the core issue of *Dialectic of Enlightenment* is the attempt to explain why, while science and technology progress, the development of industrial civilization seems to be able to deliver happiness, and all lands are bathed in the light of reason, "humanity, instead of entering a truly human state, is sinking into a new kind of barbarism."[1] Taking the relations between man and nature as the thread and myth and enlightenment as the kernel, Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno reveal the dialectic of "myth is already enlightenment, and enlightenment reverts to mythology," and criticize the Enlightenment spirit. This article intends to critically analyze Horkheimer and Adorno's critique of the Enlightenment spirit.

I

The Renaissance, the Reformation, the technological revolution and the Enlightenment fueled the modernization process in the West. For Max Weber, this was the process of social rationalization, i.e., the constant expansion of instrumental rationality and the constant shrinkage of value ra-

---

[1] Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialektik der Aufklärung* (Frankfurt/M.: Fischer, 1988), S. 1. [*Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Gunzelin Schmid Noerr, ed., Edmund Jephcott, trans. (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), p. xiv. (All notes in square brackets are added by the English translator.)

tionality, or the constant elevation of the Enlightenment spirit. According to the explanation of the German dictionary *Gerhard Wahrig Deutsches Wörterbuch*, "enlightenment" (*Die Aufklärung*) has four meanings: (1) explanation, illustration, clarification; (2) teaching, advising, educating, especially with regard to politics, worldview or sexual issues; (3) investigation, research, especially the pursuit of thought that is liberated from prejudice and based on reason; and (4) (narrow sense) the dominant scientific and educational innovation movement that emerged in 18th century Europe and aimed at combating "the rule of arbitrariness" (*Willkürherrschaft*), religious superstition and non-science (especially among the masses of the lower classes). In Immanuel Kant's view, the Enlightenment spirit was humanity's overcoming of its immature state it imposed on itself; the immature state was the powerlessness to employ one's own intellect without others' guidance.[2] In other words, the Enlightenment spirit was humanity's overcoming of its own immature and imperfect state through the independent employment of its own reason. However, differing from Kant, Horkheimer and Adorno believed that the program of the Enlightenment spirit "was the disenchantment of the world. It wanted to dispel myths, to overthrow fantasy with knowledge."[3] In this sense, the Enlightenment spirit did not refer exclusively to the rational spirit in Western civilization. In the broadest sense, it referred to the idea of "liberating human beings from fear and installing them as master"[4] of nature (and society).

In my opinion, the Enlightenment spirit is a civilizational optimism based on the conquest and domination of nature. It can be characterized by the omnipotence of scientific knowledge and the superiority of technological rationality. It aims at the progress of history by insisting on anthropocentrism as its core in terms of the relations between man and nature as well as individualism in terms of the relations between man and society. It advocates for humanism in terms of the relations between man and God and believes in rationalism in terms of the relations between sensibility and reason. It celebrates technological rationality in terms of the relations between technological and humanist rationalities and maintains progressivism in terms of the relations between history and the future.[5] In short, the

---

[2] Immanuel Kant, *Writings on the Critique of Historical Reason* (Beijing: Commercial Press, 1997), 22; translation substantially modified.

[3] Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialektik der Aufklärung*, S. 10 [p. 1].

[4] Ibid., S. 9 [p. 1].

[5] Wang Fengcai, *Critique and Reconstruction: The Civilization Theory of the Frankfurt School* (Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2004), 11.

core values of the Enlightenment spirit are technological rationalism, individual centrism and civilizational progressivism.

At first, the development of Western civilization was sustained by instrumental rationality together with value rationality, or scientific and technological culture together with humanist culture. Since the Renaissance and especially the Enlightenment, however, the tension between instrumental and value rationalities had intensified. Later there emerged a split between them. As a result of the Enlightenment, scientific and technological culture gained independence and expanded with the development of the Industrial Revolution, which ended up with the emergence of the hegemony of instrumental rationality and the depreciation of value rationality. The culture of technological rationalism thus took shape and continued to expand. *Technological rationalism* is the belief in the omnipotence of scientific knowledge, the superiority of technological rationality and the resolvability of the social problems resulting from the development of science and technology by means of science and technology themselves. *Individual centrism* is actually the extension and extreme form of anthropocentrism.

In the West, anthropocentrism can be traced back to as early as Greek mythology and as late as Protagoras' "man is the measure of all things." Its complete formulation appeared in the creation story of the Bible. Promoted by René Descartes and Kant among others, it achieved its mature form in modern times. In the contemporary era, anthropocentrism further expands into the theory and practice of humanity's conquering and dominating nature on the basis of technological rationality. *Civilizational progressivism* or the belief in the progress of civilization is a civilizational optimism or an optimistic idea of civilization. It holds that human civilization has been progressing constantly and that the progress of science and technology is the progress of civilization itself. With the incessant development of science and technology, tools of production become more advanced, the development of productive forces and economy more rapid, social institutions more rational, culture more developed and the quality of people's life much higher. In short, human civilization would have a better future.

In a broad sense, the idea of "progress" already existed in ancient times. Its original meaning, "moving forward," evolves along two axes: first, the growth of human knowledge and intelligence and human conquest of nature; second, the perfection of human nature, freedom and liberation.[6] In terms of its narrow sense, however, the emergence of the idea

---

[6] Yao Junyi, *On the Idea of Progress* (Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 2000), 116-14.

of "progress" is inseparable from the rise of modern science and philosophy. Since the Renaissance and especially the Enlightenment, civilizational optimism had always been the mainstream of Western culture. Bacon, Descartes, Fontenelle, Voltaire, Condorcet, Kant, Hegel, Darwin, Spencer, Taylor, Morgan, Marx, Engels, etc., all praised the Enlightenment spirit and believed in the progress or evolution of civilization. Some even held that the progress of science and technology = the development of productive forces = human freedom and liberation. It almost became a self-evident postulate that the progress of civilization was an incessant improvement. Such thought of firm belief in the progress of civilization as the necessity of history reached its peak with Hegel. As Robin G. Collingwood noted any reader of Hegel's *Philosophy of History* could not but regard it as a profound original and revolutionary work in which history for the first time entered the arena of philosophical thinking in a fully mature fashion.[7]

However, when the wheel of history moved into the 20th century, the previous idea of progress was questioned and criticized. Many elucidated that technological progress did not equal the progress of civilization, nor did the progress of civilization equal incessant improvement. R. Eisler raised such questions as how to explain the "rational" and efficient use of human fat in the manufacture of soap; how to explain the carefully planned military experiments to observe the effects of the atomic bomb and atomic radiation on living and completely helpless human beings; and how could all these efficient large-scale destructions be called the progress of human nature.[8] The Romantic mood originated from the pessimism of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and others prevailed, and civilizational pessimism gradually became the mainstream of Western culture, especially after the publication of *The Decline of the West* by Oswald Spengler. It was against this cultural background that Horkheimer and Adorno profoundly reflected on and vigorously criticized the Enlightenment spirit.

II

In Horkheimer and Adorno's view, the Enlightenment spirit could be traced back to ancient Greek mythology, especially the Homeric epics. They thought that the pre-Socratic inquiries about the *arkhe* of the world represented the rationalization process of mythology. Platonic idealism

---

[7] Robin G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History* (Beijing: Commercial Press, 1994), 172.

[8] R. Eisler, *The Chalice and the Blade: Our History, Our Future* (Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 1993), 181.

understood the Olympian gods as *logos*. The later Plato who equated Ideas with numbers represented the desire to eliminate mythology in spite of the mythological flavor. Thus, numbers or the quantification principle became the standard of the Enlightenment spirit. For the Enlightenment spirit, all that could not be boiled down to numbers or ultimately boiled down to the One were illusions. All that could not be foreseen or useless should be under suspicion. In fact, in the Homeric epics, Zeus was the god of the sky and Apollo the god of the sun, while Helios and Eos completely became a kind of metaphor. Since then, the Olympian gods had been separated from matter, and beings divided into *logos* and external objects. The whole world was henceforth dominated by humanity. Horkheimer and Adorno pointed out that, despite their anti-mythological and enlightening character, the Homeric epics had many in common with myth, such as rule, exploitation, deception, etc. Hence, "no work bears more eloquent witness to the intertwinement of enlightenment and myth than that of Homer, the basic text of European civilization."[9] That is to say, the Homeric epics reveals the intimate connections between the Enlightenment and myth more adequately than any other work. Admittedly, myth manifests on various narrative levels in the Homeric epics, but their interpretations of myth as well as the unity produced by putting together a variety of disorderly stories also illustrate the (human) subject's breaking away from myth. The Enlightenment spirit regarded the idea that man is master of nature (and society) to be ancient and universal. In front of the powerful forces of nature, however, man would forever appear impotent; only in myth could man get rid of this impotent state through self-consciousness. Accordingly, the Homeric epics and myth both have factors of enlightenment. The Enlightenment is thus able to confirm itself in myth. German Romantics already stressed factors of the Enlightenment in the Homeric epics. For Nietzsche this point was revealed from the perspective of the relationship between the Enlightenment and rule.

With respect to the establishment of man as master of nature (and society), *myth was already enlightenment*, because the Enlightenment always took anthropomorphism as the basis of myth, explained nature by means of subjective assumptions and considered supernatural things, such as ghosts and sprites, the reflection of people's fear of nature.

> According to enlightened thinking, the multiplicity of mythical figures can be reduced to a single common denominator: the subject. Oedipus' answer to the riddle of the Sphinx -- 'That being is man' -- is repeated indiscriminately as enlightenment's stereotyped mes-

---

[9] Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialektik der Aufklärung*, S. 52 [p. 37].

sage, whether in response to a piece of objective meaning, a schematic order, a fear of evil powers, or a hope of salvation. For the Enlightenment, only what can be encompassed by unity has the status of an existent or an event; its ideal is the system from which everything and anything follows. Its rationalist and empiricist versions do not differ on that point.[10]

The slogans of emphasizing the identity of reason, eradicating gods and destroying quality were actually consistent from Parmenides to Russell. Given the identity of reason, the distinction between god and human beings became irrelevant, because the rational spirit that managed everything was similar to the god who created everything; both were masters of nature. In other words, like a god, man became master of nature (and society). Horkheimer and Adorno asserted that the way the Enlightenment spirit treated things resembled the way a dictator treated his people. The dictator knew his people in order to manipulate them. Scientists were familiar with everything in order to produce things, so that all things would obey the will of scientists. The essence of things remained the same despite various changes and was always the basis of rule. Such identity constituted the unity of nature at the price of the diversity of quality. Natural objects without essential difference were trapped into the state of pure classification and the omnipotent self into the state of pure possession. Thus, this unity turned into abstract identity.

In Horkheimer and Adorno's view, the gist of the Enlightenment spirit was "knowledge is power" proposed by Bacon. Bacon made people believe that knowledge be united with power. Since the essence of knowledge was technology, people could use technology to dominate and control nature. Human reason could defeat superstition and dominate nature. However, since the Enlightenment spirit eliminated all traces of self-consciousness, the very thought that the only way could break myth ultimately ruined itself. In fact, philosophy since Bacon had been striving to interpret such concepts as substance, mass, activity, passivity, etc., with reference to the change of times. Modern science abandoned these categories, instead considered them traditional metaphysical concepts. Consequently, in the face of the triumph of positivism, the nominalist tenet of Bacon was suspected to be a kind of metaphysical bias or, as Bacon once said apropos of Scholasticism, nonsense, because logical positivism gave up all quests for meaning and even thinking: formula was substituted for concept, and rule and probability for cause and motive. When thought was reduced to mathematical formula, the world would be recognized accord-

---

[10] Ibid., S. 13 [p. 4].

ing to its own measures. All that appeared as the victory of subjective reason and all that existed as subordinate to logical formulae appeared in the form of reason's obeying immediate reality. In short, the price for the victory of subjective reason was the subject's obeying reason and immediate reality. When people judged everything by means of reason, their thinking would be constrained by the logic of reason. This logic was often abstract and bearing no negativity or transcendence over reality.

Horkheimer and Adorno argues,

> Just as myths already entail enlightenment, with every step enlightenment entangles itself more deeply in mythology. Receiving all its subject matter from myths, in order to destroy them, it falls as judge under the spell of myth. It seeks to escape the trial of fate and retribution by itself exacting retribution on that trial. In myths, everything that happens must atone for the fact of having happened. It is no different in enlightenment: no sooner has a fact been established than it is rendered insignificant.[11]

At first, the Enlightenment spirit replaced illusion with knowledge, combated myth in favor of reason, and sought to liberate man from ignorance and barbarism in order for him to be master of nature (and society). In the process of development, however, the Enlightenment in turn created the myth of reason. Thus, with the advancement of mythology, the Enlightenment was intertwined deeply with myth. The principle of the Enlightenment that opposed to mythological imagination was the principle of myth itself. *Enlightenment itself reverted to myth*. The reasons for this reversion were at least twofold: first, the mythological principle of immanence that was overthrown by the Enlightenment spirit was actually the principle of myth itself; and second, the rational spirit and the god were both intending to be lord of nature. In the process of eliminating the determinant factor of myth, people assumed that only when they were omniscient could they finally get rid of fear, become master of nature (and society), and hence achieve freedom. However, nature under humanity's domination turned back to confront the thinking subject, and the subject was in possession of nothing but the forever identical *cogito* accompanied by the idea of self. The subject and the object thus turn into nothingness.

---

[11] Ibid., S. 18 [p. 8].

III

Therefore, at an important turning point of Western civilization, if people did not firmly reject myth, their fear of ever-threatening nature and its objectifying effect would turn into "animism" (*Animismus*). The Enlightenment spirit was actually a resolution: people had always to resolve whether to obey or to dominate nature; inevitably they chose domination. In other words, the domination of internal and external nature was the absolute goal of people's life, but each attempt to crush the enslavement of nature ultimately fell more deeply into its bondage, because as the power to dominate nature increased, the power of social institutions to dominate man also increased rapidly. Thus, the price people paid for the expansion of their power was their incessant alienation in the process of exercising that power.

> Not only is domination paid for with the estrangement of human beings from the dominated objects, but the relationships of human beings, including the relationship of individuals to themselves, have themselves been bewitched by the objectification of mind. Individuals shrink to the nodal points of conventional reactions and the modes of operation objectively expected of them. Animism had endowed things with souls; industrialism makes souls into things.[12]

In other words, the Enlightenment spirit not only made human beings enslave nature, which destroyed the relations between humans and nature, but also man himself, which undermined human relationships with each other. It also objectified the human soul by turning the human being into a thing with no spirituality and creativity, and perpetuated inequality as it eliminated old inequality and injustice. Hence, the Enlightenment spirit had always been consistent with social rule in the entire liberalist era. Freedom thus ultimately headed for slavery in the completely enlightened world.

The Enlightenment spirit became "mythical fear radicalized,"[13] for the myth of reason it created was essentially a kind of totalitarian rule. Thus, in the completely enlightened world, enormous misfortune prevailed, for reason became a kind of irresistible force, an instrument that produced all other instruments and supplementary means of the economic structure. Myth was hence completely secularized in the world enlightened by reason. In other words, the Enlightenment spirit turned industrial

---

[12] Ibid., S. 34 [p. 21].
[13] Ibid., S. 22 [p. 11].

civilization into a myth, the most prominent representation of this with the universal existence of commodity fetishism in the background. The harmful effects of commodity fetishism infiltrated all levels of social life and became a tool for the ruler to control people. The individual was posited as a thing, or a kind of statistical factor, or a success or failure, the standard of which was whether he adapted successfully to professional requirements and the corresponding patterns of behavior while all other things were monitored by the collective power from class to trade union.

The human personality was thus entirely lost, because with the development of commodity economy, the hazy sight in myth was lit up by the sunlight of calculating rationality. In this light, new seeds of barbarism took root, sprouted and flourished. Under the coercive rule, people's labor that had been freed from the influence of myth always fell back into myth. The story of the Sirens showed adequately that "*the curse of irresistible progress is irresistible regression.*"[14] The fear of death and destruction was always intimately connected with the promise of happiness that threated civilization. This road was a road to obedience and labor; although a brilliant light always illuminated the way ahead, it was only an illusion, or a beautiful scene without vitality. Although the progress of technology delivered a comfortable life to people, it at the same time suppressed man's instinct and consolidated its own dominance by more sophisticated means. Where the machine was transformed into machine control, the tendencies of technological and social development were always intertwined and resulted at last in the total control of the human being. Of course, this state was not untrue; on the contrary, the adaptation to progressive forces both led to progress and brought about deterioration. The progress of civilization was thus necessarily accompanied by regression. The history of civilization was the history of despair, and a history of civilization was at the same time a history of barbarism. Heaven was always linked to Hell, the forces of good with evil, or redemption with catastrophe. These polarities could not be completely separated from each other; every fortune was paid for by misfortune. Up to the present, the humanist spirit has developed into barbarous acts in the disguise of that spirit; the other side of culture is the failed institutions of civilization that engender barbarous institutions. In short, civilization ultimately moves toward barbarism.

In sum, the process of realizing the Enlightenment spirit was a process in which progress and regression intertwined, and civilization and barbarism went hand in hand. The Enlightenment ended up with self-destruction because it contained both the progressive process from myth

---

[14] Ibid., S. 42 [p. 28].

to science, from barbarism to civilization, as well as the reverse process in which civilization reentered barbarism. This was the so-called "dialectic of enlightenment": enlightenment turned into its opposite thanks to its own logic. Meant to eliminate myth, it created the new myth of reason. Aimed at understanding and dominating nature in a correct way, it distorted the world and was punished by nature. Meant to strengthen man's capacity, it rendered man impotent. Aimed at combating totalitarian rule, it became itself totalitarian rule. Meant to promote the progress of civilization, it retreated to barbarism.[15] Horkheimer, therefore, stressed that after the progressive period in which human power was brought into play and the individual's liberation was fought for, and after human control of nature expanded greatly, society needed to stop further development for it could push humanity into a new state of barbarism.[16]

IV

In conclusion, Horkheimer and Adorno profoundly reflected on and vigorously criticized the Enlightenment spirit: "myth is already enlightenment, and enlightenment reverts to mythology." They asserted that the Enlightenment developed out of myth but confirmed itself in myth. They even asserted that myth as such was already enlightenment. However, the Enlightenment in reality reverted to myth again and resulted in fear. The realization of the Enlightenment spirit was therefore a process in which progress and regression intertwined and civilization and barbarism went hand in hand. On the one hand, it promoted the progress of science and technology and the development of industrial civilization, and the increase of humanity's capacity to dominate and transform nature. At the same time, it led humanity's further into enslavement of nature and the breakdown of the relations between humankind and nature, thus clarifying the debacle of anthropocentrism. On the other hand, it also strengthened the rule of some people over others, resulting in society's suppression of the individual, and leading to alienation, which evinced the collapse of the ideal of industrial civilization.

Thus, the Enlightenment spirit that had pursued freedom eventually became fetters that enslaved humanity and ended up with self-destruction. There are different views in academia regarding the exact nature of Hork-

---

[15] Yu Wujin and Chen Xueming, eds., *A New Outline of the Schools of Foreign Marxist Philosophy: Western Marxism* (Shanghai: Fudan University Press, 2002), 146-150.

[16] Max Horkheimer, *Critical Theory* (Chongqing: Chongqing Press, 1993), 216; translation substantially modified.

heimer and Adorno's critique of the Enlightenment spirit. For example: (1) it was a cultural critique with a pessimistic flavor that was based on Marxist philosophy of history; it failed to escape the old patterns of "philosophy of consciousness" (J. Habermas). (2) *Dialectic of Enlightenment* was unique not only for its sharply insightful writing style, but for something more extraordinary: it attempted to integrate two incompatible philosophical traditions. One was the tradition of the critique of Enlightenment reason that ran from Nietzsche to Klages and the other, the tradition of the critique of capitalism that ran from Hegel, Marx, Weber up to the young Lukács (A. Wellmer). (3) Regarding its content, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* was nothing special. It was the theoretical means that was crucial, because its raw materials were drawn from the study of such literary or philosophical works as the *Odyssey*, Sade's short stories and Kant's and Nietzsche's essays. Horkheimer and Adorno's reconstruction of the process of European civilization was not on the basis of the history of society, but on the history of nature, which was the indirect evidence of the history of spirit. In other words, they considered the history of Western civilization from the perspective of the relations between human and nature rather than human relations with each other. In the theoretical conception of social domination in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, the leading role was played by the theoretical conception of the domination of nature together with the theoretical conception of the individual's self-protection, or the aesthetic personality model and the theoretical conception of the social division of labor that pointed to the relations of domination within the society. Thus, in general, Horkheimer and Adorno's "Critique of the Enlightenment Spirit" was a critique of the model of the domination of nature (A. Honneth). I think there are three points worth noting:

First, apparently directed against the Enlightenment spirit, Horkheimer and Adorno's critique actually targeted at industrial civilization and even the entire history of human civilization. Their critique of the Enlightenment spirit and industrial civilization, especially their accounts of the relations between the Enlightenment and myth, between freedom and slavery and between civilization and barbarism were reminiscent of Benjamin's famous quote: any history of civilization was at the same time also a history of barbarism.[17] This view could be traced back to Rousseau's Romantic critique of science and technology as well as industrial civilization and even could be associated with Laozi and Zhuangzi's rebellion against spiritual and institutional civilization as well as their attack against technological civilization. Here it is necessary to correct a mis-

---

[17] Walter Benjamin, *Selected Works* (Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 1999), 407; translation substantially modified.

reading in academia, that is, Rousseau, the Frankfurt School, etc. were negative about science and technology, about reason and civilization as such. In fact, they only criticized and rectified the abuse of science and technology, the expansion of instrumental rationality and the defects of industrial civilization, although there was overcorrecting onesidedness in that process.

Second, Horkheimer and Adorno's critique of commodity fetishism requires that a long-standing commonplace in academia be corrected, that is, the Frankfurt School is said to be preoccupied only with the critique of culture and ideology without paying much attention to economic analysis. This has much to do with P. Anderson's view -- since the 1920s a thematic shift in Western Marxism has occurred from economic and political to cultural and ideological issues. The early Frankfurt School indeed centered on the critique of culture and ideology, but they did not neglect economic and political issues; on the contrary, they attached much importance to economic analysis in the process of reflecting on and criticizing the Enlightenment spirit and industrial civilization. As Zhang Yibing says, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* for the first time confirmed, in accordance with Marx's *Economic Manuscripts 1857-1858*, that bourgeois industry and market exchange in the process of social history would certainly "destroy God and quality"[18] in social life in an isomorphic manner. In general, this issue does not receive enough attention in academia.

Third, the kernel of Horkheimer and Adorno's critique of the Enlightenment spirit was a critique of technological rationalism, anthropocentrism and civilizational progressivism. Only within this framework can we understand the historical value and the contemporary significance of their critique. Although Horkheimer and Adorno's critique of the Enlightenment spirit was a onesided critique of civilization with a strong flavor of pessimism, this pessimistic critique of civilization not only inherited the Romanticism of Rousseau, the irrationalism of Nietzsche and the early Western Marxism of Lukács, but also gave rise to the postmodernism of Foucault and the postmodern Marxism of Jameson. Therefore, it has an important place in both Western Marxism and modern Western philosophy. It should be recognized that Horkheimer and Adorno's reflection on and critique of the Enlightenment spirit is thought-provoking, for their critique is a vigorous protest to the excessive elevation of instrumental rationality and the repeated depreciation of value rationality. It is significant for overcoming the negative effects of instrumental rationality and reconstructing humanist rationality in today's modernization program.

---

[18] Zhang Yibing, *Atonal Style Dialectical Imagination* (Beijing: Joint Publishing, 2001), 23.

5.
Karl-Otto Apel and the Enlightenment

LUO YALING

The most famous and acceptable definition of the Enlightenment was given by Kant at the beginning of his essay *An Answer to the Question: "What is Enlightenment?"*

> Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-incurred immaturity or inability to use one's own understanding without the guidance of another. This immaturity is self-incurred if its cause is a lack not of understanding, but of the resolution and courage to use it without the guidance of another. The motto of enlightenment is therefore: Sapere aude! Have courage to use your own understanding![1]

It is also a minimal and almost incontrovertible definition of the Enlightenment that is the awareness and practice of man's ability to use his own understanding, that is, his rationality to make his own judgments and decisions. How one makes his own judgment, what he or she decides, and what the influence or consequence of the awareness and practice of using one's own understanding were not directly answered in the definition.

Reflecting on the Enlightenment, we ask the question "what does it mean?" Since we generally do not point to the quoted definition itself, the question refers rather to a further understanding of Enlightenment, the nature of the Enlightenment or our own understanding of it. This question of what the Enlightenment means can be further divided into two questions. The first: how the Enlightenment is understood or what was it understood as? The second: how should it be understood or what should it be understood as? These two aspects can be emphasized differently by different authors. Those who reflect on the first aspect are often critics, some against the idea of the Enlightenment itself. Those who focus on the second aspect emphasize the elimination of misunderstandings and make contributions to promoting the idea of the Enlightenment.

Karl-Otto Apel can be regarded as one who reflects in the second sense, though he has never discussed the topic of the Enlightenment directly. His approach to discourse ethics, called transcendental pragmatic discourse ethics (in contrast to the approach of Jürgen Habermas, called

---

[1] Cf. Immanuel Kant, *Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?*, in *Kants gesammelte Schriften*, Band.8, 30.

universal pragmatic discourse ethics), is a post-conventional and post-Kantian moral philosophy. It not only has an inner connection with the idea of the Enlightenment but it is a critical development of Kantian ethics. It can be expected then that Apel opens a new vista on the understanding of the Enlightenment.

Discourse Ethics as a Post-conventional Moral Philosophy

The claim that discourse ethics belongs to a post-conventional and post-Kantian moral philosophy is not simply an implicit conclusion based on its assertions. It has been confirmed explicitly by Apel himself, as he, in connection with Kohlberg's schemata of the moral development and the schemata which is extended by Jürgen Habermas, locates discourse ethics as a universal communicative ethics in the third level of the development of moral consciousness (see the schemata below).[2]

	Kohlberg's schema[3]	Habermas's schema[4]
Level I (Pre-Conventional)	1. Obedience and punishment orientation	1. Obedience and punishment orientation
	2. Self-interest orientation	2. Self-interest orientation
Level II (Conventional)	3. Interpersonal accord and conformity	3. Interpersonal accord and conformity
	4. Authority and social-order maintaining orientation	4. Authority and social-order maintaining orientation
Level III (Post-Conventional)	5. Social contract orientation	6. Universal ethical principles
	6. Universal ethical principles	7. Universal communicative ethical principles

On the basis of his empirical studies on children from different cultures, Lawrence Kohlberg, the student of the Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget, further confirmed the assumption of his teacher that the development of moral judgment depends on the internalization of one's interac-

---

[2] Cf. Karl-Otto Apel, *Geschichtliche Phasen der Herausforderung der praktischen Vernunft*, in *Funkkolleg: Praktische Philosophie/Ethik*, Studientexte 1 (Weinheim und Basel: Beltz Verlag, 1984), 59-65.

[3] Cf. Lawrence Kohlberg, *Moral Stages and Moralization: The Cognitive-Developmental Approach*. Lawrence Kohlberg, *Essays on Moral Development*, Vol. II, *The Psychology of Moral Development. The Nature and Validity of Moral Stages* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984).

[4] Cf. Jürgen Habermas, *Zur Rekonstruktion des Historischen Materialismus* (Frankfurt am Mainz: Suhrkamp, 1976), 83.

tion with others in the process of socialization and the development of cognitive competence. According to Kohlberg, people who reach Level III, especially Stage 6, are in full consciousness of their identity as a member of a society and their autonomous competence to make their own judgment. Regarding the moral question of what or how people should act, they are able to put themselves in the position of others and make decisions that present universal ethical principles. Kohlberg remarked that the 6th stage in his schema is in accordance with the Kantian Categorical Imperative.

Habermas' extension of Kohlberg's theory follows in two senses. First, he reinterpreted Kohlberg's ontogenetical theory in the sense of phylogenesis. The schema of Habermas refers not only to the individual's stages of development, but also to generic history or cultural evolution. With a critical remark on Kohlberg's Stage 6 as the highest stage of moral judgment as well as Kant's monological Categorical Imperative, Habermas added Stage 7 to the schema as the highest stage, in which one is orientated according to "universal communicative ethical principles."

Apel took over the extended schema of moral development, though he is not in full agreement with Habermas in unfolding the communicative or discourse ethics. Before we go further into Apel's discourse ethics, we are now able to see in this location that he, on the one hand, unfolds his discourse ethics in the tradition of the Enlightenment, and on the other hand, he intends to show a new extension of the Enlightenment values.

Apel's Discourse Ethics

Since it is not the place here to introduce Apel's discourse ethics in detail, I would like to make a short exposition with the following three key words: (1) discourse, (2) transcendental pragmatic final grounding (Apel's approach of discourse ethics is also called transcendental pragmatic discourse ethics), and (3) ethics of responsibility. (Apel gave his own approach of discourse ethics also the name Diskurs-Verantwortungs-ethik.)

Discourse

Apel, in agreement with Habermas, is of the opinion that the problem of the universal ethics in Stage 6 of Kohlberg's schema lies in its monological character. We may follow Apel to have a look into the Kantian Categorical Imperative to see the problems with monologue.

According to Kant's formulation, the Categorical Imperative is an order which asks me to "act according to that maxim whereby I can at the

same time will that it should become a universal law." [5] One might argue that the Kantian Categorical Imperative also has a dialogical element, because the formulation "I can will" implies a thinking experiment in which the I (the empirical I) has a fictive dialogue with the rational I or with others. But such a thinking experiment is a monologue in essence. The final criterion of the judgment lies either in the abstract rational I -- insofar as Hegel has the opportunity to criticize Kant's formalism and question the Categorical Imperative itself -- or in the empirical I who performs the thinking experiment. But this is only possible in a conventional society. This is also Apel's insight in his critique of Kohlberg's 6-staged schemata: Although the universal ethical principles of Stage 6 articulate interests and demands of all concerned, since these are only supposed in the experiment of one's thought, they must suppose, at the same time, that interests and demands are already interpreted sufficiently in the sense of the existing cultural conventions. [6]

In view of the problematic monological character of the Kantian Categorical Imperative, Apel (as well as Habermas) tries to introduce the idea of dialogue or discourse into universal ethics. This is also why their approach of ethics has the name *discourse ethics* or *communicative ethics*. In discourse ethics, "only these norms can claim to be valid that meet (or could meet) with the approval of all concerned in their capacity as participants in a practical discourse." [7] This is also the discourse ethical principle (D).

The approval of all concerned instead of the monologic I is now regarded as the final criterion of the validity of moral norms. The starting point lies in the concrete individual, that is, not only in the premise of their rational autonomy but also in that of their requirement, interest and limitedness in view of the realization of the rational competence. The transition from monologue to dialogue means not only an introduction of a new and different way to recognize the interest and demands of people and to test the universal validity of a moral norm or principle. It is rather an overcoming of the methodological solipsism which leads to a "transformation of philosophy": the idea of an absolute subject collapses, and the concrete persons become the starting point of philosophical and ethical thinking.

---

[5] Immanuel Kant, *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*, James W. Ellington, trans., 3rd ed. (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 1993), 30.

[6] Karl-Otto Apel, *Geschichtliche Phasen der Herausforderung der praktischen Vernunft*, in *Funkkolleg: Praktische Philosophie/Ethik*, Studientexte 1 (Weinheim und Basel: Beltz Verlag, 1984), 62.

[7] Cf. Jürgen Habermas, *Discourse Ethics: Notes on a Program of Philosophical Justification*, in Seyla Benhabib and Fred R. Dallmayr, eds., *The Communicative Ethics Controversy* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1990), 90.

Transcendental Pragmatical Final Grounding

The discourse ethical principle (D) presents the criterion of the validity of moral norms. It is also a procedural principle to test the validity of moral norms. But Apel, in disagreement with Habermas, emphasized that it should be understood not only as a procedural principle, but also as a basic moral principle. It means that D also implicates substantial moral principles which articulate the right and obligation to take part in discourse.

Apel came to this conclusion on the basis of a transcendental pragmatic final grounding. This is other than a formal logical grounding in a semantic sense. It is rather the discovery of a transcendental reflection on the pragmatic premises of human actions. The discovery is, to be short, that the argumentative discourse presents the *unhintergehbare* situation of human beings as rational animals. The argumentative discourse as an *unhintergehbare* situation means that we are always already in argumentative discourse. In other words, there is no situation in which we can choose whether to take part in discourse or not, because when we begin with earnest to ask if we can choose, we have already entered the ground of argumentative discourse.[8] Apel emphasized that human beings with rational competence are always participants in discourse, or that they can be identified as discourse partners, though the concrete individual is not always in discussion with others in reality.

With the help of this transcendental pragmatic final grounding, Apel came further to the conclusion that the normative pragmatic conditions of argumentative discourse, such as the obligation to acknowledge the equal right of all concerned to take part in discourse, and their obligation "to strive for an agreement for the purposes of the collective formation of the will in every matter that affects the interests (the potential claims) of others,"[9] should be regarded as the basic moral principles.

---

[8] Karl-Otto Apel, *Die transzendentalpragmatische Begründung der Kommunikationsethik und das Problem der höchsten Stufe einer Entwicklungslogik des moralischen Bewusstseins*, in Karl-Otto Apel, *Diskurs und Verantwortung. Das Problem des Übergangs zur postkonventionellen Moral* (Franfurt am Mainz: Suhrkamp, 1988), 353.

[9] Karl-Otto Apel, *The A Priori of the Communication Community and the Foundation of Ethics,* in Karl-Otto Apel, *Selected Essays,* Vol. II (Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1990), 45

Ethics of Responsibility

According to Apel, the need to introduce a Stage 7 into the schemata of moral development lies also in the gap between the abstract general moral principles and their concrete applications. Apel reminded us in this connection of the rigorous critique of Kant concerning the famous example of the prohibition of lying about which Kant has always argued with Benjamin Contant.[10] A universal ethics in Stage 7 has the mission to take the problems of applying general moral principles in consideration. This is exactly part B of Apel's program of moral grounding.

The gap between the final grounded procedural and substantial principles and their application arises firstly from the pressure of action in reality. As mentioned above, the discourse ethical principle (D) takes the "approval of all concerned" as the criterion of the validity of concrete norms. But in reality, it is impossible to achieve the approval of all concerned because of the limitation of time and knowledge, conflicts of interests, etc. We are confronted with the problem of how to decide before the approval of all concerned is met. Secondly, the problem with the basic requirement, the factor of egoism, the weakness of will, as well as the unreasonable political systems that could lead to the result that some norms that could meet the approval of all concerned can not be followed. How should we decide and act in such circumstances? This difficulty makes a direct application of general norms impossible. With the consideration of these factors, Apel tries in his second step of grounding to demonstrate the two regulative principles of "ensuring the survival of the human species qua real communication community" (strategy for survival) and of realizing the ideal normative conditions in the real world (strategy for emancipation).[11] These two regulative principles, along with the basic norm of participating in the discourse and striving for agreement, constitute the content of Apel's principle of responsibility or coresponsibility.

Apel and the Idea of the Enlightenment

With the overview of Apel's discourse ethics we can now take an inventory of its connection with the idea of the Enlightenment. As mentioned above, our question is what contribution Apel has made to the idea

---

[10] Immanuel Kant, *Über ein vermeintes Recht aus Menschenliebe zu lügen*, in *Kants gesammelte Schriften*, Band.8, 423.

[11] Cf. Ibid., 48, 49.

of the Enlightenment. Here we will point out only some important aspects instead of giving a complete answer to this question.

Freedom and Responsibility

The Enlightenment as awareness and practice of the competence to "use one's own understanding without the guidance of another" articulates the autonomy of human rationality and human freedom. But it is important to point out that freedom is by no means limitlessness. Freedom is rather the flip side of responsibility.

