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Learning from the Other

**Australian and Chinese
Perspectives on Philosophy**

Editor John Makeham

PAPERS FROM SYMPOSIA HELD IN 2014 AND
2015, CO-SPONSORED BY THE AUSTRALIAN
ACADEMY OF THE HUMANITIES AND THE
CHINESE ACADEMY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES



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ISBN 978-0-909897-75-8 (electronic)

Suggested citation:

Australian Academy of the Humanities (2016) *Learning from the Other: Australian and Chinese Perspectives on Philosophy*, ed. by John Makeham. Papers from symposia held in 2014 and 2015, co-sponsored by the Australian Academy of the Humanities and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (Canberra: Australian Academy of the Humanities).

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Shirley Chan · Alan Hájek · Wang Keping
Norva Y. S. Lo · John Makeham · Freya Mathews
Wang Qi · Koji Tanaka · Zhang Zhiqiang





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Wang Qi 王齐 is a Professorial Research Fellow in the Institute of Philosophy, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. She holds a BA in Chinese Language and Literature (1990) and an MA in Aesthetics (1993) from Northwestern University in Xi'an, and PhD in Western Philosophy from the Graduate School of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (1996). She was Postdoctoral Fellow at Kierkegaard Research Center at Copenhagen University during 1999–2001. She was recruited by the Institute of Philosophy at CASS in 1996, and become Research Professor in 2012. Her main academic interests are Kierkegaard studies, Existentialism, History of Medieval Philosophy, as well as Philosophy of Religion. She has published two books and more than 20 papers, and since 2013 has been responsible for a 10-volume anthology of Kierkegaard's works and a translation of Kierkegaard's *Philosophiske Smuler* directly from Danish.

Zhang Zhiqiang 张志强 is a Professorial Research Fellow in the Institute of Philosophy, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. He received an MA in 1993 and a PhD in 1997 in philosophy from Peking University. He is also Chair of the Editorial Board of the journal *History of Chinese Philosophy*. His research mainly focuses on the Ming & Qing academic history, Consciousness-only Theory (唯识学), and Buddhism.



Introduction

John Makeham

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*L*earning from the Other: Australian and Chinese Perspectives on Philosophy consists of a selection of nine papers drawn from two symposia on philosophy co-sponsored by the Australian Academy of the Humanities (AAH) and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS). From 18–20 June 2014, Professor Alan Hájek FAHA and I led a delegation of Australian philosophers to Beijing to participate in a symposium on “Philosophy and Contemporary Society” hosted by the Institute of Philosophy, CASS. Nine papers were presented at the Beijing symposium:

- Professor Zhang Zhiqiang, CASS,
“A Study on New Directions in Research on Chinese Philosophy” (in Chinese)
- Professor John Makeham FAHA, The Australian National University,
“New Views on Traditional Chinese Philosophy: The Case of Zhu Xi”
- Professor Wang Keping, CASS,
“Efficient Governance via Synthetic Transformation”
- Professor Zou Guangwen, Tsinghua University,
“The Vision of Hope for ‘Cultural China’” (in Chinese)
- Associate Professor Karen Lai, The University of New South Wales,
“Comparative Epistemology: Knowledge, Learning and Knowing How to Proceed”
- Professor Wang Qi, CASS,
“Kierkegaard’s Christian Philosophy and Its Enlightenment”
- Professor Alan Hájek FAHA, The Australian National University,
“A Philosopher’s Apology”

- Professor Yang Tongjin, CASS,
“Global Justice: The Ethical Borders of Nationalism” (in Chinese)
- Dr Norva Lo, La Trobe University,
“Human Chauvinism and the Foundation of Morality”

Following the successful 2014 symposium in Beijing, Professor Xie Dikun, Director-General and Senior Research Fellow, Institute of Philosophy, CASS, led a four-day visit to Australia by five scholars from the Institute of Philosophy (CASS), from 3–7 July 2015. The CASS delegates participated in two programmes: a one-day philosophy symposium at The Australian National University (ANU) on 4 July, followed by a stream at the Australasian Association of Philosophy (AAP) conference at Macquarie University on 6 July. The stream at the AAP provided CASS delegates with the opportunity to interact with AAH Fellows and other attendees of the AAP Conference. Both events addressed the theme of “New Directions in Philosophy: Australian and Chinese Perspectives”. Participants were invited to address this theme by presenting papers that either (1) discuss topics from a particular area of philosophy from the perspective of Chinese philosophers or by employing paradigms drawn from Chinese philosophical traditions; or (2) discuss topics in Chinese philosophy from perspectives drawn from outside the traditions of Chinese philosophy.

Five presentations were made at the symposium and another five at the AAP Conference:

- Professor Xie Dikun, CASS, “The Current Situation, Problems and Tasks before Chinese Philosophy” (in Chinese)
- Professor Zhang Zhiqiang, CASS, “Ouyang Jingwu’s and Taixu’s Schemes for the Transformation of Modern Buddhism” (in Chinese)
- Professor John Makeham FAHA, The Australian National University,
“Zhu Xi’s Solution to the Problem of the Origin of Evil”
- Professor Chen Xia, CASS, “A Daoist View of Ecology: The Co-existence of Dao and Wu”
- Professor Freya Mathews FAHA, La Trobe University,
“Philosophy for the Anthropocene”
- Professor Wang Keping, CASS, “The Confucian Virtue of *Ren* in Social Relationships”
- Associate Professor Karyn Lai, CASS, “Doing The Right Thing: Appropriate Action in Confucian Life”
- Associate Professor Shirley Chan, Macquarie University, “From Cosmology to Humanity: a Perspective from the Newly Recovered Texts in China”
- Dr Koji Tanaka, The Australian National University, “Psychologism from a Classical Chinese Point of View”

Against the background of increasing threats to the humanities more generally, in the opening paper Alan Hájek develops a spirited two-pronged defence of philosophy. His first line of defence is to show that even if philosophy were of no practical value whatsoever, it would still be valuable. His second line of defence is to demonstrate that philosophy does, in fact, have considerable practical value. Having made a persuasive case for how philosophy can not only instruct us about, but also instantiate, the good life, he suggests that for philosophers working in the Anglo-American tradition, there is room for more reflection on what makes our lives worth living, such that it becomes the common ground for all philosophers. Recalling his experiences speaking to the Chinese philosophers at the Beijing and Canberra symposia, he notes being struck by how much more of a concern the notion of “living a good life” is to Chinese philosophy.

The idea that not all values are practical finds particularly strong resonances in the writings of the early Daoist philosopher, Zhuangzi (4th–3rd centuries BC). The following story in the eponymous *Zhuangzi* also speaks directly to the matter of how to have a good life. The story is about a carpenter dreaming about a huge tree, which, earlier in the day, he had decided not to cut down because it was no good for making timber:

“Make boats out of it and they’d sink; make coffins and they’d rot in no time; make vessels and they’d break at once.... It’s not a timber tree—there’s nothing it can be used for. That’s how it got to be that old!”

After Carpenter Shi had returned home, the oak tree appeared to him in a dream and said, “What are you comparing me with? Are you comparing me with those useful trees? The cherry apple, the pear, the orange, the citron, the rest of those fructiferous trees and shrubs—as soon as their fruit is ripe, they are torn apart and subject to abuse. Their big limbs are broken off, their little limbs are yanked around. Their utility makes life miserable for them, and so they don’t get to finish out the years Heaven gave them, but are cut off in mid-journey. They bring it on themselves—the pulling and tearing of the common mob. And it’s the same way with all other things.

“As for me, I’ve been trying a long time to be of no use, and though I almost died, I’ve finally got it. This is of great use to me. If I had been of some use, would I ever have grown this large? Moreover you and I are both of us things. What’s the point of this—things condemning things? You, a worthless man about to die—how do you know I’m a worthless tree?”¹

The thrust of these concluding sentences anticipates the substance of Freya Mathew’s paper, which questions whether philosophy is in fact an appropriate or useful tool for the environmental challenges posed by the Anthropocene, given that philosophy is “a product of the very consciousness that arguably enabled civilization to subjugate and hence unbalance nature in the first place”. More specifically, she prosecutes the case that because modern forms of Western philosophy are heirs to the tradition

of philosophy-as-*theoria*, they are thus inherently hamstrung. The dualist outlook endemic in this tradition is characterized by the separation of an “active, world-constructing subject from the merely acted-upon, constructed object”. She argues that philosophy-as-*theoria* is not only responsible for the “mind/body or mind/matter *dualism* that has systematically inflected Western thought”, but that the legacy of this dualist outlook may very well have led to our own era of environmental crisis. “The dualism that is built into the very process of theorizing ensures...that agency rooted in theory will be unaccommodating. It will be innately instrumentalist.” The industrialization that is the hallmark of modernity has been to great human advantage but at the expense of the natural environment. Moreover, because it is “theory itself that underwrites dualism and phenomenologically re-inscribes it in every act of theorizing”, theoretical remedies for environmental degradation will be to of no avail. Confronted with this dilemma, her strong recommendation is look to the methodological resources offered by China, with its long and highly evolved tradition of adaptation and accommodation. Mathews argues that in order for philosophy to retain its relevance it needs to reconfigure itself around the trope of “ecological wisdom”. In order to reconfigure itself in this way it will need to recover its ancient meaning as a reflective way of life as much as a body of texts and teachings. In this connection, she suggests, Western philosophy can learn much from China’s Daoist tradition, although Daoism too rests on assumptions that must be revised in light of radically altered planetary conditions.

Based on the distinction between “Christian philosophy” and “Christian theology”, Wang Qi’s paper argues that Kierkegaard’s pseudonymous writings are more appropriately judged to be expressions of a type of human “philosophy” rather than of a “Christian theology”, one which she describes as “a human philosophy that regards Christian revelation as an indispensable aid to reason, or a philosophy guided by the Christian spirit.” Wang argues that Kierkegaard’s Christian philosophy is very much concerned with the *Lebenswelt*. “To live a meaningful life in this world, one can neither depend on philosophical theories, nor the Church, let alone hide in the monastery. Instead, Kierkegaard turns to man’s concrete, worldly life, concentrating on the essential problem of how to make the daily life of the finite being gain a spiritual meaning.” There are interesting parallels here with the vision of “humanistic Buddhism” or “Buddhism for the human world” described in Zhang Zhiqiang’s paper, to be introduced below. More immediately relevant to the theme of learning from the other, however, is Wang Qi’s conviction that Chinese culture could benefit from Kierkegaard’s philosophy, especially his emphasis on individualism, “because the main expression of traditional Chinese culture—Confucianism—leaves little space for the individual.” Citing a paradigmatic remark attributed to Confucius—“Let the king be king, the minister be minister, the father be father, and the son be son”—she argues that roles replaced individuality in traditional Chinese society.

This claim about the centrality of roles in Confucian ethics finds support in the recent work by “Confucian pragmatists” Roger Ames and Henry Rosemont. Contra Wang Qi, however, they see Confucian role ethics as providing an exemplary ethical model. “Confucian normativity is defined by living one’s family roles to maximum effect....

Lived family roles—mothering, brothering, granddaughtering—are themselves normative standards that, informed as they are by existential embodiment, are much clearer and more concrete than putative moral principles”. Unlike abstract notions such as “individual”—which they identify as the locus of moral analysis in Western ethical theorizing—they ask, “What is known about a person when we are told she is an ‘individual,’ as contrasted with her ‘mother’?”²

At the same time, interest in Chinese philosophy as a resource for virtue ethics continues to be strong.³ This, of course, does not amount to a zero sum game, as both role ethics and virtue ethics can be employed fruitfully in the study of ethics and its expression in the Chinese cultural context. In his paper on the cardinal Confucian virtue of *ren* 仁 (humaneness, benevolence), Wang Keping clearly understands this virtue to be inseparable from the social praxis of person to person relationships. More generally, subscribing to the view that “individual human beings depend on social relationships for the appearance of any distinctive human capacities”, he maintains that “each human being will come properly into his or her own simply through the experience of social relationships, and at the same time foster self-consciousness of personal cultivation in an ethical sense for the sake of adjusting social relationships to a positive and healthy extent”.

Characterizing his paper as a contribution to social philosophy, Wang develops a general distinction between what he terms social relationships in a modern sense and human relationships in a Confucian sense. Whereas the former are based on a social contract, behind which are legal codes or enacted laws, the latter are based on human affection behind which are cultural conventions. The focus of the paper is an examination of the social and moral implications of the Confucian virtue of *ren* (humaneness; benevolence) with particular reference to the following three aspects: its capacity to facilitate the reconciliation of human relationships; as a source of social compassion; and as a moral ideal of human perfection. As in his other paper in this publication (introduced below), Wang draws theoretical inspiration from post-Marxist philosopher Li Zehou’s notion of “transformational creation” (adapting the “cultural-psychological formation” of the Chinese people to suit current conditions). Wang maintains that the ethical and religious dimensions of the Confucian virtue of *ren* could be utilized to serve socio-political purposes, “provided they can be transformed creatively into the individual pursuit of the meaning of life, and into the modern form of China’s political and legal systems with an emphasis on human relationships, group dynamics, social ideals, unity in affection and rationality, consultative settlement of civil disputes and the like”.

As noted above, Wang Qi seeks to endorse Kierkegaard’s pseudonymous writings as a kind of Christian philosophy because she sees them evidencing “a human philosophy that regards Christian revelation as an indispensable aid to reason.” Yet it is precisely the notion of God-like reason (bequeathed by the Enlightenment’s replacement of “God” with “Reason”) that Norva Lo, in her paper, finds to be particularly problematic. Lo’s concerns about human chauvinism also echo the sentiments of the *Zhuangzi* passage cited above. Human chauvinism is the view that members of the human species have far greater intrinsic value and moral rights than members of

the other species on Earth. Her paper examines two types of arguments for human chauvinism. They are the God-based argument, and the Reason-based argument. The God-based argument, which has its roots in Abrahamic and Judeo-Christian teachings, is characterized by the thesis that because humans are uniquely made in “the image of God” this not only confirms God’s special love for humans, but also justifies human authority over other, less loved, species. The Reason-based argument amounts to the idea that reason, no less than God, privileges humans over all the other species. After rehearsing the intricacies of both sets of arguments, Lo concludes that “just as God cannot be defined or analysed into existence, neither can Reason be defined or analysed into being a constituting part of human nature”.

In China, the creation of Chinese philosophy as a modern academic discipline began a little over a century ago. This development was in significant part a reaction to the criticisms mounted by Japanese scholars in the late Meiji period that Chinese philosophy lacked systemization; that it was devoid of logic; and that it fell far short of the standards set by Western philosophy. These scholars identified logic as the hallmark of order and system, and the prerequisite for genuine philosophical discourse. In turn, the charge that China lacked a tradition of logic spurred Chinese intellectuals of the day to make significant efforts to identify logic in classical writings such as *Xunzi* and *Mozi*—yet to this day this perception about the lack of logic still remains.

Koji Tanaka argues in his paper that the lack of a formal logic does not entail the lack of the development of logic *tout court*. He proposes that “rather than comparing the ideas expressed by Eastern philosophers with what Western logicians know about logic, we can instead treat Eastern logic texts as sources of inspiration for a new perspective on contemporary philosophical issues.” Drawing from the Chinese tradition, he argues that it is possible to “develop an alternative conception of what counts as good reason based on the study of the way in which we discriminate similar from dissimilar things. Based on this alternative conception, we can then challenge the formal conception of logic that dominates contemporary Western literature”. Tanaka’s paper amounts to a rallying call for logicians trained in the Western tradition of logic to study the various logic traditions of India and China and use them to examine critically contemporary Western conceptions of logic, in order to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of reasoning and argumentation. “My examination of the possibility of cross-cultural dialogue about logic will serve as a case study of showing how to do cross-cultural philosophy and how to use non-Western materials as part of contemporary philosophy”.

Just as a strong emphasis on recovering native Chinese resources in logic exercised a formative influence on the development of the academic discipline of Chinese philosophy in the first two decades of the twentieth century, so too the revival of Yogācāra Buddhist thought by leading Chinese intellectuals from the late 1890s to the 1930s played a key role in shaping currents in Chinese philosophy and modern Chinese thought more generally.⁴ Crucial to the late-Qing revival of interest in Yogācāra thought was the friendship between the Japanese lay Buddhist scholar Nanjō Bun’yū 南條文雄 (1894–1927) and the Chinese lay Buddhist scholar Yang Wenhui

楊文會 (1837–1911). Between 1891 and 1896, Nanjō sent a Yang a large number of important Yogācāra works that had long ceased being transmitted in China. Within a few short years, Yogācāra was being touted as a rival to the New Learning from the West, boasting not only organized, systematized thought and concepts, but also a superior means to establish epistemological verification based on its accounts of the processes of cognition and the nature of reality. The legacy of this Yogācāra revival also played a decisive role in shaping the course of Chinese Buddhist (and also Confucian) modernism.

Zhang Zhiqiang’s paper is a specialist study in modern Chinese intellectual history. It is a good illustration of how the scope and focus of *zhexue* 哲學 (“philosophy”) has an intellectual trajectory and content that does not always neatly align with what is known as “philosophy” in the Western academy. Indeed, *zhexue* remains very much a contested category in China today.⁵ Zhang examines the role played by two key figures in this Buddhist modernism movement: lay practitioner Ouyang Jingwu 歐陽竟無 (1871–1943) (disciple of Yang Wenhui) and cleric Taixu 太虛 (1890–1947). Both sought to transform Buddhism into having a much more explicit engagement with the social world. Ouyang sought to promote a return to the original teachings of Buddhism—what he termed “genuine Buddhism”—and was highly critical of the traditions of Buddhism that had developed in China (and which spread to East Asia more generally). In particular, he was opposed to the doctrine of “inherent enlightenment” that had developed in China, on the grounds that it is founded on the notion that sentient beings are already inherently enlightened, and hence is only faith-based and not true Indian Buddhism. He also rejected traditional taxonomies among Chinese Buddhist schools (*panjiao* 判教), instead proposing his own, based on an idiosyncratic distinction between dharma characteristics (*faxiang* 法相) and nothing-but-consciousness (*weishi* 唯識), associating the former with an inclusive non-sectarianism and the latter with a more explicit soteriological orientation. Taixu, by contrast, sought to align his vision of Buddhist modernism with modern scientific trends, and presented his views under the rubric of “Buddhism for human life”, and later “Buddhism for the human world”. Taixu was also a staunch defender of the traditions and schools of Sinitic Buddhism.

It is sometimes glibly remarked—often only half in jest—that all Chinese philosophy is political philosophy. The two final chapters in this publication—one concerned with ancient China and the other with modern China—are indeed studies in political philosophy. Over the past four decades our understanding of early Chinese philosophy has undergone a revolution, due to the publication of a rich body of excavated texts principally dating from the third and second centuries before the Common Era. Some of these texts have transmitted counterparts; many do not. Shirley Chan’s paper provides an overview of what some of these texts reveal about early Chinese cosmological thinking—the human impulse to comprehend the features and principles of the cosmos. She focuses on what a number of these texts tell us about early Chinese understandings of the how the cosmic order has direct implications for the human realm, particularly in relation to politics, religion and ethics. Focusing on the formative period of circa 300 BC, she argues that the bamboo

texts under discussion reveal a much more fluid, dynamic and hybrid intellectual field than has traditionally been appreciated. Chan draws particular attention to an overriding concern that pervades the texts: the attempt to define the essential conditions for an ideal socio-political order.

This same concern lies at the heart of Wang Keping's vision of efficient governance for China today. Against the background of President Xi Jinping's sustained anti-corruption campaign, in his second paper in this publication, Wang Keping argues passionately for the need to continue political reforms, and to establish a mode of efficient governance that has the capacity to enhance social management informed by the Confucian value of humaneness (a concept discussed in Wang's first paper). He draws on the notion of pragmatic reason as articulated by post-Marxist theorist, Li Zehou, to argue that historically "Chinese pragmatism" has pursued the ideal of humane governance. Wang advocates combining modern democracy "of a healthy kind" with moderate authoritarianism "of a controllable kind", envisioning that "such a mixture can be deployed and utilized as a transitional measure on the path to further development of a mature kind of constitutional democracy".

Finally, I would like to acknowledge all the hard work that Dr Meredith Wilson, International Coordinator of the Academy, has done behind the scenes to ensure that the meetings in China and Australia were so successful. ¶

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- 1 Burton Watson (trans.), *Zhuangzi: Basic Writings* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), pp. 60–61.
 - 2 Roger T. Ames and Henry Rosemount, Jr., "Were the Early Confucians Virtuous?", in *Ethics in Early China: An Anthology*, ed. by Chris Fraser, Dan Robins, and Timothy O'Leary (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2011), p. 19.
 - 3 See for example, *Virtue Ethics and Confucianism*, ed. by Stephen C. Angle and Michael Slote (New York: Routledge, 2013); Bryan Van Norden, *Virtue Ethics and Consequentialism in Early Chinese Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, 2007. See also the essays in *The Routledge Companion to Virtue Ethics*, ed. by Lorraine L. Besser and Michael Slote (London: Routledge, 2015).
 - 4 Yogācāra is one of the two most influential philosophical systems of Indian Buddhism, along with Madhyamaka. On the modern Chinese revival of Yogācāra, see *Transforming Consciousness: Yogācāra in Modern China*, ed. by John Makeham (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).
 - 5 See, for example, my essay, "Epilogue: Inner Logic, Indigenous Grammars and the Identity of *Zhongguo zhexue*", in *Learning to Emulate the Wise: The Genesis of Chinese Philosophy as an Academic Discipline in Twentieth-Century China*, ed. by John Makeham (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2012).



In Praise of Philosophy

Alan Hájek

THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

It was an honour to participate in the AAH–CASS philosophy workshops in 2014 and 2015, in Beijing and in Canberra. They were opportunities to explore common ground between our academies. I assume that it is common ground between us that philosophy should be valued and supported. However, at least in Australia, the humanities have been increasingly under threat, and philosophy has not been spared the budget cuts that have beleaguered various disciplines that do not offer obvious scientific or technological benefits. And so I want to defend the value of philosophy in these anti-philosophical times.

My defence has two main parts:

1. Even if philosophy were of no *practical* value whatsoever, it would still be valuable; not all values are practical.
2. In any case, philosophy has considerable practical value.

I take it that these points, too, will be common ground among the participants of our workshops. In that case, I hope they will join me in spreading the word!

1. Ignoring its Practical Benefits, Philosophy is Intrinsically Valuable

G. H. Hardy's *A Mathematician's Apology* is a poignant *apologia* of a formerly great mathematician, who was painfully aware that his own powers had waned, and who wanted to defend the value of pure mathematics, his life's work. He wrote:

I have never done anything "useful". No discovery of mine has made, or is likely to make, directly or indirectly, for good or ill, the least difference to the amenity of the world. I have helped to train other mathematicians, but mathematicians of the same kind as myself, and their work has been, so far

at any rate as I have helped them to it, as useless as my own. Judged by all practical standards, the value of my mathematical life is nil; and outside mathematics it is trivial anyhow.¹

He gave himself no recourse to the practical benefits of *applied* mathematics; for example, his subject matter included rarefied number theory, which seemingly has no real-world payoff. Fermat's Last Theorem never helped anyone build a bridge, or bring clean drinking water to a village.

Pure mathematics is hardly alone in this regard. Consider various other human endeavours that seem to have no such practical upshots: most of art, literature, music, ballet, sports, and games. I have chosen my words carefully—for there are benefits that outrun such practical upshots. Among other things, these endeavours provide aesthetic pleasure, entertainment, inspiration, and in some cases insight. These things are true of philosophy in spades. Closer to home, various other disciplines should not look to practical benefits for their justification. In the case of pure mathematics, Hardy found it in its beauty. And beauty alone would justify much of philosophy—read masterpieces by Plato, or Hume, or Nietzsche, or Lewis if you need any convincing of this. Moreover, even various parts of science can hardly claim to be means to practical ends; rather, they are ends in themselves. Cosmology is important because it teaches us about the origin and nature of the universe, things worthy of our intellectual curiosity. Similarly, philosophy's preoccupations should be ends in themselves. It is part of our intellectual curiosity, and indeed our humanity, to care about the nature of justice, freedom, knowledge, rational decision, causation, right and wrong, the mind, language, and so on.

We value various human achievements, many of them practical—inventions, technological advances, and yes, building bridges and bringing clean drinking water to villages. But we value much more about humans. We value various qualities: courage, steadfastness, empathy, selflessness, creativity, prudence, patience, humility, and so on. We also value artistic, literary, musical, physical, and intellectual achievements quite generally. Philosophy is part of our intellectual tradition, and as such should be valued. Indeed, it is a *fundamental* part. We owe its name—"love of wisdom"—to the ancient Greeks, and we rightly recognize their civilisation as a watershed in human history. So, too, the Enlightenment, which we owe to philosophers as much as to scientists. (Indeed, at that time philosophy and science were intimately related. Philosophy was regarded as the "trunk" of the "tree of knowledge".) An advanced civilization explores ideas for their own sake, and seeks knowledge, practical or not. And if we philosophers may count pure mathematicians and cosmologists as kindred spirits, so much the better for us.

It's something of a platitude that philosophy is concerned with foundations, although some platitudes are actually true, especially here in my adopted town of Canberra.² So whereas a physicist asks about the chance that a given atom decays in some period of time, or a chemist asks about the chemical properties of some compound, or a cosmologist asks what causes black holes to form, a philosopher asks "What is chance?", "What is a property?", "What is causation?" If we do our job well, our

answers to these philosophical questions will accord with such canonical applications of these concepts in the sciences. That said, the boundaries between philosophy and other disciplines are somewhat permeable. Where, for instance, is the borderline between philosophical and mathematical logic?

Much of philosophy that I find interesting can be characterized by the slogan: “Making our implicit commitments explicit”. These include the commitments of common sense, familiar to the folk, which almost inevitably infiltrate the sciences to some extent, and even more so the social sciences. They also include the commitments of scientific and social-scientific theories themselves. To be sure, having made them explicit, we may want to revise them. And philosophy plays a useful role as watchdog of other disciplines: questioning their presuppositions, policing their hasty inferences, clarifying their murky concepts. It teases out unintended and often unwelcome consequences of those presuppositions, provides tools for evaluating those inferences, and offers frameworks for understanding better those concepts. This is especially evident in the various “philosophy of ____”s. It is somewhat contingent which disciplines get to fill in the blank. Philosophy of physics has long been a respectable field. Philosophy of biology is rather more recent, but it is currently thriving. Philosophy of chemistry is still at a nascent stage, but it is showing a lot of promise. Philosophy of geology, of meteorology, of cosmology, and of other “special sciences” are yet to arrive on the scene. Perhaps they are not fundamental enough (as are physics and arguably chemistry), and perhaps they do not raise problems of a distinctive enough kind (as does biology) to merit sustained philosophical attention.

Of course, you don’t need to be a philosopher to make our implicit commitments explicit. Mathematicians do it too, and they remind us what a worthy enterprise it can be. If my slogan sounds like it trivializes philosophy, we should remember that it may be no easy feat. Nobody thinks that it’s easy to make explicit how our commitment to certain basic facts about positive integers, addition and exponentiation implicitly commit us to Fermat’s Last Theorem.

Another significant role for philosophy vis-à-vis other disciplines is to address *prescriptive* questions, where they typically address *descriptive* questions. This distinction is often blurred by the near-homophony of the words “idealization” and “ideal”. Indeed, sometimes the words get conflated, as when chemists speak of the “ideal gas law”, suggesting a law about maximally virtuous gases, when really it is an idealized gas-law. Physics, for example, is up to its neck in idealization, and so is decision theory. But whereas decision theory attempts to codify norms and evaluates actions that meet them or not, physics just codifies and unifies regularities without approval or sanction. Decision theory exhorts the ideal of maximizing expected utility theory, and criticizes us when we fall short of that ideal. But physics never tells an electron that it is irrational, nor tell a galaxy that it is badly behaved.

Many good philosophers are like intellectual decathletes, knowing a fair bit of mathematics, science, and social science, with better-than-average writing skills. And every serious discipline has its share of philosophical problems. There is thus

much opportunity for cross-fertilization: the other disciplines can offer material for philosophers to sink their teeth into, and the philosophers can offer in return rigorous scrutiny of the disciplines' foundational issues.

Philosophy, moreover, *nurtures* other disciplines, which we should value independently of *their* practical upshots. Russell's paradox shook the foundations of set theory; Gödel's incompleteness theorems did the same to the foundations of arithmetic. Ramsey's explorations in probability and decision theory gave new foundations to economics and psychology.

So even if philosophy were of no *practical* value whatsoever, it would still be valuable; not all values are practical. But that would be to concede far too much to philosophy's opponents.

2. Philosophy's Practical Benefits

For even its opponents should acknowledge philosophy's *practical* benefits. If philosophers are intellectual decathletes, then they need to be cognitive all-rounders, with wide-reaching smarts. Philosophy trains them well. It teaches clear and rigorous thinking, with all of *its* practical benefits. Major corporations such as Google and Microsoft, and management consulting firms such as McKinsey & Company, know this well. They often employ philosophers for their analytic cast of mind.

Philosophy underpins other disciplines that have practical benefits, much as pure mathematics does. And sometimes philosophical ideas can have more direct practical uptake. Consider the notion of a *Turing machine*, which began life as part of a philosophical analysis of the notion of a “computable function”, but which went on to form the foundation of modern computing. Consider the *Turing test*, which began life as a philosophical analysis of the notion of intelligence, but which went on to become a touchstone of artificial intelligence. More generally, the philosophy of mind has impacted on cognitive science and psychology in various ways—for instance, through the identity theory that the mind is the brain,³ and through the picture of the mind as a computer and of thinking as a kind of computing.⁴ Think of the real-world impact of political philosophy—witness Marx's enduring influence, and more recently, Pettit's ideas on republicanism that were taken as a template for the constitution of Zapatero's Spain.⁵ And think of how decision theory has informed not only mathematics and economics, but also public policy.

Concepts and techniques invented by philosophers often are exported to other fields. Lewis's notion of “common knowledge”, central to his analysis of convention, has become central in economics also.⁶ His analysis of counterfactuals and of adverbs of quantification has made a lasting impression on linguistics.⁷ Logics of vagueness have influenced computer science; work in ontology has influenced artificial intelligence; research on causation has influenced computer scientists, and their work in turn has influenced artificial intelligence and robotics.

More recently, philosophers have done important work on the “wisdom of the crowds”—the seemingly remarkable fact that by pooling the opinions of many people, we typically get more accurate predictions than those of individuals (even experts).⁸ This phenomenon may be harnessed to make better predictions of various important real-world events—disease outbreaks, presidential elections, terrorist attacks, extreme weather events, and so on. It is hard to imagine a more practical upshot.

