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**Traditional Values and Virtues  
in Contemporary Social Life**  
**Chinese Philosophical Studies XXXV**

Edited by  
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# Introduction

GONG QUN

Since the 1980s, some academic circles have sought to revive virtue ethics. To look for the resources of virtue ethics, most researchers have turned to ancient Greece, to Aristotle, the Stoics, and others. However, in this revival movement, many scholars have questioned whether virtue ethics is able to be adapted to modern social life. With the advent of modern society, the area of ethics has given rise to new theories, perhaps most notably: utilitarianism, with its core concept of utility; and deontology, with obligation at its core. These approaches have begun to replace ancient virtue ethics. This trend seemingly showed that virtue ethics does not adapt well to modern society and that Utilitarianism and Deontology provide a much better framework for our modern, technological, quantitative, pluralistic and globalized world. However, one can ask, is that so? And, if so, why?

If people wanted to apply virtue ethics in modern society they would be faced with a moral dilemma because social structures have shifted from the traditional to the modern. Questions have also come from virtue ethicists themselves, such as MacIntyre, who believe that the concept of utility is at the center of modern moral life, and virtue has been pushed to the edges. This argument claims that with the advent of modern society, virtue represented by traditional Aristotelianism is inevitably lost; virtue lies at the edge of social life, and we live in an historic era "after virtue." Nonetheless, the question may be raised: is there a role for virtue ethics today? Might this traditional approach be of help in coping with the complexities of modern life? What kind of relationship is fit for both modern society and virtue ethics? Does modern society need a virtue ethics? If modern society does not need virtue ethics, but only utilitarianism or deontological ethics, then, does a revival of virtue ethics, have only theoretical support and value, simply because of the social practices of modern human beings?

To answer these questions, we called together scholars from different countries and regions, of the globe for an international conference, "Ethics of Virtue and Modern Society." The papers collected

here take up the challenge contained in these questions and attempt to respond from their different perspectives, both theoretical and practical.

### Part I. Intercultural Philosophy

“Intercultural Philosophy, Mutual *Waitui*, Chinese Philosophy and Globalization” by Vincent Shen mainly discusses the issues with globalization. Globalization and modernization are internally related. Globalization is an important symbol of modern society. Modern society is a global society but, at the same time, globalization is an historical process that does not arrive at the end. For different regions, different nationalities and different cultures, how to spread and continue the modernization process of globalization, in Shen’s opinion, is a very deep philosophical problem, namely the problem of *waitui* (strangification) and generosity. He points out that globalization is a matter of cultural integration and how we face multiple others. However, how a culture fuses into another heterogeneous culture, depends on whether its *waitui* (strangification) is able to succeed or not. Only if its *waitui* (strangification) is able to be successful, can it go into the depths of another culture, and survive and develop in another culture. Whether a culture is capable of *waitui* (strangification), there are linguistic issues, and the “generosity” factor in its culture plays a role. In other words, because it has the ethical virtue of generosity, it can open to another culture which is a key factor in order for another culture to accept a culture coming from outside.

In this paper, Shen first analyses Christianity and Chinese philosophy, especially Confucianism. He thinks Christianity manifests the great spirit of generosity. The Christian doctrine that God has created the universe could be seen as God’s generosity, God’s originally generous act of producing creatures out of his infinitely powerful and immensely abundant creativity. The incarnation of Christ is an act of generosity, that God becomes human and takes the form of human body, and sacrifices his own life for the benefit of human beings and the whole world.

Second, Shen tells us there are many factors of *waitui* (strangification) and generosity in Chinese philosophy. Confucianism would

propose *ren* 仁 as the original communicative competence, the ontological condition of possibility which renders feasible and legitimate the act of *waitui* (strangification) as well as communication and self-reflection. From this original communicative competence, Confucianism proposes the concept of *shu* 恕, which could be seen as an act of empathy and *waitui* (strangification). In positing the existence of a 'sensitive responsiveness' as condition of possibility of *waitui* (strangification), Confucianism has elevated *waitui* (strangification) to the ontological level. Shen emphasizes that, in Confucianism, the concept of *shu* 恕 represents this ability to go to multiple others and to communicate with others through language understandable to him/her/them. Therefore, he believes that Confucianism will be able to contribute to this process of globalization by its way of life as a process of ethical extension, especially by Confucian virtues and values such as *ren* (仁 humanness), *shu* (恕 altruism), *yi* (義 rightness), *zhi* (智 wisdom), *cheng* (誠 sincerity), *xin* (信 faithfulness)...etc. In the networks developed by globalization, if human beings want to live up to human dignity, they should always deal with each other with sincerity and especially with the virtue of *shu*.

"The Need for Traditional Metaphysics in the Post-Modern Struggle for World Peace" by Oliva Blanchette holds that metaphysics, which is necessary both in the sense of the transcendent and from historical significance, is to point to the ultimate goal of human history: World Peace. In terms of ultimate purpose, world peace is the ultimate good and common good of humanity. In his view, the ultimate purpose of the metaphysical sense is so important, because peace has been taken as the object by human beings in relationship with others, just like satisfaction and needs of physical desire. Blanchette points out that struggles are necessary to achieve this ultimate goal. He agrees with Hegel's philosophy that human beings or individuals, in order to win other's respect and acknowledgement, must struggle with other human individuals. This struggle will carry on to the end because everyone wants to win not only the object whom one fights against, but also an identity itself from the others. The final outcome of this identity and acknowledgement is to form a public consciousness or a public spirit so as to form a spiritual community. Like Hegel's idea, just as the struggle between different individuals is in-

dispensable, war between the countries need not be avoided. These wars contribute to the progress of history, so as to form a common spirit of humanity and to the common good of humanity. The "spirit would accommodate the wide diversity of cultures, peoples, nations, and states, each with a spirit of its own, in a peace of mutual regard and enrichment." He states that "The idea of world peace as the final end of history is a rich one indeed, one that no individual, no corporation, no nation can arrive at by itself. It transcends whatever each one of these can achieve by themselves because it can come only through peaceful dialogue among all of them. This requires some metaphysical transcendence on the part of all in the encounter with the other." In his view, God has his place in the process of human pursuit of the ultimate goal: "If an individual or a community believes in a totally transcendent God who intervenes in human history through prophecy and incarnation in view of providing for the salvation or perfect happiness, not just of a particular community, but of the whole human race, then one has to include the idea of some communal good for humanity as a whole as the final end of history, regardless of how imperfect that might be, and as the way for human beings to enter into the perfect communion with God."

"Virtue, Norm, and Moral Practice: Comparative Perspective" by Yang Guorong analyses in multi-dimensional ways the concept of virtue in Chinese tradition. Yang believes that the traditional virtue theory has the following four characteristics: first, virtues lie in human life, and we can only find it inside the existence of human being. Therefore, virtue has stability. Second, moral behavior of the human being is rooted in virtue, and at the same time is constrained by general norms. Values for the mind of human being are virtues, and from outside the heart of human being, are norms. Norms imply 'ought,' and take the good as its foundation. The relationship of norm and behavior of the agent is that when there is no virtue in the mind of the agent, he is passively to follow or comply with the norm; and when there is virtue in the mind of the agent he would consciously and voluntarily follow the norm. Third, virtue which is an internal character of the human being occurs by external moral actions: from its origin, the formation of virtue cannot be separated from moral actions. What a human being has done for a long time forms his vir-

tues. Only then can external moral action manifest whether the agent is virtuous or not, so external moral actions are virtue's external confirmation over the long run. Fourth, the moral character of an agent has a naturally developmental process from the potential to its formation. What is more, behavior by virtue has a cultivating process which includes forming the intention of doing good, being able to know the good, and to form and develop good emotions.

## **Part II. Values and Morality in the Contemporary World**

"Is there a Place for Traditional Values and Virtues in Social Life Today?" by Gerard Walmsley wants to response to the questions which the announcement of the conference proposes, namely that the social transformation from traditional to modern society, and the process of modernization is one of utilitarian pursuit for material interests and one of fulfillment of material desire, which also has led to the growing decline of traditional morality. Gerard Walmsley points out that the rising of modernity has led to the inevitable result that makes us focus our attention mainly on the lowest level of value – material goods. It has demoralized us by making us blind to anything but material goods. Modernization is a process of globalization, but one which is driven and dominated by a concept of greed and a powerful force of market efficiency. It completely dominates personal and social life and culture, and compresses the world outlook of pay or earnings imposed on human being in this world, without leaving any space for cultural and moral values. Finally, the moral theory itself lies in disorder, so that we cannot have modern resources to deal with our moral situation. Therefore, we must go back to the tradition in order to obtain that which we have lost or have ignored from our thinking and ethical behavior, namely, the traditional resources of virtue ethics of Aristotle, Aquinas and Bernard Lonergan. Among the three men, Gerard Welmsley highlights the Virtue Ethics of Aquinas. In his view, Aquinas provides a specific ethical system that has characteristics of the consequentainism of utilitarianism and deontology of Kant, and is sufficient to deal with the complexity of human life, Aquinas has an outstanding theoretical argument, and there is a complete description

of virtue in human life, with a link to good will and the human intellect in order to illustrate the human good.

Welmsley deems, as a further resource for meeting the challenges of the contemporary situation, that we can turn to Bernard Lonergan. Generally, Lonergan provides the most complete response to the distortions produced by modernity and the rise of science. He offers a comprehensive philosophy of consciousness that allows for the recovery of an intelligent and responsible subjectivity. In short, by these resources, what we need is to recover a sense of the seriousness of moral life, a deeper understanding of the complexity of our ethical thinking, and ultimately a fuller self-appropriation of our moral agency. Finally, Welmsley emphasizes that Aristotle and Aquinas, along with Lonergan have pointed us in the right direction. Together their ideas will help to reorient and integrate contemporary moral life and ethical thinking.

"Values and Virtues in Three Life Forms Today" by Maijia Kule considers that if we want to ask about virtue's position in modern society, we should research it from life forms. Her paper aims mainly at researching three different human life forms: *upward*, *forward*, *on the surface*. While there exists a hierarchy of values that can be reached trying to overcome one's self and the somber prose of life the glance *upward* will unite people. One can aspire to God, truth, transcendence, the beautiful, good, superhuman, etc. Ideas about virtue ethics correspond much more to the life form *upward*, but is not so easy to implement this life form in contemporary societies and to withstand the attack of consumer society, the cult of things, media manipulations, neoliberalism, the pressure of time and the temptations of money. Economy and the bustle in the social sphere drive contemporary life *forward*. The tempo of life accelerates, demands grow; production and marketing capacities expand. Time turns into fast time; space shrinks. Stay-at-homes turn into travellers. Money becomes the universal measure for everything that can and cannot be measured. The majority of contemporary Europeans live striving *forward*. *Forward* supposes normativism in ethics and the rapid historical change of value systems. Humans are perceived as a totality of functions. Society is ruled by utilitarianism, pragmatism and functionality.

For the second half of the XX century and today's life forms *on the surface* change value systems. The triumph of the body is strikingly manifested in the extreme forms of art, in the media, in communication. Desires of the body become more important than the power of reason and spirit. Emotional experience overshadows cultivation of the human's deepest spiritual feelings. The public merges with the private. Medicine, cosmetic industry and pharmacology help to control the body. The ideals of classical ethics many times are regarded as old-fashioned, and norms – discriminating. It is a road beyond ethics. If morals are retained, then only on condition that they help to assign to the event a postclassical sense, not to evaluate it. Thirst for freedom turns into freedom of buying and adventure, egoism, and denying communal needs. It is characteristic that the most active supporters of the postclassical period standpoints are modern art, literature and the media. Kule points out that life *on the surface* is disliked by representatives of different civilizations and religions which prefer moral stability and harmony. Questions about the meaning of virtue ethics today can be interpreted in the wider context – of the different life forms. She has sympathy for the life form *upward* and sharply criticizes post-modern life forms on the *surface*. However, she does not to answer how we can go back to the *upward* life form.

“Values and Virtues in a Non-tradition-based Culture” by John Patrick Giddy believes that there are disconnections of values in the process of the transition from traditional to modern society. In pre-modern communities people were concerned about the statuses which individuals possessed and the roles with which individuals shared; and in modern society people emphasizes a higher degree of freedom. What is more, with virtue being marginalized, globalization is associated with the mainstream ethics of utilitarian ethics and de-ontological ethics, have neglected the basic virtues which dominated in traditional society. Hence, Giddy says that his aim in this paper is to present a way of thinking about these conditions of modern culture which can furnish a framework, at the individual and at the social or political level, for resisting the resultant degeneration of the quality of human life. He thinks that in modern society we cannot deny the values of freedom, and autonomy which modern society established. However, it should be noted that we also must value community and

the final settling place of human being. Therefore, we must hold the views that modern society is the development of traditional society, from which it is not disconnected. Thus, value which traditional society cherished should also be its significant for modern society. Giddy proposes integration of two such values, namely respect for individual freedoms, human rights, and the autonomy established by modern society, and also attach importance to the traditional values related to the community as home.

“Justice and Civic Friendship” by Rajesh C. Shukla has studied the relationship of justice and friendship in Aristotle’s theory in depth, and on the basis of his research, criticized some ideas held by Julia Aunas on relations of friendship and justice. In Aristotle’s view, friendship and justice are interdependent; friendship promotes a just constitution and a just constitution promotes friendship. By implication, they share the same good and pursue the same end – virtue – and are critical for social harmony and human flourishing.

Aunas criticized Aristotle’s views and emphasized that it is too great a consistency or similarity of justice and friendship, would make justice and friendship too personal. To avoid the Aristotelian error, friendship and justice must be limited in their respective fields. In answer to Aunas, Shukla reconstructed Aristotle’s reply. First, character is, indeed, a critical aspect of friendship, and it cannot be dispensed with. Second, love and affection in friendship can go hand in hand with fairness and justice, and a preferential treatment towards the friend does not entail prejudiced treatment towards non-friends. Both are parts of the human good life. In other words, Shukla follows Aristotle, and take justice and friendship as virtues of character, which support each other in one subject or agent.

“Do We Need E-Values and E-Virtues?” by Richard Feist argues that values and virtues are hybrid entities: they possess both situational (contextual) and non-situational (Platonic) properties. Richard Feist then specifically considers the ramifications of the internet on the situational aspects of values and virtues. This raises the question as to whether or not the internet’s impact on our moral lives has engendered the need for new values and virtues – that is, e-values and e-virtues – or at least substantial modifications of traditional values and virtues. The paper critiques arguments for and against the claim that

we must expand our traditional set of values and virtues. Feist thinks that we do not need any expanded or substantially modified set of values and virtues. If ethical systems in history had worked or at least been applied, the new technology does not, in and of itself, create a need for new ethical systems. Feist stresses that the philosophical tradition (broadly understood) has amply provided us with the philosophical tools to handle contemporary technology and its effects on moral life. He researched a number of situations in which the novelties of technology were considered to lead to new relationships between technology and morality, which were ultimately novelties of degree (and not of kind) and so could be handled within pre-existing frameworks. Therefore, he concludes with a discussion of the need to re-connect (and ways to do so) with the virtues and values that are exemplified in the philosophical traditions.

### **Part III. Virtues and Ethics in Chinese Philosophy**

“The Virtue Theory of Mencius” by Chen Lai reexplored Chinese traditional Confucianism and Mencius as representatives of virtue ethics. Virtue ethics is the ethical trunk of traditional Chinese Confucian ethics, and Mencius plays an important role in the Confucian tradition. Thus, re-expounding Confucian virtue ethics has great significance for the inheritance and development of Confucian virtue in contemporary society.

Chen's article discussed five virtues of Confucian step by step. The five virtues are "benevolence (Ren 仁), righteousness (Yi 義), propriety (Li 禮), wisdom (Zhi 智), true (Xin 信)." What kind of relations of the five virtues in Mengzi's Virtue Theory? Chen has proposed that Mencius' theory of virtue has two ways for describing the behavior of virtue and virtue itself. The five virtues which are major virtues of Confucian ethics are five kinds of moral actions, but also the concept of virtue. In this relationship of the five virtues, the central virtue is "benevolence (Ren 仁), righteousness (Yi 義), while the other three deploy around them. The concept of "Ren" can be enlarged to be interpreted as "qin (親)," "benevolence," "love," the "qin (親)" for their relatives, "benevolence" for people, "love" corresponding to physical objects. Chen's article then discusses the

relationship of "benevolence" and "righteousness" in Mencius' Virtue Theory. In Confucius theory, Ren and propriety (Li 禮) lie in the same level. In Mencius, "Ren" and "righteous" lie in the same level because of which the virtue of "righteous" becomes the second most important virtue in Confucianism. Mencius still discusses the relationship between "Benevolence" and "wisdom," which Chen points out is considered as a requirement for saints who should have both: benevolent wisdom. Chen's article discusses the relationship between the four virtues: "benevolence, righteousness, propriety and wisdom," and Mencius' "four heart." Mencius has the theory of four main virtues from the perspective of four heart. Therefore, Mencius developed clearly the virtue theory of Confucianism.

"Confucian Ethics and Modernity" by Xiao Qunzhong says that one problem of the moral construction of contemporary China's society is how to deal with the relationship between the virtue tradition of Confucianism and modern public morality which came from Western society. Xiao Qunzhong sees the Confucian tradition as private while public morality came from the Western tradition and is the reasonable public one. For China to enter into modern society, it is necessary to advocate a public morality based on reason, which raises the question of how to deal with the relation between Confucian traditional virtue and modern social life. From Xiao Qunzhong's point of views, there are some different ways in Confucian traditional virtue and modern morality: 1. Traditional society emphasizes private ethics while modern society emphasizes public ethics. 2. Traditional morality regulates the acquaintance, neighbor society while modern morality regulates relationships in a society of strangers. 3. Traditional morality is a kind of high standard, noble morality based on human nature's self-improvement, while modern morality is a kind of universal and basic ethical norm that aims to regulate interpersonal relationships and maintain social order. 4. Traditional morality sticks to Yi (righteousness), based on the common public as the basic unit, while modern morality sticks to rights, based on the individual as the basic unit. 5. Traditional morality is based on Ren (仁 benevolence) which means to love others, and modern society ethics are based on rule/norm/law which are deemed to be appropriate. At first look, two sides may be opposite each other, but in fact, they can compensate

each other. Morality of modern society should find its complement from its opposite side in order to complete itself.

“Contemporary Significance of Confucian Values” by Gong Qun tries to answer the issue of whether the two levels of moral value of Confucian ethics and political value of Confucian political thought have contemporary significance. Gong’s paper deems that to pursue the process of modernization by now there has appeared moral indifference in contemporary China. This showed that we had been losing the traditional Confucian moral ideal value that placed traditional moral and spiritual values over material things. Confucian philosophy, as a humanist philosophy, emphasizes ethical love, which is at the core of ethics: that people have a benevolent spirit of love for human beings is as a basic requirement of Confucian morality.

Secondly, Confucian politics, although not an authoritarian political doctrine, has a wealth of resources for contemporary Chinese democratic society in the process of pursuing modernization. Here we point out a few fundamental Confucian political ideas: first, the people as the foundation of politics. Mencius stressed the people such as water and government as a boat; people can carry a boat, and can overturn it. Second, to follow Dao, do not follow the king. In the Confucian tradition of political thought, Dao is at a higher position than the king. For the ancient Chinese Confucian whether or not a monarch is accepted to govern depends on whether the monarch rules by Dao or not; to rule by benevolence is the only the legitimate rule. In modern China, we should pursue this spirit of Confucianism, namely to follow Dao rather than ruler. To reconstruct China’s political civilization, the ancient Chinese civilization must regain its splendor in the modern world.

“Human Rights in Chinese Philosophy: Classical Confucian and Mohist Thought” is written by Haiming Wen and William Keli’i Akina. The first part of this article demonstrates the relevance of Classical Confucianism to the current Chinese articulation of human rights theory and practice. The present work argues that the best pathway for a fair comparison between the practice of China and that of the West is to focus on the common outcomes valued by the different systems. A crucial distinction is made by authors between rights as a mechanism and rights as an outcome for the purpose of a fair

comparison between desirable Western and Chinese outcomes for the humane treatment of persons. This article demonstrates how the traditional Confucian values pertaining to virtuous individuals within the context of virtue-promotion in society have the capacity to produce a social environment in which rights' outcomes are realized, yet without recourse to the full legal mechanisms of Western-claimed rights.

The second part of this article turns to Mohism to establish that traditional Chinese philosophy shares several features which motivate contemporary human rights ideology, whether Chinese or Western. First, just as the contemporary Chinese version of human rights is a response to Western powers, the Mohist version of human rights emerged, on behalf of the common people, as a contrasting response to values of the ruling class. Secondly, both the contemporary Chinese and Mohist versions of human rights consider the right to life to be the starting point for human rights. Third, both of these versions agree that the right to life precedes other rights, such as the right to self-development. Fourth, both versions aim to establish an appropriate political system and practice of statesmanship to protect the rights of the common people. The article thus concludes that at two levels, Chinese philosophy historically supports contemporary Chinese and Western efforts to articulate a meaningful framework for human rights.

#### **Part IV. Traditional Perspectives on Cultures and Human Actions**

“The World as Metaphor” by João J. Vila-Chã studies the dialectical relation theory of the macrocosm and the microcosm of man from ancient Greek philosophy to philosophical-theology fields. Vila-Chã's research shows that exploring the unity of the *cosmos* or universe and its structure and the human being itself are inseparable. Scholars on the one hand explore the structure of the *cosmos* or universe and the unity of the *cosmos* or universe, while on the other hand, always trying to illustrate the unity of people in this small universe by the elements of the universe or the unity of the universe.

For Plato, the world and people are made of the same elements: fire, air, water and soil. Because the world is not subject to the impact

of illness and death, the human disorder and diseases is interpreted as "unnatural excess or insufficiency" of the four elements, while the growth of the body seems remarkably consistent with changes in the universe itself. The theologians added God to explain the unity the natural universe and of the microscopic man. Philo of Alexandria's point of view is that the heaven is the image of God, living between the Creator and human being, so that people can be rightly understood as a small heaven, and the cosmos can be understood as the largest and most perfect man. Philo clearly explains the analogous relationship between man and the cosmos just as the relationship of microcosm and macrocosm. Philo's contribution is very important because this is the first successful attempt to reconcile the Jewish faith and the ancient Greek philosophy. With the development of Western Christian philosophy, scholars continued to explain the relationship between the macrocosm-cosmos and the microcosm-man, as with the contribution of Ramon Lull in the 13th century. Vila-Chã points out that for Ramon Lull, the whole spirit of the cosmos or universe really folding and unfolding is similar to the human soul, just as the material essence of the universe and all creatures show similar folding and unfolding of the functioning of human body. This tells us that the Greek philosophy and Christian theology understand the position in the cosmos from the unity of man and the cosmos.

"Aristotle's *Nous* as *Telos*-related Reasoning" by Liao Shenbai mainly discusses Aristotle's concept of *nous*. The concept of *nous* basically denotes *telos*-related thinking or reasoning activity of the human intellect. It goes in a zigzag route around the issues we are facing until it reaches to some ultimate point on which we need no more thinking than. It goes both upward and downward: upward to grasp a comprehension of the *telos* one has acquired, downward to reach some ultimate, acts. In the status of good men, both the upward and the downward thinking and reasoning make senses, an auxiliary factor of the downward reasoning is helpful where the mean is obscure. In the status of the average men, the upward thinking or reasoning fades out, and since a man in this states will have much heavier burden of reasoning, that auxiliary factor of the downward *nous* will seem to be both outstanding and unique.

The notion of *mind* has long been taken as a legal translation of Plato-Aristotle's *nous* in the West. In the realm of daily life and practice, the notion of mind basically denotes a downward reasoning of human beings of average status. One big contrast between these two conceptions is concerned with the way we conceive of activities of *nous* and its relation to wisdom. The most remarkable contrast lies in the fact that the comprehension or insight of *telos*, which is thus fundamental in Aristotle's concept of *nous*, is fading out or missing in the modern notion of mind.

"Creating Character: Aristotle on Habituation, Emotion, and Prudence" by Liu Wei focuses on Aristotle's virtue theory, the famous division of virtue into intellectual virtue (*dianoētikē aretē*) and ethical virtue (*ēthikē aretē*) in accordance with the two parts of the soul that have something to do with reason. Intellectual virtues are good qualities or excellence in the full use of reason in itself (*kuriōs kai en hautōi*); whereas ethical virtue is the good quality or excellence of the part that shares in reason (*logou metechēin*). He then goes on to speak of the acquisition of each of them: "intellectual virtue arises and grows mostly (*to pleion*) from teaching (*ek didaskalias*); that is why it needs experience and time (*empeirias deitai kai chronou*). Ethical virtue results from habit (*ex ethous*)." Liu Wei's paper is by and large a commentary of this statement about the acquisition of virtue, with more emphasis on the side of ethical virtue, together with some remarks on the closely related intellectual virtue of prudence (*phronēsis*). The study will discuss in what way habituation creates one's character, and why habituation is able to lead one's feelings or emotions (*pathē*) and desires (*orexeis*) to certain direction. This will be done by emphasizing the cognitive role of emotion and cognitive process of habituation. The last section briefly discusses some salient features of prudence (*phronēsis*) which are related to ethical virtues.

"Virtue Ethics in an Islamic Context with Special Reference to Justice" by Yasien Mohamed discusses virtue ethics from the position that modern moral theories broken into pieces needs to return to Aristotle's virtue theory of ethics. The question we need to ask is whether virtue ethics in the Aristotelian context can be applied to the Islamic context. The paper traces the development of justice from the Greek classical legacy to the Arabic philosophical ethical world view.

Within the classical period of the eleventh century, two Arabic philosophers Miskawayh and al-Raghib al-Isfahani have done this works. Mohamed points out that a Greek paradigm that was whole heartedly well-received by the Islamic moral philosophers is that of the psychology of the soul, where the soul is divided into three parts, the irascible, the concupiscent and the rational. It is the balance of these three faculties that produce the platonic virtues of wisdom, justice, courage, and temperance. Justice is the outcome of the three virtues, which means that the virtues that pertain to the individual are the starting point for social justice. The main text of Aristotle is the *Nichomachean Ethics* in the Arabic version as written by Hunayn Ibn Ishaq. This Arabic translation that had a profound impact on the Arabic philosophers, and traces of its ideas and terminology are present in Miskawayh's *Tahdhib al-akhlaq* (Refinement of Character), the first Arabic text to be written on the subject, and which played a mediating role in al-Isfahani's *al-Dhari'ah ila Makarim al-Shari'ah* (The Means to the Noble Virtues of the Law). Thus, although Miskawayh was more faithful to the Greek legacy, Isfahani could profit not only from the Greek ideas in the *Refinement*, but also as a model of synthesis between the Greek ethics and the Islamic theology. Isfahani built on Aristotle's concept of justice, and integrated it within the Islamic context. He made extensive use of Qur'anic verses to substantiate the Islamic philosophical perspective on justice.

However, they both differed from Aristotle in fundamental ways. For Aristotle, justice means 'equality' and it is the justice of the human law. The Islamic philosophers adopted this, but replaced it with the divine law (*al-shar'iah*). They did not separate individual justice from social justice, and held that the justice of the soul, which includes temperance, wisdom and courage, should be the point of departure for social justice. Ethics, therefore, provides the groundwork for social justice. Another aspect that differs from Aristotle is the way they have shown how justice can be tempered by benevolence. Without benevolence, justice could lead to revenge and violence, and this in turn could lead to further injustice. Their justice is not the cold calculating justice of secular democracies, but one guided by reason and compassion. Therefore, the Islamic philosophers offered something worth considering for our contemporary societies.

“In Search of a Tradition: Components for a Brazilian Culture” by André Bueno traces back the form of Brazilian Tradition, and dilemma of the tradition as well as developments of Christian cultural traditions. Brazil is famous for its cultural diversity including Portuguese culture, Indigenous and African culture and recent immigrant communities from Europe and from Japan. Therefore, the formation of the Brazilian identity, absorbs other cultures to create this phenomenon. However, the different cultural dialogues have triggered a series of social tensions. The Brazilian government also sought to create conditions for solving practical problems of the dialogues between ancient tradition and different cultures, but this effort does not seem very successful. Second, the paper notes the Catholic and Evangelical churches in Brazil. Brazil is the largest Catholic nation in the world and Catholicism is traditionally associated with the state. Brazilian social development is faced with a series of social crises and challenges. The authors note that in fact Catholicism has suffered serious weaknesses in its ability to deal with social issues, such as birth control, labor, etc. The survival of Catholicism in Brazil is due in large part to the resistant to modernization by communities living in smaller towns outside the big cities. Evangelical churches (name used in Portuguese to describe, in general terms, non-Catholic churches, such as Gospel, Pentecostal, Evangelical, etc.) have had great growth in the last two decades in Brazil. André Bueno points out that like Catholics, evangelicals preach a return to a morality considered old and derived from early Christianity. Evangelicals allow for an individual’s autonomy and the possibility of social and material achievement that is not provided in Catholicism. A person who succeeds is a good Christian, but he must accept the core of religious dogmas presented in the discourse of these churches, which are strictly monotheistic and intolerant of other religions. For evangelicals, basically, one person may be respected and accepted to enter a community, but this allows unequal treatment of other social groups. The crisis of values has caused solutions to be sought from tradition by way of Brazilian culture.

In sum, this volume has collected seventeen papers by scholars from different parts of the world, including Chinese scholars. Some

papers discuss social and moral issues from their own social tradition and cultural context, some papers are responding to social and ethical issues during the transformation from traditional society to modern society as the result of globalization. Some papers are trying to provide possible resolutions to contemporary ethical dilemmas by borrowing from traditional moral resources which bear significant implications for contemporary ethical and political life. In addition, a few papers have attempted to confront the challenges posed for a transformative way of life, inviting further and deeper contemplation. Some authors from different countries (including China) provide in-depth discussions of Aristotle's virtue ethics. The discussions from different perspectives have extended and deepened the study of Aristotle's ethics, whereas they also provide good references for further study on the relationship between traditional virtue and modern society. Chinese scholars have offered in-depth discussion of Confucian virtue ethics in their papers. They make extensive explorations of Confucian virtue ethics but also associate this Confucian approach with modern political values. Finally, a few papers go beyond the range of traditional values in their discussion and address the issues of traditional culture, globalization, modernity, and world peace; all have greatly enriched this proceeding.

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**Part I**  
**Intercultural Philosophy**



1.

## **Intercultural Philosophy, Mutual *Waitui*, Chinese Philosophy and Globalization**

VINCENT SHEN

### **Globalization, Universalizability and *waitui* (Strangification)**

Today, all countries in the world are facing the challenge of globalization. Some people would understand this as the last resort of Capitalism to dominate the world, but I prefer to understand it more deeply as a process of deterritorialization or cross-bordering, involving all humankind on the globe as a whole. This is happening now in every domain of human activities: health care, technology, environment, economics, politics, education, culture, religion...etc. "Deterritorialization" here should be understood in a broader sense, as a process of crossing borders, or going beyond oneself to the other. I will argue that globalization is the present historical stage of realizing the human being's unceasing process of strangification and a further invitation to human generosity to the other.

Institutionally speaking, the process of globalization has gone through modernity, but it goes beyond it. Modernity has produced, on the economic level, the ever-expanding free market; and on the political level, the Nation-States and their sovereignty. Beyond these, post-modernity is now producing, on its negative side, the deconstructional critique of modernity's principles, such as subjectivity, representations, rationality, and domination; and, on its positive side, the global information society. In the process of globalization, we see, on the one hand, the extension of market economy into global market, the global politics playing beyond the limits of nation-state together with its concept of sovereignty, and finally the global culture in contrast and in dialectic with self-awakening local cultures.

Taking all these into account, I have defined "globalization" as "A historical process of deterritorialization or crossing borders, by which human desire, human universalizability and interconnectedness are to be realized on the planet as a whole, and to be concretized

now as global free market, trans-national political order and cultural glocalism.”<sup>1</sup>

Since globalization is a process that concerns humankind as a whole, it should have some foundation in the nature of human beings. Philosophically speaking, it should be based in human desire to go always beyond and its nature of longing for universality or better, universalizability. Globalization as a technological, economical and cultural process should be seen as the material implementation of human nature’s universalizing dynamism of always going beyond. Since the human being is historical in its essence, there should be no universality pure and simple but only the potentiality to become universalizable, or the process of universalization in time. This is to say “universality” is only an abstract ideal existing in an ever-retreating horizon. The real historical process is an unceasingly going beyond and towards higher levels of universalizability.

Anthropologically speaking, this could be traced back to the moment when a human being picked up the first chopping stone and came to use a utensil or instrument. In this way, the human being went beyond the determinism of physical nature and established thereby a free relationship with the material world. Since then the human being stepped into the stage of hominization. But, *homo faber*, though beyond the determination of the material world in using it for instruments, still depended on them, and therefore was not totally human. When human beings were able to communicate with others through language, a system of signs structuring human experiences and revealing the intelligibility of things in communication with others, they started to exist on a new level of universalizability. Moreover, when human beings came to engage in disinterested activities, such as playing, sacrificing and artistic creativities...there emerged higher levels of freedom, even to the point of fusion with things and people. Just imagine how human beings, though easily tired after a whole day’s labor, would continue day and night dancing, playing and engaging in ritual activity of sacrifice without any boredom or fatigue. This

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<sup>1</sup> Vincent Shen, “Book Review on Michael Hardt & Antonio Negri’s *Empire*” (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), 478pages + xvii, in *Universitas: Monthly Review of Philosophy and Culture* (Taipei, June, 2004), Number 361, pp. 109-112.

shows human beings seemed to be more human in these free playful and creative activities.

Therefore, *homo loquutus* and *homo ludens* are more human, more universalizable and therefore more humanized than merely hominized. Born together with humanization, there is the universalizable dynamism in human nature that came to the scene of the historical human process. Probably this is why philosophers East and West in the axial age, which happened between the 8th and the 2nd Centuries BCE, in the time of philosophical breakthrough, would understand "reason" as the most essential function of human mind. In ancient Greek philosophy, the human being was defined as "*to on logon exon*," later translated into Latin as "*animal rationale*," the proper function of which was *theoria*, in looking for the theoretically universalizable it produced knowledge for knowledge's own sake. In ancient China, with the emergence of Confucianism and Daoism, the concern was more with the impartial or the universal in human praxis, that is, the practically universalizable.

It is clear that having the idea and tendency of universalizability is not yet the process of globalization. There is need of the technological, institutional and historical development through modern times to implement the universalizability in the form of globalization, even if that which has been implemented here is merely part of the universalizable. Globalization concerns the globe or the earth as a whole, though still in reality but a tiny star in the immense universe. Only when we are ready not only for a global ethics, but also a universalizable ethics in term of the universe, would we humans be qualified to go beyond the global era and enter into the universal era.

Now, we should consider this: globalization brings with it a contrast with localization, unity in contrast with diversification. This is a moment of human history that people in the world feel so close to each other on the one hand, and so vulnerable and susceptible of conflict of all kinds on the other. Now is the critical historical moment of opening toward the other instead of keeping within one's own self-enclosure. In responding to today's urgent situation full of conflicts created by self-enclosure of different parts such as different disciplines, economic interests, cultures, ethnic, political and religious groups, etc., we human beings should be more concerned with each other and the

possibility of mutual enrichment. In order to overcome antagonism by appealing to effective dialogue, I have proposed in recent years “strangification”<sup>2</sup> and “language appropriation” as viable strategies. The term “strangification,” a neologism that might appear strange in English, yet is much more understandable in Chinese where *waitui* 外推 means etymologically the act of going outside of oneself to multiple others, or going outside of what is familiar to strangeness, to the strangers. This act presupposes the appropriation of language by which we learn to express our ideas or values in languages understandable to others. In their turn, “strangification” and “language appropriation” presuppose an original generosity toward multiple others, without limiting oneself to the claim of reciprocity, quite often presupposed in social relationship and ethical golden rules.

I use the term “multiple others” to replace the post-modern concept of “the Other” proposed by Emmanuel Lévinas, Jacques Derrida, and Giles Deleuze. For me the Other is a philosophical abstraction. At no moment of our life were we facing purely and simply “the Other.” We are all born into the multiple others and we grow up among multiple others. It is better for our sanity that we keep in mind the existence of multiple others and our relation with them.

### **Intercultural Philosophy and Mutual *waitui* as its Methodology**

In the above mentioned context, we should recognize that different ways of doing philosophy in different cultural traditions should be able to enrich our vision of the multi-layered and multi-faceted reality. Especially in this time of radical change, any philosophy capable of facing this challenge has to include in itself an intercultural dimension. This assumption is valid for all philosophical traditions, including Western philosophy and Chinese philosophy. Today, Western philosophy is the dominant one among all world philosophy because of historical reasons. However, western philosophy cannot be universalized except by going through the test of intercultural phi-

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<sup>2</sup> The idea of strangification was first proposed by F. Wallner, University of Vienna, as an epistemological strategy for interdisciplinary research. This concept was later developed by myself to the domains of intercultural interaction and religious dialogue.

losophy. The same with Chinese philosophy, which will not be able to universalize itself except through dialogue with other philosophical traditions and philosophizing interculturally.

What is an intercultural philosophy? This should not be limited to doing only comparative philosophy, as in the cases of comparative linguistics, which is quite often limited to the studies of resemblance and difference between two different languages. Although doing comparative philosophy in this manner could lead to a kind of relativism, it could not really help the self-mutual understanding and practice of philosophy itself. Rather, the real target of doing intercultural philosophy is to put into contrast rather than sheer comparison of different philosophical traditions, in which different philosophies could dialogue with each other for the mutual understanding and enrichment of each other. I understand “contrast” as the rhythmic and dialectical interplay between difference and complementarity, continuity and discontinuity, which leads eventually to the real mutual-enrichment of different agents, individual or collective, such as different traditions of philosophy.<sup>3</sup>

Since whether or not there is universality pure and simple is still a question open to debate, I prefer to use the term ‘universalizability’. With this as a common concern it may show us a convergence between Western philosophy and Chinese philosophy. Even if Western philosophy concerns itself more with universalizability of theories, whereas Chinese philosophy concerns itself more with practical universalizability, nevertheless both of them try to go beyond particular interest and to transcend the limit of particularity in view of a universalizable value. In a certain sense, both of them target universalizability, to which *theoria* and *praxis* might be seen as complementary.

Let us consider now the epistemological strategies we can adopt in view of a good intercultural philosophy. Three approaches of strangification could be put into practice: The first is “linguistic strangification,” by which we translate a proposition of one particular discipline, research program or an expression or value in one specific culture,

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<sup>3</sup> I have worked out a philosophy of contrast in my early works, especially in my *Xiandai Zhexue Lunheng* 現代哲學論衡 (*Essays in Contemporary Philosophy East and West*) (Taipei: Liming Publishing Company, 1985).

social group or even the belief system of one's own religion, into the language/cultural expression/religious belief understandable to another discipline/culture/social group/religion, to see whether it works or becomes absurd thereby. If it does work after the translation, that means this proposition, expression, language, value or religious belief is commonly sharable to that extent. If it becomes absurd thereby, then its limit should be recognized for that reason and reflection must be made accordingly upon its principle and validity.

The second is "pragmatic strangification through a detour by reality itself."<sup>4</sup> This level has multiple examples.<sup>5</sup>

### **Intercultural Dialogue as Mutual *waitui* (strangification)**

Historically, there were many cases of successful intercultural, inter-philosophical or inter-religious *waitui* 外推 (strangification), one of them is Buddhism's success in China. For example, Buddhism came from India to China and became one of the three basic constituents of Chinese philosophy and religion. Buddhism did this by taking all measures of linguistic, pragmatic and ontological *waitui* (strangification). As to linguistic *waitui* (strangification), Buddhism first of all appropriated Daoist and Confucian languages to make itself understandable to Chinese intellectuals and then proceeded to a systematic translation of its Scriptures into Chinese. As to pragmatic *waitui* (strangification), Buddhism made the effort to re-contextualize itself in Chinese ethics (such as filial piety), politics (such as relation with political leadership) and economics (such as monastery economics).

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<sup>4</sup> Fritz Wallner understands ontological strangification on the level of interdisciplinary research and takes it to mean the movement by which we transfer from one micro-world in one discipline to another micro-world. For me, this fact that we can move from the micro-world of one discipline or research program to another is still limited to the ontic level. Only when this transfer happens through the detour by Reality Itself is there ontological strangification.

<sup>5</sup> Vincent Shen, *Confucianism, Taoism and Constructive Realism*, pp. 126-129. By different ways of experiencing Ultimate Reality I means for example *ren* (humanity) and *cheng* (sincerity) in Confucianism, the *dao* and *de* in Daoism, or the emptiness in Buddhism, God in Christianity, Allah in Islam...etc.

On the ontological level, with its experience of Emptiness or One Mind as Ultimate Reality, Buddhism made itself understandable to other endogenous traditions such as Confucianism and Daoism. Buddhist experience of Emptiness and Mind, Daoist experience of *Dao* 道 and *wu* 無, and Confucian experience of *ren* 仁 (humanness, humanity and cosmic inner-connectedness) and *cheng* 誠 (sincerity and true reality), though quite different in themselves, still enjoy some similarity and complementarity in their experiences of the Ultimate Reality.<sup>6</sup>

Unfortunately, not all Buddhist *waitui* (strangification) into China communicated the right message to the Chinese people, and this was deeply related to the linguistic strangification.

This is to say that linguistic *waitui* (strangification) can affect pragmatic *waitui* (strangification) and *vice versa*. This could be found in some Chinese translations that missed or even distorted the original message which potentially in the long run could be good for Chinese culture. For example, the translation of terms expressing ethical relationship such as “mother and father” and “wife and husband” in Indian Buddhist Scriptures became “father and mother” (sometimes even modified as “paying filial piety to father and mother”), and “husband and wife.” The phrase “marry one’s wife” was quite often translated as “marry one’s wife and concubines.” As to political relations, republican relation was translated as imperial relation. In the volume 2 of the *Dīrghāgama*, Sākyamuni praised the country of Vraja people, who often held meetings to discuss righteous affairs in a republican way. However, when translated into Chinese, it reads *junchen heshun, shangxia xiangjing* 君臣和順, 上下相敬 (The Emperor and his subjects are in harmony and the superior and inferior respect each other).<sup>i</sup> The consequence of this was that the messages of more egalitarian ethics and republican politics contained in the Indian Buddhist Scriptures were turned into hierarchical and totalitarian terms in order to adapt to Chinese culture and thereby the Chinese people were unable to learn for their own long term benefit.

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. Vincent Shen, “Appropriating the Other and Transforming Consciousness into Wisdom: Some Philosophical Reflections on Chinese Buddhism,” *Dao: A Journal of Comparative Philosophy* (December 2003), 43-62.

Religious or philosophical dialogue should be conceived as based on a mutual act self-enclosure to the other that I call “a process of mutual. The original generosity implied in this act of going outside of oneself should be seen as the condition *sine qua non* of all situations of reciprocal relationship. Philosophically speaking, before we can establish a sort of reciprocity, emphasized for example in Marcel Mauss’ *Essai sur le don* as the principle of human society, there must be previously a generous act of going outside of oneself to the other, so that there can be established accordingly a relation of reciprocity. If in the classical world, golden rules are so much emphasized and reciprocity was seen as the basic principle of sociability, now in the post-modern world and in the world of globalization, we need a principle that exceeds mere reciprocity. The new principles for society and ethics that we are looking for should base themselves on original generosity and strangification as the act of going outside of oneself to multiple others.

### **Christianity, a Religion of *Waitui* (Strangification) Generosity**

Along with Buddhism, by Christianity I mean a religion of Generosity. On the level of theology, the Christian doctrine that God has created the universe could be seen as God’s generosity, God’s originally generous act of producing creatures out of his infinitely powerful and immensely abundant creativity. Therefore, the emergence of myriad forms of existence in the universe and their successive evolution are understood in Christianity to be produced by this original act of generosity and successive act of transformation. In the first version of *Genesis*, to what He has created, God says, “it was good.”<sup>7</sup> The ontology of goodness is therefore the outcome of divine generosity. After creation, God lives also in the universe by the laws of nature that not only regulate all creatures’ movement and life, but also bring them to go outside of themselves, to greater perfection and the emergence of higher forms of being. The human being, created in the image of God,<sup>8</sup> according to his inner nature and dynamism,

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<sup>7</sup> *The New Jerusalem Bible* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd Ltd., 1990), p. 5.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p.5.

should also go beyond him/herself for greater perfection. In the meanwhile, because of his/her free will, he is also able to choose to stay in his/her self-enclosure in an imagined subjectivity, without caring about his/her relation with others, and bound miserably to self-enclosure; that is what is actually meant by original sin. The incarnation of Christ is an act of generosity, that God becomes human, takes the form of a human body, and sacrifices his own life for the benefit of human beings and the whole world. Redemption should be understood in the sense of being saved from one's finite self-enclosure and being open again to the Other, both horizontally to other people and Nature, and vertically to the Ultimate Other, God. Christ, being the core to the faith of all forms of Christianity, serves as the paradigm of strangification and generosity, that all human kind and all being in the universe should go outside of their finite self-enclosure and to multiple others, so as to return eventually to infinite perfection.

Christian generosity and strangification to multiple others are also founded in the Christian doctrine of human nature that sees human being as *Imago Dei*; thus the goodness of human nature. There has been a misunderstanding among Christians and Confucians based on the stereotyped contrast of original sin in Christianity with the original human goodness in Confucianism. In fact the theology of *Imago Dei* bespeaks of some essential similarity between them. For some theologians, original sin represents the original darkness in human nature inherited from Adam and Eve after they acted voluntarily against the prohibitive rule of God. However, if we take into account the Biblical context in which the narrative of "the Fall" appears, it is better to interpret it as a fall of human nature originally created by God as good.

The narrative in *Genesis* shows human nature as originally created good, given the ontology of goodness and the theology of *Imago Dei*. First, the environment of human existence is constituted by all things which, after each was created by God, were proclaimed by Him as good. This is the ontological foundation of the world from which human beings emerge. Second, human beings are created by God according to his Image. "God created man in the image of himself, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created

them.”<sup>9</sup> Since God is the Supreme Good, his likeness should also be good, not evil. Third, human beings are created with cognitive ability and free will and thereby responsible for their own action. These capacities are the transcendental foundation of human moral good and evil.

The so-called “evil” or “fall” happens when human beings abused their free will and arrogantly interrupted their relation with the Ultimate Other, God. This relation was represented by a covenant or an agreed rule of action. By this interruption of relation, human beings were enclosed in their own subjectivity, cutting themselves off from their relation with God. Right after this interruption, human beings began to suffer. Evil and suffering were then the consequences of the fall of human nature as *Imago Dei* and the refusal of one’s relation with God.

Here is something comparable with Confucianism. In Christianity, human nature, created in Image of God, is originally good, but in the actual exercise of his/her free will, human being could choose to be self-enclosed, to the point of denying his/her good relationship with God and others, and thereby falls. In Confucianism, Mencius asserts that human nature is transcendently good because of the four sprouts of feeling of commiseration, feeling of shame and dislike, feeling of deference and compliance, feeling of right and wrong, etc., whereas the naturalist Confucian Xunzi would say that human nature is evil. Contextually speaking, in the *Xin E* 性惡 (*Human Nature is Evil*) Chapter, Xunzi’s position is to be understood as saying that human being is born with desires, which, if without education and cultivation, will develop into conflict and violence against each other, and thereby create disorder. Evil is there understood as social and political disorder rather than as the darkness of human soul. Also, in Chapter 38 of the *Laozi*, there is shown clearly the degeneration process from *ren* 仁 (humaneness) to *yi* 義 (rightness), and from *yi* to *li* 禮 (propriety), because of human negligence and forgetfulness of the *Dao* 道 and *de* 德.<sup>10</sup> Altogether, these philosophical reflections show us also a

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<sup>9</sup> *Genesis*, 1:27, in *The Jerusalem Bible, The Old Testament*, p.16.

<sup>10</sup> “Therefore, when *Dao* is lost, there comes *de* (creative power). When *de* is lost, there comes *ren* (humaneness). When *ren* is lost, there comes *yi*

more complete image of the originally good human nature with its actual process of degeneration or falling.

For Christians, human beings are born with free will by which he<sup>11</sup> (The word "hell" indicates this definitive state of self.<sup>12</sup> These words of St. Augustine's suggest to me.

### The Foundation of *Waitui* (strangification) in Chinese Philosophy

In comparison with Buddhism and Christianity, Confucianism and Daoism still belong to the Chinese people, and are not yet universalized as world philosophy/religion. Though they have very high potentiality to become a world philosophy/religion, however, up to now, they have not yet fully developed their world-wide potentials. It is interesting to discuss what is the potentiality in Chinese traditions, in particular, Confucianism. Let me discuss first the philosophical foundation of *waitui* in Chinese philosophy.

Philosophically speaking, the strategy of *waitui* (strangification) has its condition of possibility in human communicative competence. In Chinese philosophy, Confucianism would propose *ren* 仁 as the original communicative competence, the ontological condition of possibility which renders feasible and legitimate the act of *waitui* (strangification) as well as communication and self-reflection. From this original communicative competence, Confucianism proposes the concept of *shu* 恕, which could be seen as an act of empathy and *waitui* (strangification). This is a better strategy for fruitful communication than Habermas' argumentation in positing the existence of a 'sensitive responsiveness' as condition of possibility of *waitui* (strangification), For Confucianism has elevated *waitui* (strangification) to the ontological level.

Basing on the sensitive responsiveness of *ren*, Confucianism affirms the existence of an innate *liangzhi* 良知 (innate knowledge), and the dimension of tacit consensus, which could serve as the pre-linguis-

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(rightness). When *yi* is lost, there comes *li* (propriety)." Laozi, *Daodejing*, Ch. 38.

<sup>11</sup> *Catechisme de l'église catholique* (Paris: Mame/Plon, 1992), p.271.

<sup>12</sup> St. Augustine, *Confessions*, translated by R.S. Pine-Coffin (London: Penguin Classics, 1961), p.4.

tic foundation for further argumentative consensus. If deprived of all these, during the process of argumentation Habermas' suggestion of four ideal claims would not be able to work in actual political debates, even to the point of leading towards total conflict, because of the difference in political languages and in interpreting concepts such as truth, sincerity, legitimacy...etc. There will be no real mutual understanding and no self-reflection during the process of argumentation, if we do not communicate our position for others and in speaking the other's language or making it understandable for the other.

In Confucianism, the concept of *shu* 恕 represents this ability to go to multiple others and to communicate with others through language that is understandable to him/her/them. Especially under the post-modern condition, when any difference in race, gender, age, class and belief system could create total conflict, in confrontation with the other part in difference or in opposition any part should communicate with the other with a spirit of *shu*.

On the other hand, from the Daoist point of view, *waitui* (strangification) presupposes not only appropriation of and translation into the language of other traditions. It is also necessary to render oneself present to the Reality Itself. In Laozi's word, "Having grasped the Mother (Reality Itself), you can thereby know the sons (micro-worlds). Having known the sons, you should return again to the Mother."<sup>13</sup> Daoism posits an ontological detour to Reality Itself as condition *sine qua non* for the act of *waitui* (strangification) into other worlds (micro-cultural/religious worlds).

In terms of Laozi, we grasp the Reality Itself by the process of *guan* 觀 retracing an intuitive regard or act of intuition of the essence of things by leaving things as they are. A holistic knowledge is seen therefore by Daoism as a process of back and forth between the act of interacting with manifested worlds (sons) and the act of returning to Reality Itself (the Mother). This act of returning to Reality Itself and communicating with it is therefore considered by Daoism as nourishing our *waitui* (strangification) with other worlds. This act of ontological detour to Reality Itself bestows an ontological dimension to *waitui* (strangify). Ontological *waitui* (strangification) in this sense

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<sup>13</sup> Laozi, *Laozi Sizhong*, Taipei: Da'an Press, 1999. p.45.

is especially important for religious dialogue, when the relation with the Ultimate Reality is most essential to religious experiences.

For Chinese philosophy, it is always preferable to encourage the act of *waitui* 外推 (strangification) and dialogue to maximize harmony in one's relation among many others. I use the term "many others" (or multiple others) to replace the post-modern concept of "the Other" proposed by Lacan, Levinas, Derrida, and Deleuze. For me the Other is a mere abstraction. In no moment of our life were we facing purely and simply "the Other." We are all born into the many others and we grow up among many others. The Confucian concept of *wulun* 五倫 (five relationships), the Daoist concept of *wanwu* 萬物 (myriad things), and the Chinese Buddhist concept of *zhongsheng* 眾生 (all sentient beings) all imply an undeniable idea of many others. It is better for our life of sanity that we keep in our mind the existence of many others and our relation with them.

### Confucian *shu* 恕 and Generosity to Multiple Others

To elaborate a bit more the concept of *shu* in Confucianism, and examine its dynamism of strangification and generosity in regard to its possible contribution in the era of globalization it is important to note that any historical process and social institution should always be lived existentially and ethically with meaningfulness by human beings. This is also the case with the process of globalization, which, developed by today's communication technology and implemented on economic, political and cultural levels, is bringing humankind into more and more systematic networks. This situation of living in networks existentially exemplifies the ontology of dynamic relationship affirmed since long by classical Confucianism. The Confucian concept of *ren* 仁 denotes somehow the interconnectedness between human being and all things existing in the universe (Heaven and earth). Because of *ren*, human beings can be affected by and respond to one another, and by the act of *shu* they can extend their existence to larger realms of the human world, from oneself to family, to social community, to the state, to all Under Heaven, now interpreted by the term "globalization." The networks of this dynamic relationship cannot be said to exist in the form of substance, neither cannot they be said not

to exist, as nothingness. They are always there, dynamically developing, not only on the ontological, but also on the ethical, level.

Basically, Confucianism will be able to contribute to this process of globalization by its way of life as a process of ethical extension, especially by Confucian virtues and values such as *ren* 仁 (humaneness), *shu* 恕 (altruism), *yi* 義 (rightness), *zhi* (智 wisdom), *cheng* (誠 sincerity), *xin* 信 (faithfulness)...etc. In the networks developed by globalization, human beings, if they want to live up to human dignity, should always deal with each other with sincerity and especially with the virtue of *shu*.

*Waitui* (strangification) and generosity to multiple others are considered 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,"<sup>14</sup> or "putting oneself in other's place,"<sup>15</sup> or even as "using oneself as a measure to gauge others"<sup>16</sup> or empathy (a psychological interpretation insufficient today when our life is mediated now by symbolic languages and technical objects), it is now best understood and interpreted in terms of strangification, in the sense that "he who practices *shu* knows how to strangify" (*shuzhe shantui* 恕者善推) and "extend from oneself to the other" (*tuiji jiren* 推己及人). In the *Analects*, not much was said about *shu*, though it was said by Confucius himself to be the expression to act 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*: do not impose on others what you yourself do not want."<sup>17</sup>

Here *shu* was understood in the spirit of the negative version of 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*.<sup>18</sup> From this repeti-

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<sup>14</sup> W.T. Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), p.44.

<sup>15</sup> R. Ames and H. Rosemont, translators, *The Analects of Confucius, A Philosophical Translation* (New York; Ballantine Books, 1998), p. 92.

<sup>16</sup> D.C. Lau, translator, *Mencius* (New York: Penguin Books, 1970), p.74.

<sup>17</sup> *Analects* 15:24, R. Ames and H Rosemont, *A Philosophical Translation*, p.189.

<sup>18</sup> *Analects* 12:2, R. Ames and H Rosemont, p. 153.

tion 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 version of golden rule was given in answer to the question about the concept of *ren* (humanity), asked by Zigong, "A man of humanity, wishing to establish his own character, also establishes others; wishing to be prominent himself he also helps others."<sup>19</sup>

As we can see, both negative and positive versions of the golden rule are, in Confucian terms, based on a reciprocal basis as to the relation between self and other. With *shu*, one extends one's existence to larger and larger circles. It is the act of going always beyond oneself to the other, 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 the other" (*tuiji jiren* 推己及人). A Confucian existence is an ever-expanding life based on self-cultivation. In this process, authenticity and perfection of self are in priority over dependence on others. That is why Confucius emphasized learning for perfecting oneself and much emphasis was put by him more on the side of self-perfection or self-preparation rather than on others.<sup>20</sup>

It seems that self-cultivation and self-perfection are more on the part of the individual, while harmonious relation with multiple others should be achieved only in the social context. The Confucian way of life is a continuous extension of one's existence in the context of larger and larger circles of life 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 says, "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

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<sup>19</sup> *Analects* 6: 28, W.T. Chan, *Source Book*, p.31.

<sup>20</sup> For example: "Do not worry about not being recognized by others; worry about not having any reason for them to recognize you" (*Analects* 14:30, R. Ames and H. Rosemont, p.179). "Exemplary persons are distressed by their own lack of ability, not by the failure of others to acknowledge him" (*Analects* 15.19, R. Ames and H. Rosemont, p.188). "Exemplary persons (*junzi*) make demands on themselves, while petty persons make demands on others" (*Analects* 15.21, R. Ames and H. Rosemont, p.189).

just one thing in which the ancients greatly surpassed others, and that is the way they extended what they did."<sup>21</sup> On the other hand, self-reflection and self-cultivation are always important for a deeper understanding of one's true self and potentiality, and for the exploitation of the treasure cumulated in one's own tradition. That is why Mencius would speak of "unfolding one's heart" "knowing one's own self-nature," besides the process of "extension." I would emphasize here that, without self-reflection, self-awareness and self-cultivation, strangification might become self-alienation. In Mencius this dynamic contrast between strangification and self-awareness.

In Confucianism, the tension between self and other 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 of oneself to multiple others 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*, where it is called the principle of measuring square (*Jiejuzhidao* 絜矩之道). The *Great Learning* is read first as a positive version of the principle, to be followed by a negative version. They are put in the context where is explained 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: When the ruler treats the elders with respect, then the people will be aroused towards filial piety. When the ruler treats the aged with respect, then the people will be aroused towards 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.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> *Mencius* 1: 7, D.C. Lau's translation, p.57.

<sup>22</sup> W.T. Chan, *Source Book*, p. 92.

The major point here is the governance by *ren* (humanity): when the ruler governs his people by respect and humanity, people will respond with peace and harmony, in the form of filial piety, brotherly respect and submissiveness. Positive reciprocity is here expressed in terms of filial piety, brotherly respect and compassionate for the young and the helpless...etc., initiated by the political leader. On the other hand, there is also the negative version of the measure of 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.<sup>23</sup>

As is clear, the reciprocity here is enlarged analogically from one side to the opposite side: from superior to inferior, from inferior to superior; from right to left, from left to right; from front to behind, from behind to front, and thereby forming a cubic relationship, not merely a square, of reciprocity, though always taken in a negative sense. Within this cubic structure of reciprocal relationship, more attention have been paid to the horizontal, 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 is mentioned only once. Nevertheless, the concept of “extended reciprocity” plays a major role in this largest extension of human relation – from the state to all under heaven.

### **Confucian Generosity to the Other**

Let me examine also the Confucian virtue of generosity. I agree with Aristotle that generosity could be understood as liberality as well

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 92.

as magnanimity.<sup>24</sup> When we look for Confucian virtue of generosity in the sense of liberality or generosity as to the giving or sharing of one's material goods, we might first think of Zilu. When assisting Confucius with Yan Hui, asked by Confucius as to what they would like most to do, Zilu said, "I would like to share my horses and carriages, my clothing and furs, with my friend, and if they damage them, to bear them no ill will."<sup>25</sup> This text shows Zilu has a virtue of liberality. Even if it concerns sharing and not unconditional gift, nevertheless it expresses his non-possessiveness and generosity in sharing with others as friends. Zilu did not say "share with any other in general," but "share with my friends," who were equal one with another and reciprocal in being good to each other. It seems that Zilu cherished more friendship than material goods.

Zilu's generosity in terms of liberality regarding material goods, and his ambition to govern well a state of thousand chariots, were not highly evaluated in Confucius eyes, in comparison with another's. When Zilu, Zengxi, Ranyou and Gong Xihua were asked by Confucius about how would they do if someone did recognize their talents, among all the answers, Confucius would say only "I'm with Zengxi." – Confucius was more in praise of Zengxi's free life style in union with Heaven and earth:

At the end of spring, with the spring clothes having already been finished, I would like, says Zengxi, in the company of five or six young men or six or seven children, to cleanse ourselves in the Yi River, to revel in the cool breezes at the Altar for Rain, and then return home singing.<sup>26</sup>

From this we understand Confucius emphasizes on human existential feeling as a whole and the spiritual horizon that comes closer to the rhythm of nature. This shows the cosmic breath of Confucius' mind in the sense of magnanimity. In general Confucius would emphasize generosity that is genuine, and blame false liberality. That is

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<sup>24</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1123b1-30, in *Complete Works of Aristotle* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), Vol.2, p.1773.

<sup>25</sup> *Analects* 5.26, R. Ames and H. Rosemont, p. 102.

<sup>26</sup> *Analects*11:26, R. Ames and H. Rosemont, p. 150.

the meaning of Confucius' blame of Wei Shenggao in saying "Who said that Wei Shenggao is upright? When someone begged vinegar from him, he in turn begged it from his neighbours and then presented it to the person who has asked him for it."<sup>27</sup>

Indeed, Confucius mind was so great that his virtue of generosity is not limited to liberality, but much closer to what Aristotle termed "magnanimity." Confucius did not care much about the gain or loss in material goods, his spiritual horizon was much loftier than any desire for fortune and position, as shown when he said, "To eat coarse food, drink plain water, and pillow oneself on a bent arm – there is pleasure to be found in these things. But wealth and position gained through inappropriate means – these are to me like floating clouds."<sup>28</sup> Confucius' own ambition was much higher, which, according to his own words, was "to bring peace and contentment to the aged, to share a relationship of trust and confidence with my friends, and to love and protect the young."<sup>29</sup> This means he was concerned with the existential comfort of all people at all ages, which concern derived from his universalization of the virtue of *ren* (humaneness).

We should point out here that Confucius understood generosity mostly in the sense of reciprocity. He said, when answering to 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." Among the five virtues, *kuan* 寬 (liberality) and *hui* 惠 (generosity) are related to generosity, when 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."<sup>30</sup> Note that Confucius said all these in the context of consequences, that you will not be treated with disrespect, you will win the heart of all, you will be trusted, you will be successful, you will be able to enjoy the service of others, etc. Which means Confucius considered moral matters also

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<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 101.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 114.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102.

<sup>30</sup> *Analects* 17:6, W.T. Chan, *Source Book*, pp. 46-47.

from the consequentialist, not only from the intentionalist, point of view. Liberality and generosity in Confucian sense, as to the consequences they invite, still stand on reciprocity.

I understand Confucian virtues in two senses, “relational virtues” defined as harmonization of relationship; and “aptitudinal virtue” defined as excellence in one’s natural ability. Reciprocity is the basis on which was built Confucian relational virtues and social relationship in general. It is clear that all relational virtues refer to the other(s) and receive response from the other(s), for relation always measured by reciprocity. This is much clearer when we come to relational virtues in the five relationships, consisting always in their harmonization, whether it concerns relation between husband and wife, or parents and children, or brothers and sisters, or friends and lovers, or individual and society. The meaning of virtue such as piety, fidelity, scurrility, royalty...etc., could be interpreted differently according to the change of time, but their essence as the harmonization of relationship remains always valid.

The process of harmonization of relationship should be a process of extension from reciprocity to universalizability. Reciprocity is essential for human relationship according to Confucianism. But good human relationship comes to its fulfilment when enlarged from reciprocity to universalizability. This might be what Confucius had in mind, when asked by Zilu concerning how an exemplary person behaves, he answered first by the cultivation of oneself for one’s dignity, then cultivation of oneself for the happiness of others’, finally cultivation of oneself for the happiness of all people. From reciprocity to universalizability, this means the human being should transcend the limit of special relationship to universalizable relationship, even to the point of seeing all people within four seas as brothers. With *ren*, one can treat other fellowmen, despite their difference in family, profession, company, race and nation, with *ren*, a universalizable love. With *shu*, one may go outside of one’s self through language appropriation to stragify from one’s self to multiple others, till one reaches all Under Heaven. This is the way by which Confucianism extends the harmonization of human relationship, the full unfolding of which is the process of formation of a virtuous life, not merely a life of observing stringent rules of obligation.

Ideally speaking, there must be such a dynamic energy inside Confucianism to strangify, to universalize, to extend to all Under Heaven. Nevertheless, historically speaking, Confucianism itself did not take the initiative to expand itself to all Under Heaven to the extent of including the Western world in the past, as had Christians *Alopen* in the 7th century and Matteo Ricci in the 16th century, who understood the generous initiative of coming to China despite the difficult and dangerous long voyages. It was also Matteo Ricci and other Jesuit fathers who had taken the initiative to introduce Confucianism to Europe. The *Liji* 禮記 (Book of Rites) might have synthesized the Confucian minds, in emphasizing the reciprocity of *li*,<sup>31</sup> it says, "I have heard [in accordance with *li*] that scholars come to learn; I have not heard of [the master] going to teach." Although the emphasis was put on the value of truth and the dignity of the master, unfortunately the original generosity was quite often forgotten.<sup>32</sup> The lesson of this historical fact should allow us Confucians to rethink the limit of reciprocity and to understand that, without the original generosity in taking the first step, there would be no reciprocity.

### Conclusion

Under the global challenges Chinese philosophical traditions should learn from Buddhism and Christian culture, from their linguistic, pragmatic strangification and ontological strangification and their original generosity to go beyond themselves for the good of many others.

From the 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 the universalizability and perfectibility of human

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<sup>31</sup> "What the rules of propriety value is reciprocity. If I give a gift and nothing comes in return, that is contrary to propriety; if a thing comes to me and I give nothing in return, that also is contrary to propriety." *Li Chi, Book of Rites* 1885, Part I, trans. by James Legge, reprint by Kissinger Publishing, p.65.

<sup>32</sup> The sentence in the *Liji* "In the highest [antiquity] they prized simply conferring good," right before the secondary reciprocity, may be talking about this original generosity that is quite often forgotten. *Ibid.*, p.65.

intelligence and desire, first developed since humankind's humanization with language and culture, and further developed in a self-aware manner after the philosophical breakthrough. In modernity, the human being has been searching for the resource in his own subjectivity and the rational construction of this world by way of representations. Some contemporary Neo-Confucians have adopted the philosophy of subjectivity to reconstruct Confucianism. I wonder whether this is something we should go beyond or something to which we should attach to in order to have a future. Yes, we human should explore what is inside our self and our spiritual resources. This would not become clear unless we strangify and meet multiple others for mutual enrichment.

Entering the process of globalization, we need a new ethics based fundamentally on the generosity to many others through an unceasing strangification. Without globalization, it would not be possible for human universalizability to be realized and implemented on a higher level. Globalization itself should respect and draw its resources from different cultural traditions. It should be an invitation, not an imposition. In this context, the Confucian concept of *shu* and the virtue of generosity will still be a resource for inspiration, even if they have some limits as to their emphasis on reciprocity and the need for further development so as to find a deeper layer of resources for an original generosity. It is especially on this point that Confucianism could learn from Christianity. All things considered, if we human beings are not ready for further strangification and greater generosity to multiple others, we will not be ready or even worthy, of a real globalization, not to mention entering into a higher form of universalization in terms of the universe.

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## The Need for Traditional Metaphysics in the Post-Modern Struggle for World Peace

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There are many ways of conceiving the good at which we are aiming, or the end of human life, in willing any particular good or means, or any intermediate goal on the way to that end or to that good. This is a problem for practical science that spills over into the theoretical, in order to come to a proper idea of what that final end or good should be for a rational animal operating concretely in world history. Conversely, it is a problem for theoretical science because, in concrete, real-life decision-making about means or about intermediate goals, we are usually far from clear about our true end as rational beings or about the good that would make us happy as human beings, or in what such happiness would consist.

Philosophers and theologians have maintained that true or perfect happiness cannot be obtained in this life, but only in another life of union with the divine. The common run of people place their hope for happiness in something of this world. Aristotle names three things as typical in the minds of many people: pleasure, honor in the political realm and, at least for some, contemplation. He excludes moneymaking, though that seemed to be as much the end-all and be-all for many in his day as it is for many in our day of profitability as the bottom line for success as human beings.

Money for him, and for Plato, could never be anything but a *means* for something that might make us happy in this life or the next, but never a surrogate for genuinely human happiness or for a good life we have to conceive for ourselves. This may be a life of pleasure, a life of honor, a life of contemplation, or at all three at once. Besides, the desire for money introduces a factor of limitlessness in the realm of human striving, a factor that can never bring satisfaction, because it goes on endlessly, as Locke was to recall in modern times; further, it sets human beings in ceaseless competition with one another, as we see in the constant need for growth quarter after quarter among gigantic corporations. Or also in a state of war with one another, as

Hobbes would have said, just to survive or to remain in control of resources and markets, let alone find happiness and peace in any human sense.

