Reciprocity:
A Human Value in a Pluralistic World

Edited by
Tianen Wang, Peter Jonkers & Astrid Vicas

Table of Contents

Introduction

WANG Tianen & Peter JONKERS

Reciprocity is a fundamental anthropological characteristic and a moral value. In the first sense, it refers to the fact that human beings are in a relationship of interaction with other human beings, groups of people, and societies. No one can survive as a human being alone; no one can even think as a human being without interacting with other people. Interaction can take on many forms, and the exchange of material and immaterial goods is one of them. When persons or groups give something to others, there is an exchange between them. In this context, the term reciprocity is commonly used to attribute an important moral qualification to the kind of exchange that human beings and societies strive for, namely that it should be fair and equal.

The Chinese language and Western languages have a different understanding of reciprocity. The Chinese character that is typically used as a translation of the English word "reciprocity" means "mutual benefit" or "mutually beneficial cooperation." In comparison, the Latin word "reciprocus," from which reciprocity is derived, covers an important mechanism, a movement of give-and-take and back-and-forth. Reciprocity as a human value and a fundamental anthropological characteristic has always been important for personal, societal, and international relations. Therefore, it deserves to be examined from many perspectives, philosophical, anthropological, political, and theological. This volume aims at exploring four important dimensions of reciprocity.

Part I discusses the nature and characteristics of reciprocity; the first paper by the late Vincent SHEN, entitled "Reciprocity and Generosity: Ethical Praxis and Ontological Foundation," starts from the observation that the whole world is in the process of globalization, thus emphasizing the act of reaching out to many others to obtain recognition and establish new reciprocal relationships. Reciprocity is indeed what we achieve when we establish a relationship with a new counterpart. On the other hand, globalization is characterized by boundary-crossing and can be experienced as various kinds of "transcendence," that is, "going beyond." Shen proposes to practice mutual strangification with many others to increase mutual understanding instead of conflict, clash, or even war. The idea of mutual strangification involves a positive meaning of intersubjectivity, leading to reciprocity because intersubjectivity in the strict sense might only be seen as an extension of modern subjectivity. Just like the Hegelian concept of *Anerkennung* could be only a way of recognizing the others' subjectivity as well as one's own, a minimal understanding of intersubjectivity might be only a way to recognize that I am a subject and you are a subject too. However, first, there should be an act of

reaching out to someone who breaks the ice to establish reciprocity. There-fore, the original generosity implied in this act of reaching out should now be seen as the condition *sine qua non* of all reciprocal relationships. Shen's paper aims to find in the Confucian ethical tradition and the Daoist onto-cosmolog-ical traditions the cultural and philosophical roots that still can inspire us to-day in dealing with the issues of reciprocity and generosity. First, he analyzes the Confucian notion of *shu* (translated as strangification), which is regulated by the principle of reciprocity. Thus, this principle becomes a guiding idea of social and political philosophy. Shen then continues with a discussion of the onto-cosmological foundation of generosity and reciprocity in Daoism. The Constant, another name of *dao,* does not stay within itself, but generously reaches beyond itself to give birth to all things in the universe; all these things then return to *dao.* Hence, it is by way of assistance and mutual interaction that a series of creative actions takes place, which implies reciprocity and regulation.

The second paper by WANG Tianen, entitled "Reciprocity: Mutually Beneficial Cooperation and Radical Anthropological Characteristic," starts with distinguishing between reciprocity as a practice of exchanging things with others for mutual benefit and reciprocity as a relation of mutual influ-ence, mutual action, and dependence; examples of the latter are creative ac-tivities or thought productions. In this latter sense, reciprocity means that hu-man beings are not able to function properly and even survive without it, so reciprocity can be qualified as a radical anthropological characteristic. It is this kind of reciprocity that Wang Tianen's paper discusses.

There are three basic levels of this kind of reciprocity: a physical level, a mental level, and a spiritual level. The lowest level is physical mutual de-pendence, and the highest form of cooperation is the reciprocal sharing of creative ideas, which will typically emerge as a consequence of the rise of the information civilization. This kind of civilization is a very different era in the development of humankind because information differs from physical matter and energy. In Wang's view, the main feature of information civilization is "sharing." Information is not only sharable but also shared differently in com-parison with other shared material objects. People are agents in the sharing of an information civilization. The more participants there are to share with, the more information one receives from sharing. Sharing is one of the main char-acteristics of reciprocity as a fundamental anthropological characteristic.

With regard to human information civilization, Wang argues that the cru-cial fact is the superposition of the radical character of information and an-thropology, which is an important basis to research information civilization. It involves reciprocity – a radical characteristic of information and anthropol-ogy. The superposition of the reciprocity of information and anthropology that is highlighted in the information civilization era is anything but a coinci-dence. It reflects the inherent correlation between the form of existence of people and information. This fact is important to have an in-depth understand-ing of information civilization and to clarify the concept of reciprocity.

Thomas MENAMPARAMPIL in his paper "Reciprocity: A Great Value in a Pluralistic World" argues that, while all developing societies are eager for economic growth, they do not pay sufficient attention to holding on to their skills of remaining human and helpfully relating with others. Again, if neighboring communities on the way to rapid development do not keep their expectations realistic and in complementary relationships, there is a possibility of a clash of perceived interests. Conflicts can also arise about claims over natural resources, job opportunities, political disparities, or the rapid demographic growth of a particular community. What is important for all communities is to build a consciousness of being called by nature to play complementary roles in human growth, promote healthy *reciprocal relationships,* and allow space for each other as individuals and communities. Communities that may have had the advantage of early education or a specialized skill that has become a part of their heritage are quick in taking up financially rewarding jobs. Others can look at the situation as a threat. Diversity of natural talents, acquired knowledge, skills, experiences, and cultural heritage are mutually stimulating, not threatening. If there are intelligent and sensitive leaders, who adopt a human and humane approach to each other in periods of tension and provide an inspiring and complementary vision, the communities concerned easily move forward with a great sense of serenity and self-confidence to the advantage of all. According to Menamparampil, the only way forward is to consciously cultivate an attitude of *reciprocity*: fostering a creative form of dialogue with others, listening, affirming, appreciating, questioning, and searching together. Hence, reciprocity comes down to being human in different contexts. In Menamparampil's view, a fact that we should not forget is that we belong to a cosmos that exists as a "web of cooperative and symbiotic relationships" and that everything is connected to everything else. When we forget this law, we are on the path to self-impoverishment. Being committed to reciprocity means respecting the other; it means appealing to the humanity and natural goodness in the heart even of an opponent and not embittering him or her with denunciations. It means adopting a persuasive style of approach; it means changing one's grievance into a stimulating message. It means being above partisan interests, cultivating sensitivity toward smaller and weaker groups and individuals, developing a common vision for the future. It means promoting ideas of collaboration and fostering a natural sense of fairness. This, then, is Menamparampil's message: "Reciprocity is a Great Value in a Pluralistic World."

In "Reciprocity and Reference," Astrid VICAS examines another characteristic of reciprocity. She starts from the observation that all human cultures have in common referential communication or symbolization, in contrast with communication by signaling, which humans also share with animal communities. In her paper, she explores the thesis that certain patterns of reciprocating activity are needed to acquire referential competence, in contrast to the ability to respond to signals. Vicas highlights the importance of now relatively neglected work in developmental psychology in making the case that patterns of reciprocation are tied to the comprehension of reference.

The main piece of evidence concerning the connection between patterns of reciprocation and the acquisition of reference comes from studies of first language acquisition elaborated by developmental psychologists from the 1960s and 1970s, namely Hans Werner and Elizabeth Bates. Werner proposed the construct of the primordial sharing situation and Bates developed the construct of the gestural complex. Part of Vicas's paper is aimed at outlining what these constructs are and the specific kinds of reciprocating activities they highlight.

Werner's and Bates's constructs drew on two bodies of work: 1) observations that had been accumulating in diaries of caregivers from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries; and 2) a set of claims that stemmed from Johann Gottfried Herder, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, and Wilhelm von Humboldt, developed in the late eighteenth to early nineteenth centuries. It is especially the thesis adopted by Humboldt, in his reflection on a Fichtean conception of agency, that referential communication requires the understanding of norms, rather than only the following of norms, which has an important implication for the examination of practices of reciprocation. The implication is that practices of reciprocation have a strong bearing on the understanding of norms. Thus, Vicas brings to light relatively neglected work in theorizing about the development of symbolic competence and its significance to appreciating the relationship between practices of reciprocity and the understanding of norms.

QIU Renfu's "Reciprocity and Human Symbiosis" argues that reciprocity, as an important mechanism of human symbiosis, shows multiple levels, such as interdependency, mutual benefit, sharing, and mutual achievement, which gradually develop from a low to a high level and form a hypercycle process of spiral escalation. Only by continuously seeing the mechanism of reciprocity in human symbiosis can we exhibit the common values of humankind, facilitate constant mutual achievements in the future progress of human civilization, and promote humankind as a whole to move toward a higher level of civilization.

Andrew Tsz Wan HUNG in his "Reciprocity in Friendship: The Dialogical Transformation of Friendship" explores to what extent reciprocity is essential in various forms of friendship. He first discusses Aristotle's three concepts of friendship and analyzes the debates about whether friendships based on utility and pleasure entail goodwill toward friends. Are they true friendships? Aristotle assumes that our altruistic regard toward others arises only through our appreciation of our friends' virtuous characters. However, our ordinary experience reveals that our friendships usually initiate as utility or pleasure friendships and then may be transformed into character friendships through continuous dialogue and association. By using the idea of the dialogical self, proposed by Charles Taylor and Mikhail Bakhtin, Hung argues for the transformative nature of friendship, in which the self is transformed into connected selves, and friendship has become a kind of mutually virtuous con-

stitutive relationship. Hung concludes that the exploration of dialogical transformative relationships not only affirms the intrinsic value of friendship but also helps us re-evaluate the value of utility or pleasure friendships.

Asha MUKHERJEE's paper, entitled "Reciprocity and Justice as the Boundaries of Human Relationship: A Philosophical Concern," discusses the tensions between the rules of justice, which require individuals to sacrifice their welfare for the good of others, and reciprocity, according to which all the benefits I give to the other have to be returned to me in full. Furthermore, in love, friendship, and family relationships parties are connected by mutual affection and benevolence, which is at odds with reciprocity. If so, then justice, reciprocity, and benevolence must define the boundaries within which people pursue their most intimate relationships. Based on these observations, Mukherjee demonstrates the importance and limitations of reciprocity as the basis of justice. In the next section of her paper, she shows that reciprocity gets a much broader meaning in the context of family relations. Finally, she discusses the limitations of reciprocity in the case of people's (moral) obligations toward senior citizens, orphans, deserted children, etc. All this shows how difficult it is to get a good general conception of reciprocity.

Part II analyzes the dimensions of human reciprocity in a pluralistic world. In "Reciprocity as a Source of Reconciliation," Denys KIRYUKHIN discusses to what extent reciprocity can contribute to answering the vexing question of reconciliation in cases of gross violations of human rights. The author demonstrates that the option of reciprocity and reconciliation is preserved even in a situation that might be called a manifestation of radical evil. The resolution of acute crises of human and intercultural relations manifested in tragic events, such as the Holocaust or other genocides, lies in reciprocity through forgiveness, on the one side, and in reciprocity through justice (ethical equality of the conflicting parties), on the other side. This is an extremely complicated and hardly realizable task in the decades to come. However, according to Kirkyukhin, we have no alternative to solving this problem. Reciprocity, in the broadest sense of the word, as our obligation toward others to return to them the advantages they give to us, is one of the basic prerequisites of the very possibility of social cooperation. The discussion of ways of reconciliation – especially its legal aspects – is more typical for Western European culture based on the tradition of Christianity. Nevertheless, this does not mean that there are no possibilities for reconciliation in Islam, Confucianism, or any other cultural or religious tradition. Therefore, it is extremely important in the globalizing world firstly to study and to update knowledge of the various "reconciliation cultures" represented in various traditions and ethoses, and secondly to look for opportunities for reconciliation understood as peaceful coexistence and accommodation of superficially warring positions and cultural and religious concepts.

Lalan Prasad SINGH in his "Reciprocity: A Human Value in a Pluralistic World" argues that the peaceful co-existence of different religions and ethnicities depends upon the cultivation and acceptance of reciprocity as a

human value in the pluralistic world of the 21ˢᵗ century. This can only be realized by transcending the narrow visions of institutionalized religions and ethnicities and by developing a unifying principle, in particular spiritual humanism. This principle resides in the Chinese and Indian religious values and the Western Abrahamic theological interpretations of Christian, Islamic, and Judaic religious scriptures. To realize spiritual humanism, interfaith dialogue is necessary, based on the principle of reciprocity. Singh then shows how this principle plays a central role in the works of prominent political thinkers, such as John Locke, John Stuart Mill, and Karl Marx, just like in several religious and cultural traditions, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism.

In "Bisosiative Dialectic in Pluralism," Wiwik SETIYANI argues that religion teaches moral values that gave birth to the attitude and behavior of love and tolerance toward other religions. Therefore, religion is not only a vertical ideology or doctrine but must also be interpreted contextually and horizontally. This means that religion is not a goal in itself, but is for the benefit of the people. Hence, religious diversity should be understood as a form of competition in obtaining goodness that can be enjoyed or felt by all people. From this perspective, dialectics is the proper way to understand religious pluralism or diversity. Setiyani calls the human ability to articulate pluralism and the creative power to analyze the real conditions in the community bisosiative. The recognition of the existence of other religions encourages people to always reflect and learn from others without raising religious truth claims. The recognition of religious pluralism is a source of inspiration for interpreting the ongoing dialectic of society. Bisosiative dialectic is the dialogical process that occurs through the power of thought and creative action with particular attention to the principles and the personal use of them that can give birth to universal principles.

Kunawi BASYIR discusses the "Religious Pluralism Movement in Indonesia" in his paper. Indonesia is a country with a rich diversity in ethnicities, cultures, tribes, and religions. With this diversity and difference, it comes to be a factor of integration and unity, which has led Indonesia to independence. However, along with the development of modernization, Indonesia experiences a new phase, particularly since the 1998s, with the fall of the new government. Politics is mainly contested along with the claims of freedom of thought, which hurt social order. Since that period and until today, the experience of multiculturalism in Indonesia has always come with conflict and violence, inflicting restlessness and deep concern in the country, despite its pluralist endowment. Therefore, for the last decade, Indonesia is not only renowned as the state with "*Bhineka Tunggal Eka,*" but also as a country with numerous challenges and problems resulting from ethnic, religious, and socio-cultural diversity. The result is that pluralism and multiculturalism in Indonesia will be in danger. Such a condition is the effect of modernization and globalization, bringing changes in thinking among religious people who tend to be aggressive and exclusive. According to Bashir, this situation needs serious attention from all parties, that is, the government, religious figures, and all social communities in general. An approach used by Muslim and Hindu

people in Bali after the unfortunate outbreak of *Bom Legian* (Legian Bombing) involves all elements so that problems regarding humaneness, justice, and equality are quickly resolved and Bali can rise again and become one of the references to build religious pluralism in Indonesia.

The title of Prabhu VENKATARAMAN's paper is "An Enquiry into the Case of Animal Welfare through Reciprocity." The focus of his paper is how reciprocity can be taken as the principle of moral concern in human's relationship with the non-human community, which includes nature and other animal beings. Venkataraman starts from the observation that some thinkers discuss human obligations to animals from the perspective of reciprocity, often discussed in terms of a contract. While Peter Carruthers claims that animals do not merit direct ethical concerns as there is no contract between humans and animals, Mark Rowlands tries to argue in favor of animal rights, thereby basing himself on the same principle of contract. In a similar vein, Bryan Norton talks about protecting domesticated animals based on a mutual contract that humans have with those animals, while there is no such contract with wild animals. Prabhu discusses these positions on the moral considerability of animals through the principle of reciprocity, arguing that in certain spheres of ethical concern we need to go beyond the idea of reciprocity. In his view, reciprocity can be an important point of discussion in moral concerns, but it is not the endpoint.

Part III is devoted to reciprocity on a spiritual and creative level. NING Lina's "Reciprocity of Thinking and Thought from a Logical Perspective" elaborates how thinking and thought as two different concepts have different effects on human behavior. However, the boundaries between them are not clear, so they often confuse people. Ning aims to clarify this confusion from a logical perspective and distinguishes different aspects in the reciprocity of thinking and thought: First, thinking, affective or abstract, as mass characteristic of humanity, produces conformity. Resulting from reflections on thinking, thought is independent, spontaneous, and critical, and thus has a tendency. They influence and interact with each other. Second, the progress of human wisdom and morality shows that thinking generates thoughts, and thoughts refactor thinking. From the perspective of logical epistemology, thinking provides possibilities for thoughts, while the main body of thoughts constantly enriches the connotations of thinking during the process of cognition. Third, thinking in order to become thought needs to clean up ambiguity and contradictions, and obtain effectiveness through logical analysis and inference. Thought traces the origin of the conclusion and confirms the belief when reforming the mode of thinking.

In "Information, Community, and Reciprocity from the Perspective of Axiology," ZHANG Yanfen discusses that a human being acquires his/her definition from the community, which is characterized by reciprocity. She argues that reciprocity is to be distinguished from the division of labor in a community, in which people are only extrinsically related. Reciprocity is rather the exchange of existential experiences; it is not immediate but mediated

by information. Correspondingly, information becomes essential in the pursuit of community. In our era, facts in terms of information are the most primary and universal ones conveyed by internet technology. As a result, the information community proves to be a way of life for human beings. Finally, the information community has a vision of the future because mediation is diachronic. And reciprocity and community are characterized authentically by the information of the absent subject.

SHEN Haiyan explores "Reciprocity as the Sign for a Buddhist Understanding of Truth." She starts from the observation that reciprocity as a sign contributes to our understanding of the world so that its implementation can serve as a bridge between the objective and the subjective world. Shen attempts to explore reciprocity as a sign for revealing truth in Chinese Buddhism. Based on his sign interpretation, master Zhiyi in Chinese Tiantai Buddhism can demonstrate his insight into the Ultimate Truth. Consequently, his method of interpreting signs to present Tiantai teaching has an impact on the Chinese Chan Buddhist method of teaching. Chan masters use varieties of signs to either indicate their stages of striving for enlightenment or to describe their insight into truth or as skillful means of guiding others to make a breakthrough in their course of practice.

TU Xiaofei discusses the relation between "Confucian Reciprocity and the Debate on Humanitarian Intervention." He starts with discussing a great number of theoretical studies about the pros and cons of humanitarian intervention and illustrates this by some recent examples of (un)successful interventions. He then confronts these views and examples with a Confucian perspective and draws some important moral lessons from them. Based on this discussion, Tu concludes with several criteria to assess the viability of international intervention.

In "The Confucian Idea of Reciprocity," WU Liqun discusses how Confucianism emphasizes "this-worldly" affairs and is human-oriented. The nucleus of Confucianism is about reciprocity issues. Because Confucianism holds that the same structure applies to ethical virtues and political institutions, it offers a unique perspective on the different dimensions of reciprocity. Human nature is an important clue to interpret reciprocity issues. Confucianism states that we should keep our eyes open for human nature when we investigate human real life and ideal life, which are fundamental themes in Confucianism. Wu shows that Confucianism distinguishes two dimensions of reciprocity: One is reality-oriented for real life and the other is transcendence-oriented for the ideal life. On the one hand, Ritual *(Li)* and Social Virtue *(Ren)* embody the dimension of reality. People realize their essential attribute of being human in "this-world." On the other hand, *Tao* manifests the transcendent dimension. *Tao,* which is also regarded as an essential attribute of human beings, is about spiritual values that surpass the concrete "this-world" and reveal an inherent aspiration of transcending "this-world."

Part IV focuses on the problem of reciprocity between cultures and nations in an era of globalization. Peter JONKERS asks whether "Reciprocity

Can Be the Principle of a Global Ethics." He argues that reciprocity is an ethical principle in almost all religious and secular cultures and philosophies of the world. However, the attempts to implement this principle in a globalized world have been unsuccessful. The "Declaration Toward a Global Ethics" (1993) tried to solve this problem based on the principle of reciprocity. However, despite its obvious merits, this Declaration has raised fundamental criticisms, and Jonkers discusses two of them. The first one stresses the importance of the economy of the gift, which goes beyond reciprocity. A society based on the principle of reciprocity alone is unforgiving because it fails to take into account the importance of asymmetric relations, i.e., the altruistic attitude of giving something without expecting something in return. Therefore, the principle of reciprocity needs to be complemented by an economy of gift, based on the abundance of love. The second critical response confronts the principle of reciprocity with the challenge of particular ethical traditions. What is the relevance of a global ethic if it proves unable to address concrete, pressing moral questions? Ethical life does not only rest on moral obligations but needs to be nourished and substantiated by the experience of the good life. These moral sources are particular, bound to the specific way of life in a given community. To bridge the gap between universal moral principles and particular traditions, Jonkers concludes that one should start from a profound self-reflection on one's tradition. This means that a global ethic does not emerge by transcending particular traditions, but by taking the insights of these concrete traditions seriously. This can lead to the recognition that other people can endorse the same moral principle (e.g., the principle of reciprocity) from a different point of view than ours, i.e., from their embeddedness in a different tradition.

ZAIRU NISHA's paper entitled "Vedic Ideals of Reciprocity for the Globalized World" observes that during the last three decades the term "globalization" has been used to characterize the emerging future shape of the world. A reading of the literature on globalization indicates that the votaries and critics of globalization pick up selective features to present rosy or bleak scenarios in support of their respective opposite claims. It seems arbitrary, unfair, and misleading to make a selective pick to imagine and construct one's preferred narrative for the future yet to come. Zairu Nisha argues that, despite the story of conflicts, wars, brutal oppressions, what is common to the entire humanity is an aspiration to live in peace, harmony, and cooperation. We need to recognize the urgency of taking decisions at the global level to work together for saving the planet Earth from disaster. Zairu Nisha attempts to work out how the Vedic ideals of reciprocity can be used for the sharing of information, skills, and resources to make the world a less dangerous and less insecure place for humanity to live as a family. This is expounded in the *Rig Veda* in terms of "Vasudhaiv Kutumbhakam" i.e., the world is a family.

Irina BOLDONOVA in her paper "A Hermeneutic Dialogue for Sustainable Development" illustrates the application of a hermeneutic methodology for the justification of a dialogue among such bordering countries as Russia, China, and Mongolia regarding common actions in the achievement of

reciprocity in a Eurasian context, including the Lake Baikal Nature Reserve. The hermeneutic mode in the relationship of the neighboring countries is connected with the concept of sustainable development and focuses on the perspectives of mutual cooperation around the Baikal region, which was announced as the model territory of transition to sustainable development, or a platform for the implementation of environmentally-protecting technologies and social projects. The countries have already been engaged in a dialogue on concerns raised by the global age.

The principles of philosophical hermeneutics, such as the hermeneutic circle and interpretation, the dialectics of question-answer, understanding history, prejudices, fore-conception of completeness as part of pre-understanding, the importance of cultural tradition, etc., provide a framework for the scientific-analytical approach realized in Boldonova's paper. The main subject of research is a comparative view of traditional Confucian moral values and traditional ethnic-ecological values applied to the level of environmental awareness, and their importance as heuristic resources for sustainable development and philosophical reflection in the future. The theory of sustainable development, a new paradigm of a mentality and an ecological type of civilization, is supposed to rethink moral values and teaches how to balance human material satisfaction and these moral values. This new vision would place the inner world and moral values on a higher level than material satisfaction.

The analysis of dialogic relations also contains certain issues concerning the sustainable development of the Baikal region: preservation and environmental protection of natural resources, watershed and forest management, green economics and ecotourism, and other topics. The use of the hermeneutic approach provides a more holistic interpretation and a deep understanding of reciprocity between different cultures and countries.

Olayiwola Victor OJO discusses "Sino-Nigeria Relations: Exploring the Roles at Play" by showing that Sino-Nigeria ties have been growing for many years. Bilateral relations between these countries have expanded, based on economic complementarities rooted in growing bilateral trade and strategic cooperation. The surge in terms of bilateral trade between the Asian giant and the most populous country in Africa has made Nigeria the third-largest trading partner of China in Africa. Thus, China has provided extensive economic, military, and political support for Nigeria while Nigeria has since become an important source of oil and petroleum for China's rapidly growing economy and huge population. Ojo explores the roles at play between the two countries, focusing on the historical development of the China-Nigeria relations; his paper also investigates the nature, benefits, and character of the economic and trade relations and other strategic cooperation between Nigeria and China.

Rachel CHAN Suet Kay speaks about "Reciprocal Bilingualism: The Case of "Bananas," or Purely English-Speaking Malaysian Chinese." In her view, in the conceptualization of the bridge between individualism and collectivism in the era of globalization, one dimension that can be examined is language. The effort to overcome linguistic divides may indicate a greater

level of cosmopolitanism. Chan examines the case of multilingual socialization through education and mass media. The case in point is a group of Malaysian Chinese who have received education in the English language and the national Malay language, and are not literate in the Chinese language. In Malaysia, due to the availability of multilingual education systems, there are Malaysian Chinese who choose to pursue Chinese-language education and those who do not. Research has shown that collectivist values tend to be associated with students who attend Chinese-medium schools, while individualist values tend to be associated with students who attend English-medium schools. Chan's study delves into the phenomenology of interaction among the English-literate Malaysian Chinese, colloquially known as "bananas" (white on the inside) with their Chinese-literate counterparts. By using a focus group interview, she identifies values of reciprocity among these individuals, discerned through their exchange of meanings with one another. The role of education and mass media as agents of socialization is discussed. Chan locates these values as important cultural capital in the context of globalization and the need for enhanced competitiveness in a global labor market.

The papers of this volume were presented at an international symposium on "Reciprocity: A Human Value in a Pluralistic World," which was held in Shanghai in June 2016 and was organized by Shanghai University and the Council for Research and Values in Philosophy.

Part I
The Nature and Characteristics of Reciprocity

Reciprocity and Generosity:
Ethical Praxis and Ontological Foundation

Vincent SHEN

Introduction

I define "globalization" as "a historical process of boundary crossing, in which human desire, human universalizability, and ontological interconnectedness are to be realized on the planet as a whole, and to be concretized now as a global free market, a transnational political order and cultural globalism."[1] In this process of globalization, we reach out to many others to obtain recognition, to establish new reciprocal relationships. That is indeed what we achieve when we establish a relationship with a new counterpart. Before this, globalization was characterized by its "boundary crossing." This could be experienced as various kinds of "transcendence," which means literally "going beyond." The experience of transcendence not only happens in territorial border crossing, in economic, sociopolitical, and cultural processes, but more so in scientific, artistic, and educational processes. For example, scientific research always goes beyond itself in the proposal of new theories and the falsification of old ones. In art, a sense of the "sublime" emerges in the denial of representations, going beyond the traditional sense of beauty. Today's universities are in the stage of reaching out, for example, to society, to international students. Indeed, this transcendence shows partly our generosity to reach out, and partly how we are drawn passively by a bigger force and a larger, even cosmic, picture.

In this world of globalization, all different cultural traditions have to reach out to meet many others in a situation of civilizational dialogue or clash. We are facing the multicultural challenge on both domestic and international levels because everywhere people meet with strangers. I propose the idea that we had better practice mutual strangification (*waitui* 外推) with strangers or many others to increase mutual understanding instead of conflict, clash, or even war. The idea of mutual strangification involves a certain sense of intersubjectivity leading to reciprocity. This refers to a positive meaning of intersubjectivity. I say this because intersubjectivity might be considered only an extension of modern subjectivity, which creates a lot of ethical problems today. Just like the Hegelian *Anerkennung* could be only a way of recognizing others' subjectivity as well as one's own, the negative way of intersubjectivity might be only a way to recognize that I am a subject and you are a subject

---

[1] Vincent Shen, "A Book Review of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000, 478 + xvii p.)"; *Universitas: Monthly Review of Philosophy and Culture*, no. 361 (Taipei, June 2004): 109–112.

too. This is not what I conceive of as intersubjectivity. I mean by intersubjectivity "I am considerate for you" and "you are considerate for me." It involves a dimension of real reciprocity.

I consider it necessary to replace the concept of "the Other" (*l'autrui, l'alterité*), proposed by French postmodernists such as J. Lacan, G. Deleuze, E. Levinas, and J. Derrida, with the concept of "many others." I should say that the concept of "the Other" still implies an implicit opposition between Self and Other. However, under the inspiration of Chinese philosophy, in particular the Confucian concept of "five relationships," the Daoist concept of "myriads things" (*wanwu* 萬物), and the Buddhist concept of "all sentient beings" (*zhongsheng* 眾生), I prefer to use the term "many others," which, for me, is the concrete ontological context in which we are born, grow up, and develop. Life will be healthier if we always keep in mind that we live among many others. The idea of "many others" is much more telling than Levinas's concept of "*tiers parts*," which means the Other of the Other.

Reciprocity and Strangification (*waitui* 外推)

The original generosity implied in this act of reaching out to many others should now be seen as the condition *sine qua non* of all situations of a reciprocal relationship. It is well-known that Marcel Mauss's *Essai sur le don* considered the gift as the principle of human society, or that Claude Lévi-Strauss, drawing on Mauss, argued that there were three spheres of exchange governed by reciprocity: language (exchange of words), kinship (exchange of women), and economics (exchange of things). He claimed all human relationships are based on the norm of reciprocity. According to Mauss, the "free" gift that is not returned is a contradiction because it cannot create social ties. Following the Durkheimian quest for understanding social cohesion through the concept of solidarity, Mauss argues that solidarity is achieved through social bonds created by gift exchange.

However, philosophically speaking, that is, logically and ontologically, before we can establish a sort of reciprocity, there must be a generous act of going outside of oneself to others, so that there can be established accordingly a relationship of reciprocity. That is why original generosity precedes reciprocity logically and ontologically while it is implemented in reciprocity. If in the classical and modern world golden rules were emphasized so much and reciprocity was seen as the basic principle of sociability, now, in the postmodern world and the world of globalization, we need a principle more than that of reciprocity. The new principles for society and ethics that we are looking for should be based on the original generosity of each party and strangification as the act of going outside of oneself to reach many others.

The practice of generosity, starting right from the intention of our heart and achievable in the act of dialogues with different counterparts, is crucial for solving today's urgent ethical problems. Moreover, it is necessary to make the distinction between an active act of generosity and a passive one. Active generosity is the virtue and act by which one goes beyond one's intimacy,

familiarity, and self-enclosure toward strangers and many others without any sense of superiority, to take one's best values, ideas, and discourses as gratuitous gifts to enrich others' practical, intellectual and spiritual life. The passive generosity, also known as hospitality, which is emphasized by Levinas and Derrida, is the type of generosity that receives others by letting them feel at home and be him/herself and by entertaining him/herself in freedom and listening to him/her with all ears. In the interaction with many others among so many cultural communities, we should practice both active and passive generosity or hospitality. By way of this practice, we could engage in the process of mutual *waitui* (strangification), which should be conceived as a process of dialogue among different cultural communities/traditions. Mutual appropriation of each other's language and mutual *waitui* (strangification) as a form of dialogue are the two basic methods suggested to face the challenge of globalization. A generous reaching out to strangers by the act of *waitui* could be implemented successively by linguistic, pragmatic, and ontological strangification. Let me succinctly explain below.

First, linguistic strangification is the act by which we translate one discourse/value or cultural expression/religious belief into the discourse/value/cultural expression/religious belief of other scientific, cultural, or religious communities. If it is still understandable after translation, then it has a universalizable validity. Otherwise, its validity is limited to its world and self-critical reflection must be undertaken about the limits of one's own discourse/value or expression/belief.

Second, pragmatic strangification is the act by which one draws one's discourse/value or expression/belief out from the original social and pragmatic context and then puts it into other social and pragmatic contexts. If it remains valid, it means that it is more universalizable and has a validity that is not limited to its context of origin. If it becomes invalid after such recontextualization, then reflection or self-critique should be undertaken about its limit.

Third, ontological strangification is the act by which one has access to the other's or many others' world through the detour of Reality Itself. A discourse or value/expression/belief, when universalizable by a detour of experiencing Reality Itself, for example, a direct experience with other people, nature, or even with the Ultimate Reality, would be very helpful as a detour for understanding others' different scientific microworlds (disciplines or research programs), cultural worlds, or religious worlds. Ontological strangification is most important for religious dialogue. Instead of conceptual debates, one religion should understand other religions through the detour of one's Ultimate Reality, which, if indeed ultimate, would allow one to have an access to its various manifestations.

Based on my idea of strangification we can develop the concept of dialogue as mutual strangification, which means that dialogue between different cultural traditions, thoughts, and religions should be understood as a process of mutual strangification. Religious, regional, and civilizational dialogues should be based on a mutual act of strangification.

In the dialogue between A and B, on the level of linguistic strangification, A should translate his/her propositions or ideas/values/belief system into the language of B or a language understandable to B. On the level of pragmatic strangification, A should draw his/her proposition(s), supposed truth(s)/cultural expression(s)/value(s)/religious belief(s) out from his/her own social, organizational context and put it into the social, organizational context of B. B should do the same as A. On the level of ontological strangification, A should make efforts to enter into B's micro-world, cultural world, or religious world through the detour of his/her experience of Reality Itself, such as a person, a social group, nature, or the Ultimate Reality. B should do what A does.

As Chinese, we should always look into the Chinese resources of ideas that we have to face today's intellectual and practical challenges. Thus, I would like to turn to Confucianism and Daoism regarding the issues of reciprocity and generosity to find the cultural and philosophical roots that can still inspire us today.

Confucian Ethical Foundation of Generosity and Reciprocity

Going outside of oneself and generosity to many others are supposed to be the most needed virtues in the process of globalization. In Confucianism, *shu* could be seen as such a basic virtue. Although quite often translated as altruism,[2] or "putting oneself in other's place,"[3] or even as "using oneself as a measure to gauge others,"[4] it is best understood and interpreted now in terms of strangification, in the sense that "he who practices *shu* knows how to strangify" (*shu zhe shan tui*) and "extend from oneself to other people" (*tui ji ji ren*).

In the *Analects*, not much was said about *shu*, though it was told by Confucius himself that the expression is to be acted upon till the end of one's life. When Zigong asked, "Is there one expression that can be acted upon till the end of one's days?" The master replied, "There is shu 恕: do not impose on others what you yourself do not want."[5] Here *shu* was understood in the spirit of the negative golden rule, "do not impose on others what you yourself do not want." The same negative golden rule was repeated by Confucius when answering Zhonggong's question about *ren*.[6] From this repetition, we can see a very close relationship between *ren* and *shu*, given the fact that they have the same definition. On the other hand, a positive golden rule was given

---

[2] Wing-Tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy. Translated and Compiled by Wing-Tsit Chan* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969), 44.

[3] Confucius, *Analects,* transl. and intr. Roger T. Ames and Henry Rosemont, Jr. (New York: Ballantine Books, 1999), 92.

[4] Confucius, *The Analects,* trans. D.C. Lau (New York: Penguin, 1998), 74.

[5] Confucius, *Analects,* 15:24; trans. Ames, 189.

[6] Confucius, *Analects,* 12:2; trans. Ames, 154.

as an answer to the question about the concept of humanity (*ren*), also to Zi-gong, "A man of humanity, wishing to establish his character, also establishes others, wishing to be prominent himself, also helps others."[7]

As we can see, both negative and positive golden rules are, in Confucian terms, on a reciprocal basis in terms of the relation between self and other. With *shu* one extends one's existence to larger circles. It is the act of going always beyond oneself to many others, from self to family, from family to community, from community to the state, and from the state to all under heaven. This is the act of "extending or strangifying from oneself to other people" (*tui ji ji ren*). A Confucian existence is an ever-expanding life based on self-cultivation.

The Confucian way of life, as extending one's existence in the context of larger and larger circles, is based on the perfection of one's self. Even if self-cultivation is in priority over others in the order of moral perfection, strangification or *shu* is always necessary in the order of ethical and political implementation. That is why Mencius said, "Hence one who extends his bounty can bring peace to the Four Seas; one who does not, cannot bring peace even to his own family. There is just one thing in which the ancients greatly surpassed others, and that is the way they extended what they did."[8]

In Confucianism, the tension between self and others is to be solved in reference to golden rules, both negative and positive, based ultimately on the principle of reciprocity. In this sense, we can say that, in the Confucian world in which human behaviors have to be regulated by *li*, even the act of going outside oneself to the other launched by *shu* and the original generosity it implied have to be regulated by reciprocity.

The principle of reciprocity becomes a guiding principle of social and political philosophy in the *Great Learning*. There it is called the principle of the measuring square (*Jiejuzhidao* 絜矩之道). There seems to be a positive version of the principle followed by a negative version of it. They are put in context where it is explained as the extension from governing the state to making peace within all under heaven. The positive version reads,

> What is meant by saying that the peace of the world depends on the order of the state is: When the ruler treats the elders with respect, then the people will be aroused toward filial piety. When the ruler treats the aged with respect, then the people will be aroused toward brotherly respect. When the ruler treats compassionately the young and the helpless, then the common people will not follow the opposite course. Therefore, the ruler has a principle with which, as with a measuring square, he may regulate his conduct.[9]

---

[7] Confucius, *Analects,* 6:28; Chan, ed., *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, 31.
[8] *Mencius*, 1:7; D.C. Lau, trans., *Mencius* (New York: Penguin, 1970), 57.
[9] Chan, ed., *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, 92.

The major point here is governance by *ren* (humanity): when the ruler governs his people by respect and humanity, people will respond with peace and harmony, in form of filial piety, brotherly respect, and submissiveness. The positive reciprocity is here expressed in terms of filial piety, brotherly respect, compassion for the young and the helpless, etc., initiated by the ruler. On the other hand, there is also the negative version of the measuring square:

> What a man dislikes in his superiors, let him not show it in dealing with his inferiors. What he dislikes in those in front of him, let him not show it in preceding those who are behind; what he dislikes in those behind him, let him not show it in following those in front of him; what he dislikes in those on the right, let him not apply it to those on the left; and what he dislikes in those on the left, let him not apply it to those on the right. This is the principle of the measuring square.[10]

Here reciprocity is enlarged analogically from one side to the opposite, that is, from superior to inferior, from inferior to superior; from right to left, from left to right; from front to behind, from behind to front, thereby forming a cubic relationship, not merely a square, of reciprocity, though always taken in a negative sense. Within this cubic structure of reciprocal relationships, more attention has been paid to the horizontal relationships, that is, from right to left, from left to right; from front to behind, from behind to front, than to the vertical relation between superior and inferior, which was mentioned only once. Nevertheless, the concept of "extended reciprocity" plays a major role in this largest extension of human relationships – from the state to all under heaven.

We should point out here that Confucius understood generosity in the sense of reciprocity. As he said when answering Zizhang's question about *ren*, "One who can practice five things wherever he may be is a man of humanity…Earnestness, liberality, truthfulness, diligence, and generosity." We can see among these five virtues, *kuan* (liberality) and *hui* (generosity) are related to the virtue of being generous, although all five are related to reciprocal virtues. As Confucius himself explained, "If one is earnest, one will not be treated with disrespect. If one is liberal, one will win the heart of all. If one is trustful, one will be trusted. If one is diligent, one will be successful. And if one is generous, one will be able to enjoy the service of others."[11] Note that Confucius said all these in the context of consequences, that you will not be treated with disrespect, will win the heart of all, be trusted, successful, and able to enjoy the service of others. This shows that Confucius considered moral matters from the consequentialist, not only the intentionalist, point of view. But, liberality and generosity in the Confucian sense, as to the consequences they invite, still stand on reciprocity.

---

[10] Ibid.

[11] Confucius, *Analects*, 17:6; Chan, ed., *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy,* 246–47.

The process of harmonization of relationships is a process of enlargement from reciprocity to universalizability. Reciprocity is essential for human relationships according to Confucianism. Likewise, Confucius responded to Zaiwuo, one of his disciples, who proposed two arguments against the maintenance of funeral rites. One was based upon the necessity of maintaining the social order, the other upon the circle of natural process. Confucius answered Zaiwuo with the argument of human reciprocity, that is, in the earliest time of our childhood, we were taken care of by our parents, through which and by which we observe those rites in response to the love of our parents for us. The form of these ritual practices could be changed according to the demand of times, but the essence of reciprocity in human relationships remains.

Good human relationship comes to fulfillment when extended from reciprocity to universalizability. That is the reason why Confucius, when asked by Zilu how a *junzi* (exemplary person) behaves, answered with three steps of cultivation: first the cultivation of oneself for one's dignity, second the cultivation of oneself for the happiness of others, finally the cultivation of oneself for the happiness of all the people. The process of extension from reciprocity to universalizability means that we should transcend the limit of a special relationship to a more universalizable one, even to the point of seeing people within the four seas as brothers. This means that humankind should treat other fellow beings with no regard for one's family, profession, company, race, and nation, but just with the heart of *ren*, a universalizing love, because he/she is also a member of humankind. With the act of *shu*, one can go beyond oneself through language appropriation and strangify from one's self to the other, simply because he/she is a human person. This is the way by which Confucianism extends the harmonization of human relationships, the full unfolding of which is the process of formation of a virtuous life, not merely a life of observing rigid obligations.

Daoist Onto-Cosmological Foundation of Generosity and Reciprocity

For Laozi, *dao* as the Ultimate Reality is the self-manifesting Original Act of Existence. "Dao" is not a concept, because seeing it as a concept equals saying that it is merely a conceptual being or a rationally constructed reality, which is different from Reality Itself. That is why Laozi said: "The *dao* that can be told of is not the constant *dao*; the name that can be named is not the constant name."[12] Nevertheless, Laozi attributed several characteristics to this unfathomable, unnameable *dao*. For example, *dao* is "undifferentiated whole," "inaudible," "invisible," "independent," "boundless," "pervasive," "ceaseless," "motherly procreative," "great," "expanding and acting everywhere," "far-reaching," etc. All these characteristics given by Laozi describe,

---

[12] Laozi, *Laozi Sizhong*, ch.1, 1.

though insufficiently and therefore reluctantly, *dao* and its process of expansion. For Laozi, *dao* is impersonal and not limited to human experience. *Dao* as the original self-manifesting Ultimate Reality tends to manifest itself into infinite possibilities first, then a myriad of things. However, to avoid limiting *dao* within human experience we see in the texts of *Laozi* that there is no discussion on whether *dao* owns rationality and will or that *dao* loves anything. Ownership would be inconsistent with his conception of *dao* as nonpersonal. Thus, the ontological foundation of all beings, possibilities, and experiences, including mystic experience, according to Laozi, is the impersonal *dao* itself as the Ultimate Reality.

According to Laozi, *dao* manifests itself through two ontological moments: *wu* (non-being) and *you* (being). *Wu* as non-being is not sheer nothingness; it signifies the marvelous and infinite possibilities that *dao* first manifests before it produces beings, while *you*, as a being, is the moment of realization, fulfillment, and substance. Since the possible is before the actual, we should say that the moment of *wu* is, for Laozi, more primordial than that of *you*. As Laozi said: "The myriad of things in the world come from being, and being from non-being."[13] Therefore, the movement of manifestation of *dao* must be like this: first, *dao* manifests itself as possibilities; then some possibilities are actualized, become real, concrete, and, in a process of differentiation and complexification, turn into many substances and bodies.

There is a profound sense of generosity in the *Laozi* that is primarily beyond human generosity and is ontologically and cosmologically based. Laozi showed that *dao* is the unfathomable and inexhaustible Ultimate Reality that takes the first initiative to reach beyond itself to give birth to myriad things in the act of giving birth, not to say creation. In its impersonal self-manifestation, *dao* first manifests generously into infinite possibilities and then concretizes certain possibilities, in its generous act of manifestation, into substances and bodies.

This reading of *dao*'s generosity is textually supported by the recently unearthed bamboo slips of the text *Heng Xian* (恆先 *The Constant Precedes*), which might have been authored at a time right after the *Laozi*. There we read,

> The Constant precedes you (being) and wu (non-being). It was simple, quiet, and void. To say it was simple, it was indeed the Great Simple; to say it was quiet, it was indeed the Great Quiet; to say it was void, it was indeed the Great Void. It was not satisfied with self-enclosure, therefore it rose to create the Space. Since there was the Space, there was qi (the original stuff). Since there was qi, there were beings. Since there were beings, there was beginning. Since there was beginning, there was passing away.[14]

---

[13] Laozi, *Laozi Sizhong*, chap. 40

[14] Ma Chengyuan, ed., *Shanghai Bowuguan Chang Zhanguo Chuzhushu* (Shanghai: Guji chubanshe. 2003), 288. My translation.

The Constant, another name of *dao*, which exists before being and non-being, with the attributes of great simplicity, quietude, and void, is not satisfied in staying within itself; it generously reaches beyond itself to create the space, and then other things in the space such as *qi*, and from *qi* all finite beings that are born and pass away. This text expresses the idea that *dao* is generous in taking the initiative to reach out of itself and give birth to all things in the universe. This is done by several acts of going beyond itself to many others as pushed by *dao*'s original act of generosity. In the *Laozi*, the first act of generosity is that *dao* manifests an infinity of marvelous possibilities, which, because of their intangibility, are called *wu* (non-being). Then, from these infinite possibilities, *dao* draws out some possibilities to take the form of body and realize them as *you* (being). This could be seen as *dao*'s second act of generosity. With the process of differentiation and complexification, more things come to be produced, which is *dao*'s continuous and endless act of generosity within heaven and earth. Here the term "a myriad of things" (*wanwu*) represents the Daoist concept of "many others." After having produced a myriad of things, *dao* gives itself to them by abiding in every one of them and becomes *de* (power, creativity) of each being. *De* exists in each being and is ready to be unfolded fully by each to bring them all to the Origin, *dao*.

Laozi conceived the whole cosmic process as constituted of, first, the process of giving birth to all things by *dao* and second, the process of all things returning to *dao*. *Dao* itself, in giving birth to myriad things, shows its own original generosity. As we read in the *Laozi*, "Dao gave birth to One, One gave birth to Two. Two gave birth to Three. Three gave birth to myriads of things. Everything carried *yin* on its shoulders and *yang* in its arms, and blended these vital energies (*qi*) to make them harmonious."[15] Thus, on the onto-cosmological level, *dao* is the Origin that launches the process of differentiation and complexification, from which harmony could emerge only by coordinating the rhythmic interaction of contrasts or oppositions such as being and non-being, *yin,* and *yang*, movement and rest, etc.[16]

Why does the stipulation of heavenly *dao* or laws of nature come from this original generosity? In the recently unearthed text *Taiyi shengshui* (*Great One Gives Birth to Water*),[17] the "Great One" (*taiyi* 太一) represents *dao*

---

[15] Laozi, *Laozi Sizhong*, chap. 42.

[16] The laws of nature according to Laozi could be summarized as follows: 1. Structural law: all phenomena are constituted of opposing elements, such as being and non-being, *yin* and *yang*, movement and rest, long and short, etc., 2. Dynamic law: all phenomena move in a way that when one state of affairs comes to maturity and exhaustion, it moves on to the opposite state of affairs. "The heavy is the root of the light; The tranquil is the ruler of the hasty" (chap. 26), 3. Law of conversion: All things return to *dao* and achieve harmony. "Mysterious virtue is profound and far-reaching. With it, all things return to their original natural state and reach complete harmony." In this sense, we can say that Laozi's cosmology offers a good Chinese example of what K.-O. Apel calls "harmony through strife."

[17] The full passage is as follows: "The Great One gives birth to water. Water returns to assist the Great One so as to form Heaven. Heaven returns to assist the Great One so as to

that gives birth to all things through step-by-step materialization and putting things into order. It reads: "Great One gives birth to water. Water returns to assist the Great One to form heaven. Then, heaven returns to assist the Great One to form earth. Heaven and earth (again assist one another) to form divinities…" It seems that it is always by the way of assistance and mutual interaction that a series of creative actions take place. It is this idea of assistance and mutual interaction that implies reciprocity and regulation, which eventually leads to the idea of order and regulation. It is when the order of four seasons is well-formed, an order that is expressed by the rule of reciprocity, that "the process is halted." Therefore, it could be said that this text concretizes the process of cosmogenesis in Chapter 42 of the traditional *Laozi*, with a specific view to explain the emergence of the physical and temporal order: "to complete the year and there the process is halted." The need for reciprocity and order has led from the original generosity to the regulation of nature by laws or patterns. The original creativity gives birth to reciprocal relationships, involves itself in reciprocity that builds up the regulation or law of nature, and then follows it accordingly. We may say that there is a certain form of passivity in the way that that Ultimate Reality follows its regulation or law of nature.

In Daoism, *dao* reaches out and thus gives birth to Heaven and Earth, and thereby it involves itself in the regularity developed by way of reciprocity. *Dao* maintains its order and heavenly *dao* to give a sense of objective order, to ensure justice in the world. However, this does not hinder *dao* from being generous beyond all regulations and order. I should say that it is because of *dao*'s original generous act of going beyond itself and giving birth to myriad things that, when followed, or better, imitated by the sage, there is an ethics of generosity. The sage, taking the generosity of *dao* as his/her exemplary model by incarnating the way of *dao* in his/her person, is also generous to many others with gratuitous gifts, and he takes generous giving to many others as the way to enrich the meaningfulness of his/her own life: "The sage never accumulates for himself, he takes it to be more in himself in doing more for others; he takes it to be richer in him in giving more to others."[18] Essentially speaking, what the sage does to give to many others is his/her act of opening to his/her possibilities of unfolding his/her own *de*. The generosity of the sage is also expressed in his/her good deeds of benefiting, nurturing, and coming to the rescue of all things and persons when in urgent need.[19]

---

form earth. Heaven and earth (again assist each other) so as to form divinities. Divinities assist one another so as to form *yin* and *yang*. *Yin* and *yang* again assist each other so as to form four seasons. Four seasons assist one another so as to form cold and heat. Cold and heat assist one another so as to form damp and dry. Damp and dry assist mutually so as to complete the year and there the process is halted." *Taiyi shengsui* (*The Great One Gave Birth to Water*) in Jingmen City Museum, ed., *Guodian Chumu Zhujian* (*Bamboo Slips of Chu Tombs in Guodian*) (Beijing: Wenwu Chubanshe. 1998), 125.

[18] Laozi, *Laozi Sizhong*, chap. 80.

[19] Such as in Laozi's texts: "The upper good is like water that is to be good at benefitting all things and never harmful to them" (chap. 8); "Therefore the sage is always good at

Conclusion

From a philosophical point of view, the process of globalization should be seen as a historical process of realizing the ever-universalizing human nature going beyond borders of any kind. The dynamism behind this is human intelligence and desire, universalizability and perfectibility, developed since humankind's humanization with language and culture, in a self-aware way after the philosophical breakthrough. Since modernity, the human being has been searching for the resource in his/her subjectivity and the rational construction of this world by way of representations. Today, in the process of globalization, we need a new ethics fundamentally based on generosity to many others through unceasing strangification. From generosity, we can derive an authentic relation of reciprocity and achieve it more fully and truly.

Without globalization, it would not be possible to implement human universalizability to a higher level. But globalization itself should pay respect to and bring its resources from different cultural traditions. It should be an invitation, not an imposition. In this context, both Confucianism and Daoism enjoy a high degree of universalizability. As we have seen, both Confucian and Daoist traditions emphasize reciprocity, however, both trace reciprocity back to its foundation in generosity: Confucianism emphasizes the ethical foundation, and Daoism the onto-cosmic foundation of generosity and reciprocity. The Confucian concepts of *ren* and *shu* and therefore the virtue of generosity should be a source of inspiration for the ethical foundation, whereas the generous *dao* in giving birth to the universe and its eventual derivation of laws of nature based on reciprocity gives us an onto-cosmological foundation.

If the human being is not ready for further strangification and greater generosity to many others, we will not be ready for, nor even worthy of real globalization, not to say entering in a higher form of universalization in terms of the universe or all under heaven, as Confucians would call it, and as for all heaven and earth, as Daoists would call it. It is only from this original generosity that one gives birth to true reciprocity.

Bibliography

Chan, Wing-Tsit. *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy.* Translated and Compiled by Wing-Tsit Chan. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969.

Confucius. *The Analects.* Translation by D.C. Lau. New York: Penguin, 1998.

------. *Analects.* Translation and introduction by Roger T. Ames and Henry Rosemont, Jr. New York: Ballantine Books, 1999.

---

rescuing people, that's why no person is abandoned; he is always good at rescuing things, that's why nothing is abandoned. This is called the conforming enlightenment" (chap. 27). "To protect and to nurture myriad things without dominating them, that is what can be called great. For this the sage never pretends to be great, that's why he can achieve as great" (chap. 34). Cf. *Laozi Sizhong,* Wang Bi's version, chaps. 8, 27, 34, 6, 23, 29.

Laozi. *Laozi Sizhong*.

Ma Chengyuan, ed. *Shanghai Bowuguan Chang Zhanguo Chuzhushu.* Shanghai: Guji chubanshe. 2003.

Mencius. Translation by D.C. Lau. New York, Penguin, 1970.

Shen, Vincent. "A Book Review of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000)." *Universitas: Monthly Review of Philosophy and Culture*, no. 361 (Taipei, June 2004): 109–112.

Taiyi shengsui (*The Great One Gave Birth to Water*). In *Guodian Chumu Zhujian* (*Bamboo Slips of Chu Tombs in Guodian*), edited by Jingmen City Museum. Beijing: Wenwu Chubanshe, 1998.

2
Reciprocity:
Mutually Beneficial Cooperation and
Radical Anthropological Characteristic[1]

WANG Tianen

Reciprocity could only be a mutually beneficial cooperation; it could also be a radical anthropological characteristic. The fact that reciprocity is more than a kind of special cooperation makes it an important topic. In order to facilitate the research on reciprocity from mutual beneficial cooperation to a radical anthropological characteristic, sound investigation is needed.

Reciprocity as a Special Cooperation and
an Anthropological Characteristic

Reciprocity could just mean: (1) a practice of exchanging things with others for mutual benefit or mutual exchange of commercial or other privileges. Namely, a reciprocal action or agreement involves two people or groups who do the same thing or agree to help each other in a similar way. Reciprocity in this sense only means a special kind of cooperation to engage in a mutually beneficial activity with others that is not necessary for survival. The most significant example that shows the occasionality of reciprocity as cooperation is that a snake, a frog, and a centipede can live together peacefully, i.e., live together within the same hole, even though they are natural enemies. Reciprocity could also mean a relation of (2) mutual influence and (3) mutual action. What is more, it could mean (4) a relation of mutual dependence, which is the very meaning of reciprocity we want to deal with in this paper.

Cooperation is just a kind of mutually beneficial action or influence. However, as a radical anthropological characteristic, reciprocity means not only the situation of mutual dependence but also the situation that human beings are not able to function properly or even survive without it. This means a kind of change from a relatively lower level of reciprocity, such as exchanges between people, to a higher level of reciprocity, such as that in creative activities or thought productions, in which reciprocity is not only a kind of sharing in consumption but also a kind of mutual incentives in creation. There are some basic differences between the higher and the lower level of

reciprocities. The higher the stage a system develops into, the more important the nature of reciprocity is.

Reciprocity is far from doing something good for each other among human beings, animals, and even plants. We can do a favor to each other, which means to bear a personal cost in order to benefit others. The mechanics of cooperation at the higher level of reciprocity can be mainly about reciprocal sharing, while the mechanics at the lower level of reciprocity can be a kind of simple interaction. However, the ways and natures of interaction can be totally different. They could be peaceful or be violent. The interaction at the higher level of reciprocity is to do things together or as a whole. It is positive. With regard to the lower level of reciprocity, we can find some typical cases from social Darwinism, the so-called law of the jungle. Non-social animals mainly interact in this way. For example, some animals eat other animals for survival; that is, the big fish eats the small fish. This is an extreme form of interaction at the lower level. At the higher level of interaction, people must do things together. This form of interaction is not merely a kind of cooperation because it is not an activity among different individuals. This is another kind of reciprocity, in which interaction among individuals is included integrally as a whole and which can be seen in a higher level of systems. It is the way that complex systems develop.

There are different ways of cooperation. The social division of labor is a kind of cooperation, but it is cruel from certain points of view, for some people become more like machines for the benefit of others. This paper will not discuss common forms of cooperation among non-human animals, such as grooming and other forms of body care, alarm calling, predator inspection, protection against attacks by predators, supporting injured group members, or egg-trading among hermaphrodites or social insects including many species of bees and termites. What I am going to explore in this paper will be reciprocity as a radical anthropological characteristic.

One of the key problems is how to deal with the issue that some human reciprocities in groups are produced through the activities of defending oneself against other hostile groups. Human reciprocity is not only a kind of cooperation as a form of mutualism, just like what happens in the market exchange every day, but also one of the marks for human development. This is one of Marx's significant insights. It is the meaning of the Marxian affirmation of a liberating role to the proletariat: Only by liberating all of humankind can they liberate themselves. There are different levels of reciprocity with different levels of meaning to be human. Human reciprocity decides the level of being human. To some extent, people live depending on the level of reciprocity.

Levels of Reciprocity

The lowest level of reciprocity refers to physical mutual dependence, while the highest is mutual spiritual stimulation. The highest form of cooperation is the reciprocal sharing of creative ideas. We can find the basic levels of reciprocity between these two poles.

The First Level of Reciprocity Is Physical. Some social insects, including many species of bees, ants, and termites, reciprocate physically to a high degree because they cannot be separated from one another. They cannot live without physical reciprocity with others or live physically without the community. The life of ants and bees is highly reciprocated. This means that the individuals are not physically differentiated from their community. This is the main characteristic of the first level of reciprocity.

Individuals can live independently on the first level of reciprocity because what they live on is only physical matter and energy. In principle, individuals can live in this way, but some social insects physically need others and a community in which they can communicate physically with each other. They only function physically, including in information activities. Signs or signals are all physical functions. Incretion is one of the typical examples through which social insects and animals can communicate.

The Second Level of Reciprocity Is Mental. As one of the two different levels of reciprocity, the mental level is quite different from the physical level. It is easy to live independently physically. Independent living means living on physical matter and energy, but mental reciprocity means mutual dependency. Besides physical needs, human beings have other kinds of needs, such as showing something to others. This means that we communicate mentally rather than physically. We have mental functions, which means we have mental needs that demand companionship. If there is no Other, there is no mental need, not even any kind of mental content. Therefore, the mental means information in the sense of "each other." The "each other," in this sense, refers to a mental level of reciprocity.

There are some new contents in the mental level of reciprocity, which has a different characteristic from the first level. Mental reciprocity has the characteristic of an as "each other." Humankind does not consist of separated individuals but an entire community. The whole community is tied mainly by information. Only if there is information is there mental function. Mental function means a need for information. The main difference between the physical and mental levels of reciprocity comes from the difference between physical matter, energy, and information. We can only live physically in the first level but not mentally without the second level of reciprocity because separated individuals do not need information and mental communication. In this way, human reciprocity constantly evolves with the development of human beings.

The Third Level of Reciprocity Is Spiritual. The spiritual level of reciprocity is not the same as the mental one. Although the spiritual level of reciprocity is based on mental reciprocity, they are different. There are sub-levels in the spiritual level of reciprocity. Perhaps there are also some sub-levels in mental reciprocity, but it is not important to make a distinction between them, at least not as important as making a distinction between the spiritual sub-levels of reciprocity. The reason is that the spiritual level of reciprocity has not only sub-levels but also boundaries.

As individuals, people can live in their family or a family-like group. A person cannot live as a member of a family without a family. There is a minimum range of spiritual reciprocity for human individuals. If we live in this minimum range, we can only be a kind of family human being. A family human being is such that each person involved mainly lives reciprocally in the family boundary. He or she can live together with family members within the family but is not close to the people outside the family. People can also live beyond the family boundary and go to the neighborhood, the community, and, farther, to a town, a city, a country, or the world. If someone only lives at a physical level of reciprocity, he or she will not be able to go far from one's family, even from oneself. If someone lives at a mental level of reciprocity, he or she will be able to live with the neighbor. If someone lives at a spiritual level of reciprocity, he or she will be able to go to the world from one's family. The farther they are able to go, the more they will be able to live reciprocally and even live at a different sub-level of spiritual reciprocity.

Human beings can live only in a relationship of blood in a family. They also live in relationships with neighbors without blood ties when they go to the neighborhood. These are the different levels of spiritual reciprocity. Human beings can share much more on the higher level of spiritual reciprocity than on the family level because they can share things with someone outside the family. Then they can go farther and farther. They can share things with other families, and even other cultures, belief groups, and so on. When they go to a community larger enough, they can have reciprocity with strangers.

Natures of Reciprocity

The information civilization is different from the one mainly based on physical matter and energy. Information means communication, which refers to a higher level of reciprocity. There is no reciprocity if there is no information. The development of an information civilization has established an important foundation for the development of human reciprocity. Reciprocity develops from a physical form to an informational form, and so does human civilization.

Reciprocity in an Information Civilization. More important is that we are entering into the age of information, which brings another kind of civilization: an information civilization. This is a different era in the development of human civilization because information is different from physical matter

and energy. The main feature of an information civilization is "sharing," which involves a certain personality.

Information is not only sharable but also shared differently from different objects. Its sharing effect is different from that of matter and energy. People are agents in the sharing of an information civilization. The more people participate in sharing, the more information is obtained through sharing. Sharing is one of the main characteristics of reciprocity in humankind. Information is neither matter nor energy, though it needs matter for its embodiment and energy for its communication. The comparable position of information with matter and energy means that human society will develop into a different kind of civilization in the information age. If we take civilization before the information age as the civilization of matter and energy, the civilization that follows it – the information civilization afterward would be quite different.

As a human civilization, the information civilization is a sharing civilization based on information, which is a process of public information symmetrization. On the one hand, it intends to eliminate information asymmetry in the public domain as much as possible; on the other hand, it must protect innovation patents to the best of its ability. As the information layer of human civilization, information civilization is an enslaving material civilization based on information mechanisms. In the age of information civilization, human beings can control matter and energy via information so as to change the structure of matter to make things more valuable, that is, to change materials from a physical form that does not meet human needs into a physical form that meets human needs better, and to change energy from a form that is difficult to use into a readily available form.

Thus, human activities increasingly deal with information rather than materials in a traditional sense. As a more advanced stage of the development of human civilization, information civilization is a human civilization based on the creative construction of information that most conforms to human nature. Human history develops into the stage of human nature civilization only in the information age, in which the control of matter and energy in the whole society, even the whole humankind, reaches the level at which "people enslave things" and human cognition has become more constructive than descriptive. Furthermore, the full liberation of creativity means that social development can reach a civilization level at which the social emancipation of humanity increases.

The distinction between information civilization and civilization of matter and energy is not a distinction based on a mode of social production but rather on the state of human existence. It is no longer the case that "free-riders undermine cooperation"[2] in information civilization because free-riders will be pushed out of normal human life. "The retaliation against free-riders"[3]will

---

[2] Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, *A Cooperative Species: Human Reciprocity and Its Evolution* (Princeton University Press, 2011), 22.

[3] Talbot Page, Louis Putterman, and Bulent Unel, "Voluntary Association in Public Goods Experiments: Reciprocity, Mimicry, and Efficiency," *Economic Journal* 115 (2005): 1032-1053.

be, of course, no longer necessary. For society, its future development depends entirely on the creativity and performance of society members, and thus the liberation of creativity is not only the way for the future development of information civilization, but also a reasonable choice for contemporary social development.

Reciprocity as Radical Characteristic of Information. Reciprocity is an important concept on which we are able to establish a new basis for philosophical research. This is mainly due to the coming of an information civilization, an era of information. Information has become more important than physical matter and energy. Reciprocity is one of the basic characteristics of information civilization as well as information. The most significant example of the radical characteristic of information is that: if only one person owns a cellphone, he or she does not really own a phone but a "cell" until at least another person he or she wants to reach also owns one. This example not only shows the radical characteristic of information but also reflects the "law of reciprocity." If there is no information, there is no reciprocity. Perhaps we cannot say that if there is no matter and energy, there is no reciprocity. However, as for existence on the level of information, human beings could not exist without reciprocity, which means that there are no human beings if there is no reciprocity. Reciprocity is the radical characteristic of information.

Natures of Reciprocity Based on Dependence and Independence. There is a very important line between reciprocity based on dependence and independence. Reciprocity based on dependence means low-level reciprocity, whereas reciprocity based on independence refers to high-level reciprocity. The more independent the basis of reciprocity, the higher the level reciprocity. This is not only a quantitative but also a qualitative distinction. Usually, biological reciprocity can only be based on dependent individuals. In contrast, psychological reciprocity and especially spiritual reciprocity must be based on independent individuals.

Reciprocity based on dependence means that the individuals are established on the same level. Reciprocity based on independence means that they are established on a different level, or rather, this kind of reciprocity is established on a higher level because some new functions are added to it. This is the main difference between reciprocity based on dependence and independence. The distinction can also be marked as a contrast between mutual benefit and common creativity. The most significant example of mutual benefit is the reciprocity in insect or animal societies, while common creativity is manifested in human societies, especially in scientific communities. Cultural history itself is a kind of community, a kind of diachronic community encompassing different cultural traditions. These are totally different levels of reciprocity from which we can learn about two different kinds of reciprocity.

Another difference between the two types of reciprocity, namely reciprocity based on dependence and independence, is that there is no emergence in the former and its activities, whereas there is in the latter. Emergence here

means something new that could be produced from reciprocity. In the former case, there is some cooperation; that is, mutually beneficial cooperation, while in the latter, there is something like the radical anthropological characteristic. If there is no reciprocity in the former case, people can still develop though perhaps slowly. If there is no reciprocity in the latter case, the level of the development of human beings will be quite limited. We cannot imagine that there will be a higher level of human civilization.

Reciprocity as a Radical Anthropological Characteristic

The reciprocity of humankind is a radical anthropological characteristic, which means a relationship of mutual dependence or interaction among human beings. When persons or groups give something or allow others to do something, exchanges between people or groups take place. The more one shares – especially information –, the more one gets from the community and even from the whole of humankind. The most important thing is that what one gets from sharing cannot come into existence without engaging in the life of reciprocity.

A human being can only get, in human reciprocity, what he or she most wants or needs from the community, just as social insects. For instance, bees and ants can only get, in their reciprocity, what they most want or need from their communities or societies. As for insects, what they most want or need from their communities or societies cannot be obtained anywhere else. Just as we human beings can only get safe living conditions from human society, bees and ants can only get the opportunity or chance of living from their own societies. That is the most important thing. We cannot get anything in human reciprocity independently and individually from outside of human society. The most important things for human beings can only be obtained reciprocally from human society. This is the key problem. That is why reciprocity is so important for the human being. That is why reciprocity is a radical anthropological characteristic.

Levels of Human Reciprocity. If someone lives in homogenous circumstances, then he or she will share much less than people who live in heterogeneous circumstances. One of the most significant examples is that someone will get less information from his or her own family because his/her family members live all day together, and there is not much new information they can share. However, if they go out to their neighbors, they can get more information. They can broaden the scope of information sharing to the community, the city, the country, and even other parts of the world. This is entirely possible on the level of information rather than physical matter and energy.

What one can get from different levels of human reciprocities could be totally different. One can engage in quite different reciprocities in a city than within a family. Usually, we cannot share more information in a family than in a city, because the city is full of strangers, which means there are many more different kinds of people. One can get more information from strangers

in cities than one can from people in the neighborhood. We can share with strangers different attitudes on life, different cultures, different views on value, different views of the world, different ways of thinking and acting, and even different ways of life, but we cannot share many things with them physically because we are limited to living reciprocally just on the physical level. Hence, reciprocity is much more limited in physical matter and energy than in information. Information has the nature of sharing, which physical matter and energy do not. We can share more with strangers on the level of information. If a human being lives on the mental level of reciprocity, he/she would not want to show more mentally to strangers than to a friend. Perhaps what is most important to someone is not strangers, because if someone shows something to strangers, he or she can only get temporary responses from them; but if he/she manifests mentally to his/her neighbors and classmates or colleagues, he or she can have much longer and even life-time responses. For instance, they may encourage (admire) you perhaps for their whole life, not just temporarily.

This is the limit on the mental level of reciprocity. If people live on a spiritual level of reciprocity, the situation will be different. They are not just going to receive some mental responses from others but share their new ideas and new thoughts and get inspiration from others. This is different from getting information. People can create new information and new ideas but cannot think without sharing information with others, just as they cannot have information without communication. In this way, they can share with an unlimited number of people throughout their life. Moreover, they can also share their ideas and informational creations with other people. That is the way we are as human beings. Therefore, we must be more reciprocal if we want to be better.   If we can recognize the differences between different peoples, we can see the level of reciprocity on which they live. Different reciprocities mean different boundaries, different levels of life, and different kinds of human beings. To a certain extent, being human is a matter of living in different levels of reciprocity. The higher the level of reciprocity is, the higher the quality of a human being is. This becomes clearer in the information civilization.

The most important things to human beings surely include the most enjoyable and sharable ones. What I want to mention here is the production of thoughts or, more generally, creative activities. We feel ourselves more like human beings only in our creative activities. The problem is that if there is no reciprocity, there is no creativity; if there is no new idea, there is no production of thoughts. We are human beings only because we live in the circumstances of the reciprocity of information. We may say there are no human beings if there is no reciprocity.

There is no culture still alive, not only as a living fossil, if there is no reciprocity or sharing between cultures. No culture can be alive if it does not share with other cultures in the time of globalization. It is not only a matter of individuals or cultures but concerns all of humankind. A culture is not just a matter of this or that culture but a matter of humankind. This is the relationship between being human and reciprocity.

Reciprocity as a Human Value and Being Human. No one can be a true human being alone; no one can survive as a real human being with rationality alone or without the interaction with other people synchronically or diachronically. If people enter into the information level of reciprocity, information will increase in a geometric progression because it is a square or higher power.

The backgrounds of different cultures and beliefs are important to one's level of reciprocity as a human being. If someone lives in a background of a single culture, he or she can only get the new information produced in the same culture; however, if people live in a background of diversified cultures, they can get much more information from various cultures. This is not only a matter of quantity even quality. Sometimes, people can learn more from other cultures than their own. If a culture is not open to other cultures, people's minds will become narrower, just as a family which arranges its marriage only within the same family members will suffer from the genetic consequences of inbreeding.

Cultures also have genes, that is, so-called "memes." If a culture does not open to other cultures, its cultural gene degradation will be inevitable. However, if someone lives in a diversified cultural background, he or she can receive not only more information but also, more importantly, a new life and a new gene of culture. In this way, he or she can develop his/her culture further. Diversity is important for all lives. The fewer genes life has, the fewer choices one has. Circumstances are always changing, and life will have no choice if there is only one pure gene. We can get new genes from other cultures. The development of humankind must have more sources for beliefs and cultures. This is a diachronic dimension of human development.

There is also a synchronic dimension. If we cannot learn something from history, we cannot get enough new information or enough new genes of culture. We can share not only with an actual person in reality but also with a person who died physically but whose thoughts are still alive in history. We can share information or ideas with the author when we read his or her book; we can share with directors and actors when we watch their movies, etc. There are two dimensions of reciprocity. We can live reciprocally with a real person in the same time and space and share, even more, with persons from the past.

In the era of an information civilization, we can be a creator to create new information shared by many people. This is a higher level of reciprocity. In this sense, one can share with others new creating information. There is no limit to information communication in the information world, and we can even go beyond humankind. If someone has important new ideas, others who want to share the ideas can share with him or her. That means this person lives in a higher level of human reciprocity. This way of being human is quite different from that of being human just within a family. As a consequence, one can produce more information and more thoughts when one lives in a higher level of reciprocity because the production of information is a sharable business, which is different from the sharing of physical matter and energy. The more people share physical matter and energy, the less each person gets. In

contrast, the more information is shared, the more each individual person gets. This bodes well for the prospects of humanity.

The Reciprocal Dimension of Being Human in Multi-cultural Traditions. Different cultural traditions are important resources for each other in the era of globalization. The reciprocal dimension of being human in multi-cultural traditions is getting more and more important. In the era of globalization, without the reciprocal dimension in multi-cultural traditions, no one can live a really meaningful life or think globally. People need more information interaction with each other synchronically and diachronically.

The reciprocal dimension of being human has become more important in the process of human social development, especially in the era of globalization. Challenges and problems faced in this era need a better understanding of their reciprocal dimension and a deep investigation from many perspectives in philosophy, anthropology, politics, theology, and religion. It is necessary to study issues related to the reciprocal dimension of being human in multi-cultural traditions, the nature and characteristics of the reciprocal dimension, dimensions and levels of human reciprocity in different cultural traditions, and reciprocity between people or communities in spiritual and creative levels.

The age of information brings another kind of civilization: information civilization, which is a very different era in the development of human civilization. The main feature of information civilization is "sharing." Information is not only sharable but also is shared differently from objects construed as matter and energy. The more people participate in information sharing, the more information is shared. Sharing is one of the main characteristics of the reciprocal dimension of being human in multi-cultural traditions in the information era.

Reciprocity and the Development of Humankind. Reciprocity is not merely cooperation for mutual benefit. A low level of cooperation implies that no new quality of things can be produced. Another kind of cooperation is that something new can be produced in the cooperative activities. Therefore, there are two levels of cooperation.

If some new ideas can be produced by separated individuals, then what is the difference between the creativity of individuals and their reciprocity? The creativity or the production of activity coming from individual activities is quite limited. Some ideas cannot come only from an independent individual because any new idea is based on some prior ideas. If there are no prior ideas, there is no new idea of this kind. We cannot produce new ideas without those necessary prior ideas, or we cannot produce ideas separated from the persons who have produced those prior ideas in history. Some ideas cannot be produced just by one person. Many of these kinds of ideas can only be produced based on prior ideas. Most ideas are produced through reciprocity, or most activities that produce new ideas are reciprocal. Philosophical approaches are necessary to study reciprocity.

When our research involves beliefs, cultures, etc., philosophical approaches become more important. Like animals, human beings can live alone just based on physical matter and energy. However, we cannot live alone based on information because information means at least two parties. This is an important characteristic of human culture. As mentioned before, there are genes in each culture. It is some kind of thinking stipulation in Hegel's sense. One culture has a certain kind of thinking stipulation. If there is only one culture, there is only one kind of thinking stipulation, just like the creature – plants and animals in the world on the earth. If there is only one gene in plants or other creatures, it is easy for this gene to be destroyed by changing conditions. However, if there are many genes in cultures and traditions, which means there must be a greater diversity of thinking stipulations, there will be a greater diversity of cultures and traditions that will provide more opportunities for us to survive in the ever-changing conditions of human cultural life.

In sum, there are different kinds of reciprocity based on different needs. The nature of reciprocity is decided mainly by the needs on which the reciprocal activity is based. The choice will be quite different in the "ultimatum game,"[4] which depends on the needs of the "responder." If reciprocity is based on needs featured in terms of matter and energy, it will just be one of mutual benefit. In this sense, cooperation is only a matter of mutual benefit for individuals as cooperators. It does not necessarily mean something new is produced from the activities of cooperation. If the reciprocity is based on some mental and spiritual needs, it will be a kind of reciprocity that can produce new ideas, a new function, or even a qualitatively new system. That is to say, reciprocity based on spiritual needs can be a kind of creative activity because creative activities mean some kind of information activity. And the essence of information activities is mutual; they are not only a matter of providing benefits for cooperators.

What is most important is that new things can be produced from reciprocal activity. It can be a creative activity, and there is no exception for culture. Actually, it is very important for the development of any kind of culture. It is also very important for the development of cultures nowadays, because it is a time of globalization. All cultures must be open to other cultures if they want to develop at present. Otherwise, any culture will go downhill. It will be just some kind of fossil, some kind of cultural fossil. A cultural fossil is quite different from a creatural fossil because the creatural fossil is dead, and the cultural fossil can be alive but in a very limited way – it means that the culture is no longer in the process of development.

In the development of culture, reciprocity is a very important topic. In the context of reciprocity, no culture can develop without reciprocating with other cultures in the time of globalization. Indeed, any culture can be kept

---

[4] Werner Güth, R. Schmittberger, and B. Schwarze, "An Experimental Analysis of Ultimatum Bargaining," *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization* 3 (1982): 367–388.

alive as long as the people who created the culture are alive, but it is impossible to develop it further if it does not open to other cultures. It means that no culture can develop in the time of globalization without reciprocating with other cultures.

Reciprocity is not only the only way of developing the human being, but also the only way of cultural development in the time of globalization. There is no way for a living culture to develop without reciprocating with other cultures. Nowadays, understanding the human being means a kind of anthropological phenomenology of culture. There are two important connections. On the one hand, if there is no development of the human being, there is no development of relative culture. On the other hand, if there is no development of cultures, there is no development of human beings. Human culture is a result or product of human reciprocity. Perhaps material culture is not entirely the product of human reciprocity, but spiritual culture must be the product of human reciprocity because spiritual culture is the production of information. In the time of globalization, multiple cultural backgrounds are important conditions to develop human culture and human reciprocity. A bidirectional supercycle is an important mechanism of human culture and human reciprocity in the time of the information age.

Any two cultures can learn more from each other because human culture will develop into higher levels. Different cultures will merge into the same mechanism. The development of human reciprocity and human culture are the different sides of the same process. If there is human reciprocity, there is also, at the same time, human culture. If there is human culture, there must be, at the same time, human reciprocity. Human culture holds a more typical connection with reciprocity than language. Language is also a typical and basic production of human reciprocity. It is a symbol or mark of human reciprocity. Human reciprocity is a foundation for human culture. Language is more basic than culture in relation to human reciprocity because, to some extent, the high level of human reciprocity is the production of language.

Bibliography

Bowles, Samuel and Herbert Gintis. *A Cooperative Species: Human Reciprocity and Its Evolution.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011.

Güth, Werner, Rolf Schmittberger, and Bernd Schwarze. "An Experimental Analysis of Ultimatum Bargaining," *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, no. 3 (1982): 367–388.

Page, Talbot, Louis Putterman, and Bulent Unel. "Voluntary Association in Public Goods Experiments: Reciprocity, Mimicry, and Efficiency," *Economic Journal*, no. 115 (2005): 1032–1053.

3

Reciprocity:
A Great Value in a Pluralistic World

Thomas MENAMPARAMPIL

In Times of Rapid Changes Social Codes of
Mutuality and Reciprocity Weaken

People are on the move today. The mobility of job-seekers as a result of rapid commercial and industrial growth has led to the enfeebling of family bonds and social relationships that used to be nourished by the extended family, the local school, and neighborhood communities. The result has been the *erosion of cultures* where human values were generated and handed down. This has reduced the effectiveness of all traditional patterns of social formation and weakened the handing on of *social codes* that used to keep families and communities together. That is what makes natural social groups seem helpless when conflicts break out within or between communities, and inhuman situations arise.

A fact that we cannot afford to forget is that we belong to a cosmos that exists as a web of cooperative and symbiotic relationships and that everything is connected to everything else. It is reciprocal relationships that build us up. When we forget this truth, we are heading for trouble. As neighboring communities work their way forward toward development, they often ignore this truth and land in tension among themselves. The same thing happens not rarely among neighboring countries; if they do not keep their expectations realistic and respect each other's aspirations, they are likely to collide with each other. A partial understanding of immediate realities can lead to a *perceived clash of interests* at the first stage and real clashes at the second. Conflicts can also arise over claims to natural resources. Reciprocity works toward the mutual benefit and ensures the common good.

Leaving Space for Each Other as Communities

History tells us that when communities emerge from isolation or underdevelopment, there is a period of uncertainty. Neighboring communities feel that their identities have to be defined and affirmed, and relationships with other ethnic groups are sorted out. Competing interests of neighbors can lead to tensions. Such tensions are built on perceptions of political, economic, psychological, or cultural *exploitation of their group* by a stronger one. Some of these may be true and some exaggerated. In a multicultural society, communities that may have had the advantage of *early education* or specialized skill, which has become a part of their heritage, are quick in taking up financially rewarding jobs. For example, some are good in the cultivation of certain cash

crops and grow rich, others have developed business skills and begun to prosper, others have built up a knack for political maneuvering and capturing power. These communities may be perceived as exploiting others, or may actually be doing so. Those who feel left behind build up grievances. If, on the contrary, there is an atmosphere of reciprocity and the neighboring communities begin to consider these aptitudes and skills complementary, the chances of conflict are greatly reduced. But such a development will largely depend on far-sighted leaders on either side.

In any case, it is not rare that *minority communities feel marginalized* in the economic competition in reference to the majority community or the stronger ethnic group in the neighborhood. Their discontentment manifests itself in various forms of protests. As we said earlier, there may be truth in the allegations, but there are times too when minority leaders keep alive their discontent to retain the political loyalty of their communities. Occasionally there is a *third party* that fans these inter-community tensions for its own political or economic interests.

The fact is that there is enough space for everyone in the world. But we have to learn to make sufficient space for each other. *Exaggerated self-affirmations* of some communities can lead to similar exaggerations in others, setting in motion a chain reaction with no end in view. Ethnic conflicts have been reported in Afghanistan, Angola, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Liberia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tajikistan; tensions in Bangladesh, Belgium, Bhutan, Burundi, Estonia, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Iraq, Latvia, Lebanon, Mali, Moldova, Niger, Northern Ireland, Pakistan, Philippines, Romania, Rwanda, South Africa, Spain, Turkey;[1] anxieties of Vietnamese in Cambodia, of South Ossetians and Abkhazians in Georgia, of Karens, Kachins, Rohingyas in Myanmar.[2] Nearly all countries in the world have some ethnic minorities. Fewer than 20 states are without at least 5% minorities.[3] It is important to give attention to this problem when we are discussing a plural cultural situation and search for intelligent ways of making space for each other. One must learn to look beyond mere political interests.

Inter-cultural Tensions

Cultural minorities all over the world are making their voices heard these days when they feel their interests are not attended to by the majority community, e.g., the Basques in Spain, Welshmen in the United Kingdom, Quebecois in Canada. Similarly, smaller nations representing smaller ethnic groups feel threatened by the larger ones in the neighborhood. It is important to pay attention to the *ethnic and cultural dimensions* of the problem.

---

[1] Maria Montserrat Guibernau, *The Identity of Nations* (London: Polity Press, 2007), 80.

[2] Ibid., 82.

[3] Ibid., 83.

Wrong handling of grievances of cultural minorities has often led to major conflicts, as has happened between the Hutus and the Tutsis in Africa. From time to time, we read of uneasy relationships between the Dutch and the French-speaking people in Belgium. Meanwhile, Uzbeks have been moving away from Kyrgyzstan due to ethnic tensions. Something similar happened to the Armenians in Syria. Such incidents reveal the power of ethnicity and the centrality of culture in the political life of a nation and of inter-community relationships in a pluralistic society. There are not many countries in the world that do not have to deal with violence related to ethnic and cultural differences. It is in such contexts that we must help each other to *remain human.*

Where ethnicity and culture had been ignored for a long time, the self-assertion of minorities can become much stronger as soon as that possibility arises. The reason is easy to understand. Ethnicity defines for a community what it holds as most precious: its identity. For every community, its own identity and *culture* are unique. These constitute the *ground of their selfhood* and collective existence and promote the values the community lives by. They help it in its *search to be truly human* and find a place in the wider human society. That is why anthropologists consider self-affirmation of communities as something healthy, even necessary. We should not look at this phenomenon negatively. It provides the energy that a community needs for its very survival and self-enhancement. It serves a psycho-social purpose ensuring solidarity within the community in times of danger and motivation for its continued existence.

Even cultures of weak communities have survived when related communities succeeded to preserve a fierce *sense of uniqueness* about their identity during their history. A self-perception of being chosen gave them the needed strength even in the most adverse circumstances to struggle on and survive, as it did in the case of the Jews, Armenians, Romani, Welsh, Irish, Poles, Tibetans, and others. Every community has a right to be proud of its collective self and its cultural heritage. If a community feels that its ethnic, cultural, or historic identity is undervalued or threatened and its political or economic interests ignored, it becomes restive.

Recognizing the Identity and Culture of Each Other

Restlessness in communities is stronger if they constitute *minority groups,* especially those at the borders of countries or margins of society who have too little shared history with the mainstream society or the dominant communities. The smaller ethnic groups in any nation are inclined to resent the indifference and unconcern of the dominant society to their problems. It is for that reason that the assertion of ethnicity and culture has become a discernible trend almost in every part of the world: in Russia, France, Pakistan, Australia; by the Scots, Welsh, Tyrolese, Basques, Catalans, French Canadians, Flemings, Tamils, Kurds, Baluchis. This phenomenon has been gathering strength in recent years and has acquired the name *Identity Politics* on the

world scene. Such self-affirmation can take a violent turn when it is not given scope for legitimate self-expression or when the concerned parties make up their mind to take their claims to extremes, as happened in ex-Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Georgia, Indonesia, Chechnya, and Sri Lanka. It is often said that violence is the eloquence of the weak.

Border communities feel that they had not been a part of the events and processes that gave shape to the national identity and culture, and that their shared history with the majority community has been too brief and the common heritage too small to make them feel a sense of togetherness. In consequence, they have developed a *weak sense of belonging* to the nation concerned or the society of which they are part. Marginal communities feel that they had too small a share in shaping the history of the society of which they have generally been victims.

The emotional distance becomes even more if there are memories of hostile relationships between these border communities and the dominant communities in the past, or if they sense a threat to their cultural identity. Tensions mount when border communities express their sense of alienation further, *wanting to secede* from the control of the dominant cultural group and constitute a new state. The threat of secession in this case is an affirmation of difference. For instance, the Plebians wanted to withdraw from the Patricians in Roman times.

There is any number of communities today that want to secede from a bigger political unit for reasons of cultural or historical differences, or economic or political deprivation: the people of Aceh and Irian Jaya in Indonesia, those of Chechnya in Russia, the Baluchis in Pakistan, Muslims in South Thailand, Muslims of Mindanao in the Philippines, Kurds in Iraq, and Catalans in Spain. The Scots parted ways with England and South Sudan with the North. In some cases, there is violence on the side of the protesters, and in other cases, it is the State that takes the initiative in going hard on the minorities. Sometimes the secessionists take rigid positions; there are times when the representatives of the Administration likewise remain inflexible.

Respecting the Selfhood of a Community

Even nation-states with long histories like the United Kingdom or France have gone through stages in the shaping of their national identity. Such collective self-questionings, therefore, need not be considered unusual in the development of a national consciousness. However, if we do not make place for the cultural dimension of these problems, we will not be able to bring solutions to the anxieties that afflict these regions.

The emotional integration of smaller ethnic groups and humbler communities calls for a strong sense of *human sensitivity* and cultural understanding on the part of those who guide the destinies of the nations. Economic packages alone are inadequate. Respect for the selfhood of the community and its concerns is far more important. Sun Tzu says, understanding the cause

of a possible conflict can lead not only to its resolution but even to its avoidance. "Plan for what is difficult while it is easy, do what is great while it is small." That is how sages achieve greatness.[4]

Humane and Sensitive Leaders with a Sense of Reciprocity

If in a community's perception, the threat to their identity, culture, or interests persists, it does not emerge from anxiety too easily. A stormy and troublesome period is ahead. The horizon looks dark. But if leaders create an atmosphere of reciprocity, and if dissenting communities are humanely treated and given space to grow, develop, and express themselves, the dissenters gradually learn to take their place side by side with others, begin to recognize the cultural assets of other communities as complementary, respect their rights and interests, and accept to live and work in collaboration with them, joining hands together toward a common destiny. This period of transition is very sensitive. People can be led astray by *self-interested leaders* or those inspired by ideologies that lead to no future.

In troubled times, what is required are *intelligent* and *sensitive leaders* on either side. They can adopt a human and humane approach to provide an inspiring and complementary vision and encourage reciprocal relationships. Thus, the communities concerned can easily move forward with a great sense of serenity and self-confidence. If, however, this fails to happen, neither flowering of culture nor development of the economy is possible. Many opportunities for the enhancement of the identity and culture of the community will pass by. For isolation is stagnation. People cannot grow to full human potentiality in non-relationship. With swords drawn, even survival is uncertain. Such a situation spells death to the "human" element in societies. Mutual respect and reciprocity are key to any lasting solution.

Tensions Without Reciprocal Concern

If marginal communities feel that the *natural resources* in their areas are taken away from them without adequate compensation or any advantage to them, or if *their land* keeps going out to business groups or is hastily turned into general economic zones, resentment is bound to build up. The announcement of *dams* and other *mighty projects* with little consideration to the needs or difficulties of local communities sends a shiver through their spines. On the other hand, total isolation is not the answer for the concerned community. *Delaying projects* that can bring common economic benefits may put off development for everyone indefinitely. The pros and cons of a particular project may need to be studied and discussed, guarantees given and honored, but closing doors to new economic initiatives may leave one's community far behind.

---

[4] Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, trans. Thomas Cleary (New Delhi: Rupa, 1999), 2.

Total isolation is unrealistic in a globalized world. Only *intelligent openness* to wider realities and ever-widening opportunities can pave the way to prosperity. That is the law of economic development in any period of history in any part of the world. Similarly, if fast changes in the demographic pattern of a region due to industrial immigration cause indigenous people's proportion to fall significantly, there is bound to be a sense of alarm. Similarly, if the organized sector is developed mostly by capital and labor from outside the region, indigenous people become mere observers of the major economic drama as it develops; people keep wondering whom the regional economy is meant to benefit, who owns the economy, and whom it serves.

A possibility of such an undesired situation could convince indigenous people of the need to go beyond their agricultural aptitudes, and to develop the skills needed for free enterprise and creative economic ventures more typical of modern times.

Looking at Issues from Others' Point of View

There are many ways in social processes in which things can go wrong: on the one hand, when leaders adopt wrong policies or when they make wrong use of right policies when unfair things are done in the name of national security; on the other hand, when movement leaders on the other side misinform and *misguide* their people in self-interest when they build on their communities' grievances and foment anger and hatred, when they exploit their people for the sake of their personal interests, or when the ideals they place before their followers are unrealistic.

Recent history shows how good things have been used for wrong purposes. For example, world powers have invoked human rights to *interfere in the destinies of sovereign nations* or claimed to act in defense of democracy when they wanted to take advantage of weaker ones or imposed types of government on indigenous people alien to their traditions. In the same way, dominant societies pretend to be safeguarding national integrity and security when suppressing or silencing minorities within national borders; nation-states have invoked the sovereignty principle to *suppress human rights*. On the opposite side, leaders who claim to be leading a movement to defend their community and culture have been taking advantage of their followers or compromising their interests for their personal interests. Thus, right and wrong have been on either side. Reciprocity can rescue them from such exaggerations.

Experience has shown how even democracies can become illiberal, *intolerant of minorities,* silence weaker voices, connive at and even provoke ethnic conflict, and have recourse to state violence. It is also true that people can place themselves under petty tyrants and self-interested political leaders for obtaining some personal benefits. Communities have been known in addition to have recourse to various strategies to establish their victimhood before stronger communities. They develop a *martyr complex* and try to convince themselves and others of the criminal intent of everyone else and of their own total helplessness. In all these cases, when one begins to look at

things from others' points of view, one moves further on the way to being human. Mutual concern is the answer. Reciprocity counts.

Tapping the Energy of Youth, Offering Guidance

A society sets itself moving in new directions and breaking new grounds with the assistance of its younger members. Thus, *young people* in a society are not just trouble-makers or rebels who need to be disciplined and tamed. They constitute precious *human resources* to be tapped and valuable human capital to be used. Their perceptions and insights are priceless. The activities they initiate and movements they launch on instinct bring dynamism to a stagnating society. Their prophetic message, often hastily translated into action, needs to be interpreted and guided, not outright rejected. Their energy is to be used, and their cooperation and commitment are elicited. It would be a great loss if they moved away to other lands seeing little scope where they are, or in search of another atmosphere.[5]

Popular movements that young people have led in modern times have been ways by which *communities grew conscious of themselves* and their strength, and have become capable of taking their future into their own hands. Thus, political movements have brought life and direction to mute millions. Many ethnic groups in recent times have grown conscious of their collective identity and the worth and sturdiness of their heritage; they have become aware that they count for something and that they can exercise a legitimate influence on the wider society and shape their own destinies. These contributions have been extremely positive. However, one should not forget that if adults can err, young adults can err too. And it should cause no surprise that some movements led entirely by young adults should slightly stray, especially when guidance has been wanting. The old need the young to break the new ground and take their society forward. But the young, too, need the old to caution, *guide, and lead events with maturity and wisdom* in the long-term interest of the community and of the wider society.

Cultivating Reciprocity even under Pressure of
an Impersonal Economy

No doubt, the modern economy has made great contributions to human growth with the help of steadily advancing technology. All developing societies are mentally set for increased production, expanding trade, and a growing edge over others in economic performance. It will be a great pity if, in our eagerness for immediate economic advantages, we forget the long-term good of society, and lose our hold on the skills for remaining human.

No doubt, economic development is important, but it should not be allowed to degrade the human person or weaken the humane dimension of society. Unfortunately, development strategies do not always focus on human

---

[5] Alvin and Heidi Toffler, *War and Anti-War* (London: Warner Books, 1994), 187.

beings and peoples, but merchandise and the market. When we hear of so-called economic miracles, we forget that every step forward has been taken at a great human price. We are in danger of falling victims to an *insensitive sort of development* at the expense of human beings and their environment, calculated not in terms of human benefit but merely in profits and sum totals.

People become so excited about acquiring the latest gadgets and the most tempting consumer goods that all their life gets oriented to the processes of *earning and owning*, consuming, and displaying their new acquisitions. In this rat race, they leave no room for growing more human: cultivating human sentiments like the compassion of heart, joy in relationships, helpfulness in mutual dealings, and preserving an intelligent and balanced worldview. Suddenly they discover that they are no more than mere robots at the service of the economy, without heart and mind. The Frankensteins of wealth-building in the globalized economy are hunting down those who have brought them into existence. This form of modernity devours its own children.

Of late, things have deteriorated further in many parts of the world: degrading poverty in industrial areas, heartless child labor, slum squalor, street violence, trafficking in women, new types of diseases, lack of opportunity for education and skill acquisition, gross inequality and damage to the environment. People are growing insensitive to each other, ignoring their cultural heritages and undermining those of others. They grow equally insensitive to nature. Gradually they become blind to the fact that they are tearing apart nature's intricate patterns that sustain life and cosmic relationships and imperiling their existence together as human communities.