To be sure, philosophy often operates at such a fundamental level that one should not expect to see immediate practical payoffs. It may take time for philosophical ideas to gain purchase outside philosophy and in other disciplines, and then to break free of the academy and effect the real world. By the time other disciplines have appropriated them, they may no longer even be called *philosophy*; still less when the real world has benefited from them. But their roots in philosophy may be genuine all the same.

And when all is said and done, there remains the ultimate practical question that philosophy promises to answer: *how to live a good life*. This used to be a primary concern of philosophers. Indeed, Frodeman and Briggie write of a time before the creation of various disciplines in the nineteenth century:

Philosophy, understood as the love of wisdom, was seen as a vocation, like the priesthood. It required significant moral virtues (foremost among these were integrity and selflessness), and the pursuit of wisdom in turn further inculcated those virtues. The study of philosophy elevated those who pursued it. Knowing and being good were intimately linked. It was widely understood that the point of philosophy was to become good rather than simply to collect or produce knowledge.⁹

It isn't just that philosophy may equip one with a useful skill set that will aid one in the pursuit of the good life. A user's manual to life could do that. More than that, I am drawn to Plato's idea that philosophy may be an integral *part of* the good life. There is something beautiful about the earnest pursuit of truth. Doing it well often requires various human virtues—steadfastness, creativity, prudence, patience, humility, and even courage. Much as it takes courage to stand by one's moral convictions in the face of adversity, it may take courage to stand by one's philosophical convictions in the face of intellectual adversity—and to give them up when one realises that the truth lies elsewhere. Philosophy, then, can both instruct us regarding the good life and be itself a way to instantiate it.

Here, I think that Anglo-American philosophy has partly taken its eye off the ball. While I applaud much of what those of us working in that tradition do, there is room for more reflection on what makes our lives worth living. And our incentive structures are not always conducive to the pursuit of truth—for example, there is pressure to publish prolifically and rapidly, often at the expense of careful argumentation and reflection. Speaking to the Chinese philosophers at the Beijing and Canberra workshops, I was struck by how much more of a concern the notion of “living a good life” is to Chinese philosophy. But it should be the concern of all of us; this, too, should be common ground.

And to extent that philosophy delivers on this promise, we have its ultimate vindication.¹⁰ ¶

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- 1 G. H. Hardy, *A Mathematician's Apology* (University of Alberta Mathematical Sciences Society: 1940), p. 49. Available at: <<http://www.math.ualberta.ca/mss/>>.
 - 2 I should explain this joke for the uninitiated. The so-called Canberra plan is a metaphilosophical approach that is based on conceptual analysis of folk concepts, and then looks to the world to find realisers of those concepts. Some of its main practitioners include philosophers associated with the Australian National University such as Frank Jackson, Philip Pettit, Michael Smith, and Peter Menzies. They owe an intellectual debt to David Lewis, himself a frequent visitor to Canberra, a highly planned city. See Frank Jackson, *From Metaphysics to Ethics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998).
 - 3 J. J. C. Smart, "Sensations and Brain Processes", *Philosophical Review* 68 (1959), 141–156; U. T. Place, "Is Consciousness a Brain Process?", *British Journal of Psychology* 47 (1956), 44–50; David Lewis, "An Argument for the Identity Theory", *Journal of Philosophy* 63 (1966), 17–25; D. M. Armstrong, *A Materialist Theory of the Mind* (London: Routledge, 1968).
 - 4 Hilary Putnam, "Brains and Behavior", originally read as part of the program of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Section L (History and Philosophy of Science), December 27, 1961; reprinted in *Readings in Philosophy of Psychology*, Volume 1, ed. by Ned Block (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983); Jerry Fodor, *The Language of Thought* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1975).
 - 5 Philip Pettit, *Republicanism: A Theory of Freedom and Government* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).
 - 6 David Lewis, *Convention* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1969).
 - 7 David Lewis, *Counterfactuals* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1973); "Adverbs of Quantification", in *Formal Semantics of Natural Language*, ed. by Edward L. Keenan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), pp. 178–88.
 - 8 For example, Aidan Lyon, "Collective Wisdom", *Journal of Philosophy* (forthcoming).
 - 9 Robert Frodeman and Adam Briggles, "When Philosophy Lost Its Way", *The Stone* (2016). Available at: <http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2016/01/11/when-philosophy-lost-its-way/?_r=0>
 - 10 I am grateful to Yoaav Isaacs for very helpful comments.



Do the Deepest Roots of a Future Ecological Civilization Lie in Chinese Soil?

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I. Can Philosophy Help Us to Negotiate the Anthropocene?

Civilization is the product of a happy geological accident—a ten to twelve thousand year period of climate stability, known as the Holocene. With climate stability came seasonality and predictable weather, where these conditions made it possible to grow crops, store food and hence accumulate wealth. Agriculture provided the material basis for the sedentary societies that gradually evolved the stratified, literate, artisanal, administratively centralised forms of social organisation known as civilization.¹ It was climate stability that also provided the conditions for the urbanism and eventually the industrialism of such societies, since stability enabled people to establish large, permanent built environments without fear of flooding or destruction of infrastructure by the elements. Climatic fluctuations in this period, leading to extended droughts or freezes, often resulted in the collapse of local instances of civilization.²

Prior to the advent of agriculture, when people lived in small, nomadic, hunter-gatherer societies, in dangerous and uncertain environmental conditions, they were dependent on the contingent affordances of nature. Without technical means of transforming the world to suit their own purposes, they had no alternative but to accommodate and adapt to the natural environment. With the onset of the Holocene and the new conditions of climate stability that allowed for the emergence of agriculture and hence for the birth of civilization, however, humans began to develop the technical means for transforming nature. This transition was inevitably accompanied by a psychological re-orientation to reality—a change of mindset. Whereas pre-civilizational peoples had been psychologically oriented to “the given”, cultivating accommodation, attunement and adaptation to the world as they found it in all its actuality and particularity, civilizational societies were built on the discovery

that the given was not immutable. The natural order of things could be altered to suit human convenience. At a certain stage of civilization, some societies accordingly began to cultivate a new mindset of abstraction from the merely present and particular, allowing for the construction of conceptual alternatives to the contingently actual. This emerging way of thinking, aided of course by literacy but also in its turn productive of literacy, emphasised reflexivity and involved a shift from a pre-reflexive focus on the world in the concreteness of its inexhaustible detail to a reflexive focus on concepts and categories as abstract entities in their own right.³ With this new focus on concepts in their own right in addition to the original focus on the concrete things which conceptualisation enables us to describe, came an interest in the nature of the cognitive processes by which abstraction is achieved: the rules of composition and coherence by which such cognitive processes are governed. A whole new, highly recursive level of awareness came into view: observation of the laws of abstraction enabled concepts to become more sharply defined, while sharply defined concepts proved increasingly amenable to the “laws of thought”. Without clearly delineated concepts, basic presumed laws of thought, such as those of excluded middle and non-contradiction, do not apply. For example, if identity is conceived in a diffuse fashion, such that the identity of a particular thing is understood to be context dependent, then a statement such as that a particular individual is either human or not may not be true. Whether or not a particular individual counts as human may vary according to the context of consideration. In other words, logic—in this case, the law of excluded middle—depends for its applicability on well defined concepts, while concepts in turn may be honed by the application of logic: if it is accepted that a particular individual must either be or not be human, then human-ness itself must be defined in terms that exclude other categories of the same logical type.

For hunter gatherer societies, attuned to the diffuse, context-dependent and relational modes of existence and identity that characterised the still fully ecological environments on which they depended, conceptual precision, or the sharp definition of concepts, was not adaptive. Diffuse and relational categories were essential for negotiating a life-world in which the identities of all things were still inextricably and densely ecologically intertwined. In relation to such categories, the so-called “laws of thought”, first codified by Aristotle as principles of logic, did not apply.⁴ As people started to disentangle their life-worlds from nature, however, in the transition to civilization, they created around themselves a built or artefactual context in which the identities of objects—such as houses and chairs—were genuinely discrete and unambiguously instrumental in significance. In other words, as people replaced nature with fixed, built, human-designed environments, a whole new horizon of concepts and categories amenable to sharper delineation and hence to manipulation in accordance with the rules of what came to be known as logic, opened up. Once the rudiments of logic were available, reason emerged, paving the way for philosophy.

With the aid of reason, philosophers—notably the presocratics—were able to construct abstract and schematic representations of reality. Culturally enshrined as a revered (and indeed civilizing) epistemic end in itself, such philosophical activity can, however, also be seen indirectly—historically and functionally—as a

prelude, a necessary condition, for the manipulation and transformation of reality. By performing logical operations on abstract representations, philosophers were able to construct new blueprints for reality, thereby motivating and enabling a new ethos of substitution, imposition and control in place of the old ethos of adaptation to nature.

Philosophy—which emerged in the so-called Axial era, 800–200 BCE, when civilization had reached maturity⁵—might thus be seen as a product of the reflexive faculty that accompanied the shift from a hunter-gatherer way of life to life under the conditions of civilization, an offshoot of the distinctive *praxis* of civilization. It was in this sense both a definitive expression of the civilizational mind-set enabled by the climatic stability of the Holocene and a powerful tool for the further development of that mind-set, a further development that would in due course see the wholesale subjugation of nature by civilization.

In the 21st century climate stability will, it seems, no longer be assured. Anthropogenic climate change seems set to disrupt weather patterns and increase the severity of extreme weather events, leading to catastrophic droughts, floods and storms. The new era of anthropogenic environmental upheaval has recently been labelled the Anthropocene. According to this new idea, Earth has “exited the current geological epoch, the 12,000 year old Holocene, and entered a new epoch, the Anthropocene” in which “the human species is now the dominant Earth-shaping force.”⁶ This new Earth-shaping impact on the planet “includes altering biogeochemical cycles (carbon, nitrogen, phosphorus, etc), modifying terrestrial water cycles through changing river flows, land-use changes, etc, and driving extinction rates which are unprecedented since the dinosaurs.”⁷

In the Anthropocene then, the environmental context of civilization is likely to change. Philosophy, as the study of the ultimate existential questions facing humankind, must surely address such a change, and help, if possible, to navigate humanity through it. But as a product of the very consciousness that arguably enabled civilization to subjugate and hence unbalance nature in the first place, it is uncertain whether philosophy is in fact an appropriate or useful tool for this task. This is the question I wish to explore in the present paper.

II. *Theoria* versus *Strategia*: Contrasting Modes of Thought

In order to pursue this question, let us return to the origins of philosophy and consider in a little more detail the phenomenology of this new method of thinking. The earliest origins of philosophy in the West were of course in ancient Greece. Philosophy emerged as a distinctive tradition in the 6th century BCE. To grasp the distinctive phenomenology of this tradition I would like to compare it with a wisdom tradition that prevailed at the same time in China. Although these two traditions nominally shared the goal of wisdom, their approaches were very different. (I shall return below to the question why philosophy did not gain as strong a foothold in ancient China as it did in ancient Greece despite the fact that civilization in China long antedated civilization in Greece.)

My starting point for this comparison was an article by French sinologist and philosopher, Francois Jullien, “Did Philosophers have to Become Fixated on Truth?”.⁸ Contrasting the figure of the ancient Greek philosopher with that of the ancient Chinese sage, Jullien pointed out that where the philosopher set out to *explain* the world, the sage set out to *adapt* or *accommodate* himself to it. Where the philosopher sought *truth* (that is, an abstract schema that accurately represented reality), the sage aimed at *congruence* (that is, he sought to identify tendencies or dispositions at work in particular situations that could be harnessed to his or others’ best advantage). The thinking of the sage remained explicitly inextricable from agency rather than becoming, like the thinking of the Greeks, an epistemic end in itself.

I would like to suggest that Jullien’s contrast between the Greek philosopher and the Chinese sage opens up a further contrast between what might be called *theory*, on the one hand, and *strategy*, on the other.⁹

The theorist engages in a particular form of abstractive thought. He picks out concepts from the psycho-cognitive mesh of his thinking and, by further abstraction, sharpens them into well-defined abstract categories. In the process, he shifts his focus from the world itself as the object of his cognition to these reified categories—categories treated by him as (ideal) entities in their own right. By manipulating and combining these categories in accordance with abstract principles of inference and evidence, the theorist may eventually produce a schema that is considered accurately to reflect or represent some aspect of reality. Such a representational schema is then judged to be *true*.

The truth about reality, or some aspect of reality, is permanent. It is in fact eternal: the world changes, but the truth about the world does not change. Things arise and pass away, moment by moment, but the truth about things is timeless. The goal of thought, from the theorist’s perspective, is to grasp truth, and the grasping of truth is an end in itself.¹⁰ But in allowing his attention to become thus deflected from the “external” world to this timeless, abstract, inner realm of categories and conceptual constructs, the theorist’s own position in relation to the object of his cognition changes. Unlike the “external” world, theoretical constructs are the theorist’s own creation, assembled and scrutinised within the theatre of his own intellect. In grasping reality indirectly through the lens of an abstract map or model then, the theorist is engaging with something that is, in the last analysis, his own creation. Since he routinely conflates theoretical model with world itself, his status as architect or author of the model subliminally inflects his relationship with reality. As a result of this rarely scrutinised phenomenology of theorising, the theorist tends subconsciously to see himself as author or active subject in relation to a world experienced as construct or passive object.

Let me explain this point in a little more detail. In the process of perceiving the world through the lens of theory—which is to say, via the inner theatre of the intellect—the ancient philosopher became subconsciously removed from the world. As the architect of the schema, he could not be included amongst its contents. This architect who could not be included in his own abstract schema was, I am suggesting,

the original *subject*, and the world as abstract construct, viewed from within the theatre of the subject's intellect, was the original *object*. It was, in other words, via the subtle duplication involved in *theoria*, the introjective act of specular knowing, that the world first became a mere *object* for the human mind, ideal and hence inert and untouchable and completely devoid of real presence or agency of its own. This separation of active, world-constructing subject from the merely acted-upon, constructed object, was presumably the origin of the famous mind/body or mind/matter *dualism* that has systematically inflected Western thought. This dualism is a function of the subject-object bifurcation that inevitably accompanies the act of theorising itself. It will implicitly block any outlook that attributes subjectivity, agency, mentality, purpose or presence to the world at large. The mode of relationship with reality encouraged by the dualist outlook will accordingly be one of presumption: the world is perceived as a mere object for the theorist to use as he sees fit.

The *strategist*, by contrast, focuses not on abstract schemas at an inner remove from reality but on the immediate field of actual, outer influences and concrete particulars in which he is immersed. He examines these concretely and corporeally in order to discern how that field is impacting on his agency. His interest is not in abstract architectonics but rather in his own immediate situation and how the influences at play in it are tangibly impinging on him in the present moment. He does not need a theory about the nature of reality in order to respond strategically to this field of influences: he can directly feel environmental pressures increasing and decreasing as he responds now this way, now that. Nor does he address this field as a completed totality; it extends just as far as the range of his own sensitivity, and, as he moves around, this range is constantly changing. Accordingly, to train the strategic faculty, one does not teach reason, which is to say, rules for the articulation and organisation of thought in the abstract key, but rather sets mindfulness exercises or practices which cultivate sensitivity and responsiveness. This is why Chinese sages typically received their training in martial and other Daoist arts rather than in discursive inquiry.

In understanding the contrast between theory and strategy, etymology is helpful. The word, "theory" derives from the Greek, *theoria*, a looking at, thing looked at; *theoros*, spectator; and *thea*, spectacle. "Strategy" is derived from the Greek *strategia*, "office or command or art of a general", from *stratos*, "multitude, army, expedition" and *agein*, "to lead, guide, drive, carry off", from Sanskrit *ajirah*, "moving, active". In light of this, strategy may be understood as concerned with the coordination of collective or individual agency. Cognition is required for such coordination, but this is not the kind of cognition involved in *theoria*, which abstracts from the empirical agency of the subject in order to attain a more detached representation of the world. In *strategia*, cognition remains in the service of agency.

Strategic consciousness, in other words, is inherently nondualist. Rather than enacting an inner subject/object bifurcation and engaging with reality as a passive construct of his own devising, the strategist remains immersed in a fluxing field of concrete particulars and pressures that are registered not as part of an abstract totality

at an epistemic remove from the subject, but in terms of their immediate impact or influence on the agency of the embedded, nondual self.

Through strategic experimentation the strategist quickly discovers that the best way of negotiating a field of influences in which one is immersed—where this field includes the cross-cutting wills or conativities of others—is generally to adapt to them. That is to say, the best way of negotiating such a field is to make one's own ends as consistent as possible with surrounding influences and conativities, rather than seeking to impose one's will upon them. This is self-evident inasmuch as she who achieves her goals in ways best calculated to conserve her own energy will be most fit to continue to preserve and increase her own existence. Strategy then, the province of the Chinese sage, points to *wu wei*, the way of least resistance, which can be understood not simply as the giving up of one's own ends in deference to the ends of others but rather as tailoring one's ends to theirs and using the energies already at play in one's environment to further one's goals.

The strategist thus discovers *wu wei* for himself via a process of strategic experimentation. By reflecting on this process, he also discovers that *wu wei* is the natural modality of all beings: what works for him as an agent responsively and spontaneously negotiating a field of environmental forces will work for any being strategically negotiating such a field. Hence it is the strategy that will be naturally selected for all beings. In experientially discovering *wu wei* for himself, then, the strategist reflectively, though without the aid of theory, also discovers the way of all nature. In China this way is called *Dao*.

It is arguably the dualist outlook bequeathed to the West by the theoretic orientation of philosophy which has led in our own era to environmental crisis. For when the theoretic objectification of reality inaugurated by philosophy for contemplative purposes gave rise, many centuries later, to a more accurate, detailed and comprehensive form of theorisation—the body of knowledge known to us as science—humanity was empowered to exercise its agency on an unprecedented scale. This form of agency, rooted in theory, was very different from the strategic agency of the ancient sage. It was no longer the agency of a self engaged in negotiating reality from a point of immersion within it but rather that of a subject premeditating its action by reference to a once-removed abstract schema. This calculated form of agency turned out to entrain undreamed-of efficacy. However, the dualism that is built into the very process of theorising ensures, I have suggested, that agency rooted in theory will be unaccommodating. It will be innately instrumentalist.

Such instrumentalism is indeed what may be observed in the history of the West. Science, the offshoot of Western philosophy, has given birth to modernity, the instrumentalist form of civilization par excellence that has spread industrialisation throughout the world—to great human advantage but at deadly cost to the natural environment.

In the late 20th century it was philosophy itself that hunted down—and critiqued—the dualist or binary roots of Western thought. The role of binary oppositions was intensively explored by deconstructionists, notably Jacques Derrida.¹¹ The influence

of deconstruction was in turn key across a range of critical discourses, including feminism and postcolonialism. Environmental philosophers also bemoaned the entrenched dualism of the Western tradition that has systematically elevated the human, as subject, locus of mind, agency, purpose and meaning, over nature rendered as brute object, realm of mere matter, devoid of mind and hence of meaning, purpose and intrinsic value.¹² It was this dualism, environmental philosophers pointed out, that underpinned the endemic anthropocentrism and instrumentalism of Western attitudes to the natural world. In place of dualist theories of nature, such philosophers offered theories that sought to represent nature as subject, locus of mind, agency or intentionality, and the moral values that accompany mind.¹³ It was expected that when nature was reinvested with mind in this way, a more respectful and considerate attitude to the natural environment would follow. But such revised theories of nature have proved to have little traction in Western cultures. If my present analysis is correct, and it is theory itself that underwrites dualism and phenomenologically re-inscribes it in every act of theorising, then it is not surprising that theoretical remedies for a problem which, at the deepest level, springs from theory itself, will be unavailing.

So this is a dilemma for the West. But what of China? There were of course theoretical as well as strategic tendencies in the thought of ancient China. (Scholars such as the Moists, Legalists and followers of the School of Names, as well as Confucius and Mencius, displayed theoretical tendencies in their thought.) But Francois Jullien seems right in suggesting that these theoretical tendencies never became the defining perspective of Chinese civilization. Throughout its long history, the defining perspective of Chinese civilization remained the strategic one of accommodation and adaptation, elegantly codified in the normative principle of *wu wei*. Even China's departure from tradition in the 20th century, its embrace of modern forms of civilization dictated by Western science, may be seen, at the deepest level, as an instance of its traditional disposition to accommodate and adapt.

III. Alternative Foundations for Civilization: China and the West

China may have owed this difference from the West to the continuity of its civilization with its own indigenous roots. The form of civilization that evolved so gradually in China was deeply informed with, and organised around, the fundamental principle of *Dao*, a principle inherited from its pre-civilizational past. This was a principle that explicitly resisted theorisation. As Laozi puts it in the opening line of the *Daodejing*, "the Dao that can be told of is not the eternal Dao".¹⁴ As a principle, *Dao* suggests instead the strategic approach to reality that is still today characteristic of many indigenous societies. In China, theorisation was kept in check by the pervasive influence of this principle. At the same time, deference to *Dao* enabled a robust syncretism that refused any exclusive bids for truth to flourish, binding together disparate traditions, such as Confucianism and Buddhism and latterly Marxism, as well as Daoism itself, to create an open yet distinctively Chinese outlook.

The continuity of Chinese civilization with its indigenous roots is evident in the prominent role that shamanism played in the early history of China. Historians of

civilization note this as a distinctive factor in the development of civilization in China by comparison with the West.¹⁵ Shamanism, a feature widely shared by a great variety of hunter gatherer societies around the globe, consists of a set of spiritual practices whereby socially ordained individuals—shamans—communicate with a spirit-world assumed to co-exist with nature. The purpose of such communication is to gain transcendent knowledge, guidance, magic or healing energy; this is then channeled back to the shaman's community. Shamans work closely with animal powers, totemic animals generally serving as spirit guides on shamanic flights between the everyday world and the spirit world. Such reverence for animals and trust in their spiritual power, rooted in totemism, is characteristic of hunter-gatherer outlooks that have not yet demoted animals to the wrong side of culture-nature dualism.

In the formative stages of Chinese civilization, shamans continued to hold their earlier high status as societies transitioned from hunting and gathering to pastoralism and agriculture. By the second millennium BCE, emerging social elites were appropriating the knowledge and prestige of shamans to lend spiritual direction and legitimacy to their political intent. Shamans were co-opted to mediate between the spirit world, now figured as Heaven, and the secular world, now figured as Earth, in order to obtain a “mandate of Heaven” for the will of imperial rulers.¹⁶

This absorption of a pre-civilizational form of spirituality, normally associated with hunter gatherer societies, into the civilizational structure of China, might be explainable by the relative absence of rupture in the transition from pre-history to history in China. Though ethnically diverse, the cultures and languages of the Yellow River and Yangtze River basins evolved gradually and continuously over millennia—they were not subject to outright conquest or colonisation by alien cultures. (Even during later imperial periods of “barbarian” [Manchu and Mongol] dominance, Chinese language was maintained as the language of governance; Manchus and Mongols themselves were significantly sinicised rather than subsuming the Chinese under their own foreign cultures.)¹⁷

Whatever the reason for the persistence of shamanism in the evolution of a distinctively Chinese form of civilization, however, its pivotal role in turn ensured the persistence of basic elements of hunter gatherer consciousness in the Chinese outlook, where this militated against the dualising tendencies, noted above, of civilization per se.

A different unfolding of civilization is evident in the West. Ancient Greek civilization, in the form described, for example, by Francois Jullien, emerged in the centuries following waves of invasion by alien Indo-European peoples, such as the Dorians, Aeolians and Ionians, from the Danube basin in the second millennium BCE. These peoples are thought to have hailed originally from the steppelands of southern Russia.¹⁸ Their arrival in those parts of the Mediterranean, which would come to be known as Greece, represented a profound rupture in the evolution of civilization in the area. The prior, pre-Greek cultures of the indigenous (non-Indo-European) peoples—named by the Greeks themselves as the Pelagsians—were relatively obliterated. Although these peoples were already civilized, there is evidence that

their cultures retained a spiritual orientation to nature that may well have represented a certain continuity with earlier, hunter gatherer ways of life. In any case, with the sharp cultural break that the Indo-European invasions represented, little continuity would remain between post-Homeric Greek civilization and an indigenous past.¹⁹ The stage was accordingly set for the emergence, in the classical period, of a fully post-indigenous, dualised, theoretic consciousness.

IV. Philosophy in a Strategic Mode as Foundation for a New Ecological Civilization

In the 20th century, China sought, for pragmatic reasons, to weave science, with its Western philosophical underpinnings, into the open texture of its outlook. However, by virtue of the spectacular material success of science—its capacity to co-opt nature for human purposes—this theoretic outlook is currently perhaps threatening to displace the notion of *Dao* as the generous well-spring of Chinese civility. It is threatening to replace *Dao* with a dogmatic materialism that hides an underlying dualism that in turn inevitably subjects the larger earth-community to human despotism.

From the perspective of the argument presented here, it would be a tragic error for China to abandon *Dao* as its guiding principle. Theory, with its offshoot, science, is of course of enormous developmental significance in the cultural evolution of humankind. It cannot be ignored or set aside. But unless theory is subsumed under a *strategic* orientation which leaves all ultimate questions open, and seeks only to respond to the actual promptings of the world, then it will trap China as it has the West in a dualism that will continue to play itself out in the instrumentalisation of nature.

In the West, we have, I think, ceased genuinely to relate to reality itself because we have ceased to experience it directly—we apprehend it only through the dualising lenses of theory. In the twenty-first century we exist increasingly inside a discursive bubble, a world both materially made over to suit human convenience and interpreted exclusively in terms of our own ever-intensifying self-preoccupation. We have ceased to experience what it is like to exist, to act, in synchrony with the larger community of life and hence in accord with *Dao*. Theory cannot convey this re-animating experience; on the contrary, it alienates us from it. Only through *cultivation*, defined in relation to certain kinds of arts or practices, can we engage with reality in this spontaneous and responsive way. Daoism is a repository of such arts and practices—martial arts, taiji, calligraphy, internal alchemy—but many other fields of human endeavor offer potential others.

If philosophy is to help us repair our relationship with nature in the 21st century, in the face of ecological upheaval on a planetary scale, then it may need to integrate theory with a strategic orientation that is sensitive to environmental cues and capable of responding spontaneously to them, without discursive pre-conception. Such an orientation can be achieved only through practices that enable us to immerse ourselves psychophysically in nature, thereby enabling us to experience nature

immediately as the psychoactive directive and responsive matrix of our own being. If theory could in this way be subsumed under a strategic orientation, the result would surely indeed be a form of wisdom.

However, it is hard to know how such wisdom could be described, since any name would tend to co-opt it exclusively to theory. If one adopted terms such as “cosmological wisdom” or “ecological wisdom”, one might be tempted to unpack them in exclusively theoretical terms, as ways of life dictated by the cosmological or ecological sciences. Laozi of course had similar difficulties working out how to refer to the wisdom of following *Dao*, since *Dao* itself cannot be named. “The *Dao* that can be told of is not the eternal *Dao*”. But the root meaning of the term, *philosophy*, namely *love of wisdom*, is surely apposite in this connection, as it implies a form of understanding that includes an experiential, even spiritual, certainly extra-discursive dimension. To reconceive philosophy along non-dualist lines may in fact take us back to certain strands of the original philosophical enterprise. For while ancient philosophy seems indeed to have become fixated on truth, as Francois Jullien argues, and in this sense allowed theory to shape the Western tradition, counter-tendencies also existed in the Hellenistic world.

Historian of ancient philosophy, Pierre Hadot, has detailed how philosophy was understood by certain schools, notably the Stoics and Epicureans, precisely as a way of life, pursued not merely through discourse but also via spiritual exercises and meditational practices aimed at opening out the narrow perspective of the individual to the perspective of the cosmos as a whole.²⁰ For Stoics and Epicureans, according to Hadot, this expansion of consciousness, this capacity to perceive one’s interests and assumptions in the context of a larger field of inter-relations and hence to recognise the ego-distortedness of one’s habitual outlook, was a definitive key to wisdom. In the light of this consciousness, the imperative always to serve one’s own interests would give way to a more generous, accommodating tendency, with a felt sense of the rightfulness of the claims of other beings. As the product of direct experience, such an expanded perspective, with its attendant moral values, would be grasped by the practitioner as self-evident rather than entertained, as it would be were it merely a posit of reason, as a contingent theoretical position open to contestation by competing theories.

In an epoch—the Anthropocene—in which humanity is rapidly destroying the ecological integrity of the biosphere, new moral values, particularly in the form of an environmental ethic, are urgently needed. Contemporary philosophers, heir to the tradition of philosophy as *theoria*, can and do offer theoretical arguments in favour of environmental ethics. But these values have so far exerted little influence on society. The reason for this is perhaps that, as an instance of theorising, environmental ethics, like philosophy generally, phenomenologically re-enacts the subject-object split that underpins anthropocentrism, thereby reinforcing anthropocentrism psychologically even as it attempts to refute it rationally. Moreover, as a mere theoretical posit, environmental ethics remains contestable and hence optional, subject to rational demurrals by those for whom it is inconvenient. For modern civilization, based

on an ethos of industrialism and hence subjugation of nature, any ethos of moral consideration for the interests of nature is not merely an inconvenience but a direct threat. If environmental ethics is to acquire the force of self-evidence and hence the authority it needs in order to supplant the anthropocentrism so core to modern civilization, it may need to be explored and imparted by way of more immediate, experiential methods than have so far been the province of philosophy. In other words, *cultivation* of consciousness may be required in addition to discourse.

In the West we can look back to traditions such as those of the Stoics and Epicureans in the search for clues to transforming philosophy into a discipline dedicated not merely to discourse but to the cultivation of an attitude of attunement to the interests of all beings. But Stoic and Epicurean methods pale in comparison to the methodological resources offered by China, with its long and highly evolved tradition of adaptation and accommodation, codified as the Great *Dao* and cultivated via a vast array of dedicated practices. China thus seems well placed to lead the way towards a discipline that subsumes theory under a larger strategic perspective. The figure of the Chinese sage, beckoning us down the path of *wu wei*, perhaps offers a new point of departure for thinking about appropriate cognitive modalities for the Anthropocene outside the compromised parameters of the Western tradition. Just as ancient Greek philosophy laid the foundations for the civilization, rooted in *theoria*, which would eventually manifest as modernity, so such a new cognitive modality, theoretically literate but responsive in its larger orientation to nature, might help to lay foundations for a future, ecological civilization. ¶

- 1 Richard Prentice, "Cultural Responses to Climate Change in the Holocene", *Anthós*, 1.1 (2009), article 3, 1–13.
- 2 Jared Diamond, *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed* (New York: Penguin, 2005).
- 3 See Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: the Technologizing of the Word* (London: Methuen, 1982) for a classic study of the profound changes in consciousness that accompanied the transition from orality to literacy. For an environmental perspective on these changes, see David Abram, *Spell of the Sensuous* (New York: Vintage, 1996).
- 4 The early anthropologist, Lucien Levy Bruhl, pointed out in a series of books how the thought of indigenous people follows a different "logic" from the patterns of thought discernable in the history of Western thought. See, for example, *How Natives Think* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1926) and *The Soul of the Primitive* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1928).
- 5 Karen Armstrong, *The Great Transformation: The Beginning of our Religious Traditions* (New York: Knopf, 2006).
- 6 Jeremy Baskin, "Paradigm Dressed as Epoch: the Ideology of the Anthropocene", *Environmental Values* 24 (2015), 9–29 (pp. 9–10).
- 7 Baskin, p. 10.
- 8 Francois Jullien, "Did Philosophers Have to Become Fixated on Truth?", *Critical Inquiry*, 28, 4 (2002), 803–24.
- 9 See Freya Mathews, "Why has the West Failed to Embrace Panpsychism?" in *Mind That Abides: Panpsychism in the New Millennium*, ed. by David Skrbina (Advances in Consciousness

Research Series) (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2009), pp. 341–60. Several passages in the following pages are adapted from this chapter.