To get to the question of human happiness or of the good life for human beings, whether in this life or the next, we have to transcend this realm of merely economic consideration of goals and of means to gain or to maintain control over natural resources, labor and markets, or consumers of what economists refer to as commodities. In practice we come to questions of happiness by raising our sights to higher ends or higher values that money cannot buy, but that can be attained only by human achievement in the choices we make. At first we do not have any *science* of those higher ends and values. We have only our *conscience* to guide us, which can eventually lead us to a certain science of human life as a whole. But that is only after a long experience or a long life of experimentation with the good and bad of life. Practical science of this sort comes only with time. It is prospective, rather than reflective.

That does not mean that this prospective practical science is in no way reflective. It does start from a certain reflection on what human life is supposed to be about as we experience it within ourselves in our own consciousness and in communion with others, in a shared consciousness or a *conscience* we develop with others as we become more and more rational in our decision-making. From this shared reflective consciousness we can go on to a more reflective or theoretical science of the human subject as such. This is to be done independently of any particular practice one might be considering or be engaged in, as we consider the end or the good we should have in mind as rational agents in the world.

In fact, such critical reflection on human subjectivity and its ultimate end is required of the rational agent as such at certain critical or decisive moments for the rationally prospective subject. If done critically or scientifically, this reflection will hasten the prospective learning process, if not anticipate altogether its final conclusions concerning our destiny as human beings. Coming as it does only at a certain moment in the history of a subject or of a community of subjects pursuing a common end, it cannot make up for what has yet to be learned through a common practice of many individuals. It can,

however, bring greater clarity to the ideal or the good that has yet to be attained in that practice, leaving the subjects open to learning more from the ongoing practice of rational agents in communion with one another.

Much of this reflection on human practice can be carried on in terms of economic goals and means, but that is not enough to cover the full scope of human striving for the good or for a final end that would make us happy. To get to that full scope we have to understand that all human action is in view of an end that is in some focused on something that is somehow universal and that can encompass all the particular goods we strive for on the way to that ultimate end. We have to think, not just of goods that bring individual satisfaction, but also of familial goods, cultural goods, communal goods, and even of a good that may transcend all these goods as it sums them up in a final good that is not of this world. Clearly this calls for some consideration of goods that transcend the realm of commodities in an economic system. Human action is not just about making money or surviving in a world of hard knocks, frequently made worse for us by the actions and the incursions of others into territories we have reserved for our selves as individuals or as communities. Already the different kinds of good we have conceived for our selves, such as the familial, cultural, or communal transcend the kind of good we need for our individual survival and satisfaction in some form or other of commodious living. But the one that transcends them all is the one we have to think of as the ultimate or the final good of all, the only one in which we can find perfect happiness, rest, and peace.

If we think of that final good or that ultimate end for us as a transcendent God, clearly we must think of some metaphysical transcendence in our practice or in our striving for a final end as rational beings. What is at stake in human action as it relates to such a final end is much more than what we can attain in this life. It is something that pertains to eternal life, or eternal death, to a life with God or in God for eternity or to an existence of total frustration against God and without God, who remains the final end we still must necessarily will even if we are in contradiction with this most fundamental will, the God. As one philosopher put it most dramatically in a philosophical dissertation on human action: what we will most fundamentally in all

our actions as rational beings is to be God. The ultimate choice we have to make is to will to be God with God or to will to be God against God, a choice that has eternal consequences for each one of us even when it has to do with some trivial temporal economic good.

Now this thought of choosing always in the presence of God, with God or against God, is not always explicit in our minds, but it has been shown to be implicit in anyone who exercises free choice in taking action. Religion has a different way of making it explicit in the minds of most people, by some kind of teaching or revelation different from any kind of purely rational philosophy of human action or human existence. When it becomes explicit in any human consciousness, it is clear that it involves transcending anything, any good, we can think of in the world, including our selves and our action. This is what I call a metaphysical transcendence, accompanied by a sense of insufficiency on our part in choosing that good as our final end, as we have to recognize even in affirming that good as our final end. That is metaphysical transcendence for both theoretical and practical reasoning in the most radical sense pertaining to eternal life or death, rather than just finite temporal life and death in this world. If there is any necessity of metaphysical transcendence in our action for the good, that is most surely where it is to be found or made explicit, in the reasoning about a final end that would bring perfect happiness.

That is not the only metaphysical transcendence I wish to speak of as necessary in the historical struggle for world peace. There is another sense in which we can speak of a final end for human action in the world. This is an end that we can conceive as coming to be in this world, or as failing to do so in this life of rational beings, in what we have come to speak of as *history*, as constituted by human achievements in the world. The order of history as I wish to speak of it here is one that is distinct from the order of nature, though not separate from it. It is a whole that through human initiatives of all sorts is working its way toward an end. We have different ways of speaking of the end of history, either as an achievement of human enterprise, or as a failure or even a cessation of all human enterprise. The difficulty we have in conceiving the end of history, whether positively or negatively, is similar to the difficulty we have in conceiving the final end of human life as a whole in relation to God as our transcendent and

eternal Good for eternity. In fact, the difficulty we have in one case is intimately related to the difficulty in the other. It is a problem of metaphysical transcendence in each case that cannot be resolved without resolving it in the other as well. We shall try to show this more clearly at the end of this paper, where we shall reflect on how historical humanism and religion overflow into one another in our historical consciousness as rational animals.

This problem of the relation between the two forms of metaphysical transcendence, the religious and the humanistic, or as St. Augustine would say, in the City of God and the City of Man, is one that continues to haunt us in our historical consciousness as makers of history. To face that problem, we need a better understanding of how the thought of a final end of history, or in history, occurs to us in our conception of human history as something metaphysically transcendent. I specify human history here because I want to distinguish it from what is also called natural history or the history of nature. To put this another way, the distinction is between what we could call humanism and mere naturalism or materialism. In human history there is much more at stake than in natural history, which is largely a matter of survival and repetition of the same. The good we are striving to achieve as free historical agents in the world is much more than mere repetition, or even evolution, of the same. It is a good we have to think of as a final end we are striving for in our struggles, an ideal that makes us responsible agents in the world, even if we think that ideal cannot be realized perfectly in this world. It is an ideal conceived as a communal good at the same time as a personal good that transcends the realm of success or survival in the natural or the economic order.

There are two reasons for saying that the conception of this good entails metaphysical transcendence. The first is that it is not a mere repetition of what is given to us by nature to work with as human beings. To be sure we accept this good of nature and learn more about it in order to use it for our continued survival and that of the human race. We do more than that. We build upon it things that rise above mere nature. There are cultures of all sorts that can be called supernatural or metaphysical, in the sense that they transcend nature or the physical, even as they transform it into something better to serve human purposes or a more human good on the *historical* level of being.

The terms “supernatural” and “metaphysical” are usually used to refer to matters of transcendence with regard to the universe as a whole. If, however, we take the underlying terms “nature” or “physical” in this language of transcendence in their basic etymological sense of something merely given for reason to work with, we can see why we have to say that what comes from reason as historical agent is both supernatural and metaphysical even within the order of the universe, as foreshadowing something beyond the universe. That was not seen by Kant or admitted by Hegel in their philosophy of history. In any case, whether there is any kind of foreshadowing of a totally transcendent Being in any historico-rational culture, there is always at least the suspicion or the inkling of some kind of supernatural or metaphysical end, even if it be only in the humanistic order of history and not in any *metahistorical* order. There is a lot more to a human rational life in the world than just survival as an animal, even if we say with Heidegger that this survival is always under the sign of death or unto death.

The second reason for saying that the conception of some good of history as final end for human activity in the world entails some sort of metaphysical transcendence is much more determinate, one might say more ontological, than the first. It has to do with how we come to the question of being or of the good itself as convertible with being in our self-consciousness. It has always been understood that we do not come to our own self-consciousness as *being* except in the presence of another self-consciousness also as *being*, another self-consciousness as another *being* than our self. We do not come to self-consciousness except in the presence of another self-consciousness, as Hegel has shown in his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, or in communion with other self-consciousnesses, which makes every self-conscious human being a part of a community from its very inception. This mutual recognition among selves as rational and spiritual beings is what makes us all historical beings from the first moment of this transcendence over the forces of nature, including those of sensibility, through mutual recognition of one another as rational and spiritual beings. What this means then for us as rational historical self-consciousnesses is that we cannot think of ourselves without the thought of at least one other self-consciousness. Moreover, we cannot start thinking of the good we

aspire to, or of our final end, without thinking at the same time of the good or the final end of other selves as well. This entails the idea of a self-consciousness that is, not only historical in its transcendence, but also moral and ethical. This begins from the consciousness of a communal good as principle in reasoning about what to do historically as a rational being.

There are philosophers nowadays who start their reasoning in metaphysics from this sense of the other in their own rational or ethical self-consciousness. I do this myself in my own systematic metaphysics when I come to show the necessity of an other or of other selves in the communication of being. This is in terms of final and efficient causality, which has to be thought of as intentional no less than as physical, or as spiritual, historical and communal no less than as natural.

What this means for the rational agent deliberating about doing something historical of one's own, even if it be only for one's self-interest, is that one has to start from an end or a good that is common both to oneself and to an other, or many others, depending on the breadth of the community within which one is operating. This may be as small as a family or a clan or a circle of friends, in a village or a neighborhood or a club that meets for casual, recreational activities. Or it may be as large as a city or a state or a nation, not to mention humanity as a whole.

I would not include corporations in this idea of community, especially the large ones that have become multi-national, because regardless of what they may say about themselves and their passion in their advertising to the public, they do not operate for any public common good. They operate only for their private gain, even where they may serve or hinder the public common good, which is the reason why they should be regulated or constrained by those who do operate for the common good, such as governments and non-governmental organizations (NGO's) that do care for the basic social needs of the many, when they have not been coopted by the dominant large corporations. Most large corporations operate only on the level of what remain basic natural needs, many of which they create in a pseudo-culture that undermines the true culture of workers and consumers around the world only to enhance the profitability of their

operations. To operate truly in view of a common good, one has to begin with some idea of what the good or the final end of that community would be, which implies some metaphysical transcendence in one's intention.

The social good of communities concerning what to make of themselves as historical is not something physical, merely given by nature or by industrial production. It is something that can be achieved or realized only by the endeavor of communities themselves. It is not something we can leave to the forces of nature or to the manipulation of self-centered corporations who have no interest in the communal good of any community, large or small. To abandon the ideal of a communal good at the core of one's practical reasoning, as Hobbes did, is to cut oneself short as an historical member of a community. It is to set oneself back in a state of nature, which Hobbes famously describes as a state of war of everyone against everyone, a state from which there is no escape except by installing an absolute master to hold everyone in awe and to dictate contractual agreements without regard for the good or the rights of individuals, let alone of the community. In other words, this is without regard for any communal good to be attained or maintained in practice, however perfect or imperfect that good might be.

Hobbes, not unlike Marx later on, was concerned with grounding practical and political science on the firm basis of a necessity in accordance with laws similar to those of physics as conceived by Descartes. He found an ingenious way of doing just that with his social contract theory requiring an absolute ruler lording it over the community, as if from heaven or hell, without being part of it in any way. In doing so, however, Hobbes was also losing sight of an essential dimension of what I have been calling historical communal well-being for rational agents, an ontological dimension that is irreducible to the merely physical, and that I have been characterizing as spiritual, with the German idealists who tried to restore this historical/communal dimension to its proper place in theoretical as well as practical science. Many of the social contract theories and social sciences, or forms of sociology, that have come in the wake of Hobbes as a bourgeois corporatist have also lost track of this spiritual dimension of human communal life that had been prevalent before

the rise of modern social science. It was a spiritual dimension that remains influential and effective still in modern societies where communal identities are still to be found with a relative autonomy as historical innovators or as makers of their own history. It is in opposition to the reductionism of these modern social sciences that I wish to speak here.

What I have in mind is a necessary metaphysical transcendence in the historical struggle for world peace. Without some sense of a metaphysical transcendence, we cannot get a proper conception of what we mean by "world peace" as the good or the end of history, nor of the ways and means we have to take to achieve such a peace in world history. A state of peace for all human beings in the world would have to be something transcendent to anything we know now of the human condition in history, whether interiorly or exteriorly.

Why then should we speak of World Peace at this time and why is it important to speak of it in a way that calls for some metaphysical transcendence? Peace, like satisfaction and happiness, is something human beings have always sought both interiorly and exteriorly in relation to other selves. It is the one facet of the communal good that Hobbes did not let go of, though he thought of it only in negative terms as an absence of war. The desire for peace was for him the first principle of practical reasoning that would take us out of the state of war, peace as necessary for survival in a universal state of war. Hobbes does not say much that is positive about the life we can enjoy with peace, but it is nevertheless part of the good we can enjoy only in communion with other selves. It is a good we hope for that drives us to enter into contract with them, not just for survival but for enjoyment as well. Kant thought of Hobbes's social contract theory as having brought peace to nations, but only as a temporary peace for each nation taken individually or in isolation from other nations, all of which remained together in a state of war with one another. Kant dreamt of some "universal peace" that would hold for all nations together under some sort of cosmopolitan authority. That remained for him only a dream, something perhaps unrealizable in this world. In his theory he did not have the metaphysics to conceive such a universal good for human souls, who for him were all beholden to God individually and not to one another. In practice Kant had no way of

conceiving how all these human souls could be brought into communication with one another as in one global village. Universal peace remained a pure ideal for him, unreal in theory and inconsequential in practice.

Hegel, on the other hand, in his philosophy of spirit rooted in mutual recognition among selves, found a better way of conceiving this universal peace or the communal good it entails at least for a people or a nation. Starting from a confrontation between two individuals over some object of desire, he argued that for human beings or selves, unlike for other animals, such a confrontation had to become a confrontation unto death as a matter of dignity or desire for recognition from the other. What each one is looking for from the other is not just some object they might be fighting over, but *recognition*, which each one values more than mere life or survival. Hence the readiness at the outset to risk one's own life and to place the other's life at stake in a struggle unto death. This initial confrontation or readiness to put life itself at risk, however, is no guarantee that some community life of mutual recognition will result immediately. The entire dialectic toward mutual recognition may abort altogether if one or both of the antagonists dies in the confrontation. In that case nothing significant happens on the way to some spiritual or communal self-consciousness. It can also take a very long time for the consciousness of a people or of a community to take shape, as it did for example with the Greek *polis*, as in the struggle among the various tribes contending with one another, each with its own gods and with its own laws to be observed.

In the end, however, it results in a communal consciousness that can be happy or unhappy with itself, depending on how well it can unify its contending tendencies into one spirit satisfied with itself. Even after having come to a relative unification at some historical moment of its existence, the spirit of a community or of a people can also become alienated from itself in an external structure that robs it of its identity as a spirit. That causes it to seek its identity in some higher, more heavenly sphere, or in some lower sphere of expediency or wealth, rather than in its own sphere of historical achievement as something quite real. But in all of this struggle and historical tension, we have to think of spirit as a sphere of ontological achievement in its own right for all the members of community.

For Hegel, all this entailed a certain transcendence over anything merely empirical on subject to mathematical calculation, whether in the natural or the social order. It entailed a kind of spirit that came into being as a community of selves, in which individual spirits sought and found their fulfillment as selves. He even describes the modern state as such a spiritual community rising above the turmoil of modern economics and as bringing peace and fulfillment to a nation or a people, *ein Volk*, as he was fond of saying. "The state," he writes,

is the actuality of concrete freedom. But concrete freedom consists in this, that personal singularity and its particular interests not only achieve their complete development and gain recognition for their right (as they do in the sphere of the family and civil society) but, for one thing, they also pass over of their own accord in the interest of the universal, and, for another thing they know and will the universal; they even recognize it as their substantive spirit; they take it as their end and aim and are active in its pursuit. The result is that the universal does not prevail or achieve completion except along with particular interests and through the cooperation of particular knowing and willing; and individuals likewise do not live as private persons for their own ends alone, but in the very act of willing these they will the universal in the light of the universal, and their activity is consciously aimed at none but the universal end (*Phil. of Right* # 260).

This was for him the prodigious strength of the principle of the modern state allowing subjectivity to progress to its extreme of self-subsistent particularity while bringing it back to a substantive unity so as to maintain this unity in the principle of subjectivity itself.

It was also his way of conceiving the communal good of modern statehood as the end, not just for particular self-conscious rational agents seeking their own ends, but also for history as a whole in the movement toward what he calls "the actuality of concrete freedom" for the human race. The universal he speaks of, however, is not the communal good of the human race as a whole, as one might expect,

but rather of that of “a single individual whole” as constituted inwardly in one state among many others still in contention with one another in the historical struggle. In other words, Hegel conceives the communal good for taking human initiative in the world in terms of some metaphysical transcendence over the forces of nature as harnessed by rational activity, but only as embodied in one form of statehood or another, not as actualized, or as actualizable, in the human race as a whole. For him, as for many other Western liberal thinkers, the highest communal good one could think of in history was that of one’s own people constituted as a state of inner differentiation and harmony in peace. Nor did he think of this highest communal good of history as having to be related to a yet higher good in another kind of life relating to the divine or some metahistorical Good. For him the absolute World Spirit remained wrapped up in World History, actualizing itself always in one state or another.

His conception of the state as spiritual community remained closely tied to the struggle out of which it had come. His thinking on this score parallels much of Hobbes’s conception of the modern sovereign as tied to the state of war that made it necessary for survival. It was the state to which any subject could always return if he did not find the dictates of the sovereign to his advantage or conducive to his survival. Hegel thought of the modern Germanic state as somehow absolute and as the end toward which history had been building, the end of history. It was not the absolute end or the final consummation of history, which remained inconceivable for Hegel for lack of a clear understanding of anything like a Good for the rational self-consciousness that would be totally transcendent and metahistorical.

Much has been written about this idea of the Germanic state as end of history in Hegel, but the idea was not as pretentious as it has been made out to be by some. For Hegel there was no final consummation of world history. He did speak of a World Spirit moving in World History, but only as embodying itself in one state after another, starting from China in the Far East and then moving through less pronounced forms in the Near East toward the more crystallized form of the Greek *polis*, and on from there through the Roman Empire to the Northern Germanic State in his day. This was for him an end, a certain fulfillment, that World History had been building up to, but it

was not the end of history, nor did he think of it as the final resting place for the World Spirit. It was only an end that allowed him to look back on the previous stages of World History as leading up to it. It was only the place or the cross where he could take his stand as a philosopher looking back on what was for him historical actuality. He did not speak about any further end, because, unlike St. Augustine, he did not think philosophy had anything to say about a future end of history, whether for this life or for the next. He did think, however, that there were other places where the World Spirit could embody itself, perhaps endlessly, given that the historical struggle among nations or among peoples had not come to an end.

Hegel did not think that there was or could be anything like a World Spirit for humanity as a whole or as a universal community. In fact, he was opposed to any such idea when he saw it emerging with Kant and his idea of universal peace for a cosmopolitan community. Hegel remained a resolute Euro-centered nationalist in theory and in practice, in his philosophy of spirit and in his philosophy of history. That is why other more metaphysical spiritual traditions in philosophy and culture are well advised to keep their distance from this western liberal philosophy of spirit and of history, which has in fact relegated them to a subjugated status. In its idealism, or perhaps because of its idealism, it is partial to one nation over others.

Marx also was quick to point out that it was partial to one class of people over other classes within one and the same nation and around the world in the modern globalized economy. Marx had his own conception of the communal good as the end of world history, what he called "communism" as a solution to the riddle of history that knows itself to be the solution. It was not the conception of any state, nor of any class of people, but rather of a community more authentically universal pertaining to the whole human race, though perhaps still too embedded in the material conditions of modern production.

Kant had earlier proposed an ideal of universal peace for a cosmopolitan community, but he had no empirical evidence of a globalized economy to bolster the necessity for such an ideal in the modern world. He conceived the idea only in relation to what he perceived as a state of war that remained among nations, after some state of peace had been achieved in states that had already come to

their own constitution by way of a social contract. Hegel had little trouble setting the idea aside in an age of rising colonialism by affirming the absolute sovereignty of the western modern state. He held as well the right of one state to embody the World Spirit at any particular moment in history, which for him happened to be the northern European Germanic state, to overrule, by war, the right of every other state in the pursuit of its own good.

War among nations was not something to be avoided for Hegel; it was what made history go forward. Countries or periods where there was no war were for him null moments in history in which nothing significant was happening, no new spirit was emerging. This is another indication that his conception of the transcendence that characterized the spirit of a people or of a state was still too closely linked to the historical struggle out of which it had come. It is not surprising that Marx was easily able to stand Hegel on his head on precisely this point and turn his historical idealism into a historical materialism. He began precisely at the point of Hegel's mystical and mystifying characterization of the modern state in its constitution as a spiritual community *par excellence*, as indicated above.

Today, in a world of clearly globalized economics, we can no longer accept this vision of a particular state as the highest recourse we have for attaining and maintaining peace in the world, whether it be in Europe, America, or Asia, or any other part of world. There are too many institutions that span the globe in their operations, multinational corporations, and that are in effect at war with many nations, especially the smaller ones, as well as with one another in reckless competition. This is not the time and place to go into any elaborate description of the universal state of war in which we find ourselves today. There are many facets to it, which some times appear as religious, but which for the most part are economic. This state of war flares up in all sorts of ways in different parts of the world, developed as well as underdeveloped. Each one of us would have countless ways of referring to it. We do not know if we are nearing the end of history as we know it, but we do know that we are in need of world peace and of some kind of universal communitarian spirit that transcends the communitarian spirit of any particular state. I do not mean some collectivist lowest common denominator spirit subject to statistical

calculation. I mean a rich transcendent spirit that would accommodate the wide diversity of cultures, peoples, nations, and states, each with a spirit of its own, in a peace of mutual regard and enrichment.

The idea of world peace as final end of history is a rich one indeed, one that no individual, no corporation, no nation can arrive at by itself. It transcends whatever each one of these can achieve by themselves because it can come only through peaceful dialogue among all of them. This requires some metaphysical transcendence on the part of all in the encounter with the other, if not already some metahistorical transcendence relating to the eternal or to the divine as final end for the rational animal as subject and spirit acting in communion with other subjects and spirits in the world.

In conclusion of this discussion of world peace as the final end or as the good we are ultimately striving for in world history, I would like to return to the twofold sense in which we have to conceive of transcendence with regard to the end of human action or of human practice in the world, which I spoke of at the beginning. This is transcendence with regard to God as the ultimate end or as the absolute Good for rational agents, which is unattainable in this world or in this life. It is also a transcendence with regard to some sort of communion among all rational agents in peace and reconciliation with one another. That may be attainable in this world, but we have difficulty conceiving it amid the contentions that separate us from one another.

We should not think of these two forms of transcendence as independent of one another. How we conceive the one affects the way we conceive the other in both directions, whether in theory or practice. Without a proper conception of the divine as the totally transcendent universal good for human beings as rational creatures, we cannot arrive at a conception of world peace as a truly universal good for all rational beings in the world, whether as individuals or as communities. We saw how Hegel failed in this regard in the way he conceived the end of history, or in the way he failed to conceive a proper end of world history. Though he spoke of some universal good, or peace, as that to which all individual knowing and willing aspired as to their universal end, it was never for him more than the good of a state, leaving the world or the human race as a whole in a state of perpetual war. Hegel has been taken for an atheist by some or as relating only to

a counterfeit god by others. His view of the relation to God as transcendent in religion or in Christianity was ambivalent at best. It left him with a shortened view of transcendence, or of peace and justice for the human community as a whole in the historical order. It was limited to that of particular states ever in contention and in competition with one another, like the self-serving financial and commercial corporations embedded within them.

Conversely, a shortened view of how far the human community extends with which one has ultimately to enter into communion as a final end will stop far short of anything like a recognition of God as totally Other than any other rational agent and as the common end or as the final universal Good for all human beings. Even if we cannot conceive of how we can attain such a universally transcendent for our selves in history, we cannot understand it properly unless we think of it as the goal and the aim, for which all rational beings are destined. Toward this all have to choose to say yes or to say no, to be God with God or to be God against God, and to accept the consequences of their choice, namely whether to enter into perfect happiness as rational beings in union with God, or to suffer eternal damnation in total frustration of their own knowing and willing.

Knowing and willing God as totally transcendent requires a certain degree of transcendence in communion among rational self-consciousnesses; and knowing and willing God as the universal final Good for all rational consciousnesses requires some notion of a universal communion among all rational self-consciousness as the end or the culmination of world history. No state, in isolation from other states, no family, in isolation from other families, no culture, in isolation from other cultures, can adequately represent such a universal communion of all with one another, a universal communion of saints, so to speak.

Nor can any state or other particular community, taken in isolation from other communities, dictate how such a communion is to be reached in history. In this regard, all particular individuals or communities are bound to fall short in their sectarianism, including any one of them that claims to be universal, as for the modern Germanic state. To become truly universal every community has to reach out to other communities in a dialogue of reciprocal transcendence for the

spiritual enrichment of all, except perhaps for those who say no to any such transcendence and thereby exclude themselves from the universal communion of saints, to their own detriment.

It might be thought that properly religious communities based on faith in special relation to the divine for themselves do not fit into this scheme of world history as a striving for world peace or some communal good for the human race as a whole, some imperfect happiness in this world if not a perfect happiness in the next. If an individual or a community believes in a totally transcendent God who intervenes in human history through prophecy and incarnation in view of providing for the salvation or perfect happiness, not just of a particular community, but of the whole human race, then one has to include the idea of some communal good for humanity as a whole as the final end of history, regardless of how imperfect that might be, and as the way for human beings to enter into the perfect communion with God.

God redeems human beings, not just one by one, but as a community of all who know the stakes of free choice with regard to God and who will to enter in. That is why true believers in authentic religion are always anxious to spread the Good News, out of love for unbelievers as well as believers, and out of fidelity to their own convictions rather than hostility toward those they see as other than themselves. If we believe in a totally transcendent God as the final end for all rational activity in the world, there is no reason for sectarianism regarding the end or the communal good of history. Religious faith and love with regard to God as totally transcendent has to reach out to everyone it encounters, no matter what stage of belief and love they have attained in their own historical communal actuality, as a way for coming to some eternal life with God. In other words, we cannot get to heaven without working for peace and justice for all in this world. That is the message any world or catholic religion should be proclaiming as the Good News for all, not just in the next life, but also in this life of historical and communal endeavor.

This is a far cry from any conception of religion as an incitement to hatred of so-called infidels, or others who do not share in one's communal faith defined in sectarian terms, or as an opium to keep the faithful from playing their historical role in the pursuit of peace and justice for all. World or catholic religion, in its submission to the will

of a totally transcendent God, is a call to action in world history as well as in one's religious community by reaching out to others, all others, in the pursuit of communal peace and justice here on earth.

The end of history we are speaking of is not something that will come only at the end of history. It is an end that has already come to fruition, in part if not in whole. This is in the world of communal spirit we already know and will in the many different ways of transcending what is given to us by nature or by merely technological ingenuity in communion with other selves. Without some experience of such metaphysical transcendence, or of some happiness in communal life, we would have no idea of transcendence in eternal life. In fact, without any experience of the transcendence in our religious life here on earth in some historical and communal actuality that is already an actualization of things hoped for in our religious consciousness, we would have no idea of what to hope for as our final end. All this presupposes some metaphysical transcendence on our part as people reconciled with one another as communities that have attained some degree of friendship, peace and justice, even if we do not recognize that God is already with us reconciling the world to Himself. What distinguishes religious communities from merely secular communities is the realization, in faith and hope, that this is already happening in our historical actuality. This, we know, at least in some religious communities, but all communities because we know this includes many who have not yet seen what is the true end of their activity or who have ceased to believe in any such end. This is the result of a lack of transcendence in their knowing and willing as rational self-conscious beings.

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## Virtue, Norm, and Moral Practice: Comparative Perspective

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### I

Similar to *arete* in Aristotle, *de* (德), the Chinese term for virtue, has a semantic association with “*de*” (得), which means “to obtain” or “to acquire,” that *Guanzi* 管子 even directly claims: “*de* (德) implies ‘*de*’ (得).” In Daoism, virtue is a special feature obtained from Dao, and consequently provides a real foundation for the development of things: “Something that causes things to grow is called virtue” (Chapter 12, *Zhuangzi*). As far as Confucianism is concerned, Zhang Zai claims, *de* (德) implies “*de*” (得) and virtue is a quality that could be possessed”; “Virtue means to obtain principles under Heaven.” Similarly, says Wang Fuzhi 王夫之, “Everything obtained in activity can be called 德 (*de*), virtue.” Virtue discussed here is not limited to ethics, although it is related to actions of human beings. Also, virtue does mainly imply moral virtue in many cases, such as the idea of “the respect for virtue” in the *Book of History* 《尚书》; the doctrine that “faithfulness is a justified virtue” in *Zuo’s Commentary on Records of Spring and Autumn* 《左传》; Confucius’ appeal to the “political performance based on virtue” in *Analects* 《论语》, to name a few.

In Ancient Greece or in the Pre-Qin period in China, virtue, that is, *arete* or *de* (德), originally had both ontological and ethical significance, reflecting the relevance of virtue to the existence of human beings. In modern times, however, the implication of virtue, as well as its relationship to the existence of human beings, has changed. Virtue, whether in the context of English or of Chinese, is more similar to moral character or moral disposition. When talking about virtue nowadays, people think of diverse special categories of virtue, such as: kindness, kind-heartedness, justice, righteousness, honesty, self-control and tolerance. The special categories of virtue embody certain characteristics of human beings, while their diversity shows the va-

rious dimensions of human existence. As virtue splits into categories of virtue, the integration of human existence becomes a crucial issue.

The multiple attributes of a human being as a moral subject are by no means separated, but always constitute a unified structure. In spite of the diversity of its manifestations, virtue, as a specific form of existence, demonstrates the unity within the same moral subject. Such a unity appears as personality. As for the individual, whether his/her personality is good or bad serves as a synthetic standard to judge his/her moral state. Personality differs from special moral character because it embodies the spirit of human existence as a whole. Virtue, in the form of personality, integrates and regulates the daily life of a human being. Furthermore, the integrity of virtue is ontologically founded upon the integrity of human life. The integrity of virtue and the integrity of human life are complementary and interactive in the historical practice of life in this world.

The unity with the entire existence of a human being provides stability for virtue. Although it is not innate but acquired from experience, virtue functions as a stable disposition, or even an invariable "second nature." Virtue does not change when situations change. The invariance of virtue in variable situations shows that virtue tends to be stable. As a specific individual, a human being is in a process of internally evolving. However, the subject is always the same "self" as a real life as well as having an internal personality, just as a life continues to exist during metabolism, so does an intrinsic personality, an effect, which shows the relative permanence of virtue.

Virtue will lose its ethical significance if separated from the existence of a human being. We can ask the question: Why is virtue always good, or positively valued? Virtue itself cannot answer their questions. The foundation of virtue has to resort to the existence of human beings. The question of why virtue is good logically relates to another question, which more directly involves the existence and development of a human being: Why is virtue necessary? Human beings are always pursuing perfection in multiple dimensions. On the one hand, virtue does not only reflect the state of human nature, but also regulates its development; it does not only determine the direction of the spirit, but also exerts its influence on choices of conduct. In short, virtue, as an internal personality affecting the entire existence of a

human being, establishes a condition for the multiple developments of a human being. It is thanks to the connection between virtue and the existence of a human being that virtue is always good, or positively valuated. From the ontological and axiological perspectives, the existence of a human being is that which possesses originality and priority.

The relationship between self and others is the background for the accomplishment or development of a human being. Ethics has to face the self-others asymmetry, which is essential to the well-accepted doctrine that morality is for the service of others. Stressing the priority of others over oneself, or even self-sacrifice for the interests of others, the asymmetry constrains or even denies self, which causes some tension between the accomplishment or development of a human being. Consequentialism attempts to release this tension by seeking interests as great as possible, that is, the pursuit of self-interests would be all right if such interests would bring about a greater good. However, this approach is open to discussion, for if a greater interest could be taken as the criterion, then one's conduct, if it would result in a greater interest, could legitimately do harm to others.

Another possible approach to overcome the self-others asymmetry is to affirm the significance of virtue. Perfect virtue, according to *Zhong Yong*, is the realization of worth-value, on the one hand, and the affirmation of the worth of others. As a manifestation of the whole existence of a human being, virtue is not only the unity of all the attributes of a person, but also the unity of self-achievement and the achievement of others. Both the internal integration of self, and the mutual achievement of self and others demonstrate the unity of virtue and existence.

Virtue, as a unity of human existence, has its own structure. In moral practice, virtue presents good intentions in the form of a stable disposition, rather than accidental or reluctant willingness. A person with real virtue will pursue his/her moral goal and choose goodness over wickedness in any situation. He/she will not commit a wicked deed when he/she is alone and free from external regulations. His/her conduct is characterized by "for others" rather than "for oneself." In other words, what he/she does is not for the sake of admiration of

his/her external "moral image," but rather to achieve the self-realization of virtue based on sincerity.

As good disposition, virtue has an orienting quality. Moral practice not only requires the use of goodness for direction, but is also involved with issues such as "What is good conduct?" and "How can one conduct oneself in a good way?" To practice moral conduct consciously, one has to know moral norms, which can provide general criteria for the choice and valuation of conduct. However, conduct always takes place in concrete situations, which are not determined by general moral norms. Without a correct understanding of the situation, a person, who may have good intentions and knows norms well, can fail to act in a good way. Furthermore, what is also necessary is to know how to act, that is, to know the conditions and procedures of good conduct. Thereby, real virtue, which has overcome the form of the abstract "ought," always implies the ability to know what is good and how to conduct oneself in a good way.

It happens quite often in real life: A good person sometimes makes bad choices due to faulty knowledge. We shall discuss this moral phenomenon called "good people do bad things," which nowadays has been taken by ethicists as a reason to question virtue ethics. First of all, we must make a distinction between "a good person" in the ordinary sense and "a virtuous person" in the strict sense. A good person is a person with a good intentions. On the contrary, a virtuous person, as discussed above, must have not only good intentions but also must know enough about moral rules and concrete moral situations. It is because of this combination of good intentions and good knowledge that one excels in virtue. In this regard, to be a good person is not sufficient enough to become a virtuous person.

Besides the intention to be good, and the ability to know what good is and how one conducts oneself in a good way, virtue also has an emotional dimension. In real life, a person who has virtue will have different emotional reflections, and experiences of different motivations and consequences. If he/she is not motivated by virtue, a virtuous person will regret, and have a guilty conscience over his/her actions. If the action or conduct causes a bad consequence, he/she will feel deep regret. After accomplishing a good conduct, he/she will often feel content and pleased. He/she will naturally agree with other

people's good conduct, but reject their bad conduct. Self-consolation, self-reprise, self-guilt, self-content and other emotions also constitute some stable disposition in virtue. Emotions by themselves seem to be neutral. For example, love and hate are neither virtuous nor evil in an abstract sense. However, concrete emotional experiences can be judged as right or wrong. The sympathy for the misfortune of others is a healthy emotional response, while taking pleasure in others' misfortune is unhealthy. The emotional elements in virtue should always be healthy so that one's stability and righteousness of emotions are fused in virtue.

To sum up: as a mental form of human existence, virtue has an interrelated structure made up of a stable disposition of intentions and emotions on the one hand, and the ability to make rational decisions and obtain moral knowledge on the other hand. All these elements of knowing, feeling and willing in the structure of virtue cannot be fully understood merely from the perspective of psychology. Emotion, will and rationality in virtue always have certain moral content. For example, good intentions, the ability to know what is good and how one should conduct oneself in a good way, and emotional acceptance demonstrate a mental tendency to pursue goodness. Virtue, as a structure with good disposition, constitutes a spiritual subject, and consequently, an intrinsic foundation for moral practice. Virtue, as the foundation of moral practice, is not a priori and permanent, but rather historical in accordance with an individual in a society.

## II

Moral conduct is based on virtue, but must simultaneously obey the common norms. Virtue, taking a moral subject as its bearer, is directly involved with human existence. On the contrary, norms are not restricted within human existence but go beyond a moral subject. However, virtue and norms are not totally separated from each other, in spite of their different relationships with a moral subject.

Virtue is, in most cases, integrated in personality. Each cultural tradition has its own ideal examples of personality. For example, despite some mythological elements in Yao 尧, Shun 舜, Yu 禹 and other sages in ancient China, these ideal personalities do embody

virtue and reflect historical needs at any given period of time. Yao passes his position to the wise and virtuous Shun rather than to his own son. This shows a doctrine that one should be concerned with *tian xia* (the world), the whole cultural world, much more than a family, which is necessary for social order and stability. In the story of combat with a flood, Yu demonstrates a great spirit of perseverance, which is indispensable in a struggle with nature. Similarly, the bravery and fearlessness of the heroes in the Greek epics are important mental factors for survival at the time of frequent wars among tribes. Looking through the mythological veil, we can see the connection between ideal personalities and historical needs. Virtue in an ideal personality is chosen in history. In other words, characters in accordance with historical needs have been so repeatedly affirmed and confirmed that they cohere to ideal personalities in history.

The specification of virtue in ideal personalities provides a premise for the formation of norms. Moral norms reflect historical social needs and also show common moral ideals, these are based on social reality and take their specific forms in ideal personalities such as sages. Compared with norms in a concept system, ideal personalities, united with concrete human existence, have some ontological priority: Ideal personalities exist before the appearance of abstract moral norms; the system of norms originated to some extent from ideal personalities in history. In fact, norms in a concept system can in some sense be understood as the abstract and advance of ideal personalities as ideal models of existence, which can guide and direct society members.

However, the originality of virtue in a real personality cannot be overstressed. From the priority of human existence, personality as a unified form of virtue is more original, but this does not mean that virtue is completely beyond moral norms. There are always norms of conduct that reflect the social conditions of a particular historical period. In the beginning, these norms are not a form of a conscious system; they embody customs, habits, etiquette and taboo, etc. Ideal personalities in early civilizations do provide a basis for moral norms, but, on the other hand, they are affected by values and social trends. The fearlessness of heroes in ancient Greece reflects the social value of martial culture. The character of self-sacrifice in Yu's combat with a

flood reflects the priority of a collective and its strength in a period when people possessed limited capacity to conquer nature. Furthermore, ideal personalities in history are a result of re-creation: People always confirm or give prominence to some virtue of ideal personalities according to their value principles and corresponding norms. In both original and re-created ideal personalities, we can see their close connection with norms.

To sum up: Virtue and norms are prerequisites for each other in an historical process. On the one hand, virtue, in the coherence of personality, constitutes a real base for norms; on the other hand, norms influence the formation of ideal personalities from the perspective of social values.

We have just discussed the relationship between virtue and norms from an historical point of view. Logically, moral norms, as a general rule of conduct, are always beyond any particular individual. Moral conduct, however, is carried out by an individual. How can general moral norms be transferred to the concrete conduct of individuals? This involves a more intrinsic relationship between virtue and norms.

The differentiation between goodness and wickedness is a logical premise for moral practice. The differentiation forms in the process of moral knowledge, which aims to know what is, that is, to distinguish between good and evil, to grasp the ethical relationship and to understand norms. Knowledge of what is does not logically imply what one ought to do, just as David Hume mentioned: that we cannot derive "Ought" from "Is." The dichotomy between factual knowledge and evaluation is open to discussion, since the affirmation of goodness implies factual knowledge. Hume has an insight into the logical distance between "to conduct in a good way" and "to know what is good": knowing what is good does not promise doing what is good.

Norms imply oughtness and thereby the differentiation between good and evil: In affirming what one ought to do and not do, norms affirm what is good and what is evil. However, general norms are always beyond and external to any individual so that in spite of their sublimity, they may not be accepted voluntarily by individuals. In addition, norms, as general laws, contain an heteronomous aspect to individuals.

How can we infer to conduct in an appropriate way, from “to know what is good?” In other words: How can we assure the validity of general norms in moral practice? Here we must give prominence to virtue. The socialization of an individual is to some extent a transformation from nature to virtue. In other words, virtue helps a person become a social being, from his/her natural state, and consequently advance to become a moral subject. Contrary to general norms, virtue embodies the intrinsic features of an individual. Virtue, in some sense, results from the transformation of external norms. It is by influences of environment, education, rational cognition, emotional and voluntary acceptance that external norms gradually merge with internal moral consciousness, which becomes stable virtue in moral practice. While norms represent external social demands to individuals, virtue issues from moral internal callings of conduct. The relationship between individual existence and virtue is more intimate than between individual existence and norms. Virtue constitutes the self of a personality unifying knowledge, emotion and will; virtue essentially is an intrinsic form of individual existence. If conduct comes from virtue, an individual demonstrates his/her own existence rather than obeys external social demands passively. It is virtue that unifies “to know what to do” and “to do what one ought to do.”

From the relationship between norms and conductors, norms take the form of social restriction as “you ought to do,” while virtue implies “I ought to do.” For conductors, “you ought to do” gives an external command while “I ought to do” is a self-demand, which can be regarded as the result of synthetic functions of intrinsic virtue structure based on mental disposition consisting of good intentions, the differentiation between good and evil, emotional acceptance of good and emotional rejection of evil. In the form of “you ought to do,” conductors are subjected to requirements, while in the form of “I ought to do,” conductors are subjects. Without the transformation from “you ought to do” to “I ought to do,” it is impossible to achieve autonomy by overcoming heteronomy.

Logically, a conductor’s following moral norms requires a basic premise that he/she will to be a moral person. This tendency towards goodness constitutes such an internal commitment of a conductor that moral norms boast sanction for him/her. For a person who has no

good intentions and consequently no commitment to act in a good way, moral norms make no sense for he/she will by no mean have a guilty conscience or condemn himself. In this sense, we may say, since the tendency towards goodness is a premise for obeying norms, a moral system is suppositional by nature: if you choose or promise to be a moral person, then you should obey norms. Because the tendency towards goodness results from an internal mental disposition of virtue, virtue serves as a premise for norms.

Of course, to affirm that virtue provides real assurance for norms does not mean to negate the restricting function of norms themselves. Virtue, as a unified mental structure, contains general regulations, for which the willingly acceptance of norms is indispensable. In fact, the formation of virtue is simultaneously a process of self-building in accordance with norms. Norms that are dominant at a certain time not only restrict human conduct, but also influence the feature of personality. Li Gou (李觏) says, "If we guide people by learning and by rituals (*li* 礼), their virtue will be accomplished." Similarly, Zhang Zai (张载) emphasizes the unification of grasping a system of norms with transforming nature to virtue: "It is necessary to be held by rituals when virtue has not been achieved"; "Dao and righteousness result from knowing rituals and accomplishing virtue." The acceptance of norms will help to avoid an egotistic possibility of virtue. For Aristotle, the link between "justice" and "lawfulness" means the link between virtue and law since justice is "a complete virtue." Therefore, connecting justice with lawful implies the connection between virtue and laws. As compulsory norms, laws share some similarity with moral norms. In this sense, the connection between virtue and laws affirms that between virtue and norms. Such was the understanding of Aristotle, considered one of the most important thinkers of virtue ethics in history, that virtue and norms are not absolutely exclusive.

Generally speaking, common norms are required to maintain social order and solidarity, and to achieve the necessary justice of conduct. Common norms are significant operative instruments that provide basic guidelines for not only conduct, but for the evaluation of conduct as well. The formation of virtue is a long-term process. Becoming a virtuous person is a higher and more difficult achievement than simply understanding moral norms. Therefore, following

norms is a primary demand, and following external norms as a baseline is not enough for both individuals and the whole society for it is impossible to reach perfect morality, and the function of external norms, in reality, lacks internal assurance. In short, common norms are indispensable to the guide and evaluation of conduct, whereas virtue is indispensable to the real validity of common norms.

The unity of virtue and norms also can be seen in the unity of norms and diverse special categories of virtue. In Confucianism, its core moral ideas are “benevolence” (*ren*, 仁), “righteousness” (*yi*, 义), “propriety” (*li*, 礼), “wisdom” (*zhi*, 智) and “truthfulness” (*xin*, 信). These are as regards the requirements of conduct and the criteria for the evaluation of conduct. For example, Confucianism advocates “to practice benevolence” (*wei ren*, 为仁) and “to practice righteousness” (*xing yi*, 行义). In addition, Confucianism also interprets these ideas as intrinsic virtue and character: so-called “a man of benevolence” (*ren zhe*, 仁者) refers to a subject who has the virtue of benevolence. On the one hand, a person forms his/her intrinsic “benevolence” in “practicing benevolence” under the guide of the norm of “benevolence”; on the other hand, based on virtue, he/she carries out the moral practice of doing good and rejecting evil. In practice, “benevolence” as a norm and “benevolence” as a special category of virtue are united together. Similarly, justice, as a key concept in the western tradition of ethics, is both a norm and a special kind of virtue.

Virtue, including specific categories of virtue, always has a tendency toward goodness, which is naturally positive in value. Take benevolence as an example. It implies always taking care of others as a purpose and being good-willed to others. However, a tendency toward goodness means only a possibility, rather than a reality. In some cases, virtue could lead to a negative outcome. For example, benevolence, in spite of its orientation toward goodness, would not be good if one deals benevolently with those who are harmful to society (or enemies of society). In order to avoid the negative alienation of virtue and help transform what from possibility to reality, we need not only take hold of all aspects of virtue – that is, the unity of the intention to do good deeds, and knowing what is good (including distinguishing good from evil, analyzing concrete situations of conduct)

– but we must also emphasize the significance of norms in guiding virtue that also shows the relevance of norms and virtue.

### III

The above discussion has manifested, in a certain sense, that virtue is involved with both norms and conduct. At first glance, virtue seems to be more relative to “what we should be” while norms have a closer relationship with conduct since norms prescribe “what we should do” and how we can make. However, this does not imply that conduct and virtue are disconnected. Just as virtue and norms are integrated, so are “what we should do” and “what we should be.”

Virtue, which is real in itself, can be seen as an intrinsic, authentic self. However, “intrinsic” does not mean that self is constrained in the self. Although a self is an intrinsic personality, it needs to demonstrate itself externally. Similarly virtue exists both in an intrinsic mental structure and in real conduct. Just as external norms should be transformed into intrinsic virtue, so should virtue be transformed into virtuous conduct. As a matter of fact, the achievement of virtue and the performance of virtuous conduct are united in the existence of a same self in the world. As far as its origin is concerned, virtue cannot be accomplished without virtuous conduct. Wang Fuzhi, a Chinese Philosopher of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, says: “By virtue we mean what is acquired in the mind in the process of conduct.” Virtue, as an intrinsic personality, always has the problem of how to embody itself. While the formation of virtue (“what is acquired in the mind”) is based on “virtuous conduct,” the self-embodiment must surpass spiritual enjoyment so as to confirm itself in virtuous conduct.

The external embodiment of virtue is also a process of externalizing virtue. Authentic virtue is always both intrinsically and externally demonstrated. The externalizing and objectifying of virtue is, in daily life, accompanied by great conduct. Morality always extends to all aspects of social activity while any moral subject lives within some determined social environment, whose subject is powerless. Therefore, moral practice is always involved with both the determination of the environment and the indetermination of conduct. The power of virtue lies in the fact that in a determinate environment,

virtue is able to affect daily life, influence the life world, and give it new meaning so that daily life embodies Dao (value ideal).

As a form of existence, virtue, firstly, is a mental disposition with a good mental tendency. However, the value of a good mental disposition is still potential since it merely means a possibility to conduct oneself in a good way. The fulfillment of virtue lies in conduct: The transformation from virtue to virtuous conduct means virtue becomes a reality in practice. Virtuous conduct, as the realization of virtue, can take quite a few forms, while virtue also embodies all aspects of human existence, such as communication in daily life and material production.

The transformation from virtue to virtuous conduct means the confirmation of virtue in reality, by going beyond virtue in potentiality. Certainly this is not the whole story: virtuous conduct must have virtue as its internal foundation. The world is so complicated and situations are so changeable that it would be difficult to be consistent in conduct while following the changing situations in the world. Only if we always conduct ourselves with virtue can we maintain goodness in various circumstances. As a sincere personality, virtue presents an intrinsic unity of self. In this sense, virtue is one. On the contrary, virtuous conduct is "many" because conduct manifests itself in multiple ways in various social situations. The regulation of virtue over virtuous conduct can be understood as one-over-many. It is the intrinsic virtue of self that assures a tendency towards good in the various circumstances of a subject.

Virtue, as a mental structure, contains not only a good disposition, but also the ability to know goodness, which refers to grasping moral norms, analyzing concrete situations, combining norms with the situation, solving moral problems, and so on. In other words, virtue, which includes conduct mechanism and evaluation system, cannot be simply understood as good intentions. Moral norms mainly prescribe what we should do in most cases, but they do not tell us how to apply norms to a particular situation. The analysis of a situation, the application of norms in different situations, rational deliberation and volitional decision, all depend on the moral subject, and thereby, on his/her virtue.

If virtue is understood as an entire mental structure rather than some attribute, the abstraction of the relationship between virtue and conduct can be overcome. The entirety of virtue is not only a unity of practical reason, but also a unity of virtue and one's entire human existence. Because of these two kinds of unity, virtue has an ontological significance in moral practice: virtue provides guidelines for conduct and affects conduct by permeating all aspects of a subject's activities.

This does not mean to deny the function of norms in concrete moral issues. However, concrete moral issues usually relate to the flexibility of moral norms, which was discussed in the debate over *jing* 经 (universal principles) and *quan* 权 (adjustment of principles) in Chinese philosophy. Mencius is against the shortage of *quan* 权 (adjustment of principles) while he advocates returning to *jing* 经 (universal principles). Furthermore, Wang Fuzhi discusses the interaction between principles and expedience in the context of a subject as well as his/her consciousness: "Only if we know general principles and keep them in mind, can we conduct in this situation without disturbing other situations. Generality must be held in variability, while variability must be held in generality. It is marvelous if the great function of the practice is in accord with what is in the mind." By general principles Wang means in some sense, common norms. To know general principles and to keep them in mind is to transform common norms into a conceptual structure. The unity of generality and variability in the interactivity of principles and expedience, according to Wang, is based on what is in the mind, that is, an internal conceptual structure. In this way Wang emphasizes the significance of intrinsic mental structure in the process of knowing what is good.

The connection of virtue and conduct is also reflected in solving concrete moral issues. As far as Confucianism is concerned, the important debate over knowing and acting relates also to the relationship between virtue and conduct. For Confucianism, knowing is mainly knowledge of virtue, and the interaction between knowing and acting means the cultivation of virtue in practice on the one hand, and the transformation of virtue into virtuous conducts. Wang Yangming claims, "The task is to successfully engage in virtuous conduct." He also advocates "extending good conscience, in my mind, to all things;

good conscience, in my mind, implies heavenly principles. If good conscience, in my mind, is extended to all things, then all things acquire their principles." By all things Wang Yangming means various moral issues, such as ethical relationships. Good conscience can be regarded as an intrinsic virtue because it is an individual's moral consciousness, whose contents are heavenly principles, that is, general norms. To extend good conscience in my mind to all things is to apply moral consciousness to moral practice, a perspective of transforming virtue into virtuous conduct. The fact that all things acquire their principles is the manifestation of intrinsic virtue in an ethical world. As far as mind and principles are concerned, such a process is the establishment of moral order in the externalization of the mind. As far as virtue and virtuous conduct are concerned, such a process is the objectification of virtue in ethical relationships through virtuous conduct. Traditional Chinese ethics has emphasized practice character of intrinsic virtue and the regulation of personality over virtuous conduct.

Virtue affects conduct not only in its good disposition but also in its endowment of a particular moral significance to conduct. If moral conduct is merely to be in accord with moral norms, then we can say that it is "not wrong" since such conduct is characterized by spontaneity. If moral conduct results from understanding and autonomously following moral norms, then it can be called "right." To a certain extent, to do the "right" thing is the baseline of ethics because it is the primary obligation of any member of society to obey moral norms. In addition to "not wrong" and "right," we can use another word to evaluate moral conduct: namely "admirable." Admirable conduct derives from the intrinsic virtue of the subject, making it different from conduct that is merely just according on norms. Negatively speaking, conduct which is "right" or "not wrong" can avoid condemnation or accusation; positively speaking, it is "granted." On the contrary, it is not enough to say that "admirable" conduct avoids condemnation or accusation: it is "granted" because it manifests the innate power of virtue and embodies the truthful personality of the moral subject.

Moral conduct consists of motivation and consequence, and both of them are open to moral evaluation in the external society, or in the self-reflection of the subject. If he/she is aware of good motivations or

positive consequences of his/her conduct, the subject then possesses moral judgment as well as moral experience, based on self-affirmation and self-realization. The subject then feels self-confident and self-sufficient, and these will become enthusiastic forces in promoting moral practice. On the other hand, bad motivation and harmful consequences usually result in negative emotions or condemnations of conscience, such as self-accusation, regret and guilt, which function as a particular moral sanction. This sanction, realized in self-evaluation, is a very important internal mechanism for moral practice in restraining the realization of bad motivations, and avoiding the recurrence of a subjective fault with negative results. Logically, moral self-evaluation, as well as moral incentives and sanctions, requires intrinsic virtue in a subject. In fact, the evaluation of motivations and corresponding results is always intertwined with good intentions, the judgment of good and evil and the emotional acceptance of good and emotional rejection of evil. It is because of a good disposition that positive motivations and results produce self-sufficiency, while immoral motivations and results produce self-accusation, regret and guilt.

As a result of virtue, moral conduct is not only conscious but natural, especially in the formation of a specific motivation. Mencius tells us a well-known story: on seeing a child falling into a well, anyone who has moral consciousness will spontaneously try to save the child, without deliberation. In this case, motivation is the natural response and inevitable outcome of a good disposition in virtue. Perfect moral conduct is characterized by: consciousness, that is, to consciously obey rational norms; willingness, that is, originating from the internal will; and naturalness. It is in the unity of these three qualities that conduct ontologically based on virtue is autonomous, and consequently, achieves a higher-level state. Just as the *Doctrine of the Mean* (*Zhongyong* 中庸) says: "A person with authentic virtue acts in accordance with norms, without effort and without deliberation. He walks in the way of the Mean at leisure." Effort and deliberation are unnecessary since general norms have been deeply rooted in consciousness and have consequently become second nature to the subject. Because of authentic virtue, the subject goes beyond rational compulsion and intended effort into a natural realm. In this way, the

state of conduct (virtuous conduct) and that of personality (virtue) are fused together.

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**Part II**  
**Values and Morality in**  
**the Contemporary World**



4.

## **Is there a Place for Traditional Values and Virtues in Social Life Today?**

GERARD WALMSLEY

This paper argues that rather than looking for a set of traditional values and virtues we should look for ways of thinking about morality and ethics which may be found in the 'tradition' and which may be relevant for the contemporary situation. It examines the reasons for the disconnection of traditional ways of thinking and the contemporary situation at two levels: the marginalization of morality and the disarray in ethics. Both aspects are found to be rooted in the emergence of the empirical scientific differentiation of consciousness. The paper then goes on to ask what resources may be found in the tradition to overcome the gap between the ancient and the modern or the traditional and the contemporary. A contemporary resource in the thought of Bernard Lonergan is also examined.

### **Introduction: The Contemporary Problematic of Morality and Ethics**

In what follows I argue that the biggest challenge today, regarding moral life, is not simply a lack of appreciation of particular "traditional values and virtues," but the loss of an ability to think about values in a systematic, comprehensive and integrated way. To some extent this may be reflected in the conference outline. Although it points to a real problem "the weakening of traditional morality" I am not sure if it reflects the full scale of the problematic facing us in relation to morality and ethics in contemporary life. Let me proceed by recapping the conference outline and then build on that. The conference outline opens as follows:

The transition from traditional to modern society which has lasted some four centuries draws different sectors of human society into an almost synchronous process of globalization.

Compared to traditional society, however, modernization is also a utilitarian pursuit of material interests and desires which has led to a weakening of traditional morality.

There is now doubt that this is so, and I will enlarge on these points shortly. The implication is that we live “after virtue” as MacIntyre says. This gives rise to a variety of questions: How are values and virtues related? How are both related to culture and religion? Has the vitality of traditional values and virtues been lost in the contemporary world? How can the vitality be restored today?

The difficulty with the questions, though, is that they are uncontextualized as they stand. Also they seem to make a number of assumptions. What kind of values can be relevant to both traditional and contemporary contexts? What counts as a “traditional values or virtue”? Is it true that ethicists in the West have attempted to go back to virtue ethics in relation to Aristotle, and has “virtue ethics” become an important contemporary school? I am not sure if Aristotelian ethics is adequately described as ‘virtue ethics’. I do not think that going back to Aristotle is a matter of going back to a set of traditional virtues as opposed to going back to a way of thinking about moral life. Moreover going back is not simply a matter of drawing attention to virtues but involves a consideration of phronesis and moral reasoning. It also involves the recognition of values as concrete goods that promote human flourishing. A ‘virtue ethics’ cannot be separated from a ‘value ethics’. Aquinas, who expands the Aristotelian position on virtue, is also often seen as a virtue ethicist. A close look at his position reveals it to be a much more systematic and integrated account of morality, a point which I will return to later.

Now if this is so then we have to reflect what it might mean for China to go back to its traditional values and virtues. What does the return mean in the Chinese context? Is this a return to a set of virtues and a set of values found in an earlier context? What are these? How do we establish that they still apply? We do indeed need to ask whether they relate to the moral issues of modern society. What are these issues? We do need to ask whether or not “changing values provide additional resources needed for a global ethic.” What are these new contemporary values?

I am trying to indicate that the full scope of the problem facing us may go beyond what is indicated in the conference theme. We have to be careful about interpreting the kind of response to our problem about contemporary morality that the conference outline ends with:

All this calls for research in ethics that examines the human predicament in contemporary human society and rediscovers from the tradition the significance of human values and virtues for life today.

This will not be a matter of identifying a fixed set of values and virtues in the tradition. It will involve retrieving ways of thinking about the whole realm of morality as an inescapable dimension of human life: thinking about moral experience, the reality of values, the nature of virtues and the moral realm as a whole. We have to retrieve something that has been lost but also we have to discern why it was lost and show that it is still important and how it can be recovered.

I argue that the problem is both practical and theoretical (or methodological). As suggested the problem does involve the disruption of traditional society through the imposition of material values that globalization brings. This must be understood in a wider context. For with this disruption of life came a disruption of thought which involved the fragmentation of ethical theory or more correctly ethical philosophy (for to call reflection on moral life "ethical theory" is a symptom of the problem we are facing, as I will explain later). The point here is that both the practical and the theoretical problem have the same root and the same cause: the rise of the "modern empirical scientific differentiation of consciousness." For from this springs the technology which creates the material goods that drive globalization and from it also comes the fragmentation of ethical thought that makes it difficult to see the consequences of economic globalization. The success of science and the benefits that its technological application brings is clear. The production of material goods has obscured other values. The success of scientific thinking has had an unfortunate influence on science. Philosophy, even when it is not reduced to naturalism or positivism, may be confined to being an exercise in clarifying the truth claims of science or common sense.

On the one hand scientific-technological consciousness came to dominate and exclude other dimensions of consciousness. It transformed general realistic common sense into practical-materialistic consciousness whilst excluding aesthetic and above all moral consciousness. The latter becomes merely subjective, as subjective as materialistic interests and desires. Meanwhile ethical thinking had few resources to counter this subjectivizing of moral consciousness. Values are not facts according to Hume. In utilitarianism ethical theory simply reaffirmed self-interest and left no room for objective value. Modern Kantian deontology did not help much by taking ethics out of the concrete world and into the noumenal world. The position that virtue might be a matter of intelligent responsibility to concrete values and the concrete good was not considered. Either properly moral consciousness was eliminated or it was made irrelevant to practical life.

We do then need to rediscover the importance of values and virtue. This will involve appreciating how aspects of modernity and the rise of science led to a contraction of human consciousness and the distortion or elimination of moral consciousness. This cleared the way for a merely economic-materialistic globalization. The rediscovery of values and virtues will involve the recovery of ways of thinking about values as realities that contribute to human flourishing (Aristotle). It will also involve a more integrated way of thinking about morality (Aquinas). It will involve a way of personally appropriating moral thinking, moral evaluating, moral judgment and decision making, that leads to the recognition of a full range of values beyond market or material values (Lonergan).

In many ways MacIntyre has clarified the situation. He says explicitly that “we have – very largely, if not entirely – lost our comprehension, both theoretical and practical, of morality” (1984: 2). I will take up in turn the two sides of the problem.

### **Globalization and the Marginalization of Morality**

The rise of modernity, modern science along with modern politics and economics, and the economic globalization that resulted, has greatly affected moral living. Modern politics in many ways was

based on the view that political action no longer needed to be checked against moral or religious considerations: think of Machievelli or Hobbes (Gay, 1998: 56). Economics developed as the science of how technologically created material wealth should be managed and as the science of self-interested choice. Eventually economic thought came to dominate our horizon. The autonomy of economic science from religion and ethics and even from politics eventually allowed it to permeate every dimension of life and conduct. The inevitable result led us to focus our attention mainly on the lowest level of value – material goods.

This influence of economics on our whole way of life is argued in detail by Craig M. Gay, who points to Weber's concern that capitalism, the market system, has become an irresistible force that will shape our lives until "the last ton of fossilized coal is burnt" – the last forest destroyed and the last ocean polluted. And as well as harming the ecology the economic order impinges on distinctive human life by imposing a rational cost-benefit analysis on everything (whilst ignoring hidden costs or "externalities"). The result is that practical rationality trumps reflection and personal intelligence and allows no place for substantive rationality or value-based thinking (1998: 142). We are led to be "specialists without spirit" and "sensualists without heart," as Weber warned.

R.W. Fevre in his *The Demoralization of Western Culture* (2000) develops the point. He argues that economic rationality has sedimented into "the common sense of the modern era." The problem with common sense is that it can be uncritical and assume an omni-competence. Our common sense – the common sense of the modern era – denies sense to everything that cannot be measured, calculated and show credentials of utility (Bauman, Forward to Fevre, 2000: vi).

Fevre argues that western culture is demoralized because under the pressure of economic rationality it has lost touch with morality. And economic globalization has exported this demoralization. Fevre argues that western culture is demoralized because under the pressure of economic rationality it has lost touch with morality and has lost a sense of purpose. It applies economic rationality in the wrong place, as if cost-benefit analysis or rational decision process can decide everything.

He gives a simple example: who is willing to temporarily abandon a career in order to stay at home and look after their young children. The temptation is to rationalize the career choice by saying we are working to pay for their future education. We may also say that professional care may be better than amateur parenting. Fevre suggests that “in our hearts we know we have put our children into an instrumental calculation and weigh their worth” (2000: 4). We have “hollowed out everyday morality” by applying cost-benefit analysis to our relationships with our children.

For Fevre we seem to have gone from a time when moral certainty, along with faith, was easy to attain (for we breathed them in from the traditional culture) to a time when to shape one’s behaviour to a definite system of values and to be religious requires considerable effort. He links this to the dominance of a distinctive kind of common sense based on calculative reason.

[T]he term common sense as used in this book requires first, that we rely solely on reason, that we act towards others only on the basis of what we know and never on the basis of what we take on trust or that which requires an act of faith (2000: 15)

This practical-rational common sense is a dominant way of thinking. It has become the way we think about people. *We begin to weigh people in a calculating way, in the same way we look for a bargain in the store* (See, Fevre, 2000: 15). This common sense has taken over as the guide to human action. Where we once tended to rely on our feelings, on personal resonance, or on religious awareness, we now let practical calculation take over. We calculate people’s possible reactions and anticipate them. Economic rationality replaces morality as the basis of our interactions. Economic rationality is one of the most important reinventions of common sense in a more rigorous and robust form, but it is based on an old common sense idea: that everyone is out for themselves, interested in maximizing their own pleasure and minimizing their experience of pain. This idea appears in a variety of different guises over the centuries: in common sense proverbs, in the tenets of utilitarian philosophy, in the basic premise of neoclassical

economics, in the refinements of welfare economics and rational choice theory elsewhere in social science, and in everyday economic rationality (2000: 200).

Capitalism has a 'spirit' which functions like a morality – as Weber pointed out and Fevre reaffirms. It is "the spirit of the hive." This is what makes it difficult to grasp happiness in the midst of affluence. It has demoralized us by making us blind to anything but material goods. This is not a moralistic point; it is an ethical and moral point. We can be consumed by this spirit. Our whole lives are spent working for money or in spending the money we work for. Less and less time is spent on activities that do not fit the logic of the market or to which it should not be applied: enjoying art, personal relations or contemplation and religion. If religious activity is given time it can now be linked to money and business: praying for success in business or getting God's approval!

People find it more and more easy to live entirely rational lives in which they do not have to encounter any other influence [other than work related or consumer related activities]...By the time we become full-time members of the adult world of money and work, everything we see and do confirms for us that we are right to hold the rational view (2000: 203).

We live to work rather than work to live. This is hardly a context in which personal morality and faith can flourish. We are continually distracted. The idea and reality of globalization is used to raise fears that we are being left behind (2000: 205), so we outsource our parenting as economic rationality dictates.

A final point from Fevre is this: Economic rationality has now given rise to a "sham or ersatz morality which blights all possibilities of real moral invention" (2000: 209). It induces a sense of compulsion, "it makes work and consumption a duty" (2000: 209). It corrupts or excludes genuine morality. Economic rationality cannot cope with morality and so seeks to replace it (2000: 211) or disregard it as non-scientific. The only moral rule to follow is "do not waste money." You can be philanthropic if you can afford it or if it is good publicity or if it brings political influence, but not as a moral responsibility: "Where economy speaks, ethics had better keep silent." Only the work ethic is admitted. In this way "economic morality" has changed our wider

moral perceptions. With economic morality in place, economic values have come to occupy the highest position. They are meta-values standing above all other considerations.

Economic rationality, a tool rather than an end in itself, has become by a sleight of hand, economic morality. This is a peculiar morality because economic values are implied to be facts, whereas other values are 'subjective' and contrast with facts. These fact-values dominate our decision making without having to be justified. We are "obliged to defer to economic morality in order to justify our behaviour" (2000: 212). Non-economic action and values are controlled by economic value-facts: The GDP for example is considered above any other factor in life. It is 'wrong' for charity or even justice to intrude into the labour markets or education policy.

Fevre concludes that we are dealing with "one of the biggest deliberate category mistakes of human history" (2000: 213). Capitalism has persuaded employees to understand their work as a prime value and to 'believe' in the capitalist system as basic to human life. They are to commit to it, to invest themselves in it. Economic morality compels this. It persuades us to follow a cost benefit analysis that leaves out real costs to physical and mental health, to human relations and to personal happiness (2000: 214). Again the point Fevre is making is not simply a moralistic criticism of materialism and consumerism. What is at stake is a reduction of authentic human life to the confines of work. This is exported via globalization.

#### *The Globalization Factor*

The globalization factor needs to be considered more directly. This world-wide phenomenon often acts to level out cultural differences, as Thomas Friedman implies in his *The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Globalized World in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (2005). Powerful economic and technological and market processes appear to envelop the whole planet though the cultural realm keeps on trying to reassert itself. Fukuyama's *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992) has the same implication: a new order has been established definitively with globalization and liberal democracy (the wheel of time has been

stopped!). What exactly do we mean by globalization? The literature is vast but a few important points need to be made explicit.

We could take globalization in a neutral sense as simply the set of processes which make the world smaller, which make us aware of the fact that we live on a relatively small, ecologically challenged planet; of the fact that we inhabit a global village (Currie and Newson, 1998: 1). Globalization involves a growing inter-connectivity that affects nations and economies and cultures. It is a relatively new phenomenon, though it has complex roots in history – in the European Renaissance, in colonialization, and in imperialism (which already suggests we cannot take it as neutral). If we focus on the economic and technological and market aspects a less neutral side clearly emerges. The manner in which globalization began and the manner in which it proceeds and on whose terms it advances have to be considered. We discover then that globalization is experienced in different ways in different ‘places’ – in different regions and cultures.

We discover an integrated world marked by a network of global communications, dominated by the multinationals and a few super-nations whose actions dominate the world stage. The economic-technological dimensions tend to give political advantage to the developed world, though this is gradually changing. An important consequence, relevant to our discussion, is that economic globalization allows a global ‘market culture’ to swamp local markets and erode local cultures. The ambiguity of globalization comes out here. While it may bring positive benefits – it produces goods effectively and improves the material conditions of life for many – at the same time it distorts social and cultural life in various ways.

- The nature and power of globalization is such that it produces a world-wide consumer society which relentlessly pursues its goal of wealth creation, no matter what the cost to the environment or the social and cultural values that bind communities together.