Kant has already offered an insight into the unity of freedom and responsibility. He tried to illustrate that freedom to use one's own understanding is in connection with responsibility to "treat a person as an end and not merely as a means,"[12] that is, to respect the dignity of other persons. We have mentioned at the beginning that Kant discussed also the normative condition of enlightenment, namely, that "the public concerned is left in freedom."[13] We see that freedom is an implication as well as a condition of enlightenment. It is a regulative idea in the sense of Kant. With the transcendental pragmatic understanding of the human individual as discourse partner, Apel reinterpreted the idea of unity of freedom and responsibility as that of right and responsibility of all concerned as discourse partners. In contrast to Kant, who only illustrated the criterion and procedures of moral responsibility, Apel answered also the question why one should act morally or with responsibility in his transcendental pragmatic final grounding. We see also from the presentation above that Apel extended the content of basic moral principles from a perspective of ethics of responsibility which he introduced in Part B of his moral grounding.

The idea of unity of freedom and responsibility can be regarded as a response to those who criticize the idea of enlightenment with the argument that enlightenment articulates a onesided idea of rationality, namely, instrumental rationality. Such an argument is right when we take into consideration how rationality was understood in Western history. But these authors went too far when they ascribed the misunderstanding to the idea of enlightenment. In the idea of unity of freedom and responsibility which is delivered by the idea of the Enlightenment, a second dimension of rationality is obvious: the communicative or moral rationality. And since Apel saw a complementary relationship between the deontological

---

[12] Immanuel Kant, *Grundlegung der Metaphysik der Sitten*, in *Kants gesammelte Schriften*, Band.4, 429.

[13] Immanuel Kant, *Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?*, Ibid., 33.

and teleological ethics and left enough room for the latter,[14] he supposed also a third dimension of rationality: ethical rationality.[15] The idea of the Enlightenment can by no means be identified with the idea of instrumental rationality. This misunderstanding shows rather the mission of further enlightenment. (I think this place means continue the spirit of the Enlightenment)

In addition, the idea of unity of freedom and responsibility, particularly Apel's exposition of responsibility, contributes to the controversy between deontological and teleological ethics. First, deontological ethics in the tradition of the Enlightenment is in no sense only formal ethics as some supporters of teleological ethics thought. Deontological and teleological ethics are just ethics which discuss the moral question of what one shall do in different dimensions. Second, they are not in contradiction with each other. Thirdly, as Apel shows in Part B of his moral grounding, they can complement each other.

Enlightenment as a Process

Kant expressed the following opinion: "Thus a public can only achieve enlightenment slowly. A revolution may well put an end to autocratic despotism and to rapacious or power-seeking oppression, but it will never produce a true reform in ways of thinking. Instead, new prejudices, like the ones they replaced, will serve as a leash to control the great unthanking mass."[16]

Such insight of Kant turns out to be a result of Apel's discourse ethics as an ethics after "the linguistic turn of philosophy" that has overcome the methodological solipsism, because the starting point of discourse ethics lies in concrete individuals. In other words, discourse ethics acknowledges the autonomy of persons, but not the autarky of their judgments. This is also the idea of the limitedness of concrete persons. In light of such ideas, it is also not difficult to understand why the movements of the Enlightenment in history always have their limitations or negative sides. And it is also not difficult to see that the critique on historical movements of

---

[14] Karl-Otto Apel, *Die transzendentalpragmatische Begründung der Kommunikationsethik und das Problem der höchsten Stufe einer Entwicklungslogik des moralischen Bewusstseins*, Ibid, 347, Fn.28.

[15] Cf. *On the Pragmatic, the Ethical, and the Moral Employments of the Practical Reason*, in Jürgen Habermas, *Justification and Application* (Cambridge, MA: the MIT Press, 1993).

[16] Immanuel Kant, *Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?*, Ibid., 32.

the Enlightenment is not the same as that on the idea of the Enlighten-ment.

It is important here to comment on the connection between the En-lightenment and the idea of progress, because there is a wide misunder-standing that the Enlightenment promised a certain historical progress. Kant laid his emphasis on the normative conditions of the Enlightenment. According to Kant, there are only a few persons who "have succeeded in freeing themselves from immaturity and in continuing boldly on their way" by cultivating their own minds;[17] the more opportunities for enlight-enment lie in the social condition that "the public concerned be left in freedom." Thus, Kant's thought of progress does not refer to the question of whether there is historical progress but to the question of whether we can hope that there will be historical progress. The latter is also the ques-tion of whether and how the condition of progress can be satisfied, and a confirming answer to the latter question is far from a utopian historical idea. Here Apel expressed clearly that the idea of progress is rather an ethical idea.[18]

Norm and Virtue

In the contemporary context of the renaissance of virtue ethics, it is also necessary to remark on the connection between the idea of enlighten-ment and virtue ethics. Contemporary philosophers ascribed the decline of virtue ethics in the modern West to the idea of enlightenment and turned radically with prejudice against it.

Both Kant and Apel discussed more about the establishment of nor-mative conditions of enlightenment. But in no sense was that they neglect the factor of self-cultivation. The calling "Have courage to use your own understanding!" is essentially a virtue ethics imperative. Apel emphasized that his discourse ethical moral responsibility must be understood in the sense of co-responsibility. He explained this as a principle of "primordial" responsibility, which is a responsibility given by a person himself as a dis-course partner. It is not a traditional role-responsibility but self-responsi-bility in the discourse, a responsibility above institutions. The element of virtue in the concept of self-responsibility is obvious.

---

[17] Ibid., 32.

[18] Cf. Karl-Otto Apel, *Ist die Ethik der idealen Kommunikationsgemeinschaft eine Utopie? Zum Verhältnis von Ethik, Utopie und Utopiekritik*, in Voßkamp, Wilhelm (Hg.), *Utopieforschung. Interdisziplinäre Studien zur neuzeitlichen Utopie.* Bd. 1 (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 1982).

Regarding the controversy between the contemporary virtue ethics and normative ethics in the narrow sense involved in the primacy of norm or virtue, there is a need to distinguish between the level of moral grounding and that of application or realization. In the level of moral grounding, there is the controversy between deontological and teleological ethics (both belong to normative ethics in a broad sense, which refers to the primacy of norm or good.) It is not the same controversy between the normative ethics in the narrow sense and virtue ethics. The latter arises rather from the level of application of moral principles or realization of ethical goods. Both sides of the controversy proceed in view of the problem of selfish motives and the defective state of the will. The difference is that they try to deal with it from different directions. One tries to unload the individual moral burden through institutionalization, while the other does so through self-cultivation. One is more realistic, whereas the other is much more idealistic. They can complement one another, but it remains hard to justify a primacy of one over the other. Ethics in the tradition of enlightenment focus on the realistic side, but this does not signify the intention to exclude virtue ethics.

Apel as an Enlightener

At the end of this short essay, it would be good to discuss the role of Apel himself. Since the discourse ethical responsibility is based on the premise of enlightenment, one may ask what it means for unenlightened persons, because an unenlightened person will not regard the discourse ethical responsibility as self-given. Apel argues that this is only an actual state. With a transcendental pragmatic final grounding he tries to show that every person must "always already" have presupposed the normative conditions of discourse and thus acknowledged the discourse ethical responsibility. In this way, the transcendental pragmatic final grounding turns out to be a way of enlightenment, and Apel himself is an enlightener in this sense.

However, since "enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-incurred immaturity," an enlightener is only a person who tells others that they are in the state of self-incurred immaturity, that they can escape such a state and that the mission of enlightenment must be performed by oneself in society in which "the public concerned is left in freedom."

Part II

**Rethinking Marxism in
Contemporary China**

6.
An Existential Interpretation of Spatial Turn

ZOU SHIPENG

The rise of city theory is the result of an overall spatial turn, which took place in the seventies in the twentieth century. Manuel Castells once complained that the theory of spatial turn of Henri Lefebvre was too obscure and henceforth it was distanced from city practice. Since Castells the discussion on space has consciously oriented itself to city practice, the consequence is that city theory begins to exclude pure theoretical study. However, Lefebvre's philosophy that space is still an important resource of theories and especially after the elucidation of David Harvey has profoundly influenced space and city practice in modern times. This essay will focus on the theoretical aspect, particularly the ontological aspect, which, relatively speaking, is not at present paid as much attention to as others in the field of city and space study. My intention is to show that the so-called spatial turn is nothing but the continual deepening of the existential turn that had formally closed. I shall start with a preliminary survey of the relevant ideas of philosophers Karl Marx, Martin Heidegger, Lefebvre and Michel Foucault.

I

Let's anchor our point of departure on Marx. It is Marx who inaugurates the sociality of space and the horizon of modernity.

Through prescribing the social relationships of human beings, Marx gains an insight into the spatial expansion by underlying the industrial and capitalist regime and rendering space as a world that can and should be grasped by senses. Undoubtedly, the Marxian space is a kind of social space, relative space, or sensuous space. And he considers the problem of space (which is mainly the problem of urbanization in that time) to be a social-political question and to be the symptom of the aggravating class conflict caused by the capitalist contradictions between the urban and the rural, between labor and capital and between the propertied and the proletariat. Just as space as such is a type of commodity, the relativity of space lies in its value as subject to different systems of ownership. Space's belonging to the collection of commodity is an obvious form of ontologization of the capital. According to Marx, space (as well as time) is by no means the abstract form of the material -- his space is the historical *aufheben* of Kant's space *a priori*. In fact, Marx deals with the space problem

within the horizon of social existentiality and critical social theories. Obviously, space is the product of human historical activity and witnesses their subjectivity. Such a notion of space is apparently different from the level space of the medieval. The Marxian class theory and religious critique are a historical *aufheben* of the Christian view of space. But it should be noted that the Marxian view of space is not equated to that kind of homogeneous space which unfolds itself with the logical development of world history. The space of the Hegelian historical philosophy is the logical expansion of the Galilean "extensional space." Insofar as it has negated the historicity and locality of the West, this Hegelian space is nothing but an imaginary historical space. In terms of the Marxian analysis, it is exactly the capitalist expansion that highlights such localities as the city and the grassroots, ethnicity, the Oriental, etc., for a second time and makes them into the theme of any radical politics.

> The bourgeoisie has subjected the country to the rule of the towns. It has created enormous cities, has greatly increased the urban population as compared with the rural, and has thus rescued a considerable part of the population from the idiocy of rural life. Just as it has made the country dependent on the towns, so it has made barbarian and semi-barbarian countries dependent on the civilized ones, nations of peasants on nations of bourgeois, the East on the West.[1]

Now globalization and the sharp collision between spaces in capitalist practices are taken into spatial consideration and subsequently have become the base of the radical political-geographic tradition.

Here it also implies the property of existentiality that Marx prescribes to space. For him, space and geographical circumstances must be of the significance of philosophical anthropology, for they mark and confirm man's sensuous activities and relationships, which exist as positive natural relationships. The positive objective relationships such as space and circumstances are established upon the so-called dimension of the Marxian "completed naturalism," which is a positive objective relationship. Strictly speaking, the Marxian space is presented by way of transcending the geographical determinism of French materialism. It reminds one of thesis 3 in "Theses on Feuerbach," which reads as "…the coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity or self-change [*Selbstveranderung*] can be conceived and rationally understood

---

[1] Karl Marx Friedrich Engels, Manifesto of the Communist Party, Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1970, 36.

only as revolutionary practice."[2] The space here obtained by changing the current world belongs to the space of political critique and emancipation. The ontological character of space is not on the level of political significance, but rather on that of philosophical anthropology. Only when it does not exist as the natural condition restricting the human externally but as the object of man's sensuous activity and as an objective existent and therefore testifies to his essential powers, can space be a witness of the comprehensive and rich sensuous activity of human-beings. Such a space is certainly a sensuous space.

For Marx, the perception undoubtedly implicates some ontological import. He particularly prefers to explicate the perception on the basis of existentiality. This is also a theme of "Economic and Philosophic manuscript of 1844." Marx presumes in that book that "…man's feelings, passions, etc., are not merely anthropological phenomena in the [narrower] [this world cannot be clearly deciphered in the manuscript. Ed.] sense, but truly ontological affirmation of being (of nature)."[3] He stresses that such characters are in fact shown through objectifying activity (especially through "developed industrial society"): "…the history of industry and the established objective existence of industry are the open book of man's essential powers, the perceptibly existing psychology."[4] The positive comprehension and explication of the sensuous, is precisely the crucial difference between Marx and the national economists. In "The German Ideology," Marx affirms the historical meaning of sensuous individuals: "the first premise of all human history is, of course, the existence of living human individuals."[5] He then emphasizes that the sensuous world demonstrated by the philosophy of consciousness should be transformed into the "sensuous activity" and "sensuous relationships," which are cared for by existentiality: "…to conceive the sensuous world as the total living sensuous activity of the individuals composing it."[6] Marx explicitly considers "the commons of liberal men" based upon sensuous individuals as the aim of human history. While establishing his new materialism and materialist view of history, Marx does erect a structure of existentiality which is distinct from the traditional substantial ontology. It is necessary to be supplemented that such "ousia" is not revealed by the linear temporality but

---

[2] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Selected Works* (Beijing: People Press, 1995), 55.

[3] Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscript of 1844*, Martin Milligan, trans. (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books 1987), 59.

[4] Ibid., 47.

[5] Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, 155.

[6] Ibid., 171.

by space. The disappearance of the sensuous as such in Hegelian historical philosophy suggests that the temporal dimension of the sensuous has been finished (it can be said that the feelings discussed by Hegel is just within the epistemology). When Marx's connotation of existentiality is conferred, the sensuous must be manifested in the manner of space all-roundly in the state of modernity, which is signified by the developed industry.

Marx directs himself from the transcendental ontology and the ontology a priori to social ontology. It is Marx who initiates the ontological revolution of space. However, under the domination of temporality, his space is still natural and passive. He offers a well-known thesis on the transformation from time to space by saying that "the time is not only the measure of man's life, it is also the space of his development." The key of the thesis is not space but time. As a ready-made metaphor, "space" marks its established and passive being, so it is still a kind of unproductive space. Marx does commit himself to re-obtaining space through radical practice, but he has never deemed the spatial as such as an existential ousia. Though it does lay out the topic on the transferring of space, the "Capital" is restrained by the notion of time and space at that time. If we imagine that when treating the system of land ownership or the land itself Marx is equipped with the notion of space in our time, whether he would revise the concept of "general capital" he put forward before, we would not know the answer.

In the horizon of contemporary philosophy of space, land-ownership does not depend on the system of property ownership. On the contrary, the former determines the latter fundamentally, because the question of the land is neither about the rent, nor about the constant capital in the process of capital appreciation; it is about direct capital. Engels reiterates in related works that the key to the land and the housing question does not consist of the existential relationships that it displays, but in the irrational social-political regime it indicates. The whole problem rests on that, as political subject as such, the land (space) has determined the existential relationships between human beings, who consequently have to try their best to survive within such determined relationships. When unfolding the horizon of modernity of space, Marx and Engels have paved the way for modern thought's surpassing of the traditional notion of space.

II

Perhaps Heidegger is the last existentialist who cares a lot about time and who also sets forth space in the frame of time. His understanding of space is a process of deepening step by step. In a lecture entitled "the Concept of Time," Heidegger criticizes the notion of homogeneous time: "the

notion of homogenization means to equate time with space, with pure presence, so it inclines to chase time from itself to the present." This citation means that Heidegger thinks of space as the prototype of the homogeneous, in other words, space is still confined within the Galilean homogeneous and pre-reflective notion of space. But something has changed in "Being and Time," where Heidegger seizes space from the angle of the existential structure of "being-in-the-world." In this way he disassembles "Being-in-the-world" into three moments: "in-the-world," "the being which always is in the way of being-in-the-world," and "being in as such."[7] The last moment refers to the spatiality of Da-sein, "by this 'in' we mean the relation of being that two beings extended 'in' space have to each other with regard to their location in that space."[8]

Heidegger points out in particular that the "being in as such" cannot be understood as such spatial relation as "one in another." Because "being-in designates a constitution of being of Da-sein and is an existential. But we cannot understand by this the objective presence of a material thing (the human body) 'in' a being objectively present."[9] "In" or "inside" means that, "a being which is extended is surrounded by the extended boundaries of something extended."[10] The notion of "being-in" or "being-inside" is actually the kind of vesselized spatiality which stretches from Aristotle to Descartes. This suggests that Heidegger has sorted out the epistemologized spatiality and orients himself consciously to the horizon of phenomenology. Especially he criticizes the mind-body dualism, based on modern epistemology and new Kantianism, which takes the "in" of the "being-in-the-world" as "spirituality," and the "humane spatiality" as an "attribute of bodiliness" established upon "corporeality." For Heidegger, such combination is just a kind of "a definite presence of two objectively present *res extensa* next to each other,"[11] whose existentiality "is more obscure than ever."[12]

However, the question involved is the understanding of the concept of extension. According to Heidegger, "that being whose being as *extensio* Descartes equated the being of the 'world',"[13] "with his radical exposition of *extentio* as the *praesuppositum* for every quality of the *res corporea*,

---

[7] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, Joan Stambaugh, trans. (New York: State University Press, 1996), 50.

[8] Ibid., 50.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid., 94.

[11] Ibid., 90.

[12] Ibid., 52.

[13] Ibid., 89.

Descartes prepared the way for the understanding of an *a priori*…"[14] According to Heidegger, the Kantian efforts are no more than a deeper penetration of Cartesian understanding. What is essential is that the Cartesian extension (since Galileo) is factually describing "the objective presence of the corporeal thing."[15] Therefore it is not sufficient to reveal the existence of space.

> Taking *extensio* as the basic determination of the 'world' has its phenomenal justification, although in recourse to it neither the spatiality of the world nor the spatiality initially discovered of beings encountered in the surrounding world, nor even the spatiality of Da-sein itself, can be conceived ontologically.[16]

The existential explication of space must go by way of the "being in." The spatiality of Da-sein is necessarily a comprehension of its "in-the-world." "The understanding of being-in-the-world as an essential structure of Da-sein first makes possible the insight into its existential spatiality."[17] In *Being and Time*, Heidegger arranges the existential analysis of space by the phenomenological method. Then we find that space unlocks itself by three aspects: the spatiality of beings' handiness in the world, the spatiality of being-in-the-world and the spatiality of Da-sein. For this reason, Heidegger investigates gradually such factors "constituting the space" as "location," "dedistancing," "directionality," "giving space," etc. The conclusion of his entire analysis is, "*Space is neither in the subject nor is the world in space*. Rather, space is 'in' the world since the being-in-the-world constitutive for Da-sein has disclosed space. Space is not in the subject, nor does that subject observe the world 'as if' it were in space. Rather, the 'subject', correctly understood ontologically, is spatial in a primordial sense."[18]

It is by means of importing existentiality into the analysis of space that contemporary discourse on philosophy of space is engendered. But the existential interpretation of space is confronted with many difficulties, and Heidegger has been clearly aware of them,

> The perplexity still present today with regard to the interpretation of the being of space is grounded not so much in an inadequate knowl-

---

[14] Ibid., 93-94
[15] Ibid., 90.
[16] Ibid., 94.
[17] Ibid., 52-53.
[18] Ibid., 103.

edge of the factual constitution of space itself as in the lack of a fundamental transparency of the possibilities of being in general and of their ontologically conceived interpretation. What is decisive for the understanding of the ontological problem of space lies in freeing the question of the being of space from the narrowness of the accidentally available and, moreover, undifferentiated concepts of being, and, with respect to phenomenon itself, in moving the problematic of the being of space and the various phenomenal spatialities in the direction of clarifying the possibility of being in general.[19]

According to Heidegger, neither the Kantian transcendent sensuous space, nor the notion of space of natural science, nor the analysis of new Kantianism or modern positivist social science belongs to the existential interpretation of space. Even his "Being and Time" is no more than an initiation of the existential interpretation of space. In that book, Heidegger just regards space as a property as Da-sein, not as ousia. In other words, the investigation of space in "Being and Time" still hinges on existential or ontological analysis. This is not satisfied by contemporary theorists who are interested in space such as Lefebvre and who set about a breakthrough in this aspect.

The topic on space in late Heidegger is location, "presence," and dwelling, which are a kind of transformation and deepening of his early thinking on spatiality. He talks about the characteristic of space, such as "presence" and dwelling in "Building, Dwelling, Thinking" (1951).

> What the word for space, *Raum*, designates is said by its ancient meaning. Raum means a place cleared or freed for settlement and lodging. A space is something that has been made room for, something that-is within a boundary (Greek *peras*). A boundary is not that at which something stops but, as the Greeks recognized, the boundary is that from which something *begins* its *presencing*.[20]

Heidegger stresses especially that, as a thing, the "bridge" joins and gathers in space. "The bridge is a thing-and, it is such *as* the gathering of the fourfold which we have described."[21] It is well known that the fourfold mentioned here is earth, sky, divinities and mortals, which are gathered together by the bridge as a "location" or "site." "By this site are deter-

---

[19] Ibid., 104-105.

[20] see Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, Albert Hofstadter, trans. (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1971), 45.

[21] Ibid.

mined the localities and ways by which a space is provided for." The bridge gathers the totality of four folds, at the same time it sets off the existential significance of space, that is, dwelling, for human beings. "Man's relation to locations, and through locations to spaces, inheres in his dwelling. The relationship between man and space is none other than dwelling, strictly thought and spoken."[22]

The "dwelling" shows that, when discussing space, Heidegger has begun to elude any investigation of temporality and has tried to render an explication of space by itself. After distinguishing the fourfoldness of time and threefoldness in a seminar on *Being and Time* (1962), Heidegger embarks on the superiority of space over time, "the authentic temporality itself as well as the field reached by the three foldness, which is decided by the approaching nearing, is priori to the place of space, by which a possible location comes to be." This argument points to "Ereignis," in other words, he "forces" human existence and henceforth the "Ereignis" by bringing out the fourth (that is, the historical) dimension of temporality. In the process he also demands we grasp the source of space from the gift of "Ereignis."

> Now Time and Being can only be given as the gift of 'Ereignis' and thought from the perspective of 'Ereignis', we must penetrate into the source of space by means of the character of the location fully considered before.[23]

For Heidegger, space essentially marks the human spirit that is in the state of being settled. In "Art and Space" (1969), written in his late years (when the discussion on space had become current in the circle of European philosophy), Heidegger criticizes the traditional notion of space, pointing out that space is neither "that homogeneous expanse, not distinguished at any of its possible places, equivalent toward each direction, but not perceptible with the senses,"[24] nor an external space permitting infinite expansion and materialization. The later space is none other than "that which compels more and more fiercely the modern to obtain their domination over it," such as the project of planets, real estate, etc. They are not the same as the Heideggerean space.

---

[22] Ibid.

[23] Heidegger, *Being and Time*.

[24] Martin Heidegger, *Art and Space*, Charles H. Seiver, trans., 4. https://pdflibra ry.files.wordpress.com/2008/02/art-and-space.pdf.

> Spatialization discloses the state of freedom and openness for man's settlement and dwelling. Considering itself, spatialization is no more than the disclosed locations where the fate of the dwelling human being returns to the home-like wonder, or to the distressed case of being homeless, or even to an indifferent state of being between the former wonder and the latter sadness.[25]

Dwelling is the theme of late Heideggerean notion of space, which is distinct from his understanding space by way of time in *Being and Time*. As to this opinion, Heidegger expresses himself explicitly. He writes, "in section 17 of 'Being and Time', I attempted to reduce the spatiality of Dasein to temporality, but this is untenable." We may consider these words a presentation of the shift of his notion on space. Though hesitating to get out of the existential interpretation rooted in his mind, Heidegger leads a new way for contemporary philosophy of space, as he rejects temporality and starts to discuss space as such.

III

Heidegger's idea of dwelling retains a delayed sense of time, which is space emerging and deeply hiding in spiritual history. Its vision fails to cover the diversity, the self-production, even the political essence, of space. That is indeed related to the lack of its social theory. In other words, the Heideggerean persistent rejection of the way of addressing the problem in social theories (or political theories) -- just as his identification of ontology and ethics -- is an essential cancelation of the sociality of space. Nevertheless, the ontological process of opening space has already given rise to the spatialization (空间化) of metaphysics. Heidegger is not aware of this, but Jacques Derrida is, for he proclaims that the Heideggerean philosophy was "the last metaphysics of presence," and that, observation reveals metaphysics' transition from temporality to spatiality.

Heidegger rejects the Da-sein which is much like the Sartrean "Self" and his Existentialism. But it is Existentialism that triggers the Heideggerean existence in time: nowhere to exist and his nihilism. This points out two themes of contemporary philosophy or the post-Heideggerian era: space (location) and body. Body is a theme seldom dealt with by Heidegger, or it hides deeply in being. To quote from "Being and Time": "being-in-the-world is a spiritual quality and the 'spatiality' of human being is an attribute of its bodiliness which is always at the same time 'based on' cor-

---

[25] Ibid.

poreality."[26] This shows that Heidegger is actually against such a vulgar concept, for "being-in cannot be clarified ontologically by an ontic characteristic."[27] For Heidegger, there is a priority of space over body. This is exactly the point of departure of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of the body where he starts to be in disagreement with Heidegger, whose emphasis is on the determination of the place to exist. Existentialism directly points out the place where human dwelling has not been. Sartre rhetorically employs spatial concepts ("Morts sans sepulture," "Huisclos," "Hell is other people") in his descriptions of human beings' existence, but they imply absurdity and nothingness, in company with anxiety on the body and detestation of self.

Existentialism puts an end to the ontology of temporality in a rather radical way, and for the philosophy of history which culminates in the Classical German philosophy, it substitutes the theories on space within the frame of structuralism. In this process, the Lefebvrean transition from Existentialism to Structuralism and the spatial theory in Foucault's Genealogy in 1970s are of special significance on the question of the contemporary shift of space.

Lefebvre firmly believes that the transition from time to space has been a matter of fact. In the lecture entitled "Reflections on the Politics of Space," delivered in 1970, Lefebvre clearly states, "it should be remembered that during the 1960s it was commonly understood, or rather misunderstood, that the object 'par excellence' of this science was space, not time."[28] The main work of Lefebvre is to reveal the production of space and its political essence. In "Space: Social Product and Use Value," Lefebvre writes: "An analysis of production in the modern world shows that we have passed from the *production of things in space* to the *production of space itself.*"[29] Space is not only the subject and ousia of production, but also that of consumption (consumption is but the reproduction of space). It twists the process of knowledge of space, as well as the production and reproduction of space, into one. Therefore, "(social) space is a (social) product."[30] "If space is a product, our knowledge of it must be expected to reproduce and expound the process of production."[31]

---

[26] Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 52.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Henri Lefebvre, "*Reflections on the Politics of Space,*" in *Antipode*, Vol 8, No 2 (May 1976), 30.

[29] "Space: Social Product and Use Value," in J.W. Freiburg, ed., *Critical Sociology: European Perspectives* (New York: Irvington Publishers, 1979), 285.

[30] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 1991), 26.

[31] Ibid., 26.

Lefebvre differentiates three kinds of spaces: natural space, spiritual space and social space. This classification never implies his approval, on the contrary, it is to criticize the notion of space of traditional ontology and epistemology, to decipher the code of natural space and spiritual space and to highlight the totality of social space. First of all, there is no pure natural space. Pure space is a mere abstraction, which is essentially a "void space." Natural space becomes and is subject to social and power space, while infinite space becomes situational space and the object of social control. Natural space, therefore, cannot be the raw material of social space; accordingly, "science of space" cannot be said to be of substantial epistemological significance.

> To date, work in this area has produced either mere descriptions which never achieve analytical, much less theoretical, status, or else fragments and cross-sections of space. There are plenty of reasons for thinking that descriptions and cross-sections of this kind, though they may well supply inventories of what exists in space, or even generate a discourse on space, cannot ever give rise to a knowledge of space.[32]

Second, spiritual space is still subject to the temporalized philosophy of history. Lefebvre leveled his critique directly at Hegel: "According to Hegelianism, historical time gives birth to that space which the state occupies and rules over…Time is thus solidified and fixed within the rationality immanent to space."[33] Within Lefebvre's framework of analysis, the Marxian theory of space is subject to the Hegelian tradition of philosophy of history. As for the Heideggerean understanding of space in terms of time, it never touches upon the sociality of space or social space itself, and it is out of the horizon of modernity. What Lefebvre solely approves is the special significance of Nietzsche's theory of space.

> Only Nietzsche, since Hegel, has maintained the primordiality of space and concerned himself with the spatial problematic…Yet Nietzschean space preserves not a single feature of the Hegelian view of space as product and residue of historical time.[34]

The Lefebvrean social space includes two ontological meanings. One is presuppositional, that is, it recognizes the existential character of space.

---

[32] Ibid., 7
[33] Ibid., 21.
[34] Ibid., 22.

For Lefebvre, the ontological character of space is undoubted, and because of this he pronounces, "where there is space there is being."[35] For this reason, it is Lefebvre that brings about the spatial turn in the sense of ontology or existentiality. The other is the ousiological meaning of social space. Ontology is supported by Ousiology, but in the conditions of modern society, Ousiology is necessarily conferred existential properties. As Ousiology, social space serves to bear ontology on space. For Lefebvre, not only does natural space belong to social space, but spiritual space does as well, which as such is the mode of being of space, in modern context. "Space" is of the character of society and constitutes the fundament of being for modern society. "Space disseminates itself in, supported by, producing and produced social relations." "The practices within space determine space, assigning space in dialectical interaction, having space as its prerequisite."

The Lefebvrean ontology on space is obviously embedded in the Marxian theory of social being and oriented by the dialectic materialism. Precisely speaking, he supplements the Marxian theory of social being with space. "Any 'social existence' aspiring or claiming to be 'real', but failing to produce its own space, would be a strange entity, a very peculiar kind of abstraction unable to escape from the ideological or even the 'cultural' realm."[36] For Lefebvre, the well-known Marxian saying, "but the essence of man is no abstraction inherent in each single individual. In reality, it is the ensemble of the social relations,"[37] can be rewritten as: it is space that is the ensemble of the social relations. If the Marxian social being refers to the authentic being or being as such, the Lefebvrean social space will be the most essential space. Insofar as he comprehends social being as social space, Lefebvre is equating social space with being as such.

For Lefebvre, social space has the character of totality, but it displays itself in "multiple other than one" manners. Lefebvre discusses many different types of space, for instance, absolute space, relative space, concrete space, abstract space, pure space, social space, private space, shared space, ambivalent space, cultural space, differentiated space, dominating space, dramatic space, epistemological space, familial space, tool space, leisure space, living space, created space, material space, spiritual space, natural space, indifferent space, organic space, multiple space, political space, real space, depressing space, sensuous space, feminine space, transparent space, true space, capitalist space, socialist space, state space, etc.

---

[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid., 53.
[37] Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, 55.

They are just spaces multiplied in the horizon of society and politics, and they are by no means a kind of structural differentiation of space. This means that the Lefebvrean space is never the result of pure theoretical analysis. It clearly orients itself to practices. Thus, a great number of spaces will unfold themselves with the disclosure of the multitude of social space.

Like Lefebvre, Foucault's critique also targets time, which is in fact space and the traditional historical epistemology. In "Question on Geography," Foucault points out that, "Space was treated as the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile. Time, on the contrary, was richness, fecundity, life, dialectic."[38] In "Texts and Contexts in Different Spaces," he writes,

> perhaps the present time is the era of space. We are in the epoch of simultaneity, of juxtaposition, of distance and approaching, of shoulder by shoulder, of scattering in all directions. And I am sure that we are in the moment when the experiential world developing from time is much less than that which from a messy network connects different points.[39]

For Foucault, space as such is of ontological and existential character. "We do not live in a homogeneous and void space, on the contrary, we live in a world entirely immersed in qualities and imaginations. Our fundamental sensuous space, dreaming space and passion space themselves, still grasp the quality of ousia."[40] It is not the case that we are choosing or manufacturing space, but that any mode of our being is situated within space and the result of spatial activity. "For us, maybe time is only one of the portions and operations of many different elements that scatter in space."[41]Being in disagreement with the Lefebvrean contemporary horizon, Foucault stresses that he reveals the social-political essence of space with the help of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, that is, the heyday of temporality and historical philosophy. In this way he claims to belong to "historicist Nietzscheanism." "It seems that, different from time, the spatiality can be considered subtracted from the holi-

---

[38] Michel Foucault, *Space, Knowledge and Power*, Colin Gordon, trans. Reprinted from Colin Gordon, ed., *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977* (New York: Pantheon, 1980), 63-77, 177.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Ibid.

ness of the nineteenth century."[42] Foucault thinks that the importance of space is highlighted in modern times and the result of thematic society. "One of the discoveries of political thought at the end of the eighteenth century" is the "society" as "new reality," and it "brings about a change of spatial significance." The essence of the discovery is that it has revealed the ontological and existential meaning of social space.

For Foucault, space is always of the property of politics. "Space is the fundament of any kind of public life and power operation." To manifest the essence of space is not to administrate space and our life; rather, it is to understand the complexity of space and the heterogeneity of different kinds of space.

> The space, in which we dwell, our life and the dissolution of the epoch and history taking place, subtracts us from ourselves. The space gripping us is itself heterogeneous. In other words, we are neither living in a void in which individuals and things are placed, nor in a void which is embellished by the eclipse of lights. Rather, we are living in a collection of relations characterizing different soils, which cannot be reduced to each other, let alone overlapping with each other.[43]

We can find that what Foucault is concerned with is microspace, the heterogeneity and variety of space.

Foucault has revealed two transformations of space: one is from the hierarchized and localized "space of emplacement" to the Galilean indefinitely open "space of extension," and then, to the so-called contemporary "soil." This method of analysis has been accepted by contemporary theorists who are interested in space. Like Lefebvre, Foucault also takes up the construction of new knowledge and structure of space -- and this is also the discrepancy between the two and Heidegger. But we need to see that, differing from the Lefebvrean radical construction of knowledge of space, Foucault's space is a kind of micro and differential space that is against grand narrative.

As to the contemporary turn of space, Foucault particularly stresses the significance of "soil." Regarding the understanding of "soil," there are several similar or entirely different approaches, such as the Heideggerean "soil" which refers to "dwelling" and "retaining," the Sartrean soil which refers to a material situation for individuals' existence, and the opposites of which are alienation and "thrownness." In contrast to the soils men-

---

[42] Ibid.

[43] Ibid.

tioned above, Foucault's soil indicates that it has something to do with the central hub of network, and the Lefebvrean "soil" is reduced to material circumstances again, and it changes into the subject of radical politics. Then it expands into the "soil" in the sense of radical political-geography in the works of David Harvey and Edward W. Soja. Alain Badiou also attaches much importance to the objective logics of soil. But these different notions of "soil" are nothing but another version of the return to the life-world, and they belong to the existential turn of modern and contemporary philosophy.

<div align="center">

IV

</div>

The change from ontological being to existential space, as well as the overall manifestation of "soil," is not only the recovery of ontic meaning to some degree, but also a breakthrough of the system of ontological categories.

The American specialist on Greek philosophy Charles H. Kahn has differentiated three usages of *einai* (to be). The first designates being-judged-to-be-true. Generally speaking, there are two syntactic structures for *to be*. One is "potential structure," referring to potential being; hence we cannot tell which actual being it designates in the real world. This structure has anticipated the theory of Becoming, which is distinguished from that of Being. Furthermore, the concept of existence in contemporary philosophy belongs to the tradition of Becoming. The other is "vertical structure," referring to the real state and properties of things. The usage of "being-judged-to-be-true" mainly presents in this structure. But it does not designate concrete beings, rather, it is revealed in the tenses of *to be*. The stems of general verbs all have three morphologies: infinitive past tense, present imperfect tense and present perfect tense; by contrast, *to be* solely has the second tense mentioned, probably equivalent to the general present tense in modern English, meaning "presenting continuously" and therefore the annulment of space in the temporality. The describing discourse on Being is none less than a synthesis of these two usages, and it has been noted that Being always plays the role of the subject term. Why is Being real and how is it presented? The answer depends on the third usage, that is what the character of Being is presence. Being is necessarily present, but the meaning of *to be* which is being-judged-to-be-true never implicate the character of presence. *To be* precisely, it is impossible to infer the character of presence of being-judged-to-be-true from logical structure, because it is existence that is the basis on which spatial relation is manifested. The second usage reveals the general character of existence

which is not open to space but only characterizes a kind of abstract space determined by eternal time in the sense of ontology.