- 10 Heidegger offered a famous analysis of *theoria*, where *theoria* was more or less equated by him with metaphysics. I am not a student of Heidegger, and do not owe the analysis I am offering here to him, so I am not particularly well placed to comment on the overlap between the two accounts. So far as I can tell, however, Heidegger was aiming to bring out the distinction between things experienced discursively—as fully discursively mediated—and things experienced immediately, as instances of being, where being is an aspect of reality that cannot be captured by discursive schemas. To “remember” being was to be brought back into the actual presence of the world rather than remaining trapped within the unreal and literally lifeless world of human discourse. I am sympathetic to this project, but my own analysis is explicitly focused on overcoming dualism and does not need recourse to Heideggerian language to explain either its aims or its findings. Any overlap between the two accounts can, I think, be attributed to the fact that both bear evidence of Daoist influences, in my own case, avowedly; in Heidegger’s case, unavowedly.
- 11 The locus classicus of this work is Jacques Derrida, “Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences” in *The Languages of Criticism and the Sciences of Man*, ed. by Richard Macksey and Eugenio Donato (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1970), pp. 247–265.
- 12 Val Plumwood, *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993).
- 13 The entire field of ecophilosophy may be seen as the attempt, firstly, to break down dualism as it pertains to nature and thereby, secondly, to recover the moral significance of nature.
- 14 Wing-Tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963) p. 139.
- 15 Kwang-Chih Chang, “Ancient China and its Anthropological Significance” in *The Breakout: The Origins of Civilization* ed. by Martha Lamberg-Karlovsky (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), pp. 1–11; also *The Formation of Chinese Civilization: An Archaeological Perspective*, ed. by Kwang-chih Chang, Pingfang Xu, Sarah Allan, Liancheng Lu (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).
- 16 Chang, “Ancient China”.
- 17 Of course, the influence of the Chinese upon their foreign rulers was not entirely one-way. Manchu and Mongolian rulers also retained and disseminated aspects of their own culture while governing China. See Naomi Standen, “Foreign Conquerors of China” in *Demystifying China: New Understandings of Chinese History*, ed. by Naomi Standen (Lanham Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 2013), pp. 33–40.
- 18 Adam Nicholson, *The Mighty Dead: Why Homer Matters* (London: William Collins, 2014), Chapter 9.
- 19 Harald Haarmann, *Roots of Ancient Greek Civilization: The Influence of Old Europe* (Jefferson North Carolina: McFarlane & Co, 2014), pp. 9–40.
- 20 Pierre Hadot, *What is Ancient Philosophy?*, translated by Michael Chase (Cambridge MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002).



Kierkegaard's Christian Philosophy and Its Enlightenment

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Kierkegaard emerged in Chinese academia with the title of “Forefather of Existentialism” in the early 1980s. Later, he gradually gained titles such as “religious thinker”, “Danish writer”, “obscure philosopher”, and “initiator of paradoxical spirit”, all of which he fully deserves.¹ For an original thinker like Kierkegaard, every new style introduced means new horizons are opened, and rereading and revitalising become possible. In this light, I will tentatively address Kierkegaard as a Christian philosopher, hoping to unite the standard division of Kierkegaard’s published works— the “pseudonymous writings” (1843–1846) and the “Christian writings” (1847–1851)—into a consistent whole.² Although standard, the division seems heterogeneous in that the former concentrates on Kierkegaard’s writing strategy, whereas the latter focuses on the subject matter. I hope that from the perspective of Christian philosophy, Kierkegaard’s pseudonymous writings could be viewed as an indirect discussion of Christianity; while his “Christian writings”, which consist of edifying and Christian discourses, can be regarded as a direct discussion of Christianity. In a way, this would confirm Kierkegaard’s self-assertion that the religious had never left him.

In the following, I am going to concentrate on three of Kierkegaard’s pseudonymous writings, namely, *Either/Or* (1843), *Philosophical Fragments* (1844), and *Postscript* (1847), to demonstrate how we can view them as the embodiment of Christian philosophy. But first of all, I will clarify the meaning of “Christian philosophy”, since it is not a self-evident concept.

When referring to “Christian philosophy”, I am well conscious of being in a vulnerable position. It is not because Heidegger used to criticise the term severely, but because for any scientifically educated modern mind, “Christian philosophy” seems contradictory and impossible. Since the Enlightenment, “philosophy” has

been divorced from “Christianity”. Consequently, each belongs to a different “plane” or “order”—philosophy, by the natural light of reason, pursues systems of self-sufficient truth; whereas Christianity pursues individual “salvation” with the guide of divine “revelation”. Seemingly, any attempt of integrating the two will damage the autonomy of each. In the history of Western philosophy, “Christian philosophy” cannot automatically be taken as a historical type of philosophy of the Middle Ages, for theology had for a long time been high up in the hierarchy of sciences. Some medieval thinkers preferred to be called Christians and showed no interest in being called philosophers; while others would rather make use of philosophy to facilitate the acceptance of Christian doctrines, thereby eventually turning philosophy into apologetics. My conception of “Christian philosophy”, however, has been influenced directly by two scholars. One is Etienne Gilson who, in his 1936 book, *The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy*, discusses the possibility of Christian philosophy from the historical point of view.³ He argues that although reason and revelation are formally kept distinct, philosophy is not necessarily “the handmaid of religion”. On the contrary, Christian revelation can become an indispensable auxiliary to reason, and Christianity does influence Western philosophy in that Christian faith has opened up a new dimension for philosophical speculation. He writes, “Thus the content of Christian philosophy is that body of rational truths discovered, explored or simply safeguarded, thanks to the help that reason receives from revelation”.⁴

If Gilson’s speculation on the possibility of “Christian philosophy” was made more from a historical point of view, then when Harvard professor John Wild reiterated the issue in the late 1950s, he was concerned about something more urgent and practical. In his book, *Human Freedom and Social Order: An Essay in Christian Philosophy*, Wild aims to lead the twentieth century out of the Age of Anxiety.⁵ He not only demonstrates the possibility of Christian philosophy, but also the urgency to establish such a philosophy. He argues, “A Christian philosophy is not a system deduced from Christian principles. ... It is rather an attempt to bring the judgment of faith to bear on this activity of man, and to bring philosophy into such a condition that it can face this judgment, and be illumined by it.”⁶ In other words, a “Christian philosophy” will, first of all, be a human philosophy guided in the spirit of freedom, and based on worldly evidence and open to all people. This philosophy will be genuinely Christian to the extent that it is guided by the Christian spirit and always open to further illumination. He argues that philosophy cannot start with an empty mind; rather, it can begin only with a certain “value image” already present in the mind, which is clearly equivalent to Aristotle’s claim that philosophy begins with a self-evident principle. In this sense, Christianity is qualified to provide a “guiding image” to philosophy, because the Christian faith can unite factors of transcendence, immanence, and existential concern into an organic whole.

All in all, if there could be a human philosophy that regards Christian revelation as an indispensable aid to reason, or a philosophy guided by the Christian spirit, then this philosophy could be called “Christian”. My reading of Kierkegaard’s pseudonymous writings starts from this angle.

"Fragmentary" Philosophy of "*Lebenswelt*"

When I try to read Kierkegaard's pseudonymous writings from the angle of "Christian philosophy", I regard them to be an expression of a type of human "philosophy", not of a "Christian theology". The relation of philosophy and theology is a major issue in Western intellectual history, a subject I have no intention of discussing in this paper. I want to emphasise that if we acknowledge the intelligibility of "Christian philosophy", then, we must admit that there is a line of demarcation between "Christian philosophy" and "Christian theology". Christian philosophy is a human reflection about meaning, truth and certainty in the light of Christian faith. And if the subject matter of such a philosophy is Christian principles and theses, then the discussion will turn out to be an understanding of Christian principles from the standpoint of philosophical speculation, and it will be done in the spirit of freedom. In contrast, Christian theology is a "self-description of Christianity", to quote Hans Frei's definition in his book *Types of Theology*. It embodies "a Christian stance" from within Christianity, by using "the internal logic of the Christian community's language".⁷

Pseudonymous author Johannes Climacus of *Philosophical Fragments* is the best example I can give to demonstrate Kierkegaard's effort to distance himself from Christian theology while attaching himself to Christian philosophy. In this highly ironical work, Climacus deals with the central dogma of Christianity—the Incarnation—in an indirect, elusive, but internally systematic way. In the "Preface", Climacus declares what he offers is only a pamphlet, written "by his own hands, on his own behalf, and at his own expense". He denies that his writing has a "meaning" (*Mening*), for he just enjoys "dancing lightly in the service of thought".⁸ To translate these self-abandoned words into normal English, Climacus has declared resolutely his absolute independence from others, institutions, and sects. To understand his resolution, we must first understand Climacus' diagnosis of his times. According to Climacus, his contemporaries have heard or known so much about Christianity that they are almost overwhelmed. In "an age of system", Christianity has been combining with diverse "ideas" or "-isms", and thus turned into systematic knowledge and dogmas.⁹ What is more, what the congregation has heard is the "self-description" of Christianity offered by the Established Church. As a result, to a certain degree, "an acoustical illusion" occurs such that the Christian faith becomes diluted or faded, owing to the lack of passion.¹⁰ In the circumstances, Climacus self-poses as a non-Christian, and starts to "plagiarise" the well-known Christian stories—to rewrite the Christian principles in "poetical" and "metaphysical" languages, to make Christianity sound strange so as to alienate the congregation from the prevailing Christian "self-description", which, in Climacus' eyes, was responsible for the serious dilution of Christian faith of his age. By so doing, Climacus intends to wake the congregation up and rebuild their acuity about and passion for Christian faith. For Climacus, passion has played an important role, concerning subjectivity, faith and even Christian faith. In *Postscript*, Climacus first elevates passion to subjectivity, and then posits faith as "the highest passion of subjectivity".¹¹ It is not hard to see that Climacus is doing the subjectivity-constructing job of German idealist philosophers, but in a different way,

which has more affinity with John's Gospel than with speculative philosophy. And this fact has in turn reinforced Climacus' position with respect to Christian philosophy.

Kierkegaard's Christian philosophy is different from the dominant speculative philosophy of nineteenth-century Europe. His philosophy is neither a system of knowledge about the "cosmos-world" nor *Wissenschaft* in the Hegelian sense. It concerns man and man's *Lebenswelt*, as well as the meaning of human existence. In that sense, Kierkegaard's Christian philosophy cannot be systematic, but only fragmentary, being consistent with life itself, which is full of hustle and bustle, mysteries and paradoxes. This situation in a certain way explains why, over a rather long period of time, Kierkegaard scholars around the world were cautious when referring to Kierkegaard as a philosopher, or felt that they had to demonstrate that he is a kind of philosopher. Thanks to the postmodern French philosophers, that is not the case anymore. In my opinion, the significance of "fragmentary philosophy" vs. "systematic philosophy" lies not only in a change of form or language, but also in a change of dimension or orientation of philosophy.

Consider the example of *Either/Or*. If the title "either/or" is reminiscent of Hegel, the Danish Hegelians and speculative philosophy, then, the subtitle "A Fragment of Life" leaves a very different impression, since it is not a proper title for a philosophical work, according to the general understanding of Western philosophical tradition. This subtitle demonstrates that Kierkegaard has overcome his confusion about "actuality" initiated by Schelling's Berlin lectures, which I think is embodied in the following remarks by "the aesthetical A" of the first volume: "What philosophers say about actuality is often just as disappointing as it is when one reads on a sign in a secondhand shop: Pressing Done Here. If a person were to bring his clothes to be pressed, he would be duped, for the sign is merely for sale".¹² From that point, the speculative meaning of "actuality" in the sphere of logic and thought has shifted to that of rigorous life. Thus the relation of man and the world is no longer that of "subject" and "object", and philosophy no longer pursues a comprehensive, objective system of truth, but returns to the human *Lebenswelt*. The traditionally omnipotent author disappears from *Either/Or*. What we encounter, instead, are representatives of different ways of life, each having individual concrete existence in the life-world, embodied in the constantly changing, paradoxical, and inexplicable *Stemninger* (mood). Philosophy has suspended its metaphysical pursuit, and starts to face *Lebenswelt* of the human being, trying to answer fundamental questions such as the meaning of life just in this life-world from within and by concrete encounter and sympathy.

But how can such a shift appear? With Kierkegaard, the answer lies in Christian faith. In *Postscript*, Climacus formulates a thesis worth quoting: "a logical system can be given, but a system of existence cannot be given".¹³ That does not mean there is no such a system. On the contrary, Climacus writes, "Existence itself is a system—for God, but it cannot be a system for any existing spirit".¹⁴ It is not hard to see the ground of the thesis—an absolute difference between God and man, which is one of the fundamental Christian principles through the entire Medieval Age. God is infinite and almighty, the Creator and Ruler of intellects, while man is finite and will

acquire limited knowledge compatible with his limited intellect. That is why only God as the omnipotent Being has the power to view disorderly existence as a system, while man perhaps will never escape from Plato's Cave Image. To conclude, because human existence from the human point of view can be only fragmentary, so is the corresponding philosophy of human *Lebenswelt*. The conclusion can only be made with the deep concern for man's concrete existence in the life-world and in the light of Christian belief that between God and man there is an impassable gap.

Though keeping "the absolute difference between God and man" as the fundamental principle, Kierkegaard's Christian philosophy bears a different colour from that of the Middle Ages. Medieval Christian philosophy has a clear intention of systemising and rationalising Christian doctrines, in order to meet the challenge of Ancient Greek philosophy, and to spread Christianity around the world. As a result, Christian faith was reinforced by way of philosophical thinking and proofs. Medieval thinkers, however, never even think about overstepping the absolute difference between God and man. Therefore, their "first and greatest commandment" is still in the Bible—"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind".

Needless to say, when Kierkegaard begins to formulate his Christian philosophy, the situation is totally different. Living in nineteenth-century Europe, one does not need to worry about the prestige of Christianity. On the contrary, one must not be fooled by the superficial triumph of Christianity. Kierkegaard has sensed correctly that Christian faith is threatened and damaged by secularisation in an unprecedented way, and man's existential depth and individuality tend to disappear owing to leveling. Many people claimed to be Christians either because they respect tradition, or they are in fear of being singled out. Therefore, the main issue for Kierkegaard is how an individual is to be a Christian in the "age of the amusement park". To lead the nineteenth century out of superficiality and the abyss of nihilism, Kierkegaard puts his hope on Christian faith, wishing to reactivate it and use it as a "guiding image". He rejects both the spirit of the Middle Ages marked by "entering the monastery", and the effort of the nineteenth century marked by creating comprehensive systems. For, to live a meaningful life in this world, one can neither depend on philosophical theories nor the Church, let alone hide in the monastery. Instead, Kierkegaard turns to man's concrete, worldly life, concentrating on the essential problem of how to make the daily life of the finite being gain a spiritual meaning.

Judge William from the second volume of *Either/Or* is very telling in this respect. Kierkegaard does not give him the status of a philosopher, or that of a rigorous ethicist who cares about "abstract, formal freedom", or that of a religious fanatic who turns his eyes only to heaven. Judge William is just a common person among other mortal beings, who chatters about work, family and duty like a middle class man. Meanwhile, Judge William believes it is self-evident that man is free. And in the sphere of life which he also holds to be free, necessity must be ruled out and the significance of choosing be emphasised. He also believes that one has to "choose absolutely", meaning to "choose myself" "in my eternal validity".¹⁵ Consequently, while Judge William does his work and fulfills his various life duties day in and day

out, and attempts to live everyday as the decisive day, he never wastes his time calculating whether he can accomplish something, since “to accomplish” signifies something outside one’s reach.¹⁶ Between gaining the whole world and nurturing his soul, he would choose the latter without the slightest hesitation. He says, “For what does it profit a man if he gained the whole world but damaged his soul?”¹⁷ It is transparent that this stance is the direct resonance of the words of Jesus—“what good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?”¹⁸ Though playing a role of a prototypical middle class citizen in a Protestant country, Judge William does not bear “the spirit of Capitalism” concluded by Max Weber, but instead stands for the model of a Christian in a secularised era. For him, the important issue is to make one’s daily, worldly life gain a spiritual meaning in the light of Christian faith.

Reflections on Kierkegaard’s Christian Philosophy

In the first place, when we deal with Kierkegaard and his Christian philosophy, it is best not to pass judgment on him from any orthodox Christian point of view, such as, distinguishing whether a certain point of view is Christian, or which pseudonymous writer could be called a real Christian—neither of which is rare in international Kierkegaard studies. Instead, we should start from Kierkegaard’s writings, to see what and how he has supplemented Christianity with his edifying solutions.

Second, as a Kierkegaard scholar in China, I hold the view that Chinese culture could benefit from Kierkegaard’s philosophy, especially his emphasis on individualism, because the main expression of traditional Chinese culture—Confucianism—leaves little space for the individual. For example, Confucius says, “Let the king be king, the minister be minister, the father be father, and the son be son.”¹⁹ Here we cannot see any place for the individual, but just different roles a man ought to play in a society. In order to understand western individualism better and not to confuse it with solipsism, however, I think one must first understand Christian philosophy. Philosophically, the Hebrew monotheist idea of God has supplied Greek rational philosophy with two dimensions: the consciousness of the Absolute and idea of free will. God is the eternal, highest and absolute Being, therefore the source of justice and unchangeableness. And after the Reformation and Enlightenment Movement, the principle “there is the absolute difference between God and man” became the guarantee of human equality. Once the idea of the absolute Being starts to work in a positive way, it can exclude all sorts of secular authorities, including the authority of those who “work in the temple” or “serve at the altar”. In Kierkegaard’s case, he endeavors to make humans individuals by emphasising God as Subject.²⁰ Since a genuine relationship can be established only between subject and subject, God demands, this elevates every human being to be a subject, to be worthy of God. As a subject, the individual should first of all relate him/herself to God absolutely—fulfill God’s commandments, be responsible to God, for him/herself, and for others, which finally leads to ethical actions. This train of thought is the most crucial enlightenment I think we can get from Kierkegaard’s Christian philosophy. ¶

- 1 On the history of the Chinese reception of Kierkegaard till 2005, cf. Wang Qi, "The Chinese Reception of Kierkegaard", in *Kierkegaard's International Reception, Tome III: The Near East, Asia, Australia and the Americas*, ed. by Jon Stewart (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2009), pp. 103–23.
- 2 Niels Jørgen Cappelørn, "Geniets rammende Lynnedslag: En introduktion til Søren Kierkegaard", preface to a 10-volumed Chinese edition of *A Kierkegaard Anthology*.
- 3 Etienne Gilson, *The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy*, trans. by A. H. G. Downes, (London: Sheed & Ward, 1936).
- 4 Gilson, p. 35.
- 5 John Wild, *Human Freedom and Social Order: An Essay in Christian Philosophy* (Duke University Press 1959).
- 6 Gilson, p. 101.
- 7 Hans W. Frei, *Types of Theology*, ed. by George Hunsinger & William C. Placher (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 20.
- 8 *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter* (SKS), vols. 1–28 (vol. 4) (Copenhagen: Gads Forlag, 1997–2013), pp. 215–217. In the English version, the Danish word "*Mening*" is translated as "opinion". However, I prefer to use "meaning".
- 9 Here I refer to H. L. Martensen's comments on the nineteenth century as "*Systemernes Period*". Martensen writes that by "system" he is referring not only in the philosophical and scientific sense, but also in the religious, poetical, political, and even industrial and commercial senses. Cf. SKS, vol. 4, p. 199.
- 10 SKS, vol. 4, p. 253.
- 11 SKS, vol. 7, p. 123, p. 124; Søren Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript to Philosophical Fragments* (CUP), trans. by Howard V. Hong & Edna H. Hong (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1992), CUP I, p. 131, p. 132.
- 12 SKS, vol. 2, p. 41; Søren Kierkegaard, *Either/Or* (EO), trans. by Howard V. Hong & Edna H. Hong (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1987), EO I, p. 32.
- 13 SKS, vol. 7, p. 105; CUP I, p. 109.
- 14 SKS, vol. 7, p. 114; CUP I, p. 118.
- 15 SKS, vol.3, p.205; EO II, p. 214.
- 16 SKS, vol.3, p.279; EO II, p. 295.
- 17 SKS, vol. 4, p. 44; EO II, p. 37.
- 18 Matthew 16:26.
- 19 *Analects* 12.11: "齐景公问政于孔子，孔子对曰：君君、臣臣、父父、子子。"
- 20 SKS, vol., 7, p. 183; CUP I, p. 200.



The Confucian Virtue of *Ren* in Social Relationships

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Social philosophy corresponds to its moral and political counterparts in terms of the theoretical speculations concerned. It is internally associated with social ethics when conceived as the ontology of the social world or organisation. This is especially so when it involves inquiry into two particular domains: social interaction and social aggregation among human individuals.

According to Philip Pettit, the forms of social interaction and aggregation are neither purely physical nor non-social. They “require the people involved to have certain intentional attitudes” instead.¹ In social life, as the non-atomists believe, social dependence governs the ability of an individual to reason and think. This ability is not just to have beliefs and desires, but to act with a view to having rational beliefs and desires. Accordingly, these beliefs and desires are there to shape “certain intentional attitudes”. In turn, such attitudes will have both direct and indirect impact upon social interaction and aggregation, and upon social practices and relationships. Here I agree mostly with the non-atomists on this point: individual human beings depend on social relationships for the appearance of any distinctive human capacities. If this is true, it could be claimed that each human being will come properly into his or her own simply through the experience of social relationships, and at the same time foster self-consciousness of personal cultivation in an ethical sense for the sake of adjusting social relationships to a positive and healthy extent.

As regards the ontology of the social world, I would like to reflect upon it from the perspective of Confucianism. In my opinion, the essential part of the ontology of the social world consists in human individuals not merely as social members, but also as moral beings. The intrinsic logic therein can be perceived as follows: the ontology of the social organisation considers how the organisational structure, institution and administration come into existence and function in an effective mode, and at the

same time, it examines what is the most determinate cause of possible effectiveness in this domain.

What is noteworthy here is the general distinction between social relationships in a modern sense and human relationships in a Confucian sense. The former is based on a social contract, behind which are legal codes or enacted laws, whilst the latter is based on human affection, behind which are cultural conventions or prescribed rites. According to the Confucian tradition, “the sage is the acme of human relationships” (*shengren zhe, renlun zhi zhi ye*), which implies that the sage as the highest embodiment of perfect virtue is the most capable person to reconcile and maintain human relationships to their best effect. This will then serve to stabilise the social structure as a whole and harmonise social interaction as well as social aggregation. As such, in Confucianism the distinction between human relationships and social relationships could be rather vague and obscure both in theory and in praxis. This is because Confucians tend to embrace the conviction that the social world is composed of human beings, and its management therefore lies essentially in the treatment of human relationships. Moreover, as Confucianism features a trinity of political, moral and religious dimensions in principle, it often believes that the appropriate exercise and cultivation of the virtue of *ren* (also spelt as *jen* in the Wade-Giles system of romanisation) plays an important role in reconciling human relationships, and procuring social harmony as well as social stability. This is mainly because of the fact that human individuals as social members are decisive in organising and administering the social world so long as they are well cultivated and properly ruled. In other words, the organisational structure, institutional frameworks and administration of the social world could be designed to work practically, provided that human relationships are harmoniously formed, properly treated, and constructively retained. This of course relies chiefly on the personal cultivation and consistent exercise of the Confucian virtue of *ren* qua humaneness, universal love, reciprocal benevolence and so forth. Such a dialectical connection evidences the Confucian conviction that no matter how well the system of the organisational structure and institution of the social world is designed and promoted, it will most likely fail to secure its predicted objectives in the absence of sound human relationships undergirded by the virtue of *ren*, which is considered to be the kernel of the superior personality or gentleman (*junzi*), who in some ways is analogous with the virtuous citizen of the Platonic type.

This discussion attempts to look into the social and moral implications of the Confucian virtue of *ren* with particular reference to its three aspects as follows: reciprocal benevolence to facilitate the reconciliation of human relationships; social compassion to nurture humane sensibility among social members; and the moral ideal of human perfection to enhance its transformational creation in the context of life today. It is intended not merely to rediscover the conventional meanings of the virtue of *ren* from a sociological perspective, but also to reconsider its extended significance from an ethical perspective.

Incidentally, what I am trying to do is partly motivated by my intention to supply some food for thought in respect to social philosophy, by drawing from the resources

of Chinese philosophy. An alternative perspective from a non-Western heritage may help to lead us to move off the beaten track in regard to investigating contemporary social issues. Even though it is not an easy matter to solicit any agreeable or fruitful solutions, it would at least help us employ a new angle for reconsideration, and deploy a fresh perspective for reflection in the realm of social philosophy. Apart from this, my goal is also partly inspired by Li Zehou's proposed distinction between ethical and religious preoccupations through critical inheritance and transformational creation.² I maintain that the ethical and religious dimensions in this case could be utilised to serve socio-political purposes, provided they can be transformed creatively into the individual pursuit of the meaning of life, and into the modern form of China's political and legal systems with an emphasis on human relationships, group dynamics, social ideals, unity in affection and rationality, consultative settlement of civil disputes and the like. It is hoped that all these elements will blend into the construction of a modern political and legal democracy, and thus open up a unique path of future development in China or elsewhere in this "global village".

The Virtue of *Ren* as the Cause of Reciprocal Benevolence

Etymologically speaking, the Confucian virtue of *ren* 仁 originated from the primordial form of a Chinese pictograph. Its component parts consist of the graph for "human" (*ren* 人) on the left side, and the graph for "two" (*er* 二) on the right side. It is therefore thought of as a kind of humane and reciprocal act that engages at least two human individuals. Such a virtue could occur nowhere if there were only a single human individual with no social interaction. This being the case, the concept of *ren* is often rendered as humaneness and benevolence due to its characteristic involvement of human relationships or social interaction.

Subsequently, this primary meaning was accepted and developed by Confucius (551–479 BC) and his later followers. In *The Doctrine of the Mean* (*Zhong yong*), one of the Confucian classics, when the Lord of Lu State asked about government, Confucius replied:

The government of the ancient Emperors Wen and Wu is displayed in the historical records [written on] the tablets of wood and bamboos. Let there be the men and the government will flourish; but without the men, their government decays and ceases. With the right men the growth of government is rapid, just as that of vegetation is rapid on the earth.... Therefore the administration of government lies in getting proper men. Such men are to be got by means of the ruler's own character. That character is to be cultivated by means of the Dao of morality. And the Dao of morality is cultivated by the virtue of benevolence. Benevolence is the characteristic element of humanity, and the great exercise of it is in loving relatives (*ren zhe ren ye, qin qin wei da*). Righteousness is the accordance of actions with what is right, and the great exercise of it is in honoring the worthy. The degree of the love decreases in accord with the distance ranging from the close to the remote relatives, and the intensity of the honor reduces in accord with the discrepancy

ranging from the more worthy to the less worthy. It is for this reason that the principles of propriety are produced.³

Good government is achieved by having the proper men in administration. These men are required to be well cultivated according to the *Dao* or truth of morality such that they will be upright and wise in conducting the affairs of state. What underlines the *Dao* of morality is the virtue of benevolence, “the characteristic element of humanity”. The basic practice of this virtue stems from loving relatives in general and family members in particular. This kinship-based love or affection is natural and authentic in most cases. It is inclined to decrease when it is extended from close relatives to more remote ones. Similarly with the case of honoring the worthy—it is apt to reduce when it comes to the less worthy. Under such circumstances there arise the regularities of propriety, regularities that stand for the system of rites that are established as institutions, laws, moral codes, social norms and so forth. The process of such change and development demonstrates the fact that kinship-based love is primary but not sufficient for the administration of an entire state. Hence, it is practically assisted rather than substituted by applying the system of rites to all walks of life in order to retain social order and pursue the common good.

In *The Analects (Lunyu)*, the virtue of *ren* is discussed more than any other virtue. When discussing it with different disciples on different occasions, Confucius would stress some key aspects of this virtue. For instance, Fan Chi asked about the virtue of *ren*, Confucius replied, “It is to love all men.”⁴ Apparently, this is the most concise definition of the virtue of *ren*. Here, love is no longer confined to relatives, but extended to all human beings alike. Elsewhere a similar idea is re-emphasised in Confucius’ advice given to young people:

A youth should be filial when at home, and respectful to the elders when abroad. He should be prudent, honest and trustworthy. He should outflow in love to all (*fan ai zhong*), and makes friends with the human-hearted (*er qin ren*). When he has time and opportunity after the performance of these things, he should learn more about the old texts.⁵

Noticeably, the proposed action to “outflow in love to all” denotes a mode of universal love rather than the kinship-constrained affection. Naturally, this mode of universal love comes into being through a progressive process, during which it is embodied in varied but inter-connected forms. For instance, it is first exemplified in the form of filial piety to the parents, second in the form of fraternal affection to the brothers, sisters, and other relatives, third in the form of human-heartedness to friends, neighbors and fellow-citizens, and eventually in the form of all-embracing considerateness to all the people across the country and the world over.

Owing to this intentional extension of “loving all men”, Zhu Xi (1130–1200), a leading thinker of Neo-Confucianism in the Song Dynasty, interpreted the virtue of *ren* as “the principle of love and the virtue of the heart-mind” (*ai zhi li, xin zhi de*). This interpretation signifies that the virtue of *ren* is taken as the virtue of all virtues due to its inclusive and complete quality. Thus, the way of attaining and performing it demands an insightful cognition of human affection qua the fountainhead of all

human values in one sense, and a constant cultivation of reciprocal benevolence for the sake of the big “We” instead of the small “I” in the other sense. As for Confucius’ advice to “make friends with the human-hearted”, I think it means in the context to work as an auxiliary force to accelerate and push forward the progressive process described above. This function goes along with the subsequent recommendation to “learn more about the old texts” that contain food for thought and the moral teachings of historical records.

At this point one may wonder what could be the specifics of the Confucian virtue of *ren* in terms of humaneness, reciprocal benevolence, universal love and the like. According to Confucius, the virtue of *ren* serves as a thread that unifies all his moral ponderings, and chiefly consists in at least four principles including *xiao*, *ti*, *zhong* and *shu*.

