ASIAN THOUGHT AND CULTURE

# New Essays in Chinese Philosophy

Edited and with an Introduction by

**Hsueh-li Cheng**

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# Asian Thought and Culture

Charles Wei-hsun Fu
*General Editor*

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Introduction
Hsueh-li Cheng ..... ix

PART ONE CHINESE LOGIC AND THE SYMBOLS OF THE *I-CHING* ..... 1

Chapter One The Place of Chinese Logics in Comparative Logics: Chinese Logics Revisited
Walter Benesch..... 3

Chapter Two On the Functional Unity of the Four Dimentions of Thought in the Book of Changes
Shu-hsien Liu ..... 23

PART TWO MORAL SENSE AND MORAL JUSTIFICATION IN LIFE ..... 59

Chapter Three The Relevance of Confucian Ethics
Bongkil Chung ..... 61

Chapter Four The Constraints of Confucianism on the Modernization of East Asian Business Enterprises
Tai K. Oh ..... 79

Chapter Five Moral Sense and Moral Justification in Confucianism
Hsueh-li Cheng ..... 97

PART THREE DREAMS, REALITY AND NATURE OF THINGS ..... 113

Chapter Six A Logical Reconstruction of the Butterfly Dream in the *Chuang Tzu*
Robert Allison ..... 115

Chapter Seven From Phenomenology into the Chinese
James W. Kidd ..... 129

PART FOUR HARMONY, SCIENCE AND THE CHINESE WORIDVIEW ..... 137

Chapter Eight The Organismic Tenet of Chinese Philosophy: A Comparison of Trends in Western and Chinese Thought
Shih-chuan Chen ..... 139

Chapter Nine Northropian Categories of Experience Revisited
Kenneth K. Inada ..... 153

Chapter Ten Yin-yang Dialectical Monism
Tsung-i Dow ..... 175

PART FIVE CARE AND THE WAY OF HEAVEN .. 195

Chapter Eleven The Way of Care: The Image of the Moral Guardian in Confucian Philosophy
Lik-kuen Tong ..... 197

Chapter Twelve Immanence and Transcendence: A Comparison between Confucianism and Christianity
Pei-jung Fu ..... 211

PART SIX REVITALIZING AND RECONSTRUCTING CHINESE PHILOSOPHY ..... 219

Chapter Thirteen Confucianism and Modernization
Chung-ying Cheng ..... 221

Chapter Fourteen The Criss of Hermeneutical Consciousness in Modern China
Lujun Yin ..... 233

Index ..... 253

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# INTRODUCTION

More than one hundred papers were delivered at the Fifth International Conference of Chinese Philosophy held at the University of California-San Diego in July, 1987. This book, a collection of some prominent conference papers, is the fruitful outcome of the meeting.

The chief purpose of the conference was to explore various facets of Chinese philosophy which have received dynamic and creative scholarly research in the recent past. Although this book cannot include everything, it has touched on a wide range of philosophical areas from the ancient symbolism found in the *I-Ching* to the current modernization of Chinese thinking. To help the general reader, papers are grouped into six categories under six different titles.

Part One concerns the philosophy of logic and symbols in Chinese tradition, especially in *The Book of Changes*. Generally speaking, Chinese conceptual schemes have multiple functions, usages and meanings. They are often symbolic. Although Chinese expression and logic are sometimes quantified or quantifiable, they cannot be reduced to one definite form or be identified with one meaning.

Professor Walter Benesch's paper is an insightful article on the place of Chinese logical expressions. He investigates the nature of logic, and claims that we live and think in thought systems which live in us. There is not one logic in human intellectual activities but as many logics as there are world views. A logic is said to have arisen in a tradition to relate ideas and experience, and as such reflects its heritage. He argues that Chinese culture is not "logic-less." Chinese logic or logics are understood as very valuable.

The next paper examines the philosophy of symbolism in the *I-Ching*. Recently some scholars have discussed the issue from anthropological and linguistic perspectives. The *I-Ching* is presented as a book of symbolic communication. Interestingly, it is called variously, as a book of timing or a book of context, since context defines meaning in any symbolic communication and time is one of the major ingredients of context. In this section Professor Shu-hsien Liu expounds the four layers of meaning in the same classic. He finds a system of mythological symbolism, a system of natural symbolism, a system of cosmological symbolism and a system of ethical symbolism. He argues that these systems display four dimensions of thought in *The Book of Changes*. They are substantially different from one

another, yet form a functional unity among them. Thus the very same trigrams and hexagrams may have mythological, natural, cosmological and ethical implications and messages. These divergent meanings convey a richness and complexity of thought in *The Book of Changes*.

Part Two concerns Confucian ethics, the backbone of the orthodox Chinese philosophical tradition. A sense of Confucian ethics is a common thread among all East Asian nations, and in many respects the Korean way of life today seems to be more Confucian than the Chinese. The first two papers of this section delivered by Korean professors discuss the validity and relevance of Confucian morality to contemporary life. Bongkil Chung critically examines the deontological aspect of Confucian ethics to see whether Confucian virtues can be justified and in what way they can be understood as relevant to modern life. He presents the teachings of Chong-san (1900-1962), the second patriarch of Korean Won Buddhism, to suggest some renovations of the Confucian moral teaching. Confucian virtues can possibly be revitalized to meet current challenges. *Jen*, the key Confucian concept, is not so different from the Buddha's compassion or Christ's universal love. Filial piety, the root of Confucian moral practice, serves to requite favor or grace shown to oneself.

The Confucian theory of ethics is deontological in character since it holds that moral action is right or good intrinsically. One ought to be moral not merely for the sake of benefits. Actually, however, this deontological ethics has been justified in the eyes of many Asians as if it would make one's business life successful and profitable. Thus Professor Tai K. Oh's essay investigates Confucianism's effects on the East Asian economies. As we know, East Asia has been the most rapidly growing region of the world economy during the past fifteen years. Professor Oh finds that Confucian ethics are to the Asian as the Protestant ethic is to westerners--an essential element in business and professional conduct. In fact, both Confucian and Protestant morals embody a work ethics which serves as the vital basis of economic success. Professor Oh correctlyly points out that Confucianism has fostered such work-related values as diligence, responsibility, thrift, promptness, cooperation and learning among Asian people. So, Confucianism has promoted economic success in Asia. The paper in particular shows how Korea's Confucian heritage has been a major reason for the highly entrepreneurial nature of Korean business activity.

My own paper investigates how Confucianists have perceived the moral sense in life, and displays that moral experience, according to Confucianism, is rich and complex and cannot be reduced either to a matter of reason or feeling. For Confucianists, feeling has a place in ethics, yet moral sentiment

is not something unrelated to reason; instead, it often develops on the basis of a noetic judgment of moral worth. The Confucian view is of an interrelatedness of knowing, sensing, doing and being.

The next section in the book is titled "Dreams, Reality and the Nature of Things," and two papers here present Taoist insights on these subjects. Ordinary people tend to regard a dream as something unreal or illusory; true knowledge must be obtained in the waking state. Chuang Tzu is one of the few philosophers who have seriously examined the logical status and ontological nature of dreams and have critically questioned the epistemic reason for a metaphysical distinction between the waking and non-waking states. In the *Chuang Tzu*, we read that once Chuang Chou dreamt he was a butterfly, a butterfly flitting and fluttering around, happy with himself and doing as he pleased. He didn't know he was Chuang Chou. Suddenly he awoke and there he was, solid and truly Chuang Chou. But he didn't know whether he was Chuang Chou who had dreamt he was a butterfly, or a butterfly dreaming he was Chuang Chou. Professor Robert Allison aims toward a logical reconstruction of the butterfly-dream anecdote, and argues that it is similar to, and is a primitive version of, the Great Sage anecdote. In the Great Sage anecdote all men are seen as existing on the level of dream, and even philosophers and the author himself may be dreaming when they expound their theories.

It is debatable whether the butterfly dream is a rudimentary version of the Great Sage dream, yet the anecdotes presented in the *Chuang Tzu* are designed to invite us to examine critically such profound philosophical questions as "What is reality?" "How do we know it?" and "What is truth?" When philosophers discuss these questions, they often presuppose ontological and epistemological dichotomies between real and unreal, true and false, existence and non-existence, emotion and reason, phenomena and noumenon, and scientific and mystical. So-called rationalism claims that what is real must be rational, while empiricism maintains that what is real must be perceptible. Those with scientific bent renounce anything mystical and transcendental, while absolutism contends that reality is beyond any description. Descartes' famous dream argument is essentially based on a dualistic approach and is often cited to establish rationalism. For Descartes, whether we are awake or asleep, the propositions of mathematics are not affected, and two and three always make five. Truth itself must be as clear and distinct as mathematical knowledge. But Chuang Tzu's butterfly dream, in my observation, encourages us to avoid this dualistic thinking and presents the subtle insight that awaking is no more real than dreaming, and that nature is to be seen as it is in its entirety. The Tao cannot be reduced to an abstract principle or any single thing, and the dualistic approach is reductive and runs

against the natural way of seeing things. In the eyes of Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu, so-called reality is truly an artificial and conventional abstraction.

Professor James Kidd's paper further explores the above Taoist approach. Then Professors Shih-chuan Chen and Kenneth K. Inada display the distinct character of the Chinese worldview. They expound the Eastern idea of harmony by comparing Chinese and Western metaphysics. Professor Inada focuses on Filmer S.C. Northrup's remarkable "categories of experience" and, in a penetrating analysis, asks if they are still worth pursuing.

Harmony is not merely an orderly aggregation of particulars or entities, but also a dialectical unity of opposites. Yin and yang are different from each other and yet are organically united and together constitute the reality of nature. Professor Tsung-i Dow's paper explicates this concept. Without the harmony of opposites nothing can occur and exist. This metaphysical concept of harmony is not logically justifiable from the standpoint of Western Aristotelian logic, nor is it scientifically acceptable from the perspective of classical Newtonian physics. But it is consistent with recent, more advanced science.

Professor Lik-kuen Tong's essay presents what he calls a "homological" understanding and reconstruction of Chinese philosophy, which is rather a new and original approach. Professor Tong defines homology as "the study of man insofar as he is the bearer of his own self-image which procures for his humanity an identity of measure between being and understanding, life and thought." He points out that we are image-bearers, and these images affect our lives; the most important is self-image. Civilized endeavors are acts of self-representation and self-justification, whereby the human being seeks to measure himself, to become himself, to appropriate to himself, in accordance with the dictates or implications of self-image. Therefore, for Professor Tong, to know Chinese philosophy is to apprehend Chinese homology, and his paper represents a homological revitalization of Chinese philosophy. What is the dominant homology which prevailed in ancient Chinese philosophy? What underlying image of the person has impregnated the mainstream of Chinese philosophical thought? What, homologically speaking, can be said about the affinity and differences between China, India and the West in their respective philosophical traditions? These are some of the questions Professor Tong discusses.

In a creative insight Professor Tong contends that philosophy began with the birth of a seminal image of man and a corresponding seminal attitude of justification, contrary to the popular view that it began with wonder. Homologically, Chinese philosophy started with care; it has developed under

the dominance of the curative principle. In Chinese culture authentic being is not equated with the rational man but with the careful, moral practitioner. An authentic ruler is a virtuous ruler, a moral overseer-guardian of the people. Since the early Chou, moral care has been the dominant concern of Chinese thinkers; and Confucianism, the champion of the philosophy of moral guardianship, has been orthodox Chinese philosophy. While the Confucian homology is seen as "care-ful," Taoist homology is said to be "care-free."

Chief among Confucian moral virtues is *jen*, humanity, the principle of loving care. But this has its transcendental foundation, namely, "the universalization of the concept of authentic humanity [which] entails then a corresponding universalization of the concept of Heaven." *Jen* is defined by Lik-kuen Tong as "humanized Heaven." Thus an authentic ruler is not merely a man of loving care but of solemn responsibility. He is the son of Heaven, *t'ien-tzu*, receiving the mandates of Heaven to provide for all human beings.

It seems that Confucianism is both humanistic and theistic. Professor Pei-jung Fu's paper corrects the view that Confucianism is essentially humanism and teaches an exclusive self-reliance philosophy. He discloses the religious dimensions of Confucianism. Heaven manifests itself in the function of the heart, and the human heart as the microcosm of Heaven represents transcendence by way of immanence. Confucian self-reliance is complemented by reliance on Heaven. Furthermore, Professor Fu claims that while Christianity is a God-centered religion, it is still open to the view of immanence, and that Confucianism and Christianity are compatible with each other.

Professor Fu's paper partly explains why contemporary Confucianists can become Christians, and vice versa. One does not have to choose between Christ and Confucius, but can follow both. This synthetic attitude seems to explain why Confucianism has been acceptable to both humanists and theists, and why it has become the major philosophical and even religious movement in Asia. In fact, *I-k'uan-tao* (The Way of One Thread), the most popular new religious movement in Taiwan and other parts of Asia, is said to be based upon the teachings of Confucius. Its believers call their religion *Kung-Meng Sheng Tao*, the sacred way of Confucius and Mencius. This new religious movement seems to be a reaction against a humanistic or secularized interpretation of Confucianism which has been popular among Chinese scholars in the past decades. Thus, when one studies Confucianism, one should not ignore the religiosity of its philosophy.

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*Regrettably, the final page (page xiv) of Hsueh-li Cheng's Introduction was omitted. This text is reprinted below. Necessary corrections will be made in subsequent editions.*

The last two papers aim to revitalize and reconstruct Chinese philosophy from the standpoint of hermeneutics. Professor Chung-ying Cheng attempts to show that Confucian philosophy, in the writings of the *Analects*, the *Mencius*, the *Chung Yung*, the *Ta-Hsueh*, and the commentaries of the *I-Ching*, can be seen as a well-interrelated system of thinking which is open and post-modern. The characteristics of openness and post-modernity in Confucian philosophy may be of great need in today's post-modern society.

Mr. Lujun Yin suggests, further, that tradition is not a natural enemy of modernization. To understand tradition is not just to engage in the impossible task of rediscovering the "original meaning" of traditional philosophy, but rather, with creative interpretation and reinterpretation, to explore what is meaningful for us. This hermeneutical attitude is essential, since it will free us from a dogmatic belief in a single authoritative standard of interpretation, and may create more enlightened attitudes for mankind.

I would like to thank Professors Antonio Cua, Shu-hsien Liu, Lik-keun Tong and Sandra Wawrytko for reading and selecting some of these papers. They have offered invaluable comments. Special thanks are also extended to Professors Peter Woo and Ju-chou Yang for their efforts to obtain the financial assistance to publish this book. For financial contributions, thanks are due to the Pacific Chinese Foundation, International Society for Taoism and International Advanced Institute, Inc. Without their support, the book could not have been printed. A word of appreciation is also due to the University of Hawaii at Hilo for providing secretarial and typing assistance. Finally, I owe a debt of gratitude to Judith Graham and Sybil Li for a copy editing of the manuscript.

Hsueh-li Cheng
Hawaii, U.S.A.

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# Part One

# Chinese Logic and the Symbols of the *I-Ching*

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# Chapter One

## THE PLACE OF CHINESE LOGICS IN COMPARATIVE LOGICS: CHINESE LOGICS REVISITED

Walter Benesch
University of Alaska-Fairbanks

For 25 years I have been teaching logic and philosophy at the college level. In addition, I have conducted a number of special programs in logic for children at the elementary and secondary levels, and have been involved in logic workshops for Alaskan Eskimo and Indian students preparing to enter the university for a regular course of study. As a teacher, I am continually involved in helping children and young adults, not only to acquire basic thinking skills and analytic techniques, but also, and more importantly, to achieve an understanding of their own mental processes and traditions. I am aware to what a degree memorization in education tends to replace comprehension. This situation is perhaps nowhere so apparent as in traditional approaches to mathematics and logics, where most college students, two weeks after semester's end, could no longer pass their final exams, were they required to re-take them. For a brief moment they have knowledge of sorts but without the insights which give it meaning and context. This is the difference between asking the questions one has been taught to ask, and discovering one's own questions. The former are frequently merely answers "spelled backwards," while the latter, because they arise within, have the ability to focus and inspire. It is this latter sort of question that is the source of introspection. It was my own experiences with this second sort of question and my concern for encouraging students to ask them, that first led me into the history and philosophy of western logic, and from there into the field of comparative logics. I believe the understanding of any particular logic must involve the ability to view that logic from the questions, problems and perspectives of other systems.

Thus my paper represents both my experiences and my recommendations as an educator in the field of logics. I shall offer four theses for

consideration.

# I

My first thesis is that there are common characteristics to thinking which are found in all cultures. It is this which permits us to translate and understand one another's thoughts--no matter how imperfectly. People certainly differ in terms of the aspects of thought and specific experiences that they emphasize. They also differ in terms of the thought systems that they develop. But despite such differences there are common characteristics implicit in thinking itself. Four of these, it seems to me, are the essential bases for logic and therefore the study of comparative logics.

*We think in relationships, patterns and sequences in which we connect idea to idea, experience to experience.* I would stress here that all such connections are made in our thinking and not in or by the objects experienced, or the symbols we use to sign ideas. It is this aspect of thought that is the essence of recognition. To recognize either objects or ideas is to relate them to mental contexts, determining thereby in our thinking the similarity and dissimilarity of one idea or experience with/from another. It is this relating which is the origin and purpose of all logics. The patterns and orders may be quite different, but "patterning" itself is common to the human mind.

From the patterns involved in recognition, it is but a short step to the process of "prediction." In predicting, not only are we recognizing relationships of the similar/dissimilar in experience, we are projecting these relationships onto experiences we have not yet had, ones we anticipate. The combination of recognition and anticipation is the source of all the causal sequences in our contemplation of the laws and orders of nature, human society, ethics, art, etc. From these relationships, patterns and sequences follows our naming. The third century B.C. Confucian philosopher, Hsun Tzu, offers an excellent example of both the process of sequential thinking and the naming that is associated with it:

> These are the common names that apply to man. That which is as it is from the time of birth is called the nature of man. That which is harmonious from birth, which is capable of perceiving through the senses and of responding to stimulus spontaneously and without effort, is also called the nature. The likes and dislikes, delights and angers, griefs and joys of the nature are called emotion. When the emotions are aroused and the mind makes a choice from among them, this is

> called thought. When the mind conceives a thought and the body puts it into action, this is called conscious activity. When the thoughts have accumulated sufficiently, the body is well trained, and when the action is carried to completion, this is also called conscious activity. When one acts from considerations of profit, it is called business. When one acts from considerations of duty, it is called (moral) conduct. The faculty which allows man to have understanding which makes man capable of something is called ability. Capability which has practical applications is also called ability.[1]

In occidental logics the patterning of thought is often most closely associated with the if/then sequences of classical syllogistic and modern symbolic logics.

*We think on levels of attention and on planes of ideas and abstractions.* If we examine the inferences associated with ideas, we discover that some are more difficult to think about than are others. Some relate to things we believe we "perceive" while others relate to things we believe are "imperceivable." The questions, "Is the frog alive?" and "What do we mean by life?" are related, but not on the same plane. The questions, "What time is it?" and "What is time?" occur at different levels of abstraction in our thinking. We probably don't need to think much about the nature and meaning of "life" and "time" in order to live our lives always on time, but if we want to examine our lives or ask fundamental meaning questions like "Is time a concept in our minds, or is it a stuff in which our minds conceive?", then we discover that neither the clocks on the wall nor the pickled frogs on the shelf will tell us anything about the meaning of either. In this regard the paradoxes of Kung-sun Lung are particularly relevant: "If a rod one foot in length is cut short every day by one half of its length, it will still have something left even after ten thousand generations."[2] Here we have the Chinese version of Zeno's paradoxes which arise out of relating a "real" spatial/temporal world on one level to an "apparent" one on another.

If we understand this relativity of recognition and perception to levels of thinking and awareness then we understand why we cannot prove upon the plane upon which we define either "proof" itself, or whatever it is we are going to prove. And we will understand why "fact" is not factual, "logic" is not logical, and why "life" does not live, nor "death" die. "Atomic theory" is not atomic. "Genetics" is not genetic. "Evolution" does not evolve. "Existence" does not exist. "Truth" is not true. "Nature" is not natural. And if "Causality" is causal, then a radical, new world emerges around us. In application, as Chuang Tzu says, these insights mean:

> Great understanding is borad and unhurried; little understanding is cramped and busy. Great words are clear and limpid, little words are shrill and quarrelsome. In sleep, men's spirits go visiting; in waking hours, their bodies hustle. With everything they meet they become entangled. Day after day they use their minds in strife, sometimes grandiose, sometimes sly, sometimes petty. Their little fears are mean and tremble; their great fears are stunned and overwhelming. They bound off like an arrow or a crossbow pellet certain that they are the arbiters of right and wrong.[3]

Perhaps one of the clearest examples of "thinking on levels" is that of the philosopher Chi-tsang (549-623 A.D.), who in a synthesis of Buddhist and Taoist thought wrote in his treatise on the two levels of truth:

> The three kinds of Two Levels of Truth all represent the principle of gradual rejection, like building a framework from the ground...
>
> When it is said that dharmas posses being it is ordinary people who say so. This is worldly truth, the truth of ordinary people. Saints and sages, however, truly know that dharmas are empty in nature. This is absolute truth, the truth of sages. This principle (or worldly versus absolute truth is taught) in order to enable people to advance from the worldly to the absolute, and to renounce (the truth of) ordinary people and to accept that of the sages. This is the reason for clarifying the first level of twofold truth.
>
> Next comes the second stage, which explains that both being and non-being belong to worldly truth, whereas non-duality (neither being nor non-being) belongs to absolute truth...
>
> Next comes the third stage in which both duality and non-duality are worldly truth, whereas neither-duality-nor-non-duality is the highest truth... One-sidedness and centrality, after all, are two extremes. Being two extremes, they are therefore called worldly truth. Only neither-one-sidedness-nor-centrality can be regarded as the Middle Path or the highest truth.[4]

*We think in mental directions.* In one direction on a mental continuum our thinking involves the thinker and perceiver consciously in all thought and perception. In the other direction our thinking excludes the thinker or perceiver and concentrates upon the objects of conception and perception. Depending upon the direction of our thought, we may refer to statements in a modern western context as objective or subjective. Of course on the level upon which we define subjectivity/objectivity, these categories are no longer appropriate. This is a good example of the relationship of direction, to thought level. We may easily confuse our choices in one direction for the

act of choosing in the other, and do this so completely that we come to believe that we have turned ourselves into one or the other of the definitions or statements that we have created. This is a bit like changing the point of observation when one looks at oneself in the mirror. The mind can indeed mistake itself for the objects of thought and perception. This essence of mental direction, mind and mind content, is most clearly expressed in Hsun Tzu in the chapter on "Dispelling Obsession":

> How does a man understand the Way? Through the mind. And how can the mind understand it? Because it is empty, unified, and still. The mind is constantly storing up things, and yet it is said to be empty. The mind is constantly marked by diversity, and yet it is said to be unified. The mind is constantly moving, and yet it is said to be still. Man is born with an intellect, and where there is intellect there is memory. Memory is what is stored up in the mind. Yet the mind is said to be empty because what has already been stored up in it does not hinder the reception of new impressions. Therefore it is said to be empty. Man is born with intellect, and where there is intellect there is an awareness of differences. An awareness of differences means that one can have an understanding of a variety of facts at the same time, and where there is such understanding, there is diversity. And yet the mind is said to be unified because it does not allow the understanding of one fact to impinge upon that of another. Therefore it is said to be unified...
>
> The mind is the ruler of the body and the master of its godlike intelligence. It gives commands, but it is not subject to them. Of its own volition it prohibits or permits, snatches or accepts, goes or stops. Thus the mouth can be forced to speak or to be silent; the body can be made to change its opinion. What it considers right it will accept; what it considers wrong it will reject...Inevitably it will see things for itself. And although the objects it perceives may be many and diverse, if its acuity is of the highest level, it cannot become divided within itself.[5]

When the Buddhist masters cautioned that we cannot remove our finger from the moon, that is, in pointing at the moon, or anything else, our very pointing becomes an inseparable part of the moon at which we point, they anticipated by centuries the directional insight of quantum mechanics. There are no observations without observers, no distinctions without distinguishers. Understanding takes us in two directions--or as Einstein put it, we can only see what our theories permit us to see.

*We live and think in thought systems which live in us.* It is these systems which provide the content for our thinking patterns, levels, and directions. Our cultural systems contain the definitions of "reality" through which we perceive and think. Within them we individually determine how we view

the world and ourselves. These assumptions are the parameters for our discussions of "truth," "proof," "good," "evil," "reality," "logic," "nature," etc. Thought systems are any culture's and age's answers to the most basic questions: What are we? Why are we here? Where do we come from? Where do we go?