The third usage of *to be* precisely "expresses the usage of location," and it is the key to the existential character of concrete existents. *To be* is always *to be* in a site, or else it will be nothing and be non-being. The usage of *to be* marks the essential connection between being and space. This is the basic truth which is known by the Greeks. For them, "being" is always present and embodied. Correspondingly, space has two significances: one is related to the "sky," in another word, to the ultimate Cosmos or the abstract void. (The word "abstract" here refers to the purified and intuitive imagination, rather than the categorical abstraction in philosophy in later generations.) The other one is related to the "earth," precisely to "location," "place," or "site," which is concrete space. These two senses are indicated in all pre-Socratic philosophers' thought. But in order to express being, we need the third usage of *to be*, by which space as "location" and "site" begins to figure in directly. In other words, space is always subjacent to being, and being has the character of spatiality.

Plato once said in "Timaeus," "…all existence that it must of necessity be in some place and occupy a space, but that what is neither in heaven nor in earth has no existence."[44] It is clear for Plato that space occupied by a concrete existent on the "earth" and universally in "heaven" exists simultaneously. Only Being is not limited by concrete time and space, because it is "transcendental" in itself. To ignore the third usage of *to be* in the discourse on being signifies its choice and rejection of space. Such choice and rejection are the symptoms that accompany "existence's" being stranded in Being. To unveil the fluid level of *to be* is equal to unmask the latter's existential level and let it present automatically. This is exactly the "outstanding" and the essential state of existence, but it is blocked by substantiality and its categorical form, and henceforth lapses into concrete "exsisteres." Accordingly, space is deprived of its fluidity and flexibility homologous to becoming and existence, and therefore degrades into an abstract and void concept which is subject to categorical thinking and bound to temporality.

The abstract concept of space as a category is formed at Aristotle's beginning in constructing the categories of being. The "To En" created by Aristotle is the neutral form of *eimi* (which means "I am") from the perspective of word-building. This form is also the synthesis of the two usages mentioned above; for this reason it highlights in particular the tradition of "judged-to-be-true" and "to be." In this way we can conclude that

---

[44] Plato, *Timaeus*, Benjamin Jowett, trans. (Focus Philosophical Library). https://www.gutenberg.org/files/1572/1572-h/1572-h.htm.

the thought of category initiated by Parmenides develops itself further in Aristotle's works. The latter's metaphysics is exactly the presenting system of To En, in other words, To En is the supporting category of metaphysics. As it is well known, there are ten categories predicating To En, which are ousia (substance), quantity, quality, relation, place, time, position, state, action and affection. Obviously when compared with the other nine categories which are nothing but the substantiation of To En, the first category (Ousia) has the sole status of supporting the latter. The connotetion of Ousia is "noumenon," which Shou-peng Wu suggests translating as the conjunction of the following three Chinese words: "entity," "substratum," "principle." These three words share the implication of "soil." But what we ought to have in mind is that the "soil" discussed here only has the property of being a category, and it has conveyed the Aristotelian proposition reading as: "the space is a vessel." Among the ten categories except the first, the category of place has a self-evident spatial property, and it also has the Ousia considered an abstract "soil" getting its concrete location. As to the reason why Aristotle chooses "place" instead of "space" as one fundamental category to predicate Being, more interpretations and meditations are wanted, so we have to suspend this question in this essay. Perhaps it is implied in such an arrangement that Aristotle is trying to get the abstract space to be analyzed and predicated concretely and substantially, as is shown in the manner in which he disposes the system of categories from the abstract to the concrete. The "concrete existent" is characterized and presented within such system of ontological categories. In another words, the Aristotelian system of ontological categories renders such usages of being qua being as the location and site further fixed, and the existent as well as space consolidated as the property of categories.

Unquestionably modern existentiality tends to emancipate "existence" from ontological system of categories; the essential connection between space and existence, in other words, the existential feature of space, must emerge with existentiality's becoming conscious of itself. The so-called Heideggerean ontological difference between "being-in" and "inside" is actually the revealed form of the ontological difference between being and beings which shows in space. The "being in" is nothing but the existential relation between man and space. This relation unfolds through "existence" and refers to "being-in-the-world," but "Being" as such needs to be prescribed or reduced. Heidegger grasps being by way of language, which is accompanied by space's essence of being inhabited. By means of the forming-into-one of four principles, that is, earth, sky, divinities and mortals, the inaugurated existence "rushes to" Being.

In fact, this is a kind of thinking which develops itself according to the spreading out of an origin, and because of this process, such thinking is natural and rational. Thus, we can conclude that being must possess its own place in concert with its becoming. Regarding this thesis, it should be something to be in somewhere. [I think of the spatial turn as the further deepening of contemporary philosophy's existential turn. Only by fully grasping that space (as well as the body, the sensuous and the world) is of existential essence can we appreciate the presentness (including the present context of our mental belief.)] Besides, we should be cautious that space unfolding itself open to modernity is not limited to an original plentitude and complexity which are already given by a system of categories. It completely exhibits the variety, the fluidness of space and the political character of essence. There is a necessary transition from natural or pure space to social existence and social space. If we want to gain an insight into the richness and perplexity of space to cast deep and analyze in depth the pathology of modern society and cultures, we must apprehend the existential and ontological characters of space.

7.

On Li Da's Interpretation of Marx's Concept of Ideology

ZHANG XIUQIN

Ninety years ago, during the May Fourth Movement, Marxism entered China as a new culture and a new thought through the translation of the works of Chinese intellectuals who were studying in Japan, France and Russia. It became the major subject of those 'advanced intellectuals' in their discussions about national rejuvenation and social revolution and a main ideology for the national liberation and revitalization of China. The 'advanced intellectuals' attempted to change the dominant role of feudal cultural traditions which at that time had Confucianism as its core in the ideology of China. They accomplished the double tasks of enlightening Chinese people and society and saving the nation with Marxism, especially its socialistic doctrine and solved the problem of national rejuvenation which could not be accomplished only through learning advanced Western technology. As one of 'advanced intellectuals' at the time Li Da (1890-1966)[1] played an important role in the spread and evolution of Marxism in China with his theoretical works and arguments. Against this background, the present work takes up the exploration of Li Da's interpretation of Marx's concept of ideology and its contemporary significance.

This paper plans to develop the discussion in three aspects: the process, (a) the formation and contemporary significance of Li Da's interpretation of Marx's concept of ideology. First, as a researcher and disseminator of Marxism in its early stage in China, based on the actual situation

---

[1] Li Da was an 'advanced intellectual' who spread Marxism in the early 20th century, and one of the main initiators and leaders of the Communist Party of China (CPC) at its early stage. From 1913 to 1920, he went to study in Japan and actively participated in the establishment of CPC. Later he withdrew due to his disagreement with Chen Duxiu. In 1922, invited by Mao Zedong, he went to teach in the Self-study College of Hu Nan Province, systematically teaching historical materialism, and became the chief editor of the journal *New Era*. During the 1920s and 1930s, he taught in many universities in China, for instance, Pekin University. He established bookstores and publishing houses, and translated a great number of works on Marxism (including works of scholars from the Soviet Union, Germany, Japan, etc.). After 1949 (as arranged by Mao Zedong, he joined the CPC again), he taught at Wuhan University and participated in the theoretical study of Marxism philosophy.

of China in the first half of the 20ᵗʰ century in interpreting Marx's concept of ideology and with the practical need of finding the route of China's national liberation and revolution, Li Da described the main attributes of Marx's concept of ideology, provided the basic definition of the concept and creatively expanded the study on its theoretical connotation and practical significance. Second, Li Da's sinicized interpretation of Marx's concept of ideology was mainly based on the translation and introduction of foreign theoretical works relevant to Marxism, especially the Marxist textbook of the former Soviet Union, and was finished through the writing of philosophy textbooks and the interpretation of works by political leaders with his fellow researchers, such as Ai Siqi, etc., at home. Third, Li Da placed the study of ideology under the framework of historical materialism and made a special description and specific analysis of the basic attribute and main form of ideology. Even though this interpretation did not establish a complete and systematic theoretical system of ideology, a sinicized interpretation[2] of Marx's concept of ideology in its early stage in China has profoundly influenced the usage and understanding of the concept of ideology in later academic study and writing, as well as the compilation of philosophy textbooks with its explicit stance and unique style.

The Process of Li Da's Interpretation of Marx's Concept of Ideology

In general, Li Da's use and interpretation of Marx's concept of ideology could be divided into three historical phases: The *Contemporary Sociology* phase in the 1920s, *The Outline of Sociology* phase in 1930s, and the interpretation phase of Mao Zedong's "On Practice" and "On Contradiction" after the 1940s. In the two former phases before 1949, stimulated by the political mission of saving the nation and finding the path for a practical social revolution, Li Da started with the interpretation and introduction of foreign works (especially from the former Soviet Union) concerning Marxist theories. He finished his interpretation of Marx's concept of ideology through writing and compiling textbooks of Marxist philosophy. In the third phase after 1949, Li Da took into account the actual background of Chinese culture, consulted the main views and basic thoughts of his fellow researchers at home and used the concept of ideology to analyze and appraise the phenomena and issues concerning ideology through the interpretation of works concerning Marxism, especially Mao Zedong's representative writings.

---

[2] This interpretation is to some extent similar to the textbook system of the former Soviet Union.

In the first phase during the 1920s, Li Da's interpretation of Marx's concept of ideology was mainly demonstrated in his book *Contemporary Sociology* published in 1926. In its third chapter, "Social Construction," Li Da not only explicitly used the concept of "ideology" but also made a primary description of the basic attribute of this concept in the form of the superstructure attribute of spiritual relation and the class attribute of social awareness as class awareness.

> The base of society is economic relations, while superstructure is politics, legal systems, and ideology. Once the productive force changes, the economic relations would change, and thus politics, legal systems, and ideology must be altered.[3]

Here, ideology is understood as a kind of social relation or, more directly, a human correlation system. That is because for Li Da, people, community, and society constitute the three basic elements of human correlation with two different kinds of relations through overlapping and interaction, i.e., material relation and spiritual relation, of which the latter refers to "politics, law, science, art, ethics, religion, philosophy, etc."[4] This indicates that from the perspective of social essentialism, ideologies are represented in the form of spiritual relations in human society, of which they are "the superstructure."[5] Li Da's conclusion is "The superstructure of society in terms of politics and law and its ideologies are all established on the base of economic relations and in turn help maintain the latter."[6] Therefore, the basic attribute of ideology is a kind of spiritual relation, and its social function is the superstructure of a certain society. As the spiritual superstructure, its specific function is reflected in maintaining economic relations.

Guided by this conclusion, Li Da primarily analyzed the respective social functions of politics, law, science, art, ethics, religion and philosophy as the superstructure of ideology and their relations with social economic foundation. He investigated the origin of these forms of ideology and pointed out that

> in ancient society, the productive force is at a low level and economic relations between people are thus simple. So-called cultural products

---

[3] Li Da, *The Collection of Li Da's Writings*, Vol. 1 (Beijing: Renmin Press, 1980), 244.

[4] Ibid., 244.

[5] Ibid., 245.

[6] Ibid., 246.

and social institutions are contained in the integrated common habits of life. What civilized people called politics, legal system, ethics, religion, science, art and philosophy are all derived from common habits.[7]

From this we can see that the appearance of ideology is the result of the development and evolution of human social awareness -- it is a transition from the "common habits of life" of classless society to the "class awareness" of class society. Li Da referred to the former as the "safe" historical formation of social awareness and the latter as "deformed" historical formation. Social reforms, especially political reforms, would inevitably involve the reform of the ideological superstructure, even though "social reforms can only be judged by the reform on social materials rather than by social awareness at that time." That is because after social reform, the new class "must, according to its new thought, build new political and legal systems to transform economic organization and meanwhile establish new ideologies to alter the whole superstructure of old society."[8]

When discussing ideology from the perspective of the relation forms of horizontal social structure, Li Da used "superstructure" concepts such as "spiritual relation" or philosophy to define the meaning of ideology. When he turned to the vertical perspective of general sociological analysis, he used "social awareness" to indicate ideology.[9] As he pointed out, social awareness was a lasting and important subject in sociology, even though scholars failed to reach agreement. So-called social awareness is a synthesized state of all kinds of human awareness. If "it is the complexity and intertwining of various economic relations that constitute the base of society," then "it is the complexity and intertwining of all kinds of awareness that constitute social awareness."[10] He argued that an awareness could be called "social awareness" only when it was suited for the economic relations of a certain society to maintain society. Here social awareness refers to "spiritual relation" or "superstructure" mentioned above, i.e., "ideology." In ancient or classless society, social awareness (i.e., ideology) appeared as "the common awareness of all individuals" in terms of "common habits of life popular in society," and when it comes to class society, "it could not represent the social awareness of all members in society, but is only class awareness."[11] In class society, social

---

[7] Ibid., 266.
[8] Ibid., 269.
[9] Chapter 9 of *Contemporary Sociology* is titled with "Social awareness."
[10] Li Da, *The Collection of Li Da's Writings*, Vol. 1, 288.
[11] Ibid., 289.

awareness is mainly represented as the awareness of the ruling class, because "the popular social awareness is definitely not the common awareness for all individuals." Then "so-called social awareness becomes the awareness that everyone has to obey in order to procure the necessities of life." This dominant position enables ideology to maintain the stable function of a social system. This endows ideology with a class attribute, which is the second important attribute of ideology after the analysis of its "spiritual relations" as superstructure.

In this sense, Li Da pointed out that "the proletariat's social awareness is socialism," and "as established on the material foundation of society is Marxian socialism."[12] Clearly, the point is, first, the reform of ideology is subordinate to the reform of the economic base; second, ideology could function as spiritual culture, and it has a class attribute in class society. In sum, in *Contemporary Sociology,* Li Da not only used the concept of ideology but also investigated the specific representing forms, origin, formation reason, development status and social function of ideology through its analysis in forms of basic attributes like "spiritual relation," "superstructure," "class awareness" and "social awareness."

In the second stage during the 1930s, Li Da began to provide a specific definition for the concept of ideology in his book *The Outline of Sociology*,[13] which was published in 1935[14] and was regarded as the first philosophy textbook written with a Chinese theory: "ideology as a form of social awareness."[15] This is the definition of ideology Li Da explicitly put forward in a specially allocated article entitled "The Ideology of Society." While ideology was mainly understood as a kind of spiritual relation in *Contemporary Sociology* in the 1920s, in *The Outline of Sociology*, ideology is understood from the angle of social awareness, which gradually gained confirmation and became Li Da's main understanding of Marx's concept of ideology, in spite of the fact that he had already made such an attempt in *Contemporary Sociology.*

---

[12] Ibid., 294, 369.

[13] Li Da's *The Outline of Economics* is also an important work in the study of Marxist political economics.

[14] This book was first printed by the Legal and Business College of Beiping University in 1935 and was published by Li Da's own Shanghai Bigengtang Books in May 1937 after some revision and replenishment. It was reprinted in 1940, republished by Xinhua Bookstore in 1948 and collected in *The Collection of Li Da's Writings* published by Renmin Press in 1981. In 2007, Wuhan University Press republished two volumes in separate editions according to the edition published by Renmin Press.

[15] Li Da, *The Outline of Sociology* (Wuhan: Wuhan University Press, 2007), 462.

Based on this definition, Li Da explored in detail the general concept of ideology and its development. In discussing the first point in his two papers "Ideology as a Superstructure" and "The General Characteristics of Ideology," Li Da explored the formation of ideology, the relation between social awareness and social being and the relative contrariety and class attribute of ideology. He claimed that "what we usually call social awareness or ideology to a special form,"

> So-called ideology is a form of social awareness and there is a dialectical correlation between form and content, which is not applicable to any social psychology without form. Similarly, there is no form of social psychology, i.e., ideology, without content.[16]

What Li Da tried to stress here is firstly the social attribute of ideology, which distinguishes ideology (social awareness) from individual awareness. He pointed out that ideology though "has no independent metaphysical noumenon and only exists in everyone's mind," it is not "simply a collection of individual awareness." As social awareness, ideology "exists as individual awareness," and on the other, "individual awareness becomes visible only when regarded as ideology (social awareness) ."[17]

Second, Li Da wanted to distinguish social psychology from ideology as social awareness. On the one hand, he objected to mixing the actual difference between the two due to their different degrees of systematizetion. On the other hand, he was against the "non-dialectical understanding of the cross correlation between psychology and ideology," for one "could not understand the unification between social psychology and ideology." For him, social psychology is content and ideology is form, and there is a dialectical cross-correlation between them, i.e., a "mutual process and development" without an obvious "deep gulf."[18] In discussing the general characteristics of ideology, Li Da elaborated the relative independence of ideology and its distortion in class society, which is a further step in understanding the basic attributes of ideology. He pointed out, "In human history, the society has experienced a series of development phases such as primitive society, ancient society, feudal society and modern society, with ideologies to suit each phase."

Even though we can "see the evolution of ideology" in history, its development "still depends on the development of social being." The "so-called independence of ideology's development is relative," for it "origin-

---

[16] Ibid., 462, 463.
[17] Ibid., 461.
[18] Ibid., 462, 463.

nates from the division between mental and material labor" and demonstrates a lack of synchrony with economic reforms in history.[19] In discussing the distortion of ideology, Li Da considered that "the nature of the distortion of so-called ideological thinking to some extent reflects the contradictory nature of the actuality of class." "In class society, all ideologies are endowed with class property." This is because "in class contradiction, the ruling class not only oppresses the ruled class in economy and politics but also in ideology,"[20] which becomes the weapon for class conflict. Thus, ideology is endowed with a fighting nature. Here, the emphasis on the relative independence and the distortion and combative nature of ideology in class society constitute a deeper exploration into the main attributes of ideology as spiritual superstructure and class social awareness. In discussing the second point, i.e., the development of ideology, Li Da divided its development history into three parts: pre-capitalist, capitalist society ideology and socialism. Among the three, the first one includes specifically primitive society, slave society and feudal society ideologies. Here, Li Da explored the origin of ideology in connection with the development of language, primitive totem worship, religion, philosophy, art and literature.

In studying capitalist ideology, he stressed its characteristics with "individualism" and "fetishism"; in terms of its specific form, Li Da added science, capitalist class law and ethics besides religion, philosophy, art and literature. This is using the concept of ideology in a broadest sense, for it not only expands the scope of ideology from class society to class-less primitive society in the history of the development of ideology, but also brings all products of human thinking in order to explore the basic forms of ideology. In the third stage after the 1940s (especially 1949), through the interpretation of Mao Zedong's "On Practice" and "On Contradiction," Li Da deepened the study on spiritual culture properties and class conflict attributes of ideology and the function in society as superstructure. During this period, Li Da mainly used concepts as "viewpoint," "(class) thought" and "thought system" to describe the concept of "ideology." For example, in *The Interpretation of "On Practice"* published in 1951, he pointed out that "society's viewpoints about politics, law, religion, art and philosophy and the political and legal systems to suit them are a superstructure confined by the base."[21] "In class society, opposite classes live respectively in certain class positions and with respective class

---

[19] Li Da, *The Outline of Sociology*, 470-471.

[20] Ibid., 471, 472, 473.

[21] Li Da, *The Collection of Li Da's Writings*, Vol. 4 (Beijing: Renmin Press, 1988), 44.

thought."[22] In addition, the relation between thought and reality could be generalized into three kinds: "thought could correctly guide practice," "thought could cooperate with practice," and "thought falls behind practice." However, "the transformation of thought" would "take a long time."[23] "Viewpoints" and "(class) thought" mentioned here both refer to "ideology."

In *The Interpretation of "On Contradiction"* published in 1952, Li Da again discussed ideology in the name of "thought system." As he said, "philosophy," as people's viewpoints about the universe and world, is "the thought system of people's understanding of the world, i.e., understanding natural and social phenomena, according to certain points of view." But "once created, it will run through the whole process of people's understanding of natural and social phenomena and define their relation with the world."[24] Marxist philosophy, i.e., the "materialist dialectics" created by Marx, "has a profound and broad economic, political, and ideological base." The ideological base refers to "English classical political economy," "English and French utopian socialism," and "German classical philosophy."[25] Obviously, ideology here refers to a thought and theory to a doctrine or system.

In sum, from the 1920s to the 1960s, Li Da made concentrated efforts to interpret Marx's concept of ideology through his series of discussions and statements. This interpretation process includes explicitly using the concept of ideology, describing its main attributes and providing its basic definition. This process also involves the origin, development and various specific forms of ideology and its significance in terms of theory and practice.

Li Da's Way of Interpreting Marx's Concept of Ideology

Li Da's interpretation of Marx's concept of ideology is accomplished mainly through the translation and introduction of major theoretical works (particularly the Marxist textbook of the former Soviet Union)[26] on Marx-

---

[22] Li Da, *The Collection of Li Da's Writings*, Vol. 4, 47.

[23] Ibid., 105, 106, 117.

[24] Ibid., 182.

[25] Ibid., 187, 188.

[26] In the 1930s, the philosophical textbook system of the former Soviet Union had exerted great influence on China, including not only Rushkoff's *Dialectical Materialism Textbook* (published in 1935) translated by Li Da and Lei Zhongjian, but also Mitin's *The New Outline of Philosophy* (published in 1936) translated by Ai Siqi and Zheng Yili and Mitin's *Dialectical Materialism and Historical Materialism* (published in 1936) translated by Shen Zhiyuan.

ism in foreign countries,[27] drawing on related arguments from his fellow researchers at home (especially Ai Siqi), and the interpretation and study of works by political leaders, especially Mao Zedong's "On Practice" and "On Contradiction." There is no clear division or a successive relation among the three ways of interpretation, for they overlap and together constitute the historical process of Li Da's interpretation of ideology. Nevertheless, each of the three ways does respectively play an important role in different phases.

First of all, these theoretical works provide a sociological perspective and a historical materialist analytical frame for Li Da's interpretation of Marx's concept of ideology. In Li Da's main works on ideology, *Contemporary Sociology* and *The Outline of Sociology*, the sociological perspective of his study on ideology is reflected not only in the titles but also in the content. To some extent, in the 1920s and 1930s, he basically carried out his explanation of the concept of ideology, its attributes and the definition based on the perspective of sociology. When Li Da defined Marx's ideology as "a form of social awareness" and discussed it mainly under the title of "social ideology," he was actually focusing on the social perspective of ideology. The formation process of this perspective is closely connected with the core theme of the period that concerned Li Da as an 'advanced intellectual' at that time (in the 1920s and 1930s). The theme was about whether China could use Marx's theory and how,[28] especially using his socialist theory to transform society and carry out social revolution, especially political reform.[29] What is more important is his emphasis on the social perspective of the concept of ideology as logically consistent with the emphasis on historical materialism.

As early as 1926 in *Contemporary Sociology*, Li Da began to explore the theory of social nature[30] from the perspective of historical materialism,

---

[27] Mainly including works of the second international theorists like Kautsky, Japanese researchers and scholars from the former Soviet Union.

[28] Actually, Li Da had provided a positive answer to this question in "Marxist Doctrine and China" published in 1923.

[29] In *Contemporary Sociology*, Li Da pointed out that "Social revolution could be divided into economic revolution and political revolution" and "economic revolution is the reform on social foundation and political revolution refers to the reform on the superstructure of society" (Li Da, *The Collection of Li Da's Writings*, Vol.1. 268.)

[30] In *Contemporary Sociology*, Li Da first used "social theory from the perspective of historical materialism" and then used "the social theory of historical materialism" in the revised edition, but both refer to "using historical materialism to illustrate the nature of society" (Li Da, *The Collection of Li Da's Writings*, Vol.1. 240.)

aiming at "using historical materialism in an attempt to transform social science."[31] This provides a basic logical framework for Li Da's concept of ideology, that is, to explore ideology within the frame of social nature and with historical materialism as the tool. To what do Li Da's so-called "society" and the social nature theory of historical materialism refer? In his opinion, "society is the combination of production relations which all people join in order to satisfy their desire."[32]

> The process of social life is the process of material production, which is totally under the control of production technique and productive force. During the process of material production, so called spiritual culture is derived from material productive relations and gets developed and transformed with the development and transformation of productive forces: the improvement of society is the improvement in productive force. This is the gist of the social nature theory of historical materialism.[33]

This research perspective was inherited and furthered developed in his *The Outline of Sociology* where the fifth chapter entitled "Social Ideology" discusses ideology systematically. Together with the third chapter "The Construction of Social Economy" and the fourth chapter "The Political Structure of Society," this constitutes the specific explanation of the second chapter "Historical Materialism Regarded as a Science." It is evident that in this book, Li Da was doing the same as he did in the 1920s' *Contemporary Sociology*, that is, placing ideology under the frame of historical materialism and engaging the perspective of sociology in the discussion.

Li Da's way of interpreting Marx's concept of ideology is not only relevant to his theoretical structure and practical objective at that time by using the theoretical exploration of social reform and especially the socialist revolution to accomplish his practical objective to save the country, but he also had a profound academic background. In a way, his form of interpreting, that is, placing the concept of ideology under the frame of sociology and using that to explain and apply Marxist philosophy's historical materialism, is closely connected with the interpretation tendency of foreign Marxists, especially in the Soviet Union.

---

[31] Li Da, *The Collection of Li Da's Writings*, Vol.1. 237.

[32] In the revised edition, Li Da pointed out that "Human community is built upon the combination of production relations, which is so called society."

[33] Li Da, *The Collection of Li Da's Writings*, Vol.1. 243.

As we all know, in the history of Marxism, in the 1920s and 1930s, there appeared in succession three ways of interpreting Marx's concept of ideology in "foreign countries" beyond China: the interpretation by the second international theorists such as Karl Kautsky and Georgi Plekhanov, the interpretation by Soviet Union scholars as Nikolai Bukharin, and the early interpretation of Western Marxism by György Lukács, Antonio Gramsci and Karl Korsch. These interpretations emphasize different aspects of Marxism: the second international focused more on the economic perspective, the Soviet Union scholars more on the political perspective and Western theorists more on cultural and ideological perspective. Together they provide a generally consistent interpretation, that is, socialgy for interpretation and historical materialism as its framework. With the evolution of society as the vertical clue and historical materialism as the main method, all these interpretations attempt to place ideology under the historical perspective of social development. As Kautsky pointed out in his famous book *The Historical Outlook of Materialism* (1927),

> the historical outlook of materialism on the one hand is based on admitting the unity of natural and social phenomena and on the other points out the uniqueness of the development of society among the universality of world development[34]

He believed that understanding and spreading the historical outlook of materialism "has become more than ever an important condition for obtaining the fruitful result of socialism."[35] Kautsky focused on such issues as "willpower and modes of production," "the base and superstructure" and "Christianity and revolution." He placed the base, "economy and natural science," under "Marx's *Preface*" and focused on the discussion of its concept of ideology. Plekhanov also put the discussion of ideology in the frame of historical materialism and pointed out that to explain the development of art, religion, philosophy and other forms of ideology from the perspective of historical materialism means strongly to confirm materialism by applying it to history. Thus, ideology became a theory or system about society and was regarded as an important dimension in the study of social development of history and a theoretical weapon with regard to reality.

---

[34] The original contains two volumes, while the translation is divided into six volumes.

[35] Karl Kautsky, *Historical Materialism*, Vol.1, the Editorial Department of *Philosophical Study*, trans. (Shanghai: Shanghai People Press, 1964), 3, 10.

The interpretation of ideology by the second international theorists, especially by Plekhanov from a sociological perspective, deeply influenced the scholastic circles in the Soviet Union. For instance, Bukharin argued that historical materialism is the sociology of Marxism, "the working class has their own proletarian sociology, whose name is historical materialism"[36]and ideology is the tool of class society transformation. Lukács, Gramsci and Korsch also regarded Marxism as a sociological theory and hence began their exploration of ideology as self-conscious proletarian "class awareness" and "leadership" in civil society. Thus, international academic circles, especially Plekhanov's and Bukharin's interpretations of Marx's concept of ideology, directly influenced the scholastic circles in the Soviet Union in the 1920s,

> when in the school and theoretical works in the Soviet Union historical materialism was usually regarded as the general theoretical basis of Marxism. Sociological issues were prominent at that time because life and conditions gave prime importance to issues concerning social being and social awareness.[37]

The concept of historical materialism always took priority over the concept of dialectical materialism as writers and teachers at that time were influenced by the works of the second international period." As a result, "in some textbooks some philosophical issues were completely subordinate to sociology, while in other books, sociology was always placed before other philosophical issues."[38]

In the 1930s, this theoretical trend changed. During this period, Leninism was seen as the new phase of the development of Marxism and issues concerning social revolution and development emerged. Under this background the ideology issue was discussed. As a result, historical materialism as the basic frame of ideology study was not changed, but because of the emphasis on dialectical materialism in the implementation of theory, its special place in methodology seemed to be shaken and was even re-

---

[36] Nikolai Bukharin, *Historical Materialism Theory*, see *Marxist Philosophy in the Vision of Contemporary Scholars: Scholars from the Former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe*, Vol. I, Yuan Guiren and Yang Geng, eds. (Beijing: Beijing Normal University Press, 2008), 65.

[37] Besides Bukharin, other scholars participating in the study of historical materialism during this period includes В.В. Адоратский, Mitin, Федор Васильевич Константинов, Rasumovsky, etc. Most of them had participated in or supported the compiling and writing of works or textbooks on historical materialism.

[38] *The History of Philosophy in the Soviet Union*, В·Е· Евграфов, ed. and Jia Zelin, trans. (Beijing: The Commercial Press, 1998), 112-113.

garded as another edition of the dialectical materialism in social and historical areas. The position of the concept of ideology in the Marxist philosophical system and especially textbook system seemed to be lowered. The function of Marxism and Leninism as the superstructure of the proletariat became prominent in the process of social revolution and construction. Therefore, the sociological dimension of the study of ideology took on great importance. The previous purely sociological dimension advocated by Plekhanov and Bukharin became the target of criticism of Deborin's dialectical school because of the mechanist trend. It was not until 1938 that a Stalin-style textbook system was officially established with "dialectical materialism and historical materialism" at its center.

The general research methodology and trend of foreign Marxism, especially the Marxist textbook of the Soviet Union in studying the concept of ideology between the 1920s and 1930s would inevitably influence Li Da. As an 'advanced intellectual' who mastered many languages, he translated foreign theoretical works and textbooks on Marx and Marxism. While *Contemporary Sociology* written in the 1920s discussed ideology as superstructure in social structure more from the social perspective of social evolutionism,[39] *The Outline of Sociology* written in the 1930s showed that Li Da was influenced by the scholars of Soviet Union while but maintaining his own characteristics. This is demonstrated not only in the system and methodology of the arrangement of the textbook, but also in the specific definition and understanding of the concept of ideology. Li Da began the book with the discussion of "materialist dialectics" and then "historical materialism." He focused on the study of ideology when discussing historical materialism, as had the Soviet Union's textbook system. This arrangement mainly regards historical materialism as the methodological foundation of research on the concept of ideology.

Li Da criticized Plekhanov and Bukharin for their mechanistic understanding of ideology and opposed regarding ideology as a kind of social psychology: "Plekhanov, in the first place, biologized the concept of social psychology considerably and thought in a naturalistic way; secondly, he understood the relation between psychology and ideology undialectically"…."In Bukharin's thought, everything got simplified mechanical-

---

[39] During this period, Li Da specifically wrote on "the theory of social evolution." Some scholars pointed out that social evolutionism was the first sinicized Marxist theory (see Shen Jigang's "Social Evolutionism: the first sinicized theory of Marxist philosophy," in *Philosophy Studies*, [2008], 8.) This indicates that in China Li Da was not the only person to be influenced by foreign Marxism. In other words, Li Da's thought represented the general theoretical trend among Chinese advanced intellectuals at that time.

ly, and ideology was transformed into a crystaline structure of social psychology. He didn't understand the unity between social psychology and ideology." In his mind, all of these understandings were "wrong."[40]

Obviously, like the Soviet Union's scholars especially after the 1930s, Li Da emphasized the importance of dialectics[41] in understanding the concept of ideology; yet he did not simply copy what the Soviet Union's scholars. Rather he added his own unique understanding. He did not strictly follow the "dualist" mode of interpretation of dialectical and historical materialism; instead he titled his chapters respectively as "The Politics of Society," "Economy" and "Ideology," which are the third, fourth and fifth chapters of *The Outline of Sociology*, standing side by side with "Dialectics Materialism" and "Historical Materialism as a Science." Here we can see that Li Da retained the sociological perspective and his way of interpreting historical materialism, although this way paid more attention to dialectics.

In sum, foreign Marxism, especially the textbook system of the Soviet Union between the 1920s and 1930s, exerted enormous influence over Li Da's interpretation of Marx's concept of ideology and thus constituted an important mode of interpretation in Li Da's ideological theory. Also the study of his fellow researchers at home at that time began to influence Li Da's understanding of Marx's concept of ideology and thus constituted Li Da's second major way of interpreting Marx's concept of ideology.

The theoretical trend in the international academic circle of Marxism during the 1920s and 1930s had direct influence opon the emerging academic circle of Marxism in China; this mainly reflected in Chinese 'advanced intellectuals' who began to accept Marxism as a kind of social evolutionism, a socialistic doctrine and social revolution and development theory. This trend would easily make people regard Marxism as a primarily thought weapon for revolution and liberation. As ideology was combined with movements of social class and activities of political parties, this understanding of the class and revolution attributes of ideology was accomplished more on the practical than the theoretical level. In this sense, the ambiguity of the interpretive frame of the definition of Marx's concept of ideology after the 1930s in the Soviet Union was concerned with whether the discussion of ideology should be carried out in terms of dialectical materialism or historical materialism. Since the latter frame was adopted, the issue was focused on how to reflect concerns of the so-

---

[40] Li Da, *The Outline of Sociology*, 462, 463.

[41] During this period, Li Da finished the translation of the textbook *The Outline of Dialectical Materialism* by Soviet scholars such as Rushkoff, etc.

cial dimensions of evolution, revolution and development, as well as problems of the increasing importance of ideology in political practice and academic and theoretical studies. These issues added much difficulty to later Marxist scholars' studies in the field of ideology, as was demonstrated most obviously in the ambiguity of the definition of ideology and the inconsistencies in its application.

From the perspective of the usage of ideology, in the 1920s and 1930s Lu Zhenyu was already influenced by Li Da in his works on the history of Chinese political thought, which explored the developmental status quo of Chinese ideology from a historical materialist perspective and formally used the word "ideology." But that is hardly a usage of ideology from the perspective of Marxist philosophy. Other relevant scholars mostly discussed ideology implicitly[42] in the name of new culture, new thought or democracy, freedom or Marxism, especially socialism. In the middle of 1930s,[43] Li Da was in charge of translating Rushkoff's *Textbook of Dialectical Materialism*, in which he transformed "ideology" into "Yi-De-Wo-Luo-Ji,"[44] though he occasionally used the word "ideology."[45] As seen from the content, in the introduction, "the Partisanship of Philosophy," and the first chapter, "Materialism and Ideology,"[46] the word "ideology" appears more frequently. From this we can see that the emphasis on the class attribute and belligerence of ideology is what Li Da could achieve in understanding this terminology at this stage, as was demonstrated in his later *Outline of Sociology*. In translations, probably limited by the original work, Li Da mainly discussed philosophical ideology. In his own works, he expanded the discussion of specific philosophical ideology to the discussion of general ideology (under the topic "social ideolo-

---

[42] That is, to actually discuss problems relevant to the concept of ideology in the absence of a terminology for ideology.

[43] Before June, 1935.

[44] This is transliteration (Li Da was a master of many foreign languages such as Japanese, Russian, English, etc.) See the Chinese version (published by Bigengtang Bookstore), 10, 12, 13, 17 (2), 25, 48, 51, 77, 95, 97, 100, 108, 119, 121, 126, 128, 130.

[45] See the Chinese version (published by Bigengtang Bookstore), 55, 57, 119, 128.

[46] It is worth noting that here he translated "idealism" or "philosophy of idealism" into "philosophy of ideology," which is different from later scholars' translating "ideology" into "philosophy of ideology." In fact, other scholars at that time like Ai Siqi also used "philosophy of ideology" to refer to "idealism," as Ai Siqi did in the article, "The Gist of Philosophy of Ideology," published in 1935 and in the discussion over the opposition between materialism and philosophy of ideology in *Popular Philosophy* published in 1936.

gy"). But later, more under the influence of Ai Siqi, Li Da used concepts like "view," "(class) thought," "thought system," etc., to describe the concept of ideology.