Similarly, when great business enterprises *tread on the interests of indigenous people*, displacing communities, damaging local markets, and destroying inherited values and traditional cultures, they are inviting a violent response. And once violence breaks out, it is not easy to bring it to a conclusion. Many of the modern tragedies like ethnic conflicts, genocide, and ecocide, are interrelated. Usually, society knows only one way to stop violence: stronger violence to impose peace. Leaders speak of "fighting terrorism." On the contrary, the future belongs not to those who fight but to those who bring communities together, harmonize opposites, and promote human values even amid intense difficulties.

Resolving Conflicts, Leading Communities to Peace

It is in this context that we begin to realize that the unrealistic expectations of some groups may have led them too far in the view of others and brought the communities concerned into conflict with each other. We need men and women of peace. However, we are living in an era in which peacemakers are hard to find. Ideologies inspired by the concepts of struggle have given to young people another message. The fighter is the hero today. Fighting for justice, human rights, one's people, culture, or nation: this provides the ideal for the young people of the day. Working for peace is not a popular mission.

What confuses the issue further is the fact that two persons or groups in a collision can have a *different understanding of justice* in a concrete situation. What happens when perceptions about justice collide, and when people who are fighting for perfectly good causes on behalf of their own people come into conflict? What happens when justice according to me fights against justice according to you? Can we adopt a creative form of dialogue which I call a *critical* dialogue with the opponents: listening, affirming, appreciating, questioning, and searching together, seeking to be reciprocal? Dialogue, when it is made effective, becomes a "smart weapon" for peace.[6] That is being human in context. Dialogue itself is not without problems: giving importance to less important things, questionable things; making odious comparisons based on ethnicity or culture, using political clout, being caught in stereotypes, or humiliating opponents. We need bridge-builders, culture-translators to enable minds and meanings to meet. We should avoid using aggressive words in the media. Human beings should learn to be human to each other.

Respecting the Opponent and Befriending him

Heroes like Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. approached knotty political problems with absolute respect for the persons who represented the other side, even for the direct opponent. They could tap the good will buried in the deepest recesses of the opponent's inner being. They appealed to the humanity, *natural goodness,* in the heart of their enemies and *did not embitter them with denunciations*. They tried to befriend their foes. They made sure that their assessment of the situation was objective, their demands fair, and their statements true. They avoided exaggerations, threats, and any form of violence. While they claimed their own rights, they did not ignore the rights of others.

We need peacemakers, those who cultivate reciprocity. That is the way of being human today: those who esteem others, even their enemies; those who win sympathy and support by the *uprightness of their conduct* and truthfulness of their argument; those who transform hearts and make a valuable contribution to the common human heritage; those who, by the *human touch* with which they handle even the most sensitive problems, build confidence; those who can identify and separate real issues from ego-requirements, from rigid ideologies, and pre-determined positions.

Right Leadership for Anticipatory Thinking, Helpful Conversations

Society readily gathers around defenders and promoters of genuine human values and common interests. Under inspiring leadership, people of all cultures and interests learn to come together. While Samuel Huntington spoke at length of a "Clash of Civilizations," we would rather speak of a *Dialogue*

---

[6] Ibid., 315.

of Civilizations, a conversation between cultures and a negotiation between interests.

The right leadership elicits reciprocity in response. Persons with worthwhile messages are happy to meet with each other. They engage themselves in "anticipatory thinking" to prevent conflict and promote peace, taking into consideration things like political factions, structural pressures.[7] Complex social situations call for careful analysis, for one can easily be misled by what appears on the surface. In 1914 H. G. Wells felt certain that he was entering into a peaceful era. He was little aware when he said, "Nothing could have been more obvious to the people of the early twentieth century than the rapidity with which war was becoming impossible," that World War I was to break out in a short time. Similarly, in 1928 Henry Ford was greatly mistaken when he proclaimed, "People are becoming too intelligent ever to have another big war."[8] And yet World War II was at the door.

Predictions often do go wrong, but the greatest tragedy takes place when a leader seeks to draw profit from the collective anger of a people for his/her private interests. He/she can fan the flames of discontent into a conflagration, and make his/her career on the grievances of the people. *People with a message* are different from *people with a grievance*. One is a lamp, the other is a shade. One inspires, the other obscures. One looks forward, the other backward. The former is optimistic, confident, and respectful; the latter is pessimistic, unsure, and aggressive. The former elicits good will; the latter believes in confrontation and crushes out even the little good will the opponent has. One takes responsibility; the other shifts responsibility to everyone else around. One is open to new possibilities; the other falls into the ditch one has made. People with a message are adults, they are human in the full sense, they believe in reciprocity. The fact is that we all have grievances. And many have grievances against us too. As individuals and communities, we have hurt each other, and there are *collective memories to be healed*. We can work on such healing. If we have a genuine grievance, we can learn to transform that into a soul-capturing message. That will make all the difference.

Experiences and Introspection

People begin to think more comprehensively and more profoundly when they reach an impasse. It was after the Kalinga war that Asoka thought of drawing nations together with a message of peace. It was after two ruinous World Wars that the western nations said they would cooperate rather than collide. The pains that we go through during conflicts hold out lessons for us. All societies have gone through negative experiences, but those, who reflected and learned, regained strength.

Arnold Toynbee in his voluminous *Study of History* argues that right through human experience, those who knew how to accept reality and learned

---

[7] Ibid., 312.
[8] Ibid., 16.

to reorganize themselves for a fresh start succeeded. He quotes the examples of Greece, Rome, England, and Holland to argue that they made a breakthrough only when they chose to lay the foundation for their fortunes on the hard rock of realities, challenging situations, including the experience of a crushing defeat.

The Path of Persuasion

The skill of the leaders on either contending side lies in their ability to search for motivations that will bind their communities together for a common purpose, *not by force but through persuasion.* The sheer need for emerging from a relatively underdeveloped condition is a good motivation. The present state of backwardness of a community, a region, or a country is not necessarily a setback, but a good starting point.

Francis Fukuyama holds that late modernizers have an advantage; beginners bring with them values that provide the backbone of success: industriousness, sparing habits, accommodating and non-confrontational ways, readiness to work hard and take trouble, an eagerness to please and win collaboration and support, willingness to take risks and innovate, and other similar qualities. They do not grow complacent too early. They cannot afford to do so. The searches of innovative leadership for new ways of making diverse interests find a meeting point. The emergence of the *European Union* and the economic success of *ASEAN* tell us how people can *hold their differences in abeyance* and seek to express them in new and *creative ways.* But they must explore and discover advantages in doing so.

Recent economic trends are showing that even the weakest country or community can have something to *specialize in* and that they derive the maximum advantage when they combine themselves with other people who are different, precisely because of their different natural endowments. Creative and insightful people have evolved ways of transcending even major differences for common benefit.

Togetherness

There seems to be a law in nature: *talents reveal themselves in clusters.* There were many dramatists in London during Shakespeare's days. Explorers and adventurers crowded the Portuguese and Spanish courts at a particular period of history. Florence, Venice, and Milan had bunches of painters in the peak era of art. Turin was the home of many saints during the 19th century. Paris was crowded with social thinkers at some stage; Berlin and Vienna with musicians.

In like manner, modern business too has been coming up in clusters. The *Asian Tigers* would be a good example. Interaction among creative leaders stimulates interest, provides know-how, and encourages innovation. Commercial interdependence also creates an atmosphere for peace. Richard

Rosecrance says in his *The Rise of the Trading State* that nations are becoming economically so interdependent that they would not easily be dragged into a conflict.[9] They would rather learn from each other. Think of the Information Industry picking up in certain cities of the Third World. One learns from the other. Suddenly there can dawn an *age of energy and optimism*, of accomplishment, expansion, growth, and development for our communities. Our young people can learn to bring something of their present political energies in the direction of social harmony and economic productivity.

Unfortunately, violence and corruption also spring up in clusters. Certain regions become known for people who produce commercially valuable goods and others for mobs that protest; some regions for creative persons, others for destructive persons. When the wrong choice is made what stares at your face, in consequence, is a situation of aggressive voices, mutual denunciations, civil disturbance, chaotic disorder, violence; growing inequality, injustice, poverty, lack of education, lack of shelter, epidemics, ethnic conflict, armed political dissent. Many lament the evils of this era. It is far better to *rejoice at the opportunity* one has for doing good precisely in these challenging times.

Responsibility to the Larger Society

A sense of responsibility seems to be the most needed value in public life today. For example, a community's eagerness for identity-affirmation should not lead it to collective self-centeredness. Everyone must have respect for the larger interests of the wider society. If the pursuit of self-interest becomes too important for a community, it would soon land in trouble with other communities and move on to the path of decline. That is what happened even to the mightiest empires in history when they adopted a policy of *consistent confrontation* with neighbors. Unfortunately, there are always some who adopt this course, giving evidence to the absence of a sense of responsibility toward self and toward others.

Or again, the *exaggerated assertion of self-interest* can force a community into a ghetto and close the minds of its members to new ideas, possibilities, creative organizational structures, and technologies. This would render their mental outlook rigid and consequently incapable of meeting the challenges of changing situations. Meanwhile, new, creative communities and countries would come up, accept emerging challenges, confront them courageously with rising confidence, and set aside the closed-minded.

Everyone knows that in matters of social interest, the government alone cannot solve all the problems. *Civil society too has to play its role*. People have to take their own responsibility as well. Many things that people expect from the administration, as though their fates depended totally on them, are easily won by their own efforts, with hard work and intelligent handling of

---

[9] Ibid., 17

both hurdles and opportunities. From the moment the leaders of the community succeed to arouse a sense of responsibility in its members, they will commit themselves to constructive work, disciplined effort, methodic approach to development, interest in probity in public life, concern for the common good, and mutually stimulating altruism. Albert Schweitzer, who spent the major portion of his life in interior Africa, believed that all of us "should sacrifice a portion of their own lives for others."

Being Above Partisan Interests

In the political field, people will show a similar sense of responsibility when they make sure not to allow their partisan interests to have precedence over the interests of society as a whole. Playing cheap politics in this context of community tensions is playing with common interests. The people of a region feel disturbed when they get the impression that major decisions are taken in their regard merely to suit the fortunes of the dominant group, and not on the merit of the issue. It becomes most unconvincing when, after that, the leaders quote common interests against the people of the region while sacrificing everything to their petty interests or the whims of the dominant society in the country. There is something unfair when a small community's major interests are sacrificed to the *majority community's petty interests* or *prejudices* in the name of the well-being of all.

Vision for the Future

It is currently being noticed that the fastest-growing *middle class* in the world is in the newly developing countries. As their purchasing power increases, they will constitute the biggest *market* on the planet. In the same way, the number of young people of working age too is growing faster in those countries than among the aging population of the developed world. They will constitute the *biggest workforce* in the global economy. If this mighty human power could be trained, motivated, and guided, it would lead the world economy. There was a time when the best brains of a developing nation were fleeing the country to build their future. It was referred to as the brain drain. Today, the *brain drain trend is in reverse*. Those who went to make their fortune abroad, like doctors and engineers, are returning to make a bigger one at home. They are coming back with the advantage of additional experience. Developing regions are recognized as the most important destination for outsourcing. These are some of the indicators that predict unlimited economic opportunities for young people with skills and determination.

Late-comers have a golden opportunity to adopt the most rewarding economic models, introduce the most remunerative working styles, and install the latest and the best model of infrastructure. It does no one harm to be a part of this scene of a unique adventure. E. F. Schumacher, speaking of communities that make a new start, says "Suddenly, there is an outburst of daring,

initiative, invention, constructive activity, not in one field alone, but in many fields at once. No one may be able to say where it came from…”

We know where it comes from. It comes from *thinking leaders*, prophets, poets, writers, who provide a stimulating philosophy for action, insisting on giving a positive response to problems, developing the human element in human beings. It depends on *dedicated young people* who inspire their colleagues to help their communities to make the right choices at strategically important moments. In this way, they give a new direction to history. Then suddenly, the story of violence, corruption, agitations, extortions, communal conflicts, ethnic tensions is clean forgotten. And a new era of peace and prosperity is ushered in. A peaceful and corruption-fee society makes sure progress for prosperity.

Collaboration, a Sense of Fairness

Human beings have always been *interdependent*. Every community, nation, and civilization has been borrowing techniques, institutions, concepts, and habits continuously from other communities, nations, and civilizations. The greater the interaction, the greater the stimulus for growth. Ideas and lifestyles, which we consider our own, may have reached us from unknown sources, not rarely from our immediate neighbors with whom we are at loggerheads. We all have borrowed from each other, and the smarter of us have borrowed more. We realize that no culture or civilization is a perfect human product. Even the most advanced societies are feeling diffident about the absoluteness of the values of their civilization and beginning to notice its limitations.

Those who recognize this limitation readily see the importance of fostering *not ideas of confrontation but of collaboration.* Those who propagated philosophies of contention and led movements of struggle against other classes, communities, and the Established Order, are beginning to rethink their propositions. They see that every human struggle in history has been in the larger context of collaboration, and those who reconcile and motivate others for collaboration make the greatest contribution to human growth and social development. Those who help the weakest derive the greatest benefit for themselves by a law of necessity.

Conflict is an aberration in human affairs; collaboration is the law of natural human processes and collective self-enhancement. Can people be assisted to bring a *non-confrontational approach* to problems? Ancient epics were about daring conquests and empire-building. Modern epics have been about the struggle for freedom, emancipation, and equality. The time has come for us to move on to enacting and recording for future generations grand “Epics of Reconciliation.“ Can we build up the *Creative Minority* that will take this initiative?

In sum, in human history, the rejection of the spiritual always provoked an exaggerated reaction for its restoration. No civilization ever prospered that

ignored human beings' daily concerns, nor survived that was blind to the human race's *spiritual destiny*. The spiritual element has brought the great civilizations of the past into existence; its motivating and strengthening power cannot be ignored even today.

Historians have traced out an unpredictable element in the development of civilizations. Some have referred to it as a chance that gives an unforeseen opportunity to communities and nations; Adam Smith saw an *invisible hand* in the economy; Mahatma Gandhi spoke of the *inner voice*. Recently some thinkers have proposed Chaos Theory, presenting what appears like chaos as a creative force transforming the entire old order and bringing into existence a new and happy state of things. Spiritually minded persons see a Deeper Design in everything leading history's processes to an Ultimate Destiny. It is only when we search the deeper levels of our Collective Unconscious that we discover the more profound reasons for reciprocity formulae for realizing humanity's lasting well-being.

Bibliography

Confucius. *Analects*.

Guibernau, Maria Monserrat. *The Identity of Nations*. London: Polity Press, 2007.

Hutchinson, John and Anthony Smith. *Ethnicity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Kakar, Sudhir. *The Colours of Violence*. New Delhi: Viking, 1995.

Sun Tzu. *The Art of War*. Translation Thomas Cleary. New Delhi: Rupa, 1999.

Toffler, Alvin and Heidi. *War and Anti-War*. London: Warner Books, London, 1994.

4

Reciprocity and Reference

Astrid VICAS

Prologue

My concern in this paper is to bring out some aspects of the nature and characteristics of human reciprocity by way of an underexamined body of knowledge and literature. This body of literature was developed in the last third of the twentieth century. I characterize it as supporting a proto-systems approach to the acquisition of first language, helping us grasp how we enter into the realization that words have meaning. It drew on ideas on the nature of language that had been brewing since the eighteenth century. It also drew on records of interaction with infants in diaries of caregivers that had been accumulating since the late nineteenth century.

The proto-systems approach to the acquisition of a first language that I identify was first outlined by developmental psychologist Heinz Werner. Some of his ideas were further articulated by developmental psychologist Elizabeth Bates. They brought out the importance of acts of reciprocation between infants and caregivers and identified these practices as part of a set of activities that enable first language acquisition.

In what follows, I take responsibility for the following aspects of the tale in which reciprocity is implicated in human language:

(i) the identification of Werner's and Bates's approach to symbolization as a proto-systems approach to linguistic reference, including the distinction made between signaling and symbolization or true reference;

(ii) a proposal concerning the antecedents of the proto-systems approach to linguistic reference;

(iii) some implications concerning what we can learn from a proto-systems approach to reference, which include that there is a strong connection between acts of reciprocation and our very ability to grasp the normative and the virtual or the public, as opposed to developing expectations produced by regular patterns of behavior.

In relation to the aims of this volume, what is to be noted is that reciprocation, virtuality, and acting in accordance with norms may require all kinds of feelings, skills, and abilities. A variety of such factors come to mind, such as feelings of empathy, skills in tracking and manipulating objects, the ability to respond to patterns of events in a way that answers one's needs, and the ability to solve problems. Nevertheless, these various feelings, skills, and abilities are present in many social animals, which communicate by signaling but do not have symbolic or referential communication.

It is a fact that symbolically competent human beings frequently exhibit reciprocity-violating behaviors. These behaviors can be ingrained in social customs and political institutions. However, the message of this paper is that, while we will need to continue to develop empathy and address tendencies to promote self-interest through cost-benefit calculations, the very thing that enables human culture and institutions, namely symbolization, presupposes practices of reciprocation. Moreover, practices of reciprocation are tied to our understanding of virtuality and normativity. Thus, the practical message of this paper is that we should engage in a self-conscious attempt to pay closer attention to the small details of our social and political lives and examine whether they offer opportunities for reciprocation. We should make a concerted effort to embed practices of reciprocation between individuals in institutions of civil society and politics and commit ourselves to their implementation.

Introduction

What is reference? We can loosely echo Augustine in saying that we all know what it is until we start thinking about it. Much has been written on reference, meaning, symbolization, and related notions. Reference, true reference, or symbolization will be the terminology employed in this paper for discussing the kind of aboutness that is characteristically ascribed in exclusivity to human languages, and that is not just the kind of intentionality or aboutness that any living entity, whether social or not, displays in making a living. This paper takes the stance that some definitive accomplishments have been registered in the characterization of true reference or symbolization, although not in the way that many people think. It is time to take stock of what has been accomplished in a line of filiation that extends from Johann Gottfried Herder and Wilhelm von Humboldt to Sue Savage-Rumbaugh. Perhaps the reader might find juxtaposing these names a bit surprising, but this paper will point out in what ways it is plausible.

This paper is intended to offer a synthetic outlook on what can be called a proto-systems account of true reference or symbolization. If some readers wonder about the label, a preliminary, very rough characterization will serve for the moment. A proto-systems account of reference or symbolization conceptualizes it to arise out of and be constituted in the interactions among individuals, who are themselves subject to transformation by their ongoing interaction and the cultural products that arise from it. One cannot isolate individual activities and purported referents and make them correspond in some easily manageable way, as in causal-linear loops or homeostatic processes. Reference arises in a system of activities and interactions subject to ever-greater complexity in organization. It is not separable from them. Some may believe that something can pass as a systems theory only if it can be modeled by equations. Ludwig von Bertalanffy, a contributor to systems theory, did

not share this opinion. He favored insight over hasty quantification.[1] In any case, none of the protagonists whose views will be reconstructed and synthesized in this paper believed quantification is a requirement for gaining insight into reference. The characterization of 'proto' is intended for those who nevertheless believe that a systems approach must be quantifiable.

The proto-systems account is an alternative to neo-Aristotelian and neo-Humean accounts of reference or symbolization. The current situation in various fields, theoretical and applied, in which the issue of reference arises, is such that the three different approaches to reference, proto-systems, neo-Aristotelian, and neo-Humean, are mixed together in a jumble, even though they have very different assumptions and implications. This is the reason why the body of the paper begins with an outline of the characteristics of neo-Aristotelian and neo-Humean accounts of reference. It then outlines characteristics of the proto-systems account of reference. The core of this paper is a presentation of the proto-systems account of reference articulated by developmental psychologist Hans Werner and his associate Bernard Kaplan and its extension by psychologist Elizabeth Bates, which will allow us to bring out a set of characteristics of reference that are distinctive of the proto-systems approach, seventeen of which are identified.

Although this paper is not intended to be an essay in the history of ideas, some backward-looking glances will be required to round out the outline drawn of what we know of the distinctive characteristics of symbolization and to sort out how it differs from neo-Aristotelian and neo-Humean views. If we were to place the historically foundational contributions to what will become the proto-systems approach to reference on a timeline, it would begin at the earliest around the 1770s with Johann Gottfried Herder. The approach acquires greater depth and breadth with the contributions of Wilhelm von Humboldt by the end of the eighteenth century and the first few decades of the nineteenth century. For some aspects of Humboldt's ideas, it will be necessary to acknowledge the insights of philosophers Johann Gottlieb Fichte and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. Fichte's contributions date from the 1790s to the early years of the nineteenth century. Hegel's relevant contributions date from the first few years of the nineteenth century. This body of contributions, which span a few decades between the 1770s and the 1820s, sets the preparatory groundwork for next stage in the development of the proto-systems approach in the hands of Hans Werner, for which we will have to wait until the late 1950s.

Indeed, the contributions of Werner and Kaplan, and Bates's extension of their work, are central in providing an articulation of the view that Herder and especially Humboldt began to outline. Werner explicitly adopted a proto-systems approach to the emergence of reference or symbolization. Werner and Kaplan's construct of the primordial sharing situation that serves as the basis for the emergence of reference will be essential to understanding what

---

[1] Ludwig von Bertalanffy, *General Systems Theory* (New York: Braziller, 1968), 24.

role the notion of what has since the late 1970s been labeled "triadic" inter-action plays in how reference arises. These developments occur in the space of two decades, ranging from the late 1950s for Werner's work relevant to our concerns to the late 1970s, in which Bates fleshes out the primordial shar-ing situation through her construct of the gestural complex.

There is a further body of work that needs to be acknowledged. Alt-hough the fundamental outlook that undergirds the proto-systems approach to reference as Werner and Kaplan expressed in their 1963 publication *Symbol Formation* is indebted to Herder, Humboldt, Fichte, and Hegel, it might not have advanced past the accomplishments of the nineteenth century with-out a significant body of writing that had developed in the period of over a century in which it appears that no progress was being made. Werner and Kaplan's construct of the primordial sharing situation is deeply indebted to the contributions of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century diaries writ-ten by caregivers who were also professionally trained psychologists: Milli-cent Washburn Shinn, Clara and William Stern, Ernst and Gertrud Scupin, Wilhelm Ament, Werner F. Leopold, and M. M. Lewis, to name only some of the more prominent ones on which Werner and Kaplan drew.

The work of Werner and Bates is today mostly glossed over as of pass-ing, historical interest. Their insight into reference, encompassing most sig-nificantly the idea that reference requires what can be called the publicity of the non-present, has often been, since the 1980s, reinterpreted as the idea that reference requires a species-specific human ability to gaze together with other humans at the same object, sometimes also labeled joint attention. An excep-tion to this trend is especially notable in reports by primatologist Sue Savage-Rumbaugh, in which she discusses the kind of activities that went into induc-ing symbolic competence in non-human apes. Savage-Rumbaugh's work can quite easily serve as a practical illustration of what it means to think of refer-ence in terms of a proto-systems approach and what something that is now called a triadic relation means in this context.

It is hoped that clarifying the distinctiveness of the proto-systems ap-proach to reference will promote recognition of the substantial character of the contributions of Werner and Bates. It is also hoped that it will stimulate some people to reexamine the diaries of caregivers, the insights of which were significant in underpinning Werner's formulation of a proto-systems ap-proach to reference.

The next section briefly explains what is meant by neo-Aristotelian and neo-Humean approaches to reference. This is done for the sake of enabling greater clarity in sorting out a tangle of views that liberally combine the proto-systems approach to reference with ideas that are in effect not compatible with it. There are essential stakes at play if we wish to understand better what has been accomplished in the study of the acquisition of symbolic compe-tence in humans and some animals. The stance taken in this paper is that in-sights from the proto-systems approach will be needed if we are ever to make definitive progress in understanding symbolic competence not only in living beings but also, potentially, in artificial systems, such as virtual artificial

agents and robots. Because of space constraints, only the delineation of the proto-systems approach will be pursued here. Amplifications in the history of ideas and debates with rival views will have to await later papers. It will be enough to point out, for the moment, that a chief motivation for renewing an acquaintance with the proto-systems approach is that alternative approaches face significant drawbacks: they either assume too much or too little.

Reference for neo-Aristotelians and neo-Humeans

The currently popular approaches to the problem of reference and how the skill to refer is acquired are still largely Aristotelian and Humean, in a broad sense, although Platonism occasionally finds its place at the table. What is here called contemporary Aristotelianism takes reference to be a given and embedded in natural events. Reference is part of the structure of reality and the human mind. In this, present-day Aristotelians follow, by and large, Aristotle's views: "Now spoken sounds are symbols of affections in the soul, and written marks symbols of spoken sounds. But what these are in the first place signs of – affections of the soul – are the same for all; and what these affections are likenesses of – actual things – are also the same."[2] Aristotle lays down much of the infrastructure for the relation between spoken sound and symbol in *On the Soul*: The soul, by its intrinsic nature, is such that it is fitted to receive the form of the object to which it is directed, so that symbols have immediate purchase on the intrinsic structural elements that make up reality. There is nothing remarkable about reference that makes it different from intentionality. Intentionality, in the sense of the aboutness of mental content, is built into nature. Reference is, likewise, already built into reality in the special case of human souls.[3]

Neo-Aristotelians acknowledge some scientific developments since Aristotle by assuming that the correspondence between the structure and contents of the individual human mind and external reality, which accounts for how reference works, has been ensured by the vagaries of natural selection. Darwinianism is enlisted in support of the general outlook that there is a way nature plainly is, and we are made fit to survive by individually and mentally conforming to the underlying structure of things in nature.

In Hume's *A Treatise Concerning Human Nature*, which antedates the publication of Herder's 1772 *Treatise on the Origins of Language* by a little over three decades, reference is approached as a convention reached among human individuals. It is explained in terms of mutually expressed beliefs belonging to the parties to the convention. Their mutually expressed beliefs concern their expectations about regularities in behavior. In principle, Humean

---

[2] Aristotle, *De Interpretatione,* trans. J. L. Ackrill, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation,* ed. J. Barnes (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press), 1984, 16a4-8.

[3] Aristotle, *On the Soul,* trans. J. A. Smith, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation,* ed. J. Barnes (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press), 1984, Book 3, Chapters 3-8.

reference is not different from the kind of coordination that occurs when in-dividuals fall into the same rhythm while rowing a boat. There is, indeed, nothing special about reference.[4] In keeping with Hume's outlook, neo-Humeans build reference up out of iterated expectations concerning regularly observed patterns of co-occurrence in behaviors and events.

These twenty- and twenty-first-century views about reference were de-veloped and advocated by philosophers. John Searle[5] is prototypical of what has here been called neo-Aristotelianism, while Paul Grice and Michael Brat-man are typical of the neo-Humean approach, which has been most thor-oughly developed by David Lewis. Their ideas, often blended in various ways, as in developmental psychologist Michael Tomasello's numerous pub-lications, have been accepted, usually tacitly and only occasionally explicitly, by a large swath of social and natural scientists, including evolutionary psy-chologists, ethologists, and anthropologists. Some contemporaries are in-clined toward neo-Aristotelianism. Even more, however, lean to a kind of neo-Humeanism. In fact, neo-Humeanism is embedded in current commer-cial algorithms developed for natural language processing. Yet, while there is a world of difference between Aristotle's essentialism and Hume's brand of empiricism, when it comes to symbolization, both neo-Aristotelians and neo-Humeans – and all the various possible blends of the two approaches – agree to treat it as a kind of correspondence between individual behaviors or mental contents and objects or events.

Now, on the one hand, the neo-Aristotelian approach to reference "solves" the problem of reference by assuming reference is already embedded in nature. This is giving away too much too soon. On the other hand, the neo-Humean approach is adequate for providing an account of signaling, both how it arises and what it is. Nevertheless, its most lucid expositor, twentieth-century American philosopher David Lewis, clearly recognized that there is an unbridgeable gap between signaling and reference. He did not pretend to bridge it.[6] This is more than can be said for the typical contemporary neo-Humean. The average contemporary neo-Humean believes that the gap has been bridged and that philosophers have shown us how to do it. Nothing is further from the truth. In effect, it is probably safe to say that the average neo-Humean social or natural scientist is not even aware that there is an issue to be addressed.

If we were to look outside of professional philosophical treatments of reference, on the side of theory application, we would find that much of Sav-

---

[4] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. P. H. Nidditch (Oxford: Oxford Uni-versity Press, 1978), 490.

[5] John R. Searle, *Intentionality: An Essay in the Philosophy of Mind* (Cambridge: Cam-bridge University Press, 1983); Idem, *The Construction of Social Reality* (New York: The Free Press, 1995); Idem, *Making the Social World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

[6] David Lewis, *Convention*: *A Philosophical Study* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univer-sity Press, 1969), 143, 160-161.

age-Rumbaugh's early work with apes can be understood to provide an extended refutation of the Humean view of reference.[7] By the turn of this century, she had been led to admit that training apes to respond to co-occurrences between language-like tokens and physical objects hindered rather than helped their ability to gain symbolic competence.[8]

The neo-Humeans, because they try to generate reference from the ground up, that is, from the observation of mere co-occurrences, have given themselves a much harder task than the neo-Aristotelians, who just assume reference as a given. They are perhaps not familiar with Lewis's sober assessment of the prospects for reducing reference to signaling, so the reductionist program is still currently a quite popular approach to reference or symbolization. In what follows, because symbols are so frequently treated as signals in the extant literature, some aspects of signals will be brought out. This will help us prepare the way for discussing the distinctiveness of reference or symbolization in later sections of the paper.

Signals. One may allow that any living entity interprets its environment, in some sense of "interpret." It can act to preserve and promote its life. It conveys something about its state to other living entities as it draws on some properties of the state of its environment in order to make a living and starts the process all over again for as long as it is alive. In this sense, there is interpretation and communication in support of "purpose." We can take any such conveyance to be a matter of signaling. We can also accept psychobiologist Jaak Panksepp's and others' views that many animals have consciousness and that it provides an additional means to supporting their livelihood. Certainly, animals that are thought to have consciousness can communicate intentionally. The list of species for which this is believed to be plausible has grown significantly over the past decades. It is not widely controversial to say today that, at the very least, the kinds of animals that are social and have consciousness can communicate intentionally.

We can grant all of this, and still, it would not turn signaling into symbolization. That is not to say that some of these animals could not learn symbolic communication. The point for the moment is a more general one about the features of signaling and how they differ from the features of reference or symbolization. This section takes a brief look at features of signals, which it will do by way of an example. Five features of signals can be extracted from it, useful for eventually highlighting relevant aspects of symbolization.

The example is taken from Bates, who inherited it from N. Svachkin. It involves a stage in early childhood when children are not yet referentially competent. A child utters "kitty." She does this as part of a routine of throwing her toy out of her playpen. It is a cue for an adult caregiver passing by to

---

    [7] Sue E. Savage-Rumbaugh, *Ape Language: From Conditioned Response to Symbol* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986).

    [8] Sue E. Savage-Rumbaugh, Jeannine Murphy, Rose A. Sevcik, Karen E, Brakke, Shelly L. Williams, Duane M. Rumbaugh, "Language Comprehension in Ape and Child," *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development* 58, no. 3/4 (1993): 213.

fetch the toy.[9] Several things can be said about this exchange between child and adult:

    1. The uttering of "kitty" and the throwing of a toy are part of an event. The uttering of "kitty" stands in relation to a larger event as part to whole. The latter also includes the presence and behavior of a caregiver being observed.

    2. The utterance of "kitty," understood as an event, makes it more likely that one will observe the child who made the utterance throw the toy out of its playpen and the caregiver pick it up. The utterance of "kitty" allows an observer to predict the events of throwing a toy out of the playpen and the toy being picked up by a caregiver will occur.

    3. The utterance of "kitty" and the caregiver's picking up a toy are both items in surveyable sets of alternative events. Each action, whether utterance by the child or response of the caregiver, is part of a set of surveyable alternatives. The occurrence of one event in the set enacted by the child reduces the probability of occurrence of alternative behaviors (behavior other than picking up the toy) enactable by the caregiver.

    4. Barring error or deception, there is a one-to-one correspondence between the utterance of "kitty" and the caregiver engaging in a game of fetch.

    Finally, one may add the following condition:

    5. The relation between utterance and the behavior of picking up a toy might be temporary and unstable. It is possible that someone might fetch a toy without the child having uttered: "kitty," or the child might utter "kitty," and no one engages in a game of fetch. Suppose, however, that there is a one-way dependency between the uttering of "kitty" and the act of engaging in a game of fetch-the-toy. Alternatively, suppose that a caregiver would not have participated in a game of fetch-the-toy with the child had the child not uttered "kitty." Either one of these conditions, if satisfied, might be grounds for saying that the utterance of "kitty" was a causal factor in initiating an episode of fetching. This last feature is intended to capture what many people understand by causation. Many would want to say that the utterance of "kitty" causes fetching behavior. The trouble with causation is that there is no widespread agreement about how to analyze it, and I do not wish to get involved in debates about causation. Nevertheless, the notion crops up often enough, so it is mentioned in passing here. People do talk about intentional communication as a way of controlling others' behaviors. Richard Dawkins in *The Selfish Gene* is typical in this respect.[10]

    All in all, one could say that the utterance of "kitty" is an intentional communicative act that means, or signals, fetch the toy. To summarize its features, let us call the two events related A and B. Feature 1) expresses that

---

   [9] Elizabeth Bates, Luigia Camaioni, and Virginia Volterra, "The Acquisition of Performatives Prior to Speech," *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly* 21 (1975): 224.

   [10] Richard Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

A is part of an event of which B is also a part. Feature 2) expresses that A predicts B or that A makes B more likely to occur. Feature 3) expresses the idea that if A is an option in a set of surveyable alternatives A', A'', A''', etc., and B is likewise an option in a set of surveyable alternatives B', B'', B''', etc., the occurrence of one of the As reduces the probability of occurrence of all of the B-alternatives except one. Feature 4) expresses the point that the relation between A and B is generally one-to-one. Finally, feature 5) conveys the idea that in some cases of intentional communication, A causes B. Some people like to think of 5) as expressing the condition that the occurrence of A controls the occurrence of B.

This way of understanding communication is quite widespread. Here is a typical example from ethology, in which reference is assumed to be the same as signaling. In this example, the ethologist interprets vervet or Diana monkeys to refer to an eagle by uttering a characteristic alarm call.[11] The event can be analyzed to have the following features.

1. The utterance of the alarm call is part of an event that also includes a recipient's response to the call.

2. The utterance of the alarm call predicts, for the animal picking up the signal, the presence of an eagle; it also makes it more likely that the recipient enacts the corresponding response, which is looking up and ducking into a bush.

3. The utterance of the alarm call is part of a set of surveyable alternatives, such as calls for leopard, eagle, or python. Recipients' behaviors are also categorizable into a set of surveyable alternatives, namely, the respective protective responses to leopards, eagles, or pythons: climb up a tree, look up and duck into a bush, or look down on the ground. The observed occurrence of one event in the set of alarm calls, the call for eagle, reduces the probability of the observed occurrences of recipients climbing up a tree or looking down on the ground.

4. The relation between the utterance of an alarm call and what it predicts is one-to-one: the call for leopard corresponds to climbing up a tree, not looking down on the ground, or ducking into a bush.

5. Finally, if one wants to add the fifth feature, the production of the alarm call for eagle causes the recipients of the call to look up and duck under a bush. There is a one-way dependency between the uttering of the call for eagle by one monkey and the behavior of looking up and ducking under a bush by the recipients. The recipients would not have looked up and ducked under a bush if they had not observed the eagle alarm call.

More examples could be adduced. Here are some additional examples of signaling involving pre-symbolic children from Bates and her associates.

---

[11] Arnold K. Zuberbühler, "Female Putty-Nosed Monkeys Use Experimentally Altered Contextual Information to Disambiguate the Cause of Male Alarm Calls," *PLoS ONE* 8, no. 6 (2013).

Marta produces the Italian utterances "da" and "tieni" in the context of ex-changing an object with an adult, regardless of whether she is the one giving or taking. Moreover, she never uses these sounds when she is not the one participating in the game. Bates interprets "da" and "tieni" as ritual vocal acts performed when passing objects rather than words symbolizing the activity of giving and taking. These vocal acts are still akin to signals. They are part of a wider event involving a game with an adult caregiver.[12]

The same could be said when another child, Carlotta, uses the utterance "bam" to knock over blocks or mix up toys or "brr" when she rides or drags toys or things that make a noise. They are events that are part of an activity; they do not have a referential function.[13] Other examples include games of patty cake and "bye-bye," which are behavioral routines.[14] Primatologist Savage-Rumbaugh, a decade later, prefacing her own work in inducing ref-erential competence in non-human apes, would echo the point Bates and her collaborators made in the 1970s. The answer "bye-bye" to the question "Where's Daddy?" is different from the utterance of the similar-sounding "bye-bye" in what she calls an "interindividual behavioral routine."[15] The first is a commentary on a specific, articulable aspect of a situation. The sec-ond is part of an event that predicts an act of taking leave. Indeed, the first displays a characteristic of symbolization, which is the articulation of expe-rience through focus and specificity. There are many other distinctive features of symbolization. The purpose of the next section is to list them briefly. They will be discussed at greater length in later sections.

True Reference or Symbolization: An Overview

The distinction between symbolization and signaling is a key insight in Werner and Kaplan's *Symbol Formation*. Its centrality is highlighted in the very title of the book. Bates and her collaborators, Savage-Rumbaugh, and psychologists Patricia Greenfield and Joshua H. Smith would all later self-consciously accept the distinction that Werner and Kaplan had emphasized: "Signs and signals are elicitors (or inhibitors) of action; they lead one to an-ticipate rather than to represent an event. In our view, therefore, symbols can never be considered as a mere species of the genus 'sign.'"[16] Here represen-tation is understood as a synonym for reference. Indeed, the crux of the issue is what makes reference different from eliciting or inhibiting action, the latter being characteristic of signaling.

Many current participants in debates as to whether nonhuman apes can refer believe that reference is not reducible to signaling, even as they tacitly rely on neo-Humean accounts of reference as signaling. Reference, many

---

[12] Bates, e.a., "The Acquisition of Performatives Prior to Speech," 220-224.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid., 93.
[15] Savage-Rumbaugh, *Ape Language,* 23.
[16] Heinz Werner and Bernard Kaplan, *Symbol Formation* (New York: Wiley, 1963), 14.

agree today, is different because it requires a triadic relation.[17] There is much variability in how the notion of triadicity is treated. Since the 1980s, the dominant interpretation appears to characterize it in terms of two interactants exchanging gazes involving a physical object, which is the third thing in the triadic relation. This characterization has its own problems, which will be outlined in a later section. The point of this paper is to highlight positive developments concerning attempts that have been made to gain insight into the distinctiveness of symbolic reference rather than to argue against contrasting views. It will be assumed that reference will always be understood as that which characterizes the fundamental requirement for language beyond signaling. One of the benefits of examining the tradition in which the work of Werner and Kaplan is situated is that it is the proper context for contextualizing and understanding what triadicity should be taken to mean. Indeed, one of the secondary implications of this paper is that what triadicity is cannot really be understood without Werner and Kaplan's theory of reference, which is a proto-systems account and which is itself situated within the purview of a Herderian and especially Humboldtian approach to language.

It is Werner and Kaplan who explicitly introduced what is now called triadicity into the examination of how reference is acquired. They did this by proposing that reference arises in a primordial sharing situation, in which manipulating objects together with a caregiver enables the inductee to perceive what is not available to perception without articulation and focus. It is essential to keep in mind that the primordial sharing situation is a schema for conceptualizing how reference arises. It does not advocate for Western-style atomic families, as is sometimes believed.[18] It is perhaps even more important to note that the caregiver diaries on which Werner and Kaplan relied revealed that the subject of articulation and focus was not always something that one could look at. Thus, it would be improper to characterize the primordial sharing situation as the tracking and exchange of gazes involving infant, caregiver, and object.

Werner and Kaplan's proposal was further developed by Bates and her colleagues, who suggested that the focus at stake was elicited by engaging with a caregiver in specific kinds of acts, namely, acts of showing and repeated giving-and-taking. These are elements of what Bates called the gestural complex. She also brought out the idea that the kind of focus at stake enables the ability to engage in make-believe or acts of seeing-as, which occur sometime after early acts of showing begin and before the production of speech sets in. Much of this is now glossed over as being of passing historical interest. It is unfortunate that, in contemporary papers in the ontogeny of reference, a preoccupation with Bates's characterization of observable criteria

---

[17] Naomi Eilan, Christoph Hoerl, Teresa McCormack, and Johannes Roessler, eds., *Joint Attention: Communication and Other Minds* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Chris Moore and Philip J. Dunham, eds., *Joint Attention: Its Origin and Role in Development* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum 1995).

[18] Lorraine McCune, *How Children Learn to Learn Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 28ff.

for assessing whether the behavior of pre-linguistic infants is intentional, the direction and alternation of gazes, has overtaken what this paper considers to be her most important contribution to understanding reference, the gestural complex.

The work of Werner and Kaplan, and Bates did not occur without preparatory theorizing of a broad scope concerning language and human culture. This context was in place by 1830. Its chief architects are Herder and, especially, Humboldt, with notable contributions by Fichte and Hegel. The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries contributed reports by caregivers in the form of diaries, more specifically targeted to narratives of individual children's activities in the early stage of language acquisition. In what follows, I will give a very brief overview of the wider, preparatory outlook on culture and language that provided the background assumptions to the work of Werner and Kaplan on symbolization and work that follows in their footsteps, such as that of Savage-Rumbaugh.[19] To facilitate cross-referencing, I will number the various salient features of symbolization mentioned. The background underpinnings will be fleshed out somewhat more fully in later portions of the paper, after Werner and Kaplan's primordial sharing situation and Bates's gestural complex have been outlined. A series of graphical depictions providing a sketch of the relation among the various elements at play in symbolization will be included after the presentation of Werner and Kaplan's primordial sharing situation.

By the late 1820s, a confluence of characteristics came to be ascribed to reference, as distinguished from a more general intentional communication that can also be shared with other living beings. It is distinctive of the Herder-Humboldt vision of what constitutes reference that it is seen as arising, self-made, as an organism from a process of differentiation that involves members of a community bound by a way of living. Community members' understanding of themselves and the world is brought into focus, enables specificity, and is articulated in dialogical exchanges. The articulation effected in such dialogical exchanges is indefinitely revisable and flexible. The process of articulation empowers a process of auto-transformation. Entering into this process engages its participants in practices of education rather than training. Educable beings that enter into such indefinitely flexible responsorial exchanges are entities capable of understanding norms rather than just following them. Members of communities who share a way of life and organize it in terms of dialogical exchanges do so by constructing, through an ongoing process that is an expenditure of work, a world of objects that is not private but shared and public. That public, virtual world is what symbolic meaning is. Constructing such a public world is not the same as constructing objects that underlie changes in time or causal connections. The publicly constructed world of

---

[19] Heidi Lyn, Patricia M. Greenfield, Sue Savage-Rumbaugh, Kristen Gillespie-Lynch, and William D. Hopkins, "Nonhuman Primates Do Declare! A Comparison of Declarative Symbol and Gesture Use in Two Children, Two Bonobos, and a Chimpanzee," *Language and Communication* 31 (2011), 63-74.

symbolic meaning and its supporting activity has the character of a web. The self-constituting character of the symbolic world is intrinsically tied to community practices. Finally, it is the symbolic, referential character of language that is the primary manifestation of language, not grammar or syntax.

Putting all the features of the view of reference as it is featured in the tradition that runs from Herder to Humboldt, and that also includes contributions from Fichte and Hegel, we can list the characteristics of reference that it draws as: (1) something that *constitutes itself* (2) within an *organic system*-like totality (3) subject to a process of *differentiation*, which enables, (4) by the collective *work or labor* of a (5) *historical* people that shares a *way of life*, (6) through the enhancement of focus and specificity, the *articulation* of a world of (7) shared *virtual objects that are public*. This articulation is (8) endowed with *indefinite flexibility*. It is effected in an ongoing process that occurs in (9) *dialogical exchange*, by which participant members in a community are (10) *educated* or cultivated rather than trained. This process of cultivation (11) begins in the context of *familial relations*. It enables (12) the *understanding of norms*, rather than just the following of or obedience to norms. The public world constructed in dialogical exchanges (13) has the organization of a network or a *web*. Finally, (14) *reference is the primary phenomenon* that enables language. Grammar follows from the historical interaction among members joined in exercising a common way of life.

Points (1) through (14) provide a convenient way of numbering the various aspects of this reconstruction of the view that underpins what is here called the tradition that stems from Herder and Humboldt, with notable contributions from Fichte and Hegel, and that serves as a background for understanding Werner and Kaplan's primordial sharing situation and Bates's gestural complex. Ignoring or removing this background would lead us back to either something like a neo-Aristotelian conception of reference embedded in Nature or a neo-Humean conception of reference as signaling. As far as I am aware, only philosopher Charles Taylor has attempted something similar. However, he chose to concentrate on a subset of these features: focus as articulation, publicity, and the understanding of norms,[20] to which, in more recent work, he has added the features of holism, way-of-living, seeing-as, and dialogical interaction.[21]

Features brought out by Werner and Kaplan's primordial sharing situation, which sharpen some of the points anticipated by Humboldt and Hegel, and which are today loosely discussed as triadicity, will be labeled (15). Those brought out by Bates's gestural complex will round up our sixteenth (16) feature of symbolization. Finally, pretend play, a phenomenon that Bates identified as characteristic of the transition toward referential production,

---

[20] Charles Taylor "Theories of Meaning," in Idem, *Human Agency and Language: Philosophical Papers I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 256-263.

[21] Charles Taylor, *The Language Animal: The Full Shape of the Human Linguistic Capacity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016).

even though she did not identify it as part of the gestural complex itself, will be our seventeenth (17) feature distinctive of symbolization.

Werner and Kaplan's Primordial Sharing Situation

In what follows, I will often use the perhaps old-fashioned sounding word "symbolization" instead of "reference," since the term "reference" is associated in the mind of many philosophers with a causal conception of the relation between word and referent, which for this paper is a matter of signaling, not symbolizing. With this in mind, what comes next is a reconstruction of a proto-systems approach to symbolization within the tradition opened by Herder and Humboldt.

As noted earlier, the term "proto-systems" is used to give a conservative characterization of the outlook on symbolization that we owe to Werner and Kaplan. This is because some would expect a systems approach to any phenomenon to be stated quantitatively. Yet, as one of the founders of systems theory, Ludwig von Bertalanffy, pointed out, quantification is an ideal but not necessary condition to think of a collection of phenomena as a system.

Systems, defined in terms of abstract relations, are complexes of elements, the characteristics of which cannot be articulated independently of the relations that they bear to other elements in the complex. The characteristics of the whole system for which these relations hold, compared to those of its elements, are emergent.[22] Von Bertalanffy apparently thought that the most interesting way of thinking about abstract relations was provided by examples of systems characterized thermodynamically, as processes that involve the flow of energy and mass. Von Bertalanffy meant more specifically that the kinds of systems at stake are those and can be maintained away from a state of thermodynamic equilibrium, in which no further change is possible[23] and from which work cannot be extracted.[24] These are the kinds of systems for which he identified characteristics such as equifinality[25] and differentiation.[26] Equifinality means that a state can be reached from different initial conditions in different ways.[27] Differentiation is the tendency systems away from equilibrium have to display increasing articulation and order.[28] Von Bertalanffy clearly thought that these features are tied to the fact that the elements in a system that is maintained away from equilibrium operate in dynamic interaction.

Feedback mechanisms, which are causal-linear processes that occur within systems, have a role in characterizing secondary constraints within

---

[22] Von Bertalanffy, *General Systems Theory*, 54-55.
[23] Ibid., 39
[24] Ibid., 125.
[25] Ibid., 142.
[26] Ibid. 148.
[27] Ibid., 40.
[28] Ibid., 211.

system subcomponents.[29]Nevertheless, von Bertalanffy thought that the concepts of feedback mechanism and homeostasis had been given disproportionate importance in the burgeoning fields of cybernetics and operations research. They are inadequate for rendering the key phenomenon of systems that are not in a state of equilibrium, the dynamic interaction among elements in a system necessary for understanding growth and evolution.[30] This is a theme von Bertalanffy revisited several times in his *General Systems Theory*. He evidently thought that the attempt to construe systems away from equilibrium in terms of multiple causal-linear feedback relations was not just inadequate but in some way indicative of a reductive mindset that would hamper intellectual clarity.

By now, these ideas are, by and large, generally recognized as fundamental to systems thinking, with perhaps the exception of von Bertalanffy's reservations about the reductionist program of casting interaction between elements of a system that is maintained away from equilibrium into the mold of causal-linear feedback relations. They were recounted because Werner drew on some of them and also because some of these points will be relevant to understanding Humboldt's views. The influence between von Bertalanffy and Werner was mutual. It is notable to see that in *General Systems Theory*, published in 1968, von Bertalanffy quoted with approval a statement Werner had made over a decade earlier, according to which the process of development proceeds from a state of relative globality and lack of differentiation to a state of increasing differentiation and articulation.[31]

Differentiation was, for Werner, a regulative principle in the Kantian sense of regulative. He understood this to mean that it has to be adopted to make sense of the process of development and that it is not itself subject to demonstration.[32] Werner thought that the way we think about the process of development inherently incorporates the notion of emergence, which he characterized in terms of qualitative discontinuities present in a complex, organismic whole undergoing differentiation. Discontinuity is ascribable to the conceptual condition that, in the development of a complex whole, a later stage is not reducible to an earlier one.[33] Von Bertalanffy agreed with Werner in highlighting the importance of differentiation, especially its being inseparable from the process of reaching a higher order of organization in a complex system.[34]

[29] Ibid., 44.

[30] Ibid., 44, 209, 160-164.

[31] Heinz Werner, "The Concept of Development from a Comparative and Organismic View," in *The Concept of Development*, ed. D. B. Harris (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1957), 126; Von Bertalanffy, *General Systems Theory*, 211.

[32] Werner, "The Concept of Development from a Comparative and Organismic View," 127.

[33] Ibid., 133-137.

[34] Ludwig von Bertalanffy, *Organismic Psychology and Systems Theory* (Barre, MA: Clark University Press, 1968), 47.

Werner implicitly accepted the connection between differentiation, increased organization, complex whole, and irreducibility to causal connections among objects, which he interpreted as qualitative discontinuity. This point bears remembering in reconstructing Werner and Kaplan's later proposal concerning what would be called today the acquisition of first language, or the ontogenesis of symbolization. That is because, by 1963, Werner and Kaplan would frame the acquisition of symbolization as a process of differentiation that occurs in a complex system, in which infant and caregiver play distinctive roles.

Von Bertalanffy had distinguished the evolution of systems from causal loops that can be picked out in homeostatic processes.[35] This is the distinction that is at stake in Werner and Kaplan's proposal concerning the ontogenesis of symbolization in a primordial sharing situation involving an infant, a caregiver, and objects that they manipulate. In their proposal, symbolization emerges from a complex interaction that incorporates the primordial sharing situation, although it is not reducible to causal relations between caregiver, infant, and physical objects. The assumption that symbols are reducible to signs would greatly simplify matters. One could take the meaning of a word to be established by combining three relata in three relations: that between the infant and an object, the caregiver and the same object, and the caregiver and the infant. The referent of a word would be the object. That is indeed how philosopher Donald Davidson proceeded.[36] He was writing almost three decades after the publication of *Symbol Formation*.

This apparently simple solution to the issue of reference is what Werner and Kaplan explicitly skirted since they thought that signs are not symbols: "In our view…symbols can never be considered as a mere species of the genus 'sign.'"[37] Their immediate target was Bertrand Russell's claim, in his 1940 *An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth*, that "language is a species of the genus sign." The assumption behind this view, which Werner and Kaplan roundly rejected, is that there is "a known world independent of language (symbolization), to which language signs are attached."[38] Indeed, the point raised here, and rejected for symbols, is a version of the fourth feature identified as being characteristic of signals in an earlier section of this paper.

The corollary of their assumption that symbols can never be considered a mere species of the genus sign is that "symbols emerge primarily from a cognitively oriented rather than pragmatically oriented operation." One of the things that they meant by this is that "speech is not genetically derivable from the vocalizations of animals or the vocalizations of infants that subserve biological needs." In saying this, Werner and Kaplan clearly asserted a constructivist stance: "in our view, symbolizing enters directly into the construction

[35] Von Bertalanffy, *General Systems Theory*, 78-79; Idem, *Organismic Psychology and Systems Theory,* 42-44.
[36] Donald Davidson, *Subjective, Intersubjective, Objective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 119.
[37] Werner and Kaplan, *Symbol Formation*, 14.
[38] Ibid., 14, footnote 3.

of 'cognitive objects,' determining how events are organized and what they mean. Our thesis is thus opposed to the widespread view which treats symbolic vehicles and referents as two fully formed entities that are externally linked to each other through contiguous pairing (and reinforcement)."[39] In effect, in saying this, they were doing far more than rehearsing Kantian constructivism, but the main point for the moment is their rejection of the possibility that alarm calls, for instance, could eventually become symbols that have a referential function. It is especially a rejection of the idea that things such as alarm calls or babblings could eventually form a language, to which reference would be assigned variably and as a whole, a view that philosophers Willard Van Orman Quine and Donald Davidson would espouse. That is a point worth noting since current discussions of the acquisition of first language, Tomasello's for instance, assert a distinction between cognitive and pragmatic orientations yet incorporate elements of a causal conception of reference, in which this distinction is not well supported.

Werner and Kaplan's primordial situation, thus, was not intended to be construed as a set of relations from which reference is established by triangulation. Instead, the primordial sharing situation is the basis for a process of differentiation out of which symbolization emerges. Werner and Kaplan suggested that, in ontogenesis, a global framework incorporating infant, caregiver, and objects undergoes increasing differentiation. They proposed, drawing on research from the 1930s and 1940s, that the "nonreflexive smile of the infant in response to the mother's smile" is the "clearest early paradigm" of the "sharing attitude" that eventually becomes "manifest when the infant begins to share contemplated objects with the Other."[40]

The primordial, global, or as-yet state of undifferentiation is diagrammed as involving three poles: mother or Other, child, and object. In this context, the act of symbolization eventually "emerges not as an individual act, but as a social one" by exchanging things with the Other, by touching things and looking at them with the Other." This is not purely a visual experience but also a tactile one.[41] The primordial sharing situation is the set-up for the emergence of symbolization. It features interactions between caregiver and infant in which an object is the focus of joint manipulation. Joint manipulation is not symbolization. It is the basis that enables a further stage of differentiation to occur, which brings, in its wake, the process of symbolization.

Symbolization requires the engagement of a process in which greater complexity arises from a less complex, less differentiated state. Werner and Kaplan's use of the term "emergence" to convey this process was not a literary device. They meant by emergence that a qualitative discontinuity was being introduced in the process of differentiation, for which the three-way interaction between infant, Other, and object set the stage. Symbolization itself

---

[39] Ibid., 42ff.
[40] Ibid., 42-43.
[41] Ibid., 43.

is not reducible to acts of three-way infant-Other-object interaction. Nevertheless, it requires this kind of interaction as a prior stage of lesser complexity from which to emerge. The prior stage is a set of physical phenomena, aspects of which can be described in terms of physical events and regularities.

The specific kinds of acts that found their way in Werner and Kaplan's construct of a primordial sharing situation appear to have been inferred from observations in caregiver diaries that had been accumulating since the late nineteenth century. Among caregiver diaries, due to space limitations, I will mention only the work of Millicent Washburn Shinn, Ernst and Gertrud Scupin, and Clara and William Stern. Their diaries were published within a few years of each other at the turn of the twentieth century.

These diary keepers were also professionally trained psychologists. While they drew on their professional training to compose and organize their observations, they were not disengaged observers. As parents or close relatives of the children they were observing, they had a long-term stake in the development of the subjects whose behavior was the topic of their study. They were particularly mindful of the interactions between children and their caregivers, which often included themselves. They observed the children's body orientation and how children incorporated objects in their interactions with caregivers.

The diaries implicitly highlight specificity as an early hallmark that something distinctive was happening that was ushering in the comprehension of symbolization, rather than the satisfaction of desires, a distinction the Scupins clearly marked in their observations. The Scupins noted that, by ten months, their son turned his body to face an object in response to a "where is?" question,[42] correcting himself spontaneously if he had turned to the wrong object.[43] Two months later, the child would stretch out his arm and hand, fingers spread out, to an object and utter "there!" rather than just turn his body in its direction in response to a "where-is?" question.[44] Among the many examples of specificity of focus that arose in these early stages, the Sterns noted that at eleven-and-one-half months, their son, while holding a different toy in each hand, correctly turned toward and looked at the relevant toy in response to a "where is?" question.[45] Not just any toy held in hand would do. The remarkable thing is that a highly specific aspect of a global situation is carved out by orientation and gesture, in addition to gaze, even though body orientation, gesture, and gaze, on their own, are not sufficient to create specificity. We tend to take specific articulation and focus for granted, and many of us would fail to notice that there is something here even worthy of being noticed. Yet early diary keepers had already been alert to these nuances in interactions between child and caregiver. Their work suggests that

---

[42] Ernst and Gertrud Scupin, *Bubi's erste Kindheit: Ein Tagebuch über die geistige Entwicklung eines Knaben während der ersten drei Lebensjahre* (Leipzig: Grieben, 1907), 34.

[43] Ibid., 37.

[44] Ibid., 48.

[45] Ibid. 83-84.

bodily orientation, gaze, or gesture are not in themselves referential. They are flexible tools, used variably, singly or in combination, that enable focus on a specific aspect of a global situation. It is focus on a specific aspect of a global situation, which allows for enhanced articulation of experience, that is important for symbolization. The flexibility with which orientation, gaze, and gesture are used sustains an incipient sense of what constitutes a proper response in interaction with others, as diary reports of spontaneous self-correction in infants who are quite young appear to show.

The diaries, in effect, highlight the variability in the means used to achieve symbolization. In a discussion Werner and Kaplan were later to reproduce at great length, the Sterns noted that their daughter first demonstrated that she understood her parents' use of the word "didda," for "ticktock," by turning in the direction of the grandfather clock when the word was spoken. This is similar to the Scupins' observation about bodily orientation as an early way of marking the specificity of symbolization. The Sterns' daughter first used the word herself when she heard another clock, the clock sitting on the mantelpiece, ticking. This was followed by the child using the word to refer to the grandfather clock even when she did not hear any ticking. She then used the word to refer to pocket watches. This was followed by her using the word when she saw part of the chain hanging from a pocket in her father's jacket. By eleven-and-one-half months, she used the word in announcing that she was looking for her father's pocket watch in his jacket, even though she neither saw nor heard it ticking. Finally, at twelve months, she used the word to refer to pictures of watches.[46] Again, as with the Scupins, the Sterns noted that the road to symbolization began with the child orienting her body toward an object of common concern. Their preoccupation was with bodily and gestural orientation rather than gaze, bodily and gestural orientations that became ever more modulated by spontaneous activity, even and especially in cases where the object of specific orientation was not present at hand.

Indeed, both Shinn and the Scupins found it essential to note that, by ten months, the infant whose development they were tracking could comment on what was not present. Shinn's niece spontaneously used the expression "M-gone" to comment on the disappearance of some object of interest.[47] Likewise, the Scupins' infant son used the expression "abah" to comment that his grandparents had left the room and were no longer present.[48] Lack of presence is not something at which one can gaze, but it can be the subject of articulated focus of attention.

The episode of self-correction noted above merits some further discussion. It occurs in the context of non-coercive interaction with a caregiver. At ten months, the Scupins' son turns his head to the wrong object in response

---

[46] Clara and William Stern, *Die Kindersprache: Eine psychologische und sprachtheoretische Untersuchung* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1965), 18.

[47] Millicent Washburn Shinn, *The Biography of a Baby* (Boston, MA and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1900), 226.

[48] Scurpin and Scupin, *Bubi's erste Kindheit*, 36.

to a "where-is?" question. His favorite object at this stage, his parents explain, is a brush. In response to a "where is tick tock?" question, the infant turns toward his favorite object. Upon repetition of the question, he realizes his error and turns to face the clock. The infant was not told his response was wrong; the question was merely repeated. The ability to correct oneself in non-coercive exchanges with a caregiver exhibits two ways an incipient normativity that attends to symbolization is present. First, the interaction occurs with an agent who could coerce the infant if she chooses but does not. Normativity is present in the caregiver exercising self-constraint. Second, because the caregiver does not exercise coercion, the infant is given the latitude of correcting itself.

Another example illustrates the feature of incipient normativity. Werner Leopold noted that his apparently precocious eight-month-old daughter spontaneously corrected her bodily orientation when, in response to a "where-is?" question, she realized that her position toward the object had changed because her high chair had been moved.[49] Again, no report of coercion is noted. Non-coerced self-correction in symbolic activity appears to be an important step in the realization that the mastery of symbolization incorporates standards of rightness. This is an idea that one can glean from a reading of caregivers' diaries.

In all cases, what is clear from the examples is that symbolization arises in a common preoccupation with the kinds of objects and events that figure prominently in a family's daily routine. To us, the preoccupation with time-keeping devices, which had pride of place in middle-class European homes, and that we find in many of these diaries, appears quaint. However, this drives a point home: There are no fundamental first symbols. At least, none appears from a perusal of these various diaries. The only point in common they suggest is that the first words learned in a child's repertoire are for activities and things that were important in the family's daily routine and that would have been the objects of shared concerns.

Indeed, the diaries bring out the flexibility a child demonstrates very early on in using a word to make a specific comment on a situation, or extract a specific feature from a variety of different circumstances, as noticeable above in the examples of the various ways preoccupation with a time-keeping piece can be shown. Flexibility and articulation are especially demonstrated in an infant's ability to refer to something specific that is *not* present. The Scupins and Shinn observed that within a short period following nine months of age, children express the absence of things of shared concern by using such expressions as "all-gone" or "away."[50] Even very early on, things of shared concern that are subject to symbolic expression are things that are not visible or touchable, and thus, by definition, not the object of a shared gaze. One

[49] Werner F. Leopold, *Speech Development in a Bilingual Child*, *vol. 1* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1939), 22.

[50] Scurpin and Scupin, *Bubi's erste Kindheit*, 36; Shinn, *The Biography of a Baby,* 227.

might even suggest that this factor is an unimpeachable condition that verifies that the child has stepped into the emerging realm of symbolization.

The Sterns also observed that their nine-month-old daughter presented her doll performing the action requested in response to their asking her to show her doll jumping.[51] While the act of manipulating the toy might be done to please caregivers, the child did not satisfy a desire by jumping. She demonstrated that she could manipulate an object in a highly specific way in response to a specific request expressed linguistically by a caregiver. The specificity of the interaction with the object is not directly advantageous to the child in the sense that it evinces no consummation of desire. The specificity of the movement imparted to the object manipulated is, however, something that showcases the beginnings of a public space shared by its participants, the caregiver and the child. The child manipulating an object delivered a performance both child and caregiver could appreciate. The event marked not a three-way relation between caregiver, child, and toy. It involved, instead, both caregiver and child in a public, virtual space, in which the physical movements imparted to a toy can be interpreted by both participants as a meaningful movement. Again, describing this interaction as directing one's gaze in the same direction misses its most important aspects.

With only the very few examples that have been recounted here, it is not hard to imagine how Werner and Kaplan could have read into these observations the production of an interactive, dialogical process of work that involves educating an infant in a way of life. The process enables further enhancing the grasp of specificity in flexibly articulating a world of shared objects in a public space. This articulation is effected in interactions that exhibit incipient normativity in caregivers' non-coercive and infants' self-correcting responses. A careful reading of caregiver diaries stands behind the construct of the primordial sharing situation. The various acts that these diaries describe, and upon which Werner and Kaplan reflected, are encapsulated, in shorthand form, in the primordial sharing situation, which they then incorporated into a proto-systems account of symbolization.

A few additional remarks are in order. It appears that Shinn and the Scupins are the ones who first brought out the significance of the period between nine and twelve months in the development of symbolic competence in infants. This is something that has since become received knowledge. They also brought out the importance of the gesture of pointing in the development of the symbolic competence of children. That is now thought to be a culturally dependent gesture, but Shinn, the Sterns, and the Scupins shared a common European heritage. Shinn, especially, gave a detailed running account of the early stages in pointing that she observed in her niece, a description that Werner and Kaplan thought was particularly insightful. The child first used her forefinger for "especially close investigations" at nine months, and by the

---

[51] Stern and Stern, *Die Kindersprache,* 17.

third week of the month, "the gesture of pointing was fairly in use." The child now pointed in answer to "where-is?" questions instead of merely looking.[52]

Paying such close attention to gesture was characteristic of these caregiver-diary-keepers of the turn of the twentieth century. As far as I can tell, it is the Scupins who first drew an explicit distinction between pointing and grasping, a distinction that is now widely accepted in current discussions of desire-expressing behavior and reference. According to the Scupins, the child's body leans toward the object it desires to grasp with both arms outstretched. That does not occur in the referential gesture. While the child might not point with a finger, it stretches its hand out in the direction of the object. The idea is that, in the early stages of referential acquisition, an orientation toward an object occurs without consummatory behavior.[53]

These are the kind of observations on which Werner and Kaplan drew when they asserted, "Eventually, a special gestural device is formed, pointing at an object, by which the infant invites the Other to contemplate an object as he does himself."[54] The motivation for engaging in symbolization is both social and public: "For us, the child's orientation toward naming reflects an intensely social motive of sharing experiences about objects with others. By learning names of objects, the child…continues to build a common universe of contemplated things and events."[55] They realized that the public recognition of "a common universe" requires sociability, even though it is not the same thing as sociability. That is because they drew on the insights of the diary-writers.

Indeed, following the lead of observations recorded in the diaries of caregivers, Werner and Kaplan distinguished between the use of vocalization and gesture to express attitudes, such as a desire for contact or an expression of wish or demand, from the declarative attitude, in which symbolization is at stake: "In developmental terms, representation of reference is least clearly differentiated from expression of attitude in the contact attitude [meaning, socialization-seeking]; such differentiation is…greatest in the declarative attitude, where the object of discourse is relatively distinct from addressor needs and addressee action." In effect, they agreed that "it is in the declarative orientation that the aspect of reference is most clearly distinct and differentiated from the aspect of attitudinal expression."[56]

We have here a variety of elements, many of which will be reproduced and debated in later discussions of what is distinctive about human language or symbolic communication: The distinction between pragmatic and requestive attitudes, on the one hand, and declaration, on the other hand; the connection with socialization; the identification of socialization in a context of

---

[52] Shinn, *The Biography of a Baby,* 220.
[53] Scurpin and Scupin, *Bubi's erste Kindheit*, 48.
[54] Werner and Kaplan, *Symbol Formation,* 43.
[55] Ibid., 100.
[56] Ibid., 135.

non-coercive caregiving; the requirement of focus on specific features of situations that are public and that occur in everyday living; the significance given to the act of pointing. The interest given to bodily orientation and the act of pointing can be dated to the turn of the twentieth century. The other aspects mentioned at the beginning of this paragraph made their appearance much earlier, as will be discussed later in this paper. However, no one before Shinn, the Scupins, and the Sterns had described them in much detail.

Werner and Kaplan's distinctive contribution was to incorporate observations from caregivers' diaries into a proto-systems outlook. In this respect, the primordial sharing situation can be viewed as a matrix in which work happens. The work done by participants in the primordial situation supports the introduction of discontinuities of the kind that can be harnessed to allow for symbolic take-off, and that were mentioned in the commentary, above, on the insights gained and reinforced by the early diary keepers: manifestations of specificity, flexibility, incipient self-correction, orientation to the not-present and to a public space of performance that are not modeled as parts of signaling events.

It is suggested in this paper that the primordial sharing situation is best seen as the locus in which social and individual experience is reorganized and regimented to construct a common, objective, and virtual world for symbolization. The interaction between caregiver and first language apprentice forms the basis for the emergence of symbolization. The interaction itself, however, is not an instance of symbolization. It is instead the condition for inducing differentiation in the apprentice's experience, from the expression of need and want to the expression of declaratives. The regimentation of attention and socialization that the interaction brings in its wake requires work, and it is part of a series of events that occur in the physical world. The primordial sharing situation is a shortcut label for the work produced in bringing about a reorganization and regimentation of the first language learner's experience. The primordial sharing situation is also, at the same time, a shortcut label for the basis, the starting point needed for symbolization to take place. This is because symbolization is not itself something that can be construed as the product of work since it is not something physical. Rather, it emerges from the set of interactions that makes up the primordial sharing situation. The world of symbols that is enabled is a distinct aspect of the process of differentiation, one that constitutes its virtual, non-physical dimension.

The implicit message from Werner and Kaplan's construct is that we do not really know how to get to the virtuality of symbolization without engaging in the labor- and care-intensive management and regimentation of social interaction and individual experience that takes place in the primordial sharing situation. Getting to the point of "getting" symbolization takes work. Nevertheless, symbolization itself is neither social interaction, nor the neural processes of attention, nor even the visual processes of tracking a physical object. Instead, all of the latter, and more, organized through the primordial sharing situation, enable the constitution of a virtual world of symbols. As Werner and Kaplan were at pains to make clear, the objects of joint manipulation in

the primordial sharing situation are not the referents of gestures or verbal utterances. They are part of the physical world in which work is done, and that forms the basis from which referential take-off can happen. These ideas are modeled in a series of graphical representations. (Figs. 1-6)

The phenomenon of symbolization is part of a complex system, of which the primordial sharing situation is the physical basis, incorporated in embodied interactions. Symbolization is not a matter of gazing with a child at a toy or a physical object. We will return to these ideas later when we reconstitute the context for this approach to reference in the ambit of a line of influence that includes Herder, Humboldt, Fichte, and Hegel. For the moment, however, a few more comments are in order. Some might suspect that the primordial sharing situation is an artifact of the Western atomic family and that reference manifests itself differently in different cultures. Finger-pointing is expendable. It can be replaced by nose-pointing[57] or lip-pointing.[58] The importance of mother-infant interaction is overrated. For instance, in some cultures, infants are carried on their mother's back facing away from her, and do not gaze at objects with her. They interact mostly with other kin.[59] That is all well and good. We *should* gain greater insight into the variety of conditions in which the work of preparing for symbolic take-off takes place.

Nevertheless, accusations of Eurocentrism in the acquisition of symbolization reflect an ongoing confusion between signaling and symbolization. Signals are tied to the physical conditions in which they occur. Symbols are not. Thus, it makes perfect sense to claim, as De León does, that "the corporeal arrangements documented across cultures reveal that the default face-to-face interaction in the Euro-American middle-class context of language acquisition and socialization is one among *many* other possibilities."[60] That is most likely to be the case. The problem is not with constructs such as the primordial sharing situation and its offshoot, the gestural complex, which we will discuss in the next section. The problem is rather with an assumption that was added in later discussions of first language acquisition, which is that it requires gazing at and tracking objects together in close face-to-face contact with a caregiver.

This idea was promoted in the mid-1970s by Michael Scaife and Jerome S. Bruner in an influential article in *Nature*. It has become a staple of contemporary discussions of joint attention and language acquisition ever

---

[57] Virginia Hughes, "The Point of Pointing." *Phenomena*, *National Geographic* (September 2, 2014).

[58] N. J. Enfield, "'Lip-Pointing': A Discussion of Form and Function with Reference to Data from Laos." *Gesture* 1 no. 2 (2001): 185-211.

[59] Lourdes De León, "Language, Socialization and Multiparty Participation Frameworks," in *The Handbook of Language Socialization*, eds. Alessandro Duranti, Elinor Ochs, and Bambi B. Schieffelin (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 81-111; Lorraine McCune, *How Children Learn to Learn Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

[60] De León, "Language, Socialization and Multiparty Participation Frameworks," 104.

since.[61] Tying symbolization directly to particular physical instantiations turns cultural variability in first language acquisition into a problem, which it should not be. Rather, what is at stake is admitting that no one knows how to induce symbolization without the work that goes into caring for infants. That point is not only compatible with cultural variation but embraces it. The unrelenting work that goes into caring for infants and engaging in shared activities with them is the stepping-stone to referential take-off but is not reference itself. These two points, the importance of the work of caregiving and the emergence of reference based on just that kind of work, are essential keys that provide us with fruitful guidelines to follow. They tell us that exclusive reliance on contingency training and Bayesian inferences are dead ends when it comes to understanding reference. That would not be the case if reference were just a matter of gazing at and tracking physical objects. Cultural variations are interesting and important. They may present challenges to a neo-Humean account of reference but not to a systems-based approach.

Bates and the Gestural Complex

In their 1907 publication, the Scupins had already noticed that their son began engaging in games of give-and-take with his mother by nine months. Their noting this fact indicates that they thought it was relevant to their son's burgeoning language comprehension. That is the kind of insight that was to be further articulated by Bates and her collaborators about seven decades later.

In work that spanned the second half of the 1970s, Bates and her collaborators explicitly assumed Werner and Kaplan's framework of a primordial sharing situation. While Bates liberally mixed in ideas from Chomsky, Grice, and especially Piaget, her most influential work arose from taking Werner and Kaplan's basic idea and extending it in a novel way. In the process, Bates and her collaborators enriched Werner and Kaplan's construct of the primordial sharing situation, They added features of early language acquisition that Werner and Kaplan had not explicitly discussed in the context of the primordial sharing situation, notably the connection between seeing-as and the comprehension of reference.

---

[61] Roger Bakeman and Lauren B. Adamson, "Coordinating Attention to People and Objects in Mother-Infant and Peer-Infant Interaction," *Child Development* 55 (1984): 1278-1289; Melinda Carpenter and Joseph Call, "How Joint is the Joint Attention of Apes and Human Infants?" in *Agency and Joint Attention,* eds. H.S. Terrace and J. Metcalfe (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 49-61; Naomi Eilan, Christoph Hoerl, Teresa McCormack, and Johannes Roessler, eds., *Joint Attention: Communication and Other Minds* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Chris Moore and Philip J. Dunham, eds., *Joint Attention: Its Origin and Role in Development* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1995); Axel Seeman, ed., *Joint Attention: New Developments in Psychology, Philosophy of Mind, and Social Neuroscience* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011); Michael Tomasello, *Constructing a Language* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003); Idem, *Origins of Human Communication* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008); Idem, *Why We Cooperate* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009).

Bates based her observations and inferences on longitudinal studies of a small number of children. These studies included diaries and video recordings documenting children's interactions with their caregivers. Despite acknowledging Chomsky's contributions, Bates framed language acquisition in terms of the acquisition of reference or symbolization rather than syntax, much in keeping, as it will later be brought out, with the Herderian and Humboldtian outlook that sees symbolization as the primary linguistic phenomenon. She also drew on an understanding of indices, which she attributed to Piaget, according to which indices are in a part-whole relation to the context in which they occur. Given this understanding of indices, Bates assumed that, prior to symbolic competency, first language learners' behavior could be thought of in terms of indexical procedures for acting on events.[62] Infants' early innate motor behaviors, such as looking at face-like things and smiling in response to human faces and voices, are interpreted by caregivers to have a social meaning. These behaviors provide the first loop of responses that will enable social interaction.[63]

Bates and her colleagues believed the evidence they examined supported the claim that nine months is the age at which the process that leads to symbol comprehension begins, while the discovery that "things have names" is achieved by thirteen months.[64] That is an achievement, Bates inferred, which is traceable to how an infant interacts with both caregivers and objects together. She believed that prior to about ten months, Piagetian indexical sensory-motor routines for interacting with adults and with non-social objects are kept separate. Afterward, infants integrate them. Specific interactive activities that bind infant and caregiver are the instruments through which the integration occurs.

The integrating acts that are consistently mentioned in Bates's publications from 1975 to 1979 are acts of showing objects to a caregiver, engaging in giving and taking objects with a caregiver, and pointing for the benefit of a caregiver. By 1979, with the publication of a correlational analysis based on collected observations of child-caregiver interactions, Bates and her colleagues singled out showing, giving, and communicative pointing as part of a construct they called the gestural complex. The behaviors that are part of the gestural complex have to do with the use of symbols, rather than a general tendency to communicate or display intentionality, and still less with the exclusive expression of desire.[65]

Here is an example from one of Bates's earliest reports on child-caregiver interactions, before Bates coined the phrase "gestural complex":

---

[62] Elizabeth Bates, *Language and Context: The Acquisition of Pragmatics* (New York: Academic Press, 1976), 91.

[63] Ibid., 58.

[64] Elizabeth Bates, L. Begnini, I. Bretherton, L. Camaioni, and V. Volterra, *The Emergence of Symbols: Cognition and Communication in Infancy* (New York: Academic Press, 1979), 38.

[65] Ibid., 87

At 10;18 [10 months, 18 days of age] we observed the first instance in which Carlotta extends her arm forward to show an object to the adult. She is playing with a toy already in her hand; suddenly, she looks toward the observer and extends her arm forward holding the toy. In the next two to three weeks, this behavior increases and stabilizes until we observe Carlotta looking around for objects not already in her grasp, and immediately presenting them while awaiting adult response.

At this stage, "showing" does not seem to involve any intention to give the object…However, at 13;2 we have the confirmation that the child has differentiated showing from giving. She takes a wooden mask from a chair, crosses the room smiling and looking at the observer, and drops the mask in the observer's lap.

Around the same time that giving becomes a separate communicative scheme, Carlotta also begins to use a pointing gesture in communicative sequences.[66]

This excerpt brings home the importance ascribed to acts of giving, as contrasted with taking, in the early stages of acquiring symbolic competence. Before entering into the process at the end of which she grasps that words have meaning, Carlotta had uttered sounds for "give" and "take" indiscriminately whenever objects were being passed around in games in which she was the beneficiary.[67] Giving engages reciprocity in a way that taking does not.

Again one must draw a link with the path-breaking work of the diary-keepers. The Scupins are likely the first to have explicitly connected the acquisition of a first language and reciprocation involving a caregiver and an object. They note, in their diary entry for 19 January 1905, when their child was nine months old, that:

Today, our little boy, while examining the [milk] bottle, brought it up to his lips and breathed deeply into the opening. It made a strange snoring noise. Looking up, he gave his mother a questioning look, and, smiling, handed the bottle over to her. She made loud noises by blowing air into it. In a squeal of delight, the boy then took the bottle back. He vigorously blew into the bottle, puffing his cheeks. Thereupon, he handed the bottle back to his mother, in a gesture of mute invitation. They took turns making funny sounds in this way, which were always accompanied by the child's peals of laughter.[68]

Few people would take time to notice these mundane exchanges between child and caregiver. Fewer still would bother taking notes about them.

---

[66] Bates, e.a., "The Acquisition of Performatives Prior to Speech," 216-217.

[67] Ibid. 224.

[68] Scupin and Scurpin, *Bubi's erste Kindheit*, 29 (my translation).

The Scupins did. What they found notable was turn-taking behavior. What is notable for us is that they had the insight to see the relevance of such behavior to first language acquisition, thus opening a path for Bates's later construct of the gestural complex.

What Bates and her collaborators thought was not part of the gestural complex is just as interesting. By the time of their 1979 work, showing off behaviors, such as blowing a raspberry, are excluded. Moreover, using Piaget's notion of sensory-motor ritualization to denote sets of repetitive and habitual behaviors, Bates and her colleagues found that what they called ritualized showing off behaviors, such as waving bye-bye and playing games of peek-a-boo or patty-cake, were not part of the gestural complex. Bates also borrowed the phrase "symbolic play" from Piaget. She used it to mean pretend-play, that is, play that engages as-if seeing or seeing-as. Bates did not include symbolic play in the gestural complex. Neither showing off or ritualized showing off nor symbolic play is part of the gestural complex.

The behaviors of the gestural complex appear at around nine months.[69] The acts of showing, exchanging, and pointing that are its distinctive components induce the conveyance of a public world as it is being built on the fly in caregiving contexts: "the eventual commerce of propositions is first carried out with an exchange of concrete objects or an indication of visible events."[70] Because these acts are conducive to reference, yet antedate spoken expression, Bates called them protodeclaratives. Indeed, she claimed that "the first one-word declarations ('Doggie!') emerge out of the same pointing, giving, and showing sequences that are here taken to be protodeclaratives."[71]

The direction of gaze is an important fact that she and her collaborators noted about infant and caregiver behavior. In effect, the occurrence of acts of gazing back and forth between object and adult caregiver is used as a criterion for interpreting observations of infant interactions.[72] Nevertheless, the acquisition of symbolic competence is not characterized by the direction or exchange of gazes. Gaze tracking and exchange occur in showing off behavior, which is not symbolic.[73] What is significant is that Bates believed that two separate schemata, interacting with people and interacting with objects, must be synthesized in order for symbolic competence to arise. Acts of showing and activities of giving and taking are concrete physical steps through which this integration is effected. Sensory-motor ritualizations, such as games of peek-a-boo and patty-cake, precede the stage at which the infant is capable of integrating interaction with caregivers and object manipulation. The same can be said of acts of showing off. Acts of make-believe or pretend play require this integrative preparation but are not part of the preparatory stage itself.

---

[69] Bates, e.a., *The Emergence of Symbols*, 38.
[70] Bates, e.a., "The Acquisition of Performatives Prior to Speech," 220.
[71] Ibid., 209.
[72] Bates, e.a., *The Emergence of Symbols*, 36.
[73] Bates, e.a., "The Acquisition of Performatives Prior to Speech," 216.

According to Bates's observations, symbolic play, which is pretend play and features as-if seeing or seeing-as, occurs by around thirteen months.[74] It is present by the time a child is capable of verbalizing one-word expressions. Piaget had characterized pretend play in terms of children's practicing sensory-motor routines in ways divorced from pragmatic efficacy.[75] Bates and her colleagues thought the evidence they collected supported the claim that symbolic play is a good predictor of linguistic production, meaning production beyond the one-word stage.[76]

Now, Bates assumed that comprehension precedes production, much in keeping with the outlook implicitly incorporated in the turn-of-the-century diaries on which Werner and Kaplan had drawn. Compatible with this assumption is the belief that the beginnings of pretend play belong to the period in which symbolic comprehension, the realization that "things have names," has already been achieved. Piaget, for his part, thought that symbolic play had no connection to language.[77] In this respect, Bates introduced a substantial departure from Piaget's ideas even as she used his terminology. If we are to follow Bates's insights, somewhere in-between the acquisition of symbol comprehension and language production, the ability to see something as something else arises; this is not quite the same as imitation or problem-solving and is not related to grasping object permanence.[78] Neither imitation, problem-solving, nor object permanence calls for the comprehension of symbols, but seeing-as does.

Like Werner and Kaplan, Bates did not use the term "triadic" to describe the synthesis required for a public realm, which is not itself subject to physical manipulation, to emerge. Werner and Kaplan were careful to forestall the misunderstanding that the object that is a conduit for interaction between infant and caregiver in the primordial caring situation is a referent. Bates and her colleagues were not always so scrupulous, and it sometimes appears in their writings as if referents are implicitly thought of as physical things in particular contexts.[79] Thus, some of the seeds for later interpretations of first language acquisition, that it involves some kind of triangular relation, in which the child shares gazes between the caregiver and an object, and that it is the object that is the referent, can be found in Bates's own work. Nevertheless, Bates and her collaborators substantially developed and made more precise what is distinctive about the interaction that occurs in the primordial sharing situation, the various kinds of acts that bind infant and caregiver on the road to first language acquisition. The idea that the interaction between infant and caregiver features acts of reciprocation and sharing remains a constant theme.

---

[74] Bates, e.a., *The Emergence of Symbols*, 42.

[75] Jean Piaget, *La formation du symbole chez l'enfant* (Paris: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1978), 93ff.

[76] Bates, e.a., *The Emergence of Symbols*, 128.

[77] Piaget, *La formation du symbole chez l'enfant,* 104; 110-111.

[78] Bates, e.a., *The Emergence of Symbols*, 122-126.

[79] Ibid., 43.

It is not clear that much progress has been achieved to sort things out since Bates's work. Nevertheless, some developments have come to the fore. Pointing by extending the index finger is now seen as an artifact of the European and American subjects Werner and Kaplan and Bates and her associates were observing or about which diaries had been kept. Ethnolinguists note that other gestures, for instance, lip-pointing, fulfill an equivalent function in other cultures. Nevertheless, this caveat only reinforces the importance of recognizing that symbolization, to function, must rely on the implicit introduction of a realm of the "not-there" for physical acts to be interpreted as equivalent ways of articulating specific aspects of a situation. That minimal level of abstraction is built into the very admission that various cultures have equivalent ways of doing what pointing with an index finger accomplishes in some cultures. Acts of pointing and their equivalents require a realm of the not-there to function as a means of selective identification of specific aspects of a situation, which is one of the features of symbolization. That realm of the not-there is what we can call the field of reference. It is not something that can be pointed at or shown, but it must be operative so that pointing in any of its guises can function at all.

The work of Werner and Kaplan, and Bates did not appear in a vacuum. The context for their view had been in preparation for some time. Most of the relevant ideas took shape within a relatively short span, from the early 1770s to the late 1820s. At this stage, an abbreviated reconstruction of the historical underpinnings of the conception of symbolization exhibited in the primordial sharing situation and the gestural complex is in order. This reconstruction is intended to reinforce the points that make it distinctive compared to neo-Aristotelian or neo-Humean approaches to reference, both of which take acts of reciprocation for granted.

The Distinctiveness of Symbolization: The Outlook That Stands Behind the Primordial Sharing Situation and the Gestural Complex

Werner and Kaplan, and Bates brought out the importance of practices of caring and reciprocating to initiation into symbolic competence. The features of symbolization they were assuming will be briefly recalled. As mentioned in earlier sections of this paper, the most significant contributions to delineating these features stem from Herder and Humboldt, with supporting ideas from Fichte and Hegel.

Herder's Contribution. A foremost characteristic that is the key to Herder's insight on symbolization is that it shapes human awareness. It transforms the flow of confused experience by enabling the acknowledgment of the manifold as one.[80] While at first glance, this statement appears to be nothing more than the rephrasing of a Kantian catch-phrase, Herder had neither

---

[80] Johann Gottfried Herder, *Treatise on the Origin of Language*, in *Philosophical Writings,* Michael N. Forster, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 108-110.

object permanence, categorization of features, nor causation in mind. Surely many non-symbolically competent animals can re-identify objects, categorize things, and are attuned to regularities in their environment. What he had in mind was something that is translated as the process of "taking-awareness,"[81] rather than just having awareness: "The first moment of taking-awareness was also the moment for the inward emergence of language."[82]

The best way to convey what taking-awareness is would be to think of it as the ability to introduce structure into a global situation so as to allow an agent to hone in one of its specific aspects.[83] It is the sort of ability that the Scupins and the Sterns described in some detail in first language learners' development. It is also an ability that Savage-Rumbaugh brought out in a language-taught Bonobo chimpanzee's response to a novel sentence, such as "go get the carrot that is in the microwave." The subject ignored the carrot placed in an array of objects in front of him and went to the kitchen to retrieve a carrot from the microwave.[84]

Animal alarm calls, for instance, those discussed at the beginning of this paper, do not have this feature. For Diana monkeys, a call is correlated with the presence of an eagle and elicits an evasive response. The troupe has no signal that allows them to ignore an eagle that is close by and focus on a distant one, even though Diana monkeys have the cognitive capabilities to categorize some things as eagles, recognize the identity of members of the troupe, and track causal interactions among them. Symbols enable specificity and articulation of aspects of experience, which signals do not. The two semiotic objects function in different ways.

Other features of symbolization devolve from taking-awareness. Herder connected the specificity enabled by taking-awareness to indefinite flexibility. There is no limitation to what can be the subject of focus. Once engaged, the process of taking-awareness can be oriented in different ways to different aspects of experience, and build up on itself. It is because this feature is characteristic of a human language that Herder believed all human languages are equal. His way of expressing the point was to remark that no human language is "brutish."[85] That is because he thought any speaker of a human language can adapt to a different way of seeing through the process of taking-awareness that symbolization enables. For this reason, any human experience expressible in one language is expressible in any other language.[86] All human languages are equal with respect to enabling indefinite flexibility. Symbolization allows a novel orientation to specificity that is inexhaustible.

The transformation toward articulate specificity and indefinite flexibility is not produced by some outside force, and it is not a piece-meal series of events. Humans acquire greater specificity and indefinite flexibility through

---

[81] Ibid., 82.
[82] Ibid., 128.
[83] Ibid., 108-110, 128.
[84] Savage-Rumbaugh e.a., "Language Comprehension in Ape and Child," 53.
[85] Herder, *Treatise on the Origin of Language*, 120.
[86] Ibid. 120, 132, 150.

their own means, from within the ambit of human practices. In other words, Herder thought that symbolization is self-constituting.[87] The self-constitutivity of taking-awareness meant for Herder that language – understood as symbolization – is constructed as "a whole! A system!" It is "a whole magnificent structure of human forces"[88] that is not owed to nature.[89] Herder's enthusiastic pronouncement clearly indicates that he intuitively construed the constitution of language as symbolization through the taking of awareness as a systemic development rather than a motley collection of phenomenal events related, piece-meal, by patterns of regularity. Although his notion of a whole precedes the twentieth-century delineation of systems, it shares the stance that certain collections of event-types cannot be adequately characterized independently of the relations they bear to one another. He ascribed this feature not only to human language but the entire way human beings interact in a community or the "structure of human forces." He thought of language as embedded in an organized way of living a human life. Language and organized human living are all aspects of "the magnificent structure."

The "magnificent structure" incorporates at the lowest level of aggregation the family and at the highest, historical peoples. Herder placed the initial stages of the process of the development of symbolization within the context of familial caregiving, a theme that is repeated in twentieth-century constructs of the primordial sharing situation and the gestural complex. Werner and Kaplan, and Bates, for human infants, and Savage-Rumbaugh, for bonobo infants, all emphasized the importance of drawing on shared daily routines that bind individuals in a community for initiating the comprehension of symbols.

However, a Herderian theme on which they do not follow up is the historicity of peoples. That is partly because their work and observations occurred operationally at the level of family or family-like group interaction. It is also partly due to the lack of respectability talk about the historicity of peoples has suffered in the wake of twentieth-century political events. The historicity of peoples and their ways of living has, nevertheless, made a comeback of sorts, under the guise of the study of cultural variations. When social anthropologists argue that how Maya Zinacantec infants share gazes is different from how Western children do (de León) and that this has implications for first language acquisition, they are implicitly rehearsing a Herderian line, most probably without realizing it and reinterpreting it to fit a neo-Humean outlook.

We can recapitulate some Herderian themes outlined so far as follows. Herder thought that taking-awareness arises in the constitution of a people, whose historical ways of living also shape the historicity of the process of

---

[87] Ibid., 97.
[88] Ibid., 112.
[89] Ibid., 80.

taking-awareness.[90] This historical development is realized at the most immediate level in the context of the family since the formation of peoples passes through everyday modes of living individuals share in families. Through its incorporation in family life and the historical development of a people, the phenomenon of taking-awareness expresses the way of living of a people.[91] Through exercise in a communal way of living, the specificity of symbolization develops or "gets formed further."[92] Historical self-constitution and self-transformation in ways of living support flexibility in taking-awareness, which is subject to indefinite variation and is intrinsically improvable.[93]

We can take some of these features – the importance of familial interactions and the historicity of a way of life – to characterize the ideas of a "language game" and "way of living" that have gained currency in Anglo-American philosophy of language via Ludwig Wittgenstein's later work. Language games and ways of living, now having acquired a status akin to slogans, are actually of Herderian vintage, even though Anglo-American philosophy of language commonly attributes them to Wittgenstein and typically combines them with a neo-Humean account of reference. The significance of the borrowings, especially the fact that they belong to a proto-systems approach to symbolization that is not frameable in terms of signaling processes, is underappreciated.

We have not yet exhausted the features Herder has brought to our attention. Indeed, Herderian symbolization is the critical feature that transforms humans into educable rather than only trainable individuals.[94] That is because symbolization enables the flexible and indefinitely refinable specificity of focus, in contrast to rote repetition. Upbringing and the distinctive character of communication through the articulated specificity enabled by the taking of awareness are carried out through dialogical exchange.[95] The dialogical character of linguistic communication belongs to the group of features that tie the acquisition of symbolization to communal living, from family to larger communities. It is, however, also tied to a stance on grammar or language organization, as opposed to semantics or reference. Herder claimed that, in effect, grammar is the result of patterning in dialogical exchanges, as they repeatedly occur through time. Reference is primary; grammar results from dialogical exchanges.

Language starts out as "mere vocabulary."[96] Through dialogical exchange, which expresses "art in use,"[97] it develops a grammar. Grammar gives us a "map of the humanity of language," it is an "art of speaking," a

---

[90] Ibid., 118.
[91] Ibid.
[92] Ibid., 132.
[93] Ibid., 132, 155.
[94] Ibid., 141.
[95] Ibid., 97.
[96] Ibid., 121.
[97] Ibid.

"philosophy about language."[98] To have a language that can be developed as an art, one first needs to step into taking-awareness, which induces the ability to focus and introduce specificity into a prior flow of awareness in which everything was mixed up before the advent of symbolization.[99] Grammar is something that develops over the course of the history of interactions among beings that are capable of expressing specificity through symbolization in dialogical interaction. Thus, the primary phenomenon of what we call human language is symbolization or reference. Grammar, syntax, speech forms arise as regularities that channel in ever more efficient ways the organization of symbolization through dialogical exchanges. This idea will find its way into Bates's work – despite her occasional references to Chomsky, who held a diametrically opposite view – but also into the work of developmental psychologists such as Patricia Greenfield and Joshua Smith,[100] not to mention people with orientations as diverse as neuroanthropologist Terrence Deacon,[101] evolutionary psychologist Michael Tomasello,[102] and primatologist Sue-Savage Rumbaugh.[103]

These Herderian features of symbolization, with some wavering on the acceptability of the notion of historical peoples, form a stable and constant collection that remains in force down to the work of Savage-Rumbaugh with nonhuman apes. They were already identified by the early 1770s. To summarize the features identified in Herder concerning what it takes to understand symbolization, they are: articulated specificity of reference; indefinite flexibility of reference; self-constitution of reference; in a system; reference as tied to a family context; reference as tied to a historical way of life of a people; reference as linked to educability rather than trainability; development of reference in dialogical exchange; and development of grammar from reference by interaction through dialogue. They are, respectively, features identified as (6), (8), (1), (2), (11), (5), (10), (9), and (14) earlier in this paper.