Of the Chinese thought systems, Fung Yu-lan writes in his *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*:

> ...I would say that the craving for something beyond the present actual world is one of the innate desires of mankind, and the Chinese people are no exception to this rule. They have not had much concern with religion because they have had so much concern with philosophy. They are not religious because they are philosophical. In philosophy they satisfy their craving for what is beyond the present actual world...
>
> According to the tradition of Chinese philosophy, its function is not the increase of positive knowledge (by positive knowledge I mean information regarding matters of fact), but the elevation of the mind--a reaching out for what is beyond the present actual world, and for the values that are higher than the moral ones. It was said by the *Lao-tzu*, "To work on learning is to increase day by day, to work on *Tao*...is to decrease day by day." I am not concerned with the difference between increasing and decreasing, nor do I quite agree with this saying of Lao-tzu. I quote it only to show that in the tradition of Chinese philosophy there is a distinction between working on learning and working on *Tao* (the Way). The purpose of the former is what I call the increase of positive knowledge, that of the latter is the elevation of the mind. Philosophy belongs in the latter category.[6]

# II

My second thesis is an extension of the first, i.e., that there is not one logic but as many logics as there are world views and thought systems---each presenting a different perspective and response to the common characteristics discussed in my first thesis. Thus the understanding of any logic involves, firstly, understanding the tradition that creates and uses it, and secondly, viewing it relative to other systems. This assumption might be summarized using Galileo's two "laws of motion": i.e. (1) within a closed system motion is absolute. Thus the coffee spilled from my cup, in a jet flying near the speed of sound, falls with the same motion as the plane and lands in my lap, not on my chest. But (2) motion between and among closed systems is relative, and it may be difficult if not impossible to distinguish motion and rest between and among systems. Anyone who has

stood on a ship's deck and watched the piers "move" will understand this second principle.[7] That Galileo did not apply his insight into "motion", to thought systems in general, is due in part to his firm belief that there was but one logic/language, in which God wrote the book of the world. Though motion might be relative, its mathematical expression in an essentially three dimensional, Euclidian world, was not.

As with motion, so with logic, which, from the Greek *logos* can mean "word", "essence", "law." I would define logic for my purposes here as "a process of inference consistent with the recognized thought problems and patterns in any given tradition." It may be syllogistic and possess three steps as in the complete Aristotelean form, or it may have two as in the Buddhist syllogism of Dinaga.[8] Or it may have five steps as in the Nyaya syllogism of Gotama.[9] In each of these traditions the differences among the syllogisms fulfill special purposes and express insights consistent with each tradition's inference patterns. But logic may not be syllogistic at all. It may move in intuitive leaps from insight to insight as the thinking intelligence seeks to relate levels of thought, being to non-being, change to constant and reconciling opposites along the way as in the case of Heraclitus' exposition of the *logos*:

> The hidden harmony is better than the obvious. People do not understand how that which is at variance with itself agrees with itself. There is a harmony in the bending back, as in the case of the bow and lyre. Listening not to me but to the Logos, it is wise to acknowledge that all things are one.[10]

The *logos* in the *Chuang Tzu* relates knowledge to understanding and distinction to non-distinction through the point of view of the distinguisher. It is an inference process with at least three aspects: "this," "that," and the "understanding intelligence" itself:

> Everything has its "that," everything has its "this." From the point of view of "that" you cannot see it, but through understanding you can know it. So I say, "that" comes out of "this," and "this" depends on "that"--which is to say that "this" and "that" give birth to each other. But where there is birth there must be death; where there is death there must be birth...Therefore the sage does not proceed in such a way, but illuminates all in the light of Heaven. He too recognizes a "this," but a "this" which is also a "that," a "that" which is also a "this." His "that" has both a right and a wrong in it; his "this" too has both a right and a wrong in it. So, in fact, does he still have a "this" and "that"? Or does he in fact no longer have a "this" and "that"? A state in which "this" and "that" no longer find their opposites is called the hinge of the Way. When the

> hinge is fitted into the socket, it can respond endlessly. Its right then is a single endlessness and its wrong too is a single endlessness. So, I say, the best thing to use is clarity.[11]

A logic arises in a tradition, as a way of relating ideas and experiences, and as such reflects its heritage. One culture may emphasize certain spiritual aspects of human experience, e.g. the "potential for attention, consciousness, attentiveness" as in the world view of the Jainas.[12] Another culture, as in the case of the occidental, may stress the increasingly abstract "objects" of attention and thought - "things" whose essence is constant and unchanging, as in the Platonic "forms," the Aristotlean "universals," or the structures themselves as in modern symbolic logics. The Chinese "logicians," Hui Shih and Kung-sun Lung Tzu, present a more intuitive synthesis of these poles of "attention" and its "objects." This would seem to be the meaning of Hui Shih's "A chicken has three legs," i.e. either "two legs and the spirit that moves them"[13] or "...the two legs and the leg as such."[14]

Different traditions with their different emphases will produce different interpretations of human experience and different logics for reasoning. However, any given logic does more than reflect its tradition, it also reinforces that tradition's way of thinking in that it both represents and sets rules and standards. These two aspects of various logics have historically proven to be one of the major obstacles to cross-cultural understanding and to the study of comparative logics. All too often comparisons are made on the basis of some system's assumption that its approach is the only logical way. Thus other logics are to be squeezed into a Procrustean bed in which what is seen as deficiency is rejected or ridiculed, what is seen as surplus is simplified or deleted. Clearly, major culprits in this process are those occidental logicians who, with Parmenides and Aristotle, identified logic with an ultimate, unchanging reality. The later Euclidian, Christian, and modern logical positivists, consider logic as "one," "indivisible" and "inherently western." The English materialist, Thomas Hobbes' observations are fairly representative of this perspective at its most conservative:

> The first author of speech was God himself, that instructed Adam how to name such creatures as he presented to his sight...Seeing then that truth consists in the right ordering of names in our affirmations, a man that seeks precise truth had need to remember what every name he uses stands for and to place it accordingly,

> or else he will find himself entangled in words as a bird in lime twigs, the more he struggles the more belimed. And therefore in geometry, which is the only science that it has pleased God hitherto to bestow on mankind, men begin at settling the significations of their words, which they call definitions and place them in the beginning of their reckoning.[15]

So powerful has this western view been -- in part due to the success of the Newtonian world view and nineteenth century colonialism with its twentieth century after effects, that sometimes Indian and Chinese philosophers, educated in it, tend to see their own traditions as "inferior" or "logic-less." Some search, as in the case of the Indian historian of logic, Vidyabhusana, for the source of their own logics in the Greek:

> ...so far as the five-limbed syllogism of Hindu Logic is concerned, the Hindu logician may have been indebted some way or other to the Greeks. While the syllogism was definitely formulated as a logical doctrine by Aristotle...in the 4th century B.C., the Hindu logician shows but a vague conception of it as late as the 1st century B.C... I am inclined, therefore, to think that the syllogism did not actually evolve in Indian Logic out of inference, and that the Hindu logician owed the idea of syllogism to the influence of Aristotle. To me it is one of the most important enquiries in the history of Indian Logic to ascertain at what stage the doctrine of inference, which was an indigenous growth, was happily amalgamated with the borrowed art of syllogism into a common structure of logical thought. The Buddhist work Kathavatthu furnished several logical terms, e.g. upanayana, nigamana, etc., of syllogistic reasoning. But we find not a single instance where these terms have been methodically combined so as to form a syllogism proper.[16]

Others, as in the case of Wing-tsit Chan, one of the most important Chinese philosophers and translator of the twentieth century, find their traditions "logic-less" in comparison to the West:

> The only school that was primarily devoted to logical considerations was the Logicians, who constituted one of the smallest schools and exercised no influence whatsoever after their own time.
>
> The name "Logicians" is used to emphasize their intellectual character. Actually, they neither evolved any syllogism nor discovered any law of thought. They expressed themselves in dialogues, aphorisms, and paradoxes instead of systematic and cogent argumentation.... Their metaphysical and epistemological concepts are primitive, but they represent the only tendency in ancient China toward intellectualism for its own sake.[17]

# III

My third thesis is that in the second half of the twentieth century, because of the cultural, philosophical and scientific changes brought about by a number of east-west conflicts, as well as the radical changes in physics, the classical Newtonian worldview itself has run into problems in the natural and social sciences. It continues to explain phenomena on a sense level where we still seem to encounter an absolute and Euclidian world. But on the macrocosmic and microcosmic planes, where space can be conceived as curved, and parallel lines cross, we find observations are no longer possible without the influences of observers and their instruments. In this relativistic universe, the changing, flowing, "everything in everything" worlds of Heraclitus, Anaxagoras, Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu, seem to provide better models for modern physical science--a science, incidentally, which is itself no longer "western" or "eastern." As a result of the search for new models of "reality," an increasing number of occidental scientists, theologians and lay persons, are writing books that seek to synthesize oriental and occidental cosmologies. Striking examples of this change might be Niels Bohr's use of the Yin Yang symbol on his own coat of arms, as well as his introduction into physical theory of the idea of complementarity of conflicting theories of matter and light. To Bohr's insight, we might add Fritjof Capra's use of Indian and Chinese ideas in his *Tao of Physics*, R.G.H. Siu's *Tao of Science*, Gary Zukav's *Dancing Wu Li Masters*, etc.

What then are the problems and limitations of this classical scientific view which we have begun to alter so radically in our time? Perhaps most simply put, they go back to the pre-Socratic Greek assumptions which held that "reality" was ultimately one, homogeneous and unchanging. In order to accommodate change, multiplicity and heterogeneity -- which seemed to be the stuff of everyday common experience -- the Greeks posited a "real" world and an "apparent" world. The real was never apparent -- the apparent never real. It was this Greek perspective which produced the two-valued logic of Aristotle and Parmenides. Contradictions were both illogical and unnatural. With different versions of the world, only one could be correct, i.e. as in the case of the "excluded middle." Now, in physical and social

theory, we live in a universe which is a mix of observer and observation. Two valued-logics, which were assumed until recently to mirror reality, are now seen to reflect our ways of thinking. Euclidian geometry is no longer the "science of real space," but rather a logic among logics, some of which are non-Euclidian. An excellent summary of the changes in physical and social science is provided by the French anthropologist, George Devereux, in his discussion in *Ethnopsychoanalysis,* of Henri Poincare's theory of "explanation."

> According to Henry Poincare, if a phenomenon admits of one explanation it will admit also of a certain number of other explanations, all as capable as the first one to elucidate the nature of the phenomenon in question. I, for my part, specify that in the study of Man (but not only in the study of Man) it is not only possible but mandatory to explain a behavior, already explained in one way, also in another way, i.e. within another frame of reference. The obligation to hold an (explanatory) "double discourse" is not imposed upon us by the fact that human behavior is "overdetermined"... The simple fact is that a human phenomenon which is explained in one way only is, so to speak, not explained at all and is therefore not fully exploitable, and this even--and, in fact, chiefly--if this phenomenon's first explanation has made it perfectly comprehensible, controllable and foreseeable in terms of its own specific frame of reference.[18]

Perhaps one of the most perplexing characteristics, however, of the recent and increasing interest in Indian and Chinese cosmological models, is that there has been to date, practically no interest in developing and adapting Chinese and Indian logics. For some reason, the occidental who likes the Chinese view of the world as process, and accepts the unification of opposites, will not reflect upon the logic that goes with these views. Thus we find our century, oriental or occidental, trying to create multi-valued logics and artificial intelligence out of traditional two-valued systems. In general we tend to ignore the implications of our own views. At a time when the world is no longer clearly "Euclidian," behavioral psychology still uses an Euclidian model to talk of "condition." It is my firm conviction that the changes in physical theory require the insights and tools of comparative logics. And I also firmly believe that the social scientist, who is after all a human being, needs other and broader mirrors and channels to view himself and direct his thinking. Not only are traditional Chinese process views of nature of great significance for the changes that have occurred in the

twentieth century, but of equal importance are the potentialities of the largely unexplored logics which accompany these views. This is especially true in the social sciences where man's attempt to treat "man" with a narrow, two-valued, objective/subjective dualism has led to a grotesque, mechanical modelling of the human spirit, and a denial, as in behaviorism, of the very essence which one must presuppose exists in order to "deny" its existence. The paradoxes and contradictions created by "object logic," cannot be either resolved nor exploited by object logic. A comparative approach both to cosmologies and to logics is critically needed.

# IV

My fourth thesis is that there is indeed a Chinese logic, and it is not only possible to clearly identify it, it can and will prove an indispensable part of the thinking techniques and methodologies that we use to explore ourselves and the world.

As science becomes increasingly abstract and mathematical, there is a tendency to assume that the absence of a formal system in an occidental sense indicates there is/was no logic and/or no real logicians in classical China.

We forget, or do not understand, that our formal systems are simply highly distilled and abstracted languages, and that they are both useless and meaningless without the assumptions, definitions and directions which in turn cannot be explained in the symbols of the formal system itself. That this absence of distilled symbol systems has been construed as an absence of logic and logical thinking, is most unfortunate. Such formalism, however useful, is after all the tip of the dog's tail, it is not the dog. The following evaluation by Bastable is fairly characteristic of this misunderstanding:

> Chinese thought, consistently moral and practical in quality, produced a logical tradition devoid of much formal system of abstract speculation and centered on the nature, use and problems of names. (It is surmised that the Chinese language was not one to promote a simultaneous growth of grammar and logic; that as speech with ununinflected words it produced lexicographers rather than grammarians.)[19]

That no formal, axiomatic system can establish itself is, in essence, the implication of Godel's "*incompleteness theorem*," first published in 1931:

> In any formal system adequate for number theory there exists an undecidable formula--that is, a formula that is not provable and whose negation is not provable (This statement is occasionally referred to a Godel's first theorem)...
>
> A corollary to the theorem is that the consistency of a formal system adequate for number theory cannot be proved within the system.[20]

It would seem to be a short step from Godel's insight to a fairly clear understanding that formal logics arise from non-formal logics. Thus the non-existence of a formal logic, a logic in which structural relationship is emphasized over content, can in no way be used as a criterion to determine the presence of other logics, especially "content logics" in which form is not stressed. That such logics can be formalized systems, seems to me highly probable, but I do not believe that these systems, if and when constructed, will be either axiomatic or two-valued in the fashion of object logics, nor will they resemble the formal structures of object logics.

My concern now is with the classical Chinese tradition as it relates to Chinese logic, and then with an overview of the logic itself. I believe that at least three characteristics of Chinese culture have created and influenced its logic.

Firstly, Chinese thinkers and Chinese logic are concerned with *synthesis*. The ideal of Chinese philosophy, the sage, is the individual who has mastered this logic of synthesis. Fung Yu-lan puts it thusly:

> This-worldliness and other-worldliness stand in contrast to each other as do realism and idealism. The task of Chinese philosophy is to accomplish a synthesis out of these antitheses. That does not mean that they are to be abolished. They are still there, but they have been made into a synthetic whole. How can this be done? This is the problem which Chinese philosophy attempts to solve.[21]

To which I would add, it is the task of the logics to express these syntheses of apparent antitheses: non-being and being, true and false, knowledge and ignorance, name and thing, observer and observed, good and evil, etc.

Secondly, as an extension of an interest in syntheses, Chinese logics are concerned with the position/presence of the thinker. This is one of the characteristics which seems paradoxical to the occidental, who has traditionally located the difference between a "real" and an "apparent"

world in the external. In the Chinese view this difference presupposes an observer. This is why in the logics there is a tendency to use techniques which encourage reflection and introspection, i.e. puzzles, paradoxes and an emphasis upon intent. Perhaps one of the best illustrations of this technique at work is to be found in the *Book of Tao*, e.g.,

> Who knows that he does not know is the highest; Who (pretends to) know what he does not know is sick-minded. And who recognizes sick-mindedness as sick-mindedness is not sick-minded. The Sage is not sick-minded. Because be recognizes sick-mindedness as sick-mindedness, therefore he is not sick-minded.[22]

Similar examples are found in the *Analects*: "He who learns but does not think is lost; he who thinks but does not learn is in danger."[23] "To say you do not know when you do not know--that is the way to acquire knowledge.[24]

Thirdly, there is, as the Rumanian philosopher, Anton Dimitriu, points out, an ontological concern with the existence of the "ten thousand things" in China, vs. an overwhelming concern for the essence of things among the Greeks:

> ...the paradoxical judgment in ancient Chinese thinkers, which may appear strange and difficult to Europeans, is based on an induction which is fundamentally different from the induction of Western logicians; it is a penetrating induction, which penetrates into the ontological core of things, revealing the laws of existence, and not the essence of their nature.[25]

The question is how does traditional Chinese logic carry and express "logically" these three aspects of thought we have just discussed. Let us begin with technique. Aristotle would choose the categorical proposition and the syllogism to relate his universal and particular classes. As I said before, the Chinese methods are not syllogistic. The patterns are dictated by insight into content rather than structure. The vehicle for the logic itself is the story, the metaphor, the analogy, the aphorism, the "paradox." Why? Because this is a logic which emphasizes and cultivates "reading between the lines," in which, what the line does not express, is as important or more important than what is said. It is a logic of intent rather than specific propositions, a reflective and introspective logic.

Chinese logic does not use a "step technique" as in the syllogism, or as in modern symbolic logics in which there is a linear progression. Rather Chinese logic is an *aspect* logic, using what I would call "aspect

techniques," far more appropriate to intent and meaning. We encounter the problem Chinese logic addresses, for example, in western jurisprudence when in a court of law we try to determine "intent" from a specific sequence of events in assigning responsibility. There are no two-valued laws which govern intent, and juries are cautioned to examine the evidence in the light of "reasonable doubt." In the jury trial it is the aspects of actions which give us intent rather than the steps per se.

I would suggest that Chinese logic as aspect logic, is therefore both complementary and paradoxical, and though a line of reasoning may have many aspects, some are more critical logically than others.

Since the logic is a logic of synthesis, this means above all else synthesis of levels, sequences and directions. Both the containers for reasoning and the contents will exemplify these syntheses. Levels flow into one another without sharp distinction. The introspective/extrospective merge so that the isolation of the one from the other is neither possible nor desirable. It is through an aspect technique that logical syntheses are achieved. At least four aspects are essential. Their order is often arbitrary and varies, yet all are consistently present in lines of reasoning:

1) A particular or practical aspect which is the reference point of the analogy or aphorism, etc., reflects the actual experience of the immediate reader or listener. We might call this a mirror aspect, the one which reflects my experience in such a way that I can relate to it and think about it. It is existential. For example the individual's own experience of the confusion of names.

2) A larger totality or universal aspect which gives the significance and meaning of the particular in a greater context, e.g., the first chapter of the *Tao-te Ching* presents the reader with a discussion of the "named" and the "nameless." It begins with every man's experience of talking:

> The Tao (Way) that can be told of is not the eternal Tao. The name that can be named is not the eternal name. The Nameless is the origin of Heaven and Earth; the Named is the mother of all things. Therefore let there always be non-being so we may see their subtlety, and let there always be being so we may see their outcome. The two are the same, but after they are produced, they have different names.[26]

A second example of this aspect can be taken from Hsun Tzu's chapter on "Rectifying Names:"

> Names have no intrinsic appropriateness. One agrees to use a certain name and issues an order to that effect, and if the agreement is abided by and becomes a matter of custom, then the name may be said to be appropriate, but if people do not abide by the agreement, then the name ceases to be appropriate. Names have no intrinsic reality. One agrees to use a certain name and issues an order that it shall be applied to a certain reality, and if the agreement is abided by and becomes a matter of custom, then it may be said to be a real name.[27]

3) A reflective aspect which facilitates the thinker's awareness of the essential continuum or synthesis of aspects one and two, and carries his intuitions and attentions back to himself--as in the case of the *Book of Tao* cited above. If I understand it, I understand my self, my spirit, in a different sense, on a different level, than I did when I tried to name the unnameable. Another illustration is found in the *Hsun Tzu*:

> There are, however, names which are intrinsically good. Names which are clear, simple, and not at odds with the thing they designate may be said to be good names.[28]

Fung Yu-lan expresses these three aspects aesthetically and succinctly in a wonderful one line argument, which also expresses the difference between "aspect" and "step" logic: "One must speak very much before one keeps silent."[29]

4) An applied aspect which directs the thinker's attention to the implications of his insight and understanding as a rule, a way of life, and a way of being in his cultural and ethical context. This latter aspect is very important in that it is the ultimate "conclusion" to the line of reasoning. A train of thought in this synthesis or aspect logic which lacks this final quality would be seen as incomplete. An illustration of this fourth aspect can again be selected from Hsun Tzu:

> When one, on hearing the names, can immediately understand the realities they refer to, then names are fulfilling their practical function. When they are combined to create pleasing forms, then they are fulfilling their aesthetic function. He who can use names in such a way that they are both practical and aesthetically pleasing may be said to have a real understanding of them.[30]

I would stress here, as in the example from Fung Yu-lan above, that in an aspect logic, the argument or line of reasoning arises in the spirit of the listener or reader, not on the paper or in the text as is often assumed to be the case in western object logics.

Perhaps it would be most appropriate here to close with Chuang Tzu's famous statement about a statement, as an illustration of the Chinese "logic of four aspects" in action:

> Now I am going to make a statement here. I don't know whether it fits into the category of other people's statements or not. But whether it fits into their category or whether it doesn't, it obviously fits into some category. So in that respect it is no different from their statements. However, let me try making my statement.
>
> There is a beginning. There is not yet beginning to be a beginning. There is not yet beginning to be a not yet beginning to be a beginning. There is being. There is nonbeing. There is a not yet beginning to be a nonbeing. There is not yet beginning to be a not yet beginning to be nonbeing. Suddenly there is nonbeing. But I do not know, when it comes to nonbeing, which is really being and which is non-being. Now I have just said something. But I don't know whether what I have said has really said something or whether it hasn't said something.[31]

There are those accustomed to seeing the world through two-valued glasses, clearly outlined in textbooks and on printed pages. However, in a time when insight, understanding and tolerance are so important, not only as ethical and humanistic principles, but as the new foundations for theory and practice in the physical and social sciences, it would seem to me that the Chinese logic of aspect and synthesis has much to offer. How much easier it would be, with Bohr to treat both particles and waves as aspects of light and matter rather than mutually exclusive absolute attributes, in a world where the logician is also a gentleman and a sage of the type that Hsun Tzu describes:

> The learning of the gentleman enters his ears, clings to his mind, spreads through his four limbs, and manifests itself in his actions. His smallest word, his slightest movement can serve as a model. The learning of the petty man enters his ear and comes out his mouth. With only four inches between ear and mouth, how can he have possession of it long enough to enable a seven-foot body? In old times men studied for their own sake; nowadays men study with an eye to others. The gentleman uses learning to enable himself; the petty man uses learning as a bribe to win attention.[32]

# Notes

1. Burton Watson, trans., *Hsun Tzu, Basic Writins* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), pp. 139-140.

2. Hu Shih, *The Deveopment of the Logical Method in Ancient China* (Shanghai: The Oriental Book Company, 1928), p. 119.

3. Burton Watson, trans., *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), p. 37.

4. Wing-tsit Chan, *Source Book in Chinese Philosoph* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 360.

5. Burton Watson, *op. cit.*, pp. 127-129.

6. Fung Yu-lang, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy* (New Yor:Free Press, 1966), pp. 4-5.

7. Galileo Galilei, *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems--Ptolemaic and Coperican,* Drake Stillman (trans.), (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967).

8. #2 See F. Stcherbatsky, *Buddhist Logic* (New York: Dover, 1962), Vol. I, pp. 279-80.

9. #3 See Chakrabarti, *Kisor Kumar: The Logic of Gotama, Monographs of the Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy #5* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1977), p.36f.

10. Philip Wheelwright, *Heraclitus* (New York: Atheneum, 1964), p. 102.

11. Burton Watson, *Chuang Tzu,* pp. 39-40.

12. See Griddhrapinchchacharya Sri Umaswami Maharaja: *Tatvartha Sutram* (Delhi: Jain Trust, 1951), p. 39.

13. Hu Shih, *op. cit,* p. 125.

14. Wang Hsien-ch'ien, *Chuang Tzu Chi-chieh,* in footnote #9, Wing-tsit Chan, *Source Book in Chinese Philosophy,* p. 234.

15. Thomas Hobbes, "Leviathan" in *Great Books of the Western World* (Britannica Press, 1952), Vol. 23, pp. 54-56.

16. Satis Chandra Vidyabhusan, *History of Indian Logic,* (Banarsidass: Motilal, 1978), pp. xv-xvi.

17. Wing-tsit Chan, *op. cit.,* p. 232.

18. George Devereux, *Ethnopsychoanalysis* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), p. 1.

19. Patrick K. Bastable, *Logic, Depth, Grammar of Rationality* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan Ltd., 1975), p. 258.

20. *Encyclopedia of Philosophy,* Vol. III, pp. 348-9.

21. Fung Yu-lang, *op. cit.,* p.8.

22. Yutang Lin, *The Wisdom of China and India* (New York: Modern Library, 1942), p. 620.

23. Wing-tsit Chan, *op. cit.,* p. 24, #2:15.

24. *Ibid.,* #2:17.

25. Anton Dumitriu, *History of Logic,* (Kent: Abacus Press), Vol. I, p. 36.

26. Wing-tsit Chan, *op. cit.,* p. 139.

27. Watson, *op. cit.,* p. 144.

28. *Ibid.,* p. 144.

29. Fung Yu-lan, *op. cit.,* p.342.

30. Watson, *op. cit.,* p. 147.

31. *Ibid.,* p. 43.

32. *Ibid.,* P. 20.