Ai Siqi's *Popular Philosophy* divided Marxist philosophy into three parts: ontology (world outlook), epistemology and methodology. Ai Siqi decomposed ideology into "philosophical thought," "daily feelings" and "world outlook." For him, ideology was equivalent to ideological form, which is also "ideology" for some people. There is no difference between the meaning of the two words. "It includes literature, philosophy, science, religion, ethics, law, etc. In a word, it is the opposite of the material organization of society (like economic organization, political organization, military organization, and so on)."[47] Ideology "not only represents the common awareness of a group, but also pushes the group forward."[48] This is the function of ideology. Ai Siqi also pointed out that, in an "emergency period" of revolution and war, feudalism and capitalism, ideologies are dangerous and must be transformed. Ai Siqi's popular interpretation of the concept of ideology influenced Li Da's interpretation. First, under Ai Siqi's influence, Li Da abandoned the use of the transliteration for "Yi-De-Wo-Luo-Ji" and gradually began to use "ideological form," which was used by Ai Siqi, for it was easier for Chinese people to understand in reference to ideology.[49] Second, influenced by Ai Siqi and other people's emphasis on ideology in the political field, Li Da changed his way of interpreting and understanding the concept of ideology from previously compiling and writing philosophy textbooks to interpreting contemporary Chinese classics rather than foreign works on Marxism. This constituted his third way of studying ideology. This change was obviously in the third phase of the evolution of Li Da's ideological theory, between the 1940s and 1960s.

The theme of this period was to explore a path that would lead socialist revolution smoothly to socialist construction. As the class ideology of the proletariat and its vanguard, the Communist Party of China, Marxism became the dominant ideology of Chinese socialist revolution after conquering Chinese feudal traditional ideology, capitalist ideology and other non-Marxist ideologies. Marxism officially became the national leading ideology representing the will of the country after the founding of New China. In the lecture, "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People" delivered in 1957, Mao Zedong pointed out explicitly that

---

[47] Ai Siqi, *All of Ai Siqi's Writings*, Vol. 2 (Beijing: Renmin Press, 2006), 368.
[48] Ibid., 370, 371.
[49] It is particularly worth mentioning that they both used "philosophy of ideology" to refer to "idealism."

Chinese ideology was "socialist ideology under the guidance of Marxism and Leninism."[50] This indicated that the official ideology under Mao Zedong was endowed with basic standards. Thus, it became urgent to oppose any non-socialist ideology including feudalism and capitalism at that time and even to replace the development of society and economy as the priority.[51] Since then, how to maintain the dominant position of leading ideology in such areas as philosophy, religion, ethics, literature and art became the main task of ideological theory. This directly influenced academic circles of educators and scholars in which Li Da and Ai Siqi served as representatives. On the one hand, they continued to interpret the philosophical ideology of Marxism and Leninism and their significance in practice; on the other hand, they advocated and emphasized the significance of Mao Zedong thoughts as the new form and phase of Marxism in China. The best example is Li Da's interpretation of Mao Zedong's "On Practice" and "On Contradiction" during this period. As mentioned above, he could have already used this terminology "ideology," but probably due to the sensitiveness of ideology in practice, similar to Ai Siqi, Li Da rather used such concepts as "view" or "thought," "ideological form" or "ideological system," etc., more frequently to refer to and discuss ideology.

Li Da's three ways of interpreting Marx's concept of ideology emerged concurrently in the three historical phases of the formation of the concept of ideology. The only difference was that in the first phase of the 1920s, the influence of foreign Marxism, especially the Soviet Union's textbook system, was more prominent. In the second phase of the 1930s, he was influenced more by his fellow researchers, especially Ai Siqi, at home. In the third phase of the 1940s and especially after 1949, the interpretation of the works by Mao Zedong localizing Marxism in China gradually became the third important way of interpreting Marx's concept of ideology for Li Da.

The Significance of Li Da's Interpretation

On the whole, Li Da's interpretation of Marx's concept of ideology was accomplished through compiling and writing textbooks and through translating and interpreting classics, mainly from a sociological perspective within the framework of historical materialism. This kind of Li Da's interpretation of ideology profoundly influenced contemporary study of

---

[50] Mao Zedong, *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung* (II) (Beijing: Renmin Press, 1986), 768.

[51] Scholars used to refer to the improper doings as "the generalization of ideology."

the concept of ideology and theory in China. After Li Da, Chinese academic circles began to construct their understanding of Marx's concept of ideology through translating and introducing foreign works on Marxist philosophy and compiling and writing their own textbooks.

After 1949, a series of Marx's classics, especially the first and second Chinese versions of *Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels*, *The Selected Works of Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels*, *The Collected Works of Lenin*, and *The Selected Works of Lenin*, were compiled and published one after another.[52] In 1954, the 14th chapter of F.V. Konstantinov's *Historical Materialism* and "Social Awareness and Its Forms" were translated and published by the Renmin University of China. After *The Outline of Sociology*, Chinese scholars began to compile and write philosophical textbooks suitable for the Chinese academic institutions in higher education institutes. For example, in 1961, entrusted by Mao Zedong, Li Da as the chief editor supervised the publication of *The Outline of Marxist Philosophy*.[53] In the same year, Ai Siqi was in charge of the editing of *Dialectical Materialism and Historical Materialism* by the Publicity Department of the CPC Central Committee and the Ministry of Higher Education. In the early 1990s, the first and second volumes of *Dialectical Materialism and Historical Materialism*, compiled by Xiao Qian and Li Xiulin, were published by the Renmin University of China. In the new century, stimulated by the study and construction project of Marxism theory more new Marxist textbooks emerge.

Almost all problems and phenomena concerning ideology are discussed within the framework of historical materialism framework as the important component of Marxism. The sociological perspective adopted distinctively by Li Da was neglected in the Soviet Union due to the two 'isms', dialectical materialism and historical materialism, but dialectical materialism actually had priority. Meanwhile, due to the imbalance between ideological practice and theoretical studies, in the translations of works on Marxism, the term "ideology" was not consistent. Sometimes,

---

[52] Even though it was not completely translated directly from German or English originals but mainly from Russian, it provided important first-hand materials for the study of Marxist philosophy, esp. ideological theory. In the first edition of *Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels,* "ideology" was translated in all texts except that of the *German Ideology*, while in *The Collected Works of Lenin*, this word was mostly translated as "thought system."

[53] This book failed to be completed because of Li Da's death in 1966. After 1978, the first volume was revised by his students and assistants and published as *The Textbook for Dialectical Materialism* by Renmin Press.

it appeared as "fancy,"[54] sometimes as "thought system," or just as "ideology." Chinese textbooks and academic works used "ideological forms," "thought system," or "ideology." The main content of ideology was stipulated as views about politics and law, ethics, religion, art and philosophy, while "science" as advocated by Li Da was excluded. Ideological concepts and theory were mostly discussed in chapters relevant to "economic foundation and superstructure" and "social awareness" in Marxist historical materialism. The class and the political attributes of ideology were consistently stressed.

In sum, since the late 1970s, the evolutionary line of Marxist ideological theory in China was that: the usage of the concept of ideology was as diverse as before, but gradually several terminologies "Ideological forms" and "thought system" were relatively fixed to refer to it. The construction of ideological theory was mainly deepened and expanded on the basis of historical materialism, especially its "economic foundation and superstructure." The study of ideological theory was often replaced by the study of such specific areas as politics and legal thought, ethics, art, religion and economic structural relations. Ideological practice was the highlight of this period -- the position of Marxism, especially Mao Zedong's thoughts, as the mainstream ideology in Chinese socialism was established politically, while its implementation in social politics, economy and culture was still at a tentative stage. The relationship between ideology as the superstructure and social economic structure as the base was the crux of the Chinese people at that time. The task of solving this issue was left to the Marxist academic circle of China. The stormy discussion on the criterion of truth held in late 1970s and the third Plenary Session of the eleventh Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party held in 1978 both showed that the core subject of the period was the socialist construction with Chinese characteristics for economic reform and opening to the world. In such a circumstance, the development of ideological theory entered a new phase. On the one hand, in the field of political thought, in terms of socialist development theories Deng Xiaoping's Theory, the Important Thought of Three Representatives and the Scientific Concept of Development as the core gradually became the guidelines for the Chinese people to face challenges and to realize their dreams of turning China into a prosperous country. On the other hand, in the field of academic studies, the study of the classics of Marxism was flourishing unprecedentedly. This was reflected in the successive publications of the second Chinese version of *Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels*, *The Selected Works of*

---

[54] In the dictionary, "philosophy of ideology," which was referred to as idealism before, was also used to refer to ideology in English.

Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels, *The Collected Works of Lenin* and *The Selected Works of Lenin*, as well as the compilation and revision of all kinds of Marxist textbooks and the publications of a great number of academic works on Marxist thought.

Under this background people began to realize that the study of ideological theories, especially to clarify basic theories, should be reinforced; and that such studies should pay attention to the practical problems[55] emerging from the construction of ideology in reality. The former is the base and theoretical foundation for the latter to be deepened and expanded. Therefore, today, when we discuss the contemporary significance of Li Da's interpretation of Marx's concept of ideology, we understand that the most prominent significance probably is the task of studying basic theories, that is, to make a convincing clarification of Marx's concept of ideology. Marxist academic circles both at home and abroad mostly explored Marx's concept of ideology within the framework of historical materialism, which is closely connected to Marx and Engel's basic understanding and discussion of the concept of ideology. According to existing texts, we learned that it was in Marx's doctoral dissertation that he clearly used the concept of ideology for the first time. After that, Marx gradually formed his own ideological theory in a series of manuscripts, notes, letters, comments and books, such as *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* and its introduction, *The German Ideology, The 18th Brumaire of Louis Napoleon*, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, Preface* (The 1859 Preface), *Capital*, etc. In the process of construction of his theory, Marx mainly used critique as the tool and used a set of concepts such as "illusion," "hypothesis," "reverse" and "slogan and clothes for war" to demonstrate the rich connotation and practical significance of concept of ideology.[56] In these texts Marx always used the concept of ideology when discussing the basic principle of historical materialism. That was reflected in *The German Ideology* and *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, Preface* (The 1859 Preface), in which he referred to politics, law, religion, art, philosophy, etc., as "forms of ideology" and treated them as "superstructure" corresponding to "the modes of material production" as the base. As Marx said, "law, politics, religion, art and philosophy, in a word, forms of ideology" were "forms of social awareness"

---

[55] The former one is usually regarded as the academic path of study while the latter as a popular or folk path. As the dominant ideology and guidance in society, Marxist theoretical system is regarded as the official or government path.

[56] For more information about the development history of Marx's concept of ideology see Zhang Xiuqin's "The Three Phases of the Development of Marxist Ideological Theory," in *Marxism and Reality* (2008), 5.

based upon the "realistic foundation" that functioned as "the summation of productive relations" and "constituted the economic structure of society" as "the superstore of law and politics."[57]

This statement, on the one hand, makes a theoretical point that the concept of ideology and theory are subordinate to the basic principle of historical materialism but actually constitute an important part of the latter. Particularly, it points out that ideology should be discussed in the binary oppositional structure of "economic base and superstructure" as described in historical materialism about social structure. On the other hand, the diversity of Marx's usage of terminology is the reason that caused the ambiguity and uncertainty we face when interpreting his concept of ideology. More importantly, both in *The German Ideology* that concentrates on ideology and in *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, Preface* (The 1859 Preface), Marx used the concept of ideology based upon its two levels of meaning. First, in general, ideology is the form of awareness of a certain society.[58] Thus, it is endowed with the general attributes of social awareness. Marx pointed in particular to its components or attributes such as emotion, imagination, thought mode, views of life, etc. Second, from the angle of specific aspects or axiology, ideology could function as the superstructure of a certain society. As a kind of ideological system, it is reflected in such fundamental areas as politics and legal thought, philosophy, art, ethics, religion, etc., in different degrees. The first concept of ideology was regarded as a kind of "illusion" or "false awareness," because of the relevant wording of Engels' in one of his letters to Merlin in 1893.[59] The second concept of ideology is

---

[57] *Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels*, Vol.2. (2nd edition) (Beijing: Renmin Press, 1995), 33, 32.

[58] According to Yu Wujin, Marx used the term "ideological form" several times in his doctoral dissertation and "The Introduction to *The Criticism of Hegel's Law Philosophy*," e.g. "direct ideological form," "external ideological form," "essential ideological form," "political ideological form," etc. See Yu Wujin's *About Ideology* (Shanghai: Shanghai People's Press, 1993), 62.

[59] In this letter, Engels said, "Ideology is the process accomplished by the so-called thinker consciously but with false awareness. The real motivation behind this is unknown to him/her. Otherwise, it would not be called an ideological process. Therefore, he/she imagined a false or superficial motivation. Since it is a thinking process, its content and form are both derived from pure thought -- whether it is from his/her own thought or his/her predecessors'. He/she only deals with thought and simply believes that this material is derived from thought and doesn't study any other origins distant from and not subordinate to thought." See *Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels*, Vol. 4, (2nd edition) (Beijing: Renmin Press, 1995), 501.

the basis of the phrases "ideological superstructure" or "the superstructure of ideological forms" which are familiar to us.[60]

Today, the international Marxist academic research circles seem to get used to exploring Marx's concept of ideology and theory from the two perspectives. If the first is overstressed, then Marx's concept of ideology would tend to be understood as a critical or negative concept; if the second is emphasized, the positive aspect of ideology would become prominent based on the significance of social structures. That is also the reason why the former is more regarded as an ideology on the level of philosophy or pure academic theory while the latter is endowed more with the attributes related to sociology or practice. Probably, only when the two concepts of ideologies break the improperly defined line between them and realize true dialectical unity could we really understand Marx's concept of ideology and make a correct interpretation. Of course, this interpretation would not be obtained through simply going back to Marx's or Engels' understanding, but should be made in combination with the new problems and needs emerging in today's world.

---

[60] Actually, Marx explicitly originated "ideologie" for the first time in his doctoral dissertation; in *The German Ideology* that marked the completion of his concept and theory of ideology, he used not only "ideologischenüerbau" but also "idealistischen Superstruktur." In the Chinese version, the former was translated into "about thought." As mentioned above, the word "ideology" in Marx's doctoral dissertation was translated into "fancy." Similarly, when translating the works of classic Marxist writers, for instance, Marx, Engels and Lenin, there is a big gap in different Chinese translations of "ideology." Besides the translations mentioned above, the word was also translated to "thought system" ("general thought"), "ideological," "ideological system" or "ideological form," etc.

8.

Reflections on György Lukács' Theory of Totality from the Perspective of Ernst Bloch's Utopian Philosophy

Zhang Shuangli

György Lukács' theory of totality is of vital importance both to his own thought and to the consequent development of Western Marxism. In his early works written before his conversion to Marxism, the craving for totality was already present.[1] In his book, *History and Class Consciousness*, this craving is both clearly articulated and taken as the center of the whole book. The conception of totality is revived as the kernel of both Hegel's and Marx's methodology. Orthodox Marxism is interpreted by Lukács as nothing other than the historical dialectic with the conception of totality as its core. What is more, the craving for totality is never a pure theoretical issue but the standpoint of the proletariat and the transformation of this reified world. Because of this, the craving for totality pervades the later development of Lukács thought. It is his later discussion of realism and, more importantly, with his theory of totality, especially as articulated in *History and Class Consciousness*, that it has become the core of the history of the development of Western Marxism. On the theoretical level, this understanding is vital to later Western Marxist interpretations of both the metaphysical tradition and Marx's philosophy. On the practical level, it is innate in both their critique of the modern world and their strivings for the way out. In this sense, to understand György Lukács' theory of totality correctly is a great help in finding the right interpretation of the whole tradition of Western Marxism.

On the Traditional Interpretation of György Lukács' Theory of Totality

For a long time, it has been widely held that Lukács' theory of totality is Hegelian and because of this, his *History and Class Consciousness* has opened the way of Hegelian Marxism, which has constituted the main part of Western Marxism. Two important reasons support this viewpoint. One is that Western Marxism originated from the early Western Marxists'

---

[1] Martin Jay, *Marxism and Totality* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984), 81-102; John E. Grumley, *History and Totality* (London: Routledge, 1989), 97-127.

reflections on the experience of the defeats of the proletariat revolutions in the early 20th century. The other is clearly stated in *History and Class Consciousness*. I am going to analyze these two respectively to show that neither of them is sufficient.

1. It is true that the experience of the defeats of the proletariat revolutions in the European world in the 1920s is one important reason for the forming of Western Marxism. Not only Lukács' thought but that of Korsch and Gramsci can be considered to be the serious response to this miserable experience. However, what is important is that we cannot take this historical experience as the only reason for the origination of Western Marxism and stop here to understand the whole theory of Western Marxism. Unfortunately, many people do think in such a manner. Thus, it would be necessary that Lukács' thought in *History and Class Consciousness* was taken as totally Hegelian, or, to be accurate, as totally inside the logic of classical German philosophy. The reason for this is easy to understand. If we consider Western Marxism only the response to the historical experience of the defeats of the proletariat revolutions, we will simply oppose Western Marxism to the so-called "official Marxism" of the second international and the third international and think that the main task of Western Marxism is to criticize "orthodox Marxism." Many people think that Western Marxism has pointed out that the main reason for the defeats of the proletariat revolutions lies in the fact that the "official Marxism" has not recognized the important function of consciousness in the proletariat revolution. In other words, the main reason for the defeats lies in the lack of revolutionary consciousness, which is attributed to the theoretical mistakes of "official Marxism." Thus, the great contribution of Western Marxism is only taken as its critique of "official Marxism."

This critique could be accomplished if only they reached the level of the classical German philosophy because these early Western Marxists are very clear that "official Marxism" is at most at the level of modern vulgar materialism. Lukács expressed this through his critique of Engels.[2] Korsch pointed out that "Russian Marxism" is a kind of simple materialism which insists on the division between reality and consciousness.[3] This is also true of the Marxism of the second international, which shared the same philosophical principle. Gramsci saw "official Marxism" as a

---

[2] György Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, Rodney Livingstone, trans. (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1971), 131-133.
[3] Karl Korsch, *Marxism and Philosophy*, Fred Halliday, trans. (New York: NLB, 1970), 87.

philosophy of common sense, which is not a science but a fetishism.[4] It is just that classical German philosophy transcended this simple division between reality and consciousness and accomplished by its development of the principle of activity. Lukács spoke about this clearly in the passage titled "*the Antinomies of Bourgeois Thought*": ever since Kant, classical German philosophy has been trying to understand the world as the product of the rational subject. This is true not only to the world of phenomena as showed by Kant's "Copernican Revolution" in the realm of epistemology, but also to the whole world. All the great efforts of classical German philosophy are made in this direction, because understanding the world as totally rational is the mission of rationalism, which is finally accomplished in Hegel's system. With the dialectic of totality, the rigid opposition of subject and object melts, and the whole world is understood as the substance as the same of the subject. This identical subject -- object is history.[5] In order to criticize "official Marxism," what Western Marxism needed to do is to revive the tradition of classical German philosophy and raise the Marxist research to its level.

Because of this, many scholars hold that Lukács' thought in *History and Class Consciousness*, including his theory of totality, has the typical logic of classical German philosophy. Some regard this as positive, for it has raised the philosophical level of Marxist studies.

> At a time when Marxist theory still lagged behind many of its bourgeois counterparts in reflective sophistication, Lukács almost single-handedly succeeded in raising it to a respectable place in European intellectual life.[6]

Some regard this as negative for it leads to the interpretation which still confines Marx's philosophy to the logic of classical German philosophy. Some scholars even develop this viewpoint further and hold that the Western Marxist craving for totality means that they are still in the logic of the old metaphysics and are still occupied by a false problem. Richard Rorty's viewpoint about this is typical[7] when he argues that total revolution can only result from a kind of absolute truth, or total truth. In this

---

[4] See Antonio Gramsci, *Practical Philosophy* (Chinese version).

[5] Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, 110-149.

[6] Jay, *Marxism and Totality*, 102.

[7] Richard Rorty, *Post-Metaphysical Hope: Neo-Pragmatist Essays in Social, Political and Legal Philosophy* (Shanghai: Shanghai Ewen Press, 2003), 408-411 (Chinese Version).

way, those leftists' craving for total revolution -- I think Lukács is included in this -- is in fact the craving for a final truth. This is the ultimate goal of the whole Platonic metaphysical tradition. In other words, Rorty thinks that to be confined in the logic of classical German philosophy or to pursue total revolution is dangerous, for it confines us to the thinking mode of the Platonic tradition. In this sense, it can never realize the aim of transforming the present world, but only keeps its radical character.

Here, it is important to note that Lukács, together with other early Western Marxists, aimed not only to point out the basic mistake of "official Marxism," but also to disclose the basic crisis of the modern world and to transform it thoroughly. The reason for those early Western Marxists to open the way of "Western Marxism" not only lies in their dissatisfaction with "official Marxism," but more so in their discontent with the present world, because of which they finally convert to Marxism. Lukács said this clearly in his 1967 preface to *History and Class Consciousness*,

> I have never succumbed to the error that I often noticed in workers and petty-bourgeois intellectuals who despite everything could never free themselves entirely from their awe of the capitalist world. The hatred and contempt I had felt for life under capitalism ever since my childhood preserved me from that.[8]

It is interesting that hatred and contempt for the life under capitalism were true for Hegel and other classical German philosophers. Because of this, Lukács said that "for all its romantic anti-capitalist overtones, the ethical idealism I took from Hegel made a number of real contributions to the picture of the world that emerged after this crisis."[9] The key issue is that Lukács has not only recognized Hegel's hatred of the capitalist world but has seen clearly that classical German philosophy is doomed to be unable to fulfill its mission. This is the basic meaning of the so-called "antinomies of bourgeois thought."

> Thus classical philosophy finds itself historically in the paradoxical position that it was concerned to find a philosophy that would mean the end of bourgeois society and to resurrect in thought a humanity destroyed by that society. In the upshot, however, it did not manage to do more than provide a complete intellectual copy and the *a priori* deduction of bourgeois society.[10]

---

[8] Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, xi.
[9] Ibid., x.
[10] Ibid., 148.

So far, it is clear that the relation between Lukács' thought and Hegel's thought is one of tensions. On the one hand, Hegel's philosophy is the most important resource for Lukács in its critique of the bourgeois society, modern philosophy included; on the other hand, since classical German philosophy is the spiritual pillar of the capitalist world, it is one of the most important targets to be criticized and transcended by Lukács. Thus, we can never simply say that Lukács' thought, especially his theory of totality, is totally Hegelian, but rather one of the tensions. It is this innate tension that should be articulated.

2. It is also true that Lukács himself said in his 1967 preface that his thought in this book is basically Hegelian. The meaning of this is double-sided: on the one hand, the great achievement of *History and Class Consciousness* could be attributed to its revival of the tradition of classical German philosophy. The most important achievement of this book is its revival of the Marxist dialectic, which is made possible by renovating the tradition between Hegel's and Marx's dialectics of totality. As Lukács asserted:

> For anyone wishing to return to the revolutionary traditions of Marxism, the revival of the Hegelian traditions is obligatory. *History and Class Consciousness* represents perhaps the most radical attempt to restore the revolutionary nature of Marxist theory by renovating and extending Hegel's dialectics and method.[11]

On the other hand, it means that the most serious problem of *History and Class Consciousness* lies in its inability to get out of the logic of Hegel's philosophy. This dilemma is manifested in two interconnected conceptions: alienation, which in *History and Class Consciousness* is reification and the identical subject-object. Lukács admitted that he did not understand the distinction between alienation and objectification, which is clearly articulated in Marx's *1844 Economic-Philosophic Manuscript*. Because of this, he, like Hegel, could not find the real way out of the world of reification and only put all his hope on the identical subject-object, which is mainly a theoretical construct.

However, this is not the whole truth about the book. The other part of the truth is that it is one of the outstanding efforts to transcend Hegel's philosophy. This is especially shown in its correspondence with Ernst Bloch's *The Spirit of Utopia*. As for the relation between these two books, Bloch wrote:

---

[11] Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, xxi.

There are parts and ideas in *History and Class Consciousness* which are expressions of a common point of view and which really came from me. Just as parts of *Geist der Utopie* and aspects of its contents originated in conversations with Lukács, to the point that both of us found it hard to say, "This is my idea, this is yours." We were really in profound agreement.[12]

However, *The Spirit of Utopia* is seldom taken as Hegelian. In the book, Bloch stated that Hegel's philosophy of the absolute spirit is a kind of "dogmatism," for it assumes to have thoroughly solved the "we problem" and to have arrived at absolute truth. This kind of "dogmatism" is consistent with the present false world, for it has dismissed the tension between the present world and us. With inspiration from Søren Kierkegaard, what Bloch tried to do is to revive our inquiry of the "we problem." This means not only the re-emergence of the tension of the present world and us, the critique and transformation of the present world, but especially the critique of the rationalist "dogmatism." In this sense, *The Spirit of Utopia* is taken as "irrational" rather than "Hegelian." It is interesting that it is Lukács who taught Bloch about Kierkegaard and that it is Bloch who taught Lukács about Hegel.[13] This means that if Ernst Bloch's statement about the relation between the two books is correct, then the relation between Lukács' thought in *History and Class Consciousness* and Hegel's philosophy is not so simple. It is this complexity as a great inspiration for us to face the modern world that is a serious crisis.

The Way for Totality as the Way of Praxis

1. The relation between Lukács' theory of totality and that of Hegel is very important, for it will define our understanding of Western Marxism. If we accept the traditional viewpoint mentioned above, then we will necessarily think that the way for totality in Western Marxism is still the way of theory, not the way of praxis. Hence, Western Marxism will still be taken as belonging to the old philosophy, which, according to Marx, aims only to interpret the world and is, in fact, the affirmation of the present world. This logic has been expressed by many scholars. Here, we choose Alexandre Kojève and Richard Rorty as examples. For Kojève as a Hegelian, it is clear that there are only two ways to inherit Hegel's philosophy: the left way and the right way. The former is the way of those

---

[12] Michael Lowy, "Interview with Ernst Bloch," in *New German Critique* (1976), no. 9, 38.

[13] Ibid., 38.

Hegelian Marxists, Kojève included. The latter is the way of late Hegel and his conservative followers. Both of these two ways believe that truth is the truth of the whole history, that is, it is the truth of the end of history. The difference between them lies in that the right way insists on the "already" of the end of history and the left way insist on its "not yet."[14] Apparently, the right way requires only theory and the left revolutionary activities to help the realization of the end of history. However, the left way is never the way of praxis, but still a way of theory, for actions are only the next step of theory to let what theory has already grasped to come true. Rorty develops this further and argues that the craving for total revolution of those Western Marxists is in fact the pursuit of the so-called absolute truth.[15] In this way, Western Marxism as Hegelian would be nothing other than another branch of the old metaphysics.

On the contrary, if we admit that Lukács' theory of totality is an outstanding effort to solve the problem left by Hegel, we will understand that the way for totality means to getting out of the imperial conceptions and theories and walking in the way of praxis. This will be clearer if we see Lukács' theory of totality in *History and Class Consciousness* from the perspective of Ernst Bloch's utopian philosophy.

Since Bloch's *The Spirit of Utopia* has drawn a lot of inspirations from the Judaic-Christian tradition, especially the mystical traditions, it is often taken as mystical or irrational. This has constituted one of the important reasons why Bloch's thought has not been paid much attention by scholars on the left. It should be pointed out that what Bloch tried to do in *The Spirit of Utopia* was to accomplish the mission of classical German philosophy. That is, Bloch's utopian philosophy is never a total negation of rationalist philosophy, especially classical German philosophy, but rather a continuation. According to Bloch, the mission of classical German philosophy is nothing but to ask about the "we-problem."[16] As the "pure question,"[17] this can never be answered by any theoretical system, but only in praxis. Thus, Bloch's utopian philosophy is the continuation of the cause of practical philosophy opened by Kant. With this counterpart, we can see Lukács' theory of totality more clearly. To some extent, the situation of Lukács is similar to that of Bloch. His craving for totality

---

[14] Alexandre Kojève, "Hegel, Marx and Christianity," in *Taming of Thymos: Leo Strauss on Xenophon's Writings* (Beijing: Hua Xia Press, 2002), 1-25 Chinese version).

[15] See the above relevant passage.

[16] Ernst Bloch, *The Spirit of Utopia*, Anthony Nassar, trans. Meridian Series (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000), 187.

[17] Ibid., 196.

is the continuation of practical philosophy, which has been hinted at by classical German philosophy. The craving for totality begins from Kant's conception of "thing-in-itself" and ever since is closely connected with the problem of matter. This means that to crave for totality is never only to crave for a total theoretical system, but to crave for encountering and transforming matter in praxis.

2. Let us look at Bloch's philosophy more specifically. Classical German philosophy is taken by Bloch self-consciously as his most important resource. This is manifested by the fact that he has discussed it directly in *The Spirit of Utopia* at least twice.[18] More importantly, Bloch also said clearly in the same book that he is still going on "the internal path"[19] started by Kant and Kierkegaard.[20] In this sense, classical German philosophy has not only provided the material for Ernst Bloch but the question itself. This is rendered possible through his journey, which could be described as starting from Hegel, working through Kierkegaard and going back to Kant.[21] Through this, Bloch found that Kant's philosophy is a philosophy about ourselves and is a kind of "transcendental- productive" philosophy, while Hegel's philosophy is the philosophy of the present world and has lowered philosophy into a "transcendental pedagogy."[22] That is, ever since Kant, classical German philosophy is a kind of practical philosophy, but this has not been carried through, because, it was later lowered into theoretical philosophy by his gravedigger, Hegel.

According to Bloch, Kant's contribution does not lie in epistemology, but in his concern about our being.

> Who is nothing, however, will no longer encounter anything outside, either. Without ourselves, we can certainly never see what shall be. At least this much was anticipated by Kierkegaard, especially by Kant, who gives "subjective" spontaneity, our only salvation and declaration of color, now that nothing else can still provide color or substance, its due.[23]

---

[18] One is in the passage titled "Kant and Hegel, or, Inwardness Overtaking the Encyclopedia" (173-187), and the other is in the passage titled "More on the Adequation of Amazement, and the Pure Question" (196-198).

[19] Bloch, *The Spirit of Utopia*, 3.

[20] Ibid., 187, 198.

[21] Lowy, "Interview with Ernst Bloch," 38; Bloch, *The Spirit of Utopia*, 196-198.

[22] Bloch, *The Spirit of Utopia*, 185.

[23] Ibid., 173.

Kant's pursuit of the secret of ourselves is a process of ongoing deepening. It begins from the question of how something may be universally valid to the question of how something might a priori be possible and then to the question about the ethical self, the unconditional. Since Kant's philosophy is of pure form, it has not carried through this internal journey thoroughly and finally left us in the bad infinity. In this sense, Bloch agrees with Andreas Baader's observation of Kant:

> Here Kant has not gone deeply enough; the analysis of the phenomenon of practical reason could more immediately and easily result in spontaneity, its artistic unfolding; that in our inmost life activity, as engendering the will; our reality, as abundant life and as divine reality, announcing itself to us as it unfolds outward within us.[24]

In order to assume the mission of practical philosophy, the internal journey should be deeper until it is utopian.

Hegel also opposed Kant's philosophy of pure form, but he chose the wrong way to overcome it. He gave up the internal journey in order to get a completely content conception so that he could become the philosopher of the world.

> In Kant, in other words, philosophy was a solitary light meant to burn up the night of this world. In Hegel philosophy becomes a headmaster, or indiscriminate lawyer for the Being that hired him, and the night of the world retreats into the merely ignorant subject.[25]

In this light, the tension between the practical philosophy about the "ought" and the present world has been dismissed and philosophy becomes only pedagogical. Furthermore, Bloch said that this kind of philosophy is the most dangerous dogmatism, for it has stopped our internal journey and made us satisfied with the "has already." What is more important, Hegel's philosophy has expressed the present condition of modern people,

> Instead, we have become the poorest of vertebrates; whoever among us does not worship his belly worships the state; everything else has sunk to the level of a joke, of entertainment.[26]

---

[24] Ibid., 178.
[25] Ibid., 185.
[26] Ibid., 2.

This means that we have lost the ability to keep asking what is our absolute end, but we have taken what has been given to us as the end. In this way, modern people are rational animals either of benefits or of ideologies. It is this serious crisis that Bloch is determined to overcome, for this in fact means the death of our culture.

Bloch argued that the only way to face the crisis is to awaken the spirit of utopia deep in our hearts. This is, in fact, the way back to Kant but also more than this. For to be practical, to lead the world to our home, we need not only the vertical path, but also the expanse, the becoming outward of the inward.

> This is as far as the internal path can first go, namely toward what we call a self-encounter, the preparation of the inner world, without which every gaze outward remains empty, instead of being the magnet, the force that draws forth the inner world and helps it back through the falseness of this world. In the end, however, after the internal vertical movement, a new expanse appears: the world of the soul, the external, cosmic function of utopia, maintained against misery, death, the husk-realm of mere physical nature.[27]

This means that by living in this false world and facing the challenge of death, we can become truly human neither through the cognition of the truth of the present world, or through being confined to the inner world. Only in praxis, in fighting against the false world, in meeting the challenge of death in praxis, can we glimpse the light of our being. Bloch holds that to go back to the tradition of Kant and Kierkegaard never means to dismiss Hegel thoroughly, but to "let Kant burn through Hegel."

> The self must remain in everything; though it may at first exteriorize itself everywhere, move reverberantly through everything in order to break the world open, in order above all to pass though a thousand doorways, but precisely the self that desires and demands, the not yet implanted postulative world of its a piori is the system's finest fruit and sole purpose.[28]

Bloch is clear that to continue the way of practical philosophy, we need the world. We are not going to the other world as a pure spirit, but to transform the world into our home. In this way, we can understand Bloch's conclusion in the afterword written in 1963: "As a whole, this

---

[27] Ibid., 3.
[28] Ibid., 187.

principle applies: 'The world is untrue, but it wants to return home through man and through truth'."[29]

3. Let us now step further into Lukács' theory of totality. It is widely held that Lukács' theory of totality originated from Hegel's viewpoint that Truth is the totality. Because of this, totality is understood as a theoretical totality, that is, the comprehensive knowledge of the whole history of society. However, it is shown in *History and Class Consciousness* that the concern about totality began much earlier and that the reason for its raising up lies in the human condition in the capitalist world. In the tradition of classical German philosophy, this has been the core issue in Kant's philosophy. Ever since it has been the core in the development of classical German philosophy. The greatness of classical German philosophy lies in its concern with the issue of totality, which means that the classical philosophy has self-consciously realized the deep crisis in our life and has begun efforts to deal with it. Moreover, their efforts to arrive at the totality also have touched the right way to solve the crisis, that is, the way of praxis. To put it more clearly, Lukács and Bloch have used different words to express the same issue, for both of them have realized the meaning of praxis in Kant's philosophy and are determined to inherit it. In order to emphasize the tension between the present world and us in praxis, Bloch used "the internal path" to express the way of praxis. In order to emphasize our encounter of "matter" in praxis, Lukács used "the craving for totality." In the end, the two of them had the similar analysis, that is, to be confined in theory in fact means the disappearance of the tension between the present world and us, only when we stand higher than the present world, as an other to the present world, can we really encounter it.

In Kant's philosophy, the issue of totality is touched by the conception of "thing-in-itself." Although many people complain that Kant's rationalism is not thorough enough because of this conception, Lukács pointed out that this indicates that Kant has recognized the limit of reason. What is more important is that this limit is at the same time the limit of our human condition in the capitalist world. We can only stop at the contemplative intuition of the present rational world but can never change it. Ever since Descartes, the principle of reason has claimed to be total. This means that not only the subject is rational, but also the whole objective world is in essence rational.

> The situation is quite different when rationalism claims to be the universal method by which to obtain knowledge of the whole existence.

---

[29] Ibid., 279.