- It generates ever new wants and needs. It collapses the full range of values down to the material level (omitting or minimizing personal and social and cultural and religious values). It may recognize a bare minimum of civic values to preserve order and facilitate the effective production of goods. Overall it promotes a ‘demoralization’ of human life (Fevre, 2001).

- It imposes a managerial style on human life, reducing society to business, citizens to being consumers, culture to entertainment, knowledge to information, education to training.

- It brings about a 'pseudo-culture' that appears multifaceted but is basically homogeneous. A consumer culture covers over and obscures genuine cultures. It functions powerfully and perversely in a way that deforms the modern western culture from which it sprang as well as deforming and destroying other cultures by breaking down their unity (See Langan, 2000: 3).

Generally this corporate-led globalization is a "juggernaut driven by greed and notions of market efficiency" which radically affects personal and social life and culture (Ellwood, 2001: 107). It imposes a cost-benefit outlook that leaves little room for culture and moral values. According to Ralph Favre in *The Demoralization of Western Culture* (2000) it lowers morale and morality. Economic rationality instils a consumerist mentality in every area of life. Demoralization involves losing touch with morality in a way that also brings a loss of purpose. The way we relate to people is distorted and social and cultural solidarity are diminished.

From an African point of view, the new global corporate system can appear a form of neo-colonialism. It tends to widen the gap between rich and poor, north and south. New political-economic alignments have not done much to change this. Pressure is put on local cultures and governments and on undeveloped regions to bring them into the global system. Often globalization plays a role in fostering and entrenching corruption, eroding democracy and in provoking a clash of civilizations. Generally globalization fails to appreciate the importance of the culture as Harrison and Huntington point out in their *Culture Matters* (2000).

The effects are clear. We find a loss of cultural identity and rootedness, a loss of creativity and imagination, and the suppression of philosophical traditions that underlie cultural identities. Globalization pulls people away from their roots and it relativizes the claims of any culture. Clearly it is a force to be reckoned with. Responding will not be easy: "The very idea of putting people [and cultures] ahead of the market challenges...the people who control it" (Ellenwood, 2000: 129).

This then is one side of the problem. Human consciousness is contracted or reduced to a single level. There seems to be no room for a range of values, and no awareness of virtue. The global world context is such that it is difficult to resist being drawn into this outlook and being led to act accordingly.

*The Disarray in Philosophical Ethics*

MacIntyre offers a clear diagnosis of the 'theoretic' side of the problem. He argues that moral philosophy (in the West) gives little guidance because it has only fragments of ethical knowledge. Moral philosophy has been so disrupted that it has left modern philosophy so fragmented that it cannot do justice to the complexities of our moral situation. Epistemologically modern thought was fragmented into rationalism, empiricism and idealism. In ethical theory the split was into utilitarianism and deontology and ethical subjectivism. The result is that we have almost no real idea what ethical thinking involves, says MacIntyre. In other words the problem is not simply the neglect of particular values but the marginalization of any values. For MacIntyre, though we use moral terms and talk of ethical theory we are simply going through the motions.

MacIntyre argues that the academy is unaware of its limitations. It has a short term historical perspective. Though it glances at Plato and Aristotle it jumps to Descartes and follows him in seeking completely new foundations of thought, e.g. in establishing a tradition that denies tradition. For MacIntyre "the language and the appearance of morality persists even though the integral substance of morality has to a large degree been fragmented and then in part destroyed" (1984: 5). He reasserts this in his *A Short History of Ethics* (1998) where he criticises the view that "moral concepts can be examined and understood apart from their history" (1998: 1). More fully the problem is that moral concepts are examined rather than moral consciousness, moral performance and moral positions based on moral judgments. The assumption which he criticizes is that moral concepts are "a timeless, limited, unchanging, determinate species of concepts" forming "the language of morals," which can then be examined apart from life. Analytical ethics is thus abstracted from moral life and so from the

virtues and values that seem to be lost. Analytical ethics is reduced to being second-order comment on first order discourse or life. Such a position tries to define philosophy so that “it would be a conceptual truth that philosophy could not impinge upon practice” (1998: 1)

Compare the following:

We are not concerned to know [abstractly] what goodness is, but how to become good men, since otherwise our enquires would be useless (Aristotle).

[This ethical theory] is entirely on the level of analysis...All theories...in so far as they are philosophical theories, are neutral as regards actual conduct (A.J. Ayer.)

This is crucial different between ancient and modern thought, between traditional and contemporary thought. Arguably the shift from one outlook to the other may be traced to the rise of science and to its claim to be omni-competent in relation to (sense) data. Philosophy including moral philosophy is then reduced to being simply about the logical or linguistic clarification of terms. Students who are spontaneously Aristotelian (or Confucian) become disoriented as morality is squeezed out or analysed away.

A number of other thinkers agree with MacIntyre. In *Ethics in Context* (2001) Gernot Bohme argues strongly that “what one expects from ethics is not information but guidance.” To be interested in ethics means not be “involved”: we are not merely entertaining something as interesting (2001: 1). Given this, philosophy is more a way of life than it is a “science.” It should concern serious problems that interest everyone and which call for judgment and deliberation and decision. Academic analytic ethics fails in this: it fails to do justice to its context. For example in Germany there is little “Ethics after Auschwitz.” Moral thinking should be serious thinking about who we are and what society we want to establish (2001: 8).

Similarly Charles Larmore in his *Patterns of Moral Complexity* (1987) agrees with MacIntyre that moral thinking is complex and that much theorizing is too simplistic. We need to “recover some of the complexity of the phenomena with which moral philosophers ought

to deal" (1987: ix). We need to avoid seeking a single principle or single "decision procedure for settling moral questions" in a concrete situation (as Utilitarianism or even Kantian Deontology seem to do). We need practical wisdom and phronesis! We need also to distinguish personal and social ethics which exist in tension. We need to recognize a range of different kinds of values that are not reducible to each other. Deontologists point to absolute values, the good will. Utilitarians reduce all values to interests. Contemporary ethics needs transforming.

Writing earlier, Mary Warnock in *Ethics Since 1900* (1966) finds that the abstraction of analytical ethics leads to "an increasing triviality of the subject" (1966: 144). We exist as moral agents who make an impact on each other. Hence, moral philosophy cannot confine itself to clarification of concepts but must consider choice and action. Unless changes are made analytical ethics will continue to advertise its own irrelevance!

MacIntyre adds that his thesis remains true despite the rise of "applied ethics." He argues this simply conforms the problem of fragmentation and lack of engagement. For applied ethics assumes the impoverished morality of the wider culture and the fragmented ethics of the academy. The fragmentation is repeated in various contexts: business ethics or medical ethics or media ethics.

Textbooks in analytical ethics are revealing here. The standard approach is to focus narrowly on the utilitarian-deontological divide, with only a gesture towards virtue ethics. Normative ethics is separated off from meta-ethics and both from applied ethics. Meta-ethics is dominated by non-cognitivism and quasi-realism or expressivism and subjectivism: the objectivity of values or goods is made problematic. Thomistic ethics provides an alternative I will later argue but the dominant approaches in the academy reflects the problems raised by MacIntyre. Virtue ethics is only gestured at and while natural law is sometimes mentioned it is treated in a reductionary way. Normative ethics is one-dimensional or subjective. Virtue ethics may be mentioned but there are no objective values for virtuous agents to be responsible for.

In terms of the marginalization of morality due to economic globalization and the establishment of the market culture with its material

values we add the disarray in ethics which has few resources to draw on in assessing our situation.

### **Possible Responses to the Problematic: Aristotle, Aquinas and Lonergan**

How best can we respond to the situation? What resources do we have for developing our moral practise and our ethical thinking? In the first place says McIntyre we do need to engage in a historical survey; we do need to explore the tradition. The aim will not be to discover a set of traditional values though, but rather for ways of thinking about morality that have been lost sight of or overlooked.

It is important that we should, as far as possible, allow the history of philosophy to break down our present day preconceptions, so that our too narrow views of what can and cannot be thought, said, and done are discarded in face of the record of what has been, thought, said and done (1998: 1).

A historical survey may allow us to see the limitations of contemporary fragmentation, to understand how it came about and how it may be overcome. It may renew our appreciation of the seriousness of moral thinking and identify possibilities of integration. It may enable us to see why we need virtues and whether or not there are real values to respond to.

#### *Aristotle: Beyond Virtue Ethics*

For example, a consideration of the thought of Aristotle already might reveal that he is much more than a 'virtue ethicist'. He shows how values are substantial and real: they are what contribute to full human flourishing. He shows how responsibility for this flourishing is at the heart of morality and clear thinking about such responsible action is at the heart of ethics. For a more extensive response we need to consider Aquinas.

*Aquinas: An Integral Account of Morality and Ethics*

What should a relatively complete ethics provide? What is required for a relatively complete account of the field of morality and ethics? Arguably an adequate account would be realistic and concrete. It should do justice to our moral consciousness – it should be phenomenologically adequate concerning our response to the good or to evil and our concern to do what is right. It should illuminate and explain our moral action: why we act as we do and why we think we should act as we do. It should explain our conviction that there are norms that enable us to evaluate our actions. It should explain how we freely decide to act in certain ways and what is the basis of our moral responsibility. It should explain how we develop as moral agents.

However, few ethical frameworks do justice to the entire field. Some confine themselves to normative ethics and then only to one aspect of normativity. Some confine themselves to metaethics and a consideration of the meaning of moral terms or principles. The field of ethics is often fragmented into utilitarianism and deontology and perhaps virtue ethics or rights theory. Particular theories rarely do justice to all the dimensions of moral life or of ethical reflection. I would argue that Aquinas comes closest to a relatively complete account.

That Aquinas was serious about ethics is evident. In the *Summa Theologiae* he devotes 303 questions to ethics. I argue that his account is convincing in its detail. Yet often his position is neglected or overlooked which is regrettable for a number of reasons. This is unfortunate because Aquinas's ethics is in many ways the high point of both his philosophy and his theology. Indeed, the central project of his last years was to elaborate a comprehensive account of how human beings ought to conduct themselves (Pasnau, 2004: 217).

Why has it been neglected? In a way it has been neglected because of the very features that make it attractive and convincing: the very detail of his approach makes his account challenging. It requires hard work and serious thinking. It is multi-dimensional in a way that few approaches attain. It is, all at once, a virtue theory and a natural law theory, with divine commands playing a role as well. It combines deontological and consequentialist aspects, and in addition has a

strong teleological component. All of this, Aquinas seems to think, needs to be embraced by a complete theory of human ethics. That theory, as a result, resists summation in any but the most superficial and uninteresting fashion (2004: 217).

This contrasts strongly with the cases of Kant or Mill or even with Aristotle's virtue ethics:

Whereas the spirit of Mill's utilitarianism can be captured in a few sentences, and Kant's in a few paragraphs, there is no [easy] way to give a corresponding sense of what is distinctive in Aquinas's ethics (2004: 217-218).

For example 'there is nothing in Aquinas that even remotely resembles Kant's categorical imperative' (2004:218). He does offer as the basic principle of natural law the precept to 'Seek good and avoid evil'. He points out that we need a range of other derived but still general precepts to begin to focus any reflection on how to act. He also acknowledges that in applying the precepts we have to recognize an 'unpredictable variety of particular occasions' and the need to take into consideration a variety of circumstances. This has to be done because 'there is little use in speaking about moral matters in general, since actions are in the order of particulars' (II-II. *Prologue*). Similarly he rejects any easy 'rational decision procedures' as found in 'rational choice theory' for example. From his perspective such procedures fail to appreciate the requirements of prudence and the careful and intelligent application of general principles.

Similarly Aquinas is much more detailed and nuanced both in his account of pleasure and happiness and in his account of the consequences of actions than Bentham or Mill. He considers actions as both good and evil in intention and good and bad in consequences. He points out that actions have internal consequences that affect the actor and not just external consequences that can be quantified. Aquinas is careful to distinguish between acts of human beings and full human acts that are essentially moral because they involve intelligent and free responsibility. There is nothing in Bentham or Mill that corresponds to Aquinas's awareness of not only the public consequences but also the personal consequences of human actions. He considers not just

pleasurable and painful consequences but also the personal consequences regarding what to make of oneself as a moral agent.

Aquinas then offers a detailed ethical framework – one adequate to the complexity of human lives. His account stands up well in comparison with utilitarian consequentialism and with Kantian deontology. He has a fuller account of consequences and is able to relate good will to intelligent apprehension of what is good for human beings. In addition he finds a way of recognizing the passions that influence human actions. As well as offering a fuller account of both consequences and intentions Aquinas is also able to integrate both factors and to link them with other considerations. His position includes the following:

- A detailed account of human happiness and the ultimate good that human beings aim at in all their actions.

- A fuller explanation of properly human acts as involving intellect and will and as involving freedom for excellence or for the truly good. The account explains also the complex circumstances of human acts and how they relate to good and evil in both the will and the consequences.

- A clear recognition of the role of the passions or feelings that are involved in the moral life of embodied intelligence and will.

- An explanation of how human beings develop good habits or virtues that enable them to sustain right action and become good people who are completely virtuous: this provides a fuller virtue ethics than Aristotle in that it links virtue to personal fulfilment as a moral agent, to public responsibility and to the attainment of our ultimate end.

- A deeper account of Natural Law based on the natural inclination of rational embodied creatures including the inclination to truth and goodness that points to our ultimate end.

- A detail account of the major virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance along with an account of the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity that support them in concrete circumstances.

The different aspects of this account are all interrelated. The *Treatise on the Ultimate End of Human Beings and their Happiness* provides the overall framework. It relates happiness and human actions and the ultimate end of life. It explains how human creatures come from God

and return to God through their own human moral actions with support from the infused theological virtues if necessary. The *Treatise on Human Acts* explains how the will and the intellect work in partnership: the intellect apprehends the good and the will chooses the good that it is informed about whilst remaining open to complete and universal goodness. The *Treatise on the Passions* brings out the realism of Aquinas's account: embodied intelligence has to work with human feelings. The *Treatise on the Virtues* explains how good habits help to keep us oriented towards the complete and ultimate good. Then the *Treatise on Law* shows how we can know the ultimate end and participate in the eternal law through the natural law. It explains how the inclination to truth and goodness is natural to us. It also explains how human law needs to be informed by the natural law or the moral law. Finally, Aquinas goes into details concerning the main virtues of prudence and justice, fortitude and temperance and then the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity. This includes a detailed account of the corresponding vices to be avoided.

*Lonergan: The Appropriation of Moral Consciousness and the Identification of an Integral Scale of Values/ Goods*

As a further resource for meeting the challenges of the contemporary situation I would turn to Bernard Lonergan. Generally he provides the most complete response to the distortions produced by modernity and the rise of science. He offers a comprehensive philosophy of consciousness that allows for the recovery of an intelligent and responsible subjectivity. He situates moral consciousness as a stage of a wider movement of self-transcendence and shows it as subsuming cognitional self-transcendence: In this way he links being and goodness, fact and value. Lonergan argues that through the dynamic relationship between empirical, intellectual, rational and responsible consciousness we go beyond ourselves towards objective knowledge and genuine goodness.

Lonergan takes seriously the view that we should pay close attention to what we are doing when we are morally evaluating, judging and deciding. While some analytical ethical theorists express the meaning of meta-ethics in the same way as 'What are we doing

when we are making ethical judgments or engaging in ethical arguments?' they do not follow Lonergan in going back to conscious moral performance. Their focus is on what we can say 'about' moral statements or terms or arguments. They ask about whether ethical claims are 'justified' or whether they are about 'facts' or whether they are about feeling. Often they presume a sharp distinction of fact and value before they begin (Singer, 1993: xiv). Their approach is linguistic and conceptual only, whereas Lonergan considers conscious moral performance and also the role of the moral agent in bringing about or being responsible for the existence of concrete goods. Lonergan asks 'What am I doing when making moral judgments?' What am I doing as I make this judgment? This is more than asking 'What do I mean by "good"?' In Lonergan's metaethics the reflection stays closer to moral performance. This avoids reducing moral questions to conceptual questions. This attention to conscious performance also gives a basis for integrating normative theories by tracing them back to the pre-theoretical order out of which they emerged.

Lonergan's approach may be developed. We may take self-appropriation as a way of doing meta-ethics. Recall that we have said that ethics begins with a consideration of moral phenomena – it takes everyday morality as its data. Also ethics begins already in ethical thinking about our everyday situations – all of which is often neglected. Lonergan takes this further.

In effect Lonergan is saying that both normative and meta-ethics are rooted here. Meta-ethics should pay close attention to the moral phenomena precisely in order to clarify what exactly I am doing when I make moral value judgments. Discovering ourselves as moral agents conscious of what we are doing may be the essential first step towards explaining what moral judgments and knowledge, choice and decision involve. Arguably prior to ethical theorizing we need to appropriate the data more fully, including moral performance. What is involved in the experience of obligation in the act of evaluation, in the devising of principles, in the making of specifically moral judgments, in moral decision? What is involved in the experience of freedom? What is responsibility? How do we deal with desires and emotions and feelings pulling us in different directions? How do we weigh alternatives and judge what is morally preferable and commit our-

selves to this? This kind of reflection provides not just further 'data' on morality but also enables us to grasp the whole process of moral practice: feeling obliged, feeling responsible, recognizing goods, and weighing decisions.

On the basis of this kind of reflection we reach the borderline between phenomenological ethics which deals with the moral phenomena and normative ethics which tries to grasp the principles behind performance. We may discover that the normative is found within the phenomenological: theory is rooted in praxis. The better we appropriate what we are doing the better we understand why we do it.

At the same time we begin to grasp the crucial role of moral judgment about goods in relation to human life and agency. We develop a moral phenomenology and a moral epistemology that is too often neglected when philosophers jump to 'theorizing' about ethical statements. Prior to expression we may have moral understanding and moral truth grounded in pre-conceptual experience and performance. When ethical reflection gives priority to the theoretical and conceptual it can regress into a mere consideration of ideas and theories which are 'entertained' merely as ideas. The result is an ethics that is not engaged or serious. Abstract notions are entertained in theory that would never be entertained in practice. The meta-ethical becomes an even more abstract exercise. I argue that if we do not find ethical knowledge in our experience, pre-conceptually, then we cannot add it later. Meta-ethics is grounded in self-appropriation.

It is impossible in the present essay to do justice to Lonergan's whole philosophy of consciousness but it may be worthwhile extracting one further aspect of his thought which is relevant to our project: his identification of an integral scale of values.

Lonergan's position is that corresponding to experiential, intellectual, reasonable and responsible levels of consciousness may be found an ascending scale of values or goods. Moral-consciousness and self-transcendence point not only to a general responsibility to the good but are able to differentiate a range of kinds of values. Doran, in developing Lonergan, argues that these values are essential constituents in any human life and so in any culture. Whilst this aspect of Lonergan's thought needs developing it clearly adds an important dimension to our analysis of culture and to our account of self-

appropriation. The argument is that self-appropriation enables us to apprehend these values as irreducible to subjective interests. They are found to be parallel to levels of consciousness.

Vital goods are directly experienced and include health and strength, grace and vigor. This already goes beyond a utilitarian identification of the agreeable and disagreeable for vital values are judged to be worth struggling for as part of our self-transcendence and personal development (M: 31).

Social values involve understanding the common good which requires the subsuming or transforming of particular individual values. Vital goods are conditioned by higher social values and a further stage of self-transcendence is required to recognize the good of order that requires this conditioning. This is more than a social contract motivated by self-preservation and more than the extrinsic order attained by social engineering and law enforcement. Social values belong to the common good which is truly a good for everyone in some degree.

Cultural goods have to do with meaning and values judged to be required for human flourishing. Here we reflect on whether or not we seek vital goods in a way that allows further development and on whether or not social institutions allow full human flourishing and about whether the culture as a whole provides meaning and purpose, whether or not it is open to further development, and whether or not it encourages self-transcendence.

Personal values are found at the moral and existential level and involve responsibility, including responsibility of and to persons as the original value and the originating value that takes responsibility for all other values. Other values are integrated around the value or good of a person. Arguable the test case for cultural maturity is the recognition of this value: human dignity. This is the level of full-transcendence at which we grasp our full nature as human persons who relate to all other persons.

Religious values or goods are those corresponding to the full movement towards transcendence found in human consciousness. The movement towards transcendence may be variously interpreted as: inner transcendence and depth as well as religious transcendence. In either case the term transcendence could be taken as the kind of

love that reanimates and re-orientates so that we re-commit ourselves to all the other values. There is a good case for claiming that the range of values and the extent to which they are recognized and ordered provides a good basis for reorienting and integrating contemporary morality and ethics.

### **Conclusion: The Ongoing Project**

The aim of this presentation has been limited. My purpose was to respond to the call for research in ethics that examines the human predicament in contemporary human society and rediscovers from the tradition the significance of human values and virtues for life today. My approach was to discern what exactly the predicament involved. I wanted to identify what it was that had been lost and which might be found in the 'tradition'. At the same time I wanted to identify contemporary resources for rethinking the moral and ethical dimensions of life today. I hope to have shown that the disruption that affected moral life and ethical thinking was closely linked to the emergence of the scientific-empirical differentiation of consciousness. I hope to have shown that what it brought about was a distortion in our way of thinking about ourselves as moral agents and hence a blindness to the range of values for which we should take responsibility. What we need then is to recover a sense of the seriousness of moral life, a deeper understanding of the complexity of our ethical thinking, and ultimately a fuller self-appropriation of our moral agency. Finally I hope to have shown that Aristotle and Aquinas with Lonergan point us in the right direction. Together they help to reorient and integrate contemporary moral life and ethical thinking.

I have focussed on the Western tradition or on one tradition within Western thought. I hope that much of this will resonate with Chinese tradition and motivate a similar diagnosis and corresponding retrieval of the best in that tradition. I am confident that this will enable us to meet the challenges we share as a world community.

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5.

## Values and Virtues: Three Life Forms Today

MAIJA KÜLE

Culture is not a sum total of things or phenomena, neither is it their seeming manifestations; it is formed as an experience and result of *life forms* that have arisen historically and are maintained by common human effort. The German philosophers Wilhelm Dilthey and Georg Simmel introduced the philosophical teaching of *life forms* at the beginning of the 20 century, and it was described also by Wilhelm Windelband and Ernst Cassirer. The concept "life form" has been in use since the end of the 19th century – the times of Wilhelm Wundt when it was introduced to designate the way people live, their ethical principles, interrelations, communication and different habits at a certain period. The life form idea is to be found in Max Weber's teaching on the spirit of capitalism and its connection with faith, the world of values and the activity of the mind. The theory of life forms made an impact on Husserl's phenomenology within which the capacious and most widely used concept of *life-world* (*Lebenswelt*) was worked out. The philosophical conviction that in human life there would be distinguished definite forms originated with Kant and has not, as yet, exhausted itself, because it is echoed in both structuralism and post-structuralism, hermeneutics, postmodernist compositions, etc. In addition, the theory of life forms has been adopted by some contemporary anthropologists and sociologists. Ludwig Wittgenstein says: "The accepted, the given – one might say – are life forms."

Every age, ours as well, has a characteristic view of the world and its own values. Changes in one sphere of life bring about changes in other spheres, forms of life acquire new – different – fulfillment. Values that have long been the center of attention and have been regarded as eternal, may vanish, to be substituted by others. The totality of things created by people becomes a totality of other things, other actions; the interaction of things, nature and human relations undergo changes. The spiritual arrangement is inherent in the life forms, and people are apt to feel and realize it as *the style of the age*.

Our life experience is recorded in our bodies and manifests itself in concepts of amalgamated influences that Pierre Bourdieu names *habitus*. “The categories and concepts we use to form an understanding of our world are themselves an integral part of the influences: basically they are social formations or constructs. The meaning of the most personal and obvious actions does not belong to the doer of the actions, but to the absolute system of relationships through which they are accomplished.

Society, as such, considered the main term in classical sociology, has lost its significance. French sociologist Allain Touraine writes: “We no longer live in a world of institutions, but in a world of markets, communities and individuals.” We have finished searching the basis of social life in the illustrious consensus of culture, religious morality, individualistic universality and in the principle that all are equal before the law. All these ideologies illustrate the fact of how difficult it is to live in the world divided into two parts – the markets and the communities. It actualized the question about traditional values and virtues in social life today.

21st century life in contemporary developed societies tends towards “bringing upwards” the dregs of society and “bringing downwards” former centers (the normal, non-alienated, unchallenging, calm, healthy, etc.). Everyone appears in his attire and his singularity. No matter how strongly pluralism and diversity be accented in the post-classic life form, one gathers an impression that the idea of pluralism is used to form new centers. Only the order now is reversed.

When contrasting the natural and the artificial, the artificial comes first; juxtaposing the fast and the slow, it is the fast that wins; the beautiful and the ugly comparison is in favour of the ugly that calls itself new aestheticism in postmodern arts, etc. People who used to think and live in the classical cultural form where the beautiful, following the norm, is taken to be beautiful, the truthful – truthful, and lies – lies, are at a loss because even many trends of contemporary European philosophy no longer guarantees the existence of universal ethical norms, universal humanistic ideals or highest values. Many European philosophers today are convinced that traditional values do not respond to the moral issues of modern societies. Life in the traditional forms goes on more as spitefulness, perseverance and belief.

Postclassical thinkers sometimes call it senile narrow-mindedness, conservatism and stagnation. Can we ask the question: are they really right in their positions?

Philosophy has changed nowadays. We know that philosophy is often overloaded with the most passionate requirements of the age – to speak so as to justify power, sensual enjoyment, and at times ideology. It observes and states, sees and informs, invites to think for oneself and to try to understand what is going on. Actually it is beyond the individual to completely grasp it on account of the unknowledgeable, language relativity, historicity, finitude. The French philosopher Alain Badiou is of the opinion that nowadays philosophy no longer creates universal truths, but organizes synthetic perception of truths. Development of the concept of “life forms” corresponds to such synthetic perception of contemporary cultures.

The simplest way of dividing contemporary culture is splitting it into two periods: classical and postclassical. The periods not only follow each other but also contain opposing tendencies. There is a clash of the classical and the non-classical, the traditional and the destructive, the stable and the transformational. There is a clash of the eternal and the temporal, the steady and the changeable. Their *life forms* are basically different. Life forms get established gradually; their outlines become visible to all through prominent events in art, architecture, science and economy, technological developments, communication forms, value systems, political events and revolutions.

I would like to deal with my innovative ideas about three forms of life today based on the differences of value interpretations. They are the life forms: *upward*, *forward*, *on the surface*. We can see them everywhere around the world: the differences are only in their spread and intensity.

The life form *upward* is the model of a classical, hierarchically ordered life; the life form *forward* shows how, with the approach of modernity, the reign of historicity and changeability sets in; the form *on the surface* is the description of contemporary postclassical life and absence of value systems. In contemporary life, all three exist together. The postclassical way of life expressed as life *on the surface* does not at all prevail in the whole of Europe. However, it expands and gathers strength depending on superficial modernization and globalization.

The most typical contemporary life form in the Baltic states is *forward*, though, just like throughout Western Europe, we more and more often find ourselves *on the surface*.

The classical life form manifests itself as a life form *upward* that gradually transforms into the life form *forward* from Modern times through the Enlightenment up to the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century or in another version – up to the start of World War I. Many stances that gain strength in Modern times have their roots in ancient culture and medieval times.

The postclassical life form or modernity manifests itself as a life form *on the surface*. This life form is subdivided into two stages:

a) modernism (from the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to the end of World War II);

b) postmodernism or other modernism (from the sixties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century up to our day). It is characterized not only by loss of spiritual values but especially by the pragmatism and utilitarian pursuit of material goods and pleasures.

Classical times are based on the form *upward* that characterizes a hierarchy with the Absolute at the top. The Absolute as perfection, the absolutely beautiful, good and genuine can also be called God. Even if we do not attribute religious characteristics to God, in God as the principle [idea of perfection, ideal sphere, aim] we may discern the top of the hierarchy. While there exists a hierarchy of values that can be reached trying to overcome one's self and the somber prose of life, the glance *upward* will unite people. One can aspire to God, truth, transcendence, the beautiful, good, superhuman, etc. In the classical life form, people have a system of ranking based on a stable understanding of values. There is always something that is more valuable and something else – less valuable. Ethics is not beyond good and evil; it is based on clarity of moral concepts. It is difficult to change this hierarchy of values because it is directed towards firmness and stability. Glances are turned upward, hands pointing upward, churches towering towards the sky. There is a center and a centripetal force. It is impossible not to understand that good cannot be evil and evil cannot be good. Truth does not emerge from history, memory or testimony. Truth is not a changable narrative or pluralistic discourse; it is not relative, but absolute. Only the most heretical and villainous

representatives of mankind can praise Satan, and it is incredible that they do not see him as evil incarnate. In the life form *upward* there is a center, borders, a main tendency. Order means repetition and predictability.

In the life form *on the surface*, in its turn, disorder is regularity and order is an exception. Eternity is one of the principal concepts of the classics; changeability is that of the post-classics. When wishing to admit that something in human life is indisputable, stable, and of high value, "eternity" is the word to use. He/she will live forever. Nowadays it does not mean – in peace and unchangeable. Eternity is now grasped as the perfection of the flow of time, a glimpse of heroism and not as a phenomenon beyond time. The higher place in a hierarchy one occupies, the greater his inherent striving is for perfection. *Upward* does not mean a position, but a direction and diligence.

Ideas about Virtue ethics correspond much more to the life form *upward*, but it is not so easy to implement this life form in contemporary societies and to withstand the attack of consumer society, the cult of things, the media manipulations, neoliberalism, fast time and the temptations of money.

In the course of centuries in European culture, there appears a tendency "to overthrow" the hierarchical, the upward inclined vector, and replace it with a horizontal one. History shows that the change of life form does not occur simultaneously in all the spheres: at times it has a more pronounced manifestation in political processes, at times in art, economy or architecture. Since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century almost all the hierarchies in Europe have been affected. The German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche's aphorism "God is dead" gives the synopsis that the vertical (at the top of which, for a very long time, used to be God) is finally downcast and life forms start attesting horizontal relationships of coexistence. Philosophy started to look for a new foundation of ethics, avoiding pure structures, a transcendental subject and metaphysical heights. Experience, practice, bodily feelings, power and human relationships in communication come to the forefront.

From the 19<sup>th</sup> century European middle-class life style is carried away by evolution, increase, profit, achievements and amount. At that time "duty and adventure are one and the same thing." Economy and

the bustle in the social sphere drive contemporary life *forward*. In the life form *forward* each thing has its *time*, but it is not so important to have a place (that it also has, of course). Only visible things (those within your practical horizon) have their time, the invisible (transcendental) ones have (if anything) eternity. Traditional values started to be perceived as “old” in contrast with the new strivings or ideology of the “New.” Now the things capture their time, essence depending on their ability to expand, to be changable and always new. Fulfillment is found in time, not in stability and traditional values.

The word “time” appears in the titles of newspapers and books, in the names of parties and in advertisements. The tempo of life accelerates, demands grow; production and marketing capacities expand. Time turns into fast time; space shrinks. Stay-at-homes turn into travellers. Money becomes the universal measurement for everything that can and cannot be measured. The words “development,” “career,” “the social role,” “wealth” belong to the repertory of the new “sacred writings.” It should be admitted that this form of life after the Second World War has been beneficial in many respects – prosperity is enjoyed, the states undertake social care, everybody is entitled to elementary education, the development of science is observed. The majority of contemporary Europeans live striving *forward*. *Forward* supposes normativism in ethics, and rapid historical change of value systems. Man is perceived as a totality of functions; society is ruled by utilitarianism, pragmatism and functionality. The stance itself that *the new must be followed by something still newer* is the life form instituted by the philosophy of Modern times that has taken deep roots in contemporary culture. The word “new” is “sacred” in a profane sense and has taken the place of the unchangeable Absolute because it is a concentration of changes, negation and development. That is the totality of all the feelings and values that Modern times directed against medieval times to abolish perfection, peace, stability and eternity. One might say that the word “development” is a social and pedagogical duplicate of the word “new.” That, as mentioned before, helps to profane the Christian value of “hope.” Development is a victory over the present just like hope is a victory over the present and a projection of the future. However, if hope is an emotionally existential feeling (in Christianity it is made into the greatest value by the

promise of life after death), then development is, to a greater extent, directed towards what is happening outside man's existential feelings: production, society, legislation, programmes, etc. The magical word – "new" – is the key to the contemporary period; and at the same time it also scares. The 21<sup>st</sup> century Western society changes (in all spheres: thinking, norms, ideas, etc.) can be characterized briefly by one stance: *move forward, away from the Absolute*. This stance determines the way of thinking, be it about the truth, norms, conscience, the beautiful, the essence and eternity, or honour, strength and power. You can still manage to acquire what you have not yet acquired; you can try to retrieve what you have lost. It is the form *forward* that mostly characterizes modern capitalism as a contemporary way of life.

Contemporary humans understand this form of life very well because he/she himself/herself to a great extent lives in it. Strict hierarchy is no longer prevalent, though not yet lost altogether. Yet, the hierarchical relations are formed differently. *They are not given; they come to be*. The one who is more steady is of greater value. In this life form value is created, if we can say so, by *place in time* that is given by "the presence of the past" or, to quote Max Weber, by *the accumulated past*. Every event has its prehistory. *The accumulated past* is not the reason for what is going on; yet it is the basis for the present. Therefore, it is possible to look for the place of traditional values, but they can never occupy the central place in development.

There is a great difference from the hierarchical system in the fact that the value arrangement is forever changing; it is never stable but demands attestation. The value arrangement is not given but, as the philosophers say, set as a task. It must be ever attested, every day fighting for one's place in time, rather than just existing. In this life form one can see the spirit of capitalism challenging to competition, demanding stability and failing to give "life insurance" in the hurly-burly of life changes. On the horizontal line, events have a fairly even grouping. Their hierarchical arrangement is changeable, however, and must be fought for. Victory is due to circumstances, constant evaluation of the situation, and the ability to change. This life form uncovers the origins of the ideas of liberal democracy on equality as opposed to fixed hierarchy.

This time-oriented life form saturates everything with the feeling of historicity. It is not for nothing that the 19<sup>th</sup> century is said to be a century of historical perception. History is formed by masses and energy. History is ongoing, although the wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century made one revalue history failing to see its progress. History without the story of progress is a chaotic history for it has no principles that would arrange the events in a definite value system.

Life without the story of progress is the beginning of the end to the life form *forward*. If, in the life form *upward*, man's fundamental feelings are thoughts about eternity, then, in the life form *forward*, a similar role is played by 'progress' or its milder expression, 'development'. Considering the contemporary situation the French sociologist Alain Touraine states: "We no longer believe in progress."

That is a sign that the next form heaves into sight as the more contemporary view of life *on the surface*. At the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and today, this life form *on the surface* deeply changes value systems. The triumph of the body is strikingly manifested in the extreme forms of art, in the media, in communication. Desires of the body become more important than the power of reason and spirit. Emotional experience overshadows cultivation of the deepest human spiritual feelings. The public merges with the private. Medicine, cosmetic industry and pharmacology help to control the body. The ideals of classical ethics many times are regarded as old-fashioned, and the norms as discriminating. There is no center of spiritual activity; one can sooner speak of centrifugal and intercrossing tendencies creating a modern and ultra-modern fast and restless life. The postclassical form is characterized by stances defying totality, universal values, historical regularities, man's nature and essence, objectivity of knowledge and one truth. There appears to be a skeptical attitude towards the concept of genuine, good and beautiful; high culture is not separated from mass culture, the elitist is not the peak of culture, a tendency towards relativism appears, plurality and indefiniteness are welcome. Tomorrow is perceived as today, only offering more opportunities.

It is the necessity to oppose the nihilistic and pluralistic tendencies that could have lent classics the stamina to survive. Although in many European cultural niches classical life forms continue to exist, it must be admitted that modern times based on postclassical stances are

inevitably on the march in global developed societies. If there is one principal mark which characterizes modernity, it is the power of aestheticizing. "The life of imagination and the life of activity is one and the same thing. Imagination and activity develop simultaneously and intermingle." The creation of one's mind becomes a reality that is at times frightful, and at times quite pleasing. The aesthetic no longer means beautiful, but rather visually observable, a demonstrable that could more often than not be outstandingly ugly, and even repugnant. Culture turns into a culture of aesthetic showing off, stimulating a loss of virtues in social life today.

To summarize: it starts as a road beyond ethics. If morals are retained, then it is only on the condition that they help to assign to the event a postclassical sense, not evaluate it. Thirst for freedom turns into freedom of buying and adventure, egoism, and denial of communal needs. It is characteristic that the most active supporters of the postclassical period standpoints are modern art, literature and the media.

Narratives have a special role to play in postclassical societies. Like myths formerly they justify a definite way of thinking, the existence of norms, legislation and social institutions. If there is a fight for self-assertion, it is possible for a short time only. As the prominent popular artist Andy Warhol once said: everyone can be famous for fifteen minutes. Contemporary media confirm that.

In the life form *on the surface* differences are all. You cannot form strategies based on differences, and that is why there are not any. There is no concept of progress, and the concept of development is doubtful. The highest idea of unity can be expressed in the words: Let's unite in being different! So why cherish naïve hopes for a higher and deeper unity. This way of life arises from the postclassical form that has lost all touch with the Absolute, norms, the ideal and history as a universal process. The postclassical life form does not promote belief in an ordered historical flow of time. Paul Virilio says: "We are switching over from extensive historical time to intensive time that is characterized by moments without history." The world is in a hurry. Speed is the world's age. The speed that has now taken over time is only an hallucination, the destruction of any territory, of any chronology. Uncertainty in man's life is similar to the contemporary phy-

sicists' conclusions about the uncertainty observed in the microcosm when trying to fix the position of a particle. A characteristic approach is fragmentation. Traditional values and virtues cannot find their place. There are no methods and means to implement them. Everything in the world is divided and disconnected, examined in parts and fragments.

The postclassical life form does not crave for unity or integrity. It is accompanied by turning against all kinds of authorities, norms or canons. Prejudices and traditions are precluded; change and mockery have their day. The postclassical life form combines irony, uncertainty, fragmentation and absence of selfness alongside a canon of negation. The comical mood is in keeping with the perception of the absurd. Violent disorder, laughter, brightness and destruction are cultivated. Slight impudence triumphs over portly seriousness, and resplendent naughtiness throws into confusion traditional stiffness. Those who take life easy imagine themselves grand. However, life presents much more serious bills when you cannot get away with lies, pretense, irony and light-mindedness. As Western philosophy has not stopped reminding us the conclusion of life is death, in view of which neither property, fame nor imagined grandness make any sense. The life form *on the surface* does not foresee a serious confrontation with death because life is a chain of unforeseeable events and death is a chance event just like all the others.

The turn of culture towards a secularized life in some ways makes the thoughts about sin, blame and sense easier, leaving the center of gravity of the thoughts for the moment when the inevitable is imminent. A whirl of prosperous and the carnival of a merry life stops only at times to remind one of horror, senselessness and absurdity.

You can experience the carnival only if you are involved in it; irony can be grasped only if it hits you. It is important to take part, to be involved. Man is involved in everything – in the process of literature, in deciphering the symbolism of the cinema, politics, a street brawl, etc. Life styles, art modes, kinds of political activity – everything is being construed in a process moving from the once accepted single truth and the created unchangeable world towards a variety of truths, world emergence and its polemic versions. That is why the postclassical life form is intensely pictorial, exotic and unreal (virtual).

To the forefront arrives something, never really hidden, yet seldom noticed, as contemporary fashion exhibits the navel now driven out in the forefront of body signs.

The world is full of signs; they are used to denote bodies, things and events. Living in the world of signs we seldom encounter reality; we keep playing with ourselves afraid of being too serious, united, whole and unchangeable. Traditional values look too serious, and virtues are old fashioned. In the postclassical life form there exists a maximum belief in pluralism in all its possible manifestations. The piano is hit with a hammer, sculptures are made of butter and "heroes" of sex appeal are placed in front of the church.

The life form *on the surface* does not fit any definite scheme because it breaks down all schemes including those referring to it. Western Europe has experienced political liberation, colonial liberation, sexual liberation, women liberation, youth liberation, instinctive passion liberation and art liberation. In life everything is liberated, as it were. Baudrillard calls it a state of simulation in which we can only play out different scenarios because actually they have already taken place. Postclassical people live in an image and dream world that is behind us but which we are trying to produce with, as it were, predestined indifference.

Life *on the surface* flourishing beginning with the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century are disliked among representatives of different civilizations and religions which prefer moral stability and harmony. Questions about the meaning of virtue ethics today can be interpreted in the wider context of the different life forms. Alasdair MacIntyre writes in his "After Virtue" that the best form of human life in which the virtues are most adequately embodied, is based on the human community directed towards the achievement of common goods. Common goods are not possible at the life form on the surface. It mostly corresponds to the life form *upward* with universal values and are realized in the life form *forward* if it is not overloaded with relativism and utilitarianism. I have sympathy for the life form *upward* and I am going to sharply criticize the post-modern life form on the *surface*. If contemporary philosophers are interested in finding the basis for virtues in social life today, they have to develop a more intensive critique of the life form *on the surface*.

### Ethical Pluralism and *Sensus Communis* in the Search for Unity

In the world where one wants to see both harmony among the nations and balance between the traditional and the modern values, a solution to the problem of ethical pluralism might be found by searching for a common denominator.

One way could be referring to the concept of common sense. It should be remarked that the concept of *sensus communis* is ambiguous. Here, one might talk about the whole as either a part of a subject or a unity of subjects.

Giambattista Vico writes that "*sensus communis* is the sense of what is right and of the common good that is to be found in all men; moreover, it is a sense that is acquired through living in the community and is determined by its structures and aims." Such a viewpoint allows us to consider the *sensus communis* as especially important in the context of social experiences and life-world.

This gives rise to fundamental problems or questions. One can speak about the common sense as of something not exactly and completely clear, but still fundamental to the apriori nature of mind. At the same time it is possible to experience the dynamic changeability of this mind as an historic nature which is influenced by cultural and social processes. Hence, there may be grounds for looking into relations between the completed, the absolute and, on the other hand, the subjective, the collective and the appearance of the moment. And this question leads to another: can one search for grounds of ethics here?

The link between the *sensus communis* and the apriori nature of mind could be related to Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Judgement*. Kant searches for the third apriori principle in the field of aesthetics realizing that anyone is capable of stating the judgement of taste. According to Kant this apriori power which is founded in the sense (*Sinn*) allows bringing together the dihotomy of reason and morals, that is, to reconcile both previous critiques.

This common sense is *sensus communis*, the common idea of judgement. Thus, Kant has to search for an apriori foundation for judgements of taste since otherwise they could become subjective affects. For this he finds *sensus communis* as the universality where the

power of cognition is free and where the community exists when it distances itself from the subjective.

Kant points out that for any judgement of taste to exist there has to be common sense, as all statements have to be universal. It is already an issue of intersubjectivity. The common sense of humans existing in language ensures that judgements do not fall into a narrow subjectivity.

According to Kant the *sensus communis* expresses the common meaning, which allows expanding the aesthetic taste to a cultivated social relationship (in modern words – communication). This mutual communication brings the taste to the field of morality as the taste is socialised. Furthermore the power of judgement shows how one's sense can be socialised without a general concept. Kant shows the field of taste and morality that creates a communicative (Kant calls it *gesellschaftliches Verhalten*) life form without the participation of an abstract idea of mind.

The issue of intersubjectivity in Kant's ideas is close to those ways of thinking in contemporary philosophy that research problems of the common truths of life and morality. Now, however, we do not call them 'truths founded on taste' but rather the common experience of truth. This could be one keystone for the quest to find a unitary ethics which would be based on the common notion of truth.

Going back to Kant's idea of *sensus communis* might help in understanding the complicated and dynamic change and conflict of values in the modern globalised world, where the common and the whole are becoming more and more necessary. Meanwhile ethical pluralism might be overcome by the pursuit of the common, where the *sensus communis* could be, if not the absolute, then at least a very important basis and beginning.

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6.

## **Values and Virtues in a Non-Tradition-Based Culture**

JOHN PATRICK GIDDY

### **Introduction: The Harm of Modernity**

Mary Clark (2002) in a section headed “The technologized megamachine” argues that globalization has all but erased the possibility of retrieving a good human life under conditions of modernity.

By the end of the nineteenth century it was all too clear that the private ownership of wealth...was antithetic to the Enlightenment dream of equal rights and an equal say by all in the construction of social life...It was a new form of feudalism, but without the Church’s moral teachings...to ameliorate its excesses...A new ‘scientific’ morality was conveniently invented to justify human inequality. Darwin’s theory of evolution as a process of selection of the most fit individuals in each generation [showed] the superior fitness of the winners in the economic competition for power...This mindset, this belief system, this new religion, is today more firmly entrenched than ever in the dominant social institutions of not only the industrialized world but also the now-global compass of transnational corporate capitalism. The drive for ever-more efficiency in production, for ever-more competition in the accumulation of wealth and the power it holds, and for ever-more rapid technological change is beyond the control of any single government, whether elected or not” (2002: 309).

The psychic insecurities of having to compete throughout one’s life; of perhaps becoming a ‘loser’ in the eyes of others; of having no stable future, no trusted, supportive community to contribute to and be accepted by; of being deprived of any familiar social story that gives one a meaningful identity and a realistic social goal to strive toward – all these

wreak enormous psychic stress on people around the planet ... (2002: 310).

The background to this is the shift from customary to law-based society. Again, I use Clark's useful description (Clark, 2002: 297).

Let us call these society A (customary) and society B (law-based). In customary society (A), the basis of social order is the beliefs of the community from stories, myths and such like. In "modern" society (B) the authority for social order is distant – God, the king, "the majority," and inflexible. In A, the judges/interpreters are the elders of the community; in B, it is the state judiciary or priests appointed from a central body. In A, "wrong" is seen as personal harm (corrected by remediable compensation) or community harm (corrected by shame; exile); in B, all crimes are crimes against the state, which controls restitution. In society A enforcement of social order is through disapproval or desire to belong; in B, it is fear of armed authority (police, military). In A, the goal of justice is apology, restitution, reconciliation; in B, it is whatever is prescribed by law. In A, the basis of social relations is trust, duty, customary kinship, family bonds, friends; in B, it is repression and punishment. In A, rules of social order are changed through group consensus; in B, through edicts, or majority rule.

My aim in this paper is to present a way of thinking about these conditions of modern culture which can furnish a framework, at both the individual and the social or political level, for resisting the resultant degeneration of the quality of human life. First, however, it is necessary to counter the idea that there can be no ethic of virtue under conditions of modernity.

### **Does Moving Away from Tradition-Based Cultures Mean Moving Away from Virtues?**

A culture is "modern" to the extent that no particular tradition of

that culture is able to assume general acceptance. The set of associated values and virtues of that tradition no longer has dominant force in the culture. Anthony Giddens argued – I will try to show incorrectly – that “the modes of life brought into being by modernity have swept us away from *all* traditional types of social order, in quite unprecedented fashion” (1990:4). He suggests that the default method for arriving at truth in our contemporary culture disempowers all traditions, which are now justified, if at all, by extra-tradition methods, which are simply “tradition in sham clothing” (1990: 38). It is “sham,” it seems, because the values of the tradition no longer have a proper grip on individuals. Ross Poole illustrates this idea by reference to one’s membership in a family. As a father in the family, for example, one achieves one’s identity through *identification* with the good of others in the family, one is *tied into* their good. However, the conditions of the market, of being a consumer, characteristic of modernity, break down this sense in which one is first and foremost a participant.

Once the identity of the individual is conceived in abstraction from his relations with others, the assumption of pervasive self-interest becomes almost inescapable....The identity required by the market is that of an individual who is not tied to particular activities and responsibilities (Poole, 1991: 7 and 61).

In South Africa the disempowering of tradition is clearly evident, as is what one may call “tradition for tourism,” in which, for example, Zulu women in urban areas bare their breasts in the performance for tourists of a traditional dance. Or the President, Jacob Zuma, justifies his poor sense of private integrity in taking a fourth and fifth wife, by referring to the (sham) *political category* of “traditional culture.”

For Poole the type of questioning that is encouraged in modernity will *always* undermine the tradition.

Any process of *evaluating* these identities is liable to undermine them. For an individual to subject her or his identity (as wife/mother or breadwinner/head of household) to such a scrutiny is to render that identity vulnerable...To ponder

the identity in question is to render contingent what must be assumed as necessary and inescapable if it is to found an ethic of virtue (Poole, 1991: 63, in Giddy, 2005: 40, *my italics*).

Two crucial elements defining modern culture are: a) a greater degree of individual freedom of choice (which finds expression in democratic forms of government); and b) the critical scientific evidence-based method for arriving at the truth. Poole seems to think of these, in some sense negative. However, I want to argue that both these elements can be fully affirmed if seen as constituent of our normative human nature, or human flourishing, and re-expressed in these terms. More specifically I am going to suggest that liberal modern culture has to be understood by means of its “internal goods” and the critical mechanisms of consensus democracy understood as furthering those goods. The mistake would be to take the mechanisms as ultimate values in themselves.

Virtue is largely omitted from the agenda of the dominant ethics associated with the global world. For Bentham and Mill, moral values became a matter of self-interested individuals, disengaged from traditions and making utilitarian calculations on units of benefit or “happiness.” For Kant, ethics was a matter of a set of rules of fairness, in particular that of universalizability. In the Kantian approach, as is seen for example in the ethics of John Rawls, the rules themselves are not *further* justified. There seems to be no satisfactory answer to the question, Why should I be moral? why seek the greatest happiness of all? why follow the rule of reason and fairness? More recently naturalized ethics looks for evolutionary *causes* of moral behavior as of interest in its own right; but this fails to provide a motivating *reason* to override any resistance to taking up the moral project.

This amounts to an ethics without virtues of character. Marx, for one, disparaged such an ethics – whether “an ethics of enjoyment (utilitarianism) or of asceticism” (i.e. either utilitarianism or Kantianism). He failed to see the need to offer a sustainable alternative: “history” was going to accomplish what can only be brought about by human effort! His theory of a human being (derived in part from Hegel via Feuerbach and coming down to us in the form of the 1844 Paris Manuscripts) included the idea of the human being as a “species

being.” Thus he was able to think of himself and his nature in a critical way, to develop his ideas and put them into practice, and to expand the scope of our self-determination. He omitted the crucial aspect of freedom of choice, the aspect of human transcendence that allows the possibility of ethics. Social transformation takes conscious effort and virtue, without which the best ideals will be corrupted.

Aristotle, untroubled by the modern paradigm of true knowledge as (deterministic) science, thinks of ethics as a perfectly legitimate and important practical enquiry conducted not neutrally by the scientific observer but by those already engaged in the quest for the best or most worthwhile kind of human life, and seeking to *clarify* their goals and hierarchies of preferences. “The end aimed at is not knowledge but action,” he says (N.E. 1095). We can only understand the idea that “every art and every inquiry, and similarly every action and pursuit, is thought to aim at some good,” as the opening sentence of his *Nicomachean Ethics* reads. We do not have to take it as being challenged by modern empirical science, for the scientific attitude is precisely a *dis-engaged* one.

Aristotle suggests using as guideline for this quest, the idea of human fulfillment, fulfillment of our human nature and our most basic desires such as rationality and political participation. This is what MacIntyre and others refer to as the standard of “human flourishing.” For the present dominant global approach, however, this standard no longer operates, firstly because of the greater degree of individual freedom in deciding *which* version of human flourishing we want to adopt; and secondly because any such version could not claim to be objective knowledge, because objective knowledge – according to the dominant default idea of knowledge properly speaking – is never normative, it is simply *the facts*, and no facts can lead to a value conclusion, as Hume famously showed.

### **Excellence in Social Practices: Skills and Virtues**

The upshot of this is that ethics becomes a matter simply of whatever shared preferences we happen to have – “emotivism.” Be that as it may Alisdair MacIntyre (1981, esp. p.181) has argued that in the very ordinary notion of a social practice we can see that objective values do

continue to operate in some parts of our modern culture. Objective value judgments, he says, are linked to what he calls social practices, that is, large-scale cooperative activities with internal goods being in part constitutive of that practice. Examples are the medical and legal professions, sports, and family life. In each case there is an ideal of objective excellence which is not simply a matter of preference. We might debate about the merits of a particular philosophy essay, but we agree more or less on the criteria for what makes for a good one. These internal goods are transcendent of the agent, in other words they are objective values, and they are shared. They make us more than ourselves: we become soccer players, or chess players, or ice-skaters with objective skills, which are judged as true values for participants in that social practice and those who appreciate that practice.

Are excellences and skills in the practice the same as moral virtues? Not exactly. You can be skilled at playing badminton but not a particularly virtuous person. However, there is a connection between the two. The reason is as follows. All practices, defined by their internal goods, need institutional supports, players often need to be rewarded, rules are required for allocating positions, for promotions and so on: medicine needs hospital administrators and chess needs chess societies. The efficient execution of these supports is also of value, but not a value internal to the practice. Practices are threatened when players focus more on those external goods than the internal goods, when lawyers and doctors do their jobs not in order to bring about justice or health, but primarily for the money and prestige. When this happens the practice is, in a technical sense, corrupt – even if the profession’s ethical code has strictly speaking not been broken. The principle of resistance to corruption is the set of traditional virtues of character: those dispositions or habits of character that make one to be a certain kind of, not soccer player or lawyer, but person. These are qualities of good judgment, of courage in the face of disapproval, of balance when the temptation to override the internal goods is strong, of truthfulness when others are fudging the issues, or a sense of justice when the easiest route is to give undue preference to one or another group. It is these precise qualities of character that are especially needed in the current global situation characterized by Mary Clark as “technologized megamachines.”

An example can illustrate why this is not so difficult or idealistic as it may seem (see McCabe, 2005): learning how to enjoy reading. A child might read a novel because his teacher tells him to do so, and because he wants to please the teacher; but he really only becomes a reader of novels properly speaking when he discovers, one night while reading in his room until far past his usual bedtime, the pleasures of reading for its own sake. He now does it primarily because he appreciates the *internal* goods of the activity, the places one goes in one's imagination, the larger world one takes part in, the identification with the characters through which one learns so much about oneself. The *external* goods – praise from the teacher – while still nice, become secondary. Similarly we can think of medicine or the teaching profession, which are called “vocations” because those who practice them can truly appreciate their internal goods, health, learning.

I want to argue, in other words, that the characteristic institutions of a liberal society, valuing individual freedom and equality above all, are practically feasible only when the culture as a whole sees itself in terms of a social practice which has these virtues of character as internal goods.

### **Abstract Freedom and Effective Freedom: Liberal and Communitarian Values**

Modern liberal society is characterized by the procedural values of fairness and individual autonomy. My argument is that the substantive value of growing participation is however implicitly affirmed in the liberal approach. For a liberal, or modern outlook, making a normative issue out of participation seems a throw-back to a premodern culture defining persons in terms of their social roles rather than as individuals with choice. Participation is a communitarian not a liberal value. My argument, based on MacIntyre's perceptive analysis, is that the procedural values are not true values at all, but emotively justified preferences of a dominant culture – unless they are relativized in the way suggested above, namely, seen to be internal goods of a social practice, namely, modernity. They are relativized by a notion of human flourishing, and its concomitant virtues of character.

The link can be seen however if one distinguishes the bare capacity for freedom or autonomy (essential freedom) from its realization (effective freedom). The latter requires the development of virtues of character, openness of self-learning, an enabling milieu of good parenting, and so on – about which utilitarian and deontological ethics have little to say. In particular it involves habits of good behaviour, both on the intellectual level – qualities of attentiveness, intelligence, good judgment – and on the level of practical decision-making – courage, temperance, justice and so on. The liberal culture, and the philosophical ethics associated with it, to that extent misunderstands itself and the conditions for its own sustainability. Its blind spot has to do with a normative idea of human nature: the bias of the human sciences is to see all such ideas as fully conditioned by the particular values of its own culture, for example to do with how it frames its ideas about “woman.” The default position is to abscond from any such framing, in other words to cut all bonds with “nature.” The human person is reduced to a choosing point or self. This fits well with a culture in which the self largely manipulates its world through technology. It does not fit well with the value of *participation* – which MacIntyre sees as key to all ethical values, because we are by our nature social beings.

### **Moderating the Commercial Moral Syndrome by Virtues of Character**

What has happened in the change from premodern to modern is a shift in the kind of default social interaction. Whereas the premodern culture puts the focus on one’s place or social role in the group, modern culture emphasizes a greater degree of freedom. The duty of a parent and priest in the premodern period would be to oversee the adherence to the sets of rules governing the social behaviour of his children or subjects. The duty of the child or subject would be to affirm the authority of the parent or priest or king. Ethics would be essentially understood in terms of this kind of social grouping.

Jane Jacobs (1994; see also Giddy 2007) has done a descriptive study of moral values in North American society. She found that these form two quite distinct clusters of ideas, the guardian moral syndrome (premodern, key value: loyalty) and the commercial moral syndrome

(modern; key values: equality and production). The latter cluster is currently the dominant one. The former cluster, emphasizing obedience but also, crucially, participation, gives identity, and it can be argued that it expresses a crucial element in any ethical framework. This is because an action is deemed morally good when the right thing is done for the right reason (and in the right way). If a person in passing bumps me painfully in the ribs with his elbow I have to know: was it an accident, or did he have some grudge against me because of some past action of mine? Only when I know what was intended, or aimed at, by the action, can I judge it as morally neutral or else morally bad, or simply as an immature act of revenge. It is the same action from the point of view of its consequences (my sore rib) but not in itself. The guardian moral ideas come into play when one sees oneself as a member, say of a family or a nation or a religious organization, when one *identifies oneself* with something greater than oneself. From the point of view of consequences (the commercial moral syndrome aiming at productivity without regard for intention), one can say nothing strictly speaking of the moral quality of the act, neither morally praising nor morally blaming the agent.

There is much talk about professional ethics. Medical ethics is supposed to have “saved” ethics from the hole it dug for itself some years ago, and made it a useful rather than superfluous academic inquiry. Professional ethics, in particular business ethics, can also be seen as trying to prop up a practice, or a culture, without any sense of virtues. A profession, as I have said, is an example of a MacIntyrean social practice, with a set of objectively affirmed internal goods, the goods of the trade. Internal goods are always threatened by goods of the institution, goods external to the intrinsic constituting goods and aims of the practice as such – goods such as promotion, salaries, and so on. In a commercial society these are always under threat. Once the external goods override the internal ones, the profession is, as I said, technically speaking corrupt – doctors and lawyers aim not at health, and justice, but at money and prestige. This is within the bounds of the code of ethics prescribed by the professional body, but human ingenuity, if it is so directed, always will find a way to circumvent codes of ethics. A “good” defence lawyer gets his or her clients acquitted, whether or not the accused is in fact guilty of the crime. The

word “good” here does not mean morally good and the legal profession is then seen less and less as a social good, to be respected. The authentic practice, on the other hand, is constituted by an authentic habitual focus of energy, because the participants are aligned with a set of values in which the goods of the profession, whatever they be fit, make sense, *and are moderated*. The lawyer’s salary is a means to an end, and should be valued only in a proportionate rather than a disproportionate way. So too the obligation on the defence lawyer to represent the client as best possible should be *proportionate* to the end of justice.

#### **Clarification by Contrast: The Neo-Darwinian or Naturalist Approach to Ethics**

This approach sees human persons as agents. We have contrasted the abstract idea of freedom as key value in modernity with that of growing effective freedom. We want to affirm not just the “human right” to freedom, but the *ethical value* of personal growth in one’s freedom. This presupposes the natural human capacity for what we can call agency – which we can describe also as self-transcendence. We are influenced by our environment in all we think and do: our sense-experience is the beginning of our knowledge and our desires are the starting point for our actions. However, to the extent that someone comes to hold a belief on good grounds (exercising their capacity for reasonableness), they are cognitively self-transcending; and to the extent their will conforms to their understanding (say, on the most worthwhile course of action), they are volitionally self-transcending. Both achievements require virtues of character.

But modern global culture can arguably be seen as having a blindspot about agency, and has been said to be properly compared to the condition known as autism (lack of a sense of self) (M. Robinson, *Absence of Mind*). To the extent there is this lack of a sense of being a self and agent, a foundation will be lacking for the typical modern values of individual autonomy and equality. An important implication is the lack of any basis for dialogue with pre-modern traditions and their ideals of being human, including religious traditions. Recent attempts in the burgeoning neo-Darwinian paradigm to re-think

ethics and religion “naturalistically” fail to the extent that a proper philosophical anthropology, grounding also the practice of science, is absent, as Mary Clark points out *In Search of Human Nature*.

The neo-Darwinian viewpoint that Clark attacks is based on the idea of the basic unit of evolution being the gene, understood as operating under the compulsive ends of survival, adaptation and reproduction. Secondly, genes are in competition for scarce resources and the “obvious fact that there are social organisms had somehow to be explained. How could cooperation with a supposed competitor ever be adaptive?” (2002:70). The answer was provided by game theory. Behaviour will be able to be predicted (it was thought in the 1940’s) if we assume individual actors, whether in a war situation or in an economy, as optimizing their choices taking into account all the information. As applied to evolution, it would seem any gene would be eliminated if it promoted cooperation with another gene. The cooperation that exists can be explained by noting: (a) kin selection (I help those closely related to me, so sharing in most of my genes); and (b) reciprocal altruism (they help me exactly as I help them, so costs and benefits equal out).

Clark notes two major problems with this picture. It is incorrect to correlate a particular piece of behaviour (say, cooperation) with a particular gene. It is illegitimate to extend a genetic paradigm from the simple level of genetic coding to the complex level of cellular behaviour. Behaviour is the result of “complex, reciprocal interactions among genetic instructions, current environments and remembered experiences (learning)” (2002: 76). Secondly, survival is assured only to the extent that the gene fits in with the entire genome: so the starting assumption of “individual benefit” falls away. She concludes that we can observe different behaviour patterns depending on the stress levels of the agents. Discussing primates, “low stress tends to lead to egalitarianism, high stress to hierarchy with the possibility of more aggressive behaviours.” She concludes that both outcomes are in accord with the basic propensities of primates for bonding on the one hand and for autonomy on the other. “Stressful conditions tend to restrict autonomy, which in turn creates potential frustration and tends to increase frictions which strain social bonds. Excessive stress leads to coercive hierarchies and, ultimately, to violent conflict” (2002: 97).

### Conclusion

Clark argues convincingly over a number of chapters that human existence is framed by three basic psychic needs, for bonding, for autonomy, and for meaning (see 2002: 233-237). Taking these as unproblematic I conclude to the need to cater for such needs in any ethic and in good social arrangements. Our problematic can then be summed up in four points.

1. It is the non-recognition of the basic need for meaning that blocks any reconciliation of the other two needs, so that bonding and autonomy are seen as at odds. An example of this non-recognition is precisely the attempt to explain behaviour by postulating as a basic determining force that of "individual benefit."

2. The "modern" era is identified with breaking the emphasis on bonding in meeting the psychic need for autonomy. Autonomy is seen as a trump value.

3. Under the threat of loss of identity, of community, a closing down of openness sets in, increased authoritarianism and fanaticism. The space for the fruitful resolution of human needs disappears, and meaning-giving narratives, religious traditions, are squeezed out. Though scientism seems a way out, it only masks the larger problem.

4. Autonomy as trumping remains unchallenged. The demand for "human rights" seems an imposed demand, increasing resentment in the community under existential threat. (As counter-example she gives South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission.)

For a way through this, modernity has to be seen as a development of the customary society, and its sophistication, rather than a break. The key value of modernity, the value of autonomy, has to be seen as one value among such others as the value of community or belonging. It is misleading to ask if there are, in addition to individual rights, community rights. This is to frame an ethical question in terms of the "modern" vision where autonomy (and thus "rights") is trump. The organizational measures needed to secure the values of human flourishing in community, the internal goods of human community, of being human in point of fact, these measures are necessary but not sufficient. They are the rules of procedure for arranging rewards, respecting each participant equally, and so on. The internal goods of

the human community have, on the other hand, to do with virtues of character, trustfulness, generosity, self-knowledge, self-affirmation, personal growth. These come about through others, and society has to facilitate this interpersonal interaction. These meanings can be shared by all, without limit.

One central character-virtue is precisely that of including others, rather than simply getting one's own way. This is commonly known as self-transcendence, and it is a normal everyday virtue. The unauthorized yet dominant procedures and assumptions of the megamachine have to be resisted by each individual in their own sphere of activity through virtues, and at a social level by supporting alternative structures.

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## Justice and Civic Friendship: A Traditionalist Critique of Modern Citizenry

RAJESH C. SHUKLA

In this paper I examine the traditionalist-critique<sup>1</sup> of the modern-conceptions<sup>2</sup> of justice and civic friendship. Without making an exhaustive claim regarding the modern conceptions of justice and civic friendship, I wish to note their two main characteristics. On the one hand, modern conceptions of justice and civic friendship hold that justice is a matter of social concern whereas civic friendship falls in the realm of personal virtues.<sup>3</sup> In other words, it is imperative that an individual acts justly in her associations with others but whether she wants to be friendly towards them or not is a totally separate question. On the other hand, justice – at least on its dominant modern liberal view – is understood as a *legal and contractual* device for ensuring honesty and fair play in an individual's social interactions, protecting her from lie and theft, and other intrusions as well.<sup>4</sup> Friendship has no such legal and normative implications. Against the above modern view, I shall argue that justice and civic friendship do not deal with two separate aspects of an individual's life. Following Aristotle, I will show that both justice and civic friendship are virtues and inhere in the same individual.

This paper is divided into four sections. In the first section, I lay out Aristotle's conception of justice and friendship, and examine the possibility of their convergence in the realm of subject and object. I argue that Aristotle conceives of friendship and justice as virtues, and

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<sup>1</sup> I shall take Aristotle as the leading representative of the traditionalist view.

<sup>2</sup> John Rawls, Amartya Sen and Julia Annas can be regarded as the leading representative of the modern view. In this paper I focus on Julia Annas's critique of Aristotle.

<sup>3</sup> Julia Annas, "Plato and Aristotle on Friendship and Altruism," *Mind*, 86 (1977), p. 552.

<sup>4</sup> John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), pp. 53-58.

not as contractual and social mechanisms. In the second section, I provide a modern critique of Aristotle's view that there is an identity of subject and object in friendship and justice. In particular, I examine Julia Anna's criticisms of Aristotle's view and construct an Aristotelian reply against her critique. In the third section, I develop Aristotle's theory of justice and civic friendship. I argue that Aristotle's conception of justice and civic friendship must be viewed under the broad spectrum of human life and its potentiality. I contend that Aristotle views human life in terms of a shared project and virtue, and that his conception of a good life is essential to understanding his notion of justice and civic friendship. Finally, in the fourth section, I state my conclusions.

### **Convergence of Justice and Friendship**

Aristotle sees a close and complementary relationship between justice and civic friendship. Both justice and civic friendship, Aristotle contends, are virtues. Both are about the good of others, along with one's own good. Moreover in their ideal form, they are exhibited by a virtuous individual (*NE* 1160a5-8). A good friend is a just person, and a just person is good friendship-material. Aristotle observes: "friendship and justice seem to be concerned with the same things and to be found in the same people" (*NE* 1159b25-26). Thus understood, for Aristotle, there is a *convergence* of the subject and object in the case of friendship and justice, not a radical separation as espoused in modern thought.

Justice in its complete moral sense, according to Aristotle, includes personal as well as social aspects. The personal aspect of justice deals with an individual's life and actions at a private level, that is, in conducting one's life according to virtue and living a noble life (*NE* 1129b23-33). The social aspect of justice deals with one's association with others; for instance, how I should conduct myself in the social domain or in my civic relations; *what objects* I should desire and *how much* of these objects I should take or possess. Justice in the social domain deals with the *distribution of goods*, particularly with material goods (note that moral goods, such as a development of one's intellectual capacity and character, are not excluded here; however,

our focus is on material goods). Accordingly, justice entails two things: a doctrine of proper proportion or doctrine of mean, as Aristotle calls it, and a set of rules that determine this proportion (*NE* 1134a1-7), specifically, the laws (*NE* 1129b20-24).

That is to say, for Aristotle, laws determine the worth or merit of an individual's interactions at the social level. This means that our actions in the social domain are measurable in accordance with an objective set of rules, decrees, and legislations (and are measured that way in a good society). The enforcement of laws is the safest guarantee to secure everyone's interest; everyone gets what is due to them, neither more nor less: "So the just is a sort of proportion" (*NE* 1131b18). Accordingly, proportionate equality is critical to Aristotle's theory of justice.