Then, what do these principles actually mean? With regard to *xiao* and *ti*, they are considered to be two cardinal principles related to the virtue of *ren* as benevolent actions. When talking about the character of the *jun zi*, the superior man or gentleman, Youzi, a disciple of Confucius, generalised his observations as follows: “The superior man bends his attention to what is fundamental. That being established, all practical courses of human existence will emerge. Filial piety and fraternal submission are the root of all benevolent actions, aren’t they?”⁶ According to Chinese customs, *xiao* is a principle of filial piety to parents, and *ti* is a principle of fraternal submission to elder brothers. They make up the root of the most cardinal virtue of *ren* as benevolent or humane actions because they are characteristic of loving relatives, thus leading to the growth of family affection grounded in the blood lineage or clan system.

Empirically speaking, this family affection is born naturally, and humanised culturally. It provides a solid basis for the development of love in a much broader sense of sociality. That is to say, neither the “outflow in love to all” nor “loving all men” could be possible without the family affection as its necessary foundation. As a consequence, Li Zehou considers family affection to be most elementary in that it serves to mould a type of “affectionate root” (*qing ben ti*) with regard to the historical ontology of humankind and of public ethics.⁷ This “affectionate root” is to my mind functional both as a psychological organism and a moral organism, for it involves not simply feeling, emotion and sensibility, but also understanding, cognition and rationality. Hence, it ends up with what Li Zehou calls the “affective-rational formation” (*qingli jiegou*) in the Chinese mentality and ideology with a constant emphasis on the education of human affection as the keystone of social structure.

In Confucian thought the virtue of *ren* calls for the boundless pursuit of extension. Notwithstanding that it begins with family-centered constraints at its initial stage, it is extended to a much larger scope. For example, when Confucius once told Zeng Shen, one of his students, that his doctrine is “that of an all-pervading unity”, Zeng went on to assert, “the doctrine of the Master is to be true to the principles of *zhong* and *shu*”.⁸ In my observation, “the doctrine of the Master” is inferred to be the doctrine of the virtue of *ren* as explored and explicated by Confucius himself over 100 times

in *The Analects* proper, not to speak of his frequent reconsideration of it in many other discourses and texts ascribed to the corpus of Confucian classics. The doctrine as such is commonly acknowledged to rely on two paramount principles of *zhong* and *shu*. As regards the principle of *zhong*, it is often identified with the code of conduct performed by someone “who, in wishing to establish himself, also seeks to let others establish themselves, and who in wishing to develop himself seeks also lets others develop themselves”.⁹ This code of conduct evidences a strong and thoughtful awareness of social interaction. Taking into account the context, the principle of *zhong* could be seen as that of mutual thoughtfulness or considerateness owing to its tendency to nurture the win-win stance towards all beneficiaries or stakeholders, as might be expressed in contemporary jargon.

With respect to the principle of *shu*, Confucius asserted that it is exemplified in the following statement: “What you do not want to be done to yourself, do not do it to others”.¹⁰ Elsewhere Confucius reconfirmed a similar idea when talking with Zhonggong: “Do not do to others as you would not wish done to yourself. Have no resentment when you are at work for the state. Have no grudge against anyone when you live together with your family”.¹¹ Accordingly, the principle of *shu* turns out to be a kind of mutual concern or a principle of altruistic reciprocity applied to social encounters. It appears more or less identical in essence to “the golden rule” prescribed in the Bible. Yet, the principle of altruistic reciprocity is deep-set in the pragmatic reasoning of Confucianism, which is chiefly characterised by ethicalness, usefulness and performativeness. It is to be exercised in daily life in the secular world. In contrast, “the golden rule” is attributed to the Christian outlook and advocated in a sacred direction. It tends to be adopted as a kind of imperative by religious believers in that it is spiritual rather than practical, difficult rather than easy, with regard to its operation in secular life among the general populace.

Noticeably, Confucius hereby expanded the application of the principle of *shu* as altruistic reciprocity to the service for the state and to the life in the family. Renowned in the Chinese tradition, the state and the family are closely interrelated and equally important. As a matter of fact, one of the leading ideals in Confucianism is to “regulate the family and govern the state rightly” (*qi jia zhi guo*).¹² It is worth pointing out that the family in the past used to be as large as the size of the clan, for it would be made up of three to five generations and therefore form a network of complex inter-relationships. It is by no means easy to regulate the family well and keep all members in stable affinity or close kinship. In reality, the state is something of a large community that comprises families as its basic units of social organisation and administration. According to Confucian beliefs, if each family is well regulated, the state is most likely to be well governed, and then people will be liable to live a happy and peaceful life. Such a life would be impossible whenever the family and the state were plunged into chaos and conflict. Nevertheless, according to the Confucian standpoint, the whole enterprise of regulating the family and governing the state rightly depends largely upon the foundation of personal cultivation (*xiu shen*) in affective, moral, legal and social spheres, because both the family and the state are human products in essence and dependent upon human action in the main.

At this point, there arises the following question: “What does the Confucian virtue of *ren* aim for eventually?” This is ostensibly a teleological query that requires a teleological judgment. Thus, judging from Confucius’ preoccupation with the ideal of “regulating the family and governing the state well” (*qi jia zhi guo*) and his constant emphasis on “the supreme importance of harmony (*he wei gui*) as the excellent quality”,¹³ I would conclude that the Confucian virtue of *ren* as reciprocal benevolence and humaneness is motivated and championed to harmonise human relationships, and also to facilitate social order, stability and harmony. This goal is often described in terms of “keeping the state in peace and the people at ease” (*guo tai min an*). In order to achieve this ultimate goal, the Confucian virtue of *ren* works in a threefold mode comprising three inter-linked principles: the principle of family affection (*qin qing*) based on filial piety and fraternal reverence (*xiao ti*), that of mutual thoughtfulness (*zhong*) directed to the win-win strategy of social interaction, and that of reciprocal benevolence (*shu*) somewhat parallel to “the golden rule” but exercised in the daily life of the secular world.

The Virtue of *Ren* as the Source of Social Compassion

As evidenced in the previous section, the virtue of *ren* is comprehensive in its composition and function. On several other occasions, Confucius himself treated *ren* as the most fundamental and complete virtue. For instance, he treasured the culture and power of both rites and music (*li yue*) to the extent that he believed firmly a state could be governed well and kept in order with the appropriate employment of rites and music. However, he denounced the practice of rites and music without the virtue of *ren*: “If a man be without the virtue of *ren*, what has he to do with the rites of propriety? If a man be without the virtue of *ren*, what has he to do with music?”¹⁴ All this shows that the exercise of rites and music needs a moral foundation in the virtue of *ren*.

Furthermore, Confucius often compared the virtue of *ren* with other virtues, and regarded it was the most complete of all. For example, when Fan Chi asked him how to attain the virtue of *ren*, Confucius recommended,

It is to have a sedate attitude and conduct (*gong*) in daily life, to remain serious and attentive (*jing*) when coping with affairs on duty, and to be strictly sincere and honest (*zhong*) when helping others. Even if a man happens to go among rude and uncultivated tribes, these qualities are not to be neglected.¹⁵

Soon after this advice, Confucius continued to add, “The firm (*gang*), the enduring (*yi*), the simple (*mu*), and the modest (*ne*) are near to the virtue of *ren*”.¹⁶ As noted from the above depictions, the approach to the virtue of *ren* involves the application of three moral codes to daily life and social services, codes that include having a sedate attitude and conduct (*gong*), serious and attentive work ethic (*jing*), and sincere and honest performance (*zhong*). It follows that the attainment of the virtue of *ren* is preconditioned with the nourishment and exercise of such virtues as the firm (*gang*), the enduring (*yi*), the simple (*mu*) and the modest (*ne*). All this seems

to me that Confucius set up *ren* as the most perfect virtue. It is deployed as the ideal standard for all other virtues. If this is true, it suggests a process of persistent pursuit and continuous cultivation on the part of human beings.

What are the key virtues Confucius is mainly concerned with? There is no easy answer to this query because Confucius offered a diversity of virtues and emphasised them on diverse occasions in accord with the interlocutors involved. In spite of this, I find three of the virtues outstanding on his agenda. They are the virtue of *ren*, that of *zhi* and that of *yong*, as emphasised in the following account:

The way of the superior man is threefold, but I am not equal to it. With the virtue of humaneness (*ren*), he is free from anxieties. With the virtue of wisdom (*zhi*), he is free from perplexities. With the virtue of courage (*yong*), he is free from fear.¹⁷

As is observed in the above quotation, Confucius remained modest as usual regarding his moral cultivation and progression. He had the tendency to make the most of every opportunity for self-improvement when presenting advice or teachings to others. Here again he did not hesitate to confess that he fell short of “the way of the superior man”, the way that is threefold in terms of three cardinal virtues, i.e., humaneness, wisdom and courage. More specifically, the virtue of humaneness keeps man free from anxieties about fame, gain, honor and disgrace, because he goes beyond such desires and wants. The virtue of wisdom keeps man free from perplexities about phenomenal appearances and illusions, because he knows what is true and real. The virtue of courage keeps man free from fear of difficulties, hardships and challenges, because he is ready to confront them even at the sacrifice of his life.

In addition, there are two more points to be referred to in this case. First, the superior man is supposed to be free from anxieties due to his possession of the virtue of *ren*. This could be true with respect to his selfish concerns and expectations relating to external fame and gains, among others. Yet, when it comes to his social cares and concerns about the *status quo* of the country and the living conditions of the populace as a whole, the superior man could be filled with anxieties and even worries beyond his personal interest. His state of mind as such could be designated as disinterested because he thinks of others before himself. Second, the virtue of *ren* as humaneness cannot become what it can be without the prerequisite of the virtue of wisdom that bears the knowledge of the essential qualities of the virtue of *ren*. This is justified with reference to Zhu Xi’s interpretation cited in the preceding passage. Moreover, the virtue of *ren* accommodates the virtue of *yong* as courage because of its inclusive nature. This is affirmed by Confucius in his saying, “The man of humaneness is sure to have courage, but the man who has courage may not always be the man of humaneness”.¹⁸

One may wonder how courageous the man of humaneness could become? According to Confucius, “The determined scholar and the man of humaneness will not seek to live at the expense of injuring their virtue of humaneness. They will even sacrifice their lives to preserve their virtue of humaneness”.¹⁹ This expresses the view that the man of humaneness will be so courageous that he will lay down his life in order

to accomplish his virtue of humaneness. His resolution and integrity are such that he cannot be swayed by external temptations or fatal threats. All this is due to at least two major reasons: first, he holds the conviction that the brave exercise of “the virtue brings glory to him, and the opposite of it brings disgrace”.²⁰ And second, he cherishes the spirit of martyrdom and acts upon the virtue of *ren* as a moral imperative. It is in this aspect that the virtue of *ren* is in a way like moral dedication of a religious kind, even though it is directed at moral ideals and the secular goods.

It is widely recognised that Mencius (372?–289 BC) succeeded Confucius in championing *ren* as the most fundamental and perfect virtue of all. He therefore paid considerable attention to human affection and moral conduct, and also reflected upon the virtue of *ren* together with other virtues through a psychological investigation into human nature and heart-mind. The most influential of his formulations reads as follows:

From the feelings proper to it, it is constituted for the practice of what is good. This is what I mean in saying that human nature is good. If men do what is not good, the blame cannot be imputed to their natural powers. The feeling of compassion [commiseration] belongs to all men; so does that of shame and dislike; and that of reverence and respect; and that of approving and disapproving. The feeling of compassion implies [is the capacity for] the virtue of benevolence (*ren*); that of shame and dislike, the virtue of righteousness (*yi*); that of reverence and respect, the virtue of propriety (*li*); and that of approving and disapproving, the virtue of wisdom (*zhi*). Benevolence, righteousness, propriety, and wisdom, are not infused into us from without. We are certainly furnished with them. It is simply from want of reflection. Hence it is said: “Seek and you will find them. Neglect and you will lose them”.²¹

According to Mencius, human beings have feelings, which motivate them to take actions. Human nature is good, and so is the human heart-mind. This being the case, human beings will have proper feelings, and accordingly take proper actions for the practice of what is good. It is through self-cultivation that feelings can change into virtues. For instance, the feeling of compassion turns into the virtue of benevolence (*ren*), the feeling of shame and dislike into the virtue of righteousness (*yi*), the feeling of reverence and respect into the virtue of propriety (*li*), and the feeling of approving and disapproving into the virtue of wisdom (*zhi*). These four kinds of feeling correspond to the four kinds of virtue that are determined by the judgment or knowledge of what is good, just and right.

Elsewhere, Mencius reasserted that the feeling of compassion is essential to men because it is the beginning of benevolence, the feeling of shame and dislike is essential to men because it is the beginning of righteousness, the feeling of modesty and complaisance is essential to men because it is the beginning of propriety, and the feeling of approving and disapproving is essential to men because it is the beginning of wisdom or knowledge. Men have these four kinds of feeling just as they

have their four limbs. Those who have none of them are simply not entitled to be deemed human.

With particular reference to the feeling of compassion, Mencius illustrated its immediacy with the following example. If someone suddenly sees a child about to fall into a well, without exception they will experience a feeling of alarm or distress. They will feel so, not as a ground on which they may gain the favor of the child's parents, nor as a ground on which they may seek the praise of their neighbors and friends, nor from a dislike of gaining a reputation for remaining unmoved by such a event.²² All this exemplifies the moral instinctiveness and unselfishness of the feeling of compassion or commiseration. Because this feeling is aroused by an unexpected accident and directed to another person unknown, it can be construed as socially interactive and universally applicable because it is observable in the reactions of all humans alike when placed in similar situations. In a word, the feeling of compassion is essentially social rather than private. Moreover, it is not only characterised by sympathy and pity in a passive sense, but also of warm-heartedness and performativeness in an active sense, involving spontaneous actions to help others in need no matter whether they are known to one or unknown. It is acted out in accord with one's good conscience or virtuous benevolence when it is applied to the innocent victims of grave accidents, fatal diseases, natural calamities, wars, famine and the like.

As with his predecessor Confucius, Mencius reconfirmed the affective ground of the four key virtues. Yet, it seems to me, he skipped over the intermediate transition from the affective beginning to the virtuous outcome as though he took it for granted. This is because Confucius had already pointed it out when articulating the way of becoming virtuous in terms of reciprocal benevolence and loving all men:

To subdue one's self and return to the rites is the virtue of *ren*. If a man for one day subdues himself and returns to the rites, all under the sky will ascribe the virtue of *ren* to him. Hence the practice of the virtue is from a man himself instead of from other, isn't it?²³

Here are a couple of points to make in view of contextual reflection. First, "to subdue one's self" means to curb one's desires, feelings, ambitions or selfish expectations. It is not the same as religious self-denial in that it is intended to control and discipline what is involved in egoism. It is in a way like the Greek *aretē sōphrosunē*, virtue of temperance or self-control.

Second, "to return to the rites" means to restore the rites adopted in the three ancient dynasties of the Xia, Shang and Zhou, rites that were deployed as the ceremonies of propriety, codes of conduct, social norms, and political institutions. Noticeably in this regard, what Confucius and Socrates sought was similar, that is, what is right and good. Confucius, however, appeared to be certain about it and assured that it was present in the conventional rites mentioned above. He therefore advised people to decide on their right path by means of appropriate ethical choice and social commitment from the standpoint of reciprocal benevolence and universal love. In contrast, Socrates seemed to be skeptical about it and hankered after it through his

dialectic reason. He did not ignore the practical values and popular definitions of the conventional virtues, but questioned them critically from epistemological positions. This is because he was firmly convinced that real knowledge would necessarily lead to goodness and justice.

In addition, Confucius and Mencius both expounded the development of the virtues in the living or secular world alone, whereas Socrates and Plato both pursued it in the secular world overshadowed by the divine world. For example, the two Chinese thinkers associated it with the superior or noble man's (*junzi*) self-cultivation of a refined personality, while their Greek counterparts linked it with the suitable utility of divine reason as a special gift given by god to humankind. Eventually, Confucianism became preoccupied with the highest form of achievement of which man as man is capable in the visible or material world. Platonism is concerned with humans becoming divine in terms of man as man becoming god-like in both the visible world and the invisible one.²⁴ Accordingly, in both moral cultivation and social interaction, Confucianism makes no distinction between mind and body, and thus sticks to monism, whereas Platonism distinguishes mind from body, and thus clings to dualism. According to Herbert Fingarette and A.C. Graham as well, one of the advantages of studying Confucius in particular is to get off the routinised contrast between mind and body as inner and outer compartments of oneself. This is simply due to the fact that Confucius treats mind and body as an inseparable whole. Hence, it can help us escape being “blinded by a mind-matter dualism or by the dualistic way of dividing the world, along with the denial of the reality of the ‘mental’ half”.²⁵

Third, the intermediate transition from the prerequisite of subduing one's self to the attainment of the virtue implies a process of self-cultivation via the revival of the rites and the conduct of propriety. This process calls for correct education and guidance by principle. In this domain, Confucius and Plato seem to share something in common to the extent that both of them were in favor of educational determinism. They held the belief that men could become virtuous or good so long as they were exposed to correct education or *orthen paideia*. Notwithstanding this, the two thinkers appear to differ widely in their conception of human nature. Confucius was in fact optimistic about human nature, and considered it to be innately good. Plato was pessimistic about it, and therefore examined it with a focus on its *akrasia* and other weaknesses related to the passions and desires of the tripartite *psychē* or soul. When it comes to the process of self-cultivation, the Confucian line of thought also diverged from its Platonic counterpart. That is, the former assumes that it commences with natural desires and feelings alike, develops into affection or love through human culture in terms of rites, merges with reasonableness through modification and adjustment in accord with human relationships, and turns into the virtue of *ren* with the help of moral awareness and social commitment. As a result, the Confucian virtue of *ren* as the most paramount of all virtues features an affectionate-cum-rational structure because it is rooted in family-based affectionateness and kinship love, and upgraded to society-oriented reasonableness in terms of reciprocal benevolence and universal love.

Plato, by contrast, holds that the process of self-cultivation depends on *orthen paideia* (correct education) during which divine reason and moral training should be fully applied to supervising the passionate and appetitive parts of the soul. With respect to Platonic moral psychology, it should work at its best according to the model of psychic harmony that focuses on the rational incorporation of the other components within the soul. If this does not suffice to do the job, it ought to resort to legal codes or *nomoi* for the sake of reinforcing the educational project and character formation. Thus the Platonic virtue of *dikaiosunē* as justice that is comprehensive of all virtues features a rational-cum-legal structure. The structure is grounded in the leadership of practical reason over passions and desires as other constituents of the soul, and at the same time, consolidated by persuasion and guidance of legal education. Ultimately, Platonic virtue is to be sublimated to the level of divine refinement or god-likeness through learning philosophy sanely and insightfully.

An important point to be noted is that a kind of measurement is needed to look after “the emotive affection” in Confucianism and “the appetitive desires as well as the spirited passions” in Platonism. It is rather a large coincidence that the measurement in each case stems from the similar principle of “the golden mean”, understood in terms of “never too much, never too little”. The principle is renowned as *zhongyong* in Chinese and as *mesos* in Greek. Curiously, all along it has underlain the ways of thinking and the codes of conduct, respectively, of the Chinese and Greek peoples.

Transformational Creation of the Virtue of *Ren*

Taken in sum, the Confucian virtue of *ren* could be seen as that of reciprocal benevolence, universal love and humaneness in general. It is by nature the most fundamental and comprehensive of the virtues. With reference to the moralised sense of *ren* when translated as “perfect virtue” by Legge, it is worth quoting the following comment by Benjamin I. Schwartz:

Here, one would see something of a parallel to the evolution of *virtus* and virtue from the Latin *vir*. What it seems to encompass in Confucius is something as broad and even as ultimately mysterious as Socrates’ idea of the good as applied to the moral life of the individual. It is an attainment of human excellence which—where it exists—is a whole embracing all the separate virtues. Thus it certainly also embraces all the social virtues and the capacity to perform the *li* [rites] in the proper spirit. It is this social aspect which has led to the translation of the term as love, benevolence, and humanity. It must nevertheless be acknowledged that in much later Chinese thought it is this side of *jen* [*ren*—its capacity to make the individual act well in all the encounters of social life—which is emphasised.²⁶

This reminds me of Fingarette’s observation on the virtue of *ren*. I think he is right to conceive the virtue as “a directed force operating in actions in public space and time”.²⁷ An intended *philopraxis* of the virtue of *ren* in particular and of other virtues in general can be discovered throughout *The Analects*. This leads Fingarette to come to regard Confucius as a guide to a moral philosophy with an emphasis on the

performative function of language and its interdependence with social convention.²⁸ Yet, what he says is just part of the story. Hereby I would like to add that this virtue is also a self-conscious force and operating in private space and time within the family proper. Moreover, it is to be cultivated inward and performed outward on both private and public occasions.

Above all, I think the virtue of *ren* in Confucianism is proposed as an ideal of human perfection, an ideal that is to be approached and accomplished via a boundless pursuit or consistent practice. According to Qian Mu, for instance, to read *The Analects* is to become human (*zuo ren*).²⁹ In his opinion, as far as I could see, “to become human” is to achieve the highest form of being a man as man. This highest form indicates a process of human perfection according to the constant exercise of the virtue of *ren*. Evidence of this is embodied in Confucius’ appreciation of Yan Hui’s behavior: “Such was Hui whose heart for three months at a time would not go off course from the virtue of *ren*. The others might attain to this virtue no longer than a day or a month”.³⁰ Hui’s successive praxis of the virtue “for three months at a time” connotes a long span of time in one sense, and demonstrates a spiritual and behavioral habituation in the other sense, a habituation that enables him to act upon the virtue habitually and spontaneously. In striking contrast, others could act according to the virtue for a day, a month or a moment. It is not difficult for a person to do the right thing from time to time, but it is difficult for him or her to do the right thing continuously over a sustained period a long time, much less all the time. We can draw the following tentative inference from the above account: habituation in this context bears a strong moral consciousness that resembles both Aristotle’s and Hegel’s conceptions of habituation.

What relevance does the Confucian virtue of *ren* have nowadays? I suppose it lies in the rediscovery of the virtue against the problematic circumstances of life we are confronted with today, circumstances under which human relationships have become increasingly diluted or thinner due to keen competition, disturbing anxiety, constant stress, tense ambiance, and self-defensive mentality, among others. Therefore, each modern human needs to use, as it were, a mirror to look at his or her reflected image, and also to reflect the images of others for a double check. This mirror is to be contrived metaphorically from the virtue of *ren* as examined through this discussion. It can be acquired by means of sincere self-cultivation in the spirit of consistency and perseverance. To my mind, however, it is presumed to undergo the process of creative transformation with reference to modern society and its issues. This process can be facilitated by means of both trans-historical reconsideration of what is right or good in more than one cultural heritage during different phases of human evolution and transcultural synthesis of rule by virtue with rule by law, among all the positive and healthy value systems that we humans happen to create and share.

With respect to the dilution of human relationships, for instance, the principle of *shu* as part of the virtue of *ren* is more than relevant and helpful owing to its trait of altruistic reciprocity. For it is not simply related to the cultivation of a refined personality, but also can be taken as a traditional source out of which a form of social ethics can be developed for modern society. That is to say, individual humans can do

their utmost to integrate the principle of altruistic reciprocity as part of social ethics with that of social contract, thus creating a social environment where they can enjoy living a life of equality, independence, mutual care, reverence and complaisance. If this integration is successful, it can be at its best transformed into a kind of social awareness highly needed to renovate and ameliorate the human condition. However, it cannot rely on either social ethics or social contract alone. It demands a complementary force to be drawn from the two scopes. For we should have something more than legal prescription to supervise any effective implementation of social contract in its instrumental sense, and also have something more than minimum morality to ensure a healthy development of human relationships in its teleological sense. ¶

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- 1 *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, ed. by Ted Honderich (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 832.
 - 2 Li Zehou, *Lunyu jin du* (A Present-day Reading of *The Confucian Analects*) (Hefei: Anhui Education Press, 1998), p. 8.
 - 3 James Legge trans., *The Doctrine of the Mean (Zhong yong)* (Changsha: Hunan Publishing House, 1995), p. 41, mod.
 - 4 *The Confucian Analects (Lunyu)*, trans. By James Legge (Changsha: Hunan Publishing House, 1995), 12:22.
 - 5 Confucius, *The Confucian Analects*, 1:6, mod. All subsequent citations from the English version are subject to necessary modifications with reference to the Chinese original for the sake of accuracy.
 - 6 Confucius, *The Confucian Analects*, 1:2.
 - 7 Li, *Lunyu jin du*, pp. 18–20.
 - 8 *The Confucian Analects*, 4:15.
 - 9 *The Confucian Analects* 6:30.
 - 10 *The Confucian Analects* 15:24.
 - 11 *The Confucian Analects*, 12:2.
 - 12 *The Great Learning (Da xue)*, trans. by James Legge (Changsha: Hunan Publishing House, 1995), p. 1.
 - 13 *The Confucian Analects*, 1:12.
 - 14 *The Confucian Analects*, 3:3.
 - 15 *The Confucian Analects*, 13:19.
 - 16 *The Confucian Analects*, 13:27.
 - 17 *The Confucian Analects*, 14:28.
 - 18 *The Confucian Analects*, 14:4.
 - 19 *The Confucian Analects*, 15:9.
 - 20 Mencius, *The Works of Mencius (Meng zi)*, trans. by James Legge (Changsha: Hunan Publishing House, 1995), 3:4.
 - 21 *The Works of Mencius*, 11:6.
 - 22 *The Works of Mencius*, 3:6.

- 23 *The Confucian Analects*, 12:1.
- 24 Plato, *The Republic*, 499c–500d; *Theaetetus*, 176a–177a; *Laws*, 792d, 897b, 902b, etc.
- 25 Herbert Fingarette, “Response to Professor Rosemont”, in *Philosophy East and West*, vol. 28, no. 4 (1978), 512. See also A. C. Graham, *Disputers of the Tao: Philosophical Argument in Ancient China* (Illinois: Open Court, 1989), pp. 26–27.
- 26 Benjamin I. Schwartz, *The World of Thought in Ancient China* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985), pp. 75–76.
- 27 Herbert Fingarette, *Confucius: The Secular as Sacred* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), p. 55.
- 28 Fingarette, *The Secular as Sacred*, p. vii. See also Graham, *Disputers of the Tao*, p. 23.
- 29 Li, *Lunyu jindu*, p. 9.
- 30 *The Confucian Analects*, 6:7.



Human Chauvinism and Divine Reason

(大人类主义及神圣的理性)

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1. Human Chauvinism, God and Reason

Many people believe in the superiority of the human species above all other species on Earth. *Human chauvinism* (大人类主义) can be referred to as the view that human beings possess far greater intrinsic worth and rights than other creatures, where these human-chauvinistic rights are meant to entitle and permit human beings to consume and exploit nature at the expense of other species. Historian Lynn White has argued that the human-chauvinist sense of superiority and entitlement is deeply rooted in some core Abrahamic and Judeo-Christian teachings.¹ For example, the thesis that humans are uniquely made in “the image of God” and, subsequently, the thesis that humans are authorised and blessed to “rule over” and “subdue” the other species are given in the *Genesis* 1:27–28:

God said “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth”. God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them; and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it.

The belief that human beings are uniquely made in “the image of God” is usually accompanied by the further belief that God has a special love for human beings—a love far greater than his love for the rest of his creations—which then justifies human dominion over other species. An important premise in this religious argument for human chauvinism is a *God-based value theory* (以上帝为本的价值论), which takes God’s love, blessing, approval, or grace as the ultimate source and foundation of objective value. The God-based value theory maintains that something is worthy if and only if God loves it. The theory can be refined by adding to both the analysans

and analysandum qualifiers, such as “intrinsically” (meaning “non-instrumentally”) or “unconditionally”.²

Two lines of thought may explain the God-based value theory. Firstly, child psychologists have told us that children often sense their own worth as dependent on or confirmed by their parents’ love for them (Coopersmith 1967; Isberg, R. S. et al 1989). Perhaps in a similar way, God—the ultimate parent to everything—could somehow bestow objective worth on the things he loves. But some further explanation is needed. Supposed a parent loves a child more than his siblings, and this inculcates in the child a sense that he is more worthy and has more rights than his siblings. We would quite rightly think that the child’s sense of superiority and entitlement is merely subjective, and that the parent’s attitude of privileging the child over the other siblings—this attitude by itself—is not an objective foundation for attributing a greater worth or standing to the child. So why would the Judeo-Christian God’s supposedly greater love for humans bestow greater objective worth on humans? The main difference between a human parent and God is of course that while a human parent is a powerful authority to the child, God the creator is supposed to be the all-powerful authority of everything! So if one grants the existence of God and his divine property of being all-powerful, then one could argue that just as God has created things in the physical universe by willing their existence, he could also create values in things by loving them. If the creation of values is an event of the same metaphysical kind as the creation of entities in the physical universe, then it seems that in term of their ontological status, values could exist as objectively as do physical entities in the universe.

Secondly, the idea that God’s love is the absolute measure of value is explicable by appealing to another of God’s supposedly divine properties, namely that of being all-good. To be good, as Aristotle has pointed out, is not just to know the good, but also to love the good, and to do the good. If we just focus on the “love the good” part, then an all-good God would be a being who, among other things, loves everything that is good and does not love anything that is not good. In other words, God loves something if and only if it is good. Or equivalently, something is good if and only if God loves it. In short, the *God-based argument for human chauvinism* (以上帝为本的大人类主义论证) can be summarised as follows.³

God-based argument for human chauvinism

G1. X is more/less intrinsically worthy if and only if God intrinsically loves X more/less (God-based value theory).

G2. God intrinsically loves human beings far more than nonhuman beings.

P1. Those and only those who are more intrinsically worthy are entitled to dominate those who are the less intrinsically worthy, such that the interests of the former take higher priority over the interests of latter (“logic of domination”).⁴

HC. Human beings are far more intrinsically worthy than, and are entitled to dominate, nonhuman beings, such that human interests take far higher priority over nonhuman interests (human chauvinism, from G1, G2 and P1).

Is human chauvinism a justifiable position without appeal to the idea of a supernatural creator? Does the human species have some qualities—other than supposedly being the object of God’s greater love—that make it more worthy than other species on Earth?

Throughout the history of western philosophy, the faculty of reason, or rationality, is the quality most often put forward as the one that puts humans not only apart from but also above all other species. Aristotle, for example, held the *rationalist thesis of human nature* (理性主义人性观), which says that human beings are essentially rational animals, whose common humanity (i.e., the human essence) is rationality. He also held the human chauvinistic view that “nature has made all things specifically for the sake of man” and that the value of nonhuman things in nature is merely instrumental (*Politics*, Bk. 1, Ch. 8).⁵ Underlying Aristotle’s outlook on value and moral standing is a form of *reason chauvinism* (大理性主义), according to which reason, or rationality, is a supreme merit that gives those who possess it far a greater intrinsic worth and standing, and entitles them to far greater rights, than those who lack it.