In that event the necessary correlation with the principle of irrational-
ism becomes crucial: it erodes and dissolves the whole system. This
is the case with modern (bourgeois) rationalism.[30]

That is, modern rationalism does not admit the existence of anything
beyond reason, or the irrational. This universal rationalism is rendered
possible only by the principle of activity; that is, the world itself is the
product of the rational self, and in this way, it can then be realized through
rational knowledge. In this sense, Lukács said that Kant's principle of
activity embodied in the so-called "Copernican Revolution" is the prin-
ciple of the whole rational philosophy.[31]

However, Kant has seen more than this. He has the insight that al-
though the world seems to be man-made, we still can not touch or change
it. There exists the darkness which cannot be penetrated by rational
knowledge. Lukács emphasized that this is just the most basic crisis of
modern people. People in the capitalist world are living in the dilemma of
reification. On the one hand, because commodities have been the only end
of production, modern people have been liberated from all kinds of natural
limits and seem to have become the subject of the whole modern world.
On the other hand, because of reification, modern people are lowered to
the elements in the whole process of the self-sustaining of society. This is
true not only of workers, but also of capitalists. Modern people, the ap-
parent subject, can only stop at contemplating on the rules, which govern
the process.

Kant's greatness does not stop at this; he has also taken great efforts
to deal with this crisis. "Thing-in-itself" has both negative and positive
meaning. The former means that it has pointed out the limit of the abstract
reason, while the latter means that it has hinted the way out of this crisis,
that is, praxis. This is expressed in the two dimensions of "thing-in-itself,"

> To put it briefly, these problems can be reduced to two great, seem-
> ingly unconnected and even opposed complexes. There is, firstly the
> problem of matter in the logical or technical sense, namely, the prob-
> lem of the content of those forms with the aid of which 'we' know
> and are able to know the world because we have created the world
> ourselves. And, secondly, there is the problem of the whole and of
> the ultimate substance of knowledge, the problem of those 'ultimate'

---

[30] Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, 114.
[31] Ibid., 112.

objects of knowledge which are needed to round off the partial systems into a totality, a system of the perfectly understood world.[32]

These two problems are at root the same problem, because only when the problem of matter is solved, can we talk about totality. To modern people, the craving for totality is in fact the craving for encountering "matter" itself and the craving for the ability to transform it. Kant has realized that this could be solved in praxis. This is the reason why Kant discussed the problem of noumenon in the realm of praxis,

> Kant had attempted in the *Critique of Practical Reason* (which has been much misunderstood and often falsely opposed to the *Critique of Pure Reason*) to show that the barriers that could not be overcome by theory or contemplation were amenable to practical solutions.[33]

However, according to Lukács, Kant has not accomplished this great cause; his philosophy finally was confined to pure forms. That is, Kant has only hinted at the direction to solve the problem but has not gone far in this direction. Lukács holds that it is Hegel's dialectics that has pushed this great cause further, because it is the dialectic of "matter."

> Hegel in his *Phenomenology* and *Logic* was the first to set about the task of consciously recasting all problems of logic by grounding them in the qualitative material nature of their content, in matter in the logical and philosophical sense of the world. This resulted in the establishment of a completely new logic of concrete concept, the logic of totality.[34]

Here Lukács takes Hegel's dialectic as the continuation of Kant's practical philosophy in the understanding of Hegel's dialectic of totality, that is, what is essential is not the whole system of the theory but the problem of "matter." This problem is solved in Hegel's philosophy by the principle of "the true not only as substance, but also as subject."[35] Because of this, Lukács claimed that Hegel's philosophy arrived at the real way to solve the problems: the way of history. It is in history that the opposition between the subject and the object is overcome, and that "matter" is

---

[32] Ibid., 115.
[33] Ibid., 123.
[34] Ibid., 142.
[35] Quoted from Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, 142.

melted. So far, we can understand why Lukács thinks that only by reviving the Hegelian dialectic of totality, can we return to the revolutionary tradition of Marxism. For Lukács, to revive Hegel's dialectic means to go back to the way of praxis.

Lukács is also clear that in the last analysis, Hegel's philosophy is not practical philosophy, but only a contemplative philosophy. Like Kant, Hegel has also not escaped this tragic fate. The reason is that Hegel cannot find the real subject in history. The absolute spirit is only the abstract Self, not the people acting in history. In this sense, praxis in Hegel's philosophy is only apparent,

> In consequence, as Marx has emphasized in his criticism of Hegel, the demiurgic role of the 'spirit' and the 'idea' enters the realm of conceptual mythology. Once again -- and from the standpoint of Hegel's philosophy itself -- it must be stated that the demiurge only seems to make history.[36]

This means that the absolute spirit's self-creation is never the praxis that changes and transforms the present world. Because of this, Lukács emphasized that the key issue of carrying through the dialectic of totality is to find the real subject of praxis. The whole History and Consciousness could be considered the efforts to look for the subject of history.

It is here that Lukács and Bloch meet again. In Bloch's utopian philosophy, the key issue is to wake up the spirit of utopia, that is, to awaken the light that has not yet been put out in this false world. It could be said that only through a weakening of this "surplus" (Bloch's word), could there still be hope to survive the crisis. This "surplus" is the "other" in this false world. Lukács is in the same situation, because for him, to find the way out of reification, we need to look for the surplus that has not been reified, that is, the not yet atrophied soul of workers.

> This is the fact that while the process by which the worker is reified and becomes a commodity dehumanizes him and cripples and atrophies his 'soul' -- as long as he does not consciously rebel against it -- it remains true that precisely his humanity and soul are not changed into commodities.[37]

Only starting from here, from the "other" in his reified world, can the class consciousness pointing to the future come into being. In this sense, there

---

[36] Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, 148.
[37] Ibid., 172.

has already been a tension between totality and otherness in both Bloch and Lukács' thought. Only starting from the otherness can we enter into praxis to change the present world, can we crave for the total man liberated from all alienations. Because of this, there has always been the tension between totality and otherness in the whole development of Western Marxism.

The importance of this tension lies further that our hope for the future is unguaranteed. That is, "otherness" lies not only in the point of our departure but also in the end itself. Our starting point is not only an "other" which is different from all the other parts of the world but "humanity" or "soul," which can never be fully realized in any particular time and place. Only with this realization can we have the countenance to strive forever for a utopian future. In the history of rationalism, people have tried everything to chase our hope on the true knowledge in order to be guaranteed. In the tragedy of classical German philosophy, Lukács and Bloch have recognized that rational knowledge can never open the way to the future. To insist on the claim for a guaranteed hope means to be confined in the past forever. Therefore, they chose the way of praxis. In the way of praxis, theory is only one aspect. The world will always be other than what we have thought; the future will always be other than what we have planned. Because of this, we will never stop at the "has already," and our hope for the "total human" will forever be lightened.

In emphasizing "otherness," Lukács has not gone as far as Bloch. He has tried to explain why there is such an "other" in the reified world. His answer is that the proletariat is the identical object-subject of history. In this way, the "otherness" of the departing point of class consciousness has been weakened; also, he has not spoken clearly about the "otherness" innate in the ultimate goal of the proletariat revolution. However, neither of these can deny that the way he pointed out is the way of praxis.

In sum, with the development of post-modern philosophy, many people believe that Western Marxists' theory of totality, especially that of György Lukács, has been outdated. However, through the analysis of the tension inside his thought, I have shown that Lukács' craving for totality is the craving for praxis. In this sense, we are still his companions. We still need the sensitivity to the crisis in the present world and at the same time to the "other" in this global world. We still need to hold on to hope for the utopian future

Part III

Religious Reflection in Society

9.

New Obscurity:
Religion and Politics in the Radical Philosophy

WANG XINGFU

"Marriage is like a fortress besieged: those who are outside want to get in, and those who are inside want to get out." This French proverb can be used to describe the complicated situation of religion today. In the history of Marxist intellectuals, the secularization of politics is always a principle.

In *On the Jewish Question,* Karl Marx detects a political theology in the liberal democracy and calls for a final, radical secularization of politics. Marx thinks that the liberal state or state of rule stands over society as heaven does earth. The sovereignty of the citizen rests on a Christian logic of incarnation that separates the individual from human species-being; the abstract universality of rights displaces the concrete universality of participation in collective social life. When finishing the task of criticizing religion, we have to turn to the criticism of secular life, the criticism of law and state. Marx's idea, as the last great act in the history of secularization, is that communism will return the transcendent political state to its immanent place in society and remove the final obstacle to the recovery of the human alienated essence.

Marx's self-understanding on religion and politics has not been accepted by all. Some scholars thought that we could detect the religious core in his historical materialism and project of communism. The idea of communism is just a secularized version of a Messiah. Karl Löwith thinks that Marx had inherited the legacy of Hegel's dialectic, but there is an important difference between them.

> Like all German idealism, Hegel's philosophy of Spirit rests on Christian supernaturalism. It is the faith in Christ as the Lord and Logos of history which he translated into a metaphysical Spirit unfolding itself in the process of history. Since Hegel, however, identifies the history of world with that of the Spirit, his understanding of history retains much less of its religious derivation than does Marx's materialistic atheism. The latter, in spite of its emphasis on material conditions, maintains the original tension of a transcendent faith over against the existing world, while Hegel, to whom faith was only a mode of *Vernunft* or *Vernehmen*, had, at a critical turning-point in his intellectual history, decided to reconcile himself to the world as it is:

existing real and reasonable. Compared with Marx, the great realist is Hegel.[1]

Though Marx sharply criticizes religion as the alienation of the human being, the messiah and eschatology of Judaic-Christianity is the secret core of his theory. Löwith asserts:

> Historical materialism is essentially, though secretly, a history of fulfillment and salvation in terms of social economy. From which one might deduce, after the fashion of Marxist 'revisionists', the philosophical garb and the relic of the religious attitude is, on the contrary, from the first to the last sentence inspired by an eschatological faith, which, in its turn, 'determines' the whole sweep and range of all particular statements.[2]

According to Löwith, not only in the political and ethical level, but also in the ontological level, Marx is a theological thinker. Echoing Löwith and Albert Camus denounce communism as a myth of this-worldly salvation. Raymond Aron also attacks communism as the opium of intellectuals and Marxism as a rationalization of irrational religious passion.

In contemporary politics, the relation between religion and politics is still an unresolved problem. In the end of *The Passing of an Illusion: The Idea of Communism in the Twentieth Century*, French historian François Furet argues, "with the collapse of socialist expectation, we have seen the foundations of deified history crumbling," but, liberal democracy cannot get rid of religion. Although the triumph of liberal democracy has been celebrated as the end of history and the end of utopia, Furet still believes that democracy needs utopias and religion, "a world beyond the bourgeoisie and capital, a world in which genuine human community can flourish."[3] His book ends with this ambiguous conclusion: if the exit from communist illusion has proven terminable, then democracy's own exit from religion seems interminable.

According to Warren Breckman, "The collapse of the Marxist project of emancipation in late twentieth century brought with it the collapse of

---

[1] Karl Löwith, *Meaning in History: The Theological Implications of the Philosophy of History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949), 51.

[2] *Ibid., 54.*

[3] François Furet, *The Passing of an Illusion: The Idea of Communism in the Twentieth* Century, Deboha Furet, trans. (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1999), 502

confidence in the secularizing project that had accompanied it."[4] Today, for Marxists and post-Marxists, returning to religion is quite popular. Breckman analyzes French post-Marxism's return to religion in three thinkers: Cornelius Castoriadis, Claude Lefort and Marcel Gauchet. John Roberts analyzes the similar turn to religion in revolutionary thinkers such as Giorgio Agamben, Alain Badiou, Antonio Negri and Slavoj Žižek. Roberts asserts,

> It is precisely the 'secularisation' of Judeo-Christian categories in Kant, Hegel, and Marx's respective theorizations of history that provides the dialectical ground for atheistic recovery and invocation of Judeo-Christian thought (in particular messianism, renunciation, and fidelity) in recent political philosophy.[5]

That does not mean that the returns are the spread of obscurantism and anti-rationalism of religious foundationalism; rather, they are new attempts to revive the memory or prospect of a universal emancipatory politics. The returns are expressed in the following works: Badiou's *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism (2003)*; Agamben's *The Time That Remains: A Commentary on the Letter to the Romans* (2005); Žižek's *The Fragile Absolute or, Why Is the Christian Legacy Worth Fighting for* (2000) and *The Puppet and the Dwarf: the Perverse Core of Christianity* (2003).

Why are so many Marxists and radical thinkers interested in religion, especially the tradition of Judaic-Christianity? Roberts correctly points out that the present 'returns to religion' are undoubtedly caused by a sense of crisis in politics. With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the crisis of Marxism and historical materialism in the public sphere, for many people, Christianity seems to be an available resource of reconstructing, the radical emancipatory project and revolutionary political subjectivity.

> In this respect, the 'turn' to Christianity reconnects to a less forgiving and accommodating political space than the one associated with the

---

[4] Warren Breckman, "Democracy between Disenchantment and Political Theology: French Post-Marxism and Return of Religion," in *New German Critique,* (Winter, 2001), 104.

[5] John Roberts, "The 'Returns to Religion': Messianism, Christianity and Revolutionary Tradition," Part I. "Wakefulness to the Future," in *Historical Materialism* 16.2 (2008), 59.

present globalized liberal agenda -- one based on the demands of sacrifice, fidelity, faith, and the (not-pious) vows of poverty.[6]

For the radical thinkers, the "returns to religion" are a compensatory response to the present crisis of socialist politics.

> The emphasis on messianic weakness, therefore, is precisely the means by which Marxist subjectivity is able to separate itself from those traditions and forms of organization of 'the old type'; and not from the history and practice of Marxism as such.[7]

Marxist classical politics is based on the following three principles: secular rationalism, historical progress and humanism, but these principles are not self-evident today. In the contemporary culture we find some profound changes which shake the common understanding of the relationship between politics and religion, as well as the relation between Marxism and religion. In this paper, I argue that the politicizations of Christianity of Marxists and the radical lefts are new attempts to revive their roles and resist the hegemony of neo-liberalism in political theory. Although they provide many provocative thoughts on rethinking the relationship between religion and Marxism, they have fallen into a new obscurity. Just as Marx's criticism of the young Hegelians, in these new discourses, real political issues have been melted into enigmatic jargons of philosophy. I will examine the complicated thoughts in Marx and Engels briefly in the first part and then discuss the attempts of connecting Marxism and religion by Benjamin and other contemporary thinkers.

Religion and Classical Marxism

Roberts thinks that the absence of systematic discussion on religion in Marx and Engels produced a confusion in the Marxist tradition on the question. As Alexander Saxton says, "Marxism's failure to come up with an effective hypothesis for the origin of religion left a strategic gap in the secular (materialist) interpretation of history."[8] It is true, but the more important issue is religion's relevance to contemporary society, rather than the theoretical explication of the origin of religion. As Roland Boer notes,

---

[6]Roberts, "The 'Returns to Religion': Messianism, Christianity and Revolutionary Tradition," Part I. "Wakefulness to the Future," 76.

[7] Ibid., 101.

[8] Alexander Saxton, "Religion and Human Prospect," in *New York: Monthly Review Press* (2006), 164.

> In an era when any sign of political passion withers under the cynicism that refuses to see any change to what may now be called *Götterdämmerung* capitalism, it seems to me even more important to hold to a political passion, especially Marxism. For it holds out the utopian -- understood in the best senses of the term -- possibility that capitalism will finally collapse, that it is not the end run of the political economic system.[9]

In his view, Marxism and Christianity share some common values and beliefs, for they all struggle against all kinds of social evils and all appeal to a utopia of classless society and the idea of a fulfilling flourishing of humanity. In this sense, Marxism and Christianity have common concerns in politics and ethics.

Strictly speaking, there is no consistent and unifying theoretical legacy of Marx and Engels' on religion, but in the Marxist tradition, there is a consistent political legacy. In Marx's lifetime, he did not have much interest in the internal contradiction of religion and Christianity. According to Roberts,

> It is largely because by the early 1840s -- after a decade of deflationary attacks on religion by Strauss, Bauer, and Feuerbach -- Marx believed the critique of Christianity and religion to be, in its fundamentals, mostly accomplished. Thus, from 1844 onwards, it was the critique of the political economy, state law, and the political organization of human society that overwhelmingly preoccupied him, and not the development of a theory of ideology which could explain the persistence of religion despite the spread of science and the worker's movement.[10]

For Marx, when the critique of heaven has been completed, the critique of the earth becomes a realistic task.

In the early Marx, the criticism of religion is part of the critique of ideology. Following Feuerbach's example in "Contribution to a Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law," Marx writes,

> The foundation of irreligious criticism is this: man makes religion, religion does not make man….Thus the struggle against religion is

---

[9] Boer, Roland, *Marxist Criticism of the Bible* (London; New York: T & T Clark International, 2003), 5.

[10] Roberts, "The 'Returns to Religion': Messianism, Christianity and Revolutionary Tradition," Part I. "Wakefulness to the Future," 72.

indirectly the struggle against that world whose spiritual aroma is religion…religion is a sign of the oppressed creature, the feeling of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless circumstances. It is the opium of people. [11]

Opium is a pain killer, and it can mitigate symptoms of disease, making unbearable suffering bearable. In this sense, religion is ideology. In religion, the social order that emerges contingently is taken as natural and eternal. According to Marx's classical metaphor about ideology, religion is the inverted mirror of reality; it misrecognizes illusion as reality. In this context,

[i]t is the immediate task of philosophy, which is in the service of history, to unmask self-estrangement in its unholy forms once the holy form of human self-estrangement has been unmasked. Thus, the criticism of Heaven turns into the criticism of Earth, the criticism of religion into the criticism of law, and the criticism of theology into the criticism of politics.[12]

In this sense, Marx was an avowed atheist. However, we should notice that, unlike Claude Lévi-Strauss, Bruno Bauer and Ludwig Feuerbach, Marx is unwilling to see this eschatological content squandered through a rationalist and undialectical critique of religion. He says, "Religious distress is at the same time the expression of real distress and also the protest against real distress."[13] That means that religion does not only function as the expression of the suffering, or an illusion of reality, but also as the expression of the will to end the suffering. In the actual religion, obedience and resistance are in entanglement. If Marx expounded the dimension of obedience, in his later works Engels had tried to save the dimension of resistance in religion.

In "*On the History of Early Christianity,*" Engels writes,

The history of early Christianity has notable points of resemblance with the modern working-class movement. Like the latter, Christianity was originally a movement of oppressed people: it first appeared as the religion of slaves and emancipated slaves, of poor people deprived of all rights, of peoples subjugated or dispersed by

---

[11] Karl Marx, *Early Writings* (London: Penguin Group, 1992), 244-245.

[12] Ibid., 244-245.

[13] Karl Marx, "Letter to Rugen," in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Collected Works*, Volume 3 (Livingstone, London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1975), 175.

Rome. Both Christianity and workers' socialism preaches forthcoming salvation from bondage and misery; Christianity places this salvation in a life beyond, after death, in heaven; socialism places it in this world, in a transformation of society.[14]

It is obvious that there is a continuum from early Christianity to modern socialism. In his comment on Thomas Münzer, Engels sympathetically identifies the messianic meaning of Christianity:

> By the Kingdom of God Münzer meant a society with no class differences, no private property, and no state authority independent of, and foreign to, the numbers of society. All the existing authorities, insofar as they refused to submit and join the revolution, were to be overthrown.[15]

Obviously, Engels acknowledged that early Christianity contains the semantic potentials of salvation from the oppressed class. In contrast to contemporary radical thinkers, though Engels took early Christians as the forebear of modern proletarian class, he did not take late Christianity as the peer of the modern proletarian revolution. It is not just that Christianity has become an ideology in modern society, but that the development of modern proletarian struggle has overstepped the premature stage of revolutionary consciousness.

Marx and Engels all were successors of the Enlightenment. Trust in the historical progress of humanity and the prospect of infinite perfection is basic for them. In the framework of the universal evolution of social history, religion is an outdated form of practical consciousness. Engels argues,

> The first phase of the proletariat's struggle against the bourgeoisie is marked by a sectarian movement. This is logical at the time when the proletariat has not yet developed sufficiently to act as a class.[16]

The same logic of criticism can be applied to the criticism of religion. Once the proletariat class has been organized as party and class for themselves, any form of religion has been overstepped forever.

---

[14] Marx and Engels, *Collected Works*, Volume 27, 445.

[15] Ibid., Volume 10, 422.

[16] Karl Marx and Fredric Engels, "Fictitious Slits in the International," cited from the John Roberts, "The 'Returns to Religion': Messianism, Christianity and Revolutionary Tradition," Part II. "Pauline Tradition," 99.

Marx's project was partly practiced in the past two centuries. So-cialist movements took themselves not only as post-capitalist politics but also as post-religious redemptions of humanity. Human reason can expli-cate its own norms and values necessary for rational society by social science; the progress of modern society in productivity and technology promises more realist prospects of the complete fulfillment of humanity. The logic of progress expels the eschatology of religion to the margins of public consciousness. The experiences of the 20th century have shaken the Marxist project of secularized emancipation. In the radical criticism modernity has been denounced as "catastrophic,"

> Heidegger denounced the present age as that of highest 'danger', the epoch of accomplished nihilism; Adorno and Horkheimer saw in it the culmination of the 'dialectic of enlightenment' in the 'adminis-tered world'; Giorgio Agamben defines the twentieth-century con-centration camps as the 'truth' of the entire Western political pro-ject.[17]

In a word, as Adorno thought, the "progress" of human society is not a process from the barbarism to civilization, but rather a history from the slingshot to the atom bomb. Reason promises universal freedom, but its realization is universal compulsion. Fascism, Stalinism, Auschwitz and Hiroshima have exposed the limits of humanism, rationalism and the conception of progress. Secular traditions of the Enlightenment and mod-ernism have exhausted themselves. It is in such a situation that some thinkers return to religion and seek an alternative way of reconstructing political discourse.

Benjamin: A Mediate Figure between Marxism and the Radical Politics

In the recent radical political philosophy, the central strategy of the return to religion is to disengage politics from historical determinism and humanist progress and reconnect it with religion or another means of im-manent transcendence. Recent "returns to religion" in the Western Marx-ist tradition is the third wave. The first wave began in the 1920s. In order to resist the revisionist's distortion of Marxism and historical materialism by historical determinism and vulgar evolutionism, György Lukács argues that revolutionary events can break through at 'any time': "It would be of

---

[17] Slavoj Žižek, *The Puppet and The Dwarf: The Perverse core of Christianity* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2003), 153.

no moment where…the possibility of an actively influencing the subjective moments is completely lacking."[18] 'Messianic' time which locates a future is invisible here and now.

The messianic understanding of historical materialism reached a summit in Walter Benjamin's critique of the historicist version of Marxism. Roberts tells us that the 'returns to religion' in Marxist tradition cannot be grasped fully without Benjamin's messianic interpellation.

> Because it is precisely Benjamin's Judaic reconstruction of the absolute in the 'here and now' as the logic of communist practice and vision as set against a self-contained 'progress', which establishes the political terrain whereupon the 'returns to religion' and the rereading of Paul from within Marxism are being contested.[19]

According to Michael Lowy, "Walter Benjamin occupies a unique place in the history of modern Marxist thought. He is the first partisan of historical materialism to break radically with the ideology of progress."[20] Only after the reception of Benjamin's explicit messianism is it possible to talk about an anti-historicist Marxism and the returns to religion in radical politics. In my view, all problems of political philosophy can be boiled down to two basic problems: one is ontological, which deals with the possibility of political action and subject; another is normative, which deals with the desirability of norms and values. Benjamin has made a special contribution in these two dimensions through an innovative understanding of historical materialism.

In Benjamin's version of historical materialism, insights from the Marxist conception of human emancipation and the messianic concept of Judaic tradition were integrated tightly. In one famous allegory in "Theses on Philosophy of History," a little hunchback sitting under the table guides a puppet to play chess. The puppet is called "historical materialism," the little hunchback theology. If historical materialism enlists the service of theology, it will win all the time. In Benjamin's thought, religion has multiple implications. In contrast to a historicist conception of time, messianic time always remains in the here and now. "In this structure he recognizes the sign of a messianic cessation of happening, or, put differently, a rev-

---

[18] Georg Lukács, "A Defence of 'History and Class Consciousness'," in Roberts, "The 'Returns to Religion': Messianism, Christianity and Revolutionary Tradition," Part II. "Pauline Tradition," 77.

[19] Ibid., 79.

[20] Michael Lowy, "Walter Benjamin and Marxism: Cover Story," in *Monthly Review* (Feb. 1995).

olutionary chance in the fight for the oppressed past."[21] Here we cannot deduce the emergence of messianic time through an objective analysis of historical process. "'Messianic time' ultimately stands for the intrusion of subjectivity irreducible to the 'objective' historical process, which means that things can take a messianic turn, time can become 'dense', *at any point*."[22] Benjamin claims,

> A historical materialist cannot do without the notion of a present which is not a transition, but in which time stands still and has come to a stop. This notion defines the present in which he himself is writing history. Historicism gives the 'eternal' image of the past'; historical materialism supplies a unique experience with the past.[23]

In historicist time, we indulge in the continuum of empty and homogenous time, blind to the coming of catastrophe and redemption. In messianic time, we are "wakeful to the future," taking every moment as an exceptional state which needs to make a unique decision. In the final thesis of *On the Concept of History*, messianic time is identified with the redemptive conception of history, in which "every second of time was the strait gate through which the Messiah might enter."[24] Only by grasping the messianic dimension can a person remain in control of his powers and exit from the dull and passive continuum of history.[25] Here the conception of messianic time is the presupposition of political virtues such as sobriety and courage. Thus, it is not difficult to understand that

> [t]he tradition of the oppressed teaches us that the 'state of emergency' in which we live is not the exception but the rule. We must attain to a conception of history that is in keeping with this insight.[26]

In one word, the possibility of political action does not rely on historical necessity and human knowledge but on the discontinuity and contingency of history and human consciousness of themselves. It is just the weakness of human existence that paradoxically becomes the positive condition of political subjectivity and a revolutionary event.

---

[21] Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, edited and introductions with Hannah Arendt (San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1968), 262.

[22] Žižek, *The Puppet and The Dwarf: The Perverse Core of Christianity*, 134.

[23] Benjamin, *Illuminations*, 262.

[24] Ibid., 264.

[25] Ibid., 263.

[26] Ibid., 257.

On the second issue, reconstructing a normative horizon is the main task of Benjamin's theory. In common sense, politics is the collective conduct to seek private or collective interest, political norms and values can be derived from the contribution of material goods or from the prospect of better life in the future. In Benjamin's mind, if political practices are constrained by materialist interests, they will risk falling into obedient ideology. This ideology is the reason why German Social Democrats fell into political revisionism in their struggle with capitalist regimes and Nazism. Just as he escaped from the fatalism and gradualism of historicism by relying on messianic time, Benjamin tries to rescue radical political semantic meanings of historical materialism by the messianic memory of past times. "In the image of the classless society Marx has secularized the image of messianic time."[27] Human emancipation does not identify with an infinite improving of future life and an infinite development of production and technology. According to Benjamin, the theoretical error of Social Democrats has catastrophic political effects.

> Our consideration proceeds from the insight that the politicians' stubborn faith in progress, their confidence in their 'mass basis', and, finally their servile integration in an uncontrollable apparatus have been three aspects of same thing.[28]

These three doctrines are the root of the social Democrats' failure in their struggle against Fascism.

In sum, Benjamin soberly perceives that traditional secular and progressive Marxism suffer from two kinds of poverty. The conception of history based on a linear evolution of social history is too poor to provide the possibility of conceiving radical social transformation, and its materialist communist image of future society is too poor to provide any attractive alternative horizon for proletarian politics.

Today if Western radical thinkers face a similar situation to that of Benjamin, how can we justify the possibility of a radical politics that escapes attacks from two sides: liberal reformism and postmodern cynicism? To answer the question, we have to reconstruct the normative horizon of rational society that transcends the logic of neo-liberal globalization and some kind of political ontology for explaining the possibility of historic events which can break the linear process of time. In these aspects, Benjamin's non-evolutionary historical materialism is a forerunner for

---

[27] Walter Benjamin, GS1: 1231, cited from Brian Britt, *Walter Benjamin and the Bible* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2003), 127

[28] Benjamin, *Illuminations*, 258.

Badiou, Žižek, Agamben and Terry Eagelton. It is a bridge between classic Marxism and radical politics.

The Exchange between Politics and Religion in Badiou and Žižek

In the intellectual history of radical leftist politics, the creative exchange between Marxism and religion has three waves. The second wave was German progressive theology and Latin American liberation theology in the 1960s and 1970s. The last wave is the 'returns to religion' that began in 1980s in radical thinkers. Roberts reminds us,

> [t]he 'returns to religion in political philosophy, philosophical ethics, and political theory have recently taken various forms. Some of these positions emerge from the Marxist tradition, some of these are avowedly post-Marxist positions. But all draw on the ethical and political content of religion in order to establish, or test, the possible links between the political subject and the subject of religious passion and faith.[29]

According to his analysis, those writers who share belief that the pre-reflective resources of Christian tradition are constitutive in political philosophy can be divided into four categories: (1) those who draw on the Engelsian continuity between Marxism and early Christian eschatology (principally Marxists); (2) those who insist on the limits of reason and see this as an invitation to explore the intersection of philosophy and theology (Kantians, deconstructionists and theological phenomenologists); (3) those who treat Christianity and other religions as revolutionary critique and an extension of Marxism as such (Christian ontologists and ecumenical libertarians); and (4) those who are post-Marxist or neo-Marxist revolutionary secular defenders of Christian universalism. It is puzzling that Roberts puts Badiou, Agamben and Negri into the fourth category and Žižek in the first category. I think there are no essential differences among Žižek, Badiou, Negri and Agamben, even though they are not in agreement on many concrete issues.

Broadly speaking, the politicization of Christianity in radical politics has two branches: the Jesus tradition and the Pauline tradition. "The Jesus tradition of Christianity is largely a modern construct."[30] Today Saint Paul

---

[29] Roberts, "The 'Returns to Religion': Messianism, Christianity and Revolutionary Tradition," Part I. "Wakefulness to the Future," 60.

[30] Roberts, "The 'Returns to Religion': Messianism, Christianity and Revolutionary Tradition," Part II. "Pauline Tradition," 78.

attracts more attention because he sees Jesus' sacrifice and resurrection as the great event and elaborate its messianic meaning. For Paul, Jesus' death and resurrection is an apocalyptic event, which means a rupture of history and the possibility of salvation. This apocalypticism has great attraction for Badiou and Žižek.

Badiou argues that Paul is not an apostle or saint but does care of the Good News Jesus declares. Badiou has no interest in the religious content of the Pauline tradition. "For me, Paul is a poet-thinker of the event, as well as one who practices and states the invariant traits of what can be called the militant figure."[31] For Badiou, Saint Paul's unprecedented gesture consisted in subtracting truth from the communitarian grasp and setting up a true universalism. It is just the figure that has been absolutely necessary for our time.

Of what does the contemporary situation consist? Badiou believes that its most characteristic feature is the complicity between relativism and false universalism. According to Badiou, most influential philosophies, like Anglophone analytical ideology and the hermeneutical tradition, end up in a cultural relativism. They indulge in a variety of identity politics, like race, gender and religion. In our time, we have lost the capability of thinking of a true universality. On the one hand, there is absolute sovereignty of capital's empty universality in the crazy extension of capital globally, which fulfills Marx's prediction of a world-market. The market ideology of neo-liberalism accommodates a false universality. On the other hand, with a process of fragmentation built into closed identity politics, the political consciousness has fragmented. The contemporary situation ends up "oscillating between the abstract universal of capital and localized persecution."[32]

How can we break the articulated whole of abstract homogeneity and identitarian protest? Badiou believes that Saint Paul is the best figure to provide a solution. In *Romans*, Paul says, "For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. For 'everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Romans10). If we replace God by this or that truth, we actually understand the significance of Paul's words for us. For Badiou the task of thought is to reconstruct the generic condition of universality, or a universal singularity. The true universality is neither a formal feature of judgment, nor the universality of abstract rights; it is the universality of event.

What is event? Badiou argues,

---

[31] Alain Badiou, *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism*, Ray Brassier, trans. (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 2.

[32] Ibid., 12.

I name 'event' a rupture in the normal disposition of bodies and normal ways of a particular situation. Or if you want, I name 'event' a rupture of the laws of the situation. So, the importance of an event is not its realization/variation of a possibility that resides inside the situation. An event is the creation of a new possibility. An event changes not only the real, but also the possible. An event is at the level not of simple possibility, but at the level of the possibility of possibility.[33]

Paul's words expound the possibility of possibility by Jesus' resurrection. In Paul's text, Badiou thinks that the resurrection is not just an event, it is the Event as such. Why do we invoke Saint Paul? Badiou says,

What does Paul want? Probably to drag the Good News (Gospels) out from the rigid enclosure within which its restriction to the Jewish community would confine it. But equally, never to let it be determined by the available generalities, be they statist [*étatiques*] or ideological. Statist generality belongs to Roman legalism, to Roman citizenship in particular, to the conditions and rights associated with it… Slaves, women, people of every profession and nationality will therefore be admitted without restriction or privilege.[34]

That means that Christianity relies not on any available external determinations of its address, but rather on the internal truth of faith. Just for it, Saint Paul is a case of mobilizing a universal singularity both against the prevailing abstractions of capitalist economy and particularist protest of postmodernist culture.

Badiou advocates for politics as a truth procedure. Here truth-event is a generic condition. Paul's preaching embodied politics as a truth procedure. First, an event is politics if and only if its material is collective.

We say that the event is ontologically collective to the extent that it provides the vehicle for a virtual summoning of all. 'Collective' means immediately universalizing. The effectiveness of politics relates to the affirmation according to which 'for every x, there is thought.[35]

---

[33] Alain Badiou, "Is the Word 'Communism' Forever Doomed?" http://philoso phyol. com/pol/?action-viewnews-itemid-10275.

[34] Badiou, *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism*, 13-14.

[35] Alain Badiou, *Metapolitics*, translated and with an introduction by Jason Barke (London: Verso, 2005), 141.

That means for everything, there is a singular truth. Anybody who is constituted as subject of politics is called to be a militant of the truth procedure. Second, "the effect of the collective character of the political is that politics presents as such the infinite character of situations."[36] Every politics of emancipation rejects finitude, rejects "being towards death." Every situation is ontologically infinite; politics is engaged in rendering explicit the subjective infinite of the situation. Politics as truth procedure is opposite to any positivist understanding of reality. Lastly, in relation to the situation, politics as truth procedure is resistance to the power of the State. According to Badiou, the state is a sort of metastructure that exercises the power of counting over all the subsets of its situation, but the state of the situation always exceeds the situation itself. There are always more parts that exceed elements which are immanent to the power of politics. The real characteristic of the political event and truth procedure always assigns measure to the superpower of the State; politics is not the bargaining of private interest or the compromise of powers. Politics puts the State at a distance by setting up its measure. "It exhibits a measure for statist power. This is the sense in which politics is 'freedom'."[37] In brief, a political event is universal, infinite and non-Statist.

According to politics as truth procedure, Paul is an example. His general procedure is a strict truth procedure: (1) The truth of resurrection is universal: "The Christian subject does not preexist the event he declares (Christ's resurrection)…He will be required to be neither Jewish (or circumcised), nor Greek (or wise)."[38] Paul opens the possibility of subjectivity, which is different from those ways in the cosmological discourse of Greek and the legalist discourse of Roman. The Greek's discourse of philosophical wisdom put every one in his due place in the cosmological system, while Roman's discourse puts the human being in the grid of the social status system; (2) Truth is entirely subjective. Thus, every subsumption of its becoming under a law will be argued against, which means that the truth does not obey any external law; (3) By the eventual effect of the Truth-Event, the subject must remain faithful to his declared truth. But, truth is a process, not a given entity. In order to think it, one requires three proper virtues: faith (*pitis*), love (*agape*) and hope (*elpis*). In a sense, Badiou stresses that Paul is not a mythologist of faith but a materialist thinker and militant moral-rationalist.

---

[36] Badiou, *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism*, 14.
[37] Ibid., 15.
[38] Ibid.