With this brief outline of justice in mind, we can now discuss how, for Aristotle, friendship and justice converge in terms of their subject and object. For the purpose of clarity, allow me to break his claims into two groups: first, that friendship and justice share a unity of object, and second, that friendship and justice reside in the same individual. That is to say, friends are just to one another and a just individual would make a good friend. We must also bear in mind that, for Aristotle, both friendship and justice are primarily virtues, and as such, both are crucial to an individual's happiness and moral fulfillment (*NE* 1095a13-15, 1097b1-8, *Politics* 1295b23-24, 1280a31-32).

#### *Common Object (First Argument)*

Aristotle argues that both friendship and justice have a shared object. That is, in their ideal form, both deal with the pursuit of virtue. Justice seeks to secure virtue in civic associations, and friendship aims at virtue in a more personal context. Both friendship and justice, he argues, are the surest safeguards against *pleonexia*.<sup>5</sup> Aristotle argues

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<sup>5</sup> The term *pleonexia* is usually translated as 'desire', 'greed', 'graspingness', and a tendency to possess more than one's own share; clearly, these translations have different grammatical form and structure; however, without debating the merit of these translations, I will use *pleonexia* in the sense of a tendency or desire to possess more than one's legitimate share.

that friendship and justice converge in terms of their objects in two specific ways.

In the first place, both friendship and justice seek to promote the good of the other, and not merely of oneself. Aristotle argues that friends love and respect one another for their intrinsic moral properties and desire to enhance one another's happiness and satisfactions. This implies that friends want to contribute to one another's interests, goods and welfare, and treat one another in a fair and virtuous way. Justice, he contends, shares this object with friendship, that is, it seeks to promote the good of others. Justice is a virtue (*NE* 1129b25-31). Hence, only a virtuous person can truly *promote* the good of the other, and act always in a just manner.

In the second place, justice, like friendship, seeks to *protect* the good of the other. Friendship, we have seen, entails not only positive contribution to the other's good, but also a protection of the other's good from any possible harm. This includes friends watching over one another's interests, goods and projects. For instance, I must help my friend secure his belongings and save him from vulnerable situations that can potentially cause him harm (*NE* 1155a1-33). Similarly, justice protects the other's interests and goods. In its rectificatory form justice seeks to undo the harm that has been inflicted upon someone; that is, it makes *pleonektes* accountable for their actions and restores the rule of law (*NE* 1132a1-36). Thus, both friendship and justice, Aristotle holds, protect the other's interests.

Accordingly, Aristotle concludes that both friendship and justice share a common object, that is, the good of the other. He holds that virtue is critical to the realization of the object, and that virtue constitutes the core of the above convergence.

#### *Common Subject (Second Argument)*

Aristotle's second argument for the convergence of justice and friendship is that they have the same subject (*NE* 1159b25-26). To establish his claim, Aristotle must substantiate two things. First, he must show that a friend is a just person, and second, that a just person is either a friend or, with a minor concession to Aristotle, a friendly person. Furthermore, any reasonable Aristotelian explanation must be

in harmony with empirical instances of friendship and justice. In other words, it cannot be abstract.

Aristotle seeks to establish the above identity of friendship and justice in two specific ways. On the one hand, he uses virtue to explicate the true nature of friendship as well as justice (*NE* 1155a25-28). That is, for Aristotle, both friendship and justice are virtues (*NE* 1129a25-30, 1155a3-5). Moreover, he argues that virtues exist only in harmony with one another, that is, they do not exclude one another. For Aristotle, a just person cannot be just in isolation, either from other virtues or individuals.<sup>6</sup> That is to say, a just person must exhibit other virtues, such as truthfulness, courage, generosity and friendliness. Similarly, a true friend cannot be unjust, fearful, indulgent and mean; by contrast he is just, courageous, temperate and generous. For Aristotle, all virtues go hand in hand. Since both friendship and justice are virtues, and virtues, by nature, are inseparable, they must coexist in the same subject (*NE* 1155a22-32). Both justice and friendship reside in the same subject.

Aristotle argues that there is an intimate correlation between friendship and justice.<sup>7</sup> That is, they not only have a strong bearing upon our social associations but also approximate such associations in a significant way (*NE* 1171b30-35). In our personal and social associations, friendship and justice mirror each other (*NE* 1155a22-29). More clearly, if friendship is strong in a given society, that society reflects a reasonably good manifestation of justice, and by contrast, if friendship is weak then justice suffers as well (*NE* 1161b6-10). For instance, both friendship and justice exist in greater degrees in an aristocracy and oligarchy but are negligible (absent) in a tyranny. Thus, for Aristotle, aristocracy and oligarchy are superior forms of social governance than tyranny, which inflicts harm upon its people.

Thus, friendship and justice are interdependent; friendship promotes a just constitution and a just constitution promotes friendship. By implication, they share the same good and pursue the same end –

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<sup>6</sup> Alasdair MacIntyre remarks: “The virtues are all in harmony with each other and the harmony of individual character is reproduced in the harmony of the state.” MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, p. 157.

<sup>7</sup> Aristotle writes: “...the highest form of justice seems to be a matter of friendship.” *NE*, 1155a25.

virtue – and are critical to social harmony and human flourishing. Keeping all these things in mind, Aristotle concludes that friendship and justice cohere in the same subject.

### **Julia Annas' Critique of the Subject-Object Unity**

Aristotle's above arguments for subject-object unity in friendship and justice have important consequences. First, friendship is not, as ordinarily construed, merely a personal relationship. Rather it has a wider social connotation. Second, for Aristotle, justice is not an impartial medium of securing fair play in social activities and interactions; it has a deeper moral purpose. It seeks to improve the character of civic members and inculcate a sense of fellowship among them and make them virtuous. However, some critics find these implications inherently problematic; specifically, they reason that Aristotle's proposed subject-object unity undermines both friendship and justice in significant ways. Julia Annas remarks:

To our mind the parallel drawn out between the concepts makes justice too personal and friendship too impersonal. Justice, for Aristotle is not a matter of rights held independently of one's social relationships, and friendship not merely a matter of one's personal likings but to a great extent defined by one's social position as subject, son, etc.<sup>8</sup>

Prior to examining the merits of Annas' observation it is essential to have a full comprehension of her views. That is, we must know what, precisely, Annas is saying here, and what are the proper entailments of her views. She is not denying that friendship and justice are important to us, indeed, any such denial would be unwarranted; she is making a more focused claim. She is saying that friendship is a personal relationship, and justice a set of rules and norms, laws and equity of our social behavior. Accordingly, she argues that friendship and justice must each be *confined* to their specific domains *without meddling* with one another.

She conceives of friendship as a mutual relationship involving affection and well-wishing for the friend and justice as an impartial

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<sup>8</sup> Julia Annas, "Plato and Aristotle on Friendship and Altruism," p. 552.

principle of public conduct (Annas, p. 553). For Annas, my friend and I share an emotional bond based upon our good will and affection. We like each other, help each other, spend time together, and value each other's company. But from the commonality of all these interests and activities, it does not follow, Annas reasons, that my friend and I are partners in character-building as Aristotle wants us to be: "Aristotle is wrongly insisting that friendship involves approval of and respect for the friend's character, and ignoring the irrational element in friendship, which can lead us to like and love people of whom we strongly disapprove."<sup>9</sup>

Once we strip off the role of character in personal friendships, as Annas does, it would logically follow that an individual's character, to a large extent, is immaterial in carrying out justice in the social domain. If character is not a determinant in our personal friendship, as Annas argues, it would not be surprising to conclude that it has no role in civic friendship. Certainly, personal friendship is prior to civic friendship and if our character is not an important ingredient of personal friendship, it cannot be so in the case of civic friendship. Accordingly, "The Aristotelian notion of justice is not quite the same as ours [impersonal in nature]" (Annas, p.552). That is to say, Aristotelian justice prescribes a leading role for one's character and virtue, but Annas and those who share her views do not. That is why Annas construes justice as an impartial principle of social conduct.

A satisfactory reconstruction of Aristotle's reply to Annas would need to meet two conditions. It must show that character is indeed a critical aspect of friendship, and it cannot be dispensed with. It must establish with some certainty that bias is not the only alternative to impartiality; that love and affection in friendship can go hand in hand with fairness and justice, and that a preferential treatment towards the friend does not entail prejudiced treatment towards non-friends. In other words, it does not compromise fairness and justice at any point.

According to Aristotle, character is critical to friendship (*Politics*, 1280b20-39, 1326a5-8, 1332a39-43, *NE* 1105a1-4). Character, he believes, plays a crucial role in the determination of one's actions, aims and objectives in life: "With regard to virtues, knowledge has little or

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<sup>9</sup> Julia Annas, "Plato and Aristotle on Friendship and Altruism," pp. 549-50.

no weight, while the other two conditions [character and rational choice] are not just slightly, but all-important" (NE 1105b1-4). Accordingly, Aristotle makes his classification of friendship into three kinds on the basis of what we love in our lives, and argues simultaneously, that our character is central to our choice and pursuit. He shows that those who want instant gratification and are of unstable character are drawn towards friendship of pleasure, and by contrast, people with noble character form virtue friendship. For example, consider the friendship of the young. Such friendships are often driven by pleasure and physical gratification rather than a genuine moral concern for the other's well-being (NE 1156b1-5). Thus, our character determines the friendships that we form, and as such it is critical to the formation of friendship in the first place. It is an important factor in the determination of the aims, objectives, interests and projects that a friendship pursues. Hence, Annas' segregation of character and friendship cannot be realistic. She demands a conceptual separation that has no regard for the practical instances of friendship. Aristotle's [our] empirical instances of friendship refute her claim (NE 1156b1-30).

A cultivated character, Aristotle contends, provides a strong foundation for friendship and facilitates the manifestation of justice in the civic domain. That is to say, with a cultivated character, my friend and I love each other for our intrinsic goodness and being. A cultivated character is a safeguard against bias and favoritism in friendship.<sup>10</sup> Consider a practical example. I appear for a job interview, and my friend turns out to be the sole interviewer. My friend deliberates over the abilities of all the interviewees, including myself, and finally selects another candidate who meets the job requirements. Now, my friend's decision should be in accordance with his professional obligations and in agreement with virtuous conduct. For Aristotle, friendship, at least virtuous friendship, does not mean favoritism – a violation of virtue; rather it means a genuine affection for the friend. Though my friend does not hire me, he regrets my loss. This is important to me personally and to our friendship. I want my friend to be not only affectionate and loving, but also upright and virtuous. In

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<sup>10</sup> Aristotle remarks: "There are three things which make men good and virtuous; these are nature, habit, rational principle." *Politics*, 1332a39-40.

other words, I would not want my friend to help me secure a job at the expense of our common commitment to fairness, virtue and moral goodness. Here, my knowledge of my friend's nature and character is crucial. For, I know that he would take all pains to promote my good, and he knows that I would not want him to compromise fairness, and neither would he.<sup>11</sup> Accordingly, character secures friendship in difficult circumstances.

Much of the above discussion sounds repugnant to an ordinary understanding of friendship, including Annas'. For Annas construes friendship largely as a personal and emotional relationship without any specific reference to virtue and character. But it would be a mistaken step to dismiss Aristotle's proposed subject-object unity in friendship and justice without understanding them the way Aristotle understands them namely as them – both manifesting virtue in their respective spheres and, as such, forming a symbiotic relationship.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, Annas must not place the high demands of justice upon pleasure and advantage of friends of weak character, only to conclude later that friendship and justice do not exist in the harmony that Aristotle envisions for them. The subject-object unity of friendship exhibits Aristotle's ideal of friendship, which is attainable in principle if we view human life the way he does – as a moral progression towards the good or a manifestation of human *telos* – and indeed this unity will look arbitrary if bereft of its Aristotelian moral purpose.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> J.L. Ackrill writes: "Successful handling of complex circumstances requires complex virtues (and skills) and no one of these [concern for the friend or a mere preservation of fairness] will be good enough on its own. The virtues of a good man are not to be likened to a set of separately operating functions, each displayed in its own private set of actions, but to a set of nicely balanced inter-related functions all of which must be in order if good results in any direction are to be achieved." Ackrill, *Aristotle's Ethics* (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1973), p.23.

<sup>12</sup> He writes: "...for the will to live together is friendship" (*Politics*, 1280b39).

<sup>13</sup> Alasdair MacIntyre writes: "Human beings, like the members of all other species, have a specific nature; and that nature is such that they have certain aims and goals, such that they move by nature towards a specific *telos*. The good is defined in terms of their specific characteristics. Hence Aristotle's ethics, expounded as he expounds it, presupposes his metaphysical biology."

Accordingly, we can conclude that there are missing premises in Annas' critique of Aristotle. Her understanding of friendship, we have seen, is sharply different from Aristotle's and hence her critique is misplaced. In the next section I will bring out the further implications of Aristotle's proposed subject-object unity in friendship and justice and its underlying reasons. I will also show in greater detail why Annas' critique of this unity is misplaced.

### **Justice and Civic Friendship**

Annas' critique of Aristotle presents two main contentions: first, that friendship cannot be applied to the civic domain, and any attempt to do so would be replete with difficulties, and second, that any such attempt would jeopardize both friendship as well as justice. In order to reply to her more specifically, we need to reconstruct Aristotle's positive arguments showing that both friendship and justice are interconnected and essential aspects of our social associations. We must show along with Aristotle that both share the same object and reside in the same subject. Accordingly, our task in this section is to present a full-fledged exposition and analysis of Aristotle's theory of civic friendship.

Aristotle gives two sets of arguments to establish his case for civic friendship: normative, and practical. Here, normative arguments stand for a set of ethical proposition(s) that have some ontological necessitation, such as that the aim of life is a good life (*Politics*, 1280a31-32). Practical arguments refer to the empirical state of affairs that easily admit some kind of application in practice, for instance, while aristocracy is conducive to virtue (*Politics*, 1293b39-42), tyranny is not (*Politics*, 1295a19-24, *NE* 1161b9-10). Aristotle employs both kinds of arguments to establish his view of civic friendship, without making any sharp separation between them.<sup>14</sup> Accordingly, I will use these

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MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A study in Moral Theory* (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), p.148.

<sup>14</sup> He writes: "For friendship is a community, and as we are in relation to ourselves, so we are in relation to a friend. And, since the perception of our own being is worthy of choice, so is that of the being of a friend." *NE*, 1171b32-35.

arguments side by side to illustrate Aristotle's case for civic friendship. I will argue that civic friendship is not a matter of choice, as Annas and those who share her view believe, but a matter of moral necessity. Furthermore, I will show that civic friendship has distinctive practical advantages and is critical to our social well-being. I will use these findings to establish, along with Aristotle, the subject-object unity in friendship and justice. Aristotle remarks:

Every state is a community of some kind, and every community is established with a view to some good; for mankind always acts in order to obtain that which they think good. But if all communities aim at some good, the state or political community, which is the highest of all, and which embraces all the rest, aims at good in a greater degree than any other, and at the highest good (*Politics*, 1252a1-6).

Aristotle's above passage claims that a state is a community, and that a community contains the good of all of its constituent members. For Aristotle, these claims are conjoined; that is, they can neither be dissected nor separated. Accordingly, we need to work out the precise implications of both these claims to understand Aristotle's moral and political thought, and to formulate a strong reply to Annas' objections.

For Aristotle, the state is a community. It is natural in that we have an inherent propensity to live with others, and to form associational ties with them (*Politics*, 1252b27-30, 1280b30-39). Such ties at an immediate level include familial and friendly associations, and at a distant level, social and commercial associations. For Aristotle, our natural propensity to associate with others gets its most robust expression in our immediate personal associations, but our personal associations do not exhaust its full potential (*Politics*, 1252b27-35). Though personal ties reflect our natural propensity in critical ways, that is, they nourish our natural instinct to associate with others, they do not fully satisfy it (*Politics*, 1253a1-40). Our natural propensity contains a teleological progression: it leads smaller associations to develop into larger ones and elemental perfections to grow into full-fledged perfections: "When several villages [smaller associations of human beings that exhibit elemental perfections] are united in a single complete community, large enough to be nearly or quite self-sufficing, the state comes into existence, originating in the bare needs of life, and continuing for the sake of good life" (*Politics*, 1252b27-35, 1253a19-39).

Accordingly, for Aristotle, the state or *polis* entails a higher degree of perfection than individual human beings.<sup>15</sup>

For Aristotle, there is no discrepancy between personal and social relations. That is, *polis* or social relations embody the same natural propensity that constitutes, and in turn, conditions, personal relations. Personal relations and civic relations coexist side by side. They complement each other, enhance each other and make each other grow. They form a continuum. They capture two sides of human nature and being, bring them into harmony with each other, lead to overall satisfaction and fulfillment, and finally to the realization of a good life.

Civic relations and associations provide the opportunity to engage in a variety of activities, such as trade, commerce, material pursuits and physical gratifications (*Politics*, 1263a22-25). These gratifications are important. As much as we desire to live with others, we equally desire material satisfactions. For a good life cannot be a life of want or depravity; it requires material goods, pleasure, wealth, companionship, and a pursuit of those endeavors that exhibit material goodness.

Social relations also impart a new form of perfection to one's life;<sup>16</sup> a perfection that is unknown when one lives in the smaller associations of immediate fraternity, family, village or any other association of that kind (*Politics*, 1252b27-35). Civic associations provide one with an opportunity to share one's interests, activities, thoughts and ideas on a larger level. Association with other citizens gives one a chance to cultivate intellectual faculties, an opportunity to test the veracity of one's views and the coherence of one's ideas. Furthermore, civic associations provide citizens with an occasion to acquire virtue and to exhibit it in conduct. In sum, through civic associations, one develops a sense of concern for other fellow-citizens, and achieves one's own satisfactions.

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<sup>15</sup> Aristotle remarks: "The *polis* is by nature clearly prior to the family and to the individual, since the whole is of necessity prior to the part." *Politics*, 1253a19-20.

<sup>16</sup> C.C. W. Taylor writes: "The good life is the life directed by phronesis, and the most perfect exercise of phronesis is the application of that virtue to the common good of a community." Taylor, "Politics," *Cambridge Companion to Aristotle* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 241.

The very idea that we can attain our material and moral satisfactions only in association with others in a social context in which people of different streams come together to contribute to one another's life looks like a platitude<sup>17</sup> to a modern reader. By making my good dependent upon my association with others, Aristotle makes my good vulnerable.<sup>18</sup> In other words, since I can never be fully sure how others will behave and what their likes and dislikes are, any attempt to define my good in association with others would be a non-starter. Even when I like someone, it may not follow that my liking has the same moral strength (or for that matter should have the same moral strength) that Aristotle ascribes to civic interactions. Annas writes: "Its [Aristotle's theory of friendship] main weakness lies in Aristotle's tendency to assume too readily that liking an individual for himself and liking him because one approves of him are more closely related than they in fact are."<sup>19</sup>

If Annas' overall critique of Aristotle is correct, then Aristotle would be guilty of two main mistakes: epistemological and factual. Aristotle's epistemological error would be in believing that our personal and social relationships, friendship and justice share the same subject and object; and the factual error would be that Aristotle almost identifies a *mere approval* of an individual with a *genuine liking* for that individual, when Annas argues clearly it is not. Below, I will unearth the premises that lie beneath Annas' argument against

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<sup>17</sup> Richard W. Miller remarks: "Our central moral anxieties are directed questions of how to avoid objectionable interference with others and not how to develop ourselves in the best possible way [in association with others]." Miller, *Moral Differences: Truth, Justice and Conscience in a World of Conflict* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1992), p.30.

<sup>18</sup> Martha C. Nussbaum write: "All this [Nussbaum's exposition of Aristotle's friendship] makes it abundantly clear that the best sort of love between persons is highly vulnerable to happenings in the world. Indeed, we wonder how often the world has ever allowed such thorough going intimacy to flourish." Nussbaum, *Fragility of Goodness: Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 359.

<sup>19</sup> Julia Annas, "Plato and Aristotle on Friendship and Altruism," p. 550.

Aristotle, discuss their merits, if any, and finally show that they are either misplaced or baseless.

The main idea behind Annas' objection against the sameness of subject and object in friendship and justice can be summed up in the following way. For Annas, personal relations and social relations deal with two different aspects of our lives. Personal relations, such as my relation with my family and friends, have an emotive connotation and exhibit a thick bond. One has love, affection, care and concern for one's family and friends, and feels a sense of bond with them. The same cannot be said in the case of social relations and civic ties (Annas, p. 553). Civic ties, for Annas, involve a large scale of association, such as social and political groups, cultural and economic organizations. As such, for Annas, our personal and social relations fall into two different categories: personal relations involving affection and attachment, and social relations requiring a universal perspective and fair conduct in the public domain. To this point, Aristotle may agree with Annas.

However, Annas goes a step further. She claims that concerns that we exhibit in our personal associations, such as friendship, stop at the level of personal associations, and that it is not possible to extend them to the civic domain in *any shape or form*. For Annas, my personal concerns towards my friends are *qualitatively different* from social concerns towards other fellow-citizens, and they can never share any proper commonality unless we *stretch* them beyond their known frontiers, as Aristotle apparently does (Annas, p. 553). Accordingly, she writes: "It is even more inept to apply them [goodwill, affection, well-wishing] to commercial relationships, or demand that these require a long time of association and be enduring."<sup>20</sup>

Here, it is critical to bear two things in mind. First, we must ask how and why Aristotle sees an intimate connection between personal and social relations, while Annas does not. Second, to establish our position that Aristotle has legitimate reasons to see this connection, and that Annas' objection is either misplaced or wrong, we must spell out the precise nature and content of good will and affections in civic friendship. I will discuss these issues in order.

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<sup>20</sup> Julia Annas, "Plato and Aristotle on Friendship and Altruism," p. 553.

The most basic characteristic of a good association, whether personal or social, Aristotle argues, is its purposive coherence; that is, it seeks to pursue those aims and goals that are consistent with the pursuit of the common human *telos*, a progression towards the good, and as such are necessary for the well being of its members (*Politics*, 1253a19-39). For Aristotle, both friendly and civic associations in their ideal form must exhibit this coherence of purpose, otherwise they will be a mere amalgamation of human beings and not a proper association. He infers that both personal and social associations, friendship and community, share the same object as well as objective, namely, a good life for their members, and are critical to their well-being.

For Aristotle, the pursuit of a good life requires both personal and social associations (*Politics*, 1280a31-34).<sup>21</sup> Our personal associations bring us tremendous gratification but never fully satisfy our propensity to associate with others. Society for Aristotle is a progression, from immediate associations (family and friends) to intermediate associations (social clubs, village) to the final association (*polis* or society). *Polis* or society has the same natural origin, and manifests the same moral end<sup>22</sup> what family or friendship. Clearly, *polis* or society is a large-scale association and it encompasses many people, and as a result, its bonds are not as thick as familial or friendly bonds. The bonds of *polis* or social relationships are not qualitatively different from familial or friendly bonds. All these bonds reflect the same human propensity to associate with others. The difference between social and personal relationships and associations is that of quantity, one thicker than the other, and not of quality, as Annas thinks.

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<sup>21</sup> J.M. Cooper rightly remarks, "...On Aristotle's view civic, and not just personal, friendship is an essential component in the flourishing human life. In order to flourish a person needs the more fully realized forms of the moral virtues that only civic friendship brings. Hence, for Aristotle, to achieve the best possible human life, one must develop sentiments of attachment to others with whom one is joined in a common social life. Cooper, *Reason and Emotion*, p. 335.

<sup>22</sup> Alasdair MacIntyre observes, "We are to think of friendship as being the sharing of all in the common project of creating and sustaining the life of the city, a sharing incorporated in the immediacy of an individual's particular friendships." MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, p. 156.

For Aristotle, a good life involves a shared living with one's family, friends, relatives and fellow-citizens (*Politics*, 1252b20-30, 1295b22-24). All these associations serve the same purpose, namely, facilitation of material and moral satisfactions, and are critical to a harmonious life. In other words, I need to have care and concern for my family and friends, and show emotional and moral commitments towards them, but these emotional and moral dispositions are neither at the expense of social commitments nor contrary to them. To live a good life I must strike a fine balance between my personal and social relations, reason and emotion, theoretical and practical wisdom. This balance is critical to my overall life and happiness. It reflects virtue in my life, and a good life is a life of virtue.

Up to now I have argued against Annas' conceptual separation of personal and social relations, of personal friendship and civic friendship, of friendship and justice. However, Annas may very well concede to Aristotle the subject-object unity in friendship and justice, and still question civic friendship on the grounds of practicality. In other words, she may say that, though Aristotle's theory of friendship provides us with a cohesive model of conduct at a theoretical level, it is less clear if civic friendship will translate into reality, at least the way Aristotle envisions it. The practical instances of civic friendship may never exhibit the original purity that Aristotle ascribes to them. If so, then, Annas would be raising a legitimate point and her objection would have some strength. Practice, indeed, is an important test of any moral or political theory. In other words, to answer Annas' present objection Aristotle would need show that civic friendship is an empirical reality or at least is capable of becoming so (under the right circumstances), and is not merely a pure idea inapplicable in practice. This includes showing that I can have goodwill towards my fellow-citizens even though I do not know them personally, and that there is no conceptual or practical inhibition to my good will towards them.

Recall that earlier we drew a distinction between two kinds of goodwill: substantial or pure, and elemental or incidental good will. This distinction is crucial to the understanding as well as unfolding of civic friendship. Since substantial good will is found only in personal friendship, it would be a mistake to attribute it to civic friendship as I have argued earlier. Accordingly, Aristotle would need to show that

civic relations involve an elemental good will. This does not exclude substantial goodwill in civic relations; indeed a virtuous person may exhibit that. More clearly, an elemental goodwill towards fellow-citizens is a necessary condition of civic friendship, and a substantial good will is not.

Given that good will or a sense of concern for others as well as for their good is a critical constituent of civic friendship, one may ask why Aristotle requires us to have this disposition towards fellow-citizens in the first place. On what grounds do I manifest good will, and what purpose does it serve? Aristotle argues that goodwill for fellow-citizens springs from our natural disposition to associate with each other (*Politics*, 1280b30-39). In other words, by nature, we are positively inclined towards our fellow beings. In the second place, he grounds civic good will in the mutual rational recognition of citizens that their association is critical to the pursuit of their interests, objectives and common goods (*Politics*, 1252b27-30, *NE* 1094b1-12). That is to say, I wish my neighbor and other community members well, believing that their satisfaction, progress and well-being will lead to larger satisfactions in the social space that I inhabit. We live in the same geographical space, share the same health care, and are associated with the same political and social institutions. Despite our immediate distance, we share certain fundamental goods, such as a desire for a good life (*Politics*, 1280a31-32).

The very recognition that my own good and well-being are intimately connected with that of others has some substantive practical consequences. While pursuing my own interests and objectives in my civic life, I am careful not to encroach upon others, and I am willing to contribute to the good of others whenever I have time and opportunity to do so. In the civic spheres of my life I conduct myself in accordance with civic laws that seek to promote the overall social happiness. I do not view civic laws as negative constraints but as a positive set of rules and regulations directed at the pursuit of a good life in the civic sphere. As such, I view my satisfactions in association with other fellow-citizens, and certainly not at their expense.

Accordingly, Aristotle argues that civic friendship is a bulwark against injustice (greed) and a safeguard against unjust individuals (*pleonektes*). It stops an individual's desire to take more than his share

or possess more than what he deserves under the schema of proportionate distribution of goods (*NE* 1131a30-31, 1134a35-36). Civic friendship exposes *pleonektes* to virtue and fair conduct, good habits and honorable rewards. An individual's civic conduct, for Aristotle, is largely determined by his character, habituation, and social ethos (*NE* 1102a14-25, 1103b22-26). Thus, civic friendship addresses injustice at its root – an individual's desire to take more than his fair share – and places justice at the core of an individual's life and conduct.

### Conclusion

My purpose in this paper has been to critique the modern conceptions of justice and civic friendship. Against the modern view, I have argued that justice and civic friendship go hand in hand and that they cannot be separated. Following Aristotle, I have shown that both friendship and justice are virtues and that both are critical constituents of a good life. I have also argued that a flourishing human life requires a meaningful and just association with one's friends as well as one's fellow-citizens. Aristotle rightly points out that a "state [larger association] exists for the sake of good life, not for the sake of life only" (*Politics* 1280a31-32). To be sure, modern conceptions of justice and civic friendship, including Annas', fail to appreciate the above elements of a good life. Our personal and social relationships, I have argued, are intimately connected and interdependent and their separation will do harm to both. Indeed, it will weaken justice and make civic friendship poorer. Accordingly I conclude that together justice and civic friendship serve a common end of the good life and that they are intrinsically connected and inherently meaningful as well.

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## Do We Need E-Values and E-Virtues?

RICHARD FEIST

### Introduction

Before launching his crushing attempt to doubt everything, Descartes in the opening passages of his *Meditations on First Philosophy* stressed that he realized just how many things he believed that were ultimately proven false. There was no choice but to undergo, at least once, a large-scale examination of all his beliefs (Descartes, 2000, p. 104). This wide-ranging scrutiny runs from everyday types of truths to the most complex ones in mathematics and physics. And it does not stop there. The self-examination runs also to those things that one generally values, all the way down to the most deeply-held ethical principles. Because the doubt of morally-praised items can be held without contradiction, such items are like any other claim to truth, and therefore require placement on a firm footing – or at least as firm as possible.

However, Descartes' project of a belief inventory and subsequent analysis is neither new with him nor unique to him. The history of philosophy shows that the call for, and act of, re-evaluating beliefs occurs almost with a periodicity. The self-evaluation project can be seen in other disciplines as well, from architecture to music. Thomas Kuhn's philosophy of paradigms and paradigm shifts is an attempt to formalize science's instantiation of this general pattern of periodic self-evaluation, as a general theory of the history of science. What Kuhn adds to the story in this context is a mechanism that actually drives the re-evaluation: the emergence of paradigm-resistant observations that simply cannot be integrated into the current paradigm without extreme modifications of the paradigm. Of course, once the paradigm requires such extreme modifications (and these can always be done), the situation finally arises, in which those working in the paradigm have their attention drawn to the fundamental aspects of the paradigm, and begin Descartes' process of self-evaluation. Without the existential threat to the paradigm, there is simply no reason to re-evaluate the paradigm. Simple curiosity, or the desire for change,

or the ability to poke the odd hole into the paradigm, seems, according to Kuhn, not enough to mandate overturning the framework of research. Put in a more socio-psychological manner, scientists are rather conservative creatures who tend to work within predetermined patterns, unless something in the data “forces” them to question those patterns (Kuhn, 1962, pp. 80-110). Scientists are not, in this Kuhnian picture, Popperian adventurers asserting bold propositions that are incessantly tested until there is refutation or corroboration. For Kuhn, it takes a severe rupture to cause thought to bend back and examine its own foundations, a position reminiscent of John Dewey’s view that when things are going well, we tend not to think about the “deep stuff.” It is only when we encounter breaks or obstacles that interrupt the smooth flow of things that we are likely to pause and reflect upon what we are doing, and why. Dewey uses the example of someone walking along a path, thinking about various things around him/her, but not thinking in the real sense of the term until faced with a choice: a fork in the road. This “forked-path thinking” is what happens when the paradigm simply does not allow us to process our experience in a smooth and non-reflective manner (Dewey, 2007, p. 9). Kuhn also insists that when a paradigm is re-evaluated and ultimately overturned, it is always when another paradigm is accepted as its replacement. Heidegger, and especially Husserl, in their own ways, also stressed the effort of returning to the basics and uncovering exactly those elements that undergird experience and knowledge (Heidegger, 1996; Husserl, 1965).

Concomitant with this general pattern of re-examination is the claim that the re-examination requires not just scrutinizing the fundamental ontological furniture, as in some kind of conceptual dusting exercise, but a thorough cleaning that might very well result in much of the furniture being ejected from the home, as in a general purge. Moreover, that which remains will not simply remain but might have to be fundamentally rethought. This fundamental re-thinking of the remaining furniture can itself be considered as lying on a continuum. To use an example from the history of science, the concept of mass in Newton’s theory and the concept of mass in Einstein’s could be understood as related through limits. If an object,  $X$ , with mass,  $m$ , is travelling at a speed very near to that of light, all the effects associated

with relativity come into play. In other words, we understand the concept of “mass” through Einstein’s equations, and if the speed of  $X$  falls far short of light speed, then we would understand “mass” more through Newton’s equations. In other words, the theories, in a sense, blend into each other depending on the speeds involved. At one limit you get Einstein, and at the other, Newton. This is a gross oversimplification, but it makes the point that science progresses, rather than flips, from one concept to another. The flipping comes with the more extreme doctrine of Kuhn’s, that is, incommensurability. On this reading of the history of scientific concepts, Newtonian mass and Einsteinian mass are not related at all and cannot be said to be limits of each other. They may share the same term, “mass,” but that is it. In this case the concept of mass is not dusted off, or modified, or refinished in any sense. The concept is simply replaced, as I said, “flipped.” My overall point here is that when thought shifts, the very nature of that shift is not immediately clear: the shift could be interpreted in different ways. Is it a shift that retains concepts and modifies them in some way, or is it a shift in which the very concepts themselves are radically different and present a whole new way of thinking? To go back to the house metaphor, are we cleaning, purging, painting, gutting, or are we tearing down and rebuilding? Often when claims are made for “new ways of thinking being needed about some discipline or object  $Z$ ,” the kind of remodeling lying behind the claims is not at all clear. This has been an ongoing problem in the philosophy of science, and here I would like to turn to the analogous problem in ethics.

In particular, what are we talking about when we make claims that technology requires a new way of ethics? Are we advocating modification, on the gutting or replacing of previous ethical frameworks and concepts?

One thing is clear at this point. We cannot avoid the problem of having to think about the re-evaluation of ethics. Aristotle was quite right when he noted that more knowledge just means more choices. Increased knowledge does not simply add to the number of choices, but it adds to the domains in which we must make choices. Without advancements in technology, the choice of how to fund end-of-life research – and the beginning of life for that matter – would not be

nearly as pressing, if at all. With no ability possible for controlling or influencing human life in these domains, we would not need to either think or debate any of these kinds of issues. I will return to this later in the paper. For now I would like to draw attention to the fact that Plato makes the same point, that knowledge comes with ethical commitments, in his allegory of the cave, an allegory that can be read in several different ways. For instance, some read the cave as the body and the cave's inhabitants as representative of the divisions of the soul. I wish to be a little bit more literal here, although not entirely literal, of course. I read the ascent from the cave, by an individual, as the individual's journey to knowledge. I read the descent back into the cave as, again, just that, the knowing individual's return to society. What I am stressing is that after the individual left the cave and acquired knowledge, he/she felt the obligation to return and to share the gained knowledge. This return signifies that knowledge is not ultimately distinct from action. I need to be a little more precise here. While one may possess knowledge without using it, as in sharing it with others, this 'private knowledge' is indeed an act, and an ethically questionable one at that. Again, the very acquisition of knowledge creates moral obligations to the community. This holds true even if the community is not terribly receptive to the philosopher's knowledge. As Plato stresses in the *Republic* and *the Phaedo*, the punishment of the "crime" of philosophy may be meted out in terms of mild or intense mocking, and could also lead right to death.

How often does one leave the cave and return? Plato's allegory leaves that question open, but it would appear that it need only be done once. This is in accord with Plato's ontology of truth and his epistemological considerations. The truths that one discovers in the bright Platonic sun are immutable; they may be applied in different ways and in different circumstances, but they themselves do not change. There is no need to leave the cave more than once. Descartes slightly differs on this point. As I mentioned before, Descartes tells us that one must, from time to time, evaluate all the items in one's mental inventory. There is a bit of tension in Descartes' thinking: on the one hand, he stresses that he will find fundamental truths with a new and trustworthy methodology – that of clear and distinct ideas – and yet on the other hand, there is the need to return to foundations and re-

examine the entire structure of knowledge. My interest here with respect to re-examination of knowledge is in a Cartesian spirit. That, in one sense, there are truths that last in a Platonic style (although I differ from Plato and Descartes as to their ontological and epistemological status), and are not atemporal. Does this mean that we need new values or virtues? Or, putting it another way, are the traditional systems or approaches to ethics unable to service contemporary ethical problems? This issue of how, or even whether, philosophical tradition can help us in the face of modern technology is the central point of my discussion.

### **The Case for Needing a New Ethics**

Here I put forward, as the heading states, the case for needing a new ethics. It would seem, at first glance, that there is a need for a new ethics. As mentioned earlier, Aristotle picked up on the Platonic link between knowledge and obligation. Aristotle points out that as human knowledge increase, the choices that we must make only increases. This is certainly evident today. Consider the explosion of medical knowledge and technology. Even as little as twenty years ago, certain cases would have been beyond the medical knowledge of that time. Today, many such cases do fall within the ability of medical knowledge, but this generates new questions, new choices. For instance, we have moral questions, such as whether or not medical intervention should occur, and moral/economic questions, such as who will pay for the medical intervention, which is becoming increasingly complicated, and as a result, increasingly costly.

The argument goes more generally as follows: as science and technology advance the scope of human power, the number of decisions and their complexity has been growing at astounding rates. Without doubt, the range of possible human actions is today far greater than at any time in human history. Not only are there simply more choices and more complex ones, but there are radically new kinds of choices and new kinds of complexity. Consider another area of technological development, industrial knowledge and technology. Perhaps even more than medical technology, which simply creates new questions about the pre-existing moral object, the human body,

industrial knowledge and technology creates new moral objects and new moral questions about them. For example, environmental degradation dwarfs anything witnessed in history. The very notion of “the environment as an object” is new. Even more novel is the notion of “the local versus the global environment.” Finally, the idea that the “environment can be manipulated” is unprecedented. The far-reaching implications of all this is that the manipulation is not of the local environment, but that of the entire planet. The key conceptual example of the environment as one object is the notion of the “greenhouse effect.” In sum, there is a jump from the parts to the whole.

To flesh the argument out further: never before did humans have to decide whether or not they would use their power to destroy (or not to destroy) their environment. The clear-cut case of this is a government’s decision of whether or not to obtain and use nuclear weapons. This decision over whether or not to use available power to destroy the environment runs right down to the individual citizens. Never before did the average citizen of a state (in this case modern, developed, industrialized states) have to come to grips with the fact that his or her lifestyle could be playing a role in the destruction of his or her own environment. Simply put, the very lifestyle that some communities enjoy is, in the worst case, not environmentally sustainable, or in a lesser case, only sustainable provided that other communities live at a much lower standard. By the previous statement, the notion of “the lesser case” is only lesser in the sense of environmental damage; it is arguably not lesser in the moral sense of the injustice (i.e., radical inequality) that it represents.

The great British philosopher, Alfred North Whitehead once declared that “all life is a form of robbery” (Whitehead, 1978, p. 105). The smallest, most innocuous life form, must take from its environment in some way or another. As life creates more order by its self-articulation, the by-products are sometimes used by other creatures, but there is always a net drain on the energy of the system. The sun, however, continues to pump fresh energy into the system. The point is that we have gone from this natural, life-based form of robbery, which steals parts, to a large-scale, living robbery that threatens outright theft of the whole. Unlike nuclear technology and its associated decisions, our lifestyle decisions may not have an immediate impact.

Indeed, that is often the problem in getting people to change their lifestyle habits. If people drive cars that contribute to global warming and that only amounts to a few degrees over the next century, and is accompanied by occasional, scattered, weird weather, that is not a huge incentive to change. How different human reaction would be if global warming were to occur rapidly. Consider a place like Canada, where winter freezing is part of the national culture because cold weather has been the physical basis for activities like hockey, skiing, and tobogganing. If parts of the country were to experience a rapid, average and sustained rise of a few degrees, the winter would essentially disappear since no freezing temperatures would occur. All outdoor activities linked to sub-zero temperatures would be eliminated. Approximately three years ago, a similar situation occurred in Canada's capital, Ottawa (Newstaff, 2010). Due to a particular change in ocean currents, the temperature of Ottawa remained above freezing for nearly the entire set of months that are typically associated with sub-zero temperatures. Although scientists had mentioned that this was not due to climate change but to other weather patterns, the public reaction was one of fear, and their calls upon the government to do something were loud and widespread. Although not much was done, nor could be done, the shift in government rhetoric was clearly noticeable. The government of the day had hitherto been openly and vociferously sceptical concerning the whole concept of climate change. After a winter of nearly no snow, and no lakes and rivers freezing over, the government performed an about-face on the whole notion of climate change. Admittedly this did not lead to major policy changes because the weather patterns quickly returned to normal. Nonetheless, the after effects have been an increased awareness on the part of the government and its citizens of the hazards of climate change.

Technology has led us from considering degradation of parts of the environment to the degradation of the environment as a whole; that is, technology has introduced a new moral object, "the environment." Technology has also led us from considering moral questions regarding individuals, to thinking about humanity as a whole. More precisely, we now think about a very abstract object that requires moral consideration: future generations. We ask ourselves what kinds

of rights they have. For instance, does a future generation have the right to clean drinking water and clean air to breathe? If so, that will set up duties for the present generation.

Still the argument for the need for a new ethics continues, as it stresses that we need not enter into futuristic speculation to find new moral objects. Today we live in a world where it is common (although there is some disagreement) to regard animals and even plants as objects of moral standing. Destroying a species of animals or a rainforest is not simply regarded as immoral because of its impact on humans, but carries an intrinsic loss of value. One of the key elements of the novelty of such objects is that humans can, within a short period of time, destroy such objects. One could argue that previously it was possible for humans to inflict huge amounts of damage to the environment, but it was only possible to do so over a great amount of time and with massive effort. Today it is arguably the reverse: a business or government decision made in a moment, with a minimum of effort, could easily have catastrophic consequences.

Again, we need not look too far for the need for a new ethics since computer technology has provided us with an object, namely the computer itself, which is a particularly new kind of entity in the universe and generates new kinds of problems. This issue is stressed by James Moor in his classic paper, "What is Computer Ethics?" If we think of various kinds of devices, such as televisions, toasters, ovens and so on, they are designed to do one or perhaps a small set of tasks. An oven may cook your food and heat left-overs, but it does not make photocopies. Toasters provide part of your morning meal, but do not open WORD files. Now computers download, and open, and manipulate WORD files. They also enable you to read and send email messages, listen to music (even compose it), create gift cards and calendars, watch videos (and make them too), and simulate blood flow in the aorta, and the probability orbits of electrons. Your computer allows you to use skype to talk to your friends, but it also allows others to hijack that very webcam and spy on you, and perhaps liquidate your bank account.

Finally, we are now witnessing the rise of additive manufacturing. This could be thought of as the reverse of sculpting. A sculpture begins with a block of, say, marble, and then removes the marble

in order to create the shape desired. Michelangelo is often credited with the view that he would “see” the figure in the block and work until he “liberated” it. Of course, he always insisted that the hand did nothing but obey the intellect. Additive manufacturing begins with cross sections of the final object and creates a base layer, and then adds the succeeding layers until the object is fully formed (Excell & Nathan, 2010). Hence, with the right kind of printer, printer cartridges and the requisite software, various kinds of three-dimensional functioning objects can be printed. Although 3-D printers are not entirely commercially available at the time of this writing, it most likely will not be long before the term “download” replaces “ordering” when one is in search of pizza on a Saturday night. “Download” has, in many ways, replaced “order” when it comes to books. This incredible variety of possibilities, all at the hands of one machine, is why Moor considers the computer a revolutionary object – for it is “logically malleable.” Moor writes:

Computers are logically malleable in that they can be shaped and molded to do any activity that can be characterized in terms of inputs, outputs and connecting logical operations... Because logic applies everywhere, the potential applications of computer technology appear limitless. The computer is the nearest thing we have to a universal tool. Indeed, the limits of computers are largely the limits of our own creativity (Moor, 1985, p. 269).

Moor was concerned that the computer, the universal tool, would always create new problems and therefore would require new ethics, because these problems would affect society in such new and different ways that they would create “public policy vacuums.” Moor writes:

A typical problem in computer ethics arises because there is a policy vacuum about how computer technology should be used. Computers provide us with new capabilities and these, in turn, give us new choices for action. Often, either no policies for conduct in these situations exist or existing policies seem inadequate. A central task of computer ethics is to

determine what we should do in such cases, that is, formulate policies to guide our actions...One difficulty is that along with a policy vacuum there is often a conceptual vacuum. Although a problem in computer ethics may seem clear initially, a little reflection reveals a conceptual muddle. What is needed in such cases is an analysis that provides a coherent conceptual framework within which to formulate a policy for action (Moor, 1985, p. 266).

Indeed, Moor was essentially correct in much of what he said. There is no question that computer technology and the associated rise of the internet, which includes social media, have generated all kinds of instances in which governments have been playing the game of catch-up. Since Moor was putting this forward in 1985, many years ago, we could go further – more than Moor – by arguing that computers are not simply limited by our creativity, for that presupposes that the only creativity around is “human creativity.” Given that computers are now solving many types of problems that humans were not able to solve, it is not unreasonable to think that computers will eventually (and possibly even soon) demonstrate what some may call “computer creativity.” If that is the case, then the range of possibilities flowing from computer creativity may be as wide and unwieldy as the possibilities following from human creativity – and maybe more, if it truly is the case that there is no limit. In fact, the final result may be that distinguishing computer from human creativity is superfluous.

For now, the view that computers pose new problems is known as the “uniqueness problem.” It is essentially the view that is summed up nicely by Hans Jonas in his influential and interesting work, *The Imperative of Responsibility*. Jonas writes that:

...the *nature of human action* has changed, and since ethics is concerned with action, it should follow that the changed nature of human action calls for a change in ethics as well (Jonas, 1984, p. 1).

This is an example of what I previously mentioned, namely, the repeated call for a “new way of ethics.” Here it is not entirely clear just what Jonas meant by all this. For instance, he never states what he means when he speaks of *replacing* our existing ethical frameworks. Is it a thorough uprooting and replacement of all concepts, or simply a modification of pre-existing concepts? Jonas does suggest that Aristotelean ethics, with its emphasis on justice, courage and honesty is a framework that is now overshadowed. Its emphasis on the small, the local, cannot handle our ethical problems in a global world.

It is also interesting to note that the explosion of science and technology has been taken by some to be a call for a return to traditional ethics. C.S. Lewis, in his classic, *The Abolition of Man*, states that the advancement of science has turned current discussions of morality and value into either/or choices: either we deal with moral issues in the most cerebral way possible, via science, or through the opposite, a non-cerebral way, the emotions, thinking through “the gut.” To use Lewis’ metaphor, this has made us “men without chests” (Lewis, 2000, p. 25). For it is in the thinking of the chest, the location of the heart, the intertwining of reason and emotion that we will need to find our ethical way in the modern world. In other words, we must not lose sight of traditional ethics, now more than ever.

It is also interesting to consider that in the mid-twentieth century, when there was great technological change due to the introduction of nuclear warfare and the emerging computer revolution, it was three women: Elisabeth Anscombe, Philipa Foot and Iris Murdoch, who put forward a call for a ‘new ethics.’ They argued that the ethics of the time, namely Kantian and Utilitarian thought, had finally run aground. Their call was to return to the tradition of virtue ethics, namely, a modified Aristotle, dropping his racism and sexism.

### **No Need for a New Ethics**

Is it better to forge ahead with a new system or revamp the old? Do we really need a new ethics? In order to answer this question, I wish to turn to a key idea, espoused by Walter Maner, a pioneering figure in computing technology and computer ethics. Maner has argued that it is certainly the case, again, that computers pose radically

new problems that will require new ethical frameworks. However, Maner offers us a way to think about the question, that is, the uniqueness problem, in terms that we can actually debate. In the conclusion to the discussion regarding ethical issues and computers, Maner writes:

I have tried to show that there are issues and problems that are unique to computer ethics. For all of these issues, there was an essential involvement of computing technology. Except for this technology, these issues would not have arisen, or would not have arisen in their highly altered form.

So far this is in line with what most people do: make a call for new ethics based solely on the “new problem as a result of the new technology.” As I have stressed, it does not simply follow that a new problem requires a new ethics. The new problem has to shake the ethical paradigm such that it cannot handle the new problem. Maner goes on to address precisely this point:

The failure to find satisfactory non-computer analogies testifies to the uniqueness of these issues. The lack of an adequate analogy, in turn, has interesting moral consequences. Normally, when we confront unfamiliar ethical problems, we use analogies to build conceptual bridges to similar situations we have encountered in the past. Then we try to transfer moral intuitions across the bridge, from the analog case to our current situation. Lack of an effective analogy forces us to discover new moral values, formulate new moral principles, develop new policies, and find new ways to think about the issues presented to us (Maner, 1996, p. 154).

The key issue here, the paradigm breaker, in Maner’s discussion is the notion of “analogy.” It would seem that Maner sees moral reasoning in casuistic terms, which is often done in legal frameworks, like common law. Maner thinks that we reason on a case by case basis. This, in itself, is highly debatable, but I will put that aside here. Computers demand novel moral thinking since we simply cannot relate

the situations that they generate to anything that we have seen before. This approach, however, is similar to rule-based moral reasoning, in that when encountering new problems we tend to search for a rule that we have applied before.

The very term “analogy” derived from the Greek word “*αναλογία*,” means “proportion.” For Aristotle and Plato, analogies were “shared abstractions.” Note that Maner is not saying that computers generate radically new situations; they do have analogies to pre-computer situations, but not “effective” or “adequate” analogies. The problem is to clarify just what is meant by “effective” or “adequate” analogies. The adequacy of an analogy is context dependent. For example, the analogy is often made between the solar system and the modern view of the atom. Clearly, this is not an identity: one can easily find all kinds of very big differences between atoms and the solar system. When teaching children about the atom, the solar system analogy is a perfectly acceptable way to begin. In this case it would be an adequate and effective analogy. In a graduate course in quantum theory, such an analogy would be neither adequate nor effective. Perhaps one might wish to argue that the analogy could be a kick-starter, but then again, this kick-starting would (indeed, should) have happened long before one meets quantum physics at the graduate student level. The point still holds; the context of the analogy is critical to assessing its adequacy and effectiveness.

I would argue that Maner is correct: we do need to go case by case. It would seem to me that we can make adequate and effective analogies with pre-existing cases. However, I would make one caveat, which sounds strong, but in the end is actually quite weak: the pre-existing cases cannot be limited to previous instances of technology. If one rejects this, then it would open the doors to saying that every new technology poses new problems. By definition new technology equals new ethical problems, and so requires new solutions. That, it seems to me, is simply too extreme a position. Indeed, one could argue that it begs the entire issue. If pre-existing cases are not limited by pre-existing technology, what are their limits? I draw upon the venerable tradition of the thought experiment. As philosopher of mathematics, Jim Brown notes,

It is difficult to say precisely what thought experiments are. Luckily, it is also unimportant. We know them when we see them and that is enough to make discussion possible (Brown, 2004, p. 1126).

The question is, can we use pre-computer/pre-technological materials, to construct thought experiments (that is, adequate/effective analogies) that give rise to the same ethical problems that arise from the existence of computers/technology? If so, then it would seem that computer/technology issues are not, in principle, so new after all and, most importantly, do not require anything new in the way of ethics.

To argue this in general, that one can always find the adequate/effective pre-technological analogy, is most likely not possible. The only way, as I see it, is to look at the standard examples, which I discussed earlier, to see if they really do require new ethics, which I do not think that they do. Overall, my sympathies lie with the likes of C.S. Lewis, Anscombe, Murdoch and Foote.

I will just consider three general items. First, does new medicine raise new kinds of problems? Yes, it certainly does. Is it radically new or on the same continuum as previous attempts at medical intervention? True, we may now be able to keep severely disabled children alive, or the elderly alive, in contexts that we could not before. Medicine was always able to do this to a certain degree, even when it was as simple as providing blankets to the sick. Blankets are products of human labour and have associated costs. My point is that this is still on a continuum. There is nothing radically different here.

The same applies to the second issue, industrial technology. Environmental degradation has been a concern since antiquity. Aristotle was aware of changes to the quality of the soil in various areas of Greece.

In the time of the Trojan wars, the Argive land was marshy and could only support a small population, whereas the land of Mycenae was in good condition (and for this reason Mycenae was the superior). But now the opposite is the case, for the reason we have mentioned: the land of Mycenae has become completely dry and barren, while the Argive land that

was formerly barren owing to the water has now become fruitful (Lines 352a10-16). (Aristotle, *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation*, 1984, pp. 573-574.)

However, Aristotle suggests that these changes are natural. The earth is eternal but contains vast amounts of internal change. Perhaps more relevant here is Aristotle's recognition that humans have an effect on the environment. Just prior to the passage on soil change, Aristotle notes that the Egyptians settled in the mouth of the Nile River as it dried in certain places. He then concludes that "...all the mouths of the Nile, with the single exception of Canopus, are obviously artificial and not natural" (351b32-33). These changes, Aristotle notes, are slow, and so we fail to notice them. In sum, Aristotle notes that rich areas cannot be relied upon to stay that way. Although Aristotle clearly holds an eternalist position regarding the existence of the world and its overall stability, he does not think that where he happens to live has always been, and would always be, as it is. The idea of future generations living under very different climate conditions would not have been alien to Aristotle.

Plato was no doubt aware of such things; there are passages in which it is clear – at least clearer than in Aristotle – that he recognizes that humans can affect the environment due to their economic activities. In the *Critias* (111a-d), Plato describes how Attica was once lush, thick with forests, rich and life-giving and, most importantly, had rich topsoil. He then notes that, compared to the land it once was, the:

...Attica of today is like the skeleton revealed by a wasting disease, once all the rich topsoil has been eroded and only the thin body of the land remains. But in that age [Attica of 9 thousand years earlier] our land was undiminished and had high hills with soil upon them; what we now call the Rocky Barrens were covered with deep rich soil. And in the mountains there were dense forests of which there still survives clear evidence.

In addition to evidence that these forests and good soil existed, there is evidence that some of the fundamental landscape changes resulted from human activities. Plato continues:

There can still be found intact rafters cut from trees that were felled and brought down to be used for the greatest building projects. And there were many trees that were cultivated for their fruit and they provided limitless fodder for flocks of sheep and goats (Plato, 1997, p. 1297).

Again, this is the same issue, only on a larger scale today, but the size of the scale does not mean that a new ethics is needed.

The third issue concerns computers, their malleability according to Moor. In a simple sense, defining the range of functionality of an object is open to further possibilities. Think about being stranded on a deserted island and your only tool is a knife. How many purposes could you put this to? The knife could help you cut vines to build your shelter, gut and clean your fish for supper, drive off animals in the night, reflect sunlight if you see a passing plane, and so on. Malleability, *per se*, is not unique to computers. It might be the case that a computer, in virtue of its structural design as an input-output device, is in fact more malleable than any other kind of object. And this is another example of a larger scale.

What about the notion of computer creativity? In this case the computer may eventually become as creative – if not more – than we are. In this sense there is a new moral object in the world. Instead of just thinking about computers as instruments in our augmented capacities, and thereby giving rise to new and possibly unethical areas of human conduct, the computers themselves would be moral agents. However, even this has precedents – not identical situations, but certainly adequate and effective analogies. The spread of the domain of moral objects via the environmental ethics movement is a good analogue to the ethics of computer creativity and agency. We can make sense of animals as objects of moral standing, and we did so without having to create radically new systems of morality. We tend not, however, to see animals (although some people do) as moral agents and thereby bearing moral responsibility. If computers do develop to

the point where the question of moral agency is completely on the table, then we may see these early types of moral computers as analogous to the way we view children as moral agents. More sophisticated moral computers would be seen as analogous to the standard moral agent, which has been the subject of philosophical discussion for centuries. In sum, if it looks, and talks, and thinks, and acts like us, then it falls under the same ethical frameworks that we do. Perhaps the day will come when computer agents square off, debating the merits of consequentialism and deontology.

### Summary and Conclusion

As we have seen, philosophers have frequently called for a re-evaluation of the fundamental view, and these have included ethical frameworks as well. The key question has been, what kind of result does this re-evaluation produce? Is it a matter of modification or, more radically, a question of replacement? I drew attention to Thomas Kuhn's work as an example of a radical approach to conceptual change. My point was to show that, in ethics, it is doubtful that we require such revisions.

To further this point, I considered the standard approach, namely, that technology has created new problems and therefore requires new modes of ethical thinking. This was shown to be unclear and so I drew upon the work of Walter Maner, who points out that it must be the case that particular new technologies create situations for which there are no adequate and effective analogies, for situations that pre-date those particular technological situations. This helps in at least providing an embryonic framework for thinking about the calls for new ethics, but it ultimately does not support such calls. I considered a number of situations in which the novelties of technology were considered to buttress such calls, and I argued that they were ultimately novelties of degree (and not of kind) and so could be handled within pre-existing frameworks.

My main point is simple: if past ethical systems have worked or at least applied, the new technology does not, in and of itself, create a need for new ethical systems. I should be cautious: I am not saying that the traditional forms of ethics will cover everything that humans

can create. It just strikes me that, in the end, the calls for new ethics are more claims than demonstrations.

The real challenge from new technologies is most likely not in the area of ethics, that is, not in the development of new forms of ethics. There will always be challenging ethical questions. Instead, the real challenge will most likely be another version of the age old question, "what does it mean to be human?"

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**Part III**  
**Virtues and Ethics in Chinese Philosophy**



## The Virtue Theory of Mencius

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Generally speaking, the thought of Mencius is contrary to Confucius' deep reflection on political and ideological concepts, such as in the discussion on benevolence. Confucius primarily regards benevolence as a concept of moral behavior, while Mencius, pays more attention to the concept concerning benevolent government. Another feature of Mencius' theory is that he mentions benevolence and righteousness as two equal and most basic moral concepts, which is significantly different from the two basic moral concepts of Confucius, which are benevolence and courtesy. Moreover, except for the significance of political and ideological aspects, the concepts of benevolence and righteousness are still categories of moral behavior in Mencius' philosophy. On the one hand, these concepts are inherited from the ideas of Confucius; on the other hand, there are some new developments and deeper meaning. In view of the difference in virtue and moral behavior, the traditional major ethical categories in Mencius are gradually transformed from moral behavior into virtue. This article develops further the research and discussion of Mencius ethics with respect to the theory of virtue ethics.

### The Substance of Benevolence and Righteousness

Mencius states: "When people who have not studied have abilities, they are inherent abilities. When people who have not deliberated have intelligence, it is inherent intelligence. An infant carried in the arms does not lack intelligence of how to love its parents, and when it gets older, it knows automatically how to respect an older brother. Loving one's parents is Humaneness; respecting one's elders is Righteousness. These are principles that penetrate all peoples." (*Mencius Chin Hsin* part one)

"Loving one's parents (Qinqin)," the first word (QIN) means one's parents. "Loving one's parents is benevolence; respecting one's elders is righteousness," and this concerns the sense of the category of virtue, "Loving one's parents." belongs to benevolence, but benevol-

ence is not limited to it; similarly, “respecting one’s elders.” belongs to righteousness, but righteousness is not limited to it. Benevolence and righteousness have a more general meaning in the area of moral behavior, and contain a wider range of content. This also shows that benevolence, in the original, basic meaning, is loving one’s parents, then later is extended to common friendships.

However, “respecting one’s elders” belongs to righteousness, and the original meaning of righteousness was not necessarily limited to the family. From the historical point of view, at the beginning, respecting the elders meant respect for elders other than family members; after the generalization of Righteousness, the meaning covered the attitude towards elders within the family.

Mencius tells us:

The richest fruit of benevolence is this, –the service of one’s parents. The richest fruit of righteousness is this, –obeying one’s elder brothers. The richest fruit of intelligence is this, – knowing these two things, and not departing from them. The richest fruit of propriety is this, – the ordering and adorning those two things. The richest fruit of music is this, – rejoicing in these two things. When they are rejoiced in, they grow. Growing, how can they be repressed? When they come to the state that they cannot be repressed, then the feet unconsciously begin to dance and the hands begin to move. (*Mencius LiLou*, part one’)

Serving family members is the same as serving one’s own parents. This shows that righteousness as a virtue is not merely initiate sentiments, but the practice of such sentiments. Righteousness is not only the practice of showing respect to an elder, but the practice of such sentiments; for instance, to follow one’s brother means to show behavior that follows the lead of one’s brother. Obviously, Righteousness is both a virtue and a moral behavior.<sup>1</sup> Mencius’ statement also

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<sup>1</sup> Here it is mentioned benevolence-righteousness, intelligence-courtesy and happiness together respectively, and the intelligence is before the courtesy, shows that this chapter could be written earlier than chapter Gongsun Chou, and chapter Kào Tsze, which mentioned four terms benevolence, righteous-

means that more mature thought of benevolence and righteousness includes two aspects. On the one hand, he stressed that the behavior of serving one's parents and following one's brothers are the primary or basic meanings of righteousness, marking the basic practice of them. On the other hand, serving one's parents is an instance of benevolence, while following one's brother is an instance of righteousness. Benevolence and righteousness themselves are universal principles; general principles can be embodied as a variety of specific examples.

In addition, accordingly, the two virtues of benevolence and righteousness are the center of five virtues: the other three virtues are carried out around benevolence and righteousness. According to Mencius' emphasis on the intelligent understanding of righteousness, to identify, understand and adhere to benevolence and righteousness, courtesy must regulate and modify the practice of benevolence and righteousness, and happiness is gained in the pleasure and delight of practicing virtue.

The resentment expressed in the poetry of Small Bian is the working of "loving one's parents." Loving one's parents, is benevolence. Stupid indeed was old Gao's criticism of the ode. The student asks: "how is it that there is no resentment in the poetry of Kay?" Mencius replies: "The parent's fault in the poetry of Kay is small; that referring in the poetry of Bian is great. When the parents' fault is great, not to have murmured on account of it would have increased the want of natural affection. When the parent's fault is small, to have murmured on account of it would have been acting like water that frets and foams around a stone that interrupts its course. To increase the want for natural affection would have been unfilial, and to fret and foam in such a manner would also have been unfilial. Confucius said, "Shun was indeed perfectly filial! And yet, when he was fifty, he was full of a longing desire for his parents' affection." (*Mencius K'ao Tsze*, part two)

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ness, courtesy and intelligence. This kind of four terms together expression appears in *The Book of Rites, four norms for mourning apparel*, besides Mencius. The order of these four terms are different in different places in Mencius. For instance, the benevolence-intelligence and courtesy-righteousness are classified into two groups.

Mencius again argues for the close links between loving one's parents and benevolence, relationship with family member who does evil is estranged when others loving him without resentment; to complain the family members does wrong, that is exactly performance of the deep love to their loved ones. This statement is the comment on the poesy of Xiao Bian and Kay in "The Book of Songs," may not have universal significance. In any case, loving one's parents is benevolence, this is highlighting the meaning of "Loving one's parents" contained in benevolence, also means that it is the fundamental sense of benevolence.

In ancient times, there were some who did not bury their parents. When their parents died, they took them up and threw them into some channel of water. Later, when passing by them, they could see foxes and wild cats devouring them, and flies and gnats biting at them. The perspiration started out upon their foreheads, and they looked away, unable to bear the sight. It was not because of other people that their perspiration flowed, but because of the emotions of their hearts. Instantly they went home, and came back with baskets and spades to bury the bodies. If burying them was indeed right, you may see that the filial son was a virtuous man, in interring in a handsome manner his parents and acting according to a proper rule.' (*Mencius T'eng Weng Kung* part one)

According to Mencius, one buried his parents, because he could not bear the desecration to their bodies. This is also a reflection of benevolence and is precisely different from the Confucian school and Mohist school of thought. Mohist advocates loved equally, but they ignored the love of their family members and violated human nature; in contrast, Confucian virtues are based on love of family members and by extension to all others.

Wan Chang said, 'Hsiang made it his daily business to slay Shun. When Shun was made sovereign, how was it that he only banished him?' Mencius said, 'He raised him to be a prince. Some supposed that it was banishing him?' Wan Chang said, 'Shun banished the superintendent of works to Yû-châu; he sent away Hwan-tâu to the mountain Ch'ung; he slew the prince of San-miào in San-wei; and he imprisoned Kwân on the mountain Yü. When the crimes of those four were thus punished, the whole kingdom acquiesced: it was a cutting

off of men who were destitute of benevolence. Hsiang was, of all men, the most destitute of benevolence, and Shun raised him to be the prince of Yû-pî; of what crimes had the people of Yû-pî been guilty? Does a benevolent man really act thus? (*Mencius WanZhang* part one).

In the book of *Mencius*, there are many stories that have been used as an argument, which is very different with the *Analects*. Here the story of Shun's brother, Hsiang, a heartless people repeatedly attempts to kill Shun. After Shun becomes the emperor, Hsiang is not executed or exiled, but knighted as the governor of You Bi. Mencius defends Shun by saying that the benevolent man does not hate his brother, but is only acting intimately towards his brother. Although, Hsiang's behavior is far away from benevolent, Shun, out of love for his brother, still hopes he can enjoy a better life, and so he knights him to You Bi, and lets him enjoy the wealth of a monarch; but he would not let him manage state affairs, or threaten the people. Shun's method of handling this case would not be praised in modern society, but in the ancient society of 2000 BC, still showing the virtue of benevolence of Shun, he does not care about injuries to himself by his loved ones, and is bent on loving his family members; in the meanwhile, he takes into account the interests of the people. Herein is stated the moral behavior of the benevolent man as "brotherly love" which clearly explains the significance of a pro-word "loving."

There has never been a humane man who neglected his parents, and there has never been a just man who put his prince last in his priorities. King, cannot we limit our conversation to humaneness and giving what is dues? Why must we discuss profit? (*Mencius King Hui of Liang* Part One)

Leaving family members is contrary to "Loving one's parents," and putting the king's interest after one's own is contrary to righteousness. It is impossible for a man with the moral behavior of benevolence to ignore his parents; it is also impossible for a man with the moral behavior of righteousness to ignore his monarch. This emphasizes the direct links between benevolence and "loving family members," and righteousness and respect for elders.

Mencius said, "The enjoyment by the tongue of flavor, the enjoyment by the eye of color, the enjoyment by the ear of music, the enjoyment by the nose of perfumes, and the enjoyment by the body of comfort, are natural and endowed by Heaven. The Superior Man does not regard these as his innermost nature." (Mencius Tsin Sin part two)

The relation between father and son is an instance of benevolence. By this, benevolence is the moral behavior in the treatment of the father-son relationship, but is not the only moral behavior in the parent-child relationship. As in the examples cited earlier, the love which the elder brother has for his brother is also benevolence as moral behavior; intimate feeling and actions between children and their parents are benevolence as moral behavior; All the loving behaviors among kinship belong to benevolence. It is evident that in a family, although the content of "loving one's parents" is super-positioned with filial piety (Xiao) in many occasions, benevolence is a moral concept of a wider range.

As for righteousness, this shows in the instance of the monarch and his subjects as defined, particularly as the moral behavior that deals with the relationship of the monarch and his subjects, or more clearly, in how the minister serves his monarch. In fact, as the previously mentioned, righteousness is respect to the elder and noble, which includes the elder and noble man in and outside of the family. The elder and noble man outside of the family, generally speaking, is in the monarch-subjects relationship, that is, the attitude with which subjects serve their monarch. Benevolence, righteousness, courtesy, intelligence are regarded as the four main virtues, in which the courtesy is the virtue in host-guest affairs, intelligence is the ability to know a good man, holy is the ability to know the Tao (the highest truth in the world), the special features of these three virtues will be discussed later. "They are in the human nature" means that "these four virtues are a priori, rather than coming from the external world, which is a significantly different development from Confucius' moral theory.

However, the moral behavior defined as "respect for elder and noble" is different from the theory of four virtues and four hearts by Mencius. According to the four hearts theory, shame and repulsion are the basis of righteousness, so, the claim of "shame and repulsion is righteousness" is different from "respect of the elder is righteous-

ness." There is the same difficulty in the discussion on courtesy; courtesy is the moral behavior that deals with the relationship of the host and guest, but in the theory of four hearts, the basis for courtesy is stressed as the emotion of respect (or heart). How to deal with these contradictions in Mencius, still requires careful study and analysis.

### **The Benevolent Man Loves All**

The original meaning of benevolence was the love of parents and the love of family, but in the development of culture, benevolence has gradually become more universal. Confucius already made sure that the meaning of "benevolence" is clearly to "love people": it is promoted from family love into universal love. Mencius also inherited this. If you say that the "loving one's parents" theory refers to one instance of benevolence, the the "benevolent man loves people" theory focuses on the ethical connotation of benevolence.