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# Chapter Two

## ON THE FUNCTIONAL UNITY OF THE FOUR DIMENSIONS OF THOUGHT IN THE BOOK OF CHANGES

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## I

More than ten years ago, in an article on the traditional Chinese way of thinking, I had made the following statement:

> In fact, at least four layers of meaning can be identified in the *Book of Changes*; each is succeeding the other and yet each is also interpenetrating into the other; this explains why it is so difficult to have a comprehensive understanding of the implications of this classic. The four layers of meaning referred to are: (1) a system of mythological symbolism, (2) a system of natural symbolism, (3) a system of cosmological symbolism, and (4) a system of ethical symbolism.[1]

But I did not have a chance to elaborate on these four layers of meaning, much less to point out in what sense a functional unity may be found among the four dimensions of thought included in the *Book of Changes*. In the last year (1986) I had a chance to do some research on the subject at the Institute of East Asian Philosophies in Singapore, when I took a half-year sabbatical leave from the Chinese University of Hong Kong.[2] After the Cultural Revolution there were exciting archaeological discoveries in China which might have important bearing on tracing the origins of the *Book of Changes*; and there emerged also new ideas in the interpretation of its philosophy. I am planning to write a book in Chinese to offer a comprehensive interpretation of the classic. In this article I shall give an introduction to my approach to unlocking the mysteries in the book. It is my belief that unless we take a developmental point of view it would be impossible for us to work out a comprehensive understanding of the implications of this classic. Now I would like to reword the four layers of meaning as: (1) a system of mystical

symbolism, (2) a system of rational/natural symbolism, (3) a system of cosmological symbolism, and (4) a system of ethical/metaphysical symbolism, so that the scope is broader, and the new arrangement seems to work better in offering a comprehensive interpretation of the classic.

# II

Today most scholars would agree that the *Book of Changes* was originally a book of divination.[3] Symbols involved were saturated with mystical implications; they were supposed to help us foretell the future. Here I would like to trace the origins of such mystical symbolism.

It is well-known that the book in its present form contains a system of symbolism: there are the so-called eight trigrams: *Ch'ien*[b] (Heaven) ☰ is heaven, *k'un*[c] (Earth)☷is earth, *chen*[d] (activity)☳is thunder, *sun*[e] (bending) is wind, *k'an*[f] (pit)☵ is water, *li*[g] (brightness)☲is fire, *ken*[h] (to stop)☶ is mountain, and *tui*[i] (pleasure)☱ is a marsh. Each trigram is combined with another, one upon the other, thus making sixty-four hexagrams.[4] There is also a definite procedure to conduct divination. Those who believe in such practice obviously presuppose that there is a mystical correlation between the system of symbolism and natural and human events in the world, hence the system of symbolism may be regarded as a kind of mystical symbolism.

According to traditional accounts ultimately the system can be reduced to two basic symbols, i.e., the yin and the yang, represented by a divided line (_ _) and an undivided line(___) respectively. You may then develop the whole system either by way of one (*T'ai-chi*,[j] the Great Ultimate), two (modes: yin and yang), four (forms, younger and elder yin and yang), and eight (trigrams); or by way of one, three (trigrams), and six (hexagrams). There have been a lot of speculations about the origin of the symbols of the yin and the yang. One prevalent theory takes them to be symbols derived from the procreative organs of male and female. Recently, however, archaeological discoveries unearthed the so-called *shu-tzu-kua*[k] (numerical-grams); it is beyond doubt that they belong to the early Chou[l] period.[5] At first scholars had trouble understanding these symbols, and they were thought to be emblems for tribes.[6] Then larger quantities of these numerical-grams turned up, scholars made attempts to form new ideas about them and finally have been able to identify them as numerical-grams. Surprisingly enough, the number of hexagrams found is far greater than that of trigrams, hence scholars today are not even sure that the hexagrams are derived from trigrams.[7] One thing seems certain however: these symbols do contain ancient numbers, which appeared long before forms or images are found.

The implication seems to be, contrary to prevalent opinions, that actually numbers are prior to forms or images. If this understanding is correct, then many traditional accounts have to be revised. If in the ancient time there were only odd and even numbers such as 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, etc., and these antedate even the symbols of the yin and the yang, then we are forced to come up with a better interpretation than one which takes them to be symbols derived from the procreative organs of the female and male.

Recent studies seem to have opened up entirely new vistas. An anthropologist, Wang Ning-sheng,[m] has made a very interesting suggestion. He finds that even today minorities in southwest China still practice divination by numbers. Such a fact may shed light on the formation of the so-called trigrams in the *Book of Changes*.[8] The Miaos[n] simply break a piece of wood into two halves. When they are dropped on the ground, there are three possibilities: one piece faces up and the other faces down, or both face up, or both face down. The result would be interpreted as neither good nor bad, good, and bad. Such combinations are much too simple to help in making decisions in response to demands from a complicated social life.

The Yis[o] at Liangshan,[p] Sichuan,[q] however, have a much more complex type of practice called *lei-fu-zi*.[r] The witch-doctor *pi-mo*[s] holds some stalks in his left hand and takes away some with his right hand. What are left appear either in odd numbers or even numbers. This procedure must be repeated three times, then there are eight possibilities: even-even-even, middle-flat; odd-odd-odd, middle-flat; even-odd-odd, bad; odd-even-even, very bad; even-odd-even, middle-flat; even-even-odd, good; odd-odd-even, flat; odd-even-odd, good. *Lei-fu-zi* is often used to help in making decisions on matters such whether to fight with other tribes.

One cannot fail to see the parallel between such practices among the minorities and the practice of divination according to the system of the *Book of Changes*. Wang wrote his article with a view to discredit the classic, which from his point of view, was based on primitive superstitions. There is no need for us to agree to his conclusions, however, as a humble origin would not be accepted as a sufficient reason to prevent the development of a creative philosophy in the future. Nevertheless I do think Wang has shown great insight in his attempt to answer the question of the origin of the trigrams. And surprisingly enough, his seemingly novel suggestion actually confirms the traditional account handed down to us through the commentaries on the classic since the ancient times. According to this account it was the sage-emperor Fu-hsi[t] who first invented the eight trigrams.[9] At first sight this account may appear to be sheer speculation which cannot be substantiated by

factual evidence, as Fu-hsi was only a legendary figure, and we cannot even be sure that such a person actually existed. Approached from another perspective, however, the account may appear in a completely different light. It happens that Fu-hsi was a God worshipped by minorities in southwest China, and his legends were widely circulated among these minorities.[10] To be sure, legends never tell us real history as it was, but in the East as well as in the West, they must not be simply dismissed as pure fantasies. Often they can tell us a great deal about the remote past, if we are ready to receive the message conveyed to us through proper interpretation. In this case Fu-hsi may be understood as the symbol of the ancient minority cultures in southwest China. It is plausible that this method of divination by numbers originated in that area, and was later adopted by the Chinese people as part of their commonly accepted tradition. And the date could be ancient, certainly much earlier than the Shang[u] and Chou dynasties. That is why the origin of the eight trigrams is pushed further back to the days of the legendary sage-emperors. We should also not forget that Fu-hsi is regarded as the symbol standing for a civilization raising herds, which predates the period of Shen-nung[v] who is taken to be the symbol standing for farming.

When we explore along this line of thinking, then we realize that when eight possibilities are not enough, it is quite natural that trigrams may be doubled up to form hexagrams. This interpretation also conforms with the traditional account of the development of the *Book of Changes.*[11] It is said that Fu-hsi invented the eight trigrams, and King Wen[w] (r. 1171-1122 B.C.) developed the sixty-four hexagrams; he also wrote the *kua-tz'u*[x] or the explanation of the text of the whole hexagram and the *yao-tz'u*[y] or the explanation of the component lines. Another version ascribed the *yao-tz'u* to Duke Chou (d. 1094 B.C.) and the ten wings were said to be the work of Confucius (551-479 B.C.). Most modern scholars have rejected this account, as it is impossible for King Wen and Duke Chou to know something after their times, and it is also impossible for a single person to have completed the ten wings. But the traditional account, though perhaps inaccurate, is not without its merit. The book probably evolved during the transitional period from the Yin[z] dynasty to the Chou dynasty at a time of great distress. Its main text was completed in the early Chou, both King Wen and Duke Chou might have had a great deal to do with it. Although Confucius could not have been the author of the ten wings, they were beyond doubt the work of his followers. It was in the hands of these Confucian scholars that a book of divination gradually transformed into a book of philosophy.

A strange phenomenon which received no satisfactory explanation was that since the early Chou for several hundred years there were virtually no traces

of the development of the book. Then suddenly in the late Chou period we find in historical works such as *Tso-chuen*[aa] and *Kuo-yu*[ab] a number of divinations were recorded. The way to do divination was not the same as that practiced in later ages, but there were citations of the explanations of the hexagrams and their component lines. Suddenly the interest in such matters seemed to have gained momentum. And it was during the Warring States period that yin and yang were singled out as the two basic forces working in the universe: this theory was further combined with the doctrine of the Five Agents, and the key figure to develop such ideas was Tsou Yen[ac] (305 - 240 B.C.?).[12] Tsou combined a cyclic philosophy of history with a cosmology to form a comprehensive system of philosophy with serious political implications. His ideas were tremendously influential in his own days. Strangely enough, however, even though his influence persisted throughout the Han[ad] dynasty (206 B.C. - A.D. 220), very few scholars had acknowledged his achievement, perhaps they simply did not want to have association with the bizarre character of his grand philosophical system. His basic idea was that there is a mysterious correlation between the natural phenomena and the human phenomena. The five Agents, i.e., Metal, Wood, Water, Fire, and Earth, must take their turns, and each dynasty is characterized by an agent, later on it will be replaced by another dynasty characterized by the next agent in turn. Tsou appeared to have some connections with the Confucius school, as he urged the rulers to practice virtues according to their station and duties. Anyhow we find that Tsou Yen's ideas were gradually blended with the ideas of followers of Confucius and Mencius. But even though the ten wings might have taken in some of Tsou's ideas, yet they had developed a creative philosophy on the main which put emphasis upon moral commitment and had very little to do with Tsou's deterministic philosophy. Unfortunately, however, most Han scholars, including the great Tung Chung-shu[ae] (c. 179 - c. 104 B.C.) who helped to establish Confucianism as the state orthodoxy endorsed Tsou's cyclic philosophy of history and believed in a strict correlation between natural phenomena and human phenomena. This twist in the history of Chinese thought certainly left its imprint on the way of thinking of the Chinese people for years to come. Even the great Chu Hsi[af] (1130-1200) partially endorsed this approach to the *Book of Changes*. Now the question may be asked: is correlative thinking a thing of the past in an age of science such as ours? This is hardly the case, as A.C. Graham puts it in this way:

> While thinking causally, attention is diverted from the correlating of concepts in the background; whenever there is nothing to put in front, correlative thinking is necessarily in the foreground. In the conduct of ordinary affairs, whenever circumstances are too complex and move too fast for analysis, there is likewise nothing in front of the instantaneous act

of assimilation and differentiation.[13]

# III

The mystical symbolism is, however, gradually superseded by a system of natural symbolism. Each trigram would then stand for a certain natural phenomenon in the universe. For example, in Appendix V it is said,

> (The trigram) *Ch'ien* ☰ is Heaven, round, and is the father.... (The trigram) *K'un* ☷ is Earth and is the mother.... (The trigram) *Chen* ☳ is thunder.... (The trigram) *Sun* ☴ is wood and wind.... (The trigram) *K'an* ☵ is water.... and is the moon.... (The trigram) *Li* ☲ is fire and the sun.... (The trigram) *Ken* ☶ is mountain.... (The trigram) *Tui* ☱ is marsh.[14]

In fact we find that even in seemingly fantastic mythological references there are already certain natural elements in them. For example, in the very first hexagram Ch'ien, dragons are constantly referred to in phrases such as "hidden dragon," "dragon appearing in the field," "flying dragon in the heavens," etc.[15] From a modern viewpoint dragons do not actually exist, hence these are only figurative speeches. But in *Tso Chuen* it was recorded when a dragon was sighted, historians in those days told us stories of the past that dragons were fed by dragon tamers in the service of their rulers and a rational explanation was provided why dragons were rarely seen in later ages.[16] This means that in the ancient time dragons were regarded as real, some modern scholars even speculate that they actually belong to a species of crocodiles.[17] But what really matters here is not even whether dragons actually exist, but rather that dragons were treated as if they were real. Hence there must be certain empirical elements even in seemingly fanciful mythological tales handed down to us from the past. Through the studies of modern scholars such as Kuo Chi-kang,[ag18] Li Ching-chi,[ah19] and Kao Heng,[ai20] we now know that many lines in the *Book of Changes* actually refer to events happened in the past. From this perspective the book may be regarded as a valuable source to study the conditions of the ancient civilization in the past.

When symbols are believed to be in some ways correlated to natural phenomena, they be further employed to invent utensils and institutions at our service. Hu shih[aj] had put it in the following way,

> Thus it is the ideas which have been responsible for the creation of our utensils and institutions. The history of civilization, according to Confucius, has been a long series of successive attempts to realize the 'ideas' or perfect heavenly ideals into human instruments, customs, and

> institutions. Some of Confucius' explanations of the beginning of human institutions are extremely interesting, if not entirely true from the anthropological point of view. The invention of ploughs are, for example., which marked the beginning of agriculture, is held to have been suggested by the idea of increase or growth represented by ☴ (wood) over ☳ (thunder; hence motion). The institution of a midday market for the exchange of wares and goods among the people, is said to have originated in the idea of friction represented by ☲ (fire; hence lightning) and ☳ (thunder).[21]

Hu Shih further pointed out,

> The same view pervades the whole of the Confucian Appendices. All the '*hsiang*[ak] remarks' (Appendix III) separately appended to the sixty-four *kwas*,[a1] are illustrations of the doctrine that our mechanical inventions, religious rites, moral codes, traditional customs, etc. have had their 'formal causes' in the ideas.[22]

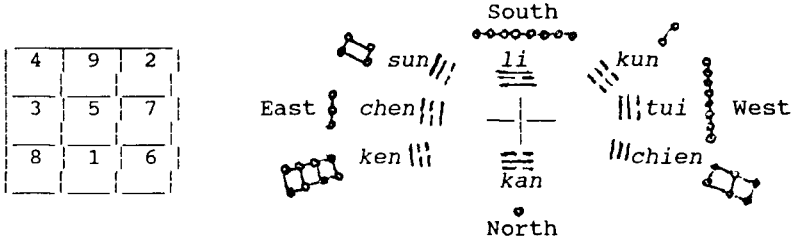
Modern scholars such as Needham would seriously doubt that such an interpretation actually reflects the development of Chinese science in the ancient time.[23] But possibilities of institutions and inventions originating from ideas should not be totally precluded. It is odd that Needham should give high praise for the Yin-Yang school while put down the *Book of Changes*. In fact they are very similar to each other in function: they may have helped the development of science to some extent on the one hand and preclude them from further development on the other hand. Benjamin Schwartz says,

> ...I... question his [Needham's] contrast between the correlative cosmology of Tsou Yen and the system of the *Changes*. Did the five elements and two force theories in themselves generate natural observation, experiment, or technical innovation? Were they not also rather used as categories for classifying and filing? Above all, did not the dominant preoccupations of the correlative cosmologists, like those of the fashioners of the *Book of Changes*, also lie elsewhere. The preoccupation which led to the canonization of the *Book of Changes* as a Confucian classic was based, it would appear, on the continued preoccupation with human destiny and normative behavior in a precarious world full of contingency.[24]

I cannot but agree to Schwartz's criticism of Needham's one-sided view of the *Book of Changes*.

In this article I would like to expand my thesis a little. Instead of talking only about natural symbolism, I propose to discuss rational/natural symbolism, as the *Book of Changes* has a whole system of numbers and forms which are closely related to its understanding of nature. Ancient

people easily had a profound mystical feeling about the numbers, especially those within ten. The Pythagoreans provided one such example, the *hsiang-shu*[am] (forms and numbers) school of the *Book of Changes* provided another example. When numbers are arranged in a certain way, they exhibit certain characteristic which may dazzle the minds of the people, hence it is not uncommon that they are believed to have come out of a divine origin, a rational element is inextricably intertwined with a mystical element: I shall give only one such example to illustrate the situation: the nine rooms of the so-called Ming-t'ang[an] (the Bright Hall) was built according to the numerical system developed from the *Book of Changes*. The shape of the hall is round on top while square at the bottom, it symbolizes that the Heaven is round while the Earth is square. Heaven covers while Earth sustains, the numbers involved may be diagramed as follows:[25]




The image of the diagram is that of a tortoise. The saying goes that "To have nine overhead and one to tread on; three is on the left and seven is on the right; two and four are shoulders; six and eight are feet; five occupies the middle." The sum of each line from whatever direction would come to fifteen. The numbers from one to nine were arranged in such a way that they were called "the forty-five points of the *Lo-shu*,[oa]" they were supposedly the lucky signs obtained from the back of the tortoise of the river Lo. The diagram is actually none other than the magical square in mathematics. Obviously there is a logic in the operation of numbers, only the emphasis may be put either on the aspect of mathematical calculation, or on making use of such mathematical knowledge to design a comprehensive scheme in order to frame all the celestial phenomena and the human events and make judgment on whether they would bring beneficial or harmful results in fortune telling. Most Han scholars were inclined toward the latter approach to the *Book of Changes*.

By the same token, the sixty-four hexagrams can be rendered into a binary arithmetic system. Leibniz acknowledged that some three thousand years ago

Fu-hsi had already got the key to this approach:[26] If we substitute "o" for "_ _" and "1" for "___", then the hexagram *k'un* (☷☷) can be rendered into "oooooo" and *ch'ein* (☰☰) into "111111". The further development of such a binary arithmetic lay the foundation for the invention of modern computers. Surely the Chinese can take pride in the achievements of their ancestors, but they should not delude themselves into thinking that the ancient Chinese arithmetic system implied in the *Book of Changes* was exactly the same as binary arithmetic worked out by Leibniz and his successors, as a subtle difference may be found among the two approaches. Because the Chinese always refuse to separate form from content, they have never developed the kind of pure mathematics or symbolic logic like in the West.

Through the efforts of Needham and his corroborators there remains little doubt that the Chinese have indeed contributed a great deal in the development of science and civilization in the past. There seems to be a limit to their progress however. They appear to have worked on rather different paradigms, for example, they would favor the organic model over the mechanical model.[27] Not only they have missed out on some of the Western achievements, but there are not sufficient evidences to show that they could ever have reached the same results independently unless they learn from the West. But they have indeed achieved something beyond the Western scope, as it is well-known that Chinese acupuncture and medicine are working on quite different premises and principles.

To sum up, side by side with the mystical aspect of the *Book of Changes*, there is also a rational/natural aspect intricably interwoven with it. The classic may be used as a source to study ancient history and society, it may offer certain insights on the development of science in China, and it contains a symbolic system which has certain affinity with the so-called binary arithmetic as developed by Leibniz and his successors. From the scientific perspective, the *Book of Changes* has shown clearly both its merits and limitations.

# IV

As was stated in the last section, Han studies of the *Book of Changes* were dominated by the *hsiang-shu* (forms and numbers) approach. But this is not the only possible approach, and magic and science certainly do not exhaust the meaning of the classic. During the Wei-Chin[ap] period Wang Pi[aq] (226-249) was the first to brush the whole thing aside, and concentrated on *i-li*[ar] (meanings and principles) alone. Wang took the *Book of Changes* primarily

as a philosophical work. Still limited by his time, his interpretation of the classic was based on his understanding of the Taoist philosophy. Then Ch'eng I[as] (1033-1107) of the Sung[at] dynasty continued the *i-li* approach, but he reinterpreted the classic in terms of his Neo-Confucian philosophy. From this perspective Confucius was seen as the author of the ten wings which gave expression to a creative philosophy with profound wisdom, and it was unfortunate that the Han scholars had totally failed to truly understand the significance of the classic.

We have already pointed out that from a historical perspective this view is untenable, as Confucius could not have been the author of the ten wings. But it is indeed possible to reconstruct a creative philosophy from the ten wings which must have been the work of Confucian followers. And it is not without justification that some ideas may be traced back to the old master himself.[28] The *Book of Changes* was the only classic left unburnt after the First Emperor of Ch'in[au] issued orders to destroy the other classics. It was reported in the *Historical Records* that Confucius loved to study the *Book of Changes* at his old age. He taught disciples such as Shang Chu[av] (b. 522 B.C.), and for ten generations the line of transmission was unbroken. It is highly probable that the ten wings were the work of these Confucian scholars, and it is customary for them to ascribe their own works to the old master in order to lend authority to such commentaries. And many ideas were handed down from generation to generation, so it should give us no surprise if they could be traced back to Confucius. The spirit seems to be consistent to what has been taught by Confucius and his followers.

Professor Thome H. Fang[aw] finds a very interesting parallel between the interpretations of the *Book of Odes* and the *Book of Changes*. He says,

> In the Major Preface to the *Book of Odes* it is asserted that there are three different styles of writing poems, i.e. (1) in the language of (factual) depiction, (2) in the language of matched simile or concealed parable, and (3) in the language of exhilarated symbolization. The first is prevalent in epics; the second, in allegories; and the third, in lyrics. It may be said that the first is employed to state the facts; the second, to conceal the meaning of implicit signification; and the third, to add beauty to creative imagination. For a similar reason, the language developed to interpret the formal logical scheme in the *Book of Changes* may be diversified into three different kinds, i.e., the language of factual depiction, the language of implicitly concealed signification, and the language of creative imagination in virtue of explicitly significant symbolization.[29]

Confucius' main effort to interpret classics lay in the third category. This explains how he could put new wine into old bottles. He did this to the *Book*

*of Odes* as well as the *Book of Changes*. Professor Fang says,

> Henceforward the *Book of Changes* as a treatise of historical depiction was turned over into a systematic philosophy of change.[30]

Or to use our own terminology, a system of natural symbolism has been transformed into a system of cosmological symbolism. Professor Fang proceeds to describe the process of transformation as follows:

> And this new philosophy of change initiated by Confucius himself and, upon the evidences of Ssu-ma Tan[ax] and Ssu-ma Ch'ien,[ay] continued in further elaboration from Shang Chu onward, was to be diversified into four different forms.
>
> (1) There came into view a new philosophy of enlivened Nature which, unlike the mechanic order of material elements and physical processes as conceived a little later by the Yin-yang school of materialism, was permeated with the dynamical confluence or consanguinity of life..... Nature is power or vital impetus creative in advance and conducive to the fulfillment and consummation of life partaken by all beings. The cardinal doctrine of the vital impetus in the process of harmonious fulfillment was set forth by Confucius in the *Tuan Chuan*[az]--the Compendiums, in the *Hsi-ts'u-Chuan*[ba]--the Conspectus, and in the early sections of the *Shuo-kua-chuan*[bb]--the scholia on the Hexagrams....
>
> (2) There emerged, on the basis of an appreciated enlivened Nature, achievement of intrinsic moral goodness in human life, adorned with beauty... Such a conception of moral-aesthetic perfection constitutive of the unique human personality was first set forth by Confucius in the *Ch'ien-K'un Wen-yen-chuan*[bc]--corollaries to *Ch'ien* and *K'un* and more systematically in the *shang-chuan*[bd]--the symbolics emphasizing the moral achievements of great men.
>
> (3) Upon the completion of a systematic philosophy of Nature and an all-round philosophy of moral-aesthetic perfection of human personality, there was developed a general theory of value in the form of the supreme Good or absolute worth assimilating into it all the relative ranks of values prevalent in the entire universe. This is the cardinal idea in the *Hsi-ts'u-chuan*--the important Conspectus of the whole book.
>
> (4) On the foundation of individual creative nature emerging into the perfection of humanity, and of consummation in the achievement of the supreme Good on a cosmic scale, Confucius finally formulated a general ontology of the fullness of Being in its entirely which is all through invested with value. It is really a value-centric ontology which we should take for the highest achievement of Confucianism as is found in the *Book of Change*.[31]

It may be questionable that Professor Fang ascribed everything to Confucius, but it is certainly not unreasonable to ascribe the above-mentioned insights to Confucius and his followers. Professor Fang further elaborated on a set of four principles that are at work in this philosophy of change. They are:

(1) The Principle of Life
(2) The Principle of Extensive Connection
(3) The Principle of Creative Creativity
(4) The Principle of Creative Life as a Process of Value-realization[32]

And he had summarized their interrelationship as follows:

> Metaphysically, the philosophy of change is a system of dynamic ontology based upon the process of creative creativity as exhibited in the incessant change of time as well as a system of general axiology wherein the origin and development of the idea of the Supreme Good is shown in the light of comprehensive harmony. Thus the principle of extensive connection asserts at the same time that the confluence of life, permeating all beings under heaven and earth, partakes of the creative process of time, and achieves, as a natural consequence, the form of the supreme Good. From the viewpoint of organicism, no set of fundamental principles formulated in a system of metaphysics can be cut and thrust into an air-tight compartment without interpenetration. And, therefore, the principle of extensive connection serves as a prelude to the principle of creative creativity which, in turn, furnishes a keynote to the principle of life in the process of value-realization[33]

Professor Fang may be said to have given a phenomeological description of the philosophy of change. He has highly prized this philosophy, as man is seen as an integral part of nature. It is in sharp contrast to the kind of scientific materialism developed in the West, which has as its consequence the bifurcation of nature. Professor Fang has commented on the situation as follows:

> For they [the majority of modern European savants], much influenced by physical science, cannot but assume that the universe consists of a system of inert matter. The universe, in their opinion, is made up of the ultimate units of matter and energy, distributed and redistributed in all sorts of ways in observance of rigid mechanical laws. It is true that this habit of thought, as exhibited in the procedure of scientific investigations, has worked successfully, giving rise to a system of laws which are abstract and accurate.
>
> But if the scientific materialism of this type is made use of in the very attempt to account for human life, then it will be overwhelmed with insurmountable difficulties. And, therefore, modern European

> philosophers, for the sake of formulating tenable theories concerning the meaning and value of human life, must start anew with different sets of assumptions. The trouble is that they are always making a great divide between matter and spirit. It is rather hard for them to bring things together which have been rashly severed. All through history they have been imposing on themselves an arduous task of developing a system of philosophy in which Weltanschauung and Lebensanschauung will work harmoniously together. But this effort of theirs, I am afraid, will eventually result in contradiction, if not in failure.
>
> With regard to this problem, the Chinese philosophers have worked out a theory which is quite satisfactory. The universe, considered from our viewpoint, is fundamentally the confluence and concrescence of Universal Life in which the material conditions and the spiritual phenomena are so coalesced and interpenetrated that there can be no breach between them. And, therefore, as we live in the world, we find no difficulty in infusing the spirit into matter and immersing the matter in spirit. Matter manifests the significance of what is spiritual and spirit permeates the core of what is material. In a word, matter and spirit ooze together in a state of osmosis concurrently sustaining life, cosmic as well as human.[34]

One may agree or disagree with Professor Fang's appraisal of Chinese philosophy, but it is true that the Commentaries of the *Book of Changes* have given expression to a universal philosophy of life which has dominated the Chinese types of cosmology throughout the ages.