It is not surprising that Aristotle was loved by the Christian Church fathers. Recall the Judeo-Christian belief that humans are uniquely made in “the image of God”—that the creator has put a token of its divine self into each and everyone of human species, setting humans not only part from, but also above, all other species. What is the divine quality that the Creator has shared with humans and none other of his creations? Clearly, it is a quality that all and only humans have but all the rest lack. Aristotle’s proposal that reason is the essence of the human species fits perfectly with the Christian belief that humans are uniquely made in the image of God and many Church fathers’ view that God is Reason. The idea that God is Reason, or that rationality is a divine quality, can find some support from the *Gospel of John* (1.1), for example, which states that “In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God”. The term “Logos” in Greek can mean “reason”, although it is not the only meaning of the term. Interpreting and elaborating on the thesis that God is “Logos”, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, who later became Pope Benedict XVI, said in a 2005 lecture:

From the beginning, Christianity has understood itself as the religion of the “Logos”, as the religion according to *reason*. [...] we Christians must be very careful to remain faithful to this fundamental line: to live a faith that comes from the “Logos”, from creative *reason*, and that, because of this, is also open to all that is truly *rational*.⁶

Suppose God the creator who is “Logos” is indeed, as Pope Benedict XVI interprets it, “creative reason”. Then the thesis that humans are made in the image of God will in effect mean that humans resemble God to the extent that they are rational. This means that the more rational a person is, the more God-like the person is! While

human beings are imperfect in their rationality, God is rationality in its *perfect* form—hence the term “Reason” with a capital “R”.

Under the theological perspective that God is Reason, the God-based value theory, which we have seen earlier, could now be recast or re-branded as a *Reason-based value theory* (理性主义价值论), which says that Reason’s love (rather like God’s love) is the ultimate foundation of objective value. Or as Michael Smith has put the very same idea, “rational desire” is the foundation of value.⁷ Or as Christine Korsgaard has put it, “rational commitment” is the foundation of value.⁸ The central rationalist idea here is that those who are rational would love (or desire, or commit to) things differently from those who are not rational, and that the more rational a person is, the more reliable the person’s love (or desire, or commitment) would be an indicator of genuine objective value. Put at its simplest, the rationalist or Reason-based value theory maintains that something is good if and only if perfectly rational beings would love it. Thus, with the replacement of “God” by “Reason” (or “perfect rationality”), the whole original God-based argument for human chauvinism can be re-casted and re-branded as a *Reason-based argument for human chauvinism* (以理性为本的大人类主义论证).

Reason-based argument for human chauvinism

R1. X is more/less intrinsically worthy if and only if Reason intrinsically loves X more/less (Reason-based value theory).

R2. Reason intrinsically loves those who are more rational more than those who are less rational (from moral rationalism).

R3. Human beings are far more rational than nonhuman beings (from rationalist thesis of human nature).

P1. Those and only those who are more worthy intrinsically are entitled to dominate those who are the less worthy intrinsically, such that the interests of the former take higher priority over the interests of latter (“logic of domination”).

HC. Human beings are far more intrinsically worthy than, and are entitled to dominate, nonhuman beings, such that human interests take far higher priority over nonhuman interests (human chauvinism, from R1, R2, R3 and P1).

The Age of Enlightenment is also called the “Age of Reason”, where in art, philosophy, politics, and science the replacement of “God” by “Reason” was a decisive step towards a new era, during which the political power of the Christian Church gave way to that of the emerging nation states. The Enlightenment’s new, or rather re-cast, faith in human rationality also had a democratising effect both politically and socially. To the extent that each and every human being is supposed to possess the capacity to reason, each and every one is autonomous, and in a position to make decisions for oneself about what to believe and how to live. That was a radical reversal of the Middle Ages’ exclusive trust in God and the Church’s sole authority on all

matters. The period also opened the way to revolutionary scientific and technological developments that were to subsequently bring unimagined material benefits to humans, but also radical destruction to nonhuman nature as we have witnessed since the middle of last century. It has turned out that Reason, no less than God, vastly privileges humans over all the other species.

2. Human Egalitarianism, God and Reason

It is often pointed out that the backbone of Western liberal democracy is the belief that all human beings are born with an *equal* worth or dignity, the violation of which is an absolute crime. This belief, it is also often argued, has its theoretical origin in the Judeo-Christian religions.⁹ Indeed, the God-based value theory that we have seen above features as an important premise in the argument for equal human worth, which can be summarised as follows.

God-based argument for human egalitarianism

G1. X is more/less intrinsically worthy if and only if God intrinsically loves X more/less (God-based value theory).

G3. God intrinsically loves all human beings and equally.

P1. Those and only those who are more worthy intrinsically are entitled to dominate those who are the less worthy intrinsically, such that the interests of the former take higher priority over the interests of latter (“logic of domination”).

HE. All human beings are equally intrinsically worthy, and no human being is entitled to dominate another human being, in that all human interests take equal priority (human egalitarianism, from G1, G3 and P1).

The idea of absolute equal human worth is the foundation of the United Nations’ “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” (1948). Without the religious faith in God’s equal love for all, however, can the idea of absolute equal human worth be justified? Replacing “God” by “Reason” in the argument will not do. For not all human beings are equally rational. In fact, such a substitution will result in a Reason-based argument *against* human egalitarianism instead.

Reason-based argument against human egalitarianism

R1. X is more/less intrinsically worthy if and only if Reason intrinsically loves X more/less (Reason-based value theory).

R2. Reason intrinsically loves those who are more rational more than those who are less rational (from moral rationalism).

R4. Some human beings are more rational than some other human beings (empirical fact).

P1. Those and only those who are more worthy intrinsically are entitled to dominate those who are the less worthy intrinsically, such that the interests of the former take higher priority over the interests of latter (“logic of domination”).

~**HE.** Some human beings are more intrinsically worthy than, and are entitled to dominate, some other human beings, such that the interests of some human beings take higher priority over the interests of some other human beings (rejection of human egalitarianism, from R1, R2 and R4).

Unlike the God-based account, the Reason-based account gives no support to human egalitarianism. Instead it leads to an abhorrent form of elitism. The Reason-based argument for elitism, under which some groups of human beings are entitled to dominate and exploit some other groups of human beings, has a logical structure exactly parallel to that of the Reason-based argument for human chauvinism, under which members of the human species are entitled to dominate and exploit members of the other species on Earth.

Since the 1970s some philosophers have argued that the Reason-based argument, or its other variants, for human chauvinism is nothing but a self-serving rationalisation of the human exploitation of nature and its other inhabitants, which people conveniently employ to pardon otherwise unjustified behaviours toward and at the expense of the other species on Earth.¹⁰

3. Functional Parallels between “God” and “Reason”

Reason, as understood by the rationalists, is a faculty in us capable of, among its other functions, causing us to act more rationally rather than less, due to our constitution as (at least partly) rational beings. For the rationalist, reason is not just an intellectual capacity for distinguishing true from false beliefs, for maintaining logical consistency, and working out probabilities. In addition, reason is also a practical faculty capable of moving us to act by generating rational motivations in us.

The rationalist conception of Reason plays a functional role in rationalist moral theories parallel to that played by the conception of God in Christian moral philosophy and theology. Firstly, like God who is supposed to be all-good, the moral rationalist takes Reason to be all-good in that Reason would love and only love what is good.¹¹ Secondly, like God who is supposed all-knowing, the moral rationalist takes Reason to be all-knowing as far as morality is concerned. The rationalist maintains that it is via reasoning and reasoning alone that human beings can distinguish between moral good and evil, and arrive at true moral judgements.¹² Thirdly, like God who is supposed to be all-powerful, the moral rationalist takes Reason to be an internal and infallible and source of moral motivation for human beings, in so far as they are rational beings.¹³ Finally, like God who is supposed to be all-present, the moral rationalist takes Reason to be universal in that it is capable of generating moral duties that are applicable to all human beings, regardless of their desires, needs, temperaments, or any other contingent factors.¹⁴

Contemporary forms of Kantian moral rationalism usually adopt some notion of reason or rationality fitting the above analysis. For example, attributing to reason the second and third features described above, rationalist moral internalism classifies people as irrational if they lack motivation to act according to their moral judgements.¹⁵ Real people, however, seem often not to be motivated to do what they judge to be morally required of them. When people are not motivated by their moral judgements, is that simply due to a failure of their rational capacities? Is rationality, as the rationalists believe, really the main resource in human beings to combat selfishness, greed, waste, and other human vices? This seems to be a question not answerable by *a priori* reasoning.

Rejecting the idea of God being the ultimate source of moral standards, the Enlightenment project was to provoke a subsequent existential crisis of human value and purpose. If humans, while intent on making moral decisions, were illuminated by a divine spark of Godly Reason, this was a reassuring safeguard of moral certainty and objectivity. But at the same time it is a failure to set human beings completely free from groundless attachments to the old religious ideal.

The moral rationalist's all-embracing conception of "Reason" contains as many problems and risks as the original religious notion of "God", which many of us regard as a fiction simply too magical to be true. Under the rationalist account, Reason has very many talents and powers. Like its predecessor, Reason is taken to be all-loving, all-knowing, all-powerful, and all-present, in so far as morality is concerned. It may not be true that much of the rationalist moral philosophy since the Enlightenment is a failed attempt to functionally replace "God" with "Reason". By parity of reasoning, however, there is a *prima facie* case at least for those who are already sceptical about the postulate of the magical God to be likewise sceptical about the rationalist postulates on Reason, which appears to share many of God's divine properties. Just as God cannot be defined or analysed into existence, neither can Reason be defined or analysed into being a constituting part of human nature. ¶

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 - 3 Andrew Brennan and Y. S. Lo, *Understanding Environmental Philosophy* (Durham: Acumen, 2010).
 - 4 See Val Plumwood, *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* (London: Routledge, 1993).
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 - 6 Joseph Ratzinger, "Cardinal Ratzinger On Europe's Crisis of Culture", 2005, available at: <<http://www.catholiceducation.org/en/culture/catholic-contributions/cardinal-ratzinger-on-europe-s-crisis-of-culture.html>>, emphasis added.
 - 7 Michael A. Smith, *The Moral Problem* (Blackwell: 1994).

- 8 Christine M. Korsgaard, *The Sources of Normativity* (Cambridge University Press, 1996).
- 9 Brennan and Lo, 2007.
- 10 See Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation* (New York: Random House, 1975); Paul Taylor, *Respect for Nature: A Theory of Environmental Ethics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986); Plumwood, *Femininism*; Brennan and Lo, Y.S. *Understanding Environmental Philosophy*.
- 11 Korsgaard, *Normativity*.
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- 13 Smith, *Moral Problem*.
- 14 Michael A. Smith, "Dispositional Theories of Value", *Proceedings of Aristotelian Society*, Supplementary Volume 63 (1989), 89–111.
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Ways of Doing Cross-Cultural Philosophy

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In 1971, Antony Flew wrote:

Philosophy, as the word is understood here, is concerned first, last and all the time with argument. It is, incidentally, because most of what is labelled *Eastern philosophy* is not so concerned—rather than any reason of European parochialism—that this book draws no materials from any source east of Suez.¹

This passage appears in Flew's *Introduction to Western Philosophy*. As the title suggests, this book is about Western philosophy. Given that this is the topic of his inquiry, there is perhaps no reason why he should venture into what is often labelled "Eastern philosophy".² However, rather than simply claiming that a study of Eastern philosophy is beyond the scope of his concern and leaving it at that, Flew assumed that philosophers "east of Suez" are not concerned with argument and took this assumption to license himself to disregard it.

Anyone who has even a slight knowledge of the history of Eastern philosophy, especially the philosophies that have developed in China and India, including Buddhist philosophy, would find Flew's characterisation of Eastern philosophy amusing (to put it mildly). In China and India, debates have been a cornerstone of intellectual and socio-political activity. Indeed some Buddhist traditions still use debate as part of education to this day. Philosophical literature sprang out of highly detailed examinations of the techniques and methodologies of debate and argumentation. For instance, Indian Nyāya literature contains analyses of correct reasoning, Buddhist *pramāṇavāda* tradition investigates perception and inference as means to acquire knowledge, and the Chinese Mohist canon includes a study of correct judgements. Numerous texts can be cited which demonstrate that

philosophical literature in China and India is full of rigorous theorisation about arguments and rational reasoning.³

In fairness, it should be said that the understanding of Eastern philosophy assumed by Flew was based on a certain reconstruction of Indian philosophy that was popular at his time.⁴ This reconstruction emphasised the possibility and importance of non-conceptual, purely perceptual experience and identified rational thinking and argumentation as problematic. However, this view of Eastern philosophy—a view which is still common not just among the customers of New Age bookstores but also among philosophers—hardly represents the philosophies even of India, let alone the various philosophical traditions “east of Suez”. A more accurate representation of Eastern philosophy is now widely available (in fact, it was already available when Flew penned the problematic passage). Dismissal of Eastern philosophy along Flew’s line is, these days, considered to be intellectually dishonest.

That said, some scholars have claimed that there is, strictly speaking, no tradition of studying *logic* in the East, or if there is, that it fails to match the sophistication achieved in the West.⁵ That is, it is claimed that even though philosophers of the Eastern traditions have taken debates and argumentation as important to topics of philosophical inquiry, they have nevertheless failed to reflect on and examine the principles that underly argumentation and rational reasoning. According to these scholars, argumentation has been put to use in elaborating on the nature of language, knowledge, reality and ethics; yet, there are no investigations of the principles underlying these modes of argument apart from the particular arguments that employ them. It is claimed that Eastern philosophers have not abstracted principles of reasoning and argumentation from particular instances and they have not formalised those principles in order to examine the features and properties of the principles. This is often unified in the idea that there is no development of *formal* logic in the East. As we will see, this has been taken to imply that there is no tradition of *logic* in the East.

In this paper, I will first show that there is, indeed, no development of formal logic in the East. However, I will argue that the lack of the development of formal logic does not entail the lack of the development of logic *tout court*. I will use this point to show how to undertake a cross-cultural dialogue between Eastern and Western logicians. My examination of the possibility of cross-cultural dialogue about logic will serve as a case study of showing how to do cross-cultural philosophy and how to use non-Western materials as part of contemporary philosophy.

Formal Logic

The contemporary Western literature on logic is largely based on the formal conception of logic. One way to articulate this conception is to say that logic and logical concepts are thought of as a concern with the ways that arguments or reasoning should “look”. Proposition logic is concerned with the propositional form of argument: $A \supset B$, A so B , where \supset is a conditional and A and B are propositional variables that stand for any propositions. Contemporary logicians take the forms such

as $A \supset B$, A so B as the object of study and delegate the question of what propositions A and B stand for as irrelevant. They investigate the systematic ways of separating those forms of argument that should be considered “valid” from those that are “invalid”. Valid forms are those where the truth of the premises (what appears before “so”) guarantees the truth of the conclusion (what appears after “so”) *no matter what propositions A and B stand for*. For instance, the form: $A \supset B$, A so B , is often considered (though not by everyone)⁶ as valid because if we assume that $A \supset B$ and A are true, B must also be true, no matter what A and B stand for. Predicate logic is concerned with quantifiers and predicates involved in arguments. It is concerned with such forms of argument as: $\exists xPx$ (something is P) so $\forall xPx$ (everything is P) where P is a predicate. To elaborate on this form, assume that something (no matter what it is) is P . Does that assumption guarantee that everything is P ? Not necessarily. We can imagine a situation with two objects a and b (again, the exact identity of these objects is irrelevant) where a is P (thus something is P) but b is not P (thus *not* everything is P). So many logicians consider this form of argument to be invalid.⁷

The formal conception has led contemporary logicians to focus on the properties of formal languages that express the forms of argument. Instead of focusing on the forms of argument and reasoning expressed in natural languages such as English or Chinese or Sanskrit, they are concerned with the languages that consist of such terms as A , B (as propositions), \supset , \exists , \forall , P (as a predicate) and a (as a proper name). The focus of inquiry for contemporary logic concerns the nature of such languages. For instance: What sentences are expressible in a language consisting, for instance, only of \exists , \forall , P , a (and variables)? What expressible power would it give if we added \Box (necessity operator) to the language? What forms come out valid in what (formal) language?

Can we find studies of argument and questions like these in Eastern material? I think the answer is no. Many Chinese and Indian philosophers have investigated various features of argument and rational reasoning.⁸ However, we do not find in Eastern texts formal analyses of arguments and rational reasoning as articulated above nor do we find definitions of validity in terms of the form of arguments rather than their contents. Thus, there is no development of formal logic in the East.⁹

Because of the lack of formal logic, some scholars have been led to think that there is no tradition of studying logic in the East. For instance, Hansen claims, “Technically, classical China had semantic theory but no logic”.¹⁰ By separating formal analysis of argument from the investigation of cognitive process and identifying cognitive process as the focus of Indian and Buddhist philosophers, Siderits argues that it is a mistake to think of them as engaging with a study of logic.¹¹ More specifically about Buddhist “logic”, Garfield has this to say: “[‘Buddhist logic’] never reaches a level of sophistication that would lead us in the modern world to take it seriously as a sophisticated account of reasoning or of consequence relations in general”.¹²

I think that we can resist these conclusions. The accounts of reasoning and argumentation that have been advanced by Eastern logicians should be taken seriously despite the fact that they did not develop a formal account of logic. I will also argue that the Eastern logic traditions can make important contributions to

the contemporary logic literature. Before explaining how to do so, however, I have to note that the dominance of formal conception in the Western logic literature constrains the methodology for studying the relevant Eastern literature.

Comparative Philosophy

If no formal study of arguments and rational reasoning is found in Eastern texts, it would seem that we cannot rely on the dominant comparative methodology for studying the logical concepts expressed by Eastern philosophers. A comparative method seeks equivalences and differences between Eastern and Western concepts.¹³ It assumes that we can achieve an understanding of the philosophies of different traditions in comparative terms based on the following methodological assumption: if one is already familiar with certain concepts in the Western tradition and wishes to understand the concepts made use of by Eastern philosophers or *vice versa*, one can grasp the “foreign” concepts by comparing them—finding equivalences and differences—with the concepts one already has.

If examination of arguments based on their forms cannot be found in the Eastern texts, however, and the formal conception of logic provides the dominant paradigm in contemporary logic literature, this comparative method of investigating Eastern philosopher’s theorisation of logical principles cannot even get off the ground. This is because no concepts expressed in Eastern texts pertain to formalised language expressing various forms and, thus, are unable to be recognised as *logical* concepts by the Western logicians.¹⁴ If this is right, a comparative philosopher would have to accept that the study of logic did not develop in the East and also accept the inference that the lack of formal logic entails the lack of logic *tout court*. It would thus seem that if we wish to conduct a legitimate investigation of logic material in the relevant Eastern literature, we would need to employ a different methodology.

Cross-Cultural Philosophy of Logic

An alternative method of engaging with Eastern material on logic could be conceived as follows. Consider the early 20th century debate between Frege and Hilbert—two of the main figures in modern logic—about consistency.¹⁵ They agree that consistency is a logical concept. Their agreement about this fundamental logical concept, however, seems to end there. For Hilbert, consistency pertains to the formal structure that can be instantiated by anything including “tables, chairs and beer mugs”.¹⁶ From his point of view, consistency pertains to a formal system where a formal system is conceived as just a scaffolding without any material attached. It followed that a system of geometry can be shown to be consistent by showing that a system of numbers is consistent so long as the two systems share the same consistent scaffolding. Hilbert took this scaffolding to be what logical principles are about. Against Hilbert, Frege claims that the thought expressed by a geometric system is different from that expressed by a number system. One is about geometric figures whereas the other is about numbers. He argued that Hilbert owes us a justification for the inference from the consistency of his number system (assuming that one can show this) to the consistency of the geometric system. For Frege, this requires 1) an analysis of concepts in a way that

brings out the complexity involved in the contents of the individual terms appearing in the system, and 2) a demonstration of the reducibility of one set of concepts and relations into another. The consistency of a set of thoughts hinges not only on the scaffolding but also on the contents of the concepts and relations involved in the set of thoughts. For Frege, logical principles are concerned with the contents of concepts and not only with the scaffolding that can be filled and used in many different ways. Frege was thus arguing that the formal conception, at least in the way that it is articulated above, is not all there is to the field of logic.

Was Frege wrong to think that the formal conception alone should not define the field of logic? The influence of the Hilbert-style approach in the 20th and 21st centuries might suggest so. However, Hilbert was ultimately silent about why Frege was wrong.¹⁷ Nor has anyone after Hilbert demonstrated that logic is exclusively formal. In fact, it is an open question whether or not logical principles—the principles that underlie rational reasoning and argumentation—must be understood according to the formal conception in Western literature. Thus, we cannot claim that the lack of formal analysis of argument is a sign of the lack of the development of logic without begging the question about what counts as a study of logic.

If this is right, the lack of formal analyses of arguments and reasoning and the lack of formal logic do not entail the lack of logic as such. Chinese and Indian philosophers investigate logical issues concerning good and bad argumentation and reasoning. They are concerned with such questions as: What follows from what? What counts as good reason? When is your reasoning warranted? They do not address these questions from a formal perspective. Instead, Chinese philosophers address these questions as part of investigating the cognitive processes of distinguishing similar from dissimilar kinds of things.¹⁸ Indian (and Buddhist) philosophers answer them by analysing the ways in which we acquire knowledge.¹⁹ The fact that they do not address these questions from a formal perspective does not imply that they do not engage with *logical* concepts or that they do not study *logic* without the assumption that logic is exclusively formal.

In fact, if we pay attention to the different perspectives from which Eastern philosophers address logical questions, we can develop a new approach to Eastern material on logic. Rather than comparing the ideas expressed by Eastern philosophers with what Western logicians know about logic, we can instead treat Eastern logic texts as sources of inspiration for a new perspective on contemporary philosophical issues. In dialogue with those Eastern texts which address logical issues from their own distinct perspectives, we can develop original solutions to contemporary issues based on the conceptual resources found in Eastern traditions. This is like fusion cuisine enjoyed by the cosmopolitan citizens of the world. Fusion cuisine is not simply a juxtaposition of two or more cuisines but is genuinely novel fare that draws on different culinary traditions. In a similar way, we can facilitate new ideas by drawing on and advancing arguments from both Eastern and Western philosophical traditions. This approach makes the “cross-cultural” part of cross-cultural philosophy redundant. One might say that it is to do philosophy.

If we were to adopt this new cross-cultural approach to philosophy, there is a possibility that we can uncover alternative conceptions of logic that have been neglected as a result of uncritically embracing the current, dominant Western view. For instance, Chinese logicians do not separate logical investigation from the cognitive process of discriminating this or that. Because of the focus on the act of discrimination, their logical investigation can be described as psychologistic.²⁰ The psychologistic conception of logic has been discredited in modern times. This is because a logical study is conceived as a study of rationality that some acts of reasoning may qualify. But, in order for reasoning to be the object of assessment, the standard for what counts as rational or irrational must be separate from the act of reasoning itself. The formal conception of logic was developed partly to overcome the difficulty of accounting for *rational* reasoning because the process in which a reasoner goes through does not tell us whether the reasoning is rational or irrational. Instead of conceding that the Chinese investigation of the process of making discrimination falls outside the field of logic, however, we can develop an alternative conception of what counts as good reason based on the study of the way in which we discriminate similar from dissimilar things. Based on this alternative conception, we can then challenge the formal conception of logic that dominates contemporary Western literature.²¹ This will not only contribute to the study of Chinese logic but, more importantly, expand the horizon of logical inquiry and enrich its analytical categories.

There is an extensive body of literature that examines the history of Western logic. Very few attempts have been made to integrate these historical and tradition-specific investigations into a contemporary examination of the conceptions of logic that determine rational reasoning and argumentation. No one has drawn on non-Western resources to propose an alternative conception. No logicians trained in the Western logical tradition have attempted to undertake a thorough and comprehensible analysis of the various Eastern logic traditions and use them to examine critically the contemporary Western conception of logic. It is time that such a study of argumentation and logical reasoning is conducted from a cross-cultural perspective. ¶

1 Anthony Flew, *Introduction to Western Philosophy* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1971), p. 36.

2 For the sake of convenience, I refer to the region “east of Suez” by “the East” in contrast to “the West” and call philosophies and philosophers of this region “Eastern philosophy” and “Eastern philosophers” respectively. The outdated label “Eastern philosophy” ignores differences between different traditions (and even within each tradition). However, those differences do not concern us for this paper and it is convenient to use the label. I should also mention that my examples are all drawn from the philosophical traditions that have flourished in China and India (including Buddhist philosophical tradition) because of my research interest, but I do not suggest that there are no philosophical traditions outside of China and India.

3 See Tom Tillemans, “Introduction: Buddhist Argumentation”, *Argumentation* 22 (2008), 1–14 (pp. 1–3).

4 See John Clayton, *Religions, Reasons and Gods: Essays in Cross-Cultural Philosophy of Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 131–32.

- 5 See Jay L. Garfield, *Engaging Buddhism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); Chad Hansen, "Logic in China", *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 1998); and Mark Siderits, "Deductive, Inductive, Both or Neither?", *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 31 (2003), 303–21.
- 6 For example, Graham Priest, "The Logic of Paradox", *Journal of Philosophical Logic* 8 (1979), 219–41.
- 7 If we also consider two-place predicates, i.e., relations between two things, then Aristotelian syllogisms can be shown to be a fragment of predicate logic.
- 8 For China, see for example, Hu Shih, *The Development of the Logical Method in Ancient China* (New York: Paragon Press, 1969/1922) and Christoph Harbsmeier, *Science and Civilization in China, Volume 7, Part I: Language and Logic*, ed. by K. Robinson and J. Needham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). For India, see several articles collected in *Indian Logic: A Reader*, ed. by Jonardon Ganeri (Richmond: Curzon, 2003).
- 9 There are several senses in which logic can be said to be "formal". See John G. MacFarlane, *What Does It Mean To Say That Logic Is Formal?*, PhD Dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 2000. In this paper, the "formal conception of logic" is meant to refer to the conception of good and bad arguments and reasoning as articulated above.
- 10 Hansen, "Logic in China".
- 11 Siderits, "Deductive, Inductive".
- 12 Garfield, *Engaging Buddhism*, p. 242.
- 13 For a long history of the use of this method in China, see Joachim Kurtz, *The Discovery of Chinese Logic* (Leiden: Brill, 2011).
- 14 This is a specific instance of the general problem associated with comparative method articulated in Koji Tanaka, "Davidson and Chinese Conceptual Scheme", *Davidson's Philosophy and Chinese Philosophy*, ed. by Bo Mou (Leiden: Brill, 2006), pp. 55–71.
- 15 The following discussion draws on Patricia Blanchette, "Frege and Hilbert on Consistency", *Journal of Philosophy* 93 (1996), 317–36; "The Frege-Hilbert Controversy", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), available at: <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2014/entries/frege-hilbert/>>.
- 16 This is a famous remark that Hilbert is considered to have made.
- 17 See the correspondence between Frege and Hilbert in Gottlob Frege, *Philosophical and Mathematical Correspondence*, ed. by Gottfried Gabriel, Hans Hermes, Friedrich Kambartel, Christian Thiel and Albert Verrart; trans. by Brian McGuinness and Hans Kaal (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).
- 18 See Chris Fraser, "Distinctions, Judgment, and Reasoning in Classical Chinese Thought", *History and Philosophy of Logic* 34 (2013), 1–24; Dan Robins, "The Later Mohists and Logic", *History and Philosophy of Logic* 31 (2010), 247–85.
- 19 See *The Role of the Example (Dṛṣṭānta) in Classical Indian Logic*, ed. by Shoryo Katsura and Ernst Steinkellner (Vienna: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, 2004); Bimal Krishna Matilal, *The Character of Logic in India*, ed. by Jonardon Ganeri and Heeraman Tiwari (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998); Koji Tanaka, "Buddhist Philosophy of Logic", *Blackwell Companion to Buddhist Philosophy*, ed. by Steven Emmanuel (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell), pp. 320–30; Tom Tillemans, *Scripture, Logic, Language: Essays on Dharmakīrti and His Tibetan Successors* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1999).
- 20 See Martin Kusch, *Psychologism* (London: Routledge, 1995).
- 21 This point was elaborated on in Koji Tanaka, "Psychologism from a Classical Chinese Point of View", a paper presented at the Australasian Association of Philosophy Conference, 2015.



Modernisation and “Integrated Buddhism”: The Buddhist Reforms of Ouyang Jingwu and Taixu

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1.

In the summer of 1924, Dharma Master Taixu convened the World Buddhist Conference at Mount Lu, a famous Buddhist mountain located in southern China. Japan dispatched a delegation of six people to attend the event, led by Saeki Jōin [alt. Zyōin] 佐伯定胤 (1867–1952), the chief monk of the Japanese Yogācāra school, and Kimura Taiken 木村泰賢 (1881–1930), a professor at the Tokyo Imperial University. During their journey the delegation visited the China Inner Learning Institute, where Saeki gave a speech titled “An Elementary Explanation of *Vijñaptimātra*”,¹ and Kimura presented a special report on “Recent Developments in Japanese Buddhism”. Saeki’s speech laid out his appraisal of, and aspirations for, the China Inner Learning Institute in the following passages:

The [transmission of the] Yogācāra school has been discontinued in China for over one thousand years. In recent years, [however, the school] has been promoted by the Chinese lay devotee Ouyang Jingwu—so there is hope for the revival of the Yogācāra school in China. During this trip to Nanjing, I visited Ouyang Jingwu, and conveyed the immense reverence I have for him [on account of his efforts to revive Yogācāra].

Yogācāra Buddhism comes from India, and is a fountainhead of East Asian culture. I hope that today and in the future China and Japan will join together to elucidate the Buddha’s invaluable teachings so that Buddhism can be spread across the world.

This speech clearly indicates that Saeki, in his capacity as a representative of the Japanese Yogācāra school, offered a very positive assessment of the Inner Learning Institute, and aspired to partner with the Institute to promote Yogācāra learning.

In the autumn of 1926, two years after the East Asian Buddhist Conference, the various schools of Japanese Buddhism jointly put together and dispatched another delegation to China to study Chinese Buddhism. This delegation was led by the eminent Tendai (Ch. Tiantai) school monk Umetani Kōei 梅谷孝永. While at Nanjing, the delegation also stayed at the China Inner Learning Institute, where they exchanged ideas with the head of the Institute, Ouyang Jingwu 歐陽竟無 (1871–1943), and other members. Ouyang Jingwu at this time asked the Japanese delegation three questions. These were:

First, it will be extremely hard to refute the views of [modern] secular science and philosophy, criticise non-Buddhist teachings and advance the essential tenets [of Buddhism as an alternative to them]. How do we transcend images and return to what is beyond affirmation and negation?