While Herder is a path-breaker in initiating the self-constituting conception of symbolization, his discussion is mostly impressionistic. Moreover, he still thought the origins of language rested in the onomatopoetic expression of feeling, a view that fits poorly with the feature of system-like autoconstitutivity. Wilhelm von Humboldt's programmatic comments on language in 1795 and his comments edited as the introduction to a work on the Kawi language, which is thought to have been written by 1828, provide a further reflection on the self-constituting conception of symbolization.

---

[98] Ibid., 211
[99] Ibid., 109.
[100] Patricia Marks Greenfield and Joshua A. Smith, *The Structure of Communication in Early Language Development* (New York: Academic, 1976).
[101] Terrence W. Deacon, *The Symbolic Species: The Co-evolution of Language and the Brain* (New York: Norton, 1997).
[102] Tomasello, *Constructing a Language*.
[103] Savage-Rumbaugh, *Ape Language*.

Humboldt's Contribution. We have seen that differentiation plays a vital role in the conception of symbolization that Werner and Kaplan developed. Humboldt attempted to address an issue that Herder had not, which is how taking-awareness is constructed. Herderian taking-awareness is part of what is achieved in the process of differentiation, which characterizes the emergence of symbolization according to the proto-systems account. It is point (3) in the list of features of symbolization from the overview in the earlier part of this paper. Humboldt was stimulated to develop his thoughts on differentiation in response to a reading of Fichte's pronouncements on the origin of language. Fichte had assumed that, in the genesis of language, linguistic signs communicated ready-made thoughts. This meant that the use and mastery of linguistic signs did not contribute to forming thoughts but found them ready-made.[104] Humboldt could not agree with this view. He nevertheless took away from Fichte the latter's preoccupation with the problem of how complexity happens to arise. Fichte made repeated attempts at addressing that issue in his writings between 1794-1796, so we will need to take a brief detour through Fichte's indirect contributions to Humboldt's understanding of symbolization.

The question of how one gets something diverse and complex from something simple is an old one. It is a problem that perplexed even the pre-Socratics. Fichte framed it generically in terms of a primordial doing, from which a response arises. The looped process of action and response yields something like a process of differentiation, through which both physical objects and social relations among agents are constructed.[105]

In his *Science of Knowledge*, published in 1794-1795, the mere possibility of thinking requires activity. However, activity encounters limitations: "We could in no way think of representation as possible, save on the assumption of a check occurring to the infinitely and indeterminately outreaching activity of the self."[106] This is an idea to which Fichte repeatedly returned. In all versions of the process, something, a check, or the experience of a limitation on activity, occurs. That experience is the catalyst that sets off a process transforming the originary experience of acting into something more complex. Fichte's idea seems to be that a higher degree of complexity is engaged, but not directly by the experience of limitation. It is developed, instead, by iteration, in which an operation is applied to its previous outcome. By a "new positing, relative to an original positing, it [the originary experience of acting] opens itself…to external influences; simply by this reiteration of positing, it concedes the possibility that there might be also something

---

[104] Johann Gottlieb Fichte, "On the Linguistic Capacity and the Origin of Language," in *Language and German Idealism: Fichte's Linguistic Philosophy*, trans. Jere Paul Surber (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1996), 124.

[105] Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *The Science of Knowledge*, eds. and trans. Peter Heath and John Lachs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Idem, *Foundations of Natural Right According to the Principles of the Wissenschaftslehre*, ed. Frederick Neuhouser, trans. Michael Baur (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[106] Fichte, *The Science of Knowledge*, 220.

within it that is not actually posited by itself."[107] The operation iterated is described as a generic "positing," by which Fichte meant any instance of doing. While the experience of limitation sets off a process of differentiation, differentiation – getting more than one thing from simple beginnings – happens by iteration, by a doing that applies to a doing, in response to which some kind of limitation has been experienced. A similar process is engaged in interacting with other agents.[108] Much of Fichte's preoccupations shifted from the problem of how objects are constructed to the issue of sociality. Both are constituted in the process of differentiation that is action-based.

Readers familiar with the vast literature on child psychology will recognize in Fichte's preoccupations the basic pattern for the often discussed theme of the looped interaction between child and caregiver as a structuring framework for child development. Fichte's goal, however, was more ambitious than describing a connection between sociality and the performance of actions, for in drawing a connection between sociality and action, Fichte was not interested in describing patterns of regular behavior. He was, instead, proposing to tie the process of differentiation to normativity.

In Fichte's view, the process by which doers interact with others is how they constitute themselves as norm-understanding agents. An undifferentiated experience of doing yields to a relation among doers who understand themselves as acting in accordance with norms for acting. The process includes causal events but is not itself reducible to causation.[109] By incorporating some of Fichte's ideas, Humboldt will implicitly attribute to symbolization a feature that Fichte had dwelled on for agency, which is that it has an intrinsic connection to normativity. That is our feature (12).

Fichte's early lectures, published in 1794 under the title of "Some Lectures Concerning the Scholar's Vocation," were widely popular among the educated German public. The lectures highlighted the normative dimension of the process of differentiation as it is experienced by beings that can have an awareness of the process of doing. In such beings, the process of differentiation features a form of sociality that

> aims at interaction, *reciprocal* influence, *mutual* give and take, *mutual* passivity and activity. It does not aim at mere causality, and the sort of mere activity to which the other person would have to be related merely passively. It strives to discover *free, rational,* beings outside of ourselves and to enter into community with them. It does not strive for the *subordination* characteristic of the physical world, but rather for *coordination.*[110]

---

[107] Ibid., 243.

[108] Fichte, *Foundations of Natural Right,* 34-37.

[109] Ibid., 35.

[110] Johann Gottlieb Fichte, "Some Lectures Concerning the Scholar's Vocation," in *Fichte: Early Philosophical Writings,* ed. and trans. Daniel Breazale (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988), 158.

Fichte brought out the significance of reciprocity in various rehearsals of these ideas. In his assessment, a being capable of entering into reciprocal social interaction is a being that does not just act according to a regular pattern of activity but has a conception of what freely acting is. The latter is a Kantian theme. It is not hard to see that the notion of reciprocating action, which is all-present in Werner and Kaplan and Bates, has clear antecedents in Fichte, who linked it directly with normativity.

In effect, Fichte consistently emphasized that the mark of a being that is capable of acting according to a conception of free action is evidenced in interaction. One of the notable characteristics of free action is manifested by what such an interacting agent could do but chooses not to.[111] It is highlighted in the passage quoted above: not resorting to subordinating others when one could do so. It is indeed a not-doing that is the mark of a being that understands norms for action, rather than just follows them.

Humboldt will transpose Fichte's phenomenology of embodied action to the process that gives rise to reference as symbolization in his 1795 theses on language. In Humboldt's hands, differentiation is a process by which discontinuity in experience is introduced, leading to the formation of new unities. In his first to sixth theses of his "On Thinking and Speaking," a piece written in response to Fichte's brief pronouncements on language in "On the Linguistic Capacity and the Origin of Language," Humboldt tied the process of differentiation explicitly to the genesis of speech, understood as symbolization. His first six theses outline how the flux of consciousness is brought to a halt and cut up to form new wholes out of parts of its activities. These new wholes are now held up as objects in opposition to subjective experience. The process is attributed explicitly to an effect of language, again understood as symbolization.[112]

His seventh thesis forcefully expresses the idea that the "check" to subjective experience, which lifts it out of "the dimness of desire," is something that is done with words. Words give human beings the ability to still the flow of experience, to "look around" and "orient" themselves, rather than be caught up in the ongoing pursuit of desires. Humboldt here combined Herder's taking-awareness with a Fichtean phenomenology of the check. The cutting-up of experience effected by symbolization that Herder called taking-awareness and that yields articulated specificity and focus is something that speakers of a symbolic language give themselves through the process of a check, which is action-based. It is something that does not come from the outside but that human beings achieve through iterative interaction.

The ability to lift oneself out of "the dimness of desire" is akin to achieving a greater degree of complexity from simple beginnings rehearsed in the Fichtean differentiating process of iterated positings. In Fichte's version of the process, through a process that engages acts of social cooperation rather

---

[111] Fichte, *Foundations of Natural Right,* 33.

[112] Wilhelm von Humboldt, "Über Denken und Sprechen," in *Werke*, vol. 5, eds. Andreas Flitner and Klaus Giel (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1981), 97-99.

than subordination, agents revise what they take to be going on in response to a kind of social pushback to an earlier intervention. The process is repeated as it turns on itself. Through this ongoing, indefinitely self-looping process, agents come to differentiate aspects of experience that were not to be had at earlier stages of social interaction. In Humboldt's rendering of this Fichtean schema, through symbols, aspects of experience become indefinitely differentiable via the phenomenology of the check, which is played out in coordinative social interaction. What is accomplished in the process of differentiation is, as Humboldt asserts in his fourteenth thesis, something that does not occur in nature: an articulation of experience that is a "thinking together" rather than a "feeling together."[113]

The Fichtean phenomenology of agency that infuses Humboldt's early thinking on reference as symbolization makes it distinctive compared to the Aristotelian and Humean approaches to reference. If we follow Fichte, acting is not segregated from cognitive content, and free agents are beings that are able to not do certain things, notably, not subordinate others to their needs when they could. Neither characteristic is in keeping with Aristotelian or Humean assumptions about human nature. Both Aristotle and Hume segregated action from cognition, and both would have taken freedom to involve lack of subordination of self in relation to others. Restricting what others do would be compatible with being free. Indeed, for Aristotelians and Humeans, the issue of freedom has no bearing on reference. Furthermore, while Humeans separate belief from desire, they would view belief as being subordinated to desire. Ultimately, the purpose even of reference is to satisfy individual desires.

Not so on the Fichtean outlook that permeates Humboldt's early thinking about language. There must be a minimal sense of normativity that is tied to the realization that one could do something but does not do it, in relation to social others. For Fichte, it would make no sense to derive this sense of normativity from the need to satisfy individual desires. If I can coerce others to do something that benefits only me, and I can get away with it even in the long run, then I would be foolish not to do it if norms are ultimately based on satisfying individual desires. The phenomenology of self-limiting interactivity was Fichte's way of countering a Humean brand of empiricism.

Humboldt borrowed from Fichte the background landscape offered by a community of self-limiting social protagonists, protagonists who understand norms manifested in interaction guided by self-limitation. One might say that Humboldt did better than borrowing ideas from Fichte. He implicitly brought out an aspect of the Fichtean conception of experience that had remained tacitly hidden, which is that Fichte was most likely assuming first language competence in the way that he characterized agency. What we get from beings interacting with each other in a way that incorporates self-limitation is "thinking together." The understanding of norms is in some way linked to symbolization. This is what Humboldt implicitly saw.

---

[113] Ibid.

Humboldt returned to the connection of language to normativity in his later writings. In the introduction to the study of the Kawi language, he indeed stated that if one can make any hypothesis about the origins of language, it should be "in the original summons to free human sociality," instead of the "need for mutual assistance." He took the latter view and the assumption that it makes, which is that language grew out of an accumulation of unarticulated signs causally produced to support individual survival needs, as two of the "most erroneous views that can be taken about language."[114]

The notion of a summons, a social variant of the more generic notion of a "check," is of clear Fichtean vintage. It appeared even when Humboldt discussed more technical issues, such as the dual form operative in some languages. According to Humboldt, in languages where the dual form is present, the "Thou" is a "not-I" but, contrary to the "he," it is a "not-I" that has freedom of choice. Moreover, the "Thou" belongs to the sphere of collective action, of doing things together, while the "he" does not.[115] Thus, the notions of free action and "thinking together" are used even to characterize some pronouns.

Normativity remained a stable characteristic of how Humboldt construed language, from which it finds its way in Werner and Kaplan's primordial sharing situation and Bates's gestural complex. The primordial sharing situation, and the gestural complex, is a framework in which thinking with another is enabled in non-coercive reciprocating activity. In being taught a language, an infant is taught self-limiting, non-coercive reciprocation. In the reports of the diary keepers, this shows up not only in the non-coercive behavior of caregivers but also in the ability of even quite young children to correct their errors without coercion. These activities are perhaps the first stages in the eventual understanding, in contrast to the following, of norms.

The normative has to be in some way implemented in physical phenomena. Humboldt's notion of work, our feature (4), addresses the physical underpinnings of language. Human activity and interaction, on which language construction relies, are physical phenomena. If indeed languages are "the work of nations" and are expressed in ongoing familial relations,[116] and if "language proper lies in its real production,"[117] then the phenomenon of language has a physical dimension tied to activity and production. It is in relation to the physical dimension of language production that Humboldt raised the notion of energy as activity. It should be noted that by language production, Humboldt meant, for the most part, articulated speech organized into a grammatical structure, the phonetical and syntactical aspects of language.[118]

---

[114] Wilhelm von Humboldt, *On Language*, trans. Peter Heath (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 60.

[115] Wilhelm von Humboldt, *Über den Dualis: Gelesen in der Akademie der Wissenschaften am 26. April 1827* (Berlin: Drückerei der Königlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1818), 24.

[116] Humboldt, *On Language*, 44.

[117] Ibid., 49.

[118] Ibid., 50-53.

If there is one catchphrase with which Humboldt's name is associated, it is that language is *energeia* rather than *ergon*.[119] While the contrast might have its source in Aristotle, as a distinction between the function of a substance (*ergon*) and the actualization of its function (*energeia*), Aristotelianism does not offer much help in gathering what Humboldt might have meant by it since he could not, in principle, adhere to Aristotle's essentialist metaphysics. *Energeia*, translated as activity, is associated with various terms in the German text: *Tätigkeit*, *Arbeit*, but also *Schöpfung*, *Erzeugung*, and *Hervorbringen*.[120] The German *Werk* and *Erzeugten* are reserved for *ergon*.[121] There is no way of getting around the problem that activity is a fluid concept. It can perhaps be supposed that its fluidity is due to the fact that the notion was undergoing scrutiny and being developed in different directions almost simultaneously, as work in the technical sense now recognized in physics and as labor – anticipating later developments in Marxian thought and the social sciences.

As early-nineteenth-century engineers and physicists were grappling with the principles by which one could extract something useable from machines, they recognized that the formula for what Leibniz had called *vis viva*, living force, was what they needed. *Vis viva* is a quantity proportional to the mass and the square of the speed of an object that moves. Indeed, in Leibniz's conception of the physical universe, *vis viva* is something more fundamental than motion or bodily extension.[122] This concept was renamed energy at the beginning of the nineteenth century by Thomas Young.[123] Energy transferred to an object by means of a force was, by the time Humboldt developed his ideas on language, defined as *travail*, or work, in the now technical meaning that term has acquired, and that it owes to Leibniz.[124] It is not a stretch to believe that Humboldt was keeping abreast of developments in engineering and physics through his brother, Alexander von Humboldt, a lifelong friend of the French engineer and mathematician Lazare Carnot.[125] This terminological development marks, if anything, the ascendancy of Leibniz's energetic conception of physical phenomena. It provides a framework for the general understanding of any kind of physical interaction, including the interaction that takes place between physical language bearers.

---

[119] Ibid., 49.

[120] Wilhelm von Humboldt, *Die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaues* (Berlin: Königliche Akademie der Wissenschaften 1836), 34-42.

[121] Ibid., 40.

[122] Carolyn Iltis, "Leibniz and the *Vis Viva* Controversy," *Isis* 62 (1971): 22-32.

[123] Thomas Young, *A Course of Lectures on Natural Philosophy and the Mechanical Arts* (London: Johnson, 1807), 52.

[124] Gustave Coriolis, *Du calcul de l'effet des machines* (Paris: Carilian-Gœury, 1929), 15-17.

[125] Hans-Eugen Kurrer, *The History of the Theory of Structures: from Arch Analysis to Computational Mechanics* (Berlin: Ernst & Sohn, 2008), 352.

The Leibnizian message that Humboldt made his own is that energetic phenomena (*energeia*) are more fundamental than properties ascribed to objects, such as size, motion, shape, or even objects themselves (*ergon*). If so, the motto that language is *energeia* rather than *ergon* could be interpreted to mean that what matters, in understanding how language arises, is to think of community members, words, syntax, and sounds not just as entities with physical properties, but as elements in mutually interacting relational structures. That is the sort of thinking that would lead to viewing language in terms of a system. Viewed as work, this feature of language is linked with our feature (2): reference as a phenomenon inscribed in a system.

In another filiation, which raises specifically the matter of social interaction and prepares a transition to the concepts of the virtual and the public – our feature (7), the theme of work as human labor had repeatedly been explored by Hegel. In his *First Philosophy of Spirit* of 1803-1804, Hegel juxtaposed speech with the production of tools and familial goods: "That first existence of consciousness as middle in bonds, is its being as speech…as tool…and as [family] goods."[126] Speech, tools, and family goods are "the means…through which, he [the agent] is active against something else."[127] In other words, they are the means by which human beings make themselves into cultural beings as "middle in bonds," that is, through social-relational activity. The theme of self-transformation through social activity, which Hegel owed at least partially to Fichte, recurs in Humboldt,[128] and thus has more than one philosophical pedigree.

Hegel had brought together language, labor, and family goods yet stopped short of integrating them. In his discussion of language, he appeared to have in mind something like the effect Herder had identified: the transformation of intuitive experience through the articulation instituted by speech.[129] In a parallel process, human action is also transformed by the development of skilled activity through the transmission of tools. Tools hold within them, or "eternalize," the labor passed down through work traditions.[130] Finally, Hegel thought that family possessions are the means through which family members recognize themselves "as one."[131] Just as tools are not only objects for individual use but incorporate a collective know-how, so do family goods raise individual affective bonds among family members to a higher level of ideality. It is through the goods held in common within a family, Hegel thought, that the consciousness of the parents is transferred and incorporated into that of the next generation.[132] By the time Hegel

---

[126] Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *System of Ethical Life (1802/3) and First Philosophy of Spirit (Part III of the System of Speculative Philosophy 1803/4),* eds. and trans. H. S. Harris and T. M. Knox (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1979), 216.

[127] Ibid.

[128] Humboldt, *On Language*, 42-43.

[129] Hegel, *System of Ethical Life,* 221-223.

[130] Ibid., 232-233.

[131] Ibid., 232.

[132] Ibid., 233-235.

composed his 1805-1806 Jena Philosophy of Spirit – around the same time as Young's redefinition of work in physics – he had proposed that family goods, which are goods that one does not consume for one's own benefit, are the first instruments by which individuals are taught to bond to a reality beyond that of the individuals in a family unit. Hegel thought that family goods introduce an element of virtuality within social relations.[133]

In Hegel's hands, language, labor, and building up a store of family goods are juxtaposed processes. One might interpret Humboldt as attempting to integrate them. Language *is* tool and family good. Understood in terms of capture and transfer of energy, the phenomena of vocal articulation and syntactic structure are tools and goods. They are something produced by groups of physical individuals and belong to them, in some sense of "belong." Nevertheless, following Hegel's insight, neither tools nor family goods are what they appear to be. Tools encapsulate work traditions. They are not just things one can manipulate. Family goods convey a common heritage, which is not something that can be stored like a family heirloom. Both work traditions and heritage are virtual rather than physical. In likening language to *energeia*, Humboldt may also have had in mind the idea that language has, beyond its physical dimension, a virtual dimension, one that calls for the recognition of a public realm, our feature (7). The two ways of thinking about *energeia* are compatible.

The virtual character of the public world is a central notion in Humboldt's philosophy of language. The terminology he used to discuss it is variable, encompassing such expressions as the inner depth and fullness of mental power, the truly creative spirit, spiritual creation, and the like. Humboldt characterized the public character of the virtual in two ways, one positively, the other contrastively. The positive characterization presents variations on the idea of something like an instantaneous constitution. For this, Humboldt used such phrases as "simultaneous self-activity of all,"[134] "everybody at once,"[135] or even "still always necessarily rest[ing] upon the collective power of man."[136] The negative characterization contrasts all-at-once-constitution with causal processes of exchanging information. Humboldt connected the two ways of presenting the public and virtual character of symbolization, as constituted all at once and not being the result of a causal-linear process, in the same paragraph: "The bringing-forth of language" is not "merely an external necessity for maintaining communal intercourse."[137] It is rather something that can be brought about "through communal thinking with others."[138] Humboldt also on occasion connected the two characterizations in the same sentence: "But the existence of languages proves that there

---

[133] Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, 1976. *Gesammelte Werke, vol. 8: Jenaer Systementwürfe III*, ed. Rolf-Peter Horstmann (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1976), 212.

[134] Humboldt, *On Language,* 42.

[135] Ibid., 24.

[136] Ibid., 44.

[137] Ibid., 27.

[138] Ibid.

are also spiritual creations which in no way whatever pass out from a single individual to the remainder, but can only emanate from the simultaneous self-activity of all."[139]

In effect, it looks like Humboldt thought that the simultaneous, all-at-once constitution of public meaning through language and the failure of causal-linear processes to account for the constitution of public meaning were two faces of the same thing: "in contrast to the overt sequence obviously linked by cause and effect," virtual objects of the public sphere, the products of cultivation, "carry within them at the same time the rekindling breath that engenders them."[140] It is in terms of this double characterization that Humboldt understood the public realm of the virtual: "each [individual] presupposes the understanding of all, and all fulfill this expectation."[141]

Humboldt, moreover, consistently held that designation, reference, or meaning is not to objects in the physical world. We see this when he stated that "the comprehension of *words* is a thing entirely different from the understanding of *unarticulated sounds*, and involves much more than the mere mutual evocation of the sound and the object indicated,"[142] or again, "It is impossible to conceive of the origin of language as beginning with the designation of objects by words, and then proceeding to put them together. In reality, speech is not compounded out of words that have preceded it; the words, on the contrary, emerge from the totality of speech."[143] This is why "conversing together is never comparable with a transfer of material."[144] Werner and Kaplan would make essentially the same point, over 130 years later.

The corollary of this position is that reference is to a public realm, which is constituted virtually: "A language…contains everything that it has transformed into sounds. But just as the matter of thinking, and the infinity of its combinations, can never be exhausted, so it is equally impossible to do this with the mass of what calls for designation and connection in language." Humboldt continues: "language also consists, before all else, of methods for carrying forward the work of the mind, to which it prescribes the path and the form. The elements, once firmly fashioned, constitute, indeed, a relatively dead mass, but one which bears within itself the living seed of a never-ending determinability. At every single point and period, therefore, language…appears to man…as an inexhaustible storehouse."[145] Something that allows for infinite combinations and is inexhaustible can only be construed as virtual, not physical.

We are a stone's throw away from Werner and Kaplan's view that meaning as belonging to a public realm emerges from the physical processes that make up the primordial sharing situation. All that is missing is the construct

---

[139] Ibid., 42.
[140] Ibid., 29.
[141] Ibid., 44.
[142] Ibid., 57.
[143] Ibid., 70.
[144] Ibid., 57.
[145] Ibid., 61.

of the primordial sharing situation. Nevertheless, the notion of a virtual space of symbolization, which is indefinitely articulable and refinable, and to which all who are symbolically competent commit themselves, is fully formed in Humboldt's writings. One would need to draw on it to make sense of the observations reported by early twentieth-century diary-keepers. An infant's use of the expression "M-gon" does not signal the presence of some object since there is nothing to pick out in physical space. On the contrary, the function of "M-gon" is to share with the caregiver a comment concerning what is not present, which is operative only in a commonly shared virtual space. Likewise, when a child makes a doll jump according to a verbal request, the movement belongs to a public space of performance; the doll is no longer just an object that is being made to move in physical space.

Humboldt also drew on a contrast with causal processes of influence when he discussed a feature he closely tied to the public character of language meaning, its web-like organization, our feature (13). Indeed, the image of a web is potently evoked to convey the all-encompassing character of language: "By the same act whereby [man] spins language out of himself, he spins himself into it, and every language draws about the people that possesses it a circle whence it is possible to exit only by stepping over and at once into the circle of another one,"[146] or again, "language can be compared to an immense web, in which every part stands in a more or less clearly recognizable connection with the others."[147] This conception is contrasted with a now-familiar culprit, the view that language can be built out of compounds of signals having a causal relation to objects.[148] We have noted above the critical stance Humboldt took toward this view with respect to the public and virtual character of language. That he thought a causal conception of reference stands in contrast to both the public character of language and its web-like organization suggests that he thought the two features were closely linked. The Humboldtian realm of reference is both public and web-like.

That is an important point and one that is tied to Humboldt's denial of surveyability. Surveyability is the third property of signals outlined at the beginning of this paper. It presumes that one can exhaustively list signals and do the same for the objects or events to which they correspond, in a piecemeal-fashion. The denial of surveyability draws on the web-like structure of symbolization, its virtual and public character, and its self-constitution in a community in conversation (our features of symbolization [13], [7], [1], and [9]): "For language cannot indeed be regarded as a material that sits there, surveyable in its totality, or communicable little by little, but must be seen as something that eternally produces itself."[149]

Savage-Rumbaugh would rediscover these ideas when, in her early work, she tried unsuccessfully to train chimpanzees to learn a set of symbols

---

[146] Ibid., 60.
[147] Ibid., 69.
[148] Ibid., 70.
[149] Ibid., 58.

as if it were an additive collection of signals. What is lacking in the additive conception of language as a collection of signals is the opportunity of engaging with the virtual through conversation. That is what is conveyed in the idea, to which Humboldt often returned, that what is not already thought, what it may be possible to think, is already in some way enabled in a language: "language…is present to the soul in its totality. Every detail in it, that is, behaves in such a way as to correspond to another that has yet to become clear, and to a whole given, or rather capable of creation;"[150] or again, "what is heard does more than merely convey information to oneself; it readies the mind also to understand more easily what has not yet been heard; it makes clear what was long ago heard, but then half understood."[151]

It is also the recognition of the virtuality and publicity of symbolization that stands behind Humboldt's clear and explicit statement that the object of reference, even for apparently simple words such as "ball," is not a physical ball: "every concept must inwardly be held fast to markers peculiar to itself, or to relations with other concepts…This is even the case with external physical objects that are plainly perceivable to the senses. Even for them the word is not the equivalent of the object that hovers before the sense, but rather the conception thereof through language-production at the particular moment of finding the word."[152]

That statement exactly amounts to rejecting what a causal-designative conception of meaning assumes. When Werner and Kaplan were critiquing what they called a Russellian conception of reference, by which they meant a variant of the causal-designative view, their most immediate intellectual predecessor was not Kant, but Humboldt. Werner's conception of an all-at-once entry into a symbolic realm that is not conceptualizable in terms of discrete causal-designative relations between signals and objects owed much to Humboldt's framework for language, which tied a conception of meaning as being articulated in a "field of the designandum"[153] to its all-at-once constitution as a public realm, emanating from, but not reducible to, familial interaction.

To summarize Humboldt's contributions, we owe to his integrating themes from Fichte with Herderian reflections on language the idea that normativity (feature [12]) is at stake from the earliest stages of symbolic formation, in which a state of greater complexity arises out of social interactions. Differentiation, indeed, amounts to inducing a greater degree of complexity from simple, undifferentiated states (feature [3]). Integrating some elements from early Hegel, we get the Humboldtian idea that the process of differentiation to a state of greater complexity, which is properly symbolic, requires the expenditure of work/labor in familial bonds (feature [4]), in which the dimmest inkling that something is "ours" rather than "mine" is prepared, even

---

[150] Ibid., 77.
[151] Ibid., 58.
[152] Ibid., 84.
[153] Ibid., 75.

if the interactions among individuals can also be construed in terms of energetic transfers. We also looked at Humboldt's statements concerning the connection between language and the realization of a virtual, public world (feature (7)) required for symbolic thought and its web-like organization (feature [13]). On the Humboldtian view, it is indeed its enabling the emergence of a public world that makes language what it is.

Humboldt agreed with all the other features that can be identified in Herder: (1) autoconstitutivity of symbolization; (2) system-like character of symbolization and its context; (5) embedding in a historical, collective way of life; (6) enabling of specificity and articulation; (8) indefinite and flexible articulability; (9) occurrence of symbolization in dialogical exchanges; (10) symbolization as acquired through education rather than training; (11) education into symbolization in familial interactions; and (14) symbolization, rather than grammar or syntax as the primary linguistic phenomenon – although Humboldt believed that grammar is what individuates historical languages. These features are, in effect, mutually supporting.

With this background in place, Werner and Kaplan, who benefited from the availability of caregiver diaries, had the tools needed to formulate the thesis that symbolization is a matter of harnessing a caregiving relation between caregiver and infant, by which a concentrated focus on the non-present is initiated through the medium of engaging in reciprocating acts of sharing objects in a primordial sharing situation. Non-coercive interaction in the primordial sharing situation is the basis on which an open, public space of virtual objects, which are organized in a web-like structure, is initiated. Once it has emerged, this virtual structure can then be used to organize the realm of physical objects in new ways. Sociality, affect, and such things as the ability to track objects, whether visually or auditorily, pattern recognition, problem-solving, all kinds of abilities that have been in some way connected to symbolization, can be assumed to serve as background facts and abilities, but they would not, in themselves, be sufficient for enabling symbolic competence.

There is a simple initial situation, the experience of the infant-to-be-educated-into-reference. The infant is part of a primordial sharing situation, which differentiates and becomes part of the complex structure that begins to be organized out of the interactions between caregiver, infant, and objects of joint manipulation. Repeated kinds of interactions, which early keepers of diaries of caregiving and especially Bates and her colleagues further analyzed into acts of showing and exchanging, but also pointing, seed the not-there: the field of reference. The field of reference is not something that can be shown, exchanged, or pointed to. Once constituted, it is what further enables increasing symbolic sophistication.

The virtual world of the not-there has a web-like structure, which then is projected onto the physical world and organizes it. In any case, what is symbolized, as Humboldt had stressed, is not an object that is perceived. Paradoxically, what is not there is required to refer to what is perceivable. These ideas are illustrated in shorthand in Figures 1-6, which present illustrated abbreviations of the ideas and themes on which this paper has dwelt. The virtual

world of public space is the world in which normative concepts can be fully articulated; indeed, it is the realm in which normative considerations can be indefinitely elaborated and refined. The public realm of the normative is seeded, however, in acts of reciprocal activity and incorporates a minimal commitment that is part of the process of education, as opposed to training. This minimal commitment is to not resort to coercion even when one could get away with it in the long run. Acts of reciprocity require adherence to this commitment.

Conclusion

Werner and Kaplan's and Bates's contributions, in addition to whatever else these developmental psychologists might have done, were to transpose into the more sober language of twentieth-century social science a conception of human interaction that Fichte had defended and that drew on the Kantian theme of freedom as requiring more than just following norms. However, they did much more than this. Their originality rested especially in providing a fuller development of the process that Humboldt had sketched; that is, the process of the emergence of symbolization and his conception of virtualized publicity, partly anticipated in some versions of Hegel's *Philosophy of Spirit*.

Werner and Kaplan, drawing on ideas that had been in the air since Herder and Humboldt, saw that the public realm of symbolization is not just a matter of joint manipulation of physical objects. It is something that arises from joint manipulation of physical objects. The realm of symbols is its "spiritualized" aspect, or as we might prefer to say today, using less old-fashioned sounding terminology, it is its virtualized aspect. Werner and Kaplan's primordial sharing situation, in which reciprocating activity takes place, provides the underpinning of a claim that has since been replicated many times in social scientific studies on the acquisition of a first language: the process of first language acquisition is "triadic."

Rather than presuppose that reference is embedded in mentation and nature, as the neo-Aristotelian does, or reduce reference to signaling events, as the neo-Humean would prefer, Werner and Kaplan forged a third way, one which is situated within the filiation opened by Herder and Humboldt, and that incorporates significant elements from Fichte – and by extension Kant – and Hegel. However, by a strange turn of events, their contributions were reinterpreted and blended into a combination of neo-Aristotelian and neo-Human approaches to reference.

With some exceptions, such as neuroanthropologist Terrence Deacon, today Werner and Kaplan's ideas are, at best, footnote material. Their idea of a primordial sharing situation, when it manages to be the subject of explicit discussion, is reinterpreted as a situation in which a caregiver and an infant gaze together at some physical object. In a publication that closely follows Bates's observations, Colwyn Trevarthen and Penelope Hubley were the first,

as far as I can make out, to introduce the term "triadic." They used it to de-scribe the acquisition of a first language in children.[154] It is now a common idea that children's acquisition of language is a triadic process. Since Bake-man and Adamson's 1984 paper, triadicity is associated with the phenomenon of joint attention, which is itself interpreted as a shared gazing at a third ob-ject. The discovery of shared gazing is attributed to Scaife and Bruner, who, in a paper published in 1976, showed that six-month-old infants could follow an adult's gaze to a distant object or location.

Much confusion surrounds the claim concerning triadicity. Since the 1990s, triadicity has been interpreted to mean that, in the ontogenesis of ref-erence, children draw on the exclusive human ability to follow an adult's gaze to some third object and gaze back and forth between it and the adult care-giver. The matter is often presented as a definitive finding.[155] This is an odd combination of ideas. It glosses over the fact that blind infants can acquire referential competence, while six-month-old infants are not referentially competent. It also needs to be squared with observations that animals that are not symbolically competent are nevertheless quite capable of coordinating gazes and actions to manipulate a distant object jointly.[156] One diagnosis for this state of confusion is that Werner and Kaplan's construct of the primordial sharing situation has been extruded from its context and original role in a proto-systems account of reference.

The notion of triadicity in the social sciences literature today is com-monly associated with a neo-Aristotelian and neo-Humean approach to ref-erence, and the latter two are also often combined, in spite of being in princi-ple incompatible. The neo-Aristotelian view takes the realm of the public to be ready-made rather than emerging from the work done in communities of social individuals. The neo-Humean view is perhaps the most prevalent to-day. It reduces symbolization to private, individual beliefs about signals. Phi-losopher David Lewis provided its fullest technical elaboration in the late 1960s. It is interesting that Lewis concluded that a language construed on the model of conventions for coordinating the use of signals fails to capture the expressive power of human languages. Languages construed in terms of sig-naling conventions lack flexibility; they are not creative; they do not enable

---

[154] Colwyn Trevarthen and Penelope Hubley, "Secondary Intersubjectivity: Confi-dence, Confiding and Acts of Meaning in the First Year," in *Action, Gesture and Symbol: The Emergence of Language*, ed. Andrew Lock (London: Academic Press, 1978), 183-229.

[155] Eilan, e.a., eds. *Joint Attention: Communication and Other Minds*; Moore and Dun-ham, eds., *Joint Attention*; Seeman, ed., *Joint Attention*; Tomasello, *Origins of Human Communication*; Tomasello, *Why We Cooperate*; Michael Tomasello, Malinda Carpenter, Joseph Call, Tanya Behne, and Henrike Moll, 2005. "Understanding and Sharing Inten-tions: The Origins of Cultural Cognition." *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 28 (2005): 675-735.

[156] Meredith Pullen Crawford, "The Cooperative Solving of Problems by Young Chim-panzees." *Comparative Psychology Monographs* 14 (1937): 1-88; Meredith Pullen Craw-ford and H. W. Nissen, *Gestures Used by Chimpanzees in Cooperative Problem Solving*. Film, 16 mm. 300 ft., 1937.

their users to construct alternative meanings; they make no room for the tentative. They do not allow for speculation, deliberation, or argumentation. They do not even allow participants to discriminate between conveying general advice and standing orders.[157] In listing the various ways that the signaling model of reference falls short, Lewis's misgivings in effect concern what we have identified as the features of normativity, virtual publicity, and indefinite flexibility, to name but a few salient features.

By contrast, the Herderian-Humboldtian conception of symbolization does allow for all these things. The reader might be excused for finding that what we lose with this conception is the common-sense character of the signaling convention approach, which relies on assuming that language is built out of causal relations between a snippet of language and a bit of the world. To this, one can give two replies. First, even the conceptions of language that take causal signaling relations to be foundational to the construction of a language very quickly slide into a Herderian-Humboldtian holism and reproduce the Humboldtian language-as-a-web theme, even though it belongs to a very different way of thinking about reference. This tactic is quite widespread in the Anglo-American philosophy of language that follows in the footsteps of philosophers Quine and Davidson, even though it is internally incoherent. Second, the apparent abstruseness of the Herderian-Humboldtian conception of symbolization dissolves when one looks at its practical applications. Savage-Rumbaugh's work on language acquisition in nonhuman apes provides an illustration of what, concretely, assuming the Herderian-Humboldtian conception of language, augmented by the primordial sharing situation and the gestural complex, looks like.

Let me recapitulate what I have done in this paper. I have used the notion of a symbol in the way it has been delineated by Werner and Kaplan in their proto-systems account of reference, anticipated in Werner's 1957 work. They did not invent the notion of reference or symbolization examined here. Nevertheless, they were the most self-conscious conduit of the notion as it was first developed in the filiation that runs from Herder to Humboldt and that also includes contributions from Fichte and Hegel. What Werner and Kaplan did bring out that is not explicitly present in these sources, even though one might argue that Hegel had a general intimation of it, is the idea of a primordial sharing situation that involves not just speaker and respondent, but both in a shared manipulation of objects on which attention is bestowed, and that highlights reciprocal interaction. It is clear from Werner and Kaplan's work that these objects are not what is being referred to. Rather the primordial sharing situation, which involves the manipulation of objects in the process of education rather than training, is the basis for referential lift-off, which allows a virtual field of reference to emerge from the work done in norm-generating, non-constraining interaction.

It is hoped that returning to Werner and Kaplan's formulation will help us clarify what the idea of a three-part relation, or "triadicity" – a term they

---

[157] Lewis, *Convention*, 160-161.

never used – was originally thought to capture. In fact, the primordial sharing situation was just part of a broader theory, which is, as I have mentioned, a proto-systems account of symbolization.

This paper attempted to reconstitute the proto-systems account with just enough background to allow the reader to appreciate in what sense Werner and Kaplan can be said to provide the most promising and coherent position on what reference as symbolization is. This paper also recognized the significant contribution Bates and her colleagues made to understanding symbolization. No one who has read their work will think of language games in quite the same way again. The distinctive work of Werner and Kaplan, it is contended, did not just draw on significant Herderian and Humboldtian themes. It also drew on a close study of numerous diaries of caregivers that appeared toward the end of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth. The primordial sharing situation and Bates's further articulation of it in the gestural complex would not have been possible without the diaries of Shinn, the Sterns, the Scupins, Ament, Grégoire, Leopold, and M. M. Lewis. It is hoped that others will be encouraged to look more closely at this undeservedly neglected material.

Because of space constraints, I must defer to the future an examination of the rival positions on the issues of reference, which I have called the neo-Aristotelian and the neo-Humean. The work in this paper provides a preliminary background for that examination. Eventually, one might want to sort out the various ways neo-Aristotelianism and neo-Humeanism have been intermingled with strands from the proto-systems approach. Future efforts in this area cannot begin without the prior work of pointing out that they are not the same. Neo-Aristotelianism entirely misses the feature of autoconstitutivity, which affects everything else it might have to contribute to the issue of reference. The neo-Humean view is decidedly anti-systems, it assumes that reference is a phenomenon that is entirely surveyable and can be acquired by training. More undoubtedly remains to be said; nevertheless, a comparative study of different approaches to symbolization was not the object of this paper.

This paper was premised on the optimistic hope that advances in the understanding of reference are possible, with enough clarity of insight, and that clarity of insight is already available, provided one is willing to plumb currently neglected sources, and provided one is willing to distinguish them from incompatible views with which they have become intermingled. It is my belief that the examination of neglected sources will serve to promote a better understanding of the possibility of symbolization in nonhuman animals.

I also believe that the work of Werner and Kaplan should be consulted for gaining insight into the prospects of symbolization in human-machine interaction beyond current commercially implemented machine-based projects. This paper identified several features of symbolization that are characteristic of the proto-systems approach to symbolization. It is hoped that they might eventually be useful in understanding what is at stake in applied work in exploring the possibility of symbolization in blended human and nonhuman contexts.

Finally, it is my belief that, given the intrinsic link between practices of reciprocation and true reference, no fundamental technical breakthrough in the extension of linguistic and symbolic behavior will be accomplished without the often unrewarding and difficult long-term work that goes into understanding and sustaining everyday, small actions of reciprocation.

Bibliography

Ament, Wilhelm. *Die Entwicklung von Sprechen und Denken beim Kinde*. Leipzig: Ernst Wunderlich, 1899.

Aristotle. *De Interpretatione.* Translated by J. L. Ackrill. In *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation, vol. I*, edited by J. Barnes, 25-38. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984.

------. *On the Soul.* Translated by J. A. Smith. In *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation, vol. I*, edited by J. Barnes, 641-692. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984.

Bakeman, Roger and Lauren B. Adamson. "Coordinating Attention to People and Objects in Mother-Infant and Peer-Infant Interaction." *Child Development* 55 (1984): 1278–1289.

Bates, Elizabeth. *Language and Context: The Acquisition of Pragmatics*. New York: Academic Press, 1976.

------. Begnini, I. Bretherton, L. Camaioni, and V. Volterra. *The Emergence of Symbols: Cognition and Communication in Infancy*. New York: Academic Press, 1979.

------, Luigia Camaioni, and Virginia Volterra. "The Acquisition of Performatives Prior to Speech." *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly* 21 (1975): 205–226.

Bertalanffy, Ludwig von. *General Systems Theory*. New York: Braziller, 1968.

------. *Organismic Psychology and Systems Theory*. Barre, MA: Clark University Press, 1968.

Bratman, Michael E. "Shared Cooperative Activity." *The Philosophical Review* 101 (1992): 327–341.

Carpenter, Melinda and Joseph Call. "How Joint is the Joint Attention of Apes and Human Infants?" In *Agency and Joint Attention,* edited by H.S. Terrace and J. Metcalfe, 49–61. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Coriolis, Gustave. *Du calcul de l'effet des machines*. Paris: Carilian-Gœury 1929. Accessed April 30, 2016. http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k1068268.

Crawford, Meredith Pullen. "The Cooperative Solving of Problems by Young Chimpanzees." *Comparative Psychology Monographs* 14 (1937): 1–88.

------ and H. W. Nissen. *Gestures Used by Chimpanzees in Cooperative Problem Solving*. Film, 16 mm. 300 ft., 1937.

Dawkins, Richard. *The Selfish Gene*. Oxford: Oxford University Press 1989.

Davidson, Donald. *Subjective, Intersubjective, Objective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Deacon, Terrence W. *The Symbolic Species: The Co-evolution of Language and the Brain*. New York: Norton, 1997.

De León, Lourdes. "Language, Socialization and Multiparty Participation Frameworks." In *The Handbook of Language Socialization,* edited by Alessandro Duranti, Elinor Ochs, and Bambi B. Schieffelin, 81–111. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.

Eilan, Naomi, Christoph Hoerl, Teresa McCormack, and Johannes Roessler, eds. *Joint Attention: Communication and Other Minds*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Enfield, N. J. "'Lip-Pointing': A Discussion of Form and Function with Reference to Data from Laos." *Gesture* 1, no. 2 (2001): 185–211.

Fichte, Johann Gottlieb. *Foundations of Natural Right According to the Principles of the Wissenschaftslehre*, edited by Frederick Neuhouser, translated by Michael Baur. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

------. "On the Linguistic Capacity and the Origin of Language." In *Language and German Idealism: Fichte's Linguistic Philosophy,* translated by Jere Paul Surber, 119–145. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1996.

------. *The Science of Knowledge* translated and edited by Peter Heath and John Lachs. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.

------. "Some Lectures Concerning the Scholar's Vocation." In *Fichte: Early Philosophical Writings,* translated and edited by Daniel Breazale, 144–184. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988.

Greenfield, Patricia Marks and Joshua A. Smith. *The Structure of Communication in Early Language Development*. New York: Academic, 1976.

Grégoire, A. *L'apprentissage du langage*. Paris: Droz, 1937–1947.

Grice, Paul. "Meaning." *The Philosophical Review* 66 (1957): 377–88.

Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich. *Gesammelte Werke, Vol 8: Jenaer Systementwürfe III*, edited by Rolf-Peter Horstmann. Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1976.

------. *System of Ethical Life (1802/3) and First Philosophy of Spirit (Part III of the System of Speculative Philosophy 1803/4),* translated and edited by H. S. Harris and T. M. Knox. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1979.

Herder, Johann Gottfried. *Treatise on the Origin of Language*. In *Philosophical Writings*, edited by Michael N. Forster, 65–164. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Hughes, Virginia. "The Point of Pointing." *Phenomena*, *National Geographic* (September 2, 2014). Accessed November 24, 2015. http://phenomena.nationalgeographic.com/2014/09/02/the-point-of-pointing/.

Humboldt, Wilhelm von. *On Language*. Translated by Peter Heath. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

------. *Über den Dualis: Gelesen in der Akademie der Wissenschaften am 26. April 1827*. Berlin: Drückerei der Königlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1828. Accessed November 24, 2015. http://www.mdz-nbn-resolving.de/urn/resolver.pl?urn=urn:nbn:de:bvb:1 2-bsb10523180-5.

------. "Über Denken und Sprechen." In *Werke*, vol. 5, edited by Andreas Flitner and Klaus Giel, 97-99. Stuttgart: Cotta, 1981.

------. *Die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaues*. Berlin: Königliche Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1836. Accessed November 24, 2015. https://archive.org/stream/berdieverschied00humbgoog#page/n9/mode/2up.

Hume, David. *A Treatise of Human Nature*, edited by P. H. Nidditch. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978^2.

Iltis, Carolyn. "Leibniz and the *Vis Viva* Controversy." *Isis* 62 (1971): 21–35.

Kurrer, Hans-Eugen. *The History of the Theory of Structures: from Arch Analysis to Computational Mechanics*. Berlin: Ernst & Sohn, 2008.

Leopold Werner F. *Speech Development in a Bilingual Child*, vol. 1. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1939.

Lewis, David. *Convention*: *A Philosophical Study*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1969.

Lewis, M. M. *Infant Speech*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co 1936.

Lyn, Heidi, Patricia M. Greenfield, Sue Savage-Rumbaugh, Kristen Gillespie-Lynch, and William D. Hopkins. "Nonhuman Primates Do Declare! A Comparison of Declarative Symbol and Gesture Use in Two Children, Two Bonobos, and a Chimpanzee." *Language and Communication* 31 (2011): 63–74.

McCune, Lorraine. *How Children Learn to Learn Language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press 2008.

Moore, Chris and Philip J. Dunham, eds. *Joint Attention: Its Origin and Role in Development*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1995.

Panksepp, Jaak. *Affective Neuroscience: The Foundations of Human and Animal Emotions.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Piaget, Jean. *La formation du symbole chez l'enfant*, Paris: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1978.

Quine, Willard Van Orman. *Word and Object*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1960.

Savage-Rumbaugh, Sue E. *Ape Language: From Conditioned Response to Symbol*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1986.

------, Jeannine Murphy, Rose A. Sevcik, Karen E, Brakke, Shelly L. Williams, and Duane M. Rumbaugh. "Language Com-prehension in Ape and Child." *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development* 58 (no. 3/4, 1993).

------, Pär Segerdhal, and William Fields. "Individual Differences in Language Competencies in Apes Resulting from Unique Rearing Conditions Imposed by Different First Epistemologies." In *Symbolic Use and Symbolic Representation,* edited by L. L. Namy and S. R. Waxman, 199–219. Abingdon: Routledge, 2005.

Scaife, M. and J. S. Bruner. "The Capacity for Joint Visual Attention in the Infant." *Nature* 253 (1975): 265–266.

Scupin, Ernst and Gertrud Stern. *Bubi's erste Kindheit: Ein Tagebuch über die geistige Entwicklung eines Knaben während der ersten drei Lebensjahre.* Leipzig: Grieben, 1907.

Searle, John R. *Intentionality: An Essay in the Philosophy of Mind.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

------. *The Construction of Social Reality.* New York: The Free Press, 1995.

------. *Making the Social World.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Seeman, Axel, ed. *Joint Attention: New Developments in Psychology, Philosophy of Mind, and Social Neuroscience.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011.

Shinn, Millicent Washburn. *The Biography of a Baby.* Boston, MA and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1900.

Stern, Clara and William Stern. *Die Kindersprache: Eine psychologische und sprachtheoretische Untersuchung.* Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1965.

Taylor, Charles. "Theories of Meaning." In Idem, *Human Agency and Language: Philosophical Papers I*, 248–292. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

------. *The Language Animal: The Full Shape of the Human Linguistic Capacity.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016.

Tomasello, Michael. *Constructing a Language.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003.

------. *Origins of Human Communication.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008.

------. *Why We Cooperate.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009.

------, Malinda Carpenter, Joseph Call, Tanya Behne, and Henrike Moll. "Understanding and Sharing Intentions: The Origins of Cultural Cognition." *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 28 (2005): 675–735.

Trevarthen, Colwyn and Penelope Hubley. "Secondary Intersubjectivity: Confidence, Confiding and Acts of Meaning in the First Year." In *Action, Gesture and Symbol: The Emergence of Language,* edited by Andrew Lock, 183–229. London: Academic Press, 1978.

Werner, Heinz. "The Concept of Development from a Comparative and Organismic View." In *The Concept of Development,* edited by D. B. Harris, 125-148. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1957.

------ and Bernard Kaplan. *Symbol Formation.* New York: Wiley, 1963.

Young, Thomas. *A course of Lectures on Natural Philosophy and the Mechanical Arts.* London: Johnson, 1807. Accessed November 24. 2015.https://archive.org/stream/lecturescourseof02younrich#page/52/mode/2up.

Zuberbühler, Arnold K. "Female Putty-Nosed Monkeys Use Experimentally Altered Contextual Information to Disambiguate the Cause of Male Alarm Calls." *PLoS ONE* 8, no. 6 (2013). Accessed November 24, 2015. http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.006566.

Figures 1-6
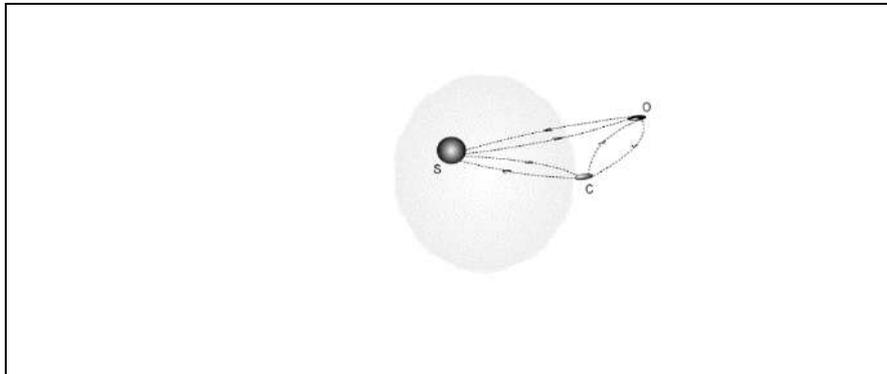
Fig. 1. The basis for the primordial sharing situation. The pale, large globe represents the state of the being-to-be-inducted into the process of first language acquisition prior to differentiation. The pattern of relationships illustrates Werner and Kaplan's incipient differentiation between the three poles of a primordial sharing situation: the individual being inducted into symbolic competence, the caregiver, and an object of manipulation. S stands for the Subject who is inducted into referential competence. C is a caregiver and O an object, here interpreted to be physically manipulable, be it a toy or a key on a keyboard. Bi-directional arrows between S and C convey mutual interaction. Bidirectional arrows between S and O and C and O convey the assumption of constructivism, according to which objects are constituted in manipulations rather than pregiven.
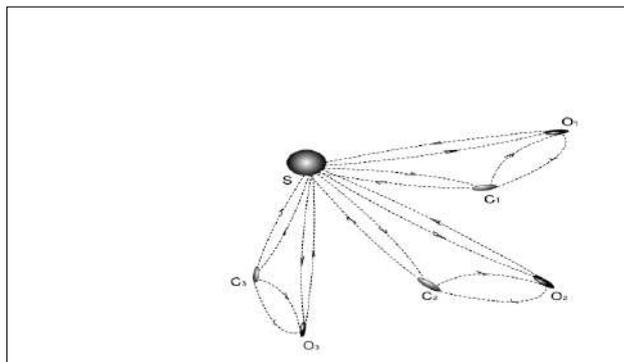
Fig. 2. Illustration of the beginnings of differentiation. Interactions for the primordial sharing situation and the gestural complex are pictured for multiple caregivers and objects. For simplicity, only three different caregivers are illustrated, each interacting with the subject with three different objects. A more realistic illustration would represent all combinations of the subject interacting with n caregivers and k objects, for any positive whole numbers n and k.
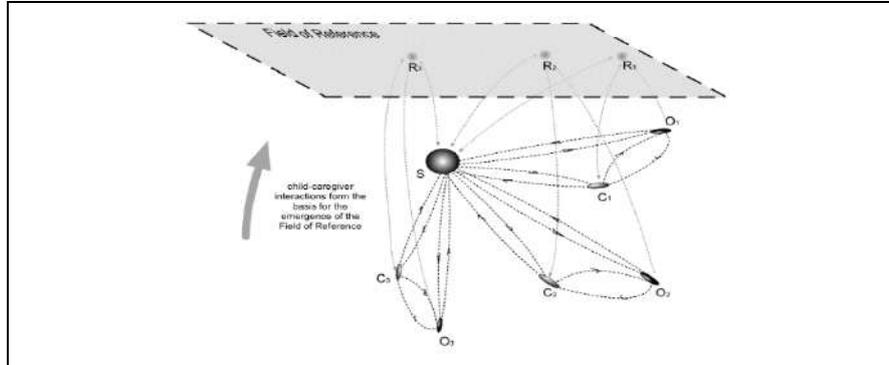
Fig. 3. Illustration of the virtuality of incipient reference or symbolization. The large arrow pointing upward conveys the first inklings that things have a virtual dimension, which arises from structured interaction, but is not reducible to it. Currently, the minimum number of virtual referents required for symbolic competence is not known. It is surely more than the three illustrated in the diagram and may be as low as one dozen. Objects O_k may include events, persons, or more complex multi-instantiated events. The dotted gray plane entitled "Field of Reference" conveys that the realization of a distinct dimension of shared experience that is not physically manipulable is now available to the Subject and that this binds her to Caregivers in a new way. The Field of Reference is intended to convey the notion of what is "in the open" or public.
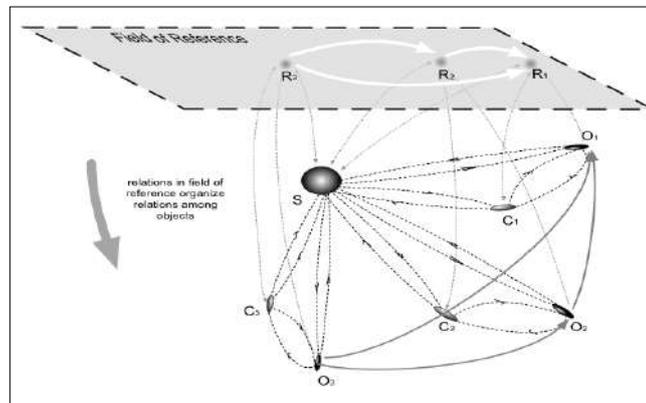
Fig. 4. Illustration of the constitution of referential relations. The dotted gray plane entitled "Field of Reference" demonstrates a virtual organization that is public. Virtual, public relations begin to organize relations among objects, understood in a wide sense. This is conveyed by the large arrow at the left, which points from the Field of Reference to the set of manipulable objects.
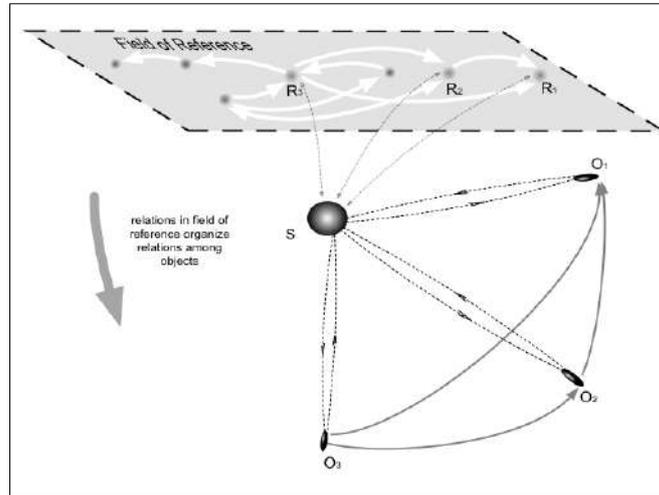
Fig. 5. Illustration of the idea of a Field of Reference, constituents of which are not reducible to one-to-one correspondences with manipulable objects. The relations among items in the Field of Reference gain in complexity. The Field of Reference is not tied to the physical interaction with specific care-givers but is extendable to new interacting agents. The notion of a Field of Reference convey the public character of reference or symbolization. It is intended to illustrate the idea that the mark of symbolization is that it conveys the possible and what is not the case. In that sense, it "exceeds" the signaling function that manipulable objects may otherwise exercise.
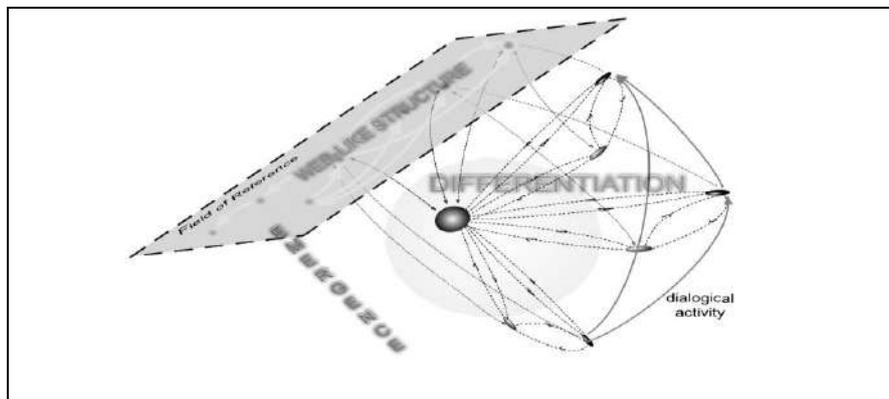
Fig. 6. Summary of the proto-systems approach to symbolization or true reference. The basis for referential take-off is the primordial sharing situation and the gestural complex, in which an infant exchanges objects with caregivers. The interaction is responsorial or dialogical and involves the expenditure of work. The process of differentiation includes everything that is included in the box. The large, pale globe represents the state of the being-to-be-inducted into the process of first language learning prior to its achievement. The Field

of Reference is what emerges in the interaction between inductee, caregivers, and objects that are being manipulated. Its elements are constituted by the interaction among referentially competent individuals and first language learners. Relations among referents in the Field of Reference, a virtual realm, have a web-like structure. The constitution of the Field of Reference is set off by practices of showing and exchanging physical objects but is not reducible to them.

5

Reciprocity and Human Symbiosis

QIU Renfu

Reciprocity is not only a basic attribute in the process of human social interaction but also the most basic mode and the most important relationship mechanism based on the development from "atomic person" to "social person." In the era of globalization, grasping the concept and form of reciprocity is of extraordinary significance for exploring the mutual progress of human civilization and the richness and diversity of the human world and expanding the social characteristics of human beings.

How to Understand Reciprocity?

There is no consensus on how to understand reciprocity. The understanding of reciprocity may be divided into the following levels:

First, reciprocity means mutual benefit. In this view, scholars believe that the mutual benefit of reciprocity is the mutual activity for promoting interests: "Citizens' life is essentially a matter of reciprocity. For cooperation, friendship, contract, agreement, family, love, and even conflict, although they are in different relationships, they share a common feature – reciprocity, so that there are various forms of reciprocity."[1] Because reciprocity is mainly "a reciprocal concept, a tendency of returning good for good,"[2] the exchange of interests between subjects is promoted through reciprocity in order to facilitate subjects' satisfaction in the process of interest interchange so as to realize the pursuit of benefit maximization between each other.

Second, reciprocity is something between justice and mutual benefits. J. Rawls argues that "the idea of reciprocity is between the idea of fairness and the idea of mutual benefit. The idea of fairness is altruistic (driven by universal goodness), while the idea of mutual benefit is understood as everyone can benefit in comparison with people's current or expected actual circumstances."[3] The concept of reciprocity lies between the concept of impartiality and that of mutual benefit. While the former is altruistic (driven by overall interests), the latter refers to everyone benefiting from the present or anticipated future situation in comparison with current conditions.[4] These two def-

---

[1] Luigino Bruni, *Reciprocity, Altruism and the Civil Society in Praise of Heterogeneity* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008).

[2] John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Beijing: China Social Sciences Publishing House, 2005), 497.

[3] John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (Nanjing: Yilin Publishing House, 2000), 51–52.

[4] John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 16–17.

initions are essentially consistent in the idea that reciprocity is between altruism and mutual benefit, which provides ideations and expectations of everyone's interests. This is "soft-core altruism." Whether it is beneficial mutuality or impartial reciprocity, the emphasis is on the reciprocity of interests, which pertains to complementary and win-win reciprocity.

Third, reciprocity is a symbiotic mechanism. Here symbiosis means interdependence, mutual complementation, and mutual promotion between subjects. In general, symbiosis can be distinguished as a mutual and unilateral benefit. "Mutual beneficial symbiosis (mutualism) means benefiting each other, while unilateral benefit symbiosis (commensalism) refers to that one party gets benefit while the other party neither gets benefit nor suffers injury."[5] The former emphasizes mutual benefit and promotion, while the latter emphasizes that one party pays out with no profit, and the other party gets profit without cost. It is difficult for unilateral benefit symbiosis to promote a virtuous circle; even the conditions and basis for symbiosis could be lost. Hermann Baumann argues that "the ethnic symbiosis is peaceful symbiosis of two national communities of different cultural types with no mutual offending based on the traditional exchange of the different life necessities." Moreover, "In symbiosis, in the case of significant cultural differences between several kinds of inhabitants that are close to each other or live together, the relationship lies in which one is 'master' or 'protege', and the subtle differences are ever-changing, and finally it develops into mixing or barrier layer type."[6] In fact, the "master" or "protege" symbiosis, i.e., subject and object symbiosis, is based on cultural differences between different ethnic groups, as well as the pattern generated by the interrelations between dominant civilization and other civilizations, such as the difference between the agricultural civilization and the non-farming civilization (for example, grassland civilization). It can be seen from Chinese history that the agricultural civilization always has had a certain advantage (for example, cultural advantage). This can provide an insight into why ancient China could form the Confucian civilization in East Asia between suzerain and subordinate countries, although they were essentially in a mutually beneficial symbiotic relationship.

Levels of Mutuality and Human Symbiosis

Mutuality shows different levels of human civilization in different historical periods, and human civilization is the process of reciprocity moving from the low level to the high level. As an important mechanism of human symbiosis, reciprocity has multiple levels, such as interdependency, mutual

---

[5] Tan Ankui, "Mutual Benefit or Reciprocity: Ability Defects and the Premise of Rawls's Contract Commitment," *Morality and Civilization* 3 (2013): 134.

[6] Weiguan Zhouer, *Ideal of Symbiosis: Modern Communication and Symbiosis, Common Ideal,* trans. Bian Chongdao (Beijing: Compilation and Translation Bureau of the CPC, 1996), 76.

benefit, and sharing and mutual achievement, which gradually form a hyper-cycle process of spiral escalation. In this process, reciprocity shows its important mechanism in human symbiosis.

Interdependence Level. Interdependence is an important mechanism for the growth of all things on earth. The most basic level of reciprocity is the interdependence between things (including human beings). Interdependence mainly refers to the fact that only by correlative dependence can things coexist. There are two basic conditions between two interdependent things: the first one is the inter-promoting symbiotic relationship, which can be excavated from the thoughts expressed in Chinese traditional culture. For example, the five elements, metal, wood, water, fire, and earth, build a kind of inter-promoting symbiotic relationship, the most significant feature of which is the complementary symbiotic relation. Complementary symbiosis mainly refers to the interrelation of mutual complementation, interaction, and mutual exchange of needed products, in which everyone is not only a means for others but also has their own purposes. Therefore, everyone is indispensable. Symbiotic relationship means that everything constitutes the basic requirement for another, and the existence of one thing requires the existence of another thing as indispensable, and vice versa. Interpromoting symbiotic relationships is particularly reflected in being an object for each other, complementing each other, and being indivisible so as to form a relationship of interdependence.

The second is the inter-restriction symbiotic relationship. In traditional Chinese culture, inter-restriction symbiosis is also an important mutual relationship. For instance, the five elements (metal, wood, water, fire, earth) build an inter-restriction symbiotic relationship. The most significant feature of the inter-restriction symbiosis relationship lies in confrontation and mutual digestion. The reciprocal mechanism of antagonistic symbiosis lies in inter-restriction symbiosis, which refers to mutual antagonism (hostile state) between things, but they are interdependent and indispensable as well. Inter-restriction symbiosis is better reflected in antagonistic symbiosis as one of important mechanisms of reciprocity.

Mutual Benefit Level. Mutual benefit is an important level of reciprocity. Interdependence is the most basic level of reciprocity between things, and a relationship outcome is constituted through interdependence and correlative dependence to maintain mutual survival. Mutual benefit is a higher level of reciprocity, which is based on the level of interdependence and refers to mutual cooperation, mutual promotion, and mutual help in order to make up for what the other lacks. It makes people transition from a state of survival toward development. "They insist that mutual benefit should be advocated in this

world to enable everyone benefit together with others."[7] Mutual benefit is particularly reflected in human, competitive symbiosis.

Competitive symbiosis is a higher level of symbiosis that develops on the basis of complementary symbiosis. However, competitive symbiosis implies an important reciprocal mechanism, i.e., mutual benefit. In other words, the core of competitive symbiosis lies in cooperation between things, for cooperation is full of competition, and new cooperation is generated from competition, which is a reciprocal relation. Loss of mutual benefit leads to loss of cooperation, and then the benign competitive relation comes to a deadlock, while a vicious competitive relation continuously swallows the cooperative relation between things and finally leads to unidirectional symbiotic relations. Therefore, mutual benefit is an important mechanism of competitive symbiosis, and only the grasp of competitive symbiosis from the perspective of mutual benefit can really lead to a benign cycle system.

Mutual benefit is a "social bond." Citizens' lives are reciprocal by nature. The common characteristic of cooperation, friendship, contract, family, love, and even conflict is reciprocity. Mutual benefit is its mechanism. It gives and offers, persists, and returns, i.e., it forms a reciprocal structure.[8] Mutual benefit is widely used in various fields, and it produces reciprocal results in interactions, giving, and feedback. Principles of reciprocity include that "people reward for good behavior and punish for bad behavior, and people's assessment on the degree of good faith not only involves the results that the behavior brings about, but also refers to the motives implied in the behavior."[9] Falk and Fischbacher hold that mutual benefit includes two aspects. The first one is to reward good behaviors and kind actions. This reciprocal relationship is a mutually beneficial relationship between things. The second one is to take disciplinary action against evil behavior, that is, punish bad behaviors, which is another type of mutual benefit. In general, when discussing mutual benefit, we mainly refer to mutually beneficial interactive activities, including complementary symbiosis and obtaining benefits from each other. We rarely understand reciprocity from a negative perspective, but punishment is feedback to alienation in the reciprocal process. Indeed, punishment is not so much mutually beneficial reciprocity; but rather a mutuality in the cause and effect chain. It can be seen from the point of view of causality that this kind of reciprocity shows punishment for evil behaviors.

Sharing Level. Sharing is an important mechanism of human interaction and a significant feature of human civilization. The diversity and richness of human civilization not only create a splendid human world and embody the

---

[7] Zhucun Zhuoer, *History and Culture of Yao Nationality: Social Anthropology Research on the Nationalities in Mountainous Regions of South China and Southeast Asia*, trans. Jin Shaoping (Beijing: Nationalities Publishing House, 2003), 52.

[8] Luigino Bruni, *Reciprocity, Altruism and the Civil Society in Praise of Heterogeneity* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008).

[9] Armin Falk and Urs Fischbacher, "A Theory of Reciprocity," *Games and Economic Behavior* 54, no. 2 (February 2006): 293–315.

unique characteristics of multiple human nationalities but also reflect the civilizational achievements shared by human beings. In fact, mutual absorption, cooperation, and sharing of cultural resources cannot be ignored, despite various conflicts among civilizations.

Fei Xiaotong criticized and questioned Huntington's "clash of civilizations" theory. From a cultural point of view, Fei Xiaotong not only saw the side of the clash of civilizations but also noticed the side of cooperation and sharing. His idea of cultural fields spreading from different centers overlapping in the same space reflects the concept of mutual cultural sharing. Fei explained the interrelationship of cultures with the concept of "field" and clarified that sharing is indispensable in the concept of intercultural mutuality. Although human civilization has various forms in different historical periods, such as cooperation, competition, confrontation, and conflict, what is hidden inside is exactly the logic of sharing.

Sharing is an important mechanism of mutual human activities. Human society moves from cooperation (huddling together for warmth) to competition and confrontation and then develops from confrontation to cooperation, all of which provide the basis for human sharing. The development of human civilization is shown in these kinds of rich mutuality, and only by facing up to the value of sharing can we add strength to the future development of human civilization. Sharing is a significant stage of human symbiosis and an important step for a country to achieve worldwide cooperation and win-win situations. This is why the Chinese central government recently has clearly put forward the concept of "sharing" development, showing global values and strategic visions with worldwide significance and value.

Mutual Achievement Level. Mutual achievement is a high level of reciprocity, a higher level of interrelation between subjects on the basis of mutual benefit, complementarity, and sharing. Based on sharing, it realizes the goals in the process of mutual benefit and mutual promotion and facilitates each subject to achieve their purposes. However, is mutual achievement related to the problem of subjectivity? That is to say, the question is whether mutual achievement involves the issue of who makes the other succeed and who is the dominant one, and whether there is a dominant subject and a dominated subject. How to grasp the issue of subjectivity in reciprocity is directly related to bringing about mutual achievements. Thus, mutual achievements can be divided into the following aspects:

While one attains achievement, one leads to others' success. Many famous sayings embody this idea in ancient China: "when a man gets to the top, all his friends and relatives get there with him," "since ancient times, if one is blessed, everyone in the house is blessed." These reflect that a person can lead to others' accomplishment in the process of his or her pursuit of his or her own achievements. When a person realizes his or her dream, he or she promotes the realization of others as well; when a person changes his or her destiny, he or she pushes others to change their fate. This reciprocity is unidirectional to a certain extent.

A person succeeds by enabling others to attain accomplishments in mutual activity, or one can finally succeed only by making others succeed. Kant held that a person is not only means but also purpose and one can achieve one's own purposes only through becoming others' means. This is a kind of more rational reciprocity activity, which is conveyed by the saying, "the fragrance always stays in the hand that gives the rose." These are mutual achievements by means of mutual promotion and interaction. In this process, the most important is that all protagonists are integrated with each other rather than discussing who occupies the leading position and who makes the other succeed. They not only reflect a high level of interdependence but also embody the meaning of mutual achievement. For mutual achievement, it is important to have mutual promotion, mutual support, mutual benefit, and symbiotic development. Mutual achievement contains not only mutual dependence but also mutual benefit and complementation.

In short, human society develops from a low level to a high level, which reflects the spiral escalation of human interaction. In this process, at a higher level of social interaction, the level of human social development can be improved continuously in the social production mode and with respect to the mutual relationships between social subjects. Only by constantly grasping the level of reciprocity can we better understand the symbiosis of human beings and further deepen our comprehension of the human community.

Two Perspectives for Understanding Mutuality and Community of Human Destiny

The level of reciprocity is an important foundation for understanding the forms of human symbiosis. No matter whether it is interdependence, mutual benefit, sharing for development, or mutual achievements, fundamentally, all of them involve two important perspectives:

Firstly, in the magnetic field, it is not difficult to find that the magnet origin as the center expands outward in its wave mode. This makes the interaction either "strong" or "weak." The closer the objects are to the center, i.e., the magnet origin, the stronger their interrelationships (mutual absorption or repulsion) are. This is "strong interrelation." The farther the objects are from the magnet's center, the weaker their interrelationships are. This is "weak interrelationship." Whether reciprocity is strong or weak, it lies in the strength of the magnetic field and the distance to the center. This center is the intersection of interests, the information sharing unit, and the connection point of mutual achievements between subjects. Whether reciprocity is strong or weak, it is related to the relationship of interest between subjects. Both interdependency and mutually beneficial reciprocity need the intersection of interests to arouse participation in a mutual activity. This intersection is the bridge between subjects regardless of survival needs or interests. The stronger the demand of subjects for intersection is, the stronger the interrelation built by the subjects is, or vice versa.

Currently, human symbiosis has entered an unprecedented complex state, and the trend of the human community has also raised people's concerns. People not only pay more attention to the future and destiny of a nation but also to the future and destiny of humankind as a whole. The concern about the fate of the human community, fundamentally speaking, lies in understanding human symbiosis based on mutual mechanisms to form a modern community favorable to the development of human civilization. The modern anxiety of humankind has not been eliminated; rather, it is becoming more severe in the face of regional conflicts, power disputes, and territorial disputes. It is necessary to re-examine human symbiosis and find the reciprocity mechanism that can help solve tensions among human beings and between countries. It is important to realize the real solution to the above contradictions in the struggle between existence and essence, objectification and self-confirmation, freedom and inevitability, the individual and the class.[10]

Second, the Tai Chi schema as a Chinese traditional culture contains the rich concept of yin and yang, which has important wisdom for grasping reciprocity. Yin and yang are an important category of Chinese philosophy. Yin, yang, and the five elements (metal, wood, water, fire, and earth) converge to form a unique cosmology that interprets the world. The Ancient Chinese used yin and yang as important concepts to understand the outside world and interpret the external universe, in which things were categorized into yin and yang. Such sayings as "all things are both yin and yang" ("Lao Zi"), "Dao contains one Yin and one Yang" ("Commentaries"), "The change of yin and yang is the fundamental principle of the universe, the four seasons are general rules of yin and yang,"[11] reveal the mode of thinking and dialectical wisdom of the Ancient Chinese. Although the theory of yin and yang is a mixture of science and divination from ancient times, it has a profound and lasting influence on Chinese society. Feng Youlan once commented that: "it can be seen from the history of ancient Chinese scientific development that the idea of yin, yang and the five elements (metal, wood, water, fire and earth) have contributed to the development of ancient astronomy, medical science and chemistry. Ancient scientists either regarded yin, yang and the five elements as the material elements with different nature to describe the composition of substance or they used the interaction of yin and yang to explain the interrelationship between substance phenomena" (12: 631).[12] The Ancient Chinese explained the interrelationship between substance, phenomena, and the mutual effects between yin, yang, and the five elements. Yin, yang, and the five elements (metal, wood, water, fire, and earth) contain such meanings as opposition, interdependence, waning and waxing, and transformation, which disclose the mechanism of reciprocity. In the traditional thinking mode, the theory of yin and yang is about a mixed concept of materiality and witchcraft.

---

[10] Karl Marx, *1844 Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2000), 81.

[11] Feng Youlan, *New Chinese Philosophy History (Volume 1)* (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2001), 624.

[12] Ibid., 631.

However, the reciprocity of yin and yang from the perspective of wave-particle dualism can be better understood as the emblem of quantum mechanics, the Tai Chi pattern appearing in Niels Bohr's coat of arms. If we understand wave-particle dualism from the mixture of science and witchcraft, the significant insight for us is that the Tai Chi schema has a richer connotation for understanding reciprocity. Understanding reciprocity from the point of "opposition, interdependence, growth and decline, and transformation" is of great significance for further enriching the ideals and practices of human symbiosis. The multipolar forms of human symbiosis imply people's value propositions for reconciling conflicts.

In the era of human symbiosis, it is better to use reciprocity to face confrontation, antagonism and conflicts between countries, nations, regions and religions. In terms of disputes about interests, the mechanism of reciprocity from the Tai Chi schema can help find the solution to reconciliation in the process of globalization. Accordingly, a possible space is provided to unveil the human community's destiny further. Only by continuously and clearly seeing the mechanism of reciprocity in human symbiosis can we exhibit the common values of humankind to facilitate constant mutual achievements in the progress of future human civilization and promote humankind to move toward a higher level of civilization.

Bibliography

Bruni, Luigino. *Reciprocity, Altruism and the Civil Society in Praise of Heterogeneity*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2008.

Falk, Armin and Urs Fischbacher. "A Theory of Reciprocity." *Games and Economic Behavior* 54, no. 2 (February 2006): 293248–292315.

Fei Xiaotong. *Collected Works of Fei Xiaotong*. Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 2005.

Feng Youlan. *New Chinese Philosophy History (Volume 1)*. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2001.

Marx, Karl. *1844 Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2000.

Rawls, John. *A Theory of Justice*. Beijing: China Social Sciences Publishing House, 2005.

------. *Political Liberalism*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996; Nanjing: Yilin Publishing House, 2000.

Tan Ankui. "Mutual Benefit or Reciprocity: Ability Defects and the Premise of Rawls's Contract Commitment." *Morality and Civilization* 3 (2013).

Weiguan Zhouer. *Ideal of Symbiosis: Modern Communication and Symbiosis, Common Ideal*. Translated by Bian Chongdao. Beijing: Compilation and Translation Bureau of the CPC, 1996.

ZhucunZhuoer. *History and Culture of Yao Nationality: Social Anthropology Research on the Nationalities in Mountainous Regions of South China and Southeast Asia*. Translated by Jin Shaoping. Beijing: Nationalities Publishing House, 2003.

6

Reciprocity in Friendship: The Dialogical Transformation of Friendship[1]

Andrew Tsz Wan HUNG

Introduction

In the philosophical discussion of friendship, many scholars follow Aristotle's taxonomy of friendship, namely, utility, pleasure, and virtue friendships. The distinction seems to show different reasons we have for making friends. However, if the idea of friendship essentially involves caring for our friends for their own sake, as Aristotle states, it is obviously in tension with two other types of friendship, which are made because of the acquisition of utility and pleasure. This also leads to the debate among scholars whether there is an altruistic attitude in the friendship of usefulness and pleasure; and whether these two types of friendship are true friendships. While virtue friendship is considered perfect friendship, the status of utility and pleasure friendships seems to be really questionable.

Nevertheless, in our ordinary experience, friendship is usually, even if not always, initiated by certain common interests of utility or entertainment and then transformed later into virtue friendship through continuous dialogues and associations among friends. It seems that utility and pleasure friendship and virtue friendship are interactive rather than divided. This paper attempts to explore the process of transformation of friendships. Although I will start with discussing Aristotle's friendship, my primary concern is not to defend Aristotle's view as such or to provide a substantial interpretation of his text. Rather, I use his theory in the service of my own ends because Aristotle has provided a good conceptual framework for me to investigate the transformation process of friendships. The dialogical concept of the self by Charles Taylor and Mikhail Bakhtin also helps give an account of the transformation of relationships. It shows that our dialogues with friends could establish a rapport among us, and our understanding of the self is also reciprocally transformed into a kind of connected selves, through which we experience a process of mutual virtuous constitution. The exploration of the dialogical transformation of friendships not only provides grounds to affirm the intrinsic value of friendship but also reaffirms the value of usefulness and pleasure friendships, which usually act as a starting point of friendship development toward virtuous friendship in the real world.

Aristotle's Three Concepts of Friendship and Goodwill

Aristotle, in his *Nicomachean Ethics*,[2] states three goals that are lovable for human beings: the good, the pleasant, and the useful.[3] Correspondingly, he distinguishes friendship into three types: friendship for usefulness, friendship for pleasure, and friendship for virtue. The first two types are only accidental in nature because those who love others for the usefulness or pleasure they provide are not concerned with their virtuous character. They love only for the sake of utility or pleasure for themselves. These two kinds of friendship are easily dissolved, for if friends do not remain useful or pleasant, people will cease to be friends.[4] The last type is the perfect and genuine kind of friendship because it is formed by good persons of similar virtuous character and is based on the mutual appreciation of virtuous character. They are good in themselves and wish well to their friends for their own sake.[5]

Aristotle characterizes the structure of friendship as a relationship that involves symmetry, reciprocity, and mirroring.[6] A friendship is a relationship in which persons have goodwill (*eunoia*) toward each other, wish good things for each other, and have reciprocity of sentiment.[7] Aristotle further raises the notion of a friend as "another self," which demands to relate oneself to the other in affection and well-wishing, as one does to oneself.[8]

John Cooper, however, in his article "Aristotle on the Forms of Friendship," raises a question, which has been continuously discussed, against Aristotle's theory of friendship. He questions whether an altruistic regard toward others can only be found in a friendship of virtue formed by a virtuous person, while friendships of usefulness and pleasure are wholly egocentric, motivated by vulgar self-love. As Aristotle admits that such perfect friendships and virtuous persons are rare, he seems to hold "an extremely harsh view of the psychological capabilities of almost everyone" and to assert that nearly all human friendships are expressions of self-centeredness.[9]

Aristotle asserts that goodwill, or altruistic attitude, functions as a starting point of friendship,[10] for it lasts some time and ripens into intimacy and then forms friendship. Thus, people cannot be friends without previous goodwill. This assertion may lead to another question: are friendships of usefulness and pleasure really friendship?

---

[2] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans., intro., notes and glossary Terence Irwin (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 1999); hereafter *NE*.

[3] *NE*, VIII.2 1156b18-20.

[4] *NE*, VIII.3 1156a20.

[5] *NE*, VIII.3 1156b7-11.

[6] Michael Pakaluk, "Friendship," in *A Companion to Aristotle*, ed. Georgios Anagnostopoulos (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 472.

[7] *NE*, VIII.2 1156a3–8.

[8] *NE*, IX.4 1166a29–33.

[9] John Cooper, "Aristotle on the Forms of Friendship," *Review of Metaphysics* 30, no. 4 (1977): 626.

[10] *NE*, IX.5 1167a4.

Cooper tries to answer this question for Aristotle; his answer has been much debated among scholars. According to Cooper, Aristotle assumes that friends have goodwill toward others in all three kinds of friendships. In order to enable utility and pleasure friendships to meet Aristotle's definition of friendship, Cooper attributes to Aristotle a controversial claim about human nature. Cooper argues that friends in all three kinds in Aristotle's theory of friendship show a real, impartial well-wishing toward each other. While goodwill toward each other is unconditional in perfect friendship, it is subject to certain conditions in friendships of usefulness or pleasure. The condition of goodwill is that the friendship remains of a general utility or is entertaining to them. This means that one would promote the good of one's friend in an impartial way so long as the friendship remains useful or pleasurable to him/her over time. If one's friend is no longer useful or pleasurable, one ceases to wish any good to him/her. Cooper argues that Aristotle's friendships of usefulness and pleasure are "a complex and subtle mixture of self-seeking and unself-interested well-wishing and well-doing."[11] It is unself-interested or altruistic because it contains the same impartial goodwill toward each other, but it is also self-seeking because the goodwill is manifested only in certain self-interested conditions.

The strength of Cooper's argument is that he attempts to be consistent with Aristotle's application of the term "friendship" in three kinds of relationships, rather than rejecting utility and pleasure friendships as false ones. However, Cooper's solution leads to several criticisms. Michael Pakaluk criticizes Cooper for misinterpreting Aristotle's understanding of reciprocity. According to Pakaluk, the nature of true reciprocity for Aristotle is to respond properly to one's friend, to wish well to each other in the aspect of one's desire. This implies that the "subtle mixture of self-seeking and unself-interested well-wishing" is not genuine and is inconsistent with Aristotle's understanding of reciprocity. The kind of well-wishing is not the same among different kinds of friendship.[12] Altruistic regard and true reciprocity only remain in friendships of virtue, while friendships of usefulness and pleasure are totally based on self-interest. However, as no human being is perfectly virtuous, is perfect friendship with total altruistic regard possible in reality?

Howard J. Curzer makes a similar criticism. He criticizes Cooper for putting his own words into Aristotle's mouth. Aristotle never said that friends in friendship relations for usefulness and pleasure tend to wish each other well for each other's sake, nor did he say anything about the condition of well-wishing. Curzer argues that Aristotle clearly states that utility or pleasure friends love one another for the sake of utility or pleasure, and they do not love each other for themselves.[13] That is, they do not love each other for appreciating one another's virtuous character. They cannot have genuine well-wishing toward others; they wish their friends well only instrumentally

---

[11] John Cooper, "Aristotle on the Forms of Friendship," 626.

[12] Pakaluk, "Friendship," 476.

[13] *NE*, VIII.3 1156a11–16.

as a means of gaining pleasure or utility, rather than based on the appreciation of each other's virtuous character. Thus, Curzer explicitly concludes, "pleasure and utility friendships do not meet Aristotle's definition of friendship, so they are not friendship."[14]

In my opinion, Curzer's answer seems to mix "love each other for appreciating others' virtuous character" with "genuine well-wishing toward others." These two can indeed be separated. That I love my friend not because of his virtuous character does not mean I cannot wish my friend well for my friend's own sake. Curzer's interpretation seems not only uncharitable to Aristotle's own use of the term "friendship" in describing all these three kinds of relationship (usefulness, pleasure, and virtue friendship) but also inconsistent with our ordinary experience of friendship. Generally, one wishes others well for their own sake if such well-wishing does not conflict with one's well-being. This is a kind of self-realization of social nature. Richard Kraut agrees that a friendship of usefulness and pleasure is also friendship because the essential nature of friendship is that "each person benefits the other for the sake of other."[15] Since the perfect friendship also produces utilities and pleasures for each other, there is a ground for keeping the common usage and for calling any relationship formed for the sake of either one of these goods a friendship. As Kraut states, "Friendships based on advantage alone or pleasure alone deserve to be called friendships because in full-fledged friendships these two properties, advantage and pleasure, are present."[16]

In my view, a paradoxical problem of utility and pleasure friendships remains in Cooper's assessment. On the one hand, it is odd for Cooper to assert that I should have goodwill toward my friend for his/her own sake, just because my friend is useful to me or gives me pleasure. It is quite right to consider that such friendship is still inherently reciprocal. This means that two individuals who are friends would be both useful or entertaining to one another. However, the ultimate motivation of friendships in these conditions is still very egocentric and instrumental. It seems to imply that the reason I have sincere goodwill toward my friend is just that he or she still has instrumental value to me, and I wish him/her to continue his/her provision of utility or entertainment to me. Once my friend ceases to perform such a function for me, or I can find someone else who can perform similar functions for my benefit, my friend can then be replaced; I have no more reason to have goodwill toward him or her. This leads to the question of whether this is mutual goodwill or whether such goodwill is fundamentally an expression of self-love. On the other hand, if we can have genuine well-wishing toward our friends without considering the acquisition of utility or pleasure, are such friendships still called utility and pleasure friendships?

---

[14] Howard J. Curzer, *Aristotle and the Virtues* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 265.

[15] Richard Kraut, "Aristotle's Ethics," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta (Winter 2012 Edition), accessed June 30, 2013, http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2012/entries/aristotle-ethics/.

[16] Ibid.

I will try to reformulate the above discussion into two questions below. First, in friendship for usefulness and pleasure, is a human being totally self-centered without any altruistic regard toward friends, as Curzer states? If not, then second, what motivates us to be altruistic toward others in friendship for usefulness and pleasure? Are we motivated by the self-interested conditions of utility or pleasure, as Cooper says? How should we distinguish our altruism toward our friends from altruism toward our fellow citizens? Regarding the first question, that of being self-centered, Aristotle seems to claim that utility and pleasure friendship cannot produce goodwill, which is supportive of Curzer's argument.[17] For Aristotle, goodwill can only arise from the appreciation of others' virtuous character.[18] However, as Pakaluk argues on the ground of construing human beings as social animals, the idea that a human being is totally self-centered is not quite possible for Aristotle. Our social nature naturally makes us friendly to others.[19]

If there can be genuine goodwill toward others in utility and pleasure friendship, then what motivates us to have an altruistic regard toward others? According to Richard Kraut, the answer cannot be "that one needs to give in order to receive; that would turn active love for one's friend into a mere means to the benefits received."[20] For Kraut, Aristotle's answer is in IX.11 with the notion of a friend as "another self," that someone "with whom one has a relationship very similar to the relationship one has with oneself. A virtuous person loves the recognition of himself as virtuous; to have a close friend is to possess yet another person, besides oneself, whose virtue one can recognize at extremely close quarters; and so, it must be desirable to have someone very much like oneself whose virtuous activity one can perceive."[21]

However, Kraut thinks that this argument is unconvincing because "it does not explain why the perception of virtuous activity in fellow citizens would not be an adequate substitute for the perception of virtue in one's friends."[22] In other words, if our altruistic attitude is simply motivated by the appreciation of others' virtuous character, as Aristotle states, it cannot distinguish the relation to our virtuous fellow-citizens from that to our virtuous friends. Such a friendship is too impersonal; it fails to grasp the friendship as intrinsically valuable. As Brink states, "Unless our account of love and friendship attaches intrinsic significance to the historical relationship between friends, it seems unable to justify concern for the friend qua friend."[23] By the same token, I do not deny that one's social nature and virtuous char-

---

[17] *NE*, IX.5 1167a14-15.
[18] *NE*, IX.5 1167a20.
[19] Pakaluk, "Friendship," 477.
[20] Kraut, "Aristotle's Ethics."
[21] Ibid.
[22] Ibid.
[23] David O. Brink, "Eudaimonism, Love and Friendship, and Political Community," *Social Philosophy & Policy* 16, no. 1 (1999): 270.

acter play a role in our altruistic attitude; but simply appealing to one's character and social nature cannot explain the difference between altruism toward our friends and altruism toward our fellow citizens.

The problem of the origin of an altruistic regard toward friends leads to another problem in Aristotle's theory, or scholars' interpretations (such as Curzer's) of it. Aristotle gives a false dichotomous picture of "self-regarded friendship of usefulness or pleasure" and "altruistic-regarded friendship of virtue." It is true that Aristotle does allow mixtures of different kinds of friendship. However, what is missing in the discussion is that the friendship of usefulness or pleasure could probably be transformed into a friendship of virtue.[24] Or, we may say, Aristotle does not discuss much how the friendship of usefulness or pleasure could probably be transformed into the friendship of virtue. His main concern is the relationship between friendship and the human good rather than to answer how to develop an intimate friendship. He has already offered an important theoretical framework for understanding friendship and morality. The discussion of friendship transformation is important because such a transformation of a relationship is common in our daily life; it helps us re-evaluate the value of utility and pleasure friendships.

Aristotle's friendship of virtue seems to give us a picture of making friends: two individuals meet, probably as contestants, and recognize one another's virtuous character. Then they spend time together in activities that exercise virtues, and finally, their friendship of virtue is formed.[25] Such a picture seems to be distant from our daily experience of making friends. Usually, we can easily identify who would be useful to us when we need help. We can also straightforwardly know whether someone is funny or entertaining. Identifying utility or pleasure is different from identifying character. We seldom identify someone's character just in a few gatherings. To know that someone is a virtuous person usually takes spending time in a relationship that is usually initiated by certain common interests, utility, or entertainment, rather than mutual appreciation of one another's character. Although this kind of friendship is fragile, it functions as the starting point of a long-term relationship. This means that friendships of usefulness and pleasure can be transformed into a more permanent friendship of virtue. How is the transformation of friendship possible?

Scholars usually assume that a friendship of usefulness and pleasure can evolve into a virtuous friendship, and that it takes time.[26] The detail of how the transformation takes place is still lacking. It is significant to explore it in order to enhance our understanding of friendship in general. In Aristotle's account, utility and pleasure friendships seem to be the deficient modes of

---

[24] In *NE*, VIII.4 (1157a11–14), Aristotle seems to assert that certain friendships of pleasure, not utility, may remain if both friends have similar characters and come to like each other's characters by habituation. However, Aristotle's account here is preliminary and vague.

[25] *NE*, IX.5 1167a20.

[26] Curzer, *Aristotle and the Virtues*, 265.

friendship. However, with the view of dialogical transformation, we may re-assess their value to see that, although they are inferior modes of friendship to the virtuous one, they still contain certain values because they may be finally transformed into virtue friendships. The relation between utility and pleasure friendships and virtue friendship is a kind of continuum in our daily life. And I will also argue that our goodwill toward friends and the sense of a friend as another self are usually, even if not always, initiated by the culmination of the connection of subjectivity and reciprocity through dialogues, gatherings, and cooperation, rather than a mutual appreciation of virtuous character. This view of the origin of goodwill explains the possibility of transformation of utility and pleasure friendships to virtue friendship. It also affirms the intrinsic value of friendship by way of showing that friendship is not only an instrument to achieve certain aims but also constitutive of our virtuous characters and the self. These make friendship so distinctive that it is different from our relationship with other fellow citizens.

In order to explore the transformative nature of friendship, we have to grasp the social nature of human beings. In his *Politics,* Aristotle argues that we are political animals because we are endowed with the capacity of speech [*logos*].[27] Human speech is different from animal voice [*phōnē*], which merely indicates pleasure or pain. The power of speech is intended to communicate good and bad, just and unjust. It is through this speech capacity that human beings alone have a sense of morality. Together they establish a family and a polis. For Aristotle, human speech is an important constituent of human relationships. However, he undertakes no further investigation in this area. I will argue that the idea of dialogical self, proposed by Charles Taylor and Mikhail Bakhtin, can contribute to Aristotle's theory of friendship. The dialogical concept helps to explain the process of relationship development, to link Aristotle's idea of a friend as another self with his three concepts of friendship, and to clarify the formation of altruistic regards among friendships; it makes Aristotle's theory of friendship more applicable to our daily experience of making friends.