## V

After the philosophy of change was shaped in the Commentaries, it was speculated on how Fu-hsi invented the trigrams:

> Of old, when Pao Hsi[bc] [Fu-hsi] ruled all beneath Heaven, looking up, he contemplated the emblems (i.e., sun, moon, stars, etc.) exhibited in Heaven, and looking down, surveyed the patterns shown on Earth. He contemplated the markings of birds and beasts and the suitabilities of the ground. Near at hand, in his own person, he found things for consideration, and the same at a distance, in things in general. Thereupon he first devised the eight trigrams to show fully the attributes of spirit-like intelligence (in its operations), and to classify the qualities of myriads of things.[35]

Obviously this was the result of rationalization in a later age. But one thing seems to be certain: whoever invented the eight trigrams in the past first started with a reading of the mysteries of Heaven, then found applications in human affairs. For followers of the philosophy of change, there is indeed an

intimate relationship between Heaven and mankind, and men have always taken Heaven as his model. It is said,

> The character of the great man is identical with that of Heaven and Earth; his brilliance is identical with that of the sun and the moon; his order is identical with that of the four seasons, and his good and evil fortunate are identical with those of spiritual beings. He may precede Heaven and Heaven will not act in opposition to him. He may follow Heaven, but will act only as Heaven at the time would do.[36]

Such thought is thoroughly consistent with the sentiment of Confucius as reported in *The Analects*:

> Confucius said, 'I do not wish to say anything.' Tzu-kung[bf] said, 'If you do not say anything, what can we little disciples ever learn to pass on to others?' Confucius said, 'Does Heaven (*T'ien*)[bg] say anything? The four seasons run their course and all things are produced. Does Heaven say anything?'[37]

Heaven here should be understood as the creative principle that works incessantly in the universe, and clearly Confucius was taking Heaven as his model. But if Heaven does not speak, then the emphasis would naturally shift to man who is conscious at working hard to carry out the mission bestowed on him by following the example of Heaven. Hence Confucius said, "It is man who can make the Way great, and not the Way that can make man great."[38] Confucius' humanism should not be understood as one which is totally cut off from Heaven, but rather that for the Way of Heaven to be actualized, it would have to be dependent on the work of man. Subsequent development of Confucian thought through Mencius, the *Doctrine of the Mean*, and the Commentaries of the *Book of Changes* shows that cosmological symbolism is gradually superseded by ethical symbolism with profound metaphysical implications.

It is by no means an accident that Mencius (371 - 289 B.C.?) was honored as representing the orthodox line of Confucian thought, as he struck a perfect balance between transcendence and immanence in the fulcrum of man. He said,

> He who exerts his mind to the utmost knows his nature. He who knows his nature knows Heaven. To preserve one's mind and to nourish one's nature is the way to serve Heaven. Not to allow any double-mindedness regardless of longevity or brevity of life, but to cultivate one's person and wait for [destiny (*ming*, fate, Heaven's decree or mandate) to take its own course] is the way to fulfil one's destiny.[39]

Wing-tsit Chan's[bh] comments on the Confucian theory of "waiting for destiny" are as follows:

> According to this doctrine, man should exert his utmost in moral endeavor and leave whatever is beyond our control to fate. It frankly admits that there are things beyond our control but that is no reason why one should relax in his moral endeavor. The tendency was definitely one of moralism and humanism. The Confucian theory represents the conviction of enlightened Chinese in general.[40]

This explains why Mencius never discussed the *Book of Changes*, apparently he would not have anything to do with divination. Mencius' rival Hsun Tzu[bi] (fl. 298 - 238 B.C.) went even further to say that "those who are well-versed in the *Book of Changes* would not practice divination,"[41] even though he often quoted from the hexagrams to support his position. Thus these two major Confucian philosophers after Confucius developed philosophies which had nothing to do with those ideas popularized by the Yin-Yang School. Perhaps Hsun Tzu went a bit too far, as he adopted a totally naturalistic interpretation of Heaven, and cut man off from the transcendent source. Both *The Great Learning* and *The Doctrine of the Mean,* however, gave expressions to thoughts that are consistent with Mencius' ideas. The opening statement of *The Great Learning* said, "The Way of learning to be great (or adult education) consists in manifesting the clear character [within the self], loving the people, and abiding (*chih*)[bj] in the highest good,"[42] while the opening statement of *The Doctrine of the Mean* said, "What Heaven (*T'ien*) imparts to man is called human nature. To follow our nature is called the Way (Tao).[bk] Cultivating the Way is called education."[43] It is not difficult to find that some statements in the Commentaries of the *Book of Changes* were thoroughly consistent with this line of thought. For example, in Ch. 5 of the Appended Remarks, Pt. 1, it is said,

> The successive movement of yin and yang constitute the Way (Tao). What issues from the Way is good, and that which realizes it is the individual nature. The man of humanity (*jen*)[ak] sees it and calls it humanity. The man of wisdom sees it and calls it wisdom. And the common people act according to it daily without knowing it. In this way the Way of the superior man is fully realized. It [spirit] is manifested in humanity but is concealed in the functioning. It promotes all things without sharing the anxiety of the sage. How perfect is its eminent virtue and great achievement! Its achievement is great because it possesses everything, and its virtue is abundant because it renovates things every day.
>
> Changes mean production and reproduction. *Ch'ien* means the completion of forms and *k'un* means to model after them. Divination means to go to the utmost of the natural course of events in order to know the future.

> Affairs mean to adapt and accommodate accordingly. And that which is unfathomable in the operation of yin and yang is called spirit.[44]

The key transformation here is that in the cosmic process the transcendent Way of Heaven is internalized in man and becomes his nature, and what is realized is exuberant with values. This position is unmistakably Confucian, even though certain Taoist and Yin Yang ideas had been absorbed into its philosophy. Divination here was given a totally rational interpretation, and a creative philosophy has emerged from primitive beliefs in supernatural powers. Moreover, the relationship between Heaven and man is turned around. Although man has got his endowment from Heaven, it is through man that the Way of Heaven is manifested.

Now we can see why the Sung Neo-Confucian philosophers especially honored the Commentaries of the *Book of Changes* along with the so-called Four Books, i.e., *The Great Learning*, *The Analects*, and *The Mencius*. And it is interesting to note that a similar process of development from an emphasis on Heaven to that of man can be found in the early Sung period. Chou Tun-i[bm] (1017-1073) was honored as the pioneer of Neo-Confucianism, his essay: "An Explanation of the Diagram of the Great Ultimate" had exerted profound influence on subsequent Neo-Confucian philosohies.[45] Chou had further developed what he learned from the *Book of Changes* into a comprehensive scheme of cosmological philosophy with man as the center of the universe. Later scholars pointed out that the Diagram came out of a Taoist source, but the philosophy Chou developed in his explanation of the Diagram was clearly Confucian.[46] He was not so much interested in the Taoist discipline to return to the root as in the construction of a creative philosophy abounded with cosmological symbolisms. Another leading Neo-Confucian philosopher Chang Tsai[bn] (1020-1077) also showed a strong interest in cosmological speculations. It was in the two Ch'eng brothers, Cheng Hao[bo] (1032 - 1085) and Ch'eng I (1033 - 1107), who studied under Chou when they were young scholars that we find the decisive turn from the emphasis on cosmological speculation to ethical/metaphysical realization. The following anecdote gives the best illustration of the case in point.

> Master Yang [Yang Hsiung,[bp] (53 B.C. - A.D. 18) said, 'To observe Heaven and Earth, then one would get a vision of the sage.' I-Chuang[bq] [Ch'eng I] said, 'That is not correct. To observe the sage, then one would get a vision of Heaven and Earth.'[47]

The Ch'eng brothers did not show much interest in cosmological speculation, their effort had been to realize the metaphysical depth in every human being through their moral endeavor based on their endowment from Heaven. The

proper procedure is not from Heaven to man, but the other way round: one must start from what is near at hand, and then may reach as far as the entire universe.

This line of thought was picked up again by contemporary Neo-Confucian philosophers. Professor T'ang Chun-i[br] (1909-1978) reported a story about his progress in appreciating the deeper insights implied in the *Book of Changes.*[48] When he first published his essay: "On Chinese Cultural Spirit," most teachers and friends complimented his accomplishment. Only Professor Hsiung Shih-li[bs] (1885 - 1968) dissented. He pointed out that Professor T'ang was wrong in thinking that the Philosophy of Change did not have a *T'i*[bt] (literally a substance, meaning an ultimate metaphysical principle), based on the saying that "What is divine has no rules and Changes have no substance." At first Professor T'ang did not accept Professor Hsiung's criticism, but later on he realized that it is not true that there is not an ultimate metaphysical principle in the Philosophy of Change. After all, it was Professor Hsiung who had shown his profound insight, as he had been able to grasp the most important message of *Changes*.

Professor Hsiung first engaged in revolutionary activities to overthrow the Ch'ing[bu] dynasty, then he had studied Buddhist philosophy, and finally was converted to Confucianism. Since then he worked hard throughout his life trying to expound his insight into the mystery of life through his understanding of *Changes.*[49] He had exerted profound influence on his disciples. One of them, Professor Mou Tsung-san,[bv] has developed a most original philosophy among contemporary Neo-Confucian philosophers.[50] He studied Kant and took him as the point of departure in order to show the limitations of traditional Western philosophies and the insights of Chinese philosophies. According to him metaphysics must be distinguished into two kinds: the so-called *shih-yu*[bw] metaphysics (metaphysics of reality) and *ching-jie*[bx] metaphysics (metaphysics of realization). The first kind means a metaphysics of substance which has been developed in the West from Aristotle to the Rationalists. This kind of metaphysics takes ultimate reality to be something eternal and objective, but it has lost its appeal owing to the criticism of Hume and Kant. Kant reopened the door for a new kind of metaphysics through the postulates of Practical Reason. It is here that Professor Mou finds the limitations of traditional Western philosophy. As Kant was limited by his Christian background, it was impossible for him to establish a moral metaphysics. But in the Chinese tradition, the finite (man) has always had access to the infinite (Heaven). It is through the discipline of the self that man can be united with Heaven. Therefore Professor Mou claims that the three major traditions in China, i.e., Confucianism, Buddhism

and Taoism, all assert that man has intellectual intuition in the sense that man, even though finite, can achieve the realization of the Way. Therefore, for the Chinese philosophers the ultimate is not just a postulate; the Way is manifested in reality, and there is interpenetration of phenomenon and reality. Professor Mou has traced his insight back to Sung-Ming[by] Neo-Confucian philosophies. He pays special tribute to Ch'eng Hao's interpretation of *Changes* and gives the Neo-Confucian insight a contemporary reinterpretation by contrast with Western philosophies. From this perspective the most profound message of the *Book of Changes* is the realization of the most simple and the changeless amidst changes. And again the insight can be further traced back to Confucius, as he said that, "In the morning, hear the Way, at night, die content!"[51] It is by realizing the spiritual fountain within the self that one can become a person with ultimate commitment, who knows that it is impossible to achieve his goals but keeps trying and makes himself a creative person.[52]

# VI

In the above I have outlined the four dimension of thought expressed through four different kinds of symbolism we find in the *Book of Changes*. The descriptions may be sketchy, but the four different directions are unmistakable. All four approaches are still thriving today. For example, *fung-shui*[bz] (geomancy) is still a way of life for the common people in a Chinese community. Acupuncture and Chinese medicine are worthy of study. Contemporary philosophers are still busy trying to recapture the messages of the *Book of Changes* through their effort to give reinterpretation of cosmological, ethical and metaphysical symbolism they find in the classic. As early as the beginning of the Ch'ing dynasty, when the royal libraries were compiled, there were already more than three thousand items written on the classic. Even today, enthusiasm for the classic has by no means died away. Every year more books and articles are published to give new interpretations. But their accounts are often contradictory to one another. In studying the *Book of Changes* it is like entering into a labyrinth. How is it possible to find the clue of Ariadne which will lead us out of the maze?

We could, perhaps, do so by way of elimination. Many mainland Chinese scholars still continue what was started by the May Fourth Movement in 1919: they have attempted to discredit the classic by adopting a strategy of demystification. They have tried to show that many statements in the *Book of Changes* really do not have any profound messages: some of the statements merely recorded what happened in the ancient past, others

represent superstition of a very primitive kind that ought to be discarded by more civilized peoples, and the best among them can offer us no more than rational thought and dialectics in its first stage. Anyhow the *Book of Changes* should be studied as merely a document of historical significance, but not much else. The interpretations of later Confucian scholars can be regarded as fabrications with the purpose of supporting a kind of feudal morality in the interest of the ruling classes.

This approach ignores the fact that all classics in the world have a perennial attraction for the future. Whitehead declared that subsequent European philosophies consisted of a series of footnotes to Plato.[53] Naturally what had been written thousands or hundreds years ago cannot be applied today without making massive modifications; therefore I do think some sort of demythologization is inevitable. But I would agree with Tillich that complete demythologization is neither possible nor desirable.[54] If the symbols of the Christian tradition can still be meaningful today, messages conveyed through the *Book of Changes,* concerning the union between Heaven and man, can also be meaningful today, only they need to be given new interpretations and application. Symbols live and die, they cannot be artificially manufactured. In a way the *Book of Changes* has dominated the traditional ways of thinking for centuries in China like the Bible in the West.

When scholars exaggerate the contributions of the *Book of Changes* to the development of science, they should be reminded that whatever was accomplished did not yet pass the threshold of modern science. Needham is certainly right to urge us not to overestimate the impact of this classic on science. But his attempt to dismiss it as providing merely a vast filing system, without making any positive contributions to science, seems to go to the other extreme. For example, the *Book of Changes* with its yin-yang, five agents model did provide a framework for traditional Chinese medicine to develop into a distinct system of its own. The only thing we know now is that Chinese medicine does operate on a different paradigm; it produces cures and effects that must not be ignored by Western medicine. What needs to be done is to find an even more comprehensive framework to include the accomplishments of Chinese medicine in its system.

When the Chinese refused to separate form from content, they paid a dear price in the development of their civilization. Hence we find that the Chinese failed to develop a formal logic as well as the mechanical model of physics like in the West. It is quite true that the Chinese have a great deal to learn from the West, if they want to catch up with the West in science and technology. Ironically, however, in moving toward the post-modern era, we

now find that Western science and technology can also create serious problems. Certainly they did not bring us all the blessings as believed by eighteenth century enlightenment thinkers. They can also bring about dehumanization, upset of ecology, and many other harmful consequences, if they are allowed to expand without being kept within a certain limit. Professor Thome Fang has already pointed out the merit of a Chinese cosmology based on the model of the *Book of Changes*. Perhaps for certain practical purposes the abstractions needed for the development of Western science and technology have been a necessity, but they must be put in proper perspective. The holistic view of man and nature should not be utterlly forgotten and discarded. We need to reconstruct some of the traditional insights and give them contemporary reinterpretation. It is not difficult for modern scholars to see that there is indeed a certain affinity between the philosophy of Whitehead and the *Book of Changes*. It is perhaps possible for us to develop a new cosmology by looking for a synthesis between tradition and modernity, and East and West. Northrop has already pointed out a general direction,[55] but it will take more scholars and greater efforts to work together to overcome the difficulties we face nowadays.

Whether a new organic model will work in the world of science is not for us to tell, it has to produce concrete results before it can be regarded as a new paradigm for another age to come. But no speculation is needed when we turn to the ethical and metaphysical dimensions of man. Kant has shown decisively we cannot establish a metaphysics by way of scientific generalization. There is no way to prove that we have freedom of the will; that is why Kant was forced to treat it as a postulate. But Kant's approach is not the only possible approach. If we start with pure reason, it is inevitable that we will come up with a theory like Kant's. But if we start from practical reason at the very beginning, then the problem will be seen under a totally different light. This is exactly why we need to review the Chinese approach to the problem. One can never establish that life is meaningful either by logical deduction or empirical generalization. It is by way of the realization of the humanity (*jen*) and creativity (*sheng*)[ac] within ourselves that the problem of meaning of life is naturally dissolved. Therefore Wang Yang-ming[cb] says,

> The great man regards Heaven and Earth and the myriad things as one body. He regards the world as one family and the country as one person. As to those who make a cleavage between objects and distinguish between the self and others, they are small men. That the great man can regard Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things as one body is not because he deliberately wants to do so, but because it is natural to the humane nature of his mind that he does so. Forming one body with Heaven, Earth, and the myriad of things is not only true of the great man. Even the mind of

> the small man is no different. Only he himself makes it small.... Hence, if it is not obscured by selfish desires, even the mind of the small man has the humanity that forms one body with all as does the mind of the great man. As soon as it is obscured by selfish desires, even the mind of the great man will be divided and narrow like that of the small man. Thus the learning of the great man consists entirely in getting rid of the obscuration of selfish desires in order by his own efforts to make manifest his clear character, so as to restore the condition of forming one body with Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things, a condition that is originally so, that is all. It is not outside of the original substance something can be added.[56]

Thus one must start with one's commitment to the Way in order to realize the depth dimension within the self. It is here we find the changeless amidst changes. Wang Yang-ming says,

> *Liang-chih*[cc] [innate knowledge] is the same as changes. As the Way, it changes frequently. It changes and moves without staying in one place, flowing about into any one of the six places of the hexagram. It ascends and descends without any constancy, and its elements of strength (yang) and weakness (yin) interchange. It cannot be considered as an invariable standard. It changes to suit the circumstances. How can this *liang-chih* be grasped? When one understand it thoroughly, he is a sage.[57]

If the realization of the innermost depth of a human being transcends time, the message is all the more pertinent for the contemporary situation when humanity is under most serious threat by external factors. It is the effort of contemporary Neo-Confucian philosophers to make this message again meaningful for people today. I think this is the most significant among their contributions.

Now that we have examined each of the four dimensions of thought expressed by four different kind of symbolism found in the *Book of Changes*. How are they related to one another? Is it possible to find a unity among them? So far we have combined a historical approach with a structural approach. We find that from a historical perspective mystical symbolism comes first, followed by rational/natural symbolism, cosmological symbolism, and ethical/metaphysical symbolism. The genetic order of them cannot be reversed. But once these symbolisms have been developed, they exist side by side, and there could be backsides, we cannot presume that they develop according to a linear progressive sequence. Each symbolism has shown distinct characteristics and cannot be reduced to another symbolism, and we can give a phenomenological description of these characteristics. Hence a structural, phenomenological approach must not be confused with the genetic, historical approach.[58] As the subject matters are different, it

seems impossible to find a common denominator for all of them. But Cassirer's philosophy of culture has helped to point toward a new direction. He says,

> Here we are under no obligation to prove the substantial unity of man. Man is no longer considered as a simple substance which exists in itself and is to be known by itself. His unity is conceived as a functional unity. Such a unity does not presuppose a homogeneity of the various elements of which it consists. Not merely does it admit of, even it requires, a multiplicity and multiformity of its constituent parts. For this is a dialectical unity, a coexistence of contraries.
>
> 'Men do not understand,' said Heraclitus, 'how that which is torn in different directions comes into accord with itself--harmony in contrariety, as in the case of the bow and the lyre.' In order to demonstrate such a harmony we need not prove the identity or similarity of the different forces by which it is produced. The various forms of human culture are not held together by an identity in their nature but by a conformity in their fundamental task. If there is an equipoise in human culture it can be described as a dynamic, not as a static equilibrium; it is the result of a struggle between opposing forces. This struggle does not exclude that 'hidden harmony' which, according to Heraclitus, 'is better than that which is obvious.'[59]

As the *Book of Changes* encompasses the whole realm of human culture, Cassirer's reflection has important bearing on our study of the classic. I find that the Neo-Confucian dictum: "Principle is one, but manifestations are many" provides a clue for us to solve our problems by moving along the same direction Cassirer took. In early Sung dynasty Chang Tsai published a very influential essay: "The Western Inscription" in which he said,

> Heaven [Ch'ien] is my father and Earth [*K'un*] is my mother, even such a small creature as I finds an intimate place in their midst.
>
> Therefore that which fills the universe I regard as my body and that which directs the universe I consider as my nature.
>
> All people are my brothers and sisters, and all things are my companions.[60]

This essay caused a lot of discussions in those days. Yang Shih[cd] (1053 - 1153) had the suspicion that Chang Tsai was teaching the Mohist doctrine of universal love and not the Confucian doctrine of graded love. Wing-tsit Chan provide us the background as follows:

> The question whether this universal love is similar to that of Buddhism and Mohism raises an important issue; for if it were, it would destroy the

> orthodox Confucian doctrine of love with distinctions. Yang Shih himself objected that the essay deals only with the substance of *Jen* but not its function, but as Ch'eng I explained to him, it is precisely in harmonizing substance and function that the 'Western Inscription' is of great significance to Confucian ethics. Underlying the essay, according to Ch'eng, is Chang's epoch-shaking theory that 'Principle is one but its manifestations are many.' The universal love, as Ch'en Ch'un[ce] (Ch'en Pei-hsi,[cf] 1153 - 1217) has observed, is not mere identification with all things, but the actual operation of principle which combines all as one. It is principle that love should be universal (as substance), but it is also principle that there should be special affection for parents (as function) because they are the root of one's life. Thus the doctrine of universal love and that of the traditional Confucian doctrine of love with distinctions are harmonized. Yang Shih himself has said, 'As we know, the principle is one, and that is why there is love. The functions are different, the applications [of *jen*] cannot be without distinctions.'[61]

Ch'eng I's answer to Yang Shih was the first time that the famous dictum *li-i-feng-shu*[cg] (Principle is one while the manifestations are many) was formulated in the Neo-Confucian tradition, and its significance cannot be over-estimated. Clearly, for Neo-Confucian philosophers, the principle of *jen* was their ultimate concern, and for them this principle was identified with the principle of *sheng-sheng*[ch] (creative creativity) of the *Book of Changes*. Creativity must be manifested in various diverse forms, hence its central theme: "Heaven and man in union" finds its various expressions in the four different kinds of symbolism like in the music of a symphony.

In mystical symbolism we find that there appears to be a mystical union between man and Heaven. Although such a primordial unity was long broken when civilization was developed to a certain stage, yet the process of demystification or demythologization cannot be carried to the extreme without producing harmful consequences. Modern man is totally cut off from nature and becomes a stranger in the universe. Anxiety is the inescapable result as has been amply described by contemporary existentialist writers. As Kant pointed out, we can never prove that there is any purpose in the world of nature, but we must still feel awed by the stars in the heaven and the moral laws of man. There is still something sacred about our life; it is in this sense that a little myth is needed even for a civilized man.

In rational/natural symbolism we find that "Heaven and man in union" is expressed through a totally different fashion. We must formulate hypotheses and design experiments in order to find verification by empirical evidences. It is untenable to maintain a dualism between formal sciences and empirical sciences like the logical positivists,[62] otherwise it would become totally

unexplainable why mathematics find such ample use in empirical sciences unless there is certain relationship between the mathematical order and the physical order. Northrop's idea of epistemic correlation has pointed toward the right direction to solve the problem.[63]

In cosmological symbolism we find that "Heaven and man in union" is expressed through a philosophy of comprehensive harmony formulated by Chinese philosophers throughout the ages, and the *Book of Changes* remains a source of inspiration to give new expressions to this philosophy. It is true that cosmological speculation is not in vogue today. But it is not impossible for us to form certain world hypotheses as suggested by S.C. Pepper.[64] The adventure of ideas is somewhat beyond the scope of normal science as portrayed by Kuhn.[65] One insight offered by Chinese philosophers is that value must have an ontological basis; it cannot be adequately explained through emotive responses or subjective preferences. *True, Is* and *Ought* pertain to two different realms; they should be kept distinct, but they must not be separated from each other. The Chinese view is somewhat congruent to Whitehead's attempt to find values in the structure of being.[66] Future explorations along this line may be encouraged.

In ethical/metaphysical symbolism we find that "Heaven and man in union" is expressed through the establishment of an ultimate concern through the realization of a dimension within the self. Creative manifestations must find their root in creativity. This is perhaps the most profound insight offered by the Chinese philosophers. For whoever deny that there is a depth dimension in the self, Wang Yang-ming has this to say:

> Their behavior resembles that of the descendants of the rich clan, who have been careless in their management of the inherited property, gradually forgetting and losing it till they themselves become poor beggars.[67]

By his endowment man is able to be united with Heaven, which is not just the totality of nature, but a transcendent creative ontological principle that works incessantly in the universe. Such searches do not pertain to the realm of science but to the realm of moral metaphysics, and only those who make their ultimate commitment to the Way and go through proper discipline may find the union with this source.