Mencius said, "King Hui of Liang is the antithesis of Humane-ness. The Humane man takes what he loves and brings it to that which he does not love. The non-Humane man take what he does not love and brings it to that which he loves." Kung Sun Ch'ou said, "What do you mean?" Mencius said, "King Hui, just for the sake of gaining more territory, ravaged his own people and then sent them into battle. Even when they were being beaten badly, he would send them back again. Afraid of losing the engagement, he sent his beloved son into the fray, who was also killed. This is what I mean by 'taking that which you do not love and bringing it to that which you love.'" (Mencius)

Bringing love to those people they do not love from the people they do love means extending the love of family members to others. To extend the love from some currently small-scale love to those in a wider range in the future is benevolence. On the contrary, if a person cannot extend love to a family member and to the people he/she should love he/she is not benevolent. Such was King Hui of Liang who did not love his people, and even worse, he tortured his people and drove them to the battlefield to die, which is inhumane. The argument of "Benevolent man can treat people they do not love with love," it is not necessarily to put into the definition of benevolence, but they do express the spirit and features of benevolence to a considerable extent,

and express the internal relationship between love and benevolence as understood by Mencius.

Mencius notes, 'Therefore the superior man is distinguished from other men by what he is in his heart; namely, benevolence and propriety. The benevolent man loves others. The man of propriety shows respect to others. He who loves others is constantly loved by them. He who respects others is constantly respected by them. (*Mencius LiLou* part two)

Keeping benevolence in the heart means that he who has the heart for loving people is the benevolent man. Hence, we say "the benevolent man loves people." We do not call the man who keeps courtesy in his heart a "courtesy man"; we call him "the man who acts with courtesy." It is clear that courtesy is not a virtue, but "manners in accord with courtesy" is a virtue. It shows that courtesy as moral behavior or virtue is generating in Mencius' words, and regards keeping benevolence and courtesy as the main virtue.

We cited examples of "respect to an elder as righteousness." If respect to an elder is moral behavior, as righteousness, is compared with "the people who act with courtesy to show respect to other people," what is the difference between righteousness and courtesy if both are the moral behavior of respect? It should be said that the practice of courtesy embodies the emotion and is concerned more with courtesy. It is an emotional respect between others equally, such as a guest and host, and so this emotion is not necessarily admiration and worship of each other. Admiration especially means the worship of one whose position is higher than one's own; righteousness is a respect of people who are of higher status. Therefore, we can say that "courtesy" is respect in general terms, and "righteousness" is a particular kind of respect. Before Mencius, "courtesy" was not a virtue; hence people classified the spirit of respect as righteousness, just as Mencius also said respect to an elder is righteousness in early years.

When Mencius later started regarding courtesy as virtue embody in respect, so they then put righteousness as the virtue which embodied shame and repulsion, and no longer defined as the virtue of respect of elders. In fact, there are many virtues are related with respect in the ancient times of Spring and Autumn Period, for example, obedience. Moreover, the love and respect emotion is highlighted in

Ancient times, such as the words in “*Book of Filial Piety(XiaoJing)*”: “The Master said: the one who loves family members does not dare do evil to others, lives with family member does not dare prejudge others’ feelings. The extreme of love and respect is behavior which lives up to the requirement of treating family members.” It is obvious, Mencius makes it so special, that is, combines benevolence with righteousness and regards the courtesy as virtue, and interprets the meaning of righteousness in a new sense.

Mencius said, “There is nothing the wise cannot understand, but they will focus on the important things. There is no one the humane person cannot love, but s/he will focus on cultivation of intimacy with the Good. The understanding of Yao and Shun did not include everything, but they took care of what was important. Their Humaneness did not extend to every single person, but they were concerned about being intimate with the Good.” Those who are meticulous about the details of minor mourning for distant relatives, but who cannot carry out the heavy mourning required for their parents, or the people who suck down food and drink, yet ask questions about the propriety of tearing meat with the teeth – these are people who do not know what is important.” (*Mencius Chin Hsin* part one)

The most basic manifestation of benevolence is to love and serve parents, but in the era of Mencius, “the benevolent man loves all people” has become the consensus of the Confucian, benevolence is completely beyond the affection among family members as the moral behavior of love. Benevolence in practice offers the priority requirements in reality, that is to company with the good man in Mencius’ era. It is a priority to argue for accompanying a good man as practice of benevolence. Appreciating people is intelligence. It should be stressed that especially appreciating a good man firstly here, it is consistent with what said in *Five guides to good behavior* “to visiting the intelligence is enlightened; to visit and appreciate them, is intelligence, too.” This is consistent with the words previously mentioned “to learn from the sage.” The regard the intelligence and benevolence are main virtues.

Mencius said, “The attitude of the man towards things is to cherish them but not benevolence; the attitude toward the people is benevolence but not love. Love family members, then be a friend to

other people; be a friend to other people then cherish things. (Mencius, *Chin Hsin* part one)

About intimacy, benevolence, and love, although they are all sensibilities, but is there any difference among them? None of the information is displayed in pre-reference documents. Then, Mencius tries to differ among them, which, respectively, is intimacy corresponding to the sensibility to family member, benevolence to people, love for things. This discloses the information that benevolence is specifically for people in general, which means that, on the one hand, benevolence is not the exclusive affection of kinship, it can be an interpersonal fraternal attitude that goes beyond kinship; on the other hand, benevolence is specifically for human brotherhood, not in terms of the “cherishing of things,” it is different to love humans than to cherish things. The intimacy, benevolence and love, are sentiments, rather than features contained in character, it is obvious that, the ancient Confucian did not distinguish among virtue, moral behavior and sensibility, all of them are within category of virtue.

### **“Lodging” in Benevolence and “Walking” by Righteousness**

In the first part, we focused on understanding benevolence and righteousness as ethical categories in the discussions on “Loving one’s parents and respect the elders,” at times Mencius uses these two terms, benevolence and righteousness together which we shall examine here.

Of course, “benevolence” is a most important moral behavior in Mencius’ theory, as he states: “Humaneness brings glory and non-Humaneness brings disgrace. So if you hate disgrace but still involve yourself in what is not Humaneness, it is like hating moisture and living in a basement. If you really hate it, you should honor virtue and respect the good. Install good men into positions of rank and give jobs to people of ability. During the breaks in warfare, you should take the opportunity to clarify your governmental procedures and legal codes. If you do this, even larger states will have a healthy respect for you. (Mencius *Kung Sun Ch’ou* part one)

If the sovereign be not benevolent, he cannot preserve his throne from passing away. If the Head of a State be not benevolent, he cannot preserve his rule. If a high noble or great officer be not benevolent, he

cannot preserve his ancestral temple. If a scholar or common man be not benevolent, he cannot preserve his four limbs. Now they hate death and ruin, and yet delight in being not benevolent; this is like hating to be drunk, and yet drinking strong wine! (*Mencius LiLou* part one)

Mencius said, 'It was by benevolence that the three dynasties gained the throne, and by not being benevolent that they lost it. It is by the same means that the decaying and flourishing, the preservation and perishing, of States are determined. (*Ibid.*)

In these three reference, Benevolence and heartlessness do refer not only to virtue, but mainly refers to moral behavior. It talks about the emperor and princes who have no benevolent behavior. We can see, benevolence is the most important ethical category for Mencius, and this is consistent with Confucius.

However, there is a huge difference between Confucius and Mencius, namely that Confucius stressed benevolence and courtesy equally, and never mentioned the benevolence and righteousness together; on the contrary, Mencius often refer the terms of benevolence and righteousness together, and its importance in Mencius' thought is much greater than in Confucian, becoming the second most important moral behavior after benevolence.

Mencius adds, 'With those who do violence to themselves, it is impossible to speak. With those who throw themselves away, it is impossible to do anything. To disown in his conversation propriety and righteousness, is what we mean by doing violence to one's self. To say "I am not able to dwell in benevolence or pursue the path of righteousness," is what we mean by throwing one's self away. Benevolence is the tranquil habitation of man, and righteousness is his straight path. (*Mencius LiLou* part one)

Benevolence is the home to which spirit, where the spirit ends. Therefore it is said "lodging in benevolence." Righteousness is the principle of action or behavior, action means walking the way, so it is said that we are guided by righteousness. The difference between lodging and guide seems that "lodging" started from "inside," while the "guide" is according with external path. At this point, early Confucian regards that the benevolence is within our nature and righteousness is out of our nature. Although opposed to the external

righteousness theory, this theory has an impact on the thought of Mencius. He had the theory of virtue, benevolence is the internalization of virtue, while righteousness is still the principle of behavior.

According to Mencius, "Humaneness is the mind of human beings. Rightness is their path. To abandon the path and not follow it, or to lose the mind and not know enough to seek it: this is a pity indeed!" When people lose their chickens and dogs, they know enough to look for them, but when they lose their mind, they do not know enough to seek it. The way of study and inquiry is the search for the lost mind. (*Mencius K'ao Tsze* part one)

Mencius said repeatedly that righteousness is the way, which shows that it is the principle of behavior and so it is objective. Benevolence is the virtue inside human nature and also is subjective. Righteousness would not be a virtue here, but the principle. It is noteworthy that benevolence is referred as the lodging for humans, and Mencius' critics, those do not know benevolence, call it "a waste of luxury lodging by not living in it." However, and most importantly, benevolence is the essential identity of the person. Mencius' critics do not understand this. Thus, "they abandon their heart and do not seek their own identity." In short, the difference between benevolence and righteousness for Mencius is that he highlights the difference between "inside nature" and what is "performed as action." When it comes to the difference between benevolence and righteousness, most of benevolence concerns the character of loving people by nature, while righteousness concerns performed actions.

Righteousness refers not only to virtue on moral behavior, but also refers to the basic principles of behavior; Benevolence is the principle of love, righteousness is the principle of justice:

The king's son, Tien, asked Mencius, "*What does a gentleman do?*"  
Mencius said, "*He elevates his motives.*"

*"What does that mean?"*

Mencius said, "To live by Humaneness and Rightness and nothing else. If you kill a single innocent man, you are not Humane. If something is not yours and you take it, you are not Righteous. Wherever you dwell, make it Humane; whatever course you travel, make it righteous. Abiding in Humaneness and acting through Rightness –

this is how the great man completes his work." (*Mencius Chin Hsin* part one)

Killing one innocent man violates the Benevolence principle, so it is called unbenevolent (FeiRen). Taking what does not belong to oneself violates the principles of righteousness, so it is called unjust (FeiYi). There is no difference between lodging and walking in terms of benevolence Principles.

In fact, Mencius often refers the righteousness and benevolence together, but seldom explains the independent meaning of righteousness as virtue. Only a description in the following materials, which are quite clear:

Mencius said: "everyone does not have the heart to do something, extending the range of these things he does not have the heart to do, is benevolent; everyone has something he is not willing to do, extend the range of these things to those he is willing to do, is righteousness. Everyone with a harmless heart for everyone, benevolence is much enough; everyone can keep under controlling his or her heart, not digging a hole through the wall for stealing, righteousness is much enough. (*Ibid.*)

People do not always have the heart to hurt others, and to extend this kind of emotion to those they could hurt is benevolence. Everybody has their own boundary of behavior, for example, they are ashamed to do something, and righteousness is exactly the boundary. The clearer the boundary, the stronger the shame this people has, and that is the performance-role of righteousness. If benevolence is the repulsion to do something, righteousness is shame on doing something, and righteousness is no longer the principle of behavior, but benevolence of heart, just like understanding it in terms of the heart.

Righteousness is a more complex ethical category, as the three types of description above, there is "respect to the elder," shame and repulsion, and the way for walking (the heart not willing to do something should be classified the shame and repulsion theory). As can be seen clearly in the theory of "Loving one's parents, respecting the elder," that righteousness is the respect to the elder out side of the family from the long range historical point of view, and extended to the respect to elders within the family relationship. The respect to

elder is different from the righteousness as the heart of shame and repulsion. Besides, as we have displayed earlier, “the shame and repulsion against wrong behavior is righteousness,” the heart of shame and repulsion is the boundary of moral perception, which is the boundary feeling for what one should do and what one should not. Therefore Mencius often use the example of “dig a hole through the wall (for stealing)” to illustrate the meaning of righteousness and righteousness. In this sense, shame as the shameful feeling regarding evil, refers to the inner rejection of immoral behavior. In fact, among the four features four hearts four virtues theory, illustrations with shame and repulsion are prominent, because Mencius takes benevolence and righteousness seriously.

As the former analysis, “respect to the elder” belongs to the virtue of righteousness, and “Respect other people” is consistent with the virtue of courtesy, then the difference between two of them is the courtesy refers to the general respect emotion, and righteousness refers to the specific respect to people beyond themselves in status. Before Mencius, “courtesy” is not virtue, so the spirit of respect is performed in righteousness. When Mencius classified courtesy as virtue and define of respect emotion, then the virtue of righteousness specifically embodies the emotion of shame and repulsion. (Maybe Mencius defines the righteousness as the emotion of shame and repulsion and then illustrates the courtesy with respect.) In any case, “the heart of respect is courtesy” is consistent with the early Confucian spirit, which claims that the respect is the main idea of courtesy, such as is said in *The Book of Rites*. There is an example in *The Book of Rites* to claim that the main idea of courtesy is respect and self-effacing, but in *The Analects*, Confucius emphasized respect very much, and except for one sentence in *Analects*: “self-effacing to be king” (in the fourth chapter, *LiRen*), no other words refer to self-effacing. Obviously defining the courtesy as respect is the consensus of Confucian and other thinkers in his era. Mencius inherited this idea as illustrating the courtesy with respect. But the respect-courtesy is about the spirit of courtesy, instead of defining courtesy as the respect of Courtesy as the norm of behavior, and for behavior in the Spring and Autumn Period, and Mencius put courtesy after as a respect for heart (self-effacing is different from respect), this is a big change. Since then, the courtesy

becomes virtue and develops into one of the major ethical categories during the Han dynasty and later.<sup>2</sup>

Zhu Bokun pointed out that, there are many examples in *The Analects of Confucius* referring to righteousness, but there is no clear explanation in it. In terms of the morality of the people, righteousness is a conscious obedience to abide by a hierarchy;...righteousness also refers the sentiments to obey the hierarchical order.<sup>3</sup> This idea of Zhu is based on the description in *Analects*, "To do righteousness for courtesy" (*Analects Duke Ling of Wei*, the fifteenth chapter, to the line of the original documents is "to do it for courtesy," where the "it" refers to righteousness), and "righteousness comes from courtesy" in *Zuo Zhuan*, what defines the righteousness as the spirit of courtesy. If so, the righteousness is the main idea of the courtesy system, and need be one is the subjective consciousness. In fact, there are many examples in *Analects* refer to his moral righteousness, such as "it is unjust to do nothing when one faces a just deed" thinking about righteousness when it has bring about the profit for doing something," "being rich through unjust methods is meaningless for me" and "gentle men are differed from others by their righteousness." In some places righteousness also involves the awareness of obligation. In the *Analects*, we can find that "the master said: gentleman regards the righteousness as one's nature, then practice it according with courtesy, express it with self-effacing attitude, accomplish it with honesty. Isn't this a gentle man?" "Master said, gentleman regards righteousness as the first principle." (*Analects YangHuo*, the senventeenth chapter). We can see from these examples that Confucius attached great importance to the righteousness, but the concept of righteousness here does not mean the moral righteousness, but righteousness in terms of deontology, or justice. It is not necessary to discuss it in the ethical theory of virtue.

Mencius sometimes regards benevolence of Tao for people. Mencius said, "Benevolence, refers to people; combining the two concepts is Tao" (*Mencius Chin Hsin* part two).

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<sup>2</sup> Zhu Bokun argues that the courtesy by Mencius inclines to courtesy, which is different from Confucius. According to *Introduction to Ethics Theory of Pro-Qin Dynasty* (Peking University Press, 1984), first edition, p. 49.

<sup>3</sup> *Introduction to Ethics Theory of Pro-Qin Dynasty* (Peking University Press, 1984), first edition, p. 49.

This regards benevolence as the humanitarian identity nature. In view of the theory of virtue, only a single virtue is not enough for being people, such as, one man with loyalty or courage or intelligence may follow the evil leader, it is no doubt that he is virtuous on loyalty or brave or intelligence, but it is sure that he could not be a good man. An evil leader may have firm, calm, generosity or other virtues like that, but his overall character is not good. A brave man may be arrogant, a wise man may be lazy, a loyal person may be stupid, and so on. Then is there one kind of virtue in this world, as long as people have it, even if he is lacking on other virtue, he still can be affirmed as a good person? This is benevolence; Benevolence is the essential virtue which makes people good; it is the most important ethical virtue for being a man. This is the meaning of benevolence in the ethics theory of virtue.

### **The Man with Benevolence and Intelligence Is a Saint**

In the thoughts of Mencius, which kinds of virtue is the main virtue? There are different expression in the book of *Mencius*, except for the idea of benevolence and righteousness and four virtues mentioned above (benevolence, righteousness, courtesy, intelligence), there is one more common idea, which is the idea of benevolence and intelligence.

Ch'ou said: "Tsai Wo and Tzu Kung were eloquent. Zan Niu, Min-tzu and Yen Yüan also spoke well but were known for their virtuous conduct. Confucius embodied both, but when questioned about it, said, 'When it comes to speaking, I am not so good.' In this case are you (Mencius) a sage?" Mencius said, "How can you ask me this? When Tzu Kung asked Confucius if he was a sage, Confucius said, 'Sagehood is beyond me. I study without getting bored and teach without getting tired.' Tzu Kung said, 'Studying without boredom is wisdom, teaching without weariness is Humaneness. Having Humaneness and wisdom, you are a sage indeed, Master!' "Now if Confucius could not accept the name of "sage," how can I? (*Mencius Kung Sun Ch'ou* part one)

Mencius quotes Tzu Kung in this chapter to classify the virtue of "studious" in the virtue of "intelligence." This is a theoretical expan-

sion on the basis of Confucius, but it is clear that, for understanding Tzu Kung, combines the benevolence and intelligence in one, that is a saint. This displays the importance of benevolence and intelligence as the main virtues. In ancient times, the saint is the people who knows Tao of heaven, and “with intelligence” why the saints is holy, so Confucian pays particular attention to benevolence and intelligence during the study of becoming saint. Holy is not one kind of virtue but the whole personality which combined benevolence and intelligence, which is different from *WuXing Book*, according to Mencius.

In another example Mencius discusses righteousness in terms of the saint.

The people of Yen having rebelled, the king of Ch’î said, ‘I feel very much ashamed when I think of Mencius.’ Ch’an Chiâ said to him, ‘Let not your Majesty be grieved. Whether does your Majesty consider yourself or Châu-kung the more benevolent and wise?’ The king replied, ‘Oh! what words are those?’ ‘The duke of Châu,’ said Chiâ, ‘appointed Kwan-shû to oversee the heir of Yin, but Kwan-shû with the power of the Yin State rebelled. If knowing that this would happen he appointed Kwan-shû, he was deficient in benevolence. If he appointed him, not knowing that it would happen, he was deficient in knowledge. If the duke of Châu was not completely benevolent and wise, how much less can your Majesty be expected to be so! I beg to go and see Mencius, and relieve your Majesty from that feeling.’ Ch’an Chiâ accordingly saw Mencius, and asked him, saying, ‘What kind of man was the duke of Châu?’ ‘An ancient sage,’ was the reply. ‘Is it the fact, that he appointed Kwan-shû to oversee the heir of Yin, and that Kwan-shû with the State of Yin rebelled?’ ‘It is.’ ‘Did the duke of Châu know that he would rebel, and purposely appoint him to that office?’ Mencius said, ‘He did not know.’ Then, though a sage, he still fell into error?’ ‘The duke of Châu,’ answered Mencius, ‘was the younger brother. Kwan-shû was his elder brother. Was not the error of Châu-kung in accordance with what is right? Moreover, when the superior men of old had errors, they reformed them. The superior men of the present time, when they have errors, persist in them. The errors of the superior men of old were like eclipses of the sun and moon. All the people witnessed them, and when they had reformed them, all the people looked up to them with their former admiration. But do the

superior men of the present day only persist in their errors? They go on to apologize for them likewise.' (*Mencius Kung-sun Ch'au* part two)

The questions and answers on benevolence and intelligence is discussion on the most important value, it is stressed particularly the saint is holy because they live up to the standard of benevolence and intelligence; benevolence and intelligence are the fundamental moral behaviors and virtues for being saint. But it is wrong to say that saints never make mistakes, they commit faults or make a mistake, even with good intentions, but they can make up for it.

The king Hsüan of Ch'î asked, saying, 'Is there any way to regulate one's maintenance of intercourse with neighbouring kingdoms?' Mencius replied, 'There is. But it requires a perfectly virtuous prince to be able, with a great country, to serve a small one, – as, for instance, T'ang served Ko, and king Wan served the Kwan barbarians. And it requires a wise prince to be able, with a small country, to serve a large one, – as the king T'âi served the Hsün-yü, and Kâu-ch'ien served Wû. He who with an areat State serves a small one, delights in Heaven. He who with a small State serves a large one, stands in awe of Heaven. He who delights in Heaven, will affect with his love and protection the whole kingdom. He who stands in awe of Heaven, will affect with his love and protection his own kingdom. It is said in the Book of Poetry, "I fear the Majesty of Heaven, and will thus preserve its favourable decree." (*Mencius King Hûi of Liang* part two)

This also shows that Mencius often takes benevolence and intelligence as the main virtue to evaluate and judge people, while be happy to live according to nature and fear nature are higher levels of the spiritual realm.

Mencius said, 'Is the arrow-maker less benevolent than the maker of armour of defence? And yet, the arrow-maker's only fear is lest men should not be hurt, and the armour-maker's only fear is lest men should be hurt. It is with the priest and the coffin-maker. The choice of a profession, therefore, is a thing in which great caution is required. Confucius said, "virtuous manners constitute the excellence of a neighbourhood. If a man, in selecting a residence, do not decide on one where such prevail, how can he be wise?" Now, benevolence is the most honourable dignity conferred by Heaven, and the quiet home in which man should awell. Since no one can hinder us from being so,

if yet we are not benevolent; – this is being not wise. From the want of benevolence and the want of wisdom will ensue an entire absence of propriety and righteousness; – he who is in such a case must be the servant of other men. To be the servant of men and yet ashamed of such servitude, is like a bowmaker's being ashamed to make bows, or an arrow-maker's being ashamed to make arrows. (*Mencius Kung-sun Ch' au* part one)

This is the example of using benevolence and intelligence together.

Mencius also has some other different claims that are similar to the “main virtues” such as, Mencius said, ‘There is a nobility of Heaven, and there is a nobility of man. Benevolence, righteousness, self-consecration, and fidelity, with joy in these virtues; – these constitute the nobility of Heaven. To be a kung, a ch'ing, or a tâ-fû; – this constitutes the nobility of a man. Men of antiquity cultivated their nobility of Heaven, and the nobility of man came to them in its train. The men of the present day cultivate their nobility of Heaven in order to seek for the nobility of man, and when they have obtained that, they throw away the other: their delusion is extreme. The issue is simply that they lose that nobility of man as well. (*Mencius Kâo Tsze* part one)

The four main virtues are explained to be benevolence, righteousness, loyalty and honesty, which is different from all explanation mentioned previously.

How to figure out all of these different explanations of the main virtues? Of course, perhaps some chapters of *Mencius* were written earlier and some later, and the ideas changed in this procedure, but it is possible they are discussions on different problem. For instance, the claim for benevolence and intelligence together happens in the discussion on becoming a saint. Being affected by ‘saintly-intelligence theory,’ invites a discussion on an ideal personality. Nonetheless, benevolence and righteousness are discussed as the most important moral virtues.

#### **Four Virtues and Four Hearts**

In early Confucianism theory, such as the thinkers represented by Kâo Tsze claim that benevolence is inside human nature while righteousness comes from the external world, that is, benevolence is a

performance of the inner heart, and hence the moral behavior of benevolence comes from the virtue of benevolence. The practice of righteousness conforms with the social principles, so righteousness is moral behavior but not virtue. Mencius pays attention to the great importance of the internalization of virtue, so he advocates that all of benevolence, righteousness, courtesy, intelligence and honesty are virtues; they can be performed as virtue. This is illustrated in the previous example: Mencius affirms, the emotions of "Loving one's parents" and "respect to the elder" are immanent cognition and immanent ability, hence benevolence and righteousness are immanent virtues. As a result, he disagrees with the idea of K'ao Tsze, which displays that benevolence is immanent virtue while righteousness is external virtue. This opinion is expressed more clearly in the theory of the four-sides:

Mencius said, 'All men have a mind which cannot bear to see the sufferings of others. The ancient kings had this commiserating mind, and as a matter of course, they had likewise a commiserating government. When with a commiserating mind that was practised a commiserating government, ruling the kingdom was as easy a matter as making anything go round in one's palm. When I say that all men have a mind that cannot bear to see the sufferings of others, my meaning may be illustrated thus: even now-a-days, if men suddenly see a child about to fall into a well, they will without exception experience a feeling of alarm and distress. They will feel so, not as a ground on which they may gain the favour of the child's parents, nor as a ground on which they may seek the praise of their neighbours and friends, nor from a dislike to the reputation of having been unmoved by such a thing. 'From this case we may perceive that the feeling of commiseration is essential to man, that the feeling of shame and dislike is essential to man, that the feeling of modesty and complaisance is essential to man, and that the feeling of approving and disapproving is essential to man. The feeling of commiseration is the principle of benevolence. The feeling of shame and dislike is the principle of righteousness. The feeling of modesty and complaisance is the principle of propriety. The feeling of approving and disapproving is the principle of knowledge. Men have these four principles just as they have their four limbs. Since all men have these four principles in themselves,

let them know how to give them full their development and completion, and the issue will be like that of fire which has begun to burn, or that of a spring which has begun to find vent. Let them be fully developed, and they will suffice to love and protect all within the four seas. Let them be denied that developed, and they will not suffice for a man to serve his parents with. (*Mencius Kung-sun Ch'au* part one)

Compared to Confucius, Mencius emphasized not only the four virtues of benevolence, righteousness, courtesy and intelligence as the four main Virtues, but more importantly is, Mencius internalizes benevolence and transfers it to a virtue. He regards it as the immanent and inner virtue in the heart, which compassion at heart is the start and basic point of benevolence, which is why we call it "sides." To expand compassion is the completion of benevolence. This also shows that only compassion is not enough to be the comprehensive virtue of benevolence.

Mencius said, 'From the feelings proper to it, it is constituted for the practice of what is good. This is what I mean in saying that nature is good. If men do what is not good, the blame cannot be imputed to their natural powers. The feeling of commiseration belongs to all men; as does that of shame and dislike; of reverence and respect; of approving and disapproving. The feeling of commiseration implies the principle of benevolence; that of shame and dislike, the principle of righteousness; that of reverence and respect, the principle of propriety; and that of approving and disapproving, the principle of knowledge. Benevolence, righteousness, propriety, and knowledge are not infused into us from without. We are certainly furnished with them. A different view is simply owing to want of reflection. Hence, it is said, "Seek and you will find them. Neglect and you will lose them." Men differ from one another in regard to them; some as much again as others, some five times as much, and some to an incalculable amount: this is why they cannot carry out fully their natural powers. It is said in the Book of Poetry,

"Heaven in producing mankind,  
Gave them their various faculties and relations with their specific laws.

These are the invariable rules of nature for all to hold,

And all love this admirable virtue.”

Confucius said, “The maker of this ode knew indeed the principle of our nature!” We may thus see that every faculty and relation must have its law, and since there are invariable rules for all to hold, they consequently love this admirable virtue. (*Mencius Kâo Tsze* part one)

Here “compassion is benevolence” does not deny the explanation in the previous paragraph, “compassion is the sides of benevolence” which is to emphasize the compassion to babies is the starting point of benevolence, instead of being to completion. Here what is Stressed claims that the emotion of shame and repulsion, self-effacing, the cognition of right and wrong, all of these performances of the virtue of intelligence are immanent and inner, but not obtained from external world. Immanent virtues are the resource of good.

Mencius said, “The essentials of the Superior Man’s character are Humaneness, Rightness, Propriety and Wisdom, which are rooted in the mind, and give rise to one’s external appearance. Their luster can be seen in his face, their fullness can be seen in his back and are released into his four limbs. The four limbs reveal this without speaking.” (*Mencius Chin Hsin* part two)

Sentiments of benevolence, righteousness, courtesy and intelligence are virtues and they are rooted in the immanent heart, and then performance is in correspondence with expressions of face and body. This is also the prevailing view for early Confucianism, such as “the virtues run cross insides, and then are expressed outsides.” (*Book of Rites*, chapter of *Wen king royal highness*)

In four-sides four virtues theory mentioned above, ethical theory of virtue, the illustration of benevolence is in accord with the arguments in former chapters, but some instructions on the righteousness, courtesy and intelligence are something new compared with the theory before Mencius. For example, “the emotion of shame and repulsion is righteousness,” the emotion of shame and repulsion means the boundary of moral perception, which is the boundary of dos and don’ts, shame and repulsion is the keeping of being shame, or the emotion of repulsion from human nature.

There are no precedents to illustrate the righteousness as the emotion of shame and repulsion. The heart of esteem and respect is

courtesy, this is consistent with the theory “respect is courtesy”; but ancient people regards courtesy as the norm, none of them regarded courtesy as the heart of respect. Compared with ZiSi and seventy thinkers in that era, Mencius illustrates intelligence with the standard of right and wrong. The concept of intelligence is quite important in ZiSi’s theory, but ZiSi pays more attention to how to distinguish the good man from the bad man [2]; while Mencius stresses how to distinguish right and wrong by moral standards, and gives prominence to its feature of moral virtue, makes the four virtues more coherent in the view of moral virtue, and more reasonable in moral philosophy.

In any case, the theory of an immanent four virtues takes the benevolence, righteousness, courtesy and intelligence as virtues instead of moral behavior, which is significant phase during the procedure of internalization in moral theory developing. This does not mean that Mencius takes benevolence, righteousness, courtesy and intelligence as virtues only, and no longer as moral behaviors.

As one part of the immanent four virtues theory, the idea of four-sides prompts some other moral declinations, such as compassion, and the emotion of shame and repulsion, which can be classified as the sentiments. The four-sides theory is not only connected with the four-virtues theory, but also promotes the problem of the relationship between sentiment and virtue. Among the four virtues, the compassion is most important element. Compassion which is called “cannot bear any pain which happied in others in my heart” as well, plays an important role in the Mencius’s thought. Later, the virtue of benevolence and compassion is criticized by the Legalist thinker, Han Fei. Compassion is the emotional sentiments of sympathy, compassion, or sympathy is an immanent feeling for humans who are not utilitarian and selfish. Compassion is not only the originator and performance of the virtue of benevolence, but also where the human nature lies. However, Mencius does not discuss on the relationship between sentiments and virtue in-depth, which is discussed in the newly excavated documents “Human nature comes from destiny.”

This virtue theory take a theory of human nature for its foundation more explicitly, which is well known as the innate goodness of human nature. On the one hand, Mencius classifies benevolence, righteousness, courtesy and intelligence as the heart of compassion,

the heart of shame and repulsion, the heart of respect (we can discuss the heart of self-effacing later), the heart to distinguish right and wrong. This is very special, because no one before classified righteousness to the heart of compassion on courtesy to self-effacing, but regarding righteousness as the external principle and courtesy an external norm. On the other hand, Mencius cognizing the heart of compassion, the heart of shame and repulsion, the heart of respect the heart as distinguishing right and wrong as an a priori moral Conscience; they do not come from habits and experience, but are immanent features in human nature. Therefore, if benevolence, righteousness, courtesy and intelligence are virtues, then they are natural characters and natural hearts, which means that virtue is a gift, a priori, rather than deriving from experience and habits. In this view, virtue becomes an attribute of human nature, it is innate. However, we can still raise our problems, does the theory of innate goodness of human nature claim people are born with these virtues? If not, how could they obtain these virtues and perform them? What is the relationship between these virtues and human nature? Of course, if we review the later thoughts of Xunzi as an example, virtue theory is not necessarily connected with the theory of innate goodness of human nature, because the virtue theory co-exists with the theory of evil human nature. It would appear that the Confucian virtue theory itself does not necessarily require a particular theory of human nature as a basis. At least among the ideas in the pre-Qin era.

### **The Reflection of Virtue**

Mencius' virtue theory itself also contains the content of self-cultivation. To reflect according to the categories of virtues and their practiced results. As we have quoted:

Mencius said, 'That whereby the superior man is distinguished from other men is what he preserves in his heart; namely, benevolence and propriety. The benevolent man loves others. The man of propriety shows respect to others. He who loves others is constantly loved by them. He who respects others is constantly respected by them. (*Mencius LiLou* part two)

The people who love others will be loved constantly; the people who respect others will be respected constantly, which refers to the effects of reciprocity for moral behavior. In fact, the result of virtue is not meaning the case. How could we look at the virtues under such circumstances? Mencius introduces the reflection theory:

Here is a man, who treats me in a perverse and unreasonable manner. The superior man in such a case will turn round upon himself: "I must have been wanting in benevolence; I must have been wanting in propriety; how should this have happened to me? He examines himself, and is specially benevolent. He turns round upon himself, and is specially observant of propriety. The perversity and unreasonableness of the other, however, are still the same. The superior man will again turn round on himself: "I must have been failing to do my utmost. But after he reflects upon himself, and proceeds to do his utmost, still the perversity and unreasonableness of the other are repeated. On this the superior man says, "This is a man utterly lost indeed! Since he conducts himself so, what is there to choose between him and a brute? Why should I go to contend with a brute? Thus, it is that the superior man has a life-long anxiety and not one morning's calamity. As to what is a matter of anxiety to him, that indeed he has. He says, "Shun was a man, and I also am a man. But Shun became an example to all the kingdom, and his conduct was worthy to be handed down to later ages, while I am nothing better than a villager." This indeed is the proper matter of anxiety to him. And in what way is he anxious about it? Just that he may be like Shun: then only will he stop. As to what the superior man would feel to be a calamity, there is no such thing. He does nothing which is not according to propriety. If there should befall him one morning's calamity, the superior man does not account it a calamity. (*Mencius LiLou* part two)

The Gentleman has a reflexive ability, which means self-examination, introspection, hence the self-examination needs to benevolence, to courtesy and to loyalty as the primary projects, indicating the importance. He takes benevolence as the main virtue. In the book of Mencius, benevolence, righteousness, loyalty and intelligence appear together, but not everywhere; Mencius emphasizes the connection between benevolence and righteousness, but not in everywhere. In many places Mencius mentions benevolence and other virtues toge-

ther, and a convincing instruction of why he does this has not yet appeared. As we described earlier, this perhaps is due to different range of problems such as interpersonal relations. One of them acts ruding them courtesy becomes the main aspect of human relationship to reflect on.

Mencius' thought also shows that, Confucian virtue theory not only raised the moral categories, but also advocated that people implement, and emphasize the virtue of reflexion, namely to reflect on one's attitude according to others' attitudes and behavior, that is to reflect on their own moral behavior, which is a complement and development of "I reflects on my behavior three times everyday" in *Analects of Confucius*, development takes virtue as its basis points.

Mencius said, 'If a man love others, and no responsive attachment is shown to him, let him turn inwards and examine his own benevolence. If he is trying to rule others, and his government is unsuccessful, let him turn inwards and examine his wisdom. If he treats others politely, and they do not return his politeness, let him turn inwards and examine his own feeling of respect. When we do not, by what we do, realise what we desire, we must turn inwards, and examine ourselves in every point. When a man's person is correct, the whole kingdom will turn to him with recognition and submission. It is said in the Book of Poetry,

"Be always studious to be in harmony with the ordinances of God,

And you will obtain much happiness." (*Mencius LiLou* part one)<sup>4</sup>

Here the example becomes a little clearer with "introspection" and reflection on one's own benevolence, one's own intelligence and one's own courtesy. This leads to reflection on one's own virtue. This is different from self-reflection on benevolence, courtesy and loyalty alone. Thus, Mencius highlights three different terms of benevolence, intelligence and courtesy. Nonetheless, heart and behavior are the

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<sup>4</sup> See Chen Lai, "Bamboo slip five pieces and the thought of ZiSi," *Peking University Journal* (January, 2007).

objects of “reflection,” rather than only the particular virtue. In the thought of Mencius, the virtues of not blaming others, taking reflection inwards, and self-cultivation, are the life-giving manners of the benevolent man.

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## Confucian Ethics and Modernity

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### Introduction

In contemporary Chinese society, development of ethical constructions is a very important scholarly topic, and includes how to treat the relationship between traditional Confucian ethics and modern Western public ethics. Indeed, both possess important realistic values. This topic also concerns the relationship between private ethics and public ethics and how we can “connect [them] with traditional ethics” in modern ethical constructions. Last, but not least, it concerns the contemporary Chinese construction of ethics and civilization and the daily ethical practices of citizens.

We need to realize that the tradition of Confucian ethics and modern public ethics is, firstly, a diachronic relationship between traditional and modern times. After all, Confucian ethics was born in ancient Chinese society, and so it will probably need to undergo an innovative transformation, to synchronically connect with modern ethics. This is because Confucian ethics is, after all, Chinese tradition. The reason that tradition becomes tradition is that it is the past that lives on today. Today’s China comes from the traditional China. The prerequisite of the study of the connection between Confucian ethics and modern public ethics is to make clear the respective heterogeneity, or we can say, diachronic is the prerequisite of synchronic. It would be wrong to deny the possibility of their reciprocal transformation. However, if we do not clarify the situation, and assume that they can connect with each other, or assume that this depends solely on the expansion of the traditional Confucian School, is to realize that such a transformation from tradition to the modern age, would be too simplified. Moreover, it is a complicated and difficult issue, especially the issue of how to transform and connect. The main topic of this article is, first, to clarify the diachronic differences between these two kinds of ethics and, second, on the basis of this clarity to study in depth how these two can go beyond simple transformation to convergence within the conditions of modern society.

### **The Differences between Confucian Traditional Ethics and Modern Public Ethics**

The difference between traditional ethics represented by Confucian ethics, and modern public ethics represented by Western Democratic Liberalism may be summarized under a few points:

1) Traditional society emphasizes private ethics while modern society emphasizes public ethics.

Chinese traditional society is a society based on family and country as an integral whole. Private life and communication are relatively developed. Strictly speaking, on the basis of the modern "public character," it can be said that, to some extent, public life and communication, in the modern sense, did not exist. People lived mainly in the family and the private communication circle of the family. When stepping out of the family, one would enter the country, and common people seldom had a chance to participate in political life. The public realm between the family and the country was largely underdeveloped. Nor is there citizenship and communication based on the equal legal rights of individuals. Social communication, at most, existed within a village or within relatives and friends, and such communication was still private among acquaintances. The ethics born in such a society will develop into private ethics, while remaining deficient in social public ethics.

The phrase "everybody will only take care of the snow in front of his own door and neglect the ice on other peoples' houses" is a psychological reflection of such ethics. Ethics is decided by social living conditions. Without the social foundation of public communication, it would be hard to pass on the thought of social public ethics. In traditional China, the opposition between public and private was only an idea of the sense of worth, and seldom had any firm, concrete manifestations. The understanding of 'public arena' referred mainly to the "imperial court" and the "government." There seldom existed a public sense, such as the so-called Western style public realm of things that relates to all people. In sum, the undevelopment of the public arena led to an undevelopment of Chinese traditional society's public ethics.

We cannot deny that Chinese traditional society indeed emphasized private ethics. Even Confucian so-called “learning both sound in theory and practice,” and the so-called, “From the emperor to the common people, all of them consider moral character building as the foundation” are referring to the importance of private ethics. One important method of thinking in the Confucian school is the system of ‘expansion.’ That is to say, starting from oneself as ground zero and then expanding out to others. Although, Confucian ethics used analytical thinking and some of the method of modern ethics – good character ethics and normative ethics – for Chinese Confucian ethics good character was and is fundamental. To a great extent, life in modern society is public in character. Clothes are bought, not made. In big cities, it is relatively rare for members of a family to eat a few meals together in one week’s time. Speaking of accommodations few can live in separate houses, but instead live in apartment houses. Concerning travel, most use public transportations; even if one drives his own car, he must obey public transportation rules. Everyone’s place and style of contact possesses a very strong public character. As a result, the evolution of social life makes people, first, emphasize morality’s function in maintaining the basic order in public life. Thus, it seldom focuses on whether people have noble qualities. Some modern ethical theories have determined that this is the exact character of a democratic society: it leaves the right to choose to become noble or not, to every citizen and thus no longer demands a high standard of ethical compliance.

Li Zehou directly uses his theory of two kinds of ethics, namely, “Religious morality” and “Social morality,” to demonstrate such difference between traditional Confucian ethical theory and modern public-regulated ethics. He wrote “The so-called ‘Social morality’, is the ‘public morality’ proposed by Liang Qichao at the beginning of 20th century. It is founded on the basis of the modern rule of law (or the modern rule of law takes it as the foundation). It is the common principle, norm, order, sense of worth and style of behavior of modern society that maintains modern life. namely, freedom, equality, human rights, democracy, etc. Heteronomy is very strong, and thus, is normative ethics... ‘Religious morality’ is the so-called ‘private morality’ by Liang Qichao. In China, this is promoted by the traditional Confucian

approach. It emphasizes emotion and righteousness and is deeply rooted in faith. It relates to an individual's ultimate concern and status ...It is not normative ethics, but good character ethics with strong self-discipline and it seeks what is 'good'." Li Zehou's theory clearly states that traditional Confucian ethics is a kind of good character ethics with a private ethical character, while modern Western ethics is a kind of normative ethics with a public common character. The content and realm of issues are correspond with Li Zehou's definition.

2) Traditional morality regulates a society of acquaintance while modern morality regulates relationships in a society of strangers.

In a traditional society, due to the great development of private life and private contact, traditional morality mostly regulates the interpersonal relationship between you and me, and among acquaintances. As the traditional "Five human relations": father-son, husband-wife, brother-brother, friend-friend, monarch-liege, the first three are about family relationships while the last two are about social and political relationships, all of which are relationships between acquaintances. In modern society's public life, it is mainly a relationship between me and other people, between me and the group, and between me and society, which is a relationship between strangers. Obviously, the traditional "Five human relations" would have difficulty in carrying out their function to regulate modern society's public life.

Therefore, as early as March 15 1981, Li Guoding from Taiwan proposed the definition of "the sixth human relation," namely the relationship between the individual and the social public. That is, the relationship between oneself and a group, as previously mentioned. We need to propose a sixth human relation..."Although we are a civilized country with a long history, and with good etiquette, and always emphasize ethics, we lack the proper norms to regulate the relationship between an individual and the social public'." These so-called "discussions on new ethics" in Taiwan society provide us with beneficial inspiration and orientation to correctly understanding the relationship between traditional morality and modern society. This considers the traditional "Five human relations" to be particularist and "The sixth human relation" to be universalist. The five human relations belong to private morality, while the sixth human relationship

belongs to public morality. The features of the interpersonal relationship characterized by the five human relations are kindness and caring, while, at the same time, their disadvantages are favouritism, uncleanness and disorder; the advantages of the interpersonal relationships, characterized by the sixth human relation, are fairness and order, while the disadvantages are an impersonal treatment and drifting apart. The purpose of the sixth human relationship is not to make people wise, but to require them to perform their own duty. It requires the sacrifice of self-interest, but only in that one not encroach on another's interest, whether the other person has a special relationship to us, or is a stranger.

In modern life, the sixth human relation requires people: first, to be frugal, honest and clean on public property, thus, eliminating waste and corruption; second, to protect the public environment, thus, eliminating pollution; third, to obey the public order, thus eliminating uncleanness and disorder; fourth, to properly protect and respect the rights and interests of an unknown third party; and fifth, to offer equal opportunity to a stranger and not discriminate against him or her.

This discussion on the new morality of the sixth human relation among the Taiwan society and academic circles has great revelancy on how we correctly understand and treat the relationship between Confucian ethical tradition and modern morality: first, the five human relations of traditional society between private persons cannot completely fit the needs of public life of the modern society of strangers, and a modern new morality is required for the sixth human relationship, that among strangers. Second, such a new concept requires precise observation and analysis of the reality of the morality of Chinese society. We can frequently observe such situations in real life. In modern life, many Chinese people have totally different methods of treating acquaintances and strangers. For example, when someone is taking a bus and suddenly sees a friend, relative, coworker or acquaintance, he will always offer his seat to his acquaintance and this with enthusiasm, but if it is a stranger, an old person or a pregnant woman, he will intentionally pretend that he does not see them and completely ignore the situation. These totally different attitudes towards acquaintances and strangers represents the opposition between private and public ethics. Third, such a theory reveals the advantages

and disadvantages of the five human relations and the sixth human relation. It also proposes the ethical attitude towards public property, environment, order, an uncertain third party and total strangers. This is the requirement set by modern public morality, which is absent among the Chinese people.

3) Traditional morality is a kind of high, noble morality based on human nature's self-improvement. Modern morality is a kind of universal and basic ethical norm that aims to regulate interpersonal relationships and maintain social order.

Chinese Confucian morality has relatively high requirements on people's private morality. It demands that people emulate those better than themselves and become noble and wise people. It has a religious characteristic in that its morality will look for help from heaven and the noble. It was established on the foundation of human nature's belief that everybody can become noble: human nature is good and everybody possesses benevolence on the foundation of morality's self-confidence. Some scholars claim that it is caused by the closed nature and elite thought of traditional society. This might be reasonable, but to deny such a noble pursuit of traditional morality on this account does not seem correct because morality's function in social life is different from that of law. It is meant, not only to maintain certain social order, but also to improve oneself. Only if there are more good people and even more wise and noble people, will a society become good. If there are only citizens who will not violate the social order and public morality and obey the laws in a society, then it will only be a well ordered society and cannot be counted as a society with high moral and civilized standards.

Li Zehou uses his "two kinds of moral" theory to explain the differences between traditional society's high standard morality and modern society's universal basic regulation. They are morality with a religious characteristic and morality with a social characteristic. "Ethics of Absolutism, aka the so-called 'morality with a religious characteristic', puts individual 'soul saving', or 'life settlement', which represent the meaning of life and individual value under this absolute order. Thus it acquires peace, settlement, dependence and anchorage" "One should have some kind of spirit', 'some kind of ideal', 'morality

with a religious characteristic' offers such an ideal, to make people draw themselves into it as if getting drunk and feeling limitless happiness. Even if he needs to sacrifice his life, or has to experience incomparable difficulty, or has to experience endless fatigue, he will never turn back and will have no regrets. It always reveals people's loftiness and dignity. It also reveals the human's difference from animals and the 'real' existence of a subject which is different from those people who are only satisfied with perceptual and worldly happiness." Such a definition of morality with a religious characteristic by Li Zehou properly explains the moral spirit's pureness and the loftiness of Confucian morality of wisdom, the spirit of simple living, the spirit of the real man, the spirit of fearlessness, the readiness to die for a cause and benevolence. The reason that Kant has to look up to the sky and to the moral law in his heart is due to the pureness and loftiness of such a moral law.

Obviously, the high standard of Confucian wisdom or the ethics of noble people still has the function of improving human nature and perfecting modern society. Such Confucian religious morality does not come from the air, but from the morality of common customs in society. In China, religious morality is not truly separate from social morality from beginning to end. "In fact, such 'morality with a religious characteristic' is a kind of mystery or transcendent explanation on the basis of the Confucian 'pay attention to one's own moral uplift without thought of others'."

Li Zehou considers the so-called modern social morality as constructed on the basis of the tools of modernization – the social noumenon which takes the individual as base, and the contract as principle. "The so-called 'modern social morality' mainly refers to the self-conscious principle and standard that individuals should obey in activity within social interpersonal relationships and contacts...The human behavior and moral characteristic it deals with in social life has a direct relation to modern law, politics and economy." Besides, Li Zehou has sharply pointed out that modern social morality takes the individual as a unit, a subject, a foundation. It puts this individual in first place and groups (society) in second place. It also puts private rights (human rights) in first place, while public rights take second place. Li Zehou also thinks that "The individual autonomy proposed

by Liberalism results in individual alienation." "Regarding the field or spirit of culture, in a gradually atomized society the individual becomes standard and center; what it brings is a thin and cold human relationship, dysphasia and an empty mind. In this situation one does not have to worry about food and clothing; life becomes aimless and the world becomes meaningless. That is, today the meaning of life and the value of living is of no importance. This is rather remarkable."

Of course, Li Zehou does not absolutely deny modern social morality. How do we deal with the relationship between these two kinds of morality? The project proposed by Li Zehou is "good-evil and right-wrong live apart": The "right-wrong" sense that everybody possesses has a close relationship with the law and politics, while the "good-evil" sense that everybody possesses has a close relationship with religion, culture and tradition. The main issue that modern social morality must solve is the issue of right-wrong, while the main issue that traditional religious morality must solve is the issue of good-evil. What liberalism and modern social morality require is only the minimum level obligation in modern life, carried out by individuals. That is, to obey the minimum level public norms and standards, for example: fulfilling a contract, protecting public property, obeying orders, performing various professional moral acts, performing obligatory military service, not infringing upon other's rights, etc. If one disobeys any of the above, it may or may not concern an issue of law. However, if it violates the common living order and injures other people's interest, it is immoral. Basically, it is an issue of "right-wrong" here, but not an issue of "good-evil." If it is wrong, then one is not using good reason and has a guilty conscience, but it is not certain that one is an evil person or has an evil nature.

What this emphasizes only refers to those objective norms, rights, limits, interests and conflicts, which regulate people's behavior, and thus can have no relationship to soul saving, ultimate carefulness, and settlement of life. Li Zehou thinks we should first separate these two kinds of morality and then we can talk about their connection. When talking about separation, it requires that religious morality not intervene with modern social morality too much, but at the same time, permits individuals to have more freedom to choose their own religious morality. Besides, he thinks that "morality with a religious

characteristic" (private morality) can have a function of "standardization" but not "construction" towards "morality with a social characteristic" (public morality). In the author's opinion, this requires us to separate, and at the same time, combine the lofty characteristic of traditional noble morality and the universal, worldly characteristics of modern social morality. That is what is necessary for the modern construction of a morality that brings together the respective functions of the perfection of human nature and the integration of social order. This is to construct a universal modern morality and, at the same time, to propose promoting and developing a traditional noble and lofty moral spirit. The modern universal morality will not be replaced by the noble morality and vice versa. We use traditional noble morality to standardize the modern citizen's morality, and we use the modern citizen's morality as the modern society's moral foundation for the traditional noble morality. After thirty years of Reform and Openness, people have learned to follow the Western countries.

In fact, they understand modernization as westernization. In the realm of thought and culture, Western liberal thought and morality become the prerequisite for most scholars. For example, in academic discussions since 1990s, some scholars have proposed that what modern morality needs is exactly the concrete legalization of morality. Some scholars believe that pursuing the most basic ethical baseline would be enough, and thus would exclude traditional lofty noble ethics that promote high moral standards. This opinion is obviously not a fair judgement from the theory's scientific character and practical exercise. In my opinion, as an idea and norm of value, the social function of morality is exactly to lead and promote growth in human nature and social tendencies, and not only to maintain the current real order (of course this function is also included). If morality becomes legalized, then could not morality be compromised, cancelled or negated as well? Such baseline ethics, in fact, is not promoting people to become bad people or villains, but at the same time it is not promoting them to become noble and wise. Therefore, in the construction of modern Chinese morality, we must combine the loftiness of traditional elite morality and the universal characteristic of the modern citizen's ethics, and not emphasize either one at the expense of the

other. According to the official file's description, we should stick to the unity of progressiveness and massiveness in ethical construction.

4) Traditional morality sticks to righteousness as its top priority, based on the common public as the basic unit, while modern morality sticks to rights as its top priority, based on the individual as the basic unit.

Li Zehou points out that "Modern social morality is based on personal rights as characterized by reasonable, conditional and mutual indemnification, while traditional religious morality is usually characterized by emotional, unconditional and non-mutual indemnification obligations and responsibilities." Liberal modern Western morality takes the individual and individual rights as its basic prerequisite of value and demand. As liberalism sees this relationship between the individual and society, every individual has his own independent value that is not replaceable. Individuals do not live dependent on the whole as he/she has a self-determined, autonomous and subjective existence. Therefore, society is not an existence over-riding the individual, but an existence of a community constituted by individuals living together with equal value, dignity and rights, and these individuals do so self-consciously and voluntarily. Everybody is a subject of society and has irreplaceable internal value. They possess social rights of which they cannot be arbitrarily and illegally deprived. Society should respect individual rights and maintain everybody's equal right of self-realization.

In modern China, the rights consciousness is rising while the duty consciousness is weakening because of the influence of western culture. In ethical theory, we thought moral duty did not ask for rights, but now some scholars think moral duty asks for the unity of rights and obligations, and also as a legal duty because they accept liberalism. Some argue that the unity of rights and obligations is the basis for modern morality. I think this point of view makes ethics equal to law, makes thought equal to action, makes the subjective mind equal to objective law, and in fact, cancels the unique role of morality. Ethical duty reflects rather a sense of responsibility, so if the subject asks for rights as carrying out obligations, the action's moral value will lose, or at least be reduced. Chen Lai said: "In field of ethics

the claim to rights has limits; and the generalization of thought focusing on rights is a cause of many social problems. The claim to rights usually has a connection to individualism which argues that individual rights are prior to group objectives and the public good. On this stand, the thought of duty, responsibility and virtue are difficult to establish. "The core principle of a liberal morality is the primacy of rights, everyone acts based on his/her own values, and reasons that the public good will run counter to individual freedom. On the contrary, the Confucian and many religious ethics emphasize on the social public good, social responsibility and public virtue. Responsibility and rights are different utterances, and reflect different ethical positions, and apply different value fields."

If we say that liberalism embraces the "innate rights of man," the Chinese culture holds the view of "make your own duty." That duty is the basis of the fundamental thought of Chinese core values. While western culture is based on individualism, and everybody will have to establish connection with each other, the pre-condition is that rights and duties are absolutely clear, or they cannot have a collective life. In China, blood relationship and the respect for it make duty a priority, and even the political order is ethical. The Chinese ethic asks that everyone fulfill his/her own obligations which include loving others. The basic duties are filial piety in the family, and devotion to the country. The gentleman (Junzi) will put his country first, love all people, and realize social justice; these are the gentleman's main ethical duties and responsibilities. Confucius said: "make the old be quiet, make the friend be faithful, and make the young to boom," and said his idea was to "cultivate my moral character and make people good" (The Analects of Confucius). Chu yuan said: "I often cried when I observed people's hardship;" (Lisao) Fan Chung-Yen said: "when I secure an official position, I will care for my sovereign" – this is an hierarchical duty of consciousness; "when I am in the country, I will care for the common people" – this is an public righteousness duty consciousness. Fan Chung-Yen said: "I desire happy behind others, but worried before the common people." Ku Yen-Wu said, "everybody has his duty for the country's rise and fall." In addition to scholar-bureaucrats feeling a duty to their country and people, the common chivalrous expert also has these duties.

All in all, the core of Chinese traditional moral values highlights duty, i.e., duty is prior to rights, and sometimes even to no rights. The essence of the human in Chinese culture is an ethical relationship, and different ethical relationships give the human a corresponding duty. If a man does not carry out his obligations, he will be included with the birds and beasts. Carrying out obligations is a bound duty for the Chinese people, and those who pursue social ethical values, for example like caring for public righteousness, will be praised and eulogized everywhere. When we eat traditional Chinese rice-pudding at the Dragon Boat Festival, we remember Chu yuan; many middle schools' texts select Fan Chung-Yen's "Remarks of Yueyang Tower"; and Ku Yen-Wu's motto is best known to all people by now. The reason for this is that they embody the core Chinese ethical value of duty.

5) Traditional morality is based on Ren (benevolence) which means to love others, and modern society ethics are based on Yi (righteousness) which means to be appropriate.

The main virtue of traditional Confucian morality is Ren, and Ren demands love of others. In fact, Ren is established on emotion, and in essence is emotionalism and particularism. However, Ren also includes reason; Ren asks not to love everyone equally, but to love relatives more, and demands self-denial and a return to propriety, so as even to provide liberal relief to the masses. Ren deals with relationships between acquaintances such as family, relatives, and friends, etc. These relationships easily put emotions in an important position, especially in a family. They require one to be "other-centered" (Liang Shuming), that is to carry out obligations first. What's more, Ren is from filial piety and Ren will expand to the realm that "all people are my brothers and I share the life of all creatures." This is the Confucian train of thought, and impacts our method of constructing morality – let the world be filled with love. This idea is difficult to actualize, especially to the whole world.

In Confucian thought, there are the Yi and Li (etiquette) virtues which embody appropriateness and temperance via rationalism, in addition to Ren. Han Yu said in "Yuan Dao": "universal love is Ren: to be appropriate is Yi; what we can obey is Dao; and what cultivates our moral character is De. Ren and Yi are names but Dao and De are

virtual." Here, he means Ren-Yi is content in form and Dao-De is abstract in form, i.e., Ren-Yi is the nature of Dao-De. That is to say that traditional ethics has both emotionalism and rationalism by means of Ren and Yi. In ethical history, Mencius had a debate with Kao Tzu about "Ren being inner and Yi being outer" and came to the conclusion that Ren-Yi was inner, which made Ren almost equal to Yi, and dispelled the objective and rational essence of Yi.

A traditional society is a society of families and acquaintances. Thus, Ren, which is based on emotion, may meet the demands and solve traditional problems. However, in modern society, we live in a civil society and a stranger society and need Yi more than Ren. Ren means love, emotion, and kindness, and is mainly suited to family life. Nonetheless, outside the family, there are different classes and orders, and we would have to obey Yi. Family morality and public morality are different; the former pays more attention to the emotions of relatives and the latter focuses on the principles of social objectives. Ren and Yi have different value optics. Ren is directed towards family and relatives. We cannot imagine that strangers could produce the positive emotions of kindness and love. Maybe a saint can, but the common person does not love without a reason. Based on social and moral rationing, and a born-equal consciousness, we can respect the stranger. This is the utility of Yi. Ren, as emotion and love, does not love equally; in fact, it is hierarchical love. For example, we cannot love a wife more than our parents in a traditional society. The love of Ren has a kind of privacy and particularity, to which Confucian thought wants to expand this kind of love, but Mencius said equal love is an action as birds and beasts. We can find contradictions between emotion, privacy, particularity of ethical tradition and universality, objectivity and equality of modern morality.

Yi has some kind of universality and objectivity, although it belongs to the family. In the past, its public righteousness has shown that Yi is suitable for modern pluralism. Therefore, modern morality construction needs both Ren and Yi. Gao tzu is right: as far as love is concerned, we will love our parents naturally more than others. As far as respect goes, we may respect all people equally. Now, what we need is just this kind of moral reasoning exceeding family love. The purpose of morality is not only to cultivate one's character, but also to

realize development and harmony in society. Social demands for order, justice, and principle is called Yi, which means what we cannot do. The realm of Yi is not about others, but about ourselves. Only when everybody uses Yi to guide his actions, can a society be orderly and harmonious. In fact, morality includes the meaning of what to do, and what not to do. So, as does the inner constitution of morality and the function of morality.

Chinese traditional morality focuses on Ren, and commences by putting the country first; these abstract moral appeals are admirable, but lack operability. Some advanced element of the literati and officialdom can carry out these duties, but ordinary people cannot, and so they often do not obey social ethics. In modern society, "the core of public morality is that people will not do harm to a collective interest or to others' rights and interests. This is negative because it demands not doing harm to others. "The emotions and hierarchical love in the family is what the modern society lacks. The appeal of Ren-Yi is the production of the moral elite. What is needed is not elite morality, but common morality. Only as such, can we maintain the basic order of society.

Can the inner saint be the outer king? I have no answer. But I think it is likely that traditional, elite, religious, personal virtues can breed a modern universal, popular, basic, and mundane social public morality, because the moral life has internal consistency. Modern virtue ethics argues that the reason why virtue can be realized is that it maintains its human nature and personality. A virtuous man has the ability to choose a good action and will do so, because he can expand his inner virtue outward. Of course, this expansion needs some effort, such as combining virtue with a modern life experience and a modern ethical essence.

### **The Combination of the Tradition of the Confucian School's Ethics and the Modern Public Ethics**

How can one realize the connection and combination of the two kinds of ethics? There are the least three aspects:

First, it is a very important step constantly to strengthen education regarding on traditional sage ethics, and promote Chinese virtual

characters, so as to regulate and promote the modern citizen's ethical mind. During the May Fourth Movement, Chinese traditional ethics was denied as the core content of "Rejection of Confucianism," and then, constantly after the founding of PRC because of ideology. As a result, several generations are lacking in the knowledge of traditional virtues. If we want to combine traditional ethics and modern ethics, we must strengthen the education on traditional virtues first. In our system of national education, this has been lacking for a long time. At the beginning of Minguo, when he, Cai Yuan Pei, was Minister of Education thought that, the two courses, the Cannon and of Ethics, must be set up in the schools that were above middle school. In Singapore, courses in the middle schools have the subject, Confucian ethics. On the contrary, in China, subjects in the national education system, such as social life or family, does not include education in traditional virtues. If the Chinese do not know anything about the requirements of traditional virtues, then how it is impossible for us to combine it with modern ethics. Traditional morality is not carried forward only on the knowledge level only, but also by restoring its spirit. Under the influence of Western liberal ideas, the sense of equality has been rooted. However, the essence of traditional ethics emphasizes hierarchy between men, such as one of love, of justice, and of subsequence ceremony. Of course, it is very important for human beings to sing of the value of equality, but the ethical reality should be one of unification of difference and equality. During the Chinese enlightenment process, we only pursue the equality of Western ethics and belittled the spirit of Chinese ethics. Therefore, when constructing contemporary Chinese moral culture with Chinese characteristics, we must pay attention that we carry forward traditional more. It is vital for promoting Chinese moral qualities, to lead man to the virtual highness of the traditional holy man, to insist on the valuable idea that put Yi above Li, and of the love that pay attention to family and others, even extending it all over the world. In the transformation process from traditional to modern society, we should promote modern civic morality and guide people's daily behavior by traditional Confucian ethics. Thereby, people will draw meaning from life, and at the same time, when achieving the unification of the economical, moral and

social, they should also be one in morality with “being man” and having civil virtues.

Second, it is also an important to constantly promote education in the modern ethical spirit, for maintaining society’s basic ethical order, to promote a civil sense, obeying norms of law and ethics. Traditional ethics in China not only care about the improvement of the social order, but pays more attention to one’s self-improvement. In essence, moral thoughts focus on privilege and are feeling-oriented. In opposition, the essence of modern Western morality requires a much stronger awareness of the rules, so that citizens will fulfill their obligations. The moral norm and law-abiding spirit are thought of as the moral basis of modern society, which is a scarce resource for traditional Chinese. Because Chinese traditional ethics is mainly virtue ethics, the privileges that came into being were inevitably a social phenomenon, and the universal moral law was often diluted by these privileges. The awareness of rule and law from the West must be strengthened in Chinese, which need not be influenced by moral teaching, but by sustaining the law. In a word, in the process that tradition is going toward modernization and globalization, it is inevitable that the Chinese will learn from the West. Because of world’s desire for oneness, it will also be unrealistic to reject these ideas and ethics from the West. Additionally, there are many more differences between traditional society and modern society, such as openness and vulgarity. Thus, we would like need to treat valuable Western valuable ideas critically. As long as it is reasonable and helpful to establish the concepts and norms of the modern social order, we should digest them to a certain extent.

Third, to develop modern society’s new ethics, it is extremely important to combine the traditional ethical spirit with the modern ethical spirit, to merge Chinese traditional ethics and modern Western ethics together. This so-called fusion can only happen on the condition that there be no differences between the two; the moral civilization level has the inter-driving force appropriate to social order and self-completeness. Today, Chinese society should strive to achieve the combination of traditional ethics and modern ethics. Chinese ethics and Western ethics, together can become one of self-morality and public ethics, of the traditional “Five Relations” and “the Sixth

Relation.' The latter offers a needed focus on the morality for the stranger in civil society. Additionally we should strive for unification of the traditional gentlemen's morality with a universal civil morality; in other words, it is both collective-oriented and self-oriented. Perhaps some people will question how one can arrive at a real combination and unification if they are opposites? My answer is: Life itself is full of contradictions, if these two kinds of ethics can meet the needs of contemporary society, then the modern citizen, they will have a base for unification. There is a difference between, "The cannon and adaptation": when we are faced with a universal modern moral and traditional virtue ethics, we can learn to distinguish between them and use them effectively. In a word, only then can we adopt "the doctrine of the mean," the old moral wisdom in our lives, to gradually realize this kind of unification in practice. Perhaps this is a better way to construct a contemporary social morality.

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## The Contemporary Significance of Confucian Values

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Since the reform and opening up, China's economy has been developing rapidly. In 2010, China's economy surpassed Japan and became the second largest economy in the world. People's living standards are improving. With the development of economy, the social life, ideological and cultural values have also undergone great changes. Today Chinese society is more open and people's ideas and values are more active. From the perspective of moral values, the trend of the current Chinese social moral values can be observed in two ways. On the one hand, with the practice of the market economy, people's sense of innovative spirit has been going on an unprecedented increase. The people's sense of independence has begun to play an important role in moral life. Moral pluralism has become a known fact in contemporary China. On the other hand, with the growth of living standard, material pursuit has been gaining strength day by day. We have witnessed the most negative things in China's social moral life. The bottom line of morality was constantly pushing down. Fake goods, counterfeiting events, cynical, pillaged, and even children and women trafficking are not uncommon nowadays. An extreme case happened in Guangdong in 2011. After a little girl was run over by a car in public, 18 passersby turned a blind eye and just walked by without offering any help. This extreme case shows the horrible indifference among people and demonstrates the serious moral problems at the national level in China.

China is known for its ancient civilization which lasted over 5,000 years. The traditional Confucian ethics has long been followed as the guidance for public ethical life and individual morality in private life. Showing compassion and mercy, and loving others are the fundamental ethical rules proposed by Confucianism for thousands of years. Due to social changes ever since modern times, traditional Confucian ethics have lost its shaping influence and regulating power over the civilian life on the whole. People are not attached to Con-

fucian moral and ethical rules so closely. However, such social reality also shows the necessity and importance to revive traditional moral values in the contemporary society. At the same time, China's pursuit of modernization is also a process of building up democratic society. For this purpose, the traditional Confucian political thought may provide precious resources and references.

### **Part I**

In the new period which endorses the reform and opening and the pursuit of modernization, Chinese economic and social development is based on the development of a market economy. What is market economy and what principles should be followed by the activities of agents in a market economy? The basic fact is that the activities of agents in a market economy are based on contract. Therefore, the ethical principles of a market economy are founded on the spirit of contract. Contract ethics emphasizes the autonomy and free will of the subjects or agents in the system of market economy. What is more, all subjects or agents are equal, in addition to having rights, obligations, freedom, justice and rule of law which all are produced by contract ethics. If we survey the shaping of modern society in Western countries, we can find that the foundation of its social and economic life is the emergence and maturity of the market economy, and also the core ideas of freedom and equality come from it.

It shows that the modern market economy cultivates modern humanist values, the idea of freedom and equality. In modern times, people bade farewell to the Middle Ages in order to pursue the life of freedom, equality and happiness, but also we are falling into an age of instrumental reason in which people pursue the material life and try to fulfill material life and the requirements of a money/profit economy. Instrumental reason goes hand in hand with the spirit of the enlightenment which emphasized human value and dignity. However, it also leads to the strong tendency of materialism, egoism and technocracy. This happens, regardless of moral value, and is called by Max Weber, the conflict of value reason and instrumental reason, meanwhile modernity was manifested as the loss of value reason.

All of these negative factors in modernity had been foreseen in the Age of Enlightenment by the representative figure of the Enlightenment spirit, Rousseau. He believed that business elevated the desire for money and enjoyment, which led to the corruption of people's heart. Business and financial activities were the main industry of large European nations. "People indulge in laziness, and they get lost in libertinism, and appeased themselves by doing business. They are enslaved to interests, and feel apprehensive and unsafe in society. They are slaves or rebels, but never free men."<sup>1</sup> Therefore, it is necessary to review the modern spirit comprehensively since the Enlightenment. Alsdair McIntyre also believes that since the beginning of the modern society, because of our rejection of the tradition of virtue ethics represented by Aristotle, modern society has become an era of "After Virtue." That China pursues modernization via the modern market economy is exactly the same as the western project of modernization. Therefore, we are in a period like what Alsdair McIntyre called as a dark time due to the lack of traditional virtues.

In the social situation of losing traditional virtues, the Western world started a movement for the revival of traditional virtues, mainly to retrieve its sources in Aristotle. In China, it should be our choice to revive the Confucian tradition of humanist values and traditional morality, especially Confucian ethics. China enjoyed a splendid ancient civilization, with the culture enriched through in its long history, contributing to a profound tradition of humanism. There are some negative and harmful factors embodied in the despotism of ancient China. When China began the transformation from traditional society to modern one, a series of fierce movements for an anti-traditional culture occurred in the last one hundred years. The history seems to punish us in a way because despotism were not eliminated, but our precious ethical and cultural resources were almost shattered after so many fierce movements. Now when we look back as we stand in our modern time, we realize they are so valuable for the social life. The revival of Confucian ethics does not mean to restore the traditional society, but it is necessary to balance modern materialistic pursuits and self-interest with the aid of traditional ethics.