Argument of the Dialogical Self

Charles Taylor, in his article "The Dialogical Self," states that modern philosophy in the last two centuries has been dominated by a kind of disengaged, monological consciousness, which originated from the modern epistemological tradition in Descartes's and Locke's philosophy. This disengaged, monological consciousness makes us see ourselves as primarily a "subject of representations;" that is, we first form representations about the outside world and then depict our ends desired and feared. This subject is

---

[27] Aristotle, *Politics*, trans. and intr. C. D. C. Reeve (Indianapolis, IN: Hacket Publishing Company, 1998), I.2 1253a10.

monological because it assumes that we are in contact with others, the "outside" world, through representations we have "within."[28] The subject in this sense is, first of all, an "inner" space – a mind independent of body. In his refutation of the monological view of the self, Taylor argues that we are primarily engaged in practice as an agent who acts in the world. The main difference with this view is that the practice of understanding becomes the primary focus of the agent; the exercise of understanding is implicit in our activity. It exceeds the framing of representations, but it does not exclude it.[29]

This has two important implications for our epistemology. First, although we do not always frame representations, our understanding is always there. Second, the representations we formulate are only comprehensible against the background understanding. The background understanding we share interwoven with our practices and ways of relating is not mine but ours. It is something intensely shared, which binds a relation and a community. Our actions and conversations are constituted as such by a shared understanding among those who make up the common agent. They are dialogical in nature. And we understand ourselves and society through these social exchanges with others by using languages that are dialogical in nature.[30]

The idea of the dialogical self originated in the work of Mikhail Bakhtin, the early twentieth-century Russian literary theorist. He calls attention to the way that much of our experience and thought takes the form of dialogue with interlocutors.[31] His theory challenges the modern supremacy of the interiority of selfhood that excludes otherness from the active site of dialogue and definition of the self. According to Bakhtin, my self-understanding always begins with my name from others through their mouths with their intonation. I know myself through others by their words, forms, and tonalities, which shape my initial idea of myself.[32] As he states, "I am conscious of myself and become myself only while revealing myself for another, through another, and with the help of another. The most important acts constituting self-consciousness are determined by a relationship toward another consciousness (toward a thou)…The very being of man (both external and internal) is the deepest communion. To be means to communicate…To be means to be for

---

[28] Charles Taylor, *The Language Animal: The Full Shape of the Human Linguistic Capacity* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2016), 64; Charles Taylor, "The Dialogical Self," in *Rethinking Knowledge: Reflections Across the Disciplines*, eds. Robert F. Goodman and Walter R. Fisher (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1995), 59.

[29] Taylor, "The Dialogical Self," 61.

[30] Taylor here takes language in a broad sense, which includes art, gesture, and so on.

[31] Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogical Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. M. Holquist (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1981) and Idem, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, ed. C. Emerson (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).

[32] Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, xx.

another, and through the other for oneself."[33] We are manifested as communicative beings because we use language. Our consciousness can only arise and become a vivid life in the use of language.[34]

For Bakhtin, we have no internal sovereign territory. We are entirely and always on the borderline, looking into the eyes of another and looking inward with the eyes of another. "I cannot manage without another, I cannot become myself without another."[35] Therefore, selfhood is a joint production of dialogue on the border between the self and others. The dialogical self is one among numerous interdependent selves, involved in ongoing dialogues among interlocutors, whether they are real or imagined.[36] Our identity is constituted in dialogue. What gets internalized in the subject is not simply the response of others but the whole conversation with the inter-animation of voices.[37] The dialogical self shows not only the nature of the self as relational but also the indispensability of dialogue in relationship development and the interpenetration of the self and others in such a dialogical relationship. Through dialogue, we can initiate a relationship in which our boundaries are opened, and thus we are connected to each other and enter into a "mutual constitution relationship."

Dialogue, Friendship, and Mutual Constitution of Virtues

Based on the idea of a dialogical self, I argue that the development of friendship is through our ongoing dialogue with friends. According to Taylor, dialogue can create "the peculiarly human kind of rapport, of being together, that we are in conversation together."[38] Through language expression, not only do we have something into articulation, but we also place it in public space. This "brings us together *qua* participants in a common act of focusing."[39] For instance, at a friend's wedding party, we may talk to someone we have not met before. Usually, we start with certain greetings or rituals which establish a preliminary bonding, or we may say: "Oh! Today is really hot! It is not a good day for a wedding!" Others may smile, look at me, and respond, "Right! I think it is better to go swimming now." We may then laugh together. This can establish a rapport or "joint attention."[40] The conversation may be followed with, "Oh! Do you also like swimming? Which swimming pool do you usually go to?" or this may not happen if there is no common language.

---

[33] Ibid., 287.

[34] Julian Holloway and James Kneale, "Mikhail Bakhtin: Dialogics of Space," in *Thinking Space*, ed. Mike Crang and Nigel Thrift (London: Routledge, 2000), 75.

[35] Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 287.

[36] Jennifer de Peuter, "The Dialogics of Narrative Identity," in *Bakhtin and the Human Sciences: No Last Words*, ed. Michael Mayerfeld Bell and Michael Gardiner (Los Angeles, CA: Sage, 1998), 38–39.

[37] Taylor, "The Dialogical Self," 65.

[38] Charles Taylor, *Human Agency and Language: Philosophical Papers 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 260.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Taylor, *The Language Animal*, 57.

No matter what, the rapport has been established among us before I fully appreciate the other person's character, even though the rapport is still initial and very thin.

The above example may show that a friendship can be initiated with the motivation of utility or pleasure, such as exchanging information or cracking a joke, rather than by mutual appreciation of one another's character. Through conversation together, we are experiencing the hot weather as well as the joy of the party; the matter of the stifling heat and joy is not just for you and for me separately; it is now *for us*. "This predicament is now something shared," as Taylor states, "much of the point of most conversations is not the information exchanged, but precisely the sharing."[41] Similarly, going shopping together and listening to music together are different from doing these separately. There is a sense of connected subjectivity among friends; that is, the sense of togetherness and companionship, which constitutes the sense of reciprocity and mutual belonging, a central element of the friendship among us. In such a sense of connected subjectivity, the self also experiences a transformation of subjectivity from individual selves to connected selves, in which the subjects are no longer "I" and "you," but "we;" the consciousness of the self no longer focuses exclusively on one's own, but also on others as part of a bigger "I." As Nancy Sherman argues, the sense of belonging between friends typically arises from the sense of shaping others as one's own.[42] This sense of connected subjectivity usually happens earlier than our awareness of others' virtuous character. It is true that the appreciation of others' virtuous character may enhance my fondness toward them, but without the experience of dialogue and association, the sense of mutual belonging can hardly be established. This explains why my relationship with my friend is different from that with my fellow citizens. It also affirms the value of the friendships of usefulness and pleasure because they usually play an important role in the formation of long-term, stable, virtue friendships by initiating conversation and association with friends.

If we can find a common language in conversation, we may further enhance our mutual understanding: "I usually go to the Daisyfield Swimming Pool." "Is it clean? I usually go to Darwen Swimming Pool. It is not so clean." "Darwen is not bad. I used to be a lifeguard there. Other swimming pools are even worse." "Lifeguard! How does it feel to be a lifeguard? Exciting?" "Not really, but for me saving lives is a meaningful job." We may further find out our common interests and temperaments through conversation, which may further strengthen our association. In this light, conversation is important to develop friendship further and enhance the sense of connected subjectivity among friends. By the same token, friendship may be diminished for lack of ongoing contacts and dialogue.

---

[41] Taylor, *The Language Animal*, 56.

[42] Nancy Sherman, "Aristotle on Friendship and the Shared Life," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 47, no. 4 (1987): 605.

The development of friendship is prominent especially in the situation where we are helped by friends in periods of weakness and disability. As Aristotle states, in adversity, our friends are not only useful in offering substantial help but also sweet and pleasant through their companionship. Their presence could make our pain lightened because they share our distress. Such experience is puzzling for Aristotle as it is unclear whether our friend has taken part in the distress or our awareness of their presence helps relieve the pain.[43] However, from the dialogical view, my distress in adversity is shared by my friend because our sentiments can be united through conversation. For instance, when I was injured, my friend came and said, "Oh! You hurt yourself?" "Yeah! I played soccer last night. The floor was slippery. I just fell down and hurt myself." "Oh! Poor thing. How can I help you? Maybe I can pick you up for school this week!" Through the continued dialogue in these associations, I may also come to appreciate my friend's virtuous character, such as being compassionate and assertive, because conversation provides the way by which one can realize virtue through words and subsequent actions.

Through conversation, I can feel that my friend's response is empathetic, which has created a unity of sentiments between us. It strengthens our sense of connected subjectivity and makes me feel that something happens not only to me but to us. And my friend is willing to deal with the problem with me. Although my friend and I each have a unique spatio-temporal placement in existence, this unique placement we have in existence is shared through the dialogue. The hurt itself happens to me; it is addressed to where "I" am, not to my friend's place. Nevertheless, this uniqueness is shared. The event of existence is unified through dialogue. The shared event is "always a border incident on the gradient, both joining and separating the immediate reality" of my particular situation with my friend's particular perception and determination.[44] So we are presented with a paradoxical idea of differences in simultaneity. It can be summed up in Bakhtin's phrase "the unique and unified event of being."[45]

The appreciation of my friend's virtuous character not only strengthens our relationship but also brings a challenge to my own moral self-understanding: he is the ideal person I want to be. My self-knowledge is enhanced through contrasting myself with my friend in our dialogue. I am motivated by him/her to be more assertive and sympathetic toward the needy. As our value judgments and actions are conditioned by our moral framework, dialogue with friends, and people we trust, although their virtuous character and moral frameworks differ from mine, they could challenge my existing moral framework and lead to what Gadamer calls "the fusion of horizons."[46] This can broaden my moral universe, and I may come to the development of a new hybrid form of moral framework. Thus, being friends with virtuous persons

---

[43] *NE*, IX.11 1171a25-33.

[44] Michael Holquist, *Dialogism: Bakhtin and his World* (London: Routledge, 2002), 28.

[45] Holquist, *Dialogism: Bakhtin and his World*, 24.

[46] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. J. Weinsheimer and D. G. Marshall (New York: Crossroad, 1989²), 379.

can prompt one's virtuous development and moral transformation. It also explains why Aristotle is so much concerned with virtuous character among friends: dialogical friendship provides the form of life within which we can mutually cultivate our virtuous character.

According to Mavis Biss, Aristotle's idea of the friend as "another self" is understood as "a partner in moral perception" who contributes to our self-understanding.[47] In our interaction, I am necessarily confronted by my friend with difference. Through observation, we have formed a contrast with our friends, and our self-knowledge is enhanced.[48] From the dialogical perspective, conversation with our friends is an important way to find out something about our character which we did not know before. My friend may tell me that my personality is gentle and soft. I am an easy-going person. To play with me is comfortable. Or, he/she may advise me to be more assertive. He/she may feel that I am not confident enough. His/her appreciation or advice may entrench my virtuous character and encourage me to be even gentler toward others or more assertive in front of others. As dialogical selves, we must appropriate the vision of others in order to see ourselves. Whatever my friends say about me, their interpretation about me makes me aware of "who I am" and finally "who I want to be." Our dialogue makes me aware of either my good qualities and thus encourages me to strengthen them or my weaknesses and pushes me to change them.[49] This mutual understanding, and thus mutual appreciation or advice, has gone beyond the relation of usefulness and pleasure. I would call it a relationship of mutually virtuous constitution. Our moral selves have been mutually constituted in our continuing dialogues and associations. It is also a "relationship of giving and receiving" that is crucial to friendship and virtue cultivation. This explains why "good people's life together allows the cultivation of virtue."[50] The relationship of mutually virtuous constitution also affirms the intrinsic value of relationships among friends.

As MacIntyre states, we become mature, practical reasoners and are capable of participating fully in human flourishing (*eudaimonia*) only in a "network of relationships of giving and receiving." We first participate in "a set of relationships to certain particular others who are able to give us what we need."[51] In such relationships, I experience that others make my good their own so that I can acquire virtues and become willing and able, in turn, to regard the good of others as my own. We owe to this relationship an obligation to give to others that cannot be calculated or restricted in advance.[52]

---

[47] Mavis Biss, "Aristotle on Friendship and Self-Knowledge: The Friend Beyond the Mirror," *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 38, no. 2 (2011): 125.

[48] Ibid., 131.

[49] Anne-Laure Crépel, "Friendship: Shaping Ourselves," *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* 22, no. 2 (2014): 191.

[50] *NE*, IX.9 1170a12.

[51] Alasdair MacIntyre, *Dependent Rational Animals: Why Human Beings Need the Virtues* (Chicago, Il: Open Court, 1999), 98.

[52] Ibid., 108.

Dialogue, Friendship, and Self-understanding. As discussed above, our association and dialogue with our friends may contribute to our self-under-standing, which is also important to our virtuous development, for no one can be virtuous with self-deception. Our self-understanding is always partial. From my own perspective, I cannot see myself as a whole. And our perception always involves a certain pre-understanding shaped by our history and social condition. I always perceive things and the self from my particular perspective conditioned by my history and feelings. I am unable to fully comprehend myself without the assistance of others' perspectives. Sometimes, our friend does know our need and character more than ourselves. For instance, my friend grumbles to me, "My neighbor is an old lady. She usually opens her door and speaks loudly. I am very angry with her. She has intruded on my privacy. I have to confront her." My friend used to think she was very gentle, and she thinks that her complaint is fully justified this time. However, I answer her, "Yeah, your neighbor is not considerate. But your being furious seems to be overreacting to her noise."

One of the distinctive features of dialogue is that, in the face of different viewpoints, our conversation may call for further articulation of emotions, which in turn enhances one's self-understanding. The dialogue with friends is important for self-knowledge because it helps us prevent self-deception by involving further self-reflection and elaboration of our feelings that one may not achieve simply on one's own. Through conversation, my friend also finds that her over-reaction to her neighbor may be due to her experience with her dominant mother; her mother always acts in a hostile way toward others. Thus, she dislikes her mother, and she would easily become angry with someone who acts like her mother. After the dialogue, my friend may find that I do understand her, helping her revise her past perception and enhance her self-knowledge, so she is willing to share her story further. I also share mine. These sharings have strengthened our connected subjectivity and have deepened our friendship by enhancing our mutual understanding and trust.

According to Gadamer, also a proponent of the dialogical view, a good dialogue may lead to a transformation of the self and relationships, from a relationship of individual-to-individual to communion, or to what I call "the connected selves." The dialogical understanding is an interaction between openness and application. A dialogue requires an openness to hear something anew so as to form a connection with the other. Thus, dialogic openness aims at solidarity. In dialogue, we open our self to any new meaning by granting it tentative authority to challenge our moral beliefs and prejudices. It also entails a willingness to offer a justification of one's view. We may apply a new meaning and examine whether such an insight reveals a new perspective on our current motives and dilemmas and helps to illustrate new situations.[53] Basically, the form of our experience and practice results from the mutual influence between interpreters and events, present and past, and one person

---

[53] See Frank C. Richardson, Anthony Rogers and Jennifer McCarroll, "Toward a Dialogical Self," *American Behavioral Scientist* 41, no. 4 (1998): 507.

and another as an ongoing inner dialogue among different viewpoints. Such a dialogue inevitably involves a certain reinterpretation and modification of an old self-understanding. For Gadamer, dialogue is different from debate; it is not to win the other over to one's side. As he elaborates, "To reach an understanding in a dialogue is not merely a matter of putting oneself forward and successfully asserting one's own point of view, but being transformed into a communion in which we do not remain what we were."[54] A good dialogue demands a humble attitude; we may lose ourselves in the interaction with another. It is like a play that we just want to keep going. Eventually, it leads to a relationship of mutually virtuous constitution.

Conclusion

Friendship is important because it is reciprocal and dialogical; it helps us fight against a solipsistic life. As I have shown, Aristotle's three concepts of friendship should be integrated with the idea of the transformative nature of relationships. By using the dialogical concept of the self, I have argued that our making of friends usually starts with a friendship of usefulness and pleasure, and later is transformed through continuous conversation and association into virtue friendship, in which one sees one's friend as another self. Throughout the formation of friendships, mutual goodwill is usually initiated through dialogue, through which a connected subjectivity is established. This is then maintained and enhanced by ongoing dialogue and mutual understanding among friends. The dialogical friendship shows that our virtuous character can be fostered through our continuous dialogue with friends as a relationship of mutually virtuous constitution. The exploration of such dialogical transformative relationships not only helps us acknowledge the value of utility and pleasure friendships, which can be an inauguration of a long-term virtue friendship, but also affirms the intrinsic value of friendship, which is constitutive of our virtuous development and the self. This relationship is distinct from our general relationships with other virtuous citizens.

Bibliography

Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*. Translation, introduction, notes and glossary by Terence Irwin. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 1999.

------. *Politics.* Translation and introduction by C. D. C. Reeve. Indianapolis, IN: Hacket Publishing Company, 1998.

Bakhtin, Mikhail. *The Dialogical Imagination: Four Essays.* Edited by M. Holquist. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1981.

------. *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics.* Edited by C. Emerson. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.

Biss, Mavis. "Aristotle on Friendship and Self-Knowledge: The Friend Beyond the Mirror." *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 38, no. 2 (2011).

---

[54] Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 379.

Brink, David O. "Eudaimonism, Love and Friendship, and Political Community." *Social Philosophy & Policy* 16, no. 1 (1999).

Cooper, John. "Aristotle on the Forms of Friendship." *Review of Metaphysics* 30, no. 4 (1977).

Crépel, Anne-Laure. "Friendship: Shaping Ourselves." *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* 22, no. 2 (2014).

Curzer, Howard J. *Aristotle and the Virtues.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

De Peuter, Jennifer. "The Dialogics of Narrative Identity." In *Bakhtin and the Human Sciences: No Last Words*, edited by Michael Mayerfeld Bell and Michael Gardiner. Los Angeles, CA: Sage, 1998.

Gadamer, Hans-Georg. *Truth and Method.* Translated by J. Weinsheimer and D. G. Marshall. New York: Crossroad, 1989.

Holloway Julian and James Kneale. "Mikhail Bakhtin: Dialogics of Space." In *Thinking Space*, edited by Mike Crang and Nigel Thrift. London: Routledge, 2000.

Holquist, Michael. *Dialogism: Bakhtin and his World.* London: Routledge, 2002.

Kraut, Richard. "Aristotle's Ethics." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta (Winter 2012 Edition), assessed June 30, 2013. http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2012/entries/aristotle-ethics/.

MacIntyre, Alasdair. *Dependent Rational Animals: Why Human Beings Need the Virtues.* Chicago, Il: Open Court, 1999.

Pakaluk, Michael. "Friendship." In *A Companion to Aristotle*, edited by Georgios Anagnostopoulos. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009.

Richardson, Frank C., Anthony Rogers and Jennifer McCarroll. "Toward a Dialogical Self." *American Behavioral Scientist* 41, no. 4 (1998).

Sherman, Nancy. "Aristotle on Friendship and the Shared Life." *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 47, no. 4 (1987).

Taylor, Charles. *Human Agency and Language: Philosophical Papers 1.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

------. "The Dialogical Self." In *Rethinking Knowledge: Reflections Across the Disciplines*, edited by Robert F. Goodman and Walter R. Fisher. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1995.

------. *The Language Animal: The Full Shape of the Human Linguistic Capacity.* Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2016.

Reciprocity and Justice as the Boundaries of Human Relationship: A Philosophical Concern

Asha MUKHERJEE

Reciprocity has been the most important principle in the process of development of human society. In the globalized context challenges and problems are faced and need deep investigation from philosophical perspectives. Human well-being is one of the most important aspects philosophers are concerned about from time immemorial. Social contract theorists like John Rawls, while developing a theory of justice, invoke the value of reciprocal relationships to deal with human dignity and well-being. As part of a social contract, all human beings need help from one another from time to time to pursue their individual interests and goals effectively. If we can arrange a system of reciprocity, in which all the benefits required to contribute are typically returned to us in full (or more), this may justify playing by the rules. But rules of justice ("treating equals equally and unequal unequally") raise problems since these rules require individuals to sacrifice their own welfare for the good of others, especially when some individuals might not be in a position to share in the particular goals for social improvements at issue. For example, badly disadvantaged people may not be in a position to reciprocate for the public or private assistance they receive. Further, to require a prompt and exact return of the benefit received may defeat the general purpose of the norm of reciprocity, because it may drive disadvantaged people further into debt. Yet to waive the debt altogether, or to require only some discounted amount, seems to defeat the purpose of reciprocity.

Further, social well-being often requires people's sacrifices in pursuit of some social goals in which reciprocity seems to lose its meaning. This may occur, for example, in love, friendship, and family relationships where parties are connected by mutual affection and benevolence. One of the forms of reciprocity eliminates the space for unconditional love or loyalty. If this is right, then justice, reciprocity, and benevolence must define the boundaries within which we pursue the most intimate relationships.

Introduction

Philosophers have been concerned about issues of human well-being in general and individual well-being in particular. These issues have also been central to the social, legal, and political sciences. Theories of justice are often suggested as one way out. Justice is seen mainly as being of two types, which

are related to each other: distributive and retributive. The concepts of equality, inequality, desert, and human dignity play an important role. Distributive justice involves distributing benefits equally, while retributive justice involves giving and getting equally. The prime basis for justice is to treat equals equally and unequal unequally. If there were no differences between individuals and groups, delivering justice would have been easy. But differences between the two are inevitable, which makes things interesting and complicated. Persons have a right to their uniqueness, to preserve their differences, and to relate to others when equality is asserted. A child and an adult are equal yet different; a poor and a rich person are equal but also different; a doctor and a scientist are different but they are also equal under the income tax rules. Persons differ in their abilities, capacities, needs, efficiency, enjoyments, sufferings, and surroundings. Therefore, justice is required, so far as distribution is concerned, to follow guidelines such as, "in so far they are alike, they should be treated equally" and "in so far they are different they need to be treated differently." This also requires factual knowledge about the differences to reduce both actual and apparent inequalities and injustices. Injustice occurs when one is discriminated against and does not get what one deserves or gets less than what one deserves or gets more than what one deserves. The differences in recipients could be infinite, thus it follows that "who deserves and what" is often very unclear. In a poor country, to survive, each citizen deserves one meal a day as a minimum. But in a rich country, it makes no sense to talk about one meal a day, but rather it may be meaningful to think that each person deserves a car.

In terms of retributive justice, both equality and differences are important. The traditional view on retributive justice is that wrongdoers must be punished. Kant expressed his view in the following passage in the *Metaphysics of Morals*:

> Even if a civil society resolved to dissolve itself with the consent of all its members – as might be supposed in the case of a people inhabiting an island resolving to separate and scatter themselves throughout the whole world – the last murderer lying in prison ought to be executed before the resolution was carried out. This ought to be done so that everyone may realize the desert of his deeds, and that blood-guiltiness may not remain upon the people; for otherwise they will all be regarded as participators in the murder as a public violation of justice.[1]

Retribution is to give back or pay back. The receiver gives back in a just proportion, or as much as deserved, or as agreed upon, or appropriate. In the process, the giver becomes the receiver. This idea may be called justice as reciprocity. The inequalities between the giver and the receiver as well as

---

[1] Immanuel Kant, *The Philosophy of Law*, trans. W. Hastie (Edinburgh: Clarke, 1887), 198.

equalities and deservingness are part of determining justice or injustice. The factual data regarding differences and similarities between deserving individuals are also significant as well as complicated. But the question is what to give back as part of cooperation? Is it just social resources or moral concerns? Reciprocity is understood, according to Allan Buchanan, as the right to share the social resources only if individuals contribute or can contribute to the co-operative surplus.[2] If a person is unable to contribute to the social surplus, he/she does not deserve any just treatment. Any rational being would not agree with this. Justice must be extended to all human beings regardless of their ability to contribute. Human beings who are unable to contribute, for example intellectually disabled or seriously disabled persons, also deserve just treatment. The thesis that an individual who is not capable of being a contributor to the cooperative surplus has no right to social resources cannot be accepted as justice. Justice as reciprocity must be provided to those who are not able to contribute to social resources due to certain reasons.

Reciprocity as Justice

From Plato onwards reciprocity, as part of justice, along with gratitude, has been central to social and political philosophy to produce healthy personal relationships and social life. It is worth noting that almost all societies, including India, have a set of social practices[3] based on the conception of reciprocity and, although they may differ from each other, they are regarded as fundamental to human life.[4] Lawrence Becker calls reciprocity a disposition "to return good in proportion to the good we receive, and to make reparation for the harm we have done. Moreover, reciprocity is a fundamental virtue."[5] Furthermore, "Gifts and goods pervade our lives. So do evils and injuries. Everywhere, in every society of record, there is a norm of reciprocity about such things."[6] For Becker, "reciprocity is fundamental to the very concept of justice."[7] But not many attempts are made to turn the general concept of reciprocity into a more determinate set of norms and standards and "the concept of reciprocity is routinely oversimplified and then either abandoned or

---

[2] Allan Buchanan, "Justice as Reciprocity versus Subject-Centered Justice," *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 19, no. 3 (1990): 228.

[3] In Ancient Hindu tradition we find an extensive discussion of recognizing various kinds of debts (*Rins*) of an ethical and spiritual nature in the expression of gratitude for the gifts one receives from the world: *Deva Rin,* debt to the deities, *Pitra Rin,* debt to the ancestors, *Rishi Rin,* debt owed to the sages, *Nri Rin,* debt to humanity at large, and *Bhuta Rin,* debt to plants, animals, and nature, http://www.sanskritimagazine.com/indian-religions/hinduism/five-dharmic-debts-rin-every-hindu-paid.

[4] Lawrence C. Becker, "Reciprocity, Justice and Disability," *Ethics* 116, no.1 (Oct. 2005): 18.

[5] Lawrence C. Becker, *Reciprocity* (London: Routledge, 1986), 3.

[6] Ibid., 73.

[7] Lawrence C. Becker, "Reciprocity and Social Obligation," *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 61 no. 4 (1980): 417.

abused."[8] John Rawls has insisted on reciprocity and said that "the difference principle expresses a conception of reciprocity."[9] He argues that when the difference principle is satisfied, "the least advantaged will benefit from the inequalities produced or left in place by the scheme for social cooperation, and the most favored members of society will benefit also, from the willing cooperation of all the others."[10]

Becker thinks that Rawls's "fair returns in kind" is an oversimplification without using reciprocity and its fittingness and proportionality.[11] Perhaps Rawls interprets reciprocity as equivalent to *tit for tat*, that is, paying back roughly in kind, more or less, what you put in as a regulative rule of thumb rather than a fundamental principle of justice. Plato in Book I of the *Republic* offers the opinion that justice is a matter of speaking the truth and paying your debts. Socrates produces a well-known counter-example, namely, that we do not want to return a weapon that a friend has left in our care if the friend is deranged when he asks for it back.[12] This shows that if we define reciprocity as *tit for tat,* then it would be too narrow to accommodate right conduct or justice. Polemarchus jumps to the conclusion that justice is a matter of helping your friends and harming your enemies, or justice is reciprocity by way of returning good for good and harm for harm. Socrates argues that it is unwise to inflict genuine harm on one's enemies since that would only make them worse.[13] But Socrates fails to notice that if no harm is inflicted on enemies, they will take advantage or become worse if we turn our other cheek to them. Therefore, some form of reciprocity is desired for maintaining a fair relationship. Reciprocity among the equals is easy to maintain but is often problematic among the unequals.

Indeed, people are often engaged in mutual advantages by doing their fair share, which can be seen as a form of reciprocity. But sometimes we may want to opt out of the reciprocal obligations. When we do not want people to shower gifts on us in some business deals, we are not under any obligation to make returns. It is also interesting to note that if I do not accept a favor, I do not have the duty to return it. Robert Nozick imagines the following case: neighbors institute a public address system and assign its use to each person including myself. After 138 days, my turn comes. Am I obliged to take my turn?[14] Surely not, Nozick says. We can decide whether we accept the favor or not. Receiving favors is not accepting them. We may receive unasked favors, but we should be able to decide how to respond. Merely receiving the favor does not compel one to reciprocate. Plato in *Crito* shows how accepting

---

[8] Becker, "Reciprocity, Justice and Disability," 20.
[9] John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), 102.
[10] Ibid., 103.
[11] Becker, "Reciprocity, Justice and Disability," 20.
[12] Plato, *The Republic*, 331c.
[13] Ibid., 335a–335e.
[14] Robert Nozick, *Anarchy State and Utopia* (New York: Hachette, 1974), 93.

benefits generates obligations.[15] Socrates considers whether citizens have a duty of gratitude to obey the laws of the state similar to the duties of gratitude toward one's parents. "We have given you birth, nurtured you, educated you, we have given you and all other citizens a share of all the good things we could. By giving every Athenian the opportunity, after he has reached manhood and observed the affairs of the city and used the laws, we proclaim that if we do not please him, he can take his possessions and go wherever he pleases."[16] The feeling of gratitude has some commonalities to reciprocity, however, reciprocity is not limited only to gratitude, which only explains the positive concept of reciprocity, but is almost silent toward wrongdoers.

Reciprocity in Family Life

How do we understand reciprocity in terms of love, friendship, or family relationships where the foundation of relationships is mutual affection and benevolence? One may presume that justice and reciprocity would have hardly any significance in such relations, because we love or are affectionate toward someone, taking their side and caring to the extent that we forgive their wrongdoings, if there are any, and love unconditionally, without expecting any return. Rawls has been criticized by thinkers for bringing family relations under theories of justice, pointing out that family relations could be grossly unjust and have always been so. In a family, if the relations are unjust, the moral education of children would be distorted; if one cares for justice, and looks for reciprocity, the family relations get fractured. Therefore, justice and reciprocity must define the boundaries within which we pursue even the most intimate relationship.[17] Reciprocity in the friendship context may mean an overall reciprocal balance rather than strict equality in giving and taking. It requires caring for each other, being responsive and supportive, and being in tune with each other. For example, person A helps when a good friend, person B, breaks her leg in an accident. After some time, when A gets hospitalized, B extends help to look after A's dog at her residence.

It is normally accepted that reciprocation in personal relationships rarely follows a mathematical formula, i.e., give and take. It varies depending on the individuals involved, and on situational factors such as who has more control, persuasive power, or influence. It is often the case that one individual will be the lead reciprocator and the other the responsive one. The form of reciprocation is often influenced by the emotional needs of the individuals. Sometimes one member of the family may need more support than the other; this can change from time to time depending on the situation. People usually do not follow a set pattern like robots; different friends may reciprocate differently at different times depending on the depth of friendship.

---

[15] Plato, *Crito* 52b–d.
[16] Ibid., 50d.
[17] Susan Moller Okin, *Justice, Gender and the Family* (New York: Basic Books, 1989).

Reciprocity in family life is discussed in detail by Nancy S. Jecker in her article "Are Filial Duties Unfounded?" It is often regarded that repayment, giving back, or paying back cannot be made in a husband and wife relationship or in a child and mother relationship, which is most intimate. One of the reasons is that the concept of equality has an extremely complex use. Confucius observed in ancient times that in the father-son relationship the people involved have much greater difficulty in treating each other equally. The father supports the son but the son cannot support his father. In the Indian tradition too the father should support the son, even if the son is an adult. Based on the doctrine of treating the unequal equally Confucius formulated a rule based on reciprocity which is close to the Kantian principle "treat each other particular person as you would like to be treated if you were that person." A father should treat his son as a son, not as an adult or equal, but he should treat his son equally as he would like to be treated if he was his son. A son cannot repay his father for the support his father has provided but he can treat his own son as his father has treated him. In this way, the process goes on from father to son and then again when the son becomes a father. Thus, the receiver becomes the giver after incorporating what one has received. The self becomes the other and the other becomes the self in the reciprocal relationship. It is a long-term relationship. There may be an expectation that children will reciprocate for the care they have received by caring for their parents and grandparents. This is different from the long-term contractual obligation among business partners.

One of the central objectives of the family is to support and protect children. It is normally granted for their surviving and flourishing, without much expectation in return. In this sense, family is a benevolent institution, but all parental sacrifices may not be expressions of benevolence. We must distinguish various kinds of parenting behavior depending on parents' choices and preferences. They could be largely indifferent about their children's welfare but occasionally extend benefit to them. Alternatively, they may care deeply about their children and their welfare and regularly benefit their children for their own sake. It is in the latter case that gratitude is due in an institution, and any form of ingratitude depreciates the moral significance of benevolence extended by the actors. This does not exclude the first case of parenting from gratitude, but the degree is less. How to respond, respect, or express gratitude or loyalty is a matter of free choice for children as well as for parents. When children are young their respect is shown by just obeying the parents, but when they grow older respect takes a different form. It is important to remember the relationship one has for gratitude.

What do we share in the intimate family relation? Ferdinand Schoeman maintains that "we share ourselves," which implies that to "talk about rights of others, respect for others, and even welfare of others is to a certain extent irrelevant."[18] One surrenders one's self to identify with the other. Parents do

---

[18] Ferdinand Schoeman, "Rights of Children, Rights of Parents and the Moral Basis of the Family," *Ethics* 91 (1980): 8.

their best for the welfare of their children. The issue of requesting benefit does not arise. Can we conclude then that children have no duty toward their parents? Michael Slote asserts that "it is difficult to believe that one has any moral duty to show gratitude for benefits one has not requested." It is presumed that young children do not request any benefit from their parents. Nancy S. Jecker tries to argue, following Socrates on gratitude, that grown children owe their parents. The animated law of Athens asks:

> …did we not bring you into existence? Your father married your mother by our aid and begat you…since you were brought into the world and nurtured and educated by us, can you deny in the first place that you are our child…And if this is true, you are not on equal terms with us…[19]

The assumption then is that Socrates's parents deserve gratitude for having benefited Socrates in three ways: (1) by bringing him into the world; (2) by nurturing him; (3) by educating him. For Jecker gratitude is a response not merely to benefit but to benevolence, and the benefit must be accompanied by the desire to help. In the case of begetting the children, a granter of benefit has expressed a feeling and attitude of care, value, and respect; the children do not owe gratitude to their parents. Parents often choose to have children for enriching their lives; this cannot be considered as an act of benevolence. But the education and nurturing of their children are certainly benefits, which demand gratitude from their children. Can this be considered as an act of benevolence? Parents often do things beyond what duty requires. For example, a parent may scarify him/herself to finance his/her child's studies to become a doctor, or while caring for the child when she/he is ill he/she tries to do not only what is a must but also all that could make the child happy. They are doing their best as parents. A financially poor couple is sacrificing all their comfort and going through all hardship to provide good education to their child. This may be regarded as a case for demanding gratitude from the child.[20]

Going Beyond Reciprocity

Moral value is ascribed especially to human behavior toward the protection of various disabled forms of human life, including strangers. Capable adults should embrace reciprocity as a *value*. Paying taxes for the protection of their life, property, physical and mental integrity, and goals and intentions help these people to maintain a respectable life. Compassion to those who suffer often leads to their benefit. Forgiveness, like compassion, also comprises being humane. Acting toward the realization of humanity, the passive

---

[19] Nancy S. Jecker, "Are Filial Duties Unfounded?" *American Philosophical Quarterly* 26, no. 1 (1989).

[20] Ibid. 74–5.

form of compassion and forgiveness, is also a form of benefiting people. Moral values can only be realized through our behavior and conduct in relation to strangers.

Allan Buchanan is right to say that our moral obligations should go beyond our treatment of those who can relate to us on a reciprocal term such as senior citizens, orphans, deserted children, etc. Reciprocity is not the only principle that provides justice. Justice is not exhausted by principles of reciprocity, rather reciprocity remains an essential thread in the fabric of a good community.[21] To use Kant's example of the shopkeeper who treats his customers politely in the hope that they would come again to his shop to buy things so that his business would flourish, this shopkeeper is not a morally good person. A morally good person is the one who does his/her "duty for the sake of duty alone" and acts from the good will. The value of helping and protecting disabled forms of human life and strangers without return represents the real moral value of humanity. These values are the result of our cultural evolution, our moral development.

The Golden Rule "do unto others as you would have them do unto you" becomes an expression of connecting solicitude with the norm, which Kant sees as the duty of reciprocity. Paul Ricoeur argues that this norm presupposes a space of asymmetry between doing and being done to. He reinterprets Kant's second imperative, that is, that people should be treated as ends in themselves. Humanity is not seen as just the sum of individuals in the abstract but as the idea of the plurality that constitutes it. It includes the particular value of each person who makes up humanity as such. In this sense, humanity becomes synonymous with multiplicity.[22] Ricoeur says "equality is presupposed by friendship. This is why friendship alone can aim at the familiarity of a shared life."[23]

Ricoeur believes that both Kant's imperative and the Golden Rule are grounded in an absence of reciprocity and that the effective mediation of the Golden Rule is legally based on the definition of respect for a person as an end and "in his own right."[24] For Ricoeur, only through friendship (reflexivity of the self), people can grasp the domain of mutual respect that will connect them as "equals." It has been argued that "Ricoeur is wrong to link moral solidarity with friendship, for one is not obliged to be friends with others, yet one does owe them respect. How this respect can develop on an empirical level is one of the difficulties with Kant's categorical imperative, and Kant was well aware of this problem."[25]

---

[21] Buchanan, "Justice as Reciprocity," 81.

[22] Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer (Chicago, Il: Chicago University Press, 1984), 223.

[23] Ibid., 184.

[24] Ibid., 226.

[25] Maria Pia Lara, *Moral Textures: Feminist Narratives in the Public Sphere* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), 142–43.

Conclusion

Our lives are governed by some form of reciprocity, but the basic idea is that "when you can, return good in proportion to the good you receive." The art of reciprocity is partly an art of graciously acknowledging favors. How and when one acknowledges must be left to the two parties and their mutual understanding. Sometimes we simply give thanks without settling the account. At times, we do not even give thanks but deeply appreciate others' help in the heart. Sometimes it also has to do with timing. With friends we need not reciprocate immediately; it can be a long-term relationship. In intimate relationships, we do not take stock from time to time, which may lead to some misunderstandings that one may feel being exploited and ultimately alienate our partner. Thus, reciprocity is not meant to exchange things of equal value.

If my close friend helps me when I am in need, it does not demand an obligation on my part to help him/her. If this is what is demanded by the reciprocity principle of justice, then it would generate an unfair burden. But I must "return good in proportion to the good I receive" whenever I can. The principle of justice demands that I must respond in some comparable way by helping my friend as much as possible. If those who are old, powerless, and disabled receive a favor they need not return it. If we expect everyone to pay back, it may lead to hierarchical arrangements in social and political life. In such exchanges, the rich get richer and the powerful more powerful. We should regulate reciprocity with the principle of justice, and not the other way round. David Schmidtz makes a distinction between symmetric reciprocity and transitive reciprocity. Returning the favor to the original benefactor is symmetric; repaying a loan, acting on contracts, maintaining a business partnership are such examples. However, the fitting response to a favor is not to return it but to "pass it on." Returning the favor to the teacher would be odd, but we can help others as our teacher helped us. This is called transitive reciprocity. It is not so much about returning a favor but about honoring or doing justice to it. Passing the favor on, one may not repay the original benefactor, but one can give thanks in another way to balance the scale.[26] For example, an alumnus donating funds to her school for future students, blood donations, etc., are examples of transitive reciprocity. This distinction of reciprocity can help to solve the difficult problems of dealing with disabled and intimate relationships on the one hand and balancing the scale of justice on the other.

People in intimate relationship, fully adult people, and elderly parents who made their contribution before becoming permanently disabled, "should return favors as per symmetrical reciprocity." Fully capable adults, while relating to their children who cannot yet contribute, should embrace reciprocity as a *value*, "acting on behalf of the autonomous but mutually supportive reciprocators that their beneficiaries may yet become." In the case of disabled

---

[26] David Schmidtz, *Elements of Justice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 82–83.

people who have never been and never will do a meaningful favor for anyone, we cannot expect any reciprocity. If we must deal with such cases with the principle of justice, "it will have to be some other part of a larger theory.…In a just society, various forces work over time to reduce the extent to which disabilities are contingently incapacitating, thereby reducing the number of people who fall outside the scope of reciprocity."[27]

Once, I was in Spain, where Spanish is the only language spoken. I was in real trouble due to the cancellation of my flight from Barcelona to Madrid. I tried to communicate, but people did not respond. Having no luck, as I was about to call some friends, one lady came to my rescue and helped me by driving me from Barcelona to Madrid. We are grateful for living in mostly a benevolent world. Therefore, we must promote and cultivate reciprocity in people to celebrate our common humanity. Reciprocity and gratitude are forms of mutual affirmation. Equal respect and equal treatment are part of the essence of being a reciprocator. Although people are not equal, they can offer the best to each other. As reciprocators, in a close relationship people can craft dimensions in which they can relate as equals. For example, in a family relationship the husband does the dishwashing, the wife does the cooking or the husband does the babysitting, the wife goes shopping.

The discussion can be concluded with Becker's words "No single principle of justice, including justice as reciprocity, is more than an element of justice. Still, reciprocity is at the core of a just society and needs to have a corresponding place at the core of our theories. Relations of reciprocity are ultimate exemplars of the ideal of society as a cooperative venture for mutual advantage. This is precisely the reason for John Rawls to develop a distributive theory of justice based on reciprocity (or fairness, or fair play) as a middle ground between a thoroughgoing concern with individual well-being and a thoroughgoing concern with social well-being' but Rawls failed to 'get a good general conception of it."[28] My task in this paper has been to show how difficult it is to "get a good general conception" of reciprocity.

Bibliography

Becker, Lawrence C. "Reciprocity and Social Obligation." *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 61, no. 4 (1980).
------. *Reciprocity*. London: Routledge, 1986.
------. "Reciprocity, Justice and Disability." *Ethics* 116, no.1 (Oct. 2005): 9–39.
Buchanan, Allan. "Justice as Reciprocity versus Subject-Centered Justice." *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 19, no. 3 (1990): 227–252.
Jecker, Nancy S. "Are Filial Duties Unfounded?" *American Philosophical Quarterly* 26, no. 1 (1989).

---

[27] Ibid., 102–103.
[28] Becker, "Reciprocity, Justice and Disability," 12

Kant, Immanuel. *The Philosophy of Law.* Translated by W. Hastie. Edinburgh: Clarke, 1887.

Lara, Maria Pia. *Moral Textures: Feminist Narratives in the Public Sphere.* Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998.

Nozick, Robert. *Anarchy, State and Utopia.* New York: Hachette, 1974.

Okin, Susan Moller. *Justice, Gender and the Family.* New York: Basic Books, 1989.

Plato, *Crito*.

------, *The Republic*.

Rawls, John. *A Theory of Justice.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971.

Ricoeur, Paul. *Time and Narrative.* Translated by Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer. Chicago, Il: Chicago University Press, 1984.

Schmidtz, David. *Elements of Justice.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Schoeman, Ferdinand. "Rights of Children, Rights of Parents and the Moral Basis of the Family." *Ethics* 91 (1980).

Part II
Dimensions of Human Reciprocity in a Pluralistic World

Reciprocity as a Source of Reconciliation

Denys KIRYUKHIN

When discussing the tragedy of Auschwitz and its ethical and political consequences, French philosopher Vladimir Jankélévitch, particularly in his work "L'imprescriptible: pardonner? Dans l'honneur et la dignité," concludes that "forgiveness died in the death camps."[1] Indeed, such tragedies as Auschwitz, the Rwandan genocide, The Nanjing Massacre ("The Rape of Nanking"), the mass murders in Cambodia, Yugoslavia, and the territories controlled by ISIS, etc., all raise the question of whether these events have set a limit to forgiveness, human relationships and, finally, reciprocity, and exclude the possibility of reconciliation. Many Holocaust and genocide survivors believe that the malefactors have lost their humaneness, thereby totally excluding the possibility of forgiveness. From a legal point of view, such crimes are not subject to forgiveness. In this case, we do not and cannot have any ethical obligation to forgive or to reconcile. When responding to the gradual forgetting of the Holocaust in Europe, Jankélévitch declares that there are radical acts of evil that are unforgivable. Nevertheless, the French philosopher still speaks of the possibility of forgiveness even in such seemingly unforgivable situations (this is why we begin our research with reference to his ideas): sometimes the crimes are so horrible that the delinquent cannot possibly atone for them with any punishment; thus, what remains is just to forgive them.[2] Such forgiveness would be unjust. Firstly, it would be illegal, contrary to the concept of the necessity of punishment. Secondly, it would be asymmetrical. As Jankélévitch and Jacques Derrida point out, the Nazis who committed the Holocaust or those who were responsible for the genocide in Rwanda or Yugoslavia have never asked for forgiveness. When we forgive them, we have to face the resultant moral and legal asymmetry, which seems to exclude the possibility of reciprocity and stultify the very act of forgiveness. This does not necessarily lead to reconciliation, for forgiveness is an "ethical gamble" as Edgar Morin calls it. However, when the further development of the situation becomes dependent on the forgiven (Derrida also says that forgiveness is given in pledge to the malefactor), this risk is the only opportunity to restore the destroyed reciprocity, if the act of forgiveness finds a reciprocal response on the part of the malefactor and is transformed by him/her into the act of reconciliation.

The issue of how and under what circumstances this forgiveness is feasible is outside the scope of this work. We have taken the Holocaust as an uttermost example of social disruption and loss of reciprocity because it

---

[1] A quotation from Aaron T. Looney, *Vladimir Jankélévitch. The Time of Forgiveness* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015), 161.

[2] Ibid., 162.

demonstrates the relevance of reciprocity for social relations and is entwined with reconciliation. Further, this example shows that the option of reciprocity and reconciliation is preserved even in a situation that might be called a manifestation of radical evil.

Reciprocity, which means in the broadest sense of the word our obligation toward the other to return to them the advantages they give to us, is one of the basic prerequisites of the very possibility of social cooperation. Embodied in the "Golden Rule," the formula of reciprocity is present in all the major world religions, as well as in secular ethical systems. The admonition by Confucius, "do not impose upon others those things that you yourself do not desire," resonates with the ethical rule of Zoroastrianism ("not to do to others all that which is not good to one's self"),[3] the demands of Aristotelian ethics, Christian ethics and the Kantian categorical imperative. The "Golden Rule" is considered not only as a formula of reciprocity but also as a rule of justice, as the "Golden Rule" is oriented toward establishing equivalence or equality among individuals. In pre-modern societies, this rule acted as a key principle of justice, which coincides with reciprocity.

Within the framework of liberal political philosophy, particularly in John Rawls's theory (especially in his later works, such as *Political Liberalism*), reciprocity, in a Kantian way, is regarded as a symmetrical relation of individuals. Correspondingly, such a system of relations is associated with the possibility of social cooperation. The role of reciprocity consists in its facilitation of autonomous individuals coming to an agreement concerning the basic principles of justice, which, according to Rawls, are found at the root of every institution of a well-ordered (i.e., liberal and democratic) society. An important idea concerning the political role of reciprocity, captured by Rawls, is that following the principle of reciprocity (i.e., respect of individuals toward one another as equal and free persons) allows the achievement of social agreement and, ultimately, the forming of social unity without coercion. The relations of reciprocity, as Rawls puts it, form the initial level of social relations before (or outside) political institutions that facilitate the forming of these institutions following the interests and value orientations of individuals, without any party's interests dominating over the others' interests. Rawls does not consider reciprocity in the context of reconciliation; the theme of conflict is actually afforded little analysis in his works. Nevertheless, if we adopt his perspective, we can see that, in the situation of conflict, especially when we have no institutions to appeal to for rectification of injustice or achievement of reconciliation (this is the situation in which reconciliation is sought not within individual communities but between societies or nations), reciprocity turns out to be the prerequisite to opening a gate for reaching an agreement.

---

[3] Jacob Neusner and Bruce Chilton, eds. *The Golden Rule. The Ethics of Reciprocity in World Religions* (London-New York: Continuum, 2008), 160, 168.

However, Rawls's interpretation of reciprocity, situated within the framework of Kant and Mill's liberal tradition of political philosophy, is subject to at least three essential restrictions mentioned in his critical works. One may notice the position of Iris Young, who emphasizes that symmetrical reciprocity, to which Rawls appeals, is fundamentally inapproachable. Reciprocity is asymmetrical because other people remain closed and inconceivable to us. Individuals, even members of a single society, have their personal life histories, occupy different social positions, and differ in their abilities and interests; thus, we are simply unable to know and take into account all their interests. This does not mean, however, that reciprocity is impossible. As Young argues,[4] reciprocity is based on an individual's ability to look at him/herself with the other's eyes, to grant, i.e., to act asymmetrically, to expect no obligatory response from the other, and also, shall we add, to forgive. In other words, Young expresses the idea that we can preserve reciprocity without necessarily "counterbalancing" ourselves in relation to one another, without necessarily establishing symmetrical relations.

Another important problem related to Rawls's issue of reciprocity is highlighted by Allen Buchanan.[5] In his view, justice as reciprocity (let us recall that in 1971 he even published an article entitled "*Justice as Reciprocity*") is possible only among those who can render services to one another, who make contributions to joint endeavors, and who have the right to their share in social resources. In other words, the relations of reciprocity are established in the context of individuals interrelated through a system of social cooperation. It is difficult to speak of reciprocity (or the very possibility of realizing justice principles) where there are no such relations – e.g., between representatives of different nations, religious traditions, or cultures, especially conflicting ones. Moreover, societies, especially modern ones, are quite complex, as Buchanan emphasizes. They have their own principles for determining the limits of cooperation and defining what is included in this system of cooperation. The real struggle is fought for the definition of these limits.[6] In the framework of a theory of justice as reciprocity, this problem is left out of consideration.

Buchanan points to an important problem of the social and cultural dependence on the conditions of symmetrical reciprocity. It is interesting that Rawls, having presented one of the best explications in the theory of justice of the universalist liberal tradition, was ultimately forced to acknowledge that his theory of justice as honesty (or reciprocity) is a theory suitable only for already liberal and democratic societies. However, the problem of reciprocity

---

[4] See Iris M. Young, "Asymmetrical Reciprocity on Moral Respect Wonder and Enlarged Thought," in *Judgment, Imagination, and Politics: Themes from Kant and Arendt*, eds. Ronald Beiner and Jennifer Nedelsky (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001), 205–229.

[5] See Allen Buchanan, "A Critique of Justice as Reciprocity," in *Introduction to Contemporary Political Theory. A Reader*, ed. Colin Farrelly (London: SAGE, 2004), 99–107.

[6] Ibid., 103.

(and that of reconciliation) is not limited to the framework of liberal democratic societies, hence the opportunities of Rawls's theory are found to be extremely restricted. In this way, it seems that the question of whether and how reciprocity is possible after a tragedy such as the Holocaust remains unsolved within Rawls's theory.

As Buchanan notes, the concept of justice as reciprocity is quite restricted. The problem is, as we have already seen from the above example of forgiveness, that while justice and reciprocity are tightly interrelated, they do not coincide. Rawls is right in saying that reciprocity is inconsistent with coercion; Buchanan is also right in saying that achieving the symmetry of reciprocity required by the liberal tradition of political philosophy provides very strict social limits to the formation of social community, which is a prerequisite for reciprocal relations. But symmetrical reciprocity following a tragedy (the reciprocity of the offender and the victim) is hardly attainable when social unity is thereby destroyed. In this regard, reciprocity is indeed always asymmetrical, as is forgiveness. Rainer Forst points out that reciprocity (here we speak of the possibility of reciprocity after a conflict) presupposes resignation from a meta-ethical position (Forst talks about resignation from "high truths") in favor of acknowledgment of the requirements and values of the other because the very act of reciprocity has a universalizing nature.[7] The problem of reconciliation enables us to see this clearly.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who was the head of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which investigated the apartheid regime in the Republic of South Africa, states that after the hard work of the Commission, he came to understand that "though there is undoubtedly much evil about, we human beings have a wonderful capacity for good."[8] This discernment of the good, which beyond any doubt is human, explains why even after dreadful tragedies and catastrophes, such as the Holocaust, we can bring up a problem of not only justice, of bringing the guilty to justice, but also forgiveness and political reconciliation.

Political reconciliation is a specific practice to establish or rebuild a community among social groups and contending parties whose relationships are determined by a tragedy they experienced, a period of political repressions, or a conflict in which they were involved, and to do so through their historical memory. Hence, political reconciliation is related to the acts of not only distinct individuals but also social groups. In addition to the assumptions of responsibility and forgiveness, it stipulates an agreement on the interpretation of the past. Often, the first step toward achieving reconciliation is a simple acknowledgment of the fact of the tragedy, which can develop a similar understanding (and description) of the past. For instance, the problem of reconciliation between the Turks and the Armenians after the events of 1915

---

[7] Rainer Forst, *The Right to Justification. Elements of a Constructivist Theory of Justice* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 6, 20.

[8] Desmond Tutu, *No Future Without Forgiveness: A Personal Overview of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission* (London: Rider Books, 1999), 205.

that took place in the territory of the Ottoman Empire remains pertinent: while the Armenians consider those events as genocide, the Turks describe them as a civil war.

Bert van Roermund considers the problem of reconciliation in the context of relations between the victim and the violator. This approach is of special importance in multiple such cases as one social group endures coercion or violence by another (in fact almost all the cases of political conflicts). Van Roermund states that true reconciliation is related to the victim "*recognizing the humanness of the perpetrator.*"[9] He speaks about neither the victim's acknowledgment of the violator's positive human qualities nor the appeal to a certain abstract "human existence" common for the victim and the violator. Rather, the way to reconciliation is to establish the relations of reciprocity, whereby the victim acknowledges that, in different historical circumstances, the violator could be a victim and the victim could be a violator. From the theological point of view, "reconciliation as an initiative of the victim is only possible if and when (s)he acknowledges being a sinner," from the political point of view, it means that "in reconciliation, evil becomes 'ordinary' in the profound sense of 'among us'."[10]

At first sight, a reconciliation that appeals to forgiveness and mercy is incompatible with justice. For example, Archbishop Tutu insisted that the past should not be neglected, yet the perpetrators should not be punished. However, this is not entirely correct, as it is not true in terms of the standard of law. Justice is an essential part of the process of reconciliation and is expressed in reciprocity between the conflicting parties or the victim and the violator. This is only possible after the refusal of each of the conflicting party's claims that its position is true. Such a refusal of claims for the monopoly on truth and a mutual acceptance of responsibility is a true basis to create a common language for the description of conflicts.

Theoretically, the problem of collective responsibility is rather polemical and must be solved before we can speak about reconciliation (for example in a situation of conflicts between social groups). Within the limits of the liberal tradition introduced by Immanuel Kant and Rawls, we can speak about personal responsibility. For Kant, autonomy conditions it   – imputation of guilt to an individual is possible only insofar as he/she acts freely. Rawls shares this position, though in his interpretation of responsibility he emphasizes that an institutional framework of freedom (based on the principle of justice) makes it possible to speak about responsible citizens. However, it is still problematic to discuss collective responsibility, even within the limits of his theory. This means that the application is problematic.

---

[9] Bert van Roermund, "Rubbing Off and Rubbing On: The Grammar of Reconciliation," in *Lethe's Law: Justice, Law and Ethics in Reconciliation*, eds. Emilios Christodoulidis and Scott Veitch (Oxford-Portland: Hart Publishing, 2001), 182.

[10] Ibid., 182–183.

Acknowledging the above problem, which is typical for liberalism in general, Andrew Schaap attempts to find a solution for it in the works of Hannah Arendt,[11] who distinguishes a collective responsibility (which is always a political responsibility) and an individual responsibility that may be both legal and moral. Arendt is rather wary of collective responsibility, for when we consider a social group as an agent, the responsibility of the particular individuals for the committed atrocities gets thereby blurred.[12] This observation is essential in the case of restoring justice during a trial, for example, the trial of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem. However, blurring individual responsibility happens to be less important or entirely insignificant if the goal is to have reconciliation, not to seek justice. Arendt's well-known statement "where all are guilty, none is" is lethal for criminal justice, but it may take a new meaning if we speak about reconciliation. Everyone is equal not in irresponsibility, but, on the contrary, in responsibility for the evil done; this common responsibility is a prerequisite for forgiveness, and thus reconciliation, to be possible.

This raises the reasonable question of the limits of responsibility, for each of us, cannot be responsible for all the evil in this world, whether it be wars, terrorist attacks, or ecological problems. There is no unlimited responsibility. However, we are responsible for our own actions. We may feel responsible or guilty (or we may be considered responsible) merely because we identify ourselves with a social group, though we have not performed any reprehensible actions, but representatives of our social group did. In the search for a resolution to this difficulty, Paul Ricoeur suggests relying upon prudence (Aristotle's *phronesis*)[13] to define the right balance between the refusal to recognize the responsibility for the consequences of certain actions, even unintentional, and unlimited responsibility. While this approach may be possible when we speak about an individual's moral and legal responsibility, it is very difficult to apply it to the responsibility of social groups. In the second case, the limits of responsibility coincide with the political and historical boundaries of those groups. Therefore, the development of new social communities – reconciliation is one of the forms of social integration – seems to be possible in redefining the boundaries of the existing communities under the influence of moral judgments and estimations concerning the past and, less frequently, of the continuing conflict.

The experience of various countries demonstrates the lack of a single strategy to reach reconciliation for all members of a political society or two political communities, for example, the case of reconciliation between Ukraine and Poland in the bloody events of World War II. The Ukrainians were persecuting and killing the Poles, and the Poles were doing the same to

---

[11] For example, Andrew Schaap, *Political Reconciliation* (London: Routledge, 2005), 110ff.

[12] Ibid., 112–113.

[13] Schaap pays attention to this position of Ricoeur. Ibid., 114–115.

the Ukrainians. Reconciliation was reached based on the mutual acknowledgment of the collective responsibility of the Poles and the Ukrainians for the atrocities committed. A symbolic expression of mutual acknowledgment of guilt became the words of forgiveness by the presidents of the two countries. Thus, at the political level, the obstacles to the development of East European cooperation had been removed. The tragedy of the past ceased to be an actual event of the present. But can we say that justice was sacrificed for reconciliation in this case? Indeed, there was no investigation regarding the immediate delinquents; i.e., the requirements of retributive justice were not observed – nobody was assigned responsibility, and even the names of the delinquents guilty of the dreadful massacre of women, the elderly, and children were not announced.

It appears that one cannot say that the reconciliation between Ukraine and Poland was reached by a complete disregard for justice. This case is an example of a reconciliation strategy based on the principles of not retributive but reparative justice. The requirements of the latter were observed, and the victims's compensation was symbolic in the form of forgiveness and memory. A complex strategy for reaching reconciliation can also be observed in Spain. A conscious choice was made in favor of obliterating the past with a view of not punishing the delinquents of the civil war. Instead, the topics that constituted a menace for civil accord were excluded from the public discourse.

However, the experience of Argentina represents a different example. The policy of reconciliation pursued by President Raul Alfonsin was based on the principle of retributive justice. In the 1980s, the crimes of the preceding authoritarian regime were investigated, and several officials, military men, and politicians went on trial and were consequently held responsible. The threat of punishment stimulated many participants and supporters of the dictatorship to begin an active opposition to the investigation of the past crimes. It is well known that this menace to social stability led the authorities to retract the policy of punishing the guilty, so the problems of reconciliation and responsibility remained topical for Argentinian society and still remain so to some extent.

The example of Argentina shows the validity of the thesis that reconciliation is associated not with punishment but with the acknowledgment of the very fact of breach of justice, as in the case of the dictatorships, or the general description of the past (clarification of the truth) which was particularly achieved in the Ukrainian-Polish relations at the political level. Therefore, reconciliation, as an alternative to retributive justice,[14] does not contradict justice in general. It is, in fact, closely related to it because it is based on the

---

[14] As Kjell-Ake Nordquist writes, "reconciliation is wider than a legal process, it concerns a reality that a court may not be able to reach – neither legally nor morally – which deals with the web of responsibilities, hidden goals, and deceptions that become part of daily life in protracted armed conflict situations." Kjell-Ake Nordquist, *Reconciliation as a Political Concept: Some Observations and Remarks* (Bogotá: Editorial Universidad del Rosario, 2006), 20.

acknowledgment of and, in some cases, compensation to the victim. One must remember the difference between political and individual reconciliation. At the political level, past tragedy or conflict may cease to act as a factor; this can define civil or international relations and eliminate confrontation. At the individual level, it is far more complicated to achieve reconciliation. Alteration of political relations often is at odds with the alteration of social relations if it is not accompanied by a transformation of people's consciousness.

Again, revisiting the example of Ukraine and Poland, reconciliation was achieved at the interstate level but not properly reflected in the personal relationships. The personal relationships have not changed considerably, for the level of confrontation between Poles and Ukrainians is sometimes still very high. This is reflected, *inter alia*, in the rhetoric of right-wing politicians of both countries, who continue to exchange mutual accusations.

The past constantly reminds us of itself. We cannot agree with the idea of E. Mobekk that "individual reconciliation is the ability of each human being to conduct their lives in a *similar* manner as before the conflict without fear or hate."[15] The experience of tragedy, conflict, or repressive rule changes its survivors forever. It is extremely difficult to keep living as before, in a *similar* manner, if possible at all. That is why the importance of reconciliation lies not in denying or forgetting the past experience but in deducing an experience of peace from the experience of tragedy. This cannot be achieved exclusively within the framework of political reconciliation, for it is associated with a political decision, which is motivated ideologically, and fixed at the level of state institutions. Moreover, the declared political reconciliation can often become a source of new conflict and injustice, particularly in cases where a certain ideological concept of social community (an imaginary community) is inculcated in society using institutional mechanisms of constraint, or where the boundaries of a new political community are discriminatory to a certain part of the society. In this respect, political reconciliation may be implicitly successful only when the process of reconciliation comprises a part of the democratization process,[16] which includes the acknowledgment of the rights of all members of society and the establishment of political relations based upon the principles of democracy.

As Schaap sharply notes, "there is good reason to be suspicious of an ideal of community as it is in the name of this ideal that oppression is legitimized,"[17] because in such a case, social relations are tailored to a certain ideal even before reconciliation is actually achieved. It is no coincidence that political reconciliation does not automatically lead to reconciliation at the individual level in many cases (probably even in the majority of cases known

---

[15] Eirin Mobekk, "Transitional Justice in Post-Conflict Societies: Approaches to Reconciliation," in *After Intervention: Public Security Management in Post-Conflict Societies: From Intervention to Sustainable Local Ownership*, eds. Anja H. Ebnother and Philip Fluri (Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2005), 263.

[16] See Colleen Murphy, *Moral Theory of Political Reconciliation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[17] Schaap, *Political Reconciliation*, 78.

today, where personal relations were given less attention than the political integration of the society). This is exemplified by the reconciliation between Ukraine and Poland and the situations in Argentina, the Republic of South Africa, etc.

The reconciliation of political communities is not the result of a political decision, hence it cannot substitute for a voluntary individual ethical choice that forms the basis for individual reconciliation, which is reconciliation between individuals, not between social groups. We are referring to an individual axiological choice of peace instead of conflict, forgiveness instead of revenge, and equality (justice) instead of submission. Political authorities and institutions have an indirect influence on this choice. First and foremost, it is related to the religious and cultural tradition to which an individual belongs.

The discussion of ways of reconciliation – especially in the legal aspect – is more typical for Western European culture based on the tradition of Christianity. This does not mean that there are no possibilities for reconciliation in Islam, Confucianism, or any other cultural or religious traditions. The dependence of reaching reconciliation on a certain culture – or, more widely, a certain ethos or community – explains why one cannot propose a universal model or mechanism of reconciliation because each culture has its own practices of reconciliation and its own understanding of when reconciliation may be achievable. Therefore, it is extremely important in the globalizing world firstly to study and to update the knowledge of the various "reconciliation cultures" represented in various traditions and ethoses, and secondly to look for opportunities for reconciliation understood as peaceful coexistence and accommodation of warring positions and cultural and religious concepts. The works of a Japanese Catholic writer, Endo Shusaku, raise the question of the reconciliation of two cultures (European Christian and Japanese)[18] as a key issue. His works, in particular, give evidence that value paradigms forming a local community and its ethos can contribute to the formation of solidarity at the global level. The prerequisite for this is the establishment of a system of global relations based on the principles of justice, which is critical for forming relationships of trust among the members of the global community. Confidence is also the prerequisite for dialogue and, potentially, for reconciliation.

The resolution of the acute crisis of human and intercultural relations manifested in tragic events, such as the Holocaust or the Rwandan genocide, lies in reciprocity through forgiveness. It creates the possibility for the development of reconciliation mechanisms. Yet, it is an extremely complicated and hardly realizable task in the decades to come. We have no alternative to solving this problem.

---

[18] "As a Christian, a Japanese and an author, I am constantly concerned with the relationship and conflict created by these three tensions. Unfortunately, I have yet to reconcile and create certain unity between these three conditions in my mind and, for the most part, they continue to appear as contradictory." Quote by Mark B. Williams, *Endō Shūsaku. A Literature of Reconciliation* (London-New York: Routledge, 2002), 33.

Bibliography

Buchanan, Allen. "A Critique of Justice as Reciprocity." In *Introduction to Contemporary Political Theory. A Reader*, edited by Colin Farrelly, 99-107. London: SAGE, 2004.

Forst, Rainer. *The Right to Justification. Elements of a Constructivist Theory of Justice.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2012.

Looney, Aaron T. *Vladimir Jankélévitch. The Time of Forgiveness.* New York: Fordham University Press, 2015.

Mobekk, Eirin. "Transitional Justice in Post-Conflict Societies: Approaches to Reconciliation." In *After Intervention: Public Security Management in Post-Conflict Societies: From Intervention to Sustainable Local Ownership*, edited by Anja H. Ebnother and Philip Fluri. Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2005.

Murphy, Colleen. *Moral Theory of Political Reconciliation.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Neusner, Jacob and Bruce Chilton, eds. *The Golden Rule. The Ethics of Reciprocity in World Religions*. London-New York: Continuum, 2008.

Nordquist, Kjell-Ake. *Reconciliation as a Political Concept: Some Observations and Remarks.* Bogotá: Editorial Universidad del Rosario, 2006.

Roermund, Bert van. "Rubbing Off and Rubbing On: The Grammar of Reconciliation." In *Lethe's Law: Justice, Law and Ethics in Reconciliation,* edited by Emilios Christodoulidis and Scott Veitch. Oxford-Portland: Hart Publishing, 2001.

Schaap, Andrew. *Political Reconciliation.* London: Routledge, 2005.

Tutu, Desmond. *No Future without Forgiveness: A personal overview of South Africa's truth and reconciliation commission.* London: Rider Books, 1999.

Williams, Mark B. *Endö Shüsaku. A Literature of Reconciliation.* London-New York: Routledge, 2002.

Young, Iris M. "Asymmetrical Reciprocity On Moral Respect Wonder and Enlarged Thought." In *Judgment, Imagination, and Politics: Themes from Kant and Arendt*, edited by Ronald Beiner and Jennifer Nedelsky, 205-229. Lanham, MD: Rowman &Littlefield, 2001.

Reciprocity:
A Human Value in a Pluralistic World

Lalan Prasad SINGH

Reciprocity is a unit of value. It gives meaning and significance to human beings and covers the whole gamut of human existence. It has an epigenetic relation with the new global order. It is a core concept in human evolution. It is a philosophical, moral, biological, cultural, anthropological, and religious concept. I shall confine my discussion mainly to the human moral dimensions and importance. The challenges and the complexities of the new emerging socio-political system and the peaceful co-existence of different religions and ethnicities depend upon the cultivation and acceptance of reciprocity as a unit of human value in the pluralistic world of the 21st century.

The creation of the pluralistic new global order is necessary for the very survival of humankind. Theologians of different religious traditions are facing the greatest challenge of the 21st century, that is, the demonic interpretation of religious scriptures. This demonic and wrong interpretation of scriptural texts, particularly in the Abrahamic religions such as Christianity, Islam, and Judaism, is creating a crisis of civilization. Some theologians belonging to the Abrahamic religions are creating a crisis of civilizations. Religions without a metaphysical, moral, and spiritual foundation become a breeding ground of superstition, dogmatism, fanaticism, and fundamentalism and start indulging in the politics of hatred and violence. Reason is a defining characteristic of human beings. Kant considers reason as a power of synthesis in unity and reciprocity. According to Kant *pure reason* is based on an *a priori* principle which is different from *practical reason*. Plato's myth of the cave portrays the jaundiced views of truth and reality.

The search for the new global order could depend upon transcending the narrow vision of institutionalized religion and ethnicity and coming out from Plato's cave and experiencing truth and reality from a new perspective of spiritual humanism. We are aware that the old order is in flux, but we have not worked out the form and contents of a new global order. The survival of humankind depends upon the cultivation of a new moral value system based on the affirmation of human dignity and international cooperation based on the moral and the spiritual principle of reciprocity.

The establishment of the pluralistic global order depends on the substance of a unifying principle that resides in the cardinal distinction between Chinese and the Indian religious values and the Western Abrahamic theological interpretations of Christian, Islamic, and Judaist religious scriptures. Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism have a sound spiritual, moral, and metaphysical basis in spiritual humanism. They have captivated the esoteric, the mystic, and the spiritual longings of human beings. These religions

were accepted by the elites and the common masses as an art of living. These religions do not believe in crusade and violence. Crusade and violence are the antitheses of spiritual humanism. The religion which is bereft of rational metaphysics loses its moral universal character and appeal and becomes institutionalized and denominational. Religions have two distinct bases, theology and spirituality. Some theologians are creating the civilizational crisis of the 21st century by wrong and irrational interpretations of religious texts and scriptures. Spirituality, based on love and non-violence, is the core of all religions. Some theologians believe in religious crusades to exterminate the believers of other faiths and establish their religious fundamentalism through violence.

Hassan al-Banna, an Egyptian school teacher, was the founder of the Egyptian Society of Muslim Brothers in 1928. He interpreted the Quran as the prescription of the establishment of the Islamic nation in its entirety and called for all Muslims of the world to unite. This Brotherhood movement gave birth to a Jihadist rhetoric. He was succeeded by Sayid Qutub, who became the ideologue of Islamic fundamentalism. According to Qutub, Islam is the only universal system, hence all Muslims must overthrow all other political-social systems and establish the Islamic state. According to Qutub, all other political and social models are un-Islamic and illegal.

Qutub became the unchallenged ideologist of Islamic fundamentalism and gave birth to the radicals and the Jihadists in the Middle East, in the form of al-Qaeda, Hamas, Hezbollah, the Taliban, Iran's clerical regime, Hizb ut-Tahir (the party of Liberation, active in the West and openly advocating the reestablishment of the caliphate in a world dominated by Muslim fundamentalists), Nigeria's Boko Haram, Syria's extremist militia Jabhat al-Nusrah, and the Islamic State of Iraq. Anwar al-Sadat was assassinated in 1981 by a radical Islamic fundamentalist for making peace with Israel. The attack on the World Trade Centre on September 11, 2001, by Islamic Jihadis, created fear and hatred in the whole world. Radical Islamism considers suicide bombings as martyrdom. Samuel Huntington, Professor of Political Science of Harvard University, known from the thesis he advocated in his celebrated book *The Clash of Civilizations,* prophesized that the third and the final world war would be civilizational, i.e., between Christianity and Islam.

Religion promotes humane and universal principles of love, justice, brotherhood, and coexistence. The wrong interpretations of these fundamentalists promote genocide and horrendous acts of hatred, violence, and suicide bombing. The world is sitting on the gun powder of hatred and violence. We have to find out a solution by a proper interpretation of religious texts. Interfaith dialogue could create a cultural ambiance for the cultivation of love and non-violence for the preservation of the moral health of humankind. The Daoist, Buddhist, Confucianist, and Gandhian would say that peace and non-violence are the historical necessity for the very survival of humankind. To change one's behavior and thinking is a difficult task, but religions have something special to offer. If we go through the history of human evolution,

we find that religions have played an important role in creating and transforming the barbarian society into a civilized one.

We must take a lesson from history. History has witnessed the Thirty Year's War (1618-1648) in Europe between Catholics and Protestants which destroyed one-fourth of the population of Europe. After realizing the irreparable damage that was done on both sides about 200 delegates started negotiating for the agreed solution, known as the Peace Treaty of Westphalia. It recognized the pluralistic religious and political order. Henry Kissinger writes,

> The Peace of Westphalia became a turning point in the history of nations because the elements it set in place were as uncomplicated as they were sweeping. The state, not the empire, dynasty, or religious confession, was affirmed as the building block of European order. The concept of state sovereignty was established. The right of each signatory to choose its domestic structure and religious orientation free from intervention was affirmed, while novel clauses ensured that minority sects could practice their faith in peace and be free from the prospect of forced conversion. Beyond the immediate demands of the moment, principles of a system of international relations were taking shape, motivated by the common desire to avoid a recurrence of total wars on the Continent. Diplomatic exchanges, including the stationing of resident representatives in the capitals of the following states (a practice followed before then generally only by Venetians), were designed to regulate relations and promote the arts of peace.[1]

The Treaty of Westphalia recognized the multiplicity of social, religious, and political realities and ushered in a new era of religious multiplicity rather than the dominance of any single religion. We find the echo of the model of the Peace Treaty of Westphalia in the utterance of Metternich who played a decisive role in the Vienna Congress of 1815-1816, which provided European stability. The great axioms of political science derive from the recognition of the true interests of all states; it is in the general interest that the guarantee of existence is to be found, while particular interests – the cultivation of political wisdom considered by restless and short-sighted people – have only secondary importance. Modern history demonstrates the application of the principle of solidarity and equilibrium, and of the united efforts of states to force a return to the common law. The religious dialogue is a historical necessity to save humankind from the present religious acrimony which may result in a nuclear holocaust. India and China can play a role by initiating an interfaith dialogue and creating a climate of peaceful existence.

Relativity theory and quantum mechanics are coming closer to the Taoist, Buddhist, and Vedantic conceptions of truth and reality. Both the Indian

---

[1] Henry Kissinger, *World Order* (New York: Penguin Books, 2015), 26–27.

and the Chinese civilizations are based on a sound, universal, spiritual, and moral foundation. It is the moral duty of thinkers and leaders of India and China to initiate the religious dialogue and create harmonious relations among different religions. This is the only way the world may herald a new era of spiritual renaissance and save humankind from total annihilation.

The plurality of the new global order is based on contradictory religious and political realities. It would be suicidal if we leave the problems created by the wrong and demonic interpretations of religious scriptures and history unattended. They need our immediate attention and the very survival of humankind hinges on solving them. Although we live in plural religious, linguistic, and ethnic realities, there are possibilities to find a harmonious and happy blending of this conflicting religious, political, ethnic reality that depend on the acceptance of the concept of reciprocity as a new human value system. Kissinger writes,

> In the other great contemporary civilization, reality was conceived as internal to the observer, defined by psychological, philosophical, or religious convictions. Confucianism ordered the world into tributaries in a hierarchy defined by approximations of Chinese culture. Islam divided the world order into a world of peace, that of Islam, and a world of war, inhabited by unbelievers. Thus, China felt no need to go abroad to discover a world it considered already ordered or best ordered by the cultivation of morality internally, while Islam could achieve the theoretical fulfilment of the world order only by conquest or global proselytization for which the objective conditions did not exist. Hinduism, which perceived cycles of history and metaphysical reality transcending temporal experience, treated its world of faith as a complete system not open to new entrants by either conquest or conversion.[2]

It will not be out of place to understand the concept of human beings reflected in different cultures and civilizations. Hobbes's conception of man in the *state of nature* is solitary, nasty, brutish, and short. In the state of nature, there is war of all against all and there is a complete lack of cooperation yielding reciprocal benefits. On the other hand, Plato in the *Republic* discusses the political doctrines and argues for a system of cooperation based upon the division of labor and mutual exchange of the surplus produced by the other person as a form of distributive justice.

Plato refers in his philosophy to the metaphors of shadow and substance. The metaphor of the cave contains the essence of Plato's teachings in the *Republic*. The prisoners (the human race) are confined to a dark cave and forced to see only the images on the cave wall in front of them. When the fire burns behind them, they see only the shadows, which they consider the reality. They have "the praise and honors for each other, and prizes for those who

---

[2] Ibid., 363 –364.

saw most clearly the shadows that passed before them, and who could best remember which usually came earlier and which later, and which came together and thus could most ably prophesy the future."[3]

This metaphor is pregnant with profound philosophical teachings. When one of the prisoners comes out of the cave, he gets free from the illusion and then makes a difference between the shadow and the substance. After being liberated from the illusions of shadow, one becomes enlightened. Plato refers to such a person as a philosopher. Plato writes,

> Those who have become philosophers in other cities are justified in not sharing the city's labors, for they have grown into philosophy of their own accord, against the will of the government in each of those cities, and it is right that what grows of its own accord, since it owes no debt to anyone for its upbringing, should not be keen to pay it to anyone. But we have made you in our city kings and leaders of the swarm, as it were, both to your own advantage and to that of the rest of the city; you are better and more completely educated than the others, and you are better able to share in both kinds of life. Therefore, you must each in turn go down to live with other men and grow accustomed to seeing in the dark.[4]

Humankind is always in search of justice and virtue. Glaucon tells Socrates that life is full of grief and hardship and the pleasures of vice and injustice are easy to attain. This can be found also in the biblical story of the book of Job. Job, who lives a life of truth and justice so that even God acknowledges him as a perfect and upright man who is devoted to God and opposed to evil, cries out to God and says, "Thou knowest that I am not wicked." (Job 10:7) Yet the suffering of Job was terrible. "Wherefore," Job asks of God, "do the wicked live, become old, yea are mighty in power?" (Job 21:7)

According to Plato, pleasure is not the highest good. If you pursue pleasure as the highest good, you will become morally degenerated. The highest good could be attained only by the reciprocity of human values and harmony of the soul. According to Plato, the right conduct of life, which emanates from the knowledge of the tripartite soul, forms the idea of the good, which speaks of the reciprocity among the three parts of the soul. Plato's entire theory is based on Socrates's doctrine that virtue is knowledge. Unless one establishes reciprocity between reason and virtue there will be no harmony in society.

The problem of accepting a plural, global order is the greatest challenge for human beings. Although the state is formed by surrendering individual passions, like an individual living in the state of nature, it seeks to acquire absolute sovereign power even through anarchy and savagery. The choice is to live in the peace and security of the slave or to accept and cultivate the new

---

[3] Plato, *Republic,* trans. C.M.A. Grube, rev. C.D.C Reeve (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1992), 516c–d.

[4] Ibid, 520a–c.

value of reciprocity by cherishing a *perfect civil union of humankind.* Rousseau, the intellectual godfather of the French Revolution, rejected the then existing institutions – property, religion, social classes, and civil society. Revolution originates when people are disillusioned and dissatisfied with the existing socio-political structure. The French Revolution originated in one of the most advanced and the richest countries of Europe.

It was the manifestation of the general will of the people who didn't accept the hereditary monarchy. This was the result of the lack of reciprocity between the ruler and the ruled and between the king and his subjects. The revolution affirmed the legitimacy and moral imperatives of reciprocity. The establishment of a pluralistic world order depends upon a delicate balance between reciprocity and human values. The political philosophy of Locke is a doctrine of consent and agreement to constituting the foundation of political morality. He speaks of the political and historical necessity of reciprocity without which no social system would function properly and no harmony in society would exist.

John Stuart Mill (1806-1863) observes in his celebrated work *On Liberty:* "Society is not founded on contract, and no good purpose is answered by inventing a contract to deduce social obligations from it." It is true that "everyone who receives the protection of society owes a return for the benefit, and the fact of living in a society renders it indispensable that each should be bound to observe a certain line of conduct toward the rest."[5] Mill formulates the thesis that prohibits "injuring the interests of one another; or rather certain interests, which either by expressing legal provision or by tacit understanding, ought to be considered as rights."[6] The second element of social responsibility enjoins that "each person [bears] his share (to be fixed by some equitable principle) of the labors and sacrifices incurred for defending the society or its members from injury and molestation."[7]

Mill's doctrine of liberty is based on the relevance and significance of the concept of reciprocity and mutual benefits. No society could exist in today's pluralistic world without accepting the importance and relevance of mutual benefits. The greatest historian of the last century, Arnold Toynbee, argues that society is not constituted of individuals but by their relationships. These relationships speak of the ethics of reciprocity and the acceptance of mutual benefits in peaceful coexistence. Mill outlines his concept of reciprocity while concluding his whole thesis with, "the only government which can fully satisfy all the exigencies of the society is one in which the whole people participate; that any participation, even in the smallest public function is use-

---

[5] John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty,* ed. Edward Alexander (Peterborough-Ontario: Broadview, 1999), chap. 1, 56.

[6] Ibid., 4.122.

[7] Ibid.

ful; that the participation should everywhere be as a great degree of improvement of the community to allow; and that nothing less can be ultimately desirable than the admission of all to share in the sovereign power of the state."[8]

Reciprocity and human value play an important role in the socio-economic and political system. Reciprocity has both positive and negative aspects. Different thinkers and historians have interpreted both the failure and the achievement of the French Revolution. During his sojourn in Paris in the 1840s, Karl Marx started to understand the cause of the failure of the French Revolution. According to Marx, it is not reason or education that brings about change and transformation in the socio-political system. The Enlightenment in Europe could not bring about the desired and proper change and metamorphosis in the social system. Even the radical Jacobin party couldn't succeed in achieving the objectives of the revolution by wrong and radical methods through the *reign of terror*. On the other hand, Hegel considered that the failure of the French Revolution was due to the lack of a proper and ripe dialectical process to reach the state of freedom. The French Revolution presents a paradox, that is, it took place in the richest state of Europe. History is not a dialectic expressed in time. It does not repeat itself. History is the manifestation of the collective consciousness and the aspirations of humankind. Whether the manifestation is in the form of evolution or revolution, it depends upon the nature of reciprocity between the ruler and the ruled, between the citizen and the government. In his economic and philosophic manuscripts of the 1840's,[9] Marx presents a humanistic interpretation of history. The Paris Manuscripts present Marxism as the humanistic system of ideology of which the central objective is the moral regeneration of humankind through world revolution.

This young Marx was revered as a great revolutionary and had a great impact on the intellectuals of his time. It was appealing to live by human essence by denouncing wealth and money. Before the publication of the Paris Manuscripts, the world was not aware of the earlier works of Marx. T. Z. Lavine writes,

> Before these manuscripts of the young Marx were discovered and published, Marxism had been thought of primarily as the book of the mature Marx, and as a scientific system or a scientific socialism, as Marx and Engels themselves called it, or as an economic and materialistic interpretation of history which stood Hegel's idealistic philosophy of history on its head. Generations of Marx scholars had accepted the view that for Marx the meaning of his-

---

[8] John Stuart Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 3.151-50.

[9] These manuscripts were published in the 1930s by the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow with the financial and the political support of the communist party of the Soviet Union under the directorship of David Riazanov who was purged and killed by the order of Stalin

tory is found in the division of labor, class struggle, class consciousness, and the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism, as a scientific theory, Marxism was regarded as having no moral or religious or philosophical meaning, but simply as offering an explanation of the necessary economic laws governing historical change.[10]

Ludwig Wittgenstein had propagated two kinds of philosophy. The earlier Wittgenstein propagated the picture theory of meaning, according to which the word is a name. According to the later Wittgenstein, a word is not a name. It can be used as a name but it can be used in many other senses. The meaning of a word is determined in a cultural context. There is no continuity, rather a logical gap between the philosophy of the earlier and the later Wittgenstein. I find a similar thesis propagated by the earlier Marx and the later Marx, in which there is also no continuity, rather a logical and ideological gap. However, the success of Marxism depends upon the acceptance of reciprocity and human values. Marxism is a profound and sublime philosophical system and has been interpreted by different thinkers and historians in different ways. This speaks of the profundity and the richness of Marxian thought.

Reciprocity has a human ethical dimension. It is known as the Golden Rule. It stands for an ethical system for the treatment of each other. It has a moral basis in tolerance, consideration, compassion, love, and filiality. The whole philosophy of Buddhism is based on compassion and *nirvana*. *Nirvana* is not only personal enlightenment but the realization of the wholeness of existence and being in which one is spiritually and organically related with others. Bodhicitta is the ultimate truth and reality. It is a metaphysics of oneness and wholeness. From the blade of grass to the cosmos there is nothing but the manifestation of Bodhicitta. This realization brings about an epistemic change in our perception, which is the central objective of Buddhism. According to Buddhism, there is no difference between *sansar* and *nirvana*. From one perspective we experience *sansar,* from another perspective we have the realization of *nirvana.* This speaks of the oneness and the non-dual metaphysical philosophy. Buddhism and Confucianism are based on the spiritual humanism of ethical reciprocity. Reciprocity has a universal appeal, for it is based on common human feelings, aspirations, and experiences, which motivate people to think about others and realize the importance and significance of moral value. This is the basis of our moral decisions. People sometimes argue against the Golden Rule or ethics of reciprocity by pointing out that there is no such thing as universal longings and opinions so that it would be irrational to think that every member of society and a political system could behave universally. The Golden Rule may be accepted as an ideal, a moral principle, but it doesn't have a common basis to adhere to in our day-to-day life. Confucius states in the *Analects* that we ought to treat others as

---

[10] T.Z. Lavine, *From Socrates to Sartre: The Philosophical Quest* (New York: Bantam Books, 1984), 274.

we would like ourselves to be treated. This does not entail that others have the same feeling as we have for them.

Some claim that the Golden Rule would undermine the importance and affirmation of individuality, for each one of us is unique. The acceptance and the practice of the Golden Rule would be the negation of my individual rights. This argument is based on a wrong and false assumption about individuality. The very existence of an individual entails his/her dependence and moral and anthropomorphic relation with others. The very importance, glory, and dignity of individuals depend upon the acceptance of reciprocity. Ethical reciprocity has been enunciated by different thinkers in different periods of history, who have changed the course of human history by their profound ethical and humanistic thoughts.

Below are the different ways in which the ethics of reciprocity has been expressed:

Do not do unto another what you would not have him do unto you. Thou needest this law alone. It is the foundation of all the rest. (Confucius, 6th Century BCE)

Avoid doing what you would blame others for doing. (Thales, 464 BCE)

What you wish your neighbors to be to you, such be also to them. (Sextus the Pythagorean, 406 BCE)

We should conduct ourselves toward others as we would have them act toward us. (Aristotle, 384 BCE)

Cherish reciprocal benevolence, which will make you as anxious for another's welfare as your own. (Aristippus of Cyrene, 365 BCE)

Act toward others as you desire them to act toward you. (Socrates, 338 BCE)

This is the sum of duty: Do naught do unto others which would cause you pain if done to you. (From the Mahabharata (5:1517), 300 BCE)

Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. (From the Bible, Leviticus 19:18 1440 BCE)

Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them. (Jesus of Nazareth, circa 30 CE)

The enmity cannot be conquered by enmity. It can only be conquered by love and righteousness. This is the eternal truth and law (Dhamma, The Buddha, Yamakabagga, Verse 5, Dhammapada)

The ethics of reciprocity has been termed by some philosophers as a deontological ethics. Deontological ethics is based on considerations of one's duties toward others. Deontology entails the existence of an *a priori* moral obligation. It means that people should live by the Golden Rule defined by some universal principles, which do not change due to time and place. Ethical norms and values are not absolute and universal, hence deontological ethics transgresses the limits of ethical norms and values. Other thinkers have given a different interpretation of the Golden Rule. For them, the ethics of reciproc-

ity is based on mutual respect and understanding, rather than on a deontological formulation of the Golden Rule. Thus, the ethics of reciprocity is dependent on one's understanding, acceptance, and respect of differences and variations of different religious teachings.

Karl Popper observes that the Golden Rule or the ethics of reciprocity is not based on the concept of retributive justice or the Law of Retaliation. The fundamental basis of the ethics of reciprocity is to live and let others live; to treat all people as members of the community with due consideration and compassion. The Golden Rule should not be confused with a "rule" in the semantic or logical sense. The logical shortcoming in the positive form of the Golden "Rule" is that it would require a masochist to harm others. This shortcoming can be overcome by the acceptance of the ethics of reciprocity. The ethic of reciprocity is aware of the freedom of speech, but the freedom of speech entails that one would be always conscious of the freedom of speech of others and the respect of the sensibility of others.

Mahatma Gandhi is considered the Mashiah of peace and non-violence. He didn't accept violence for the attainment of Indian independence. One of his greatest contributions is the maxim of the *sacredness of means and ends*. He enunciated the maxim that the right end must be won by the right means and tried to moralize and spiritualize politics. Gandhi's maxim is an elemental necessity for the establishment of a peaceful pluralistic global order. Global pluralism in its modern political meaning and significance is dependent on the Gandhian maxim of ethical reciprocity. There is a culmination of ethics of reciprocity in the Buddhist concept of Bodhisattva. In no other religious tradition do we find such a sublime form of ethics of reciprocity: A man who has acquired all the merits to get enlightenment (*nirvana*) but instead of entering into a *nirvanic* state of eternal bliss and beatitude takes a vow to help others in the attainment of enlightenment and would be the last one in history to enter into the transcendental realm of *nirvana*.

Confucius's filial piety is not only the virtue of respect for one's parents and ancestors but also a moral mandate to live a moral life and work for the establishment of a harmonious social and political order. Filial piety is a key virtue in Chinese culture and tradition and is the main concern of a large number of stories. One of the most famous collections of such stories is The Twenty-four Filial Exemplars (*Ershi-si xiao*). These stories depict how children exercised their filial piety in the past. While China has always had a diversity of religious beliefs, filial piety has been common to almost all of them; Hugh D. R. Baker says that respect for family is the only element common to almost all Chinese people.

The creation of a pluralistic international world is a historical necessity for the preservation of ethical health and the very survival of humankind. For the establishment of a new world order, we require a new value system based on the ethics of reciprocity, which would guarantee harmony and peaceful co-existence. The world has become a global village. There is an emergence of an advanced and new communication system. There is an emergence of a new global economic system within the existing nation-state. It is ushering in

a new civilization, a new renaissance, and a new value system. Reciprocity in different cultural values and belief systems would create a new human value system and enrich the cultural milieu and the belief system of the world.

According to Kant, moral law springs from our rational nature, which binds us with one another. Aristotle introduces *phronesis* or special capacity of reasoning about what one should do in his *Nicomachean Ethics*. Kant formulates the laws governing free action in his *Metaphysics of Morals*. Augustine says that the God of Christianity is the basis of unity and goodness. Nietzsche argues against Kantian moral theory in his book *Beyond Good and Evil* and says that the transvaluation of values would liberate humankind from not only the perversity of evil but from the perversity of morality as well. The basic question of meta-ethics is whether it is possible to derive an *"ought"* from an *"is"*?

We are living in a multipolarity of values and contradictory realities, and facing a grave threat from the spread of weapons of mass destruction, environmental depredations, and genocidal practices. In the light of the present explosive situation which has threatened the very existence of mankind a new value system based on Buddhist compassion, Christian love, Confucian filial piety, Islamic brotherhood, Marxist socialism, Western liberal democracy, and Gandhian non-violence is a historical necessity. The reciprocity of these value systems is historically mandatory for the creation of a new international social order. The reciprocity of these value systems would result in a new pluralistic world based on spiritual humanism.

Bibliography

Kissinger, Henry. *World Order.* New York: Penguin Books, 2015.

Lavine, T.Z. *From Socrates to Sartre: The Philosophical Quest.* New York: Bantam Books, 1984.

Mill, John Stuart. *On liberty.* Edited by Edward Alexander. Peterborough-Ontario: Broadview, 1999.

------. *Considerations on Representative Government.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Plato, *Republic.* Translated by C.M.A. Grube, revised by C.D.C Reeve. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1992.

10
Bisosiative Dialectic in Pluralism

Wiwik SETIYANI

Religious diversity or plurality is a necessity, for it is a source of inspiration to learn from what is taught and what values are good for humankind. Understanding the teachings of each religion can eliminate the truth claims of religion and good religious teachings that are worthwhile and *maslahah*/ helpful for others can be implemented in everyday life. Religion should not only be seen at the level of theology but also in actions of its adherents. Actions of religious believers can be done through a dialectic with the public good, personal and universal. Dialectics is not limited to dialogue but must be translated into concrete actions. Human thought is a major foothold for analyzing the conditions of people in a situation of (religious) diversity. The action which is good and true based on religious teachings can create a sense of love and benefit people. *Ummatan wahidatan* is a manifestation of human values. Religious believers should reflect on other religions which can be examples of religions' goodness. One should recognize and understand pluralism as a real action. Understanding pluralism means recognizing and humanizing human beings through human values. Human reasoning is the main tool to view and generate concrete actions through a comprehensive interreligious dialogue.

Religion as Actions

People have become a major asset in realizing social harmony through various activities. Social harmony is a picture of a society that is dynamic and creative. A harmonious society can be realized if a religious community can implement good behaviors. Religious doctrines should be contextual, not textually understood. Hence, religion itself is not the main purpose, but the benefit of people, as described in the Qur'an:

> Indeed, Allah does not feel shy in citing any parable, be it that of a gnat or something above it (in meanness). Now, as for those who believe, they know it is the truth from their Lord; while those who disbelieve say, "What could Allah have meant by this parable?" By this He lets many go astray, and by this, He makes many find guidance. But He does not let anyone go astray thereby except those who are sinful (Qur'an 2:26, Mufti Taqi Usmani translation)

Through the guidance of a religious person, people come closer to God and expect His Grace. Good deeds multiply the vertical (religious) and hori-

zontal (social) dimension. Religion comes with the mission of kindness, sacredness and is loaded with universal values. Its goal is that people live in peace and harmony with the environment by the rules and teachings of God. Religion teaches people unity and peace and mutual respect. Indeed, every religion has its own teachings and uniqueness in social life. Peace and unity of the *Umat* (*ukhuwah wat}ani>yah/ ukhuwah insa>niyah*) is a normative teaching of Islam, which respects not only religious differences but also the diversity of race, gender, nationality, and ethnicity. The Qur'an teaches universal brotherhood and the acceptance of pluralism in a society that can generate social harmony.

Religious diversity is a necessity. When explaining the importance of religious harmony, Swami Bhajananda points out that there are two significant reasons: first, religious conflicts are caused either internally, namely, by religious doctrines looking at "other religions," or externally, that is, by the manipulation of religion by outsiders. Second, the history of religious conflict is largely due to the issue of religious independence. These two reasons indicate that religion is conceived only vertically, not horizontally, thus the offense occurs among religious followers. Therefore, attention to religion should not only be theological, vertical, but also horizontal. A horizontal interpretation of religion is constructed through community activities, in which people are closely related to one another and develop an attitude of appreciation and belonging (tolerance). The attitude is necessary because mutual tolerance would not cause wars but peace, harmony, and respect for each other. This can foster social harmony. Islam teaches social harmony through mutual help among people.