Principle is one while the manifestation are many. It seems that the West has paid too much attention to the manifestations while neglected the Principle, and the East has sticked too much to the Principle itself and somewhat neglected to find novel ways to manifest the principle. Now it is high time for us to seek a golden mean in order to realize the wisdom we inherit from

the *Book of Changes*. The classic is no longer understood to give us a closed system. It is pointing to a direction. The Principle of Creativity is seeking ever anew expressions. It is here we find the meeting point between tradition and modernity, East and West. Inadequate as it may, this introduction is offered as an example to illustrate the possibility of revitalization and reconstruction of Chinese Philosophy, the central theme of the Fifth International Conference of Chinese Philosophy of the International Society for Chinese Philosophy.

# Notes

1. Shu-hsien Liu, "The Use of Analogy and Symbolism in Traditional Chinese Philosophy," *The Journal of Chinese Philosophy I* (1974), 316.

2. My article: "On Mystical Symbolism in the *Book of Changes*" (in Chinese) is published by The Institute of East Asian Philosophies in Singapore and included in its Occasional Paper and Monograph series.

3. Cf. Fung Yu-lan,[ci] *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, trans. Derk Bodde (Princeton: Princeton University Press, two volumes, 1952, 1953), Vol. I, pp. 379-380. In fact the great Chu Hsi (1130-1200) had already pointed out that the classic was originally a book of divination, only at a later date that it was transformed into a philosophical work. He inherited the *hsiang-shu* (forms and numbers) approach from Shao Yung[cj] (1011-1077) and *i-li* (meanings and principles) approach from Ch'eng I (1033-1107), and tried to strike a balance between the two approaches. We are very much indebted to Chu Hsi as it is largely through him that we learn about the way to practice divination with stalks today. From our perspective, however, Chu Hsi's synthesis cannot be considered a success, because he took over a Han cosmology which was eclipsed by later achievements in science, and he failed to penetrate into the depth of the ethical/metaphysical dimension of thought in the *Book of Changes* as developed by Ch'eng Hao (1032-1085). For the difference between the Ch'eng brothers, see Mou Tsung-san's monumental work on Neo-Confucian philosophy, *Hsin-t'i yu hsing-t'i*[ck] [Mind and Nature] (Taipei:[cl] Cheng-chung,[cm] three volumes, 1968-69), Vol. II, pp. 21-54, 259-275.

4. Cf. Wing-tsit Chan trans. and comp., *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 262.

5. Cf. Hsu Hsi-tai[cn] and Lou Yu-tung,[co] "*Hsi-Chou kua-hua shih-shuo*"[cp] [An Attemp to Give Explanations of Diagrams of Hexagrams of West Chou] *Chung-kuo Che-hsueh*[cq] [Chinese Philosophy] 3 (August, 1980), 13-19.

6. Famous scholars such as Kuo Mu-jo[cr] and Tang Lan[cs] had maintained such a viewpoint.

7. Cf. Chang Wu:[ct] "New Results, Characteristic, and Directions in

Research on the *Book of Changes*" in *chou-i tsung-heng lu*[cu] [Essays on the *Book of Changes*] (Hupei:[cv] Publications, 1986), pp. 611-612.

8. Wang Ning-sheng, "*Pa-kua chi-yuan*"[cw] [The Origins of Trigrams] Kao-ku[cx] [Archaeology], No. 145 (1976), 242-245.

9. This account was handed down to us since Ssu-ma Ch'ien's *Historical Records.*

10. Cf. Yuan Ko,[cy] *Chung-kuo ku-tai shen-hua*[cz] [Ancient Chinese Mythology] (Peking:[da] Chung-hua,[db] 1985), pp. 41-51.

11. See Note 9.

12. Cf. Chan *Source Book*, pp. 244-250.

13. A.C. Graham, "Yin-Yang and the Nature of Correlative Thinking" *IEAP Occasional Paper and Monograph Series No. 6*, p.8.

14. Fung Yu-lan *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, ed. by Derk Bodde (New York: The Free Press, 1966), p. 141.

15. These are taken from the *yao-tz'u* or the explanation of the component lines of the hexagrams.

16. The discussions were recorded in the twenty-ninth year of Duke Chao[dc] of Lu.[dd]

17. For example, Ho Hsin[de] of the Institute of Literature, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences maintains that dragons were actually a species of crocodiles: *Crocodilus porosus*.

18. Kuo chi-kang first started the trend; see his contributions in *Ku-shih-pien*[df] [Discussions in Ancient Chinese History] (Shanghai: Ku-chi[dg] Publications, 1982), Vol. III, Pt. I.

19. Li Ching-chi, *Chou-i t'an-yuan*[dh] [An Exploration of the Origins of the *Book of Changes*] (Peking: Chung-hua, 1978).

20. Kao Heng, *Chou-i ku-ching ching-chu*[di] [A Contemporary Commentary on the Ancient Text of the *Book of Changes*] (Hong Kong: Chung-

hua,1980).

21. Hu Shih, *The Development of the Logical Method in Ancient China* (Shanghai, The Oriental Book Co., 1928), p. 37.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 38.

23. Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilization in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), Vol. 2, pp. 326-327.

24. Benjamin I Schwartz, *The World of Thought in Ancient China* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1985), p.400.

25. Cf. Jen Chi-yu,[dj] *Chung-kou che-hsueh fa-chen-shih (Chin-Han)*[dk] [The Influence of Chinese Philosophy (Chin-Han)] (Peking: People's Publications, 1983), p. 452.

26. Chu Ch'ien-chih,[dl] *Chung-kuo che-hsueh tui Ou-chou ti yin-hsiang*[dm] [The Influence of Chinese Philosophy on Europe] (Fu-chou:[dn] Fu-chien[do] People's Publications, 1983), pp. 229-233.

27. Cf. Thome H. Fang, *The Chinese View of Life* (Hong Kong: The Union Press, 1957), pp 44-86.

28. Cf. Thome H. Fang, *Chinese Philosophy: Its Spirit and Its Development* (Taipei: Linking Publishing Co., 1981), pp. 102-104.

29. Ibid., p. 99. Please note that Professor Fang Translated *I Ching*[dp] into *The Book of Change*.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 103.

31. *Ibid.*, pp. 103-104.

32. *Ibid.*, pp. 106-112.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 109.

34. Fang, *The Chinese View of Life*, pp. 51-52.

35. Fung, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, Vol. I, pp. 393-394.

36. Chan, *Source Book*, p. 264.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 47.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 78.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 79.

41. *The Hsun-tzu*, Ch. 27.

42. Chan, *Source Book*, p. 86.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 98.

44. *Ibid.*, p. 266.

45. *Ibid.*, pp. 463 - 464.

46. Fung, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 442.

47. Wai-Shu[dq] [Additional Works], 11:3b, in the *Erh-Ch'eng ch'uan-shu*[dr] [Complete Works of the Two Ch'engs], (SPPY ed.), transaction mine.

48. T'ang Chun-i, *Chung-kuo wen-hua chih ching-shen chia-chin*[ds] [The Spiritual Values of Chinese Culture] (Taipei: Cheng-chung, 1953), Preface, p. 2.

49. For an introduction to Professor Hsiung's ideas see Shu-hsien Liu: "The Contemporary Development of a Neo-Confucian Epistemology," *Inquiry*, XIV (1971), 19-27.

50. For an introduction to Professor Mou's ideas, see *ibid.*, 27-40.

51. Chan, *Source Book*, p. 26.

52. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 43. Confucius himself was regarded as the embodiment of such an ideal of man by the posterity.

53. A.N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality* (New York: The Free Press, 1969), p. 53.

54. Cf. Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* (Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, three volumes, 1951, 1957, 1963), Vol. II, p. 29.

55. F.S.C. Northrop, *The Meeting of East and West* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1946).

56. Chan, *Source Book*, pp. 656-660.

57. Wang Yang-ming, *Instructions for Practical Living and Other Neo-Confucian Writings,* trans. Wing-tsit Chan (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), p. 260.

58. Cf. Ernst Cassirer, *An Essay on Man* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944), pp. 30-31.

59. *Ibid.*, pp. 222-223.

60. Chan, *Source Book*, p. 497.

61. *Ibid.*, p 499.

62. Dewey's pragmatic approach to logic would also reject the view of logical positivism, cf. John Dewey, *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry* (New York: H. Holt & Co., 1938), pp. 519-520.

63. Cf. F.S.C. Northrop, *The Logic of the Sciences and the Humanities* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1947).

64. Cf. S.C. Pepper, *World Hypotheses* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1970).

65. Cf. Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962).

66. Cf. A.N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality.*

67. Julia Ching,[dt] *To Acquire Wisdom: The Way of Wang Yang-ming* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), p. 214.

This article is Professor Liu's presidential address delivered before the Fifth International Conference of Chinese Philosophy of The International Society of Chinese Philosophy in San Diego, California, July 13, 1987.

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# A Glossary of Chinese Characters

a 劉述先

b 乾

c 坤

d 震

f 坎

g 離

h 艮

i 兑

j 太極

k 數字卦

l 周

m 汪寧生

n 苗

o 彝

p 涼山

q 四川

r 雷夫孜

s 畢摩

t 伏犧

u 商

v 神農

w 文王

x 卦辭

y 爻辭

z 殷

aa 左傳

ab 國語

ac 鶡衍

ad 漢

ae 董仲舒

af 朱熹

ag 顧頡剛

ah 李鏡池

ai 高亨

aj 胡適

ak 象

al 卦

am 象數

an 明堂

ao 洛書

ap 魏晉

aq 王弼

ar 義理

as 程頤

at 宋

au 秦

av 商瞿

aw 方東美

ax 司馬談

ay 司馬遷

az 緣傳

ba 繫辭傳

bb 說卦傳

bc 文言傳

bd 象傳

be 包犧

bf 子貢

bg 天

bh 陳榮捷

bi 荀子

bj 止

bk 道

bl 仁

bm 周敦頤

bn 張載

bo 程顥

bp 楊雄

bq 伊川

br 唐君毅

bs 熊十力

bt 體

bu 清

bv 牟宗三

bw 實有

bx 境界

by 宋明

bz 風水

ca 生

cb 王陽明

cc 良知

cd 楊時

ce 陳淳

cf 陳比溪

cg 理一分殊

ch 生生

ci 馮友蘭

cj 邵雍

ck 心體與性體

cl 台北

cm 正中

cn 徐錫台

co 樓宇棟

cp 西周卦書試說

cq 中國哲學

cr 郭沫若

cs 唐蘭

ct 張武

cu 周易縱橫錄

cv 湖北

cw 八卦起源

cx 考古

cy 袁珂

cz 中國古代神話

da 北京

db 中華

dc 昭

dd 魯

de 何新

df 古史辨

dg 古藉

dh 周易探源

di 周易古經今注

dj 任繼愈

dk 中國哲學發展史{秦漢}

dl 朱謙之

dm 中國哲學對歐州的影響

dn 福州

do 福建

dp 易經

dq 外書

dr 二程全書

ds 中國文化之精神價值

dt 秦家懿

# Part Two

# Moral Sense and Moral Justification in Life

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# Chapter Three

## The Relevance of Confucian Ethics

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According to Fung Yu-lan, a scholar who has written on the history of Chinese philosophy, what Chinese philosophy can best offer to the West is not its epistemology or metaphysics but its ethics.[1] Another scholar, Chung-ying Cheng, seems to accept the truth of this view by saying, "Chinese philosophy will not become merely a theoretical system, but . . . will be used and applied to resolve and solve the problems of life in the individual, community and the world."[2] Also writing in contemporary times, scholar Shu-hsien Liu suggests that "many traditional practices are time-bound and should not be allowed to remain as a factor to impede future progress [but also]. . . there is something perennial in these teachings that calls for a reinterpretation of their messages."[3] In Liu's view we may find ways from the past to help us better cope with the problems we must face in our modern lives.

These suggestions raise the question of whether Confucian morality, which has provided moral norms for peoples under the Chinese cultural influence for the past two millennia, can be renovated as a sound moral system for the contemporary world which is so different from that in which Confucius and Mencius[a] lived. Even if it could be reconstructed, there is the different matter of its revitalization; if it is not revitalized as a moral norm for men, it is no more than a philosopher's intellectual plaything, perhaps like Kant's deontologism or Mill's utilitarianism. One way to revitalize a moral system is to integrate it into a religious institution. As Stephen Toulmin suggests, "[E]thics provides the *reasons* for choosing the 'right' course; religion helps us to put our *hearts* into it."[4] Another way is for a state authority to indoctrinate it as a code for the people, as the Singapore government seems to have tried.[5]

This paper is concerned only with the question of the possibility of reconstructing Confucian morality. For this purpose, what are considered to be the central moral tenets in Confucian ethics will be spelled out in an opening section, and some criticisms of those moral tenets will be examined in a second section. A third section concerns suggestions which Chong-san (1900-1962), a Won Buddhist master, made toward renovating Confucian moral tenets.

# I

Normative ethics comprises ethics of duty and ethics of virtue. It is not clear whether we can separate ethics of duty from those of virtue in the Confucian moral teachings. A brief look at ethics in the West will shed light on this question, and on problems related to the reconstruction of Confucian ethics.

The two rival theories of normative ethics in the West, Kant's deontologism and Mill's utilitarianism, are mainly concerned with theories of moral obligation. The moral foundation or the criterion of rightness in utilitarianism is the principle of utility; for Kant the moral foundation is rationality. For Mill an act is right if and only if it is conducive to the greatest happiness of the greatest number. As Mill says:

> The creed which accepts as the foundation of morals "utility" or the "greatest happiness principle" holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness; wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. By happiness is intended pleasure and the absence of pain; by unhappiness, pain and the privation of pleasure.[6]

By contrast, for Kant an act is right if and only if it is done from a maxim which one can at the same time will to be a universal moral law.[7] In Kant's view one has a good will, the highest good in the whole universe, only if one acts for the sake of universal moral law. If one tries to will a bad maxim as a universal moral law, like lying or treating men as a mere means for self interest, a contradiction is involved, and the maxim becomes irrational. In Mill's view, however, Kant's categorical imperative cannot be a universal first principle, an origin and ground of moral obligation, because immoral rules of conduct can be willed by rational beings with no contradiction. Mill counters:

> But when he [Kant] begins to deduce from this precept any of the actual duties of morality, he fails, almost grotesquely, to show that there would be any contradiction, any logical (not to say physical) impossibility, in the

> adoption by all rational beings of the most outrageously immoral rules of conduct. All he shows is that the *consequences* of their universal adoption would be such as no one would choose to incur.[8]

Another version of Kant's categorical imperative, which requires one to treat humanity never as mere means but always as an end, entails a principle of justice. This principle understands justice as fairness, and undermines the moral foundation of utilitarianism, namely, the principle of utility. In one contemporary view, the principle of utility cannot be a rational choice since it can justify the violation of the basic human rights of a minority.[9] Any moral principle which implies a morally repugnant act is rejected as unsound.

There does not seem to be any ethical theory which can be free from such devastating criticism, and we might ask, can Confucian ethics survive such rigorous criticism?

That for Confucius and Mencius certain conducts are one's absolute duty regardless of their consequences is not hard to argue. In one instance Confucius defended the rites of three-year mourning,[10] and Mencius also tried to justify the practice, as follows: King Hsuan of Ch'i had determined to shorten the three-year period of mourning. In response Kung-sun Ch'au commented, "To have one whole year's mourning is better than doing away with it altogether." But Mencius said, "That is just as if one were twisting the arm of his elder brother, and the elder merely said to him, "Gently, gently, if you please." "Your only course," Mencius observed, "should be to teach such a one filial piety and fraternal duty."[11]

This is an absolutist or Kantian approach. Yet another Chinese, Mo Tzu[b], condemned elaborate funerals with utilitarian arguments:

> So much wealth is buried in elaborate funerals and long periods of work are suspended in extended mourning. Wealth that is already produced is carried to be buried and wealth yet to be produced is long delayed. To seek wealth in this way is like seeking a harvest by stopping farming . . .[12]

Mencius' deontological moral view was also very well demonstrated in his answer to King Hui of Liang[c] who asked whether Mencius' visit with him could profit his kingdom. Mencius replied, "Why must your Majesty use that word *profit?* What I am provided with are *counsels to* benevolence and righteousness, and these are my only topics."[13]

There are many other examples of deontological arguments in the four

Confucian classics. In the *Chung Yung*[d] [Doctrine of the Mean] we read, "What heaven has conferred is called THE NATURE; an accordance with this nature is called THE PATH of duty; the regulation of this path is called INSTRUCTION."[14] Thus, one's moral duty is to follow what heaven has mandated. Here the foundation of Confucian morality can be seen as deontological, for the will of heaven mandates that one ought to follow the path of nature. Mencius soon unfolds this nature as a fourfold path and makes it one's moral duty to follow it. As a way of proving that human nature is good, Mencius first observes the empirical fact that "[a]ll men have a mind which cannot bear *to see the suffering of others*,"[15] then says:

> From this case we may perceive that the feeling of commiseration is essential to man, that the feeling of shame and dislike is essential to man, that the feeling and complaisance is essential to man, and that the feeling of approving and disapproving is essential to man.[16]

In other words, if you are a man, then you have these four feelings; hence if you do not have them, then you are not a man. Mencius' theory of human nature opens the possibility for developing an ethics of virtue and of obligation. For the first Mencius says that feelings of commiseration, shame and dislike, modesty and complaisance, and approving and disapproving are the principles [that is, the beginnings] of benevolence [*jen*[c]], righteousness [*i*[f]], propriety [*li*[g]] and wisdom [*chih*[h]] respectively.[17] These four are regarded as the four cardinal moral virtues in Confucian ethics, and later the Sung Neo-Confucian philosophers would try to provide metaphysical proof for their morality.[18]

As these four feelings are the principles or beginnings of the four virtues, so it is one's *duty* to develop and complete them in order to be human as heaven has mandated. On this topic Mencius says:

> Men have these four principles just as they have their four limbs. When men, having these four principles, yet say of themselves that they cannot *develop them*, they play the thief with themselves, and he who says of his prince that he cannot *develop* them plays the thief with his prince.
>
> Since all men have these four principles in themselves, let them know to give them all their development and completion, and the issue will be like that of fire which has begun to burn, or that of a spring which has begun to find vent. Let them have their complete development, and they will suffice to love and protect all within the four seas. Let them be denied that development, and they will not suffice for a man to serve his parents with.[19]

Since one's most important moral duty in the Confucian ethics is filial piety, and since one will be unable to serve one's parents without the complete development of the four principles, isn't it plausible to argue that their complete development is a prior duty? If this looks like a rhetorical question, one may recall that for Kant a man has certain duties to himself, *viz.*, not to commit suicide and not to waste his talents, among others. And in the Confucian ethics one's filial duty is not negotiable; it is one's absolute duty even if heaven falls! Thus one has a duty to oneself, in order to be human, to develop and complete the four feelings. The Confucian ethics is thus deontological. However, it is different from Kant's moral system.

According to Kant, we should not dream for a moment of trying to derive the moral principle from the special characteristics of human nature.[20] Kant's reason for this view is that, since human nature in the phenomenal realm is so diverse, it will be impossible to find a universally necessary moral principle in human feelings. As we have seen above, however, the Kantian moral precept or categorical imperative cannot avoid legislating morally repugnant consequences, as Mill pointed out.

A theory of obligation in Confucian ethics can be seen most clearly in the Confucian moral tenets concerning the three bonds and the five human relations. In the *Chung Yung* we read:

> The duties of universal obligation are five, and the virtues wherewith they are practiced are three. The duties are those between sovereign and minister, between father and son, between husband and wife, between elder brother and younger, and those belonging to the intercourse of friends. The five are the duties of universal obligation.[21]

Mencius specifies the nature of duties: ". . . between father and son, there should be affection; between sovereign and minister, righteousness; between husband and wife, attention to their separate functions; between old and young, a proper order; and between friends, fidelity."[22] While these five duties are reasonable, the moral implied in the three bonds is unbalanced. The minister has an absolute duty of loyalty [*chung*[i]] to the sovereign; the son the absolute duty of filial piety [*hsiao*[j]] to the father; the wife the absolute duty of moral integrity or chastity [*lieh*[k]] to the husband.

That the moral duties attached to the three bonds and the five human relations are deontological can be seen most clearly when we recall the terms in which Chu Hsi[l] condemned Buddhism and Taoism for neglecting those duties. Chu Hsi said, "The mere fact that they discard the Three Bonds . . . and the five Constant Virtues. . . is already a crime of the greatest

magnitude. Nothing more need to be said about the rest."[23] And Chu Hsi relates the moral principle of the three bonds and the five constant virtues to the mandates of heaven, again making them deontological.[24]

In Confucian ethics the moral duties described cannot be compromised on utilitarian grounds even if heaven falls and the earth splits! For these reasons I think the Confucian moral system is best described as a deontology. Now the question is, whether the Confucian ethics is relevant to the contemporary world, and if so, how.

## II

The question of reconstruction and revitalization of Confucian ethics arises because the heart of Confucian morality has been battered down by Chinese intellectuals themselves, agitated or enlightened by waves of Western culture, especially the powerful influences of science, democracy and Marxism. Futhermore, since Confucian morals have a humanistic foundation, the Christian world cannot accept Confucian ethics, let alone the worlds of Islam and Hinduism. Thus the question arises whether a Confucian ethics is relevant, whether it contains some moral tenets which are universal and eternal to mould the good life and to help realize the harmony among men.

At the turn of this century Confucian morality was blamed for having kept Chinese civilization in the closet of a dark age. Hu Shih[m] declared:

> In the last two or three decades we have abolished three thousand years of the eunuch system, one thousand years of the foot-binding, six hundred years of the eightlegged essay, four or five hundred years of male prostitution, and five thousand years of judicial torture. None of this revolution was aided by Confucianism... the six Confucian Classics are inadequate to provide leadership.[25]

The fact that all those evil practices had been committed for long periods while Confucianism was almost a state religion can be used as a *reductio ad absurdum* against Confucian morality. One may set up a dilemma: either Confucian morality supported such evil practices or did not. If it did, then it was an intrinsically evil moral system; if not, then it was impotent. Hu Shih's criticism can be taken as charging the latter. The moral system of the immortal sage was not potent enough to reform a traditional social system.

Chinese critics during the 1950's and early 1970's argued that the Confucian ethics supported the slave-owning class and/or the feudal system during the periods of the Spring-Autumn and the Warring States. The central moral

tenets of Confucian ethics such as benevolence [*jen*], rites or propriety [*li*] and filial piety [*hsiao*] were all denounced as reactionary. Kuan Feng and Lin Yu-shih, for instance, argued that, since Confucius had represented the class which was crumbling, Confucius wanted to restore the old Chou rites by defining *jen* as "restraining oneself and returning to rites" [*k'e-chi fu-li*"] where "rites" means the Chou rites.[26] Filial piety, the most important Confucian moral duty, had been denounced as a man-eating more decades before these critics spoke. Lu Hsuen, for instance, argued that filial piety should be relegated to the past. According to Kam Louie,[27] Lu Hsuen's most systematic condemnation of filial piety appeared in his critique of the "Twenty-four Illustrations of Filial Piety." Lu Hsuen dealt with each story in turn; in one case he commented that "the story relating how a man had buried his infant son to save enough food for his mother made him feel relieved that his own father had not been so filial."[28] Wu Yu was another writer who denounced filial piety as the cause of all the faults and vices of traditional Chinese society, from the unquestioning obedience expected of the people to concubinage.[29]

Women's purity or chastity was another requirement of Confucian morality leveled by the May Fourth writers. The notion of women's purity involves matters of chastity and of widows remarrying.[30] Wing-tsit Chan described recent attacks on the Neo-Confucian suppression of women as follows:

> The strongest attacks were directed at Ch'eng-I and Chu Hsi; two quotations were cited to attack them. When asked whether a lonely and poor widow should remarry, Ch'eng had answered, "To starve to death is a minor matter but to lose one's integrity is a very serious matter." Intellectual rebels were unanimous in declaring that this was a clear proof of Neo-Confucian suppression of women.[31]

When Confucian ethics gets state support, Christian teachers may use the Confucian suppression of women as a reason for rejecting it. An example comes from Singapore:

> Insensitive and rebellious humanity may not choose to conform to God's will in a particular area. A case in point is the Biblical idea of the life-long monogamous marriage. Confucian sages were silent on this even though concubinage and loose sexual mores affected their age, bringing divided family loyalties, suspicion, rapacity and heartbreak. If sages were silent perhaps the women of those times, out of respect for the Confucian ideal of *li* (i.e. rules of propriety), should have been asked whether they wished to be concubines.[32]

We have seen that both Kantian deontologism and Mill's utilitarianism

collapse because their theories can prescribe morally repugnant consequences. Now the question is whether Confucian ethics can survive these devastating criticisms. Kam Louie's study reports that decades of bombshells falling on Confucian ethics in China have not succeeded in giving it a deathblow. Some prominent historians have called attention to the fact that Chairman Mao quoted Confucius frequently, thus opening the way for a more sympathetic interpretation to emerge once again.[33]

# III

Intellectuals have sometimes argued that some Confucian ideas could be inherited. Fung Yu-lan argued that philosophical concepts have two facets--the concrete and the abstract--which can be separated such that the abstract aspect of a concept might be inherited while the concrete application might be, historically, discarded. For instance, by the concept of *jen* or "love men" Confucius may have meant "love the aristocratic class"; however, that concrete aspect of *jen*, belonging to a different age, could and should be discarded while the abstract notion "love men" could be retained.[34] In 1963, Liu Chieh-jen was accused of having argued that:

> Confucius was the saviour for all times, and was the embodiment of the truth and the divine. With Confucius' concept of *jen*, all problems in the world can be solved. Things such as Marxism-Leninism, the theory of class struggle and the method of class analysis can be dispensed with.[35]

Another attempt to give a sympathetic interpretation to loyalty [*chung*] and filial piety [*hsiao*] was made by Kuan Feng and Wu Fu-ch'i, who tried to show that moral terms can have different meanings in different times. Loyalty in the feudal period could have meant loyalty to the landlord class, whereas in other times it implied loyalty to the state and the people. In a socialist society, filial piety could be cast entirely in class terms, with parents and offspring helping each other in building the socialist state.[36]

From these observations we can see that those who condemn Confucian ethics because it supported a slave-owning class and feudal lords commit a generic fallacy. From the fact that medicine saves an evil person it does not follow that the medicine is itself evil; it could have saved a good person, too. After decades of attempts to reject Confucian morals, there are still eternal truths to be found in Confucian ethics. The moral feelings of commiseration, shame and dislike, modesty and complaisance, and approving and disapproving, which Mencius attributed to human nature, seem to be a solid foundation for both an ethics of virtue and of duty. With proper

interpretations and slight renovations, the four cardinal virtues of *jen*, *i*, *li* and *chih* can be moral virtues that any human being can aspire to, regardless of religious, political or ethnic differences. The causes of disharmony, conflict, inequality among individuals, communities and nations lies not in the lack of religious or political inculcation of justice and universal love, but in the lack of proper development and completion of the four feelings. The concept of "a government which cannot bear to witness the suffering of its people," as Mencius taught, is not confined to monarchical or feudal systems; it can function well in socialist systems, much better than in a capitalist society where the concept of government has a smaller place. Confucian ethics is in fact relevant for both societies. On the level of personal relations among individuals the Confucian moral norms of *jen*, *i*, *li* and *chih* can contribute to individual happiness, social harmony and human dignity. In an imaginary society where people do not have a mind which cannot bear to witness the suffering of others, do not feel shame and dislike, do not respect others, and have no sense of right and wrong--a society which Mencius would diagnose as sick--the Confucian morality would be needed more than any other.