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<sup>1</sup> J.J. Rousseau, *Projet de system pour la Corse*, OCIII, p.911.

Economic growth in modern society cannot be the equivalent of the overall social progress. Since China started the pursuit of modernization, China has achieved remarkable progress. Especially in economy, we have made rapid economic growth and achieved mighty economic power. It is impossible to resist the wheel of history. However, if people simply ignore morality, and behave like animals driven by material desires, what's the point of economic development? If we neglect enhancing the value of the humanism in the pursuit of modernization and economic growth, ignoring moral and interpersonal harmony, ignoring culture, resources, and environmental indicators, there will be a great gap between economic and social development. This could even result in more destructive conduct and behavior. Besides the GDP growth, social progress should also include such important elements as: the regulation system of production and distribution, the reformation of institutional system, the relationship between man and nature, improving quality of life, and social fairness and justice. The goal of modernization is to ensure that human live with dignity. The core of human life with dignity is morality, at least relations among fellow human beings are to be guided by morality.

## Part II

The Confucian philosophy is a humanistic which emphasizes benevolence and love as its core value. "Benevolence, is the identity of human person." "Benevolent man loves others." Confucius understand people as subjects in personal relationship, instead of the lonely and single person. Regarding benevolence as the identity of man shows that only those people who live up to the requirements of benevolence deserve to be human. How can a man be benevolent? Confucius' answer is "they love other people." What is "love" in the Confucian sense? It can be expressed in both negative and positive perspectives: in the negative respect, "Do not do unto others what you do not want others do unto you." In the positive respect, it can be expressed as "If you want to build your personality by virtue, you should act for others, and develop the virtues which you wish to have for others."

Confucius defined "benevolence" in two respects in the perspective of the normal rational person. In view of the former, what a normal rational person should not desire is his model for his behavior, namely, how to act to other person. For example, no one desires to harm him or herself, nor do they desire for self-adversity, hence we should take it as the model in order to be kind to others. In an old Chinese saying: "You cannot intend to injure others." If all can treat each other following this principle, then we can respect each other. Therefore, interpersonal security can be sustained by morality. We can explain the negative aspect in a positive way, saying that if we do not hope to be indifferent to each other, then we should love each other. Morality is not only protecting us from harming each other, but morality can also bring about love for each other, which is the norm for harmony in interpersonal relationships. What is more, it is also the criterion for the peaceful coexistence of the entire humanity.

Confucianism requires a higher standard in the positive expression of "benevolence," requiring the moral self-improvement to "develop the virtues which you wish others to have." Perfecting a person's own morality is accomplished by showing love and help for others. It means that to promote other's good or morality is done by the agent himself to achieve his or her own moral personality. The goal of the good cannot be regarded as being isolated meant for a single individual, but as something to be shared with others in relation. A person can fulfill the achievement of his own morality by assisting others to achieve the good, and meanwhile improving the moral self and achieving the goal of mutual love and respect.

From two perspectives, negative and positive, Confucian benevolence constitutes the mutual love relationship among persons and thus constructs a healthy interactive relationship between the individual and the social group or community. These two requirements of Confucianism should be seen as beyond a particular social background. The reason is, no matter what particular social condition we are in, we are still in a personal network and should treat each other with kindness. This is an unconditional requirement for Confucianism. Therefore, moral indifference in contemporary society is almost incomprehensible for Confucian ethics.

Confucian philosophy is a humanist philosophy which emphasizes the value and dignity of the human being, similar to humanism developed in modern Western world. Confucius believes that “water and fire are no life although they have Qi; and vegetation has no perception although it has life; and wild beasts have no sense of justice although they have perception; only the human beings have them all: Qi (气), life, perception and sense of justice. Hence, human beings are the noblest beings in this world (*Hsun-tzu, On Kingship*). In comparison with all the other things in this world, human being is the noblest. Confucius believes that Mankind, Heaven and Earth are “the three elements of the world.” Human beings act correspondingly to the law of heaven and earth, shining with the sun and the moon, and live according to the sequence of the four seasons, and grow together with all other things without damaging each other. Mankind and the world they live in are interdependent.

The highest concept in Chinese philosophy is “Dao” (道), Dao can be divided into Dao of heaven and Dao of humanity. Dao of Heaven is the law in generation and is embodied in everything in the world. Dao of humanity is the moral and political laws in the human society as well as in private life. However, in view of Confucianism, Dao of Heaven and Dao of humanity are the same one, which is called “sincerity” (诚). Sincerity is Dao of Heaven and also Dao of humanity. Moreover, the reason why the human being is noble is that they have sincerity in mind. Hsun-tzu said: “the best Dao of self-cultivation for gentleman is simply being sincere, nothing else. Only benevolence can be the guardian of our hearts, and only justice can be the guide for the human conduct. We human beings are shaped by sincerity and benevolence; we have the spirit after having the form of the human; then we can deal with everything freely by acting with justice sincerely with reason. We can be wise with reason; then we can change and develop with wisdom. Changing and development are natural orientation. Heaven says nothing but we know it is high. The earth says nothing but we know it is deep. The seasons say nothing but we expect the next one to come. The reason for these phenomena is there are principles or laws in them. They are run by the principle of sincerely ...Although the heaven and earth are noble, but without principles or laws, creatures cannot be cultivated in the world. Although the saints

are wise, they cannot teach other people if they are not sincere. Although there is a biological link between the father and son, there will not be intimate relation between them if they cannot treat each other sincerely. Although the monarch is noble, nobody will respect him if he is not sincere" (*Hsun-tzu, On Prudence*).

Then, what enables people to do this? Mencius proposes that we can know the principle of heaven if we exert our heart to understand human nature. In other words, if you practice fully our intrinsic good, you can understand human nature, and the proceeding to understand the Dao of heaven. Thus, Confucianism emphasizes human beings as agents, so it advocates that people can both practice and develop Dao. Therefore, Moral metaphysics in Chinese philosophy or Confucianism has the concern for virtues as the priority. Confucianism proposes that the difference between the man and the beast is not big, which means that the moral spirit is essence of the human despite of the similarity between the two, because the physical difference is just secondary. The people who are concerned with morality belong to the first class, or big man; those concerned with the physical body belong to the secondary class, or little man. The doctrine shows its great difference from modern Western humanism, which puts emphasis on the human value in addition to self-interest and private interests, and which locates the pursuit of satisfaction of the sensory in the core position. The spiritual values of Confucianism are embodied in the idea of benevolence and love of others, the realization of justice in society, not to be selfish and not to clique. What is justice then? Justice is expressed in the interpretation of power. Power is not to be yielded to pressure, but to be indifferent to seeking self-interest. Power cannot be used to change the moral principle of life even if the whole nation tempts me to do so. Power is to take life seriously, to hold onto justice whereas to resist the social corruption (*Hsun-tzu, On Honor and Shame*).

### Part III

China's practice in politics shows that it is a very difficult project for China to achieve the democratization in the process of modernization. Just as in the field of moral life, we need the resources of Confucianism for building moral life and moral character in the con-

temporary society. Hence, it is necessary to take Chinese traditional resources seriously in order to achieve and practice democracy in China. Fundamental issues of democracy are the protection of human rights and civil rights, and limiting the power of Government. That is to say, we need to acknowledge the people's sovereignty. However, China's political reform is very sluggish compared to its economic reform. Human rights have not been really protected, and the corruption of officials is even more grave. So many serious problems happened in the process of modernization, even though the problems cannot be fully attributed to social changes. The problems have seriously endangered the social development due to the long history of despotism, whose influences still remain active in the contemporary society. Confucianism mainly functioned as the dominant ideology in the despotic society for a thousand years, but Confucianism could not be mistaken for supporting the absolute and extremely despotism. The following will provide a discussion of some key concepts of the political thought in Confucianism.

First, the concept of humanism. This concept expresses the people-based idea, taking people as the foundation for the state. This is the essential political idea in Confucianism. In Chinese philosophy, "foundation" 本 and "detail" 末 are relational with "foundation" as the primary and "detail" as the secondary. This idea was promoted earliest in *Book (Shang Shu)*. The idea on humanism Confucius' thought includes: loving the people, doing good to the people, enriching the people, educating the people, extensively conferring benefits on the people, and enabling the people to assist all. The explicit interpretation of the political thought on humanism can be found in *Mencius*. The political idea of humanism can be embodied by the position of the public in comparison with the monarch. The question is to be answered: which is fundamental, which is secondary among the people, state and monarch? According to idea of kingship ("Wang Dao" 王道) of Mencius, the primary and priority is given to people, monarch ranks as the last. He said: "People are the most important, the state less, the monarch least" (*Mencius, Tsin sin part one*). In his opinion, the disrespected monarch cannot gain power so that any monarch has to apply the policy of benevolence if he wants to be respected by the public. It means that they should treat the people with benevolence,

love the people, protect the people, and enrich the people. Actually Mencius pointed out here that the basic function of the governing power is not making profit for those in power, but for the benefit of the common social members. If the government only makes profit for the officials and treats the public like dirt, the monarch will lose justification for his government. In Mencius' opinion, whether or not the monarchs can rule depends on the people's response of being supportive or protestant. The water can support a boat, and it can overturn it as well. How do we understand the political authority in one state? Mencius believed that the biggest political authority lies in the people rather than in those in power. 在 Mencius argued that the people are the foundation for monarch, but not the other way round. Mencius believed that the foundation of the state was people. We could not say that the foundation of people was monarch. It is not the monarch who came before the people, but rather people came prior to the monarch. The fact is "the heaven gave birth to the people, and then out of the people came monarchs and mentors in the world." (*Mencius, monarch Hui of Liang part two*). The life and rights of the people are endowed from the heaven. The monarch and mentor came out of the people. "Those who are genuinely respected by the people can win the governing power as the monarch" (*Mencius, Tsin Sin part one*). Therefore, this order is quite clear for Mencius. Mencius cited from *Book (Shang Shu). The oath* "what the people see is just what heaven sees, and what the people hear is just what heaven hears." (*Mencius, Wan Zhang part one*) The foundation of the people is heaven, the will of heaven is the will of the public, and the public opinion is the divine opinion.

Precisely for this reason, Mencius repeatedly stressed that the emperor could not hand on the nation to others (*ibid*). Whether the people support or oppose determines the fate of the sovereign. Therefore, the people's decision is the most important political decision. Mencius illustrated his idea with the example of monarch Shun (舜) who obtained the throne from the will of people. The people decided that Yao (尧), the son of the late monarch, should not inherit the power. Moreover, Mencius also believed when the monarch managed the state, he should not only apply the benevolent policy and take serious of interests of people, but also should take the public opinions

into consideration for decisions in major political issues. If the monarch intends to kill someone, all the people in this country agree with that, then he should re-examine the case until he discovers the good reason for the capital penalty, then he can execute the man. From this point of view, it is quite natural that the ordinary people's right and dignity should be taken seriously. Here in the idea of Mencius, we see the similar understanding to that of the Western concept of "natural right."

In Mencius' thought, the monarch, ministers and the people are equal in their relations. This idea of equality requires that the relation must be reciprocal as well. "Mencius told monarch Xuan of Qi (齐宣王): 'if you treat the ministers as your hands and feet, the minister would treat you as his head and heart; if you treat them as dogs and horses, they would treat you as stranger; if you treat them as dirt and dust, they would treat you as enemy'" (*Mencius, Li Lou* part two). Between the monarch and ministers there is no one-sided subordination of the latter to the former. At the same time, Mencius took his thought "the foundation of the state is the public" as the basis of the relationship between the monarch and ministers. He argued that, if a monarch did not protect his people but harmed them, he was no longer the monarch of this nation, but a "tyranny." Then the people could execute him. He said: "we call the cruel thief 'one guy'. I know one guy named Zhou (纣) was executed, but not the monarch who be murdered" (*Mencius, Monarch Hui of Liang* part two). Therefore, we find no submissive consciousness to authority in Mencius, but we realize that Mencius' political thought contains the element of anti-authoritarian attitude.

Another Confucian representative figure, Huang Zongxi, survived the dynasties of Ming and Qing. Huang strongly advocates the idea of people as foundation of state. His thought is close to the idea of Western democracy in the modern society. Huang propounded that the people are the master and the monarch is the guest in the state. He said: "In ancient times, the people are the master and the monarch is the object, what the monarch manages in whole life is for the well-being of the people. On the contrary, today the monarch becomes the master and the people are made objects" (*A Ming barbarian waiting for a visitor, On Monarch*). Reversing the relation of master and objects

brought social scourge. Huang pointed out: "The most baneful one for this world is just the monarch or the ruler of the state" (*Ibid.*). He believed the peace or turbulence in the world did not rely on the rise and fall of one royal family, but on the happiness for the people.

Huang stressed that the real masters are common people. He opposed the despotic and autocratic rule of the monarch. He emphasized that the relationship between the monarch and the people should be equal. "The nobles are not officials, the humbles are not the civilian" (*A Ming barbarian waiting for a visitor, On Law*). He suggested that the monarch and his people be equal, and the difference of monarch and the ministers is only determined by their names whereas they had the same function for administration. Therefore, "the ministers manage the public affairs for the people, not for the monarch, not for the royal family" (*A Ming barbarian waiting for a visitor, On Law*). He suggested that the monarch, the prime minister, officials and intellectuals should check and balance the power on managing public affairs, so the monarch could not be dictatorial, the prime minister could not follow orders of the monarch without following the principle. Rather, they should rule the state together. The intellectuals could judge the righteousness in public affairs. Legislative power should be independent from that of the administration. All issues in court, officials, and public should be examined by the law. It is unimaginable that thoughts of Huang proposed in ancient China shined with brilliance of the idea of modern democracy and the spirit of law.

Second, Huang strongly argues that everyone should not follow the monarch but Dao, which means Dao is fundamentally superior and prior to the monarch in reality. If the monarch follows the essence of Dao, we should follow his order; but if the monarch's order is not conformed with Dao's spirit, what we need to do is to resist his order. The viewpoint of traditional politics of ancient China is that Dao should be higher than the monarch. This order cannot be reversed in Confucianism. The administration achieves its justification only by conforming to the tradition of Dao certified by Confucians, i.e. the Dao of Wang (王道) from the three dynasties of Xia, Shang and Zhou, or the Dao of Yao and Shun certified by Confucians together with their political ideas which were inherited by Confucianism. The principle of Dao in Confucian ethics is benevolence and sincerity which also

serve as the principle of politics. It is also the spirit of the guidelines that the political practice reflected in ancient Shang and Zhou. On the one hand, Confucianism has the political principles as “the ruler guides the subject.” On the other hand, it does not advocate unconditional obedience to the emperors in the political reality. It is acknowledged that the tradition of Dao is higher than the rulers in politics. In this sense, Confucianism does not suggest the real State authority should be supreme, nor should monarchical power be the supremacy. Only the spirit of benevolence principle and the Wang Dao in history represented by Yao and Shun are the supremacy. What is reflected in the doctrine of the Confucianism is the norms of “Dao” for evaluating the state in reality. For Confucianism, administration corresponding to Dao is applying benevolent policy, thus the political practice with the core spirit of benevolence is called “Wang Dao” as well. In the doctrine of Confucius, “with-Dao” and “without-Dao” are against with each other. Confucius describes repeatedly what is the “the state with Dao,” and what is “the state without Dao.” Confucius also relates the situation and glory of gentlemen to the political reality in terms of the situation with or without Dao. In his view: “that the gentleman becomes official in the state with Dao is right choice; but it is shameful to serve in a state without Dao” (*The Analects of Confucius, XianWen*).

In other words, it is a shame to be an official and enjoy the salary from the monarch if the political reality is gloomy and the state is managed without Dao. Confucius said: “the gentlemen should govern the state with Dao. If not, they should leave” (*The Analects of Confucius, Duke Ling of Wei*). He did so by himself. Kingdom of Qi 齐 sent many female musicians and dancers to kingdom of Lu 鲁, and Duke of JiHuan 季桓公 accepted them, then they indulged in the music for several days. Confucius resigned for this. He often criticized such monarchs (such as Duke Ling of Wei) who managed its state without Dao. Therefore, Confucius did not advocate blind obedience to the authority in political practice, not mention blind obedience to monarch. Confucius distinguished the political realities in real states from his ideal political ones, and evaluated the reality with his criteria. The Wang Dao which he seeks is the political ideal described above, rather than the specific system in any kind of political reality.

Confucius agreed not to cooperate with but resist against political authorities who had no Dao in their hearts. It was difficult for Confucius to find one monarch with his ideal standard of politics. Therefore, Confucius often kept a distance from the political authority in reality. As noted in the above quotation, “the gentlemen should govern in the state with Dao. If not, they can go.” How to deal with the relationship with those in power then? He advocated the integrity attitude instead of being indifferent to the principle of right and wrong like a hypocrite, as what the historiographer Shi Yu (史鱼) did. What the ministers should do if the monarch made a mistake? Confucius advocated “to point it out in front of the monarch directly even it is offensive.” Zi Lu asked how to serve his monarch, Confucius responded: ‘Do not deceive him, offend him’” (*The Analects of Confucius, Discussion on constitution*). In other words, do not deceive your monarch, but confront his will. We know that even in the Spring and Autumn Period, the ministers are likely to be executed by monarch if they offend him directly and provoked him. Therefore, Confucius took the value of Dao more seriously than preserving life.

Mencius, Hsun-tzu (荀子), Dong Zhongshu (董仲舒), Chu His (朱熹) and other representative figures of Confucianism inherited Confucius’ idea that Wang Dao, benevolence and other virtues are superior to anything else. Mencius praised highly the Tang Wu (汤武) revolution. He said that “I know a sinner called Zhou (紂) was executed, not a monarch was murdered.” What Mencius expressed here explains the idea that the Dao of benevolence and justice or Wang Dao is higher than the monarch. What is more, Confucians distinguished the tyrant from benevolent monarch by their attitude to the people and resisted against autocratic ruling by monarch which did not correspond with Confucian criteria for politics. They advocated some restrictions on the power of monarch against the standard of Dao. Therefore, for administrating or managing the state, Dao was more important than power and officials. Hsun-tzu raised the idea that Dao is higher than the monarch, the state survives if only Dao survives, state will die out if Dao is destroyed (*Hsun-tzu, Dao of monarch*). The right choice is to “follow the Dao, but not monarch” (*Hsun-tzu, Dao of ministers*). This is the essential feature of Confucian orthodoxy.

Dong Zhongshu (董仲舒) promoted clearly the thought of “three cardinal guides.” Among them, the “monarch guides ministers” agreed with the absolute monarchical idea. However, Dong Zhongshu promoted exactly the same ideas about how to limit monarchical power which is “Heaven curses monarch without Dao” and “the monarch with Dao crusade against the monarch without Dao” so that we can see that Dong does not advocate blind obedience to the monarch. That “heaven curses monarch without Dao” means that the dominant force as the super power of heaven will produce the natural disasters to condemn the monarch. This builds up the authority of heaven above the monarchical authority. In the meanwhile, He also explains the change or transition of dynasties as “the monarch with Dao crusade against the monarch without Dao.” The driving machinery of change and development of history is Wang Dao. “The monarch with Dao crusade against tyranny without Dao” had advanced the historical change and development. Therefore, he called it heavenly principle, or principle of justice. Jie in Xia dynasty and Zhou in Shang dynasty managed the nation without Dao, so they were attacked and replaced by the monarch with Dao, so Tang in Shang Dynasty monarch and Wu in Zhou dynasty (夏桀王、商纣王无道, 所以被有道的商汤王、周武王伐而取代) is justification for heavenly principle.

Confucians in Song and Ming dynasty not only inherited this Confucian tradition of “following Dao rather than the monarch” but also developed it. They not only put forward a systemic pedigree of Dao’s tradition, and proposed the debate between the tradition of Wang Dao by which monarchs rule according to morality and tradition of Ba Dao (霸道) by which monarchs rule by power. In their pedigree of Wang Dao tradition, not only left no position to the monarchs after Duke Zhou, but also criticized the monarchs’ conduct without Dao from Han and Tang dynasties to the consequent times. They took the instance of Li Shimin as an example. Li could not succeed to the tradition of Wang Dao from three dynasties (Xia, Shang and Zhou) for his fratricide and usurping power from his father. Confucians in Song and Ming dynasty acclaimed that we should put the monarch under the constraints of the “Heavenly Reason” (天理). They believed the idea that the monarch cannot violate justice although the throne of the monarch is supreme. In other words, the

Confucians in Song and Ming dynasty not only inherited the concept of Wang Dao in the moral sense, but also set up the highest concept, i.e. Heavenly Reason, in transcendental sense which restricted the behaviors and desires of rulers. In order to protect the tradition of Wang Dao and the authority of Heaven, what Confucian's responsibility is to criticize the monarchs without Wang Dao and rectify their behaviors for guarding of Dao. For example, Chu-Hsi had directly criticized that the emperor in Southern Song Dynasty had too much private desires.

Confucianism had long taken this kind of social responsibility as Confucian mission—the attitude to contempt the unjust officials when a Confucian felt the responsibility of Dao on his shoulder. This anti-authoritarian spirit should be regarded as very valuable ideological resources of Confucianism for modern China. In the process of Confucian development for thousands of years, it was the willful resolution for Confucians to resist the political authority who ruled only by his power. We can see the Dao' spirit rose in the group of Tai Xueshi (太学士) in the last period of Eastern Han Dynasty. We can see it grow up in the group of Donglin Dang (东林党) in the last period of Ming dynasty. We can read the thoughts showed in the books by kind of scholars, for example, in Hanyu's (韩愈) work, *Expostulate to gratulate of Pshakyamuni buddha bone shrine* (谏迎佛骨表). We can see Mencius' heritage in the historical doctrine of Chu His (朱熹) who honors Wang Dao and shows his contempt to Ba Dao. We can also recognize the impact of Confucius and Mencius on the actions of ministers in all ages who offended their emperors in the risk of execution.

China is undergoing the rapid process of social development which is also the process of transition to modern society. How can we accomplish the transition successfully in morality and politics? We need to develop new values for the new social life in the moral and political fields. Modern times require modern values and modern criteria: freedom, equity, justice, human rights and personal virtues. However, we cannot build modern values from nothing, and the traditional culture of China provides the fertile ground from which we can absorb the nutrients necessary for modern values. We cannot afford to lose them. In our opinion, the reconstruction of the Dao has huge significance for both social morality and the development of the

political common good in contemporary China. What is more, modernization is a two-edged sword, having both positive and negative impact. As has been discussed in part one, the negative factors in the process of modernization are so serious that we need to appeal to the traditional virtues and to the political philosophy of Confucianism. Therefore, in the process of value, moral and social reconstruction, Confucian philosophy, moral and political one, will play an important role in modern society. This, in turn, will reproduce some of the splendor of ancient Chinese civilization in the modern period.

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## Human Rights in Chinese Philosophy: Classical Confucian and Mohist Thought

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### Introduction

The belief that China possesses no conception of human rights has been bolstered by those who regard any historic semblance of human rights in China to be a Western import for which China is beholden both to religious missionaries and imperialists (Hsiung, 1985: 3-17). Similarly, there are those who claim that China's own imperialistic past and Confucian hegemony have perpetuated an authoritarian culture inimical to individual rights in any form (Xia, 1996: 78). A fallacious *argumentum ad ignorantiam* has even been constructed out of the fact that there is no single word for rights in ancient Chinese vocabularies (Cao, 2004: 85). These and other circumstantial claims often cloud the fact that the practices of humane treatment ensured by contemporary expressions of human rights possess *de facto* corollaries within Chinese traditions.

This paper argues that historic Chinese traditions do indeed possess strong antecedents of contemporary human rights ideology. The authors refer to traditions as plural, to reflect the variety of philosophical, religious, social, and political influences which have shaped China over a period of time that far outstretches the human rights tradition of the West. Our claim is simply that, whether we examine Chinese values following China's significant exposure to the West, or return to Chinese values prior to significant Western exposure, the historic and indigenous presence of human rights values within Chinese philosophy cannot be denied. The formulation of such rights may not follow the legal codes of the West, whether it be the Magna Charter of Great Britain or the United States Bill of Rights, but the practice of virtues and duties designed to ensure the outcomes valued by human rights theories is not alien to, but is inherent within Chinese traditions. Yet, this is not to claim that excellence in the practice of human rights has been widespread in China's history, nor in the history

of the West, but the authors do argue that the ideology of human rights is very much a part of China's philosophical heritage, which it may call forth today.

The Chinese have been working on their present-day version of human rights for more than a century (Angle & Svensson, 2001: General Introduction), and the development of contemporary Chinese human rights has taken place in three stages. First, during the last three decades since the late 1980s, some Chinese rights scholars have adopted an extreme version of "inviolable and inalienable natural rights" (Angle & Svensson 2001: 321). Secondly, since the early 1990's, the People's Republic has deliberately constructed a systematic version of human rights, primarily as a reaction to, and counter-version, of Western human rights ideas imposed on China immediately following the Tian'anmen movement (Angle & Svensson 2001: 323-9). Third, there has emerged a rational reconstruction of Chinese indigenous values applied to human rights, based on the practice of recent modernization and industrialization. However, as China's financial development has positioned her to become the second largest economy in the world, the contemporary Chinese version of human rights is not merely an application of human rights values within the People's Republic alone. China has become one of the voices in the search for universal standards of what constitutes the decent treatment of human beings, not only within developing or third-world countries, but also for nations at all levels of development.

It must be recognized, however, that China's present foray into human rights discourse with Western democracies is not merely a short-term reaction. China's capacity to generate a contemporary version of human rights and to engage in productive external discourse, flows from its deeply imbedded philosophical traditions which have long espoused the essence of human rights. This article examines two representative and contrasting traditions of Chinese thought, both significant in their historic shaping of China, Classical Confucianism and Mohism, named after their respective founding teachers Kongzi (551-479 B.C.) and Mozi (470 – 391 B.C.). Our thesis is that both traditions serve as significant indigenous resources upon which a contemporary Chinese understanding of human rights may be established.

An important implication of this claim is that human rights is not a notion dependent solely upon one of China's philosophical traditions, but is compatible with competing and evolving traditions. As much as Classical Confucianism serves as a "base-line" of philosophical values inherent within Chinese culture, and to that extent, both receding traditions and influences subsequent traditions, Mohism stands as a challenge to much of what is sacred to the more dominant Confucian doctrine. Another way to understand this is to recognize that even competing traditions in ancient China acknowledged the foundations which today serve as a basis for contemporary human rights.

The first part of this article will demonstrate the relevance of Classical Confucianism to the current Chinese articulation of human rights theory and practice. At the outset, an important clarification needs to be addressed. Since the notion of rights has been defined by the West as a legal mechanism possessing efficacy within a legal frame of reference, how can rights exist in a society which, dating back to Confucius, has focused upon the legality of performing duties and roles, and not the legality of claiming rights? There is, at least on the surface, a degree of incommensurability between the notion of rights and the notion of duties. The present work argues that the pathway to fair comparison and contrast between the practice of China and that of the West is to focus on the outcomes valued by each system. In this discussion, it will be necessary to differentiate between rights as a mechanism and rights as an outcome. Doing so will enable a fair comparison between Western and Chinese intentions and outcomes, with respect to the humane treatment of people. We will show that the valued outcomes of the Confucian ideology of roles and duties are comparable to the valued outcomes of the Western ideology of rights. We will further suggest ways that language can illustrate rather than obscure this commonality.

In examining Classical Confucianism's vision, it will become apparent that the outcomes valued by rights theories are dependent upon the healthy functioning of society at its seminal levels of: individual, marriage, family, village, city, nation, and, ideally, the world (the *Daxue* 大學 theory). Thus, the Western emphasis upon individualism is generally absent from Confucian teaching. This is not to be

confused, however, with the rich presence within Confucian teaching, of the valuing and nurturing of the individual as part of society. The fulfillment of roles and duties, therefore, becomes essential to the assurance of rights outcomes. The “relationally-situated” individual is both a beneficiary of, and a benefactor to, a society which practices the duties of ren (humane love) 仁, yi 義 (righteousness), li 禮 (ritual propriety), zhi 智 (知) (wisdom), and xin 信 (faithfulness). Known as the wuchang 五常 (the Five Constant Regulations), these five primary virtues are incumbent upon rulers and the government in Confucian doctrine. The practice of these virtues as duties by governing role-players (e.g., rulers, parents, teachers, etc.) provides a conceptual framework for the construction of general or broad claim-rights. This article will demonstrate the coherence of Classical Confucian ideology through the lenses of Western social contract theory as represented by legal theorist Wesley Hohfeld. Thus articulated, Classical Confucianism is an accessible resource for the development of contemporary Chinese human rights.

The second part of this article presents a contemporary Chinese reading of human rights from the perspective of Mozi, an ancient Chinese philosopher whose views differed from the earlier Confucius on a number of significant issues. The authors argue that a Mohist reading can shed a new light on the contemporary human rights situation, not only as feedback to the traditional Western version of human rights from a normative civil perspective, but also as a contribution to a deeper understanding of the Chinese response to the Western version of human rights. This perspective demonstrates that the Chinese version of human rights can rest firmly on China's own traditions, including that of Mohist thought.

There are several reasons that it is possible to appeal to the Mohist philosophical tradition as a foundation for a contemporary Chinese version of human rights. First, as both the contemporary Chinese version of human rights and the traditional Western version of human rights are responses of the common people to their power, the Mohist version of human rights also reflects the standpoint of the common people over and against the values of the nobles or ruling class. Secondly, both the Mohist version and contemporary version hold the ‘right to life’ to be the first and most fundamental human right, and

the right from which all other rights are to be developed. Third, both versions agree that the right to personal self-development is a basic right derived from the right to life. And, fourth, both versions attempt to establish an appropriate political system and governing statesmanship to protect the rights of common people. In short, the contemporary Chinese version of human rights resonates significantly with the ancient Mohist version of human rights, further indicating that it is not merely a response to the Western version of human rights, but is firmly rooted in ancient Chinese thought.

### **Part One: Classical Confucianism and Human Rights**

In general, the position of this article is that the emphasis on duties and roles within Classical Confucianism implicitly affirms many standards for the treatment of persons, advocated by human rights proponents within the liberal democratic human rights tradition. Some specific outcomes produced by rights, although not explicitly developed as rights in Classical Confucian philosophy, ensue from broad socially beneficial outcomes cultivated within Classical Confucianism. These include the performance of virtue-duties by agents toward patients in social roles, ranging from the parent-child relationship to the state-citizen relationship. Although there is no word or concept in Classical Chinese which captures the essence of 'rights' in the Western claim-rights sense, it is possible to draw upon the analysis of rights and duties as 'corollaries' by legal scholar Wesley N. Hohfeld (1964), to show that de facto claim-rights expectations may be derived from, or correlated with, various Classical Confucian doctrines. In short, the work accomplished by role-generated duties in Classical Confucian thought yields the safety and subsistence outcomes sought by rights advocates, while not invoking a rights rationale.

At the outset it is important to differentiate between content and mechanism when discussing human rights. The first aspect, content, is that to which subjects claim entitlement. We are considering here the content of basic human rights, summarized in the term basic rights – the outcomes or substances of security, subsistence and liberty (Shue. 1996: 19). Yet human "rights" also exists within a second aspect,

a discourse predicated upon adversarial demand in which the claim for content is asserted against an objective party. Accordingly, the mechanism for human rights is the demand discourse in which a subject asserts a claim against an objective party for the provision of security, subsistence and liberty. It follows that, when a subject is incapable of personally asserting such a claim, a third party may do so on behalf of the subject. Thus, human rights may exist whether or not subjects claim them personally. They may exist where third parties, such as societies, legal institutions, or nations, assert that they exist and exercise a demand discourse for "rights" on behalf of one party against another. The adversarial nature of human rights, thus, postures the subject as an offended, deprived, injured, or even abused party deserving redress, rather than one seeking a privilege, mercy or charity. The fulfillment of a human rights claim is, therefore, not based upon the goodwill, virtue or charity of the party who is the object of a human rights claim.

Lest one think that the stipulation of human rights envisions a society of constant tension and belligerence between subjects and objects of rights, in Western democracies, the content of human rights tends to become inscribed within social codes or law, along with the specification of who possesses rights to such content. Consider, for example, the Bill of Rights, which are amendments to the United States Constitution; they elevate rights claims (many of which were asserted against King George of England in the Declaration of Independence) to points of law. This phenomenon reflects the universality of human rights claims, which, when legally adjudicated for one individual, becomes law for all individuals. Thus, as Jack Donnelly notes...

Human rights claims principally seek to alter legal or political practices. Claims of human rights, thus, aim to be self-liquidating. To assert one's human rights is to attempt to change political structures and practices, so that it will no longer be necessary to claim those rights (as human rights) (Donnelly, 1998: 20).

A consequence of the legal encoding of human rights in Western democracies is that claimants to human rights in the West now

generally seek the application of law or existing social standards to their cases. Nonetheless, human rights do not exist because of laws; laws relevant to human rights exist because a claim to a human right has been upheld by a government on behalf of a subject against an objective party. Western democracies may possess a mechanism for the majority of its citizens to establish laws reflecting the common good, yet rights are articulated precisely because the majority rule must at times be “trumped.” The philosophical basis for a human right exists irrespective of its legal status or the form of government. Current legal scholarship recognizes this distinction as is illustrated by this citation from the Notre Dame Law Review:

...human rights are by nature universal, natural, and counter-majoritarian. Because rights are natural and universal, their validity does not depend on endorsement by any particular political process. Because rights are restrictions on democratic governments, their content should not be left up to the democratic process (McGinnis and Somin, 2009).

Rights, then, are not bestowed upon individuals, not even under the most democratic regimes. Human rights do not exist because of the goodness of fellow citizens or rulers, but because of the potential evil of the majority or of rulers. The capacity to view individuals as autonomous from, or capable of, asserting claims against the State or other citizens is a defining assumption underlying the notion of human rights.

Given these features of the Western conception of rights, there emerges the paradox that Classical Confucianism does not possess such a concept of human rights, yet is committed to the production of social outcomes advocated by rights. As a means to an end, rights are effective in Western democracies, but in the context of a culture deeply indebted to its roots in Classical Confucianism, the exercise of rights appears to be at odds with both the practice of Chinese virtues and the primacy of benevolence (ren 仁) as the means by which others are cared for. As Seung-Hwan Lee points out...

Being a morality based on virtue, what Confucianism takes seriously is not rightful claims or self-assertions, but the virtues of caring and benevolence. What Confucian morality suggests to us is not that one stand up as a person qua autonomous being, but that one become a person of excellence (chün-tzu) (Lee, 1996:367).

Virtuous behavior, as practiced by the junzi 君子, will often find itself at odds with the practice of claiming one's rights. Even in the matter of being recognized for what one deserves (i.e., one's own rights), the junzi 君子 forgoes what is due him (Lun Yu 1 論語, Analects 1). The ancient treatise The Great Learning (Da Xue 大學) informs Classical Confucianism with a vision of universal human self-development, empowered by the national ideology of tianming 天命 such that moral authority becomes efficacious through the cultivation of the role of 君子 junzi throughout all sectors of society. The junzi 君子, a role not limited to persons of any single social class, serves as the agency by which the performance of virtue-duties generates beneficent structures for personal, family, and civic life, thus fulfilling the Da Xue 大學 ideal.

The Da Xue 大學 inspired mandate of promoting human development obligates the 'rulers' of society (i.e., in a monarchy, the king; in a democracy, the people; in a family, the parents, etc.) to guarantee, as a duty of its role, the universal provision of basic human needs, and the opportunity for the development and flourishing of human potential throughout society. On the one hand, every society must conduct its own debate as to where to set the limits of a higher order provision, whether at subsidized university education, career placement, home-mortgage entitlement (as in Singapore), or retirement income, etc. Yet, on the other hand, the universal provision of the basic rights to safety and subsistence, as in Maslow's hierarchy of human needs (Maslow, 1943: 370-96), is a necessary prerequisite of the Da Xue 大學 vision. Essentially, the Confucian ideal is one in which benevolent (i.e.; ren 仁 motivated) parties are responsible for the care of others as a duty, whether within the family, or the state. The exemplary treatment of persons on a wide scale is promoted through the reproduction and cultivation of benevolent individuals. In his study

of Confucian leadership throughout China's history, Xuezhong Guo concludes:

From Confucius' point of view, the central pursuit for a nobleman [sic. Junzi] is his moral duty to self-cultivation, in order to manifest his virtues to society and serve his country (Guo, 2005: 115).

From a Confucian perspective, the notion that one would pit himself against a parent, spouse or leader, to claim or demand a right both deprives the leader of the opportunity to be benevolent, and casts the plaintiff in an "unvirtuous" role. In the Confucian system, virtue (de 德) governs the behavior and decorum of both providers and recipients of the beneficence. The conscientiousness of rulers and the people to promulgate cultural values for benevolence (ren 仁) is the basis for humane treatment.

At times of greatness, when benevolence (ren 仁) prevails in the land, it is because exemplary persons (junzi 君子), including rulers and citizens, have an accountability to the moral imperatives and universal mandates acknowledged within their culture (see discussion of tianming 天命 below). Yet, while high ideals play a role in civic or common efforts to achieve the universal good, the propensity for human failure and shortcomings, intentional or otherwise, is documented in the annals of China's history by the Shujing 書經 and other ancient works. This is precisely where Classical Confucianism faces its most significant pragmatic difference from rights-based systems of ensuring basic human needs. It is the point of enforcement. Fundamentally, rights ensure that legitimate claim-holders, by appealing to an efficacious legal system, are guaranteed the outcomes to which they are entitled. Both the guarantee and the sense of entitlement to a provision are alien concepts in Classical Confucianism.

Does this apparent deficiency in the capacity to legally ensure outcomes render Classical Confucianism irrelevant to the contemporary discussion of human rights? No, since the Classical Confucian vision is not merely a perfectionist theory in which the highest good is individual self-cultivation, but also a "moral" appeal to a culturally relative notion of "natural law," the concept of tianming 天命. The

authoritativeness of such a notion in any group presupposes a measure of philosophical or religious homogeneity. In communities where consensus on *tianming* 天命 or other comparable universal norms is absent, the practice of virtue ethics in itself could have little basis for guaranteeing rights. Such would be the case in nations like the United States there were to be an erosion of the consensus on “inalienability” of rights (i.e., as in the Declaration of Independence). Thus, it must be kept in mind that the Classical Confucian approach to the treatment of persons is a vision or ideology, not a template for legal structures. A vision inspires the search for solutions to bring about its realization, although it may be faced with formidable challenges. While the Classical Confucian vision lacks the legal and enforcement features of the Western conception of rights, it does possess a values structure which may be drawn upon to inform laws. Moreover, the absence of legal and enforcement structures, per se, allows the Classical Confucian vision a greater measure of transferability to a variety of legal, political or social frameworks.

From a comparative philosophical perspective, as well as for global public policy, the language of virtues and duties will benefit from alignment with the language of rights, wherever accurate and feasible. What follows is an attempt to do precisely this so that Classical Confucianism might benefit through enhanced correlation to contemporary and Western concerns, rendering it relevant to contemporary human rights discourse.

#### *Classical Confucianism in Rights Language*

Is it possible to see within Classical Confucian role performance, the presence of implicit claim-rights corresponding to explicit duties? According to the renowned jurist and Yale professor Wesley N. Hohfeld, “...the term ‘right’ tends to be used indiscriminately to cover what, in a given case, may be a privilege, a power, or an immunity, rather than a right in the strictest sense” (Hohfeld: 34). Hohfeld pointed out, that, strictly speaking, to each right held by one party there is a reciprocal duty by another party:

...It is certain that even those who use the word and the conception of "right" in the broadest possible way are accustomed to thinking of "duty" as the invariable correlative (Lake Shore & M.S.R. Co. v. Kurtz) (Hohfeld: 38).

In discussing rights, privileges, powers, and immunities, Hohfeld constructed a scheme of "opposites" and "correlatives," illustrating that a right correlates to a duty (Hohfeld: 38). Citing legal precedent, Hohfeld concluded that the relationship between duties and rights is correlative and tautological insofar as their violation is concerned:

A duty or a legal obligation is that which one ought, or ought not to do. 'Duty' and 'right' are correlative terms. When a right is invaded, a duty is violated (Hohfeld: 38).

While Hohfeld argued the notion of claim within the concept of right, he carefully distinguished rights from privileges, powers or immunities (Hohfeld: 40-41), as these concepts do not entail duties (for example, a privilege correlates to possessing no right on the part of another). Using Hohfeld's analysis, Classical Confucianism, which concerns itself largely with duties (and virtues), can be seen as a system of implicit claim-rights corresponding to explicit duties.

Jeremy Waldron, commenting upon Hohfeld's theory of reciprocal duties and rights, points out that modern jurisprudence has further specified claim-rights as being either in personam, or in rem (Waldron: 6-7). A claim-right in personam correlates to a duty assigned to a designated party, as in the duty to fulfill the terms of a contract. A contract clearly specifies the who and the what of a duty or obligation. Many claim rights in personam are not generated by explicit contracts, but by the conventions of social roles and relationships, such as the relationship between married spouses.

A claim-right in rem correlates to the duty of all people, as in the duty of all people not to steal what belongs to others. Generally accepted obligations between members of a society reflect an implicit or explicit social contract. The norms and conventions a society affirms for the treatment of individuals are generated both by enumerated duties and notions of virtue.

Both conceptions of claim rights, in personam and in rem, can be generated from Classical Confucian duties and virtues. Chung-ying Cheng has proposed a five-stage process by which, "...a theory of virtues could be turned into a theory of implicit rights if it could be seen as a theory of correlative duties among members of a community" (Cheng, 1998:146). Most germane to the discussion of claim rights in rem is Cheng's fourth stage in which, "...the individual, as a member of the community, is also the indirect beneficiary of the virtuous action of another individual, even though that may not be intended by the agent" (Cheng, 1998:148). It should be noted that Cheng speaks of 'virtuous action' in the context of relationships in a community, which, for the Chinese, traditionally entails roles. Technically, virtues in isolation (as excellences) do not generate correlative rights. The practice of virtues in the discharging of duties that pertain to roles is what generates the expectation of rights.

The essence of Cheng's theory is that the community-wide practice of de 德 (virtues) within roles produces a social and political environment that implicitly confers what, in effect, constitutes rights. Within an implicit rights environment, however, it is necessary to make the kind of distinction Kant draws between broad and narrow rights and, specifically, between assignable and non-assignable rights. Therefore, an understanding of how both claim-rights, in personam and in rem, follow from duties and virtues (within roles) must be developed. Before proceeding to do this, however, two clarifications are necessary.

#### *A Clarification on Virtues and Duties*

In the ideals espoused by Classical Confucianism, virtue and duty are treated simultaneously. The Lun Yu 論語 (Analects) portrays Confucius as accepting the need for laws to govern a society, but striving to cultivate motivations among the people that would make laws unnecessary. The role of the ruler is to be virtuous and to rule by virtue (cf. Lun Yu 論語 12.17, 13.6). In turn, such a ruler can expect the people to follow his example of virtue:

The Master said, 'If the people are led by laws and uniformly abide by them or be punished, they will try to avoid the punishment, but have no sense of shame. If they are led by virtue and uniformly seek virtue by the rules of propriety, they will have a sense of shame, and moreover will become good' (Lun Yu 論語 2.3).

Classical Confucianism is not opposed to law, but aware of its limited capacity to regulate human behavior and its total incapacity to regulate the human character. The development of virtue, alone, permits an individual to live out the highest ideals and to play an exemplary role in society. Thus, while law or custom may direct an individual to fulfill a duty, the noblest individual exercises a virtue-duty. This person acts, not primarily to avoid the consequences of violating a law or duty, but to avoid the shame of perpetrating such a violation. In Confucian thought, to bring shame upon one's family (which occurs when shame is brought upon one's self) is anathema. The avoidance of shame, as a motivation to be "good," requires the practice of virtue that goes beyond the external fulfillment of duties:

Hsien asked what was shameful. The Master said, 'When good government prevails in a State, to be thinking only of salary; and, when bad government prevails, to be thinking, in the same way, only of salary; – this is shameful' (Lun Yu 論語 14.1).

Classical Confucianism is more concerned with cultivating the proper (i.e., virtue-based) motivation than with external conformity to a ritual, custom or law. A theory of claim-rights translated from duties, therefore, must also incorporate virtues. When a duty entails a virtue (and it could be argued that this is always the case), we may speak of it as a virtue-duty.

*A Clarification of Social Structure – Past and Present*

The Li Ji 禮記 (Book of Rites) identifies the virtue-duties required of each party in the primary relationships on which society is founded.

One set of virtue-duties is ascribed to the relationship between husband and wife: "Righteous behavior in the husband, obedience in the wife." Persons are thought of as belonging to normative social relationships and obligated to fulfill role-based expectations. Most categories of personal relationships mentioned in the *Li Ji* 禮記 (Book of Rites) hail from a feudal culture in which societal roles were defined according to strict expectations. To say the least, these role expectations would not gain ready acceptance in Western liberal democracies. More to the point, neither would the majority of today's Chinese embrace all of them.

The perpetuation of ancient social roles, however, is not the goal of a contemporary theory of human rights in China, although such a theory would clearly benefit from the recognition of roles as the context for rights. Some Classical Confucian role expectations, such as filial piety, remain deeply ingrained within the Chinese social structure in one form or another. Other role expectations, such as the subjugation of wives to husbands, have met with serious challenges by the egalitarian ideals of Communism and a growing exposure to democracy, despite widespread inequities in actual practice. Similarly, the relationship of ruler and subject has evolved into one of State and citizen. While the Confucian paradigm of benign monarchs and dependent subjects has given way to a modern form of government, a role relationship between State and citizen in which the expectations of *tianming* 天命 can be applied continues to exist.

In light of the inapplicability of feudal social structures to contemporary Chinese society, a human rights theory drawn from Classical Confucianism must be capable of extracting a relevant value independent of social structure. The initial value I propose, resident in Classical Confucianism, is the implicit value of claim-right expectation. This value is implicit because it is not stated. Yet, it is inherent and pervasive, because it is very fabric of social structure. Regardless of the specific expectations between parties in a role relationship, Classical Confucian society functions on the basis that each party has a legitimate claim to the other's fulfillment of incumbent expectations. The following analysis will attempt to demonstrate that the language of rights flows naturally out of the reciprocal virtue-duties in the normative social relationships addressed by Classical Confucianism.

In these relationships, individuals practice claim-right expectations, although they speak of them in the language of duties and virtues.

*Implicit Expectation of Claim-Rights in Confucian Relationships*

The virtue-duties that generate claim-rights in personam are at the heart of the Classical Confucian vision of the ideal society. The Li Ji 禮記 (Book of Rites) itemizes the expected virtue-duties in five sets of relationships that, up through the modern era, have characterized Asian social structure.

1. Kindness in the father, filial piety in the son
2. Gentility in the eldest brother, humility and respect in the younger
3. Righteous behavior in the husband, obedience in the wife
4. Humane consideration in elders, deference in juniors
5. Benevolence in rulers, loyalty in ministers and subjects

A Hohfeldian analysis of the above passage yields the following set of claim-rights in personam as corresponding to duties between two individuals linked in a personal relationship. They are rights in personam because individuals in the specified relationship will presumably be known to each other, and will not make unique claims on each other that they would make on individuals outside of the relationship. For example, a father knows his son and makes claims upon him that he could not legitimately expect of others. In enumerating the claim-rights that correspond to specified duties of relationship, the logic of implicit Confucian rights will become evident. It is a logic based on the conception of the individual as a familial and societal role-player. The pervasiveness of a rights concept in social roles will also become evident.

1. Virtue-Duties:

“Kindness in the father, filial piety in the son”

Rights:

For the father, the claim-right to filial piety from the son

For the son, the claim-right to kindness from the father

2. Virtue-Duties:

"Gentility in the eldest brother, humility and respect in the younger"

Rights:

For the eldest brother, the claim-right to humility and respect from the younger brother

For the younger brother, the claim-right to gentility from the elder brother

3. Virtue-Duties:

"Righteous behavior in the husband, obedience in the wife"

Rights:

For the husband, the claim-right to obedience from the wife

For the wife, the claim-right to righteous behavior from the husband

4. Virtue-Duties:

"Humane consideration in elders, deference in juniors"

Rights:

For elders, the claim-right to deference in juniors

For juniors, the claim-right to humane consideration in elders

5. Virtue-Duties:

"Benevolence in rulers, loyalty in ministers and subjects"

Rights:

For rulers, the claim-right to loyalty in ministers and subjects

For ministers and subjects, the claim-right to benevolence in rulers

Strictly speaking, the above groups of role-generated, claim-rights are categories in need of specification and application within social-temporal settings. That which constitutes "righteous behavior in the husband" will change from one cultural setting to the next, as will "benevolence in rulers." Generally, the parties within role relationships will be the ones who know best when their expected claim-rights have been violated. It is the project of an applied theory of human rights to take the categories of claim-rights expectation and to enumerate culturally relevant applications.

*The Functional Confucian Society*

The translation of virtue-duties into rights conjures up visions of an ideal society, in which balance exists between duties and their fulfillment, claim-rights and their guarantee. In this ideal society, virtue-duties and rights interact dynamically and reciprocally. For example, a ruler's virtue-duty to treat his ministers with benevolence generates specific obligations. These obligations become specific expectations and claim-rights of the ministers. In turn, the ministers respond reciprocally with the virtue-duty of loyalty, generating specific obligations to the ruler which become the claim-rights of the ruler.

The burden to be the first party to demonstrate virtue-duty is clearly on the ruler, and it is also upon the father, elder brother, husband, and elder in their respective social positions. Throughout the Lun Yu 論語, Confucius is seen to insist that the initiative for virtue and duty rests with the more powerful party in a relationship, as the following question and answer indicate:

The Duke of Ting asked how a prince should employ his ministers, and how ministers should serve their prince. Confucius replied, 'A prince should employ his ministers according to the rules of propriety [li 禮]; ministers should serve their prince with faithfulness (Lun Yu 論語 3.19).

More generally, a ruler's expectation of (or claim-right to) obedience from the people is predicated upon the ruler's fulfilment of this virtue-duties:

The Master said, 'When a prince's personal conduct [zheng 正] is correct, his government is effective without his having to issue orders. If his personal conduct is not correct, he may issue orders, but they will not be followed (Lun Yu 論語 13.6).

In the well-functioning Confucian society, relationships at every level ensure the equivalent of rights, as those in power behave with

integrity and benevolence toward those who are less powerful. This is essentially the way *tianming* 天命 is translated into political, social and family life.

The reality is that Chinese society has never fully functioned according to the Confucian ideal. Parties on the left side of the *Li Ji* 禮記 equations (i.e., fathers, older brothers, husbands, elders, and rulers) have enjoyed a privileged status throughout Chinese (and Western) history, empowering their personal claim-rights and demands.

In a perfect Classical Confucian world, the cultivation of virtue would provide sufficient restraint to prevent the abuse of power. The *Lun Yu* 論語 (Analects), however, is replete with illustrations recognizing the innate potential within individuals, especially power holders, to fall short of virtuous conduct and intent. The result of such virtue failure is dysfunction within the relationships upon which society is structured. Families and governments simply do not always function in a manner that ensures that superior power holders in relationships always fulfill their duties toward their non-empowered counterparts.

For the value of claim-rights expectation to be meaningful, a mechanism for enforcing legitimate claims, irrespective of the relative power of the claim-holders, is essential. To employ the Classical Confucian value theory directly, as a structure or model for human rights, is impracticable for its absence of such an enforcement mechanism. For this reason, a theory of human rights that draws upon Classical Confucianism must confine itself to the articulation of a philosophical justification for rights. This contribution to the rights discourse, however limited, is a necessary one. The value of claim-rights expectation, when extracted from Classical Confucian texts, can then serve as the foundation for a human rights language for China. Specific values, such as those of the *Li Ji* 禮記, will find expression in modern claim-rights applications as the relationship between present-day and ancient social values is negotiated. A philosophical justification for rights is the first step in the task of developing a workable Chinese theory of human rights. Classical Confucianism can be the source for such an ideology and, thus, contribute to the development of a contemporary Chinese theory and practice of human rights.

*Why Classical Confucianism Does Not Speak of Rights*

Several explanations may be suggested for the absence of a rights language in Confucian society, including a Confucian proclivity toward non-assertiveness. One possible explanation emerges from the context in which virtues and duties are developed in Classical Confucian literature. With the exception of the more sublime virtues espoused for the junzi 君子 (i.e., superior or exemplary person), virtues and duties are always spoken of in the context of relationships as in the Li Ji 禮記. Fundamentally, the Classical Confucian self is understood as a member of a social structure, most notably the family. One is not primarily an independent person, but is first a son or daughter, brother or sister, wife or mother, husband or father, elder or junior. Hsieh Yu-Wei states that, next to benevolence (ren 仁), filial piety (xiao 孝) “has held for four thousand years the most important place in Chinese ethics.” (Hsieh, 1986: 166) The family has been the frame of reference for self-identity.

In contrast, the development of rights in the West has closely followed the rise of individual identity. A “respect for the individual and individual conscience” (Almond, 1993: 260) is associated with the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century social movements and revolutions that gave birth to expressions of rights such as the Declaration of Independence and the corresponding French statement on the rights of man. The absence of a strong doctrine of individualism in China has limited the development of a rights language that would pit the individual against family or society.

*Rights in Society*

The extraction of claim-rights in personam from the Li Ji 禮記 is closely tied to the Classical Confucian understanding of claim-rights in rem (i.e., those rights that are the duty of all people). The virtue-duties pertaining to family and social roles listed in the Li Ji 禮記 are specific applications of the Classical Confucianism doctrine of shu 恕 (reciprocity), articulated in the following passage and earlier quoted:

Tsze-kung asked, 'Is there one word which may serve as a rule of practice for all of one's life?' The Master said, 'Is not RECIPROCITY such a word? What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others.' (Lun Yu 論語 15.23)

The generality of shu 恕 creates a general claim-right in rem – namely, that when other people practice their virtue-duty of shu 恕, they will not do to me what I would not do to them. Correspondingly, others can expect that I will practice the virtue-duty of shu 恕 in my dealings with them. The Classical Confucian vision is that of a society ultimately regulated by civility rather than by enforcement of law. Thus, ren 仁 (humane benevolence) becomes the simultaneous virtue-duty and claim-right of all citizens, with particular bearing on the conduct of rulers.

Ren 仁 required of the ruler prodigious attention to meeting the needs of subjects for the necessities of life and the protection from abuses of petty magistrates. The good Confucian ruler embodies the liberal value that society must care for those least able to care for themselves: "...his desires are set on benevolent government, and he secures it..." (Lun Yu 論語 20.2.2). Ren 仁, however, is only the first of the five primary Confucian virtues, the remainder being yi 義 (righteousness), li 禮 (ritual propriety), zhi 智 (知) (wisdom), and xin 心 (faithfulness). Governance by the virtues resulted in the articulation of wuchang 五常 (the Five Constant Regulations), which, in essence, is the five primary virtues applied to rulers (Yao: 34). The following scheme of corresponding claim-rights for each virtue-duty in the wuchang 五常 provides a conceptual framework for the construction of general or broad claim-rights.

1. Virtue-Duty of the State:

Ren 仁 (humane benevolence)

Rights of the People:

Citizens have the right to the state's provision of basic needs, protection, education, and opportunity to pursue one's goals in life.

2. Virtue-Duty of the State:

Yi 義 (righteous behavior)

Rights of the People:

Citizens have the right to expect righteous behavior from the ruler and other citizens.

3. Virtue-Duty of the State:

Li 禮 (ritual/propriety)

Rights of the People:

Citizens have the right to expect appropriate ritual and propriety from the state and other citizens.

4. Virtue-Duty of the State:

Zhi 智 (知) (wisdom)

Rights of the People:

Citizens have the right to expect that wisdom shall be the basis for judgments and law.

5. Virtue-Duty of the State:

Xin 信 (faithfulness)

Rights of the People:

Citizens have the right to expect virtue-faithfulness of the state and other citizens.

This list of corresponding claim-rights that emerges from the wuchang 五常 (the Five Constant Regulations) is necessarily broad. Like the fact of claim-right expectation, it identifies a kernel of values within Classical Confucianism that is not bound to social structures. Throughout the primary Confucian texts, particularly in the Lun Yu 論語 (Analects) and the Mengzi 孟子 (Mencius), the values concisely stated in the wuchang 五常 are unpacked in the form of specific instructions and admonitions to rulers. Nonetheless, in Classical Confucian government, the locus from which the values emanate is the virtue of the ruler. Values such as Ren 仁, yi 義 (righteousness), li 禮 (ritual propriety), zhi 智 (知) (wisdom), and xin 心 (faithfulness) are, therefore, open-ended, finding a variety of expressions in changing situations. On the one hand, this reflects the perspectives of openness and constant change prevalent throughout the Yijing 易經 and Chinese philosophy. On the other hand, it stands in marked contrast to the highly specific articulation of claim-rights in modern Western legal systems.

*Positive and Negative Claim-rights*

Each of the above categories of claim-rights carries with it the further distinction of positive and negative rights. Ren 仁, for example, entails the positive claim-rights of subjects to the means and opportunity for subsistence as the benevolent duty of the ruler. At the same time, ren 仁 establishes negative claim-rights to protection from unwarranted intrusion or abuse by government.

On occasion, implicit positive and negative claim-rights are presented simultaneously as in a characteristically Confucian list of “the four bad things” (Legge translation). The first “bad thing” is, “...to execute a person who has not first been educated” (Lun Yu 論語 20.2.3, Ames and Rosemont, 1998: 229). The passage immediately continues, “...this is called cruelty” (Lun Yu 論語 20.2.3). In Classical Confucian thought, the highest ideal for the individual is education, for education trains one to be virtuous. Once the means of subsistence is provided to the people and their prosperity assured, Confucian rulers are instructed to provide universal schooling (Lun Yu 論語 13.9). Uneducated law-breakers are not, therefore, to be held responsible for crimes committed in ignorance if the government has failed in its educational duty toward them. The positive claim-right of the individual, corresponding to the government’s duty to educate, is to receive an education. The negative claim-right of the individual, corresponding to the government’s duty to be just, is to be protected from prosecution for crimes committed without a proper education. That the government is responsible to provide sufficient education (i.e., training) goes beyond the context of obedience to laws. Confucius is reputed to have said, “To go into battle with people who have not been properly trained is to forsake them” (Lun Yu 論語 13.3).

**Part Two: Mohism and Human Rights***Versions Responding to Power*

Following the two world wars of the 20th Century, the United Nations was founded for the purpose of keeping global peace. Currently, the U.N. consists of 192 member nations, ostensibly ensuring

that most nations are in agreement with each other to maintain peace and protect human rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights can be regarded as a consensus that these nations have agreed to respect the inherent dignity and right to proper treatment of human beings. Some argue that the Western notion of human rights is too liberal to apply to developing countries, and that imposing human rights on developing countries is an imperialistic reminder of past colonization. Human rights rhetoric is often employed in order to loosen the grip of economic competition that maintains "Western hegemony" over Third World countries.

The supporters of what has come to be called Asian Values claim that Asian Values is incompatible with the Western conception of human rights and democracy. This is because the West's emphasis on individual rights and freedoms is considered to be the source of social decay, rising crime and divorce rates, teenage pregnancies, and other societal ills. Thus, many have attempted to integrate Asian Values into a modified view of human rights. Such an approach has generated the values of equilibrium and moderation; communitarianism over individualism; consultation and consensus for conflict resolution over litigation; respect for authority instead of autonomy; the fostering of strong family ties, frugality, hard work, and sacrifice over state welfare; and punitive measures for criminals. According to May Sim, despite the diversity within Asian Values, the Shared ASEAN (Association of South-East Asian Countries) position on human rights, as a consolidation of Asian nations' views through conferences sponsored by the U.N. (e.g., 1993), is a collective rejection of Western pressures, especially that of the United States. The 1993 Bangkok Declaration acknowledged that rights are universal, but added the qualification that "they must be considered 'in the context of' national and regional particularities." (Angle & Svensson 2001: 410) China is an Asian country and, as such, holds views on human rights compatible with Asian Values, given its particular historical and regional context. It is in this spirit that one must understand the Chinese recognition of inherent dignity, equality and inalienable rights of all human beings as the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace.

According to Stephen Angle, the Chinese word *quanli*, as a translation for "rights," was first used in the mid-1860s, and the actual

correlation between these two words is quite loose. The word *renquan* has been a popular word for the concept of human rights throughout the 20th Century. The last ten years of that century gave birth to a new beginning for the discussion of human rights within China (Angle, 2002: 3-4). As Guo Daohui indicates, the road for Mainland China to recognize human rights is treacherous. Human rights is basically not protected in modern China's historic political movements, such as "Anti-Right Wing Movement," "Great Leap Forward," and "Cultural Revolution" from 1949 to 1978. With reflections on the Cultural Revolution, an increasing number of Chinese scholars started to defend the idea of human rights from a Marxist humanist point of view from 1978 to 1983. This led to another enlightened movement in the late 1980s. It has only been since 1991 that China has begun to develop its own version of human rights, notably as an answer to Western challenges on the issue of human rights, thus paying attention to the real condition of human rights in China (Guo, 2011). Since the early 1990s, China has encouraged open discussions on the topic of human rights and has fostered much discourse. The Chinese government published its own white paper on human rights and, since 1991, has responded annually to challenges, while also admitting problems concerning human rights in China. Furthermore, the Chinese government has signed 25 international human rights agreements and has taken responsibility in trying to reduce the remaining human rights problems.

With the rise of China's economic and political power in the modern world, much Western scholarship concerning China and human rights issues has been conducted outside of mainland China. However, little research has been conducted into the ways of accessing China's ancient philosophical canon as a resource for a contemporary human rights policy. The little research which has been done tends to focus on Confucian values, owing to their popular and revered status throughout history. Not much research, however, has focused on Mozi's ideology and its potential to serve as the foundation for addressing Western concerns for human rights in China. This article is an attempt to relate Mozi's philosophical ideas to the needs of contemporary Chinese human rights.

In the past, much Chinese scholarship, in response to contemporary Western challenges on the issue of human rights, tacitly

accepted the hermeneutical framework of Western political discourse. Today, Chinese intellectuals have been working on their own post-Western discourse based on China's indigenous philosophical and cultural traditions. Scholars like Zhang Weiwei have argued that "the West would do well to study the ideas behind China's dramatic rise" (Zhang, 2010: 126). Zhang argues that there are at least eight Chinese ideas responsible for China's growth: 1) seeking truth from facts or following a realistic and pragmatic approach; 2) the primacy of the right to life; 3) the practice of holistic thinking; 4) the belief that government is a necessary good; 5) good governance; 6) promotion of the worthy; 7) creativity; 8) seeking harmony, not sameness (*Ibid.*, 126-43). Zhang's articulation of the ideas responsible for China's modern growth and development can be traced to Mohist thinking.

Mozi was born into a commoner's family in the State of Lu (in today's Shandong Province) but spent most of his life in the State of Song (in present day Henan Province). He studied Confucian theory in his early years and later established his own school of thought, Mohism, which challenges Confucianism on many fronts. Mozi brought forth a system of political and social philosophy, and it was said that Mohism was as influential as its rival, Confucianism, in the Pre-Qin Period. Mozi traveled from state to state to promote his political ideas to rulers who were generally disinterested in his philosophy. Because this great thinker never held any high official position in his lifetime, Mohism is typically associated with the beliefs of the common people (Fung, 2007: 86).

### *The Right to Life*

The Chinese focus on economic development and practical aid to help ordinary people live better lives offers a needed corrective to the Western emphasis upon human rights that prioritizes political rights over the basic rights to life and subsistence (Zhang, 2011: 129). When Western Enlightenment philosophers elevated freedom, equality, and political rights over property, they represented the interests of the rising proprietary classes. As a result, little was done to confront racism, colonialism, and even the slave trade during their times. For most Western powers, the right to life and subsistence are less impor-

tant than they are to China, whose task to feed and provide for her vast population is a primary focus.

The right to life is not merely a contemporary issue, for it has been a subject of most Chinese philosophers throughout history. During China's Warring States period, Mozi's response to the problem of war was to promote the right to life, specifically, the right of the people not to be killed. He also promoted the notion of universal love as the right of all people to be treated with equality. His notions of "anti-music" and "anti-extra spending" were also defenses of the peoples' right not to be harmed by wasteful government.

In contrast to the inherent nobility of Confucianism, Mohism embodies the common touch tinged with idealism. Mozi refused to accept any rationalization for war, and the cardinal principle of his political stance was "no aggression." In his own words, "preventing the killing and harming of men is the greatest righteousness in the world" (Lowe, 1992: 39). Based on this, one could argue that Mozi was devoted to establishing a peaceful, "non-violent" world. History remembers Mozi as not only a great thinker, but also a great doer. For example, on hearing that the State of Chu was planning an attack on Song, Mozi walked for ten days and nights to reach Chu, in order to persuade its rulers to change their minds. He argued that wars were meant to destroy the physical existence of individuals, and if people respected others' lives as much as their own, they would never go to war. The Mohist condemnation of offensive war is essentially premised upon the rights of all people to live free from war and deprivation.

Human development is the universal foundation of human rights, and economic and social progress are prerequisites for the growth of a democracy and human rights. China, with the world's largest population, insists that "the right to subsistence (shengcun quan)" is the most important of all human rights (Angle & Svensson 2001: 358), and this is also underscored by Asian Values (Angle & Svensson 2001: 411). Throughout history, large numbers of people have been killed in wars, not only during the pre-Qin period, but also in modern times, especially by Western powers in the early 1900s (Ibid., 358-9). While the right to life is the basic starting point for any political rights, like the subsidiary right of freedom of speech,

ensuring subsidiary rights is not possible during times of civil war within a country or while the country is under foreign attack and invasion. For Mozi, not to fight any offensive war is based on his values of non-discrimination and impartial affiliation with others. For Mozi, our priority, should not be to follow Confucian propriety as determined by Heaven and earth, but to change "...the concept of duty imposed by Heaven from that of particularity, tending to self-assertion of positive rights associated with one's station, to that of universality, leading instead to submission before others and the creation of negative rights in others" (Young & Nguy n, 1990: 104).

The principle of 'universal love' (jian'ai) is the premise for Mozi's condemnation of war. A.C. Graham considers this translation to be convenient but misleading because it is too vague and warm (Graham, 1989: 41) and "no one finds it tolerable" (*Ibid.*, 43). Indiscriminate and unconditional love is that which is extended universally; or, in other words, it is a love that entails no personal relationship. Mozi said that it benefits the lover and the beloved, and the failure to love universally causes social turmoil. Such liberality, Mozi said, is possible if people see others' homelands, families, and lives as their own. Mozi's idea of love is similar to that of Christian doctrine, which teaches that all God's creatures are equal. This universalized notion was famously attacked by Mencius who asserted that Mozi's "impartial caring" is "to not have a father" (Mencius 3B9.9 in Van Norden, 2008: 85). Even Mozi's Mutual Benefit School satirized anyone who would "shave his head and show his heels if it would benefit the empire." Liu Shipei (1884-1919) scoffed that "this is to exhaust one's duties while not enjoying one's rights" (Angle & Svensson, 2001: 38).

Unfortunately, the beneficence Mozi professed is often labeled as an ancient form of utilitarianism; this is based on a remark in which he stated that people should help each other on the grounds that they would eventually need help themselves. Additionally, Mozi stressed that his doctrine brought the greatest gains to the largest number of people. In a period haunted by fierce strife between states and peoples and the deep hostility that prevailed, a spirit of altruism inspired reconciliation and unity. Urging people to reach beyond hierarchical and geographical divisions to tap the milk of human kindness, is still

relevant today, stoking our desire to turn an imperfect world into a better place.

Most scholars who consider Mozi's notion of universal love to be utilitarian (Fung 2007: 90) fail to understand his emphasis on reciprocity. As Mozi says, "He who loves others, must also be loved by others. He who benefits others, must also be benefited by others. He who hates others, must also be hated by others. He who injures others, must also be injured by others." (Mozi, ch. 17, in Fung, 2007: 90) That Fung takes Mohist loving others as "a sort of personal insurance or investment" (Ibid.) is a narrow perspective and does not recognize Mozi's reciprocal spirit which is actually broader and deeper than Confucius' ways of being benevolent to others starting from one's family members. From John Rawls' point of view, reciprocity is to pursue the national interest with respect to fundamental human rights at an international level; and to pursue a personal, reasonable self-interest with the sense of justice at a state level (Rawls, 1999: 28). For Mozi, the pursuit of personal interest must be based on the value of reciprocity, both at the personal and inter-state levels. In pursuing personal or state interest, one needs to take the interests of others as one's own, and should avoid doing harm to others because doing harming to others results in harming oneself. Thus, Mozi's idea of universal love defends the rights of all people to be treated equally.