According to Bourdieu's theory of habitus and field, habitus can be described as the logic of the game in a practical sense that encourages agents to act and react practically, while a field is a concrete social situation governed by a set of objective social relations. Adherents of religion play a role in building social harmony in their environment through religious activities. Understanding Islam should not only take place at the level of doctrine but also cover the implementation through concrete activities. This could have an impact on people. Teaching routine activities can help the community or congregation understand religion more deeply to establish patterns of healthy relationships and social services by sharing with others love, which would be a buffer zone and give birth to harmony among communities. These attitudes are implementations of religion as acts or behaviors which spawn social harmony. Hence, belief in religion, in confident interpretations of truth, meaning, and intention is very urgent. Adherents of religion carry out obligations, such as the implementation of religious teachings (religious rituals). This implementation may establish togetherness, solidarity, kindness, and most importantly create peace and harmony between people. Therefore, there are two things necessary to understand religion: first, the history of religion must be seen and understood without exception as a cultural phenomenon. Second, the cultural experience before the modern era was based on the locus of the community alone. Religion, as a social construction, was related to the system

of symbols in which people found a universal meaning in their social living. All societies have ways of thinking and patterns of behavior, and people are expected to have the maturity to understand religion properly through the implementation of religious teachings in everyday life.

Interfaith as Pluralism

Religious life constantly refers to the teachings of religion as a guideline to be true theologically. Each religion has a horizontal impact on humans and the universe. The belief of adherents of a doctrine becomes a medium for dialogue and for religious thought to be translated into life: Translating each faith should result in the decision that leads to actions with a view of the good of all humankind.

Actions of religious followers who have the right intention can lead to a good competition between religions, as in the teaching of Islam, which teaches competition in goodness. Goodness in every religion's teaching can be applied by any religious observant. Observance of religious teachings is the duty of every believer who loves his/her religion. There are three important aspects: first, to understand the process of salvation; second, to make changes correctly; and third, to achieve these naturally. Different interpretations can give birth to different actions, for example, the implementation of religious celebrations with a variety of rituals. Rituals become cultural as well as characteristic of the present culture; religions without cultures can emerge, but cultures without religions cannot. Cultural actions in the name of religion can give birth to a variety of inter-religious groups with the purpose of safe transformations.

Among the solutions in the name of religious processes, changes and objectives acquire the appreciation of the faithful. The practice of religious celebration is the action of salvation in a religious ceremony in Java, Indonesia. Geertz classifies four sections: first, the salvation of life crisis, such as birth, circumcision, marriage, and death; second, the salvation of the events in the calendar; third, social integration; and fourth, non-normal events, for example, leaving for a long journey, moving, changing the name of a person, chronic disease, witchcraft, etc. A wide variety of actions executed in a culture can be understood as an expression of pluralism. The diversity of religious communities is a necessity in society and shapes society in the form of a cultural collectivity. Through religious practices, religious people find the meeting point of religion which gives birth to social harmony irrespective of ideology, tribe, gender, nationality, and ethnicity. Pluralism enables one to solve cultural differences. The Qur'an teaches universal brotherhood and the acceptance of pluralism in society.

The history of Islam in Indonesia, especially in Java, is dominated by clerics (*kyai, Ajengan, master teacher, tengku, buya*), whose role and position have contributed to the Islamic community. The struggle at the level of both formal religious institutions and informal local leaders forms a relationship that is not based on organization. Religious actors have a major influence in

shaping the culture because believers trust the truth that is based on the local clerical leadership and the leadership of the institution of Islamic organizations. The local leadership is the inspiration and foundation of religious believers. This fosters a culture of local wisdom, which is a form of pluralism with a mission of salvation for all people.

All religions aim at salvation and truth-value following the argument of their respective religions. In pluralism, they should not be compared or contrasted. The reality of pluralism is a necessity of thought and human action when unity is needed. Pluralism is a view that all religions are on the same road to the core of religious reality. No one is superior to the other because all religions are considered valid to God. As revealed by Nicholas Rescher, the appreciation of pluralism means to appreciate the view of the other either individually or collectively. This view is also confirmed in Islamic thought, in that is there is no compulsion in religion, reality can be understood by doing acts of kindness through religious teachings.

Understanding Religion with Dialectics

Religion teaches dogmas (theology) about the Lord. Religious dogma can be applied not only vertically, but also horizontally. The implementation of religious teachings often results in understanding of religion as an ideology, whereas religion is a higher value than ideology. Many people present religion as a source of ideology to its adherents. However, religious understanding spawns a variety of interpretations, which can create a new culture in the community. The interaction of religion and culture has two different aspects, namely a vertical and a horizontal one. Horizontal interpretation is constructed through the dialectic of society. Dialectics between people in the generation of ideas is diverse. The implementation of religious teachings is done by establishing interreligious relations through dialectic, which serves as a communication bridge between religious communities. Religion, along with the culture of the region, builds tolerance in the community. From an Islamic perspective, several ways can be used as a foothold in the framework of thinking; first, the belief of every Muslim and mutual respect for any religion or any culture; second, people of different religions as the reality of God's will and personal choice of each people; third, every Muslim not burdened with the infidels; fourth, every Muslim following justice, doing good deeds, and not violating the law.

There are two ways to understand religion, the metaphysical aspect (belief) and aspects of expression (tradition). Beliefs and traditions always form religious history, a collection of important stories through which a tradition is known and understood cumulatively in the wider community. Cumulative tradition is not static but alive and dynamic, because cumulative traditions are active participants in shaping the convergence of human diversity. Convergence always exists in particular religions or religious traditions, which look at other religious traditions as their own. The experience of other traditional

religions should be interpreted as a cultural heritage in general and not considered strange or irrelevant because they are also involved in the life of God. A dialectics of religion can be done with some religious teachings, such as those concerning God, rituals, traditions, and mysteries. All religions believe in God, although the mention of God varies in Islam (Allah), Christianity (the Father in Heaven), or Hindu-Buddhism (*Sang Hyang Widi wasa*). These religions believe that God's religion is a universal religion. Each religion has a normative foundation contained in its holy book.

Aspects of ritual, tradition, and mysticism in every religion have things in common, although they are different in execution. In this respect, religion has both outside (exoteric) and inside (esoteric) characteristics. According to Frithjof Schuon's explanation of the goals of religions, the real nature of the divine is hidden inside. The outside and inside characteristics uniquely strengthen the position of religion because religion can be studied from different points of view or approaches. Some of the approaches emphasize that religion is universally well-studied at the level of authenticity. Interreligious dialectics show that Islam recommends doing good to people of other faiths. This principle is also taught in all religions: to keep a good relationship with anyone. Tolerance or understanding other religions is the key to religious life. The symbol of the power of religion can be seen in the form of worship of different religions, for instance, mosques, churches, synagogues, and temples. Practices or religious rituals are performed in each religion as a form of submission to a higher force. On the other hand, the practice of religion as a social and cultural force is also important because the dialectics of religion is the actualization of the theology of humanity.

Muslims are *Khayr ummah ummah Wasat*, which means that Muslims should be able to realize themselves in society with three requirements: first, Muslims can live together with followers of other religions and should not separate themselves from and shut down global life; second, the unity of Muslims and Islamic solidarity should not lead to ethnocentrism or acts of aggression, rather Muslims should cooperate in maintaining peace and promoting morality; third, Muslims should always be willing to listen and learn from the experiences of others and take good things.

The dialectic of the real meaning of religion for human life is logical reasoning, not a narrow viewpoint to understand their religion. The dialectics of religion is a key driver in building strong relationships. The attitude of respect for one another is also a key to producing the ideals of the religions of all nations. Lofty ideals bequeathed to religious communities can create a peaceful order to form a harmonious life that gives birth to culture. Religion is not history, but religious life bears historical and cultural forms. Interesting and unique events are complex phenomena, which can be used as a science to form a logic of history that encompasses power politics, science, social, legal and cultural, and religious phenomena. The essence of dialectics of religions is to explain the achievements of religions to reach "civilization."

Bisosiative Dialectics

The main requirement of dialectics is to find the right way to build interreligious communication. Relationship with one another is the dialectical relationship of mutual interest, with two important parts, the transformation at the macro level, and the revolution at the micro level. The dialectics on macro and micro levels must go through a long process to maximize results.

Contemplation and thought processes performed by the religious communities should be based on rational interpretation. Whereas people who are not religious need to get an explanation and understanding based on reflections and ideas, religion will be able to dialogue with any situation (cultural, political, legal, economic, etc.) at any time. Religion should always be in contact with any subject whose activity is oriented to the values of life taught by religion and who has a rational attitude in responding to any situation. To understand the dialectics of religion, we should consider the whole range of instruments and functions. The role of instruments and the functions of religion is to bring together the power of religious communities in various forms of activities.

Dialectics is done in the form of individual dialogue, which produces a variety of interpretations of each individual based on logical argument. Individual logic allows the logical form of dialectic and understanding of the teachings in the social context to occur through the dialectic of universal interpretation. In the esoteric aspects of religion, religion can only be understood by individuals based on a development that does not neglect an individual's experience as an actor. Dialectics in the form of good dialogue, personal, particular, and universal, enable individual actors to develop their potential through knowledge of objects that produce social values and economic and even political morality. The strength of the individual (subject) and knowledge (object) is to be able to read the situation and the conditions to achieve the objective benefit of the people. The individual with the object of knowledge can analyze social issues and can provide insight to the community. However, people need to understand the mismatch between expectations and what is actually happening with the unity of the community and the culture. The attitude of people is a form of struggle with a variety of strategies aiming at instilling public confidence in social belief (for instance, empathetic behavior through religion).

Frameworks as bisosiative dialectic should take into account a variety of strategies and make the process of dialogue a natural one in ways of a soft manner and a rational interpretation. There are two ways to do this: to understand one's thinking as different from the way of thinking and acting; and to be able to distinguish between oneself and others. The ability of organization is needed to shape a proper personality. The eclectic system of choice is to get the right answer by combining and seeking appropriate solutions with different groups.

Pluralist Actions Produce Bisosiative Actions

The view of pluralism is the right choice because it pays attention to the phenomenon of an increasingly complex society. Pluralism appreciates and understands differences as inevitable, and sees that all religions are on the same road to the core of religious reality. No religion is superior to any other because all religions are considered valid to God. Human beings as God's creatures have a proper way to understand differences of religion, ethnicity, language, tradition, or culture. As Nicholas Rescher explains, to appreciate the existence of pluralism is to appreciate the view of individuals or groups. The ability of individuals to appreciate the views of individuals or groups means to be able to establish an open dialogue with other people.

Pluralism is not an abstract idea or thought. The product of an attitude or action is based on four important aspects: to have an open attitude; to appreciate tolerance; to uphold democratic values; and to create a pluralistic society. The individual attitude that seeks to combine the logic of reason and social reality is called bisosiative action. Bisosiative action can be understood as behaviors or actions of individuals who want to have a meaningful interpretation of the individual's information. Interpretation of individuals is through the generative process of the cognitive formation of ideas or ideas implemented in actions. Individual action is a process of self-realization and emanation, which have a mysterious meaning. The effects of these actions also have a subjective meaning for those who direct the actions of others. Bisosiative action is not obtained only through cognition but also through the affectivity of individuals, namely, by giving explanations in a way that is independent of an objective relation with surrounding people and with the community. Individuals or groups who recognize and understand pluralism are those who always keep the dynamics of society as a form of bisosiative action. The goal is to maintain the sustainability or viability of the secured environment to keep it dynamic and constructive.

Conclusion

Dialectics is one appropriate method to understand pluralism in society. There are three forms of dialectics, the particular dialectic, personal dialectic, and universal dialectic. Individual actors initiate dialectics by integrating personality through bisosiative action. Bisosiative action is the implementation of ideas or thoughts in generative processes of various dialectics with social reality.

Pluralism is a cultural product that originates from the diversity of the complex social reality and gives rise to new thinking for deep analysis. Bisosiative thought contributes significantly to actions with due regard to particular matters, values, etc. It is universal. The diversity of the complex world is a necessity for bisosiative action. Pluralism as a product of culture or religion continues to color world civilization. Bisosiative thought provides an

alternative solution that contributes to reinforcing the meaning of actions of individual actors in the understanding of pluralistic societies.

Bibliography

Adler, Mortimer J. *Truth in Religion the Plurality of Religions and the Unity of Truth.* New York: Macmillan, 1990.

Ahluwalia, Muninder K. and Anjali Alimchandani. "A Call to Integrate Religious Communities into Practice: The Case of Sikhs." Accessed June 20, 2014. http://www.apa.org/education/ce/integrate-religious-communities.pdf.

al Qar}d}a>wy Yu>suf. *Ghoir al Muslimii>n fi> al Mujtama' al Isla>my.* Accessed March 20, 2014. lihat www.al-mustafa.com.

Badawi, Jamal A. *Hubungan Antar-agama: Sebuah Perspektif Islam.* In *Memahami Hubungan Antar-agama.* Translated by Burhanuddin Dzikri. Yogyakarta: Sukses Offset, 2007.

Barkun, Michael. *A Culture of Conspiracy Apocalyptic Visions in Contemporary America.* Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press, 2003.

Berry, Bonnie. *Social Rage Emotion and Cultural Conflict.* New York: Garland Publishing, 1999.

Bhajananda, Swami. *Harmony of Religion from Standpoint of Sri Ramakrisna and Swami Vivekananda,* Kolkota: Ramakrisna Mission Institute of Culture, 2007.

Bleeker, C. J. *Pertemuan Agama-Agama Dunia: Menuju Humanisme Religius dan Perdamaian Universal.* Translated by Syafaruddin. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Dian Pratama, 2004.

Bourdieu, Pierre. *Arena Produksi Kultural; Sebuah Kajian Sosiologi Budaya.* Bantul: Kreasi Wacana, 2012.

Cahill, Michael. *The Environment and Social Policy.* New York: Routledge, 2002.

Cantwell, Wilfred Smith. *Kitab Suci Agama-Agama.* Translated by Dede Iswadi. Jakarta: Mizan, 2005.

Durkheim. Emile. *The Elementary Form of Religious Life.* Translated by Karen E. Fields. New York: The Free Press, 1995.

Edgar, André and Peter Sedgwick. *Key Concepts in Cultural Theory.* New York: Routledge, 1999.

Fraklin, Adrian. *Nature and Social Theory.* London: Sage, 2002.

Gabriel, Markus. "The Dialectic of the Absolute: Hegel's Critique of Transcendent Metaphysic." In *The Dimension of Hegel's Dialectics*, edited by Nectarios G. Limnatis. New York: Continuum, 2010.

Gadamer, Hans-Georg. *Hegel's Dialectic: Five Hermeneutical Studies.* Translated by P. Christoper Smith. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1976.

Gal, Ofer and Raz Chen-Morris. "Empiricism without the Senses: The Instrument Replaced the Eye." In *The Body as Object and Instrument of*

Knowledge, edited by Charles T. Wolfe and Ofer Gal. New York-London: Springer, 2010.

Geertz Clifford. *Religion of Java*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1976.

Greyerz, Kaspar von. *Religion and Culture in Early Modern Europe 1500-1800*. Translated by Thomas Dunlap. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Hick, John. "The Next Step Beyond Dialogue" In *The Myth of Religious Superiority a Multifaith Exploration*, edited by Paul F. Knitter. New York: Orbis Book, 2005.

Hidayat, Komaruddin. *Agama untuk Kemanusiaan dalam Atas Nama Agama.* Bandung: Pustaka Hidayah, 1998.

------. "Dilema Obyektifitas Agama." *Jurnal PERTA* 4, no. 1 (2001).

Hilmy, Masdar. *Islam, Politik dan Demokrasi: Pergulatan antara Agama, Negara dan Kekuasaan.* Surabaya: Imtiyaz, 2014.

Keene, James J. "Baha'i World Faith: Redefinition of Religion." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 6, no. 2 (Autumn, 1967).

Kleman, David E. and William Schweiker. *Religion and the Human Future. An Essay on Theological Humanism.* Singapore: Blackwell Publishing, 2008.

Klemola, Juhani, ed. *Type of Variation, Dialectal and Typological Interfaces.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1984.

Kuntowijoyo. *Muslim Tanpa Masjid: Essai-Essai Agama, Budaya dan Politik dalam Bingkai Strukturalisme Transendental.* Bandung: Mizan, 2001.

Machasin. *Struggle for Authority between Formal Religious Institution and Informal-Local Leaders.* In *Varieties of Religious Authority*, edited by Azyumardi Azra and Kees Van Dijk. Singapore: ISEAS, 2010.

Madjid, Nurcholish. *Islam Doktrin Dan Peradaban.* Jakarta: Dian Rakyat, Paramadina, 2008.

Mcgrath, Alister E. *Christian Theology: an Introduction.* Oxford: Blackwell, 1994.

Mingers, John. "Information, Meaning, and Communication: an Autopoietic Approach." In *Sociocybernetics: Complexity, Autopoiesis and Observation of Social Systems.* London: Greenwood, 2007.

Mondal, Anshuman A. *Nationalism and Post-Colonial Identity: Culture and Ideology in India and Egypt.* London: Routledge, 2003.

Moore, G. E. "The Value of Religion." *International Journal of Ethics* 12, no. 1 (October 1991).

Munawar, Budhy al-Rachman. *Ensiklopedi Nurcholish Madjid, Pemikiran Islam di kanvas Peradaban.* Jakarta: Mizan, 2006.

------. *Islam Pluralis: Wacana Kesetaraan Kaum Beriman.* Jakarta: Paramadina, 2001.

Nevins, Andrew. *Locality in Wovel Harmony Linguistic Inquiry Monographs.* Cambridge, MA: MIT, 2010.

O'dea, Thomas F. *Sosiologi Agama Suatu Pengenalan Awal.* Jakarta: Rajawali, 1987.

OsmaFathi. "Islam and Human Rights, the Challenge to Muslim and The World." In *Rethinking Islam and Modernity*, edited by Abdel Wahab El-Effandi. London: The Islamic Foundation, 2001.

Parsons, Talcott. *Sociological Theory,* New York: The Free Press, 1954.

Rawls, John. *A Brief Inquiry into the Meaning of Sin and Faith with on my Religion.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009.

Rescher, Nicholas. *Pluralism: Against the Demand of Consensus.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.

Rifa'I, Muhammad Abduh. "Textual and Kontextual Interpretation. Toward Religious Harmony in Indonesia." In *Antologi Studi Agama*, edited by Rahmat Fadjri. Yogyakarta: Jurusan Perbandingan Agama, 2012.

Sarfuddin, Endang Anshari. *Ilmu Filsafat dan Agama.* Surabaya: Bina Ilmu, 1987.

Schuon, Frithjof. *Form and Substance in the Religions.* Bloomington, IN: World Wisdom, 2002.

Setiyani, Wiwik. "Hak Azasi Manusia dalam Wacana Keislaman di Indonesia." *Jurnal Islamedia* 11, no. 1 (2011).

Sewell Jr., William H. *Logics of History: Social Theory and Social Transformation.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2005.

Smart, Barry. *Michael Foucault Key Sociologist.* New York: Routledge, 2002.

Smart, Ninian. "Sebuah Pengantar." In *Aneka Pendekatan Studi Agama,* edited by Peter Cornnolly. Jakarta: Lkis, 2012.

Thompson, Michael, Richard Ellis and Aaron Wildavsky. *Cultural Theory.* San Francisco, CA: Westview Press, 1990.

Vitz, Paul C. *Religion as Psychology: The Cult of Self-Worship.* Michigan, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995.

Voltaire. *Traktat Toleransi.* Yogyakarta: Lkis, 2004.

11

The Religious Pluralism Movement
in Indonesia

Kunawi BASYIR

Introduction

In the era of modernization and globalization fueled by capitalism and liberalism, members of religious communities have a chance to interpret religion at will. As a result, religion loses its image as the source of value and norm and as the guidance of collective behavior in social and cultural life. It rather appears as a source of religious recognition through the process of construction, deconstruction, and reconstruction, which is more individualistic in relation to interpretation and comprehension. Many academics in this regard call the current era the resurrection era of religious thought together with social conflict.[1] Although religion does not have the same impact as before, religious thoughts still play a pivotal role. As Huston Smith mentions, the world today has entered a critical period in the sense that religion has become the weak point of national and constitutional life. The loyalty of religious members negatively tends to bear an exclusive ideology that is capable of causing *ethnic-religious* conflicts.[2]

This condition hurts the future of national and constitutional life in Indonesia because, for some centuries until the last decade, the order of social and religious life in Indonesia has been peaceful and avoided conflicts. However, since Indonesia is entering a new phase of the reformation of national and constitutional life, the emergence of political and economic unrest resulted in social conflicts, which disrupted the peace of the Indonesian state. For instance, in 1998, the source of conflicts had two cultural elements: ethnicity and religion.[3] Through both religion and ethnicity, society tends to be-

---

[1] The era is marked by the remarkable rise of religious life and spiritual inclination for the modern human around the globe. See Huston Smith, *Agama-Agama Manusia*, trans. Safroedin Bahar (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 1995), 15. Compared to Nurcholish Madjid, *Islam Doctrine Peradaban: Sebuah Telaah Kritis Tentang Masalah Keimanan, Kemanusiaan, Dan Kemodernan* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1992), 7.

[2] Smith, *Agama-Agama*, 5.

[3] The phenomenon affirms Huntington's thesis that the main determining factor of the political contestation of the world is the divergence of cultures and civilizations, rather than the disparity of ideological interests, national state, and economy. One of the most distinguished elements is religion. He summarizes that the clash of civilizations is visible between the East and the West. Ethnicity, tradition, or culture is blocked by objective elements such as ethics, history, traditional speech, institution, custom, and religion. With

come more identitarian, dichotomic, and differentiated. In this regard, the cultural fault line of the situation becomes the basis of controversies. In cultural relations, religion becomes one of the most determinant elements.[4]

Some phenomena have shown that the problem of plurality constitutes the top challenge for religions in Indonesia. The existence of religious plurality needs to be regarded as a natural reality in today's society and has a logical consequence for social life, namely the obligation to live in peace among different religions. The paradigms and postures, which for so long tended to be exclusive, are tested in a multi-religious scope in the multicultural society, so that the inclusive paradigm,[5] tolerance, and even moderate understanding of religion have become the only solution for Indonesia. This is happening in Denpasar–Bali. The composition of the Bali people is more plural and multicultural and constitutes a substantial matter in building a condition intended to bring about a good social order. However, in 2002, the state was shaken by the incident of the Bali bombing. This phenomenon made the Islam-Hindu relationship much more difficult, for it had been conducive to seeking compromise and tolerance. With that incident, the government along with the religious elites in Bali immediately held a conference with the participation of six religions to find solutions to the tension between Muslim and Hindu peoples. Several meetings finally resulted in an agreement that the Bali bombing was not an Islamic mistake but because Bali culture had been disturbed by the political and global world. The only need faced by the government and the society in Bali is the revitalization of the Bali tradition, that is, *Menyama Braya* tradition (you are me, and I am you) as *Ajeg Bali*. To resurrect the culture of *Menyama Braya*, the local government along with the local people launched the multiculturalism movement, which can be seen from the following discussion.

The Government Role in Practicing Religious Pluralism in Indonesia

As mentioned above, the journey of religious pluralism in Indonesia has been dealing with a reverse situation. The value of religious pluralism in Indonesia is experiencing a reshuffling due to the high wave of globalization.

---

the logical impact of the objective element, culture has the same restriction as the subjective element, which is the self-identification of individuals. In turn, these two things make up intercultural distinctions that are not only real but also elemental. See Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 68.

[4] Ibid., 56.

[5] This paradigm believes that the adhered religion (*Agama Anutan*) possesses the perfect truth and salvation more than other religions. Other religions may be right because they contain certain characteristics possessed by the adhered religion (*Agama Anutan*). This concept is open and does not agree with a claim that can be used as an excuse to negate the rightness and creed of other religions. This concept always seeks the common platform in a plural society. See Fatimah Husein, *Muslim-Christian Relations in the New Order Indonesia: The Exclusivist and Inclusivist Muslims Perspectives* (Bandung: Mizan, 2005), 31.

This means that all cultures from the outside have colored social life in Indonesia. The Arabic culture came to Indonesia by carrying its culture and ideology, such as *Wahabiyyah*, *Syiria*; the Indian culture contributed with its *Ahmadiyah*, the Persian with its *Shi'ah*. But Indonesia has its own culture which contains diversity in unity showing each their own identity and ideology. However, the variation of culture and ideology in Indonesia did not become the prime model. Indonesia has become a divided society, thus the multicultural reality possessed by Indonesia has become a social liability. Indonesian culture is no longer a friendly culture, but a violent one. Violence in the name of ethnicity, culture, or religion has become a trademark in Indonesia. But before the world religions appeared, Indonesia already had a religious faith emphasizing inner tranquility, equality, balance, and inter-ethnic harmony.[6]

In terms of the historical experience of religions in Indonesia, although Islamic typology in Indonesia can currently be qualified as syncretic,[7] the spirit of pluralism is still well-maintained and leads *Islamic Indonesia* to a moderate territory with the development of technology and information. However, the emergence of religious radicalism threatens religious pluralism in Indonesia. In the 1960s, the problems related to interreligious conflicts could be quickly solved by discussions that produced pillars (*sila-sila*) in Pancasila (five pillars) and the presidential decree. Such a situation has not prevailed because in 1965 the interreligious relationship was upset by tension, for example, the church impairment in Makasar (1967), the Jakarta Slipi incident (1969), the Banyuak Island of Aceh (1969), Flores (1969), Donggo of East Sumbawa (1969), the Bukit Tinggi Hospital (1970), and the Catholic Tarakinata Building of Jakarta (1975). According to Natsir, those problems were caused by the Muslims' protests against the government, which was not able to produce a good result.[8]

K. H. Mochammad Dahlan, the minister of religious affairs of Indonesia at that time, held an interreligious conference to avoid interreligious conflicts, attended by T. B. Simatupang, A. M. Tambunan, the Protestant representative, Kasimo, the Catholic representative, H. M. Rasyidi, the Muslim representative, and others from Hindu and Buddhist communities. This conference showed the government's serious response to the problems of violation among religious followers. The concern was that such problems would lead to a bigger problem (a national disaster) if they were not resolved through interreligious dialogue. According to President Soeharto's recommendation,

---

[6] For more detail on social harmony in the religious field in Indonesian history, see Niels Mulder, *Kepribadian Jawa dan Pembangunan* (Yogyakarta: Gajah Mada University Press, 1981), 12.

[7] Islamic syncretism is Islamic religious practices mixed with local cultures but the exchange of Islamic values with local cultures (Hindu) means that Islamic behavior is in contradiction with Islamic values.

[8] M. Natsir, *Mencari Modus Vivendi Antarumat Beragama di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Media Dakwah, 1980), 23.

to live interreligious life smoothly, we need to have an attitude of respecting each other and not compelling people to join a religion.[9]

In 1975, the interreligious institute was finally formed. It took so much time because of some obstacles, in particular, that no institution could represent Islam. At that time, there were only institutions affiliated with certain religious organizations, rather than independent organizations. Finally, on July 27, 1975, the Indonesian Ulama' Council (MUI), an independent organization representing Islam in Indonesia, was formed. Christians have the Indonesian Church Council (DGI), Catholics have the Committee of Church Representatives (MAWI), Buddhists have the inter-Indonesian Buddhist Coordinating Institution (WALUBI), and Hindus have the Indonesian Parishada Hindu Dharma (PHDI).[10] Through government support, Mukti Ali organized various consultative forums, dialogues, and interreligious conferences. He created the "interreligious harmony project."[11]

The strained situation occurred not only because the government suspended supporting Islam but also because of competition among Muslim people. We can observe this competition in the Building United Party (PPP), consisting of two big powers: *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU) which tends to be critical toward the government, and the Indonesian Muslimin (MI), which is more accommodative. These two political powers often show rivalry, which risks exacerbating disputes among Muslims and threatening Indonesian national stability. Alamsyah Ratu Prawiranegara, the religious minister of the Indonesian Republic, took the situation in hand and advocated for interreligious harmony with the phrase of "*trilogi kerukunan*" (harmony trilogy).

The government policy toward interreligious harmony did not only stop with the period in office of Alamsjah but continued with Muhammad Maftuh Busyani, the religious minister, who organized many dialogues and seminars about interreligious harmony. In the seminar organized by the minister of religion in Jakarta on December 31, 2008, Basyuni conveyed that interreligious harmony constituted a dynamic pillar of national harmony that needed to be cultivated continuously to create a harmonic relationship based on tolerance, mutual understanding, and respect of equality in practicing religious teaching in social and national life.[12] In 1978, Alamsjah published Decisional Letter No. 70 about the rule of religious dissemination and the assistance to religious institutions in Indonesia.

Many conflicts and violence in the name of religion took place and increased from 1999 to April 2001 as, for instance, 327 churches and 254 mosques were ruined in Maluku. After various aggressive actions, the expul-

---

[9] Azyumardi Azra, *Menteri-Menteri Agama RI: Biografi Sosial-Politik* (Jakarta: INIS Bekerjasamadengan Balitbang Depag RI, 1998), 259.

[10] Ibid., 302.

[11] Djohan Effendi, "Dialog Antar Agama: Bisakah MelahirkanTeologi Kerukunan," *PRISMA*, no. 5 (June 1978): 14.

[12] Accessed October 2, 2012, http://www.scribd.com/doc/90.358408/agama-islam-keru kunan-antar-umat-beragama.

sion and impairment of worshipping places affected many religious communities, Catholic, Christian, and Hindu.[13] In the Ahmadiyah case, violence continued more dramatically in several places, such as Manis Lor Kuningan of West Java, Parung Bogor, Prayo of Central Lombok, and Lingsar of West Lombok.[14]

To keep national stability and to avoid social conflicts, the government has a fundamental role in realizing the recognition of pluralism and interreligious harmony in Indonesia, with the assistance of religious organizations such as the Interreligious Interaction Forum (FIA), Interreligious Harmony Forum (FKUB), and the Cross-Religious Communication Forum (FKLA). Besides dialogues, the government should also issue regulations, either in the form of constitutional and decisional letters or instructions, as well as instructions executed by the president or the ministers. These government regulations do not purport to intervene in religious freedom in Indonesia but to preserve law and order so that national stability is not disrupted. The religious problem should be placed in the private sphere; however, if religious activities disrupt the public order and threaten the peaceful coexistence of people, then the form of religious operations would become not private but public. The government then is responsible to protect and prioritize the collective welfare by creating harmony in Indonesian religious life.

Civil Society as a Basis for the Movement of Religious Pluralism

One of the popular issues in the late 90s was the discourse of *masyarakat madani* (urban society). This issue was discussed among academics regarding the unstable social-political condition of Indonesia that finally reached the level of a crisis of identity and civilization. According to Naquib al-Attas, the term "madani" equals "civil society," meaning people who highly respect the values of civilization.[15]

As Indonesia is in a post-reformation phase, central power has vanished. The new order is in the scope of symbolic power. Power is finally placed in the state organization located at the level of the province, region, district, and village. For instance, *Desa Pakraman* (traditional village) in Denpasar-Bali was included in this power struggle. The spirit of regional autonomy as one of the powers to build a civil society in Denpasar is more powerful, for the traditional village becomes a reincarnation of the new state for the Bali people, who place *Desa Pakraman* as the last defensive fort of Bali culture. Varied movements and programs for maintaining tradition are taking place. The government, along with the Bali people, has started to popularize the "Ajeg

---

[13] Muhammad Ali, *Teologi Pluralis-Multikultural: Menghargai Kemajemukan Menjalin Kebersamaan* (Jakarta: Penerbit Buku Kompas, 2003), 65.

[14] Fawaizul Umam, "Tera Ulang Peran Profetik Tuan Guru," in "Konteks Kebebasan Beragama di Pulau Lombok," *Ulumuna* 13, no. 2 (December 2009): 433.

[15] Naquib al-Attas in Riswanda Imawan, *Masyarakat Madani dan Agenda Demokratisasi* (Jakarta: LSAF, 1999), 12.

Bali," that is, Bali must return to "barract," meaning that it has to be established based on Bali culture, which is Hindu.

The will of the Bali people to regulate their regional rules in accordance with Hindu teaching is starting to be practiced.[16] Although the Bali people use Hindu laws in their regulation, the regional rules still allow other religious groups to live side by side with the Hindus. Such religious tolerance based on traditional rules existed long ago in the small kingdoms of Bali, such as the Waturenggong Kingdom in Klungkung and Badung in Denpasar.[17] In the kingdom era, the term *Menyama Brama* was prominently introduced; however, because of modernization and hegemony of the new political order, the tolerant tradition of Bali culture disappeared.

Thus, one of the *Ajeg Bali* that needs to return is *Menyama Braya* (I am you and you are me). That culture constitutes a powerful form of religious tolerance in the Denpasar city of Bali. The key concept of the Hindu people in terms of interreligious tolerance is "*Tat Twam Asi*" and "*Yama Niyama Brata.*" The former means I am you; the latter, you are me. For the Bali people, when we love ourselves, having self-affection, we have to say and do something to others as we do to ourselves. If these principles work, the peace of life in this world will be granted. We can see the embodiment of the concept in people's routine activities through the tradition of *Ngupoin, Mapitulu*,[18] *Mejenukkan, Ngejot*,[19] etc. All of those traditions constitute a form of interreligious harmony in Denpasar Bali.

Strong interreligious tolerance as well as "*Ajeg Bali*" or "*Ajeg Hindu*" conform to the social structure of Bali people who are multicultural. This is what the local government of Denpasar city is trying to attain: "*Denpasar Kreatif Berwawasan Budaya Dalam Keseimbangan Menuju Keharmonisan*" (the creative Denpasar insightful culture in balance with harmony). Ajeg Hindu as the Bali icon for national and international eyes, apparently equal

---

[16] The 1991 Local Regulation No. 3 states that Bali culture has much to do with Hinduism to preserve the harmony of society and its culture. The first Bali governor, I Made Mangku Pastika, stated that for tradition, culture, and religion, Hinduism is the basic model to realize safeness.

[17] In the era of Nusantara Kingdoms, the *Badung* Kingdom had a conflict with the *Mengwi* Kingdom. The *Badung* Kingdom gained assistance from Muslim troops of the *Bugis* Kingdom and defeated the *Mengwi* Kingdom. This was one of the Muslim pioneers in Kepaon of Denpasar city. See "Muslim Has Come to Bali Since the 15 BC," *Bali Post*, December 2, 2001.

[18] *Ngupoin*, *mapitulung* means to help neighbors, friends, and relatives in the ceremonial preparation. This tradition has become a custom of the Denpasar society when there would be ceremonies either in marriage or other rituals. Muslim and Hindu people are around to give each other a hand for the success of the ritual, also for accommodation, etc. The distinction between *Ngupoin* and *Mapitulung* is that the former means a person who conducts the *Hajatan* (someone's will), while the latter is used when a religious ceremony is conducted.

[19] *Ngejot* is food sharing (meat) to neighbors, nearest relatives. This tradition used to be performed in Hari Raya (Holy day) of *Nyepi* among the Hindu people and *Idul Fitri* among the Muslims.

to the theory of multiculturalism,[20] was excluded by George Ritzer. This postmodern figure emphasizes the problem of alienation and the upward trend of intellectuals, meaning that minority and isolated groups are well educated to a higher position and significance in the social world.

"*Ajeg Bali*" as the icon to unite the multicultural society in Bali, especially in Denpasar, is the right choice to make Bali a zone of security, peace, and welfare. If we try to understand the historical record of the term, although it has a strong sense of Hinduism, it does not mean to close off interreligious tolerance but rather to be open to religious harmony similar to that of "*Menyama Braya.*" The term *Ajeg Bali*, meaning that the Denpasar people must have an autonomous Bali culture, prevailed because for several years, particularly in the new era, the government organized only one agency for tourism in Bali with the term *Sapta Pesona*. Government hegemony made Bali lose its identity. The outcome was that the Bali people became confused. This was the background of the Bali bombing in 2002.[21]

According to Antonio Gramsci, there are two levels in the principal structure of government administration: civil society and political society. Civil society evokes the whole apparatus commonly called *swasta* (private agency), such as educational institutions, mass media, and religious institutions. Political society or the state evokes all public institutions that have the power to control the governmental system. Gramsci argues that hegemony belongs to a political class that is successful in deceiving other classes of society into accepting moral values, politics, or cultures.[22]

The Bali people realize that they have to rise and stand on their own feet. Borrowing A. S. Hikam's terminology, the Bali people have to build a civil society based on self-identity. In this regard, the local wisdom (Hindu culture) could be the way to bring Bali into *Bali maksartham jagadhita ya ca iti dharma* (physical and spiritual welfare), as dreamed by the Hindu or Bali people in general. The function of fortification and the discourse to empower civil society of the Bali people, "*Ajeg Bali*" and even "*Ajeg Hindu*," is to popularize a return to Bali tradition so that Bali could become a brighter, more

---

[20] This theory has seven characteristics: *first*, to refuse a universalistic theory to defend the ones in power; *second*, to try to be inclusive and give attention to the oppressed groups; *third*, not to be free from moral values: *fourth,* to try to be open; *fifth,* not to distinguish big and small narrations; *sixth,* to be critical; *seventh,* to acknowledge work restricted by a certain creation either in a cultural contextual form or a social form. See George Ritzer, *Teori Sosial Postmodern*, trans. Muhammad Taufiq (Yogyakarta: Kreasi Wacana, 2005), 322.

[21] The reason for the problem of the relationship between Muslim and Hindu people in Bali after the Bali bombing, according to Agung Putri is the collapse of economic life. Tourism is down due to fear of the insecure situation in Bali. The Bali bombing was conducted by a Muslim, giving rise to an anti-Islam sentiment. See "Ngurah Agung Memulihkan Keretakan Hindu-Muslim" [Ngurah Agung recovers the cracked Hindu-Muslim relation], *Tempo*, August 21, 2013.

[22] Antonio Gramsci, *Selection from Prison Notebook* (New York: International Publisher, 1971), 57.

secure, and more fascinating place with its culture, economics, and socio-religious tradition.[23]

One of *Ajeg Bali* that needs bringing back as the pole of *masyarakat madani* (civil society) in Bali is the role of history, Islam being established since 1460 in the era of the Gelgel Kingdom in Klungkung.[24] In Tabanan, the relationship between the Hindu and Muslim people has existed since the early 1900s. The togetherness and harmony of Muslim and Hindu people in Bali have been long preserved and protected by the people. The Muslim and Hindu people in Bali want to rebuild their relationship in the context of the interrelationship of *ke-Muslim-an dan ke-Bali-an* (Muslim-ness and Bali-ness). However, the contemporary situation, especially socio-political and economic, has distorted the harmony of the Muslim-Hindu relationship, and the Bali bombing eventually exacerbated the problem of interreligious tolerance in Denpasar and Bali generally.

Ngurah Agung,[25] for example, goes by the motto of re-building "*Bali Harmony*" under the flag of the Hindu-Muslim Brotherhood in Bali (PHMB).[26] For him, the harmony of Hindu-Muslim people was brought about by the presence of moral values and the socio-cultural consistency of the Hindu and Muslim people. In terms of moral values, Bali has beautiful resources. This beauty is well maintained since Bali people apply *Tri Hitakarana* and *Tat Twam Asi*. In terms of socio-political culture, Bali has an

---

[23] I Gede Mudana, "Lokalisme dalam Politik Lokal Bali" [Localism in Bali local politic], in *Jelajah Kajian Budaya,* ed. I Made Suastika (Denpasar: Pustaka larasan in cooperation with Program Studi Magister dan Doktor Kajian Budaya Unversitas Udhayana, 2012), 59.

[24] The pioneers of Islam in Klungkung were the forty guardians of the Majapahit Kingdom in the era of Dalem Ketut Ngelisir (Raja Gelgel I). The king of Dalem Ketut Ngelisir in the Majapahit dynasty established the Gelgel Kingdom in Klungkung. M. Sarlan, *Sejarah Keberadaan Umat Islam di Bali* (Denpasar: Bimas Islam Depag Propinsi Bali, 2002), 64.

[25] Being born in the Puri (kingdom) circle, Ngurah Agung was raised in accordance with the Hindu tradition in *Pakraman*. The forefather of Ngurah Agung was renowned and had a close relationship with Islam. For instance, A. A. Manik Mas Mirah, the princess of the Pemecutan king, married the king of Madura Barat Cakraningrat IV and then converted to Islam and changed her name to Siti Khodijah. However, Ngurah Agung's fear of Muslim people emerged since he became acquainted with Gus Dur around 1995. Since then, Ngurah Agung frequently visited Islamic boarding schools in East Java and has ongoing relations with the *Kiai* (Islamic religious figures). He is fluent in reciting or spelling *dzikir* (Islamic praying). Based on his close relationship with *Muslimin* (Muslim people), he is even called Ngurah Agung Muslim. See "Ngurah Agung Memulihkan Keretakan Hindu-Muslim."

[26] PHMB is an Association of Hindus and Muslims in Denpasar Bali, which teaches tolerance and respect to each other. Its leading members are A. A Ngurah Agung, SE (PHMB leader), A. A. Putu Rai (advisor), A. A. Gd Ariewangsa, SS (the leader of PHMB soldiers), and Wayan Gede Gunawan, Msi (academician/honorary advisor). This association was established when the Bali bombing disrupted the peace of Bali and caused tension between the Muslim and Hindu people. The bomb was detonated by a terrorist but in the name of religion. However, the relationship between Hindu and Muslim people was harmonious in earlier times. *Tempo*, October 6, 2013, http://phmbBali.blogspot.com.

open-minded culture and is capable of cultivating the culture of *nyama braya*, *segilik seguluk*, *beda paksi bina paksa*. These two aspects of *ke-Bali-an* (Baliness) are relevant to the Islamic concept; as the local wisdom, this concept has been applied by different communities collectively. The Bali community in the past, for example, was able to create such harmony despite different faiths. This spirit has been carried on by the Bali people as a principle based on religious tolerance.

Multiculturalism as a Base for the Movement of Religious Pluralism

The plural culture of the Denpasar people is supported by its ethnic groups. The ethnic Bali consists of the indigenous people of Bali, who are the largest community compared to other ethnic groups. But the local culture is still dominated not only by the indigenous Bali culture but also by Hinduism. There is a mutual relation between religion and the local culture. Thus, we may say that the Bali culture is Hinduism, and Hinduism is the Bali culture; namely, the existence of Hinduism could not be separated from the Bali culture itself. The religion of the Bali Hindu becomes the moral value system and norm implemented in action and the social system and is manifested in varied cultural materials.

Existentially, Bali should not become a hindrance to the rise of pluralism in Denpasar City.[27] The spirit of Bali is the building stock of the multicultural awareness of the Denpasar people, which will lead them to a strong cultural pluralism. This is because Bali culture is based on Hinduism and espoused by the popular term of *Menyama Braya*, which is always socialized and practiced in this plural society.[28] Along with plural culture and ethnicity, the plurality of religions (Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Catholicism, Christianity, and Confucianism) is also espoused. The divergence of beliefs and faiths does not hurt the existing social structure in Denpasar; instead, it brings the spirit of togetherness to the building of a reliable city.[29]

---

[27] A religious movement is often related to moral values because some elements are out of date or irrelevant to the change and development of the age. Theologically, fundamentalism is identical to literalism, primitivism, legalism, and tribalism, whereas politically, it is connected with *populism reaksioner* (reactionary populism). See James Barr, *Fundamentalism* (London: SCM Press, 1977), 1. Lionel Caplan, *Studies in Fundamentalism* (London: Macmillan Press, 1987), 1.

[28] We can see in the 1991 regional regulation number 3 that tourism in its development is based on the Bali culture and the Hindu tradition by protecting the harmony of inter-tourism, society, and culture. Some time ago, the Bali governor, I. Gd. Mangku Pastika, conveyed in his opening speech that with the one tradition, culture, and religion which is Hinduism, we have a model to bring safety to our tradition, culture, and religion. In addition, the same idea is conveyed in the mission of Denpasar "*Denpasar Kreatif Berwawasan Budaya dalam Keseimbangan Menuju Keharmonisan*" [Creative Denpasar Cultural Insight in Harmonious Balance], one point of which is to grow self-identity of the people of Denpasar based on the Bali culture.

[29] In the wake of the 2002 bombing, the first step was taken to build interreligious and ethnic cooperation for a multicultural society. Several institutions such as FKUB, FKAEN,

Interreligious tolerance and harmony in Bali and Denpasar are promising, for there have not been collisions. This is because the Bali people have inherited a tradition transmitted from generation to generation for fifteen centuries. Due to the mutual understanding and appreciation of people of different ethnic and religious groups, they have created interreligious tolerance and harmony. For example, when the Hindu people celebrate the great day of Nyepi (the new year of Saka 1935/2013 M) in Denpasar, the Muslim community participates in helping the process of Nyepi.

The culture of *Menyama Braya* can become a good program for a multicultural society in Denpasar because *Menyama Braya* has a strategic meaning for the development of Bali in the future. *Menyama Braya* becomes an excellent expression for all religions in Bali. A program for dialogue was presented by FKUB Bali, in which all representatives of religions shared their perspectives on the concept of *Menyama Braya* and its relevance to each of the religious teachings.[30] Several religious figures depicted that *Menyama Braya* constitutes one of the supporting factors for the implementation of interreligious tolerance in Bali, particularly in Denpasar. The term *Menyama Braya* is not only popular among the Bali people (only the Hindu) but also among others (*Nyama Selam*). Thus, the difference in religious understanding does not constitute a challenge but a solution for the religious life of the multicultural society (Hindu-Muslim). They have mutual respect, understanding, and consideration toward each other, for they can distinguish what is doctrinal and social.

To avoid any disputes among religious people in Denpasar, religious figures and *Ulama'* (Islamic religious leaders) are always active in reminding the *MuBalighs, Ustadz, Guru Ngaji* (religious teacher), and *Khotib* (mosque official) to promote interreligious tolerance in any religious lecture on al-Qur'an and Hadith and to avoid themes that destabilize the nation, for instance, infidel, pig, and statue worship. These themes could bring offense to the Hindu community and should be avoided as triggers to disintegration. By scrutinizing some of the phenomena above, we can see how the Bali people maintain interreligious harmony in the multicultural society in Bali. Although some unpredictable incidents may take place, thus bringing a feeling of insecurity, suspiciousness, and doubt, the effort based on traditions fosters the realization of the idea of multiculturalism.

PHMB had the agenda of establishing dialogue for promoting the harmony of inter-religious and ethnic communities in Denpasar.

[30] The representative of Islam, Muhammad Anshory, for example, conveyed that Islamic teachings, especially the Islamic pillars, constituted the universal principle that is used to foster the ethical and peaceful life of *Menyama Braya*. The concept of Islamic pillars must be implemented to promote brotherhood in the plural society as well as in Denpasar because *Menyama Braya* is an excellent social institution. Agreeing with Anshory, Suharlin, the representative of Hinduism, explained that *Menyama Braya* is an attitude and behavior of the Bali people to acknowledge and accept diversity of ethnicity, religion, and race. This statement was supported by Sudiarta, the Buddhist representative, showing that the local wisdom of *Menyama Braya* in Denpasar is not only a discourse but also something that should be implemented among the Bali people.

Multi-ethnic diversity essentially has two potential sides: unique diversity and conflict. These potentialities need to be carefully organized and well maintained so that conflict will not arise. For this purpose, interreligious tolerance and harmony were established by the educational sector and social movements (LSM). The educational organization of *Miftahul Ulum* in the Javanese village developed the following vision and mission: learning to know, learning to make, learning to live together, and learning to face others (four educational pillars).

The awareness of multiculturalism leading to interreligious tolerance in Bali is also continued by social webs such as the Interracial Community Forum/*Forum Komunikasi Antar Etnis Nusantara* (FKAEN), the Interreligious Harmony Forum (FKUB), and the Bali Muslim-Hindu Brotherhood (PHMB). The purpose of these forums is to preserve the harmony of religious life in the local area. These are the result of several agreements about the harmony of living together. Such agreements include the following: first, the expression of religious greeting in accordance with each religion; second, the preservation of the purity and safety of worship as the responsibility of all religious people; third, the promotion of the local wisdom "*Menyama Braya*" as the basis of harmony; fourth, the promotion of essential values of each religious teaching related to harmony as the guidance of religious people; fifth, dialogue as the solution to problems, mediated by the interreligious harmony forum along with related officials.[31]

These multicultural movements seem to increase the consciousness of religious pluralism on the local level.[32] The idea of multiculturalism is starting to be understood and practiced in a plural society in line with the tradition of *Menyama Braya*. This becomes the foundation for the Bali people to create a relationship with Muslim communities. Muslim communities had a history that was strongly related to the native people of Bali in the past, such as *Nyama Selam* or *Saudara Islam* (Islamic brother). But the tradition of *nyama braya* experienced a disastrous incident, the Bali bombing, in 2002. At that time, the relationship between Hinduism and Islam became quite tense. After the Bali bombing, the Muslim community still had a difficult situation, for it became the target of distrust. After that, security in Bali started to be rebuilt.[33]

In response to such a situation, the multicultural movement pioneered by religious figures joined by the interreligious harmony forum in Bali fre-

[31] I Gusti Made Ngurah, *Saling Menerima dan Menghargai Perbedaan Melalui Dialog Antar Umat Beragama dalam Masyarakat Multikultural* (Denpasar: Sari Kahyangan Indonesia, 2010), 8.

[32] The holy day of Nyepi is coincidentally the same on Sunday and Friday. The awareness of having pluralism is also visible when both religions celebrate their religious services, and Muslim and Hindu people help each other in assuring the smoothness and safety of ongoing ceremonies.

[33] I Wayan Sukarma, "Pariwisata Bali Pasca Bom Kute," in *Bali yang Hilang: Pendatang, Islam dan Etnisitas di Bali,* ed. Yudhis M. Burhanuddin (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2008), 15; "Muslim Pasca Bom Bali," *Bali Pos*, December 2, 2010.

quently organized meetings and dialogues to discuss problems related to religious issues. Leaders from all religions in Bali agreed to contain and decrease any potential conflict among people from different religious backgrounds.[34] In addition, Muslim and Hindu people in Bali agreed that the incident of the Bali bombing should not be related to any ethnic group or religion. Through the hard work of religious figures, the government, and the Bali people, along with the *Pakraman* village, in practicing interreligious tolerance and harmony,[35] the interreligious life of multicultural society in Denpasar has been going well until today. The result is that any issues raised by radical movements that might disturb the agenda of *Menyama Braya* could not be found in Denpasar and surrounding places.

Conclusion

Religious pluralism in Indonesia has ups and downs due to the political situation in the country. In its early period, Indonesia was an independent country marked by Islam, but religious pluralism was there. However, with the development of technology and information, followed by political turmoil in the country, the nature and the values of pluralism became endangered. Although theologically, Islamic Indonesia has progressed from purity toward modernity, it does not guarantee the value of religious pluralism. Sometimes, Indonesia is in a very poor condition concerning religious pluralism. One of the solutions that should be developed is to revive the local wisdom and develop multicultural awareness so that a harmonious atmosphere can be generated to promote the values of religious pluralism.

Bibliography

Abdullah, Irwan. *Konstruksi dan Reproduksi Kebudaya.n*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2006.

Ackermann, John Robert. *Agama Sebagai Kritik: Analisis Eksistensi Agama-Agama Besar*. Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1991.

Ali, Muhammad. *Teologi Pluralis-Multikultural: Menghargai Kemajemukan, Menjalin Kebersamaan*. Jakarta: Penerbit Buku Kompas, 2003.

Ardika, I Wayan. *Sejarah Bali dari Pra Sejarah Hingga Modern.* Denpasar: Udayana University Press, 2012.

Astra, I Gde Semadi. *Guratan Budaya dalam Prespektif Multikultural*. Denpasar: Fakultas Sastra dan Budaya Udayana Press, 2003.

Attas, Naquib et al. "Riswanda Imawan." In *Masyarakat Madani dan Agenda Demokratisasi*. Jakarta: LSAF, 1999.

---

[34] I Gusti Made Ngurah, *Saling Menerima dan Menghargai*, xi.

[35] In 2013, the committee of Ibn Batutha mosque participated in the contest of the national level mosque and became the second winner of the contest due to the support from the Pakraman village (traditional village) either in a material or spiritual way.

Azra, Azyumardi. *Menteri-Menteri Agama RI: Biografi Sosial-Politik.* Jakarta: INIS Bekerjasama dengan Balitbang Depag RI, 1998.

Barr, James. *Fundamentalism.* London: SCM Press, 1977.

Caplan, Lionel. *Studies in Fundamentalism.* London: MacMillan Press, 1987.

Huntington, Samuel P. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Orde*r. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996.

Djohan, Effendi. "Dialog Antar Agama: Bisakah Melahirkan Teologi Kerukunan." *PRISMA*, no. 5 (June 1978).

Hikam, Muhammad A. S. *Demokrasi dan Civil Society*. Jakarta: LP3ES, 1999.

Husein, Fatimah. *Muslim-Christian Relations in the New Order Indonesia: The Exclusivist and Inclusivist Muslims Perspectives.* Bandung: Mizan, 2005.

Konteks Kebebasan Beragama di Pulau Lombok." *Ulumuna* 13, no. 2 (December, 2009).

Kunjungi. October 2, 2012. http://www.scribd.com/doc/90.358408/agama-islam-kerukunan-antar-umat-beragama.

Madjid, Nurcholish. *Islam Doktrin Peradaban: Sebuah Telaah Kritis tentang Masalah Keimanan, Kemanusiaan, dan Kemodernan.* Jakarta: Paramadina, 1992.

Mulder, Niels. *Kepribadian Jawa dan Pembangunan.* Yogyakarta: Gajah Mada University Press, 198.

Mudana, I Gede. "Lolakisme dalam Politik Lokal Bali." In I Made Suastika, *Jelajah Kajian Budaya*. Denpasar: Pusataka larasan Bekerjasama dengan Program Studi Magister dan Doktor Kajian Budaya Unversitas Udhayana, 2012.

"Muslim Pasca Bom Bali." *Bali Post*, December 2, 2010.

Natsir, M. *Mencari Modus Vivendi Antarumat Beragama di Indonesia*. Jakarta: Media Dakwah, 1980.

Ngurah, I Gusti Made. *Saling Menerima dan Menghargai Perbedaan Melalui Dialog Antar Umat Beragama dalam Masyarakat Multikultural.* Denpasar: Sari Kahyangan Indonesia, 2010.

"Ngurah Agung Memulihkan Keretakan Hindu-Muslim." *Tempo*, no. 21 (August 2013).

Ritzer, George. *Teori Sosial Postmodern*. Translated by Muhammad Taufiq. Yogyakarta: Kreasi Wacana, 2005.

Smith, Huston. *Agama-agama Manusia*. Translated by Safroedin Bahar. Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 1995.

Sukarma, I Wayan. "Pariwisata Bali Pascabom Kute." In *Bali yang Hilang: Pendatang, Islam dan Etnisitas di Bali,* edited by Yudhis M. Burhanuddin. Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2008.

Struat, David J. *Pura Besakih: Temple, Religion and Society in Bali*. Michigan: KITLV, 2002.

Sugira, I Ketut Suda. *Upaya Memantapkan Kehidupan Dialogis Masyarakat Beragama di Bali.* Denpasar: Upada sastra, 2003.

Sukarma, I Wayan. "Pariwisata Bali Pasca Bom Kuta." In *Bali yang Hilang: Pendatang, Islam dan Etnisitas di Bali,* edited by Yudhis M. Burhanuddin. Yogyakarta, Kanisius 2008.

"Umat Islam Sudah Datang Ke Bali Semenjak Abad ke 15 M." *Bali Post*, December 2, 2001.

Unal, Ali and Alphonse Williams. *Advocate of Dialogue: Fethullah Gulen*. Fairfax, VA: The Fountain, 2000.

Wahid, Abdurrahman. *Islamku, Islam Anda, Islam Kita*. Jakarta: The Wahid Institute, 2006.

Widya, I Ketut. *Pecalang Benteng Terakhir Bali*. Denpasar: Udayana Press, 2008.

An Enquiry into the Case of Animal Welfare through Reciprocity

Prabhu VENKATARAMAN

Reciprocity is considered an important principle in the domain of moral philosophy and is often seen in close similarity to the golden rule. The idea of reciprocity can be understood not only from a legal perspective but also from a moral perspective. It is an important principle in inter-human, inter-community, and international relationships. The principle of reciprocity expects that people respond to one another in a similar way, which is supposed to reflect common sense. For instance, if you are treated kindly by someone it is expected that you also treat that person kindly. This is the reciprocal treatment between two members. Often it takes the form of retaliation of the same sort, kindness for kindness or harm for harm. Human beings display such behavior. The question is whether such and similar actions adhering to this principle are good enough to pursue and worthy enough to be taken as a norm to be abided by.

While reciprocity may be lacking in lofty ideals, it makes judgments easier to directly employ this principle, be it in our social groups, in our community life, or even to an extent in our legal systems. Reciprocity can be an easier and fairer task to follow, enforce and inculcate. But, the loftier demands or expectations of moral life seem to go beyond the scope of reciprocity. As Bill Puka mentions while referring to the golden rule, "the rule is distinguished from highly supererogatory rationales commonly confused with it – loving thy neighbor as thyself, turning the other cheek, and aiding the poor, homeless and afflicted. Like agape or unconditional love, these precepts demand much more altruism of us, and are much more liable to utopianism."[1] But whether to have such norms that are theoretically beyond the reach of reciprocity and practically beyond the common-sense view is given to question.

Reciprocity is based on a fair and just treatment to make social living possible without many moral demands and expectations. It seems that reciprocity is properly acted upon, but in practice, it may not be easy. To quote a famous verse from the Tamil poet Thiruvalluvar, "a timely help, even though small, is worth more than the world."[2] What types of reciprocal action are we talking about? What actions would suffice as reciprocal actions? How do

---

[1] Bill Puka, "The Golden Rule," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, accessed March 5, 2016, http://www.iep.utm.edu/goldrule/.

[2] S. Bharati, Project Madurai (Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India), retrieved from Project Madurai.

we understand the relationship between reciprocal action and an act of gratitude? I shall discuss this last point later in this paper. Apart from the issue of the difference between a reciprocal action and an act of gratitude, reciprocity by itself should not be understood in its face value, framed in the "golden rule." For instance, if Y gives X a box of chocolates on X's birthday, X need not return to Y a similar box of chocolates. Rather, what may be a proper reciprocal action is to know what Y prefers and then give Y that gift. Here, norms of reciprocity do not go with expecting the same action, that is, giving the same gift, rather than going by the idea of reciprocating the preferences.

Despite its seeming limitations, reciprocity plays an important part in social cohesion and in creating and developing norms of behavior for social harmony. It helps greatly in providing stable, fair, and trusty social interactions. While individual reciprocity is easier to understand and carry out, we cannot say the same at the social level, where there are many more individual members who may not have direct contact with one another. In such a scenario, the idea of a contract as a social and moral principle extolls the principle of reciprocity in conducting the affairs of society in a just and fair manner.

Just and fair distribution of benefits and burdens ensures treating members impartially and distributing these benefits and burdens proportionally without any bias. But it requires a rationale of how the benefits and burdens are distributed. Only when there is a proper reason behind the distribution can the members abide by the distribution with the view that their benefits and burdens are reciprocated amongst the many unknown members. One such justification of the distribution of benefits and burdens comes through the social contract theory, according to which "morality consists in the set of rules governing behavior that rational people would accept, on the condition that others accept them as well."[3]

If there are multiple members in a social setup, what is the guarantee that each member reciprocates the behavior as other members do? If it is just a question of moral obligation without any punishment, or if it is not going to be adhered to, then keeping the social cohesion becomes an impossible task. This is where the principle of reciprocity ensures, apart from being a moral demand, developing a sense of punishment to impose on its members to follow the principle. This suggests that it is rational to obey on the condition that others are obeying as well. For instance, if I do not harm others, there should be a guarantee for me that others also do not harm me. If they do harm me, the harm should also be reciprocated to them, not by me, but by an authority that should do that job. "This can explain why we treat those who break the rules – criminals – differently. Thus, when someone violates the condition of reciprocity, he releases us, at least to some extent, from our obligation toward

---

[3] James Rachels, *The Elements of Moral Philosophy* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2003), 145.

him. In other words, if you break the contract then others aren't bound by it (with respect to your part in it)."[4]

Through the idea of contract, we come to the idea of government. The government can enforce and ensure that people follow the principle of reciprocity, that is, do not harm others and the government tries to ensure that others shall not harm you. In this sense, the principle of reciprocity helps to keep social cohesion and acts as a moral principle and a social principle in running affairs. It can be ensured through the idea of a contract. But the question remains whether we can extend this principle to other beings that are not humans. If we use reciprocity and, in turn, the social contract as the principle of social and moral cohesion, how do we understand the way we treat nonhuman animals?

Many thinkers in recent times have discussed the way we treat animals and the moral concerns involved in it. Thinkers like Tom Regan, Peter Singer, Guy Francione have done considerable writing on issues related to animal rights and welfare from deontological and utilitarian perspectives. Similarly, in terms of the principle of the social contract, thinkers have talked about animal rights. Within the perspective of reciprocity, we shall see how animals fit in. Is there any scope for animal beings to have their space within the social contract? Humans may engage in and extol the principle of reciprocity, but how can we understand this principle in the relationship with the nonhuman community, including nature and other animal beings? I would like to deliberate how certain thinkers carried out the discussion on humans' obligations to animals from the perspective of reciprocity in terms of a contract.

If we look at the principle of contract, we can see that it is a hypothetical contract made by people. The veil of ignorance is part of the Rawlsian idea of a social contract. Here people do not know what their position is. They are ignorant of classes, social positions, natural assets and abilities, strength and intelligence, gender, and the like. They are self-interested beings and try to maximize their position through reason. They try to distribute benefits and burdens equally and impartially as much as possible because they do not know where they will be placed once the veil of ignorance is lifted. As self-interested rational agents, all come up with unanimous decisions. And only rational agents are part of the contract to get that unanimity.[5]

Through the contract, they agree upon an enforcing body, which can ensure that reciprocity is adhered to. The enforcing body may warn or correct or punish the members. It can make the members follow the terms of the contract. The contract is made among rational beings who are capable of following the agreed principle. The contract may not be able to involve those who are not part of the contract, who are not in a position to follow the agreed principles, and who cannot be a part of a reciprocal community. Therefore, those beings who cannot be members of the contract cannot claim to have

---

[4] "Social Contract Theory," accessed April 14, 2016, http://www.csus.edu/indiv/g/gaskilld/ethics/sct.htm.

[5] John G. Hoffman, *Introduction to Political Theory* (Delhi: Pearson Education, 2007).

rights. That is, they cannot be given any rights as they are not part of the contract. This is the line of argument Peter Carruthers brings in when he tries to show that animals do not have any rights on their own as they are not part of the contract.

Carruthers[6] claims that animals do not merit direct ethical concerns as there is no contract between humans and animals. According to him, "Morality is here [i.e., according to contractarian approach] pictured as a system of rules to govern the interaction of rational agents within a society. It, therefore, seems inevitable, on the face of it, that only rational agents will be assigned direct rights on this approach. Since it is rational agents who are to choose the system of rules and choose self-interestedly, it is only rational agents who will have their position protected under the rules. There seems no reason why rights should be assigned to non-rational agents. Animals will, therefore, have no moral standing under Rawlsian contractualism, in so far as they do not count as rational agents."[7]

Carruthers argues that we have no direct duties toward animals. Animals are incapable of being part of this social contract, therefore we have no direct duties to them. Carruthers writes, "…moral standing is possessed by all and only human beings (together with other rational agents, if there are any), who thus make direct moral claims upon us. Animals, in contrast, lack standing and make no direct claims upon us."[8] Thus Carruthers says that there is no moral wrong in hunting, factory farming, or laboratory testing on animals; those supporting any aspect of the animal rights movement are thoroughly mistaken.[9]

According to Carruthers, though we have no direct duties toward animals, we have indirect duties toward them. He says, "They derive from the good or bad qualities of moral character that the actions in question would display and encourage; where those qualities are good or bad in virtue of the role that they play in the agent's interactions with other human beings. On this account, the most basic kind of wrong-doing toward animals is cruelty. A cruel action is wrong because it evinces a cruel character. But what makes a cruel character bad is that it is likely to express itself in cruelty toward people, which would involve direct violations of the rights of those who are caused to suffer."[10]

This line of thought was available with earlier thinkers like Kant and Aquinas. Rowland remarks that "cruelty and callousness to non-humans is wrong not in itself but because it tends to make the perpetrators cruel and callous…this is another version of indirect rights view."[11] A similar sort of

---

[6] Peter Carruthers, *The Animals Issue* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
[7] Mark Rowlands, *Animal Rights: A Philosophical Defence* (London: Macmillan, 1998), 123.
[8] Peter Carruthers, "Against the Moral Standing of Animals," 18, accessed September 10, 2021, http://faculty.philosophy.umd.edu/pcarruthers/The%20Animals%20Issue.pdf.
[9] Carruthers, *The Animals Issue.*
[10] Carruthers, "Against the Moral Standing of Animals," 15.
[11] Rowlands, *Animal Rights,* 122.

indirect rights is given by the idea that a being has indirect rights if it is associated with an individual who has direct rights. For instance, my pet dog possesses indirect rights, as I possess a direct right, that is, I should not be harmed and any harm done to my pet dog harms me; therefore, no one should harm my pet dog. This suggests that my dog has an indirect right not to be harmed.

On the other hand, Mark Rowlands[12] tries to argue for direct rights for animals. In his book *Animal Rights: A Philosophical Defence* (1998), he gives a contractarian defense of animal rights. While Carruthers tries to argue against animal rights from the contractarian perspective, Rowlands tries to defend animal rights from the same perspective. Rowland observes, "…contractarian approaches to morality are not capable of underwriting the attribution of direct rights to non-human animals. The reason for this is that non-human animals are, it is assumed, not rational agents, and contractarian approaches subsume, under the umbrella of moral consideration or concern, only rational agents."[13] But Rowlands immediately points out that there are no suitable and sufficient grounds to uphold this position. He says, "I shall argue that there is nothing in contractarianism per se that requires that the protection afforded by the contract be restricted to rational agents. The fact that the framers of the contract must be conceived of as rational agents does not entail that the recipients of the protection afforded by the contract must be rational agents."[14]

Rowlands's argument is oriented toward the moral aspects of a contract. Rawls in his original position talks about the veil of ignorance, in which one should not lay any claim for things that one does not deserve on one's own like intelligence, social status, gender, etc. Rowlands extends this principle and asks how one can take the principle of rationality as granted. He proposes his position from an intuitive equality argument, which, in essence, runs as follows: "If a property P is undeserved, in the sense that one is not responsible for possessing it, then it is morally arbitrary and one is not morally entitled to it. If one is not morally entitled to P, then one is also not morally entitled to whatever benefits stem from the possession of P….A person plays no role in deciding whether or not she is going to be rational; she either is or she is not. The decision is not hers, but nature's. Therefore, according to the terms of the intuitive equality argument, it is a morally arbitrary property, and one is not morally entitled to its possession."[15] Rowlands uses the principle of "reflective equilibrium" of Rawls to further his point. Rawls's contract theory gives us a model to work on our moral and rational principles through the process of reflective equilibrium. Rawls's concern was not about the outcome of his principle to be categorically accepted, but about the principle and the process of decisions. In this light, Rowlands argues that within the contract theory we can support the direct rights of animals.

---

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid., 122.

[14] Ibid., 123.

[15] Ibid., 140.

There may be some serious concerns concerning Rowlands's position. His idea of reflective equilibrium is well-taken, but, according to Rawls, beings in their original position are self-interested and rational beings. If we accept and accommodate self-interestedness in the original position, we may rule out any sense of generosity or kindness. Why should I think about the rights or welfare of animals as long as it is not going to serve any of my self-interest in maximizing my position? If I am to maximize my position by using my reason, and if Rowlands takes that reason to be arbitrary, then Rawls's starting point is extended further. In that case, what is the point or criterion for the basis of a contract? Where do we draw the line? Rawls's rationality principle is the guiding principle to make decisions as well as the deciding criterion for distributions of rights and duties, benefits, and burdens. Rowlands is not considering a being's capability to agree and to abide by the principles of contract, thus it becomes a daunting task to substantiate any rights of animals based on contract.

Carruthers, therefore, rules out the possibility of any rights to animals based on contract. On the other hand, if a contract is the only way to judge the morality of actions and to give rights to beings, the consequences of holding to such a position may take us to uncomfortable quarters that are against our moral intuitions. For instance, if rational agents, by virtue of their rationality and subsequently the contract, have rights while any non-rational beings do not, then, how do we consider the rights of yet to be born fetuses, mentally challenged people, etc.? Don't they have any rights? This issue was aptly brought out by thinkers who criticize the contractarian principle and who do not give any rights to animals. Tom Regan claims: "It (Rawls's contractarianism) systematically denies that we have direct duties to those human beings who do not have a sense of justice – young children, for instance, and many mentally retarded humans."[16] For Singer, ethics cannot be based on reciprocity. The drawback of Carruthers's position is that reciprocity may not apply to children. Singer says, "The difficulty with this approach to ethics is that it also means we have no direct duties to small children, or to future generations yet unborn."[17] Contractualism is not a sound doctrine of ethics, particularly when one tries to understand the moral obligations toward beings like animals, children, etc.

Instead of claims as to whether we can bring animals under the purview of rights through a contract, Bryan Norton tries to classify animals into different kinds to see how best we can accommodate certain types of animals through the idea of reciprocity. Here, Norton is not using the principle of a hypothetical contract; rather, he uses our life experiences to show how we can take care of a few sets of animals.

---

[16] Ibid., 123.
[17] Peter Singer, "Ethics and Animals" (2007), accessed September 24, 2010, http://animalrightskorea.org/essays/peter-singer-ethics-and-animals.html.

Norton[18] is discussing how to protect the domesticated animals based on the mutual contract humans have with animals, whereas there is no such contract with wild animals. Instead of going for an all-in or all-out argument for a moral consideration of animals, Norton argues from a pragmatic perspective. In one of his arguments on humans' treatment of animals, he mentions that human beings should give more care to animals that are closer to them than wild animals.[19] Norton explains that in an environment many "contents," including wild animals, birds, domestic animals, and plants, are present. Our relationship with these objects is inevitable. Our association with animal beings, according to Norton, should be determined based on the distinction of whether an animal is a "context" one or a "content" one. Norton suggests that all animals that are related to human beings in one way or the other need to be protected and taken care of. But based on available resources, one may not be in a position to care for all animals as it involves considerable spending. In such a scenario, Norton comes up with the distinction of "context" and "content" animals.

Norton claims that animals that are related to humans can be categorized as "context" beings, while animals and beings that are not in any way under the direct purview of humans are "content" beings. "The context in which we interact with domesticated animals implies a contract to look after them. No such contract exists with wild animals; for this reason, we have no moral obligation to individual members of wild species who remain in their natural habitat."[20] The distinction of "context" and "content" corresponds to domesticated and wild animals. Norton says that animals that are in the human community demand more care than those that are not. This type of animal care in the human community is a kind of "contract."[21] In other words, domesticated animals are in a contract with humans; therefore, it is humans' responsibility to take care of them.

He then makes another distinction, that is, some animals are useful for human beings, and hence need more care; some are not related to human beings; therefore, human beings are not obliged to take care of them: "I have argued that it is mainly the context, and not the content, of our interactions with animals that determines our moral obligations to them, and I have argued that our obligation to wild animals generally emerge at the population level, where our policy decisions affect large trends in ecological systems and the processes that sustain them."[22] Norton might be right that animals that are in the human domain or the human community demand more care because they are in a relationship with humans.

In sum, Norton understands the care for domesticated animals from the ideas of a contract and reciprocity. We are morally obliged to take care of

---

[18] Bryan G. Norton, *Searching for Sustainability: Interdisciplinary Essays in the Philosophy of Conservation Biology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
[19] Ibid.
[20] Ibid., 383.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Ibid., 383–384.

those domesticated animals, as they serve us. It is not that they directly take care of us, but because those domesticated animals help us in providing security, maintaining our livelihood, and even giving us a good quality of leisure. Our moral obligation to them does not stand in reciprocal relationship to, if I can use the word, their moral behavior. Rather, reciprocity is for their utility to us, for which we take care of them. We feed them, give them proper medical care, take care of their ailments, and protect them from the sun and the cold to keep them fit and fine. We do those things to get their services. In this sense, we get into a reciprocal relationship. What we do to them is sufficient for what they do to us. Over and beyond what we do to them, we also engage in actions that show our gratitude to them.

Closely associated with this idea of reciprocity is the idea of gratitude which, as a moral character, goes beyond the idea of reciprocity. Between humans and domesticated animals, we have come across many times acts of gratitude and faithfulness from pet animals, which even risk their lives. Stories of faithful dogs protecting their masters are prevalent across the globe. From the human side, many cultures give respect and gratitude to their "context" animals. Each culture may have its own cultural rituals centered on showing its "gratitude" toward its fellow beings. For instance, in Tamilnadu, a state of India, every year in January, people have a special cultural festival for cows and buffaloes as a mark of gratitude for their service. This is called "maatu pongal." In many temples in south India, elephants are given great respect and gratitude for their services. It is to be seen to believe the way those animals are treated during their lives and after their death. The crux of my argument here is that though we start with a reciprocal relationship, we do not stop there. We extend it through gratitude and consider their own intrinsic worth and value. This needs a separate discussion and extensive elaboration. Suffice to say that we have an ample scope to go beyond reciprocity.

We started our understanding of reciprocity as primarily a human character, more so, among rational beings. We discussed the issue of extending moral obligations to animal beings through the principle of reciprocity. Through the discussion, we have known that reciprocity does give scope for accommodating other nonhuman beings in a moral consideration. Through reciprocity, we can accommodate animal welfare. But the idea and practice of reciprocity take us further to practice and follow other virtues like gratitude. Thus, reciprocity may be the best starting point for talking about moral obligations, but we go beyond reciprocity as we think it is not the endpoint.

Bibliography

Bharati, S. "Project Madurai." Madurai, TamilNadu, India. Retrieved from Project Madurai.

Carruthers, Peter. "Against the Moral Standing of Animals." Accessed September 10, 2021. http://faculty.philosophy.umd.edu/pcarruthers/The%20 Animals%20Issue.pdf.

------. *The Animals Issue.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Hoffman, John G. *Introduction to Political Theory.* Delhi: Pearson Education, 2007.

Norton, Bryan G. *Searching for Sustainability: Interdisciplinary Essays in the Philosophy of Conservation Biology.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Puka, Bill. "The Golden Rule." In *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Accessed March 5, 2016. http://www.iep.utm.edu/goldrule/.

Rachels, James. *The Elements of Moral Philosophy*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2003.

Social Contract Theory. Accessed April 14, 2016. http://www.csus.edu/indiv/g/gaskilld/ethics/sct.htm.

Rowlands, Mark. *Animal Rights: A Philosophical Defence.* London: Macmillan, 1998.

Singer, Peter. "Ethics and Animals." 2007. Accessed September 24, 2010. http://animalrightskorea.org/essays/peter-singer-ethics-and-animalshtml.

Part III
Reciprocity on a Spiritual and Creative Level

13

Reciprocity of Thinking and Thought from a Logical Perspective

NING Lina

Thinking and thought are two different concepts that have various influences on human behaviors. However, there are no clear boundaries between them, which can cause confusion. In terms of reciprocity, thinking kindles thought while thought changes thinking, bringing about a better perception of life and mutual understanding between cultures and interactive development of a dynamic civilization. From a logical perspective, this article delves into the reciprocity of thinking and thought, aiming at the prerequisite thinking of reciprocity among different cultures in human civilization.

The Reciprocal Characteristics of Thinking and Thought

As a distinctive feature of humanity, emotional or abstract thinking produces conformity, whereas a thought is an independent, spontaneous, and critical result from reflection and the process of thinking, which can be interpreted. Thought includes such factors as method, attitude, belief, decision-making, and related activities of multiple dimensions, either positive or negative, lucid or ambiguous, effective or contradictory. All could affect the way of communication.

Aristotle founded the study of formal logic and constructed reasoning by deduction and demonstration. In his view, observing the rules of thinking is a key component of effective thinking in the classical Greek city-state. With concrete contents, thinking goes in the form of public culture, providing citizens with respect and trust. He points out that "the attempts of some of those who discuss the terms on which truth should be accepted, are due to a want of training in logic,"[1] which emphasizes the connection between axioms and deductive objects. Wittgenstein notes, "applied and thinkable proposition signs are thought" and "thought is a meaningful proposition,"[2] which endows the elements of thinking in the depth of thought. He argues that "the purpose of philosophy is to clarify thought on the basis of logic."[3] No matter how human beings exist, individually or collectively, as long as they are able to think clearly, they possess the articulation of thinking; and good thinking

---

[1] Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, trans. Litian Miao (Beijing: Renmin University of China Press, 2003), 64.

[2] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, trans. Ying Guo (Beijing: The Commercial Press, 1992), 37.

[3] Ibid., 44.

facilitates good thought. The more thorough reciprocity exists between thinking and thought, the more they can enhance one another, trigger interactions, and thus overcome thinking hurdles in real-world communications.

It is due to the causality between thinking and thought, as well as their isomorphism, that diverse cultures and civilizations can learn from each other. The cultural reforms of modern China can be seen as an adoption of Western learning and an interaction between Chinese and Western cultures. Yan Fu, a Chinese scholar and thinker, translated Mill's work on logic into Chinese and disseminated his theories as a logical instrument for cultural critics in modern China as well as an instrument for scientific reasoning to criticize the outdated part of Chinese culture. This had a far-reaching influence on education in terms of scientific knowledge, attitudes, and methodology. Yan's introduction of Mill's theories not only brought new ways of thinking and intellectual resources to the modernization of Chinese society but also supported unremitting efforts to update thinking methods and rationality in modern China. It is universally acknowledged that every ethnic group has its own culture, but different cultures influence each other during their development, so the updating of culture is inevitable. Traditional Chinese culture consists of national psychology, ways of thinking, value systems, knowledge structures, and behaviors. Chinese culture clashed and coalesced with the West over its history. This means that it has not only sublation and choice but also adaption and re-organization of its own culture. Both exclusion and acceptance take place in this process, and hence a need for new cultural factors emerges. When introducing Western culture, Yan Fu first took into account the attributes of people and the necessity of reform toward a modern society. The reason that he chose to translate the Western study of logic was to transform the way of thinking and seek a proper thought for the cultural modernization of China.

How the Reciprocity of Thinking and Thought Promotes Human Culture

Thinking generates thought which in turn restructures thinking. This reciprocity is the premise to advance human civilization, as thinking cannot exist without the idealization of life, during which thought leads thinking to develop further its creative nature, from empirical and emotional to free and self-disciplined human rationality. Prerequisite considerations answer why human beings are human beings and why they have reasonable thoughts. Furthermore, as culture and life are diverse, complex, and sometimes even contradictory, the capacity of inferring the future becomes a requirement for mutual understanding and dialogue across cultures and civilizations. The showcase of the logical discipline of thought, the combination of clear thinking, reliable deduction, and adequate reasoning can be transformed into rationality, which must be observed in life in order to avoid or reduce survival barriers.

A System of Logic is a notable work of John Stuart Mill, a 19th-century English logician. It is regarded as a book that has influenced logic worldwide, changed the direction of logical studies, and set a path for logic into the heartland of social life through the influence of Heinrich Scholz, a German historian. Mill attaches the value of logic to people's pursuit of intellectual life and puts forward the unique logical intentions of thought. It is a method to shake off mental breakdown, an approach to clarify deduction, and an effort to broaden thoughts. It serves to boost the transformation from logical methodology into the spirit of logic, and, further, into intellectual life. The logistic method, therefore, goes from being thinking-based to thought-based. In Mill's viewpoint, public life involves the interests of the general public. This calls for the effective articulation of thought. In other words, it elucidates thoughts by means of logic, including clear expression, sufficient reasoning, and compact demonstration. In this way, the intrinsic requirements of logic present the nature of thought via public discourse. The reciprocity of thinking and thought has been significant for British politics, history, and society, tremendously impacting the reforms of thinking methods and social conceptions in Britain. Based on Mill's system of logic, Yan Fu reflects on the flaws and limitations of conventional Chinese thinking and points out the absence of deduction and induction in traditional Chinese culture. He values the renewal of thinking that is scientific and calls for a conversation between Chinese and Western logical studies. Yan spares no effort to introduce Mill's logic to China for the purpose of restructuring and modernizing Chinese culture and supporting mutual influences among cultures through the interaction of thinking and thought.

The reason why logic becomes an indispensable rational force in social development and the pursuit of personal happiness is twofold. On the one hand, logic is determined by the richness of human thought and, on the other, by the profoundness of logical thinking. As long as it becomes the pivot in social progress, thinking based on logic will permeate the way people think and choose, such as belief, ambition, value system, and aesthetics. Consciously, people analyze rationally and make rational decisions. This is considered a rise in the quality of thought that echoes humanism. Logic stimulates the mutual conversion between thinking and thought, boosts the rational development of society, and encourages cross-cultural or even cross-civilizational interactions.

Reciprocal Affirmations between Thinking and Thought

By logical analysis, deduction, and demonstration, ambiguity or even contradictions in thinking are eliminated, and notions able to guide actions come into being. Likewise, when the conclusion is being questioned closely in the reorganization of thinking, thought illustrates belief. While it is based on thinking, thought also facilitates thinking in return. This makes the logical method, which has a reflective function, capable of testing the validity of inquiries. Guided by the spirit of logic, seeking truth and rationality, people

conduct thinking activities that navigate the unknown from what they already know, and they attach rational foresight onto thought. The scientific and humane spirit that logic embodies is shown through thought as a part of human conformity and social communication.

Aristotle suggested that "thinking in itself deals with that which is best in itself, and that which is thinking in the fullest sense deals with that which is best in the fullest sense. And thought thinks on itself because it shares the nature of the object of thought."[4] Accordingly, the formal logic he established is the product of self-disciplined rationality and free thought in the development of ancient Greek society. With such characteristics as analysis, explanation, deduction, and demonstration, logic makes the method of thinking a tool to articulate thought as an object of thought. Apart from its role of acquiring scientific cognition and describing or disseminating knowledge, logic unleashes the power of thought with rational thinking. It also bears on rules of social life and how people in a certain era perceive the purpose of life to ameliorate a world in which lures dominate while thought gets lost. Logic also provides guidance on thought. In addition, when logic converts thinking into thought by means of reflection, it requires language, too, alongside the capacity of uncovering problems and putting forward hypotheses. Zhou Liquan, a Chinese logician, notes, "In order to play an essential role in improving thinking, formal logic must conjoin natural language, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. It must conjoin the expression of human emotions and communications."[5]

Since the second half of the twentieth century, the development of logic has returned to the nature of thought to clarify, demonstrate, and support ideas. "Logical studies improve one's ability to comprehend, analyze, assess and argue," says Stephen Layman[6]. In other words, logic carries the reciprocity of thinking and thought and serves in the rational analysis of human existence as it is open to the lifeworld. The state of life is thus elevated to a new level. This is in line with human nature: to pursue truth, virtue, and beauty. It also aids in transforming logical wisdom into a humanistic quality, making it systematic in belief, ambition, value system, and aesthetics. On the basis of this reciprocity, therefore, rational conscious actions enhance a diverse global civilization.

Bibliography

Aristotle. *Metaphysics*. Translated by Litian Miao. Beijing: Renmin University of China Press, 2003.

Layman, Stephen C. *The Power of Logic.* Translated by Wujin Yang. Beijing: Renmin University of China Press, 2010.

---

[4] Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 259.

[5] Liquan Zhou, *Logic Theories on Correct Thinking Successful Communication* (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1984), 1.

[6] C. Stephen Layman, *The Power of Logic*, trans. Wujin Yang (Beijing: Renmin University of China Press, 2010), 1.

Wittgenstein, Ludwig. *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus.* Translated by Ying Guo. Beijing: The Commercial Press, 1992.

Zhou, Liquan. *Logic Theories on Correct Thinking Successful Communication.* Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1984.

14

Information, Community, and Reciprocity from the Perspective of Axiology[1]

ZHANG Yanfen

It seems not justifiable to reduce reciprocity to the association of human subjects. Instead, reciprocity shapes all those that can be called subjects. The human association developed through reciprocity is mediated by information. The information community can be considered as an approach to studying the issue of reciprocity.

Reciprocity and Community

The criterion that distinguishes one thing from the other is not abolished because reciprocity makes the existence of things possible. "criterion" here means connection rather than separation. In other words, a thing is what it is as a subject rather than as a substance because only a subject can have a dynamic connection that is distinguished from static separation. Hegel once reminded us of this issue, "…everything turns on grasping and expressing the True, not only as *Substance*, but equally as *Subject*."[2] The True is true because it engages itself in establishing associations as a subject. Such a subject is an inter-subject in its actuality because nothing is qualified to have priority over others for a subject with respect to the True, just as Hegel stated, "The True is thus the Bacchanalian revel in which no member is not drunk."[3] Conversely, it is impossible for the subject to retreat from its associations, and Hegel continued, "…each member collapses as soon as he drops out."[4] In this case, the reciprocal association among subjects proves to be the prerequisite. In brief, a thing either exists with or collapses without a relation to others.

The only way to avoid collapse is to establish a reciprocal association because the existence or persistence of a thing does not depend on what it already has but rather on what is developed from the inter-subjective relation between itself and others. The reciprocal relation is far more important than what a thing owns by itself. This importance is illustrated in a myth in Plato's *Protagoras*, which reveals the significance of human reciprocity. In the dialogue, Protagoras tells us that Prometheus stole wisdom and fire from the

[2] Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 10.

[3] Ibid., 27.

[4] Ibid.

practical arts and gave them outright to the human race so that the latter would be equipped to have means of livelihood. But these means were not enough for human existence. Protagoras continues,

> thus equipped, human beings at first lived in scattered isolation; there were no cities. They were being destroyed by wild beasts… they did indeed try to band together and survive by founding cities. The outcome when they did so was that they wronged each other, because they did not possess the art of politics, and so they would scatter and again be destroyed. Zeus was afraid that our whole race might be wiped out, so he sent Hermes to bring justice and a sense of shame to humans, so that there would be order within cities and bonds of friendship to unite them.[5]

It is clear here that what is most fundamental for human existence is not what they already have but the reciprocal association with a sense of justice and shame.

It is also clear that reciprocity underlies the community, namely, the city. The foundation of cities, being the starting point of this story, enables people to escape from wiping out the bonds of friendship. This escape from the collapse of cities also defines human beings. For that matter, the definition of human beings originates from the community rather than the individual. This does not mean that there is nothing private but that the private is defined by the reciprocity of the community. For instance, while analyzing the private toothache, John Dewey said,

> it is a verifiable fact that your *having* a toothache is quite a different event from *my* having it. It does not follow that you know that *what* you have is a toothache any differently from the way in which anyone else knows it. As a matter of fact, the dentist probably knows the nature of toothache, the special location and other characteristics of *this* toothache, much better than does the one who *has* it.[6]

Although a toothache is private and belongs to an individual, it can be defined and distinguished in terms of reciprocity by way of communication between the patient and the dentist. In other words, although the ache is private, it is not isolated but expressed to others. As Dewey stated, "One can even go so far as to say that the *significance* of the recognition that enjoyments and suffering are privately *had*, is a matter of social morals."[7] Social morals here are manifestations of the bonds of friendship in the community.

---

[5] Plato, *Complete Works*, ed. John M. Cooper (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1997), 757–758.

[6] John Dewey, "How Is Mind to Be Known?," in Idem, *The Later Works 1925-1953, Volume 15: 1942-1948*, ed. Jo Ann Boydston, intr. Lewis S. Feuer (Carbondale and Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1989), 30.

[7] Ibid., 31.

Private sufferings are moral events to the extent that they are saturated in inter-subjective relations, either as indifference or compassion. In this sense, sufferings, enjoyments, and other privacies are embodied in reciprocal communities.

What is the essence of reciprocity if inter-subjective relations are more significant than those already owned by a subject? The answer may be a value judgment by and for human beings. The relation between the desire of a subject and the attribute of an object is the field rather than the source for such a value judgment. In this regard, Alexandre Kojève had a thought-provoking idea,

> Hence, anthropogenetic Desire is different from animal Desire (which produces a natural being, merely living and having a sentiment of its life) in that it is directed, not toward a real, 'positive,' given object, but toward another Desire. Thus, in the relationship between man and woman, for example, Desire is human only if the one desires, not the body, but the Desire of the other; if he wants 'to possess' or 'to assimilate' the Desire taken as Desire…[8]

That is to say, the desire of a subject in the sense of anthropogenesis is directed not to the attribute of an object but to the desire of another subject for the attribute of the object. This inter-subjective relation on desire is the source of value judgment. As something given, an object has its ready-made attribute, whereas the inter-subjective relation of desire is something becoming and changing, namely something possible rather than ready-made. Accordingly, the task of value judgment is to explore the possible space of the inter-subjective relation revealed by virtue of values in the community.

A misconception about the essence of reciprocity is that the attribute of an object to which the desire of a subject is directed serves as the basis of reciprocity. However, the attribute of an object will never become real without a value judgment in the community. For example, when Dewey discussed Plato's dialogues, he said,

> the shoemaker is a judge of a good pair of shoes, but he is no judge at all of the more important question whether and when it is good to wear shoes; the physician is a good judge of health, but whether it is a good thing or not to be well or better to die, he knows not. While the artisan is expert as long as purely limited technical questions arise, he is helpless when it comes to the only really important questions, the moral questions as to values.[9]

---

[8] Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: Lectures on the* Phenomenology of Spirit, ed. Allan Bloom, trans. James H. Nichols, Jr. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980), 6.

[9] John Dewey, "Reconstruction in Philosophy," in Idem, *The Middle Works 1899-1924, Volume 12: 1920*, ed. Jo Ann Boydston, intr. Ralph Ross (Carbondale and Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1982), 88.

Obviously, it is more important to judge whether it is good to wear shoes than whether a pair of shoes is good and good to live than whether health itself is good. One makes a judgment when they direct their desire to the attribute of an object. In reality, one does not act as a value subject; otherwise, one degenerates into being merely an artisan; the attribute of an object to be judged becomes something abstract if it is cut off from the community. In terms of value judgment, it is suggested that what should be considered is not only the attribute of an object and the desire of a subject directed to it but also the inter-subjective relation of desire. This consideration could also be applied to the discussion of the issue of reciprocity.

The Dimension of Existence and the Division of Labor in the Community

Why is there such a misconception of reciprocity? One could respond with the help of the division of labor, for the most noticeable manifestation of reciprocity is the mutual usefulness resulting from the division of labor in the community characterized by the exchange of products between subjects. But there is something more important than the division of labor or exchange in the community. It could be illustrated in the following myth:

> Hermes asked Zeus how he should distribute shame and justice to humans. 'Should I distribute them as the other arts were? This is how the others were distributed: one person practicing the art of medicine suffices for many ordinary people; and so forth with the other practitioners. Should I establish justice and shame among humans in this way, or distribute it to all?' 'To all,' said Zeus, 'and let all have a share. For cities would never come to be if only a few possessed these, as is the case with the other arts.'[10]

The distribution of the other arts may correspond to the division of labor, which makes everyone a specialized artisan. These artisans serve each other with their own special arts. This seems to be the most immediate embodiment of the association among people since people indeed live on their arts. On this matter, Hegel, while elaborating the question of enlightenment, observed,

> The extent to which he looks after his own interests must also be matched by the extent to which he serves others, and so far as he serves others, so far is he taking care of himself: one hand washes the other. But wherever he finds himself, there he is in his right place; he makes use of others and is himself made use of.[11]

---

[10] Plato, *Complete Works*, 758.
[11] Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 342–343.

However, in Plato's opinion, the whole human race might be wiped out if shame and justice were distributed as the other arts were. Similarly, the division of labor cannot be the solution to the problem of existence. Existence is considered moral by Plato. In other words, the significance of existence relies on the fact that human beings do not preserve themselves by the arts as something objectively present but develop themselves through the moral as something possible. This is the inter-subjective possibility on account of value judgment because existence in the sense of value is inalienable; everyone should share in it equally.

Because of this possibility, the division of labor always results from sharing something objectively present, for example, a specialized art. However, existence does not result from such objectively present things, just as Heidegger asserted: "*the 'essence' of Da-sein lies in its existence,*"[12] "Thus, Da-sein is never to be understood ontologically as a case and instance of a genus of beings as objectively present."[13] That is to say, for a certain art, all artisans are quite similar to each other because they are fungible and indistinctive. But human beings with the essence of existence are distinctive ontologically and thus non-fungible. It could be argued that artisans can make themselves dissimilar by engaging in different arts, just like the division of labor that turns the heterogeneous into the homogeneous. Karl Marx contributed the decisive explanation of this issue.

Marx, while summing up an argument of Adam Smith in his *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, stated,

> The diversity of human talents is more the effect than the cause of the division of labor, i.e., of exchange. Besides, it is only the latter which makes such diversity useful. The particular attributes of the different breeds within a species of animal are by nature much more marked than the degrees of difference in human aptitude and activity. But because animals are unable to engage in *exchange*, no individual animal benefits from the difference in the attributes of animals of the same species but of different breeds.… It is otherwise with *men*, amongst whom the most dissimilar talents and forms of activity are of use to one another…[14]

What is important is not that the diversity of human talents is the effect of the division of labor but that human beings undermine themselves by the sale of their diverse talents. In short, the usefulness of differentiation is just for sale in the exchange process. As Marx said, "you must make everything that is yours *saleable,* i.e., useful."[15] If this is the case, the exchange or the

---

[12] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1996), 40.

[13] Ibid., 40.

[14] Karl Marx, "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844," in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, *Volume 3* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1975), 320.

[15] Ibid., 310.

division of labor causes differentiation for the purpose of abolishing labor differentiation.