Reinterpretations and renovations of Confucian moral tenets are inevitable in accordance with the change of times. When there is no ruler, the moral duty of loyalty to the ruler has no place; where men and women are treated equally, the moral duty of chastity or purity should not apply only to women. If Confucius or Mencius were present today, they would adapt those moral rules for today. Or, someone whose wisdom equals that of the former sages might renovate them and tell people what to do. And people might not care a straw about such renovation; Confucius and Mencius were not well accepted in their own time.

Chong-san, who had mastered the Seven Confucian Classics before the age of seventeen and emerged as a great master in Won Buddhism, has given a reinterpretation of most of the central moral tenets of Confucianism, which include *chung* [loyalty], *hsiao* [filial piety], *lieh* [chastity], *jen* [benevolence], *i* [righteousness] and the five human relations.[37] From the fact that Chong-san left *li* [propriety] and *chih* [wisdom] out of consideration, we may presume that he did not regard them as relevant to contemporary ethics. Here I want to introduce the central points of his reinterpretation.

(1) Loyalty means the central heart/mind and hence it is a mind free from self-deception. With this mind one can serve well both oneself and others wherever one is located. This loyalty differs from that which in ancient times a minister felt toward his sovereign, which was sometimes foolish and

harmful to the country. Today the world is more complex and ill; loyalty in this original sense should be revived.

Chong-san has here replaced a minister's moral duty of loyalty to his sovereign with the moral virtue of sincerity emphasized in the *Chung-yung* [Doctrine of the Mean]. Trying to be sincere is the way of the princely man, and self-deception has no place in sincerity.

(2) Filial piety refers to what is done as a requital of favor or grace done to oneself. Filial piety is the most fundamental of the grace-requiting actions. The best approach to filial piety lies in recognizing all the favors one has received and requiting them in this world. This differs from the filial piety practiced in the past when a son did not leave his father even if the father was self-reliant.

For Chong-san filial piety does not leave a mother or daughter out of consideration. The fact that one could not have existed without one's parents means that one has been favored by them more than by any other source. Thus there is a *prima facie* filial duty to one's parents. In Chong-san's view, however, one cannot be said to have discharged filial duty without requiting all the graces and favors to which one owes life. And there are four sources of grace, namely, heaven and earth, parents, brethren, and laws [religious, moral, civil and penal]. The ways of requiting these graces form the central moral tenets of Won Buddhism, which I have no space to discuss here.[38]

(3) Chastity [*lieh*] means being true to one's high moral principles. In the past this virtue was confined to women because of the narrow interpretation of the term. It required a woman, either engaged or widowed, not to remarry when the man died. It was an inhuman practice. But this duty to be true to high moral principles should be followed to cure the world of moral illness.

Chong-san's reinterpretation of the term applies to any religious practice since any religion requires its followers to keep its ethical and religious precepts. In Chong-san's view, keeping such precepts demands the kind of integrity that was required of women under Confucian ethics. To lose one's integrity is to lose one's place in any society.

(4) *Jen* means benevolence or kind heartedness; it is found in the Buddha's compassion and Christ's universal love. *I* means righteous actions which do not violate the way of heaven, and are ways which man ought to follow. These two virtues must function together, checking each other in human heart.

In Chong-san's reinterpretation of *jen* we find a triple moral homology, which provides a theoretical ground for viewing the three sages as one. If one practices *jen*, one also practices the Buddha's compassion (*karuna*) and the universal love Christ taught. Thus a Confucian who practices *jen* practices Christian love and the Buddha's compassion without a specific conversion.

(5) The five human relations used to be the standards of Eastern morality; all norms regarding family, society and the state were based on these standards. In modern times, these standards have become loose and weakened; hence they should be adjusted to the needs of today's world. (a) Between parents and children there should be affection; (b) between senior and junior there should be righteousness; (c) between husband and wife there should be harmony; (d) between old and young there should be a proper order; and (e) between brethren [fellow humans] there should be fidelity.

Chong-san has thus replaced the minister's loyalty to his sovereign with the loyalty between a senior and a junior. Thus the sense of loyalty still survives. Notice also that Chong-san has removed the implication of male chauvinism in the original statement that husband and wife should observe their separate functions. The re-rendering is that there should be harmony between them.

# IV

Whether Chong-san's reinterpretation of some of the central moral terms of Confucian ethics can provide a sound basis for a modern Confucian morality remains as a question. It may be argued that Chong-san's reinterpretation has made the moral norms contained in the four cardinal virtues, the three bonds and the five human relations non-Confucian. One who argues this way must defend the original Confucian morality, or provide a better reinterpretation unless he rejects Confucian morality altogether. But it is unlikely that Confucian morality can appeal to the world today without a substantial renovation. Chong-san seems to have tried to revive the central moral tenets, which reflect eternal truths, while casting aside some anachronistic elements.

It seems to me that these Confucian moral tenets do consist of eternal truths which anyone who aspires to be a genuine human being would find appealing. It can be argued that the foundation of Confucian morality lies in the moral sense that heaven has mandated. John Stuart Mill denounced this as an "unreliable internal oracle." Mill went a different way to find the foundation of morals. But for myself, I don't feel immoral when my actions are not conducive to the greatest happiness of the greatest number. Nor do

I find others morally blameworthy for acting out of sympathy without first checking whether the maxim of sympathy could be willed as a universal moral law. It is doubtful whether anyone acts from such a basis. It should be recalled that in Kant's view one cannot base a morality on characteristics of human nature, like feelings of commiseration, shame and dislike, modesty and complaisance, and the sense of right and wrong, which are the foundation of Confucian moral teachings. Still, to be fully human one ought to nourish and complete them to realize the virtues of benevolence, righteousness, propriety and wisdom. When these four moral virtues function properly in life, one realizes the inner sageliness.

# Notes

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# Chinese Glossary

a. Mencius 孟子

b. Mo Tzu 墨子

c. King Hui of Liang 梁惠王

d. *Chung Yung* 中庸

e. *jen* 仁

f. *i* 義

g. *li* 禮

h. *chih* 智

i. *chung* 忠

j. *hsiao* 孝

k. *lieh* 廉

l. Chu Hsi 朱熹

m. Hu Shih 胡適

n. *K'e-chi fu-li* 克己復禮

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# Chapter Four

## THE CONSTRAINTS OF CONFUCIANISM ON THE MODERNIZATION OF EAST ASIAN BUSINESS ENTERPRISES

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East Asia today is the fastest growing segment of the world economy. While Japan has been undergoing rapid economic growth for several decades, the past ten years have seen phenomenal growth among the so-called NICs (newly industrialized countries) including Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore. Many explanations of this phenomenon have been offered, but since every international executive knows that local social values have much to do with the way business is conducted in any part of the world, much attention has focused on the possibility that the values of Confucianism--the common ethical thread among East Asian nations--have had a positive influence on East Asia's economic development. Some thinkers, however, have argued that Confucianism is as much a liability as an asset. The purpose of this paper is to identify, explore and evaluate Confucianism's effects on the East Asian economy.

## Foundations of East Asian Values

Just as Western values have derived from the Greco-Roman heritage, the basic social values of East Asia originated with Chinese civilization. While a number of religions, particularly Taoism and Buddhism, have influenced the basic values of Chinese civilization, none has had a deeper or more practical influence on daily life than the religious/philosophical system known as Confucianism. Over the centuries Confucianism has become more than just a creed that Asians can consciously accept or reject; it has become an inseparable part of East Asian cultural identity. So deeply is it ingrained that most Asians are only dimly aware, at best, that their values represent anything more than just a part of their ethnic identity. As Michel Deverge

has said, "Confucianism is not a creed to be adopted or rejected, but an inseparable part of what it means to be Chinese."[1] It is not surprising then to find that East Asian business practices and customs are just as deeply influenced by what Confucius taught as any other area of East Asian life.

In spite of its pervasiveness, however, Confucianism is not a monolithic repository of unchanging truth, but is as highly complex and varied as the social fabric of the nations of eastern Asia. The influence of Confucianism in Japan has been largely limited to the warrior ethic, differing significantly from the situation in East Asia's NICs, where Confucianism permeates the moral value system and the lifestyle.[2] Thus, Confucianism is deeply rooted in Taiwan and Hong Kong, which are ethnically Chinese to the core, as well as in Singapore, where the Chinese are the ethnic majority. Even in Korea, where Confucianism began as a borrowed ideology without ethnic roots, it somehow eventually became even more dogmatic and rigidly confined to a narrow orthodoxy than in China.[3]

The depth of Confucianism's influence on most of East Asia is mind-boggling. It forms the foundation of ethics and morality in business as well as social and personal life, detailing the attitudes and behavior appropriate to human relationships, from the top to the bottom of the social order, from intimate family relationships to the most distant associations, and in most areas of daily life. In the NICs of East Asia, it can be said that one's character is evaluated largely on the basis of how closely one adheres to the social forms and attitudes Confucius prescribed. Propriety is the principal measure of virtue.

It is important to note that the major focus of Confucian thought is on family relationships. While Confucian concepts of self-discipline and the government of families and of the nation form the basic principles of political philosophy in the NICs of East Asia, the main emphasis in those societies is on family relationships. Some of the more elaborate family customs and traditions have been modified by necessity in industrialized urban areas, but for the most part, the great family rites of Confucius are still observed much as they always have been.

## Confucianism and East Asian Prosperity -- Help or Hindrance?

Confucian ethics are to the Asian what the Protestant ethic is to the westerner--an essential element in business and professional conduct. It can be argued successfully that some elements of Confucian tradition are a hindrance to effective business conduct, but on the whole, more would agree with S. G. Redding, who maintains that within the deep-rooted cultural unity that is East Asia, Confucianism has promoted economic success (Redding, 1984; Hicks and Redding). Roderick MacFarquhar and others share Redding's belief that Confucianism is the single most important contributing factor in the economic achievement of East Asian NICs. While Redding recognizes that political/legal and economic/geographic factors have played a role in East Asia's economic prosperity, he concludes that the influence of the Chinese sociocultural heritage of Confucianism on such East Asian social institutions as the family and educational system has served to promote the work-related values of diligence, responsibility, thrift, promptness, cooperation and learning. Citing Jones and Sakong (1980), Redding suggests that Korea's Confucian heritage is a major reason for the highly entrepreneurial nature of Korean business activity.

## The Nature of Confucianism

According to Oh and Oh (1981), "Confucianism is concerned with the correct observance of human relationships within a hierarchically oriented society." Confucius' teachings revolve around what are known as the Five Cardinal Relationships: father/son, monarch/subject, husband/wife, elder brother/younger brother, and friend/friend. Four of these relationships are hierarchically structured, and in each, the proper attitude of the subordinate party is prescribed. The proper attitude of the son towards the father is one of filial piety--a kind of self-sacrificing devotion and respect. The proper attitude of a subject is loyalty; of a wife, obedience to the husband; and of a younger brother, respect for his elder. Only within a friendship relationship can two people appropriately relate on an equal footing. Between friends, an attitude of mutual sincerity is considered appropriate.

The importance of the family in the Confucian value system is immediately apparent: of the five basic relationships, three involve the relationship of family members. To carry the emphasis even further, Confucianism teaches the "model of two," comparing and pairing the monarch/subject relationship

to the father/son relationship, and the friend/friend relationship to that of brothers. From a very early age, people growing up in East Asia's NICs are taught these values, which are characterized by exclusiveness in dealing with others (Hsu, 1984).

*About hierarchy:* The goal and purpose of establishing this rigid hierarchy of relationships have been to create and maintain a harmonious collective social order. Maintaining absolute loyalty and obedience to authority and fulfilling the obligations within relationships is supposed to guarantee an ordered collectivity in which overt conflict is absent. The emphasis on harmonious group life so widespread in East Asia today is a direct result of the value and importance Confucius placed on rigid hierarchical order.

In East Asia's NICs, the Confucian principle of hierarchical order is the underlying cause for the predominantly vertical nature of relationships in business organizations. The emphasis on obedience to authority certainly can be expected to affect the way individuals react to orders from their superiors in business organizations.

*About Obligations:* China and Korea emphasize the obligations of subordinates to superiors and say little or nothing about obligations of superiors toward subordinates. Japan differs by emphasizing the reciprocal nature of responsibilities in hierarchical relationships. This probably explains why Japanese companies tend to exhibit more employee solidarity and loyalty than Korean and Chinese companies do. In NICs, the responsibilities of superiors are not usually stipulated in a clear-cut manner. Traditional morals were molded by a feudal society in which the rights of the ruled were ignored. Superior positions were structured for taking, not for giving. Consequently, being in a position of power is a very important goal in business, government and other areas of life (Liebenberg, 1982).

Carried over into family relationships, the lack of superior-to-subordinate obligations has led to parental behavior patterns that sometimes border on the sadistic. Parents often feel free to demand what they will of their children, without considering the effects of their demands on their offspring, and children are expected to fulfill all demands cheerfully and without complaint as an expression of filial piety. The superior status of the father is well-defined and unassailable, ranking him together with heaven, earth, the emperor and teachers. One Korean psychiatrist has termed filial devotion "moral masochism" in which filial piety functions as a defense mechanism to counteract the sadistic demands of totalitarian parenting.[4]

In the society as a whole, the lack of superior to subordinate obligations has led to dysfunction in some respects. As children in East Asian NICs grow up, they are severely restrained in their communication with their parents, leading at a later time to difficulty in communicating with all persons in authority. Just as Confucian children must repress hostility towards parents, so subordinates must repress hostility towards their superiors. The result is displacement of hostility downward to the lower ranks in the hierarchy.

In this atmosphere, distrust tends to pervade the entire organization. Managers hesitate to delegate authority to subordinates, limiting their opportunities to develop as managers. The higher the authority, the more absolute it becomes, and the greater the responsibility, the less willingness there is to delegate. As a result, decision-making is highly centralized. As Pye has observed, the "ideal of omnipotent authority still persists, making divisions of responsibility awkward and the delegation of duties ambiguous."[5]

The distrust that often pervades Confucian organizations has many ramifications. It produces highly self-centered, individualistic managers unable to work with a team, lack of loyalty, and a high turnover rate. The main organizational method of motivation is fear, and strict and thorough control of employees.

In Korea, the strict emphasis on hierarchy without mutuality of obligation has produced a managerial jungle of major proportions. Yoon (1974) cites particularly chronic problems with centralization, anomalous administrative practices and personalization which have not improved in spite of intensified attempts to bring reform through structural changes and rearrangement of authority relationships. Korea's highly authoritarian managers are characterized by an instinctive drive for power and suspiciousness of others; they see relationships in terms of struggle and competition, and have a tendency to see people as threatening. They seek power by attaching themselves to those in power, and appear dependent on and loyal to their superiors only in order to acquire power for themselves or be promoted. Their ultimate goal is independence. Authoritarian managers have personalized attitudes towards public office, and superficial attitudes towards the actual content of their jobs. Since Korean society continues to instill authoritarian attitudes in its young, authoritarian leadership will probably persist there in spite of efforts at reform patterned after Western democratic ideals (Yoon, 1974).

*About formalities:* One of the most striking characteristics of Confucian

society is its formalism. Socialization in Confucian cultures consists largely of teaching the stylized response appropriate to every situation. Individuals are judged entirely by the way they fit into the prescribed patterns for interpersonal relations. Being polite means adhering to the prescribed formal model, and is the principal measure of one's virtue.

The well-known concept of face is directly related to formalism. When the group has confidence that individuals can be depended on to fit into the prescribed patterns at all times and on all occasions, such individuals are said to have "face." Should they ever fail to meet these expectations, they have lost "face," which means they have lost the cooperation of their group and have, in effect, lost everything worth having. Losing face is the ultimate social disaster in East Asian society.

The effect of loss of face is the feeling of shame. Shame, a direct result of violating Confucianism's formal requirements, is a major tool in the training and discipline of children in East Asia's NICs. As adults, the feeling of shame continues to result from violations of the formal code.

Formalism also leads to some difficulties in organizational life. Because communication patterns outside one's own clan are highly ritualistic, it is difficult to communicate honestly in those areas. Impressive job titles are an important motivational tool, and employees often bear different job titles for external and in-house use in order to satisfy the demands of formalism. Lavish and impressive-looking offices are highly valued. The emphasis on external appearances oftentimes presents a false face to outsiders while the true face is revealed only within the clan. Western society deplores this double standard and calls it deception and hypocrisy, but in Confucian society it is perfectly acceptable behavior, often implicitly encouraged for the clan's advantage.

## Family Relationships in the Business Setting

The heavy emphasis on family so characteristic of Confucian tradition has made its impress on business life in East Asia in different ways. In Japan the biological family plays a relatively minor role in national life compared to other areas of East Asia. Instead, the concept of family has been transferred to the work environment so that the work organization functions very much like a family in many ways, with corporate leaders playing the role of father and subordinates expressing attitudes of filial devotion.

In East Asia's NICs, the biological family is the single most important institution in society. Usually corporations are owned and operated by biological families (Business Groups in Taiwan, 1984; Lim, 1985; Lim, 1978).

While such intense devotion to the family contributes a certain warmth to everyday social relations, it does have disadvantages. Liebenberg has observed a number of problem areas in Korean organizational behavior that tend to derive from the Confucian emphasis on family and personal friendships in Korean society.

When dealing with people outside their own personal, family-type reference groups, Koreans tend to be highly individualistic. While most Korean corporations are family-owned, the corporations do not operate socially as families like they do in Japan. Motivation in Korean firms revolves around money, status and personal power, and personal advancement is highly competitive. Interpersonal trust and company loyalty are noticeably lacking, and personality-based factionalism is rampant. Good connections--with relatives or old school friends--are considered important stepping stones to personal achievement. The constant jockeying for position and power gives rise to a great deal of instability, and Korean executives tend to shoot for short-term goals rather than long-term planning.

As Liebenberg has pointed out, since the Confucian clan system dictated a narrow range of loyalty, Koreans have developed no sense of obligation to outsiders. As a result, they are good at competition, ruthless in opposition, and very poor at compromise and cooperation (Liebenberg, 1982).

Korea readily acknowledges these problem areas. The Korean Businessmen's Association reports that some of Korea's most urgently needed organizational improvements are the separation of ownership and management; the development of professional management and managers; the elimination of familistic, paternalistic, and authoritarian personnel management practices; and the promotion of labor-management cooperation (England, 1971).

The situation with regard to family is much the same in China as in Korea. Teamwork is the relational style within the family, but in non-family business relationships, the Chinese tend to behave individualistically. The cooperative aspects of the family concept are not transferred to society as a whole, with a resulting lack of social consciousness.

The family tradition has a strong negative effect on the longevity of business

firms in East Asia's NICs. There is a proverb that says "No family can stay rich for more than three generations," and much evidence supports it. In Hsu's study of twenty-five indigenous firms in Singapore, only one has been run by a single family for three generations (Hsu, 1986). One reason that has been suggested is that the norms and traditions developed by family firms are in direct conflict with individual merit and rational organizational development. Objective impersonality is suppressed by family emotion and custom, inhibiting the rational growth of the organization (Parsons, 1949; Weber, 1951).

Another reason for the short life of family-owned business firms in East Asia's NICs is the practice of inheritance among male heirs. In the Chinese family, the inheritance is equally divided among all sons while in Korea it more often goes to the eldest son than to the younger sons, but in both cases ownership of business firms is inherited regardless of qualifications. In the extended family system practiced in family firms, father-son and brother-brother relationships play a critical role in management and decision-making, regardless of the age or competence of the decision-maker. The inner family circle tightly maintains its exclusive control of the firm.

As firms are passed from one generation to the next, a typical pattern can be observed. As the second generation matures and succeeds to the family fortune, a cycle of fragmentation begins. Multiple siblings attempt to share ownership in a going business and find themselves unable to break up the enterprises due to loss of economies of scale. Conflict erupts over share of inheritance, and power struggles develop into cliques battling for spheres of influence. A third generation matures and further fragmentation occurs. Under these circumstances, it is very rare in East Asia's NICs for a firm to survive for 200 or even 100 years, as is common in Japan (Wong, 1985).

Non-family employees of family-owned firms in East Asia's NICs are in an unfortunate position. Permanently excluded from the inner family circle, whose authority is unchallenged, they are seldom trusted, and feel alienated. What loyalty they do develop is directed towards their individual superiors rather than towards the organization. If the boss goes, the organization experiences the loss of all personnel who were loyal to him. When this happens, the organization suffers the loss of much accumulated experience. This kind of disenchantment and alienation are widespread in East Asia's NICs. In Korea, the annual voluntary separation rate is twenty percent.

The alienation between the family and its hired employees is reflected in, and enhanced by, gross salary differentials. In Korea, heads of family-owned enterprises earn about 200 times as much as newly-hired college graduates, while in Japan, heads of firms make only 7 to 8 times more.

## The Value of Education in Confucian Tradition

Education has long played a highly important role in Confucian tradition. Within Confucian societies of the past, the main qualification for leadership was "virtue," a quality which could only be acquired through intense, long-term study of the teachings of Confucius. Academic achievement was measured by a series of landmark examinations which determined young people's educational and personal futures within their society. The educational method involved much rote learning and copying of examples, with the development of theoretical and logical reasoning playing a minor role.

Education in East Asia today still places the major emphasis on accumulating a vast store of knowledge through rote memorization. It tends to produce a workforce well suited to the regimentation of the manufacturing and service industries but without much creativity. The emphasis on memorization over creative synthesis and critical analysis indicates that East Asia's NICs are not likely to play a major role in innovative and creative fields such as software and biotechnology, to name a few.

Education is still the pathway to power in East Asia today. Young people are highly motivated to obtain it, and diplomas and degrees are deeply respected achievements. Education is still an important component of virtue. The field of study is of secondary importance: education in virtue is considered a more important quality for a leader than technical competence or professional expertise. Consequently, the type of educational preparation some Asian businessmen have for their jobs may seem inappropriate to Westerners. But as Owen explains it, East Asia's NICs expect their leaders to be men of "virtue" and respect them for it. Respect helps make their leadership effective.

East Asia's highly demanding educational system develops in its young

people a kind of discipline that prepares them well for future learning. They are well-equipped for the demands of heavy on-the-job training that goes with life in a business enterprise. Having submitted themselves to school standards all their lives, they readily submit themselves to company standards as adults (Ching, 1984).

## Problems Created by Confucianism: A Summary

Like any other social system in the world today, Confucian society has liabilities as well as assets. When it comes to economic activity, qualities that in some situations are very helpful may on other occasions become hindrances.

While formalism is a very useful trait in maintaining harmony, predictability and stability in an organization, business people with formal traditions tend to display a lack of adaptability when faced with unexpected and unprecedented events, and they tend to find new faces--particularly Western faces from an alien culture--unsettling. The social distance inherent in formalism impedes honest and straightforward communication as well as the speedy development of new relationships that can be so important in the fast-paced business life of the West.

The emphasis on maintaining order and harmony has its advantages in terms of stability, but there are times when opposition is very real and important, and needs to be dealt with. East Asian groups are sometimes seriously handicapped by their lack of conflict resolution mechanisms. The emphasis on hierarchy works against the delegation of power, and against the easy development of friendships within work organizations.

The strong emphasis on family-type groups tends to work positively within the group, but results in distrust of those outside the group. Establishing trust with outsiders is difficult and time-consuming.

The literary emphasis that prevails in East Asian education has produced a communication style that is not well adapted to expressing the theoretical or logical reasoning necessary for good business communication. To Westerners, Oriental business documents may often seem vague and evasive.