Second, the [observance of the] precepts has not functioned properly for some time. Most [of the precepts] are not applicable [to the modern world]; however it would not be acceptable to accommodate and follow new [guidelines in place of the ancient ones]. How can we adjust and popularise the practice [of observing the orthodox precepts in the modern world]?

Third, the practices of Tantric Buddhism are easily confused with [those of] Hinduism, and [the former's] doctrine is easily encumbered by [the interpretations of] the Huayan and Tiantai [traditions]. How can we use the theories of Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga to correct these, and fully bring out the true substance [of the Buddha's teachings]?

Perhaps because Ouyang's questions touched on the issue of Tantric Buddhism, the Japanese delegation chose Takai Kankai 高井觀海 (1884–1953), a professor from the Shingon (真言) Tantric school's Chisan Kangakuin Institute (智山勸學院), to answer these questions. However Takai's speech "did not answer the three points" in question, and instead discussed "the Yogācāra school as seen from the viewpoint of Buddhist history". According to an account that was later recorded by the China Inner Learning Institute, the content of Takai's speech was, roughly, as follows:

In general terms, the principles of the Buddhist teachings do not go beyond the three laws: all conditioned things are impermanent, all dharmas lack self, *nirvāṇa* is perfect tranquility. The first two constitute reality, the last is an ideal—they merge together in "idealism" and [as such] are not apart from the "one mind" (*ekacitta*). Hence to study the Buddha's teachings, one must investigate this mind. Mind encompasses the cogitating mind (*citta*), the aggregated mind (**samudaya-citta*; 集起心—a term denoting the "storehouse consciousness" *ālayavijñāna*), and the immutable mind (堅實心; the *bhūtatathatā*, or true nature). Hināyāna discusses the dependent arising of the mental effect of ripened karma based on [the investigation of] *citta*. Provisional Mahāyāna [that is, the propaedeutic or incomplete, schools of Mahāyāna] discusses the dependent arising of *ālayavijñāna* based on [their understanding of] the aggregated mind, [and this] together with the view of the non-reality of the phenomenal world (

虛妄) is what is explained by the Yogācāra school, and has its origins in Mahāyāna. Real Mahāyāna discusses the dependent arising of the *bhūtatathatā* and speaks of the view that the world is the real (真實) basis of [insight into] the immutable mind, [and this] is what is explained in each of the Sanron, Kegon, Tendai and Shingon schools, and represents the [subsequent] outgrowth of Mahāyāna. The Inner Learning Institute places importance on Yogācāra, which has its roots in Mahāyāna, and strives to apply itself to this foundation.²

Takai Kanko was a scholar-monk of the Shingon (真言) Tantric school's Chisan 智山 school. He was not only deeply versed in Tantric Buddhism—he was also an accomplished scholar of the Yogācāra and the Abhidharma schools. In his speech, he proposed a schema for classifying and interpreting the entire body of the Buddhist teachings. On the basis of a division between reliance on the cogitating mind, aggregated mind and immutable mind, central to each of which were, respectively, the teachings of dependent arising of the mental effect of ripened karma (i.e., *citta*), the dependent arising of the *ālayavijñāna*, and the dependent arising of the *bhūtatathatā*, he categorised all Buddhist teachings as pertaining to Hināyāna, provisional Mahāyāna, and real Mahāyāna. In this schema, Yogācāra, is classified as the provisional Mahāyāna, thus placing it below real Mahāyāna represented by his own Shingon school and other schools that had developed subsequent to the early flourishing of Yogācāra.

These conversations between members of the Inner Learning Institute and the Japanese delegates reveal to us, in a roundabout way, the Institute's unique ideas about Buddhism, as well as its members' reasoning behind, and plans for, the modernisation and reform of Buddhism. They are richly symbolic as they clearly show the dialectical relationship that existed between Chinese Buddhism's modernisation and early twentieth-century Japanese Buddhism. In essence, this dialogue with Japanese Buddhists was a key contributory cause of Chinese Buddhism's subsequent modernisation reforms. In the next section of this article I will begin by analysing the discussions between Ouyang and the Japanese Buddhist delegates. I will then explore more deeply the reasoning behind, and plans for, the modernisation reforms that were advanced by the Institute, focusing on those of its core leader, Ouyang. I will then bring these together with a discussion on the modernisation plans of Taixu. My intention in doing so is to delineate the themes, motivations and underlying context of Chinese Buddhism's modernisation.

2.

The three questions advanced by Ouyang reflect what were, over the duration of his long career as a Buddhist thinker, some of his core concerns. For instance, the third question, which referred to Tantric Buddhism, reflected his uncertainty as to this tradition's place in Buddhism. Moreover, this question revealed two mutually related premises that underlay his understanding of Buddhism more generally. The first is that "the theories of Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga" are the standard for judging and correcting Buddhist teachings, and the second is that these two were needed to

correct the teachings of Tiantai and Huayan more specifically because they failed to convey explicitly the true substance of the Buddhist teachings. On these grounds, for Ouyang, the status of Tantric Buddhism rests on whether it concords with “the theories of Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga”. As such, one should not be “encumbered” by the doctrines of Tiantai and Huayan. A more important point that Ouyang was trying to make, however, is that the Inner Learning Institute was not only concerned about propagating the “doctrines of Yogācāra” as represented by Asaṅga. In this sense, for Ouyang, both Saeki and Takai’s positive appraisals of the Institute betrayed a fundamental misunderstanding about its goals and aspirations. Both delegates assumed that the Inner Learning Institute primarily aspired to make contributions to scholarship on the Yogācāra school. As far as members of the Institute were concerned, however, their new interpretations of Yogācāra thought were part of what Ouyang called a “scholarly revolution” (研學革命) which involved new positions on, and methods for interpreting, the Dharma as a whole, and which aimed at organising the Buddhist teachings so that a systematisation of the entire Buddhist canon could be possible. The misunderstanding of the delegates in this sense reveals the fundamental disparity between the Inner Learning Institute’s mission to integrate and systematise the entire body of the Buddhist teachings, and the Japanese approach to Buddhist scholasticism based upon the division of Buddhist schools. I will return to this very important disparity later.

The second question raised by Ouyang, which relates to the observance of the precepts, reflects another long-held concern of his. Elevating the observance of the precepts goes hand in hand with establishing religious organisations. And in line with this, Ouyang’s question about the precepts was closely related to his concerns about the need to reform China’s Buddhist organisations. For Ouyang, the challenge in doing so lay in the need to somehow construct new organisations that adapted to the needs of the day yet remained faithful to the intention that lay behind the Buddha’s initial decision to establish the *samgha* [community of monks], and which pursued renewal while remaining faithful to the original intention behind instituting the precepts. This strong commitment to reforming China’s Buddhist organisations was something that Ouyang held throughout his life; it was also shared by the eminent early Republican-era Buddhist leader, and renowned reformer, Taixu 太虛 (1890–1947). Essentially, the “scholarly revolution” of reorganising, categorising and interpreting the Dharma, which Taixu similarly called a “learning revolution” (學理革命), was intended to lay a foundation for what Taixu earlier in his life called an “organisational revolution” (組織革命) in Chinese Buddhism, and the relationship between the former scholastic and the latter organisational reform was seen to be symbiotic.

In regard to this, the experiences and successes of Japan’s Buddhist organisations in the early 20th century provided an important motivation for both of these Chinese reformers. Ouyang and Taixu both felt that reflecting upon and learning from these experiences was indispensable. Earlier in 1907 Ouyang went to Japan to investigate the state of Japanese Buddhism. His close friend Gui Bohua 桂伯華, who had earlier led him onto the path of Buddhist scholasticism, studied Buddhism in Japan from

1906 until his death in 1915. Taixu also long wanted to go to Japan to “survey a place where Buddhist Learning and European Learning were in balanced proportion”, and travelled there on two occasions—first in 1917, and again in 1925, when he attended the East Asian Buddhist Conference. This is the background of Ouyang’s questions to the Japanese delegation.

There were also some important differences between Ouyang’s and Taixu’s appraisals of Japanese Buddhism’s modernisation. These differences were principally related to their respective appraisals of the relative strengths and weaknesses of the Japanese system of “differentiated schools being self-administering” (分宗部勒). They also reflected both figures’ designs for the path ahead for the reform of Chinese Buddhism—which were themselves based on their own assessment of contemporary China’s problems. On this point, Ouyang’s question reflects his doubts about the relaxation of the rules of monastic discipline (*vinaya*) that Japanese Buddhism implemented to adapt to the modern world. It reflected also many years’ ruminations on the question as to how one can reorganise Buddhist organisations through reforming the precepts to adapt to the needs of the day, while avoiding “breaking the precepts” and sacrificing the original intent of forming the Buddhist *samgha* on account of a misguided desire to “accommodate and follow new” trends in society. This, arguably, was a core conundrum that had long perplexed Ouyang.

Finally, we return to the first question as to how Buddhism should respond to the challenges of Western “science and philosophy”. This stemmed from another of Ouyang’s core concerns—whether Buddhism as an Oriental body of learning for achieving virtue could, in the face of these challenges, continue to play a key role in guiding and giving meaning to the lives of modern Chinese, and Oriental people more generally. To achieve this, according to Ouyang, “refuting” or critiquing Western science and philosophy, and unearthing and expounding the “truth” of Buddhist teachings, needed to become an indispensable part of studying Buddhism. However when expounding the “truth” of the Buddhist teachings in order to “refute” non-Buddhist views, how does one avoid “dogmatism” so that one can transcend inter-sectarian conflict? This was something that Ouyang must have been conscious of when he established “inner learning” as “another kind of learning” predicated on the premise that “Buddhism is neither a religion nor a philosophy”. At the same time, the vast body of accomplished academic research on Buddhism that emerged during Japanese Buddhism’s modernisation period developed and flourished under the influence of empiricism. This may have prompted Ouyang to consider how, while contributing to deepening our knowledge of Buddhism, one can continue to maintain those characteristics that make Buddhism what it is. For Ouyang, this involved thinking about how, when studying Buddhism through the differentiated modes of enquiry of philology, linguistics and history, one can integrate this differentiated knowledge through the principle of “using the Buddhist teachings to study the Buddhist teachings” (words of the famous contemporary scholar-monk Yinshun 印順 [1906–2005]). In other words, how can Buddhist Learning serve as an instrument to deepen our knowledge of the religion, and at the same time not compromise or erode our faith in it? These are probably the key lessons that Chinese Buddhists drew

from Japanese Buddhism's experience of modernising academic Buddhist studies. We may note that in the history of modern Chinese Buddhist studies, the research of Ouyang Jingwu, Lü Cheng 呂澂 and Venerable Yinshun all, to an extent, synthesised the empirical approach of science and the faith-based approach of Buddhism. In light of this, this question appears to have touched upon a broad range of background and contextual issues, and is not as straightforward as it may have first seemed.

In essence, the "three questions" advanced by Ouyang reveal two core agendas. First, in the face of the challenges posed by modern Western civilization, how can Buddhism endure the baptism of fire of Western science, philosophy and even religion, and through a creative reinvigoration, continue to play a significant role as a wisdom of life for the Chinese and, more broadly, the Oriental peoples? Second, how can Chinese Buddhist organisations, at the centre of which stand the archaic institutions of Chan tonsure lineages and Dharma transmission lineages, be reformed so that they can adapt to the needs of modern China, and actively participate in the reconstruction of Chinese society?

In my opinion, the entire Chinese Buddhist modernisation project gravitated around these two concerns. The first, in essence, was the backdrop against which arose Taixu's "Buddhism for human life", which advocated "achieving Buddhahood within humanity", as well as the "inner learning" of Ouyang Jingwu, which "established the principle of learning that is for the sake of humanity". In spite of their respective differences, the reform agendas of both these figures shared a common premise—they both wanted to reform Buddhism (which traditionally emphasised self knowing and personal salvation) so that it could come to play a more active role in improving the world (i.e., the human realm) and the lives of people (i.e., human lives). In relation to the second point, Ouyang established the "*bodhimaṇḍala* [place of enlightenment] of the lay devotee" and advocated reviving the true spirit of the Buddhist order as it existed in Śākyamuni's times, remodeling the clergy, and uniting the system of the teachings and the system of teachers. Identical concerns prompted Venerable Taixu to reorganise the monastic order, build on the notion of an "orthodox Dharma of the vehicle of humanity" (人乘正法) to establish a lay devotee Correct Faith Assembly (正信會), and use Buddhist faith to "elevate the people and correct the customs". In spite of many differences of opinion, the aspirations for the reform of Buddhist organisations of both these figures were in this regard fundamentally the same—both hoped that reformed organisations could serve as a base for protecting and propagating the orthodox Dharma, and as a centre for educating and elevating society. In view of this, it could be said that the tenets of "Buddhism for human life" and of "inner learning" were directed towards establishing what these thinkers understood to be correct faith (正信; *śraddhā*) in the Dharma according to the Mahāyāna ideal (i.e., the ideal of saving others and not just oneself). And it could equally be said that the purpose of the reform of Buddhist organisations was to put this into practice in the real world through right action (正行; *samyak-pratipatti*). As such, we may say the core tenet of modernising the Dharma was to re-establish correct faith and right action.

Yet for faith and action to be right, they must be founded on a right understanding (正解; *samyag-jñāna*) of the Buddha's teachings. On account of this, the modernisation movement came to address another theme—establishing a standard, orthodox understanding of the Dharma, based on the selection, categorisation and interpretation of the variegated and vast body of the Buddhist teachings. This precipitated the development of another principle—"integrating" or "systematising" this vast body through constructing an integrated Buddhist teaching and systematised doctrine. This, in turn, laid the foundations for a further step. It meant that the various forms of actual Buddhism that appeared in this imperfect *samsāric* world needed to be integrated into an ideal Buddhism. In this regard, "integrated Buddhist teaching" and "systematised doctrine" were underlying principles that supported the construction of an ideal Buddhism. And they also laid the doctrinal foundations for reorganising Buddhist organisations, and thus right action. This, as a whole, could be called the movement to correct the teachings.

Ouyang and Taixu each developed different systems for "correcting the teachings", and these came to serve as the two core models of the early twentieth-century Chinese Buddhist modernisation movement. Their differences were the result of different understandings about the nature of truth in the Buddha Dharma. And these, in turn, led to divergent principles for the systematisation of the teachings, as well as the formation of different systematic studies of the doctrine. More importantly, these contrasting systematic studies of the doctrine corresponded with differently configured concrete plans for using such a schema to integrate actual Buddhism into a type of ideal Buddhism.

Strictly speaking, this ideal Buddhism, brought about by an integrated Buddhist teaching and systematised doctrine, is essentially a type of integrated Buddhism. Such an integrated Buddhism should have a completely systematised doctrine, and should organise different teachings according to defined principles so as to militate against contradictions, and lay the foundations for a wholly integrated Buddhist teaching and systematic study of the doctrine. At the same time, organisational reforms should be directed at constructing a unified Buddhist organisation or a united Buddhist church, in contradistinction to a Buddhism divided into different schools and schools. It could be said that Taixu's and Ouyang's movement to correct the teachings were intended to facilitate the construction of an integrated Buddhism, but had different strategies for approaching sectarian Buddhism and its underlying principles. These points, to a certain degree, were to determine the characteristics of the models of systematic studies of the teaching that each figure constructed.

3.

Strictly speaking, the doctrines of Chinese Buddhism are sectarian in nature. Sectarian divisions in China stopped at the level of doctrine and lineage, however, and never fully evolved into a strict system of dividing Buddhist organisations, or instituted an organised and hierarchical system of what the moderniser's called "differentiated schools being self-administering" (分宗部勒). Such a system,

however, did exist in Japan. Taixu made the following excellent observations and critiques in regard to the constitution of this system and its modernisation:

Each school in Japan has its own rigidly systematised organisation. Each school has a bureau of school affairs, which manages the administration of the entire school. Temples are ranked according to their size, and particular matters have particular people [designated to] attend to them—all [of the schools] allocate labour in a way that makes the most of the capacities of their people. Each school similarly runs Buddhist education programmes—elementary schools and middle schools are general [curriculum schools], whereas universities specialise in their school/sect, and are run by the school/sect. Social and cultural benevolent enterprises are divided according to their activities. These happen to accord with the intended plans [outlined in] my own discourse on the monastic order. Although each school in Japan has strictly systematised organisations, there is no supreme organ which has administrative jurisdiction over Buddhism nationally.... Because in Japanese Buddhism each school administers itself, energies are distributed towards each school, forming faith in schools, but no faith in Buddhism as a whole. In terms of the division of schools, each school has its own temples. My discourse on the monastic order has also discussed this, but I advocate that there be a Bureau for [Overseeing] Practice and a Bureau for [Overseeing the] Maintenance of the Teachings, and a united confederation of dharmas and monastic orders. In terms of the organisation of the Correct Faith Association for lay devotees, there needs to be a unified faith in the Buddhist teachings; there certainly cannot be a division according to schools as is the case of clergy and temples. The Three Treasures should be the only object of faith. Although in Japan there is a Buddhist association, it is loose and not sound—it is certainly not as tightly integrated as the confederation of Buddhist monastic orders I have planned.... This is the basis for the establishment of my theory, and how my investigations in Japan verified my theory.³

Taixu held that the aim of the reformation of Chinese Buddhism was to establish something similar to the Japanese Buddhist system of “differentiated schools being self-administering”, where monasteries are managed internally at different levels and smaller temples are subordinate to larger ones, the different capabilities of members are fully exploited through the allocation of labour, and tightly integrated Buddhist organisations serve as a basis for setting up educational and benevolent organisations. This was seen as creating an organisational platform for upholding the teachings and propagating Buddhism in society.

Although acknowledging that Japan’s differentiated schools were self-administering, Taixu nevertheless felt that rather than adopt the Japanese model whereby each school administered itself, he proposed that in China the two functions should be separated out, and that only the self-administering aspect should be adopted, with a view to establishing a confederation with supreme authority, and charged with managing Buddhism nationally. To achieve this aim, one could not have the school-

based faith of Japan—rather there needed to be a united faith in Buddhism as a whole. As far as Taixu was concerned, Chinese and Japanese Buddhism were already different in this regard, having what he called “differences in regard to revering the patriarchs and the Buddha”:

The different schools of Japanese Buddhism today mostly transmit the dharma lineage in the way that each school’s founders did, and so each school has an independent spirit. The aim of this spirit is [to foster] reverence of the patriarchs to which the Dharma has been transmitted [in the school in question]. Buddhism in Japan is mostly like this. In Chinese Buddhism, although the lineage patriarchs are quite revered, in reality Śākyamuni is regarded to be the peerless, supreme honoured one—this is because all of the dharmas transmitted by the patriarchs came from Śākyamuni.⁴

According to Taixu, a distinguishing feature of Chinese Buddhism is a tenet of “revering of the patriarchs and the Buddha” in which it is recognised that “all of the dharmas transmitted by the patriarchs came from Śākyamuni”. For Taixu, this is why Chinese Buddhism’s tradition of revering patriarchs and dividing schools never evolved into a formal system of “differentiated schools being self-administering”. Moreover Chinese Buddhism’s tradition of revering the Buddha made the movement towards unification seem inexorable. It was in concordance with this view that Taixu advanced his first systematic study of the doctrine in order to categorise the Dharma, namely, a system based on the theory that “the eight schools have their distinctive strengths, but in the final analysis they are all equal”. And it was also on this basis that he began to develop his “ideology of Buddhism qua integrated system”. From this point on he “was not restrained by the sectarianism of the past”, and undertook a categorisation and interpretation of all the Buddhist teachings handed down from Śākyamuni. He systematised all the Buddhist teachings as “the teachings pertaining to that of the [time of] the Buddha extending to that of the three periods and the three systems”, “the doctrine pertaining to true reality extending to that of the three ranks and the three schools”, and “activities which concord with the nature and capacities [of sentient beings] extending to that of the three bases and three realms”. In summary, in order to construct a united Buddhist federation and realising the ideal of forming an “integrated Buddhism”, Taixu felt that it was necessary to systematise the Buddhist teachings in their entirety at a conceptual level, and establish a systematic study of the doctrine that made a whole of the Dharma approach possible.

Although Taixu’s distinctive systematic studies model was able to break through the restraints of traditional schools, at a deeper level it also refined and outlined the structural foundations of sectarian doctrine. This shows that Taixu’s appeal for a unified Buddhist confederation was advanced on the premise that there would be no attempt to break down the tradition of sectarian approaches to the study of Buddhism. That is, under Taixu’s model for a united Buddhist confederation, sectarian studies in Buddhism would be even more accommodated through an inclusive, systematised study of Buddhist doctrine. This in turn would allow Chinese Buddhism—which was already less sectarian than Japanese Buddhism—to transcend the limits of sectarian faith even further, which would in turn facilitate the unity

and integration of the Buddhist schools, and so establish an integrated Buddhism in a grand confederation as well as its system of self-administering schools.

As Taixu said, “the revolution of Chinese Buddhism cannot discard the monastic orders and temples that have two thousand years of history. To abandon the monastic orders and temples for the sake of a Buddhist revolution—one that makes the religion more expansively scholastic and socially oriented—is like talking about a global revolution and discarding democracy”.⁵ Taixu’s reforms sought to reorganise and to integrate the old monastic orders, and not to instigate a revolution that targeted them. This is a distinctive characteristic of the Buddhist organisational model he planned, and it was a distinctive characteristic of his systematic study of Buddhist doctrine.

4.

In contrast with Taixu, Ouyang Jingwu was a more authentic revolutionary who advocated a more thorough Buddhist revolution. Ouyang, like Taixu, advocated an “integrated Buddhism” and the pursuit of a united Buddhist confederation. Ouyang, however, had a different attitude towards traditional monastic orders and the sectarian Buddhism that they were founded on, and this appears to have prompted a different approach to the systematic study of the Dharma. These differences were the focus of ongoing debates between Taixu’s disciples and the China Inner Learning Institute.

In 1916 Ouyang Jingwu formally advanced his theory that Faxiang (法相; dharma characteristics; Sanskrit: *dharmalakṣaṇa*) and Weishi 唯識 (*viññaptimātra*; “nothing but consciousness”) are different schools. This theory laid the conceptual foundations for his life’s studies. The main tenet of this theory was that Faxiang is broader than Weishi—it encompasses more than the Weishi. On this basis, he held that Faxiang should be distinguished from Weishi. This marked the unearthing of a new principle for systematising the Dharma. This principle had two premises. The first is that the authority of the words of the Buddha cannot be doubted. The second is that this authority rests on a principle that is the connecting thread of the entire teachings—it is a principle that identifies and unites the teachings. On this basis, the study of Buddhism is “research subsequent to the conclusion”—which is to say, it is a rational study that aims at using comparison and inference to patch up contradictions in the teachings of the scriptures, wherein apparent contradictions in the teachings are explained in depth so that a more profound doctrine that unites differences and resolves contradictions can be uncovered. Herein *nitārtha* sutras, or those that they do not speak of ultimate truths directly and explicitly but use expedient means to educate people, are all held to contain *neyārtha*, or teachings that directly speak of ultimate truth. Although not immediately apparent, the latter can be uncovered through following a correct procedure of explication.

For Ouyang, Mahāyāna teachings should not be strictly segregated, nor should there be a sharp distinction made between Mahāyāna and so-called Hināyāna. Looking at Hināyāna from the perspective of Mahāyāna, by unearthing and discerning the less apparent, deeper meaning conveyed by the latter, one can break out from Hināyāna’s

purported confinement to matters relating to self-understanding. On account of this, one can come to understand that there is no fundamental difference between teachings that are great (*mahā*) or small (*hinā*)—as the words of the Buddha, they are all truths that are equal and unitary. As such, the principles of Faxiang can be used to dissolve the foundation for the division and categorisation of the teachings upon which sectarian Buddhism stands. Strictly speaking, this principle of categorising the teachings is one of systematising the Buddhist teachings. According to Ouyang, however, the sectarian method of selectively categorising the teachings in order to establish the special merits of one's own school is basically a way of establishing and elevating one's school and showing contempt towards other schools. Navigating between special merits and the notion of equality makes it difficult to establish a synthesis, which in turn makes inter-sectarian competition for supremacy inevitable. The principle of dividing and classifying the teachings cannot resolve this problem at a fundamental level, which is to say, one's faith in one's school could in the end create problems in regard to one's faith in Buddhism more generally. As such, Ouyang's account of Faxiang completely undermined sectarian approaches to the study of Buddhism, and laid key foundations for constructing a thoroughly systematic study of Buddhist doctrine as a united whole. Although this systematic study of the doctrine fundamentally had no room for sectarianism, it did acknowledge that different schools formed due to divergent approaches to the Dharma that were primarily products of different historical conditions. Through the systematic study of these doctrines, it would be seen that the theories of these schools each had their own rationale and respective place.

As may be expected, Ouyang's criticism of sectarian Buddhism made Taixu uneasy. For Taixu, even if the eight schools had different merits and employed different expedient means, in the final analysis they were always equal. The key to understanding this in part lies in Taixu's interpretation of the meaning of the word "school". Taixu held that school is a self-verified realm—it is the realm of practices that will lead to the realisation of buddhahood, and an expedient designation for the term practice (*xing* 行). The difference between schools is that "each school chooses a certain point to explain the practices for observing whence all dharmas arise".⁶ Clearly, Taixu planned to maintain sectarian studies in Buddhism, and by bringing together the studies of different schools, establish a synthesised, accommodating and systematised study of the doctrine. The differences between Taixu's and Ouyang's approaches to sectarian Buddhism is further evidenced by their different views on the *Awakening of Faith* (*Dasheng qixin lun* 大乘起信論).

Doubts as to the authenticity of the *Awakening of Faith* were first raised by Japanese scholars. For Ouyang, however, this problem had special significance, and became a basis for critiquing sectarian Buddhism, and provided another dimension for establishing his account of systematic doctrines. Just as the theory that Faxiang and Weishi are different schools was the foundation for Ouyang's systematised teachings, the study of Weishi laid the foundations for his systematisation of doctrine. By developing a distinction between so-called old and new Weishi, Ouyang outlined what he felt to be the doctrinal background of the composition of the *Awakening of*

Faith. Based on the comprehensive account of the Four Conditions (*si yuan* 四緣, Sk.: *catvārah pratyayāh*) provided by so-called new Weishi, he differentiated the functions associated with each of the Four Conditions: causes as conditions (因緣 *hetu-pratyaya*), continuous sequence of sameness condition (等無間緣 *samanantara-pratyaya*), conditions enabling an object to be taken as a cause of consciousness (所緣緣 *ālambana-pratyaya*) and contributory factors as condition (增上緣 *adhipati-pratyayam*). This served as a foundation for establishing the theory that Suchness (*tathatā*) is inherent reality (*ti* 體) and that correct knowledge (*zhengzhi* 正智; *samyag-jñāna*;) is its function (*yong* 用), which he in turn used to attack the theoretical foundations of the *Awakening of Faith*'s account of the conditioned arising from Suchness. Here he used so-called new Weishi to criticise the theoretical framework of sectarian Buddhism by venerating Suchness qua "inherent reality" and identifying the path of Suchness that is supreme. Strictly speaking, "determining that it is the path which is supreme" became the ultimate criterion for categorising and interpreting the teachings, and it played a pivotal role in the development of Ouyang's systematic study of the Dharma. As such, it became a core concern throughout Ouyang's intellectual career. From this outline of the relationship between Suchness and correct knowledge in the *Awakening of Faith*, through to his identifying the "realm of the Buddha and practice of the bodhisattvas" as the highest principle in the "Essay on [the Buddha's] Teachings" (*Shi jiao pian* 釋教篇), and extending through to the theory, formed later in his life, of "the sole cardinal principle of *nirvāṇa* without remainder"⁷—each step deepened and clarified the systematised study of the teachings as the highest principle for ordering the classification of doctrine.

Because of this, Taixu's support for the *Awakening of Faith* was seen to be a defence of sectarian Buddhism, and became a site of contradiction within Taixu's systematic study of the doctrine. The most prominent contradiction involved the question of how one should discern the relationship between ultimate truth and expedient means. This existed in the backdrop of the problem of bringing together the notion of the teachings qua a product of history and other conditions, and their status as the repository of ultimate truth. In Ouyang's system, expedient means are not mere expedience—they can be a "genuine expedience" because ultimate truth pervades them. In this sense, expedient means is ultimate truth. In the case of expedient means that lead to ultimate truth, ultimate truth is being applied through expedient means. This "ultimate truth as expedient means" is the bodhisattva's capacity to properly discriminate all phenomena [as a foundation for teaching people of differing capacities]. Because of this, teachings formed on account of historical and other conditions all manifest higher truth—they are concrete expressions of higher truth. There does not need to be a systematisation in the manner proposed by Taixu, which promotes a more contrived synthesis between history and truth.

Through this coordination between the study of the Faxiang and the study of the Weishi, Ouyang developed his own distinctive systematic study of doctrine. This thoroughly undermined the doctrinal foundations upon which sectarian approaches to the study of Buddhism, and their teachings, were established. While Ouyang's

systematic study of doctrine reformed these foundations, it also harboured his plan for the reconstruction of Buddhism. As early as 1912, Ouyang, Li Zhenggang 李證剛 and others founded the Chinese Buddhist Council. This had two core guiding tenets—first, to help realise the autonomy of the clergy under the Republican system's separation of state and religion, and secondly, transform autonomous clerical authorities into a united clerical authority. In line with these two principles, and now possessing a clerical authority independent of political authorities, the Council had the authority to spread the teachings autonomously, supervise all Buddhist organisations, handle all disputes within the religion, and maintain order within the religion. Due of the status of Ouyang and his people as lay devotees, however, the principles formulated by this Council were seen as a means to wrest clerical authority from the *saṃgha* [community of monks], and as a result the Council was boycotted and vehemently criticised by monks, and soon faded from existence. Nonetheless, the tenets of this Council provided an impetus for Ouyang's subsequent efforts to construct a systematic study of Buddhist doctrine. In his *Bian fangbian yu sengzhi* 辨方便與僧制 (On Expedient Means and the Institution of the *Samgha*), and the "Shi shi pian" 釋師篇 (Chapter on [Buddha as] Teacher) of his *Zhina neixue yuan yuanxun shi* 支那內學院院訓釋 (Explanation of the Disciplinary Rules of the China Inner Learning Institute), he clearly identified being a teacher with being a buddha, and merged the system of the teachings in Buddhism with the system of teachers—this returned the Buddha to the status of teacher, and elevated the status of the system of teachers. On this basis, Ouyang also advanced the theory of the "*bodhimaṇḍala* [place of enlightenment] for the lay devotee"—it could be said that the construction of the Inner Learning Institute on the model of the Nālandā Monastery marked the establishment of such a *bodhimaṇḍala* for the lay devotee. As far as Ouyang was concerned, the *bodhimaṇḍala* of the lay devotee was not only a centre for maintaining and propagating the Dharma through Buddhist education—is was to also serve as a basis for elevating society more generally. As Ouyang explained in his "General Regulations for the Chinese Learning Institute": "[It] takes as its core tenet a system of expounding and propagating the Buddhist teachings, and cultivating people talented at benefitting the world, rather than people who merely benefit themselves". Because Ouyang limited the category of "monks" to those in the *śrāvaka-saṃgha* (i.e., monks who belong to Hināyāna), he directed the responsibility for "benefiting the world" to lay disciples, and as such transferred clerical power to lay organisations.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, Ouyang's plans were immediately criticised by Taixu. As the China Inner Learning Institute was being built, Taixu wrote, "*Zhina neixueyuan wenjian zhaiyi*" 支那內學院文件摘疑 (Doubts Concerning the China Inner Learning Institute Documents) in which he expressed dissatisfaction that the Inner Learning Institute restricted the category of monks to *śrāvaka* monks. A key theme in Taixu's reform plans involved thinking about transforming *śrāvaka* monks into bodhisattva monks; transforming monks who were concerned for their own salvation into monks who were concerned with the salvation of the world, and who took responsibility for protecting and propagating the teachings and elevating society. Because of this, Taixu strongly emphasised the key importance of the *saṃgha* in his reforms, insisting that monks should play the leading role in reforming Buddhism;

that through reformulating clericalism and ecclesiastic unity, Buddhism could make a greater contribution to society, the country and the world. Yet against the backdrop of these disputes were different understandings of modern society, and these different understandings themselves formed the backdrop of these two figures' different understandings in regards to Buddhism's social responsibilities and functions. Taixu and Ouyang's Buddhist modernisation and reform plans are still, in this sense, worth considering.