In the conclusion of *Saint Paul*, Badiou believes Paul has succeeded in providing a foundation for true universalism by his break with Judaic legalism and Greek intellectualism:

> In reality, the Pauline break has a bearing upon the formal conditions and the inevitable consequences of a consciousness-of-truth rooted in a pure event, detached from every objectivist assignation to the particular laws of the world or society yet concretely destined to become inscribed within a world and within a society.[39]

Badiou's interpretation is eloquent and illuminating, but there is a tension between the personal fidelity to the Truth-Event and effect of the Truth-Event. If a truth-event is such by subjective belief, how do we know whether a truth-event is real or false? Obviously, for Judaism, Paul's production of the resurrection-event as a Truth-Event has no veracity. If we seek for the foundation of universality only in subjective belief, how can we escape the trap of relativism in the political struggle? We can give a formal definition to Truth-Event that is addressed to all people without gender, ethnicity, or status. We still do not know whether an event delivers a universal message of emancipation or a universal mistake. For Badiou,

> Truth-Events are not judged true or false on the basis of their appeal to sectional or particularist interests. Rather, the Truth-Event is that event which produces a transformation in the horizon of the truth in the interests of greater and more inclusive universality.[40]

If we recall the Hegelian critique to Kant's ethics, we can understand the difficulty of Badiou's argument. Hegel believed that we cannot divorce the good from the evil by the categorical imperative, even an evil will can claim its status of universality without violating the formal definition of universality. Another is the issue put forward by communicative theory. For Aristotle, the world of politics is public. Nobody can be a political subject without participating in public practices. Badiou thinks, in the truth area, that the subject needs nobody. This subject with an asocial character risks the peril of falling into solipsism. Roberts correctly points out that Badiou's project is strongly Adornian. In this project, the tension between personal political consciousness and political collective solidarity is always in a non-reconciliatory condition.

---

[39] Ibid., 108.

[40] Roberts, "The 'Returns to Religion': Messianism, Christianity and Revolutionary Tradition," Part II. Pauline Tradition, 84.

Žižek ostensibly calls Badiou his teacher and follows Badiou in defending universalism and understanding Saint Paul. But Žižek pursues this within an explicit discussion of Christianity and wants to contribute to rethinking the relation between Marxism and Christianity. In *The Puppet and The Dwarf*, Žižek says,

> My claim here is not merely that I am a materialist through and through, and that the subversive kernel of Christianity is accessible also a materialism; my thesis is much stronger; namely, that kernel is accessible *only* to a materialism approach -- and vice versa: to become a true dialectical materialist, one should go through the Christianity experience.[41]

Broadly speaking, Badou, Žižek and Agamben are anti-historicists in the sense that they all refuse the traditional version of historical materialism. Agamben argues,

> True historical materialism does not pursue an empty mirage of continuous progress along infinite linear time, because it holds the memory that man's original home is pleasure. It is this time which is experienced in authentic revolution.[42]

Agamben tries to redeem the messianic dimension of secular revolution by return to Judaeo-Christianity. In the new reflections of historical materialism, Benjamin's anti-evolution conception of history and messianic time are under a common background.

Žižek claims that Christianity is a fragile legacy worth fighting for. Here, following Badiou, he believes that the only important thing in Christianity is that Christ died on the cross and was resurrected. Echoing Badiou, Žižek also argues that Pauline Christianity has broken with its Judaic origins with the resurrection:

> Judaism reduces the promise of Another Life to pure Otherness, a messianic promise which will be never fully present and actualized (the Messiah is always 'to come'); while for Christianity…the Mes-

---

[41] Žižek, *The Puppet and Dwarf: The Perverse Core of Christianity*, 6.

[42] Giogio Agamben, *Infancy and History: On the Destruction of Experienc*e (London: Verso, 1993), cited from Roberts, "The 'Returns to Religion': Messianism, Christianity and Revolutionary Tradition," Part I. "Wakefulness to the Future," 93.

siah is here, he has arrived, final event has always taken place, yet the *gap which sustains the messianic promise remains*.[43]

The resurrection as an event is a universal singularity, Christ's death and resurrection is "a Truth Event [that] can occur that opens up to us the possibility of participating in Another Life by remaining faithful to the Truth Event."[44] The event shows how human beings get out of the Scylla and Charybdis between postmodernist nihilism and positivism. Actual history is in the gap between the "already" of Christ's resurrection and the "not yet" of Christi's Parousia. The gap shall be covered by subjective struggle but never succeed totally. It is in this point that Pauline Christianity has implications for politics. As Roberts points out, "Christ's sacrifice may formally redeem all humanity, but Christians, in the actuality of their faith, are compelled to engage in the difficult work of realizing its truth *in this moment*."[45] Even salvation in Christianity is unwaged; Christians have to take position and responsibility in real life. Here, Žižek highly appraises Pauline tradition. Compared to the modern Jesus tradition, which grounds faith in the transformative potential of Christ's benign ecumenical message, Pauline universalism grounds faith in fidelity through struggle. In this sense, Paul is a fighter of faith.

Žižek emphasizes that Christianity is the religion of Revelation: everything is revealed in the Bible: "what is revealed in Christianity is not just the entire content, but, more specifically, that there is nothing -- no secret -- behind it to be revealed."[46] No obscene superego supplement accompanies its public message. What is revealed in Christianity? Žižek says,

> A crucial line of separation is to be drawn here between the Jewish fidelity to the disavowed ghosts and the pagan obscene initiatory wisdom accompanying public ritual: The disavowed Jewish spectral narrative does not tell the obscene story of God's impenetrable omnipotence, but its exact opposite: the story of His impotence concealed by the standard pagan obscene supplement.[47]

---

[43] Žižek, *The Puppet and Dwarf: The Perverse Core of Christianity*, 141.

[44] Slavoj Žižek, *The Ticklish Subject: The Absent Center of Political Ontology* (London: Verso, 1999), 147

[45] Roberts, "The 'Returns to Religion': Messianism, Christianity and Revolutionary Tradition," Part II. "Pauline Tradition," 85.

[46] Žižek, *The Puppet and Dwarf: The Perverse Core of Christianity*, 127.

[47] Ibid., 129.

Žižek highly appraises Job's complaints for his undeserved suffering. Job is willing to fit into the overall divine order and to recognize his place in it by explaining his suffering as a necessary part of the unfolding of God's plan. In this sense, Job is a protocritic of ideology.

Žižek defends the legacy of universalism in Judaic-Christianity. Like Badiou, he thinks that the true universality must transcend the dualism of universality and particularity. Žižek advocates a concept of concrete universality in the Hegelian way. What is "concrete" universality? Žižek claims that it has to be asserted in its negativity in a first move; it is not an all-encompassing container, but a destructive force which undermines every particular content. The true concrete universality is not a totality which mediates all particular content within its organic *whole*; on the contrary,

the true Hegelian 'concrete universality' is the very movement of negativity which splits universality from within, reducing it to one of the particular elements, one of its own species. It is only at this moment, when universality, as it were, loses the distance of an abstract container, and *enters its own frame*, that it becomes truly *concrete*.[48]

But which element can be chosen as instantiation of the concrete universality? Žižek returns to Hegelian logic again. According to this logic, every universal Whole is divided into its part and its remainder.

Every politics which grounds itself in the reference to some substantial (ethnic, religious, sexual, lifestyle) particularity is by definition reactionary. Consequently, the division introduced and sustained by the emancipatory ('class') struggle is not the one between the particular of the Whole, but the one between the Whole-in-its-parts and its Remainder which, within the Particulars, stands for the Universal, for the Whole 'as such', is opposed to its parts.[49]

The remainders are the exclusions of the social whole, they have no legal status and are at the very bottom of the social hierarchy. In other words, fighters of universalism are outcasts and remainders.

Žižek claims that there is a structural homology between the Pauline Christianity and political ontology of revolution in two aspects. In the issue of revolution, we may read the motto of the proletarian revolution: "We were nothing, we want to become All" for the proletarian redemp-

---

[48] Ibid., 87.
[49] Žižek, *The Puppet and Dwarf: The Perverse Core of Christianity*, 133.

tion. In the established order, the proletarian is nothing, but the remainder of this order and its part of no part (Rancière's word). In the horizon of redemption, the proletarian will become all of the world. In the issue of time, Pauline messianic time and the logic of the revolutionary process have a structural homology. Time is not a process outside of our practices; the consciousness of time has to be transformed by our subjective will and action, for any revolution is premature in an objective sense.

> If we wait for the 'right moment' to start a revolution, this moment will never come -- we have to take the risk, and precipitate ourselves into the revolutionary attempt, since it is only through a series of 'premature attempts (and their failure) that (subjective) conditions for the 'right' moment are created.[50]

It is a radical voluntarist version of historical materialism. Žižek believes that emancipation and Christianity face the same task: in order to redeem the rational core of Christianity, we have to abandon the shell of its institutional organization; in order to be revolutionary, we have to abandon the Stalinist party and communist organization.

Žižek's argument for the structural homology between Christianity and emancipatory politics is misleading to some extent. In historical materialism, the proletarian class as the agent of revolution is based on two complimentary theses: on the one hand, the proletarian class is the agent of social productivity; it is central to social reproduction and therefore has a structural advantage. On the other hand, as an exploited class on the bottom of the social hierarchy, it has no special interest to be defended, hence it has a moral advantage. In this sense, the proletarian or moral of the class struggle and the intellectual universality of social labor are united. Once the proletarian class realizes its power and uses the power as the tool of realizing the goal of emancipation, it will become a revolutionary agent. But we cannot find similar arguments in Žižek's theory.

As utopia, both Marxian classless society and the kingdom of Christianity have a common belief in the universal emancipation of humanity. Secular politics and religious practice ultimately are two distinctive human activities. A rational way is to keep up a creative dialogue between them, without cancelling the boundary. In this sense, Žižek does not succeed in resolving the tension between a utopia and realistic political practices.

---

[50] Ibid.

10.

Perfect Greek Art as Art of Religion: Reconsideration of Marx's Question on Art from the Perspective of Hegel's *Aesthetics*

Lu Kaihua

Karl Marx claimed that material transformation of the economic conditions of production can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, artistic or philosophical, in short, ideological forms, which, in turn, can be so determined. At the same time, he took artistic ideological forms as a special example for the uneven development with the forces of production. This raises the question about the eternal charm of Greek art, a theme that is close to a Kantian question of aesthetics. In order to get rid of the puzzle of sensuous perception of beauty, Marx should have turned the arms of his enemy, Hegel, to admit that art, especially fine art, which belongs to a highest interest of humankind, is absolute.[1]

Marx's Question of Art

For Marx, the issue of art was always difficult. If the development of art enjoys an independent position in Marx's paradigm of "superstructure and economic foundation,"[2] it would potentially threaten his system of historical materialism. In 1859, Marx had drawn a final conclusion in the preface of Karl Marx's *The Outline of a Contribution to the Critique of*

---

[1] The main text on Marx's question on art in this thesis be focused on the preface of Karl Marx's *The Outline of a Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (*Vorwort [Einleitung [zur Kritik der Politischen Ökonomie]]) (Abbreviation: Outline)* and *The Outline of a Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy (Einleitung [zur Kritik der Politischen Ökonomie]).*

[2] "With the change of the economic foundation the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed." See Karl Marx, in *The Author's Preface of A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, N.I. Stonf trans. (Chicago, 1903), 12. [Mit der Veränderung der ökonomischen Grundlage wälzt sich der ganze ungeheure Überbau langsamer oder rascher um.] Karl Marx/ Friedrich Engels -- Werke, (Karl) Dietz Verlag, Berlin. Band 13, 7. Auflage 1971, unveränderter Nachdruck der 1. Auflage 1961, Berlin/DDR. S. 9.

Political Economy[3] that, art, as law, morality and philosophy or other ideologies, is determined by the power of production of a certain society along with the social relations of production.

However, the problem of art was once, because of its uneven development with material production, a troubling question for Marx's theory, for it threatened its consistent system. In addition, an aesthetic question why ancient Greek arts retain an eternal charm was deduced from Marx's analysis in the final part on art in his *Outline of the Critique of Political Economy*. The answer to the question in virtue of a "Child and adult's metaphor,"[4] is also an obscure response to the question on art.

The puzzle of eternal charm retained by Greek art is most difficult for Marx, because the problem of art could be regarded as the consequence of Marx's overlooking the difference between the problem of fine art and the problem of beauty in art, both of which are given different

---

[3] "In considering such transformations should always be made between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, aesthetic or philosophic, in short ideological forms in men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out." Ibid., 12. (In der Betrachtung solcher Umwälzungen muß man stets unterscheiden zwischen der materiellen, naturwissenschaftlich treu zu konstatierenden Umwälzung in den ökonomischen Produktionsbedingungen und den juristischen, politischen, religiösen, künstlerischen oder philosophischen, kurz, ideologischen Formen, worin sich die Menschen dieses Konflikts bewußt werden und ihn ausfechten.) Karl Marx/Friedrich Engels -- Werke, (Karl) Dietz Verlag, Berlin. Band 13, 7. Auflage 1971, unveränderter Nachdruck der 1. Auflage 1961, Berlin/DDR. S. 9.

[4] "A man cannot become a child again unless he become childish. But does he not enjoy the artless way of the child and must be not strive to reproduce its truths on a higher place" See Marx, *Karl Marx's A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, 312. "Ein Mann kann nicht wieder zum Kinde werden, oder er wird kindisch. Aber freut ihn die Naivetät des Kindes nicht, und muß er nicht selbst wieder auf einer höhren Stufe streben, seine Wahrheit zu reproduzieren?" See Karl Marx, Einleitung (zur Kritik der Politischen Ökonomie), 641-42.

meanings by Hegel in his *Aesthetics*.[5] Marx's argument comprises a leap in which he mixed the problem of art with an aesthetic problem. The former belongs to the domain of a philosophy of art that Marx failed to accomplish. Yet when one considers that Marx merely dropped a scattered 'outline' on art, it is understandable because he had not made his argument on art scrupulously.

This requires a close look at the text in order to show a clear picture on the background knowledge of how Marx's trouble about art came to be and an analysis on *Outline* is also helpful in seeing how Marx was troubled with the question: why and how does ancient Greek art keep its charm and artistic pleasure forever?

Here Hegel should be invited into this discussion about these questions which troubled Marx. In Hegel's *Aesthetics*, Greek art is characterized as that for which "nothing can be nor become more beautiful." This may contribute to the explanation of why Greek art functions as a certain aspect of model (or standard) and unattainable ideal of art.

Marx aimed to make a critique on Hegelian aesthetics as early as 1842. Before writing his *Outline* in 1857, Marx had taken notes on aesthetics by a Hegelian scholar, E. Muller, and wrote an article on aesthetics for the New American Encyclopedia.[6] His entire "outline" was supposed to be a critique of Hegel's methodology on an aspect of political economy and other ideologies including the artistic. The historical and textual background indicates that Marx would have been familiar with Hegel's *Aes-*

---

[5] Fine Art, for Hegel, of which scientific treatment is worthy, is different from beauty of art, despite that without the latter the fine art itself could be hard recognized. "In these respects it may look as if fine art is unworthy of scientific treatment because [it is alleged] it remains only a pleasing play, and even if it pursues more serious ends, it still contradicts their nature; but [the allegation proceeds] in general it is only a servant both of that play and of these ends, an alike for the element of it being and the means of its effectiveness it can avail itself of nothing but deception and pure appearance." "For the beauty of art presents itself to sense, feeling, intuition, imagination; it has a different sphere form thought, and the apprehension of its activity and its products demands an organ other than scientific thing." Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, T.M. Knox, trans., 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 5.

[6] Moravoski Stepen, "The Aesthetic View of Marx and Engel," in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism,* Vol. 28, No. 3 (Spring, 1970), 302.

thetics, and could have taken this draft on art as a beginning for a critique of Hegel's *Aesthetics*.[7]

Marx's Argument on Art in the *Outline*

1. Marx's main discussion on art is gathered in the final draft of *Outline*. His aim in these pieces was to figure out why the great art such as the Greek art appeared and developed at a low stage of its social development. The crux of the point for Marx was to understand the relation between Greek mythology and Greek art in the social phenomena.

Mythology, in *Outline*, belongs to an ancient people who try to "overcome, dominate and shape the nature" in and through their imagination. The need for mythology, for Marx, is that people could not exercise their mastery over the forces of nature. Mythology disappears once people are able to attain their mastery over the forces of nature.[8] According to Marx, Greek art also presupposed its mythology. What is the presupposing supposed to mean here? In Marx's words "It is a well-known fact that Greek Mythology was not only the arsenal of Greek Art, but the

---

[7] Unfortunately, according to the analysis of this thesis, it is hard to draw a conclusion that Marx was acquainted with Hegel's *Aesthetics* as expected. On the contrary, we do not know whether he intended to ignore Hegel's key points on art or if he just did not know a lot about the text of *Aesthetics*.

[8] "Is the view of nature and social relations which shape the Greek imagination and therefore Greek [mythology] possible in the age autonomic minchenary spindles and railways and locomotives and electrical telegraphs?" See Marx, *Karl Marx's A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, 310. "(Ist die Anschauung der Natur und der gesellschaftlichen Verhaltnisse, die der griechischen Phantasie und daher der griechischen [Mythologie] zugrunde liegt, möglich mit Selfaktors und Eisenbahnen und Lokomotiven und elektrischen Telegraphen?) (*Einleitung [zur Kritik der Politischen Ökonomie]*, 641.) Here the English translation is wrong from the 'Mythologie' into the notion of "Art," which should be "Mythology," and 'zugrunde liegt' into "shape of" which should be "is based on." The English online edition translated by Tim Delaney is more faithful than this old edition of Stonf, "Is the view of nature and of social relations on which the Greek imagination and hence Greek (mythology) is based possible with self-acting mule spindles and railways and locomotives and electrical telegraphs? What chance has Vulcan against Roberts and Co., Jupiter against the lightning-rod and Hermes against the Credit Mobilier?" http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1859/critique-pol-economy/appx1.htm.

very ground from which it sprung."[9] The 'Boden' (ground, foundation or base), indicates two things in Marx's analysis of the relation between mythology and art: (1) It is Greek mythology and no other mythology, for instance, Egyptian mythology, that could not be the womb and soil (Boden) for Greek art, more precisely, could not gave birth to Greek art.[10] This means that Greek art could only be born in a society adhering to a faith in Greek mythology. (2) The notion "Boden" implies that Greek art could not develop further without its "soil" and "ground," for without its "Boden" it would be like a corpse or a picked blossom that cannot be beautiful any longer.

That metaphor of "Boden" for mythology means that the development of art could never be independent of the living condition in mythology, i.e., each art work in the form of Greek art created by artists must be working within the faith of Greek mythology, or more precisely, could only be possible under the ideology of a stage of undeveloped society.

A conclusion drawn from the above is that the Greek mythology determines Greek art. If mythology disappears, then the corresponding art fades away as well. To bolster this statement, Marx argues that the art of Greece functions as a shape in present of the mythology for Greeks. "Nature and even the organization of society (which is made sense by Greek into Mythology) are wrought up in popular fancy and artistic elaboration. In the shape of an artwork people of ancient times could make sense of their mythology." Since the unbroken link claimed by Marx between the mythology and the art is at work, it is easy to explain why Greek art could

---

[9] See Marx, *Karl Marx's A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, 310. (Bekannt, das die griechische Mythologie nicht nur das Arsenal der griechischen Kunst, sondern ihr Boden.) (ME.Bd.13,641;2.811.) As Marx mentioned "Egyptian mythology never be the soil and womb which would give birth to Greek art," see Marx, *Karl Marx's A Contribution to the Critique of Political Eco-nomy*, 310. (Ägyptische Mythologie konnte nie der Boden oder der Mutterschoß griechischer Kunst sein.) (ME.Bd.13,641;2.809).

The notion of "Boden," in the view of this thesis, should be translated into the word "ground" which indicates an organic relation between Greek Mythology and Greek art as the earth and the plan sprung into the soil. The other edition with the "basis" or "foundation" could be weaker in the meaning of the soil. http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1859/critique-pol-economy/appx1.htm; http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1850/pol-econ/index.htm (1 of 2) (23/08/2000 17:06:55).

[10] "Egyptian mythology never be the soil and womb which would give birth to Greek art." See Marx, *Karl Marx's A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, 310. (Ägyptische Mythologie konnte nie der Boden oder der Muterschoß griechischer Kunst sein.) (ME.Bd.13,642;2.810.)

not possibly appear again in a developed society where mythology is replaced by natural science and industry, where the task is to master and control the forces of nature.

2. After Marx thought he had understood the uneven development of art in his own method, the toughest question arose in the next paragraph of the *Outline*: Why Greek art still retains some aspect of artistic (aesthetic) pleasure and eternal charm for us even its living conditions have long gone?[11]

This question suddenly turns Marx's whole discussion above into a dilemma. According to Marx's discussion, it would be not possible for us who have no faith in mythology to enjoy Greek art. In modern society, we would not be able to enjoy the beautiful in Greek art, for we are not ancient Greeks. Greek artworks, such as the epics of heroes and the sculpture of gods that Marx mentioned in his *Outline*, would not be intelligible or attractive to us any more.

This question leads to a controversial issue: whether this puzzle of the eternal charm of Greek art is consistent with Marx's explanation of the "uneven development of art with its social production." It also directly challenges Marx's argument about "one's consciousness being determinate with his or her social existence."[12] This also results in a more interesting issue for Marxism: would Marx give up his explanation of the eternal charm of art and instead accept the fact that there is an absolute area for human consciousness independent of one's social existence, which is not determined by material production? In this case, the area of fine art is the place of 'the absolute' for Marx.

---

[11] "It (the difficulty) rather lies in understanding they still constitute us with a source of aesthetic enjoyment for us and in certain respects prevails as the standard and model beyond attainment." See Marx, *Karl Marx's A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, 311-12. (Die Schwierigkeit ist, daß sie für uns noch Kunstgenuß gewähren und in gewisser Beziehung als Norm und unerreichbare Muster gelten.) (ME.Bd.13,641;2.809.)

[12] Marx wrote: "It is not consciousness that determines their existence, but, on the contrary, their social existence determines their consciousness." See the preface of *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, in N.I. Stonf trans. (Chicago,1903), 11-12. [Es ist nicht das Bewußtsein der Menschen, das ihr Sein, sondern umgekehrt ihr gesellschaftliches Sein, das ihr Bewußtsein bestimmt.] See Karl Marx/Friedrich Engels -- Werke, (Karl) Dietz Verlag, Berlin. Band 13, 7. Auflage 1971, unveränderter Nachdruck der 1. Auflage 1961, Berlin/DDR. S. 9.

Religion: Marx's Foible and Contradiction

1. A key flaw of Marx is that he overlooked the relation between Greek art and Greek religion (and mythology), which should be much more complicated than Marx had expected. Marx confused the causal link between Greek art and Greek mythology. In his analysis, it is unclear whether Greek art still could be independent of its mythology when art started to express something beyond the content of natural forces. If we take Marx's argument into the discourse of Hegel, it is clear that first, imagination of Greek mythology offered its art material, but second, it is hardly accurate to say that art is mythological.

It is true that the art of Greece is mythological insofar as it is a presentation of its mythology that reflects the people's understanding of nature and their social structure, but it does not mean that Greek art is equal to 'mythology' which disappears after people master the forces of nature.

On the contrary, according to Hegel's distinction of classical art (Greek Art) from symbolic art, the most important difference is that classical art is disengaged from a mere presentation of natural forces, and does not present the symbol of natural God. Marx has mentioned that "all mythologies" [Mythologie] are products of imagination to overcome and dominate, most importantly, and to shape natural forces.[13] As for the material of Greek art which is refined from its mythology, it did not function as the expression of natural forces anymore.

2. If Marx in *Outline* would have paid more attention to make an argument about the influence of "social structure" on art rather than that of imagination for forces of nature, his argument about art would have been much clearer and convincing with a dialectical relation between Greek mythology and the social structure of Ancient Greece. It might be that, for Marx, the discussion on such a relation between both had been done in his previous work so that he would not want to talk more on the topic of social structure and art in his *Outline*. This paper would like to explore what Marx was ambiguous about on the issue of art.

---

[13] It is hard to understand why Marx said so without any further argument here. Perhaps for Marx it is just a self-evident part for he had an argument before. "All mythology masters and dominates, shapes the forces of nature in and by imagination; it disappears as soon as man gains mastery over the force of nature." See Marx, *Karl Marx's A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, 310. "Alle Mythologie überwindet und beherrscht und gestaltet die Naturkräfte in der Einbildung und durch die Einbildung: verschwindet also mit der wirklichen Herrschaft über dieselben." (ME.Bd.13,641;2.809.)

In Marx's *German Ideology* (1845), a certain social structure formed by "the organization of these individuals and their consequent relation to the rest of nature"[14] presupposes the division of labor. That means, in *Outline*, that a certain social structure implies a certain model of production in which human beings carry out a series of material intercourses to overcome their surrounding nature and inner natures (food, shelter and self-reproduction). This social structure depends mainly on the division of labor among those *real individuals.* In addition, the 'true' labor division is the mental and the physical one, which is the first step for human beings to overcome and control the forces of nature. The former kind of labor which produces ideological production, such as mythology, religion and philosophy, is the privilege of the ruling class. As the ruling class must persuade all the ruled to accept their social status, mythology as a kind of ideology (especially in ancient Greece) thus serves as a tool for ruling. This reflects the entire relationship of the production of human society.

According to Marx, art is kind of special labor, which is between the physical and the mental, and shared by the ruler and the ruled. However, since art is still supposed to be independent of mythology, which serves as an explanation of the legality of the ruling class, art is also limited by the ideology of its age. By virtue of the background knowledge in Marx's *Critique of German Ideology* (to prove that art functions as a sensuous ideology), it would be much easier to understand why Marx links mythology and art, since he holds that modern art cannot be "perfect" without mythology.

3. However, further exploration of the background of Marx's text is not sufficient to answer the question which bothered Marx. As the ideology of Greece, e.g., slavery and gender discrimination, faded away, should Greek art, as the sensuous products of Greek ideology, eventually pass away? For modern people it is impossible to agree with Greek slavery, but they still admire the beauty of Greek artworks. This means that art has nothing to do with moral judgment. Is it possible, then, for us to make sense of Greek art for its eternal charm by way of analysis of superstructure and material production?

Terry Eagleton provides an answer for Marx. According to Eagleton, the eternal charm of Greek art is an illusion for Marx, for Marx failed to be aware that what he appreciated are the products of his own imagination. In Eagleton's view, if Marx had a chance by means of some deft archaeological research, e.g., some remodeled scene of Greece given by modern

---

[14] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology*, including theses on Feuerbach and introduction to the critique of political economy (New York: Prometheus Books, 2005), paperback edition, 43.

technology via archaeology, to see what ancient Greek tragedy actually meant to its original audience, he would have recognized how much concerns emanated from his own time. With such deepened knowledge and experience, he would have stop enjoying the tragedy that he was enjoying.[15]

Eagleton's view is an ostensible response to Marx's trouble about art. Although Eagleton's argument still follows the principles of "superstructure and economic foundation (or material production)," it coerces Marx to accept a Hegelian aesthetic, i.e., the idealism has to do with the problem of art.

For Eagleton, every aesthetic experience of any individual is an action of a re-writing and re-creating of him/herself according to his/her own principles and tastes,[16] which are determined by his/her age and surrounding as well as dominating ideology. Thus, reading Shakespeare's or Homer's works would not be the same in the Middle ages or in ancient Greece, but rather a work of people's imagination according to the popular taste of a certain social environment.

Eagleton's view could also be represented in a Hegelian way so that the reader and the critics depicted are a typical phenomenon of modern art. For Hegel, only in the age of "Romantic art," one (the bourgeoisie) would take his/her principles and values of inwardness as the criterion of the world outside. Since Eagleton is a modern bourgeois, he could draw such an artistic theory of subjectivity. Thus, his view should be regarded as a Hegelian view on modern art.[17]

The difficult question here that really matters is not how Marx is in trouble with "Greek art's eternal charm" to be answered (by Eagleton),

---

[15] In addition, Eagleton said, "We might come to see that we had enjoyed them previously because we were unwittingly reading them in the light of our own preoccupations; once this became less possible, the drama (in Ancient Greece) might cease to speak at all significantly to us." See Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 10-11.

[16] "'our' Homer is not identical with the Homer of the Middle Age, nor 'our' Shakespeare with that of his contemporaries; it is rather that different historical periods have constructed a 'different' Homer and Shakespeare for their own purposes, and found in these texts elements to value or devalue, though not necessarily the same ones. All literary works, in other words, are 'rewritten', if only unconsciously, by the societies which read them; indeed there is no reading of a work which is not also a 're-writing'." See Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, 10.

[17] The topic of why Eagleton should be a Hegelian will not be further discussed later for it would be another hard question on Hegel's Romantic art and Marx's view on Shakespeare, which is beyond the main topic of Greek art in this thesis.

but by the imbalance in the relationship between art and production that puts Marx's whole system at risk. An alternative for Marx might make his system an open rather than a closed dogma.

Greek Arts: "Nothing can be nor become more beautiful"

Greek art is regarded as a classical art and a perfect art according to Hegel's *Aesthetics*. To draw a common standard of perfect art that both Marx and Hegel would agree upon, here classical art should have at least two levels of implications: first, it means a completed art; and second, 'classical' also indicates that the art, in Marx's word, must be a model (norm) for other arts. In general, the former meaning of art should be a precondition of the latter; but we should make a further distinction between the two. A corroboration of the two is necessary for both Hegel and Marx. As mentioned above, Marx left only an obscure paragraph on this issue in his *Outline*, it seems there is only one path to continue the argument on why and how perfect Greek art is.

The Ideal of 'Perfect Art'

Hegel in his *Aesthetics* claimed that there are only three kinds of arts: symbolic art, classical art and romantic art. Classical art is the only perfect art as evidenced in parts of Greek art, which includes sculpture, epics, parts of lyric poetry and specific forms of tragedy and comedy.[18] Among these forms, sculpture, in Hegel's term, is the most 'classic' for classical art because form in sculpture expresses a perfect fusion of the content and the form.

In *Aesthetics*, Hegel offered a definition on classical art in terms of "the determinate Character of classical art." The character of classical art, i.e., a perfect art, indicates that "content and form are meant to be adequate to one another." According to Hegel, as to the aspect of shape (the visible

---

[18] "In connection with 'classical' art in the usual rather indefinite meaning of the word, with the particular kinds of art in which the classical ideal is displayed, e.g., sculpture, epic, definite kinds of lyric poetry, and specific forms of tragedy and comedy." Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 441.

part) "there is a need for totality and independence in itself."[19] The fundamental characteristic-free and independent spirit implies that its two sides -- spiritual content and external appearance -- should be "in-itself a totality," or, to put it more simply, should be harmonious with each other. Only in this way could the beauty of Greek art be the mediation for reconciling subject with substance.

Human Body and Spirit

As the spiritual refers to something free and independent of nature (its finite existence), it would not dwell in plants whose soul is given, or in animals whose "soul" is only that of living at peace with surroundings according to its instincts. It is solely human beings who by nature intend to make sense of what they do and give a justification for what to do or what not to do, in other words, with the 'soul' of human spirituality.[20]

However, the human body, as the only dwelling place of Spirit in Hegel's terms, on the one hand, still contains animal types with attributes of dead, ugly, transient, and more exactly, of the finite.[21] On the other hand, the human body could also be an anthropometric shape as the expression of symbolic art which could be viewed as the result of imagination about natural forces.

How could the human body with inborn flaws be suitable to present a spiritual being, i.e., an internal and infinite being? This question is, at same time, a spur for the main issue of "Marx's troubles about art,"

---

[19] "It is clear from the determinate character of classical art, where content and form are meant to be adequate to one another, that even on the side of the shape there is a demand for totality and independence in its life. This is because the free independence of the whole, in which the fundamental characteristic classical art consists, implies that each of the two sides, the spiritual content and its external appearance, shall be in itself a totality which is the essential nature of the whole." Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 433.

[20] "For people speak even of a specific 'soul' of metals, minerals, stars, animals, numerously particularized human characters and their expressions….But, for things in nature, such as stones, plants, etc., the word 'soul', in the meaning given to it above, can only be used metaphorically. The soul of merely natural things is explicitly finite and transitory and should be called 'specific nature' rather than 'soul' For this reason, the determinate individuality of such things is completely revealed already in their finite existence." Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 154.

[21] "The human form does carry in itself much of the general animal type….Of course in the human form there are dead and ugly things; i.e., determined by other influences and by dependence on them." Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 434.

because it offers a Hegelian "formal standard" for the perfect art, which constitutes a discourse with Marx's view of aesthetics, even though it looks odd for Hegel.[22]

Hegel did not expend much effort on this question, but he still had a scattering of comments on it. A clue has been left to gather those sporadic discussions into one focused point: how to make spectators recognize the spirit from an artwork. This thesis strives to show how the topic on Hegel's argument in sculpture could support this audacious argument.[23]

The Spirit as the Inner-Being of the Body

Hegel famously said that the spirit of a person could be seen from his or her eyes because the eyes are a window to the soul. He did not talk more about it, nor did he speak of an argument for it in *Aesthetics*.[24] In common sense, it is reasonable to say that it is easier for us to recognize through the expression of eyes what 'he' or 'she' (for instance, the sculpture of a human body) is doing or what his or her mood (grief, anger, peace, or felicity) is. This means that the emotion and feeling expressed by a human face -- its look and gesture -- is more intelligible than an animal's. However, it is not because that we are human beings who own the same feelings that a sculpture shows, which could cause us to know a

---

[22] As the footnote above mentioned, Hegel was against that type of question in the domain of the beauty of art. However, in accordance with Marx's intellectual development we had to draw a 'criterion' for Marx's problem of aesthetic charm, but it just serves to make sense of the question about why Greek art as a perfect art is the most beautiful, and nothing can be more beautiful.

[23] Actually, Hegel never talked about why a kind of art retains its lasting charm for the issue on that is much like an aesthetic one rather than a philosophical one. In the preface of *Aesthetics*, Hegel had mentioned that, "[f]or this topic, it is true, the word Aesthetics, taken literally, is not wholly satisfactory, since 'Aesthetics' means, more precisely, the science, or philosophical discipline…but the proper expression for our science is *Philosophy of Art* and, more definitely, *Philosophy of Fine Art*." Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 1-2.

[24] Hegel has a further argument by virtue of analysis on the relation between the human body and the human mind (or spirit). He gave two examples: through human eyes we see one's spirit and the distinction between the human body and animal bodies. Both of the above aim to prove the human exterior (the human expression) is a bodily presence which "in itself mirrors the spirit." The former instance that we can a human spirit by means of seeing his eye could not suffice for Hegel's argument but still intelligible by combining with the latter one. Hegel wrote: "If therefore the bodily presence belongs to spirit as its existence, spirit belongs to the body as the body's inner being and is not an inwardness foreign to the external shape." Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 433.

countenance, a gesture, or expression of eye-contact from the human shape. For Hegel, it is only human beings who are spiritual animals have the human body evince itself as the dwelling-place of spirit and indeed as the "sole possible existence of spirit in nature."[25]

The argument given by Hegel is that spirit, as the body's inner being, is not "an inwardness foreign to external shape." Rather, being seen through the human body, for instance, through the eye, the spirit also belongs to the body. For Hegel, as the body is the dwelling place of the soul and the spirit, it implies that the spirit is a part of the body; thus, the spirit is the inner being of the body. As an inner being of the body, the spirit could be intelligible, that is, the spirit is not foreign to the external shape (the human body).[26]

Then, the difficulty lies not only in that the human exterior is a bodily presence which in itself mirrors spirit, but also in that each side of an artwork -- its content and its external shape -- could perfectly be harmonious with each other. More precisely, the work of art could be expressed with the form and the spiritual as one. In Hegel's words, the art work is "not showing the spiritual by way of a linkage produced by imagination in contrast to what is present."[27] Hegel knew that in the human form there are animal types including dead and ugly things,[28] which are the elements to interrupt the presentation of the content of pure spirit. The solution is then

---

[25] "The human form does carry in itself much of the general animal types, but the whole difference between the human and the animal body consists solely in this, that the human body in its whole demeanour evinces itself as the dwelling-place of spirit and indeed as the sole possible existence of spirit in nature." Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 434.