No matter how human beings are differentiated by virtue of the division of labor, they have nothing to do with this differentiation. The reason is that there is not any immanent and qualitative relevance between them and the differentiation. Due to the division of labor, human beings become capable of doing different work, but in reality, they do their work without any difference, namely, to sell their usefulness without any difference. Theodor W. Adorno said,

> …as a result of the ever-advancing division of labor, work processes become more and more alike, to the point that the supposedly qualitative differentiation through the division of labor is finally abolished (*aufgehoben*) – again a dialectical motif – as a logical consequence of this very division of labor, so that, in the end, anyone can do anything.[16]

The consequence that "anyone can do anything" seems to echo one of Dewey's analyses of workers: "He might – and frequently does – equally well or ill – perform any one of a hundred other tasks as a condition of receiving payment."[17]These discussions show us that since there is no qualitative relevance, human beings are fungible for the division of labor and the division of labor is fungible for human beings. In short, the division of labor causes the difference of humans as artisans, who only treat each other as useful and exchangeable things through the rejection of the dimension of existence. This means that artisans as things are disqualified from being subjects and related to each other just extrinsically. Thus inter-subjectivity is absent, and so is reciprocity. Moreover, those who are homogeneous have no qualitative reciprocity but quantitative accumulation, for reciprocity implies interdependence in an organic community.

If reciprocity can be ruined by the exchange of things during the process of the division of labor, how is it possible for it to continue playing its role in human existence? The answer is in exchange. Of course, it is not the exchange of things but existential experiences. For instance, Marx thought, "assume *man* to be *man* and his relationship to the world to be a human one, then you can exchange love only for love, trust for trust, etc."[18] In this type of exchange, love and trust are not things but human beings and their inter-subjective relations. With their essence of existence, human beings tend to exchange their different existential experiences in the community. The existential experiences can be attributed not to artisans but to those who are qualified

---

[16] Theodor W. Adorno, *Introduction to Sociology*, ed. Christoph Gödde, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000), 42.

[17] John Dewey, "Experience and Nature," in Idem, *The Later Works 1925-1953, Volume 1: 1925*, ed. Jo Ann Boydston, intro. Sidney Hook (Carbondale and Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1981), 275.

[18] Marx, "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts," 326.

as subjects. Thus, paradoxically, what is dispraised as means in the division of labor can be praised as an end in existence such as for love and trust. Marx wrote,

> When communist *artisans* associate with one another, theory, propaganda, etc., is their first end. But at the same time, as a result of this association, they acquire a new need – the need for society – and what appears as a means becomes an end. In this practical process the most splendid results are to be observed whenever French socialist workers are seen together. Such things as smoking, drinking, eating, etc., are no longer means of contact or means that bring them together. Association, society and conversation, which again has association as its end, are enough for them; the brotherhood of man is no mere phrase with them, but a fact of life, and the nobility of man shines upon us from their work-hardened bodies.[19]

Smoking, drinking, eating, etc., are free from the distortion caused by the division of labor but reverted to the association through which human beings exchange their existential experiences. The association of brotherhood reflects the true meaning of reciprocity in existence, just like love and trust.

Reciprocity Reconstructed by Mediation

However, the exchange of existential experiences must be expressed in some ways, such as smoking, drinking, eating, etc. In other words, human beings have to exchange their existential experiences by means of mediation. Thus, reciprocity is always mediated. What is this mediation? Of course, it would not be regarded simply as tobacco, alcohol, or a meal. One of Dewey's statements may give us a reference:

> Hence, he lives not, like the beasts of the field, in a world of merely physical things but in a world of signs and symbols. A stone is not merely hard, a thing into which one bumps; but it is a monument of a deceased ancestor. A flame is not merely something which warms or burns, but is a symbol of the enduring life of the household, of the abiding source of cheer, nourishment and shelter to which man returns from his casual wanderings.[20]

The world of signs and symbols distinguished by Dewey is certainly important, for it is through signs and symbols that we make value judgments. They serve as the mediation of reciprocity. However, in the division of labor, we understand the mediation of reciprocity as merely concerning physical

---

[19] Ibid, 313.
[20] Dewey, "Reconstruction in Philosophy," 80.

things. Physical things only are what they are and are incapable of being anything else; they cannot contribute to the exploration of the possible space of reciprocity. Whereas signs and symbols are transcendental, they can be attributed to existential experiences rather than physical properties. As Dewey stated, "all this which marks the difference between bestiality and humanity, between culture and merely physical nature, is because man remembers, preserving and recording his experiences."[21] For that matter, the discussion of reciprocity on the basis of existence amounts to the discussion of reciprocity based on signs and symbols.

Furthermore, signs and symbols could be called information, for they are interpretable and thus comprehensible expressions of meanings. Or rather, they should be called axiological information since they are not the expression of a physical property but of value, which is prior to the former. For example, the words sweet and bitter, according to Dewey, are firstly the expression of value rather than that of physical property. He said, "The dictionary will inform anyone who consults it that the early use of words like sweet and bitter was not to denote qualities of sense as such but to discriminate things as favorable and hostile."[22] As far as the priority of the value expression of information is concerned, it is by virtue of such information that the subject can be informed, and the inter-subjective can be produced. However, while being considered as the value expression and thus as the mediation of reciprocity, information is flexible and variable because it always presents itself as something possible, which implies the interpretability and comprehensibility of information.

This could be illustrated in one passage from *The Book of Rites*,

> During a great dearth in Qi, Qian Ao had food prepared on the roads, to wait the approach of hungry people and give to them. One day, there came a famished man, looking as if he could hardly see, his face covered with his sleeve, and dragging his feet together. Qian Ao, carrying with his left hand some rice, and holding some drink with the other, said to him, 'Poor man! Come and eat.' The man, opening his eyes with a stare, and looking at him, said, 'It was because I would not eat 'Poor man come here's' food, that I have come to this state.' Qian Ao immediately apologized for his words, but the man after all would not take the food and died.[23]

The food, as a physical thing, is offered to the famished man through the information of "Poor man! Come and eat," while the value judgment of the famished man based on this information is that he is treated with indignity.

[21] Ibid.

[22] John Dewey, "Art as Experience," in Idem, *The Later Works 1925-1953, Volume 10: 1934*, ed. Jo Ann Boydston, intro. Abraham Kaplan (Carbondale and Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1987), 22.

[23] Dai Sheng, *The Book of Rites*, trans. James Legge (Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou Ancient Books Publishing House, 2016), 159.

In other words, this information, as a value expression, means contempt rather than kindness for the famished man. The famished man cannot enjoy the food like a beast because what is offered to him is not only food but also indignity and contempt. As a result, he chooses dignity and death. Mencius explained this with his conception of "men of distinguished talents and virtue":

> Therefore, men have that which they like more than life, and that which they dislike more than death. They are not men of distinguished talents and virtue only who have this mental nature. All men have it; what belongs to such men is simply that they do not lose it. Here are a small basket of rice and a platter of soup, and the case is one in which the getting them will preserve life, and the want of them will be death; – if they are offered with an insulting voice, even a tramper will not receive them, or if you first tread upon them, even a beggar will not stop to take them.[24]

The value judgment of "like" and "dislike" is much more important than the fact judgment of "life" and "death" for "men of distinguished talents and virtue" as value subjects. The value subject always follows the former. However, things are not so simple because the value judgment stemming from information is a production and can be interpreted. For example, the passage cited from *The Book of Rites* above is followed by a comment by Zeng-zi, "When Zeng-zi heard the circumstances, he said, 'Was it not a small matter? When the other expressed his pity as he did, the man might have gone away. When he apologized, the man might have taken the food.'"[25] This means that the value judgment of indignity and contempt from the information of "Poor man! Come and eat" can be reconstructed from "immediately apologized for his words" because the information is a mediation that is open to reinterpreting. The reconstruction of mediation is of great importance since it characterizes the possible space of reciprocity. Zeng-zi grasped the reconstruction of mediation, so his analysis of "when the other expressed his pity as he did" and "when he apologized" reconstructed the inter-subjective relationship. This means that reciprocity can be reconstructed through mediation.

Because of the reconstruction of mediation, information makes a varied space of inter-subjective relationships possible. Such a space is not closed so that each value expression can be negated and held, just as Hegel said, "The negative appears as the *mediating* factor, because it holds itself and the immediate of which it is the negation within itself."[26] In this sense, the reconstruction of mediation makes the inter-subjective reciprocity not only what it is but also what it is not, which defines the subject itself. In the example

---

[24] Mencius, *The Works of Mencius*, trans. James Legge (Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou Ancient Books Publishing House, 2016), 413.

[25] Dai Sheng, *The Book of Rites*, 159.

[26] Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, trans. and ed. George Di Giovanni (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 746.

above, at first, Qian Ao is defined as an offender in the relation between him and the famished man, but after the reconstruction of mediation, he is transformed into an apologizer. Without the mediated reciprocity, Qian Ao would not be defined as a value subject, although he would still be as an almsgiver. Human beings are qualified as the subject of value by mediation, namely, information, which reconstructs reciprocity. Since reciprocity can be reconstructed by information, the value subject itself is also constantly reconstructed. As a result, information becomes a basic pursuit in the community whose measure is reciprocity.

The Pursuit of Information in the Community

Usually, a subject is considered a human individual engaged in some physical activities. However, this is not true for a value subject because merely physical activity and a physical individual cannot fully express value. For example, to "kill" or "not to kill" in the commandment of "Thou shalt not kill"[27] is not a value expression. The killer or the killed cannot be considered as a value subject. A value expression must contain information, or rather, axiological information. It is not the description of an occupation or the status of the killer or the killed. Even if the killer or the killed is a soldier, the activity of "killing" is still not a value expression. What does a value expression mean? As it is written in *Mencius*,

> The king Xuan of Qi asked, saying, 'Was it so, that Tang banished Jie, and that king Wu smote Zhou?' Mencius replied, 'it is so in the records.' The King said, 'may a minister then put his sovereign to death?' Mencius said, 'he who outrages the benevolence proper to his nature, is called a robber; he who outrages righteousness, is called a ruffian. The robber and the ruffian we call a mere fellow. I have heard of the cutting off of the fellow Zhou, but I have not heard of the putting a sovereign to death, in his case.'[28]

Sovereign or minister are descriptions of one's status rather than a value subject. The case in which a minister puts his sovereign to death does not involve any value expression. A value expression derives from the information of "a mere fellow" that transcends all ready-made things such as occupation, status, and so on. Inter-subjective reciprocity is embodied in the relationship between "a mere fellow" and the one who kills him according to axiology but not between a sovereign and his minister.

A subject only emerges from the information that has a value expression. The formation of a subject is the course of the reconstruction of reciprocity through information, which is not ready-made or realistic. Here, the information of "a mere fellow" does not describe the physiological character

---

[27] Exodus 20:13.
[28] Mencius, *The Works of Mencius*, 65-67.

or the occupational identity but a value expression. As far as reciprocity is concerned, what the subject pursues is information rather than something realistic. It is by the pursuit of information that a subject establishes itself.

There is confusion between the pursuit of information and the entity referred to by information. The reason for this confusion is both the view of realism and the limit of technology. It could be said that the latter results in the former. For example, in the early philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein, the entity referred to by information is canceled. As he stated,

> Suppose everyone has a box with something in it: we call it a 'beetle'. No one can look into anyone else's box, and everyone says he knows what a beetle is only by looking at *his* beetle. – Here it would be quite possible for everyone to have something different in his box. One might even imagine such a thing constantly changing. – But suppose the word 'beetle' has a use in these people's language? – If so, it would not be used as the name of a thing.[29]

According to Wittgenstein, the meaning of a word is its use rather than its reference. The reference of information is neither an entity nor a goal because it is the use of a word that makes inter-subjective reciprocity possible. The task of information is to construct and reconstruct the inter-subjective relationship. However, it seems that people are always inclined to cross the border of information or mediation in order to acquire the so-called entity. There is not an expansive space in which information can be created, exchanged, and shared with the support of technology. This has not been changed completely until fully developed internet technology emerged. In recent years, our lives have been greatly changed by internet technology. However, this does not mean that we have understood the significance of the change and its effect on reciprocity. Hence, there are some points that need to be clarified.

First, if inter-subjective reciprocity is considered from the perspective of the internet, the subject that used to be thought of as something substantive now proves to be useless and cancelable. That is to say, reciprocity is no longer the relationship between substantive subjects but rather between various bits of information. Thus, it is not necessary to discuss such things as the physiological characteristics or occupational identity of information. The virtual identity on the internet is different from the real identity. However, the virtual identity is also as substantive as the real one because it is the result of the division of labor and has the mark of artisans. People seek their different divisions of labor in the virtual world because they are not satisfied with what they have in the real world. The relationship between virtual identities is not the reciprocity we have discussed because the essence of reciprocity is the value judgment.

---

[29] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 100.

Second, information as the mediation of reciprocity transcends all physiological characteristics and occupational identities in both real and virtual worlds. Information is basically the expression of value. The commercial interchange of products, etc., through the internet should not be treated as the embodiment of reciprocity because it is conducive to the preservation of human beings as something ready-made but not to the creation of something possible. However, if reciprocity can be reconstructed constantly by information, we are able to break through all existing things, such as physiological characteristics and occupational identities, and consequently find the possibility of becoming subjects, namely, human beings. This does not mean that information gives value to facts and announces value on the internet.

Third, value is a fact itself instead of an attachment to the fact. For instance, in Mencius's analysis, "a mere fellow" is factual, but the relationship between a sovereign and a minister is nonfactual because a value expression is a fact itself. What information reveals on the internet is a fact, although such a fact may be shadowed by a counterfeit. Reciprocity is mediated by information on the one hand and based on fact on the other hand. This could be illustrated by Jean-Paul Sartre's discussion of a coward, "He is not the way he is because he has a cowardly heart, lung, or brain. He is not like that as the result of his physiological makeup; he is like that because he has made himself a coward through his actions."[30] Here, cowardliness has nothing to do with physiological characteristics or occupational identity but with information and a revelation of the fact. For a person, cowardliness is a fact that is more essential than one's physiological characteristics or occupational identity. And one is not a coward through one's birth but could be a coward through one's actions.

The pursuit of information in the community means establishing the subject itself in reciprocal actions, which are based on facts revealed by information. The effect of internet technology on reciprocity shows that facts revealed by information turn to be the most universal and fundamental ones. This makes the pursuit of information the way of existence of the community that receives the unprecedented support of internet technology.

The Information Community as a Way of Life

The community discussed above could be called the information community. In the internet era, the information community has become a way of life through which desire and value judgments are created, exchanged, and shared along with information in the community.

It is not because of "being-in" that a person or a member of the community is what he/she is initially and then enters into his/her way of life. Rather, one begins one's way of life from the outset. Similarly, it is not the case that one enters the internet to create, exchange, and share information for the sake

---

[30] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Existentialism is a Humanism*, trans. Carol Macomber (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 38.

of his/her hobbies and interests, but that one becomes a member of the information community from the outset. The information community could be regarded as a technological presentation or development of the concept of "world" in Heidegger's philosophy. As he stated,

> It is not the case that human being 'is', and then on top of that has a relation of being to the 'world' which it sometimes takes upon itself. Da-sein is never 'initially' a sort of a being which is free from being-in, but which at times is in the mood to take up a 'relation' to the world. This taking up of relations to the world is possible only *because,* as being-in-the-world, Da-sein is as it is.[31]

Since one is a member of the information community just like in the "world," all that one owns and even oneself should go back to the creation, exchange, and sharing of information supported by internet technology. In the past, it was possible to live in solitude but not in the internet era because every nook and cranny in the world has been exposed to the internet. The information community has become a way of life. Even one's daily life is inevitably caught up in the process of the creation, exchange, and sharing of information. Through this process, the inter-subjective relationship is constructed and reconstructed. As value subjects, human beings transcend their physiological characteristics or occupational identities. Moreover, their judgments of facts are not based on their hobbies and interests. Jean-Jacques Rousseau distinguished the general will from the will of all and said,

> There is often a great deal of difference between the will of all and the general will. The latter considers only the general interest, whereas the former considers the private interest and is merely the sum of private wills. But remove from these same wills the pluses and minuses that cancel each other out, and what remains as the sum of the differences is the general will.[32]

On the internet, the will of all is expressed widely; it is easily regarded as the general will. The will of all is based on physiological characteristics and occupational identity as well as hobbies and interests. It fundamentally aims at the private interest. It is not the general will. The information community as a way of life does not imply that we should indulge ourselves in infinite and sensitive appetite and rational supervision in virtue of internet technology. Rather, we should use subtraction to withdraw from such indulgence. A value judgment is the result of such subtraction. Then what is the general will? The answer can derive from Heidegger's consideration of conscience. He said, "*What* does conscience call to the one summoned? Strictly

---

[31] Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 53-54.
[32] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *On the Social Contract*, trans. and ed. Donald A Cress (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1987), 31-32.

speaking – nothing. The call does not say anything, does not give any information about events of the world, has nothing to tell."[33] That is to say, the general will or what is left in existence is not something given. Rather it is nothing. Because of this nothingness, it is possible to make all that exist by themselves. As Heidegger later said, "As this summons, it is the summons of the self to its potentiality-being-a-self, and thus calls Da-sein forth to its possibilities."[34] When we take the information community as a way of life, we do not entrust ourselves to something reliable and determinate but to our possibilities. This is a response both to the value judgment that explores the possible space of reciprocity and the information that manifests itself as a value expression on the level of possibility.

A Vision of Future in the Information Community

As discussed above, possibility is primordial and actuality is derivative. What is of the most possibility and the least actuality? The answer is the future. Heidegger said, "Letting-*come-toward-itself* that perdures the eminent possibility is the primordial phenomenon of the *future*."[35] Such a future related to possibility does not mean a point-in-time after now. Every point-in-time that can be marked in time is not future but now. According to Augustine, "what is by now evident and clear is that neither future nor past exists, and it is inexact language to speak of three times – past, present, and future. Perhaps it would be exact to say: there are three times, a present of things past, a present of things present, a present of things to come."[36] As soon as it is replaced by now, future loses its possibility. This is because the future is transformed into a now which has not yet become actual and will be so. Therefore, Heidegger said, "Here 'future' does not mean a now that has *not yet* become 'actual' and that sometime *will be* for the first time, but the coming in which Da-sein comes toward itself in its own most potentiality-of-being."[37] Then how to achieve this "coming"? Information could be the answer.

Information as mediation will never become actual because it reconstructs fact and reciprocity. Reconstruction implies that fact and reciprocity are always in the process of becoming rather than actuality. Becoming is always delayed because of the diachronic dimension of mediation. By nature, the information community contains the vision of the future. But what faculty of the subject makes such a vision available? It is neither the sensitive appetite nor the rational supervision because both are suitable for actuality. The former is for the intuitional actuality and the latter is for the ideal one. Both faculties can only be applied to the actual or the present, such as physiological characteristics and occupational identity. At the same time, the future cannot

---

[33] Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 252.
[34] Ibid, 253.
[35] Ibid, 299.
[36] Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 235.
[37] Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 299.

be actual or present. Then what faculty can be used to cope with the non-actual/non-present? Let us consider Immanuel Kant's suggestion. According to Kant,

> *imagination* is the power of presenting an object in intuition even *without the object's being present*…Now insofar as the imagination is spontaneity, I sometimes also call it the *productive* imagination, thereby distinguishing it from the *reproductive* imagination. The synthesis of the reproductive imagination is subject solely to empirical laws, viz., to the laws of association. Therefore this synthesis contributes nothing to the explanation of the possibility of a priori cognition, and hence belongs not in transcendental philosophy but in psychology.[38]

As proposed by Kant, imagination is a faculty that copes with the non-actual non-present, namely, the future. Imagination, properly speaking the productive imagination, is the inter-subjective faculty in the community that makes the vision of the future available.

Rather than being perceived by the senses or cognized by reason, the non-present can only be envisioned by imagination. However, the starting point is not the non-present but visions, for visions imply beliefs and expectations. The future is nothing unless we believe and expect it. It changes itself constantly on the way toward us. This change is described as the imagination of social practices by Richard Rorty. As he said, "We should try to think of imagination not as a faculty that generates mental images but as the ability to change social practices by proposing advantageous new uses of marks and noises."[39] Similar to Kant, Rorty also excluded psychological imagination. According to Rorty, the change of social practices is closely related to the advantageous new uses of marks and noises, which coincide with our consideration of information as signs and symbols. The advantageous new uses of marks and noises also reconstruct the inter-subjective relationship between users. Further, Rorty ascribed the source of language to the imagination, following the Romantic's argument.[40] Since imagination is the source of language, it is not that language reports something before imagination enlarges it, but rather that imagination creates it before language tells it. Therefore, language, as the result of imagination, primarily reveals what it is not rather than describes what it is. As Rorty suggested,

> It is not that we first spoke a language that simply reported what was going on around us, and later enlarged this language by imaginative redescription. Rather, imaginativeness goes all the way

---

[38] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Werner S. Pluhar (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1996), 191–192.

[39] Richard Rorty, "Pragmatism and Romanticism," in Idem, *Philosophy as Cultural Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 107.

[40] Ibid., 106–107.

> back. The concepts of redness and roundness are as such imagina-
> tive creations as those of God, of the positron, and of constitutional
> democracy.[41]

These concepts listed by Rorty are not as they are beforehand in the physical or mental world; rather, they are what they are not before imagination creates them in language.

To some degree, all the concepts belong to a future that is on the way to us through imagination and information. As a neo-pragmatistic philosopher, Rorty once declared, "If there is anything distinctive about pragmatism it is that it substitutes the notion of a better human future for the notions of 'reality', 'reason' and 'nature'."[42] In fact, the future is not a concept; in other words, not a concept of time. This is because it is the primary phenomenon of temporality. Just as Heidegger said: "*The primary phenomenon of primordial and authentic temporality is the future*."[43] Thus it is more proper to say that the future summons the reciprocity for the information community with its priority in temporality. What we should do is to listen to what the future summons.

In this light, the subject is no longer the terminal of information because there is only freedom but no end. Or rather, there is only reciprocity but no subject. This notion could be found in *Lü's Commentaries of History*, "a man of Jing lost a bow and refused to look for it. He said, 'a Jing man lost it and a Jing man will pick it up. Why do I have to look for it?' Upon hearing it, Confucius said, 'it will be appropriate if he omits the word Jing.' After hearing it, Lao Zi said, 'it will be appropriate if he omits the word 'man'. So Lao Zi was the most public-spirited."[44] In this story, the subject gradually withdraws its presence to the extent that only the activity without the presence of the subject is left. Here, reciprocity and community are authentically characterized by information without the presence of the subject. It is only in the vision of the future that such a characterization can be understood by us, namely, members of the information community.

Bibliography

Adorno, Theodor W. *Introduction to Sociology*, edited by Christoph Gödde, translated by Edmund Jephcott. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000.

Augustine. *Confessions.* Translated by Henry Chadwick. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Dai Sheng. *The Book of Rites.* Translated by James Legge. Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou Ancient Books Publishing House, 2016.

---

[41] Ibid., 114.

[42] Richard Rorty, "Truth without Correspondence to Reality," in Idem, *Philosophy and Social Hope* (London: Penguin Books, 1999), 27.

[43] Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 303.

[44] Lü Buwei, *Lü's Commentaries of History*, trans. Tang Bowen (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 2010), 8.

Dewey, John. "Experience and Nature." In Idem, *The Later Works 1925-1953, Volume 1: 1925*, edited by Jo Ann Boydston, introduction by Sidney Hook. Carbondale and Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1981.

------. "Art as Experience." In Idem, *The Later Works 1925-1953, Volume 10: 1934*, edited by Jo Ann Boydston, introduction by Abraham Kaplan. Carbondale and Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1987.

------. "Reconstruction in Philosophy." In Idem, *The Middle Works 1899-1924, Volume 12: 1920*, edited by Jo Ann Boydston, introduction by Ralph Ross. Carbondale and Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1982.

------. "How Is Mind to Be Known?," in Idem, *The Later Works 1925-1953, Volume 15: 1942-1948*, edited by Jo Ann Boydston, introduction by Lewis S. Feuer. Carbondale and Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1989.

Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich. *Phenomenology of Spirit.* Translated by A. V. Miller. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977.

------. *The Science of Logic.* Translated and edited by George Di Giovanni. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Heidegger, Martin. *Being and Time*. Translated by Joan Stambaugh. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1996.

Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of Pure Reason.* Translated by Werner S. Pluhar. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1996.

Kojève, Alexandre. *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: Lectures on the* Phenomenology of Spirit, edited by Allan Bloom, translated by James H. Nichols, Jr. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980.

Lü Buwei. *Lü's Commentaries of History.* Translated by Tang Bowen. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 2010.

Marx, Karl. "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844." In Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, *Volume 3.* Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1975.

Mencius. *The Works of Mencius.* Translated by James Legge. Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou Ancient Books Publishing House, 2016.

Plato. *Complete Works*, edited by John M. Cooper. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1997.

Rorty, Richard. "Truth without Correspondence to Reality." In Idem, *Philosophy and Social Hope.* London: Penguin Books, 1999.

------. "Pragmatism and Romanticism." In Idem, *Philosophy as Cultural Politics.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *On the Social Contract.* Translated and edited by Donald A Cress. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1987.

Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Existentialism is a Humanism.* Translated by Carol Macomber. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007.

Wittgenstein, Ludwig. *Philosophical Investigations.* Translated by G. E. M. Anscombe. Oxford: Blackwell, 1999.

15

Exploring Reciprocity as the Sign for
a Buddhist Understanding of Truth

SHEN Haiyan

Introduction

The use of reciprocity as the sign in approaching and revealing the ultimate truth is a notable phenomenon in Chinese Buddhist schools. I would like to explore especially the use of reciprocity as the sign in Chan Buddhist teaching, which is in line with the technique of sign interpretation adopted by the master Zhiyi (538-597 CE) of the Tiantai Buddhist School.

The definition of the sign is generally understood as something standing for something else, i.e., signifier and signified. "Sign" in Tiantai Zhiyi's system of interpretation refers to words, characters, phrases, images, numbers, and analogies that signify truth, ideas, concepts, and thoughts. Generally speaking, Zhiyi's interpretation of the title of the *Lotus Sūtra* is the interpretation of signs. However, as we look closely, we find that Zhiyi has a unique system of sign interpretation by means of using numbers and analogies and by means of deciphering words, characters, and so forth, in order to signify his ideas and thoughts. His philosophical thought, in turn, enhances the depth and power of his interpretation of the *Lotus Sūtra* (*Fahua jing* 法華經).

Zhiyi's concept of sign interpretation is concerned with conveying the meaning of signs in nature because the sign is the manifestation of a principle embedded in nature. Zhiyi gives examples of mundane inventions that are derived from emulating natural phenomena. The invention of the fishing net is due to one's understanding of the principle that is manifested by the sign as the spider web, in which the principle represents the means of catching things. The invention of the vehicle is due to one's understanding of the principle that is manifested by the sign as the flying bird, in which the principle represents the means of delivery. The invention of the boat is due to one's understanding of the principle that is manifested by the sign as the floating raft, in which the principle represents the means of transportation. The invention of characters is due to one's understanding of the principle that is manifested by the sign as the bird's track, in which the principle represents the means of written communication.[1]

Basically, there are two levels of signs, each of which, in Zhiyi's interpretation, contains one layer of arbitrary language. The first level of the sign refers to natural signs (i.e., images in nature), which contain what nature attempts to express. This intention of nature is the first layer of arbitrary language, which is illegible and is to be discovered. The second level of the sign

---

[1] *Fahua xuanyi*, T33. 771c.

is related to the author, who, by means of interpreting natural signs, attempts to convey certain themes. The words and sentences the author uses are legible language, forming artificial signs. The theme contained in the artificial sign is the second layer of arbitrary language, which has to coincide with the first layer of arbitrary language. The overlapping of these two layers of arbitrary language strongly supports the discourse of the author.

Given that, in Zhiyi's interpretation, the central image of the *Lotus Sūtra* is the image of the lotus (which belongs to the natural sign), this natural sign can, in turn, represent the authentic nature of reality. This demonstrates that nature speaks through the image of the lotus to reveal the Buddhist Dharma. The conclusion is that the discovery of what the lotus (as natural sign) signifies must be the Ultimate Truth since the arbitrary language of the lotus expresses the true nature of the phenomenal world. Therefore, Zhiyi's sign interpretation in the *Fahua xuanyi* (法華玄義)[2] is a means to penetrate the True Reality (*shixiang* 實相) and to make this layer of arbitrary language legible. This intention of Zhiyi to reveal the profound truth through visible signs is evident. As he states: "Like one's facial feature that is replete with all good and bad, when one's outer appearance is viewed, one's inner [quality] is at once known."[3]

In short, by penetrating the Ultimate Truth signified by the lotus (as natural sign), Zhiyi's discourse (as artificial sign) is substantiated. By revealing the Ultimate Truth as perfect and harmonious, correspondingly, Zhiyi's own philosophical thought is also proven to be perfect and harmonious, and the body of his interpretation stands out to be the embodiment of his perfect and harmonious philosophy.

Our study shows that one of the achievements of Zhiyi's interpretation of signs concerns the written language, by investigating different meanings of a word (from which certain systems and concepts Zhiyi intends to convey are unraveled), by decoding the structure of a character (which reveals Zhiyi's theory of one dharma in relation to all dharmas), and by reasoning out meanings of the black ink as form, with which Zhiyi demonstrates how truth is embedded in all dharmas.

The spirit of Zhiyi's sign interpretation is inherited by Chan (Zen) masters, who also use signs in their teaching. Signs that permeate daily life, such as eating, drinking, sleeping, gestures, facial expressions, analogies, shouting, stick beating, drawing, and so on, are used as important methods to convey experiences of enlightenment and to teach students to penetrate truth as well. Here, we begin with the description of one of Zhiyi's sign interpretations, that is, the decoding of the structure of a character.

---

[2] Haiyan Shen has done a comprehensive study on this masterpiece of Chinese Buddhism. See Haiyan Shen, *The Profound Meaning of the Lotus Sūtra: T'ien-t'ai Philosophy of Buddhism* (Delhi: Originals, 2005).

[3] *Mohe zhiguan*, T46. 53a.

The Interpretation of Sign to Decode the Structure of a Character

For Zhiyi, sign interpretation can not only be made by studying the meaning of a word but can also go so far as to decipher the strokes of a character. From the development of each stroke, a new character is formulated, and a new meaning is suggested. Such a detailed and fine touch in deciphering the development of each stroke is a unique and sophisticated method of sign interpretation. This method is based on the principle of ideograms as characteristics of the Chinese written language. Zhiyi's analysis of the formation of characters is to find their meanings represented by each stroke, which is exemplified in a lengthy analysis of the "black ink as form." It vividly depicts Zhiyi's theory that all dharmas are developed from one single dharma. Since they are one entity, Zhiyi holds that one dharma can penetrate all dharmas, and all dharmas are embodied in one dharma (*yiji yiqie, yiqie jiyi* 一即一切，一切即一). In other words, the former *yi* (one) refers to any individual entity, which can be taken as a microcosm that contains all entities; the latter *yi* (one) refers to the Ultimate Truth, which can be taken as the single principle that underlies all entities.

According to Zhiyi's system of identification, there is absolutely no discrepancy between one phenomenon and another as they are interconnected on the basis of one principle. To portray this relationship of inter-connectivity between one entity and all entities, Zhiyi gives an example revealing the structures that constitute Chinese characters. In association with traditional writing, black ink is the basic element that enables written characters to be formed. Thus, black ink is treated by Zhiyi as the fundamental form that is used to depict the formulation of characters.

Form can interpret all dharmas. It is like the black ink as form. One stroke [i.e., horizontal stroke] means one (*yi* 一). Two strokes mean two (*er* 二). Three strokes mean three (*san* 三). Adding the vertical stroke (on the three horizontal lines) means king (*wang* 王). Adding one stroke on the right means the period from 1 a.m. to 3 a.m. (*chou* 丑). Adding one stroke on the left means field (*tian* 田). If the middle vertical line goes over the top, it means due to (*you* 由). When this line goes over the bottom, it means to explain (*shen* 申). With such bending and turning, the meanings that are signified are endless. It could be that one word interprets immeasurable dharmas, or immeasurable words commonly interpret one dharma, or immeasurable words interpret immeasurable dharmas, or one word interprets one dharma. If one dot of black ink bends or turns slightly, its interpretation differs greatly. If it bends to the left, it is interpreted as evil (*e* 惡); if it bends to the right, it means good (*shan* 善).[4] Writing the dot on top means no-outflow (*wulou* 無漏) [of defilement]; writing the dot at the bottom means outflow (*youlou* 有

---

4 How the character can be interpreted as evil and good is not clear. We presume that left and right counterpart are taken as allegorical terms for evil and good.

漏) [of defilement].[5] Being killed or alive, being prosperous or robbed, being ruined or honored, being in suffering or in joy, all are in the form of ink. There is no dharma that is beyond ink. In short, black ink interprets immeasurable Teachings, Practices, and Principles. Black ink is also the foundation for Teaching, Practice, and Principle.[6]

By pointing out how the "black ink as form" (*hei mose* 黑墨色) can possibly work out in the development of writing various strokes in formulating various characters (with their different meanings), Zhiyi presents an ontological concept about one dharma containing all dharmas, and all dharmas being identical to one dharma. "One dharma contains all dharmas" is demonstrated by him from the black ink (as the fundamental source) that functions to draw a multitude of strokes, from which various characters are formed. Since all characters are derived from strokes and all strokes are derived from the black ink (as form), this demonstrates that all dharmas are identical to one dharma. Therefore, this second type of sign interpretation vividly depicts the dynamic nature of Zhiyi's perfect and harmonious philosophy.

The Interpretation of Sign to Reason out Meanings of the Black Ink as Form

A Chinese character is interpreted by Zhiyi in such a way that its various connotations are associated with his theory of Buddhism. First of all, its connotations correspond to his interpretation of the word *Ching* (經 *sūtra*). Second, its connotations are the expression of various principles in Buddhism and various categories of the Subtleties in his interpretation of the *Lotus Sūtra*. This interpretation is an extension of the above analysis of strokes. Zhiyi's analysis goes so far as to get to the foundation of the characters, not only of the strokes that form the structure of the characters but also the black ink that draws the strokes. Through his skillful reasoning on the executive development of the black ink, the semantically empty black ink as form is charged with endless meanings.

Let us continue to quote Zhiyi's whole analysis discussing multiple connotations the "black ink as form" could signify.

(1) The black ink as form is interpreted to signify the meaning "slight emanation" (微發) that is associated with teaching, practice, and doctrine (concerning the principle) in Buddhism. In terms of the Buddha's teaching recorded in written language, this written form in fascicles and volumes is derived from the development of an initial dot. In terms of practice, because

---

[5] Zhiyi does not specify a character dealing with the dot at the top and at the bottom. We presume that what he intends to portray is the state of non-outflow of defilement and outflow of defilement. If the dot is at the top of the character, it draws a picture of non-dripping, descriptive of non-outflow; if the dot is on the bottom of the character, it draws a picture of dripping, descriptive of outflow.

[6] *Fahua xuanyi*, T33. 777a.

of the teaching in the written form of dots, words, and sentences, one is able to practice according to the teaching. One begins to carry out small practice and eventually proceeds to carry out great practice. In terms of the doctrine that expresses the principle (or truth), the teaching in the written form of dots and words can perceive the principle from the teaching itself. One begins to perceive the shallow principle and eventually the profound principle.[7]

(2) The black ink as form is interpreted by Zhiyi to signify the meaning "gushing up spring" (*yongquan* 湧泉). From the black ink, there gush up infinite dots, words, sentences, and verses that record the teaching; there gush up infinite practices; and there gush up infinite doctrines. Thus, the black ink as form embraces three kinds of gushing up spring in terms of teaching, practice, and doctrine.[8]

(3) Since the black ink as form is the beginning of things as indicated above, Zhiyi interprets it as the cause. On the one hand, it is due to attachment to form that the bond of life-death in the six worlds of *saṃsāra* (heavenly beings, humans, asuras, animals, hungry ghosts, and hell-dwellers) arises. On the other hand, striving to attain liberation from the attachment to form becomes the cause of forming four kinds of sagehood. In other words, black ink as form enables one to see the emptiness of things from which liberation results.[9]

(4) Truth is embedded in the black ink as form and, therefore, the latter is regarded by Zhiyi as the Buddha-Dharma. As indicated above, since the form is the foundation for the dharma, the three major components in Buddhism (Teaching, Practice, and Principle) are established. This is to say that in order to lead beings to perceive the illusory nature of form, teaching is implemented by the Buddha to bestow on beings knowledge and wisdom. Following the teaching, practice must be carried out to sever delusions. Finally, after delusions are severed, a person is able to perceive the principle and realize the truth.

(5) Since the black ink as form contains the teaching of the Buddha, it can be translated as *sūtra* (*jing* 經). Zhiyi explains:

> If [one] sees the form as scripture (*sejing* 色經), [one] recognizes that form is [the cause from which] false views and wrong attitudes [arise]; form is the doctrine of Dependent Origination; form is identical to Emptiness, the Provisional, and the Middle [Way];[10]

---

[7] Ibid.

[8] *Fahua xuanyi*, T33. 777a.

[9] Ibid., 777b. Four kinds of sagehood in Buddhism refer to the four levels of accomplishment in terms of *śrvāka* (disciples of the Buddha who contemplate the Four Noble Truths to attain *nirvāṇa*), *pratyekabuddha* (enlightened by contemplating on Twelve Links of Dependent Origination), *bodhisattva* (enlightening being), and Buddha (the awakened one).

[10] Zhiyi's theory of the Middle Way-Ultimate Truth (*zhongdao shixiang* 中道實相) is the identification of the three aspects of reality – Emptiness, the Provisional Existence, and the Middle Way. This theory not only incorporates different views about reality but

and form is identical to the Dharma-realm that contains all enti-
ties.[11]

This is to say that form can be treated as *sūtra*. Why? This is because
form can teach one to realize that if one is attached to form, form is the source
of false views and wrong attitudes. Form also teaches the doctrine of Depend-
ent Origination, because form is originated from causes and conditions. Form
can also reveal the Threefold Truth of Emptiness, the Provisional, and the
Middle Way. Form is empty, because it comes to existence due to the com-
bination of causes and conditions. Form is provisional, for it bears temporary
existence. Form is the Middle Way, for it is simultaneously empty and provi-
sional. Since the Threefold Truth is the characteristic of all dharmas, this truth
designates the all-embracing nature of the Dharma-realm. Since form ex-
presses this Threefold Truth, form is thus identical to the Dharma-realm (that
is all-embracing).

(6) Since the black ink as form is taken as the Buddhist scripture, so are
the characters formed by the black ink, which can be taken as the foundation
for dharma or truth.

First of all, from the character written in ink (*mozi* 墨字), one is able to
realize the Four Noble Truths. Thus, the character written in ink is the foun-
dation for *śrvākas*. Zhiyi points out:

> If [one] realizes that the character [written in ink] is the effect and
> retribution with no mark, then no-mark is the Truth of Suffering.[12]
> Being tainted by the form of retribution is the Truth of Accumula-
> tion.[13] Knowing that the character is originated by causality, and
> that it expresses Suffering, Emptiness, and No-selfhood, this is the

also affirms that the empirical world is the ultimate place to practice and attain liberation.
Emptiness is spoken of in terms of the illusory nature of existence since one entity origi-
nates depending on other entities. The Provisional conveys the characteristics of phenom-
ena from the angle of their conventional existence. Although phenomena are illusory, they
do bear certain names and exist temporally. The Middle Way identifies Emptiness with
the Provisional and vice versa. When people hold onto either the view of Emptiness or the
view of the Provisional Existence, for Zhiyi, either side is extreme and does not reflect the
true characteristic of the phenomenon. Only the Middle Way that incorporates both views
by identifying one side with the other transcends both extremes. However, this transcend-
ence is not to remove oneself from two sides; instead, it embraces both to represent the
perfect perception of comprehensiveness.

[11] *Fahua xuanyi*, T.33. 777b.

[12] No-mark (*Wuji* 無記) means that one cannot distinguish what the causes are that can
lead to certain effects and, therefore, no-mark is suffering, signifying the Truth of Suffer-
ing as one of the Four Noble Truths in Buddhism (i.e., suffering, cause of suffering, ex-
tinction of suffering, and the path leading to the extinction of suffering).

[13] The form of retribution means that since form is the source of false views and wrong
attitudes, retribution results. Therefore, the form of retribution is the cause of suffering,
signifying the Truth of Accumulation.

Truth of Path.[14] Since [one] recognizes that the character is not the character, [one] will not have false views about [the nature of] the character, and all afflictions will be extinguished. [Therefore,] this is the Truth of Extinction.[15]

Second, from the character written in ink, one realizes the Twelvefold Causality (ignorance, volitional activity, cognition, name and form, six senses, contact, sensation, desire, attachment, existence, rebirth, and old age-and-death) and, thus, the character written in ink is the foundation for *pratyekabuddhas*:

If one does not understand [the nature of] the character, this is called Ignorance. [If one] arouses love and hatred from the character, this is Volitional Activity. Distinguishing the character as beautiful or ugly is Cognition. Knowing the name of the character is Name-and-Form. When the character enters eyes, this is called Six Senses. When the character as object is against the faculty, this is called Contact. Receiving and being tainted is identical to Sensation. Lingering and being attached is Desire. Rack one's brain trying to seek is Attachment. The attachment arouses karman, and this is called Existence. Existence can lead to effect, which is called Rebirth, Old Age, Sickness, and Death. The wheel of suffering runs endlessly, which is the foundation for the Twelvefold Causality. If one is able to perceive that the character is not the character, ignorance will be put to rest, and there will be no volitional activity, and one will not be led to old age-and-death. [If] ignorance is extinguished, old age-and-death is extinguished too. [One] should know that this character is the foundation for *pratyekabuddhas.*[16]

Third, the perception that the nature of the character is inherently empty is the foundation for bodhisattvas, for this perception is what inspires them to carry out actions in order to save living beings. Zhiyi explains:

If [one] understands that the character is identical to emptiness, and is not empty due to extinction, the nature of the character is inherently empty. By emptiness, there is no love and hatred, and no deviance and correctness. [Since] the character cannot be obtained [due to emptiness], who is the person who knows the character? Why is it that living beings falsely generate attachment or abandonment? [The bodhisattva] makes the vow with kindness and compassion and practices the Six Perfections to save living beings.

---

[14] This means that if one understands the doctrine of Causality, Suffering, Emptiness, and No-self (that is embedded in a character), one is able to reach the extinction of suffering. Therefore, this is the Truth of Path.

[15] *Fahua xuanyi*, T33. 777b.

[16] *Fahua xuanyi*, T33. 777b.

By entering the reality of suchness, [the bodhisattva bears in mind that] there are [actually] no living beings who attain extinction and liberation. [One] should know that this character is the foundation for bodhisattvas.[17]

Fourth, the character is the foundation for Objects as Truth.[18] This is because by perceiving the character in a certain manner, one is enabled to realize the One Ultimate Truth (that is identical to the Threefold Truth). Since this One Ultimate Truth embraces all dharmas, for Zhiyi, it is the state of Buddhahood, and one's attainment of Buddhahood is endowed with the four virtuous qualities: Constancy, Bliss, Selfhood, and Purity. Zhiyi asserts:

If [one] perceives the character as not the character, and neither the character nor not the character, this perception which does not belong to either of the two extreme views [of negation or affirmation] is called Purity. Purity does not bring any karman, and this is called Selfhood. This Self has no suffering, which is called Bliss. Without suffering, there is no life and death, and this is called Constancy. Why is that? [Knowing] the character [as the character] is the Worldly Truth; [knowing the character as] not the character is the Absolute Truth; and [knowing the character as] neither the character nor not the character is the One Ultimate Truth. This One Truth is identical to the Threefold Truth, and the Threefold Truth is identical to the One Truth. This is called the foundation for Objects [as truth].[19]

Fifth, the character is the foundation for Knowledge. This is because from what is signified by the character written in ink, one is able to perceive the identity between emptiness and existence. Zhiyi stresses:

If [one] knows that the character written in ink is the [product of] combination of paper, pencil, mind, and hand, [one] can get no character [as a whole if] one examines every single character; [one] can also get no character [as a whole if] one examines every single dot. Therefore, nothing can be obtained. Since one's mind and hands can grasp nothing [as they appear to be], nothing is capable of [existing independently]. [Since there is nobody who can grasp something that is capable of existing independently], who would

---

[17] *Fahua xuanyi*, T33. 777b–c.

[18] This is the first of the Ten Subtleties Zhiyi illustrates in his work *The Profound Meaning of the Lotus Sutra* (*Fahua xuanyi*). The Ten Subtleties is his system of illustrating Buddhism refer to Objects as Truth, Knowledge, Practice, Positions, Threefold Dharma, Empathy and Response, Supra-mundane Power, Expounding the Dharma, Retinues, and Benefits. For a detailed study of the Ten Subtleties, see Shen, *The Profound Meaning of the Lotus Sutra*, vol. 2, 96–317.

[19] *Fahua xuanyi*, T33. 777c.

be [the one who] knows what is incapable of [existing inde-pendently]? This [kind of reasoning] is the foundation for Knowledge.[20]

Sixth, the character is the foundation for Practice. It is evidenced by the bodhisattva's action of sacrificing himself for the characters that express the truth. Zhiyi emphasizes: "[The bodhisattva who] gives away his precious body just for eight words, this is the foundation for Practice."[21]

Seventh, the character is the foundation for Positions. This is evidenced by the level of attainment the Buddha realizes through his understanding of characters. Zhiyi reiterates: "'As soon as I [the Buddha] understand one sentence, even just a half sentence, I am able to perceive the Buddha-nature and to enter into great nirvāṇa.' This is [an indication that character is] the foundation for Positions."[22]

Eighth, the character is the foundation for the Vehicle on which one can ride to attain enlightenment. This is evidenced by the enlightenment the Buddha attains through hearing *sūtras* constituted by characters. Zhiyi explains: "The reason I [the Buddha] obtained the Triple Bodhi[23] is through hearing *sūtras* and praising them.' [This means that] character is the foundation for the Vehicle."[24]

Ninth, the character is the foundation for the Response. This is to say that even if one happens to forget the characters in the scriptures, the Buddha will cause one to regain one's sharpness with *samādhi* and *dhāranī*.[25] There-fore, this is concerned with the response of the Buddha. Zhiyi maintains: "If one forgets periods in sentences, [I] will make one able to penetrate and to be

---

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.*,* 777c. "Eight words" refers to the account of the Buddha in one of his previous lives as a bodhisattva. One time, the bodhisattva heard a deity reciting half of a verse: "All dharmas are impermanent, and this is the dharma of origination and extinction (*zhuxing wuchang, shi shengmiefa* 諸行無常,是生滅法)." In order to hear the other half of the verse, which also constitutes eight words, i.e., "when birth and death extinguishes, quies-cence and extinction is bliss," (*shengmie mieyi, jimie weile* 生滅滅已,寂滅為樂), the bo-dhisattva was willing to offer his body to the deity. *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*, T.12, 450a–c.

[22] *Fahua xuanyi*, T33. 777c.

[23] The Triple Bodhi refers to 1) the Bodhi of the True Reality (*shixiang puti* 實相菩提), which is the principle of the True Reality that underlies the Path of Enlightenment. This principle encompasses all things without any distinction between opposite things, such as the distinction between liberation and saṃsāra; 2) The Bodhi of Ultimate Knowledge (*shizhi puti* 實智菩提) is the ultimate knowledge that penetrates the True Re-ality; 3) The Bodhi of Skillful Means (*fangpian puti* 方便菩提) is the skillful means im-plemented by the Buddha to teach and transform sentient beings.

[24] *Fahua xuanyi*, T33. 777c.

[25] *Dhāranī* is the mystic syllables, similar to the *mantra* in esoteric Buddhism. It is re-garded as the quintessence of a *sūtra*, and is usually recited at the end of a chapter. It plays the role of actualizing the mystical power of a *sūtra* by invoking the divine power.

sharp again with one's accomplishment of samādhi and dhāranī.' This is identical to the foundation for the Response."[26]

Tenth, the character is the foundation for Supra-mundane Powers, for one attains supra-mundane powers through the power of truth contained in Buddhist scriptures. Zhiyi explains: "Because of the text [constituted by the characters], [one] acquires supra-mundane powers. This is identical to the foundation for Supra-mundane Powers."[27]

Eleventh, the character is the foundation for Expounding the Dharma. Zhiyi explains: "Because of the characters, speech is formed. This is identical to the foundation for Expounding the Dharma."[28]

Twelfth, the character is the foundation for Retinues. Zhiyi asserts: "[The Buddha] pronounces the characters to teach others, and this is identical to the foundation for Retinues."[29]

Thirteenth, the character is the foundation for Benefits. Zhiyi comments: "[If one] diligently learns certain characters and gains benefit from them, this is identical to the foundation for Benefits."[30]

The above full account in terms of the black ink as form and the character written in ink is Zhiyi's endeavor to demonstrate his theory of any single dharma that contains all dharmas which in turn are represented by any single dharma. This analysis is a concrete example of how Zhiyi's theory can work out in practice, which serves an educational purpose. Thus, one should also be able to draw inferences about other cases. In other words, any single element in the world expounds the truth. Any form of sign, whether visual, auditory, or verbal, could be read as Buddhist scriptures. We can discern from this third type of sign interpretation that it reveals the functional and dynamic nature of Zhiyi's perfect and harmonious philosophy.

Through this study, we come to realize the unique contribution of Zhiyi in terms of sign interpretation. That is, truth can be penetrated by means of correctly understanding the arbitrary language of nature. Truth can be exposed through interpreting various signs. For Zhiyi, the interpretation of sign becomes a means to demonstrate his own philosophy, whereby his thought is proved to be akin to the principle of the Ultimate Truth. This indicates that Zhiyi's interpretation of the *Lotus Sūtra* is not just the discourse for speculative philosophy but is intended to embody his own philosophy in practice, through which his system of understanding Buddhism as a whole is presented. What Zhiyi is concerned about is no longer an idea or a metaphysical problem that remains in the domain of discourse but the methodological and hermeneutical approaches that can demonstrate his philosophy in practice. Ultimately, the goal of his sign interpretation is educational and soteriological. That is, Zhiyi strives to convey visually what the Ultimate Truth is, how

---

[26] *Fahua xuanyi*, T33. 777c.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid.

we can better conceive and understand the profound truth, and how we can approach the attainment of truth through the revelation of his perfect and harmonious philosophy.

The System of the Use of Signs in the Teaching of Chan Buddhism

The method of sign interpretation in the teaching of Tiantai Buddhism demonstrates its innovative spirit characterized by Chinese culture and contributes to the indigenization and development of Buddhism on Chinese soil. As a very effective approach, Chan Buddhism carried forward this tradition of using signs. The epistemological way of understanding the world in Chan Buddhism, based on the doctrine that the principle and phenomenon are perfectly merging (with the expression: the present place is the manifestation of emptiness as the absolute truth), bears similar marks to what is emphasized by Zhiyi. That is, one is all, and all is one.

Chan masters assure us that any thing or incident in the mundane world can be a turning point for one to reach sudden enlightenment. This type of episteme is apparently an impact of Zhiyi's theory of the Middle Way-Ultimate Truth, as he stated: "All mundane affairs are not opposed to the Ultimate Truth. Every color and fragrance is nothing but the Middle Way."[31] On the other hand, Chan masters creatively adopted the use of signs. They expanded the signs in a narrow sense of language, such as words and images, to the signs in a broader sense of language with figurative expressions, which refer to every part of daily life, landscape, mountain, sky, and so on. All things can be taken as the sign symbolizing the Buddha-nature. The use of signs in the practical context of life and activity by Chan masters serves to demonstrate their own experience of enlightenment or as an instrument of Chan practice and teaching to bring the students to realization and awakening.

Based on the doctrine "The present place is the manifestation of emptiness as the absolute truth" (*lichu jizhen* 立處即真), the use of signs in Chan Buddhism is so extraordinarily rich in content that a system of various forms of *gongan* (public record 公案) is evolved. It includes scolding, shouting, gestures, and so on, which serves as the artificial sign; the depictions of natural scenery being the natural sign. These two categories of the sign are exercised to demonstrate that Tao as truth is omnipresent and that all sights reveal the true thusness (*tathatā*) or truth body (*dharmakāya*). Chan master Dahui Zonggao (ca. 1089-1163 CE)[32] in the time of the Song Dynasty claims:

> Our present seeing and hearing of every phenomenon are nothing but dharmas.[33] The things that are falling down are not others, and

---

[31] *Fahua xuanyi*, T33. 683a.

[32] He is the seventeenth-generation successor of the Yangqi branch of the Linji school of Chan Buddhism.

[33] The teaching record of Dahui *Yulu*, vol. 2.

the flying objects are not dusts. This is because mountains, rivers and mother earth represent the king of the dharma – the Buddha.[34]

Although daily life and activities are different from nature, still, they stem from self-nature as the original purity of the mind. For Chan masters, the embodiment of the Buddha-dharma juxtaposes natural and social elements, as Dahui Zonggao (大慧宗杲) stated: The Buddha-dharma abides in daily livelihood, in your walking, lodging, sitting, sleeping, in your congee eating and rice eating, and in your conversation.[35]

Among the various use of signs in Chan, we have summarized briefly six types as follows:

(1) The no-word is taken as the sign to illustrate that truth can only be understood intuitively but not conceptually.

(2) The natural phenomenon is taken as the sign in order to illuminate one's own experience of enlightenment.

(3) Daily affairs are taken as the sign to exhibit that Tao is embodied in the ordinary mind of no-discrimination.

(4) Everyday chores and labor are taken as the sign aiming at experiencing the reality of the non-duality.

(5) The form of paradoxical dialogues is taken as the sign to indicate the profound meaning of the truth that is beyond logical reasoning and conceptualization.

(6) Actions and gestures are taken as the sign to reveal the methods of practice, the sovereignty of the mind, and the ultimate truth as the non-duality of things.

The No-Word Is Taken as the Sign to Illustrate That Truth Can only Be Understood Intuitively but Not Conceptually. Chan Buddhism is best known as "a separate transmission outside the teaching without relying on words and phrases" (*buli wenzi, jiaowai biechuan* 不立文字,教外別傳).[36] Therefore, its supreme teaching is exposed by transmitting from mind to mind. Truth is realized in the state of silence that is beyond verbal language. This is exemplified by the legendary story of the Buddha, who, holding a flower before the assembly, saw Mahākāśyapa[37] smile and realized that he alone had understood. Apparently, the teaching transmitted directly from mind to mind is superior to that through words and phrases, and one's intuitive understanding of truth is superior to that by conceptual understanding. The master Huangbo Xiyun 黃檗希運 (d. 850 CE) concludes:

---

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid., vol. 23.

[36] *Wudeng huiyuan*, vol. 1.

[37] Mahākāśyapa is one of the most revered of the Buddha's disciples and is renowned for his ascetic practices.

> The teachings of the Buddhas of the ten directions concern only the dharma of the one single mind. Thus, the Buddha secretly transmitted this dharma to Mahākāśyapa. Such a dharma substance of the one mind that pervades empty space and dharma-realm is called the principle of all buddhas. How can you understand this dharma just by words and sentences when it is being expounded? It is not to be perceived with particular things and circumstances. The meaning of the dharma can only be penetrated silently. This is named the dharma-door of no-action.[38]

Chan masters also employed silence and no-word to imply that the supreme meaning of neither existence nor emptiness is beyond speech, by which ratiocination by the human intellect is shunned. For instance, the Chan master Huizhong 慧忠 (d. ca. 775 CE) in the time of the Tang Dynasty was once conversing with a monk official in the imperial palace, whose name was Zilin 紫璘. Zilin asked the master to present an argument for discussion. Huizhong, instead of making a verbal statement, remained silent for a while as a form of his presentation.[39] Apparently, he made a silent statement with the intention of asserting that the supreme meaning is speechless and cannot be perceived through the intellect.

In the text *Wudeng Huiyuan* 五燈會元, *Juan* 15, it is recorded that a monk asked the Chan master Qingyuan Xingsi 清原行思 (d. ca. 740 CE): "What is *bodhi*?" Qingyuan responded to his question with a blow of the stick, shouting: "Get out! Don't shit here." His reaction as the sign shows that the nature of emptiness is right here to be seen. Since all things are such as they are, any thought is redundant and devious. One must abandon mistaken thought so as to acquire the direct perception of truth, seeing that words and thoughts prevent one from gaining insight into the ultimate truth.

The negation of words and thoughts and the affirmation of the nature of emptiness ever-present everywhere is highlighted by the master Qingyuan: "Our school does not adhere to words and phrases, and does not have a teaching to transmit."[40] In short, Chan masters exercise the method of screaming and beating as the sign with the purpose of stressing that all dharmas are, by nature, empty and that one cannot experience emptiness as truth by a general idea or concept held in one's limited mind. Such an implication functions to awaken one's intuitive insight into what transcends ordinary conceptualization.

The Natural Phenomenon Is Taken as the Sign in Order to Illuminate One's Own Experience of Enlightenment. Among the classical Chan texts, considerable parts consist of depictions of landscape scenery. Based on the

---

[38] *Gu Zunsu Yulu*, vol. 3.

[39] *Jingde chuandeng lu* (The Record of the Transmission of the Lamp Published in the Chingde Era), by Tao Yuan (d.u.) 30 vols.; completed in 1004. T 2076.51.196–467.

[40] *Wudeng huiyuan*, vol. 15.

doctrine that all things in nature reflect the pure mind, Chan believes that when the pure mind is integrated with nature, one is able to realize the absolute Self-nature being perfect and eternal. The master Yunju Wenqing 雲居文慶 states: "Whether it is the bright moon or gentle breeze, whether it is the green mountain or clear water, all things as the dharma-teaching at present sight are endowed with perfection."[41] The Chan master of the early Tang, Yongjia 永嘉 (665-713 CE) declares in his work *The Song of Enlightenment*: "One complete nature passes to all natures, and one universal dharma encloses all dharmas. One moon is reflected in all waters, and all the water-moons are from the one moon."[42] For him, the universal reflection of the moon and the convergence of all the water-moons into the one moon are taken to represent the perfect merging of the principle and phenomenon, which is adhered to by Zhiyi as "one is all, and all is one." Master Qingyuan's enlightenment is an instance that expresses one's epistemological progress with the natural elements of mountain and water.[43]

At the first stage, before he began to practice Chan, he was not able to see into the nature of things. Deceived by the false appearance of things, he mistook what he saw with his very eyes as real. Therefore, the mountain is mountain, and the water is water, as they appear to be.

At the second stage, after he started to learn from Chan masters, he understood intellectually that all things are empty by nature. With the Buddhist teaching of emptiness, he knew that things lack self-nature and are empty as they come to be dependent on causes and conditions. Thus, the mountains and rivers he saw are not what they appear to be: the mountains are not mountains, and the water is not water. However, Qingyuan's perception of the empty nature of things is not beyond the sphere of his intellect since it is achieved through analyzing and disintegrating entities until nothing is left.

At the third stage, after thirty years of practicing Chan, Qingyuan finally arrived at enlightenment. By embodying mountains and rivers, he and mountains and rivers were no longer different and became one unity. Although mountains and rivers are empty by nature, they are also a manifestation of truth as subtle existence (non-existence appeared to be existent). The ultimate reality of the non-duality of emptiness and existence surpasses one's mind discrimination and thought. With the direct cognition of mountains and rivers and without relying on analytic faculties, what Qingyuan saw was that the mountains are still mountains and the rivers are still rivers.

In Chan literature, Chan monks also employ natural scenes to depict their frame of mind in terms of realization. Chan practitioners are not only required to keep their mind in serenity and concentration without distraction (such as the inquiry of the monk in the following dialogue) but are also expected to achieve a union between heaven and man, whereby the self disappears, and one's mind is fused into poetic scenery of autumn and winter (as

---

[41] Ibid.
[42] T.48. 395c–396c.
[43] *Wudeng huiyuan*, vol. 17.

described by the master in the following dialogue). It is recorded in the *Wudeng Huiyuan*, *Juan* 14, as follows:

> A monk asked: 'A wild goose flies over the sky and its shadow sinks in the cold water. Nevertheless, the wild goose has no intention of leaving traces, and the water has no thought of sinking shadow. Isn't it nothingness?' The master answered: 'The reed flowers are all over the two sides of the snowy bank, and the river water depicts one day sight of the autumn.'

From the statement of that monk, we know that he has achieved the mind of no-thought. The scenery the master describes, on the other hand, denotes that his subjective mind and objective world are united: both are connected to each other thoughtlessly, and they are empty, yet not empty.

In Chan, nature is also used to describe the Buddha-nature. It is noted, in *Wudeng Huiyuan*, *Juan* 15, that a monk asked the master Yunmen: "For what purpose did Bodhidharma come to China?" The master replied: "Mountains, rivers, and the great earth." Obviously, Tao is everywhere and envelops all things. Here, the concrete expression of nature as mountains, rivers, and the great earth symbolizes that any phenomenon of this world displays the true thusness (*tathatā*).   Chan masters often quote natural objects to analogize the doctrine of impermanence. For example, a student asked the master Yunmen: "If one kills his parents, one may confess to the Buddha. What if one kills the Buddha or Bodhidharma,[44] to whom he may confess?" Yunmen replied: "Dew."

The dew in the Buddhist context refers to the world of birth and death that is impermanent and transient. It is stated in the *Diamond Sutra*:[45] "Like a meteor, like darkness, as a flickering lamp, An illusion, like hoar-frost or a bubble, like clouds, a flash of lightning, or a dream: So is all conditioned existence to be seen." Here, a natural object such as dew is taken as the sign for one to gain an insight into emptiness as the nature of existence.

Daily Affairs Are Taken as the Sign to Exhibit That Tao Is Embodied in the Ordinary Mind of No-Discrimination. Chan practitioners aspire to enlighten to the ultimate reality of the merging of the principle and phenomena (*lishi wuai* 理事無礙) as well as the merging of all entities (*shishi wuai* 事事無礙). The concrete revelation of this episteme finds its expression in the slogan "The ordinary mind is Tao," which is advocated by Mazu Daoyi 馬祖道一 (ca. 709-788 CE).[46]

---

44 The legendary Bodhidharma (d. ca. 535 CE) was the first patriarch of Chinese Chan Buddhism. He came from India "not to teach words and letters," but to "transmit the teaching that is outside of the scriptures."

45 (*Vájra-cchedikā-prajñā-pāramitā-sūtra*), T8.748.

46 "Ordinary mind is Tao. What is ordinary mind? It is without personal doership, without distinguishing good and bad, without accepting or rejecting, without mistaken views

In practice, Chan monks do not miss out on any actions. Ordinary things such as eating and dressing are the sign of implementing their conviction that ordinary mind is Tao. To maintain ordinary mind means not to discriminate among activities, be they trivial or sublime. By doing so, one gains experience of no-action (action without any thought of action). Tao is considered to be everywhere and is contained in daily life. This is called, "One's every part of life, whether walking, dwelling, sitting, and sleeping, or responding and guiding others, all of them are nothing but the path of bodhisattva."[47]   Furthermore, daily affairs are applied to signify that Tao refers to spontaneity. The most trivial conduct of everyday life can best reveal Chan practiced attainment and living according to Tao.

Master Dazhu Huihai 大珠慧海, a student of Mazu, gives an answer to a question concerning how one should strive to cultivate as: "Eat when I am hungry, and sleep when I am tired."[48]   Chan masters concentrate on everyday living as the sign of enlightenment and as the sign of practicing Chan because it is so basic and down-to-earth that it entails the fundamental principle of naturalness. After all, the function of the Buddha-nature is based on the whole phenomenon of the world. Reflecting on this assertion is Chan's attitude toward every detail of one's life, such as tea drinking. Chan believes that as long as one merges oneself into each activity, taking it as Chan practice, daily life could become the means for destroying one's false views and wrong attitudes. Through such engagement, something true or real is revealed extemporaneously and directly.

Everyday Chores and Labor Are Taken as the Sign Aiming at Experiencing the Reality of the Non-Duality. For Chan practitioners, each situation in everyday life is the sign conveying the ultimate truth, and with one's eyes and ears, one can discern at any moment the boundless Buddha-dharma. What the simple life shows us is the truth that "one is all and all are one." The whole universe is unified without separation. Hence, one can be inspired to realize the Buddhist truth from a piece of firewood, which symbolizes the truth referring to "one is all." The all-pervasiveness of Tao can be perceived from a rice basket or when one is cutting grass.

For instance, when monks were removing firewood, the master Yunmen picked up one piece and threw it on the ground, declaring: "A whole Buddhist teaching expounds nothing but this." At another time, Yunmen asked the cook: "how many dharma eyes are there in the rice basket?" Seeing that the monk could not answer, Yunmen replied instead: "There are countless dharma eyes in it." Once, he asked the monk who was cutting grass: "How many dharma teachers have you got from mowing?"[49]   These questions and

---

of nihilism or eternalism, and without differentiating between ordinary man and the sage."
Shuiyuezhai zhiyuelu 3.

[47] *Gu Zunsu yulu*, vol. 1.
[48] *Wudeng huiyuan*, vol. 8.
[49] *Gu Zunsu yulu*, vol. 32.

answers were schemes employed by Yunmen to teach those monks that doing daily chores and labor is an approach to getting into the practice of Chan. One is able to conceive infinite reality from finite things. With the finite that is fused into infinite, the limitation of an individual life is transcended.

Furthermore, filth, such as excrement and urine, are utilized by Yunmen to imply that the Buddha-nature is beyond the distinction between defilement and purity. A monk once asked him: "What is the Buddha?" Yunmen replied: "Dried excrement stick." This is to dismiss people's false view connecting the meaning of purity to the Buddhahood. If one is beyond the mind of discrimination, filth would not be associated with impurity. It could just be a mutual object that may trigger one to see into one's own pure mind. Here, the dried excrement stick is employed as the sign epitomizing the non-duality of impurity and purity and that the Buddha-nature is present at all places. Once one's premises attaching purity to the sacred and filth to the profane are rejected, one may realize that it is our ordinary conceptualization that hinders us from encountering our own originally enlightened mind.

The Form of Paradoxical Dialogues Is Taken as the Sign to Indicate the Profound Meaning of Truth That Is Beyond Logical Reasoning and Conceptualization. In order to prevent the students from being tangled by logical thinking, Chan masters often engage themselves in paradoxical dialogues as the sign to indicate that Tao is beyond logical reckoning and can only be understood intuitively. The paradoxical dialogues imply that if one is constrained by the conventional framework of language and concepts, one is incapable of encountering truth. For example, a monk asked the master Dongshan Shouchu: "What is the Buddha?" The master answered: "Three pounds of flax." In another case, a monk asked the master Zhaozhou Congshen: "If myriad dharmas are converged into one, where is the one converged into?" Zhaozhou replied: "I have had a cotton garment made in Qingzhou that weighed seven jin." In another similar case, a monk challenged monk Shengnian (ca. 926-993 CE): "What is it that is called the Buddha mind?" Shengnian answered: "A radish in Zhenzhou weighs seven jin." This style of dialogue denotes that truth cannot be cognized through words and thoughts and that abandoning them is an approach to penetrate the truth.

Actions and Gestures Are Taken as the Sign to Reveal the Methods of Practice, the Sovereignty of the Mind, and the Ultimate Truth as Non-Duality of Things. Based on a conviction that all actions and behaviors in life can be taken as the practice in appreciating Chan, practitioners strive to pay attention to the significance of various manners exhibited by persons. This is to say there is no fixed form of practice in a conventional sense that is related to ritual worship, sitting in meditation, or living an ascetic life. In fact, any assumption that one must practice to attain the Tao is already far away from the Tao. The Tao cannot be measured, and one's attainment cannot be expected. Thus, taking speculative measures to attain it is doomed to fail. This is exemplified in Nanyue Huairang's (677-744 CE) teaching.

At his initial stage of practice, Mazu Daoyi favored seated meditation with an expectation that it could lead him to attain Buddhahood. Nanyue Huairang, on the other hand, in order to teach Mazu that this is not the right approach, began to abrade a brick, claiming that he intended to make a mirror out of the brick. Mazu did not understand and pointed out that his action was ridiculous. Huairang asked then in retort: "Since a mirror cannot be made out of a brick, how can the form of sitting meditation lead one to become a Buddha?"[50] His teaching as a sign denotes that if there are any thoughts and expectations about realization or any assumptions and speculations about certain ways of practice, one is destined to be restrained from achieving liberation.   To be liberated is to be freed from any restrictions. Such a mind of freedom is shown in master Danxia's account. At one time, Danxia lodged in a temple during a cold winter. Danxia burned a wooden Buddha statue for a fire. The abbot of the temple chided him for his behavior. Danxia poked the ashes, stating: "I desire to get sharira out of ashes." The abbot responded angrily: "How could the wooden statue contain sharira?" Danxia concluded: "Since I didn't get sharira out of it, let me burn two more Buddha statues."

This action of destroying the Buddha statue by fire serves to demolish idolatry and warns people that Buddha-nature resides inside everyone. Searching for innate nature outwardly is like the case of burning the Buddha statue, which only results in vain in getting sharira out of it. One is able to gain access to the ultimate truth by being freed from distorted views. Master Juzhi always showed his thumb as the sign to guide students to uncover the reality of non-duality. It is recorded in *Wudeng Huiyuan*, *Juan* 8:

> The master Juzhi always showed his index finger when he was asked what the Way was. A novice from the same temple as Juzhi was once asked later, what his moralizing discourse was like? He also showed his index finger in imitation of his master. When Juzhi heard of the novice's action, he cut off the novice's index finger with a sharp sword. The novice ran away screaming and weeping with pain. Juzhi called him, and at the moment as soon as the novice turned his head around, Juzhi asked him: "What is Buddha?" The novice automatically stuck out his finger but saw nothing, with which he suddenly awakened to the truth.

This account tells us that the Buddha-dharma is inclusive of existence and non-existence. Showing one's finger is the sign of oneness or existence. Cutting off a novice's finger signifies that the oneness is converged into zero – the sign of nothingness. Ultimate Truth is conveyed with the merging of existence and nothingness. The purpose of Master Zhaozhou Congnian repeatedly emphasizing having a cup of tea also serves to diminish the students' mistaken thought and conceptualization.

---

[50] *Jingde chuandeng lu*, vol. 5.

> Zhaozhou once asked a new monk: 'Have you ever been here before?' The monk said: 'Yes, Sir, I have.' Zhaozhou said: 'Have a cup of tea.' Later on, another monk came, and he asked him the same question: 'Have you ever been here?' The monk answered: 'No, I have never been here.' Zhaozhou said: 'Have a cup of tea.' Afterward, one resident monk asked the master: 'How is it that you make the same offering of a cup of tea no matter what a monk's reply is?' The old master called out: 'O, monk.' The monk at once responded: 'Yes, master,' whereupon Zhaozhou repeated again: 'Have a cup of tea.'[51]

Zhaozhou's statement "have a cup of tea" implies that truth lies in simplicity and is self-evident in activities such as tea drinking.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Tiantai Zhiyi's sign interpretation dynamically carved out the way for Chinese Buddhism with its perfect and harmonious philosophy that features vivacity, vitality, flexibility, and innovation. Chan Buddhism carried out and developed Tiantai's method of teaching in terms of the use of signs, formulated a system of teaching, vigorously utilizing different kinds of methods of representation, and extemporaneously presenting the truth. Chan's teaching method, with its characteristic of improvisations, is in line with its tenet, "the present place is the manifestation of emptiness as absolute truth." Consequently, it engenders a force that leads the students to return to their own nature that is originally pure and tranquil. As the soteriological and educational means to reveal the ultimate truth and guide beings to penetrate one's own nature, both Tiantai and Chan teachings possess unique features in terms of using signs. Their value for using signs demands more attention and awaits further academic investigation.

Abbreviations

T – *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* (大正新修大藏經). Takakusu et al. compiled, 1924-1932.
XZJ (Wan) – *Xuzang jing* (卍) (續藏經), Nakano Tatsue (中野達慧) et al. compiled, 1905-1912.

Bibliography

Primary Sources
Daoyuan (道源) (d.u.). *Jingde chuandenglu* (景德傳燈錄), 30 *volumes*, completed in 1004. T 2076.51.

---

[51] *Wudeng huiyuan*, vol. 4.

Gu zunsu yulu (古尊宿语录), 48 *volumes*, compiled by Zezang (賾藏). XZJ 1315.68.

Nirvāṇa Sūtra, 40 *volumes*. Translated by Dharmakṣema (曇无讖). T 374.12.

Shuiyuezhai zhiyuelu (指月錄), 32 *volumes*, compiled by Qu Ruji (瞿汝稷); completed in 1595. XZJ 1578.83.

Wudeng huiyuan (五燈會元), 20 *volumes*, compiled by Puji (普濟). XZJ 1565.80.

Xufeng Yunwen (雪峰蘊聞). *Dahui yulu* (大慧語錄) (*The Teaching Record of Dahui*), 30 *volumes*, published in 1172. T 1998a.47.811b–943a.

Zhiyi (智顗). *Fahua xuanyi* (法華玄義), 10 *volumes*, compiled by Guanding (灌頂). T 1716.33.

------. *Mohe zhiguan* (摩訶止觀), 20 *volumes*, compiled by Guanding (灌頂). T 1911.46.

Secondary Sources

Shen, Haiyan. *The Profound Meaning of the Lotus Sutra: Tiantai Philosophy of Buddhism.* Delhi: Originals, 2005.

16
Confucian Reciprocity and the Debate on Humanitarian Intervention

TU Xiaofei

In recent decades, international humanitarian interventions have been carried out with various degrees of success. The United Nations, for instance, regularly engage in peacekeeping missions in areas suffering from civil and regional conflicts. It is noteworthy that China has become more active in supporting and participating in these missions, for example, the recent peacekeeping in the Republic of Mali. The NATO intervention in Kosovo in the late 1990s was a high-profile humanitarian action that was generally applauded. In the meantime, there are other cases, such as the US invasion of Iraq, that are more controversial. In this case, although the main motivation for the US decision to go to war was national security, humanitarian considerations, e.g., Saddam Hussein's brutalities against his own people, were also cited to justify the war. Nevertheless, philosophical and ethical debates on the legitimacy and viability of intervention have been ongoing.

To go back to the philosophical and legal thinkers of premodern Europe, we see that Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) had argued for the rights and obligations of European Christians to protect their Christian brothers in other parts of the world. William Edward Hall (1835-1894) and Henry Wheaton (1785-1848), nineteenth-century jurists in Britain and the United States, were among the advocates of intervention. Among contemporary scholars, Michael W. Doyle's thesis of "democracy peace" and Robert I. Rotberg's theory of "failed state" are often cited as theoretical justifications for intervention. The list could also include Bruce Martin Russet, Edward D. Mansfield, Jack L. Snyder, etc.

However, there has been a strong intellectual tradition arguing against intervention. In *Of the Law of Nature and Nations*, Samuel von Pufendorf (1632-1694), the famed German jurist, refuted the argument that Europeans had a moral obligation to intervene in North America because of the American Indians' objectionable actions, such as human sacrifice. Emer de Vattel (1714-1767), in his *The Law of Nations*, opined that a state could not judge if what happens is legal outside its national boundaries. Many European thinkers and jurists followed the same ethical reasoning, for instance, Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), Paul Pradier-Fodéré (1827-1904), August Wilhelm Heffter (1796-1880), and Franz von Liszt (1851-1919), to name just a few. Contemporary American scholar Jeremy A. Rabkin echoes the same principle in articulating why sovereignty matters. Harold S. Johnson focuses on the specific issue of interventions in independence and separation movements in foreign countries and emphasizes that self-determination should be respected within the community of nations, but not necessarily for any groups that are

bold enough to make a claim. F. E. Smith, on the other hand, questioned the motives of the intervening nations. According to him, the publicly announced noble goals of intervention are either veiled self-interest or a form of national Quixotism. Parker T. Moon goes even further by calling colonialism aggressive altruism.

After WWI, it became a common practice to protect the sovereignty of all nations, regardless of their size and socio-economic condition. The 1955 Bandung Conference affirmed the principle of nonintervention by colonial powers, old and new, in the affairs of Asian and African countries. In 1965, the United Nations passed the Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention in the Domestic Affairs of States and the Protection of Their Independence and Sovereignty, in which all forms of intervention, particularly armed intervention, are forbidden. In 1986, the International Court of Justice ruled against the US intervention in Nicaragua. Twentieth-century world history has amply attested to the complexities of interventions, which were sometimes carried out in the name of support for other people's self-determination. For instance, Bangladesh became independent from Pakistan in 1971 thanks to India's aggressive diplomatic advocacy and direct military intervention. At the time, the majority of United Nations members, including African countries that recently achieved independence from Western colonial powers, were against India's actions because they violated the equality between nations by compromising Pakistan's sovereignty. Similarly, the Soviet Union's intervention in its East European satellite states in the 1960s invited widespread protests around the world and further discredited the Soviet Union's global image. Even the more favorably viewed international interventions, such as Tanzania's overthrow of Uganda's cannibalistic dictator Amin (1979) and Vietnam's ouster of the genocidal Cambodian Khmer Rouge (1979), were not controversy-free in terms of international law.

One of the challenges of humanitarian intervention is whether it is a form of selective moral indignation (Albrecht Schnabel and Ramesh Chandra Thakur). A recent example is Myanmar, which has caught human rights organizations' attention for decades and has been presented as a success of international human rights. While the Burmese military junta was indeed brutal in oppressing political and civil liberties, it is not completely clear how much worse it was than other authoritarian regimes in Asia or other places. Nor is it compellingly evident that the political and social conditions under the Burmese military rule were much more severe than those in other countries that concerned international communities for humanitarian reasons. Since the 2000s, Myanmar has been praised as a successful case of internal political transformation under international pressure. Yet recently, both diplomats and the media in Asia and the West have raised concerns regarding the power transition and leadership style of Aung San Suu Kyi, the former opposition leader who turned into a political strongwoman.[1] Similar suspicions had

---

[1] See, for instance, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/mark-farmaner/burma-election-democracy_b_8505384.html.

been cast regarding the arrest of Pinochet in 1998. Although he indeed committed atrocities against his own people, it is unclear he deserved to be singled out among his contemporary fellow dictators and terrorists.

Advocates of intervention often depend upon a tripolarity in international relationships: the good (democracies), the bad (authoritarian regimes), and the ugly (barbarian nations that are interventionable). Nevertheless, politicians such as Hans Morganthau and George Kennan, as well as philosophers such as Reinhold Niebuhr, advocate an apolitical realism that shies away from lofty moral idealism in international politics. Specifically, John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) argued against foreign interventions on the philosophical ground of moral agency and free choice. According to Mill, it is ethically advantageous to refrain from imposing freedom on a nation with outside help because easily gained freedom can be easily lost. Joseph Stromberg concurs that freedom cannot be imposed on people without imperiling their free choice. When an external intervention occurs, counter-intervention should be considered legitimate. Hence interventions with noble intentions more often than not incur long civil wars in intervened countries.

From the Western perspective, it is debatable whether international intervention is an *erga omnes* obligation justified by *jus cogens*. Henry Rosemont criticizes liberal individualism by pointing out that individual autonomy does require others to provide food and shelter to me. But we can respect others' autonomy by ignoring them. As Aldous Huxley once said,

> We live together, we act on, and react to, one another; but always and in all circumstances, we are by ourselves. The martyrs go hand in hand into the arena; they are crucified alone. Embraced, the lovers desperately try to fuse their insulated ecstasies into a single self-transcendence; in vain. By its very nature every embodied spirit is doomed to suffer and enjoy in solitude. Sensations, feelings, insights, fancies – all these are private and, except through symbols and at second hand, incommunicable. We can pool information about experiences, but never the experiences themselves. From family to nation, every human group is a society of island universes.[2]

By the same token, taking national autonomy as the ultimate goal in international politics is problematic.

Here, I believe, is where a Confucian perspective could be helpful in solving this dilemma. Mencius, living in the chaotic Warring States period of Chinese history, was often confronted with burning questions of how to deal with wars and conflicts. Below are examples of what Mencius had to say. For the sake of preserving the integrity of Mencius's thought, I quote the passages in the *Book of Mencius* in their entirety.

---

[2] Aldous Huxley, *The Doors of Perception and Heaven and Hell* (New York: HarperCollins e-books, 2009).

In the first Li Lou chapter of the *Book of Mencius*, the master says,

A man must first despise himself, and then others will despise him. A family must first destroy itself, and then others will destroy it. A State must first smite itself, and then others will smite it. This is illustrated in the passage of the Tai Jia, 'When Heaven sends down calamities, it is still possible to escape them. When we occasion the calamities ourselves, it is not possible any longer to live.'[3]

This reminds us of the ancient truth about the ethical roots of prosperity, disintegration, and conflict in societies. In a time when people tend to exclusively explain the above in materialistic terms (e.g., the Iraq War was "blood for oil"), Mencius's perspective sounds surprisingly refreshing. Mencius continues,

Bo Yi, that he might avoid Zhou, was dwelling on the coast of the northern sea. When he heard of the rise of king Wen, he roused himself, and said, 'Why should I not go and follow him? I have heard that the chief of the West knows well how to nourish the old.' Tai Gong, that he might avoid Zhou, was dwelling on the coast of the eastern sea. When he heard of the rise of king Wen, he roused himself, and said, 'Why should I not go and follow him? I have heard that the chief of the West knows well how to nourish the old.' Those two old men were the greatest old men of the kingdom. When they came to follow king Wen, it was the fathers of the kingdom coming to follow him. When the fathers of the kingdom joined him, how could the sons go to any other? Were any of the princes to practice the government of king Wen, within seven years he would be sure to be giving laws to the kingdom.[4]

This is the best advice to leaders who have conflicting feelings about whether to take intervening actions. The moral lesson is that if the ruler respects and serves his people, his people will act on the ruler's behalf. In the same chapter, it says,

Qiu acted as a chief officer to the head of the Ji family, whose evil ways he was unable to change, while he exacted from the people double the grain formerly paid. Confucius said, 'He is no disciple of mine. Little children, beat the drum and assail him.' Looking at the subject from this case, we perceive that when a prince was not practicing benevolent government, all his ministers who enriched him were rejected by Confucius – how much more would he have rejected those who are vehement to fight for their prince! When

---

[3] https://ctext.org/mengzi/li-lou-i.
[4] Ibid.

contentions about territory are the ground on which they fight, they slaughter men till the fields are filled with them. When some struggle for a city is the ground on which they fight, they slaughter men till the city is filled with them. This is what is called 'leading on the land to devour human flesh.' Death is not enough for such a crime. Therefore, those who are skillful to fight should suffer the highest punishment. Next to them should be punished those who unite some princes in leagues against others; and next to them, those who take in grassy commons, imposing the cultivation of the ground on the people.[5]

Here the moral lesson is that if a leader uses force recklessly out of personal political ambitions, however much may be accomplished politically and militarily, this "great" leader is a criminal to his own people and humanity. The following is sound and practical advice that can be applied to our time:

Yu and Ji, in an age when the world was being brought back to order, thrice passed their doors without entering them. Confucius praised them. The disciple Yan, in an age of disorder, dwelt in a mean narrow lane, having his single bamboo-cup of rice, and his single gourd-dish of water; other men could not have endured the distress, but he did not allow his joy to be affected by it. Confucius praised him. Mencius said, 'Yu, Ji, and Yan Hui agreed in the principle of their conduct. Yu thought that if anyone in the kingdom were drowned, it was as if he drowned him. Ji thought that if anyone in the kingdom suffered hunger, it was as if he famished him. It was on this account that they were so earnest. If Yu and Ji, and Yanzi, had exchanged places, each would have done what the other did. Here now in the same apartment with you are people fighting – you ought to part them. Though you part them with your cap simply tied over your unbound hair, your conduct will be allowable. If the fighting be only in the village or neighborhood, if you go to put an end to it with your cap tied over your hair unbound, you will be in error. Although you should shut your door in such a case, your conduct would be allowable.'[6]

We see is that Mencius seamlessly combines moral idealism with a dose of political practicality. Although the sage kings Yu and Ji and the solitary scholar Yan Hui have made very different decisions about their lives, they are correct in their decision making and contribute greatly to the well-being of society, politically and intellectually. According to Mencius, their legacies are equally important, and indeed their roles could be interchangeable, should the circumstances change. Mencius advises that an intervention is necessary

---

[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid.

if and only if it is urgent and within the manageable reach of the intervener. Otherwise, it would be wise to stay away.

Interestingly, Gordon Bennett offers solutions to intervention along similar lines. The following criteria are used to assess the viability of international intervention.

1. Problem area: this includes an evaluation of the seriousness of the situation in question, e.g., epidemic-forced relocation, natural disaster, famine, massive violence, and the degree of urgency, e.g., whether it is a current threat and whether short term solutions are possible.

2. Local government: this is to see whether the local government is present and functional or nonexistent, whether it is corrupt, whether it helps solve the problem or causes the problem, whether the people welcome the intervention.

3. Intervening party: does it act out of self-interest? Is it driven by its own internal politics? Does it receive the trust of the locals?

4. Intervention: does the mission have clear goals, an exit plan, how difficult is the mission, e.g., is there a need to change the local political structure? What are the political and military risks, how probable is the success? Is there an international consensus?

The above is an example of how ancient Confucian wisdom converges with contemporary thinking. There are many more rich resources in both Eastern and Western traditions awaiting to be explored.

Bibliography

Bennett, Gordon. *Aboriginal Rights in International Law*. London: Anthropological Institute for Survival International, 1978.

Doyle, Michael W. *Liberal Peace: Selected Essays*. New York: Routledge, 2011.

------. *The Question of Intervention: John Stuart Mill and the Responsibility to Protect*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015.

Hall, William Edward. *A Treatise on International Law*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924. www.huffingtonpost.com/mark-farmaner/burma-election-democracy_b_8505384.html.

Huxley, Aldous. *The Doors of Perception and Heaven and Hell.* New York: HarperCollins e-books, 2009.

Johnson, Harold S. *Self-determination within the Community of Nations.* Leyden: A.W. Sijthoff, 1967.

Mansfield, Edward D. *Economic Interdependence and International Conflict: New Perspectives on an Enduring Debate*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2003.

Mencius. *The works of Mencius*. Translated by James Legge. New York: Dover Publications,1970. https://ctext.org/mengzi/li-lou-i.

Rabkin, Jeremy A. *Law without Nations? Why Constitutional Government Requires Sovereign States*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005.

Rotberg, Robert I. *State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror*. Cambridge, MA: World Peace Foundation; Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2003.

Russet, Bruce Martin. *Grasping the Democratic Peace*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University press, 1993.

Schnabel, Albrecht and Ramesh Chandra Thakur. *Kosovo and the Challenge of Humanitarian Intervention: Selective Indignation, Collective Action, and International Citizenship.* New York: United Nations University Press, 2000.

Snyder, Jack L. *Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991.

Wheaton, Henry. *Elements of International Law*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1936.

The Confucian Idea of Reciprocity

WU Liqun

Confucianism and Reciprocity

As one of the basic characteristics of anthropology, reciprocity means mutual dependence and the interrelationship between people. No one can live in isolation. No one can become an actual rational person in isolation and think as a human being without interaction with others. When a person or a group gives something to another person or group, a kind of exchange takes place between them. All human activities are manifestations of reciprocity or closely related to reciprocity to some extent. A human being is not an isolated being but a being in the world of oneself and others, society and nature. Human social communications have become reciprocity issues. In order to solve these problems, people have set up political institutions and social norms to satisfy public human life. Politics, society, history, and culture are all expressions and developments of reciprocity issues. In terms of reciprocity, an important clue is that reciprocity is an essential attribute of human beings; that is, human nature is an inherent basis to investigate real life and ideal life.

Confucianism has two main characteristics: attention to social reality and appreciation of human nature. It is by focusing on the ideal of human society and the meaning of human life that Confucianism has been formulated. According to Confucianism, in order to reach the ideal human society for the stability and harmony of "self," "home," "country," and "the world," it is necessary to design and found institutions through the process of cultivating oneself, putting one's family in order, running a local government well, bringing peace to the entire country, and eventually accomplishing political goals. When the institution of *Li* is established, *Ren*, which points to harmony, can resolve the tensions of society. *Li* and *Ren* construct a foundation for human social stability and harmony. To make the limited life of an individual unlimited, *Ren* designs ways and methods to realize the meaning of life by endowing limited human life with immortal values and providing spiritual pillars so as to dissolve the anxiety of human existence. With a human-oriented academic style and attention to "this-worldly" affairs, the nucleus of Confucianism is about reciprocity issues. With its structure of ethical virtues and political institutions, Confucianism offers its unique outlook on these issues.

During the Spring and Autumn and the Warring States periods, when kings' kingships entered in others' hands, the flame of wars was burning without a break. It was not possible for people to live in peace. In the face of the collapse of *Li*, scholars in the pre-Qin period meditated on how to restore social and political order and how to re-establish the ethics that contains three

cardinal guides and five virtues. Academic diversity resulted in the presentation and communication of various ideological trends. This was a spectacular event in ancient China. All schools of thought contended for attention. All classes of teachers put forward their theoretical directions and solutions concerning the real problems of that time. They all tried to provide ethical values and institutional designs in support of social reform. On the basis of introspection and the interpretation of ancient rules of rites and music, Confucius and his disciples established a new school known as Confucianism. Because of its moral cultivation and realistic practice, Confucianism became the mainstream school at that time of change. In a nutshell, Confucius regards the rule of the last Golden Age as an ideal for governing a country, the virtue or morality and moral consciousness based on patriarchal clan and institutions of consanguinity as a spiritual direction, and the rational construction of an ethical order as a practical scheme. Its theoretical logic and historical status indicate that,

> The holiness and authority of classics are not a sort of a priori decision, but a historical reality in the practice of community's cultural life, in the interpersonal relationship, in the relationship between man and history, in cultural communication and language communication, and also in etiquette practice in China. The reason of a classic becoming a classic lies in that all the people of the community regard it as a sacred, an authoritative, and a meaningful thing. In this sense, the nature of classic, does not depend on the text itself, but depends on its actual role and its function to be treated in a community.[1]

Li and *Ren:* A Realistic Dimension of Reciprocity

Confucius advocated *Li*. The design of *Li* is based on the requirement of human nature, which contains "seven emotions" and "ten righteousnesses." *Ritual Records* explains it as follows:

> So the sage can make the whole world like one family, the commonwealth like one person, this is not of the subjective opinion, but with understanding of human feelings, having a clear knowledge of righteousness, knowing very well of benefit and worry, and then he can do it. What is called human feelings? Happiness, anger, sorrow, fear, love, disgust and desire, these seven feelings that do not need learning are called human feelings. What is called righteousness? Father being the benevolent, while his son being filially pious, elder brother being loving, while his younger brother being deferential, husband being fair, while his wife being

---

[1] The Philosophy and Religion Department, ed., *The Philosophical Review*, vol. 1 (Wuhan: Hubei People's Publishing House, 2002), 161.

complied, the elderly being kind to the young, while the young being obedient, the emperor being merciful, while officials being loyal, the rule of these ten kinds of interpersonal relationships is called righteousness…So the sage had no better way but *Li* to steer seven emotions, maintain ten kinds of norms of human relationships, advocate humility and avoid fight.[2]

Li accompanies human life all the time. It is both the external etiquette and the interior rule of ethics. It stands for the reasonable order of social institutions. By defining its political levels and subordinate relations, the ritual of the Zhou Dynasty lays great stress on all levels of people, from emperors, governors, ministers, literati, and officialdom to the common people and keeps them from arrogance. That is to say, all levels perform their roles and enact their social duties according to their social positions, as defined by *Li*, without arrogance. Consequently, social harmony and political stability can be achieved and maintained through *Li*. Confucius believed that it is arrogance that destroys social harmony and undermines political stability. Thus, he advocated restoring the ritual of the Zhou Dynasty. In Confucius's opinion, the chaotic situation that resulted from the collapse of *Li* could come to an end, and social order and harmony would rise again as long as the ritual of the Zhou Dynasty could be restored.

In the Warring States period, seven powerful countries strove for hegemony, which led the ancient ritual institution to lose its function of maintaining social and political order and even come close to collapse. Xunzi (third century BCE) endorsed and developed Confucius's idea of *Li* and established his system of *Li*. Xunzi distinguished the difference between human beings and animals in his theory of *Li*:

Water and fire have pneuma (*Qi*) without life, grasses and trees have life without esthesis, birds and beasts have esthesis without morality and justice (*Tao Yi*). Because man has pneuma, esthesis and pays attention to morality and justice, man is the most precious creature in the world. Although man is not more powerful than the cattle, not running faster than the horse, the cattle and the horse are enslaved by man. Why? Because: Man can be combined into a social group, however the cattle and the horse cannot. Why man can be combined into a social group? There is a system of hierarchy and birthright. Why hierarchy and birthright can be carried out? Because there are the morality and justice.[3]

---

[2] Wu Shuping and Lai Changyang, eds., *Notes for the Four Books and Five Classics in vernacular Chinese*, vol. 3 (Beijing: International Culture Press,1992), 531.

[3] Wang Xianqian, ed., *Collected Works of Various Masters in the pre-Qin Period*, vol. 2 (Shanghai: Shanghai Bookstore,1996), 104.

Xunzi believed that the true world belongs to human beings because human beings could be combined into a "group." The so-called "group" is an orderly community where *Li* is the order. Xunzi regarded such a community maintained in an orderly manner and harmoniously by *Li* as a "group." In other words, human social and political life is different from animal life that is only for survival. "Group" and "*Li*" are the true scene of human life. For human beings, an individual's life begins with the consciousness of "group" and "*Li*." Xunzi's "group" and "*Li*" show that reciprocity is an essential attribute of human beings.