Unlike the ritual worship and passion for music in Confucian teachings, Mozi disdained music and dance as extravagant and wasteful. He contended that state policies should give priority to meeting the primary needs of the people, like subsistence, and be mindful not to add to their burdens. He deemed the development of music as an unnecessary diversion of financial resources compared to the more important concerns of food, clothing and shelter for all members of society. Mozi also recommended Spartan funerals because he believed squandering money on the dead unnecessarily depleted the fortunes of the living. Elaborate funeral rituals and prolonged mourning for the deceased exhausted families both emotionally and financially. Mozi argued that, instead of being obsessed with the afterlife, rulers should pay more attention to the present life and those with whose welfare they were charged. Thus, Mozi's idea of condemnation of music and

economy of expenditures might be regarded as fighting for the right of protecting, the common people from being mistreated.

*The Right to Develop*

Mozi was a strong opponent of fatalism (*ming*) which might be taken as the Confucian sense that “there is a set or immutable patterns to the world” (Raphals in Lupke, 2005: 71). Usually scholars consider that “the Mohist arguments targeted a Ruist understanding of *ming* as predetermination” (*Ibid.*, 82), but according to Fung Yu-lan, Mozi’s attack is not tenable because *ming*, for Confucianists, “signified something that is beyond human control” (Fung, 2007: 86). The prevailing view of the time was that one’s fate was predetermined. Mozi, however, brought forth the idea that people are neither destined for failure nor success, wealth nor poverty, a noble nor a low status. Rather, people should take a positive attitude toward life and strive for all they can possibly achieve from their vantage points. Mozi’s idea of anti-fatalism could be regarded as the right to believe in the payback of one’s hard-working spirit.

Mozi encouraged his students to be practical and to work hard, probably because most of them hailed from the lower social classes. There is a certain kind of moral principle that both Confucius and Mencius advocate, as Mencius states: “[the superior person] cannot be led into excesses when wealthy and honored, deflected from his purpose when poor and obscure, nor [convinced to] bow before force or might” (Mencius 3B2). The Mohist school agrees with this perspective (Angle & Svensson 2001: 177). Working hard is to be self-dependent and self-developing, without capitulating to external factors, such as money, power, and other influences. In this sense, everyone has the right to develop one’s own self, based upon hard work, meaning that there is no need to bow to other outer sources, and one can even “suffer misfortunes as the basis for cultivating virtue” (*Ibid.*; 178). It is reasonable for Hu Shi to consider that the Chinese do not cherish rights because of the “lack, throughout the history of China, of the profession of legal defenders” (*Ibid.*; 178). However, the ancient Chinese philosophers did not claim civil rights from rulers. Instead, they insisted that people should possess the right to be faithful to moral

principles, whatever may happen in their lives. For the Mohists, those rights lie generally in personal hard work and growth into full personhood. Thus, being practical and working hard is actually defending the right to develop oneself based on one's hard work.

Like Leonardo Da Vinci, Mozi was versatile. Besides his achievements in philosophy, he was, in his day, a great scientist. It was said that he invented many weapons and machines, including a wooden bird that could fly. Thus, Mozi encouraged people to be creative by arguing that one's future depends upon one's creativity. During the past thirty years, China has grown while opening itself to the world. Because the Chinese people have learned everything they could from others, China has been able to develop a competitive advantage, even with respect to Western powers (Zhang, 2010: 139-41). Chinese people have done well at working hard to improve their individual and communal lives. Accordingly, the condition of human rights in China has vastly improved.

#### *Appropriate Political System and Governing Statesmanship*

Mozi was unhappy about the societal structure he lived in, and aimed to change it by calling upon his followers to establish a new way of ruling. He thought the power of aristocratic families should be broken and the shackles of a family's background should be shaken off. For good statesmanship, Mozi had a two-pronged prescription: promote the virtuous and capable, and comply with superiors.

Mozi's concept of exalting the virtuous (shangxian 尚贤) can be regarded as the right to promote the best people to the ruling class. In contrast to the Western perspective which views government as a necessary evil, the Chinese tend to regard government as a necessary good (Zhang, 2010: 132). China has a two-thousand-year history of promoting able persons to lead the community. In the past thirty years, the Chinese government has led its people to fight on many fronts: agriculture, special economic zones, opening up of cities, world-trade organizations, Olympics etc. Every one of these fronts needed able persons to work efficiently for the state. A necessarily good government must be conducted by relatively good people because good people care about the interests of common people.

For Mozi, everyone deserves a chance to participate in social management, regardless of his economic or social background. He encouraged rulers to select candidates for official posts only on the basis of their ability. Most Mohist followers came from humble roots, so they looked forward to a political system in which one's competence, rather than one's pedigree, determined one's position.

Mozi's idea of identification with one's superior (shangtong 尚同) can be taken as the right to a strong statesmanship for the protection of the common people's interests. Mozi's dictum that chosen officials should align themselves with their superiors was to establish unified moral standards and political centralization. He encouraged officials to communicate their opinions to those in the higher ranks, but insisted that, in the end, that they support those above them. According to Mozi, subordinates must ultimately accept what their superior thinks is right as being right, and what is said to be wrong as being wrong. When the superior is at fault, his acolyte should provide good counsel, and when those in power find virtue in subordinates, they should promote it among the other underlings. Mozi considers that it is difficult to unify the opinions, feelings, interests and wishes of a group of people, as he claims "it is not possible to clearly understand the values and interests of people in far off lands" (Mozi 11, in Angle & Svensson 2001: 60). Scholars like Zhang Shizhao (1881-1973), in the New Culture Movement, conceive of China as a country that can bring together different viewpoints, and make concessions to achieve the goal of a common path to peace (Angle & Svensson 2001: 61). It is a common ideal amongst Chinese thinkers from Mozi's time to the 20th Century, to expect that a government that can achieve consensus and lead its people will produce a stronger and better country.

In promoting the able and asking them to be identified with their leaders, Mozi demonstrates a contradictory attitude on the issue of state governance. On the one hand, he hoped that rulers could become open-minded and grant official posts only to the qualified; yet, on the other hand, he advocated absolute obedience to the lord of a state, on the presumption that his ascension to that position meant he was the most high-minded and tender-hearted of men. In this sense, it is right to claim that "Mo Tzu used the psychology of the 'small man' (xiao

ren) as the mechanism to achieve political order" (Young & Nguyễn, 1990: 106).

The West developed democracy and liberty only over a lengthy process of time. The rapid infusion of Western political ideology, in most developing countries, has proven to be less than successful from indigenous points of view. Thus, China has shifted its focus from theory to the idea of good governance. As some argue, Asian Values is about what makes a good society and what makes a good government, and Chinese good governance seeks to transcend the traditional contradictions within a democracy. Whatever its ideology, a political system must be tested in the real world, to see if it is good for its own people. In other words, we might say that the effectiveness of governance is more important than the Western insistence on the right sequence. The best democracy is the particular democratic practice that is suitable for a certain country or a state.

From the perspective of good governance, Mozi's idea of identification with the superior (*shangtong*) is a way to ensure a strong statesmanship to protect the common people's interests. A. C. Graham noticed that Mozi takes "conforming upward" as "the unifying of morality (*yi*) throughout the world" and *yi* was translated as both "fitting" and "the right" (Graham, 1989: 45). Mozi's concern over the efficacy of the human organization might be related to his military background, and so it is understandable for Mozi to view centralization to be consistent with efficiency. Discussing the problem of Mozi is similar to judging the Chinese way of handling governance over people. It is not a debate on either democracy or totalitarianism, but the search for an appropriate mean between freedom and centralization. And its aim is to see whether or not people will benefit from particular policies. China has a lengthy history of maintaining government stability so long as the government is working toward the peace and order of a society.

Mozi is also famous for his ideas about the will of Heaven (*tianzhi*) and the existence of ghosts (*minggui*). China has a long-held tradition that a leadership group should pay attention to the attitude of common people. This can be traced to Mozi's ideas concerning the will of Heaven (*tianzhi*) and the existence of ghosts (*minggui*). The common people naturally hope for a way to prevent their leaders from

doing evil and hurting the community, and so it is necessary for the leaders to articulate that Heaven has a will and that the leaders should follow heaven's will. Similarly, leaders must acknowledge that there are ghosts that watch over whatever a leader does. Thus, the judgment of the common people, in terms of the beliefs of common people, becomes the basic standard for deciding if a leader is doing his job properly. Mozi's appeal to the will of heaven is actually connected with the standards of duty towards the common people (Young & Nguyễn, 1990: 105).

Mozi thought that heaven possessed a will and a disposition, and the rulers on earth are its sons. Heaven could reward or punish humans for their performance, so rulers ought to be cautious in carrying out their duties. Mozi claimed that it is heaven's desire that people should love and help each other, and that all should comply with this principle. Transgressors would be punished by the gods and ghosts would be sent down by heaven to dole out justice. The existence of immortal beings was also taken for granted, and they were regarded as wiser than human beings, and even kings. Mozi's intention to provoke awe for divine forces reflects a defiance for the prevailing ruling class, and compassion and concern for the common people.

Mozi's three tests (*sanbiao* 三表) can be interpreted as the right to bring efficacy to a state in contemporary China. One of the fundamental values for China's development into a greater nation, over the past thirty years, has been to seek truth through facts (*shishi qiushi*), which is a practical and pragmatic approach to dealing with real-world situations. Just as the Europeans elevated reason during the Renaissance, the Chinese have elected finding the best solution for real-world situations over merely following ideologies and doctrines. During the past thirty years, China has transformed itself, from a Communist and ideological country (ca. 1949-76), into one of the least ideological countries in the world. This practical or pragmatic attitude can be traced back to Mozi's three tests:

Its basis, its verifiability, and its applicability; (1) it should be based on the deeds of the ancient sage-kings; (2) it should be verified in the hearing and seeing of the common people; (3) it should be applied in adoption by the government and

observed in its benefits to the country and the people. (Mei, 1929: 183)

As de Bary points out, although Western readers tend to be skeptical of "what history proves," Chinese philosophers use this appeal to strengthen the validity of their arguments (Watson, 1963: 4). Mozi also uses the word 'fa' to mean law, based on its original meaning of "pottery mold" or "model" (Young & Nguy n, 1990: 103). Thus, the "possession of the will of Heaven" is "likened to the possession of a measuring device" (Brindley, 2010: 10)

To some extent, Chinese economic and social practices of the past thirty years have been in accord with these three tests. China has learned from its own previous mistakes as well as from those countries that attempted to put Western ideologies into practice and failed. The measurement of any adopted policy is whether or not it is beneficial to the good of the common people. When a new policy is going to be put into practice, such as scientific experiments, the Chinese government scrutinizes in a proper way, the results from a small area before extending the practice to the rest of the nation. China has a long tradition of pursuing harmony and the mean, which is based on the harmonious philosophy between yin and yang. This is in contrast to the method of fighting and conquering others, as is often apparent in Ancient Greek philosophy.

The Mohist school was eclipsed in the centuries that followed the Qin Dynasty (221 B.C.-206 B.C.), and not until the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) did some scholars revive the study of it. For most of China's ancient history, Confucianism was upheld by the ruling class and became orthodox, as Mohism was nudged to the margins. Mozi offended those in power by trying to weaken their authority with the threat of being watched by heaven, and for decrying the profligate living that went hand-in-hand with their privileges. Meanwhile, Mozi was not popular among commoners either, for drumming into them the virtues of submission to an unfair and hierarchical system, and also for bidding them to love strangers as much as members of their own family. In Chinese philosophical history, the logic, the scientific spirit, and the ideal of a just society in Mohism remain unmatched contributions to the spiritual development of humanity.

Based upon the above discussion, the contemporary Chinese version of human rights resonates very much with the ancient Mohist version of human rights, and it is not merely a response to the Western version of human rights, but is firmly rooted in ancient Chinese philosophy. Most Mohist ideas, arguing from the standpoint of the common people, can be interpreted as a defense of human rights in the contemporary Chinese discourse on similar issues. In other words, it is possible for Chinese human rights issues to be discussed in their own vocabulary, without following Western discourses on human rights and passively responding to Western challenges to China on similar topics.

### Conclusion

The value of examining Chinese philosophical antecedents for contemporary thought on human rights is that the ultimate authority is elevated when they are recognized as an authentic part of the culture. The West has a long tradition of explicitly identifying and articulating the basis and practice of ensuring individual human rights. We have shown that, although China has only recently articulated human rights in an explicit fashion, both the foundation and mandate for rights outcomes have been integral parts of Chinese philosophy and culture. Classical Confucianism allows us to address essential theoretical questions, as to the compatibility of rights and values and Chinese culture in its most traditional sense. The authors have concluded that the true practice of Classical Confucian ethics produces an environment in which human rights outcomes are generated. The concerns of Mohism demonstrate that contemporary issues related to the development of rights have an authentic Chinese motivation. None of this is to suggest that the Chinese way is superior to that of the West. Rather, we hope our readers conclude, with us, that the claim of human rights being alien to the Chinese must be abandoned, especially if the globalization of China is to lead to global cooperation and mutual respect between the countries of the world.

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**Part IV**  
**Traditional Perspectives on Cultures and**  
**Human Actions**



## The World as Metaphor: Aspects of the Dialectic of Microcosm and Macrocosm in the Western Tradition

João J. Vila-Chã

The notion of *world* (*kosmos*) has been playing quite a crucial role in the process of understanding *man and being in relation* since the very beginning of the philosophical enterprise. For a long time, the idea has been at the very center of the human quest for meaning and wisdom.<sup>1</sup> Pythagoras was probably the first one to designate the universality of all existent things by the term *kosmos*.<sup>2</sup> Teophrastus speaks of the *world* as a conjunction of heaven and earth and everything *in-between*.<sup>3</sup> In the *Nature of the gods*, Tullius proclaims that “the world is almost like a home shared by gods and men, a *polis* for the ones and the others.”<sup>4</sup>

The idea of the *world* as a synthesis of unity and multiplicity, meaning a well-ordered universe (the Greek word *kosmos* means also “good order”) finds its complement in the notion of *man* as a *microcosm*, i.e., a *small world* reflecting the larger one. Indeed, the most pertinent opposition is that between the great world, i.e., *macro-cosmos*, and the small world, i.e., *micro-cosmos* of man. The process, however, can also be seen from the perspective of those that attempt to *humanize* the

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<sup>1</sup> See: Franz Lämmli, *Vom Chaos zum Kosmos: Zur Geschichte einer Idee* (Basel: F. Reinhardt, 1962); and Francesco Bertola, *Imago mundi: La rappresentazione del cosmo attraverso i secoli* (Cittadella [Padua]: Biblos, 1995).

<sup>2</sup> See: Léon Brunschvicg, *Le rôle du pythagorisme dans l'évolution des idées* (Paris: Hermann & cie, 1937).

<sup>3</sup> See: Theophrastus, *Metaphysics*. With an introduction, translation, and commentary by Marlein van Raalte (Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1993); Samuel Sambursky, ed., *The Concept of Place in Late Neoplatonism*. Texts with translation, introduction and notes by Samuel Sambursky (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1982).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Francisco Rico, *El pequeño mundo del hombre: Varia fortuna de una idea en la cultura española*. Ed. corr. y aum. (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1986), p. 11. Francisco Rico will be our most important guide throughout the present chapter.

great world and, thus, would rather speak about the universe at large in terms of *makros anthropos*. The predominant tendency has become rather the one that speaks of *man (anthropos)* in terms of *mikros kosmos*.<sup>5</sup>

This primordial link between the representation of *man* and the representation of the *world* is, in the first place, the result of the philosophical attempt to find an *arche*, i.e., a principle (or principles) of everything that is. Anaximenes, for example, establishes that the principle of everything is *air*, from which it becomes easy to establish a parallelism between *man* and the *universe*, particularly when he explicitly compares the human *soul*, i.e., the *air* that surrounds and contains us, to the breath and the *air* that surrounds and contains the entire cosmos (13 B 21).<sup>6</sup> Francisco Rico makes it clear that this analogy, which is one of the oldest between *man* and the *world*, will continue to surface again and again in always new formulations.<sup>7</sup>

The typical understanding of reality among the ancient Greeks presupposes an elaborate play of opposites and their mutual conjugation. Anaximander, for example, determines the *arche* in terms of *justice* in the cosmos, through which the four elements themselves are transmuted in one another, since none of them constitutes in itself the foundation (*upokeimenon*) of what is. The eternity of the movement, thus, explains the phenomena.<sup>8</sup> Heraclitus, on the other hand, insists that “war is the father of all things” (22 B 531) and that unity is in itself full of multiplicity and conflict.<sup>9</sup> On the other hand, Empedocles

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Rico, *op.cit.*, p. 12.

<sup>6</sup> Antonio Maddalena, “L’aria di Anassimene come sintesi,” *Atti del Reale Istituto Veneto di Scienze Lettere ed Arti* (XCVII, 1937-1938) pp. 515-545; Georg Wöhrlé, *Anaximenes aus Milet: Die Fragmente zu seiner Lehre*. Herausgegeben, übersetzt, erläutert und mit einer Einleitung versehen von Georg Wöhrlé (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 1993).

<sup>7</sup> Rico, *op.cit.*, p. 13.

<sup>8</sup> See: Charles H. Kahn, *Anaximander and the origins of Greek cosmology* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994).

<sup>9</sup> See: Charles H. Kahn, *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus: An Edition of the Fragments With Translation and Commentary*. 1st pbk. ed. (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981). Also: Clémence Ramnoux, *Héraclite; ou L’homme entre les choses et les mots* (Paris: Les Belles lettres, 1959); and Jean Brun, *Héraclite, ou Le philosophe de l’éternel retour*. Présentation, choix de textes, traduction, bibliographie par Jean Brun (Paris: Seghers, 1965).

depicts the universe in terms of four roots and two great forces that structure it.<sup>10</sup> "With earth we know the earth; with water, the water; with air, the luminous air; with fire, the fire that destroys; love, with love; hatred, with the hatred that is terrible." (31 B 109). Since *like knows the like* and *man knows the world*, the conclusion is that *man is like the world*, both in his sympathies and his antipathies. In other words, man is nothing more than a *mikros kosmos*.<sup>11</sup>

Even though the words *macrocosm* and *microcosm* might be conspicuously absent from the *Timeaus*, there is not much doubt left regarding the fact that this important Platonic dialogue is permeated by a deep understanding of our present problem.<sup>12</sup> For example, the *Corpus Hippocraticum* presented the doctrine of *man as microcosm* in rather practical terms. From the principle that *man* and the *world* share the same *nature* derives the practical axiom that the health of man demands by necessity an *imitation* of the balance and harmony found in the world. Therefore, in order to *cure*, the physician must be familiar with and truly know the workings of the *kosmos*.<sup>13</sup> Now, it must be assumed that Plato was no foreigner to this doctrine. Given his own self-understanding as a *physician of souls*, however, it is logical to expect that his pragmatic worry would lie rather with the moral and religious consequences of that *imitation* called for by an authentic knowledge of the *cosmos*.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> See: Jean Brun, *Empédocle; ou, le Philosophe de l'amour et de la haine. Présentation, choix de textes [d'Empédocle], traduction, bibliographie* (Paris: Seghers, 1966); Walther Kranz, *Empedokles: Antike Gestalt und romantische Neuschöpfung* (Zürich: Artemis-Verlag, 1949). Also: Romain Rolland, *Empédocle. Suivi de L'éclair de Spinoza* (Paris: Du Sablier, 1931).

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Rico, *op.cit.*, p. 14.

<sup>12</sup> See: Anders Olerud, *L'idée de macrocosmos et de microcosmos dans le Timée de Platon: Étude de mythologie comparée* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells Boktryckeri, 1951). On the reception of this dialogue throughout the Middle Ages, see Tullio Gregory, *Platonismo medievale: Studi e ricerche* (Roma: Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo, 1958).

<sup>13</sup> Ludwig Edelstein, *Peri aeron und die Sammlung der Hippokratischen Schriften* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1931).

<sup>14</sup> *Timaeus*, 47 b-c (Jowett translation), in *The Collected Dialogues of Plato, Including the Letters*. Edited by Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns. With

The notion of *cosmos* is here at work in the sense of an *ethical norm* for *man*, a meaning, however, that (according to Anaximander and Pythagoras) does not deny or disavow the material analogy, but rather finds support in it. For Plato, the *world* and *man* are constituted by the same elements: fire, air, water and earth (31b-32c; 42e-43a, 73b) and, since the world is free from old age and unaffected by disease (33 a-b), disorders and diseases in the human being are to be explained in terms of the “unnatural excess or defect” of those four natures, or in what amounts to their irregular alteration (82 a). Indeed, it seems clear that in the same manner that the body grows and changes, so does the universe experiment in itself changes of different kinds (56 c-58 c). Plato’s description of what happens in the human body in parallel with what happens in the body of the “*great animal*” intends, thus, to demonstrate the great collaboration that necessarily exists between *macrocosm* and the *microcosm*. Breathing, for example, is ultimately explained as the process by which the body liberates a fire that unites itself with the cosmic fire (cf. 79). Similarly with the process of vision: “When the light of day surrounds the stream of vision, then like falls upon like, and they coalesce, and one body is formed by natural affinity in the line of vision, wherever the light that falls from within meets with an external object. And the whole stream of vision, being similarly affected in virtue of similarity, diffuses the motions of what it touches or what touches it over the whole body, until they reach the soul, causing that perception which we call sight.”<sup>15</sup>

The world is circular, as is demanded by its perfect beauty and the fact that it contains in itself all possible figures (*Timaeus*, 35 b); regarding man, on the other hand, “the gods, imitating the spherical shape of the universe, enclosed the two divine courses in a spherical body, that, namely, which we now term the head, being the most divine part of us and the lord of all that is in us; to this the gods, when they put together the body, gave all the other members to be servants, considering that it must partake of every sort of motion.”<sup>16</sup> Like an

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Introduction and Prefatory Notes. Fourteenth printing (New York: Princeton University Press, 1989), p. 1175.

<sup>15</sup> *Timaeus*, 45 c-d. Cf. *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, p. 1173.

<sup>16</sup> *Timaeus*, 44 d. Cf. *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, p. 1173. In his commentary to the *Timaeus*, Proclus (348 a) asserts that man must be considered an

*acropolis*, the head in the human being constitutes for Plato the site where the sovereign part of the human soul resides (90 a), i.e., the portion that, by means of an earnest and determined "love of knowledge and of true wisdom" (90 b), has the power to lead the totality of the human nature into the realm of a life that is immortal.<sup>17</sup>

For Plato, the soul, the principle of life, constitutes an intermediary between the *same* and the *other*. Moreover, it represents the very condition of *intelligibility* in being. Indeed, according to Plato, when God was framing the universe, he "put intelligence in soul, and soul in body, that he might be the creator of a work which was by nature fairest and best."<sup>18</sup> It is with the human being, which precisely consists of *psyche*, *nous*, and *soma*. Moreover, if the *soul of the world*, which Plato ostensibly compares to a musical instrument, can be divided into harmonious intervals (following the series 1, 2, 4, 8 and 1, 3, 9, 27 and then combined in 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 27), so does the human soul possess the capacity to orchestrate itself in accordance with the same proportions or harmonies.<sup>19</sup>

The importance of the human soul derives from the *nous*, its divine and immortal part, which resides in the head, our true "root," and "inasmuch as we are a plant not of an earthly but of a heavenly growth, raises us from earth to our kindred who are in heaven."<sup>20</sup> Below the rational part of the soul, and with some kind of communication with it, namely in the chest of man, resides the *soul of the passions*. Still below that, in the belly of man, resides the *nutritive soul* without communication.<sup>21</sup> In order to obtain both physical and spiritual harmony, i.e., perfect *justice*, *man* must exercise, i.e. synthonise with the *cosmic* model each one of the three souls, because "there is no proportion or disproportion more productive of health and disease, and virtue and vice, than that between soul and body

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entire *kosmos*, precisely because of the fact that he is a *microcosmos*. For him, *man* is endowed with intelligence and reason and also a divine body, which, like the universe, is mortal. Cf. Rico, *op.cit.*, p. 19.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, p. 1209.

<sup>18</sup> *Timaeus*, 30 b. Cf. *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, p. 1163.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. *Timaeus*, 35 d; 43 d.

<sup>20</sup> *Timaeus*, 90 a. Cf. *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, p. 1209.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. *Timaeus*, 71 a. Cf. *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, p. 1194.

themselves.”<sup>22</sup> Hence, Plato’s therapeutic approach in relation to any kind of *disproportion* or *disease* in soul or body, among which *ignorance* is certainly the greatest of them all.<sup>23</sup>

We can assume that when in the *Republic* Socrates proposes an examination of *justice in the cities*, before he attempts to study it in individuals, “looking for the likeness of the greater in the form of the less” (369 a), he must be thinking of something like the *harmonious model* of the *Timaeus*. Moreover, the *Republic* also indicates the origin of Plato’s doctrine of the *three souls*, which parallels the three classes of people belonging to the *kalipolis* and emulates their organization. Indeed, as the *city* is divided in three classes of people, so the soul of man is composed of three parts. There is no question that the city which is *best ordered* is the one “whose state is most like that of an individual man.”<sup>24</sup> In other words, for Plato, the *polis* emulates the *world* in the measure that it emulates *man*, who as it should and has to be, takes equal *care* of the *harmony* to be generated among the different parts of the *body* and of the *soul*. This in a conscious *imitation* of the *pattern of the universe*.<sup>25</sup>

In the case of Aristotle, the notion of *mikros kosmos* appears in Book VIII of the *Physics*, where, facing objections against the idea of eternity of movement, he points out that, it “sometimes happens that there is no motion in us and we are quite still, and that nevertheless we are then at some moment set in motion, that is to say it sometimes happens that we produce a beginning of motion in ourselves from within ourselves, without anything having set us in motion from without” and that nothing like this is to be found in the case of the inanimate things, which are “always set in motion by something else from without.” In animals, however, we have a situation of a motionless thing in which motion can be produced from the thing itself, and not from without. Hence, for us, the most revealing passage: “if this can occur in an animal, why should not the same be true also of the universe as a whole? If it can occur in a *small world* it could also occur

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. *Timaeus*, 87 d. Cf. *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, p. 1207.

<sup>23</sup> *Timaeus*, 88 b-89 a. Cf. *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, p. 1208.

<sup>24</sup> *Republic*, 462 c. Cf. *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, p. 701.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. *Timaeus*, 88 b. *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, p. 1208. Also: Rico, *op.cit.*, pp. 21-22.

in a *great one*; and if it can occur in the world, it could also occur in the infinite."<sup>26</sup>

This seems to be the only instance in which Aristotle makes a direct use of the expression *mikros kosmos* in the sense that we are here approaching. However, his vision of the world, is no less affected by the principle that there is an analogy at work in the relation between *man* and the *world*. For example, when in the *De partibus animalium* he infers that the whole of nature operates in terms of a *telos*, he attempts to determine the *final end* by means of a comparison between the *heavens* and the living or mortal beings on earth: "order and definiteness are much more plainly manifest in the celestial bodies than in our own frame; while change and chance are rather characteristic of the perishable things of earth. Yet there are some who, while they allow that every animal exists and was generated by nature, nevertheless hold that the heaven was constructed to be what it is by chance and spontaneity; the heaven, in which not the faintest sign of chance or of disorder is discernible. Again, whenever there is plainly some final end, to which a motion tends should nothing stand in the way, we always say that the one is for the sake of the other; and from this it is evident that there must be something of the kind, corresponding to what we call nature."<sup>27</sup> In the *De caelo*, on the other hand, Aristotle depicts the *heavens* as being *empsychos*, i.e., animated and containing in themselves the principle of their own movement: "that which is moved, we have shown that it is primary and simple and ungenerated and indestructible and generally unchanging; and it is far more reasonable to ascribe those attributes to the mover. It is the primary that moves the primary, the simple the simple, the indestructible and ungenerated that which is indestructible and ungenerated. Since then that which is moved, being a body, is nevertheless unchanging, how should the mover, which is incorporeal, be changed?"<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> *Physics*, Book VIII, 252b17-252b 28. Cf. *The Complete Works of Aristotle*. The revised Oxford translation, edited by Jonathan Barnes (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984), vol. I, p. 422.

<sup>27</sup> *Parts of Animals*, Book I, 641a33-641b36. Cf. *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, p. 998.

<sup>28</sup> *On the Heavens*, Bk. 2 288a14-288b6. Cf. *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, p. 475.

Philo of Alexandria, on the other hand, expresses his reflections upon the principle that there is a relation of analogy between the *microcosm* and the *macrocosm* particularly in the context of his meditations on the biblical narratives of creation, most especially regarding the exegesis of *Genesis 1: 26-27*.<sup>29</sup> Philo's doctrine of man as *microcosm* is indeed inseparable from his meditations on *man as image and similitude of God*. He frequently calls attention to the similarity that exists between God and the rational soul of man. In *De opificio mundi*, for example, he writes that "every man, in respect of his mind is allied to the divine reason, having come into being as a copy or fragment or effulgence of that blessed nature."<sup>30</sup> Because *nous*, i.e., man's rational soul, is like God, it must be one and indivisible. Hence, as Philo says in the *Quis Rerum Divinarum Heres*, the rational soul of man differs significantly from the irrational soul, which by nature is subject to division.<sup>31</sup> Indeed, Philo maintains that the *soul* plays within the human being the same role that the *heavens* play within the cosmos: as one is constituted by the five senses, plus the capacity to speak and the faculty of reproduction, so the other is constituted by the seven circles of the planets. This reveals Philo's great fascination for the mysterious meaning of the *number seven*, i.e., the one that, being the *number of Creation*, is necessarily present in everything that exists, so that it encompasses both the *heavens* and the *earth* and so that it shall endure until the end of the universe.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, Philo insists that in the human being the faculty of reasoning (*nous*) deserves to be compared to the role played by the sun in the *cosmos*.<sup>33</sup> After all, according to Philo's exegesis of *Genesis 1:27*, the fact that *man* was created "after the image of God" means simply that man's higher nature is essen-

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<sup>29</sup> Richard Arthur Baer, *Philo's Use of the Categories Male and Female* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1970).

<sup>30</sup> *De opificio mundi*, 146. Cf. Baer, *Philo's Use of the Categories*, p. 17.

<sup>31</sup> *Quis Rerum Divinarum Heres*, 232-233. Cf. Baer, *Philo's Use of the Categories*, p. 18.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. *De opificio mundi*, 111.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. *Quis Rerum Divinarum Heres*, 263.

tially like divine nature. In *De opificio mundi*, Philo interprets Genesis 1:27 as referring to the *higher nous* present in empirical man.<sup>34</sup>

According to Philo, given the fact that the *heavens* – which are also *image of God* – are positioned *between* the Creator and the human creature, *man* can rightly be understood as a “small (*brachos*) heaven”<sup>35</sup> and the world as the “greatest and most perfect man.”<sup>36</sup> Thus, for Philo *man* is a miniature world (*microcosm*), an idea that he himself attributes to some unnamed philosophers of whom he says that they “declare that man is a small world and alternatively the world a great man.”<sup>37</sup> Like the *macrocosmos*, which consists of a body and a Logos within it, *man*, the *microcosmos*, consists of body and mind, whereby according to Philo this mind in the body is like the immanent Logos in the world, a part of the incorporeal Logos which existed prior to the creation of the world. Philo refers to the preexistent Logos and the Logos in *man* as being two Logoi, i.e., “one the archetypal Logos above us, the other the copy of it which we possess.”<sup>38</sup> In another passage he describes these two Logoi as “the mind within us and the mind above us.”<sup>39</sup> Moreover, like the immanent Logos in the world, the Logos immanent in *man* also constitutes the principle of order and harmony and “purposive rational action in man.” In other words, the relationship of the higher *nous* to the powers of the irrational soul is like the relationship of a king towards his state, i.e., it governs and unifies all these powers, which are like its bodyguard and follow it as an escort of sorts.<sup>40</sup>

The particular importance of Philo’s contribution to the articulation of the analogy of man to the world as a *microcosm* to a *macrocosm* is due to the fact that it unveils one of the very first successful attempts

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<sup>34</sup> *De opificio mundi*, 69. Cf. Baer, *Philo’s Use of the Categories*, op.cit., pp. 23-24.

<sup>35</sup> *De opificio mundi*, 82. Cf. Harry Austryn Wolfson, *Philo: Foundations of Religious Philosophy in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*. 5th print (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982), vol. I, p. 425.

<sup>36</sup> *De migratione Abrahami*, 220. Cf. Wolfson, *Philo*, I, p. 425.

<sup>37</sup> *Quis Rerum Divinarum Heres*, 155. Cf. Wolfson, *Philo*, I, pp. 424-425.

<sup>38</sup> *Quis Rerum Divinarum Heres*, 230. Cf. Wolfson, *Philo*, I, p. 425.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem*, 236. Cf. *Ibidem*.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Wolfson, *Philo*, I, p. 425.

to reconcile Jewish *faith* with Greek *philosophy*. Philo's interpretation becomes particularly suggestive, for example, in passages like the one in the *De vita Mosis* in which he compares the ornaments of the High Priest to a replica of the entire universe. Granted that the one carrying these cannot be worthy of the Lord Himself, he always must, at least, strive to become so in relation to the *world*, i.e., he must attempt to become himself a *brachus kosmos* (a *world in abbreviated form*).<sup>41</sup>

The analogy and interaction between *microcosm* and *macrocosm* also finds relevant echo among the Church Fathers, particularly the Cappadocians.<sup>42</sup> For example, Saint Basil of Caesarea (c.330-379) in one of his sermons refers to the fact that man is able to see the wisdom of the Creator as in a *microcosm* by means of introspection.<sup>43</sup> While speaking in these terms he was not, however, addressing the problem of the *mystical presence* of God in the soul, nor was he speaking of the *cosmos* in terms of the human body; rather, he was speaking of the interaction among the different elements that constitute the human being as an analogy of *cosmic order*. Both one and the other are, for him, a reflection of God's infinite wisdom. On the other hand, Saint Gregory of Nazianzus (329-389) seems to have used, at least on one occasion, the expression *O MIKROS KOSMOS* as a designation for *man*, in relation not so much to man's constitution itself, but to "his receptive powers in their relation to the outside world, on account of which the human soul may be said to contain this world within itself."<sup>44</sup> On his part, Saint Gregory of Nyssa (c.330-c.395) uses the notion of *man as microcosm* in different places, both explicitly and, more often, implicitly.<sup>45</sup> Saint Gregory's comparison of the *cosmos* to a single

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<sup>41</sup> Cf. *De vita Mosis*, II, xxvi, 133-135. Cf. Rico, *op.cit.*, pp. 28-30. See also: Jean Laporte, *Théologie liturgique de Philon d'Alexandrie et d'Origene* (Paris: Paris, 1995).

<sup>42</sup> For a general introduction to the thought of the three great Cappadocian Fathers, see: Anthony Meredith, *The Cappadocians* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1995).

<sup>43</sup> *Hom. in illud, Attende tibi ipsi*, 7. Cf. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 31.

<sup>44</sup> Thunberg, *Microcosm and Mediator*, *op.cit.*, p. 135.

<sup>45</sup> On the main aspects of Saint Gregory's thought, see: Jean Daniélou, *Platonisme et théologie mystique: Essai sur la doctrine spirituelle de Saint Grégoire de Nysse* (Paris: Aubier, Éditions Montaigne, 1944); Walther Völker, *Gregor von*

*musical harmony* is particularly striking. It is one of which God is both the author and the interpreter. Accordingly, when he stresses that *man* is a *microcosm* and constitutes a mirror of the harmony of the universe, he is emphasizing the fact that both in *cosmos* and in *man* there is a certain imitation of the Creator. This, after all, is the explanation for the fact that, by virtue of reason, *man* is able to find in the *megacosmos* what he first discovers in the *microcosm* that he himself is. The human mind, thus, recognizes that both in the world of man (*microcosm*) and in the universe one and the same *harmony* is presented. Indeed, one of the axioms at work in Gregory of Nyssa's anthropological vision is the principle that human nature reflects in a smaller scale, like a mirror, the reality of the larger world.<sup>46</sup> Moreover, this also constitutes for him a favorite proof for the existence of the soul. Since man is called a *microcosm* precisely in the measure that it is constituted by the same elements as the *megacosmos*, the inference follows that from the vision of the body the existence of the soul must also be posited.<sup>47</sup> This idea became so commonly accepted that in some liturgical texts of Alexandria the human being receives the qualification of *kosmopolites* and *kosmou kosmos*.<sup>48</sup> The Greek Fathers were indeed so acquainted with this notion that authors like Gregory of Nazianzus and Maximus the Confessor seem to find in the notion of *mikros kosmos* a correct expression for the *glory of man*. In the same line of thought, Eriugena will even coin a new name for man, namely, *officina omnium*.<sup>49</sup> For the Cappadocians, however, the true reason for man's greatness and glory is ultimately due, not to his likeness to the universe; on the contrary, to the fact that he is created as an *image* and in *similitude* to the Creator.<sup>50</sup>

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*Nyssa als Mystiker* (Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1955); and Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Présence et pensée: Essai sur la philosophie religieuse de Grégoire de Nysse* (Paris: G. Beauchesne, 1988).

<sup>46</sup> Cf. *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 44, 441.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 46, 28.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. F. E. Brightman, ed., *Liturgies, eastern and western being the texts, original or translated, of the principal liturgies of the church*. Edited with introductions and appendices by F.E. Brightman on the basis of the former work by C.E. Hammond (Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press; Macmillan, 1896).

<sup>49</sup> Cf. *Patrologia Latina*, 122, 530). Cf. Rico, *op.cit.*, pp. 35-36.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Thunberg, *op.cit.*, p. 135.

In the terms proper to his allegorical interpretation of Sacred Scripture, Origenes (185-254) not only asserts that within *man* there are all kinds of sacrifices to be offered, but also affirms, particularly in his interpretation of *Matthew* 5, 14, that the human being is indeed another *world*, only *smaller*, within which not only the sun, the moon and the stars can be found, but also God Himself. Furthermore, since *man* can see within himself all the things that constitute the *world*, no one should ever doubt that each and every *man* has within himself “the animals that are immolated in the holocausts.”<sup>51</sup> As *world of the world*, *man* is called to contemplate within himself the whole of creation and so come to see everything that is in some way related to himself; in other words, the human being is called not only to look to the exterior of things, but also, and primarily, to look inside himself and, there, in the intellectual cellars of the soul and no longer in need of images and representations, prepare a true dwelling for the coming of God.<sup>52</sup>

Finally, and just for the sake of exemplification, we also would like to refer in this context the contribution of Ramón Llull (1232-1316). For the Catalan philosopher, the entire universe reflects itself in each one of the parts that constitute it. At the same time Llull declares it to be present in the human being in a very special way, precisely because in him *participen coses esperitais e corporals*. His *El Arbre de ciència*, and the fourteen trees that it depicts, manifests with great beauty how reality is structured in accordance with a hierarchy that goes from the lowest degree in the scale of nature, the *elemental tree*, to the highest one, the *divinal tree*, and how in each one of them *totes coses, esplegades o emplegades* are present, and, thus, how through them we are led to *entendre les altres ciències*.<sup>53</sup> Llull’s presentation of this analogy of the tree is so masterful that the reader has no difficulty in understanding

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<sup>51</sup> Cf. *Patrologia Graeca*, 12, 449 and 450; Cf. Rico, *op.cit.*, p. 36.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. *Patrologia Graeca*, 79, 252. See: Angela Maria Mazzanti, *L’uomo nella cultura religiosa del tardo-antico: Tra etica e ontologia*. 1. ed. (Bologna: Patron, 1990).

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Ramón Llull, *Arbre de sciencia, escrit a la ciutat de Roma l’any M.CC.lxxxxv*. Transcripcioo directa...per Moss. Salvador Galmes (Palma de Mallorca: Comissio Editora Lulliana, 1917-1926), vol. 2, p. 341; and vol 1, p. 4. Cf. Also Rico, *op.cit.*, pp. 80-81.

the similarities in the configuration of each one of them and, above all, in understanding that each one of the different trees recapitulates the previous one. For example, if we take the fifth tree, the *humanal*, we are able to see in it the confluence of the *elemental*, the *vegetal*, the *sensual* and the *imaginal*, which is precisely the same as to say that *man* congregates in himself all the ingredients of the material world (the four elements and the three potencies), together with a fifth nature, the *soul*.<sup>54</sup>

Indeed, for Ramón Llull the human being clearly constitutes a true *microcosm*.<sup>55</sup> In his *Proverbis*, for example, he also reminds us of the fact that *en cascù home ha de totes creatures, e cascù home pot de totes creatures*, and that from both the greatness and the misery of man this is to be derived: *En bo home són exaltades totes les corporals substàncies, e en mal home devallades e avilades*.<sup>56</sup> From the principle that *man* is conceived as *image and similitude of God* and that *creation* carries the *traces of the Trinity*, Llull concludes that it is in the *human soul* that the most eloquent signs of God's presence are given. Indeed, the *soul* is, with its three potencies, the *estrument ab lo qual les corporals substàncies atenyen llur fi en Deu*.<sup>57</sup> Therefore, the human being constitutes for Llull the privileged space of encounter between the material and the spiritual realms and reflects with eminent clarity the reality of the Divine. In the humanity of Jesus Christ, he who is the most authentic and perfect *microcosm*, Divinity is present not only as a *reflection*, but in the fullness of God's own being. Indeed, the thirteenth tree in *El Arbre de ciència* is

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<sup>54</sup> Ramón Llull, *Arbre de sciència*, vol. 1, p. 175. Cf. Rico, *op.cit.*, p. 81.

<sup>55</sup> Regarding this point, see in particular the study of Robert Pring-Mill, *El microcosmos lullia* (Palma de Mallorca: 1961). Also of interest from the same author is "The Analogical Structure of the Lullian Art," in S. M. Stern, Albert Hourani, Vivian Brown, eds., *Islamic Philosophy and the Classical Tradition: Essays Presented by His Friends and Pupils to Richard Walzer on His Seventieth Birthday* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1972) pp. 315-326.

<sup>56</sup> Ramón Llull, *Proverbis de Ramon: Mil proverbis, proverbis densenyament*. Transcripció directa amb facsimil, introducció i variants dels mes vells manuscrits per Moss. Salvador Galmes (Palma de Mallorca: Institut d'Estudis Catalans de Barcelona, 1928), p. 211.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 208.

said to be the one *en qui participa lo Creador ab totes creaturas, en quant són ajustades abdues les natures en unitat de persona*.<sup>58</sup>

In the *Libre de home*, Lull describes the *dignity of man* in terms specifically attuned to a dialectic of activity and passivity: “En cors de home ha parts actives e passives, e actus naturals qui són de les parts actives e passives. Les parts actives són elamentativitat e vegetativitat, sensitivitat e yimaginativita [por los cuatro componentes corporales], possitivitat, appetivjtat e vi rtujtivitat, verativitat e delectativitat [y se sobreentienden ‘bonitivitat,’ ‘magnitivitat’ y demás, hasta apurar las Dignidades], de qui són la elamentativitat, vegetativitat, sensitivitat e yimaginativitat; e totes aquestes parts actives són una forma comuna del cors de home. Les parts passives corporals e naturals del cors del home són elementabilitat, vegetabilitat. Sensibilitat e ymaonabilitat, e lur corporal e natural bonibilitat, magnibilitat *et cetera*.”<sup>59</sup>

The point of doctrine that we want to emphasize here is the fact that for Lull the entire *spiritual reality* of the universe folds and unfolds itself in terms that are analogous and comparable to the *human soul*, as the *material reality* of the same universe, with all its creatures (mineral, vegetal and animal), folds and unfolds itself in terms similar to the workings of the *human body*. Moreover, we must also remember that in his *trinitarian* understanding of the universe,<sup>60</sup> Ramón Lull grounds his metaphysical explanation upon the notion that there is an essential link between *soul* and *body*. In the *Libre de home* he writes: “Lo cors ha forma enformada per la forma de la ànima, e que de la sua forma essencial e de la essencial forma de la ànima és composta la forma del home, enaxí passada en terc nombre de forma de ànima e de cors.”<sup>61</sup>

Here it is also very important to remember the fact that all the philosophical efforts developed by Lull were primarily directed to finding all the reasons needed for the explanation of the central dogmas of Christian faith, particularly the dogma of the *Trinity* and of

<sup>58</sup> Ramón Lull, *Arbre de sciencia*, vol. 2, p. 205. Cf. Rico, *op.cit.*, p. 82.

<sup>59</sup> Ramón Lull, *Obres de Ramon Lull* (Palma de Mallorca: 1901-1950), vol. 21, p. 27. Cf. Rico, *op.cit.*, p. 82.

<sup>60</sup> See: Robert Pring-Mill, “The Trinitarian World Picture of Ramon Lull,” *Romanistisches Jahrbuch* (7, 1955-1956) pp. 229-256.

<sup>61</sup> Ramón Lull, *Obres de Ramon Lull*, vol 21, p. 14. Cf. Rico, *op.cit.*, p. 83-84.

the *Incarnation*, in terms that could be understood and accepted by all the members of the three major monotheistic religions. Hence, the crucial importance and vital role that the notion of man as *microcosm* plays for Llull. At the center of his thought, however, is the understanding that it is in the person of Jesus Christ that we can find the most perfect realization of *man as microcosm*.<sup>62</sup>

Llull and Lullism were destined, almost inevitably, to play a very important role in the philosophical (and literary) development of the Renaissance.<sup>63</sup> Moreover, his name is also profoundly associated with the *philosophy* and the *mystic of love*.<sup>64</sup> In v. 258 of his *Libre de amich e amat*, Llull writes: "The beloved is far above love, and far below love is the lover. And love, which is in the middle, lowers the beloved to the lover and raises the lover to the beloved. This lowering and raising are the beginning and the life of that love by which the lover suffers and the beloved is served."<sup>65</sup>

As Llull says in his *Arbre de filosofia d'amor*, "love is the cord that binds the lover to his beloved" so that, as Sala-Molins explains, the *union* between lover and beloved can exist only *in love*, and not in the

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<sup>62</sup> Regarding Llull's contribution for a *dialogue* of the religions, see: Walter Andreas Euler, *Unitas et Pax: Religionsvergleich bei Raimundus Lullus und Nikolaus von Kues* (Würzburg; Altenberge: Echter; Telos Verlag, 1990); and Ruedi Imbach et al., *Raymond Lulle: Christianisme, judaisme, islam. Les actes du Colloque sur R. Lulle*, Université de Fribourg, 1984 (Fribourg, Suisse: Éditions universitaires, 1986).

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Eusebio Colomer, *De la Edad Media al Renacimiento: Ramón Llull, Nicolás de Cusa, Juan Pico della Mirandola* (Barcelona: Herder, 1975); J. N. Hillgarth, *Ramón Lull and Lullism in Fourteenth-Century France* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971); Paolo Rossi, "The legacy of Ramon Lull in sixteenth-century thought," *Mediaeval and Renaissance Studies* (5, 1961) pp. 182-213; and Frances Amelia Yates, *Lull & Bruno* (London; Boston: Routledge & K. Paul, 1982).

<sup>64</sup> Ramón Llull, *Libre de amich e amat*. Text original directament trelladat d'un codic trecentista, ab proemi, notes y glosari den M. Obrador y Bennassar (Palma de Mallorca: 1904).

<sup>65</sup> Cf. *Doctor Illuminatus: A Ramon Llull Reader*. Edited and translated by Anthony Bonner, with a new translation of *The Book of the Lover and the Beloved* by Eve Bonner (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 222.

*fusion* of the persons.<sup>66</sup> Indeed, the Lullian mysticism is a true mysticism of *difference*, a vision of love that clearly articulates one of the most demanding aspects of the relation between the *same* and the *other*, i.e., the one between *union* and *separation*.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Cf. Louis Sala-Molins, "Le refus de l'Identification dans la Mystique Lullienne," *Estudios Lulianos* (9, 1965), pp. 39-53; 181-192 (p. 43).

<sup>67</sup> One of the best accounts of Lull's mysticism can be found in Louis Sala-Molins, *La philosophie de l'amour chez Raymond Lulle*. Préface de Vladimir Jan-kélévitch (Paris: Mouton, 1974).

## **Aristotle's *Nous* as *Telos*-related Reasoning: Two main Contrasts with the Enlightenment Notion of Mind**

LIAO SHENBAI

In this presentation, I will focus on a very basic concept of Aristotle, i.e., his concept of *nous*, and some relevant issues. The main idea is roughly as follows. The concept of *nous* in Aristotle's themes about human beings is basically a sort of thinking or reasoning activity, a *telos*-related thinking or reasoning activity to be exact, in the realm of human practice, that requires a man to have the insight of the *telos* he has acquired when considering particulars of his practices. This sort of thinking and reasoning has been degraded, as a whole, in the post-Aristotle era. The first stage of this degradation is perhaps the one characteristic of man's turning his sight from *telos* (the goodness) to virtue. In the era of Enlightenment, when the people of Europe wanted to shape their social life without the bondages of Christianity and the Greek conception of the human being came to be admired, philosophers, quite naturally, endeavored to get rid of the concept of *telos* and its related approach of thinking and reasoning. This process has continued and has come to constitute the background characteristic that the only approach to thinking and reasoning possible for men seems to be the measuring of reason, this was originally an auxiliary element of that *telos*-related thinking and reasoning on affairs of human practice, and which men would use only when there was a need. Meanwhile it is possible to think of these affairs in a counting or measuring manner.

It should be noted that this process of transition of the comprehension of man's potential of thinking and reasoning has brought about many further transitions in the West. I will not, however, go into these. I will leave aside the enquiry as to whether this approach to thinking and reasoning could still be alive in the West, or if it helps one to live in the modern world. I will follow a suggestion of Chinese wisdom, i.e.: in the affairs of human beings, it might be best only to

say, "Try to comprehend the origin better, and you will find the better way to go further."

### Aristotle's Concept of *Nous*

Aristotle's concept of *nous*, as I read it, basically denotes a *telos*-related thinking or reasoning, differing itself from the theoretical thinking (*touthoretikou*), in that when it goes, it will always go with a certain comprehension or insight of the *telos* (An433a14). By *telos*, Aristotle means something a man will construe as the final cause of his goodness (NE 1094a19-21), that is, he will pursue it merely for its own sake and nothing more. Again, by someone's goodness, he means the achievement of that thing which constitutes the good that we regard as the goodness of human beings, or of normally well-cultivated men (NE 1094a22).

*Nous*, for Aristotle, is both a part of the soul characteristic of this sort of thinking and reasoning (An 407a20-21), and a potentiality or state of the soul that thinks and forms judgments (An 429a22); not that sort of thinking and reasoning concerned with creation or production (which is called craft), but that concerned with the affairs of practice (NE 1139a11, 1140a3-4); this sort of thinking or reasoning, as faculty or state of the soul, is found only in human beings or highly intellectual beings (An 429a6-7). This thinking or reasoning is both an intellectual faculty or state of the soul, and its activities, presenting itself only in thinking or reasoning activities (An402b13).

In comparison with theoretical thinking, this thinking and reasoning faculty and its activities is not concerned with unchangeable things, but is concerned with the affairs of human life, which are full of all kinds of changes. We, as human beings, have become accustomed to having these kinds of intellect activities when we begin to think of things concerned with the problems of our lives. The nature of this thinking and reasoning lies in the fact that when it is happening, we think of the issues we are facing with a sort of comprehension of the *telos* we already have. *Nous* is the only intellectual faculty that helps us to comprehend the first principles (*argae*) (NE 1141a8) connected with the *telos* we have.

One remarkable characteristic of the activities of *nous* is that when *nous* goes, it goes in a zigzag route around the issues we are facing, as the matters we think of with *nous* are variable particulars, until it reaches to some ultimate point on which we need no more thinking than a decision, that is, a so-and-so act (NE 1143a29).

It is remarkable that in *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle sees, on one hand, *nous* and *phronesis* as belonging to the same genesis, as he sorts out the intellect virtues in two categories in VI-11:

Wisdom  
Science *nous*  
Craft *phronesis*,

while on the other hand, he tries to differentiate *nous* from *phronesis*, saying that the former goes upward to comprehend the first principles, whereas the latter goes downward to the ultimate particulars, and even in this sense, he call them opposites (NE 1142a). But the impression of this seemingly opposition will disappear as we read his following observation on *nous*:

And *nous* is concerned with the ultimate in both directions:...in demonstrations it grasps the unchangeable and primaries, while in practical reasoning it grasps the ultimate, the contingent fact, and the minor proposition, since these are the first principles of those things (NE 1142a34-b1).

Thus, we might say that, according to Aristotle, whenever we do not have any concrete interest, but only a very general one, i.e., an interest in thinking over the question, 'What is the good of my whole or enduring life?', we will think of things upward until we grasp some comprehensive insight (at least new to us, in some respect) to the question. Whenever, on the other hand, we think of a question like 'Is this a kind of sweet food?' or, 'should I pardon Zhang this time?' we will be thinking downwardly of our practical affairs. In this direction, the comprehension or insight of the good in our newly adjusted vision will be conducted downward until we come to some ultimate point.

A seeming truth here perhaps lies in this: the clearer we think of things upward, the better we will think and reason downwardly to reach a proper ultimate point. These two routes of thinking and reasoning seem to cooperate well with each other.

## The Downward Reasoning

### *The Status of the Virtuous Man*

Let us go along in this second direction with Aristotle and see what we will encounter. We have to, however, go through a perspective of Aristotle, i.e., to observe it from a different status of human beings.

Suppose first that we are virtuous, that we are good men, who have already acquired insights of the good during our whole, or enduring lives. We will not lose these insights because they have been acquired over a long period of practice; at the beginning we did not feel things and do things this way, but we finally acquired the characters we now have. These insights will shine through the zigzag route of this downward thinking and reasoning: 1) in the sense that they will help to locate those proper intermediate ends that are both means of the *telos* and the things we regard as ends; and 2) in the sense that they will help us to find the virtuous state in feelings and actions that we will call the mean.

When faced with the need to make a decision, we have in mind the comprehension or insight of the good, which turns into some sort of notion about the good and plays an important role in downward thinking or reasoning. Normally we will not need anything more to help us make a judgment, for many of the things we encounter are pretty clear in nature, and thus we will "see" clearly (NE 1113a30-31). For instance, to live temperately will appear to be among the nobler things and, by itself, a pleasant thing for us (NE 1104b6-7). On the other hand, adultery and the like will, by itself, appear to be a base conduct (NE 1107a10-11), as we have already firmly acquired a character of feeling about things this way.

On those occasions when the decisions we have to make are most difficult and the whole situation seems to be involuntary, as Aristotle says, a good man, with these insights in mind and the proper character, will still make the best choice that a man can make. For instance, a good man will withstand his sufferings up to the point that a man can, as long as his limbs are under his control, because he has the comprehension of a noble *telos*, which makes him different from a

bad man who has not (NE 1110a20-24). This noble *telos*, Aristotle says, will shine even in misfortunes, when a virtuous man will calmly and peacefully withstand a misfortune he has unfortunately encountered (NE 1100b29-30).

In some cases, however, the mean itself is sometimes obscure (NE 1108b20-26; 32-34), thus difficult to locate (NE 1109a22-31; b14-15), and all the important particulars we must be aware of (NE 1106b19-21) vary continuously (NE 1106b1-5). We may need serious deliberation and thus may need some sort of measured reasoning to help; when there is such a need, it is possible for a man to use this auxiliary approach. This sort of thinking and reasoning helps our comprehension and insights to go zigzag to the situation we are facing, clarifying a realm in which we are safest to do well and avoid mistakes. It is auxiliary simply because it cannot alone ensure us of this result, unless we keep in mind the comprehension and insight of the *telos*, and keep trying to figure out, the best way in accordance with them.

The phrase "when there is a need" needs some explanation. First of all, things of necessity do not fall within the realm of practice that we need to think and reason about (NE 1112a21-25). Second, for fortunate or unfortunate things, we do not need to think and reason about at all, for we cannot make any judgment and any choice about these things (NE 1112a25-26). Third, those things that concern us as human beings, which are not within the extent of our capacity, will not concern us (NE 1112a26). And fourth, within our control in the thinnest sense, two big exemptions have been exempted, as described.

The phrase "when it is possible" needs a more difficult explanation. First, we need to have our *nous* continuously cultured as we mature in our acquired dispositions. Our *Nous* grows with age (NE 1143b6) and the growth takes time (NE 1142a15). Second, *phronesis*, the main virtue of practical wisdom growing out of *nous*, grows together with the disposition of virtue (NE 1144b31-32). This means that we have to pay attention to the cultivation of both our moral disposition and the growth of our *nous*. Thirdly, we have to be aware of when dealing with such situations, the person, the timing, occasion, manner, etc., to avoid making ourselves drunken or asleep (NE 1110b28-29, 1111a4-7). And fourth, an implication, though Aristotle does not address it, is that we must have the proper time, since in fact

there are times we do not. And the last, in facing an intermediate end that fits our *telos*, we need to end our downward thinking and reasoning at some proper point, any good deliberation will be one taking only the proper time, not too long (NE 1142b26-28).

I will not go into further detail of Aristotle's account of the nature of this downward zigzag thinking and reasoning in the case of a good man; the main idea is that the comprehension of the *telos* he has had will always be in his mind and will not be lost, and meanwhile, the auxiliary measured thinking and reasoning may at times be a help to him.

#### *Status of the Average Man*

Now let me turn to Aristotle's account of this downward reasoning of a secondary status, that is, the status of the average man. Average decent people, for example, citizens of a state, have this potentiality of *nous* by nature, like seeds of a plant, but not, however, its growth. The actualization of this potentiality needs a condition we will call human, i.e., he actually acquires this potentiality through the practice of using it.

In the status of average people we may have had a sort of *telos*, which means we may have some comprehension or insight of the good that we as human beings may possess. However, this formed not entirely *telos* is firm, for our habits of feeling and doing things properly are not so well-cultured, and we still have bad habits, especially in that we still have bad desires for improper objects and for enjoying necessary pleasures to improper degrees. Thus, our dispositions of feeling and doing things with the comprehension or insight of the *telos* are not certain. Only on a firmly formed good manner of feeling and doing things can this disposition be firmly cultivated.

Because the disposition of fine feeling and good behavior is weak the inner comprehension or insight of the *telos* is not firm enough, during this downward zigzag reasoning, a man may lose this comprehension or insight of the *telos* in the sense that this weak comprehension or insight will not work well with an instable good behavior disposition. This happens in two different ways. First, we may still be continent: this means that although we still have strong desires for

improper pleasures or for enjoying pleasures of necessary to improper degrees, we can still at times overcome this tendency of yielding to these desires for the sake of that weak comprehension (NE 1145b8-13, 1146a9-12). Secondly, we may be incontinent: this means that when we have these strong desires we cannot get rid of the strong influences of them because of our instable disposition of doing proper and fine things, in which bad habits still occupy an outstanding position (NE 1145b8-13, 1146b19-23, 1148a3-7). This is, Aristotle says, something like having paralyzed limbs; when you want to move them to the right, they drag you contrarily to the left (NE 1103a18). In this latter case, although the comprehension or insight is still there, it will not work in two main senses. First, it is itself too weak, thus although it is there, it is only like some words that a drunken man can recite, and so you can say that it loses any of its influence (NE 1147a19-21). Second, the bad habits of feeling and doing things are too ingrained (NE 1149b19-20), and it will produce something like minor premise in downward reasoning that makes us go astray (NE 1147a24-36). Therefore, the man in question cannot be powerful enough to reminding himself of that weak comprehension or insight. Thus, we can hardly say that an incontinent man has the comprehension or insight of his *telos*, i.e., the true goodness of him as a human being, for his comprehension is, at best, something like the conscious state of a drunken man or a man half a sleep (NE 1147b2-6).

We might be inclined to derive from Aristotle's account that a continent man may sometimes fail to constrain himself, since the force of improper desires is very strong. Hence, an incontinent man may sometimes (of course, much less than the former) succeed in constraining himself, if we agree with a commonplace observation that average men sometimes do good things and sometimes do bad things. Thus, we can safely say that they, in fact, are both continent and incontinent. This is not to suggest that we should classify both the incontinent and the continent, as discussed by Aristotle, to be the same sort of human being. The suggestion is that we may define the incontinent and the continent in a thinner sense: the incontinent are those who, for the most part, cannot constrain themselves well but can sometimes succeed, whereas the continent are those who, for the most part, can constrain themselves well but sometimes may fail. But what

is at stake is that the above problem of the incontinent, according to Aristotle, is one of physiology, that is, a problem caused by badly-formed habits of feeling and doing things, like some 'illness' in one's mental physiology, or by the infirm disposition of feeling and doing things in good manner. Yes, in this case these two factors are mingled with each other.

I will leave aside the explanation of Aristotle's account of the status of a bad man, for the reason that this is not (I agree with Aristotle) relevant to the situation of average people. A bad man is he who either has never obtained or, even if he had, has lost the comprehension and insight of the *telos*. Instead, he has formed some other end which seems to be final to him, but both good men and average would not regard.

### **The Help of the Auxiliary Factor**

We can also sort out in Aristotle's account of the characteristics of downward thinking and reasoning, in the case of the average man, a further aspect: the psychological one based on this physiological one, the explanation of which might help to show why in this status the auxiliary factor would seem to be a help both outstanding and unique.

Once this comprehension or insight fades out, a man with a mingled disposition will feel that his desires for some pleasures, because of his ill-cultured habits of feeling and doing things, are very strong, perhaps too strong to control. Some improper objects will seem extremely attractive, and of necessity, a formed taste for the pleasure of over-taking them grows rapidly, partly because of the countless temptations around him, but basically because of the very nature of the formed taste itself.

Now this seems to be the fate of the human being: he is born of a mixed nature, and he is, based on this and in the normal situations for human beings, ready to be made into a kind of mingled disposition. Basically this is the human condition: man has been accustomed to being brought up with using pleasure as a basic discipline. As a result, we can hardly get rid of our inclinations for seeking pleasure, and hence we are used to using pleasure and pain as the standard for judging our behavior (NE 1105a2-5). The difference lies only in

whether pleasure and pain are felt in a good way or a bad way; a good man will feel them in a good way, while a bad man, in a bad way, and the average man in the indefinite, sometimes good or close but many times bad (NE 1104b30-35).

Thus, a good man needs to judge mainly on the issues of person, timing, occasion, etc. of the act in a situation as depicted in II (i), since he normally feels things in a good manner and easily finds a good way. In comparison, an average man will need to judge not only those issues, but also the companion issue of pleasure and pain, as he has formed some bad desires and tastes.

Now, going along with Aristotle, two things become obvious here. First, the potentiality of the average man's having his *nous* fully developed, a potentiality of every human being, will be heavily obstructed (NE 1147b14-15). This is because his comprehension of his *telos* is fading out, while at the same time he needs to make judgments much more than a good man does. Second, he needs to judge tough and difficult matters, i.e., matters concerned with pleasure and pain, for these things are extremely difficult for him to judge (NE 1105a8-9, 1148a5-7). He is not, according to Aristotle, a good judge of these things.

The average man, however, needs to judge matters concerned with pleasure and pain. He knows that he cannot merely rely on his feelings because he will make mistakes if he does. On feelings of pleasure and pain, both Plato and Aristotle have had strong influence in persuading average men that human beings, in a status away from the natural state, feel pleasant on things that they will not feel so in the natural state.

Now given the fact that this comprehension is fading out while at the same time the above-mentioned need is often tough and sometimes urgent, an average man will urgently look for something that seems to be helpful. He would appeal to measure those seem-to-be things that come to him, especially those seem-to-be pleasures and pains. That auxiliary factor of this *telos*-related thinking or reasoning would appear to be a kind of help, both outstanding and unique: outstanding because the comprehension or insight of the *telos* is fading out and has not been regarded as an intellect that sheds light on these matters of practice; unique because there seems to be no other can-

didate to help. It now serves an instrument for avoiding mistakes as he has come to believe that by measuring these things, he will not make the mistakes that he might have made if he merely relied on his feelings.

What does this help consist of? We will perhaps be able to answer this question by sorting out the particular problems and situations, in which average person needs this help.

First, surely, if we have two possible pleasures, we would need to measure each one to determine which is greater, since the greater, the better. Of the two possible, we would again measure to determine which one is smaller, since the greater, the worse, and the smaller, the better. Again, suppose we have to decide between an at-hand pleasure and an obscure pleasure in the future, like the pleasure that we will be feeling in some scientific studies, or between an at-hand pain and an obscure pain in the future (suppose we could imagine it at least), or suppose we have to decide between an at-hand pleasure and an obscure pain in the future, or, the opposite, between an at-hand pain and an obscure pleasure in the future, we would need to determine which one is more important for us to highlight.

Could we, in the status of the average man, always measure these things the right way? We can, if you believe that all seem-to-be pleasures or pains are measurable, and that it is easy to measure one by using the other as a scale, even if they are opposites. Many optimistic utilitarians do think this way. In what sense are all of these things measurable and can any of them serve as a scale? You would rely on this measuring using a principle like this: your feeling of pleasure or pain A can be used as a scale for measuring pleasure or pain. In this way, you still return to what you tried to get rid of, that is, relying on feelings. For both Plato and Aristotle this measuring is indeed not a reliable. For one thing, Plato would say that feelings vary and cannot serve as a scale, and that if we ignore this and try to measure the feelings of the pleasure of thinking (for instance) with those of bodily pleasure, we will be making some shallow measuring. Aristotle would add that there are vicious pleasures that we should get rid of (NE 1176a20-22), and there are pains that we ought to endure to a proper degree in order not to be shamed (NE 1150b2). You cannot simply reach a judgment by measuring how you feel about them.

Even if you try to ignore this puzzle, you will still find it difficult to get rid of the above mentioned (II [ii]) problem (proposed by both Plato and Aristotle) that men in unnatural states take pleasure from things that they would not when they are in their natural states. How could we measure the pleasure we have in our unnatural state with an other sort of pleasure that we would have in a natural state as a scale, if we do not have a notion of the pleasure we would have in our natural state? How could we measure a man's pleasure in his unnatural state with one that he would have in his natural state if we believe that he has no a notion of the latter?

Plato and Aristotle strongly doubted that real measuring could be made in this state since these kinds of pleasures contain in themselves pains out of deficiencies. I agree, and will insist that, since a man in this state would not have any idea about the nature of the pleasure he would have in his natural state, that pleasure cannot serve as a scale in his downward reasoning. These two questions would cause anyone in the status of average people to become more puzzled. It is interesting to see that in Chapter VII of his *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle does not go further to explain how an incontinent man could get help from some deliberation. In fact, Aristotle thinks that this measuring of pleasure and pain does not really help an incontinent man, because it merely helps him to form an end that may not be good for him as a human being (NE 1142b19-21).

In both these two cases, contrary to the optimistic view of utilitarianism, I do not think we can make a precise measuring on these matters. The help of this auxiliaryfactor of the downward *nous*, by-nature a *telos*-related thinking or reasoning, but now a mere instrument in the eyes of average man, is very limited for him. In the former case, the measuring can only instill in him a belief that he is making a right judgment, which is not always correct, but can sometimes help him to avoid being incontinent. He will do much better if he can keep a vision of the merits of human beings, which is still possible for him. In the latter case, since real measuring is seldom made, it is ridiculous for us to believe that this measuring will give a man in unnatural state any real help. What he needs to do is to cure his seriously ill-cultivated habits of feeling and doing things. The only defense is that in the status of a mingled-disposition we can only help

by measuring; thus, to grasp a notion of the measuring is in itself a good thing.

The limited help of this auxiliary factor of *nous*, however, will seem to be greatly increased by using his craft or technique. Craft or technique is another sort of reasoning that either helps to figure out an external end as an intermediate end, or helps to sort out the right way to achieve that end as an ultimate. With the comprehension or insight of the *telos* fading out, the auxiliary factor of *nous*, being now seen merely as a measuring tool or instrument, will go mingled with the reasoning of craft or technique. This compound may, as Aristotle rightly says (NE 1142b19-21), help to figure out the right way to an intermediate end, but this end could be harmful for the agent.