[26] The discussion of Hegel's argument here is ambiguous. Hegel wrote: "If therefore the bodily presence belongs to spirit as its existence, spirit belongs to the body as the body's inner being and is not an inwardness foreign to the external shape, so that material aspect neither has in itself, nor hints at, some other meaning." Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 433-4. It is hard to comprehend the above argument made by Hegel for the body which was regarded as a finite and material thing without the background of *The phenomenology of Spirit,* in which Hegel argued for why. There are also some flaws that exist. The question concerns most the body, whatever he gives is not convincing enough but we can further the discussion.

[27] "For when the spirit has grasped itself as spirit, it is explicitly complete and clear, and so to its connection with the shape adequate to it on the external side is something absolutely complete and given, which does not first need to be brought into existence by way of a linkage produced by imagination in contrast to what is present." Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 434.

[28] Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 434.

on the job of the productive artist who deals with expunging and obliterating the irrelevant elements of the human body.

The Artistic Skill

Might the aesthetics skill of Greek art (as a perfect art) be the most relevant part of Marx's view on aesthetics? Was Marx a Kantian on the question of art concerning the models or standards of art?

The issue of artistic skills for Greek art, in Hegel's view, is the least important part. For Hegel, Greek artists have already given the highest form of the external material -- the human body. The content has been already there in cut and dried given by their national faith, myth and other realities.[29] In another word, the substance is given.

The mission left is about how to make the human body express purely and naturally in a determined area, so that the artists of Greece can gain more freedom to realize their talent and imagination rather than being restrained by the content. Compared with Indian and Egyptian artists, Greek artists, with the help of the content given by their national faith, myth and other realities, are fortunate that what they are asked to do is to concentrate themselves on the task of shaping the external appearance of art congruent with the content bestowed[30] in a restrained and self-sufficient field. This makes it makes it possible for them to expose their talents and skills. The aim of the Greek artists, in Hegel's view, is quite concrete. They present the spirituality of gods in figures as the character of repose, peace and felicity by virtue of a human body. This constitutes the possibility of an easy way for spectators to watch.

In sum, Hegel paid less attention to "norms" or "standard" of the artistic skill. Rather, he concentrated on the condition and material that could stimulate artists' talents. The aspect of technical skills in art, for

---

[29] "But the more the artist has available confronting him an absolute and free content in national faith, myth and other realities, all the more does he concentrate himself on the task of realities, all the more does he concentrate himself on the task of shaping the external artistic appearance in a way congruent to such content." Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 439.

[30] "But the more the artist has available confronting him an absolute and free content in national faith, myth and other realities, all more does he concentrate himself on the task of realities, all the more does he concentrate himself on the task of shaping the external artistic appearance in a way congruent to such content." Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 439.

Hegel, is about the growing dexterity by repeated practice on a special content given by a static religion.[31]

However, the position of the productive artist matters in the whole process of production of art. Imagination, as a mysterious productiveness, is a natural gift and natural impulse of artists, because the key for the sensuousness of the work of art is in the presence of an operation that cannot be observed and thought about, precisely it is not like a general and intelligible scientific talent. This kind of talent is an unconscious movement in artists; imagination is an abstractive and mysterious activity of humankind.[32] Only with a combination of talent and genius, the artist could create a fine work of art. Nevertheless, the issue about imagination could be taken into a "scientific treatment."

The Norms of the Perfect Art as Art of Religion

The Norms of Perfect Art

This 'principle' of the beautiful, in Hegel's terms of the ideal as spirit, shows in itself in a sensuous way, and possibly the most important 'standard' deduced to express the highest content in an adequate form of an individual, for individuality is the only thing art would be most interested in.[33]

In the case of sculpture, the idea is that anyone views a sculpture can recognize the spiritual (the ideal) through a human body (although as a

---

[31] "Classical art therefore requires a high degree of technical skill which has subdued the sensuous material to willing obedience. Such technical perfection ,if it is to carry out everything required by the spirit and its conceptions, presupposes the complete development of every craftsmanship in art, and this is achieved especially within a static religion." Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 440.

[32] "[A]nd so we are right to say that there is no specifically scientific talent, in the sense of a merly natural gift. On the other hand, imagination has at the same time a sort of instinct-like productiveness, in that the essential figurativeness and sensuousness of the work of art must be present in the artist as a natural gift and natural impulse, and, as an unconscious operation, must belong to the natural side of man too." Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 40-41.

[33] "For the Idea as such is indeed the absolute truth itself, but the truth only in its not yet objectified universality, while the Idea as the beauty of art is the Idea with the nearer qualification of being both essentially individual reality and also an individual configuration of reality destined essentially to embody and reveal the Idea." Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 73.

temporal manifestation).[34] After the finite elements of body are obliterated and expunged according to the principle of the beautiful and the ideal, the spirit comes out from an individual reality. Thus, the whole course of "recognizing the spiritual from a work of art" could thereby be regarded as the shape of humanity as being the free spirituality of God in him/herself.

The most essential elements of the beautiful of Greek art is (1) the highest content, i.e., the substance given, and (2) most appropriate form -- the human shape, the dwelling place of spirit. Other elements, such as the talent and skills pertaining to the subject-matter, play no central role in Greek art. Furthermore, the key essential precondition for Greek art has to do with how human beings can find such highest content, when and where they are not conflictual with self-awareness that directly causes the human body to be an embodiment of the spirit.

Thus, art could be perfect only in ancient Greece, wherein subjectivity and substance were be contained in a certain area. According to Hegel, only in a society where people lived in the happy, i.e., appropriate milieu of both self-conscious subjective freedom and ethical substance,[35] or in Marx's terms, in a golden age as the "normal childhood of human being,"[36] could the most beautiful art appear.

Art That Functions as a Religion Could Be Perfect Art

From Hegel's perspective in his chapter on "Classical Art," Marx missed the point that it was Greek art that formed the religion of Greece

---

[34] The human body when in Romantic art and in the process of dissolution of Classical art, its inner nature such personification and anthropomorphism come to being and become an inadequate element in shape of spirit. "This shape, which the Idea as spiritual -- indeed as individually determinate spirituality -- assumes when it is to proceed out into a temporal manifestation, is the human form." Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 78.

[35] "Classical beauty with its infinite range of content, material and form is the gift vouchsafed to the Greek people, and we must honor this people for having produced art in its supreme vitality. The Greeks in their immediate real existence lived in the happy milieu of both self-conscious subjective freedom and the ethical substance." Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 436.

[36] "There are ill-bred children and precocious children. Many of ancient nations belong to the latter one. The Greeks were normal children. The charm their art has for us does not conflict with the primitive character of the social order from which it had sprung." See Marx, *Karl Marx's A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, 312. "Es gibt ungezogene Kinder und altkluge Kinder. Viele der alten Völker gehören in diese Kategorie. Normale Kinder waren die Griechen. Der Reiz ihrer Kunst für uns steht nicht im Widerspruch zu der unentwickelten Gesellschaftsstufe, worauf sie wuchs." (ME.Bd.13,642;2.812.)

rather than Greek natural mythology. In the *Aesthetics*, art's function as a religion (Greek art) is different from that of a mythology (Egyptian art & Indian art) since the Greek religion is different from that of other peoples (which are regarded as unruly children by Marx). Greek religion is not "the domination over nature,"[37] or in Marx's terms, "overcoming natural forces in and by imagination,"[38] but the expression of the spiritual in the sensuous shape of complete freedom.

Marx is partly right. As art at its earlier age lacked the adequate content to express the spiritual, gods in the earlier art, such as ancient Egyptian art and ancient Indian art, could only express their content in a symbolic way, or in Hegel's terms, in an external way. This means that arts rooted in mythology took the shape of animals and the natural phenomenal, i.e., immediate nature[39] as the media to show its content in terms of an anthropomorphic method. These symbolic arts express their object immediately in the form given by nature and are thereby inadequate to be understood as the free being. They are something external to the real content of art and then turn into abstractions for the human mind.

For both Hegel and Marx, ideologies such as religions and mythologies should be regarded as the reflections of human beings making sense of surrounding nature and practical activities, in Marx's term, human social structure. But for Hegel, the religion of art should be regarded as the reflection of human beings themselves in their highest interest.[40] Mythological tales tell about gods of natural forces or animal kingdoms which create and rule human beings by breaking their subjectivity, since those figures of gods are totally external and unintelligible to human beings. For Marx, human beings could only shape the uncontrolled natural forces as objects of blind worship.

---

[37] "At this point [art] lays hold of the spiritual as its content, in so far as the spiritual draws nature and its powers into its own sphere and so is represented otherwise than as pure inwardness (romantic art), or as *dominion over nature* (symbolic art)." Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 476.

[38] "All mythology mastering and dominating, shape the forces of nature in and by imagination; it disappears.as soon as man gains mastery over the force of nature." See Marx, *Karl Marx's A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, 310. "Alle Mythologie überwindet und beherrscht und gestaltet die Naturkräfte in der Einbildung und durch die Einbildung: verschwindet also mit der wirklichen Herrschaft über dieselben." (ME.Bd.13,641;2.809.)

[39] Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 253.

[40] "Nor does art elude philosophical treatment by lawless caprice, since, as has been already hinted, its true take is to bring the highest interests of spirit to our minds." Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 13.

In Hegel's view, natural gods in mythology are totally abstract. In the process of shaping those gods of natural forces, artists had hardly found a concrete and stable embodiment. Hence, in Indian tales and fables, gods are figures of animals or metamorphoses, which stand for the disturbing and unintelligible attribution of the power of nature. A common point for those gods in tales is that their figures and stories are exaggerated, aghast and beyond the imagination. For Hegel, the art with the content of such natural gods is symbolic art and abstract because of their unrestricted figures.

For ancient Greeks, gods were not characterized as the symbols of natural forces but as the shape of humanity.[41] Since the force of nature and the kingdom of animals were not worshipped by human beings after the debasement of the animal kingdom, the Greeks, contrary to Marx's argument, became more fully self-conscious and took themselves as free-beings even in the trap of natural forces.

The perfect art, i.e., the expression of the most beautiful, gradually referred to the spiritual completely and showed an individual who is objectively refined from the imperfection of finitude.[42]

The Divine created from imagination by the Greeks as a kind of ideology was gradually characterized as the self-reposing power of the individual spirit who also possesses knowledge, will and other spiritual power.[43] In other words, the new gods of Greece as individuals were no longer the lords of nature, and more precisely, not something determining humankind and harming their subjectivity. Rather, the new Divines with a spiritual character come to be intelligible to human beings. Thus, the relationship between gods and humankind could be reconciled into a

---

[41] "Now since the objective and external, in which spirit becomes visible, is, in accordance with its nature, determinate and particularized throughout at the same time, it follows that the free spirit…can in its shape in nature be only spiritual individuality equally determinate and inherently independent. Therefore, humanity constitutes the centre and content of true beauty and art; but as the content of art (as has been already." Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 432.

[42] "Humanity must appear essentially determined as concrete individuality and its adequate external appearance which in its objectivity is purified from the defect of finitude." Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 432.

[43] "As the genuine gods of classical art have for their inner character free self-consciousness as the self-reposing power of the individual spirit, they can also come into our view only as possessed of knowledge and will, i.e. as spiritual powers." Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 453.

happy harmony whose result is the beautiful. Its outlook is the past occurring as a background.[44]

By virtue of the beautiful, the Greek people regarded the outside world as the reflection of the inner world. Watching gods in the shape of the human body and characterized by personality, they recognized the spirituality in them and felt harmonious with gods and the whole world.

The worship of gods in the case of Greek religion is through the means of works of Greek art. Greek artworks, which are able to show the spiritual in felicity, loftiness and eternal peaceful figures and characterized with a self-sufficiency, repose and independence, free from accident and nature, form the links that finite human beings always seek.

Consequently, the beautiful presents and harmonizes people's subjective inner totality of character and the objective totality of external existence.[45] In other words, the Greek people immersed into a feeling of domesticity and being at home. That feeling of the beautiful arose by gods (the new gods) made all Greek citizens immersed spontaneously in harmony with their surroundings and the relationship with other citizens. Each one fulfilled the requirements and obligations according to laws of gods, i.e., the rules of states and the common good of the whole. By means of reconciliation of the beautiful the ancient Greeks achieved their "pathos"[46] -- the substantial content of the actions in their political and ethical life. In a word, the beautiful makes the substance of Greek life intelligible and visible.[47] The inner part of an individual was not disturbed for its reflection on the external life as the reflection of the inner life.[48]

---

[44] "[A] milieu which yet, like life in general, is at the same time only a transitional point, even if at this point it attains the summit of beauty and in the form of its plastic individuality is so rich and spiritually concrete that all notes harmonize with it, and moreover, what for its outlook is the past still occurs as an accessory and a background." Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 437.

[45] "[The] individual must appear as having his abode, and therefore as being free, in nature and all external relations, so the both sides, (i) the subjective inner totality of character and the character's circumsatances and acitivity and (ii) the objective."

[46] Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 579.

[47] "Now, lastly, the universal powers which not only…but are equally alive in the human breast and move the human heart in its inmost being, can be described in Greek by the word, pathos. (Pathos means anything that befalls one, whether good or bad. [from the translator footnote])." Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 232.

[48] "For external objectivity, in so far as it is the actuality of the Ideal, must give up its purely objective independence and inflexibility in order to evince itself as identical with that [subjectivity] of which it is the external existence." Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 253.

Thus, Greek art presents the most beautiful gods for all Greek citizens. The beautiful in this case functions as a new religion with a background knowledge, or in Marx's view, ideology, which means that people could be harmonious with the surrounding world and still keep their subjectivity free in its own totality.

"The most beautiful" in Hegel's analysis of Greek art functioning as religion means that the beautiful, which is present in Greek art, is no longer a kind of mediation of making sense of the forces of nature, but the function of making sense of making sense -- the highest interest for humankind.

Therefore, natural gods, in Marx's analysis on art, which function as the "overcoming and dominating force of nature," lost their significance in the Greek religious system and were replaced by new gods who are full of spirituality of freedom.

In this sense, we understand why Greek art as perfect art was seen as religion itself, that is, the function of making sense of making sense. The reason that Greek art had achieved the standard of a perfect art is because of the fact that Greek society held a religion of art that made the Greeks be Greeks. How, then, Greek art could become the kind of art that can function as religion, or, the full expression of substance?

The Greek age passed away, and both Marx and Hegel agreed with the end of art, for the question is about whether Greek life would be possible again[49] on an ideological account or the explanation of social production. The question is why Marx, as well as Hegel, could admire Greek art without believing in the Greek religion, which is a religion of art.

This question could turn into another question: could modern people who are in a life of immersed-in-their-inwardness admire Greek art? For Hegel, the answer is yes.

Since we understand what ancient Greece is or was, and what we are in the next step derived normatively from Greece, we can still appreciate and admire Greek art by virtue of philosophy of art, rather a faith of Greek natural mythology, the spontaneous obedience to the law, or any other

---

[49] "The charm their art has for us does not conflict with the primitive character of the social or form which it had sprung. It is rather the product of the latter, and is rather due to the fact that the unripe social condition under which the art arose and under which alone it could appear can never return." See Marx, *Karl Marx's A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, 312. "Der Reiz ihrer Kunst für uns steht nicht im Widerspruch zu der unentwickelten Gesellschaftsstufe, worauf sie wuchs. Ist vielmehr ihr Resultat und hängt vielmehr unzertrennlich damit zusammen, daß die unreifen gesellschaftlichen Bedingungen, unter denen sie entstand und allein entstehn konnte, nie wiederkehren können." (ME.Bd.13, 642;2.810.)

requirements which only Greeks could fill. We can perceive the charm of Greek art in deep knowledge and speculation of Greek art. This means that if we can take other arts on the same level as the Greek in terms of philosophy of art and what can be understood is how to make sense of the art of Greece.

Marx and Kantian Paradox

The last paragraph in *Outline* indicates something unsolved in Marx's system when he was aware of being troubled by the question that he could not answer easily. Interestingly, according to Marx,[50] human beings could only set forth the question that can be solved, because the question that human beings become conscious of and try to overcome is only the consciousness transformed by the conflict of existing life between social forces of production and the relations of production. Thus, only when the material conditions are ready for the solution of conflict, could the question in the human mind be possibly answered.

However, the Kantian question of the eternal charm of Greek art is based on the Kantian paradox, freedom and necessity, which for Kant is aimed to be reconciled in the critique of aesthetic judgment, or in the Hegelian notion, the contradiction of "amphibious animal."[51] Marx realized that the question of eternal charm would lead him back to Kant's old problem and that he had to turn back to the Hegelian resolution to the Kantian paradox.

---

[50] "Therefore, mankind always takes up only such problems as it can solve; since, looking at the matter more closely, we will always find that the problem itself arises only when the material condition necessary for its solution already exist or are at last in the process of formation." See Marx, *The Author's Preface of A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, 12-13. "Daher stellt sich die Menschheit immer nur Aufgaben, die sie lösen kann, denn genauer betrachtet wird sich stets finden, daß die Aufgabe selbst nur entspringt, wo die materiellen Bedingungen ihrer Lösung schon vorhanden oder wenigstens im Prozeß ihres Werdens begriffen sind." See Karl Marx/Friedrich Engels -- Werke, (Karl) Dietz Verlag, Berlin. Band 13, 7. Auflage 1971, unveränderter Nachdruck der 1. Auflage 1961, Berlin/DDR. S p.9.

[51] "In numerous forms they have always preoccupied and troubled the human consciousness, even if it is modern culture that has first worked them out most sharply and driven them up to the peak of harshest contradiction. Spiritual culture, the modern intellect, produces this opposition in man which makes him an amphilbious animal, because he now has to live in two worlds which contradict on another." See Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 54.

The last metaphor of "children and adults" as the final conclusion of "Greek art as a thing of the past"[52] is the same as Hegel's, and could be taken as a transition for Marx from the Kantian paradox to a solution from the Hegelian perspective. Only in the Hegelian perspective could he find a way out of this Kantian aesthetic problem and with a supposition about the reconciliation of freedom and necessity, subject and substance. In this sense, for Marx it hints a possibility to a Hegelian aesthetic rather than a Kantian aesthetic.[53]

If Marx was forced to answer the question of the eternal charm of art, the issue of perfect art would show that the standard for a perfect art is to be considered in terms of a certain mode of art which expresses the spiritual fully in an adequate shape. Only for this could the true freedom of the subject itself be shown. However, this is no longer the task of art, for its interests have shifted to the object of individuals whose perfect stage is to show something full of substance from and in nature.

The spiritual should experience the voyage of art, i.e., in a sensuous way, to touch the freedom of substance, to make the charm of Greek art really perfect in showing freedom for its immersion in the whole "substance." As in "Preface" to the 1807 *Phenomenology*, Hegel wrote, "In my view, which must be justified by the exposition of the system itself, everything hangs on apprehending and expressing the truth not merely as *substance* but also equally as *subject*."[54] As Terry Pinkard explains, the "truth," in our case, the true freedom for humankind, must leave nature ("substance") behind but must equally include agency ("subject") as well

---

[52] "The charm their art has for us does not conflict with the primitive character of the social or form which it had sprung. It is rather the product of the latter, and is rather due to the fact that the unripe social condition under which the art arose and under which alone it could appear can never return." See Marx, *Karl Marx's A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, 312. "Der Reiz ihrer Kunst für uns steht nicht im Widerspruch zu der unentwickelten Gesellschaftsstufe, worauf sie wuchs. Ist vielmehr ihr Resultat und hängt vielmehr unzertrennlich damit zusammen, daß die unreifen gesellschaftlichen Bedingungen, unter denen sie entstand und allein entstehn konnte, nie wiederkehren können." (ME.Bd.13, 642;2.810.)

[53] I had to say I had no idea about this conclusion of the draft from Professor Terry Pinkard as he gave his lecture at the Fudan University in 2011.

[54] Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Terry Pinkard, trans. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996), ¶17. [Es kömmt nach meiner Einsicht, welche sich durch die Darstellung des Systems selbst rechtfertigen muß, alles darauf an, das Wahre nicht als *Substanz*, sondern ebensosehr als *Subjekt* aufzufassen und auszudrücken.]

as nature ("substance") within itself.[55] In this case, their freedom is, at the start of the beautiful, in Hegel term, both a "freedom from and a freedom in" the natural world.[56]

If we take Marx's last sentence into account in a Hegelian way, it is true that Marx should be a Hegelian on the issue of art. A man needs not to be 'childish' in order to be able to enjoy the beauty of naive children, as he had been a child. To turn back to the answer from Eagleton, it is difficult to say that a man would not stop enjoying a fine art as Greek art for its beauty as the true freedom of humankind, but stop those, such as Egyptian art and Indian art, from damaging the freedom of spirituality, i.e., subjectivity.

Marx's system, as he expected, can still be consistent with the issue of art in terms of philosophy of art for it left a certain domain for such a 'metaphysical but highest interest' of human beings. More interestingly, as Marx had said, he would like to stand "Hegel's on his feet," which means that his system of historical material could make the methodology of abstraction (of Hegel) into concrete, the normative into the historical and idealism into materialism. But from the analysis above, it seems that on the issue of art, Marx's account is much more abstract, normative and ideal than Hegel's, as his "it is well known" to the evidence of Greek's eternal charm, the "Boden" of mythology for Greek art and the metaphor of "naïveté of a child." The problem of art for Marx is still a tough issue.

---

[55] Terry Pinkard, *Self-Consciouseness Desire*, The draft paper for the lectures in the Fudan University, 2011.

[56] Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, et al., *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie des Geistes: Berlin 1827/1828* (Vorlesungen / Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel; Hamburg: F. Meiner, 1994) xxxviii, 321, p. 19. Quoted from Pinkard, *Self-Consciousness Desire*.

11.

The Market Dimension and
the Transcendent Dimension of Religion

ZHANG QINGXIONG

I

The society that we are living now is a secular one. One of the most important characteristics of our secular world can be summarized as that the market mechanism penetrates into all parts of the social life including the religious arena. Religion is within this market mechanism. Without this market mechanism, religion cannot survive; yet led blindly by this market mechanism, religion is doomed to corruption. How to adjust religion to a society characterized by market economy while at the same time maintaining transcendent inclination towards eternal reality is important to determining the sound development of religion per se and its long term social stability and harmony.

There is a demand and supply relationship in religion. The demand for religion comes from social, psychological and other kinds of needs in our lives and is succeeded by the supply of religions. For instance, facing pains from sickness and death, people tend to demand salvation in order to find ways of getting rid of sufferings. Short lives and an imperfect world make people concerned about the other world and expect for life in heaven. In a turbulent society, destitute and homeless life, rough official careers, cruel business competition and a capricious stock market drive people desperate for fortune telling to know one's life and blessings of gods.

Since people are concerned about material profit, their religious lives are not all about spiritual pursuits. Buddhists ask monks to do ceremony for treating disease or releasing soul of the dead; Christians ask priests to celebrate their weddings in church; tourists buy tickets to visit famous ancient religious places; officials strive to be the first to burn joss sticks at the beginning of the Chinese Lunar New Year to bless their careers; inhabitants shop in small commodity shops in Confucian temples and also eat in vegetarian restaurants in Buddhist temples. Can we say that what they are doing does not involve money? Religion is part of the market economy; its corruption is also part of the corruption of the entire society. Unauthorized constructions of temples are built in some places; even worse, the local government is involved in such constructions for the sake of economic interest. Some fake monks and nuns in some places claim

that they can cure diseases and dispel disasters. What they do is to use Buddhist or Taoist rites and religious services as ways of making money.

Religion is a product of culture. Like art, religion has its own elegance and vulgarity. Elegant religions can purify one's mind and spirit, enhance one's morality and sentiment and shift one's attitude from an egoistic center to transcendence in which the whole world and all people are unified. Vulgar religions make one's attention merely on one's own destiny. It advocates a utilitarian relationship for the sake of one's wealth, health, marriage, career and one's religious belief. Also, it assumes that worshiping and seeking help from gods is a kind of trade: "money spent, disaster dispelled."

Nowadays, the problem for religious development in China is that the promotion of elegant religions is insufficient, while vulgar religions are everywhere. Vulgar religions have the same power as small scale productions in the economic area; mere administrative measures have little effect on them. We must recognize that there are religious needs in our society, and wherever a demand exists, a supply of such products, either elegant or vulgar, appears. Administrative measures only work on elegant religions, which are comparatively in the open. Once these elegant religions have been restricted, they will no longer serve the demand of people; then vulgar religions, which are loosely organized in the dark, come out to provide the needed products. Under these circumstances, inferior products may appear. Charlatans can easily join with vulgar religious promoters. Vulgar religions require little knowledge and education from people and are favored by those who have diseases and are in a hurry to find a cure. Restrictions on elegant religions generate more opportunities for smuggled religion. Similarly, if we put strict restrictions on the production via correct means it may leave chances to fast-fingered corporations to manufacture or smuggle the demanded products. For example, decades ago, when there was a short supply of colored TVs in the domestic market, we had a severe problem of smuggled TVs. Nowadays, not only can we manufacture color TVs to meet the domestic demand, but also export them to the overseas market. As a result, smuggling TVs has become the story of yesterday.

II

Marx once compared religion to opium, and then many people thought that we should forbid religion the way we do opium. Marx did affirm that

> [r]eligious suffering is, at one and the same time, the expression of
> real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh
> of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul
> of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people.[1]

We should understand Marx's view on religion with the basic prin-
ciple of Marxism, that is, we should understand it based on the dialectical
and historic method. This statement is not contradictory to the religious
market "demand and supply" theory that I have discussed before. Once
there are pains in our secular life, people tend to resort to religion for sal-
vation to ease their sufferings. The fact that people seek salvation from
religion indicates the real suffering in our secular life. This can be proved
by the social survey that we have conducted. For example, in Shanghai
the most economically developed city in China, a small number of Chris-
tians are wealthy businessmen and high-level intellectuals. Yet, the major-
ity of Christian believers are not wealthy, but belong to vulnerable groups
in society. Many became religious initially because they suffered from
sickness, unemployment, poverty, or loneliness. Senior citizens and fe-
male citizens, together with migrant workers, occupy the majority of these
religious believers. Overall in China, there are relatively more religious
people in rural areas and poor places than in cities and rich places. From
the global perspective, though there has been a strong Christian tradition
in Europe, because of rapid economic development and good social wel-
fare, the number of religious believers is decreasing. There are many
churches, but most of them are empty because fewer people go to church
service. However, Africa and Latin America, where poverty is common
and social welfare is not sufficient, have now become places of religious
importance due to the increase of the number of religious believers. Ob-
viously, the statement of Marx that religious suffering is, at the same time,
the expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering still ap-
plies to the current situation.

The statement that religion is opium of the people needs to be ana-
lyzed carefully. This statement made by Marx meant that the oppressing
class uses religion to paralyze the resistant awareness of the oppressed. In
this sense, religion was used as opium of the masses by the oppressing
class. But Marx and Engels also mentioned that the oppressed class, under
the name of religion, mobilized people to rise against the ruling class, "To
the masses whose minds were fed with religion to the exclusion of all else,

---

[1] Karl Marx, *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right: Intro-
duction*, in *The Marx-Engels Reader* (2nd edition), R.C. Tucker, ed. (New York
and London: W.W. Norton and Company, 1978), 54.

it was necessary to put forward their own interests in a religious guise in order to produce great agitation."[2] In this sense, religion is used as a way for the oppressed class to launch a revolution. In the 1th century in Germany, Menzel led a farmer's uprising by using the Millennial Kingdom in Revelation in the Bible to encourage people to establish a society where everyone is equal, and good people shall govern the world for thousands of years. No matter whether religion is thought to be the opium for people or a guise for people's uprising, religion is taken advantage of by politics.

It is difficult to give a clear definition of religion because religion has two dimensions, transcendent and secular, which are tightly related with one another. The transcendent entity means God to Christians, Buddha to Buddhists, Tao to Taoists and "Destiny of Heaven" or "Principle of Heaven" to Confucian disciples. Meanwhile, religion deeply relates to the secular life of human beings, for people resort to religion for the elimination of tribulation, for seeking blessings, for comfort of the soul, for philanthropy and justice. All these are related to the secular life; human beings need a transcendent entity, such as God, Buddha, Tao and Heaven, to solve their secular problems.

Sociologists claim that religion has such functions as social integration, social critique, moral discipline and psychological consolation, all of which are based on the belief in a transcendent entity. If believers lost their faith in the transcendent entity, then these functions could not work. In other words, if we deconstruct the transcendent entity as an object of belief, those religion-related functions would be destroyed. There once was an enlightened sociologist. One day when he went to a primitive tribe, he found that people there worshiped a totem, their society was in good order; they were all living with solidarity and amicableness. He tried to enlighten primitives and told them that it was naïve for them to worship the totem, which was a representational animal and had no spiritual value at all. He also commented on their amicableness and solidarity but suggested that they should give up totem worship and introduce law and ethics into their tribe. The primitives did what he suggested. However, law and ethics did not convince and were not obeyed by the primitives. At the same time, because they no longer worshiped the totem, the former solidarity and amicableness based on their totem worship was gone.

Modern enlightenment tries to substitute religion with reason by ways of replacing all the religion-related social functions with law, moral education and psychological treatments based on reason. This seems only

---

[2] Friedrich Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach and the Outcome of Classical German Philosophy* (New York: International Publishers, 1941), 57.

leading to results similar to what that sociologist brought to that primitive tribe. Why? Because people are willing to act upon law and moral principles only when they have the spiritual support to do so. This spiritual support transcends instrumental reason. When people gave up their totem worship, they also abandoned the related transcendent spirit. Unfortunately, the newly introduced law or ethics failed to provide with the transcendent spirit for those primitive people. It is rather difficult to nurture a transcendent spirit among a community, for it takes thousands of years for people to foster this spirit from their psychological and living habit. This is where the traditional values lie.

III

The modern Enlightenment reason declared that religion should be replaced by reason and removed from people's life. Though we had the Enlightenment in Europe in the 17th century, we still have religions today. The reason that religions still exist today is because the Enlightenment reason failed to solve all the problems in human life, especially those related to the moralization and bitterness of life. The tribulation of human life does not merely come from dissatisfaction with material needs. Moralization differs from disciplines which operate through laws or knowledge, it requires a transcendent dimension.

Modern enlightenment reason tries to replace the transcendent-dimensioned traditional culture with science and democracy, which are developing soundly now. However, when science only cares about factual truth and democracy concerns merely the distribution of profit, problems, such as, the meaning of life, are left in a vacuum and ignored by the modern Enlightenment reason. This is our current situation: science becomes positivist and democracy becomes procedural. Under these circumstances, science and democracy have no transcendent dimension and cannot function as do traditional cultures.

We often assume that science advances while religion is just the opposite and that religion should be replaced by science. In reality, science and religion have different functions, it is unreasonable to compare one with the other and say one is advanced and the other is not. Both science and religion have a process of development. From a primitive level in the Stone Age to modern technologies, science has developed with the times. Religion has also developed from totem worship to modern religions through times. Through adjustment of forms, religion could make itself adaptable to different type of society, such as slavery, feudal, capitalistic and socialist society. Since religion has a transcendent dimension by nature, what we should be concerned about is not how we can make it die

out from history, but how we can adjust it and make it adaptable to present times.

Arnold Toynbee, a British historian, once made a comparative study of all religions, from the primitive to the modern level and came to such a conclusion: higher religions have an ethical connotation. Higher religions convert human beings from being self-centered to being self-devoted.

> Self-centeredness is thus a necessity of life, but this necessity is also a sin. Self-centeredness is an intellectual error, because no living creature is in truth the centre of the universe; and it is also a moral error, because no living creature has a right to act as if it were the creator of the universe.[3]

With a self-devoting desire, the loving self treats the universe as a society of selves like itself. In Christianity, Jesus summarized all the principles by which human beings should have faith in God and love their neighbors just as God loves them. Confucianism calls for the awareness of the heart of heaven and earth and takes it as guidance for human actions. Buddhism advocates that sympathy should be given to all things and all living beings in the universe. All these illustrate the viewpoint from self-centeredness to a transcendent-center and about the transcendent faith as their ethical foundation.

Toynbee hereby raised the concept of a higher religion. He connected higher religions with ethics and assumed that Judaism, Christianity, Islamism and Buddhism fall into the category of higher religions, for they all have the function of moralization, which assumes that the transcendent entity, such as God, Tao, Buddha and Heaven, has its own ethical character. God is good and upholds justice; the good deity (God) is sure to defeat bad one (demon). "Tao" (Way) abides in non-action, "De" (virtue) is the manifestation of Tao and these two Chinese characters literally constitute the concept of moralization. Tao, without any name or form, gives birth to the myriad of creatures. Tao controls everything and spreads goodness and great kindness into the development of all creatures. Buddhism holds great sympathy, mercy and strongly rejects self-centeredness. According to Confucianism, Holy heaven blesses all human beings; sages know their destiny from heaven and take guaranteeing world peace as their responsebility. The salvation function of religion is to relate this good and tran-

---

[3] Arnold Toynbee, *An Historian's Approach to Religion* (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), 4-5.

scendent entity with a liberation power. Anyone who has faith in this good and transcendent entity will finally be immersed in blessing, free from sufferings and pains.

In these higher religions, there is a need to distinguish the elegant form from the vulgar. In such higher religions as Christianity, Islamism, Buddhism and Taoism, though the elegant communities are prevailing, the vulgar sects might blend in. This is obvious in sociological surveys. We have to take into consideration that different religious forms meet the various demands of people. People vary in many ways due to differences in education and economic and social status, the attitude towards the world and the purpose of religious faith, therefore, they tend to have various demands for religions. Since the variety of forms of religions promotes religious tolerance and richness, there is no reason to see this variety as a bad thing. What we should be most concerned about is how to enhance elegant religions' function in order to enable it to guide the development of the vulgar forms of religions toward the better.

Elegant religions inherit the merit of human civilizations of thousands of years and update with times by referring to the success and failure of development of the history of religions and by absorbing the excellent cultural achievements. Elegant religions are in the pursuit of ultimate concern while envisaging the real social problems. They promote tolerance, peace and philanthropy and stay away from extremism and narrowness. They have great sympathy for the suffering people and make effort to enhance their morality. Elegant religions play an active role in promoting social stability and harmony. Whereas vulgar religions do not pay attention to the function of morality and free the suffering merely through idolatry and religious ritual. They are easily taken advantage of by deceivers.

Sufferings and pains of life are the outer drives for the existence of religion. Some pains can be reduced or relieved while others which existed in the past are still with us today and will stay here for a long time. Pains relieved by religion are essentially the eternal sufferings inside the hearts of human beings. These pains come from our limited and fragile life from our selfishness, greediness and cockiness in our human nature and from the abandonment and hopelessness about human life. How could we integrate the limited human life with unlimited wholeness and achieve the transformation from self-centeredness to a transcendent entity? How could we overcome cockiness, desperation and loneliness? These topics are always present in religion.

Although socialism in China has tremendously improved our living standard, we should not overlook the unsound development of our social welfare system. The market economy brings not only a vigorous market but also financial crises. People who have no job or a place to live and

who are in poverty and have no money to see a doctor still occupy a certain portion of the whole population. Moreover, there are other pains in our life which cannot be solved even if the welfare system was perfect. People tend to get those pains when they are left alone and divorced, or lose some-one they love, etc. No matter how advanced science, society and the economy have become, those who have mental sufferings still have un-re-lieved pains. Officials in religious and other government sectors should not discriminate against those who become religious with the purpose of reducing sufferings and pains. Rather, we should insist on the principle of serving the people by listening attentively to and helping them,

<p align="center">**IV**</p>

In order to develop elegant religions and push away vulgar religions we should cultivate talents and adopt a competition mechanism.

The leader of the elegant form of religion should be respected as cultural elite. Clergies, priests and abbots should have the right education and public trust. However, nowadays in China most of the people who have higher positions in the religious arena have only primary or middle school education. Although it is possible for them to have knowledge in a certain aspect of religion with the help of their masters, they do not possess sound knowledge. Sometimes some people are not good at studies, but may enter the religious school with a bribe; others who are unable to make a living bribe their way to become monks or nuns. Some of thm are too lazy to make progress; some not even study and observe religious canons and observe disciplines but bring some social ills to sacred religious places.

One of the important reasons why this happens is the separation between the religious management sector and the education and cultural development. Religious schools are administered by religious offices, while elementary schools, middle schools, colleges and universities, either publicly or privately funded, are administered by the State Ministry of Education. Diplomas from religious schools are not recognized by the Ministry of Education because of the separation of managements between religion and social affairs. Thus, culture and education are categorized as social and public affairs, while religion is not.