Reciprocity is the theoretical premise of the theory of human nature in Confucianism. Xunzi believed that the relationship between "group" and "self" of human society is consistent with that between *"Tao"* and "all things on the earth." "*Tao*" is the foundation of "all things on the earth," while "all things on the earth" is the embodiment of "*Tao.*" The relationship between "*Tao*" and "all things on the earth" is equal to the relationship between community and individual. Xunzi said: "Everything just presents a part of nature's order. One thing is just a part of everything. The ignorant people only know one aspect of a particular thing, but they believe that they know the nature's order in their own conceit. Indeed, they are ignorant."[4] "*Tao,*" which is associated with everything, is higher than everything and is the whole at the same time. "knowing-Tao" means dealing with interpersonal relationships and relationships between human beings and nature correctly. As Xunzi said,

> Because of knowing the defect of thinking methods and catching sight of the scourge beclouded, the sages neither let fond, nor let hatred, neither only see the beginning and the vicinity, nor only see the ending and the distance, neither only devote their efforts to the broad and profound, nor take the shallow and crude as they are, neither only understanding the ancient, nor only knowing now, but observe a variety of things at the same time and make a trade-off among them according to a certain norm. Therefore, many differences and opposites cannot cover up each other which could result in confusing the order. What is the norm of trade-off? The answer is: *Tao*. So, we cannot be unknowing of *Tao*.[5]

Xunzi believed that the human world contains interpersonal relationships and relationships between human beings and nature. In terms of the former, individuals must stand in the "group" to handle interpersonal relationships aright. Otherwise, many differences and opposites could be covered up, confusing the order. In terms of the latter, as an entirety, human beings must stick to "*Tao*" to handle the relationship between themselves and nature aright. Otherwise, it would be difficult to observe a variety of things at the

---

4 Ibid., 213.
5 Ibid., 263.

same time. "Trade-off," which means both relationships are handled aright, is equal to relieving stupidity and getting understanding. Thus, "relieving stupidity and getting understanding" means "knowing-Tao."

For Xunzi, Confucian *Li* has penetrated every aspect of social life. *Li* is not only the appearance of words and deeds and the way one gets along with others but also about whether a person could survive and serve society, whether a country could be peaceful, etc. *Yi-li*, *Zhou-li* and *Ritual Records*, known as "*Three Rites*," took shape from the end of the Warring States period to the early Western-Han Dynasty. The rites, decrees, and regulations of *Yi-li* are numerous and complicated. The comprehensive and detailed etiquette and stipulations have 117 entries, which include the Capping Ceremony (*Shi-guan-li*), the Wedding Ceremony (*Shi-hun-li*), the Etiquette of Meeting (*Shi-xiang-jian-li*), the Community Drinking Ceremony (*Xiang-yin-jiu-li*), the Local Shooting Ceremony (*Xiang-she-li*), the Governors Banqueting Ceremony (*Yan-li*), the Etiquette of Archery Exercise for Governors and All Officials (*Da-she-li*), the Etiquette of Greeting Each Other for Governors (*Pin-li*), the Etiquette of the Host Governors Treating the Guest Senior Officials Coming for Greeting (*Gong-shi-da-fu-li*), the Etiquette of Governors Calling on the Emperor in Autumn (*Jin-li*), the Mourning Etiquette and Dress and Personal Adornment in Addition to the Emperor (*Sang-fu*), the Etiquette of Funeral for Literati and Officialdom (*Shi-sang-li*), *Ji-xi-li* (details and supplement of *Shi-sang-li*), *Shi*-yu-*li* (details and supplement of *Shi-sang-li*), the Etiquette of Fete in the Ancestor Temple for Literati and Officialdom Class (*Te-sheng-kui-shi-li*), the Etiquette of Fete in the Ancestor Temple for Ministers (*Shao-lao-kui-shi-li*), *You-si-che* (details and supplement of *Shao-lao-kui-shi-li*).

There are five most important social activities: *Jin-li* (governors calling on the emperor in Autumn), *Pin-wen* (greeting each other for governors), mourning and fete, *Xiang-yin-jiu* (the community drinking), and marriage. For example, *Jin-li* (governors calling on the emperor in Autumn) has strict norms about palace size, furniture, decoration, colors, and the seating arrangement of different governors with different ranks of nobility. Such elaborate rituals and cumbersome arrangements indicate the appropriate monarch-subject relationship, which is called "righteousness between the emperor and his governors." "*Xiang-yin-jiu-li*" is the etiquette of public feasts. In ancient China, the official at the provincial level would host a banquet for men of virtue and ability, who are successful candidates in the imperial examinations, to see them off before they go to their offices. This kind of feast is called "*Xiang-yin-jiu.*" "*Xiang-yin-jiu-li*" makes strict stipulations on staff setting and arrangements of seating and objects. That is to say that the feast is not primarily for eating or drinking but to identify one's part in social activities. Thus, it is called "knowing order between seniors and juniors."

Under the guidance of *Li*, people distinguish the monarch and his subjects, the high and the low, the superior and the inferiors, the gentle and the simple, the elder and the young. Gradually, people develop rules and norms for their manners and behaviors. Thus, well-behaved human life, which shows the nobility and dignity of human nature, differs essentially from that

of animals. When *Li* is respected and abided by, human beings are endowed with honor and dignity. In ancient society, a moral, emotional appeal is an important means to maintain political order and social peace for the integration of the state, family and clan, and self and others. The purpose of Confucianism in proposing *Li* is to construct and maintain a stable political order and harmonious society. This means that *Li* is saturated with ethical spirit.

Confucianism inculcates a Confucian ethical spirit and values into the minds of social members. The effect is remarkable. People unconsciously acknowledge the spirit of *Li* and consciously transform the spirit into the rule of behavior in daily life; Confucianism teaches Confucian ethical spirit and values to the public in certain places. As Fei Xiaotong said, "*Li* is not enforced by the outside power, but is meant to develop a personal sense of awe and veneration by enlightenment, and bear it in mind. Man is active to obey *Li*. *Li* can be fond of, which is called 'get rich in fond of *Li*'."[6]

Confucius emphasized *Li* and complied with it. The *Analects* records Confucius's stories of complying with *Li* in various aspects, including affairs of state, living at home, making friends, diet and daily life, words and deeds, etc. "Look not at what is contrary to *Li*, listen not to what is contrary to *Li*, speak not what is contrary to *Li*, make no movement which is contrary to *Li*."[7] This statement indicates that Confucius attached great importance to *Li*. Nevertheless, Confucius paid more attention to the spirit of *Li* than to *Li* itself. The *Analects* records: "'It is according to *Li*,' they say, 'It is according to *Li*,' they say. Are gems and silk all that is meant by *Li*? 'It is music,' they say, 'It is music,' they say. Are bells and drums all that is meant by music?'"[8] Moreover, "Lin Fang asked what the first thing to be attended to in *Li* was. The Master said, 'A great question indeed!' In festive ceremonies, it is better to be sparing than extravagant. In the ceremonies of mourning, it is better that there be deep sorrow than minute attention to observances."[9] According to Confucius, a strong value foundation of *Li*, namely *Ren*, should be developed so that the problem of governing the state and harmonizing society might be solved.

The original meaning of *Ren* is "humanity." The connotation of both *Ren* and humanity interpenetrate one another. According to Confucius, *Ren* means people always care for others and love others: "loving others" and "endearing the dear" are the basic principles of *Ren*.[10] *Ren* is presented through family affection and consanguinity. This kind of love is in compliance with human nature. In Confucius's view, *Ren* is human nature, for it is the essential factor to be human. Confucius was conscious of the "Differentiation between Man and Poultry." "Grow to Manhood" is a major topic in

---

[6] Fei Xiaotong, *From the Soil: The Foundations of Chinese Society* (Beijing: Beijing University Publishing House, 1998), 51.

[7] Zhuxi, *Annotation Sets of the Four Books* (Shenyang: Liaoning Education Press,1998), 141.

[8] Ibid., 194

[9] Ibid., 64.

[10] Ibid., 149.

Confucianism. "Grow to Manhood" means a person becomes a man/woman by inspiring the self-consciousness of humanity. One can recognize and confirm one's position, duty, and value in "this-world." Confucius insisted that virtues exist not only in individual moral personality but also in personal contributions to society. The ultimate goal of virtues is to reach "Nature's Order," which is a lofty realm of "virtues with the characteristic of heaven and earth"[11] and "forming a ternion with heaven and earth."[12]

When one's moral cultivation reaches this lofty realm, he/she might have a profound insight about social destiny, life, and fate and be *"Harmonious with Heaven and Earth"* and *"able to assist the transforming and nourishing powers of Heaven and Earth."* Consequently, his/her *"virtue is vast enough to influence the world."*[13] This is the ultimate goal of *Ren*. Through *Ren*, people fully recognize the true human nature and actively participate in the continuous movement and change in the universe. Although *Ren* is the highest form of virtue, it comes from the truest emotion of human nature. As the interior spirit, it provides a rational foundation for human nature, whereas *Li* is the external regulation that is eventually transformed into an interior ethical spirit by *Ren*. Together, the two virtues become a solid foundation to support the rationality and supremacy of the Confucian political order.

In real life, people bring the entire order of family, community, and country in correspondence to *Li* while they are aware that human nature is pursuing *Ren* and "corresponding with Heaven and Earth."[14] This is the meaning of life. *Li* and *Ren* not only confirm the norm of value for social life, political order, and individual living but also play important roles in social integration and equilibrium. They have always been the nucleus of Confucianism. The theoretical direction of Confucianism always points to the social institution and the ultimate meaning of human life.

Tao: The Transcendent Dimension of Reciprocity

Tao is a supreme and ultimate notion in Chinese philosophy. Philosophers in the pre-Qin period all discussed *Tao* and regarded it as the origin and essence of the universe. In Confucianism, *Tao* is regarded as an ideal of political government, social harmony, and spiritual virtues. *Tao* stands not only for Confucian spiritual values of political and ritual institutions but also for the ultimate value basis and the significant source of "this-world." *Tao* is both an ideal and a norm of "this-world" but higher than and far away from the concrete "this-world."

Zhou Yi (the Book of Changes) said, "The concrete but on Says Tao, the Concrete but under Says Qi."[15] *Tao* is a metaphysical notion of the universe.

---

[11] Tang Mingbang, ed., *Notes for the Book of the Changes*, revised edition (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 2009), 205.

[12] Zhuxi, *Annotation Sets of the Four Books*, 33.

[13] Tang, ed., *Notes for the Book of the Changes*, 200.

[14] Zhuxi, *Annotation Sets of the Four Books*, 381.

[15] Tang, ed., *Notes for the Book of the Changes*, 200.

It takes part in the construction of not only humanity, nature, and society, but also human-heartedness. Confucianism uses the Heaven, the Earth, and the human to formulate a harmonious and orderly world. Among the three, the human is more precious because it can "embrace heaven and earth," and be "harmonious with nature."[16]

The central point of Confucianism is about the recognition and penetration of *Tao*. Confucianism aims to solve practical problems of human life in "this-world" and to find the ultimate meaning of life in the process of following *Tao*. Thus, Confucianism regards *Tao* as the goal of life. There are such sayings as "A scholar, whose mind is set on *Tao*, and who is ashamed of bad clothes and bad food, is not fit to be discoursed with;"[17] "The object of the superior man is *Tao*. Food is not his object;" "The superior man is anxious lest he should not get *Tao*, he is not anxious lest poverty should come upon him;"[18] "Those whose *Tao* are different cannot lay plans for one another;"[19] or "If a man in the morning hears *Tao*, he may die in the evening without regret."[20] These sayings indicate the importance of ethical virtues, the power of personality, and the harmonious relation between the Heaven and the human in Confucianism. Confucianism also regards the ideal of *Tao* as a political belief. This belief, which comes from the profound need of humanity, has turned into an ideological tradition and has transformed into a spiritual power inherited from generation to generation. With a deep concern for and a profound insight of *Tao*, Confucianism always preserves a self-awareness of both "this-world" and the transcendence of "this-world."

Tao is a basic principle of Confucianism in constructing the political order. It is an evaluation of whether society is well-developed. If it is "with-Tao," then the political order is well-developed. Otherwise, it is "without-Tao." A society with *Tao* is an ideal for Confucianism. There was indeed a period in Chinese history commemorated as the last Golden Age, for at that time, "*Da-tong* (Great Utopia)" was ruled by the great Emperors Yao and Shun. According to Confucianism, social customs were good, and people lived and worked in peace and contentment under the management of the great Emperors. As *Ritual Records* said,

> When the Great *Tao* prevails, the world is like a common wealth state shared by all, not a dictatorship. Virtuous, worthy, wise and capable people are chosen as leaders. Honesty and trust are promoted, and good neighborhood cultivated. All people respect and love their own parents and children, as well as parents and children of others. The aged are cared for until death. Adults are employed in jobs that make full use of their abilities and children are nourished, educated and fostered. Widows and widowers, orphans and

---

[16] Zhuxi, *Annotation Sets of the Four Books*, 33.
[17] Ibid., 72.
[18] Ibid., 181.
[19] Ibid., 183.
[20] Ibid., 74.

the old without children, the disabled and the diseased are all well taken care of. Every man and woman have appropriate roles to play in society and in their family. They hate to see resources lying idle or wasting away, yet they do not keep them for themselves. They hate not to make use of their abilities, yet they do not work for their own self-interest. Thus, intrigues and conspiracies do not arise, and thievery and robbery do not occur therefore doors need never be locked. This is the ideal world – a perfect world of equality, fraternity, harmony, welfare and justice. This is the world called Da-tong (Great Utopia).[21]

The being "shared by all" is not only a supreme principle of the ideal society, but also the reason for society to exist. The "chosen and cultivated" is a way to achieve the "shared by all." If people vote persons of virtue and ability to manage society, Datong (Great Utopia) would be possible. *Da-tong* (Great Utopia) stands for the Confucian ultimate belief in the ideal society. The belief comes from true and profound humanity. The essential difference between human life and animal life lies in the attention to and high self-awareness of ethical virtues and the meaning of life. The actual course of human spiritual life begins with contemplating the meaning of life with dignity and nobility. With a high self-consciousness, Confucianism regards the inquiry to *Tao* as its ideological theme and goal. Under the guidance of *Tao*, people can achieve the meaning of life, and society can be well-developed.

Da-tong (Great Utopia) was the world ruled by the good emperors Yao and Shun. However, self-interest, competition, conflict, and war ensued when the highest principle of "shared by all" was transformed into "shared by a dictatorship." Thus, the Emperors of Yu, Tang, Wen, Wu, Cheng, and Zhougong established *Li* to maintain the social order. As *Ritual Records* said,

Nowadays the Great *Tao* is hidden rather than appeared, the world is shared by dictatorship. All people only respect and love their own parents and children. They work only for their own self-interest. Emperors and governors take inheriting the throne from the father to the son, the elder brother to the younger brother as a ritual. City moats outside the city are served as defense facilities. Rite and morality are the principle to make the monarch and his subjects correct, father and son kind, brothers concord, husband and wife harmonious. It is *Li* to be used to establish all institutions, divide plough and census register, praise highly brave and wise persons, and reward people to help themselves. The resulting intrigue and war start. Emperors of Yu, Tang, Wen, Wu, Cheng and Zhougong turn into the worthy of various emperors during three generations. They are chosen according to *Li*. None of those six worthies does manage state affairs by the *Li* discreetly. They commend people's

---

[21] Wu, eds. *Notes for the Four Books*, 529.

righteousness, inspect people's trustworthiness, and indicate people's fault according to *Li*. They take effect the punishment in the heart of love. They advocate interpersonal humility to make obeying the settled *Li* clear to all. If there are people who disobey *Li*, even the monarch will be deposed, and people will regard him as a scourge to *Tao*. This is called *Xiao-kang* (moderately prosperous society).[22]

Xiao-kang (moderately prosperous society) is the realistic society settled and regulated by *Li* while *Li* is in accordance with *Tao*. The aim of *Li* is to let the waning *Tao* appear.

Tao is a value norm of "this-worldly" affairs. It is a legal foundation of realistic politics. Confucianism emphasized benevolent politics and proposed returning to the ancient ways and *Li* because it had a great concern for "this-world" and the aspiration of transcending "this-world." Confucianism unremittingly pursued turning the ideal of ethical virtues into a realistic political order. Therefore, Confucianism was never concerned only with imagining *Tao* but with realizing a concrete social and political life to achieve the ideal of *Tao*. In the Confucian view, benevolent politics was not just imaginary but rather a real existence in the time of the great Kings of the Golden Age. Benevolent politics was not only just theories but also human requirements based on human nature. It demonstrated human dignity and a human spiritual ideal. Therefore, benevolent politics could exist not only in the past but also in the present and future. *Tao* is not only an "ought to be" but also the "actually to be." That is what is meant by the saying, "Dao can't be off-lying for a moment, being off-lying wouldn't be Tao."[23] Although realistic institutions rise and fall with historical changes, *Tao*, which gives the spiritual direction and the significance of realistic institutions, has never changed; it is always consistent.

Although people live in "this-world," they yearn to transcend "this-world." People need not only to realize themselves in the concrete "this-world" but also to go beyond it to live in an ideal life. People's pursuit of an ideal life and perfect virtues reflects the human demand for self-transcendence. Both Western "Utopia" and Chinese "*Da-tong*," as human dreams and pursuits of an ideal life, are rational reflections of "this-world" as well as the transcendence of "this-world." The reflection and the transcendence as the premise and foundation of "this-world" describe a future vision as the motivation of "this-world." The actual human life is always subjected to the human pursuit of an ideal for the future. During the changes of history, people always have had an ideal for the future in order to transcend the present and the past. "This-world" is always in the process of outstripping the past and moving into the future. As Gao Qinghai said,

---

[22] Ibid., 529.
[23] Zhuxi, *Annotation sets of the Four Books*, 17.

Man is the essence of life. He does not let himself restricted by the weak life, he has an eternal nature which is superior to life. Although man is an individual being, he is not satisfied with this narrow individual being. Man is also an unlimited being which is superior to the individual being. Man is self-centered, but he does not hide himself in an isolated self-cage. Man mixes the self with the non-self world…In a word, man is the world and the world is man.[24]

Although human beings are limited, the human pursuit of an ideal life is unlimited. The desire and the pursuit of eternity are important motivations for human beings to accomplish real life and create an ideal life.

In sum, Confucianism provides a distinctive understanding of many issues about human relations. It is manifested by both reality-oriented and transcendence-oriented dimensions based on the theory of human nature. As an aspiration to and pursuit of an ideal social order and spiritual values, *Tao* has a transcendence-oriented dimension. It is an inherent demand of self-transcendence. However, *Tao* also has a feature of operability for "this-world" and is always in a dynamic, practical process. Confucianism regards *Tao* as an ideal of ethical virtues and designs political, social, and spiritual institutions to order "this-world" according to *Tao*. Only in the process of the design of regimes and the pursuit of life can *Tao* achieve its substantiality and feasibility. In the Confucian view, the fundamental cause of social chaos and disorder is the loss of *Tao*. The worry of the "non-prevailed of *Tao*" and the "unapparent of *Tao*"[25] describes the Confucian concern of "this-world." Both the criticism of the regime and the concern about moral issues are based on its faith in *Tao*.

In the reality-oriented dimension, *Li* of Confucianism is not the specific provision but the spirit of *Li*. Likewise, *Ren* of Confucianism is not the specific provision but the spirit of *Ren*. The spirit of *Li* and *Ren* is the value and significance of society, politics, and life. The spirit of *Li* and *Ren* is the implication of *Tao* contained in *Li* and *Ren*. *Tao* is the norm of evaluating "this-world." The "with-*Tao*" means the harmony and unity of *Li* and *Ren*.

Bibliography

Fei Xiaotong. *From the Soil: The Foundations of Chinese Society*. Beijing: Beijing University Publishing House, 1998.

Gao Qinghai. *The Sequel of Gao Qinghai Philosophical Writings*, vol. 2. Harbin: Heilongjiang Education Publishing House, 2004.

Philosophy and Religion Department, ed. *The Philosophical Review*, vol. 1. Wuhan: Hubei People's Publishing House, 2002.

---

[24] Gao Qinghai, *The Sequel of Gao Qinghai Philosophical* Writings, vol. 2 (Harbin: Heilongjiang Education Publishing House, 2004), 49.

[25] Zhuxi, *Annotation sets of the Four Books*, 19.

Tang Mingbang, ed. *Notes for the Book of the Changes*, revised edition. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 2009.

Wang Xianqian, ed. *Collected Works of Various Masters in the Pre-Qin Period*, vol. 2. Shanghai: Shanghai Bookstore,1996.

Wu, Shuping and Lai Changyang, eds. *Notes for the Four Books and Five Classics in vernacular Chinese*, vol. 3. Beijing: International Culture Press,1992.

Zhuxi. *Annotation Sets of the Four Books.* Shenyang: Liaoning Education Press, 1998.

Part IV
Reciprocity between Cultures and Nations in the Era of Globalization

18

Can Reciprocity be the Principle of
a Global Ethics?

Peter JONKERS

Introduction

To what extent can reciprocity be the principle of a global ethics? At first sight, the answer to this question seems to be unreservedly positive. Within the world religions and secular worldviews, the principle of reciprocity, commonly known as the 'Golden Rule' in the West, is (almost) universally accepted as the basis of ethics. In either its positive (to treat others as you would wish them to treat you) or negative form (do not treat others as you would not wish them to treat you), it occurs in teachings of all the great religions. In India, the Hindu *Mahabharata* recommends that "One should never do that to another which one would regard as injurious if done to one's own self. This, in brief, is the rule of Righteousness." In the Jain *Kritanga* Sutra, we are told that one should go about "treating all creatures in the world as he would himself be treated." In the Buddhist scriptures, there are many such sayings: "As a mother cares for her son, all her days, so toward all living things a man's mind should be all-embracing." In China, Confucius taught that the notion of Consideration, namely "what you do not want done to yourself, do not to others," serves as a rule of practice for one's life. Confucianism practices its virtue of Consideration by considering the other person's feelings in terms of one's own; in the Chinese language, this practice is called *Duo,* which is opposed to desolation, the attitude of eliminating others from one's view.[1] The practice of *Duo* refers to that one needs to regard others' benefits as one's own interest, the object of *Duo* should be only others' interest rather than my own, and, finally, that one has to analogize or contrast others' minds to one's own.[2] In a Taoist scripture, we read that a good man will "regard [others'] gains as if they were his own and their losses in the same way." In ancient Persia (including today's Iran), a Zoroastrian scripture declares "that nature only is good when it shall not do to another whatever is not good for its own self." In Christianity, Jesus taught that "as ye would that men shall do to you, do ye also to them likewise." The Jewish *Talmud* states, "What is hateful to yourself do not do to your fellow man. That is the whole of the Torah." In the *Hadith* of Islam, the Prophet Mohammed says, "No man

---

[1] Yu Zhiping, "Philosophical Reflection on the Universal Ethics: In the Case of Confucianism 'Golden Rule'," in *Diversity in Unity: Harmony in a Global Age,* eds. Hu Xirong and Yu Xuanmeng (Washington, DC: Council for Research in Philosophy, 2015), 33, 36. Yu Zhiping notes that the golden rule appeared, in fact, earlier than Confucius, namely in *The Doctrine of the Mean* and in the book of *Guan Zi.* See Idem, 34.
[2] Yu Zhiping, "Philosophical reflection on the Universal Ethics," 37.

is a true believer unless he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself."[3]

In the field of secular philosophy, Kant's categorical imperative, "Act only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law without contradiction," also highlights the unconditionality and universality of the principle of reciprocity.[4] Richard Dawkins, too, argues for the universality of this principle. In his view, humans have a gene for reciprocal altruism (you scratch my back, and I will scratch yours).[5] Although there are good reasons to criticize Dawkin's attempt to found reciprocity on biological grounds,[6] it nevertheless offers further confirmation of the universality of the principle of reciprocity.

Turning more extensively to contemporary social and political philosophy, Jürgen Habermas uses reciprocity as the key term to qualify the ideal kind of communicative interaction in a society that is democratic and non-authoritarian. He uses the principle of reciprocity as a way to criticize today's bourgeois capitalist society, which has become oppressive because people's life-worlds have been colonized by technology, administrative bureaucracy, and the economy. For John Rawls, reciprocity is an essential element for a fair system of cooperation in society. Fair cooperation means that each participant may reasonably be expected to accept certain terms of cooperation, provided that everyone else likewise accepts them. The result of such an idea of reciprocity is that "all who are engaged in cooperation and who do their part as the rules and procedure require, are to benefit in an appropriate way as assessed by a suitable benchmark of comparison."[7] Hence, societal reciprocity lies between altruism, implying that one is prepared to sacrifice oneself *à corps perdu* for the common good or the benefit of the other, and mutual advantage. This is understood as that everyone is advantaged with respect to each person's present or expected future situation as things are. According to Rawls, reciprocity cannot be identified with altruism because altruism rests on an asymmetric relation between the other and myself – I sacrifice myself without expecting anything in return. This is at odds with the basic idea of modern society, which consists of free and equal citizens. The principle of reciprocity also has to be distinguished from that of mutual advantage, since this idea takes persons as *rational* beings, who are only interested in their own (short-sighted) self-interest. By contrast, the principle of reciprocity rests on

---

[3] For the references to all these quotes see John Hick, "Is There a Global Ethic? A Talk Given to the Center for the Study of Global Ethics, University of Birmingham UK, in February 2007," accessed February 17, 2016, http://www.johnhick.org.uk/ethic.pdf. For an extensive overview, see Jacob Neusner and Bruce Chilton, eds., *The Golden Rule. The Ethics of Reciprocity in World Religions* (London: Continuum, 2009).

[4] Immanuel Kant, *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. James W. Ellington (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1993), 30. Kant himself vehemently rejected the relation of the categorical imperative and the golden rule.

[5] Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion* (London: Black Swan, 2007), 216f.

[6] Hick, "Is there a Global Ethic," 7.

[7] John Rawls, *Political Liberalism. Expanded Edition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 16.

people as *reasonable* persons, a term that refers to a broader kind of rationality than restricted self-interest. For reasonable beings can propose principles and standards as fair terms of cooperation and abide by them willingly, given the assurance that others will likewise do so. Phrased positively, "reciprocity is a relation between citizens expressed by principles of justice that regulate a social world in which everyone benefits judged with respect to an appropriate benchmark of equality defined with respect to that world."[8] As Rawls himself realizes, this kind of reciprocity is only possible between free and equal citizens in a well-ordered society expressed by its public political conception of justice.

This last remark shows the limits of the Habermasian and Rawlsian interpretation of the principle of reciprocity. That is, only in a well-ordered society of free and equal citizens can one reasonably assume that everyone accepts, and knows that everyone else accepts the very same principles of justice, that the basic structure of this society (its main political and social institutions and how they fit together as one system of cooperation) is publicly known to satisfy these principles, and that its citizens have a normally effective sense of justice and so comply with society's basic institutions, which they regard as just.[9] However, these conditions do not apply unreservedly to today's pluralistic world, because there is a lot of socio-economic and socio-cultural inequality that undermines the unbiased and fair application of the principle of reciprocity; moreover, there is no universally accepted idea of the principles of justice, especially among different cultures and political systems, and even less a shared idea about the basic political and social structures needed to satisfy these principles; citizens around the world do not accept the authority of existing international institutions, insofar as they claim to put these principles of basic justice into practice. Hence, to examine whether, in our times, reciprocity can still serve as the principle of a global ethics, we have to take an approach that does not rely so heavily on the Western idea of a well-ordered, liberal democratic society.[10]

Reciprocity in the 'Declaration Toward a Global Ethic'

To further explore the meaning of the value of reciprocity for today's globalized society, I propose to start from the "Declaration Toward a Global

---

⁸ Ibid., 17.

⁹ Ibid., 35.

¹⁰ It has to be noted that reciprocity is not only a principle of individual and social ethics but also a radical anthropological characteristic. It gives an essential qualification to the principle of recognition, which is constitutive for self-consciousness, as Hegel has shown. In particular, reciprocal recognition highlights the fact that the human self is dynamic and radically dependent on the other. Thus, reciprocal recognition implies a critique of the traditional static and substantialist idea of the human, as well as of the one-sidedness of some engrained Western human values, such as self-determination and individualism. For an overview of the various layers of meaning of this concept, see H. H. Ritter, "Gegenseitigkeit," in *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie, Band 3*, eds. J. Ritter a.o. (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1974), 119–129.

Ethic." This Declaration was mainly drafted by the well-known Swiss theologian Hans Küng and officially adopted and proclaimed by the Parliament of the World's Religions in 1993.[11] The common conviction of this Parliament, consisting of approximately 8000 faithful and representatives of religions from all over the world, was that "a common set of core values is found in the teachings of the religions, and that these form the basis of a global ethic."[12] The global character of this ethic lies in that its principles "can be affirmed by all persons with ethical convictions, whether religiously grounded or not."[13] This ethic should not be seen as a global ideology or a single unified religion beyond all existing religions, and certainly not as the domination of one religion over others, but rather a fundamental consensus on binding values, irrevocable standards, and personal attitudes. It is an attempt to overcome the rampant ethical particularism as a characteristic of post-modernity, according to which there can be no agreement about universal norms and values because they are dependent on specific cultures and religions and, hence, are incommensurable. Furthermore, although this global ethic has far-reaching political implications, it does not focus on the *collective* responsibility that each individual may hold, but rather on the responsibility of *each individual* in his or her place in society, and quite specifically on the individual responsibility of political leaders.[14] Finally, the most important reason that underlies the drafting of this Declaration is the acknowledgment that, in an age of globalization of economies, technology, and communication, there is also a need for a globalization of ethics.[15]

This Declaration states "that every human being without distinction of age, sex, race, skin color, physical or mental ability, language, religion, political view, or national or social origin possesses an inalienable and untouchable dignity."[16] What is intriguing is that the idea of human dignity is expressed through the principle of reciprocity, more commonly known as the Golden Rule. In the Declaration, the Golden Rule is phrased as follows: "What you do not wish done to yourself, do not do to others. Or in positive terms: what you wish done to yourself, do to others."[17] Because the principle of reciprocity or the Golden Rule is so widely recognized as a principle of morality across so many traditions, it possesses, according to Küng, a tremendous moral authority and reveals a profound unity underlying the diversity of

---

[11] For an excellent overview of the background and the various stages of Küng's project of a World Ethos, see José Casanova, "The Sacralization of the *Humanum:* A Theology for a Global Age," *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 13, no. 1 (1999): 21–40.

[12] *Declaration Toward a Global Ethic. Introduction*, http://www.parliamentofreligions.org/content/toward-global-ethic-initial-declaration.

[13] Ibid., I.

[14] Ibid.; see also Hans Küng, "Global Politics and Global Ethics. Status Quo and Perspectives," *Seton Hall Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations* (Winter/Spring 2002): 11.

[15] Ibid., 18.

[16] *Declaration Toward a Global Ethic,* II.

[17] Ibid.

human experience. Hence, the Golden Rule can legitimately be put forward as the final foundation of a global ethic. What is more, the principle of reciprocity "is not just hypothetical and conditioned, but is categorical, apodictic and unconditioned – utterly practicable in the face of the extremely complex situation in which the individual or groups must often act."[18] In contrast with the idea of autonomy, promoting the values of self-determination and self-realization, the principle of reciprocity takes into account that human beings are dependent on and in permanent interaction with each other, thus creating room for commitment to fellow human beings and the world around them. The major advantage of giving a central role to the idea of reciprocity is that a global ethic avoids the pitfalls of individualism and its exclusive focus on the rights of individuals, which inevitably lead to disregarding our responsibilities and commitments toward others. An ethic of reciprocity is easily acceptable to religious traditions and non-Western civilizations; hence, it deserves more the qualification 'global' than the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights," which is often criticized as suffering from a Western and individualist bias.

The general idea of reciprocal commitment at a global level is concretized through several irrevocable ethical directives that apply to all human beings, irrespective of their (country of) residence, ethnicity, sex, social and economic status, etc., and that can be summarized as follows: Commitment to a culture of non-violence and respect for all forms of life ("you shall not kill" or put positively "Have respect for life"); Commitment to a culture of solidarity and a just economic order ("You shall not steal" or put positively "Deal honestly and fairly"); Commitment to a culture of tolerance and a life of truthfulness ("You shall not lie" or put positively "Speak and act truthfully"); Commitment to a culture of equal rights and partnership between men and women ("You shall not commit sexual immorality" or put positively "Respect and love one another").[19]

Two Philosophical Comments on the Principle of Reciprocity

There have been many responses to the "Declaration Toward a Global Ethic" from representatives of world religions as well as members of political, economic, and academic communities. In particular, people praised its search for a global ethic and for providing a starting place for further growth in mutual understanding and appreciation by way of agreeing on the principle of reciprocity as a minimal expectation of all human beings. My paper wants to focus on two fundamental problems of the principle of reciprocity and thereby offer some underlying reasons why the international community has poorly received the Declaration. My critique certainly is not as radical as Nietzsche's, whose genealogical account unmasks the principle of reciprocity as

---

[18] Hans Küng, *Global Responsibility: In Search of a New World Ethic* (New York: Crossroad Publications, 1991), 59.

[19] *Declaration Toward a Global Ethic*, III.

an annulment of the most personal value of an act, and, hence, as a step toward the formation of herds,[20] but rather intends to stimulate a discussion on how to enhance its importance as a true human value in a pluralistic world.

Beyond Reciprocity: The Economy of Gift. Human actions are characterized by two essential features. First of all, an action is not only interaction, transaction, putting a plurality of actors in a (mostly conflictual) relation, but also an asymmetric relation between one who is acting and another who is being acted upon and undergoes the action. This results in a moral problem: the threat of violence inherent in every asymmetric inter-action. Its most common problem is that the actor uses the other as a means for his or her own interests. However, the asymmetric relationship can also make a reverse turn, namely that the actor sacrifices her or himself for the sake of the other. But even then, the threat of violence still looms, mostly in the form of paternalism or a condescending attitude of the actor to the person who is acted upon. The second feature is that the exertion of freedom always goes together with the disposal of certain fundamental goods, whose acquisition is always uncertain, contingent because it depends on the cooperation or obstruction of others. This means that the fragility that characterizes the acquisition of all goods is added to the vulnerability, which is inherent in the asymmetric relation of acting and being acted upon – caused by the threat of violence.[21]

Against this fundamental anthropological background, the Golden Rule, founded on the principle of reciprocity, aims to reduce this vulnerability and fragility by installing a basic equivalence between all the interacting persons. The Golden Rule shares this principle of equivalence and universality with the law of retaliation (*lex talionis*). Its most well-known phrase is: "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise" in the Old Testament.[22] The universality lies in the fact that almost all the specific articles of the *lex talionis* start with "anyone who…," which implies that these laws apply to everyone, Israelites as well as foreigners.[23] Despite all its harshness, the *lex talionis* constitutes a moral improvement in comparison with a sheer vengeance. Vengeance is limitless and emotional, whereas retaliation has an element of measure, provided by the very principle of equivalence, as well as an element of justice. The measure is determined by a judicial sentence that follows the objective penal

---

[20] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Nachgelassene Fragmente 1887-1889*, in Idem, *Kritische Studienausgabe, Band 13,* eds. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1999), 61, 583f; Friedrich Nietzsche, *Zur Genealogie der Moral,* in Idem, *Kritische Studienausgabe, Band 5*, eds. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1999), 383f.

[21] Paul Ricoeur, "Entre philosophie et théologie I: la *Règle d'Or* en question," in Idem, *Lectures 3. Aux frontières de la philosophie* (Paris: Seuil, 1999), 274.

[22] Exodus 21: 24-5.

[23] Emmanuel Levinas, "An Eye for an Eye," in Idem, *Difficult Freedom. Essays on Judaism,* trans. Seán Hand (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 146.

code.[24] In the case of the *lex talionis*, equivalence concerns the contents of actions themselves, eye, tooth, hand, etc. With the Golden Rule, a new improvement obtains: reciprocity is anticipated instead of being merely reactive. The agent is summoned to take the initiative to act (or to refrain from acting) in such a way that…Furthermore, the rule is addressed to intentions, dispositions, and feelings: what you would hate being done to you.[25]

On such a basis, it is perfectly understandable that the principle of reciprocity has been put forward as a fundamental human value in a pluralistic world and even as the principle of a global ethics. As the Declaration states:

> our world is experiencing a *fundamental crisis:* A crisis in the global economy, global ecology, and global ethics.…Hundreds of millions of human beings on our planet increasingly suffer from unemployment, poverty, hunger, and the destruction of their families. Hope for a lasting peace among nations slips away from us. There are tensions between the sexes and generations. Children die, kill, and are killed. More and more countries are shaken by corruption in politics and business. It is increasingly difficult to live together peacefully in our cities because of social, racial, and ethnic conflicts, the abuse of drugs, organized crime, and even anarchy. Even neighbors often live in fear of one another. Our planet continues to be ruthlessly plundered. A collapse of the ecosystem threatens us.[26]

The acceptance and implementation of reciprocity as the principle of a global ethics means a substantial improvement of living conditions of the majority of the world population, for the principle of reciprocity concerns all kinds of interactions: interpersonal, societal, economic, political, and international.

However, the principle of reciprocity falls short of expectations when it comes to offering the minimal content of a global ethic. Its shortcomings go far beyond the already observed fact that the world does not even come close to the Rawlsian ideal of a well-ordered society, which would not only acknowledge this principle without reservation but also accept and support the main political and social institutions that are responsible for its implementation. These shortcomings are more fundamental than the fact, observed by Rawls, that the principle of reciprocity is often misunderstood and misused in a rather self-interested way: I give something to you so that you give something back to me (*do ut des*). In my view, the fundamental problem of the principle of reciprocity is that it is unable to fulfill the high hopes that the Declaration has placed in it, namely to serve as the moral foundation of commitment to a culture of non-violence and respect for life, of solidarity and a

---

[24] Levinas, "An Eye for an Eye," 147.

[25] Paul Ricoeur, "The Golden Rule. Exegetical and Theological Perspectives," *New Testament Studies* 36 (1990): 394.

[26] *Declaration Toward a Global Ethic,* Principles.

just economic order, of tolerance and a life of truthfulness, and equal rights and partnership between men and women.[27] In other words, there is a wide gap between the minimal content of the principle of reciprocity, which results from a global consensus, and the sublime commitments it is supposed to underpin. A society based on the principle of reciprocity alone is unforgiving because this principle fails to take into account the fact that asymmetric relations, i.e., the altruistic attitude of giving something without expecting something in return, play a crucial role in all forms of human interaction. Examples of asymmetric relations abound: relations between parents and children, the healthy and the disabled, the young and the elderly, the rich and the poor, wealthy and deprived countries, people who live in regions with favorable climate conditions and those who do not, etc. As Rawls has correctly shown, relations based on altruism fall outside the scope of the principle of reciprocity because they are at odds with the basic idea of modern society consisting of free and equal citizens. To safeguard even minimal respect of human dignity, these asymmetric relations, nevertheless, have to be included in every (global) ethics.

French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas offers an even sharper critique of the symmetric ethics that underlies the principle of reciprocity. His asymmetric ethics, based on the unconditional and unlimited appeal of the other to the self, is so radical that it goes far beyond the minimal content of a global ethic. He shows that there is inherent violence in every symmetric relation, which inevitably leads to injustice. For Levinas, modern philosophy has typically understood human relations as a process of reducing the radically other to (a moment of) the self and to the neutrality of being. "To affirm the priority of *Being* over *existents* is to already decide the essence of philosophy; it is to subordinate the relation with *someone,* who is an existent, (the ethical relation) to a relation with the *Being of existents,* which, impersonal, permits the apprehension, the domination of existents (a relationship of knowing), subordinates justice to freedom."[28] It cannot be denied that the principle of reciprocity includes a direct and original relation with the other person. However, according to Levinas, in such a relation the other appears as an element of a totality, namely of a global ethics, and therefore on an equal footing with the self. This negates the unique character of the other so that it is a form of violence against the otherness of the other. To put it more concretely, the self has an inherent tendency to see the other as someone similar to the self, having a similar socio-economic and socio-cultural position, similar ideas, needs, and desires. Such an attitude inevitably results in a perhaps unintended but actual assimilation of the otherness of the other by the self.[29] Thus, Levinas accuses modern philosophy and Western society in general, including its humanist tradition, of having a totalizing and ego-logical character, in other

---

[27] *Declaration Toward a Global Ethic*, III: Irrevocable Directives.
[28] Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity. As Essay on Exteriority,* trans. Alphonso Lingis (The Hague-Boston-London: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), 45.
[29] Yu Zheping, "Philosophical Reflection on Universal Ethics," 45.

words, of committing violence against the other. To overthrow the fundamental injustice that is involved in all these seemingly symmetric but actually totalizing relations, he sees the other as someone who precedes my initiative and my decision and who confronts me with my injustice and treats him or her on an equal footing with myself. The outcome of this reversal of the symmetrical relationship between the self and the other is that the other has an ontological and ethical priority over the self. This results in a radical asymmetry between the other and the self, "as if the logos, which in itself is beginning, origin, archè…were constantly submerged here by the pre-original, as if subjectivity were not freedom of adhering to a term presented to it but passivity, more passive than passivity of receptivity."[30]

To account for the asymmetrical character of many human relations, it has been often argued that the principle of reciprocity needs to be complemented by an economy of gift. This expression refers to an original act of giving to every creature, based on the abundance of love, and taking place in a symbolic network that is prior to the symmetric, reciprocal relations of what we owe to each other. The above examples of altruism show what the economy of gift concretely means. This economy surpasses the field of morality in the strict sense since it belongs to the domain of compassion and love for every creature.[31] One of the most famous texts, which highlights the superiority of the economy of gift over the principle of reciprocity, is the Sermon on the Plain in the New Testament:

> If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full. But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back.[32]

Whereas the principle of reciprocity inevitably puts a limit to one's identification with the neighbor so that this principle can be applied to similar situations and people, the economy of gift breaks these limits open from within and opens the sphere of the abundance of love: the enemy becomes the touchstone of my behavior toward the other. Just like vengeance is limitless in a negative, destructive sense, altruism or gift is limitless too, but in a positive sense, oriented toward the flourishing of the other. This shows that the economy of gift not only disorients the principle of reciprocity and anyway staves off its self-interested misuse, but also reorients it toward the good.

---

[30] Emmanuel Levinas, *Humanism of the Other*, trans. Nidra Poller, intr. Richard A. Cohen (Urbana-Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 48.

[31] Ricoeur, "Entre philosophie et théologie," 276; Ricoeur, "The Golden Rule," 392f.

[32] Luke 6: 32-35.

Whereas the principle of reciprocity is by definition bilateral, the economy of gift is unilateral; the one who gives expects nothing in return.[33]

No criminal law, no administration of justice, no economic system can proceed in the way prescribed by the economy of abundant, unilateral gift; loving your enemies, lending money to someone without requiring to get it back makes no sense in a world that is based on the Rawlsian principle of fair, reciprocal cooperation. This indicates that the economy of gift is not moral, but supra-moral. Therefore, the principle of reciprocity cannot and should not be eliminated or substituted by the economy of gift. However, it is also clear that this principle as such is unable to guarantee the humaneness of society, even at a minimal level. Hence, "the incorporation of a motive of compassion and generosity in all our codes, penal codes, and codes of social justice, constitutes a reasonable task, although difficult and endless."[34]

Beyond Reciprocity: the Challenge of Particular Ethical Traditions. Despite the support for the Declaration Toward a Global Ethic, a common concern of most commentators is that this ethic is a minimalist one because it is based on the "least common denominator." Moreover, a global ethic risks ignoring the richness and concreteness of substantial values and virtues of religious and secular moral traditions.[35] While there is a broad consensus about reciprocity as the (minimal) principle of a global ethic, people are deeply uncertain and discordant with each other about the constitutive ideals and moral sources of the good life. In this light, some worldwide organizations, such as the Global Ethic Foundation, and individual academics have developed Intermediate Principles to bridge the gap between universal but rather formal ethical principles and particular, substantial ethical traditions, religious and secular. They comprise, among others, equal treatment before the law; freedom of thought, speech, conscience, and religion; learning and expressing the truth; and an (indirect) voice in all decisions that affect them.[36] However, these Intermediate Principles come out of a contemporary Western post-Enlightenment culture and reflect the concerns and presuppositions of (post)modernity. Inevitably, this jeopardizes their potential to serve as an intermediate between the universal principle of reciprocity and the particular ethical traditions.

To avoid this deadlock, Hans Küng, the strong promoter of the Declaration, sticks to the formal universality of the principle of reciprocity and keeps the particular moral traditions at bay as much as possible. He writes that the Declaration does not mention specific ethical issues, such as sexual behavior, contraception, abortion, euthanasia, etc., because there is no consensus either among religions or within every single religion. But one can legitimately

---

[33] Ricoeur, "The Golden Rule," 394, 396f.

[34] Ibid., 397.

[35] Henk Vroom, *Walking in a Widening World. Understanding Religious Diversity* (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 2013), 271.

[36] For a summarizing overview of these intermediate principles, see Hick, "Is There a Global Ethic?," 10–14.

query the relevance of this global ethic if the consensus on which it is based does not reach beyond the abstract universality of the Golden Rule and proves to be unable to address concrete, pressing moral questions. Some researchers argue that the Golden Rule is not a good guide for human conduct, because it seems to require conduct that everyone admits is *not* required, and sometimes seems to require conduct that is wrong. This problem becomes even more acute if people inhabit conflicting moral universes. To achieve reciprocity, does the Golden Rule require or imply that we should respect moral positions we oppose and shape our actions around them? To give only one historical example, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, abolitionist as well as proslavery Christian clergymen invoked the same Golden Rule to underpin opposed positions on this issue.[37]

Another related problem is that the abstract universality of the Golden Rule does not provide the motivational potential for people's moral commitments on the level of their day-to-day practices. In this sense the principle of reciprocity risks remaining a dead letter. That is (one of) the reason(s) why Küng, who had been working on his world ethos project since the late 1980s, asked the Parliament of the World's Religions to agree on the Declaration and drafted the text himself. It is questionable, however, whether this approach has been conducive to the kind of mobilization needed to implement his project. Küng indeed gathered the support of prominent religious leaders, but there is no evidence that any of them went back to their communities to organize a grass-roots movement around an ethic to which they subscribed cognitively.[38] The motivational potential needed to implement a global ethic is primarily emotive and fueled by collective action. People are not prepared to sacrifice themselves for the sake of a formal universal principle, but only

---

[37] William Scott Green, "Parsing Reciprocity: Questions for the Golden Rule," in *The Golden Rule. The Ethics of Reciprocity in World Religions,* eds. Jacob Neusner and Bruce Chilton (London: Continuum, 2009), 3f. Casanova argues that the consequences of the abstract character of Küng's project become especially manifest in the development of a new paradigm of politics, which combines a sober perception of interests with a basic ethical orientation. According to Casanova, Küng is unable to offer any concrete illustration of the workings of such a model of responsible politics in the real world, because he lacks a convincing theory of democratic politics on a national let alone on a global level. The problems resulting from the abstractness of the project of a global ethics become even more apparent on the level of global governance and economy, which should rest on global values, based on the Golden Rule. According to Küng, such a global ethic would help humanize the impersonal workings of bureaucracies and markets and constrain the competitive and self-serving instincts of individuals and groups. But Casanova queries: What defines economic and political structures as being more or less humane? And who is to do the defining? In other words, common norms cannot be presupposed as the premise and foundation of a modern social order but rather as the potential and always fragile outcome of a process of communicative interaction. See Casanova, "The Sacralization of the *Humanum,*" 33-8. Regarding the problem of the abstractness of a global ethic, see also Richard Falk, "Hans Küng's Crusade: Framing a Global Ethic," *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 13, no. 1 (1999): 77.

[38] Casanova, "The Sacralization of the *Humanum,*" 24, 30, 32.

to the extent that it is embedded in and supported by a particular tradition of positive, substantial values.

According to the above observations, one can conclude that there is a rift between universal, formal ethical principles and substantial ideals and particular experiences of the good life as a source of concrete moral behavior. Across the great differences of theological and metaphysical beliefs, there is a great consensus about several universal ethical principles, such as reciprocity, justice, benevolence, etc. But it is quite a different thing to be moved by a strong sense that human beings are eminently *worth* helping or treating with justice due to their dignity. Here we meet the moral sources that originally underpin these universal principles, such as reciprocity.[39] Ethical life not only and even not primarily rests on moral obligations, but originates in the human desire to live a good life. High ethical standards need strong sources; in other words, they need to be nourished and substantiated by the experience of the good life. These moral sources are particular, bound to the specific way of life in a given community. This shows that there is a structural imbalance between the formal universality of moral norms and the substantial particularity of ideals and experiences of the good life.

Paradoxically, procedural universalist ethics, which aims to overcome today's fragmentation by abstracting from the substantial values of particular cultures, saps the pre-moral sources on which it rests. In this context, it is illustrative to note that Habermas too expresses his doubts about the motivational potential of today's universalist ethics, which is based on arguments that are independent of religious and metaphysical traditions. He values religious and secular moral traditions as particular, pre-political springs of political virtues that are needed in every polity.[40] If this imbalance between universal ethical norms and their particular sources persists, the principle of reciprocity runs the risk of becoming morally corrupting, breeding self-condemnation for those who fall short of fulfilling it and depreciating the positive impulses to self-fulfillment.[41]

Practical Wisdom as a Solution to the Problems of Reciprocity

To find a solution to the problematic consequences of the gap between reciprocity as the principle of a global ethics and the concrete richness of particular ethical traditions, I start from Paul Ricoeur's critical discussion

---

[39] Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self. The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 515f.

[40] Jürgen Habermas, "Pre-political Foundations of the Democratic Constitutional State," in Jürgen Habermas and Joseph Ratzinger, *The Dialectics of Secularization. On Reason and Religion* (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2006), 29–31.

[41] Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 516. I developed this problem further in Peter Jonkers, "Crying in the Desert? Speaking About God in Our Time," in *In Quest of Humanity in a Globalizing World. Dutch Contributions to the Jubilee of Universities in Rome 2000,* eds. W. Derkse, J. Van der Lans and S. Waanders (Leende: Damon, 2000), 132f.

with Hans Küng.[42] As pointed out above, the main problem of the principle of reciprocity is its disembodied formalism, namely, to unite all people around this principle and enable them to endorse it, the advocates of this approach have to abstract as much as possible from particular traditions. Indeed, Küng is convinced that one should leave aside the fact that in the theoretical domain of faith and doctrine, many differences, even conflicts, exist. Instead, one should focus on the practical *ethical* level of concrete behavior: how should I treat my neighbor? From these two premises, he concludes that there exist certain moral guidelines that all world religions have in common, such as don't lie, don't kill, don't steal, etc. These guidelines can be affirmed by all people, despite their different cultural and religious backgrounds, and they can even be united in a single moral principle, the principle of reciprocity. Küng acknowledges that this approach requires a distinction between the universal norm as such (e.g., don't kill) and the concrete source of this norm, namely the particular tradition in which one stands. For Küng admits that he is more interested in the former than in the latter. He regrets that all too often this already existing consensus about universal moral principles is obscured by dogmatic disputes and intolerable self-opinionatedness.[43]

However, in Ricoeur's view, neither the principle of reciprocity nor any other universal principle can serve as the only foundation of a global ethic, because such an approach does not result in a minimal, but rather in a poor ethic. Moreover, what we see is that the ongoing process of globalization has not led to a consensus-based global ethic but to the enhancement of particular identities, and sometimes even to the revival of tribal identities that are often accompanied by various expressions of triumphalism, absolutism, and exclusivism. Today human beings live in a condition that has been aptly labeled as "after Babel," which means that it is irreducibly plural and even fragmented, especially when it comes to human values.[44] This explains why Ricoeur is quite critical of Küng's radical distinction between universal formal norms and particular moral traditions, as well as his preference for the former over the latter. It is quite illustrative that he compares Küng's project with the attempt to create a universal language (Esperanto). However, the creation of a universal language has been proven unsuccessful because people are profoundly attached to their native languages, especially when it comes to expressing their deepest thoughts and emotions. In a similar vein, the project of global ethics that is only based on the principle of reciprocity fails to take into

---

[42] "Entretien Hans Küng – Paul Ricoeur [autour du "Manifeste pour une éthique planétaire" (Ed. Du Cerf) de Hans Küng]," in *Les religions, la violence et la paix. Pour une éthique planétaire*, accessed February 5, 2016, http://www.fondsricoeur.fr/uploads/medias/articles_pr/entretien-hans-kung-paul-ricoeur-v2.pdf. For an excellent analysis of this discussion, see Marianne Moyaert, *In Response to the Religious Other. Ricoeur and the Fragility of Interreligious Encounters* (Lanham-Boulder-New York-London: Lexington Books, 2014), 69–92.

[43] "Entretien Hans Küng – Paul Ricoeur"; see also Moyaert, *In Response to the Religious Other*, 76.

[44] Moyaert, *In Response of the Religious Other*, 78f.

account the passion that arises from people's deep attachments to their traditions. It is erroneous to think that we could transcend our ethical and cultural traditions; on the contrary, we are deeply embedded in them.[45] It is not so much the persistence of these traditions but rather their denial that has been the cause of so many socio-cultural oppositions and even conflicts in our times. Thus, the first challenge for a global ethic is not so much to find a minimal ethical consensus but to understand what separates people as members of particular historic-cultural communities that mold and orient their ethical aspirations and principles. The second challenge concerns the application of formal principles to the ethical complexities that confront people in their day-to-day lives. Hence, the real problem of a global ethic is to understand how particular moral traditions realize universal but also rather abstract ethical principles, like human dignity or reciprocity, to orientate concrete human behaviors.

Ricoeur's response to these challenges is that only based on a profound understanding of the – sometimes conflictual – plurality of moral traditions do common, and perhaps even universal, ethical concerns become manifest. This understanding does not primarily concern the traditions of others but should take the form of a profound self-reflection on why and how our particular tradition, religious or secular, separates us from other people. The crucial question in this respect is: how can I recognize from my conviction that there is something vital that is not said in my tradition but may be addressed in another one?[46] Such a self-reflection can lead people to conclude: yes, we can understand that other people can endorse the same moral principle (e.g., the principle of reciprocity) from a different point of view than ours, i.e., from their embeddedness in a different tradition. This means that a global ethic does not emerge by transcending particular traditions, as Küng suggests, but from these concrete traditions. Through this self-reflection, people can realize that the ideals of the good life have been handed down and entrusted to them from time immemorial. Precisely because people understand that they are not the "owners" of their own tradition and the values it comprises and that these values are also from "elsewhere," they can accept the idea that these values can be present in other traditions as well, and that no tradition can express them completely.[47] Instead of trying to found a global ethic based on an abstract moral principle, what has to be done is to make a round trip between the abstract expression of the simplest moral commandments and the extreme

---

[45] "Entretien Hans Küng – Paul Ricoeur." The European Values Study project has given an empirical confirmation of this view. Although researchers themselves had expected that particular traditions would fade as a consequence of the process of modernization, the results of their pan-European surveys showed the opposite: throughout Europe, the importance of substantial ethical and cultural traditions is rather increasing than decreasing. For a philosophical analysis of this phenomenon, see Peter Jonkers, "How to Respond to Conflicts over Value Pluralism?," *Journal of Nationalism, Memory, & Language Politics* 13, no. 2 (2020): 1–22.

[46] "Entretien Hans Küng – Paul Ricoeur."

[47] Ibid.

difficulty to live them in-depth in one's particular tradition.[48] This does not mean that we have to do away with moral universalism as such. The most appropriate reaction to our condition "after Babel" is to discover universality at the heart of particular traditions instead of abstracting them. Hence, one should not confound the striving for moral universality with a homogeneity of beliefs, and even less with eliminating the conflict of interpretations, since this is a direct consequence of our current condition of fragmentation.

On a more fundamental level, the above challenges can be analyzed as resulting from the fact that ethical life in a broad sense consists in the intertwining of three aspects: first, there are universal moral principles; second, these principles have to be applied to the complex and contingent conditions of human lives; and, third, these conditions are embedded in particular traditions of the good life, which are, in turn, related to universal moral principles.[49] This means that someone, who has a vast knowledge about universal moral principles but cannot apply them appropriately to complex situations in which people act, would not be seen as a person of high moral standing, but makes him- or herself guilty of a hubris of practical reason. The appropriateness of this application is determined by whether or not this person can take into account the particular traditions that serve as the ultimate frameworks or horizons of people's moral behavior, orienting them toward the good life. The same holds for someone who is sensitive to the concrete situations in which people are living, but fails to take into account the importance of moral principles as objective standards of the good life; such a person would yield to the illusions of the heart and not be considered as truly moral either.[50] Hence, true ethical life holds at bay three ruinous alternatives: 1) focusing only on the universality of moral principles because this leads to the illusion that these principles can be univocally applied to concrete situations; 2) consistently justifying individual moral behavior, disregarding the ultimate frameworks or horizons of moral meaning because this results in the arbitrariness of sentimentality; 3) refusing to critically assess particular traditions

---

[48] Ibid.

[49] Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 274. See also Paul Ricoeur, *Reflections on the Just* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 46; Moyaert, *In Response to the Religious Other*, 80.

[50] Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 241. In this context, it deserves to be noted that several authors deplore the fact that, since modernity, the tension between theoretical, detached knowledge and life-oriented, engaged love of wisdom has widened to a complete rift, which has occurred at the cost of the more holistic idea of knowledge. See Robert Nozick, "What is Wisdom and Why do Philosophers Love it so?," in Idem, *The Examined Life. Philosophical Meditations* (New York: Touchstone Press, 1989), 273; David Ford, *Christian Wisdom. Desiring God and Learning in Love* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 269–271; Brenda Almond, "Seeking Wisdom. Moral Wisdom or Ethical Expertise," in *Where Shall Wisdom Be Found? Wisdom in the Bible, the Church and the Contemporary World*, ed. Stephen C, Barton (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999), 202–205; Daniel Kaufman, "Knowledge, Wisdom, and the Philosopher," *Philosophy* 81, no. 1 (2006): 129–151.

from the perspective of universal moral principles because this paves the way for ethnocentrism and other forms of cultural exclusivism.

Inevitably, there will be conflicts between these three dimensions of ethical life, as they result from the conflicting nature of human existence itself. It is impossible and undesirable to extract our individual moral actions from their embeddedness in larger moral frameworks or to treat these frameworks as if they could be reduced to universal objects of detached moral reasoning. As human beings, we are always situated in such a way that we cannot bring our individual moral actions face-to-face with the ethical frameworks that orient us, and even less with a universal moral principle, be it reciprocity or something else. It is also undesirable to try to reduce the plurality of moral traditions as much as possible under the pretext that they would only be sources of conflicts. Rather, this plurality should be appreciated for manifesting the richness and the inexhaustible character of the good life. To give only one example: it is so enriching to have a discussion on non-violence with people from different traditions, for it is understood differently in Buddhism and the monotheistic religions. This highlights the irreducible plural understanding of the principle of non-violence.[51]

To find a solution for the conflicts that inevitably arise from the confrontation of these three aspects of moral life, it is helpful to introduce the idea of practical wisdom.[52] The need for practical wisdom arises when the universalism claimed by moral principles is confronted with the recognition of positive values belonging to the (particular) historical and communitarian contexts of the realization of these same rules.[53] According to Ricoeur, the characteristics of practical wisdom can be summarized as follows:

1) It always upholds the moral norm, although it may be applied differently according to the particulars of the situation; 2) it is the search for a just mean, less in the sense of a compromise than an attempt to find a common ground; 3) so as not to appear arbitrary, it should seek the advice of others, especially competent, wise, experienced people.[54] To realize this, the capacity to deliberate is essential for practical wisdom, especially because – to phrase it in Aristotelian terms – the objects of practical wisdom are, unlike those of theoretical wisdom, things that are not of necessity and, hence, are capable of being otherwise. Practical wisdom results in a 'moral judgment in situation'[55]

---

[51] "Entretien Hans Küng – Paul Ricoeur."

[52] For further development of the importance of practical wisdom in a situation of cultural and religious plurality, see Peter Jonkers, "Philosophy and Wisdom," *Algemeen Nederlands Tijdschrift voor Wijsbegeerte* 112, no. 3 (2020): 261–277.

[53] Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 274.

[54] David Kaplan, *Ricoeur's Critical Theory* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2003), 113.

[55] Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another,* 240.

Hence, practical wisdom does not aim at transcending ethical plurality by referring to formal, universal principles, but tries to discover the universality of a true moral judgment in particular situations. However, practical wisdom has to assume the following paradox:

> On the one hand, one must maintain the universal claim attached to a few values where the universal and the historical intersect, and on the other hand, one must submit this claim to discussion, not on a formal level, but on that of the convictions incorporated in concrete forms of life. Nothing can result from this discussion unless every party recognizes that other potential universals are contained in so-called exotic cultures. The path of eventual consensus can emerge only from mutual recognition on the level of acceptability, that is, by admitting a possible truth, admitting proposals of meaning that are at first sight foreign to us.[56]

This means that the universality that is reached as a result of practical wisdom is inevitably potential or inchoate. A moral judgment in situation remains fragile, hence always open to reconsideration; practical wisdom can never propose, let alone impose, one single answer as a response to people's quest for truthful life orientation. Moreover, because such a judgment in situation has to be made in a context of plurality, the conviction that seals this judgment benefits from the plural character of the underlying debate; a wise person is not necessarily one individual alone.[57]

In my view, the main reason that many traditional as well as contemporary views on practical wisdom are so unsatisfactory is that these views negate the paradox of practical wisdom. Most traditional forms of wisdom are rather theoretical, focusing on the universal principles of the good life, thereby rising above human passions and the complexities of existence. Wisdom thus seems to be something imposed on the world from above.[58] The impression is that wisdom is a simple univocal affair so it risks becoming severed from the concrete lives of people.[59] Contemporary manifestations of wisdom, in contrast, focus on the spatio-temporal settings of human lives, thereby failing to critically examine the hidden assumptions of these settings, in particular the need to relate them to universal moral principles. Such a kind of presumed wisdom risks to be nothing more than an ideological justification of the existing order.[60] Neither of these two views on practical wisdom can

---

[56] Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another,* 289.

[57] Ibid., 273.

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

[59] Wolfgang Welsch, "Weisheit in einer Welt der Pluralität," in *Philosophie und Weisheit: Kolloquien zur Gegenwartsphilosophie, Band 12,* ed. Willi Oelmüller (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1989), 227.

[60] Almond, "Seeking Wisdom. Moral Wisdom or Ethical Expertise," 199.

truly orient human lives. The popularity of these approaches, then and now, probably stems from the fact that they give us the illusion of being able to find a definitive solution, albeit in opposite ways, to the existential conflicts that haunt us, and thus create the erroneous impression that either one of these approaches can make human life easy. By so doing, they negate the very nature of practical wisdom, which consists in the fragile nature of every judgment in situation.

Conclusion

The central question of this paper is whether reciprocity can serve as the principle of a global ethic. Based on the preceding analyses, it is clear that the answer cannot be unreservedly positive. One shortcoming of such an ethic is that it fails to acknowledge that this principle, despite all its merits, can only regulate the symmetric relations between human beings, but not the asymmetric ones. Moreover, a global ethic negates the gap that exists between the universal but also abstract nature of the principle of reciprocity, the particularity of moral traditions, and the concrete complexity of individual moral actions. My answer to the central question of this paper is that such an ethic should, first of all, assume the paradox of practical wisdom. Reciprocity can be a universal principle of a global ethic if such an ethic does not abstract from or transcend particular moral traditions, but rather discovers this value as a common ground of these traditions. The principle of reciprocity can be universal only in an inchoative way since it has to be submitted to the challenge by the convictions incorporated in concrete forms of life. This challenge can be met only if each participant in this confrontation recognizes that other moral traditions may contain potentially universal dimensions of the principle of reciprocity that are not present in mine. Such a process will probably not result in a global consensus about the content of the principle of reciprocity but in shared judgments in situation, which highlight the enormous versatility of this principle in various moral traditions.

Bibliography

Almond, Brenda. "Seeking Wisdom. Moral Wisdom or Ethical Expertise." In *Where Shall Wisdom Be Found? Wisdom in the Bible, the Church, and the Contemporary World*, edited by Stephen C, Barton, 195–210. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999.

Casanova, José. "The Sacralization of the *Humanum:* A Theology for a Global Age." *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 13, no. 1 (1999): 21–40.

Dawkins, Richard. *The God Delusion.* London: Black Swan, 2007.

Declaration Toward a Global Ethic. http://www.parliamentofreligions.org/content/toward-global-ethic-initial-declaration.

"Entretien Hans Küng – Paul Ricoeur [autour du "Manifeste pour une éthique planétaire" (Ed. Du Cerf) de Hans Küng]." In *Les religions, la violence et*

la paix. Pour une éthique planétaire. http://www.fondsricoeur.fr/uploads/
medias/articles_pr/entretien-hans-kung-paul-ricoeur-v2.pdf.

Falk, Richard. "Hans Küng's Crusade: Framing a Global Ethic." *Interna-
tional Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 13, no. 1 (1999): 63–81.

Ford, David. *Christian Wisdom. Desiring God and Learning in Love.* Cam-
bridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Green, William Scott. "Parsing Reciprocity: Questions for the Golden
Rule" In *The Golden Rule. The Ethics of Reciprocity in World Religions,*
edited by Jacob Neusner and Bruce Chilton. London: Continuum, 2009.

Habermas, Jürgen. "Pre-political Foundations of the Democratic Constitu-
tional State." In Jürgen Habermas and Joseph Ratzinger, *The Dialectics
of Secularization. On Reason and Religion.* San Francisco, CA: Ignatius
Press, 2006.

Hick, John. "Is There a Global Ethic? A Talk Given to the Center for the
Study of Global Ethics, University of Birmingham UK, in February 2007."
http://www.johnhick.org.uk/ethic.pdf.

Jonkers, Peter. "Crying in the Desert? Speaking About God in Our Time." In
*In Quest of Humanity in a Globalizing World. Dutch Contributions to the
Jubilee of Universities in Rome 2000*, edited by W. Derkse, J. Van der
Lans and S. Waanders, 117–137. Leende: Damon, 2000.

------. "How to Respond to Conflicts over Value Pluralism?" *Journal of Na-
tionalism, Memory & Language Politics* 13, no. 2 (2020): 1–22.

------. "Philosophy and Wisdom." *Algemeen Nederlands Tijdschrift voor
Wijsbegeerte* 112, no. 3 (2020): 261–277.

Kant, Immanuel. *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals.* Translated by
James W. Ellington. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1993.

Kaplan, David. *Ricoeur's Critical Theory.* Albany, NY: State University of
New York Press, 2003.

Kaufman, Daniel. "Knowledge, Wisdom, and the Philosopher." *Philosophy*
81, no. 1 (2006): 129–151.

Küng, Hans. *Global Responsibility: In Search of a New World Ethic.* New
York: Crossroad Publications, 1991.

------. "Global Politics and Global Ethics. Status Quo and Perspectives." *Se-
ton Hall Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations* (Win-
ter/Spring 2002): 8–20.

Levinas, Emmanuel. *Totality and Infinity. As Essay on Exteriority.* Translated
by Alphonso Lingis. The Hague-Boston-London: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971.

------. "An Eye for an Eye." In Idem, *Difficult Freedom. Essays on Judaism.*
Translated by Seán Hand. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University
Press, 1990.

------. *Humanism of the Other.* Translated by Nidra Poller, introduced by
Richard A. Cohen. Urbana-Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2003.

Moyaert, Marianne. *In Response to the Religious Other. Ricoeur and the Fra-
gility of Interreligious Encounters.* Lanham-Boulder-New York-London:
Lexington Books, 2014.

Neusner, Jacob and Bruce Chilton, eds. *The Golden Rule. The Ethics of Reciprocity in World Religions.* London: Continuum, 2009.

Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Nachgelassene Fragmente 1887-1889.* In Idem, *Kritische Studienausgabe, Band 13*, edited by Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1999.

------. *Zur Genealogie der Moral.* In Idem, *Kritische Studienausgabe, Band 5*, edited by Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1999.

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

Rawls, John. *Political Liberalism. Expanded Edition.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2005.

Ricoeur, Paul. "The Golden Rule. Exegetical and Theological Perspectives." *New Testament Studies* 36 (1990).

------. *Oneself as Another.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1992.

------. "Entre philosophie et théologie I: la *Règle d'Or* en question." In Idem, *Lectures 3. Aux frontières de la philosophie.* Paris: Seuil, 1999.

------. *Reflections on the Just.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

Ritter, H. H. "Gegenseitigkeit." In *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie, Band 3*, edited by J. Ritter a.o. 119–129. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1974.

Song, Robert. "Wisdom as the End of Morality." In *Where Shall Wisdom Be Found? Wisdom in the Bible, the Church, and the Contemporary World*, edited by Stephen C Barton, 295–306. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999.

Taylor, Charles. *Sources of the Self. The Making of the Modern Identity.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

Vroom, Henk. *Walking in a Widening World. Understanding Religious Diversity.* Amsterdam: VU University Press, 2013.

Welsch, Wolfgang. "Weisheit in einer Welt der Pluralität." In *Philosophie und Weisheit: Kolloquien zur Gegenwartsphilosophie, Band 12,* edited by Willi Oelmüller, 215–249. Paderborn: Schöningh, 1989.

Yu Zhiping. "Philosophical reflection on the Universal Ethics: In the case of Confucianism 'Golden Rule'." In *Diversity in Unity: Harmony in a Global Age,* edited by Hu Xirong and Yu Xuanmeng, 33–49. Washington, DC: Council for Research in Philosophy, 2015.

19

Vedic Ideals of Reciprocity for
the Globalized World

ZAIRU NISHA

Introduction

The second half of the 20th century has seen unprecedented changes in all spheres of human life all over the globe. The political success of national liberation movements against colonialism and imperialism, the spread and collapse of so-called socialist/communist political economies, the migration of a substantial number of people from Asia and Africa to Europe and North America, the emergence and expansion of trans-national corporations, the global movement of finance capital, the rapid increase in the pace of production and transportation of goods, the spread of consumerist culture, the easy access to electronic media and computers with internet facilities, all have changed the daily life of a vast segment of people in the world. These transformations can be seen in the increasing power of the western industrial-military complex, the international political economy and geopolitics, the depletion of natural resources, threats of man-made natural disasters, and global warming. We live in a pluralistic world in which people from different communities, with their own varied religious and cultural practices, are living in common or contiguous geographical spaces. Despite that people from different parts of the world live together, either by choice or by force of circumstances, our world today is a more dangerous place than ever before as it is full of violent conflicts, tensions, terrors, and wars. Social media in cyberspace has provided an unforeseen opportunity for people to instantly communicate with each other, and to form their groups and communities virtually across the globe. There are virtual communities living in their imagined or imaginary worlds, often pursuing conflicting visions, promoting aggressions against real or imagined opponents. Our world, in this era of globalization, is a pluralistic but not harmonious world. Our world is not at peace with itself. No wonder, in this world, even individuals are not at peace with themselves as they have to live intensely uncertain lives full of insecurity and apprehensions. Therefore, it is urgent and necessary to identify the sources of human misery both at the individual and at the collective levels.

Accordingly, this paper elucidates the various dimensions of human finitude and imperfection to address our ignorance about the nature of the world and ourselves. Our ignorance is the primary cause of problems the world is facing today. This paper explores and employs Vedic ideals of reciprocity such as the world as one family, unity in diversity, *Purusarthas*, and *Rit* order to present suggestions for the achievement of a "good" life and har-

monious and peaceful relations among fellow human beings. The Vedic literature clearly underlines that human beings are finite in their cognitive capacities and therefore not able to comprehend fully cosmic mysteries. The violation of such limitations has had critical consequences. Vedic ideals show the way to resolve rapidly increasing problems faced at the global level. By following the Vedic *Dharma*, i.e., doing rightful actions and duties, it may become possible to save humanity and the world from impending disasters.

Implications of Human Finitude for Global Perspectives

Human beings are finite beings. Being human, we have to live within our existential, cognitive, and volitional limits. We cannot overcome our mortality, lack of omniscience and omnipotence, and consequential imperfections in conducting our affairs. The post-modern mind has slowly come to notice that many of the grave threats to human survival on the planet earth are unforeseen and unintended consequences of practices adopted in the use of modern science and technology for making profits in the name of human welfare. Often unwittingly but sometimes deliberately guided by instrumentalist capitalist rationality, we tend to forget our human limits while attempting to exploit nature and treat it merely as a resource for increasing our wealth, luxuries, and comforts. We delude ourselves by assuming that we are potentially, if not yet actually, capable of becoming omniscient and omnipotent in our relation to nature. Our arrogance has been hit back by none else but our ignorance of the world and ourselves.

Pre-modern traditional communities were aware of the limits of being human. In the Indian context, this wisdom was first articulated in the various hymns of *Rig Veda*. The Vedic seers were perspicuously clear that human beings and even the creator of the universe, if there is one, may not be able to comprehend the mysteries of the cosmos. It is articulated in *Nasadiya Sukta*[1] of *Rig Veda* that issues about creation and creator are unknown and unknowable because maybe the creator herself, if there is one, does not know the answers to such questions.

ko addhā veda ka iha pra vocat kuta ājātā kuta iyaṁ visṛṣṭ iḥ |
arvāg devā asya visarjanēnāthā ko veda yata ābab || (10:129)[2]

This means that "who knows, and who can say whence it all came, and how creation happened? The gods themselves are later than creation, so who knows truly whence it has arisen?" This verse of *Rig Veda* provides an explicit clue to human finitude and limitations.

Contrary to this attitude of humility, the positivist method and philosophy of modern science has a misplaced over-confidence that a day will come

---

[1] *Nasadiya Sukta* is also known as the hymn of creation and the origin of the universe.
[2] Raimundo Panikkar, *The Vedic Experience: Mantramanjari* (Delhi: Motilal Banaridass, 1994³), 10ᵗʰ book (Mandal), verse 129ᵗʰ.

when it would be possible for scientists to answer all the possible questions and for technologists to solve all the practical problems faced by humanity in the world. However, such arrogant attempts to transgress human finitude have resulted in the deleterious consequences that the world is facing today in terms of natural and manmade calamities. Now it is well known that the colonial policies practiced by the Europeans during the last five centuries have resulted in the underdevelopment and impoverishment of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The colonial policies could be pursued without any hesitation as the Europeans of the colonial era did not regard the non-Europeans as their equals. The people of Asia, Africa, and the Americas, to use Rudyard Kipling's phrase, were "white mans' burden," to be civilized from their barbarian condition. Modern capitalist culture, which originated in Europe, places a greater emphasis on maximizing production and consumption. The indicators of development in/of society are calculated in terms of GDP, per capita income, and per capita consumption. In Vedic terms, the modern capitalist society sees its advancement exclusively in terms of *Artha* (Pursuit of Wealth) and *Kama* (Pursuit of Pleasure), unbridled and unregulated. Such unchecked pursuits can be possible in a society only when it is guided by an extremely individual-centric perspective instead of a libertarian communitarian perspective. The modern conception of the individual is that of an atomistic, autonomous, and solitary individual. Such conceptions are, by implication, highly egocentric and tend to promote selfishness and discourage an altruistic approach toward fellow human beings, particularly those living in or coming from other countries.

Also, there is an increasing fragmentation and alienation of social life due to growing pressures of a harsh, impersonal work culture that always demands optimal and better results in terms of greater efficiency and lower cost of production. Consequently, there is a growing disenchantment with the modernist project. A lack of a sense of fulfilment of ambitions and desires has induced among many people a sense of nostalgia for their traditional communitarian ways of life. Today many leading economists, who had eulogized globalization a few years ago, are its severest critics. They have started arguing that the economic indicators of development are not necessarily indicators of the quality of the "good" life in a society. In this scenario, we need to look for alternative views of human life to go either beyond or resolve the economic, social, political, cultural, and moral dilemmas and conflicts that we face today at the global level.

Vedic Ideals for a "Good" Life and a Harmonious World

The Vedic seers had propounded the ideals for a "good" life by viewing the whole "World as one's own extended family," which is mentioned in *Mahopnishad* as "*Vasudhaiva Kutumbhakam*" (6.71-73). It consists of several

words: "vasudhā," the earth; "ēva," indeed is; and "kutumbakam," family,[3] and is further elaborated in *Mahopnishad* as:

> *Ayam bandhrayam neti gananaa laghuchetasaam |*
> *Udaracharitaanaam tu Vasudhaiva Kutumbhakam ||*

This means "one is a relative, the other stranger says the small-minded. The entire world is a family, live the magnanimous. Be detached, be magnanimous, lift your mind, enjoy the fruit of Brahmanic freedom" (6. 71-75).[4] Mahatama Gandhi also supported the notion of the world as one family in different words:

> We are in a new age, an age of emerging world society – one society, that is what is beckoning to us on the horizon. Prophets and seers have spoken to us of one family on earth. We are children of the same parents and therefore, we belong to one family.[5]

These lines show that the Vedic seers did not confine their vision to a particular locality or any specific community or individual. They had the vision of treating entire humanity and the whole world as a family. In a family, the members see their well-being in the well-being of the entire family. A careful reading of this Vedic hymn makes it abundantly clear that the Vedic ideal of reciprocity encompasses not only the present but also the future generations, not only human but all forms of life, not only the animate world but also inanimate nature as well. This insight is reiterated in various Vedic prayers in which natural forces such as water, fire, wind, space, earth, moon, planets, sun, stars, etc., are invoked to bless humanity, and human beings are advised to live in harmony and peace with these natural and supernatural forces. The Vedic message is that human pursuits of wealth and pleasure must be regulated by *Dharma,* principles of righteous actions and duties, to live in harmony with nature and in peace with fellow human beings.

The classical Indian doctrine of four *Purushartha,* i.e., goals of human life and values pursued consciously by individuals and communities, includes *Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha*, which does not neglect or ignore the significance of the pursuit of wealth (*Artha*) and pleasure (*Kama*), as these two are among the four goals of human life. In contrast to the unbridled pursuit of these goals in the modern consumerist capitalist culture, these two goals do not exhaust the sphere of human activities in the classical *Vedic Purusharthas.* The Vedic seers cautioned that an exclusive pursuit of these two important goals of human life could be a major source of disappoint-

---

[3] A. G. Krishna Warrier, *Maha Upanishad* (Madras: Theosophical Society, 1953), accessed July, 20, 2016, www.advaiat.it

[4] Ibid.

[5] *Understanding India's Relevance of Hinduism*, eds. Subhash C. Kashyap and Abhaya Kashyap (New Delhi: Vitasta Publication, 2007), 21.

ments, frustrations, conflicts, and violence among individuals and communities. One's wants and desires can generate conflicts with others and their wants and desires. To avoid such conflicts, there has to be some method or way of resolution, such as *Dharma,* which is postulated as a primary pursuit, because it regulates the pursuit of *Artha* and *Kama*. *Artha* and *Kama* are self-oriented and other-oriented pursuits for human individuals and communities, whereas *Dharma* is a normative pursuit for regulating the pursuit of *Artha* and *Kama* to avoid and resolve possible conflicts that may arise in these pursuits. *Dharma* is the set of principles of conflict resolution to maintain peace and harmony. It is said that, initially, there were only three *Purusharthas,* i.e., *Dharma, Artha,* and *Kama*, which was called *Trivarga*. The fourth *Purushartha*, i.e., *Moksa* was added later on.

It is worth asking why *Trivarga* was considered insufficient and incomplete as a result of which the need to add the fourth *purushartha* was recognized. Let us say I have pursued and achieved my desires for wealth and pleasure to my complete satisfaction and also in accordance with the normative regulations stipulated by moral principles (*Dharma*). Will this make me completely satisfied and at peace with myself? A careful reflection on this question will make it clear that the answer will be negative. The reason is that I may have many curiosities about myself and the world, not about the production of wealth and pursuit of pleasure, which may remain unsatisfied and a source of my discomfort with myself and about myself. The Vedic seers had recognized the vital significance of the questions, such as "How do I know myself?" "How do I know the world?," for understanding the purpose and meaning of human life. In the *Ishavasya Upnisada,* Verse 7, it points out that "He who sees unity in all diversities, he who knows the self as the universal soul is beyond all illusions and sufferings, beyond all losses and gains." For the Vedic seers, the gateway to self-knowledge is also the gateway to the knowledge of the world. They proclaimed that "Knowledge of the Self gives the knowledge of everything!" Perhaps the addition of *Moksa* as the fourth *Purushartha* serves to meet this significant human need. As long as I do not know or understand myself, I cannot lead a meaningful life. Self-knowledge is a prerequisite for the liberation of the Self from ignorance about itself. It is for this reason that *Moksa* is considered the highest *Purushartha.*

In contrast to this view of the hierarchical order of the *Purusharthas*, many interpreters of classical Indian philosophy are of the view that the four *Purusharthas* cease to be *Purushartha* if they are taken not as a constellation but in separation from one another. This is illustrated by pointing out that the pursuit of *Kama* alone is lust, the pursuit of *Artha* alone is greed, the pursuit of *Dharma* alone is mere ritualism, and the pursuit of *Moksa* alone is escapism. According to this view, these four become *purushartha* only when they are pursued jointly and coherently not in isolation. The pursuit of *Artha* and *Kama*, along with *Dharma* and *Moksa*, is a way of living a harmonious life without conflicting with fellow human beings or damaging nature. But this path is not easy and simple as the conflict among *Sanatana Dharma* (universal eternal principles)*, Yug Dharma (*principles for an age/era)*, Varnashama*

*Dharma (*principles for various classes and stages of life), *Svad-harma* (principles for the Self), and *Aapada Dharma* (principles for crises) is a constant possibility. It is for this reason that the ethics of *Purushartha* requires reviews and reinterpretations to understand its relevance to the contemporary pluralist world. We also need to consider whether the *Chaturvarga* (i.e., Brahmin, Kshtiaya, Vaishya except For Shudra) of the classical Indian theory of *Purushartha* is adequate to meet the demands of contemporary social life or whether we need to think of some new *Purusharthas* for the globalizing world.

The classical Indian theory of *Purushartha* has a distinctive feature. It encourages respect for differences and diversity in opinions and perspectives. This is evident from the above-mentioned typology of various kinds of *Dharmas*. Instead of seeing moral relativism or moral skepticism in such a typology, as some of the critics of Indian ethics have alleged, it would be better to see respect for the plurality of perspectives in this framework. This framework can be drawn from another crucial Vedic insight "*Ekam Sat Vipra Bahudha Vadanti*," which means that Truth is one but wise men say it differently. Perhaps this insight is grounded in an acknowledgment of the cognitive limits of our being human. We attempt to comprehend the Truth, but our comprehension is always incomplete and partial, hence the diversity or plurality of views. In a pluralist world, we have to learn to appreciate that the diversity of ways of life, languages, practices, traditions, foods and garments, technologies, and arts is evidence of the richness of human creativity manifested in response to the challenges presented by the diversity of nature. We have to learn to preserve this rich human heritage by protecting and promoting it.

The greatest threat to this heritage comes from the universalization of the modern consumerist lifestyle and technology, which are transferred from the so-called developed countries to the allegedly "developing" countries. The prevailing paradigm of development needs to be questioned from the perspective of *Purushartha* to develop an authentic ecological and humanist ethics to guide our lives. We shall learn to treat our planet earth with respect only when we stop seeing it merely as a resource to be used to increase our wealth and to serve our quest for instant pleasures. We need to come out of the virtual world and return to the real world, a moral universe guided by cosmic moral principles, called *Rit* by the Vedic seers. The basic difference between the classical Indian Vedic philosophy and the modern capitalist philosophy is that instrumental rationality guides modern life, whereas the Vedic seers laid stress on intuitive moral choices. The intuitive moral choices become possible through a rigorous practice of learning to see the structures of interconnections in the various elements of what we call our cosmos. We have to learn to relate with our fellow human beings and our social and natural world from a holistic perspective instead of dealing with our problems merely in bits and pieces. For this paradigm shift, the Vedic vision of reciprocity can be a useful guide for the contemporary pluralist global world.

Conclusion: Practicing Vedic Ethics of Reciprocity

In the present scenario, humanity is confronted with two basic questions concerning the "good" or quality of life. One is related to our collective existence and the other to our personal life as individuals in our contemporary real life-world. The first question presents the social dimension of life. How can it become possible to live our local and pluralistic life in accordance with the Vedic expression of the world as an extended family, i.e., *Vasudhaiva Kutumbhakam?* The answer is already given by the Vedic seers; that is, it can only be possible when we search, understand, and practice the moral ways of living together harmoniously with our social, cultural, economic, and religious plurality on the planet earth. The other question is associated with the personal aspects and goals of individual human beings, i.e., how can an individual search the meaning and purpose of her life in today's environment, which is full of ambiguities and tensions of complexities and consequential personal stress? We need to give proper and equal consideration to problems that arise from a lack of attention to spiritual, intellectual, and emotional aspects of the consumerist lifestyle. To overcome such wretched situations, one has to understand the Vedic messages of unity in diversity, the world as an extended family, profound truths of the moral cosmos, eternal human values, ideals, and duties and responsibilities toward fellow human beings and ourselves in terms of *Purusharthas*. A true human consciousness accepts all changes and challenges to its very existence sagaciously, rationally, and compassionately. We must always be ready to take responsibility for our actions by becoming aware of our moral duties toward fellow human beings.

In the present age of science, technology, and capitalist consumerism, when the spirituality and morality of Vedic literature are considered religious dogmas, superstitions, and fetishism, we need to understand the true sense of the spiritual reasons behind its fundamental ideals. The truth indicates the journey from 'I' to 'We,' the extension of man toward perfection and fulfilment as self in relation to others. This highest self-realization of ego, the 'I' to the 'We,' can enable us to open our individual space for the use of collective welfare. Only in such a holistic environment shall human beings learn to exercise their freedom and make their choices fearlessly and righteously. In this way, despite our differences, we will be able to live together harmoniously, peacefully, and cooperatively within this pluralistic global world. In this context, it is important to mention Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's words in his interview with Norman Cousins, in March 1951, "We are in search of our soul. We are groping and trying for some kind of adjustment – Integration if you like – of our national life, our international as well as individual lives."[6]

---

[6] Ibid., 21.

Bibliography

Huntington, Samuel P. *The Clash of Civilisations and Making of the World Order.* New Delhi: Viking, 1996.

Panikkar, Raimundo. *The Vedic Experience: Mantramanjari*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Pub. Ltd., 1977, 1994.

Rig Veda. In Raimundo Panikkar, *The Vedic Experience: Mantramanjari*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1977.

Understanding India Relevance of Hinduism, edited by Subhash C. Kashyap and Abhaya Kashyap. New Delhi: Vitasta, 2007.

Warrier, A. G. Krishna. *Maha Upanishad*. Madras: Theosophical Society, 1953. www.advaiat.it.

A Hermeneutic Dialogue for Sustainable Development

Irina BOLDONOVA

Introduction

Dividing cultures between Western and Eastern ones implies not only the conception of their geographical locations but also of their specific perceptions and pictures of the world and their views on comprehending reality. Both the East and the West have their own scientific, religious, artistic, and spiritual values.

In the Eastern mentality, there is no separation between the universe and the world of nature and human society; everything is interconnected. These relationships are sacred and much deeper than they may seem at first glance. Ontological characteristics are felt on the existential level. Eastern logic is different from Western thought. It does not use rationalistic solutions to problems but rather turns toward contemplation, serenity, and inner desire for harmony with the outside world. In the context of partnership and dialogic relations, Russia occupies a certain place. Russia has a huge space with a small population and less developed transportation and information communications, especially in the regions of Siberia, the Far North, and the Far East. The country has long been a multi-ethnic and multi-religious state. Occupying a large central part of the Eurasian continent, contemporary post-reformed Russia, as in the past, is under strong cultural influence from both the East and the West, first and foremost the neighboring cross-border cultures.

The concept of dialogue stands and is used as the most acceptable form of civilized co-existence among cultures, nations, and smaller sub-cultural communities. Historically, the appeal to dialogue is always the testimony of a strategic paradigm shift. Dialogue as the symbol of productive interactions of independent notions makes up a diverse semantic space and a common culture. Like a real conversation of contemporary cultural models, a dialogue of different cultures is more and more becoming the reality of the twenty-first century, where people of different cultures can solve problems interactively and by consensus. The hermeneutic approach with the priorities of humanistic thinking suggests methods of universal understanding, the idea of which is not to suppress the culture of minorities but to give them a chance to develop ways of dialogue and cooperation.

The globalization process generates a large number of problems, such as ecological crisis, over-consumption, and others. The 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development Rio + 20 confirmed the commitment of leaders of states and governments and global civil society to all the principles of sustainable development and the declarations adopted in Rio de

Janeiro (1992) and Johannesburg (2002). In connection with the recommendations of Rio + 20, sustainable development on the national and regional levels should be a strategic goal of state policy.

To accomplish the transition of humankind to a model of sustainable development, it is necessary to consolidate political, intellectual, and individual efforts for the future of humanity. Priority should be given to the social and human sciences, the arts, and religious reflections. Creative people need to elaborate on new forms of understanding the world. Thus, the spiritual and moral foundation of human existence, the rethinking of tradition, and the development of new values must be the vector of perspective strategies.

Methodology of Intercultural Dialogue and Hermeneutics

It is generally assumed that hermeneutics has been a respected philosophical paradigm for intellectual reflection since the beginning of the twentieth century. Hermeneutics, as a well-known methodology of the humanities and social sciences, gives a new theoretical level of analysis and new opportunities to comprehend cultural phenomena. Understanding as a basic requirement of being has always been the leading existential characteristic. Contemporary hermeneutics interprets the problem of the intentionality of transcendental consciousness, which was developed by theorists of hermeneutics. Hans-Georg Gadamer's conception has been applied in the human sciences and has originated a lot of research in intercultural communication.[1]

Gadamer's hermeneutics describes a system of categories, which was generally developed by American scholars in communication studies. J. Stewart, S. Deetz, J. Anderson, etc., reflected and summarized the hermeneutic tendency of communication research development in the '70s and '80s. Hermeneutic ideas in communication studies were popular in the '70s, and in the '80s non-empirical inquiry became more influential and effective. Scholars in communication studies recognize the importance of humanistic approaches in contrast with empirical, cognitive ones.

Self, experience, values, and human relationships are of primary concern to phenomenologists who see meaning and interpretation as a unitary concept. Phenomenology thus concerns itself with understanding rather than with the mere application of methodology. At the same time, phenomenology, by its very approach, deals not merely with the discovery of some abstract truth but also with the improvement of the human condition, founded on conscious experience. Behavior and meaning thus become conjoined. The ultimate aim of phenomenological studies becomes a concern for the ontological as well as the epistemological bases of human understanding.

The hermeneutics of intercultural communication as a branch of communication studies explains not only the ability to interact within an intercultural context, but also situations where commonality is reached between speakers and hearers using verbal, non-verbal, and extra-linguistic categories

---

[1] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New-York: Continuum, 1999).

and also by coordination, mutual exchange of views, and the will to know cultural backgrounds. Intercultural communication is distinguished from cross-cultural communication by the possibility of learning from the other culture, growing together, building relationships, and then examining their own culture deeply and changing themselves. The hermeneutics of intercultural interpretation goes deeper and asks further questions about the conditions and nature of meaning in these contexts so that a new sense of meaning appears in qualitative perspectives.

The first scientific exploration of intercultural communication began in the '50s of the previous century and did not become more widespread until the late 70s. E. Hall was the most prominent scholar in this area.[2] As C. Geertz recognized, observation and description, in and of themselves, are insufficient to describe culture; culture cannot be reduced to specific behavior patterns. He introduced interpretative methods in the explanation of anthropology and ethnography, the use of observation, description, and interpretation in the search for meaning, which originated a trend in intercultural communication. Rooted in the phenomenological-hermeneutic tradition and applying Geertz's framework of the interpretation of culture, G. Philipsen developed an interpretive theory of cultural communication. This theory offers a foundational framework for ethnographic studies that are aimed at identifying, describing, and illuminating the essential cultural features of communication that differentiate one community from another.[3]

Thus, intercultural communication was studied in detail to formulate its theoretical foundation, which appeared only in the ''90s. Nowadays, various methodological approaches are flourishing because of great practical demand. In the humanities, we can observe investigations of intercultural communication concerning issues in pragmatics, interpersonal interactions, problems of comprehension, adequacy in intercultural settings, etc. In general, the hermeneutic methodology of communication studies is considered one of the most powerful and prominent theoretical foundations. It has become more influential and heuristically effective, especially for those who want to study the possibilities of understanding.

Eurasian Frontier: Russia–China–Mongolia

The geographical and political development of Eurasian nations since the "Hunnu period" historically has had the specific character of the geo-strategic Russia-Mongolia-China triangle for many centuries. The Eurasian frontier is an international unity with an open and dynamic structure of sociocultural diversity of the three neighboring border cultures. It is engaged in a transboundary interaction, functioning as a whole and representing an integrated co-development.

---

[2] Edward T. Hall, *The Silent Language* (New York: Doubleday, 1959).
[3] Stephen W. Littlejohn, *Theories of Human Communication* (Wadsworth, OH: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1999).

The Russian-Chinese border, although still in the same place, however, has significantly changed compared with the Soviet times. Currently, the Russian-Chinese border consists of two parts. One is the extended area comprising the province of Heilongjiang and the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region of China, which borders several regions of the Russian Federation, the Primorsky region, the Khabarovsky region, the Jewish Autonomous Region, and the Amur and Zabaykalsky regions. The other on the West is the border between the Republic of Altai and the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. The Western part of the Russian-Chinese border lies in a small transboundary territory where the rocky mountains make it difficult to access part of the border. The Eastern part goes along the mountain ridges of Trans-Baikal, mostly the rivers. The greater part of the Russian-Chinese border has rivers, which is considered to be either an advantage or a disadvantage.

The Far East, the Republic of Buryatia and the Zabaykalsky region, which is part of the Southeastern Siberia, border the Northeastern provinces of China. The entire length of this border along its surrounding territories is developing and is called a Chinese (Asian) model of transboundary regionalism.[4] The problem of regionalization, including transboundary territories, in recent decades, has become one of the central problems of modernity due to the collapse of the dichotomous world-order and the regional identity as a self-sufficient cultural and historical formation. Transboundary areas having borders with nation-states belong to different cultures and civilizations and hence feel strongly influenced by borders in every way. It is worth studying the so-called Eurasian frontier's being, its modern trends, promising directions, and priorities for the development of Russian-Mongolian and Russian-Chinese relations by taking into account the shift of the Russian Federation's foreign policy toward the East. Active processes of cooperation with Eurasian transboundary neighbors indicate a current trend toward regionalization – one of the most important factors in the process of globalization.