For the Chinese and Koreans, the intense commitment to the hierarchical family unit results in a number of problems. They have difficulty trusting and communicating with non-kin, and there is little cooperation outside of family groups. The emphasis on obedience to superiors has not encouraged the development of initiative among subordinates. It is not considered appropriate for interpersonal feelings between superiors and subordinates to be taken into account, so when negative feelings develop, they are repressed rather than resolved, and are often displaced downward in the ranks. As a result, ineffectiveness, inefficiency and even turmoil often fester close beneath the surface of order and harmony that social traditions enforce.

## How Confucianism Helps

While this paper has revealed a number of ways in which Confucian tradition has hindered effective economic activity, there is much convincing evidence that, on the whole, it has had a positive effect. Redding, citing Kahn (1979), lists several East Asian traits which derive from Confucian tradition and have contributed to organizational success. Intense family socialization has promoted a high level of education, the acquisition of skills, and seriousness about one's tasks, jobs, family and other obligations. The tendency to be cooperative within one's group has made East Asians good at teamwork in many instances. A respect for hierarchy and a sense of its naturalness have tended to support the smooth exercise of authority. And when hierarchy has been coupled with a sense of the complementarity of relationships, perceptions of fairness and equity within institutions have been enhanced.

## Conclusions

This paper has described five major characteristics of the Confucian tradition that forms the foundation of East Asian culture in the NICs today: the heavy emphasis on the family, even in the business sphere; the importance of hierarchy, authority and obedience; the pre-eminence of formality; the high value placed on order and harmony; and respect for a thorough and well-rounded education.

Each one of these characteristics has had an influence on East Asian business life about which Western business people need to be knowledgeable.

(1) The result of the heavy emphasis on family has been a teamwork style in the in-group, but distrust and individualism towards out-groups. Friendship relationships, established on a basis of trust and mutual sincerity, are important pathways for outsiders to get things done in East Asian business organizations.

(2) There is a hierarchy to be recognized in every relationship except friendship--even between buyer and seller.

(3) Propriety is of the utmost importance, and loss of face is to be avoided at all costs. External trappings of authority and power are highly valued, and presentation of a false front to outsiders is quite acceptable.

(4) Conflict is never explicitly acknowledged and confrontation is taboo.

(5) A well-rounded education is respected and accepted as evidence of personal virtue. Advanced technical competence is not considered a requirement for leadership in industry.

(6) Last but not least, Confucianism can be credited with instilling the qualities of diligence, skill and seriousness that have helped make the East Asian business community such a dynamic economic force in the world today.

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# Notes

1. Deverge, p.4.

2. Pye, 1985, p.57; Morishima, p.3, and Reischauer and Fairbank, 1958, pp.656-663.

3. Reischauer and Fairbanks, 1958, p.433.

4. Cho, 1983.

5. Pye, 1985, p. 66.

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# Chapter Five

## MORAL SENSE AND MORAL JUSTIFICATION IN CONFUCIANISM

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## I

In the West the moral sense is often regarded as an extra organ of sense, instinction or faculty, and feeling is considered something ontologically distinct from reason. Western philosophers have debated whether reason is the master or the slave of feeling, and argued whether a moral judgement is a matter of reason or of feeling. Many hold that mere feeling is too inferior to have anything to do with moral worth. It is sometimes even regarded as a source of evil. Others contend that moral sense is the real spring of morals. Some thinkers even claim that fully developed moral sentiment is the final and highest achievement of human life.

Moral experience, according to Confucianism, is a rich and complex life-experience and can not be reduced either to reason or to feeling. Our moral life has many facets, and so does human nature. There are cognitive, emotive and volitional aspects. For Confucianists, it is odd and even absurd to ask which function is the real master of our behavior. The purpose of this paper is to study how Confucian scholars perceive the nature, power and function of the moral sense in our lives.

For Confucianists, our lives do testify to the importance of the moral sense in experience. In concrete situations we often perform morally through the approval of our immediate sentiments without conceptual reasoning. In practice, feeling has a place in ethics. Yet moral sentiment is not something totally isolated or unrelated to reasoning; instead, it often develops from a noetic judgment about moral worth. Morality is more than moral sentiments, and is often justified on rational grounds and occurs within a cognitive context. Futher, morality is understood to apply only between man and man,

not between man and inanimate objects. Nor does it occur between object and object. For Confucianists, without interpersonal relationship there would be no morality. So morality is called *jen-lun* (human relationship) in Chinese. However, not all human relationships are moral. In Confucianism only those which are in accord with the rational principle of consistency, namely, "If X is right for me, it should be right for others," or "If X is not right for me, it should not be right for others." This constitutes the moral value of such virtues as benevolence. Morality is also known as *lun-li* (the principle of human relationships).

In this paper I will examine the Confucian justification for moral sentiment and examine the analysis by which benevolent sentiment is determined to be a virtue. In Confucianism ethics does not exclude the role of reason and moral judgments are understood as cognitive. Actually, in Confucianism reason and feeling, subjectivity and objectivity, individuality and sociality, fact and value are mutually connected. Facts associated with moral sentiments are presented to justify the ideal of virtue, to give a reason for being moral, to provide a rationale for discipline and education, and also to offer hope for improving human life. Confucian psychology, epistemology and ontology teach people to see others and morality in their fullness. According to Confucianism, what man is lies in what he thinks and senses, and in the ways he behaves. In what follows I want to expound the Confucian view of the inter-relatedness of these aspects of life.

## II

Feeling or sentiment has a vital place in Confucian ethics. According to Confucius and his disciples, people often behave benevolently without prior rational deliberation. Frequently, compassion, benevolence and gentleness to others are natural and immediate manifestations of the moral sense or sentiment. This natural sentiment is seen in the fact that men cannot bear to see the sufferings of others. To illustrate the sponstaneity of this moral sense, Mencius made the following words:

> When I say that men have a mind which cannot bear [to see the sufferings of] others, my meaning may be illustrated thus: even nowadays, if men suddenly see a child about to fall into a well, they all will experience a feeling of alarm and 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 the reputation [of being nonvirtuous].[1]

Why are men compassionate to others? Is it due to rationation that morality or benevolence will pay? According to the Mohist school founded by Mo Tzu (479-381 B.C.), morality will pay, right actions must come out of a rational calculation that the actions will benefit both the world and the individual. In his words, "He who loves others, must also be loved by others. He who hates others, must also hated by others. He who injures others, must also be injured by others."[2] Mo Tzu criticized Confucianism and pointed out that the Confucian funeral observances and music are invirtuous because they wasted the wealth and energy of the people.

For Confucianists, virtues develop naturally from human nature. Morality is not based on a calculation of profit or utility, and moral life is desirable for its own sake, not because of the benefits it brings. Confucius claimed, "The superior man understands righteousness (*i*);the inferior man understands profit (*li*),"[3] and "If one's acts are motivated by profit, he will have many enemies."[4] When King Hui of Liang asked Mencius how to benefit the kingdom, Mencius said, "If Your Majesty says, 'What is to be done to profit my kingdom?' the great officers will say, 'What is to be done to profit our families?' and the inferior officers and the common people will say, 'What is to be done to profit our persons?' Superiors and inferiors will try to snatch this profit the one from the other, and the kingdom will be endangered...Let Your Majesty also say, 'Humanity and righteousness, and these shall be the only themes.' Why must you use the word, 'profit'?"[5]

Virtues are beyond the deliberations of utility. So, when men see a child falling into a well, they will rush to save the child --not to gain the favor of the child's parents, to seek the praise or avoid a bad reputation. It is rather due to the spontaneous response of human nature. For Confucianists, the moral sense as a natural manifestation of human nature, makes human beings different from and superior to other animals. So Mencius claimed, "From this case we see that a man without the feeling of commiseration is not a man; a man without the feeling of shame and vice is not a man; a man without the feeling of modesty and compliance is not a man; and a man without the feeling of right and wrong is not a man."[6]

Funerals observances and music are kept and encouraged by Confucianists to satisfy and nourish the moral sentiment. Mencius said,

> In the most ancient times, there were some who did not inter their parents. When their parents died, they took them up and threw them into some water channel. Afterwards, when they passed them by, there would be foxes and wild cats devouring them, and flies and gnats biting at them. Their perspiration started out upon their foreheads, and they looked away, unable to bear the sight. The emotions of their hearts affected their faces

> and eyes, and instantly they went home and came back with baskets and spades and covered the bodies. If the covering of them thus was indeed right, the filial son and the man of humanity also certainly have their proper way to inter their parents.[7]

It often depends upon the hearts of men whether a certain action is right or wrong, appropriate or inappropriate. "Anciently there was no rule for the size of either the inner or outer coffin. In middle antiquity, the inner coffin was made seven inches thick, and the outer one the same. This was the same from the Emperor down to the common people, and was not done simply for the beauty of appearance, but because complete satisfaction was thus given to men's hearts."[8]

According to Confucianism, the moral sense is innate in one's nature. By following this innate sentiment, one can do good. Morals are not implanted from without, but rather reside in the very essence of being human. In Mencius' words, "The feeling of commiseration belongs to all men; so does that of shame and dislike; that of reverence and respect; and that of right and wrong. The feeling of commiseration is humanity; that of shame and dislike is righteousness; that of reverence and respect is propriety; and that of approving and disapproving is wisdom. These are not fused into us from without. We originally are possessed of them."[9] He pointed out that children carried in the arms all innocently love their parents. As they grow, they intuitively respect their elder brothers. To have filial affection for parents is humanity, and to respect elders is righteousness. For Mencius, these feelings were universal in the world.

From the innate moral sense spring moral distinctions including such basic virtues as humanity, righteousness, propriety and wisdom. "The feeling of commiseration is the beginning of humanity. The feeling of shame and dislike is beginning of righteousness. The feeling of modesty and yielding is the beginning of propriety. The feeling of approving and disapproving is the beginning of wisdom."[10] These feelings provide a psychological and ontological potential to behave morally. Without them men would be mere beasts. On the other hand, one who fully develops these innate abilities will become a sage.

To emphasize the point that innate moral sentiment is the spring of morality, Mencius stated, "All things are already complete in oneself. There is no greater joy than to examine oneself and be sincere. When in one's conduct one vigorously exercises altruism, humanity is not far to seek, but right by him"[11] In Confucianism, it is the purpose of education and moral discipline to bring out innate ability, which is called the goodness of human nature. The view that all men have good nature, or that human nature is good, does

Mencius stated, "All things are already complete in oneself. There is no greater joy than to examine oneself and be sincere. When in one's conduct one vigorously exercises altruism, humanity is not far to seek, but right by him"[11] In Confucianism, it is the purpose of education and moral discipline to bring out innate ability, which is called the goodness of human nature. The view that all men have good nature, or that human nature is good, does not mean that men's natures are actually and entirely good, and we are all sages today. Rather it means that men possess the potential or beginning of virtue. If the potential is well developed, one will become a sage. Others who do not develop their moral feelings, will not.[12]

The goodness of human nature is not merely a source of the individual's moral life, but also of a good society and a good government. If all men have minds that cannot bear to see others suffer, a good society will surely follow. If a ruler and government officials have feelings of commiseration, there can be virtuous government. Mencius said, "All men have the mind which cannot bear [to see the suffering of] others. The ancient kings had this mind and therefore they had a government that could not bear to see the suffering of the people. With a government that cannot bear to see the suffering of others, the government of the empire will be as easy as making something go round in the palm."[13]

Morality is also power in Confucianism. The moral sense can please the hearts of others and attract others to us. Chi K'uang Tzu asked Confucius about government, inquiring, "What do you think of killing the wicked and associating with the good?" Confucius replied, "In running your government, why should you use killing at all? If you desire what is good, the people will be good. The virtue of a ruler is like wind and that of the people is like grass. In whatever direction the wind blows, the grass always bends."[14] For Confucius, "If a ruler sets himself right, he will be followed without his command. If he does not set himself right, even his commands will not be obeyed."[15] A similar philosophy was put forth by Mencius when he said, "When force is used to overcome people, they do not submit willingly but only because they have not sufficient strength to resist. But when virtue is used to subdue people, they are pleased in their hearts and sincerely submit, as the seventy-two disciples submitted to Confucius. *The Book of Poetry* says,

> From the west, from the east,
> From the south, from the north,
> None wanted to resist
> That is what is meant.[16]

# III

From the fact that feeling or sentiment has a vital place in Confucian ethics, one should not infer that for Confucianists the nature of moral judgment is essentially emotive or noncognitive. Nor should one hold that in Confucianism emotion or passion is the master of human behavior. Western philosophers have compartmentalized human nature and have made the sharp ontological distinction between affective and cognitive aspects. For centuries, Western philosophers have debated whether reason or emotion controls action, whether the moral sense or rationality is the ultimate faculty, and whether moral judgments are cognitive or emotive in nature.

Plato is famous for his philosophy of the tripartite nature of the soul. Plato held that the soul consisted of a rational factor, a courageous or spirited part and the appetites. The rational part distinguishes men from brutes and is regarded as the highest element. It is immortal while the other two can perish. Plato located reason in the head, the spirited in the breast, and the appetites below.[17] These three elements in life conflict with each other, but the rational element, like a charioteer controlling two horses, is most precious and should be the master of life. The spirited element is seen as a natural ally of reason, and loves honor with temperance and modesty; it is likened to the good horse. The unruly appetites tend to side with riot and insolence, and act like a horse that needs to be tempered by whip. Like Socrates, Plato identifies virtue with knowledge. Reason rather than feeling ought to direct human actions, and the moral sense has no significant place in ethics.

This analysis has exercised enormous influence upon the Western view of morals. However, some Western philosophers such as David Hume have contended, on the contrary, that reason is the slave of the passions, and that moral judgment is ultimately emotive in nature. A moral sense, rather than reason, is the spring board for moral decision making. For Hume, reason alone was incapable of motivating action and, ultimately, moral distinctions are derived from feeling. In *A Treatise of Human Nature*, Hume claims that "reason is, and ought to be the slave of the passions, and can never pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them."[18] He maintained that a rational explanation of the ultimate ends of human activity was impossible. If we ask a man why he takes exercises, he may say that he wants to be healthy. And if he is asked why he likes good health, he may say that sickness is painful. But if he is asked why he prefers pleasure to pain, no explanation can be given. "This is an ultimate end, and is never referred to any other object."[19] There must be something desirable on its own account

and for its immediate accord or agreement with the affections.[20] Similarly virtue, Hume points out, is an end desirable on its own account and for its own immediate rewards. He wrote, "Morality, therefore, is more properly felt than judged of."[21] He defined virtue as "*whatever mental action or quality gives to a spectator the pleasing sentiment of approbation;* and vice the contrary."[22]

Hume regarded his psychology and epistemology as carrying on the work of moral-sense theorists such as Shaftesbury, Hutcheson and Butler. He sought to answer traditional Western philosophical questions about whether reason was the master or slave of the emotions. But Confucian ethics is not given to deal with those questions. In fact, from a Confucian perspective, while the questions appear to be genuine and intellectual issues, they are really inappropriate and senseless problems based on an erroneous compartmentalization of human nature. Consequently, Western philosophers have wondered and argued, and have wasted time in examining whether moral judgments are essentially cognitive or emotive.

Unlike the Western philosophers, Confucius and his disciples do not compartmentalize human nature into different elements. Rather, they see the essence of a human being as something harmoniously rich and complex. Reason and feeling or sentiment are not ontologically distinct; instead they are diverse functions and manifestations of human nature. For Confucianists, life has many facets, and nature multiple functions and activities. Sometimes we are cognitive, at other times we function affectively. At still other times it may be both or neither. It is senseless to ask which function really masters our lives, and unwise to try to reduce one function to the other.

According to Confucianism, moral experience being rich, can never be reduced to single phenomenon. It ought to be seen in its fullness. Sometimes our moral judgments manifest sentimentally, at other times they appear more rational. But it is erroneous and inappropriate to reduce such a variety into a single minded analysis, saying that reason controls the emotions or that, after all, morality is more properly felt than judged of.

Furthermore, human nature, according to Confucianism, has a volitional facet. One's power to will plays an important role in activity. Without volition and belief, emotion and cognition cannot function properly and so moral conduct is neither merely an expression of emotion nor an assertion of cognition, but has a volitionary aspect as well. For Confucianists, morality presupposes the sincerity of will (*chen-i*). Virtues manifest good human nature, but are not due to a single factor; rather they are due to the extension of knowledge (*chih-chu*), the sincerity of will and the normality of mind

(*cheng-hsin*). In Confucianism, good is not limited to agreeable sentiment, or rational deliberation, but rather encompasses sincere intention, the correct mind and extensive cognition. Confucianists also never define vice or evil as merely sentimentally disagreeable. For them, what is disagreeable sentimentally may be good.

Yet not all sentiments are moral. Why is it, then, that some are moral and others not? What constitutes the morality of a moral sensibility? Confucianists have carefully examined these issues. Surely, benevolence is a virtue immediately agreeable to general sentiment, so when a child is about to fall into a well, men will rush to save him almost without thinking. But why do we praise the act? Why do we accept benevolence as a virtue? According to Confucianism, it is not merely due to sentiment, but rather involves reason. Virtue is praised and accepted because it is reasonable as well as emotionally satisfying. Such virtue is known as *jen* in Chinese.

*Jen,* the key virtue in Confucian ethics, has been translated as benevolence, unselfish love, good will, humanity, human-heartedness and perfect virtue. In fact we cannot find the English equivalent of the term. This is much due to the fact that in English ethical terminology is based on Western moral philosophy while Confucianism evidences a different moral psychology, epistemology and ontology. Contemporary sinologists seem to read into Confucianism too much of the Western view of men and morals. When they see that Confucianists discuss the moral sense as the source of moral action, they hold that Confucian ethics is based on "a moral feeling that reveals the human person as one naturally related to others. . . He affirms his own nature with his emotions, with no alienation from himself or from others."[23] The real structure of Chinese ethics is said to lie hidden in its holistic insights,[24] as if it had no rational principles or rules of inference.[25]

# IV

The Western theory of the moral sense often assumes an ontic distinction between reason and emotion, and maintains that morality lies with sentiment. As we have seen, Hume even argues that reason alone can never produce action. According to Hume, moral distinctions ultimately derive from pleasure and pain, and are unjustifiable on rational grounds. Hume regarded virtue as an end "desirable on its own account, without fee or reward, merely for the immediate satisfaction which it conveys."[26]

Certainly, human beings often express moral sentiments without much deliberation, but according to Confucianism the sentiments about pleasure

and pain alone can never be a source of morality. Morality means more than sentiments. Confucianists point out that other creatures, animals, also have feelings, and even a parrot can say, "Stealing is wrong!" or "Be honest!" Yet the parrot's expression is not a moral proclamation. Why? For a sentiment to be moral at all, it must also involve motive and belief. And it must be conveyed under conditions of *chen-i* (the sincerity of the will) and *cheng-hsin* (the normacy of the mind). If a lunatic or a dreamer asserts, "Be benevolent!" we do not suppose we have heard a moral judgment.

For Confucianism, even although men often express moral sentiments without deliberation, the so-called moral sentiment must be justifiable and within a cognitive context; otherwise, brute feeling or erratic emotions can be counted as moral sentiments. People may be pleased by attractive artistic objects, but this feeling would not be counted as moral. Morality does not occur between human beings and inanimate objects. It happens only between man and man. Thus in Confucianism morality is called *jen-lun* (human relationship) or *lun-li* (the principle of human relationship).

Without such intersubjectivity, and the communal life of human beings, there would be no morals. Our sense of dignity, right and wrong, obligations and values, according to Confucianism, are made manifest and rooted in human relationships. If there were only one man living in this world, there would not be benevolence, kindness, good will, friendship and other virtues. For Confucianists, the individual can never be the source of morals, and the dignity of the individual must be seen in interpersonal relationship with others. Etymologically, *jen*, the key Confucian virtue, means "man-to-man." Interpersonal relationships make human beings and their lives valuable and different from other creatures. Therefore Confucius said, "*Jen* is man."[27] This can be translated as "Man-to-man is man." The assertion is that morality makes man what he is, and is grounded in the man-to-man relationship. So Mencius said, "Man-to-man *jen* is the heart of man,"[28] and "The sage is the apogee of the human relationships."[29]

According to Confucianism, the interpersonal relationship constitutes the nature of morality and also the essence of humanhood. As the way one deals with others defines one's value and moral being, morality is not something acquired and added to one's being after the individual is, but is the very substance of one's dignity and being itself. The greatness of this morality and humanhood is first seen in one's family relationships. When a baby is born, the first persons he contacts are parents and family members. His morality and humanhood should be cultivated and should manifest in his relationships with relatives. Later, he will naturally show his value and essence in his dealing with friends and others in the society. Mencius said, "Children

carried in the arms all know to love their parents. As they grow, they all know to respect their elder brothers. To have filial affection for parents is *jen*, and to respect elders is righteousness. These belong to all persons in the world, that is all."[30] Therefore, in Confucian ethics *hsiao* (filial piety) is called the root of all virtues.

Virtues such as benevolence, friendship and kindness everywhere excite the approbation and good will from others, but Confucianists would not claim that they are rooted in a special kind of sense, perhaps termed "sentiment," as many Westerners do. A so-called "benevolent outlook" has noetic, and volitional as well as sentimental aspects, and can be justified on rational grounds. It becomes a virtue because it is in accord with the principle that if a certain action X is right for me, it should be right for others. If X is not right for me, it should not be right for others. Disinterested sentiment like this is fair, consistent and reasonable, and hence virtuous. On the contrary, selfishness or self-love is a vice because it violates the basic principle of rationality. Therefore, Confucius said, "The man of *jen*, wishing to be established himself, seeks also to establish others; wishing to be enlarged himself, he seeks also to enlarge others. To be able to judge of others by what is nigh in ourselves, --this may be called the criterion of morality."[31] He also described *jen* as "What you do not want others to do unto you, do not do unto them."[32]

Human beings express a variety sentiments in their interpersonal communications with other people, but only those that are in accord with the principle of *jen* can be counted as moral. Men should take care with sentiments that violate this objective principle. Once King Hsuan of Chi told Mencius that he felt sexual desire for women, and asked whether his sentiment was moral or immoral. Mencius replied, "If Your Majesty loves beauty, let the people be able to gratify the same feeling, and what difficulty will there be for you to become the true king of the empire?" The king also expressed that he had strong desires and feelings about wealth, and asked Mencius whether his feeling was good or evil. Mencius answered, "If Your Majesty loves wealth, let the people be able to gratify the same feeling, and what difficulty will there be for you to become the true king of the empire?"[33]

Passions are often the source of action, yet according to Confucianism we can control our passions and regulate them to fit with the objective criteria of morality. So in the works of Mencius, we read, "One who commands our liking is called a good man."[34]

# V

In Confucian ethics, reason and emotion, subjectivity and objectivity, individually and sociability, and fact and value are mutually connected and interpenetrated. No aspect should be left out, and none should be taken exclusively as the master of moral action. The complexity and richness of life and moral experience should be apprehended as they are. If human nature is compartmentalized, and morality reduced either to the realm of reason or mere sense, moral values and the human essence would be lost.

In Confucian teaching, while the fact that all men have a mind that cannot bear to see the suffering of others is brought out to show that morality is in ways sentiment, it also reminds us of the important fact that the moral sense is deeply rooted in human nature and even evil persons have benevolent sentiments at time. This, for Confucianists, justifies the belief that every man has the potential to be good. It also justifies the ideal of a moral society.

Once Confucius was taking part in the winter sacrifice. After the ceremony concluded, he went for a stroll near the city gate and sighed mournfully. His disciple Tzu-lu was by his side and asked, "Why should the gentleman sigh?" Confucius is reported to have sighed for the state of Lu, his native country. He then expressed his vision of a moral society. According to Confucius, the ideal society is a community where the great Tao is practiced, and everything under heaven is for the public. The worthy and able are promoted to office and men practice good faith and live in affection. People do not regard as parents only their own parents, or as sons only their own sons. The aged find a fitting close to their lives, the robust their proper employment; the young are provided with an upbringing and the widow and widower, the orphaned and the sick, with proper care. Men have their tasks and women their hearths. They do not leave goods lying about wastefully, yet they do not hoard them for themselves. People dislike the thought that their energies are not fully used, and still they use them not for private ends. Therefore all evil plotting is prevented, thieves and rebels do not arise, and people can leave their outer gates unbolted.[35]

This ideal society is called *Ta-tung-shih-chei*, the world of great equality or grand unity. Now, is this moral society too idealistic? How is it possible? Is not human nature by contrasts, selfish? If so, it becomes unreasonable to ask people to live an egoless way of life. In order to deal with just such skepticism, Mencius urged the fact of the existence of moral sentiment in evil persons. Thus, morality is seen as disinterested motive and action, has a factual basis, and is not unreasonable to expect it. Hence the ideal moral

society is not impossible. A mind which cannot bear to see the suffering of others is rooted in human nature and can serve as the seed of morals. Let people know to give it its full development and make it bear the fruits of good behavior. "The result," Mencius argued, "will be like fire that begins to burn, or a spring which has begun to find vent."[36] The sage is the person who allows *tuan* (beginnings) of the good potent in his mind to reach complete fruition and becomes the apogee of the human relationships.[37]

If our society is still flawed, it is not because men are basically selfish and cannot do good, but rather because they have not allowed their good natures to develop well. In Mencius' words, "In reality, it is possible to be good. . . . If men do what is not good, it is not the fault of their natural powers."[38] Men become evil and the moral society cannot be established because originally innocent minds have been obscured, perhaps polluted by external influence. But discipline and education can help to remove these external adversities and discover the lost mind so as to build the good society.