Having analysed and compared the Buddhist modernisation reforms and doctrinal systematisations of Taixu and Ouyang Jingwu, we may begin to look deeper into the dialogues between the Chinese reformers and Japanese delegates, which I discussed at the beginning of this article. We have seen that the modernising reforms of Chinese Buddhism were directed towards the ideals of constructing an inclusive Buddhism, and bringing together different traditions into a united Buddhist organisation. Studies on the systematisation of the entire Buddhist teachings corresponded with this aim. A systematised study of Buddhist doctrine based on the principle of unifying the Buddhist teachings in their entirety entails both a critique and reconstruction of sectarian approaches to the studies of the Dharma. This had its basis in the clash of ideas between Ouyang Jingwu and Japanese scholars with strong sectarian affiliations. This difficulty to achieve an accord in the dialogue underscores the necessarily critical reflection that Chinese reformers adopted in regards to the Japanese system of differentiated schools being self-administering. From the perspective of the Chinese reformers, although there was much to learn from the Japanese experience, learning to transcend sectarian divisions and establish a united religious group or church was a necessity for the modernisation and development of Buddhism in China. ¶

[Translated by Corey Bell]

- 1 Translator's note: *Vijñaptimātra* (Ch. *weishi* 唯識) is the doctrine of "nothing but consciousness" or the idealist doctrine that no phenomena exist apart from mind, and is a key tenet of the Yogācāra school.
- 2 These passages are all taken from the third volume of the Institute's journal, *Neixue* 內學 (Inner Learning).
- 3 Taixu, "Wo de fojiao gaijin yundong lüeshi" 我的佛教改進運動略史 (A Summary History of My Movement to Improve Buddhism), *Taixu wenji* 太虛文集 (The Collected Writings of Taixu) (Taipei: Taiwan wenshu, 1987), p. 16.
- 4 Taixu, "Zhong Ri fofa zhi yidian" 中日佛法之異點 (Differences between Buddhist Teachings in China and Japan), in *Taixu fashi quanshu* 太虛法師全書 (Complete Works of Venerable Taixu), fascicle 26, (Beijing: Zongjiao wenhua chubanshe, 2004), p. 148.
- 5 Taixu, "Zhong Ri fofa zhi yidian", p. 148.
- 6 Taixu, "Wo zeyang panshe yiqie fofa" 我怎样判摄一切佛法 (How I Categorise All the Buddhist Teachings), in *Taixu wenji*, p. 140.
- 7 Ouyang Jingwu, "Da Chen Zhenru shu" 答陳真如書 (Letter in Reply to Chen Zhenru), in *Neixue zazhu* 內學雜著 (Assorted Writings on Inner Learning), in *Ouyang Jingwu nei waixue* 歐陽竟無內外學 (Ouyang Jingwu's Writings on Inner and Outer Learning) (Nanjing: Jinling kejing chu, 1942).



From Cosmology to Humanity: A Perspective from the Recovered Bamboo Manuscripts in China

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When intellectual historian Wing-tsit Chan used “humanism” to characterise the entire history of Chinese philosophy, he described how the Zhou (1111–249 BC) people had radically transformed their belief by professing the unity of man and Heaven, laying the foundation of Chinese culture that centred on man and society. The power of “Heaven” and the “Mandate of Heaven” were supplanted by the belief that human virtue and effort (as embodied in the Son of Heaven) were the only powers that maintained the decree of Heaven.¹

In the last four decades, the discovery of previously unknown philosophical texts dating to the fourth century BCE and the Han 漢 dynasty (202 BCE–220 CE) has revolutionised the study of Chinese culture and history, and has opened up a new channel of discussion of ancient Chinese philosophy. Archaeological finds of grave goods in the form of manuscripts that have not been subjected to interpretation and reinterpretation provide new materials for rediscovering this particular period of Chinese history and intellectual development. I will focus my study on two sets of Warring States period (453–221 BCE) texts, namely, the Guodian bamboo manuscripts (郭店簡) disinterred in 1993 in Hubei province, China, and the Shangbo jian (上博簡), a collection of bamboo texts written in a similar script bought by the Shanghai Museum in 1994 from an antique dealer in Hong Kong. The Shangbo jian is about the same vintage and probably from the same area as the Guodian corpus. The importance of these discoveries cannot be underestimated: many of the texts are without counterparts in the transmitted tradition, affording us fresh insights into the development of Chinese cosmological thinking in the period between the death of Confucius (551–479 BCE) and the writings of Mencius (c. 372–289 BCE).

As part of my ongoing research into Chinese philosophy based on the recovered Guodian and Shangbo bamboo manuscripts this paper provides a brief survey of how

Chinese cosmology as presented in these ancient texts is inclusive and synthetic; and that it is a philosophy which integrates different facets of cosmological thought. My study attempts to demonstrate that the dynamic discourses in these bamboo texts during the formative period of Chinese intellectual history c.300 BCE reveal a more fluid, dynamic and hybrid intellectual field than has hitherto been recognised. Instead of conducting in-depth analyses of individual texts, the aim of this paper is to provide a summary of what I have found so far on the subjects, particularly on the concept of cosmology and the correspondence between the cosmos and humanity in the Warring States period.²

To the ancient Chinese philosophers the conceptualisation of the cosmic order is to develop an understanding of its implications for the human realm—the synergy of political, religious and ethical dimensions. Rosemont aptly reminds us that the major Chinese philosophers of this period were social and moral thinkers, not metaphysicians; the early texts from mid-Shang 商 (c. 1500 BCE) to early Han have invariably shared themes of early Chinese cosmology that are not about the structure of the universe in the modern sense, but rather present a basic framework concerning the core question of how to develop human life (the how) by understanding the cosmic way, that is, the way of Heaven (the what). I hope the general discussion in this paper will modify and challenge our existing views of Chinese cosmology and philosophy as unchanging and homogenous, and no different from what is found in the treaties of the received tradition. As part of the historical development, the cosmic models presented in the early texts have never been a singular and stagnant one. This is very much the case in the Guodian and Shangbo texts, which present an organic, synchronous worldview, the complexity and dynamism of which are upheld by various principles (ways) expressed in rich vocabularies such as centrality, oneness, *yinyang* 陰陽 and *wuxing* 五行. More importantly, the single overriding concern that pervades the texts is the attempt to define the essential conditions for an ideal socio-political order: the understanding of Nature's features and patterns is about seeking to know their philosophical implications for the human world and the general principles of human behavior and polity.

I have proposed that the concept of *tian* 天 (Heaven) as depicted in the various Guodian manuscripts can be evaluated at three interrelated levels: (1) it is the source of the natural order (the cosmic pattern) and is responsible for the birth of the multitude of things, including the principle of development and the assigning of values to all things; (2) it symbolises normative moral principles in the human realm (the socio-ethical); and (3) it ordains individual achievement (the personal). In human society, the *junzi* 君子 (gentleman) or *Shengren* 聖人 (sage) are intermediaries between Heaven and humans; they provide teachings and act as moral exemplars.³

In the Guodian texts *tian* has been depicted as the origin of things and the source from which related principles and regularities are derived. *Tian* in this context resembles Nature and the natural order. In the *Yucong* 語叢 1 and *Yucong* 3 of the Guodian corpus, *tian* is depicted in relation to the natural order; it is where the myriads of phenomena receive the fundamental principle of existence, namely, transformation

and development. Significantly, the notions *ming* 命, *wu* 物, *ming* 名, *xing* 形, *xu* 序, and *rong* 容 in the text refer to specific prescriptions, duties and allotments, objects, names, forms, orderly sequence and appearances and, by extension, functionalities, courses and manifestations, transformation and related characteristics of various things and happenings in the natural world. The whole universe is an ordered phenomenon of things of different natures but one that renders classification possible. The concepts of *ming* and so forth point to the awareness of the prescribed order, principle, and assigned functions and actual correspondences among all things. Moreover, the notion of *li* 理 (principle) as “reasoning principles/patterns” and “managing things in compliance with the essence of principles” is also introduced: with *tian* forming the model and principles, all things will develop or are put into their patterns and regularities. In other words, *tian* is not only the source or cause of existence of all things and phenomena; it also prescribes the patterns, principles, and reasoning to be embodied in all things in the process of their formation. In brief, inherent in everything produced by *tian* are specific principles about its coming into being (*sheng* 生) and its becoming (*cheng* 成).

The *Yucong* 1 further explains how humanity is endowed with certain distinctive features with their assigned functionalities. The inborn nature of human beings, in particular the derivative abilities to sense, feel, think, correspond, interact, and engage, makes social transformation or cultural construction possible. The *Xing zi ming chu* (性自命出) contained in the Guodian corpus states that the various emotional capacities and responses to external stimuli are *qi* 氣 and are part of human nature.⁴

The *Xing zi ming chu* discusses in detail the human ability to experience musical performances as the stages of mental activity that correspond to physiological responses and physical movements. The function of music and rituals are significant because they elicit sincere moral emotions by directing our intention to moral engagement, while satisfying our sensual needs, which are an integral part of our *xing*. In this way, the human spirit or emotions, which define humanity’s distinctive nature, are drawn out by external situations. Moral cultivation is a process of integrating human nature (as endowed by Heaven) and cultural practice initiated by the sages.

Indeed, by illustrating that the natures of various things are derived from Heaven, the texts point to a possible channel leading to the integration of the Way of humanity and the Way of Heaven, and the correspondence of the former to the latter. This is condensed in the one sentence, “to examine closely the Way of Heaven so as to transform the character of the people” (*cha tiandao yi hua minqi* 察天道以化民氣). All things arise from one source: Heaven. How are we to understand the way in which things, human beings, in particular, should be properly placed in the totality of things that arise from this source? The short answer, underlined by this passage, is to understand the Way of Heaven in order to manifest the Way of humanity and their interconnection. Here, the purpose of observing the Way of Heaven relates to knowing the functions and causations expressed in the great transformation (*hua* 化), the process by which all things come into being and existence, and, in this particular context, call into being the people’s moral sense endowed by Heaven. For

a *junzi*, to realise and understand the distinctive moral features endowed by Heaven is ultimately to transform people's character and be imbued with morality through the learning of the old tradition and classics (i.e. the *Rites*, the *Documents*, the *Poetry*, the *Changes*, and the *Spring and Autumn Annals*). The *Yucong 1* text suggests that the unique cultural value of this process lies in its function of bringing together the Way of Heaven and the Way of humanity, past and present. This means that the cultural pattern created by human beings should accord with their inborn nature as endowed by Heaven. To transform and develop the people's moral character is to harmonise human nature (*xing/shenghu* 性/生乎) with external factors such as the cultural practices of music and rituals. In this regard, the Guodian corpus discusses *qi* and *qing* (情 emotions), both of which are free flowing in nature and essential to the life process, as part of human *xing*. The features and capacities derived from human *xing* produce morally congenial sensual feelings and spirit. They are morally congenial because they are spontaneous emotional tendencies conducive to moral development, waiting to be evoked by external stimuli. Related to this is the unique characteristic of rituals, which grow out of these sensual and emotional human needs. Rituals and music, in turn, bring out human sentiments and cultivate moral feelings.⁵

The *Yucong 2* suggests that the uniqueness of human nature lies in the rational-moral faculty of self-consciousness in manifesting the moral-humane potential within. Their "bestowal" by Heaven is not the end result of functionalities, but what is required of individuals to accomplish the task of becoming a complete human being. Therefore, the seemingly naturalist perspective of *tian* has moral implications: people should and can maximise their moral potentialities as decreed by *tian* by steadfastly adhering to moral principles. More significantly, those who find pleasure in acquiring and practising virtue make possible ease, self-mastery, and joy in leading a morally good life. Similar to the *Yucong*, the Guodian text *Wuxing* 五行 (Five Conducts) confirms the function of the sensual organs as well as the emotional responsiveness and intellectual capability of the heart-mind in the process of moral cultivation. The *Wuxing* further stipulates that one who harmonises (*he* 和) and assimilates/conforms to (*tong* 同) sensuality with the affective and cognitive responses (of the heart-mind) in moral practice will gain the greatest joy and easiness.

By collocating *ming* 命 with *tian* in the above contexts, we can infer from the texts that *tian* is responsible for the production and assignment of the myriads of things, and that *ming* refers to the specific features and functionalities, including *xing*, the inborn nature and principle of development to full completion, that *tian* imposes on things. To accomplish this human goal of cultivation, the sages are believed to have initiated the process of regulating human relations by setting cultural practices through integrating the constant principle of *tian*.

In the Guodian texts, *tian* is also considered to be the source of the constant and normative moral and ethical standards that serve as the fundamental principle of human relations and social order. The terms "the constant principles of Heaven" (*tianchang* 天常), or "the great regularities" (*dachang* 大常), "Heavenly virtues" (*tiande* 天德) and "the Way of Heaven" (*tiandao* 天道) or "the great way" (*dadao* 大道) are discussed analogously in terms of moral and ethical principles. In other words,

socio-ethical and moral standards are considered to be rules decreed by *tian* and are what people should constantly observe as correspondence to Heaven. Adherence to constant principles is associated with regulating and harmonising human relationships (*li renlun* 理人倫 or *zhi renlun* 治人倫). Here our earlier discussion of *li* 理, which means “reasoning principles/patterns” and “managing things in compliance with their essence”, is relevant: regulating and harmonising human relationships should be seen as a necessary process in the management of human order through observing inherent principles of reasoning and of human nature; sagehood or the virtue of a *junzi* is concerned with observing these principles and ultimately transforming the people or making them moral, in which case it is referred to as *tiande* in the *Chengzhi wenzhi* 成之聞之 of the Guodian corpus.

It is further stated in *Chengzhi wenzhi* that the basic principles governing human relations are not simply something imposed from without but rather are a reinforcement of an existing natural order conferred by *tian*. Such an inherent order, defined by the distinctions between things, encompasses the natural relationships between one being and another. Accordingly, in the human realm, human relationships are identified with and should correspond with proper names, *ming* 名. Recognising and adhering to the distinctiveness of these relationships is crucial not only for social stability but also for the natural order and principle as intended by Heaven. It is said that the *junzi* plays a role in reinforcing the normative ethical principle symbolised in the *tianchang* or *tiande*, whereas the petty person (*xiaoren* 小人) violates this principle. Through regulating and educating the people, the sage is fulfilling the task of serving Heaven and earth. At various places, the Guodian texts state the important role of the ruler as moral leader of the people, and in *Tang Yu zhi dao* 唐虞之道 there is a metaphorical expression comparing the relationship between the sage and the people to the relationship between the sun and all things.

If we take Heaven as the source of all things—their nature, assigned functionality, and related reasoning and principles—then the unity of humanity and Heaven implies that human beings are to comply with their nature and principles of growth and development. As part of the natural world, human beings are not set apart from it, and so, should not “disrupt” (*luan* 亂) or “go against” (*ni* 逆) it. Rather, humanity is an integral part of nature and is of ultimate importance (*gui* 貴) because of humanity’s inborn and developing capacity to know and to empathise with the Way and principle of Heaven, and to comply with it. To this end, human beings are to fully understand human nature as derived from Heaven, to make their name correspond with their human characteristics, distinct from other species and as members of human society. Cultural practices based on ritual and music, as envisaged by the sages, are believed to be the most effective means of affirming this harmonious relationship between humanity and Heaven, thus ensuring that proper names, order, position, and assigned duties (*ming* 命) all correspond fully. This includes the proper ordering of human relations and the roles and positions of individuals in society.

Lastly the concept of *tian* as a determinant of individual experience of a specific incident is put forward in the Guodian text *Solitude and Advancement Depends on*

Timeliness (*Qionгда yi shi* 窮達以時). This text gives extensive examples of historical figures and legendary heroes to illustrate the unpredictability of both auspicious and calamitous events; thus, individual fortunes, personal opportunities, and catastrophes are determined by *tian*. In those examples, coincidences are the cause of or the explanation for an individual's experience. The text, in fact, discusses these issues in terms of "timeliness/opportunity" (*shi* 時), "the trends of the age" (*shi* 世), and "encounters" (*yu* 遇), exemplifying how the virtuous and the talented will be recognised and employed.

Without timely recognition, even the most talented will not be promoted or honoured with an official position in which they can serve or benefit the people. The personal qualities of the figures in the examples above remained the same, yet their lives changed frequently simply because of circumstances. The expression *yu bu yu tian ye* 遇不遇, 天也 declares that *tian* ordains the sequence of events and the orbit of an individual's life, and that these are subject to interactions between circumstances and a multitude of other things. Similarly the *Tang Yu zhi dao* 唐虞之道 asserts that both personal qualities and timely recognition are required in order to become successful.⁶

An important contribution of the Guodian texts to the concept of "knowing *ming* 命" is that, from the concepts *shi* 時, *shi* 世, and *yu* 遇, the author(s) construed a set of concrete factors concerning the causes, context, and consequences of events related to one's *ming*. With these, one is able to see what is under our control and what is not. In our earlier discussion of the moral principles that one should constantly adhere to, *ming* refers to one's prescribed roles, duties, and related missions to be undertaken in a swirling world of change. Nevertheless, as an individual, to know one's *ming* is not a submissive attitude of acceptance that everything is predetermined and inevitable. Rather, it is an awareness of one's duty and how one should maintain uprightness and ultimate goodness at different points of one's life including when confronting adverse circumstances. This virtue of the *junzi* is thus compared to the fragrance of angelica growing in the valley: the original qualities of the *junzi* should and will always be cherished.

I have so far outlined the concept of *tian* in the Guodian manuscripts. The Shangbo corpus on the other hand contains individual texts that entail the synthesis of political theory and cosmology. The *Fanwu liuxing* 凡物流形 (All Things Are Flowing in Form) and the *Hengxian* 恒先 are two of these examples. Without any received counterparts in the textual tradition, the primary concern of both texts is to establish a unified and well-regulated state with emphasis on the ruler's understanding and imitation of the heavenly pattern. The texts advocate the recognition of the fundamental principles of *yi* 一 (one, oneness) and *heng* 恒 (constancy) as preconditions for governing and unifying a state.

Fanwu liuxing 凡物流形 and the *Hengxian* 恒先 reflect on, discuss and develop the key themes of cosmology and how the understanding of the cosmic order and its manifestations should be translated into proper guidelines and principles for managing the human world—concepts that emerged from intellectual discourses

during the Warring States period. Cosmological discussion during this period was not based on a singular or stagnant model, but rather was a dynamic discourse in which various ideas and concepts of rulership and statecraft are embedded, reflecting the socio-political reality and the concerns of early Chinese philosophers and political players. These texts reflect the synthesis of the ancient schools of Chinese philosophy, integrating a progressive Confucian treatise of self-cultivation with a fundamentally Daoist view of cosmology.

The *Fanwu liuxing* presents a cosmic process characterised by flowing changes and cyclical reversals; it is only with some kind of underlying force that cosmic formation and transformation is possible. Complying with the cosmic pattern and principle, the ruler should initiate the process of bringing all into completion—*yi*—, the “one”. The text provides a structured message about leadership and related political schema centred on the concept of *yi* as the source and origin of all and as the realisation of all things unified. It is a multi-dimensional term, not only explaining the formation and solidarity of the influx in the cosmic process at the macro level, but also representing the pervasive principle in the socio-political realm that would qualify the ruler to be the one. In sum, as the most basic and the first numeral, *yi* is a holistic approach a ruler should seek in every aspect of political activity. It begins with himself through introspection and wholeheartedness, bringing unity and harmony to the different levels of the socio-political structure until the unification of the empire is realised. In this sense the *Fanwu liuxing* showcases how philosophical concepts and ideological principles in ancient China are closely related to statecraft, polity and traditional Chinese political culture in particular.

The text of the *Hengxian* can be seen as another attempt by ancient Chinese philosophers to elucidate the relationship between cosmic patterns and the human realm, in particular the cosmic process of self-generation and regeneration, and the philosophical implications of this cosmic process. The text is about generation and activation rather than non-existence and non-action as has sometimes been argued. In this context, *heng* which appears seven times throughout the text, should be conceived as an inherent quality that contributes to the cosmic process of self-generation and transformation. Written with rulers and elite scholars as the intended readers, *heng* and other related concepts are the practice and principle that the ruler should follow in the process of establishing and building a socio-political system in the Warring States period. The text illustrates the cosmic process from “non-existence” to “generation”, from “creation” to “reversion”, and from “reversion” to “constancy” that enables all things to be ever-operative and ever-lasting. The same process applies to the human realm in which all social and political institutions were created, established and enforced through language, practice and repetition.

Hengxian emphasises that “oneness” and “reversion” are the principles of evolution that support the cosmic continuum—the Way of Heaven. The universe is in constant movement and reversion. Its components are differentiated and yet they return naturally and spontaneously to the interconnected whole and unity. Although differentiation and boundaries are drawn, they are a part of the cosmic continuum. Developing from a unitary origin into a complex whole, the universe has existed

and will exist as One with the many components of its connected parts. The cosmic intelligence or the course of Heaven also dictates the overall pattern of history and the basic ground rules of causation. If multiplicities of things are part of the natural cosmogonic process, returning to One is also a natural call from the developmental cycle. Whereas the *Laozi* and other Daoist texts attach importance to emptiness and spontaneity, the *Hengxian* emphasises human effort in the interplay of conscious action and natural response.

After asserting that affairs and matters come into existence through “activation” (*zuo*), the text points out that establishing names through clear communication does not just concern the initial act of naming; it also concerns the ongoing practice (*xi* 習) of rectifying people to follow the correct names. The *Hengxian* is presenting a vision of building an ordered state unified by ritual practice, proper language and many other institutional structures maintained through forms of ritual, music, language and state affairs.

What concerns the author of *Hengxian* is to make sure that human affairs and human order are not be abandoned but have lasting effectiveness. The *Hengxian* makes four claims about the process of establishing the socio-political system, which should be an emulation of the cosmic pattern: first, all the setting up and productions of the system will revert, regenerate and reproduce (*fu* 復); all actions will attain *heng* (constancy) with none out of place; with constancy all activities will achieve the intended effect, and lastly, the actualisation of names will not be discarded and abandoned (*bufei* 不廢) but will sustain and be long lasting.

Conclusion

The *Yucong*, *Chengzhi wenzhi*, *Tang Yu zhi dao*, *Xing zi ming chu* and *Qiong da yi shi* of the Guodian corpus and the *Hengxian* and *Fanwu liuxing* texts in the Shangbo corpus showcase the development of Chinese philosophy in the Warring States period. They emphasise that by following the cosmic order a ruler will be able to realise the vision of unified power founded on legitimate principles of heavenly pattern discerned in the cosmic movements and natural order. These manuscripts affirm the intellectual development of Chinese philosophy in the Warring States period, with a realisation and emphasis on the human role in creating social order. The human role is not one that is independent of or denounces the cosmic order but is one in compliance with the natural law and pattern, seeking legitimacy from the rich and dynamic concept of *tian*. ¶

1 Wing-tsit Chan, *A Sourcebook of Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969), pp. 4–8.

2 Excavated texts cited in this study can be found in the following collections: *Shanghai Bowu guan cang Zhanguo Chu zhushu* (1) 上海博物館藏戰國楚竹書 (一) (Shanghai Museum Collection of Chu Bamboo Manuscripts of the Warring States Period [1]), ed. by Ma Chengyuan 馬承源 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe 2001); and *Shanghai Bowuguan cang Zhanguo Chu zhushu* (7) 上海博物館藏戰國楚竹書 (七) (Shanghai Museum collection

of Chu bamboo manuscripts of the Warring States Period [7]), ed. by Ma Chengyuan (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2008).

- 3 For details see Shirley Chan, "Cosmology, Society, and Humanity: *Tian* in the Guodian Texts (Part II)", *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 39 no.1 (2012), 106–20; Shirley Chan, "Cosmology, Society and Humanity: *Tian* in the Guodian Texts (Part I)", *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, Supplement to vol. 38, Supplement Issue: Confucian Philosophy: Transformations and Innovations (2011), 64–77.
- 4 "The *qi* of happiness, anger, sadness, and grief is (called) none other than nature. When it [that is, *qi*] appears on the outside, it is because (external) things have laid hold of it. Human nature derives from the mandate; the mandate descends from Heaven. The *dao* begins in *qing* [natural disposition]; *qing* is derived from *xing* [human nature]." 喜怒哀悲之氣，性也。及其見於外，則物取之也。性自命出，命從天降。道始於情，情生於性。
- 5 This is spelt out in *Yucong* 2: "*Qing* (dispositions) derive from *xing* (human nature); rituals (*li*) derive from *qing* (dispositions); awe derives from reverence; the sense of shame derives from awe ... love derives from *xing*; intimacy derives from love; loyalty derives from intimacy". (情生於性，禮生於情，1嚴生於禮，敬生於嚴，2望生於敬，恥生於望，3...愛生於性，親生於愛，8忠生於親。
- 6 "In ancient times Yao was born to be the son of Heaven and possess the empire. By making himself a sage he met his *ming*; by being (a man of) humanity he was the right person at the right time... In ancient times, Shun was not disconcerted by living in a hut; he ascended as the son of Heaven yet did not become conceited. Living in a hut and not being disconcerted is to know one's *ming*; ascending as the son of Heaven and yet not being conceited is avoiding indulgence." (古者堯生為天子而有天下，聖以遇命，仁以逢時，14... 夫古者15舜居於草茅之中而不憂，升為天子而不驕。居草茅之中而不憂，知命16也；升為天子而不驕，不流也 ... 17).



Efficient Governance through Synthetic Transformation

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China is currently confronted with many challenges due to the social changes and economic boom brought forth by the reforms launched over three decades ago. In order to tackle these challenges, it is highly necessary to develop and apply a form of efficient governance (*xiaozhi*) in accord with the current politico-cultural setting. The idea of efficient governance is largely drawn from two leading sources: one is the ideal of humane governance (*renzheng*) in Confucian political thought, and the other is the notion of good governance (*shanzhi*) in Western political philosophy. Practically, the ideal of humane governance mainly consists in the demand for wise leadership that is often attributed to worthy and capable practitioners (*xianming* or *xianneng*)—practitioners who are held to be morally decent and politically wise when engaged in governmental operations or conducting state affairs. The notion of good governance depends principally on such key values as rule of law, social justice and equity, liberty and responsibility, transparency and democracy, among others.

Under such circumstances, the form of efficient governance is also associated with a notion that draws on pragmatic reason (*shiyong lixing*) qua the theoretical ground of Confucian pragmatism, and with a mode of democracy suitable to the Chinese heritage and *status quo*. As such, this notion bears such fundamental features as ethicalness, usefulness, affective-cum-rational synthesis, historical awareness, and situational adaptability, whereas the mode of democracy is based on three major principles relating to people's expectations (*min xin*), people-oriented administration (*min ben*), and people's sense of sharing (*min xiang*) according to the conventional perception of what democracy ought to be among the general public of China.

It should be noted that the chief determinants of humane governance are derived from the traditional legacy of China while their counterparts of good governance are derived from the modern mentality of the West. In a cultural sense, the former

are endogenous and the latter exogenous. Hence there arises a desirable rediscovery and rejuvenation of the two sources from a transcultural perspective. This factually calls for a synthetic transformation in the light of incorporating the most working components from both sources. However, a transformation of this kind in present-day China is assumedly made feasible by virtue of three types of practice relating to institutional reform, ideological adjustment and democracy education. This is because any single-minded rehearsal of either humane governance or good governance can hardly be fruitful or functional in the glocalising context of political culture in China today. Rather, it is apt to be misdirected towards the beaten track of negative conformism one way or another.

Efficient Governance as a Critical Necessity

The history of China has witnessed ups and downs cyclically, principally owing to social, political or natural disturbances or influences. Ever since the Opium Wars in the 1840s, China had suffered a drastic decline caused by either foreign invasions or domestic conflicts. It is not until 1949 that the New China announced it had regained sovereignty and independence from a semi-colonial and semi-feudal state of being. Successive radical revolutions and ideological movements, however, did more harm than good for China, inhibiting a balanced revitalisation of Chinese society. Thanks to the reform and open-door policy exercised over the past three decades or so, a promising renaissance of a well-off China has eventually emerged, facilitated by peaceful and rapid development in all spheres of the society.

This renaissance is signaled by the catchphrase of “the Chinese dream”, which has been widely publicised in the domestic media quite recently. By and large, so far it has spurred realistic, idealistic and even skeptical responses. In my view, the renaissance is certainly an arduous process rather than an instant fulfillment or cure-all remedy, for behind it there are certain challenges, one of which is exemplified in the political arena. That is, social management is becoming more and more difficult as a consequence of economic boom and the nature of modern industry in the context of globalisation. For instance, there are increasingly more opportunities accessible to those who want to have a better education and profession in these times of the knowledge-based economy. Meanwhile, there are increasingly more alternatives for those who expect to be better informed in the computerised era and to be more humanely treated as individual citizens. In addition, there are increasingly more people across the country who can secure sufficient means to move from one place to another for long-term employment or permanent residence. All this ends up in a large mobile population of citizens who are relatively better-educated, better-skilled, better-informed, and naturally have keen aspiration to hanker after a greater share of economic benefits, political participation, social dignity, cultural facilities, educational options, civil as well as human rights and so forth. This being true, social management now is under heavy pressure to undergo a profound change in order to gratify the growing demands from all walks of life in China.