There are well-known approaches to environmental problems in protecting vulnerable ecosystems. As a result of the separate efforts of Russia, China, and Mongolia, the environmental reserves in the Amur River basin cover more than 12% of its total area. One protected area is recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Eleven of them have been recognized as UNESCO biosphere reserves, and fifteen areas have been included in the list of wetlands of international importance. Transboundary protected areas, such as the Russian-Chinese-Mongolian Dauria International Protected Area and the Russian-Chinese Lake Khanka International Nature Reserve, have been successfully operated based on intergovernmental agreements. It is noted that, currently, agreements are being negotiated, which will create more such transboundary protected areas, including the "Headwaters of Amur" Russian-

---

[4] Tatiana N. Kuchinskaya, "Transboundary Region as a Form of Social and Cultural Space: In Searching of the Cognitive Model of Research," *Contemporary Issues of Science and Education* 6 (2011): 24–29.

Mongolian reserve and the "Land of the Leopard" Russian-Chinese reserve, both of which are close to completion.

A brilliant example of recent talks is the 2015 BRICS summit in Ufa, where the BRICS leaders of Russia, China, and Mongolia held trilateral talks. One of the important questions there was to construct a transit transmission transport line from Russia to China through the territory of Mongolia, based on the Ulan Bator Railway. The participants also discussed border and regional cooperation regularly, such as at conferences, fairs, and forums of trade and economic cooperation between Mongolia, China, and Russia in Erlyan (Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region of China).

The corridor among these countries spans the vast deserted land with very few settlements and is reminiscent of the transboundary connection effected by the Great Tea Road. Historically it is the trade caravan route from China via Ulaanbaatar (formerly Urga), Darkhan, Altan-Bulak (formerly Maymachen), to Kyakhta (formerly Troitskosavsk), Novoselenginsk, Gusinoozyorsk, and Ulan-Ude (in the past, Verkhneudinsk). The path passes through Kabansk to Slyudyanka and Irkutsk, from Irkutsk to the Lena River, and then to Alaska. In parallel, the land caravan goes along the Yangtze River to Shanghai, through Huangshi and Port Arthur to Tien-ching, Changchun, and Harbin, and finally from Hailar to Manchuria. In Verkhneudinsk (now Ulan-Ude), both routes are connected. Lake Baikal and the Selenga River have played a special role as waterways. The Great Tea Road's turnover was second only to the Great Silk Road. For the caravans along the Great Tea Road, border and cross-border settlements of Russia in Buryatia played an important role in the tea trade and the spread of tea culture, as well as cultural, ethnographic, and regional knowledge about neighboring peoples and their way of life.

Another fascinating example of cooperation from history is the famous Silk Road. Today the Silk Road and Belt project proposed by China is a tremendous demonstration of modern transboundary regionalization in a globalized world. The project symbolizes a dynamic change in Russian-Chinese relations and contributes to the geo-economic and geopolitical development of Eurasia. Russia's position toward the project is concerned, from the point of view of the Eastern Siberian and the Far Eastern regions' development, with the realization of this potential as transboundary territories. Russia also supports active cooperation by acting as the transmitting land for trade flows from the Asia-Pacific region to Europe. In this context, the revival of the Silk Road is an economic justification for the reconstruction of the Trans-Siberian Railway and the Baikal-Amur Mainline. A globalizing world consists of a large number of different and sometimes alienated local communities, and each of those communities has its own values, ethics, cultural, and historical traditions. For a reasonable co-existence and realization of their potential, people must learn to talk to each other and be eager to understand the meaning of dialogue and cooperation.

The Baikal Region and Sustainable Development

Within the transboundary territory of the Eurasian frontier, a unique place is occupied by Lake Baikal and its watershed. The Baikal region includes three regions of the Russian Federation, Irkutsk, Buryatia, and Zabaykalsky, with a total population of 4.489 million people. The territory of "the Baikal region" is not a strictly geographical concept. It includes rich historical and cultural traditions of economic, political, and cultural cooperation around Lake Baikal in its center as a geopolitical entity. This entity has different aspects and envelops natural objects, ethnic groups, social and political institutions, and economic structures, which reflect a vivid picture of people's transboundary activities. Among the regions of the Russian Federation, the political, economic, and socio-cultural development is most closely related to the regions of Baikal Buryatia, Irkutsk, and Zabaykalsky. In the globalizing age, the Baikal region presents a true example of Eurasian integration and has great potential for expanding Russia's international policy in Asia. It presents a model territory for the future society of sustainable development.

The transboundary Baikal region, a Eurasian frontier territory, has a long history of interaction with neighboring regions and with the countries of East Asia. This region demonstrates the tendency to preserve the unique culture of Transbaikalia, to maintain readiness for a further study of the diversity and versatility of neighboring communities and their cultures, and to understand their roles and places in a conglomerate of cultures and civilizations on the Eurasian continent. The historical transboundary and cross-border ties testify that the rich experience of many generations has been accumulated in a constant and fruitful cooperation in trade, agriculture, mining, and tourism. Reciprocal links have a long history given that the Baikal region was traditionally a busy trading place.

Today, environmental protection measures in Siberia and transboundary environmental problems cannot be resolved merely within Russia but require bi- or multilateral attention. Some environmental problems in Eastern Russia can be attributed to transition difficulties associated with the integration of the economies of the Asia-Pacific Region. However, most of the environmental damage is due to the lack of a regional system to ensure consistent environmental (as well as social and economic) security in the border regions of the Far East and Eastern Siberia.

The Baikal region, as a part of a transboundary territory, has many environmental issues. The main parameters of the Federal Targeted Programme for the Development of the Far East and the Baikal Region for the next five years contain the questions of the Baikal watershed, forest management, green economics, ecotourism, etc. The Baikal watershed is located half in Russia and half in Mongolia. This Programme arose from a bilateral document concerning the environmental impact assessment, water pollution problems, mining operation, and the joint use of rich mineral and energy resources. The relationship around the Baikal watershed is regulated by the

Russian-Mongolian transboundary agreements and joint transboundary pro-jects.[5] The Chinese-Russian relations will depend largely on whether Russia overcomes its current stagnation and effectively uses the vast water and other resources of the Baikal region. From the side of China, there are expectations about technologies and other resources. The Baikal region could expand its ties with the resource needs of Asian economies, not only China but also South Korea and Japan, for the benefit of all.

The developing cooperation in the area of nature protection and the ef-fective use of the Baikal region's potential is one of the prospective trends in trilateral relations. Attention to issues related to security in the transboundary territories, cooperation in the field of environmental protection, and sustain-able development will contribute to the prosperity of the Eurasian frontier. Considering sustainability issues from the perspective of a transboundary ter-ritory shared by the three countries (China, Russia, and Mongolia), the main idea is to ensure access to natural resources, or more concretely the Baikal region's resources, of the neighboring country, Russia. Thus, transboundary environmental issues and joint measures around them are bound to arise.

Historical, cultural, and ethnic traditions of this area contain spiritual and moral resources for elaborating ethical standards for effective and envi-ronmentally oriented behavior and for comprehending the foundation of sus-tainable development. The Eurasian civilization's geophilosophy can be seen as a worldwide ideology, the scale of which can be compared to Leninism, but it exceeds the latter on the level of technological and environmental chal-lenges to sustainable development. The main leitmotif of the present research is that Russia can become the center of a globalizing Eurasian civilization in a union with Mongolia and China. Here the justification is the Baikal territory as the so-called "mestorazvitiye" (i.e., development of the place) of Eurasian ecological civilization.

The Baikal territory as "the frontier region" has the natural and moral energy to be a resource for the world's sustainable development. The Baikal territory is the region of sustainable development. The transition to regional sustainable development in the Baikal Natural Territory requires research on adaptive mechanisms of all cultures that have had a direct impact on the local society's mentality. The cultural paradigm of the Baikal territory is sustaina-ble development, which presupposes the basics of environmental ethics, in-cluding people's spiritual traditions.[6]

In China, sustainable development is being planned and discussed in the context of market socialism, the core idea of which is the policy of reform. One of the aims is to achieve harmony between humans and nature through the effective use of sound technology to build a harmonious socialist society.

---

[5] "Lake Baikal: Experience and Lessons Learned Brief," http://iwlearn.net/iw-pro-jects/1665/experience-notes-and-lessons-learned/lakebaikal_2005.pdf/view.

[6] V.V. Mantatov, *Kontseptual'naya revolutsyia: K voprosu o konferencii OON Rio+20 [Conceptual Revolution: To the Question of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development Rio+20]* (Ulan-Ude: East-Siberian State University of Technologies and Management Press, 2013).

The Chinese government provides substantial financial support to research initiatives that follow the priority set out in the National Plan for Science and Technology Development 2006–2020. Among its key aspects, there are scientific initiatives in biotechnologies, agricultural processing, environmental protection, significant industrial technologies, hi-tech segments, Chinese healthcare, energy, and natural resource exploration and social development.

The Sixth Plenary Session of the sixteenth China Communist Party Central Committee (October 2006) was dedicated entirely to the issue of building a harmonious socialist society. The Session listed environmental issues among the factors adversely affecting "social harmony," for the latter is associated with population growth, the deficit of natural resources, and the degradation of the environment. At the sixth All-China Conference on Environmental Protection held in the same year, Wen Jiabao, then the Prime Minister, declared the guiding principles of China's environmental policy: the principle of balance (equal attention to environmental protection and economic development, and organic connection between the two), the principle of simultaneity of environmental protection and economic development (instead of a model where environmental protection lags behind the development), and the principle of an integrated approach (the balanced use of legal, economic and administrative mechanisms instead of the domination of administrative approaches).[7] BRICS participants Russia, Mongolia, and China, taking into account environmental factors in the developmental strategies of their regions, such as transboundary territories, are initiating state programs and perspective plans.

Hermeneutic Intercultural Dialogue for
Ecological Civilization in Future

Hermeneutic intercultural dialogue can be realized in various contexts: from daily talks between individuals, friends, family members, or colleagues to relationships among countries, cultures, and civilizations. More scholars recognize the heuristic resources of hermeneutic categories in fruitful partnership, especially in transboundary encounters. Fred Dallmayr distinguishes three main types of intercultural dialogues: pragmatic-strategic communication, moral-universal discourse, and ethical-hermeneutical dialogue:

> In pragmatic–strategic communication, each partner seeks to advance his or her interests in negotiation with the interests of other parties (here I follow completely Habermas's account). To the extent one can describe such communication as 'dialogue', the latter takes the form mainly of mutual bargaining, sometimes involving

---

[7] "Speech by H. E. Wen Jiabao, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, at Stockholm+40--Partnership Forum for Sustainable Development," http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjdt_665385/zyjh_665391/t930953.shtml.

manipulation and even deception. This kind of communicative exchange is well known in international or inter-societal relations and constitutes the central focus of the so-called 'realist' and 'neorealist' schools of international politics. Prominent examples of such communication would be trade or commercial negotiations, negotiations about global warming and ecological standards, disarmament negotiations, settlements of border dispute, peace negotiations, and the like. Much of traditional diplomacy is carried out in this vein.[8]

We can state that traditional ways of economic relations between China and Russia were influenced by a conservative view of international activities. Sometimes polluting technologies and industrial operations were transferred to the transboundary territories of Russia. Taking into account concerns amongst Russian sustainability experts and scholars in environmental studies, China recognized a similar situation regarding pollution and nature protection issues, began to shift bilateral relations, and changed attitudes toward sustainable development and common responsibility for the future of the planet. Governmental initiatives include the prevention of soil erosion and water pollution, the restoration and protection of vegetation in grasslands, the improvement of the fertility of black soil, and forest protection and development. The priorities for Inner Mongolia can be underlined as the transformation of traditional modes of grazing, the promotion of indoor cattle feeding, and traditional agricultural activities. Therefore, the Russia-China cooperation in transboundary regions is rising to a new level.

According to Dallmayr, the second type of intercultural dialogue demonstrates a respect for the desire for a consensus on equal participation and negotiations:

> In moral-universal discourse, partners seek consensus on basic rules or norms of behavior binding on all partners, potentially on a global level. Here the legacies of modern natural law and Kantian moral philosophy retain their importance. Basic rules of (potentially) universal significance are the rules of modern international law; the international norms regarding warfare, war crimes, and crimes against humanity; the Geneva Conventions; the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; and others.[9]

Here such categories as hermeneutic circle and interpretation and dialectics of question-answer are realized. At the same time, a geographic, sociocultural, and economic area of the Baikal region (the area of the north-eastern

---

[8] Fred Dallmayr, "Modalities of intercultural dialogue," in *Cultural Diversity and Transversal Values: East–West Dialogue on Spiritual and Secular Dynamics* (UNESCO, 2006), 78.

[9] Ibid.

provinces of China and the north-western part of Mongolia, the territory of the Eurasian frontier) forms a single transboundary area as a whole, where the movement in the hermeneutic circle reflects centuries of relational history. We conclude that the problem of the relationship among the Eastern, Western, and Russian worlds is based on their own cultures in the communication and interaction process between civilizations.

Fundamentals of self-reflection in hermeneutics are incorporated in the analysis of historically affected consciousness in any thought process. The historicity of our subjective being is justified by the cultural and historical tradition, in which every individual is involved, and under the influence of his/her cultural background knowledge. For example, the coexistence of large and small nations in Eurasia needs a hermeneutical analysis of the Tengri (Heaven) traditional values, which were the most fundamental spiritual foundation of the Eurasian nomadic civilization of Mongolian superethnos. That is why hermeneutic historicism is becoming much more relevant in the effective partnership of the triangle. Then Dallmayr argues that the background experience and knowledge are the starting point in intercultural dialogue:

> In ethical-hermeneutical dialogue, partners seek to understand and appreciate each other's life stories and cultural backgrounds, including cultural and religious (or spiritual) traditions, storehouses of literary and artistic expressions, and existential agonies and aspirations. It is in this mode that cross-cultural learning most importantly takes place. It is also on this level that one encounters the salience of Aristotle's teaching about virtues and the Hegelian practice of *Sittlichkeit*. Ethics here is oriented toward the 'good life' – not in the sense of an abstract 'ought' but as the pursuit of an aspiration implicit in all life-forms, though able to take very different expressions in different cultures.[10]

In this sense, spiritual traditions are integrated with prejudices and fore-conception of completeness as part of pre-understanding. Interpretation of moral traditions in a new historical context is a factor in the creation of a Eurasian humanistic culture and its globalizing civilization. The new spiritual paradigm justifies the importance of cultural and historical traditions in a hermeneutic understanding and the involvement of each nation in the emerging new type of civilization.

Valuable resources for hermeneutical reflection can be found in the traditions of Chinese society. Humanity is connected with nature. A human being cannot imagine him- or herself without his/her ties to nature, part of which he/she has always been. Confucius created a set of rules, codes of ethics, by which society should live. The theory of Confucius was founded as a continuation of ancient Chinese tradition. The core of the tradition is "historicity," according to which history is seen as co-being, the accomplishment of a given

---

[10] Ibid. 79.

meaning of the present location and time. The tradition of Confucianism is developed in a new environment, encompassing the Chinese themselves and all those who are interested in Chinese culture. Communicators can find themselves in a common historical space. In the general context of cross-cultural interaction, they feel involved in the tradition of Confucian ethics and produce a new meaning. This approach contributes to understanding ourselves in the world:

> Since ethics on this level speaks to deeper human motivations, this is the dimension that is most likely to mold human conduct in the direction of mutual ethical recognition and peace. Hence, there is an urgent need in our time to emphasize and cultivate this kind of ethical pedagogy. On a limited scale, cross-cultural dialogue already is practiced today: examples would be inter-faith dialogues, the Parliament of the World's Religions, the World Public Forum, the World Social Forum, various centers for the 'dialogue among civilizations, exchange programs of scholars and students, and the like.[11]

The Sustainable Development Strategy is not contrary to the traditional moral values of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. L. Yangutov emphasizes that the moderately dynamic model inherent in the Chinese worldview can be dated back to the concepts of Yin and Yang in the most ancient times. These concepts influence the Chinese views of the world as a consistent unity. In Taoist philosophy, the main idea of the unity and integrity of the world was developed in Laozi's teachings. The idea of unity and harmony of being, which has a strong ethical resonance, leads to the principle, "do not harm others," and explains human relations to the world. Today we can recall the heuristic potential of the great teachings of Confucius and Laozi, but review and adapt their ethical rules of conduct in a globalized space.[12]

The rice-cultivating civilization of the Chinese presupposes a delicate attitude toward nature, trust and respect for nature's cycle, and an in-depth and holistic view of people's engagements with the places where they live. The traditional philosophical reflection placed the human being in the position of dialogue with nature and harmony in their relationship. The people of this civilization place a high value on all living creatures in the environment. They perceive interrelations with nature during their hard work in the fields as the very essence of life and the natural world order. This civilization educates people to show benevolence and compassion toward all living beings, unlike practically-oriented and rational civilizations.

---

[11] Ibid.

[12] L.E. Yangutov, "The Principles of Unity and Harmony in Philosophical Traditions Of China," in *Environmental Ethics and Education for Sustainable Development* (Ulan-Ude: ESSTU Press, 2006), 285–290.

The customs and traditions of the Chinese people are the base of their national identity. They are inherited from the tradition of a pre-built, perceiving consciousness, standards, and criteria, which forms a so-called "pre-understanding," a kind of platform of ready-made and fixed judgments and thoughts, psychological standards, and mental models, all of which are taken into account by hermeneutics in the process of interpretation of cultural phenomena. In transboundary relations, pre-understanding plays an important role in the implementation of joint projects and a broad range of cooperation.

On the other side of the Eurasian frontier, there were historically Mongolian tribes, including the Buryats. Their ancient traditions and rituals were deeply environmentally friendly because people could not imagine a different attitude to what constitutes the basis of their life and worldview. Nature gave the nomads and hunters food, clothing, shelter, tools, power. They received from it their vital energy, felt themselves under its protection, and so spiritualized it. Traveling from one location to another, the Buryat nomads learned to save the land and protect the environment from degradation. Rituals were performed to ask permission before hunting, give respect, and show admiration and gratitude to the local Gods of the mountains, rivers, and forests. The ways of coexisting were reflected in their beliefs so that they found themselves part of natural ecosystems and wilderness.

As we can see, people inhabiting the Eurasian transboundary territories have the same beliefs, moral values, and a similar attitude to the environment. For centuries, people's wisdom consisted of a holistic approach to nature. The most essential principles of Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, ethnic and ecological traditions, and religious and secular understandings of the environment comprise the hermeneutically comprehended and historically-effected consciousness, the foundation of effective intercultural dialogue.

China offers the world community its model of global governance based on traditional Confucian values, which aspire to consensus and social harmony, high motivation for training, hard work, diligence, and thrift. The concept of "harmony" is the essence of Chinese traditional culture. Self-examination and self-criticism of human civilization is an opportunity for the construction and functioning of a successful society. Today the appeal of "human-environment relationships" can be considered as a philosophical and ideological basis of advanced strategy. Cohabitation and collaboration among the three countries can produce the effect of a fore-conception of completeness as part of pre-understanding. Different cultures with their specific values and traditions are involved in the ethic-hermeneutical dialogue.

Conclusion

The Russian scholars in the humanities of the Baikal region contribute their knowledge of environmental ethics and comparative analysis of ethnic and ecological traditions of the Baikal region and Eurasian transboundary territory to the paradigm of sustainable development. One of the possible themes

of intercultural dialogue on the transboundary territory of the Eurasian frontier is the sustainable development of an ecological civilization, which can start with the revival of the Great Tea Road not only as a travel route but as a form of intercultural dialogue and exchange of cultures. The dialogue among Buryatia from the side of Russia, Mongolia, and Inner Mongolia of the northwestern parts of China will give a new impulse to the trilateral relations in the sphere of sustainable development.

As the Lake Baikal Natural Territory, being recognized as a World Heritage site, attracts the attention of the whole world community, the transboundary countries share the task of elaborating regulations and a common vision on watershed management, protection of the Lake Baikal, environmental education, and ecotourism.

In the specialized literature, the term "ecotourism" is defined as tourism in natural areas to get a deeper understanding of the local environment and culture without disturbing the natural integrity of ecosystems, but rather helping to make environmental protection a better source of livelihood for local people. Ecological tourism has become more popular for many people in Mongolia and China. These countries have already established thousands of nature reserves, which consist of many forests, original parks, and beloved sights and places of interest for domestic and foreign tourists. However, ecotourism in Russian-Mongolian-Chinese transboundary regions faces challenges in protecting the integrity of natural ecosystems, especially the delicate ecosystem of Lake Baikal and its watershed.

The horizon of anticipation in hermeneutics allows us to go beyond our false prejudices and subjective viewpoints so that not only can we change the relations of transboundary local communities but also look at the beauty of nature from different angles of visions, such as the ethnic and ecological traditions of people. The cultural traditions of indigenous people of the world can be valuable resources for an ecologically-minded attitude toward nature.

The Mongolian-Russian-Chinese transboundary cooperation, incorporating traditional ecological knowledge, has the hidden resources to develop further. Not only the authorities but also the environmental communities in the three countries have been discussing relevant issues around the Baikal region and other sites on the World Heritage list. Cooperation not only in economic growth but also in protecting nature will lead to common prosperity. Sustainable development in a dialogue is the next step in transboundary cooperation, the best and the most effective ways of which hermeneutics helps us understand.

Bibliography

Dallmayr, Fred. "Modalities of Intercultural Dialogue." In *Cultural Diversity and Transversal Values: East–West Dialogue on Spiritual and Secular Dynamics.* UNESCO, 2006.

Gadamer, Hans-Georg. *Truth and Method.* New-York: Continuum, 1999.

Hall, Edward T. *The Silent Language.* New York: Doubleday, 1959.

Kuchinskaya, Tatiana N. "Transboundary Region as a Form of Social and Cultural Space: In Searching of the Cognitive Model of Research." *Contemporary Issues of Science and Education* 6 (2011).

"Lake Baikal: Experience and Lessons Learned Brief." http://iwlearn.net/iw-projects/1665/experience-notes-and-lessons-learned/lakebaikal_2005pdf.

Littlejohn, Stephen W. *Theories of Human Communication.* Wadsworth, OH: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1999.

Mantatov, V. V. *Kontseptual'naya revolutsyia: K voprosu o konferencii OON Rio+20 [Conceptual Revolution: To the Question of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development Rio+20].* Ulan-Ude: East-Siberian State University of Technologies and Management Press, 2013.

"Speech by H. E. Wen Jiabao, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, at Stockholm+40-Partnership Forum for Sustainable Development." www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjdt_665385/zyjh_665391/t930953.shtml.

Yangutov, L. E. "The Principles of Unity and Harmony in Philosophical Traditions of China." In *Environmental Ethics and Education for Sustainable Development.* Ulan-Ude: ESSTU Press, 2006.

21
Sino-Nigeria Relations:
Exploring the Roles at Play

Olayiwola Victor OJO

Introduction

Reciprocity, termed a "fairness norm," is a powerful determinant of human behavior in terms of relations among individuals, groups, and countries. Different studies carried out by psychologists, economists, sociologists, ethnologists, and anthropologists emphasize the omnipresence of reciprocal behavior.[1] Undoubtedly, the world we live in is an interdependent one, premised on the fact that human beings cannot survive without relationships of mutual benefit. There is an interconnectedness between and among individuals in different cultures and countries in the world to form mutual dependence and benefit, interaction, bilateral trade, and strategic cooperation as "reciprocity." More importantly, the relationship between two countries is exceptionally important in a global society, as our world becomes smaller through communication technology, rapid air transportation, and a complex international economy. The value of a peaceful and cooperative relationship between nations is increasingly important for trade development and growth.[2]

In the twenty-first century and in the context of growing globalization, the interconnectivity between and among countries for symbiotic benefits has become quite important, as no country can boast about being self-sufficient. This engenders bilateral relations between and among nations encompassing economic, political, military, and cultural ties to strengthen economic and political well-being. From the foregoing, it is evident that the inter-dependence among nations has become an open-world schema on the platform of reciprocity. It has become a concept of international relations involving the breaking down of barriers and the opposing of closed or highly restrictive economic systems either in bilateral treaties or in multilateral agreements to seek mutual benefit between and among nations.[3]

---

[1] Armin Falk and Urs Fischbacher, "A Theory of Reciprocity," *Games and Economic Behavior* 54, no. 2 (2006): 293–315, http://linkinghub.elsevier.com/retrieve/pii/S0899825605000254.

[2] Belinda Bridget Brown, "Impact of China-Nigeria Relations in Nigeria From 1997-2009" (Jinan: Shandong University, 2012), https://doi.org/10.7666/d.Y2179689.

[3] Robert Freeman Smith, "Reciprocity," in *Encyclopedia of American Foreign Policy*, eds. Alexander DeCond, Richard Dean Burns, and Fredrik Logevall (New York: Gale, 2002), 329–44, http://1.droppdf.com/files/X3CPy/encyclopedia-of-american-foreign-policy.pdf.

Conceptual Issue

Reciprocity. In a loose sense, reciprocity connotes a situation or a relationship in which two people or groups agree to do something similar for each other, that is, to allow each other to have the same rights, mutual dependence, action, or influence. It depicts the mutual exchange of privileges*, specifically* a recognition by one or two countries or institutions of the validity of licenses or privileges granted by the other.[4] As documented by Smith, reciprocity entails diplomatic negotiations. It is a process of exchange between nations as a negotiating tool whereby nations bargain with each other for equivalent treatment. Moreover, it can either be restrictive or open. The restrictive form usually is embodied in a bilateral agreement between two countries and can involve privileges (or different types of treatment) that are denied to other parties, or that must be specifically bargained for by third parties.[5] Open reciprocity is closely connected to a liberal trading system, for it applies to agreements that tend generally to abolish or modify discriminatory practices rather than to provide for the privileged treatment of certain items.[6]

China-Nigeria Relations: Rationale and History

History is a key to an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon because it connects the past with the present and makes prognoses about the future.[7] The evolution of China-Nigeria relations cannot be dissociated from the fact that other countries in Africa that are partnering with China have chosen, by and large, alternative forms of aid and development packages.[8]

China-Nigeria bilateral relations span over forty-five years. However, in the early years of its independence, Nigeria had no bilateral relation with China until 1971.[9] Furthermore, Nigeria had no trade relation with China in the 1970s and 1980s. The relationship between Nigeria and China was sour owing to China's support of an attempted secessionist movement that wanted to create the Biafra Republic out of Nigeria.[10] It also must be mentioned that ideology was a major determinant of China's relations with other countries under Mao Zedong. Under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, China's relationship with Africa shifted from a period of indirect political and ideological support to direct support for various national liberation movements. Nigeria,

---

[4] Merriam Webster Dictionary, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/reciprocity.

[5] Smith, "Reciprocity."

[6] Ibid.

[7] Olayiwola Victor Ojo, "Decoding the Potency of Web 2.0 in Nigeria," *International Journal of Politics and Good Governance* 5, no. 4 (2014): 1–14, http://onlineresearchjournals.com/ijopagg/art/163.pdf.

[8] Daniel Wagner, "China and Nigeria: Neo-Colonialism, South-South Solidarity, or Both?" *Huffingtonpost*, September 18, 2013, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/china-and-nigeria-neocolo_b_3624204.

[9] Brown, "Impact of China-Nigeria Relations in Nigeria From 1997-2009."

[10] Wagner, "China and Nigeria: Neo-Colonialism, South-South Solidarity, or Both?"

as a self-styled frontline state against white-led regimes in Southern Africa, served as a facilitator for the support of liberation fighters. This interface strengthened the diplomatic relations with China but affected trade only marginally because Taiwan remained the favored trading partner at the time. Nonetheless, this period saw an incipient expansion of Chinese trade relations with Nigeria.[11]

In the 1970s and 1980s, international trade was conducted primarily with European and North American countries. However, thanks to the non-stringent conditionalities attached to trading with China under Deng Xiaoping, which compared favorably with the Western trading partners' inflexible and brass-bound terms, Nigeria became an international trading partner of China under General Abacha's military rule (1993-1998). Since then, the successive governments have continued to be actively involved in trading with Beijing through diverse bilateral agreements.[12] What then is the propelling factor for bilateral relations between China and Nigeria that determines the relationship? The main driving force for the strategic partnership between the two countries is an economic one since the strategic partnership and engagement of China and African countries through the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) centers mainly on economic benefits. FOCAC was initiated at the Ministerial Conference in Beijing in 2000. The FOCAC Forum is the key platform that has strengthened bilateral relations between African countries and China. The Chinese direct investment in Nigeria and other African countries is propelled mainly by the need to secure access to natural resources, acquire key commodity and energy assets, and capture under-exploited markets. In essence, Chinese foreign direct investments in Africa are primarily resource seeking and secondarily market seeking. China concentrates on a few sectors of strategic interest, especially the extractive industries.[13]

Interestingly, the growing relationship between China and Nigeria is induced by the fact that the two countries have economic complementarities. A major development challenge in Nigeria is the infrastructure deficiency, which needs a huge investment. Complementarily, China has developed one of the world's largest and most competitive construction industries with particular expertise in civil works, which are critical for infrastructure development. This expertise is coupled with its ability to provide the necessary financial assistance to countries in need, including Nigeria.[14]

---

[11] Brown, "Impact of China-Nigeria Relations."

[12] Wagner, "China and Nigeria."

[13] Gboyega Alabi Oyeranti, Musibau Adetunji Babatunde, and E. Olawale Ogunkola, "An Analysis of China-Nigeria Investment Relations," *Journal of Chinese Economic and Foreign Trade Studies* 4, no. 3 (2011): 183–99, https://doi.org/doi.org/10.1108/175444 01111178221.

[14] Gboyega Alabi Oyeranti, Musibau Adetunji Babatunde, and E. Olawale Ogunkola, "The Impact of China-Africa Investment Relations: The Case of Nigeria," *Policy Brief. AERC Collaborative Research China-Africa Project* (November 8, 2010), https://aerc africa.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/NigeriaPB8.pdf.

China's industrialization drive and massive inflow of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into the Chinese economy have led to a fast-growing manufacturing economy, which requires oil and mineral inputs that are outstripping the country's domestic resources. Hence there is a need to source them from abroad, including Nigeria, which is well-endowed with these resources.[15] Chinese investment financing in African countries, including Nigeria, is offered with a relatively large aid component in the form of concessionary interest rates and grant elements. Moreover, the investment loans are offered without conditionalities attached to them as compared with loans from multilateral finance organizations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.[16]

For Nigeria, the primary stimulus for engaging China through bilateral trade agreements is mainly a result of the success story of this most populous country in Asia. China had its own successful economic transformation and developed its capacity to deliver large-scale infrastructure projects and, more importantly, its ability to finance them.[17] In other words, the motivation for Nigeria to have a mutual symbiotic relationship with China was China's own rapid economic development.

It is worth noting that state-to-state visits between the two countries have become more frequent with Presidential visits of the Nigerian government and that of Chinese leaders. Such visits and other series of overtures between China and Nigeria have snowballed into signing several bilateral agreements rooted in economic complementarities and other strategic cooperation. Successive Nigerian governments, especially since the return to civil rule in 1999, have continued to engage China for the country's economic well-being. Thus, China's engagement with Nigeria has continued to experience tremendous growth from the Obasanjo regime to Jonathan Good Luck and even to the incumbent President Muhammadu Buhari.

Sino-Nigeria Relations: Exploring the Roles at Play

As said *ab initio*, China's bilateral engagement with African countries has soared greatly over the years. China's engagement with African states is made possible through the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), a platform initiated in 2000 between Beijing and other African states. Moreover, apart from China's engagement with almost all African states, the Asian giant also establishes and maintains bilateral relations with different African countries through the signing of bilateral trade agreements. At this juncture, it is relevant to note that no China–Africa bilateral relationship is as important as the one between China and Nigeria because of the considerable population

---

[15] Ibid.

[16] Oyeranti et al., "An Analysis of China-Nigeria Investment Relations."

[17] Margaret Egbula and Qi Zheng, "China and Nigeria: A Powerful South-South Alliance," *Sahel and West Africa Club Secretariat (SWAC/OECD)*, 2011, https://www.oecd.org/swac/publications/49814032.pdf.

Nigeria has. With over 180,000,000 inhabitants (the most populous in Africa), it represents an enormous market. With its vast endowment in oil and other natural resources, Nigeria is the largest economy in Africa in terms of gross domestic product (GDP). Furthermore, just as the Chinese "Go Global" commercial strategy increased with the outgoing Chinese investment and commercial presence, Nigeria also initiated some reforms, which permitted the return to democracy. The implementation of economic reform programs laid out and monitored by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) has, no doubt, brought about a much-needed reform in the macroeconomic framework.

However, due to Nigeria's goal to be one of the world's top twenty economies by 2020, the need to develop non-oil sectors has become imperative. Examples of such sectors are agriculture, telecommunication services, manufacturing, and a host of others, which can engender trade liberalization and bilateral agreements with a country like China.[18] Although China's diplomatic relation with Nigeria officially dates back to February 1971, the volume of trade between Nigeria and China was very low until 1993, when rapid growth turned China from a net exporter of crude oil to the second-largest importer of crude oil in the world. Gulf of Guinea countries like Nigeria, which produce sweet, low-sulfur crude oil and offer markets for international investments, were particularly attractive to the Chinese.[19] Thus, China secured various joint-venture contracts with Nigerian oil companies, often in exchange for low-interest loans and targeted development projects. Thus, the volume of trade rapidly increased from 1.3 billion Nigerian Naira in 1990 to 5.3 billion in 1996, and more recently to 8.6 billion. Most of this growth was attributable to the oil sector, with a small fraction emanating from the import of cheaply manufactured Chinese goods and products.[20]

Under Olusegun Obasanjo, the Sino-Nigerian relationship continued to expand as a wide array of development projects were contracted to the Chinese, even though the Nigerian President still maintains close ties with Washington and London, which should have put him at some distance from Beijing. One major project undertaken was the Abuja All-Africa Games village that was contracted to the China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC) in 2000 to build some 5,000 housing units for international athletes participating in the eighth annual All-Africa Games. The construction of the village provided an opportunity for the Chinese to showcase their increasing cooperation with Africa in a high-profile international setting. Today, such large-scale, public infrastructure projects undertaken by Chinese contractors are referred to as "prestige projects."[21]

---

[18] Joseph Nnanna, "Is China's Investment in Africa Good for the Nigerian Economy," *Journal of Chinese Economic and Foreign Trade Studies* 8, no. 1 (2015): 40–48, https://doi.org/10.1108/JCEFTS-09-2014-0020.

[19] Pat Utomi, "China In Nigeria" (Washington, DC: CSIS, 2008), https://www.csis.org/analysis/china-nigeria.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.

During the Presidency of Obasanjo (1999-2007), many "oil-for-infra-structure" contracts were implemented, yet when his successor, Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, came to power, some of these were suspended. Between 2000 and 2010, annual Nigerian-Chinese trade increased nine-fold, from $2 billion to $18 billion. Ten major bilateral agreements concerning commerce, agriculture, tourism, and security were signed during that period. Nigeria imported more goods from China in 2012 than it did from the United States and India combined.[22] During the Jonathan era, the then President signed nine memoranda of understanding with the Chinese government. China agreed to provide Nigeria with a soft loan of $1.1 billion in exchange for Nigeria agreeing to increase its daily supply of oil to China ten-fold (from 20,000 barrels per day to 200,000 by 2015).[23] The successful strategic partnership based on China's valuable skills, knowledge, and experience has continued to be strengthened by the Nigerian government over the years as Nigeria looks to achieve its infrastructural economic and social goals under a development plan, "Vision 2020."[24]

Although China's rationale for entering the Nigerian market was initially driven by the demand for energy resources, Chinese involvement in Nigeria has vastly expanded in the area of manufacturing. Currently, China's public and private companies are developing economic zones in Nigeria aimed at constructing new roads and bridges, and airports and railways connecting the major cities in Nigeria. It was evident that the sharp growth in the gross domestic product was driven by the non-oil sector of the economy, particularly agriculture, telecom services, and manufacturing. While the non-oil growth rate averaged 3-4 percent in 2000, it significantly increased, averaging 8-9 percent in the mid-2000s. The performance fell to 4.5 percent in 2009 as a result of the global financial crisis.[25]

The information that was released by the Office of the Economic and Commercial Counselor of the Chinese Embassy in Nigeria and published by MOFCOM on July 22, 2014, recorded that since 2011, China-Nigeria bilateral trade totaled over 10.78 billion US dollars, exceeding 10 billion US dollars for the first time and grew to 13.6 billion US dollars in 2013.[26] These figures reveal that Nigeria is understandably China's second export market in Africa, next to South Africa, and the third-largest trading partner in Africa.[27]

It is also worth mentioning that Chinese Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) has continued to soar over the years, constructing roads to different parts of Nigeria.[28] Evidence of Chinese FDI in Nigeria includes the Ogun

---

[22] Wagner, "China and Nigeria."

[23] Ibid.

[24] Brown, "Impact of China-Nigeria Relations."

[25] Oyeranti et al., "The Impact of China-Africa Investment Relations."

[26] This information is also available on the Nigeria trade hub.

[27] Nnanna P. Azu and Eche Abu-obe, "Economic Determinants of Nigeria's Trade with China: A Cointegration Approach," *International Journal of Economics and Finance* 8, no. 3 (2016): 214–24, https://doi.org/10.5539/ijef.v8n3p214.

[28] Oyeranti et al., "An Analysis of China-Nigeria Investment Relations."

Guangdong Free Trade Zone (OGFTZ), China Town in Lagos, the Lekki Free Trade Zone, etc. The insightful paper by Chen, Dollar, and Tang[29] pictured China's top twenty destinations in terms of outward direct investment in Africa. The table below chronicles the top destinations for outward direct investment in Africa.

Nigeria	404	240
South Africa	280	152
Zambia	273	125
Ethiopia	255	114
Egypt	197	99
Congo (DRC)	193	80
Ghana	192	90
Angola	189	80
Zimbabwe	167	68
Tanzania	149	85
Sudan	148	78
Kenya	137	71
Algeria	123	75
Mozambique	94	41
Uganda	89	45
Gabon	71	23
Mali	68	33
Namibia	66	30
Mauritius	65	40
Cameroon	40	28

20 Top Destinations: Country, Number of Projects, Number of Firms
Source: Chen, Dollar, and Tang (2015, 25)

The table above contains 2,005 deals at the firm level, covering twenty countries on the African continent. The top five destination countries for Chinese Outbound Direct Investment (ODI) are Nigeria, South Africa, Zambia, Ethiopia, and Egypt, with Nigeria taking the clear lead. This then connotes that Nigeria is a top destination for China's ODI in Africa. According to the statistics of the General Administration of Customs of China, the total bilateral trade volume between China and Nigeria from 2004 to 2015 was 101 billion US dollars. The bilateral trade volume between the two countries stood at 14.94 billion US dollars in 2015; the figures make up 8.3% of China's total trade with Africa and 42% of its trade with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The major commodities imported by Nigeria from China are electrical machinery equipment, machinery and me-

---

[29] Chen, Wenjie, David Dollar, and Heiwai Tang, "Why Is China Investing in Africa? Evidence from the Firm Level," *World Bank Economic Review* (2015), https://doi.org/10.1093/wber/lhw049.

chanical appliances, and vehicles. The major commodities exported from Nigeria are mineral resources, wood, and agricultural produce such as cotton, palm oil seeds, and cashew nuts, among other products.[30]

The China-Nigeria relation no doubt has been beneficial to Nigeria in many ways. Apart from the economic benefit, another strategic partnership that has been beneficial to Nigeria includes the cooperation in the communication and space program, which led to the Chinese launch of the Nigerian Communications Satellite (nigcomsat-1) in 2007, and the development of cellular and internet networks in central Africa, military cooperation that led to the supply of military hardware to fight militant insurrection and to the training of military forces for anti-insurgency, and finally the expansion of cultural and people-to-people exchanges in education, science and technology, and culture.[31]

Though this paper was presented at the International Conference on "Reciprocity: A Human Value in A Pluralistic World," I can only give an outline of the pitfalls of the relationship between Nigeria and China. These vary from the trade imbalance to the advantage of China; the failure of some Chinese companies to perform their corporate social responsibility; poor conditions of service; not-transferring technology/skills to locals; and substandard quality of some projects/products as reported in some African countries.[32] I must, however, admit that the benefits outweigh the challenges.

Concluding Remarks

This paper has encapsulated Sino-Nigeria relations. The relationship between the two countries in the form of a bilateral relation and strategic partnership has been beneficial to both countries in many ways but not balanced. What the Nigerian government needs to do is articulate a more balanced and beneficial relationship to make it more win-win. There is a need for reform that will spur investors to establish manufacturing and processing facilities in Nigeria for import substitution, just as Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari divulged on his recent visit to China in April 2016 that the government would explore modes of practical cooperation in trade, investment, finance, human resources, agriculture, and fishing through strengthening industrial capacity cooperation in the manufacture of cars, household appliances, construction materials, textiles, food processing, and other products.

---

[30] Kayode Olaitan, "Buhari's Visit and Prospects for Nigeria-China Relations," *Guardian Nigeria Newspaper*, April 8, 2016, http.www.guardian.ng/features/buharis-visit-and-prospects-for-nigeria-china-relations/.

[31] D. Kidzu, "45 Years of Nigeria-China Relations," *Chronicle*, February 2, 2016, http://ngchronicle.com/2016/02/13/45-years-of-nigeria-china-relations/d from.

[32] Lamido Sanusi, "Africa Must Get Real about Chinese Ties," *Financial Times*, March 11, 2013, http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/562692b0-898c-11e2-ad3f-00144feabdc0.html# axzz3ZaBFD od4%0A%0A; Howard French, *China's Second Continent: How a Million Migrants Are Building a New Empire in Africa* (New York: Knopf Doubleday, 2014).

Bibliography

Azu, Nnanna P. and Eche Abu-obe. "Economic Determinants of Nigeria's Trade with China: A Cointegration Approach." *International Journal of Economics and Finance* 8, no. 3 (2016): 214–24. https://doi.org/10.5539/ijef.v8n3p214.

Brown, Belinada Bridget. "Impact of China-Nigeria Relations in Nigeria From 1997-2009." Jinan: Shandong University, 2012. https://doi.org/10.7666/d.Y2179689.

Chen, Wenjie, David Dollar, and Heiwai Tang. "Why Is China Investing in Africa? Evidence from the Firm Level." *World Bank Economic Review* (2015). https://doi.org/10.1093/wber/lhw049.

Egbula, Margaret and Qi Zheng. "China and Nigeria: A Powerful South-South Alliance." *Sahel and West Africa Club Secretariat (SWAC/OECD)*, 2011. https://www.oecd.org/swac/publications/49814032.pdf.

Falk, Armin and Urs Fischbacher. "A Theory of Reciprocity." *Games and Economic Behavior* 54, no. 2 (2006): 293–315. http://linkinghub.elsevier.com/retrieve/pii/ S0899825605000254.

French, Howard. *China's Second Continent: How a Million Migrants Are Building a New Empire in Africa.* New York: Knopf Doubleday. 2014.

Kidzu, D. "45 Years of Nigeria-China Relations." *Chronicle*, February 13, 2016. http://ngchronicle.com/2016/02/13/45-years-of-nigeria-china-relations/d.

Merriam Webster Dictionary. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/reciprocity.

Nnanna, Joseph. "Is China's Investment in Africa Good for the Nigerian Economy." *Journal of Chinese Economic and Foreign Trade Studies* 8, no. 1 (2015): 40 –48. https://doi.org/10.1108/JCEFTS-09-2014-0020.

Ojo, Olayiwola Victor. "Decoding The Potency of Web 2.0 in Nigeria." *International Journal of Politics and Good Governance* 5, no. 4 (2014): 1–14. http://onlineresearchjournals.com/ijopagg/art/163.pdf.

Olaitan, Kayode. "Buhari's Visit and Prospects for Nigeria-China Relations." *Guardian Nigeria Newspaper,* April 8, 2016. http.www.guardian.ng/features/buharis-visit-and-prospects-for-nigeria-china-relations/.

Oyeranti, Gboyega Alabi, Musibau Adetunji Babatunde, and E. Olawale Ogunkola. "The Impact of China-Africa Investment Relations: The Case of Nigeria." *Policy Brief. AERC Collaborative Research China – Africa Project*, November 8, 2010. https://aercafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/NigeriaPB8.pdf.

------, Musibau Adetunji Babatunde, and E. Olawale Ogunkola. "An Analysis of China-Nigeria Investment Relations." *Journal of Chinese Economic and Foreign Trade Studies* 4, no. 3 (2011): 183–99. https://doi.org/doi.org/10.1108/17544401111178221.

Sanusi, Lamido. "Africa Must Get Real about Chinese Ties." *Finanical Times,* March 11, 2013. http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/562692b0-898c-11e2-ad3f-00144feabdc0.html#axzz3ZaBFDod4%0A%0A.

Smith, Robert Freeman. "Reciprocity." In *Encyclopedia of American Foreign Policy*, vol. 2, edited by Alexander DeCond, Richard Dean Burns, and Fredrik Logevall, 329-344. New York: Gale, 2002. http://1.droppdf. com/files/X3CPy/encyclopedia-of-american-foreign-policy.pdf.

Utomi, Pat. "China In Nigeria." Washington, DC: CSIS, 2008. https://www. csis.org/analysis/china-nigeria.

Wagner, Daniel. "China and Nigeria: Neo-Colonialism, South-South Solidarity, or Both?" *Huffingtonpost*, September 18, 2013. https://www. huffpost.com/entry/china-and-nigeria-neocolo_b_3624204.

Reciprocal Bilingualism:
The Case of "Bananas," or
Purely English-Speaking Malaysian Chinese

Rachel CHAN Suet Kay

Introduction

In Malaysia, graduates of the Chinese-language education system have often been compared to graduates of the national Malay-language and the international English-language education systems. The former have been linked to collectivist values while the latter to individualist ones.[1]

With this said, in the present era of cultural globalization marked by transnational cultural flows, this situation is set to change. The primacy of education as a socialization agent is increasingly replaced by other forces such as the mass media. With China's rise in soft power[2] and its cultural values broadcasted through a variety of popular culture channels, the acquisition of collectivist or individualist values becomes more complex. One question that can be raised is the issue of reciprocity. In a world often characterized by the contradictions between Western and Asian values, in particular Chinese Confucian values, will there emerge a value system trade-off as the result of individuals realizing the importance of embracing both cultures? The division between the English-educated individualist values and the Chinese-educated collectivist values may well be replaced by a kind of bridging values.

In this context, I measure values sociologically by using the concept of cultural capital. This framework, introduced by Pierre Bourdieu, has often been used to measure educational outcomes.[3] My study does not measure social class outcomes but those that result from different linguistic education mediums. Thus, two groups can be compared; the "English-speaking" or "English-literate" and the "Chinese-speaking" or "Chinese-literate."

---

[1] E. Y. T Wong, "The Chinese at Work: Collectivism or Individualism?," *Hong Kong Institute of Business Studies Working Paper Series 040-001* (2001), http://commons.ln.edu.hk/hkibswp/31.

[2] M. Jacques, *When China Rules the World: The End of the Western World and the Birth of a New Global Order* (London: Penguin, 2009).

[3] R. S. K. Chan, J. Edo, and R. B. M. Hussain, "Global Habitus: Multilingual Identity Differences Expressed through Cultural Capital," *Educate Journal of Doctoral Research* 16, no. 1 (2016): 25–34; J. Goldthorpe, "Cultural Capital: Some Critical Observations," *Sociologica* 1, no. 2 (2007): 1–23; A. Lareau and E. Weininger, "Cultural Capital in Educational Research: A Critical Assessment," *Theory and Society* 32, no. 5/6 (2003): 567–606.

For this paper, I focus on the first group, the "English-literate." This group is of interest because of their origins in mastering English as a first language. With the social changes mentioned above, it is pertinent to chart their position on the usage of English and the acquisition of the Chinese language as a new form of desirable cultural capital. The issue of the individualistic worldview in this group is also highlighted. I uncover their intent to embrace the Chinese language and the associated exchange of values (or reciprocity) with their Chinese-literate counterparts.

Historical Context

In order to outline the origins of this bilingual education system among the Malaysian Chinese, I delve into the history of Chinese migration to Malaya. Scholars have written widely about the Southern Chinese migration to Malaya to populate the tin-mining industry introduced by the British in the 1800s.[4] The British encouraged the entry of workers, mostly from Guangdong in China, to meet the needs of the Malayan economy, which had been divided according to ethnic specialization[5]. Workers who had settled in Malaya and enjoyed a degree of prosperity found themselves eager to stay put and thus began setting up Chinese schools for their offspring. At the same time, the British colonial powers in Malaya had also set up English schools to train locals to enter civil service. Among the ethnic Chinese, those who had settled in Malaya and entered English schools were largely of the upper social class, while those who attended Chinese schools were made up of the other social classes. English education was seen as a status symbol of privilege. Because of the inherent need to consolidate its colonial power, the British naturally were less supportive of Chinese schools. This led to a demarcation in the nature of education and how status was associated with graduates in both systems.[6]

Since the ruling power was English, English language and literacy were viewed as an advantage. Being aware of this, upper-class Chinese families would send their children to these schools. English schools that were founded by Christian missionaries and followed the English literary traditions emphasized values such as individuality. Conversely, Chinese schools that were founded by community elders imported textbooks and recruited teachers from

---

[4] K. C. Cheong, K. H. Lee and P. P. Lee, "Surviving Financial Crises: The Chinese Overseas in Malaysia and Singapore," *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 45, no. 1 (2015): 26–47.

5 C. Hirschman, "The Making of Race in Colonial Malaya: Political Economy and Racial Ideology," *Sociological Forum* 1, no. 2 (1986): 330-361; S.P. Gabriel, "After the Break: Re-conceptualizing Ethnicity, National Identity and 'Malaysian Chinese' Identities," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 37, no. 7 (2013): 1211–1224, http://tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01419870.2014.859286.

[6] V. Purcell, *The Chinese in Malaya* (London-New York: Oxford University Press, 1948).

mainland China. The education philosophy was based on Confucianism and stressed collectivism.[7]

Much has been written about the link between collectivism and Chinese societies. Studies have been conducted comparing mainland China and other diasporic Chinese communities. While Geert Hofstede[8] claimed that ethnic Chinese communities tend to display collectivism, scholars such as Edward Wong[9] argue that the degree of collectivism is waning and that the value assessments of Chinese individuals are rather complex. Other studies have compared Western liberal democratic values to Chinese Confucian values. However, it would be naïve to pigeonhole any individual or group into a fixed matrix of values. Based on the outline of the history of education among the Malaysian Chinese, I would like to compare the outcomes of both streams of education by using the sociological framework of cultural capital.

As an addendum, sociologists have acknowledged the transnational nature of cultural flows worldwide. This, in addition to the impact of education as a socialization agent, has the power to socialize students into the accumulation of values. The notion of global values may be compared against values strictly associated with Chinese-medium or English-medium schools.

What is of interest, according to scholars Law and Lee,[10] is the issue of diasporic Chinese, particularly in Malaysia, who have not been socialized in terms of the Chinese language as an important marker of Chinese culture.[11] Education is a highly necessary tool for the dissemination of the Chinese language among Chinese communities. English-educated Malaysian Chinese have long since identified as Malaysian citizens. Acquiring English, Malay, and other, mostly European languages became more important to them in the past decades. In the current global climate, however, where China resides as a superpower[12] alongside the United States and Russia, would there be a sudden interest among the Malaysian Chinese who do not speak Chinese to acquire fluency in the Chinese language? This paper follows a group of such individuals who are at the moment undergoing tertiary education in a renowned English-language program, where the majority of their classmates are, interestingly, Chinese-educated. I attempt to trace the exchange of values (reciprocity) from their repeated interaction in this education system.

---

[7] Y. S. Tan and R. Santhiram, *The Education of Ethnic Minorities: The Case of the Malaysian Chinese* (Petaling Jaya: Strategic Information Research Development, 2010).

[8] G. Hofstede, "Management Control of Public and Not-for-profit Activities," *Accounting, Organizations and society* 6, no. 3 (1981): 193–211.

[9] Wong, "The Chinese at Work."

[10] K. Y. Law and K. M. Lee, "The Myth of Constructing a Greater China Identity: A Case Study of the Malaysian Chinese in Reforming China," *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies* 11, no. 2 (2009): 19–43.

[11] Calvin B. Tan, "Chinese identities in Malaysia," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 25, no. 2 (1997): 103–116.

[12] Li, *China as a Trading Superpower*, accessed May 3, 2016, http://www.lse.ac.uk/IDEAS/publications/reports/pdf/SR012/li.pdf.

"Going Bananas": Establishment of an Unofficial Subculture?

In the context befitting this paper, subcultures have been defined as minority cultures existing within mainstream culture and often rejecting mainstream values.[13] Two Malaysian Chinese subcultures, which have been widely chronicled in the popular media but have not been academically studied, are the "Ah Beng Subculture" and the "Banana Tribe." The former refers to a subset of the Chinese-educated Malaysian Chinese whose identity revolves around conspicuous consumption that intends to display wealth.[14] The latter refers to the English-educated Malaysian Chinese who are incapable of conversing, reading, or writing in Chinese. It is important to note that these two are subsets of each linguistic group, neither an accurate nor total representation of either. The "bananas" are a notable case because it is not so much a conscious choice of individuals banding together to reject the ideals of the majority. Rather, they belong to a minority of a larger ethnic group due to their shared traits. These two "subcultures" may be seen as extreme opposites.

This paper is concerned with the second group, the "Bananas." "Bananas" are defined as "yellow on the outside, white on the inside" (a Chinese person of a Western disposition, i.e., unable to speak, read or write in Chinese).[15] Much has been written about this group, including from the Banana's own point of view. For example, two columnists in Malaysian mainstream publications, *The Star* and *The Malay Mail*, who identified themselves as Bananas, wrote:

> Today I am still Chinese illiterate — these beautiful, ancient characters are merely graceful strokes to me. I'm not complaining; even if I can't read or write in Chinese, I can still speak and understand enough. It's a blessing and a privilege.[16]

> I understand simple Cantonese and Mandarin but whenever I try to reply in the language I choke on my words.[17]

They both admit to having low proficiency in the Chinese language, which makes it difficult for their daily routines.

---

[13] B. Smith, "Anthropology and Psychology," in *For a Science of Social Man*, ed. John Gillin (New York: Macmillan, 1954), 61; J. M. Yinger, "Contraculture and Subculture," *American Sociological Review* 25, no. 5 (1960): 625–635.

[14] R. S. Chan, K. and J. Edo, "The Ah Beng Subculture as a Case Study of Malaysian Chinese Identity Formation," *SARJANA* 30, no. 1 (2015): 71–81.

[15] Kenny Mah, "When someone calls you a banana…bake a banana cake," *The Malay Mail Online*, May 4, 2014, accessed March 1, 2016, http://www.themalaymailonline.com/eat-drink/article/when-someone-calls-you-a-banana...-bake-a-banana-cake.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Calvin Tan, "Banana, it's not just in skin colour," *The Star Online*, April 7, 2014, accessed March 1, 2016, http:// www.thestar.com.my/opinion/columnists/open-season/2014/04/07/banana-its-not-just-in-skin-colour/.

Two readers who also identified as "Bananas" submitted similarly sounding self-introductions to a popular culture website, Cilisos.my:

Went to Hong Kong recently and can't read anything in Chinese. Imagine trying to order food in local restaurants/cafes. Bloody embarrassing since I am Chinese! – David Koay[18]

I literally cannot tell the difference between "Wah you so pretty now!" and "Wah you gain weight already hor…" when all the aunties are complimenting/cursing me in Hokkien. All sounds like curse words to my foreign ears ok. – Kay Jen[19]

The two readers tell of their bewilderment when another Chinese speaker immediately assumes they understand the language (or dialect) and begins speaking to them. Often, misunderstanding occurs.

This echoes what The Star columnist above experienced: "Some friends of mine (mostly non-Chinese) say they survive just fine without knowing Chinese but of course! They forget that my Chinese-looking face automatically elicits Chinese sounds from strangers and I have received many a perplexed look when I reply in fractured gibberish."[20] While the "Banana" may choose to communicate with others based on familiarity with the English language, thus building language-based social capital, they may not have such a choice if their immediate community consists mainly of Chinese-literate speakers. The inability of "Bananas" to converse in their mother tongue also results in sometimes uncomfortable situations:

Growing up, being called a banana was at best a light-hearted tease and at worst a form of verbal abuse. Children can be cruel. At school, my classmates who spoke Chinese — be it Mandarin, Hokkien or some other dialect — would taunt me for speaking English at home.[21]

Being at one of these karaoke sessions…could be with colleagues, uni-mates, grandma birthday party. There is always some awesome Chinese popular song which everybody knows how to sing and I can go only lalala to the tune. Sometime I am lucky to find some old hokkien song with romanized chinese sing-a-long. – Ng Jiunn Jye[22]

---

[18] "9 problems faced by BANANAS, submitted by CILISOS readers!" *Cilisos.my*, February 12, 2015, accessed March 1, 2016, http://cilisos.my/9-problems-faced-by-bananas-submitted-by-cilisos-readers/.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Tan, "Banana, it's not just in skin colour."
[21] Mah, "When someone calls you a banana."
[22] "9 problems faced by BANANAS."

Inability to converse with a majority of Chinese-speaking counterparts results in the feeling of being left out in social situations or excluded by peers. Should an individual wish to overcome these limitations, a need to learn the Chinese language may well emerge. Furthermore, with the much-noted rising importance of the Chinese language in the global sphere, this need may be intensified. This paper sets out to uncover how these situations affect "Banana" individuals.

Methodology

A focus group interview was conducted among a class of students of Malaysian Chinese ethnicity, who were either English-educated or Chinese-educated at the primary and secondary levels, as well as international students who regularly mixed with the two groups. These students mainly came from a private university in Malaysia, HELP University, which offers a renowned UK degree, the University of London International Programmes. Entry to this program requires a Band 6 in TOEFL,[23] which indicates an advanced level of English language competency. This study compared cultural capital among English-educated and Chinese-educated Malaysian Chinese from two different educational mediums. Questions regarding their worldview within a globalized context were posed. The English-educated students were asked about the frequency of their interaction with Chinese-literate classmates, while the Chinese-educated students were asked about the frequency of their interaction with the former. The responses were anonymous, and respondents were identified by code names (see the following discussion).

Findings

Several themes were identified according to the seven questions posed to the respondents. These questions covered the respondents' educational background, the regularity of their interactions with members of the other sociolinguistic group, their experience of doing so, their interest in mastering the other language, their opinions on the importance of the other language (Mandarin/English), benefits of learning the other language, and being multilingual. See the table and figure below.

---

[23] "Admissions Pathway and Requirements for BSc Degree," *University of London Programme Book*, 13, accessed January 21, 2015, http://www.help.edu.my/admission/brochure.html?download=31:brochure-uol.

Table 1 – Responses and profile of respondents from the University of
London International Programme

No.	Profile	Q1: Are you literate in the Chinese language? Can you tell more about your education background? What medium of instruction was used?	Q2: How regularly do you interact with Chinese (or English) language speakers?	Q3: What is your experience like, interacting with Chinese or English language speakers? In terms of comfort, interests, challenges, views, for example.	Q4: Would you like to learn/become literate in the Chinese language or English language? Why?	Q5: Do you think Mandarin will become as important as English? Why?	Q6: Do you believe that knowing the Chinese or English language will help you improve your networking opportunities?	Q7: Do you think being multilingual is an effect of globalization?
1	English-speaking Malaysian Chinese student	Know enough Chinese language to survive – ordering food, using toilet, simple basic conversations. Home-schooled, in an American program.	Almost every day, 95% of classmates are Chinese-speaking.	Different worldview – focus on the material, the present, the shallow, not 'deep' talks.	Mixed feelings – learning is good, but no interest at the moment	If China is seen as a huge player in the future of our world.	Believe so, but most friends are English-speaking.	Inclined towards no. In Malaysia, the Chinese can speak both Chinese and Malay.
2	English-speaking Malaysian Chinese student	No. Educated in Christian-based school, in English medium, took GCSE	Very regularly. 98% of students are Chinese-language speakers. Parents speak Chinese.	They are very expressive and understanding. Challenge for non-Chinese speakers, may feel left out.	Believe China is a major player in global economy. Have improved own Chinese.	Yes, because business with the Chinese is necessary, but will not overtake English.	Yes, though it is not the only factor.	Yes. As barriers are broken, more people want to learn new languages.
3	English-speaking Malaysian Chinese student	No. Educated in international English-medium school.	Almost every weekday. Majority of UOL students speak Chinese regularly.	Chinese-speaking don't usually choose to converse in English with each other. Translations are difficult to understand.	No personal interest.	Geographically limited though a large number of speakers, especially not in the Western world.	Can break cultural barriers in Malaysia.	Yes. Social media and spread of Western influences into Asia.
4	Chinese-literate but English-fluent Malaysian Chinese student	Yes. Chinese-educated up to primary school level, then national secondary school, but also learned English as a toddler (1-4 years).	Daily, in college and with strangers.	Comfortable with Malaysian Chinese who are Chinese-speaking. But difficult to understand accent of native speakers from China (although have gotten used to it by now).	Already literate, and would do it again.	Yes. Chinese are most numerous people on the planet, mostly speak only Mandarin.	China is fastest growing economy in the world. Not possible not to interact with China-based companies.	Yes and no. Being connected allows access to learning languages. But believe that one day the world will be united under one language.

| 5 | Chinese-literate Malaysian Chinese student | Yes. Chinese-educated at primary and secondary school levels. Use English most of the time in university during classes, and on social media. | Every weekday due to classes. With friends and lecturers especially those who are English-speaking and are not able to use the Chinese language. | It is a casual thing as languages are not a problem in maintaining a relationship, as long as there is a respectful mindset. However, understand the feeling of being left out in a foreign language environment and would like to make sure no one feels left out. | For sure, as learning is a lifelong process. I would also accept the challenge of learning other foreign languages. | Yes, Mandarin is becoming more well-known with time. | Sure. English is an international language that can bridge communication gaps. | It probably would be an effect. |
| 6 | Chinese-speaking Malaysian Chinese student | Yes. Chinese-educated at primary and secondary school levels. Use English quite often – with lecturers and friends. | In class, sometimes, or in paperwork. | Interacting with English-speakers feels a little unusual, as English command is not too fluent. | Yes, improving my English is important. Most people in the world use English | Yes, Mandarin is also as important as English. | Yes. For work and social life. | Depends on the overall environment. |

Figure 1. Theoretical Model of Reciprocal Social Capital
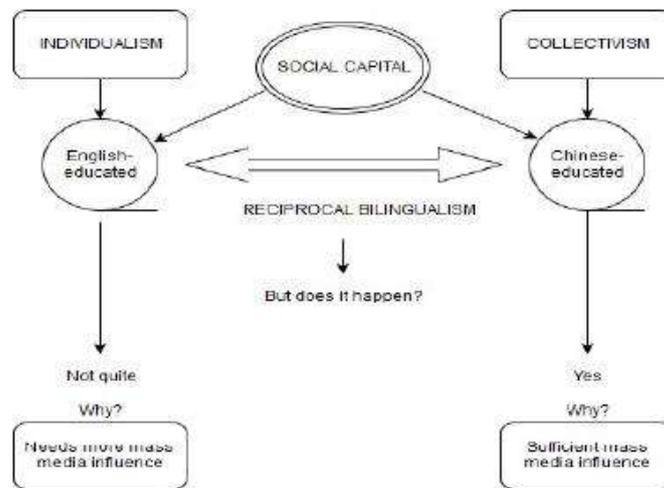
Discussion

The six respondents of the focus group interview may be categorized into two sub-groups. These are the purely English-speaking Malaysian Chinese and the Chinese-speaking Malaysian Chinese. These students are all

members of the University of London International Programme, whose population majority is formed by the Malaysian Chinese.

The English-speaking group is the main interest in this article. The data above provide a general profile of this group with little to no command of the Chinese language but the basics such as ordering food in Chinese restaurants. All three respondents belonging to this group were educated in English-medium private schools, which are different from Malaysian national schools that conduct lessons in Malay and English. Thus, the concentration of their English literacy is higher. All are matchingly fluent in speaking English. In their current environment as students of the University of London International Programme, they have to interact on a daily basis with classmates who are largely Chinese-speaking. Although a large proportion of students in this program come from Chinese-educated backgrounds, they are interested in pursuing a prestigious UK degree. They also come equipped with strong mathematical skills honed from Chinese schools, which may be a factor for choosing this highly mathematical program. The English-speaking group observes a difference in style and substance from their Chinese-speaking counterparts' conversations. The latter tend to focus on more "material and present" things in their conversations; "deep" topics are usually avoided, unlike in the English-speaking respondents' conversations. The English-speaking respondents do not have a strong desire to learn Mandarin, though they acknowledge China's rise as a global superpower. While they believe that learning Chinese could help them extend their social networks within a globalized context, they are confident that English will remain the most important language.

In the group of Chinese-speaking Malaysian Chinese, there are two respondents. The first underwent the complete primary and secondary Chinese-medium education, while the second enrolled in a Chinese primary school (and later a Malaysian national secondary school) though their family speaks fluent English. The first respondent is more prone to conversing mainly in Chinese, while the latter is comfortable speaking in both languages in their daily life. Both use English regularly in interaction with classmates as well as paperwork. The former admits that his/her English is not fluent and wishes to improve, while the latter is comfortable with his/her fluent command of both languages. The latter found it hard to understand mainland Chinese accents at first but has grown accustomed to them. The first student acknowledges the importance of mastering English as he/she believes that the majority of people worldwide use English, but both respondents believe that Mandarin is as important as English. The second student believes that one day the world will be united under one language. Both students acknowledge China's rise as a global superpower.

There are notable differences in worldview between "Bananas" and Chinese-speakers; for instance, the latter focus more on the material. Speaking comfortably in their mother tongue may lead Chinese-speakers to unintentionally sideline their "banana" counterparts. They admit that it is "unusual" to converse with another ethnic Chinese in English. Socialization in Chinese

schools emphasizes language as an important cornerstone of Chinese culture, a view not shared by "Bananas." Nonetheless, "Bananas" are aware of China's increasing global importance.

In Malaysia, some ethnic Chinese view English language education as culturally superior (likely since Malaysia used to be a British colony) and have been distanced from ancestral traditions in China for decades. Embracing a Western disposition despite one's ethnic origin may not be viewed as completely alien. As Malaysians highly value a UK-based education,[24] having a good command of English is viewed as desirable cultural capital. This is the concern that "bananas" have, being confident that the English language will survive. However, the rising importance of the Chinese language is expected to counter this. It is likely that, as human beings often fear changes, many "bananas" are not comfortable with having to master a "new" language, including its elaborate script.

In the climate faced by the two Malaysian Chinese groups, there is a much-cited divide between individualism and collectivism. The individualistic perspective tends to be associated with graduates of English-language education, while graduates of Chinese-medium schools tend to be considered collectivistic. This stems from a general application of Hofstede's paradigm to Chinese-majority societies, linking Chinese education with Confucian values, such as benevolence, filial piety, and obligation to others. Conversely, English language or Western education is associated with an individualistic mindset. However, research by Edward Wong[25] disputes such a widespread application, arguing that more Chinese around the world are embracing individualistic values. This could be, in turn, linked to the process of reciprocity, where individuals exchange value systems through their increased exposure to people of diverse backgrounds.

Questions of reciprocity can be raised in a relationship of communication between the two parties. In sociology and anthropology, the notion of reciprocity can be traced back to Marcel Mauss'[26] writings on the nature of exchanging gifts. According to Elder-Vass,[27] there are three subcategories within the practice of gift exchange; reciprocal, positional, and free. We are concerned here with the first type, reciprocal, for it brooks an obligatory response. Reciprocity has also enjoyed a recent renaissance in sociological literature because of the emergence of the theory of social capital, popularized among others by Pierre Bourdieu, Alvin Gouldner, and Robert Putnam.[28]

---

[24] Sin I Lin, "Cultural Capital and Distinction: Aspirations of the 'Other' Foreign Student," *British Journal of Sociology of Education*: *Special Issue on Education and Social Mobility* 34, no. 5-6 (2013): 848–867.

[25] Wong, "The Chinese at Work."

[26] Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies* (London: Routledge, 2002).

[27] D. Elder-Vass, "Free Fifts and Positional Gifts: Beyond Exchangism," *European Journal of Social Theory* 18, no. 4 (2015): 451–468.

[28] A. Diekmann, "The Power of Reciprocity Fairness, Reciprocity, and Stakes in Variants of the Dictator Game," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48, no. 4 (2004): 487–505.

When extended into the realm of language acquisition in a bilingual or multilingual context, reciprocity can take new forms. It is not the form typically associated with exchanging gifts but the mutual acquisition of each other's language. Given the scenario outlined above, where Malaysian Chinese consist of the Chinese-educated and English-educated socio-linguistic groups, there is the possibility of exchanging one's *lingua franca*, a concept proposed by Ramon Caminal,[29] who posits a situation known as "reciprocal bilingualism." In this situation, Caminal observes that certain bilingual societies possess a distribution of language skills that cannot be explained solely by rational economic factors. He argues that reciprocal bilingualism encourages social welfare by reducing transaction costs or network externalities, an idea shared by economic sociologists, because cooperation can occur more smoothly.

Based on my data, the Chinese-educated respondents certainly desire to enhance their capabilities in conversing in English. Members of the English-educated group, or "Bananas," meanwhile display an interest in participating in this reciprocal bilingualism, although to a limited extent. This is likely because, as also outlined by Caminal, individuals weigh the costs and benefits of learning a second language, pitting "time and money" against "the ability to communicate and do business with members of other speech communities." A study found that among Malay undergraduates in Malaysia, there was an increased interest in learning Mandarin due to several motivating factors such as career prospects, enjoyment, and interest.[30]

Perhaps, with enhanced exposure to mass media of languages other than English, which is rapidly gaining pace in terms of quantity and quality, my respondents may develop a more nuanced interest in acquiring a second language. One way for this to develop is the exposure to mass media as a tool for a language's soft power. At present, it would be difficult to deny that there is an outpour of English-language mass media worldwide. Movies, television shows, video games, and popular music in the English language outweigh their equivalents in other languages, including the Chinese language, in terms of export market share.[31] As a daily tool of communication, more people converse in the English language for formal and informal business than they do in the Chinese language.[32] Nonetheless, with China's rise as an economic superpower, its cultural influence, too, has been increasing. Recent estimates show that movies, television programs, and popular music from China have

---

[29] Ramon Caminal, "The Economic Value of Reciprocal Bilingualism!" in *The Economics of Language Policy*, eds. Michele Gazzola and Bengt-Arne Wickstrom (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2016), 165–202.

[30] T. G. Tan, A. K. Ooi and Hairul Nizam Ismail, "The Orientations for Learning Mandarin amongst Malay Undergraduate Students," *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 12, no. 2 (2012): 104–112.

[31] United States of America Department of Commerce, *2015 Top Markets Report: Media and Entertainment: A Market Assessment* (July 2015), http://trade.gov/topmarkets/pdf/ Media_and_Entertainment_Top_Markets_Report.pdf.

[32] B. Seidhofer, "English as a Lingua Franca," *ELT Journal* 59, no. 4 (2005): 339–341.

enjoyed a greater outreach in other parts of the world, boosted in part by Chinese industry leaders such as Dalian Wanda, Alibaba, and Tencent, with hit blockbuster productions such as the "Dad, Where Are We Going?" series.[33] These have enjoyed a mass appeal among Chinese overseas, including Malaysian Chinese who are not literate in the Chinese language, facilitated by the use of subtitles. This trend encourages viewers of diverse backgrounds to develop an interest in learning Mandarin and better understand the original dialogue. Numerous message boards online dedicated to similar popular television shows feature discussions in English regarding plots, characters, actors, and costumes. Often, a few commenters will indicate an interest in learning Mandarin. It appears that the appeal of mass media is important in encouraging an interest in learning the Chinese language.

In today's increasingly interconnected world, Malaysians no longer face barriers to learning new languages. With the advancement of information technology, individuals are able to expand their bridging social capital, stretching beyond the nation's borders to include friends from other countries.[34] Online communities are also present, in which individuals cluster together based on similar interests in mass media. Thus, the exchange of ideas can inspire an amount of reciprocity. Individuals are also able to transcend their primary values, individualistic or collectivist, upon realizing that the world is much vaster than that initially perceived. Regardless of education as a primary socialization agent, people can venture beyond and embrace different value systems as a result of shared interests. Although learning a second language may pose challenges, it does not override the crucial need to acquire a second language because of its instrumental value.[35]

Bibliography

Caminal, R. "The Economic Value of Reciprocal Bilingualism!" In *The Economics of Language Policy*, edited by Michele Gazzola and Bengt-Arne Wickstrom, 165-202. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2016.

Chan, R. S. K. and J. Edo. "The Ah Beng Subculture as a Case Study of Malaysian Chinese Identity Formation." *SARJANA* 30, no. 1 (2015).

------, J. Edo, and R. B. M. Hussain. "Expectation vs Reality: Cosmopolitan and Insular Social Capital among Malaysian Chinese Youth." *Glocalism: Journal of Culture, Politics, and Innovation* 2 (2015): 1–17.

---

[33] P. Frater, "China Rising: How Four Giants Are Revolutionizing the Film Industry," *Variety.com*, 2015, http://variety.com/2015/film/news/china-rising-quartet-of-middle-kingdom-conglomerates-revolutionizing-chinese-film-industry-1201421685/.

[34] R. S. K. Chan, J. Edo, and R. B. M. Hussain, "Expectation vs Reality: Cosmopolitan and Insular Social Capital among Malaysian Chinese Youth," *Glocalism: Journal of Culture, Politics, and Innovation* 2 (2015): 1–17.

[35] Y. S. Tan and Santhiram R. Raman, "Problems and Challenges of Learning Through a Second Language: The Case of Teaching of Science and Mathematics in English in the Malaysian Primary Schools," *Kajian Malaysia* 25, no. 2 (2007): 29–54.

------. "Global habitus: Multilingual identity differences expressed through cultural capital." *Educate Journal of Doctoral Research* 16, no. 1 (2016): 25–34.

Cheong, K. C., K. H. Lee, and P. P. Lee. "Surviving Financial Crises: The Chinese Overseas in Malaysia and Singapore." *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 45, no. 1 (2015): 26–47.

Diekmann, A. "The Power of Reciprocity Fairness, Reciprocity, and Stakes in Variants of the Dictator Game." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48, no. 4 (2004): 487–505.

Elder-Vass, D. "Free gifts and positional gifts: Beyond exchangism." *European Journal of Social Theory* 18, no. 4 (2015): 451–468.

Frater, P. "China Rising: How Four Giants Are Revolutionizing the Film Industry." *Variety.com*, 2015. http://variety.com/2015/film/news/china-rising-quartet-of-middle-kingdom-conglomerates-revolutionizing-chinese-film-industry-1201421685/.

Gabriel, S. P. "After the Break: Re-ceonceptualizing Ethnicity, National Identity and 'Malaysian Chinese' Identities." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 37, no. 7 (2013): 1211–1224. http://tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01419870.2014.859286.

Gouldner, A. W. "The Norm of Reciprocity: A Preliminary Statement." *American Sociological Review* 25 (1960): 161–178.

Granovetter, M. S. "The Strength of Weak Ties." *American Journal of Sociology* 78, no. 6 (1973): 1360–1380.

Goldthorpe, J. "Cultural Capital: Some Critical Observations." *Sociologica* 1, no. 2 (2007): 1–23.

Hirschman, C. "The Making of Race in Colonial Malaya: Political Economy and Racial Ideology." *Sociological Forum* 1, no. 2 (1986): 330–361.

Hofstede, G. "Management Control of Public and Not-for-profit Activities." *Accounting, Organizations and society* 6, no. 3 (1981): 193–211.

Jacques, M. *When China Rules the World: The End of the Western World and the Birth of a New Global Order*. London: Penguin, 2009.

Ji, Jing. "A Blockbuster Business." *Beijing Review* (January 2015). http://www.bjreview.com.cn/pdf/2015/05.pdf.

Law, K. Y. and K. M. Lee. "The Myth of Constructing a Greater China Identity: A Case Study of the Malaysian Chinese in Reforming China." *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies* 11, no. 2 (2009): 19–43.

Lareau, A. and E. Weininger. "Cultural Capital in Educational Research: A Critical Assessment." *Theory and Society* 32, no. 5/6 (2003): 567–606.

Purcell, V. *The Chinese in Malaya*. London-New York: Oxford University Press, 1948.

Seidhofer, B. "English as a Lingua Franca." *ELT Journal* 59, no. 4 (2005): 339–341.

Sin, I Lin. "Cultural Capital and Distinction: Aspirations of the 'Other' Foreign Student," *British Journal of Sociology of Education*: *Special Issue on Education and Social Mobility* 34, no. 5-6 (2013): 848–867.

Smith, B. "Anthropology and Psychology," In *For a Science of Social Man*, edited by John Gillin. New York: Macmillan, 1954.

Tan, C. B. "Chinese identities in Malaysia." *Asian Journal of Social Science* 25, no. 2 (1997): 103–116.

Tan, T. G., A. K. Ooi, and Hairul Nizam Ismail. "The Orientations for Learning Mandarin amongst Malay Undergraduate Students." *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 12, no. 2 (2012): 104–112. http://www.ijhssnet.com/journals/Vol_2_No_12_Special_Issue_June_20 12/15.pdf.

Tan, Y. S. and R. Santhiram. *The Education of Ethnic Minorities: The Case of the Malaysian Chinese*. Petaling Jaya: Strategic Information Research Development, 2010.

------ and Santhiram R. Raman. "Problems and Challenges of Learning Through a Second Language: The Case of Teaching of Science and Mathematics in English in the Malaysian Primary Schools." *Kajian Malaysia* 25, no. 2 (2007): 29–54.

United States of America Department of Commerce. *2015 Top Markets Report: Media and Entertainment: A Market Assessment* (July 2015). http://trade.gov/topmarkets/pdf/Media_and_Entertainment_Top_Mark-kets_Report.pdf .

Wong, E. Y. T. "The Chinese at Work: Collectivism or Individualism?" *Hong Kong Institute of Business Studies Working Paper Series 040-001,* 2001. http://commons.ln.edu.hk/hkibswp/31.

Xing, Fang. "Glocalizing ELT: From Chinglish to China English." *Journal of Language Teaching and Research* 2, no. 2 (2011): 377–381.

Yinger, J. M. "Contraculture and Subculture." *American Sociological Review* 25, no. 5: (1960): 625–635.

List of Contributors

Kunawi BASYIR (M.Ag.) received his PhD in Islamic Studies from the Sunan Ampel State Islamic University, Surabaya, Indonesia in 2014. Currently, he is a professor at the Faculty of Theology and Philosophy of that university. His teaching includes courses on Anthropology of Religion, Civic Education, and Religion and Local Culture. His research focuses on interreligious dialogue, pluralism, and new religious movements. Some of his recent publications: "Cultural Cooperation and Dialogue Between Muslims and Hindu in Bali" (2018), "The 'Acculturative Islam" as a Type of Home-Grown Islamic Tradition: Religion and Local Culture in Bali" (2019), "The Emergence of New Religious Movement and Threats to Social Harmony in Kupang, East Nusa Tenggara" (2020) and "Fighting Islamic Radicalism Through Religious Moderatism in Indonesia: An Analysis of Religious Movement" (2020).

Irina BOLDONOVA graduated from Moscow State University, Faculty of Philology, Department of English Language and American Literature. From 1999 until 2003 she worked at the Department of Public Relations at East-Siberian State Technological university as an Associate Professor. In 2010, she received a Ph.D. in Philosophy and worked as a professor at Buryat State University, Ulan-Ude-city, Russia until 2017. Currently, she works as a visiting professor at Nankai University in Tianjin, China. She is an expert in Hermeneutics, Interpersonal Communication, Intercultural Communication, Philosophy of Communication, Esthetics of Nature, and Eurasian Dialogue. Boldonova won several stipends and grants: JFDP (USA), DAAD (German Foundation of Academic Exchanges), IMG (EU), Erasmus Mundus (EU), Russian Scientific Foundation, Chinese Scientific Foundation.

Rachel CHAN Suet Kay is a Research Fellow at the Institute of Ethnic Studies, National University of Malaysia. Her academic interests focus on cultural sociology in general; in particular, she has two main tracks of research: cultural capital flows between East Asia and the West, and popular culture. This is evidenced in her latest publications, including her latest books *The Convergence of Chinese and Western Values as Global Habitus* and *Ah Beng Subculture and the Anti-Capital of Social Exclusion*. She is currently the Chief Editor of the UKM Ethnic Studies Paper Series and an editor of the KITA Monograph Series (as Chairperson of the KITA Publication Committee). She received her research-MA and her Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Malaya and holds a BSc (Hons) in Sociology and Diploma in Economics from the University of London.

Andrew Tsz Wan HUNG is a lecturer in the College of Professional and Continuing Education, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. He teaches critical thinking, political philosophy, and Chinese culture at the Division of Social Sciences, Humanities, and Design. His research focuses on Charles Taylor, Christian ethics, Chinese Family and Culture, Western and

Chinese philosophy. His recent publications include "Habermas and Taylor on Religious Reasoning in a Liberal Democracy," The European Legacy: Toward New Paradigms, 2017; "Charles Taylor and Paul Tillich on Interreligious Dialogue," Studies in Interreligious Dialogue 2021: "Mencius and Berlin on Freedom," Philosophy East and West (forthcoming).

Peter JONKERS is an emeritus professor of philosophy at Tilburg University. His teaching and research expertise includes philosophy of religion, metaphysics, history of modern philosophy (especially Hegel and his contemporaries), and contemporary continental philosophy. Currently, his research is focused on questions regarding religious truth, tolerance, religious and cultural diversity, a philosophical exploration of (Christian) wisdom, and the philosophy of F.H. Jacobi. Some of his recent publications: "A Revaluation of Wisdom as a Way to Reconnect Philosophy With the Life-World" (2017), "Religion as a Source of Evil" (2017), "The Boundaries of Intercultural Dialogue in a World 'After Babel'" (2018), "Philosophy and (Christian) Wisdom" (2019), "How to break the ill-fated bond between religious truth and violence" (2020), "Self-awareness of Life in Western Philosophy" (2020). Jonkers is a member of the Steering Committee of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies and a member of the Board of the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy.

Denys KIRYUKHIN is a research scholar at the Social Philosophy Department, Skovoroda Institute of Philosophy, the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (Kyiv, Ukraine). He graduated from Kyiv National Taras Shevchenko University and got a Ph.D. in Philosophy from the Skovoroda Institute of Philosophy. His research interests focus on the social and political development of post-communist states, theory of justice, and political philosophy. Denys Kiryukhin is the author of *The Discourses of Justice in Historical Context* (2021, in Ukrainian) and *An Introduction to Hegel`s Philosophy of Religion: Philosophy as a Speculative Theology* (2007, in Ukrainian). Furthermore, he contributed to several books, including *Community and Tradition in Global Times* (2021), *Ny kold krig. Marie Krarup taler med 17 eksperter fra øst og vest* (2018, in Danish), *Justice and Responsibility: Cultural and Philosophical Foundations* (2018), *Ukraine in Crisis* (2017), *Ukraine and Russia: People, Politics, Propaganda, and Perspectives* (2015).

Thomas MENAMPARAMPIL (Kerala, India,1936) did his studies at Calcutta University and Shillong. His special research interest has been history, culture, ethnic diversity, peace, reconciliation, and ethics. He has worked in the field of education and social work for more than forty years and has been involved in several initiatives for peace. He has presented papers recently in several universities in India, China, Africa, and the US on themes of ethical values, and more recently on the healing of historic memories and inter-ethnic and inter-cultural understanding.

Asha MUKHERJEE (Dubey) is an emeritus Professor in Philosophy at the Department of Philosophy and Comparative Religion at Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, India. She taught at Visva-Bharati for four decades after a Ph.D. from the University of Rajasthan. She was a Fulbright Post-Doctoral Fellow

in 1984-85 at Indiana University, Bloomington, and Visiting Professor, and delivered lectures in several foreign universities in various capacities. She is a member of the Steering Committee of FISP (International Federation of Philosophical Societies) and on the editorial board of several journals. Her areas of specialization are logic, analytic ethics, applied ethics, Jaina and Buddhist philosophy, religious studies, and gender studies. Her recent publications include: "Philosophy and Crisis: An Eastern Solution," in *Philosophy and Crisis*: *Responding to Challenges to Ways of Life in the Contemporary World* (2018); *The Future of Religious Studies in India* (2021); *Contemporary Gender Issues in India: Some Reflections* (2021) and a *Special Volume on Daya Krishna, Gauhati Journal of Philosophy* (2021).

NING Lina holds a doctorate in philosophy and is a professor at the Philosophy Department of Shanghai University. She is chairperson of the Shanghai Association of Logic and vice-chairperson of the Chinese Association of Logic. Her main research interest is in logic, especially Chinese logic, foreign logic, and the comparative study of these two fields. She focuses on problems about the relationship between logic and life, or logic and culture. She published nearly one hundred articles in journals and newspapers like *Philosophy Research, Philosophical Trends, Journal of Dialectics of Nature, Academic Journal of Beijing University, Academic Monthly, Studies in Logic, Academic Exchange, Guangming Daily, The Northern Forum, Inner Mongolia Social Sciences, People's Daily.* She has also published more than a dozen books, including *On the translation of Mill's logic thought by Yan Fu*, *History of Western logic*. She completed several projects of the National Social Science Fund and the Planning Fund of the Ministry of Education.

Olayiwola Victor OJO obtained his first and second degree in Political Science at the University of Ilorin, Nigeria. He received his Ph.D. in Ideology and Politics from Shanghai University, China. He has published a couple of papers in international journals. His most recent work has appeared in *Insight On Africa.*

QIU Renfu is a doctor of law and professor of the school of Marxism, Shanghai University. He is director of the China dialectical materialism Research Association, Director of China Value Philosophy Research Association. In recent years, he is mainly engaged in the research of value philosophy, presiding over three projects of the National Social Science Foundation in China. He has published more than 120 academic papers in journals and eight academic books.

Wiwik SETIYANI received his education out at Sunan Ampel State Islamic University, Surabaya, Indonesia. In 2015 he completed his doctoral education for Islamic studies. His research areas include sociology of religion with a focus on inter-religious relations and inter-religious tolerance, Islamic thought with a focus on the dogma of Islamic teachings regarding religious truth claims, and the study of religions with a focus on pluralism and multiculturalism. From 2010 until 2013 Setiyani served as chairman of the department of religious studies at the Faculty of Ushuluddin and Islamic Thought. Currently, he is a lecturer at the State Islamic University of Sunan Ampel

Surabaya Indonesia. He has supervised several dissertations in the field of Islamic and cultural studies.

SHEN Haiyan is a professor of Buddhist Studies and Religious Studies at the Department of Philosophy, Shanghai University. She received her Ph.D. in Buddhist Studies from Ghent University, Belgium, in 2004. She was a visiting Professor of the Indian Council of Philosophical Research (ICPR) in 2016-2017, in the Swinburne University of Technology, Australia in 2015, in the Centre for the Study of Humanistic Buddhism, the Chinese University of Hong Kong in 2012 and in the Department of Buddhist Studies, Foguang University, Taiwan in 2011. Shen's primary field of interest is Ultimate Freedom Experience, and she is taking the journey on the Path of Truth and experiencing life in its totality. Her main publication is *The Profound Meaning of the Lotus Sūtra: T'ien-t'ai Philosophy of Buddhism (2 Vols.)* (2005, 2007), and *Truth and Enlightenment in Tiantiai Zhiyi's Philosophy* (2020).

Vincent SHEN (1949-2018) received his PhD in 1980 from the Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium, with a thesis on "Action et Créativité: une étude sur les contrastes génétiques et structurels entre l'action blondélienne et la creavité whiteheadienne." He taught at the Department of Philosophy, National Chengchi University from 1980 to 2000, and from 2000 until he died in 2018 he held the Lee Chair in Chinese Thought and Culture, University of Toronto (Canada). His research interests lied in the area of Chinese philosophy, comparative philosophy, phenomenology, the philosophical problems of technology, culture, and religion. Some of his recent publications: *Generosity to the Other: Chinese Culture, Christianity and Strangfication* (2004); *Technology, Humanities, and Cultural Development* (2014); *From Matteo Ricci to Heidegger* (2014). He edited *Confucian Ethics: Retrospect and Prospect* (2007) and *Dao Companion to Classical Confucian Philosophy* (2014). Vincent Shen was visiting professor at various European universities. He served as President of the Chinese Philosophical Association (1995-1999, 1999-2003); President (1997-1999) and executive director (2001-2011) of the International Society of Chinese Philosophy, USA; Vice-President of the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (2012-2018).

Lalan Prasad SINGH holds a Ph.D. in philosophy from Ranchi University, India, and was (visiting) a professor of philosophy at numerous universities in India and abroad. He is the co-founder of the Inter-Faith Dialogue – A Center of Knowledge and has been convened and participated in various international conferences on philosophical and cultural topics. He has supervised more than twenty dissertations. His publications include *Zen Buddhism* (1986), *Buddhist Tantra: Philosophical Reflection and Religious Investigation* (2010), AND *Tantra: Its Mystic and Scientific Basis* (2010).

TU Xiaofei received his Master's and Doctoral degrees in Religious Studies from Harvard, Yale, and Syracuse Universities. He is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Languages, Literature, and Cultures. His research interests include classic and modern East Asian thought and East Asian pop culture. His most recent publication is "The Kojiki/Nihon Shoki Mythology and Chinese Mythology: Theme, Structure, and Meaning."

Prabhu VENKATARAMAN is currently working as a professor of philosophy in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati, India. He was a Gold Medalist in his graduate and a post-graduate degree in philosophy and was a Junior and Senior Research Fellow from the University Grants Commission, India. His dissertation was on Wittgenstein's views on religion, culture, and value. Some of his recent publications include *Identity and recognition in the case of Dalits*, *Solitude, spirituality and social beings, Issues in understanding spirituality as relational,* etc. His areas of interest include applied ethics, philosophy of education, philosophy of religion, and political thought.

Astrid VICAS is an Associate Professor of Philosophy in the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies at Saint Leo University, Florida, USA. She received her Ph.D. in Philosophy from McGill University, Montréal, Canada. Her research draws on texts from a variety of cultures and methods from various disciplines to broaden our philosophical understanding of agency, language, narrative, human excellence, and social organization.

WANG Tianen received his Ph.D. in 1996 from the College of Philosophy, Wuhan University, China. Currently, he is a professor of philosophy at Shanghai University. He was a senior visiting scholar at Rutgers University and the Georgia Institute of Technology, a research fellow and director of the Institute of Philosophy, Jiangxi Academy of Social Sciences, professor, and dean of the School of Social Sciences, Shanghai University. His main research interest lies in theoretical philosophy, especially theory of knowledge based on descriptive theory, theory of stipulation, anthropology of knowledge, causality, paradox, etc. He researches the ontological and epistemological foundations of information civilization based on big data and artificial intelligence. In his view, information is a reciprocal relation; as the radical characteristic of information, reciprocity is also a radical anthropological characteristic, which means the superposition of the characteristics of information and anthropology, and a relationship of mutual dependence or interaction between human beings.

WU Liqun, is a professor at the Department of Philosophy, Shanghai University, China. She graduated from Nanjing University with a major in Chinese Philosophy, in particular Confucian philosophy. She teaches Chinese Philosophy, Philosophy, and Life, Neo-Confucianism, and Modern Society. In her, research Wu focuses on the context and the way of thinking of Chinese Philosophy and the modern transformation of Confucianism. Recently, she started to pay attention to the research of Confucianism in the realm of reciprocity. She wrote two monographs, namely *Study on the Philosophy of WU Chen* (2011) and *Neo-Confucianism and Modern Society* (2018), and published several papers in prominent journals: "Wu Chen's Viewpoint on Taiji" (2010), "Study on Publicity in the Context of Confucian Philosophy" (2013), "The Historical Evolution of the Confucian Concept of Public and Private" (2014) and "The Theoretical Dilemma of Man-Machine Definition in Artificial Intelligence" (2019).

ZAIRU NISHA holds a Ph.D. in reproductive technologies and choice rhetorics from Jawaharlal Nehru University, India. Her research interests include feminist bioethics, Indian philosophy, philosophy of technology, and sociopolitical philosophy. Presently, she is working as an assistant professor of philosophy at Ramanujan College, University of Delhi, Delhi, India.

ZHANG Yanfen majored in foreign philosophy and achieved her Ph.D. in the school of philosophy of Fudan University in 2003. She has been an associate professor in the philosophy department at Shanghai University since 2008. Zhang contributed to the compilation of some textbooks such as *Philosophy and Wisdom, Philosophy and Life,* etc., and worked as an associate editor of Philosophy and Life. Her research interests lie in Western philosophy including cultural philosophy, axiology, foreign Marxism, etc. She has supervised several projects in philosophy and social sciences. Currently, she is supervising a National-sponsored program in philosophy and social sciences, named "Study on the Morphology and Significance of Evaluation Activity in the Micro Age." She has published a monograph on Fredric Jameson's Cultural Theory and more than 30 academic papers in leading journals in China.

Index

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 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 and 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)

IIIB.2 *The Experience of Being as Goal of Human Existence: The Heideg-gerian 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 156518 1573 (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 Postmodern Era: Indian Philosophical Studies, XIII*. Varghese Manimala, ed. IBSN 978 1565182554 (paper).

IIIB.14 *Identity, Creativity and Modernization: Perspectives on Indian Cultural Tradition: Indian Philosophical Studies, XIV*. Sebastian Velassery and Vensus A. George, eds. ISBN 9781565182783 (paper).

IIIB.15 *Elusive Transcendence: An Exploration of the Human Condition Based on Paul Ricoeur: Indian Philosophical Studies, XV*. Kuruvilla Pandikattu. ISBN 9781565182950 (paper).

IIIB.16 *Being Human in Multicultural Traditions: Indian Philosophical Studies, XVI*. K. Remi Rajani and Vensus A. George, eds. ISBN 978156518 3285 (paper).

IIIB.17 *Justice and Responsibility: Re-learning to be Human: Indian Philosophical Studies, XVII*. Balaganapathi Devarakonda and Sebastian Velassery, eds. ISBN 9781565183483 (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 and 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).

IIID.9 *Value Education in the Context of Social Integration in Vietnam Today*. Truong Ngoc Nam and Tran Hai Minh, eds. ISBN 9781565183414 (paper).