*A Notation of the two main Contrasts with the Enlightenment Notion of Mind*

I will now make some observations and remarks on the contrasts between this concept of *nous* and the Enlightenment notion of mind, but very briefly. The main idea is roughly this: The notion of mind has long been taken as a legal translation of Plato-Aristotle's *nous* in the West. In the realm of daily life and practice, the notion of mind basically denotes a downward reasoning of human beings in the average status, i.e., a reasoning activity of our intellect of counting or measuring seem-to-be things, especially seem-to-be pleasures and pains. Hence, the notion of mind has gone far astray from Plato-Aristotle's concept of *nous*. This change might have happened during the long history of the West without being noticed by normal people. Many philosophers might have noticed some traces of this change but, unfortunately, are unable to revive that fading-out concept even if they wished to. But I will leave this aside. In the following, I will pick up some important perspectives to show some contrasts between Aristotle's concept of *nous* and the modern notion of mind.

17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century philosophers of Europe, inclined to ascribe the turning of the ancient medieval world, to the modern world, to the enlightenment, a movement of thought characteristic in the average person's admiration for reason and judgments, etc. I will take this for granted and regard the change of Aristotle's concept of *nous* into the

modern notion of mind as part of it. I believe this change is crucial to that movement of thought.

The first big contrast is concerned with the way we conceive the activities of *nous* and their unique relation to wisdom. Aristotle never sees the activities of *nous*, both upward and downward, in the same way he sees the activities of science. Correspondingly, he will not regard philosophy, i.e., man's activities of pursuing wisdom, as a science. Philosophy, he says, consists of *nous* and science (NE 1141a20). What does this mean? For one thing, I think, it means that Aristotle ranks wisdom higher than science among the kinds of activities of the human intellect, and he sees it as the highest good of all human intellectual activities. By contrast, in the age of the enlightenment, science is ranked as the highest, but, to put it the other way, philosophy, the comprehensive system of pursuing wisdom, not only the upward and downward thinking and reasoning of *nous*, must be seen as a science, given that the latter is the best product of human intelligence.

The most remarkable contrast, as I see it, lies in the fact that the comprehension or insight of *telos*, which is a 'by-nature' cause or starting point of human practice, and thus fundamental in Aristotle's concept of *nous*, is fading out or missing in the notion of mind.

I have depicted (in sec. II), by virtue of Aristotle's categories of analyzing human status or conditions, the various states of human beings in which *nous* in the Aristotelian sense plays a different role. To summarize: In the status of good men, both upward and downward thinking and reasoning make sense; in the zigzag downward reasoning, upward thinking and reasoning sheds light on the route and helps locate some proper ultimate. That auxiliary factor of downward reasoning helps when we are in an intermediate situation where the mean is always obscure. In the status of average men, upward thinking or reasoning in the form of some comprehension or insight of the *telos* one has acquired, fades out and makes no sense, and in the zigzag downward reasoning, it sheds no light on the route and seems to be of no help. On the other hand, a man in this status will have a much heavier burden of reasoning to form a temporal end and locate an ultimate. In this situation, that auxiliary factor of the downward *nous* will seem to be outstanding and unique.

It is interesting to observe that with this comprehension or insight fading out or missing, an inner aspect of *nous*, i.e., the upward thinking or reasoning activity, has degenerated and become so humble an element of our intellect that ordinary people would feel ridiculous when they hear that some philosophers still talk about it. It is because of this situation that some philosophers in the West have long become accustomed to ignoring this element. Thus, when they talk of Aristotle's upward thinking and reasoning, they only pay attention to what Aristotle says about the theoretical *logos*, taking science and logic as the only examples. On the other hand, as mentioned above (sec. III), downward zigzag thinking or reasoning has long been discussed in the sense of craft or technique, as it has gone along with the latter for sometime so that it has become mingled with it into a seem-to-be indivisible compound. This mingled growth is not by itself a problem for human beings. What makes it problematic and even dangerous is that, with the comprehension or insight of the *telos* getting lost, this mingled downward measuring of the intellect would go astray.

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## Creating Character: Aristotle on Habituation, the Cognitive Power of Emotion, and the Role of Prudence\*

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Aristotle is justly regarded as the high-point and representative of the long tradition of virtue ethics. Questions like: how many kinds of virtues are there; how is virtue acquired; and does virtue lie in our rational or nonrational capacity; always play a central role when we reflect on our ethical life. Examining Aristotle's answers to these questions always proves fruitful to the understanding of this entire tradition, and ethics, as such. Aristotle famously divides virtue into intellectual virtue (*dianoētikē aretē*) and ethical virtue (*ēthikē aretē*), in accordance with the two parts of the soul that have something to do with reason. Intellectual virtue is the good quality or excellence in that part of the soul that reasons fully (*kuriōs kai en hautōi*); whereas ethical virtue is the good quality or excellence in that part of the soul that shares in reason (*logou metechēin*) (see *Nicomachean Ethics* [hereby *NE*] I.13, 1102b13-1103a10).

He then goes on to speak of the acquisition of each type of virtue: "intellectual virtue arises and grows mostly (*to pleion*) from teaching (*ek didaskalias*); that is why it needs experience and time (*empeirias deitai kai chronou*). Ethical virtue results from habit (*ex ethous*)" (*NE* II.1, 1103a15-17).<sup>1</sup> This paper is, by and large, a commentary of this statement, with more emphasis on the side of ethical virtue, together with

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<sup>1</sup> Translation of *NE* is from Aristotle (1999), with slight amendments according to Bywater's Greek text in Aristotle (1894); translation of *Politics* is from Aristotle (1984b), with slight amendments according to Ross' Greek text in Aristotle (1957); translation of *De anima* [hereby *DA*] is from Hamlyn (1993), with slight amendments according to Ross' Greek text in Aristotle (1956); translation of *Rhetoric* is from Aristotle (1984a), with slight amendments according to Ross' Greek text in Aristotle (1959).

some remarks on the closely related intellectual virtue of prudence (*phronēsis*). I will discuss in what way habituation creates one's character, and why habituation is able to lead one's feelings or emotions (*pathē*), and desires (*orexeis*) in a certain direction. This will be done by emphasizing the cognitive role of emotion and the cognitive process of habituation. In the last section, I will discuss some salient features concerning the role of prudence (*phronēsis*) in acquiring full ethical virtue.<sup>2</sup>

**"It needs experience and time."**

At the first glance, Aristotle's remark on the acquisition of intellectual virtue appears rather strange, as if to say that the acquisition of ethical virtue does not require experience and time.<sup>3</sup> I believe Brodie is right in understanding it in the following way, "Since the process of habituation also takes time, Aristotle must mean that time and experience are necessary before *didaskalia* can begin, whereas habituation begins in earliest youth. Experience precedes analysis and systematic knowledge...experience is the stuff of wisdom (*phronēsis*)."<sup>4</sup>

Aristotle's remark about the priority of experience and time for the teaching of intellectual virtue might seem to conflict with his other remark, that young people can be skilled in mathematics and similar sciences, but not possess prudence (1142a11-16).<sup>5</sup> I do not see any inconsistency in these two remarks, since this present remark says only that *didaskalia* requires experience and time before it starts, and not that it must be posterior to the full acquisition of prudence, and thus, full ethical virtue.

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<sup>2</sup> In this paper I am content with a largely static analysis of different elements in moral habituation. Burnyeat (1980) and Sherman (1988), ch.5, provide more dynamic picture of moral development.

<sup>3</sup> This oddity escapes many commentators' notice, such as Grant (1885), Stewart (1892), Burnet (1900), and Joachim (1951).

<sup>4</sup> Aristotle (2002), p. 296.

<sup>5</sup> Taylor (2006), p. 60 points out this apparent inconsistency, and appeals to "for the most part" to solve this problem, which I think neither necessary nor desirable.

Aristotle soon confirms that an early start of habituation is important, as he says, “it is not unimportant, then, to acquire one or another habit, right from youth (*euthus ek neōn*). On the contrary, it is very important, indeed all-important (*to pan*)” (II.1, 1103b23-25), and “we need to have had the appropriate upbringing – right from youth...to help us find enjoyment or pain in the right things; for this is the correct education” (II.3, 1104b11-13).<sup>6</sup> Relevant passages in *Politics* also confirm this observation. In the discussion of education (*paideia*) in the ideal city, Aristotle speaks of three things that make people good: nature, habit, and reason; the latter two are certainly the focus of education, whereas the first only provides the foundation of education (*Politics* VII.13, 1332a39-b11). He then attributes a sequence to the education of habit and reason. Habit, understood as the training of the desiring part of the soul, is prior to the training of reason or the purely rational part of the soul, just as the body is prior to the soul at birth; desires are “present in children as soon as they are born, while reasoning and intellect develop naturally in them as they mature” (VII.15, 1334b12-28); and so “it is evident that education through habit must come earlier than education through reason” (VIII.4, 1338b4-5).

How should we, then, understand the phrase “mostly” (*to pleion*)? As I see it, this phrase must be concerned with the special status of prudence. All the other intellectual virtues such as, art (*technē*, or craft), science (*epistēmē*, or scientific knowledge), intellect (*nous*, or understanding), and wisdom (*sophia*) are acquired through teaching and learning.<sup>7</sup> Prudence alone, which is about “what sort of things promote a good life in general” (VI.5, 1140a28), needs experience and

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<sup>6</sup> I will return to this passage in the next two sections.

<sup>7</sup> Some may think intellect (*nous*), understood as the intuitive grasp of the first principle (*NE* VI.6) is not acquired through teaching. If all the scientific first principles are grasped by *nous*, we can only say that only the first discovery of these principles is through intellectual intuition of the discoverer, and after that the grasp of these principles can be done through teaching and learning. The teacher can show the student certain principle is correct without any further reasoning. In this respect, I believe Barnes (1994), pp. 259-271, and McKirahan (1992), ch. 18, are not without reason to take *nous* as an intellectual state.

is developed with the interaction of habituated ethical virtue, and so it cannot be acquired by young people, as mentioned above.<sup>8</sup>

**“Ethical virtue results from habit.”**

In *NE* II.1-4 Aristotle gives his most emphasis on habituation (*ethismos*), even to the point of exaggeration. Several passages should be sufficient to illustrate this, such as, “We are by nature able to acquire them [i.e., ethical virtues],” and “We are completed through habit (*teleioutemenois de dia tou ethous*)” (II.1, 1103a25-26);<sup>9</sup> “We acquire virtue, just as we acquire arts, by having first activated them...we become just, by performing just actions; temperate, by performing temperate actions; brave by performing brave actions” (II.1, 1103a31-b1). “Actions also control the sort of state we acquire” (II.2, 1103b30-31). “If someone is afraid of everything, standing firm against nothing, he becomes cowardly; if he is afraid of nothing at all and goes forward to face everything, he becomes rash...” (II.2, 1104a20-22). “We need to have had the appropriate upbringing – right from youth...to help us find enjoyment or pain in the right things; for this is the correct education” (II.3, 1104b11-13). “It is right, then, to say that a person becomes just from performing just actions, and temperate from performing temperate actions; for no one can have the least prospect of becoming good from failing to do them” (II.4, 1105b9-12).<sup>10</sup> These passages make it clear that ethical virtue, understood as a good state (*hexis*) of character, is acquired through habituation. The abundance of these kinds of passages leads some commentators to take Aristotle’s view of habituation as non-rational, as an exaggerated opposition of

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<sup>8</sup> In the *Politics*, Aristotle says the prime of mind, i.e., the full maturity of rational capacity is around the age of fifty (VII.16, 1135b34-35). I will return to the special status of prudence by the end of this paper.

<sup>9</sup> This is perhaps the passage with the strongest sense of exaggeration, because as we will see shortly, full virtue also requires prudence, and thus is not truly completed through habituation alone.

<sup>10</sup> See also *Eudemian Ethics* (*EE*) II.2, 1220a39-b3; *Politics* VII.13; *Rhetoric* I.10, 1369b6 for similar passages.

the Socratic assimilation of ethical virtues to systematic knowledge (*epistēmē*).<sup>11</sup>

From these passages, we also see that virtue involves not only right actions, but also correct feelings (“afraid of everything”; “find enjoyment or pain in the right things”), and Aristotle says explicitly that “virtues are concerned with actions (*praxeis*) and feelings (*pathē*)” (II.3, 1104b12-13). Therefore, the habituation of the virtuous character involves two aspects, i.e., action and feelings. Given Aristotle’s distinction between external action and internal character in II.4, it is clear that in the habituation of virtue, how we internally feel is more important than how we externally act. However, it is relatively easy to understand how repeated actions can generate a habit of the same kind of action, but it is not as easy to see how this happens in the case of feelings or emotions (*pathē*), especially since feeling or emotion (*pathos*) has its root in *paschein*, a word with a passive meaning such as: “being acted upon” or “being affected.” This is precisely what we are going to examine in the next section.

**“Find enjoyment or pain in the right way.”**

Aristotle’s statement “we need to have had the appropriate upbringing – right from youth...to help us find enjoyment or pain in the right things” stands at the core of the habituation of ethical virtue. For habituation is to make the desiring part of our soul properly affected by pleasure and pain, because Aristotle emphatically defines state (*hexis*), the genus of ethical virtue, in terms of feelings: “by states I mean how we are when we are well, or badly off, in relation to feelings” (II.5, 1105b25-26), and “feeling” is defined as “whatever implies pleasure or pain,” and instantiated in appetite, anger, fear, confidence, envy, joy, love, hate, longing, jealousy, pity, and so forth (II.5, 1105b21-23). But since feeling is taken as passive, it is difficult to understand why ethical virtue is defined as “a state that decides (*hexis proairetikē*)” (II.6, 1106b36). How can we decide on something passive, or decide on how we will be acted upon?

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<sup>11</sup> For example, Grant (1885), p. 482-483 and Stewart (1892), p. 171.

Kosman's classic paper on this issue is right in appealing to Aristotle's theory of passive potentiality, to explain our ability of "being discriminately receptive and resistant,"<sup>12</sup> and he is also right to point out that this potentiality is not sufficient to explain how we are able to choose the kinds of feelings we have. But I do not think he is equally right to attempt to solve this problem by appealing to our choice of action, which, in turn and indirectly, gives rise to the proper feelings in a quasi-automatic way, as he puts it,

One recognizes, through moral education, what constitutes appropriate and correct ways to feel under certain circumstances. One acts in ways that are naturally associated with, and will 'bring about', those very feelings, and eventually the feelings become, as Aristotle might have said, second nature; that is, one develops states of character that dispose one to having the right feelings at the right time. *One does not have direct control over one's feelings*, and in this sense the feelings are not chosen; but *one does have control over the actions that establish the dispositions*, the virtues. Virtues are the source of our feeling in appropriate ways at appropriate times, and under appropriate circumstances. Although we may, in some narrow sense, not be responsible for our feelings, we are responsible for our character as the dispositional source of those feelings.<sup>13</sup>

I am not satisfied with this solution, because it renders Aristotle's emphasis on feelings in vain, or too dependent upon action. This kind of asymmetry between action and feelings does not seem palatable. Even though we have to accept a kind of asymmetrical relation between feelings and action, feelings should take the lead, since feelings and desires, which are generated by a certain feeling, are the starting points or motivations of action (VI.2, 1139a31-35), and when Aristotle defines a number of virtues, he clearly has feeling, more than action, in mind. For example, courage is defined as "a mean about feelings of

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<sup>12</sup> Kosman (1980), pp. 106-107.

<sup>13</sup> Kosman (1980), p. 112, italics mine.

fear" (III.6, 1115a6-7), temperance is said to be "a mean concerned with pleasures...and in a different way, with pains" (III.10, 1117b24-26), and more obviously, the virtue of mildness is only concerned with the feeling of anger, which is not necessarily accompanied with action (see IV.5).

To reach a more satisfactory solution, we need to emphasize the cognitive power of Aristotelian emotion. This can be seen from the following aspects.

First, we can see the cognitive power of emotion and desire from his psychological theory in the *DA*,<sup>14</sup> which provides the most substantial and scientific treatment of the different faculties of the soul. According to Aristotle, feeling and desire belongs to the perceptive part of the soul (the other two parts being nutritive and intellectual), and the faculties of perception, emotion and desire are intrinsically and necessarily connected with each other, as he says, "where there is sensation, there is also pleasure and pain, and, where these, necessarily also desire" (*DA*, II.2, 413b23-24). The two key features of this part of the soul are to make judgments and to produce movement, and the capacity of making judgments is "the function of thought and perception" (III.9, 432a15-16). Perception, and thus emotion and desire, can make assertions and denials: "Perceiving is like mere assertion and thought; when something is pleasant or painful, the soul pursues or avoids it, as if it were asserting or denying it; and feeling pleasure or pain is active with the perceptive mean toward the good or bad, as such" (III.7, 431a8-10). As one perceives something, one will be aroused to a certain pleasant or unpleasant feeling or emotion, followed by the desire to pursue or avoid it. It is precisely this judgmental faculty, common to both reason and emotion, that paves the way for the influence of reason to emotion.

Second, in Aristotle's moral psychology, emotion and desire are not blind forces, which have to be checked by sheer force, but

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<sup>14</sup> Fortenbaugh (1974) is a groundbreaking work for our understanding of Aristotelian emotion. I am in many ways following it to underscore the cognitive power of emotion and the involvement of reason in habituation. It is also a rare example that argues against the continuity between the psychological theory in the *DA* and the ethical-political works, with which I do not agree.

something having a share of reason. For Aristotle, the desiring part (*orektikon*) of the soul,

[S]hares in reason in a way, insofar as it both listens to reason and obeys it. This is the way we are said to ‘listen to reason’ from father or friends, as opposed to giving the reason [we ‘give the reason’ in mathematics]. The nonrational part of the soul is also persuaded in some way by reason, as is shown by correction, and by every sort of reproof (*epitimēsis*) and exhortation (*paraklēsis*). (I.13, 1102b30-1103a1)

Reproof and exhortation provide the key to the training of feelings. Reproof and exhortation are related to two pairs of significant themes in ethical habituation, i.e., to like (*chairein*) and hate (*misein*) correctly, and nobility (*to kalon*) and shamefulness (*to aischron*). To reprove is to keep the desiring part of the soul from what is shameful and makes it hate the shameful; to exhort is to encourage it toward what is noble, and to make it pursue the noble. This is done through interaction between reason and desire, just like that between father and child, as Aristotle’s analogy makes clear. Without attributing cognitive power to the desiring part of the soul, it is not possible for reproof and exhortation to work. This point is further illustrated by a passage in the *Politics*,

The soul rules the body with the characteristic rule of a master, while the intellect (*nous*) rules desire (*orexeōs*) with a political (*politikēn*) and kingly rule (*basilikēn*); this makes it evident that it is natural and advantageous for the body to be ruled by the soul, and the emotional part (*pathētikōi moriōi*) by intellect and the part of the soul having reason, while it is harmful to both if the relation is equal or reversed. (*Politics* I.5, 1254b2-9)

The relevant aspect of the distinction between the master’s rule of a slave on the one hand, and the political and kingly rule on the other, in this context, is precisely that the former is based on com-

pulsion and unwillingness, whereas the latter, on persuasion and willingness.

The analogy between father and child, and the use of reproof and exhortation may be more telling, because they reveal the source of authority in the habituation of emotion and desire. As a father has external authority regarding the child, and as reproof and exhortation must be practiced through some external authority, in the habituation of desire, at least in the first stage of moral development, the reason involved must be external. It is not the child's or the young man's own reason (for at this stage, his reason has not been developed), but the reason of the *polis*, i.e., its law, which is seen as "intellect without desire" (*Politics* III.16, 1287a32), and which aims at the good habituation of citizens, for "the legislator makes citizens good by habituating them, and this is the desire of every legislator; if he fails to do it well, he misses the goal" (*NE* II.1, 1103b2-5).

Third, emotions are not random reactions to any feature of our environment, but selective reactions to certain features of the environment, and they are achieved through a complicated combination of three different cognitive faculties, such as perception, belief, and imagination (*phantasia*). This so-called "intentional theory of emotion" is most fully articulated in Book II of the *Rhetoric*.<sup>15</sup> Aristotle proceeds by analyzing the three specific features of each emotion, i.e., the mental state of people having the emotion, in whom the emotion is aroused, and for what reason it is aroused (II.1, 1378a23-24). Accordingly Aristotle defines each emotion very specifically. For example, anger is defined as "a desire (*orexis*) accompanied by pain, for a conspicuous revenge for a conspicuous slight (*oligōrian*) by someone who has no reason to slight oneself or one's friends" (II.2, 1378a30-32). It is further specified as "toward some particular individual...it must be felt because the other has done or intended to do something to him or one of his friends. It must be attended by a certain pleasure – that which arises from the expectation of revenge" (1278a33-b2). In anger, there must be a *perception* of the slight directed to himself or his friend, the *belief* that it was not justified, and the *imagination* of revenge. Similar

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<sup>15</sup> For some fuller discussion of this theory, see Striker (1996), Nussbaum (1996), and especially Konstan (2006).

is the case of fear, which is defined as “a pain or disturbance due to the imagination (*phantasias*) of some destructive or future painful evil” (II.5, 1382a21-22). We may infer that if any of the features constitutive to anger are removed, such as: one is persuaded by reason that he was hit by someone by accident, or that he should not easily get angry by some small slight, or that he foresees no way to take revenge in this situation, then he will not become angry. The different ways we feel anger determine whether we are a mild, inirascible or irascible person. Similarly, the different ways we feel fear determine whether we are a brave, cowardly, or rash person. On the one hand, what we perceive, think and imagine affects our emotions; on the other hand, emotions also affect what we perceive, think and imagine, as we are all too familiar from our daily experiences, and also from Aristotle’s definition of emotion in the *Rhetoric*, “the emotions are all those things that *so change men as to make them differ in judgments (diapherousi pros tas kriseis)*, and that are also attended by pain and pleasure” (II.1, 1378a19-21).<sup>16</sup>

Fourth, Aristotle’s description of ‘wish’ (*boulēsis*), and its connection with character, provides some clues about the cognitive power of desire. This can be seen as an extension of the first point, but for two reasons would like to single it out: (1) I tend not to agree with a commonplace conclusion among scholars that wish is a rational desire generated by reason itself;<sup>17</sup> and (2) the discussion of wish and decision (*prohairesis*) as related to wish, provides a natural transition to the last section on prudence.

That wish (*boulēsis*) does not belong to the fully rational part of the soul, it seems to me, makes an important difference between Aristotle’s moral psychology and Plato’s. Plato unmistakably holds that each of the three parts of the soul has its own desire (see *Republic* IX. 580d-592b), but for Aristotle, the motivational function of desire is explicitly distinguished from the non-motivational function of reason, as he says “the starting point of an action – the source of motion, not

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<sup>16</sup> I certainly do not mean to suggest that emotion can be reduced to its cognitive components as analyzed above. It is, in the end, a kind of affectation, or sensitivity besides these cognitive components.

<sup>17</sup> See, for just a few examples, Mele (1984), Hamlyn (1993), and Cooper (1999).

the goal (*hou heneka*) – is decision (*prohairesis*); the principle of decision is desire and goal-directed reason (*logos ho heneka tinos*)...thought by itself moves nothing; what moves us is goal-directed and practical thought" (*NE VI.2*, 1139a31-36, italics mine). According to Aristotle, the goal of action is set by wish (*III.4*, 1113a15), and deliberation is the goal-directed and practical thought, which is the function of prudence.

I believe there are two important facts that counter the common view that wish is generated by reason itself. First, it is a simple fact that appetite (*epithumia*), spirit (*thumos*), and wish (*boulēsis*) are all kinds of desire (*orexis*), and all belong to the desiring part of the soul (*orektikon*), not the purely rational part (see *DA II.3*, 414b2). This is a basic distinction made in Aristotle's moral psychology (see *NE I.13*). An important passage (*DA III.9*, 432b5-7), which is usually taken as support for the similarity of Aristotle and Plato, after careful scrutiny of the context, cannot do the service as many think, for in this passage: Aristotle does not give his own view, but raises some questions concerning the consequences of the Platonic division of the soul.<sup>18</sup> Second, Aristotle's remark about children having wish, but not reason, shows that wish cannot belong to the fully rational part of the soul: "spirit and wish, and furthermore appetite, are present in children immediately at their birth, while reasoning (*logismos*) and intellect (*nous*) develop naturally in them as they mature" (*Politics VII.15*, 1334b22-25).<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Whether Aristotle's distinction of desire is consistent throughout his corpus, such as *Topics*, *Rhetoric*, *DA*, *NE*, *EE*, *Politics*, and so forth, is certainly too big a question to be tackled here. But so far as I am aware, only in the *Topics*, arguably an early work, Aristotle unmistakably says "wish is always found in the reasoning faculty (*pasa gar boulēsis en tōi logistikōi*)" (*IV.5*, 126a12-13). All the rest discussions do not necessarily support this kind of "Platonic" understanding of wish.

<sup>19</sup> One anonymous referee raises another interpretation of this passage, which is supposed to support the common view: the three kinds of desire mentioned in this passage, spirit, wish and appetite correspond to natural instinct, emotion, and thought, so wish stands for desire based on thought. I believe this understanding does not do justice to Aristotle's contrast between desire and intellect (*nous* as broadly understood in this context) in general. If thought (*dianoia*) is the function of intellect (broadly speaking), as it surely is,

According to this understanding, wish is the desire for something good<sup>20</sup> and sets the goal for action (*NE* III.4), and the basic mechanism of decision or choice (*prohairesis*) is this (see *NE* III.2-3):

Deliberation (prudence)  
Wish Decision  $\longrightarrow$

The cognitive faculty of wish can be shown clearly in the following passage:

Should we say, in reality without qualification, that what is wished for is good, but for each person, is what is wished for apparently good? For the excellent person (*spoudaios*), then, what is wished will be what it is in reality, while, for the base person, what is wished is whatever it turns out to be...for the excellent person *judges* (*krinei*) each sort of thing correctly, and in each case, what is true *appears* (*phainetai*) to him (*NE* III.4, 1113a23-31, italics mine).

Furthermore, the appearance of what is good, the object of wish, is determined by our character,

But some may say that everyone aims at the apparent good, and does not control how it *appears*, but on the contrary, his character controls how the end *appears* to him. If each person is, in some way, responsible for his own state [of character], he is also, in some way, responsible for how [the end] *appears* (*NE* III.5, 1114a31-b3, italics mine).

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then what Aristotle means here is that wish, as a kind of desire, is to be distinguished from thought.

<sup>20</sup> This judgment does not necessarily made by reason, as the above section emphasizes the cognitive capacity of desire makes clear. This can also be seen from the close connection between wish and character (see below). Since our character traits do not always involve reason, what appears good to us (and thus the object of wish) does not always involve reason either.

‘Wishing,’ for both the good person and the bad person, is the desire for something judged to be good, but only those who have been habituated into good character can have the correct judgment and correct end, which provides the starting point of action, and the goal for which the calculative part of the soul (*logistikon*) works out a way to achieve. And this is precisely what Aristotle means by saying “acting well, or the opposite, in action requires both thought and character” (VI.2, 1139a34-35).

To summarize, there is no doubt that emotions or feelings (*pathē*) are a kind of passive state, since according to Aristotle our *pathē* must be caused by something else, and must be a reaction to certain external stimuli,<sup>21</sup> but on the other hand, *pathē* are not completely passive. For it is like perception, which is, on the one hand, caused by external objects, but on the other hand, is an action of our perceptive faculty. As a cognitive power, feeling and desire are also able to follow reason, as a child follows his father, and once he is fully habituated through reproof and exhortation (or shame and nobility), he is able to judge or see what the right conclusion is, and thus, has acquired a good starting point of action. It is the habituation of feelings that instills the right ideas of nobility and shame in the youth, and internalizes these values through repeated actions and assessment accompanying these action. It is the interaction between feeling and reason, in habituation, that prepares the soil for the development of the seed of practical reason, i.e., prudence, to which we now turn our attention.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> “There are three things, one that which produces movement, second that whereby it does so, and third again that which is moved, and that which produces movement is twofold, that which is unmoved and that which produces movement and is moved. That which is unmoved is that practical good, and that which produces movement and is moved is the faculty of desire, for that which is moved is moved in so far as it desire, and desire as actual is a form of movement” (DA, III.10, 433b13-16).

<sup>22</sup> I thank one anonymous referee who asked me to clarify whether my position is anti-intellectualist or a more moderate interactionist. In next section I defend, on the same line with Moss (2011), an anti-intellectualist interpretation of the role of prudence, which holds that the end is determined by habituated virtue while the means by prudence. I do not think this anti-intellectualist interpretation is incompatible with interactionism as he or she understands. For as I emphatically argued in the previous section, there is

**“Actions should accord with correct reason.”**

Now the story of habituation is further complicated by introducing the thorny question of the relationship between prudence and ethical virtue. According to Aristotle, although habituation and the training of the desiring part of the soul is “all-important,” it is not the whole story. Ethical virtue also requires the rational part of the soul, and especially one of its virtues, prudence (*phronēsis*), to fulfill the famous definition of ethical virtue: “[ethical] virtue, then, is a state that decides (*hexis prohairetikē*), consisting in a mean, relative to us, which is defined by reference to reason (*hōrismenēi logōi*), that is to say, to the reason by reference to which the prudent person (*phronimos*) would define it” (II.6, 1106b36-1107a2, italics mine). But Aristotle’s discussion of correct reason, i.e., prudence, is not really taken up until Book VI, and the entire discussion of the relationship between prudence and ethical virtue culminates in the introduction of the term “full virtue” (*kuria aretē*), in contrast to “natural virtue” (*physikē aretē*), and the unity of ethical virtues in prudence (VI.13).

The passages regarding the rational element in ethical virtues lead many commentators to suggest that Aristotle takes ethical virtue as ultimately defined by correct reason or by prudence, and generates the intellectualist reading of Aristotle i.e., in action, reason determines both the end and the means towards the end.<sup>23</sup> This is certainly not the appropriate time to fully unfold the serious debate between intellectualist and anti-intellectualist interpretations;<sup>24</sup> what I am going to do

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such a strong cognitive element in Aristotelian emotion or desire that it necessarily involves a kind of interaction between them. The so-called “anti-intellectualist” interpretation is meant to counter the overwhelming emphasis on reason by a number of commentators, not to exclude reason as such from motivation of an action.

<sup>23</sup> Some representatives of this intellectual reading of Aristotle are Irwin (1975), Sorabji (1980), and Wiggins (1980).

<sup>24</sup> Given the vast literature on this topic, the limited space, and the main purpose of this paper, I am not intended to engage in a thorough treatment of this topic, or a full objection of the intellectualist interpretation. I will be satisfied with a few relevant remarks following Moss (2011), which provides so far the most comprehensive defense of the anti-intellectualist view, carefully

here is comment on some straightforward passages, which go against the too intellectualist interpretation, and then offer some reflections concerning the difficulties facing the anti-intellectualist interpretation.

The most natural starting point to view this controversy is certainly Aristotle's famous statement, "we fulfill our function insofar as we have prudence and ethical virtue; for virtue makes the goal correct, and prudence the things promoting the goal (*ta pros touton*)" (VI.12, 1144a6-9; similarly VI.13, 1145a4-6). In this passage, Aristotle clearly separates the roles of (ethical) virtue and prudence in our deliberation. Ethical virtue is assigned the task of awaiting the goal or end, whereas prudence figures out the means (broadly understood) to promote the end, as Aristotle also says in his remarks about deliberation, "we deliberate about the things that promote an end, not about the end" (III.3, 1112b33-34), and "we lay down the end, and then examine the ways and means to (*to pōs kai dia tinōn*, lit. "the how and through what") achieve it. If it appears that any of several means will reach it, we examine which of them will reach it most easily and most finely; if only one means will reach it, we examine how that means will reach it, and how that means itself is reached" (III.3, 1112b15-18). Therefore, the ethical virtue in this context cannot be what is defined in II.6.1106b36-1107a2, where ethical virtue incorporates prudence as a constitutive element, and thus the "full virtue" (*kuria aretē*; see VI.13, 1144b1-17). Then what kind of virtue provides the end whose achievement requires prudence? A key passage to this question is:

Virtue preserves the starting point (*archē*, or principle), whereas vice corrupts it; and, in actions, the end is the starting point, as assumptions are the starting point in mathematics<sup>25</sup> or in action; it is virtue, *either natural or habituated* (*aretē ē physikē ē ethistē*), that teaches correctly about the starting point (VII.8, 1151a15-19, italics mine).

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scrutinizing most of the evidence both for and against such a position. What follows owes much to her inspiring and provocative paper. For similar anti-intellectualist standpoint, see, for example, Fortenbaugh (1991) and Natali (2001), ch. 2.

<sup>25</sup> In science it is grasped by *nous*, a kind of intellectual intuition; see VI.6.

By omitting the term “full virtue,” which has already been introduced and illustrated in VI.13, Aristotle makes it transparent that it is our natural or habituated disposition that provides the end for our deliberation. As we have seen above, this end is set by wish, and prudence, or the fully rational part of the soul, has little to do with it.<sup>26</sup> In our present context, natural virtue can be left aside, let us focus on habituated virtue. What Aristotle means is quite clear: habituated virtue makes us, or more specifically, our emotions and desires, incline toward the correct end, i.e., the noble (*to kalon*), e.g., to be courageous in battle; whereas the means that best achieves this end is settled by deliberation through correct reason or prudence, as when a soldier assesses a specific situation (the number of enemies and his own fellow soldiers, the landform of the rivals, the equipments, etc.) and decides on the best means to achieve courage in this situation, which might well be a strategic retreat instead of holding one’s position. Only in this way can we well balance moral virtue, as both a habituated state (which aims at the correct end in actions) and in some way determined by prudence (which decides the means relative to the agent in a certain circumstance).<sup>27</sup>

Although I believe that the above account provides the most harmonious interpretation of Aristotle’s different statements, concerning the relation between ethical virtue and prudence, it also generates further challenges. I will mention three of them, and try to offer some relevant comments concerning these difficulties, even if full treatment cannot be given here.

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<sup>26</sup> We may also recall Aristotle’s remark on the different ways of acquiring principle or starting point (*NE* I.7, 1098b3-8), where he mentions induction (for theoretical disciplines), perception (for things like fire is hot), and habituation (for ethical principle); see Burnyeat (1980), pp. 72-73.

<sup>27</sup> That reason cannot set the end is further articulated by a passage from *DA*: “the object of desire is the starting point for the practical intellect, and the final step is the starting point for action...the object of desire produces movement, and, because of this, thought produces movement, because the object of desire is its starting-point...there is one thing which produces movement, the faculty of desire...the intellect does not appear to produce movement without desire” (*DA* III.10, 433a15-23).

The first challenge is a major motivation of the intellectualist interpretation of the role of prudence. Commentators worry that if desire, not reason, is the starting point of action, Aristotle will commit to the unacceptable Humean view, rendering reason as a slave of desire.<sup>28</sup> The clear line to be drawn between the Aristotelian and the Humean views of motivation is certainly too big a question to be discussed here. A partial answer can be given by emphasizing, once again, the cognitive power of Aristotelian emotion and desire, as done above. Unlike Hume, who sees passion as purely irrational, Aristotle takes his motivation of action to be shared by reason.<sup>29</sup>

The second challenge is concerning the role of prudence, as “about what sorts of things promote living well in general” (*NE* VI.5. 1140a28). Intellectualists may argue that since prudence concerns the overall good of a person, it must be able to determine the end *on each occasion*. The ultimate end, happiness, may not be provided for by prudence, but the things happiness consists of, and how one should organize one’s life in order to best achieve happiness, must be determined by prudence. To this challenge, I would answer with the formal definition of happiness: “the human good proves to be activity of the soul in accord with virtue” (I.7, 1098a16-17). This definition forms the principle (*archē*) of Aristotelian ethics, and for most people this principle is not acquired through rational argument,<sup>30</sup> but rather through habituation. The goal of good people is to practice virtuous action, and the role of prudence is to figure out how to practice virtuous actions on certain occasions. To wish for virtuous actions is to wish for the correct end, and this end is not set by reason. All the other subordinate ends may be determined by prudence, but those ends are, at the same time, *constitutive means* to achieve virtue, and thus happiness. To put it in another way, the analysis of end *without qualification* stops at the

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<sup>28</sup> See Irwin (1975) and Sorabji (1980) for this rather typical worry.

<sup>29</sup> This challenge and answer are both raised by Moss (2011), and I agree with her on this issue.

<sup>30</sup> Philosophers, like Aristotle himself, might be able to reach ethical principle through theoretical investigation (a kind of induction), and they may be conceived as exception to this thesis. Since Aristotle’s ethical treatises do not have them as primary audience, we may leave this exception aside for the present purpose.

level of virtue, which is provided by good character and habituation, or habituated virtue; whereas, all the other ends in life are, at least to a certain extent, a means to achieve virtue and happiness, which can be determined by prudence.

The third possible challenge comes from the *Politics*, for Aristotle says, “men act in many ways contrary to their habituation and their nature through reason, if they are persuaded that some other condition is better” (*Politics* VII.13, 1332b6-8). This passage seems to suggest that habituation alone cannot provide a solid ground for the motivation of action, since we may be persuaded by a present habit. If so, reason not only has to figure out the means to a certain end, but also has to settle the end itself. This challenge can be met from two perspectives. First, there is no doubt that Aristotle thinks that habit is revisable by reason, but this is nevertheless very difficult, as he quotes with approval the words of Euenus, the sophist: “indeed the reason why habit is also difficult to change is that it is like nature; as Euenus says, ‘habit, I say, is a longtime training, my friend, and in the end training is nature for human beings’” (*NE*, VII.10, 1152a30-33).<sup>31</sup> Therefore, most people, if not well habituated or well brought up, are not able to turn to the right path by argument and persuasion, as Aristotle complains in very last chapter of the *NE*, “it is impossible, or not easy, to alter by argument what has long been absorbed as a result of one’s habits” (X.9, 1179b16-18). Second, even if reason alters one’s habituation, it does not necessarily mean that reason alone sets the goal. For, as emphasized in sections II and III, habituation is not a process without reason, but rather the interaction between emotion/desire and reason, so even if one is persuaded because of present habituation, his goal may still be set by his desire, i.e., wish. He has to change his rational understanding into this kind of desire, in order to have the correct starting point for his action.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> See also *Rhetoric* I.11, 1370a6-9: “as soon as a thing has become habituated (*eithismenon*) it is virtually natural; habit is a thing not unlike nature; what happens often is akin to what happens always, natural events happening always, habitual events often.”

<sup>32</sup> See *NE* II.4.1105b11-18 for Aristotle’s warning against the tendency to take refuge in purely intellectual studies, which cannot directly provide motivation for ethical action.

In sum, I would like to go back to the special status of prudence, mentioned in section one, and show why it is not acquired merely through teaching. The first relevant point was, again, the fact that a young man can be good at mathematics, while, at the same time, not expert in prudence. This is because “prudence is concerned with particulars as well as universals, and particulars become known from experience, but a young person lacks experience, since some length of time is needed to gain it” (*NE* VI.8, 1142a14-16). Unlike science (*epistēmē*), which is always concerned with universals and with what cannot otherwise be known (VI.3, 1139b18-24), prudence, as a calculative and deliberative faculty, is always concerned with what can be and otherwise be [known/done], i.e., particulars in action (VI.5, 1140b1-4 and VI.7, 1141b8-23), and thus cannot be taught directly as a set of rigorous rules. Our mind’s eye to see the right means through deliberation must be trained and sharpened by rich experience. The second point is related to the unforgetability of prudence, for Aristotle famously says, “it [prudence] is not only a state involving reason. A sign of this is the fact that such a state can be forgotten, but prudence cannot” (VI.5, 1140b28-30), and Irwin is right to understand this unforgetability in terms of “the close connection of prudence with character and habit.”<sup>33</sup> The last piece of evidence which contributes to the special status of prudence is Aristotle’s classification of prudence in ethical virtue, rather than intellectual virtue, in Book II of the *Eudemian Ethics*, listing it as the mean between cunning and simplicity (*EE* II.3, 1221a14). Whether this passage concerning prudence should be exercised and whether it demonstrates the earlier composition of the *EE* is not quite relevant for our present purpose,<sup>34</sup> but at least it shows that Aristotle sees, at least at one time in his life, that prudence is so closely connected with ethical virtues that there is a possibility, no matter how slight, that it even belongs to the category of ethical

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<sup>33</sup> Aristotle (1999), p. 243.

<sup>34</sup> The entire controversy begins with the classic study of the development of Aristotle’s thought in Jaeger (1962/1923), ch. 9. For the updated discussion and opposite positions concerning the composition date and other comparisons of *EE* and *NE*, see Rowe (1971) and Kenny (1978).

virtue,<sup>35</sup> and thus it must be acquired in the same way as other ethical virtues.

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<sup>35</sup> Of course, judging from Aristotle's following discussion in the *EE*, especially VIII.13, prudence is still an intellectual virtue.

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## **Virtue Ethics in all Islamic Context with Special Reference to Justice**

YASIEN MOHAMED

Philosophers of late have suggested that modern moral theory is bankrupt, and that we need to return to Aristotle's virtue theory of ethics. G.E.M. Anscombe (1958) is of the view that modern ethic is misguided since we cannot have the notion of a law without a lawgiver. Modern ethics is mainly concerned with notions of duty and rightness, and not with the building of right humans which is what virtue ethics is all about. Theories of utilitarianism and ethical egoism, are based on the principle of self-interest, and so they cannot be depended upon for the refinement of character. Modern ideas about right action do not help in the least in developing the right motive. We should not do something that is right only out of duty, but also out of love and caring. A disinterested ethic of virtue that is espoused by E. Kant and J.S. Mill is not realistic since we can never be impartial and free of human emotion. A mother, for example, cannot be impartial with respect to her children, and only act from a sense of duty.

The question that we need to ask is whether virtue ethics in the Aristotelian context can be applied to the Islamic context. During the classical period of the eleventh century, this was attempted by two Arabic philosophers: Miskawayh (1030) and al-Raghib al-Isfahani (d. 1060). We have to show how they built on the virtue theory of Aristotle, and how they integrated it into the Islamic context. Then, we need to consider if their ideas are still relevant for our contemporary society. All this can be done if we limit the discussion to one concept only, the virtue of justice.

This paper will begin with the Platonic and Aristotelian concepts of justice. It will then attempt to demonstrate how these Greek concepts have been received within the Arabic-Islamic cultural context. A Greek paradigm that was wholeheartedly received by the Islamic moral philosophers was that of the psychology of the soul, where the soul is divided into three parts: the irascible, the concupiscent and the rational. It is the balance of these three faculties that produce the

platonian virtues of wisdom, justice, courage, and temperance. Justice is the outcome of the three virtues, which means that the virtues that pertain to the individual are the starting point for social justice. The Islamic philosophers and the Sufis (such as al-Ghazali), adopted this paradigm, and added Islamic theological virtues such as faith, love and obedience. However, they did not adopt the Greek concepts blindly. They rejected the idea of a human law, because reason is not a good enough guide for all ethical action. Human action should conform to the divine law. Reason can apprehend the universals of good and evil, and can explain the details of how to apply the divine law.

Thus, we will be comparing the philosophical concept of justice in Aristotle with the concept of justice in the eleventh century, and demonstrate the transmission of philosophical thought from Greek antiquity to Islam, and the manner in which these ideas, particularly of justice, have been transformed by Miskawayh and Isfahani, placing them in an Islamic context.

The main text of Aristotle is the *Nicomachean Ethics* in the Arabic version as written by Hunayn Ibn Ishaq). It is this Arabic translation that had a profound impact on the Arabic philosophers. We can especially notice traces of its ideas and terminology present in Miskawayh's *Tahdhib al-akhlaq* (Refinement of Character), which is the first Arabic text to be written on the subject, and which played a mediating role in al-Isfahani's *al-Dhari'ah ila Makarim al-Shari'ah* (The Means to the Noble Virtues of the Law). Thus, although Miskawayh was more faithful to the Greek legacy, Isfahani not only profited from the Greek ideas in the *Refinement*, but also as a model of synthesis between Greek ethics and Islamic theology.

Isfahani built on Aristotle's concept of justice, and integrated it within the Islamic context. To this end, he made extensive use of Qur'anic verses to substantiate the Islamic philosophical perspective to justice. It is interesting to note that from the point of view of intersexuality, no text is completely original; it is a product of a variety of influences, textual or biographical. There are two common sources that Miskawayh and Isfahani possibly shared: the Arabic version of Aristotle and the Qur'an. In the case of Aristotle, it is more likely that his ethics filtered through to Isfahani via Miskawayh. They both differed from Aristotle in fundamental ways. For Aristotle, justice

means 'equality' and it is the justice of the law, a human law. The Islamic philosophers adopted this, but replaced it with the divine law (*al-shar'iah*). Also, they did not separate individual justice from social justice, and held that the justice of the soul, which includes temperance, wisdom and courage, should be the point of departure for social justice. Ethics, therefore, provides the groundwork for social justice.

The Arabic philosophers held that the law is not sufficient for justice, and will not ensure good citizens. Good citizens of a democracy will emerge if we produce good human beings.

The good humans are those who embody the virtue of justice such that virtue is a natural voluntary expression of the human soul. It does not come about merely through the imposition of secular laws of justice. People can escape the laws of justice and get away with murder. But if they operate on the basis of their conscience and the sense of accountability before God, they would act with justice towards others because it is ingrained within their souls. Good humans are those who act out of their own volition and not because of externally imposed law. If good humans are nurtured, we would have good citizens.

The two Arabic philosophers embraced the Aristotelian notion of justice, integrated it within the framework of Platonic psychology, and then placed it within an Islamic cultural context. An aspect that is different from Aristotle is the way they showed how justice can be tempered by benevolence. Without benevolence, justice could lead to revenge and violence, and this in turn could lead to further injustice. Their justice is not the cold calculating justice of secular democracies, but one guided by reason and compassion.

This paper will touch on the reason Arabic philosophers were attracted to Aristotle's ethics. Part of the reason is that Aristotle espoused the view that the good life is based on virtue. For Miskawayh and Isfahani too, the good life is based on character, but they differ from Aristotle as to what constitutes the good life. They shared with Aristotle the view that the external virtues such as wealth, health and friendship are also important for the good life, but they are only a means to happiness. It is in this respect that the Islamic philosophers and Aristotle would disagree with the utilitarian theory that the good life is the life of pleasure, and that pleasure is more related to material

comforts than to character. Thus, it is important to bring character back to the center stage of modern ethics, whether secular or Islamic. Even the Muslim world is affected by the culture of human rights and political activism, while the aspect of character development is neglected.

Thus, the message of this paper is that the virtue ethics, whether based on Aristotle, Islamic or Christian ethics, ultimately, challenges the materialistic concepts of happiness. Tracing the common strands between the Hellenic and Islamic conceptions of happiness and virtue, we should be able to move forward, and reflect upon how a revival of virtue ethics can contribute to the ethical transformation in our modern society. There are certainly major differences which cannot be ignored since they suggest some fundamental differences between Aristotle and modern secular theories.

For Miskawayh and Isfahani, the ultimate goal is not character as an end in itself, but as a means to a higher end, which is the knowledge of God and everlasting happiness in the hereafter. Another difference would be in the means to the attainment of these virtues. The Islamic philosophers have adopted the method of habituation from Aristotle, but they have their own means of executing this habituation. They have the conviction that the divine law has created social institutions within Islam to foster the spirit of brotherhood, love, care and cooperation. Once the people have a sense of affinity to one another, they would do whatever it takes to help society, whether in the exercise of justice or in the practice of any other virtue. This social affinity and spirit of love and friendship will permeate the society once it conforms to the divine law that commands believers to pray in congregation and to make the pilgrimage to Mecca. Because of cultural relativity, the Greeks have a different set of social institutions to foster this spirit of love, justice and cooperation.

With respect to justice as a legal virtue, Aristotle turns to a humanly worked-out system of justice. However, the Islamic philosophers turn to the divine law for the main principles of justice, and the details can be worked out by human reason. Modern theories of ethics departed respectively from the Greek and Islamic vision of character, and posed different questions. Instead of asking: 'what traits of character make up a good person?' they began by asking: 'what is the

right thing to do'? This is a different focus, and so theories developed that were more concerned with rightness and obligation, but not with virtue. Examples of such theories are: ethical egoism (focussed on self-interest); utilitarianism (focussed on greatest happiness for the greatest number); Kant's theory (focussed on duty); and social contract theory (focussed on self-interest for mutual benefit).

The ethics of virtue is not confined to Aristotle; this was an approach of Socrates and Plato as well. But the idea that the good man was a man of virtue, according to Aristotle, made a strong impression on Arabic philosophers for two main reasons: One was that *Nicomachean Ethics* was already translated into Arabic in the ninth century, and this became an early source for Arabic ethics; and second, the idea that character is an activity of the soul with virtue was appealing to the Arabic philosophers. But the difference is that the soul, for the Arabic thinkers, was immortal, and that virtue was directed to the eternal happiness in the hereafter, who found echoes of this idea in their Islamic tradition, except that goodness was tied up with obedience to the Islamic divine commands. This means that the virtues extended beyond the four cardinal virtues, and included faith, trust, love, obedience, etc. Through these theological virtues and faith in the hereafter, the four Platonic virtues took on new meaning and became directed at eternal happiness.

Thus, by comparing Aristotle with philosophers in the eleventh century, we are able to trace the development of justice from the Greek classical legacy to the Arabic philosophical, ethical world view. Thus the Islamic philosophers offered something worthy of consideration by our contemporary societies fixated on the culture of human rights and a very legalistic conception of human justice.

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## **In Search of a Tradition: Components for a Brazilian Culture**

ANDRÉ BUENO

### **Introduction**

Recently Brazil has won a prominent place among the major world economies, forming the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), countries that will have decisive influence in the 21st century. Brazil was also able to host a soccer World Cup and the Olympics. However, these indicators of apparent success have not been accompanied by balanced social change. Brazil is faced with increasing cases of corruption. There is unemployment, deep social inequality, and the threat of ethnic, religious and sexual violence can arise at any time. There is a deep conflict between the image of a great and rich country where the mass population is negatively impacted by economic changes.

This presentation will not discuss the political and economic issues that shape this crisis, but, rather, the way it has been read by Brazilian society. In search of an ideological solution that can save the country's development, various groups within society have sought, in the ancient traditions of the past, a possible answer to the moral dilemmas facing Brazil. However, Brazil is a country of very recent history, constructed from foreign cultural matrices – mainly African and Portuguese. Through immigration it received influences from Italy, Germany, Eastern Europe and Japan. The native Indigenous culture contributes to this process, albeit much less than in the civilizations of Spanish America. In addition, the 20th century represents a dramatic change in the cultural orientation of Brazil, as it began to receive influences from the USA, e.g., patterns of consumption, and political and religious ideas. In today's globalized context, Brazilians feel relatively lost in their ideological choices, and seek guidance from the teachings that might restore a balance that existed in the past.

Initially, we shall try to understand how Brazilian society is reading its present cultural crisis, and then, try to map some of the main lines of thought that have gained strength with this crisis of moral and social values.

### **Liquid Modernity**

The Polish thinker Zigmunt Baumann (2010) pointed out, properly, that the contemporary world is undergoing a phase of “liquid modernity.” With the apparent demise of socialism in Eastern Europe, and the supposed victory of capitalist theory, the promise of a new world, more balanced and economically rich, did not materialize. Instead – and in the case of Brazil – the victory of capitalism meant a step back in working relationships, a deepening economic crisis and rising inequality. From 1964 to 1984, Brazil was ruled by a military junta that kept increasing levels of development, which however were sustained artificially (VENTURA, 2000). This caused a devastating economic crisis in Brazil after the military government, although clear signs that this could happen were already seen before the return of full democracy. The “defeat” of socialism was understood as the end of an historical context in which the concessions made to workers could be abolished after all, and it was no longer necessary to keep them from the “danger” of the socialist labor system. This created the opportunity for groups that dominated the country’s economy to scramble for profits and capital accumulation, putting in crisis the social compromise that had been established between workers and employers over the period of the “cold war.”

The desolation caused by the abandonment of this compromise launched entire societies, such as Brazil, into a reflection on moral and cultural values for if the capitalist world appeared to be a bad option, what then would be the alternatives? As noted by Baumann, we live in an historical context in which human relations are governed by uncertainty, lack deeper commitment and manifest a ‘liquidity’: impossible to control. They do break up with incredible rapidity, seeking only immediate benefits and profit. Societies without cultural paradigms reflect this values crisis. When there are no major systems, such

as the time “socialism vs capitalism,” to guide us what can we put in the place of these “big absences”?

The reading by Baumann is quite appropriate for the case of Brazil, which also has difficulty in building its cultural identity. Countries like China, India and Russia have ancient traditions that serve to build a solid cultural reference, whether to claim or refuting it. The case of Brazil is quite different: where cultural traditions are relatively recent, and are usually imported from the civilizations that colonized the country, forming no cohesive and inconsistent identity. Stuart Hall’s analysis (1997) is appropriate here to guide us in trying to understand the difficulties of building a Brazilian cultural identity, especially now, in the context of modernity.

Until the 19th century, Brazil was a colony of Portugal, and its basic cultural guidance was grounded in Portuguese culture. Indigenous and African cultural additions were fundamental in conquering space and developing economic activities. However, indigenous participation in Brazil was restricted by numerous ethnic massacres. Moreover, the culture brought from Africa was subject to the system of slavery, which ended only in 1888, that is, both cultures, indigenous and African, were conditioned by the Portuguese cultural matrix. Since the independence of Brazil in 1822 this situation has not changed radically. From the early 20th century, attempts to formulate a Brazilian cultural identity, required for the integration of the country, created the theory that Brazil would be composed of the “harmony of the three races,” i.e., that the Brazilian people was composed of the union of three cultural sources – Portuguese, African and Indigenous – and hence was egalitarian. There would not be in Brazil, for example, racial discrimination, or social discrimination caused by disparity of riches and social origin. Great Brazilian authors like Gilberto Freire (1935, 1954) and Darcy Ribeiro (1995) defended this theory for years, but it proved wrong. Brazil, during the 20th century, continued to speak Portuguese, to be Catholic in its majority, and to maintain a series of social tensions, as ethnic and intellectual divisions could not be bridged.

The cultural situation of Brazil became even richer and more complex with the arrival of large waves of immigration from Europe and Japan, which diversified the cultural landscape of the country.

However, a substantial part of the European immigrants who came to southern Brazil was not integrated with the existing cultural landscape, but maintained a certain autonomy in relation to the dynamics of cultural exchanges.

The construction of Brazilian culture was through continuous disorganization and additions as is natural in a process of cultural exchange. The existence of these different cultural matrices formed a society largely divided between different groups, whose orientations vary along ethnic, religious, cultural or economic lines. In times of political and social crisis like the present Brazilian society, these groups search in their cultural origins for possible ideological orientations to meet the demands of modernity. The desire to return to ancient cultural traditions and morals, in which a utopian stability reigns, based on clear values properly applied, has become a constant in political and social discourses regarding Brazilian identity in the contemporary world. Is there a way to re-educate people to follow a path of “order and progress”? Consider, a map of the main trends that now operate in Brazilian cultural life.

### **Proposals for Cultural Traditions**

#### *Cultural Diversity*

For methodological reasons, the first of the proposals presented here is the one advocated in general terms and by the Brazilian government. Based on guidance – in some way influenced by a socialist discourse – the government assumed that Brazil is formed of a great cultural diversity, with demonstrations and the right to free and in the Centerdependent expression, and is still under development. This does not refute the Portuguese cultural traditions, but puts them in the back-ground in order to strengthen indigenous and African cultures. It recognizes that globalization is a real and permanent effect, which directly influences the process of building an exchange of cultures. Therefore, the Brazilian government is not concerned directly with the rescue of ancient cultural traditions (with the exception of the indigenous and African), but with creating a Brazilian identity through a dynamic phenomenon of absorption of other cultures. This

has created a series of tensions within society, because many groups believe that these upgrades are responsible for the social crisis that the country is experiencing. The Brazilian government, for example, decided not to distribute a handbook on sex education and social inclusion that proposed, among other things, the acceptance of homosexuality as something natural. Similarly, university quotas were created for African-descendants and indigenous peoples that were heavily criticized by various segments of society. Brazilian schools resumed the teaching of religion (which had been suppressed during the military government), in order to promote religious tolerance in diversity. However, the proposal has been openly tampered with, and many fundamentalists have used the lessons of religious education as a stage for preaching in the schools. Finally, communities of immigrants from Europe in a more recent period of history (especially the 2nd World War), dispute the notion that diversity is harmful to society, culture and economy, and the occasional suggestion of Isolation or separatism. Another criticism of this view of cultural diversity is that it did not include immigrants from Latin America. A large number of Bolivians have come to Brazil looking for work because of the severe economic situation in Bolivia, and the Brazilian government did not wave any policy in this regard.

Therefore, we note that the point at which to target our discussion is that the Brazilian government cannot, in principle, build an inclusive culture, although that is its intent. Its attempt to create a modern image – aggregating, tolerant and inclusive – is hampered by an economic and political crisis, and a substantial portion of the population believes these factors to be interrelated. Thus, it creates a lot of confusion around the idea of a “moral degeneration”: for example, a corrupt government official is associated with the affirmation of gay rights because they are both considered “degenerate” in terms of a Christian morality that opposes both. This frame of mind is extremely simple and perverse, and has a big impact. The establishment of quotas for university students of African descent was treated by some of these social groups as a threat, created by the government, which would strengthen racial discrimination, when in fact, discrimination existed, but was masked by the myth of the “harmony of the three races.”

The difficulty of the public policy of cultural diversity is further increased by the inefficient educational system of Brazil. This has been unable to meet the demands of both the market and the formation of capable and self-conscious citizens. The government makes room for discourses that seek to regain the ancient traditions as a way to resolve the current issues and thereby allowing a variety of different proposals.

### *Resumption of Catholicism*

Numerically speaking, Brazil is the largest Catholic nation in the world. Catholicism is traditionally associated with the state, but the church's political and moral influence plummeted near the end of the 20th century. Several reasons are given for this: an elitism of Catholicism, the constant complaints of sexual crimes in the church, the gap that has arisen in relation to poor communities because of the occasional welfare policies promoted by the Brazilian government. The fact is that Catholicism has suffered a major weakness in its ability to speak on social issues such as birth control, labor, etc. The survival of Catholicism in Brazil is due in large part to the resistance of communities living in smaller towns outside the big cities. The apparent defeat of socialism in Eastern Europe in 1989 renewed the spirit of Catholicism to become an ideological and moral option for the Brazilian people, reuniting its civilization around the religion imposed since colonial times by the Portuguese. However, this return did not occur as expected. First, Catholicism began to suffer competition from evangelical churches, which worked in the vacuums left by the Catholic Church in the poorest communities. With a Christian message simplified and more accessible, the evangelical Churches manifested models that seemed to overcome the Roman Catholic liturgy that was not very able to reawaken the religious sentiment of the population. The Brazilian Catholic Church then devoted itself to a popularization of doctrine, seeking closer ties with the public. Self-help books, more appealing Catholic Mass music and other media have been used to appeal to the lost faithful.

The discourse of the Catholic Church in Brazil is closely linked, however, to the guidelines of the Vatican. Thus, the forms of populari-

zation of modern Catholicism are only superficial, since the essence of the speech remains conservative and moralizing. However, this device has achieved a relative success in recent years, since, as stated, Brazilian society believes itself to be living in a moral crisis of values which can be overcome in the future, by the revival of ancient traditions. What traditions, since Brazil is not ancient? This point is crucial for the recovery of a history of Christianity that culminates in Brazil, the most Catholic country in the world. Several Christian-themed films, made in Brazil, had a huge success, promoting a revival of Catholicism in the society.

The challenge that the Catholic Church will face, however, is: how to reconcile the discourse of renewal of a Christianity that advocates chastity, simple material life, the traditional family consisting of the heterosexual couple, in a world where the relationships market increasingly demands participation in a circle that is technologically exigent, competitive and multifaceted? Catholic renewal works well in the smaller cities of Brazil where social relationships are closer, but how to face the dilemma of modernization in large urban centers? If the conservative discourse in modern dress is attractive in the current crisis, can it be sustained before any possible political or economic improvement?

### Evangelical Churches

Evangelical churches (The names used in Portuguese are: non-Catholic churches, Gospel, Pentecostal, Evangelical, etc.) have had great growth in the last two decades in Brazil. Directly threatening the dominance of Catholicism, evangelical churches invest in the language of a reinvented Christianity, based on a unique interpretation of Christian antiquity. The language of these churches, in general, is simple and accessible to the lay public. It is based on immediate salvation in this world and eternal life as a reward for success in material life. The services rely on a biblical knowledge, based on ancient wisdom, which would serve as a guide to modernity. Strongly influenced by the churches of the USA, the Brazilian Evangelical churches have been able to expand greatly thanks to its presence in communities neglected by Catholicism, occupying the "spiritual" and moral

void. Evangelical churches would also have the advantage of being decentralized, and expanding their networks much more flexibly and dynamically than Catholic churches. Working with open doors day and night, providing direct assistance to the population and claiming that the material gain is evidence of spiritual success, evangelicals managed a rapid and surprising diffusion in the country.

Their proposals are based on moral interpretations of the Bible, differing from church to church. However, their lines of action are decidedly conservative, and their evangelical ideology is one of the main responses to the idea that cultural diversity is responsible for the moral and social crisis that Brazilian society. To quote again a few examples: evangelicals are against the discussion of abortion or euthanasia, have “programs for the recovery of sexual disorders” (gays and lesbians), advocate a radicalization and deepening of religious discourse in education. In Brazil, as well as elsewhere in the world, and they are absolutely against Darwin’s idea of evolution, believing it to be against the concept of creation of the world by God. Moreover, they are structured in economic organizations that help each other, but which exclude or downplay those who do not belong to their Church. In an attempt to deepen the moral imposition of these cultural practices, many evangelicals have participated in the Brazilian political life, applying for office and having great success with the public.

Like Catholics, evangelicals preach a return to a morale considered old and derived from early Christianity. However, evangelicals allow for an individual’s autonomy and the possibility of social and material achievement that is not provided in Catholicism. A person who succeeds is a good Christian but they must accept the group of religious dogmas present in the discourse of these churches, which are strictly monotheistic and intolerant of other religions. For evangelicals, basically, one person may be respected and accepted to enter your community, but this allows unequal treatment of other social segments. Again, some examples: the evangelical churches in general tend to be against the government’s inclusive policies, because they are thought to encourage racial-ethnic conflict. On the other hand, they have their own inclusive policies. There is great number of black evangelical preachers in Brazil whose personal success is attributed to their entry into the church and community, not to the government’s

socially inclusive policies. For them, discrimination and racial quotas create conflict, when the ideal would be the inclusion had in their churches. There are even evangelical groups that promote persecution and attacks on African-Brazilian religious cults, destroying their places of worship and attacking their representatives. This is seen not as racial discrimination, but rather 'religious and cultural' inclusion.

The same goes for gays who are "welcomed" in the church to be "cured," based on a passage of the Bible in Leviticus, which says that homosexual couples are inappropriate. When some of these evangelicals reach government offices, it is not unusual to propose public health policies to "cure homosexuality" as if it were some kind of disease.

Many evangelical churches have faced accusations of corruption and abuse of power, which puts in question the gap between their moral discourse and the practices of some preachers. However, the evangelical churches give striking examples of speech for 'teaching' or perhaps 'salvation'. There is a moralizing Christianity, fundamentalist, based on a restrictive interpretation of the history of primitive Christianity. Evangelicals have increasingly sought to participate in public life in Brazil, through public office and government, believing this to be an appropriate means to promote their views. Their unification of the Brazilian identity would be by religious means, rather than ethnic, racial or cultural. Such speech is very attractive to many, but is loaded with intolerance of cultural differences and clashes directly with the idea of diversity. Identity is seen to be created by the annulment of difference, just as in the history of Christianity, there was election of a people chosen by God' to promote the Christian faith.

*The search for the "Other Traditions"*

Religion not only urges Brazilians to seek to understand their own culture and to reform it. There are "other traditions" and political and cultural discourses are occasionally glimpsed as ideologically effective for the solution of problems affecting Brazil.

Recently, Gustavo Ioschpe (Brazilian economist and educator) visited China to review its educational system, which had excellent results in Shanghai (2011). In a lengthy report made to the "Veja" (a

well-known Brazilian magazine with a conservative character), Ioschpe praised the Chinese educational system and suggested, emphatically, that to be adopted in Brazil. Interestingly, the conservative groups of Brazilian society liked the idea, while the current government understood that the Chinese educational system had extreme discipline, incompatible with the reality of the Brazilian culture, and against the cultural diversity. If we pay attention to the glaring contradiction of this discourse, we perceive a tension that has long been developing in Brazilian intellectual circles, namely, the attraction and inspiration of the Asian models, especially those of China and Japan.

Considered models of public administration, work systems and successful economies, the experiences of Japan and China, although different, have been discussed and admired as alternatives to solve the crises in Brazil, and suggest the adoption of certain cultural practices in the work environment. With their millenary experience, the Chinese and Japanese cultures could contribute to the construction of an educational and more efficient business system. Criticism of these systems coming up again from a supposed 'Brazilian cultural identity' which has notable problems with the ideas of 'order' and 'discipline' and refutes, "naturally," elements from cultural traditions strange to the 'European-African-Indigenous' matrix that is Brazilian culture.

Similarly, the absence of a sense of "tradition" in Brazil means that the term is used erroneously. It is not uncommon for Brazilian advertisements to indicate, for example, that a particular store or company has "three years of tradition," trying to create an image of antiquity as a quality certificate. This allows us to understand the reasons why, for example, another model that has been advocated by some segments of Brazilian society is the resumption of Soviet communism, mixed with psychoanalysis; its representative is the intellectual, Slavoj Žižek (2007). This approach claims that communism will reappear, based on a model of reformed communism of the former USSR, with the human deviance solved by psychoanalytic therapy, which was missing in the former 'communist moral'. For many Brazilians that seems a total throwback; however, for its defenders socialism and communism have been able to create their "own historical traditions," able to illustrate the points right and wrong of Marxist theories. What is important is that there is a 'communist

morale' – secular, rational and non-religious – that is able to overcome the problems of the day and ignore religious tensions. One has to wonder if indeed Marxist theory can be framed within a "tradition" in the cultural sense of the word which would oppose the resumption of religious traditions in the country.

### Conclusion

This brief presentation sought to draw a map of the current situation of Brazilian culture and its need for proposals that may diminish the tribulations which society faces. Although corruption, violence and abuse can be attributed indiscriminately to the market economy and poor educational background, Brazil suffers from a moral framework that calls for social reform. The revival of the Christian traditions, reinterpreted under the light of modernity, the search for a different cultural identity or even the use of such alternative traditions as those of Asia proves the great diversity of opinion in Brazil. There is unanimity in fact, only in recognizing a crisis of values, which has called for an urgent solution based on ancient beliefs and theories. Without having a proper set of traditions that are firmly rooted in the imagination, says Baumann, the very idea of tradition does not seem to make much sense, for continuity is required for such a 'sense of tradition'. Brazilian society is seeking in this 'concept of tradition' the foundation of a 'new culture' capable of resolving the dilemmas of modernity, even if this 'new culture' would have to take its roots from ancient traditions in order to ensure its efficiency.

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# **The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy**

## **Purpose**

Today there is urgent need to attend to the nature and dignity of the person, to the quality of human life, to the purpose and goal of the physical transformation of our environment, and to the relation of all this to the development of social and political life. This, in turn, requires philosophic clarification of the base upon which freedom is exercised, that is, of the values which provide stability and guidance to one's decisions.

Such studies must be able to reach deeply into one's culture and that of other parts of the world as mutually reinforcing and enriching in order to uncover the roots of the dignity of persons and of their societies. They must be able to identify the conceptual forms in terms of which modern industrial and technological developments are structured and how these impact upon human self-understanding. Above all, they must be able to bring these elements together in the creative understanding essential for setting our goals and determining our modes of interaction. In the present complex global circumstances this is a condition for growing together with trust and justice, honest dedication and mutual concern.

The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (RVP) unites scholars who share these concerns and are interested in the application thereto of existing capabilities in the field of philosophy and other disciplines. Its work is to identify areas in which study is needed, the intellectual resources which can be brought to bear thereupon, and the means for publication and interchange of the work from the various regions of the world. In bringing these together its goal is scientific discovery and publication which contributes to the present promotion of humankind.

In sum, our times present both the need and the opportunity for deeper and ever more progressive understanding of the person and of the foundations of social life. The development of such understanding is the goal of the RVP.

## **Projects**

A set of related research efforts is currently in process:

1. Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change: Philosophical Foundations for Social Life. Focused, mutually coordinated research teams in university centers prepare volumes as part of an integrated philosophic search for self-understanding differentiated by culture and civilization. These evolve more adequate understandings of the person in society and look to the cultural heritage of each for the resources to respond to the challenges of its own specific contemporary transformation.

2. Seminars on Culture and Contemporary Issues. This series of 10 week cross-cultural 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.

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