In addition, across the country there is sharp criticism of interest groups that have taken advantage of their executive power, and “hijacked” some of the state-owned

enterprises. They are regarded as tycoons in that they are not merely corrupt, super-rich and living an extravagant life, but also occupy positions enabling them to monopolise national properties, abuse the common good, and sabotage the social order, leading to a smoldering fire of revolt among the general public. According to observations by some Chinese academics, this interest group stands for a group of bigwigs. Their emergence started in the 1990s when the reform branched off the main path of the common good, and their growth has developed further over the past two decades or so due to the “magic power” of the so-called market economy under their control and the abuse of public welfare by corrupt officials. This group has tried every means to establish hidden schemes to secure their gains. On the one hand, they are working to promote pseudo reform for their own benefit, and on the other, they place the maintenance of social stability (*weihu shehui wending*) above any attempt to introduce true reform to enhance public welfare. Their ambitions have driven them to risk using unnecessary force or violence to suppress criticisms from the general public and intellectuals in particular. Scheming to have their privileges institutionally secured, increasingly these bigwigs or tycoons have been able to influence and disrupt policy-making and governmental operations. All this threatens to push the progressive reform into either a standstill or onto a wrong track, thus ridding the government of its efficiency and credibility, and depriving the majority of sharing in the benefits of the economic bonus procured by the reform. And worse still, this situation tends to nurture maladministration or misrule, which in turn fosters at least six grave problems: the diminution of reform vitality, the widening gap between the rich and the poor, the retrogression of the rule of law, the split-up of the society as a whole, the high crime rate, and the disastrous pollution of the eco-environment. In a word, these problems are crises that may plunge the process of reform into jeopardy.

Heightened awareness of these issues as well as the demands of the general public have helped the new leadership make up its mind to campaign for a comprehensive reform at the present stage, for it has no time to wait until the scheme of the bigwigs becomes a consolidated and institutionalised system. Fortunately, the blueprint for China’s reform is in principle designed from top-down rather than bottom-up, and it will thus enable the central government to shoulder its responsibility and take up relevant measures to resolve all these problems. Otherwise the public credibility and authority of the government itself will be weakened. The new leaders are determined to start a second Long March by launching a comprehensive plan to deepen the reform in all public sectors, and at the same time attempt to reinforce the market economy by removing restrictions on private enterprises. The leadership is acutely aware of the difficulties and obstacles it is confronted with. And at the same time, it is sensitive to what the entire society of China expects from practical performance rather than political catchphrases that are often conceived as a sort of lip service by the general public. In summary, it is high time for the government to make a breakthrough within their first five-year term of office, for any pretentious rehearsal or empty promise will lead the majority of the Chinese people to sheer disappointment and even irreversible skepticism.

In response to the foregoing situation and concern, some tough measures have been taken and exercised by the new leadership ever since late 2013 to crack down on the corrupted and to constrain the privileged. Fortunately, these measures are working effectively so far and winning extensive support from the general public. Yet, what has been achieved is far from enough, and often compared to the first step of the Long March, for the biggest challenges are still there to be handled in the domains of social justice, equity, transparency, stability, power distribution, political participation, civil rights, and environmental pollution versus economic development, among many others.

Under such circumstances, it is necessary to explore the possibility of developing a mode of governance that is meant to enhance social management, and dissolve or alleviate potential issues and dangers in China. This requires a deepened reform of inadequate governance brought about by over-centralised authority, and encourages the construction of efficient governance with thoughtful humaneness or human-heartedness. This efficient governance finds its relevance not merely in the Confucian ideal of humane governance as part of traditional Chinese humanism, but also in the current schema of good governance as part of Western political philosophy. Moreover, it remains open to some other determinants to be formulated subsequently.

The Rationale of Efficient Governance

First of all, there arises a question about the rationale of efficient governance. Tentatively speaking, the rationale is connected with at least four main sources, namely, the key aspects of humane governance in China's Confucian heritage, Chinese pragmatism, the elementary conditions for good governance drawn from Western political philosophy, and the Chinese mode of democracy in a mixed institution.

The Key Aspects of Humane Governance

The ideal of humane governance stems from the traditional preoccupation with *renzheng*. It can be examined from the perspectives of both Confucian humanism and Chinese pragmatism. According to the humanistic standpoint, the exercise of humane governance is largely dependent upon at least five primary factors: the virtue of humaneness as loving people (*ren ai de xing*), self-disciplined personality of the ruler (*zheng ji ren ge*), integrative use of laws and rites (*xing li bing yong*), distinction between the good and bad practices (*hao huai fen ming*), and worthy and wise leadership (*xian ming ling dao*).

Briefly and respectively, the virtue of humaneness as loving people is preconditioned by two dimensions, one is intended to overcome the self or overcome egoist desires in order to cultivate a kind of virtue approximate to self-control or temperance, and the other is intended to restore the observance of rites for their social and moral function.

The self-disciplined personality of the ruler implies the important role model that the ruler provides for others, through the radiating impact he has upon all his

subordinates in particular and the populace in general. In many cases when the ruler happens to be politically and morally correct, he produces something more positive and constructive by virtue of effective government and helpful subordinates. Otherwise, he falls into a difficult situation and becomes inadequate either to do things right or to do right things. He is then prone to act in a way that would open up a bypath for misguided subordinates to run along. Consequently, wrong actions ensue and wrong-doers multiply.

As regards the integrative use of laws and rites in state administration, it aims to achieve more advantages for long-term social stability under favorable conditions, for the rule by law works through punishment as it makes people afraid to do what is against the law. It relies upon the sense of fear imposed from without such that it may prevent people from doing wrong. The rule by rites is morality-based and provides a kind of complementary counterpart, thus helping people distinguish between what is right and what is wrong, and guiding them to foster a sense of shame against wrong doings.

Being able clearly to distinguish between the good and the bad, it concerns actual performance in politics. Specifically, there is an expectation that the leader will “honor the five excellent practices and banish the four bad ones”, as is emphasised by Confucius.¹ By means of such capability mingled with humaneness, one who exercises government will be able to win willing support from the people as he is observant enough not merely to tell between the good and bad practices, but to make the right choice among discrepant and confusing alternatives.

After all, humane governance would be unable to do what it should do without worthy and wise leadership. Such leadership is characterised by persons of outstanding talent and virtue. In political practice, this leadership can conduct state affairs properly and effectively. And in everyday life, it observes what is morally decent and sets a good example for others to follow. More intriguingly, Xunzi describes the essential features of worthy and wise leadership in the following figurative language, quoted at some length:

If the horses are frightened of the carriage, the best thing to do is to quiet them; if the common people are frightened of the government, the best thing to do is to treat them humanely or kindly. Select men who are worthy and good for government office, promote those who are kind and respectful, encourage filial piety and brotherly affection, look after orphans and widows and assist the poor, and then the common people will feel safe, then the ruler may occupy his post in safety. This is what the old text means when it says, “The ruler is the boat and the common people are the water. It is the water that bears the boat up, and the water that capsizes it.” Therefore, if the ruler desires safety, the best thing for him to do is to govern fairly and love the people. If he desires glory, the best thing for him to do is to honor ritual and treat men of breeding with respect. If he desires to win fame and merit, the best thing for him to do is to promote the worthy and employ men of ability. These are the three great obligations of the ruler. If he meets these three, then

all other obligations will likewise be met; if he does not meet these three, then, although he manages to meet his other obligations, it will scarcely be of any benefit to him. Confucius has said, “If he meets both his major and minor obligations correctly, he is a superior ruler. If he meets his major obligations but is inconsistent in meeting his minor obligations, he is a mediocre ruler. If he fails to meet his major obligations, though he may meet his minor ones correctly enough, I do not care to see any more of him.”²

This metaphorical description turns out to be an impressive summary of what humane governance ought to do. It engages in the kind treatment of the common people, the right employment of the worthy officials, the good care-taking of the vulnerable, the observance of the moral norms of human relations, and above all, the fair governing of state affairs. With regard to present-day circumstances, the whole thesis strikes us as significant and thought provoking as it bears much relevance to political maneuvers now and then. In addition, the water-boat allegory has become a political motto in China ever since Xunzi. It implies a subtle and interactive relationship between the ruling and the ruled and it reveals a political ideal of people-based administration that prioritises the common interest and public needs. According to this logic, there arises the distinction between three categories of rulers of which the superior type is consistently highly worshiped and strongly recommended.

On this account, the worthy and wise leadership is asserted to play a decisive role in the operation of humane governance. It is obliged to be morally excellent and politically competent, and it is conceived to be the highest form of achievement of which man as man is capable. Hence, it is intrinsically associated with “the Dao of sageliness within and kingliness without” (*nei sheng wai wang zhi dao*). “Sageliness within” refers to inward cultivation and moral perfection, whereas “kingliness without” refers to political wisdom and governing expertise. An organic integration and cooperative utility of these two dimensions is assumed to produce a “sage-ruler” (*shengwang*), partly similar to Plato’s conception of “the philosopher-king” in an idealistic sense as is portrayed in the *Republic*, and partly similar to Aristotle’s conception of “the good ruler” in a realistic sense as is outlined in the *Politics*.

The Notion of Chinese Pragmatism

Apart from Confucian humanism, the historical pursuit of humane governance can be also revisited in the light of Chinese pragmatism. This pragmatism is grounded in the Confucian notion of pragmatic reason (*shiyong lixing*) in particular. According to contemporary Chinese philosopher, Li Zehou, pragmatic reason can be conceived as “a creative principle in a dynamic process”³ of historical accumulation, cultural formation and psychological sedimentation from which certain “absolute values or moral norms of objective and universal necessity can be developed”.⁴ It is by nature open to further modification along the passage of time. In Li’s opinion, it is characterised by four principles: usefulness (*youyongxing*), ethicalness (*lunlixing*), affective-cum-rational synthesis (*qing li bu fen*), and historical awareness (*lishi*

yishi). I personally think it necessary to add one more principle, that of situational adaptability (*shiyingxing*), due to its relevance to social reality.

In brief, the principle of usefulness represents a measurement of truth that resembles the core concern of American pragmatism. It is deep-rooted in the Chinese mentality as it often places much stress on pragmatic wisdom and knowledge for practical purposes. Then, the principle of ethicalness can be seen to correspond loosely with Kant's conception of "practical reason", for both of them emphasise the need of moral cultivation and conduct, and commend the building of a refined personality and even the pursuit of human perfection through lived experience. Yet, with regard to the Chinese expectation, the principle of ethicalness is applied not merely to individual cultivation, but also to collective effort. It naturally leads to the sacrifice of personal interest for the sake of the family and community good. As for the principle of affective-cum-reasonable synthesis, it almost always attempts to ensure a kind of balance between the two key dimensions of human nature. The balance is claimed to undertake actions and treat all humans in a fair and acceptable manner by harmoniously satisfying emotional and rational needs. The emotional needs are mainly directed towards the equitable and reciprocal enhancement of human relationships, whereas the rational ones are in principle directed towards doing justice to human activities according to the established rules and regulations. When it comes to the principle of historical awareness, it purports to focus on objective investigation, consideration, and calculation of things and events from a long-term, systematic perspective, and is less interested in transient gains and losses or successes and failures of the present.⁵ It is most liable to procure a world outlook by which things are perceived and appraised with particular reference to the past, the present and the future.

In addition, the principle of situational adaptability is highly conscious of the need to observe timing, and to judge the occasion (*shen shi duo shi*) in socio-political matters. It is by so doing that a correct assessment of any changing situation is rendered possible, and a solution can be found and appropriate action taken. This type of strategy is frequently applied to socio-political matters when it comes to making policies and decisions by the government, notwithstanding that the Confucian tradition is often attacked for being static rather than dynamic because it gives more credit to stability than changeability. On such an account, the rediscovery of humane governance can be meaningful only when it is exposed to modification and transformation in view of the *status quo* in China and the world alike. This is largely due to the current context of either globalisation or glocalisation in which no nation-state can afford to confine itself to its own traditions and cultures alone.

The Chief Conditions for Good Governance

It is common sense that a modern society ought to be open to the outside world. It is owing to such openness that Chinese culture has benefited and been enriched ever since Buddhism as an alien religion came to China around the first century BC, and Western civilization in the early twentieth century.

This being true, the legacy of humane governance in Confucianism does not suffice to recreate efficient governance within the social setting and cultural heritage of China proper. What is required is the integrative use of what is exercised in the political cultures of open societies in the West. This encourages due consideration of the chief conditions for good governance because of their reliable and universal features.

The particular conditions referred to are the rule of law, constitutional democracy, social justice and equity, transparency and liberty, civil rights and individual dignity, and the like. Historically all of these have proved to be more appropriate and functional than others in respect of securing social order and political life. They are by and large shared as key values, thus representing a significant part of what is treated as “the advanced culture or civilization of humankind” in the ideology of China nowadays. They are there to be learnt, reconceived and creatively transformed according to the particular social, political and cultural settings of any given endogenic kind.

Noteworthy as it is, an open society is characterised as adopting the rule of law as the constitutional basis for separating legislative, judicial and executive powers in accord with their respective independence. As globally acknowledged, the rule of law must assume maximum priority because tyranny begins wherever rule of law ends. This motto embodies the constitutional spirit and has been historically proved in the light of its truth content. Incidentally, “rule of law” is rendered into Chinese as *fazhi*, yet “rule by law” is also rendered as *fazhi*, often leading to their essential distinction being obscured. That is why many people remain unclear about which is which at a time when they are asking the government to reinforce *fazhi*. Consciously or unconsciously, they seem to bestow the government with full power beyond the legislative constraints, as though the leadership is above instead of under the law. Briefly speaking, rule of law and rule by law are distinguished from one another to the extent that the former is equally applied to all social members alike and ensures a supervision of the powerful in particular, whereas the latter is often utilised by the powerful to run state affairs and control the populace.

It goes without saying that the structure of efficient governance ought to incorporate into its practice the fundamental conditions for good governance. These conditions may need to undergo some modifications and even compromises in China during the process of institutional renovation and social development. Nevertheless, such modifications and the like will serve to pave the way for building a civil society so as to realise “the Chinese dream”.

The Chinese Mode of Democracy

Prior to discussing the Chinese mode of democracy, I would like to share some observations on the Chinese conception of democracy revealed in a large-scale survey in 2002. The survey was designed to find out the *status quo* of democracy, and was conducted in five Asian countries and regions, including Taiwan and Hong Kong. It was organised and supervised by Prof. Tianjian Shi from Duke University in

the United States.⁶ According to Prof. Shi's analysis based on the collected data, the responses from those surveyed led to following fruitful findings.

Over 80% of those surveyed from the mainland of China commonly hold that democracy is better than tyranny or despotism, and definitely suits China. Interestingly, their positive view of democracy is higher than that of their counterparts in the other four countries and regions involved. Most of those surveyed in the mainland of China have the feeling that the level of democracy in their country is pretty sufficient, that is to say, the level of democracy in their view is ranked second highest in percentage terms, of all the five countries and regions involved. Yet, their understanding of democracy varies from those surveyed in the other countries and regions. For instance, 12% of them identify democracy with governmental elections; and 6.3% consider democracy as a constraint on dictators. These two categories of feedback show a perception of procedural democracy. 22.9% equate democracy with liberty; and approximately 55% maintain that democracy means to put people's interest first and to listen to people's opinions or suggestions when it comes to making decisions and policies. Apart from that, a democratic government ought to serve the people all the time. Apparently, these two categories of feedback demonstrate a perception of substantive democracy that reflects the ideas of people-based governance prevailing in Confucianism. More interestingly, in the case of the people surveyed in Taiwan, 14% identify democracy with government elections and power constraint; nearly 50% define democracy as liberty and equality; and 33.7% think of democracy in terms of having government collect people's opinions and serve the people's interests, which again reflects the people-based mentality of Confucianism. It is worth mentioning that people in Taiwan tend to feel that the level of democracy is more than its needed and therefore they complain about the phenomenon of excessive democracy after 15 years of introducing constitutional democracy to Taiwan (1987 to 2002). In their cynical turn of phrase, democracy is not something you can eat.

If democracy is perceived to be either a process of development or a way of political life, it will take time to secure its improvement and maturity. It seems to me that there is no reason to exaggerate or gloat over the negative reactions to the Taiwan mode of democracy that is by and large a bold experiment in Chinese history in its entirety. In any case, their complaint about "excessive democracy" is not to be taken literally, as it needs a careful re-examination. Actually, quite a few people in Taiwan hold a paradoxical attitude about democracy. On the one hand, they give credit to it as they enjoy freedom of speech, and on the other hand, they downplay it as they observe its less constructive tendency, for in reality partisan political passions in Taiwan can even reach the point of negatively affecting government efficiency. This can have a strong impact upon an individual's economic well-being and quality of life as well. Hence it becomes one of the chief reasons why Taiwanese people are deeply concerned about the problem of excessive democracy. They are therefore looking for some constructive alternatives to bring democracy back to the right channel instead of letting it flow with the tide in a *laissez-faire* fashion.

As recorded in human history, the Athenians are renowned as pioneers in the praxis of democracy that successfully helped Athens experience her golden age and become “the school of Hellas” as Pericles once announced in his famous funeral oration in honor of those who had first fallen during the Peloponnesian War.⁷ However, when Athenian democracy grew corrupt as a consequence of excessive freedom, Plato exposed and attacked it in the *Republic* with an ambitious intention to build up a *kallipolis* (just city).⁸ It is basically for this reason that he is labeled as being hostile to democracy by some thinkers, such as Karl Popper, as is noted in *The Open Society and Its Enemies*. With regard to such a verdict, Plato cannot get out of his grave and defend himself now.

But I must say such a verdict is largely lopsided because Plato’s hostility is directed solely at corrupt and unhealthy democracy, for he saw clearly how harmful and destructive it was in hastening the decline of Athens as a community, and leading to the death of Socrates as an individual. He retains his negative attitude towards excessive freedom until the end of his life as is revealed in his sharp critique of vulgar theatrocracy and corrupt democracy in the *Laws*, purportedly his last dialogue.⁹ Plato thereby draws out a constitutional blueprint for the second best city-state. As related in the prologue, Plato manifests his pride in the positive function of Athenian democracy while tendering high praise for the merits of the Spartan monarchy that resembles an oligarchy to a great degree. Eventually he goes on to mix the two modes of constitution for the sake of efficient administration and checked freedom according to the Greek principle of *mesos*, a principle that aims to hold a good balance by virtue of having “never too much, never too little”. This principle of *mesos* loosely corresponds to the doctrine of *zhong yong* or golden mean in the Chinese heritage.

In my view, the approach to a mixed constitution as depicted by Plato in the *Laws* seems to be fairly relevant and applicable to China today. It must, however, be a new mixture that can be nurtured by combining modern democracy of a healthy kind with moderate authoritarianism of a controllable kind according to an institutionalised distribution of executive power. Such a mixture can be deployed and utilised as a transitional measure on the path to further development of a mature kind of constitutional democracy. In my view, it seems both suitable to the current context of China in the realm of political culture, and helpful in deepening the scheme of comprehensive reform. China is the largest developing country with the largest population that counts for a fifth of the world’s total. She needs progressive reform rather than radical revolution. And her success in economic and political reform will contribute a great deal to the whole globe and to humanity.

With regard to the on-going context of mainland China, even though economic reform has been launched for more than three decades, it is still on the way to upgrading a market economy in the pure sense of this term. In striking contrast, political reform tentatively commenced just a few years ago, and is expected to continue to develop, despite having encountered many institutional and ideological obstacles. This being the case, the Chinese mode of democracy is assumed to be modest and pragmatic at its elementary stage because, historically, the exercise of democracy in either a constitutional or an institutional sense is absent in China’s

tradition of political culture except for the regional experiments in Taiwan and Hong Kong.

Hence, I think it relevant to propose three principles in this regard. They are intended to vouchsafe the construction of efficient governance under the condition of healthy democracy based on the motivation to fulfill the common good. Theoretically and practically, the first principle is derived from the genuine concern with people's expectations (*min xin*) so as to attain the willing support of the majority. The second principle is grounded in the high awareness of people-based administration (*min ben*) so as to take into due consideration the well-being of the general public when it comes to making policies. The third principle is devoted to the steadfast assurance of people's sense of sharing (*min xiang*) so as to provide the majority with just and equal chances in order to meet their hierarchy of needs ranging from the physical at the bottom via the social, the cognitive and the aesthetic in the middle to the self-fulfillment of the altruistic at the top. All this involves an interaction between traditional and modern components of political culture at home and abroad, thus working to lay down a solid foundation of efficient governance in China.

The Synthetic Transformation in Question

The traditional pursuit of humane governance is by nature more idealistic than practical. It remains appealing in its teleological sense, but somewhat unattainable in its operational sense. In spite of all this, it has been a shadowy structure throughout Chinese history in the political arena. It continues to be so today. Its hidden traces, for instance, seem to be embodied not simply in such domestic policies as operating a people-based administration (*yi min wei ben*), taking good care of the seniors (*shan yang lao ren*) and constructing a harmonious society (*jiangou hexie shehui*), but also in such foreign policies as developing sound relationships with neighboring countries (*yu lin wei shan*), treating neighboring countries as partners of cooperation (*yi lin wei ban*), and working towards a harmonious world (*jiangou hexie shijie*) through win-win collaboration and so forth.

Nowadays in China, social realities are rapidly changing, public demands are becoming diversified, and varied challenges arise successively. These all exert increasing pressure to improve social management and the political culture, something which has become a focus of national priorities in recent years. In my view, all this accelerates the heated search for efficient governance as a critical necessity to push forward all-round and deepening reform.

According to Chinese pragmatism in political culture, the traditional heritage of humane governance needs to be reconsidered with reference to the search for good governance, and thus renovated by means of synthetic transformation. Otherwise, such heritage can hardly be revitalised with new functionality and efficiency in practice, and instead risks being misguided to follow the beaten track of negative conformism. This need is consistent with pragmatic reason in terms of practical usefulness, historical awareness and situational adaptability in particular.

To my mind, most of the afore-mentioned factors of humane governance remain valid to different degrees except for the integrative use of laws and rites (*xing li bing yong*). This integrative practice used to be divided into rule by law and rule by rites as noted above. Now rule by law ought to be substituted by rule of law, since they are fundamentally different from one another. In brief, rule by law is intended to control the common people in particular, as is exercised by officials in authority and thus particularly favors the privileged, whilst rule of law is designed to control all walks of life as it is above any type of political power, and treats all citizens equally, without tending privileges to anyone. Hence we are convinced that where rule of law ends tyranny begins. This is especially so in a political arena where, historically, democracy is conventionally absent.

Being preconditioned by the rule of law, the form of efficient governance will secure its legislative foundation and become plausible in a practical sense. It must, however, be kept in mind that such governance is also dependent upon some other indispensable determinants, as formulated earlier. In other words, it could not be molded or applied separately without going through a synthetic transformation in terms of the glocalising context of China at present. As regards the social reality involved, I think it advisable to take relevant actions to facilitate synthetic transformation. These actions will pertain to at least three kinds of practice, including institutional reform, ideological adjustment, and democracy education.

Briefly speaking, institutional reform is to be exercised in two crucial areas. One is intended to reinforce the legal system for specifying social justice and equity, civil rights and duties, power limitation and anti-corruption in particular, which is expected to narrow the gap between the rich and the poor, reduce the tension between the powerful and the vulnerable, and resolve the indignation directed towards corrupt officials and lawless money-makers at different levels among whom the bigwigs are the main targets. All this should be performed via rule of law, healthy democracy, accountable transparency and law-abiding reinforcement. Moreover, such reform needs to plan a working system to ensure the appropriate use of human resources, select the most capable, remove redundant positions, separate powers and restrict power abuse, and above all, legislate for judicial independence and fairness directed to all citizens alike.

Needless to say, this sort of institutional reform is of paramount importance, for instance, to the on-going anti-corruption campaign. This campaign was launched in China years before, but it remains inadequate because of the existence of institutional obstacles and interferences coming mainly from the power structure. As a result, the number of corrupt officials keeps increasing rather than decreasing even though drastic regulations are enacted and severe punishments are meted out. Fortunately, the new leadership of China has taken a big step forward in this regard at the end of 2013, aiming to establish a more effective and systematic network not only to inspect and punish the corrupt, but also to prevent officials from falling into the abyss of illegal temptation. All this is conducive to the institutionalisation of a better system so as to help stitch up the holes in the preceding setup of regulations through which the officials of less temperance but more power fall into the pit of corruption.

The other area of the institutional reform is directed at demolishing the power-base of the bigwigs or tycoons, because it is usually more detrimental to social stability and governmental credibility. In this respect, it must find its approach to dismantling the scaffolds of the bigwigs in such steps as strengthening state ownership by cutting off the bigwigs' connections to or exchange-channels with the powerful, and by creating a fair and just market economy equally open to state-owned enterprises and their private counterparts. This is feasible only when good legislation of legal codes and close supervision of executive power are specified and authorised. Certainly, all this must be done before the schemes of the privileged become entrenched networks that aim to hijack the national economy and even governmental administration.

Ideological adjustment is intended to pave the way for a more open discourse that should be constructive and critical at the same time. In order to do so, it demands a continuous endeavor to gradually broaden the cultural space, the thinking space, and the value space so as to meet the needs of the Chinese citizens as a whole. In this respect, it will give rise to the collective wisdom that helps explore the truth content of value systems in both diversity and universality in accord with domestic and global tendencies.

Nowadays in the computerised age, the Internet culture breaks down the rigid approach to ideological propaganda. Most netizens can obtain information from different sources. They are thus skeptical about the old-fashioned political rhetoric publicised by the state-owned media. They grow more and more individualised as they tend to think on their own, see with their own eyes, and choose as they please. All this heightens the diverse public demands for civil rights, universal values, free speech and so on. Quite recently, Xi Jinping has announced for the first time that such values as rule of law, liberty, democracy, justice, equity and mutual assistance are to be part of the kernel values of socialism with Chinese characteristics. This historic change not merely expands the value system, but also enhances socio-political life.

The outset of 2014 marked a historic event in China when the new authorities organised six task groups to promote the all-round and deepened reform in varied sectors. Among them, one is to design a top-down framework to drive forward democratic reform in the political domain. This is surely the most difficult of all the projects to be carried out, because the actualisation of democracy is a complex process, and it is especially so in the Chinese social context. In addition, democracy in its constitutional sense is peculiar to the Western tradition, and fundamentally absent in the Chinese heritage. Although many people in China long for constitutional democracy, they do not know much about what a normal democratic polity expects from the citizens of a civil society. This being true, it is necessary to introduce a nation-wide program of democracy education for all Chinese citizens. Such an exercise would be very fruitful. First and foremost, through this exercise, people will be exposed to a holistic picture of what democracy offers and demands in terms of civil rights, social commitment, public ethics and the like, and in the end they will come to understand the proper sense of citizenship in a open society. Second, they will be led to probe into the possibility of creative transformation of democratic polity in accordance with Chinese political culture and social reality. This is naturally

helpful in developing a new model of healthy democracy, for it will be like a fish out of water only to have a mechanical transplantation of a ready-made model of democracy from elsewhere without considering its suitability and applicability in the new soil. Any blunder in this case will be liable to plunge the country into chaos as is evidenced by the bitter lessons drawn from radical political reforms in some other nations. Third, by means of creative transformation China will develop a working model of democracy with its own traits. This is above all intended to produce efficient governance, make China prosperous, enable the people to live a dignified and happy life, and contribute more to the rest of the world for cooperative development.

To conclude, I would like to mention two catchphrases for further reflection. One used to be popular in Mao Zedong's regime, that is, "only socialism can save China". Yet this old model of idealistic socialism is a story of the past, and has been replaced by a new model of pragmatic socialism with Chinese characteristics. The other catch phrase, popular ever since the introduction of the open-door policy in late 1970s, is, "only reform can make a breakthrough". However, this reform must be holistic and properly in accord with the Chinese social setting as a whole, and at the same time be bolstered by efficient governance to crack down on the institutional schemes of the bigwigs while reinforcing social justice and equity for all walks of life. It will then be able to bring under control such severe problems as the decline of reform vitality, the gap between the rich and the poor, retrogression of the rule of law, the fragmentation of the social structure, increase in the crime rate, and pollution of the eco-environment, among others. Now the newly issued blueprint of comprehensive reform appears to be theoretically promising, but we hope it will become functional reality achieved through painstaking efforts in the time to come. The touchstone for all of this is often reflected in the observant eyes of the general public who keep a close watch on what is going on at home and abroad everyday. What the Chinese public expect are effective actions rather than any political catchphrase or fine-sounding lip service. ¶

- 1 Confucius, *The Analects*, trans. by D. C. Lau (London: Penguin Books, 1983), 20:2.
- 2 Hsun Tzu, "The Regulations of a King", in *Basic Writings*, trans. by Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), pp. 36–37.
- 3 Li Zehou, "Guanyu 'shiyong lixing'" 关于实用理性 (About "Pragmatic Reason"; 1993), in Li Zehou, *Shiyong lixing yu legan wenhua* 实用理性与乐感文化 (Pragmatic Reason and A Culture of Optimism) (Beijing: SXD Joint Publishing Company, 2005), p. 329.
- 4 Li Zehou, *Li Zehou jinnian dawanlu* 李泽厚近年答问录 (Interviews with Li Zehou 2004–2006), (Tianjin: Tianjin Academy of Social Sciences Press, 2006, p. 206.
- 5 Li Zehou, "Some Tentative Remarks on China's Wisdom" (excerpts), in *Contemporary Chinese Thought*, Winter 1999–2000 (Vol. 31 No. 2, M. E. Sharpe, 2000), p. 49. Also see the original text of "Shitan Zhongguo de zhihui" 试谈中国的智慧 (A Discussion of Chinese Wisdom), in Li Zehou, *Zhongguo gudai sixiang shilun* 中国古代思想史论 (Essays on Ancient Chinese Thought) (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1986), pp. 305–306.
- 6 Some of the findings are cited in an article under the title "Zhongguoren de minzhuguan butong yu xifang" (Chinese People's View of Democracy Differs from That of Westerners) in a form of interview on the widely read Chinese newspaper *Cankao xiaoxi* (Reference News) 6 May

2014, p. 11. Also see T. Shi, *The Logic of Politics in Mainland China and Taiwan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); T. Shi & Jie Lu, “The Meaning of Democracy: The Shadow of Confucianism”, *Journal of Democracy*, 21, 4 (2010), 123–29.

- 7 Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, trans. by Joseph Gavorse (New York: Random House, 1934), Book II, VI, pp. 102–6.
- 8 Plato, *Republic* 560–563, trans. by Paul Shorey (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press 199); also see Plato, *The Laws*, trans. by Trevor J. Saunders (London: Penguin Books, 1994).
- 9 Plato, *Laws* 700a–701b, trans. by R. G. Bury (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press 1994); also see Plato, *The Laws*.