It is necessary to understand this separation from another perspective. We should not simply put religious affairs into the private field. Although the individual selection of religious faith is private, religion has its own transcendent dimension which is to most people the foundation of morality. Moral education is related to the public field, religion as the foundation of morality should be considered within the public field as well. Preaching and believing a certain religion are private issues, but the

discussion related to the transcendent dimension of religion and its implycation for ultimate human concern and moral consciousness should take place in public space.

Some key universities in China have already established the Department of Religious Studies, which is supposed to be the place for people to study religion rather than preaching. The way of running such a department accords with the principle of separating religion from other social affairs. However, we should not only focus on academic researches, but should also be concerned with how to improve people's morality. The Department of Religious Studies in public universities should shoulder the responsibility for resisting social ills and the vulgar part of religion while securing and promoting its elegant and good essence. There should be a transactional relationship between the academic and the religious circles. Universities should be responsible for organizing some events for students to visit and participate in Buddhist and Taoist temples and churches, so that students can have an overall idea how religions are developed in our country. Those in religious circles should increase their knowledge and enhance their education; they should learn not only religious knowledge but also other intellectual advancements of social and natural sciences in universities. If the higher management of religious circles could be graduates of excellent universities with a master or doctoral degree, then religious leaders with higher education and cultural cultivation would have more trust from the public.

Nowadays, religious people are in the danger of being marginalized. If one becomes a religious believer, he or she is divorced from the mainstream culture. This phenomenon is not good for a harmonious social development. Once the majority of religious leaders become graduates from key universities in China, this situation may be improved. In modern society, key universities are usually the cultural and political centers of the country, for example, Harvard and Yale in the United States of America, Cambridge and Oxford in the United Kingdom, Heidelberg and Munich in Germany, etc. Many religious and political leaders are graduates from these prestigious universities. If religious leaders in China are graduates from these key universities, they will fit well into mainstream culture and politics in our society and then become a part of the core power which constitutes social prosperity and sustainability.

In order to increase knowledge and improve education of peoples who work in the religious arena, some administrators in religious sectors consign some universities to help them. For example, courses on religious studies and training programs at junior college level will be available for them; some excellent people will be sent to the most prestigious universities to study for their master or doctoral degrees. All these indicate that

the religious administrations have paied more attention to education of people in religious sectors. Although these measures are proper to the current situation, but they are still, for the long run, not a fundamental solution unless they are provided with the required education from the very beginning.

V

Now we turn to the topic of competition mechanisms in religion. As we all know, only through competition could we achieve development. China's economy is prospering through competition, religion can also advance through competition. Respected monks, priests and clergies can stand out through competitions. No one could be successful even if given the same chance in competition, but he/she still does not see the opportunity. Opening up the market is necessary to achieve a fair competition. However, we should not forget that this has to be realized step by step and that it takes time to achieve a mature market mechanism. Compared to the economic market, the religious market is more complicated. Despite the risk, we need to probe various forms of operation of the religious market.

To some extent, a religious organization is similar to a corporation. Although many religious organizations claim that they are non-profit and charitable organizations, some commercial activities take place in religious places. We cannot say that it is wrong, for we have to think religious people are human beings and that they need to make a living. Otherwise how could religion develop by itself? What we need to be concerned about is that these commercialized religious activities should be operated by some qualified and legal bodies of religious organizations. Religious administration should cooperate with the economic administration in order to define which religious organizations can be qualified as legal bodies. Just as when a businessman sells fake and inferior products he shall be punished, it is the same for the religious "juridical person." If this person conducts illegal operation by selling products which are harmful to the physical and mental health of human beings and even threatens human lives, this organization should be punished, and its "business license" should be cancelled.

Managing religion as a market does not mean the reduction of the legal income of religious organizations, rather it means the transparent of its incomes. The religious operation should abide by the regulations, and its accounts should be traceable by related offices. Some poorly made products both in art and religion are profitable while the truly elegant ones are not that popular. Therefore, religious and economic departments should pay more supportive attention to elegant religious products. The

more income a religious organization has, the more it can develop and contribute to society. The more charity a religious organization does, such as donating money to education and to people in poverty and illness, the more trust it will have from the public, and thus more people will be willing to donate money to religious affairs.

China is rich in religious and cultural resources. Buddhism, Taoism, Islam and Christianity have existed in China for thousands and hundreds of years. Together with Confucianism, all these religious traditions provide a sound foundation for the development of elegant religions in China. Religions in China will develop well and prosper if we recognize the market and the transcendent dimension of religion and thereby administer religious organizations in the way we do in a market economy. We must guide religion to develop into an elegant form which will turn religious believers from self-centeredness to the transcendent center. Nowadays China's manufacturing industry and market economy have been prosperous, which is a result of the policy of opening up and the mechanism of competition in the market economy since 1978. I think after another thirty years' effort of opening up and reform in the religious market, it will be possible to have many elegant religious products in China. At that time, religious products, like industrial products made in China, will attract more people's attention.

12.

A Contemporary Interpretation of Thomas Aquinas: The Doctrine of "Conversio ad Phantasmata" from the Perspective of Karl Rahner

Wang Xinsheng

Karl Rahner is praised as "the Contemporary Thomas Aquinas" and the "Quiet Mover of the Catholic Church." His theology and philosophy is an outstanding example of the living force and presents significance of the thought of Thomas Aquinas. This paper is intended to illustrate the contemporary meaning of Thomas Aquinas through the role of his Doctrine of "Conversio ad Phantasma" (conversion to the phantasm) in the perspective of Karl Rahner.

Following Aquinas' "Conversio ad Phantasmata"

Starting-point of Rahner's Theology

Rahner's thought is a response to the position taken by Immanuel Kant regarding the possibility of metaphysics and the limit of human knowledge. In the post-critical time, it is virtually impossible to make any theological advancement without facing against the *Critique of Pure Reason* of Kant. Because it is in this Critique that Kant came to restrict human knowledge to phenomena as he pointed out "the general problem of transcendental philosophy, namely, how are synthetic a priori judgments possible?"[1] According to Kant, the forms of human sensibility and understanding cannot be validly used beyond the realm of possible empirical experience to ground the ideas of God, freedom and the immortality of the soul. They are valid in experience as the necessary conditions of its possibility, but there is no way of ascertaining their applicability to transcendental objects. The "ideas of pure reason" therefore do not have any constitutive value, but rather serve as "regulative" or limiting concepts. It is on this epistemological foundation that Kant has his "critique of all theology based upon speculative principles of reason."[2]

---

[1] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Norman Kemp Smith, trans. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965), B 73, 90-91.

[2] *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 631 B 659, 525.

This draws us to the center of the *Critique of Pure Reason* and the work of Rahner in defending the possibility of metaphysics within the function of speculative or theoretical reason and claiming that human beings can know any entity (including the absolute entity) and that intellectual action is necessarily located in the empirical experience ("spirit in the world"). In this regard Rahner in his *Geist in Welt* (*Spirit in the World*) points out his relationship with Kant: "this book has some statements that sound like Kant's, but in fact it is against Kant."[3]

As we know, Kant in the first Critique restricts knowledge in order to save room for faith in his second book, *Critique of Practical Reason*. Kant had denied the way of approving the existence of God by the human knowing and turned to practical reason and moral metaphysics. Rahner tries to illustrate the validity and possibility of opening the way to the "absolute" through philosophy or human knowledge. For him, knowledge is not restricted to the possible empirical experience but transcends the world of sense experience, reaching a kind of dim but real knowledge of being itself. In establishing this position, he relied on his contemporary interpretation of Aquinas' doctrine of "Conversio ad Phantasmata."

"Conversio ad Phantasmata"

Rahner's philosophical and theological training was in the tradition of Thomas Aquinas, who is a main source of Rahner's language and religious thought. Rahner not only knew the modern German philosophy from Kant to Fichte and Hegel's dialectics, but also was deeply influenced by Heidegger's understanding of *Dasein* as the "being-in-the-world." This is the contemporary perspective in which Rahner looked at Aquinas' doctrine of "Conversio ad Phantasmata." To Rahner, the conversion doctrine, implied in art. 7, question 8, *Summa Theologiae I*, is the place where Aquinas most clearly examined the possibilities and limits of human knowledge. The substance of the doctrine is, in Rahner's view, that human knowledge, which is structured to the objects of immediate sense experience, can transcend the material "world" to know being-itself.

The art. 7, question 84 in Summa Theologiae I is "Whether the Intellect Can Actually Understand Through the Intelligible Species of Which It Is Possessed, Without Turning to the Phantasms?" To this question Aquinas answered: "In the present state of life in which the soul is united to a passible body, it is impossible for our intellect to understand anything

---

[3] Karl Rahner, *Geist in Welt. Zur Metaphysik der endlichen Erkenntnis bei Thomas von Aquin* (Innsbruck: Rauch, 1939), liii.

actually except by turning to the phantasms."[4] Because of the homogeneity between every cognitive power and what it knows (its "proper object"), the human being "who exists in corporeality" finds the object of knowledge in the nature of corporeal things. However, "through this nature of sensible things he also reaches out to some knowledge of non-sensible things."[5] In Rahner's view, it is this "reaching out" that points to the possibility of metaphysics in the traditional sense as knowledge of the absolute. For Rahner this possibility is further clarified in the article by the following words:

> We know the incorporeal (non-worldly), of which there are no phantasms, through a comparison with the sensible, corporeal world of which there are phantasms. Thus we know what truth is by considering the thing about which we perceive a truth. But…we know God as cause both by way of eminence and by way of negation. And in our present state of life we can also know the other incorporeal (non-worldly) substances only by way of (such) a negation or by some comparison with the corporeal world. Therefore, when we want to know something of this kind (non-worldly), we must turn to the phantasms of the corporeal world, although there are no phantasms of the thing itself.[6]

In Rahner's interpretation, the doctrine of "Conversio ad Phantasmata" expresses "originally" what Aquinas understood as the oneness of human being and knowing[7] and implies two principles: the unification of human knowledge and the unification of knowledge and being. Adopting Heidegger's point of departure, i.e., human questioning, Rahner demonstrates these principles. To both Heidegger and Rahner, the question about being underlies every human issue. Being is accessible to man only in this metaphysical and transcendental question. It questions both the object and its questioner[8] and reveals that knowledge of that which one questions is implicitly at the goal of the inquiry. Meanwhile one cannot totally comprehend what is questioned.

---

[4] *The Summa Theologica* (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1996), 449.

[5] Karl Rahner, *Spirit in the World*, William Dych, S.J., trans. (New York: Herder and Herder, 1968), 7; cf. *The Summa Theologica* (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1996), 449.

[6] Ibid., 11; cf. *The Summa Theologica* (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1996), 450.

[7] Ibid., 32-33.

[8] Ibid., 59.

On the one hand, it is the question of the unity of knowledge, that all human knowledge (including metaphysical knowledge) is possible only on the basis of sensibility. If sensibility is present to the world and intellect to being in its totality, the question once more becomes that of sensibility and intellect in their unity.[9] On the other hand, the metaphysical question implies the fundamental knowability of being; something that is completely unknowable cannot be the object of inquiry. Every question presupposes an implicit knowledge of the thing questioned. Therefore, to Rahner, when Aquinas says, "whatever can be can be known," this is not a subsequent relationship. Knowing is not a mere "coming upon something" because "the intellect and the intelligible in act are one."[10] For Rahner, this means the primordial unity of being and knowing: "Knowing is the being-presence-to-self of being and this being-presence-to-self is the being of the existent."[11]

In order to establish a theology that can take the challenge of contemporary life, Rahner starts off with Aquinas' knowledge on metaphysics, pointing out that the human person is always restricted to sense intuition, always returning to sensible things, always in the state of "conversion to the phantasms ("the present life conditions"). He thinks that Aquinas' thought in this regard is the source of the modern philosophy featuring the "turn to the subject." The following quotation is the example of the role of Thomas Aquinas in Rahner:

> Ordinary Christian anthropology is convinced that in human knowledge two levels must be distinguished: sense knowledge, that is, one having a strictly material component and spiritual conceptual knowledge, that is, one reaching out to being as such. However, against all kinds of ontologism, against all attempts to safeguard religious knowledge by detaching it from other kinds of knowledge, traditional Christian anthropology has always clearly insisted that sense knowledge and spiritual knowledge constituted a unity, that all spiritual knowledge, however sublime it may be, is initiated and filled with content by sense experience. Thomas Aquinas, for instance, emphasizes expressly in his metaphysics of knowledge that even the most spiritual, most "transcendental," most sublime concept can be reached by human beings on this earth only through a "conversio ad phantasmata," that is (in Kantian language) that every concept without sense intuition is empty, nonexistent. This statement applies also to

---

[9] Ibid., 65-67.
[10] Ibid., 68.
[11] Ibid., 69.

religious knowledge. That knowledge too is necessarily reached by an intuition that depends on sensory, and therefore also historical experience.[12]

Such an interpretation of Thomas Aquinas by Rahner is called "Christian Anthropocentrism."[13] This is Rahner's study of the concrete situation of human beings, aiming at the possibility of metaphysics and of hearing the possible divine revelation or the Word of God.

Reading Out the Contemporary Significance of Thomas Aquinas

Method of Retrieval

Rahner received his theological and philosophical education during 1924-1936. At that time the so-called "Thomism" was in its highest point, that is, the work of his commentators was repeated in manuals and textbooks. In contrast, Rahner's early work *Spirit in the World* is characterized by the idea of a "return to Thomas himself." The purpose of *Spirit in the World* is to present "one part of the Thomistic metaphysics of knowledge," which is the "teaching of Thomas Aquinas himself," and to attempt to "understand him from his own writings, without appealing to his commentators and the testimony of his school, and without going into the historical origins of his doctrine."[14]

Rahner's approach is a return to the texts of Aquinas, which provides him with the dynamism of philosophical problems, rather than going into sources or repeating arguments. He distinguishes his method, which is under the influence of Heidegger's understanding of retrieval, from that of a purely historical study. Rahner proposes to "relive the philosophy as it unfolds," rather than gather "everything and anything that Thomas ever said, as though all were of equal weight, and organizing it according to some extrinsic principle."[15] He argues that it is not possible to reach the real philosophical content of what a philosopher has said simply through gathering the statements or a repetition of the language. Only through the creative presence of the philosophical doctrine can it be reached. He tends to follow the inherent movement of the content itself, with his own innova-

---

[12] Karl Rahner, *Theological Investigations*, Vol. xxiii, Joseph Donceel, S.J. and Hugh M. Riley, trans. (New York: Crossroad, 1992), 150.

[13] J. B. Metz, *Christliche Anthropozentrik: Uber die Denkform des Thomas von Aquin* (Munich: Kosel-Verlag, 1962), 9-20.

[14] Rahner, *Spirit in the World*, xlix.

[15] Ibid., 1.

tive involvement as an integral part of the interpretation. It is a kind of "abandonment to the matter itself." Because Aquinas was primarily a theologian, "what is philosophically more essential is not always the most explicit," Rahner "under the thrust of the objective inquiry itself is seeking more or less 'meta-historical' connections between the individual lines of thought which appear explicitly in Thomas."[16]

To Rahner, the truly great philosopher can always be assumed to make genuine philosophical sense in his statements. If the meaning is "historically" explained as unexamined presuppositions borrowed from earlier thought, then the interpreter has failed. Like Heidegger, Rahner holds that in reliving the philosophical event, that is, in retrieving the event made available in the text, the interpreter returns to a past historical moment by means of the thrust of an idea and knows more deeply the pattern and direction of a philosopher's thought, from the inside, not from the outside. According to Rahner, this methodology fundamentally depends on the interpreter's understanding of the matter, but in the case of "Conversio ad Phantasmata," he is not reading his own ideas into Aquinas. What is given in advance is the line of questioning which the contemporary interpreter will put and which is clearly conditioned by current problems. This putting of the questions of modern or contemporary philosophy will lead to departure from traditional modes of expression. In an essay on the nature of truth in Aquinas, he writes:

> In this interpretation of the Thomist doctrine we cannot nor do we wish to speak in the name of scholasticism; we claim only to give our personal opinion on the way St. Thomas ought to be interpreted. Our intention is only this: a disciple of Thomas Aquinas is going to say how he has understood the great Doctor. If he has understood him well or if he has altered him, is not a problem that can be resolved by a simple appeal to a non-existent unanimity of scholasticism, but only by looking anew to St. Thomas and to what he says.[17]

In his *Spirit in the World* Rahner selects a theme central to Aquinas' epistemology: the doctrine of the conversion to phantasm. This is the key Thomistic expression for designating the "unity of all man's powers in the act of knowing," "the original unity of the one human knowing." In choosing the doctrine of "conversion to the phantasms," which is affirming the grounding of all human knowledge in sense experience, Rahner locates

---

[16] Ibid., li.

[17] Karl Rahner, S.J., "Aquinas: the Nature of Truth," in *Continuum*, II (Spring, 1964), 61.

himself on appropriate ground for answering Kant's question about the possibility of metaphysics (i.e., knowledge of the absolute) if all human knowledge is necessarily referred to sense intuition. Further, as the doctrine which demonstrates the intellect's need of imagination for its knowledge, it will provide the opening for a Heideggerian ontology of worldliness and temporality. Nevertheless, what he is centrally concerned with in *Spirit in the World* and other works is the a priori aspect of knowledge in Aquinas, particularly the light of the agent intellect. He attempts to reconcile this aspect of Aquinas' doctrine of knowledge with its empirical side by elucidating the unifying relationship between them.

What Is Retrieved

We can take the above-mentioned essay on truth as an example of an interpretation of Aquinas by Rahner. By choosing the issue of truth, Rahner directly put himself at the center of his concern: human knowledge as the starting point of metaphysics. Rahner's inquiry moves from the truth of human judgment of being in the things of contingent experience, through a consideration of the light of the agent intellect, to God.

At first, Rahner points out that for Aquinas truth resides in the adequation between thought and object. In the case of Aquinas, this act of adequation takes place in the locus of human truth, that is, the judgment. To him they are so jointly constitutive that each is the condition of the possibility for the other. Thus, the adequation of knowledge with its object is performed in the act of judgment and truth resides here rather than in its content. For Thomas, in Rahner's view, both judgment and concept must include two elements, sensibility and thought. Rahner holds that Kant's dictum about empty thought and blind intuitions is found in the Thomistic doctrine of the necessary conversion of spontaneous thought to the phantasm. This doctrine, Rahner insists, is not ingenuous realism but rather proceeds from a metaphysical understanding of sensibility. Subject and object are one in the performance of human knowing. Because the representation in sensibility is the sensible thing, receptive cognition can neither be true nor false in itself. Something more is required for genuine knowledge of truth.

The distancing of the knower from the object such that one can distinguish the object from oneself and so pronounce judgment upon it makes it necessary that a correlative, active and spontaneous power be joined to sensibility. Sensibility is only the material content of judgment. The form of judgment, especially that of universal and metaphysical judgment, resides in "a principle of truth prior to the sense impression." Aquinas' principle, which is in continuity with Aristotle, is not an objective a priori,

but a formal a priori. Its basis is not an "idea, light from God, or God," but is "the light of the intelligence itself which informs, objectifies, conceptualizes and judges the data from sense cognition."[18]

In Rahner's interpretation, the formal element of the judgment can be understood in several ways. It can be understood from the point of view of abstraction or the attribution of a general concept to a particular thing. It can be understood in the act of judgment in which the knower affirms the things of the world, where a simultaneous self-realization takes place. This for Aquinas is the unique characteristic of the knowing itself. It refers to the ability of the knower to free the self from the exteriority of sense experience itself and to be conscious of the self as a subject opposed to the world. In addition, the formal element in judgment may be understood from still another way. Judgments may occur, according to Aquinas, which have no relation to sense experience, but are certain and true because of a return to self-evident first principles.[19] The first principles, grounded in universal concepts, "present themselves to man in a perception of sensibly experienced singular things."[20] However, one cannot conclude from this that the ontological foundation of metaphysical concepts is placed entirely in the concrete, sensible things. Such grounding would provide for the universality of empirical propositions but not for the apodictic universality of metaphysical propositions.

The formal principle that precedes the individual first principles is called by Thomas the light of the agent intellect. Rahner explicitates its meaning as the a priori form through which the spontaneous spirit receives sense impressions, through the "light" of which is constructed a synthesis between the two -- the "intelligible in act." It is the dynamism of the human intellect toward the totality of all that is knowable. Because the concrete particular is apprehended within (and in comparison to) this dynamic movement toward the totality of the knowable, it is apprehended as finite and limited. It is judged as existent in relation to being. Thus, the universal is known simultaneously with the concrete; being is known in relation to beings.

According to Rahner, Aquinas at this point separates himself from a Kantian limitation of the horizon of the a priori of the mind to sense intuition. For Aquinas, the transcendence of intellect is toward being itself and in so moving beyond the limits of sense experience provides the ground for metaphysics as valid human knowledge. In *Spirit in the World*, Rahner works out the transcendental deduction of this horizon to show

---

[18] Ibid., 65.
[19] Ibid., 66.
[20] Ibid., 67.

that he is not claiming a direct intuition of being itself but that ordinary judgmental knowledge of the world implicitly involves, as a condition for its own possibility, affirmation of metaphysical being and of its primitive, transcendental structures.[21] To deny this affirmation is to retorsively and implicitly confirm it.

In Rahner's reading of Aquinas on sense knowledge, there is no naïve comparison of object known with the object in itself because they are identical. With regard to metaphysical knowledge, the evidence is not based on the object itself but on the intellectual a priori, not by a look at something but by a reflection on the knowing actively itself. Truth for Aquinas is only in the judgment which presupposes abstraction and self-consciousness and these are possible only because the transcendental a priori of spirit opens on to the horizon of being. Thus, human judgment rests upon an implicit affirmation of being itself, which in Thomist metaphysics is the pure being of God.

Thus, Rahner moves to one of his own central principles, the radical unity of being and knowing, first in pure being and then in other beings analgically. Rahner interprets Aquinas' analogy of being ontologically: the more being a being has or is, the more perfect is its correlative knowing or self-presence. "Pure Being and pure knowing are the same thing and we call him God," the prime analogue for the original unity of being and knowing. And knowing analogically is the degree of the luminosity of the one who is and knows, the self-presence of being to itself. In the human realm, knowing and being are divided because of the finitude of the human knower. However, human knowledge ultimately means taking possession of oneself, "and the degree of possibility of this conscious return to oneself is, for St. Thomas, the essential indication of the degree of potency of being that belongs to an existent."[22] Rahner concludes that the meaning of ontological truth for Aquinas is the interior self-illumination of the knower which occurs through the object logical truth and in the degree to which it is being. "Truth is possible only in self-consciousness" according to the measure of the being of spirit. Pure being and pure thought are thus identical in absolute spirit, God, who is ever hidden and yet revealed, the source of all truth.

---

[21] Ibid., 69.
[22] Ibid., 71.

Conclusion

Rahner's philosophical and theological reasoning relies on its origin in Aquinas' related thought. What is striking about his interpretation of Aquinas is that he finds in Aquinas' doctrine of conversion another expression of Heidegger's ontology of the human person, the primordial worldliness of human being and human transcendence. But, he attempts to move beyond Heidegger by showing human pre-apprehension of the infinite of being, God. Rahner's use of Aquinas allows him to presuppose rather than to prove the existence of God. His analyses of the formal object of knowledge and the absolute horizon of the human spirit will be fundamental in his theology of revelation and of grace. The theory rests upon the fundamental principle of the original unity of being and knowing, a principle which is presupposed as a condition for the possibility of the metaphysical question. It is the question as performed and actualized in human existence which is the foundation and point of departure for Rahner's metaphysics of knowledge. Within the permanent human bond with space-time experience, metaphysics is not only possible but necessary. Rahner argues for the experience of God in and through everyday human experience.

To Rahner, human performance in knowing worldly reality simultaneously opens the person to the ground of absolute of being and, in this sense, God is "known." This knowing remains an "unknowing" for it is "trans-categorical" and does not reveal what God is. The pre-apprehension attains to an "absolute, empty infinite"; the "highest knowledge of God is the 'darkness of ignorance'."[23] Thus, Rahner concludes that the human person can hear a word of God if such should be spoken, for he already knows God. Meanwhile, because God remains unknown, there is the possibility of revelation in the constitution of the human knower and hence the possibility of theology. One can discover whether such a word has been spoken, according to the structure of human spirit by conversion to phantasms, that is, by turning to the world, the only source of knowledge. [24]

---

[23] Rahner, *Spirit in the World*, 391.
[24] Ibid., 408.

Contributors

Chen Xueming, Distinguished Professor of School of Philosophy and Vice Director of Center of Studies on Contemporary Marxism Abroad, Fudan University. Specialized in Western Marxism and Chinese Marxism.

Lu Kaihua, Assistant Professor of Department of Philosophy, Shanghai East Normal University. Specialized in Marxist Philosophy and Western Aesthetics.

Luo Yaling, Associate Professor of School of Philosophy, Fudan University. Specialized in Environment Ethics and Discourse Ethics.

Wang Xingfu, Professor of School of Philosophy and Vice Director of Center of Studies on Contemporary Marxism Abroad, Fudan University. Specialized in Western Marxism, Modernity and Critical Theory.

Wang Xinsheng, Professor and Vice Dean of School of Philosophy, Fudan University. Specialized in Philosophy of Religion, Christianity and Islam.

Wu Xiaoming, Distinguished Professor of Ministry Education of China and Director of Center of Studies on Contemporary Marxism Abroad, Fudan University. Specialized in Marxist Philosophy and Modern Civilization.

Yu Wujin, Distinguished Professor of Ministry Education of China, Senior Professor and Director of Center of Studies on Contemporary Marxism Abroad, Fudan University. Specialized in German Philosophy and Marxian Philosophy.

Zhang Qingxiong, Distinguished Professor of School of Philosophy, Fudan University. Specialized in Phenomenology and Philosophy of Religion.

Zhang Shuangli, Professor of School of Philosophy and Vice Director of Center of Studies on Contemporary Marxism Abroad, Fudan University. Specialized in Western Marxism and Religion.

Zhang Xinqin, Professor of School of Marxism, Renmin University of China. Specialized in Marxist Philosophy and Theory of Ideology.

Zou Shipeng, Distinguished Professor of Ministry Education of China and Vice Director of Center of Studies on Contemporary Marxism Abroad, Fudan University. Specialized in Marxist Philosophy and Modern Social Theory.

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 impact upon human self-understanding. Above all, they must be able to bring these elements together in the creative understanding essential for setting our goals and determining our modes of interaction. In the present complex global circumstances this is a condition for growing together with trust and justice, honest dedication and mutual concern.

The Council for 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 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).
I.2 *The Knowledge of Values: A Methodological Introduction to the Study of Values*. A. Lopez Quintas, ed. ISBN 081917419x (paper).

I.3 *Reading Philosophy for the XXIst Century*. George F. McLean, ed. ISBN 0819174157 (paper).

I.4 *Relations between Cultures*. John A. Kromkowski, ed. ISBN 1565180089 (paper).

I.5 *Urbanization and Values*. John A. Kromkowski, ed. ISBN 1565180100 (paper).

I.6 *The Place of the Person in Social Life*. Paul Peachey and John A. Kromkowski, eds. ISBN 1565180127 (paper).

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).

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 Imperatives and Phenomenology's Original Forces*. 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 9781 565182578 (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 978156518 2912 (paper).

I.45 *Romero's Legacy 2: Faith in the City: Poverty, Politics, and Peace-building*. 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).

I.47 *Modern Political Thought from Hobbes to Maritain*. William Sweet, ed. ISBN 9781565182721 (paper).

I.48 *Philosophy as Love of Wisdom and Its Relevance to the Global Crisis of Meaning*. Patrick Laude and Peter Jonkers, eds. ISBN 9781565183391 (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. Byaruhangaakiiki, 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 Africa: 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 Studies, 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 Revisit: Nigerian Philosophical Studies, III*. Olatunji Oyeshile and Joseph Kenny, eds. ISBN 978156518 2776 (paper).

II.17 *Philosophy in African Traditions and Cultures: Zimbabwean 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).

II.21 *Perspectives in Social Contract Theory*. Edwin E. Etieyibo, ed. ISBN 9781565183315 (paper).

II.22 *Philosophy, Race and Multiculturalism in Southern Africa: Zimbabwean Philosophical Studies, III*. Fainos Mangena & John Douglas McClymont, eds. ISBN 9781565183360 (paper).

Series IIA. Islamic Philosophical Studies

IIA.1 *Islam and the Political Order*. Muhammad Saïd al-Ashmawy. ISBN 156518047X (paper).

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 156518 1387 (paper).

IIA.11 *The Historicity of Understanding and the Problem of Relativism in Gadamer's Philosophical Hermeneutics*. Osman Bilen. ISBN 156518 1670 (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).

III.2 *Chinese Foundations for Moral Education and Character Development: Chinese Philosophical Studies, II*. Tran van Doan, Vincent Shen and George F. McLean, eds. ISBN 1565180321 (paper).

III.3 *Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, Christianity and Chinese Culture: Chinese Philosophical Studies, III*. 2nd edition. Tang Yijie. ISBN 9781 565183193 (paper).

III.4 *Morality, Metaphysics and Chinese Culture: Metaphysics, Culture and Morality, I*. Vincent Shen and Tran van Doan, eds. ISBN 1565180275 (paper).

III.5 *Tradition, Harmony and Transcendence*. George F. McLean. ISBN 1565180313 (paper).

III.6 *Psychology, Phenomenology and Chinese Philosophy: Chinese Philosophical Studies, VI*. Vincent Shen, Richard Knowles and Tran Van Doan, eds. ISBN 1565180453 (paper).

III.7 *Values in Philippine Culture and Education: Philippine Philosophical Studies, I*. Manuel B. Dy, Jr., ed. ISBN 1565180412 (paper).

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).

III.9 *Philosophy of Science and Education: Chinese Philosophical Studies IX*. Vincent Shen and Tran Van Doan, eds. ISBN 1565180763 (paper).

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 156518 0844 (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 156518 1891 (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, eds.. 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 978156518 2455 (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 9781 56518 3070 (paper).

III.32 *Care of Self and Meaning of Life: Asian and Christian Reflections: Chinese Philosophical Studies, XXXII*. William Sweet and Cristal Huang, eds. ISBN 9781565183131 (paper).

III.33 *Philosophy and the Life-World: Chinese Philosophical Studies, XXXIII*. He Xirong, Peter Jonkers and Shi Yongzhe, eds. ISBN 9781 565183216 (paper).

III.34 *Reconstruction of Values and Morality in Global Times: Chinese Philosophical Studies, XXXIV*. Liu Yong and Zhang Zhixiang, eds. ISBN 9781565183278 (paper).

III.35 *Traditional Values and Virtues in Contemporary Social Life: Chinese Philosophical Studies XXXV*. Gong Qun, ed. ISBN 9781565183322 (paper).

III.36 *The Reflection on Enlightenment from Multiple Perspectives: Chinese Philosophical Studies XXXVI*. Wang Xingfu, Zou Shipeng and Zhang Shuangli, eds. ISBN 9781565183407 (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, II*I. 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 and Reason Today: Fides et Ratio in a Post-Modern Era: 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 Padikattu. ISBN 9781565182950 (paper).

IIIB.16 *Being Human in Multicultural Traditions: Indian Philosophical Studies, XVI*. K. Remi Rajani and Vensus A. George, eds. ISBN 9781 565183285 (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).

IIID.7 *Rethinking the Role of Philosophy in the Global Age*. William Sweet and Pham Van Duc, eds. ISBN 9781565182646 (paper).

IIID.8 *Practical Issues and Social Philosophy in Vietnam Today*. Pham Van Duc. ISBN 9781565183346 (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 156518 1204 (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 156518 1441 (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).

IV.11 *Philosophy and Crisis: Responding to Challenges to Ways of Life in the Contemporary World* (2 Volumes). Golfo Maggini, Vasiliki P. Solomou-Papanikolaou, Helen Karabatzaki and Konstantinos D. Koskeridis, eds. ISBN 9781565183292 (paper).

IV.12 *Re-Learning to be Human in Global Times: Challenges and Opportunities from the Perspectives of Contemporary Philosophy and Religion*. Brigitte Buchhammer, ed. ISBN 9781565183339 (paper).

Series IVA. Eastern and Central European Philosophical Studies

IVA.1 *The Philosophy of Person: Solidarity and Cultural Creativity: Polish Philosophical Studies, I*. A. Tischner, J.M. Zycinski, eds. ISBN 156518 0496 (paper).

IVA.2 *Private and Public Social Inventions in Modern Societies: Polish Philosophical Studies, II*. L. Dyczewski, P. Peachey, J.A. Kromkowski, eds. ISBN. 1565180518 (paper).

IVA.3 *Traditions and Present Problems of Czech Political Culture: Czechoslovak Philosophical Studies, I*. M. Bednár and M. Vejraka, eds. ISBN 1565180577 (paper).

IVA.4 *Czech Philosophy in the XXth Century: Czech Philosophical Studies, II*. Lubomír Nový and Jirí Gabriel, eds. ISBN 1565180291 (paper).

IVA.5 *Language, Values and the Slovak Nation: Slovak Philosophical Studies, I*. Tibor Pichler and Jana Gašparíková, eds. ISBN 1565180372 (paper).

IVA.6 *Morality and Public Life in a Time of Change: Bulgarian Philosophical Studies, I*. V. Prodanov and A. Davidov, eds. ISBN 1565180550 (paper).

IVA.7 *Knowledge and Morality: Georgian Philosophical Studies, I*. N.V. Chavchavadze, G. Nodia and P. Peachey, eds. ISBN 1565180534 (paper).

IVA.8 *Personal Freedom and National Resurgence: Lithuanian Philosophical Studies, I*. Bronius Kuzmickas and Aleksandr Dobrynin, eds. ISBN 1565180399 (paper).

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 1565181 344 (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 156518 209X (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 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 Tradition: 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 9781 565183032 (paper).

IVA.54 *Seekers or Dwellers: The Social Character of Religion in Hungary: Hungarian Philosophical Studies, II*. Zsuzsanna Bögre, ed. ISBN 9781 565183063 (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 *Aymara Christianity: Inculturation or Culturization?* 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 156518 0801 (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, Vincent Shen and George F. McLean, eds. ISBN 156518 0321 (paper).

VI.6 *Morality, Metaphysics and Chinese Culture: Metaphysics, Culture and Morality, I.* Vincent Shen and Tran van Doan, eds. ISBN 1565180275 (paper).

VI.7 *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).

VII.2 *Culture, Human Rights and Peace in Central America*. Raul Molina and Timothy Ready, eds. ISBN 0819173576 (paper).

VII.3 *Relations between Cultures*. John A. Kromkowski, ed. ISBN 156518 0089 (paper).

VII.4 *Moral Imagination and Character Development: The Imagination* (Volume I). George F. McLean and John A. Kromkowski, eds. ISBN 1565181743 (paper).

VII.5 *Moral Imagination and Character Development: Moral Imagination in Personal Formation and Character Development* (Volume II). George F. McLean and Richard Knowles, eds. ISBN 1565181816 (paper).

VII.6 *Moral Imagination and Character Development*: *Imagination in Religion and Social Life* (Volume III). George F. McLean and John K. White, eds. ISBN 1565181824 (paper).

VII.7 *Hermeneutics and Inculturation*. George F. McLean, Antonio Gallo and 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 156518 0100 (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 156518 1859 (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 *Religion, Morality and Communication between Peoples: 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 978156518 2608 (paper).

VII.28 *Restorying the 'Polis': Civil Society as Narrative Reconstruction*. Yuriy Pochta, Gan Chunsong and David Kaulemu, eds. ISNB 978156518 3124 (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 9781 565183209 (paper).

VII.36 *Justice and Responsibility: Cultural and Philosophical Foundations*. João J. Vila-Chã, and John P. Hogan, eds. ISBN 9781565183308 (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 Tradition: 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, XI*. 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 Kenotic 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).

VIII.23 *Envisioning Futures for the Catholic Church: Christian Philosophical Studies, XXIII*. Staf Hellemans and Peter Jonkers, eds. ISBN 9781565183353 (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 *Philosophical 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).