Confucianists are realistic about the prospects of human conditions. They know that the ideal society will be hard to find. Yet, men are justified in holding to the truth that every man is good by nature. Even evil person, no matter how recalcitrant, could be sages. In principle, if not in reality, all human beings have dignity and deserve respect and justice. Thus in Confucianism a mind that cannot bear to see the suffering of others provides a *hope* for the better advancement of society. Moral sentiment offers a rationale for promoting the cultivation of good human beings and justifies the role of moral reforms and change in the society. If by nature men were natually wicked, all moral disciplines and institutions would be artificial and even inhuman. Morality would be the same as legality.

The moral sense in Confucianism also provides a reason to be moral. A mind that cannot bear to see the suffering of others enables one to love others as oneself. It is this mind that makes men, different from and superior to animals. Mencius said, "That whereby man differs from the birds and beasts is but slight. The mass people cast it away, whereas the superior man preserves it."[39] Morals are to be practiced in a communal setting and may produce consequences beneficial to society, but such good results are merely by-products. For Confucianists, the chief reason to be moral is that one should become and be a man. To be moral is to be fully human, and it is through morality that man is man. Of course, people may not preserve and follow their innate minds. They may care only for pleasure and live heedlessly. For Confucianists, those who do not develop their moral sentiments fully are, in reality, no better than animals.

To live a human way of life also means to act intelligently because "the faculty of the mind is thinking."[40] By thinking, the mind will seize upon the correct view of things, whereas by a failure to think it will not do this. According to Mencius, "it is simply this which constitutes the great man."[41] Morality is intellectually acceptable as well as mentally agreeable. For what the mind likes is reason (*li*) and righteousness (*i*). In the Confucian analysis, what the human mind commonly and universally approves is "the principles of reason and righteousness. The sages only apprehend ahead of us what our minds mutually approve of. Therefore the principles of reason and righteousness are agreeable to our minds just as the flesh of grass-fed and grain-fed animals is agreeable to our mouths."[42]

In Confucianism the mind as human nature is known as *liang-hsin*, pure and sound mind.[43] It is not merely emotive and affective, but also cognitive and noetic in essence, and so is also called *liang-chih*, pure and sound knowing. This knowing is innately seeded in men, and hence is also called *liang-neng*, pure and sound ability.[44] If this ability is developed fully, the ideal man can be produced and the ideal society will come into being. Thus in Confucianism knowing, sensing, doing and being are virtually synonymous. One becomes and is as what one knows as well as what one senses and does. The reality and fullness of human life and moral experience should be apprehended in this way.

# Notes

1. *Mencius,* 2A:3

2. *Mo-tzu,* ch. 17.

3. *Analects,* 4:16. Confucius also said, "The superior man thinks of virtue; the inferior man thinks of possessions. The superior man thinks of sanction; the inferior man thinks of personal favors." (*Ibid.,* 4:11).

4. *Ibid.*, 4:12.

5. *Mencius,* 1A: 4 and 6.

6. *Ibid.*, 2A:6.

7. *Ibid.*, 3A:5.

8. *Ibid.*, 2B:7.

9. *Ibid.*, 6A:6.

10. *Ibid.*, 2A:6.

11. *Ibid.*, 7A:4.

12. *Ibid.*, 6A:15.

13. *Ibid.*, 2A:6.

14. *Analects,* 12:19.

15. *Ibid.*, 13:6.

16. *Mencius,* 2A:3.

17. Plato, *Timaeus,* 69 d6-70 a 7.

18. David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed, by L. A. Selby-bigge (Oxford: 1951), 2, 3, p. 415.

19. David Hume, *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, Appendix 1, 244, p. 293.

20. *Ibid.*

21. *A Treatise of Human Nature,* 3, 1, 2, p. 470.

22. *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals,* Appendix 1, 239, p. 289.

23. Julia Ching, "Chinese Ethics and Kant," *Philosophy East and West,* 28 (April, 1978), 169.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 170.

25. See I. A. Richards, *Mencius on the Mind* (London: Kegan Paul), p. 55, and see also Hajime Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples: India, China, Tibet, and Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1964), p. 198.

26. David Hume, *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals,* Appendix 1, 245, pp. 293-4.

27. *The Doctrine of the Mean*, 20.

28. *Mencius,* 6A:11.

29. *Ibid.*, 4A:2.

30. *Ibid.*, 7A:15.

31. *Analects,* VI:28.

32. *Ibid.*, XV:23.

33. *Mencius*, 1B:5.

34. *Ibid.*, 7B: 25.

35. See Wm. Theodore de Bary, ed., *Sources of Chinese Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), Vol. I., pp. 175-6.

36. *Mencius,* 2B:6.

37. *Ibid.*, 4A:2.

38. *Ibid.*, 6A:6.

39. *Ibid.*, 4A:19.

40. *Ibid.*, 6A:15.

41. *Ibid.*

42. *Ibid.*, 6A:7.

43. *Ibid.*, 6A:8.

44. *Ibid.*, 7A:15.

# Part Three

## Dreams, Reality and the Nature of Things

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# Chapter Six

## A LOGICAL RECONSTRUCTION OF THE BUTTERFLY DREAM IN THE *CHUANG TZU*

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It is my judgment that the fabled butterfly dream anecdote in the *Chuang Tzu* is an incomplete and preliminary attempt to put forth an argument that is more completely and satisfactorily put forth in the Great Sage anecdote. In order to make this case out fully, a three-piece argument might be given. The entire argument triptych would include: (i) an analysis of the butterfly dream anecdote showing it to be either internally incomplete or not properly sequenced so that both a re-ordering and some expansion of the story are needed to make coherent argument; (ii) an argument based on textual analysis of the butterfly dream showing that it would more logically precede the Great Sage anecdote; (iii) a comparative analysis of the two anecdotes showing that both are arguments for transformation.[1]

I will confine my argument to the second approach. I believe that the strongest case can be made by an internal textual comparison of the two anecdotes as they currently stand to show why on logical grounds the butterfly anecdote belongs earlier. This analysis does the least amount of violence to the text as it currently stands and addresses itself only to the order of the text. However, the three arguments being mutually reinforcing, the case for the provisional status of the butterfly dream anecdote can only be completely made by all three in concert.

Before I proceed, one qualification is to be noted. The overall strategy of comparing the two anecdotes for parallel elements makes sense only if we grant the premise that the two anecdotes are designed to make a similar point. If we were to decide that the butterfly and the Great Sage anecdotes were designed to make different points, it would be important to make certain that the two anecdotes were not making contradictory points. To know this, we first need to know the point made by each anecdote. The Great Sage dream anecdote is fairly straightforward and, as we shall see

below, there is little question about its meaning. The butterfly dream anecdote is, on the other hand, decidedly ambiguous and difficult to interpret, especially in its present form and present textual placement. I gather that there are two major interpretations possible for the butterfly dream: (a) that it is an illustration of transformation and parallels the Great Sage dream (my interpretation); (b) that it has as its primary intention the conclusion that we are never sure whether we are dreaming or awake. If (b) is taken as the meaning, then the butterfly dream anecdote directly contradicts the meaning of the Great Sage dream anecdote. So then, even the butterfly dream loses its value because then we do not know which to believe of the two, and at this point the text loses its integrity. It is my contention that by understanding the two anecdotes as similar, we can save both of them and maintain both the integrity and value of the text.

It is not enough to say with Angus Graham that the two anecdotes make different points and leave it at that.[2] We must make certain that the points that they make are not contradictory. But, it would appear that the only other interpretation of the butterfly dream that is possible does in fact contradict the Great Sage dream anecdote and leaves us with a self-contradictory text.

I consider the butterfly dream to be an earlier version or an earlier attempt to articulate what is more fully articulated in the Great Sage dream---as it were, a lisping version of the Great Sage dream, less complete and less perfect. I will compare the two anecdotes textually to demonstrate that both reveal a similar line of development, and in doing so point out how the Great Sage dream achieves more of what the butterfly dream is ostensibly attempting. This approach possesses the virtue of making sense out of both anecdotes and also of eliminating any possibility of contradiction.

The argument has two sides, one based on composition and one on explanation. Taken together, they assert for the butterfly dream anecdote a preliminary or provisional status.

The argument concerning composition is based upon the assumption that the earlier an argument is formulated, the less complete it is. As an argument unfolds, it becomes more and more complete. A less complete argument therefore belongs earlier in a text, based upon its having been formulated earlier. If, therefore, an arguably earlier argument is found later in the text and there are reasons to believe that the textual arrangement of arguments is not authentic,[3] then this is a misplacement or an incorrect editing of an argument.

This reasoning is based upon the psychology of composition such that an argument evolves as it is being formulated and its later formulations represent a more mature state of the argument than earlier attempts (as, for instance, in the B and A versions of the *Critique*). If, therefore, we can show that the Great Sage dream anecdote is a more sophisticated, complete, self-conscious, explicit and coherent version of the butterfly dream anecdote, it seems likely that it was composed later and therefore belongs later in the text.

The argument from the order of explanation is very similar because it, too, assumes that if a more sophisticated version of an argument explains both itself and another version, then that argument which explains both is logically posterior, and in our case should be placed later in the text on logical grounds. It makes less logical sense for a less full account to succeed a fuller one; the *explanans* should succeed the *explanandum*. That argument which is less explicatory and requires an additional argument to be fully clear is logically prior.

The argument from the order of composition is more difficult to make, but is nonetheless worthwhile to consider. In composing an argument, from the psychology of composition, the inexplicit precedes the explicit in time. As one develops an argument, more clarity is reached as to the conclusions one is attempting to establish. Anyone who has tried his hand at first-order philosophy is familiar with this phenomenon.

We may regard the Great Sage dream anecdote first. It is clearly more complete and sophisticated than its counterpart. There are no logical contradictions within the narrative, and there are no steps left out. The basic structure of the Great Sage anecdote is as follows. First, it states that all men exist on the level of the dream. Secondly, it states that even philosophers are dreaming when they expound their theories. Third, the author includes himself among philosophers, and is therefore also dreaming as he expounds his own theory. These three steps are put forth with complete self-consistency and without any ellipsis in the argument.

| *The text*[4] | *My condensation of the argument* |
|---|---|
| Yet all the while the fools think they are awake. | 1. All men exist on the level of the dream. |
| Confucius and you are both | 2. Even philosophers are |

| | |
|---|---|
| in a dream. | dreaming as they expound their theories. |
| And when I say that you are in dream, this is also a dream. | 3. I am also dreaming as I expound my philosophy [which in this case is the philosophy that you are dreaming]. |

The author of the *Chuang-Tzu* then moves on to a new premise that one day there will be a great awakening in which we will be able to become aware that all that has so far progressed is, in fact, part of a dream.[5] Such an expectation, if we may anticipate our conclusion here, would appear awkward if it were to appear prior to the butterfly dream anecdote, where at the end we are seemingly unaware whether we are awake or dreaming.

| *The text* | *My condensation of the argument* |
|---|---|
| And someday there will be a great awakening when we know that this is all a great dream.[6] | 4. It is possible that we can arrive at a state of knowledge whereby we can distinguish between what is a dream and what is not a dream. |
| By and by comes that great awakening and then we shall know that it has all been a great dream.[7] | |

If, on the other hand, we inspect the butterfly dream, we find it reaches (at least in its present version) a far more tentative conclusion, of narrower scope. If in fact it was composed later in time or if it was meant to appear after the Great Sage anecdote, it would not be at all logically contiguous or logically sequential. Consider:

> Once upon a time, Chuang Chou (i.e, Chuang Tzu) dreamed that he was a butterfly, a butterfly fluttering about, enjoying itself. It did not know that it was Chuang Chou. Suddenly he awoke with a start and he was Chuang Chou again. But he did not know whether he was Chuang Chou who had dreamed that he was a butterfly, or whether he was a butterfly dreaming that he was Chuang Chou. Between Chuang Chou and the butterfly there must be some distinction. This is what is called the transformation of things.[8]

If we compare the Great Sage dream with the butterfly story in its present form, the butterfly story appears to be radically incomplete. In the butterfly

dream anecdote, we are told that we are not sure if Chuang Chou is dreaming or if it is the butterfly doing the dreaming. The very next sentence tentatively claims that there must be some distinction between the two, but it is not clear from the anecdote who would be capable of making such a distinction. But I am arguing that in the later fragment, the Great Sage is put forth as one who could possibly be aware of such a distinction.

In the butterfly anecdote, while the necessity of there being such a distinction is recognized, it is not at all clear as to who could possibly make it. Clearly it cannot be Chuang Chou, who might even be dreaming of this possibility, and therefore might be mistaken. And it is not a distinction made by a butterfly. So, distinction is called for, but the condition for the possibility of the distinction is not given within the limits of the butterfly anecdote.

Finally, in the butterfly anecdote, we are told that such a distinction may be called the transformation of things. This, in the context of the anecdote, makes very little sense. The transformation of any thing would be witnessed by a knower, who himself would not occupy a veridical standpoint. Therefore the conclusion reached, as to the transformation of things, is not justified or justifiable. The conclusion does not appear to be warranted if it is taken as a conclusion which can be reached from the butterfly dream anecdote itself. The conclusion, that this represents the transformation of things, does not follow as a logical consequence but stands on its own without textual justification.

However, if we consider the butterfly dream anecdote as an anticipation or adumbration of the argument found in fuller form in the Great Sage dream anecdote, the conclusion makes perfect logical sense. First, we are told that Chuang Chou might well be the one who is dreaming (which is more or less the point of the butterfly's appearance in the story in the first place). This fits in very well if the butterfly anecdote precedes the Great Sage dream.

For example, the Great Sage dream commences with a story of those who are dreaming of drinking wine. In this context, just as the people are dreaming of drinking wine (and are therefore inebriated in their dream so that their dream judgment is impaired), so also they do not know if they are dreaming or not. *What* the transformation of things is, they are not quite sure, although they realize upon awakening from their wine slumbers that they have not been drinking wine at all. In this light the butterfly dream is on the same level as dreaming of drinking wine. But in the Great Sage dream, the mock wine imbibers *know* that there is a transformation through the appearance of the Great Sage, who appears later and explains it to them.

I have conflated the two stories for the moment in order to put my point most plainly.

Chuang Chou, or the butterfly, is Chuang Chou dreaming. He needs to wake up in order to understand this properly. The distinction between Chuang Chou and the butterfly can only be made with clarity and certainty after an *ultimate awakening*. The distinction between Chuang Chou and the butterfly that is said to exist (within the butterfly anecdote) results from, I conclude, a small or preliminary awakening. I say this not only because there is no mention made of a great awakening, but also because as soon as Chuang Chou recognizes that he is Chuang Chou, he does not know if he is Chuang Chou or not. The awakening that he experiences is not a full or real or final awakening because as soon as it occurs, he is not sure if it is not part of a dream. The conclusion which follows, that there must be some distinction between Chuang Chou and the butterfly is not legitimate if it is based internally, taking the butterfly dream anecdote as a complete argument in itself. It makes sense only if we understand the butterfly dream as a precursor to the Great Sage anecdote, such that the conditions for the possibility of the truth of the butterfly dream anecdote's claims are given. As an anticipation of a more complete argument, it makes some sense. If it stands alone as a conclusion to an argument, it is perhaps poetic but an illicit conclusion.

Thus the butterfly dream anecdote makes more sense if it precedes the Great Sage dream. Also, any distinction between Chuang Chou and the butterfly available from within the butterfly dream anecdote is premature and uncertain. Such a tentative distinction suggests a temporary, not an ultimate awakening.

Both anecdotes seem to attempt to make the same point, that we can see reality only after awakening. In the butterfly dream anecdote one awakens with a start prior to making a distinction. But the problem is that after awakening, Chuang Chou is not even certain if he is Chuang Chou. Thus, after the awakening, he is not confident. After awakening, he is only confused, much as if he were still in a dream. To make matters worse, from within this state of confusion he becomes aware that there must be a distinction between Chuang Chou and the butterfly. It seems clear from this analysis that the butterfly dream anecdote must be an incomplete or rudimentary version of the Great Sage anecdote, and was probably first in the order of composition.

The argument from the order of explanation is very much like the argument

from the order of composition. However, unlike the argument from the order of composition, the argument from the order of explanation does not argue as to which argument must have been designed first in time. The argument from the order of explanation argues from the standpoint of a complete (consistent, cohesive and coherent) explanation that it makes more logical sense that that argument which is the more comprehensive and self-conscious (which can explain both the other argument and itself) should follow, just as the *explanans* should follow the *explanandum* and not the reverse. This argument concerns what constitutes the most satisfactory explanation, and is independent of the author's intentions. Nor is it necessary to subscribe to any particular editing arrangement for the argument from the order of explanation to be valid.

As an aid to the reader, I have reproduced below the full version of the Great Sage dream anecdote which in our present version of the text is placed in near proximity to the butterfly dream anecdote, preceding it by some three arguments.[9]

> He who dreams of drinking wine may weep when morning comes; he who dreams of weeping may in the morning go off to hunt. While he is dreaming he does not know it is a dream, and in his dream he may even try to interpret a dream. Only after he wakes does he know it was a dream. And someday there will be a great awakening when we know that this is all a great dream. Yet the stupid believe they are awake, busily and brightly assuming they understand things, calling this man ruler, that one herdsman--how dense! Confucius and you are both dreaming! And when I say you are dreaming, I am dreaming, too. Words like these will be labeled the Supreme Swindle. Yet, after ten thousand generations, a Great Sage may appear who will know their meaning, and it will still be as though he appeared with astonishing speed.

I suppose it could be argued that the Great Sage dream anecdote is of little significance, with more deference given to the insight proffered by the butterfly dream anecdote. I find this unacceptable. The Great Sage dream anecdote is sophisticated and subtle when compared with the logical incompleteness and un-self-conscious, paradoxical nature of the butterfly dream anecdote.

I think a close examination of the two fragments reveals that there is a similarity of intent and that the Great Sage dream does what the butterfly dream attempts but is unable to do. The condensation of philosophical elements which follows is an attempt to demonstrate this point. While in my opinion the arguments from the order of composition and the order of explanation are mutually reinforcing, it is possible to argue that, on explanatory grounds alone, there is greater coherence to the argument if the

Great Sage dream anecdote follows the butterfly dream anecdote and indeed concludes the chapter.

Logically speaking, if we take the Great Sage dream anecdote as the later argument, it has the power to explain the butterfly dream but the reverse is not the case. Once fully awakened, it is possible to distinguish between a dream and reality. Before one has fully awakened, such a distinction is not possible. If we take the butterfly dream as following the Great Sage dream, there appears to be *regressus* in the argument. We have already fully awakened; however, we are once again in the situation of not being able to tell if we are awake or dreaming. This makes no sense at all. It could be taken as a refutation of the Great Sage argument, except that the butterfly argument claims there must be some distinction between Chuang Chou and the butterfly. Thus, it cannot be understood to be saying something different from the Great Sage dream. On the other hand, if after awakening we can no longer make the distinction even though there must be such a distinction, this nullifies the insight of the Great Sage dream--that such a distinction is possible after a great awakening. If we can no longer make such a distinction after a great awakening, this either revises the Great Sage dream (which is not likely intentional since the text still states that there must be some distinction), or it constitutes a *reductio ad absurdum* of the Great Sage dream. Yet, that the intent of the two is the same is indicated in the assertion in both that there must be a distinction. The butterfly dream wants to make the distinction but by internal logic it cannot.

If, however, we place the butterfly dream before the Great Sage dream, the pieces of the puzzle come together. The butterfly dream cannot explain the Great Sage dream, but the Great Sage dream can and does explain the butterfly dream. The butterfly dream is clearly a case of attempting to put forth the difficulties encountered if one is in a dreaming state. Chuang Chou possessed the insight that there must be a distinction between waking and dreaming before he developed a logic to explain possessing the insight. Then he elaborated the logic carefully in the Great Sage dream anecdote.

After saying that there was a distinction between waking and dreaming (Chuang Chou and butterfly) and that this was the transformation, he was able to explain how this was possible. The transformation was the partial awakening. The transformation was a transformation of the subject knower. The transformation became a condition of possibility. If we take his "earlier" statement as referring to the transformation of *things,* we are in a quandary. This is an inexplicit or enthymemic statement of what in a fuller form might read: this is about the transformation of things due to the transforming

insight of the awakened mind. Yet, there is not an endless repetition of the cycle of Chuang Chou and butterfly. He is quite clear that there can be an end to this cycle. In fact, even the recognition of a difference between Chuang Chou and the butterfly cannot be made within the dream state or it would be as suspect as the contents of any dream. The awareness that there must be a distinction between Chuang Chou and the butterfly must logically follow awakening. The possibility of seeing the transformation of things (which is another way of saying seeing reality) is a necessary precursor to the fully awakened state.

The explanatory power of placing the Great Sage dream anecdote after the butterfly dream anecdote is great, while if we insist upon placing the butterfly dream afterwards, we seem to be taking a step backwards, and then drawing the unwarranted conclusion that we can still know (or that someone can know) there must be a distinction between Chuang Chou and the butterfly while there was a possibility that the subject knower was still in a dream. This does not make logical sense, and I rest my case on this. By placing the Great Sage dream later in the chapter, we are presented with a well formed argument.

As an aid to the reader, if we place the two anecdotes side by side, we can note the superior inner consistency, comprehensiveness and scope of the Great Sage dream. These are earmarks of its having been composed with greater subtlety, and in general its all-encompassing qualities are also indications of its bringing a more complete and elegant explanation to the problems posed.

One hint of there being a link between the two anecdotes is given in the phrase, "this is the transformation of things." In the context of the butterfly narrative, "this" is the understanding of the distinction between Chuang Chou and the butterfly. The *understanding* is the true transformation. When we possess this understanding (as in the case of the Great Sage), then the things in the world become transformed in the sense that they are finally seen to be as they truly are. In the butterfly dream, all that we can know is that there is a distinction and that the understanding of this distinction is the transformation.

In the Great Sage anecdote, the missing links to the argument are more clearly supplied: there is a distinction between illusion and reality, and the greatly awakened sage will know it.[10] In the meantime, it will be expressed in the words of the philosophers and might appear paradoxical and dreamlike. Since philosophers speak out of the dream state, such seemingness

or interim paradoxicality goes with the territory.

In the order of composition and in the order of explanation, the Great Sage anecdote belongs later. It reflects both upon itself and the butterfly dream and so is more sophisticated. It explains the possibility of its own occurrence and of the occurrence of the butterfly dream. It suggests that these dual occurrences are explicable while at the same time reflecting shrewdly upon the limitations of language to do so. All these things make for its being placed later than the butterfly dream in the chapter in order that its greater power of explanation will offer a more complete logic.

I think that there are some far-reaching consequences to the argument that the butterfly dream is best understood as a provisional version of the Great Sage dream. These consequences lie outside the scope of the present chapter. I will content myself with the following brief observations.

With the placement of the butterfly dream at the end of chapter two, and with no attempt to see a connection between the butterfly dream and the Great Sage dream, one is left with the the conclusion that awakening consists of a knowing that there must be a distinction, but we are left with the possibility that the transformation which is spoken of is an endless repetition of a succession of dreams and awakenings with no respite. It is not possible (given the internal logic of the butterfly dream anecdote) to conceive of the transformation spoken of as a final or full awakening. It would be very difficult to regard the transformation or any subsequent insight deriving from it as true since it might be another figment of the imagination. This cannot be ultimate or final awakening.

One alternative, it seems, is to interpret the transformation as referring to the endless cycle of wakings and dreamings which casts doubt upon the validity of any claim to knowledge. It is difficult to know how one might reach any other conclusion justifiably without taking into account the Great Sage anecdote. The butterfly dream anecdote, taken by itself as a complete argument, leaves us with an unsatisfactory statement about reality where we are forever left in a state of unknowing. How we, in a state of unknowing, can know that there is a distinction between reality and illusion is not explained, and given the possibility that the transformation is an endless cycle, it may be inexplicable as well.

Yet understanding the butterfly dream as a provisional attempt to state what is better stated in the Great Sage dream leaves us in a more satisfactory position logically and also in a more optimistic mood. There is a possibility

of distinguishing between what is and what is not real, and the condition for the realization of that possibility is given. Once we achieve the great awakening, we can know what really is and we can explain our understanding, albeit in limited and not always in an understandable fashion.

If one is forced to choose between an interpretation of life which betokens an inescapable state of unknowing, and one which is a harbinger of potential understanding, then I would choose the second, or the Great Sage dream anecdote. In light of these two interpretations of the dream anecdotes, they cannot both be true at the same time. If the butterfly dream anecdote is true, then the Great Sage dream anecdote is false. If the Great Sage dream anecdote is true, then the butterfly dream anecdote is false. However, we need not make such choice.

If we interpret the butterfly dream anecdote as a foreshadowing and premature version of what is better rendered in the Great Sage dream anecdote, then they are consistent and they can both be true. The Great Sage dream anecdote will be seen as the fuller, more complete version of this truth. The butterfly dream anecdote will be viewed as an anticipatory version. The Great Sage dream anecdote simply fulfills and makes more complete what had been tentatively set forth in the butterfly dream anecdote. This interpretation possesses the merit of bringing self-consistency and integrity to the text, attributes which I believe should be accorded to the Chuang-Tzu.

# Notes

1. I have chosen to refer to these anecdotes as arguments although they are certainly not put forth in any clear argumentative form. Despite this fact, I believe that they function as arguments. This, however, is not obvious without the entire triptych presented. For the moment, I shall utilize the label 'argument' for philosophical convenience.

2. According to Angus Graham, the butterfly dream has the meaning of (b): "The Famous story of Chuang-tzu's dream of being a butterfly seems, however, to make a different point, that the distinction between waking and dreaming is another false dichotomy. If I distinguish them, how can I tell whether I am now dreaming or awake?" *Chuang Tzu, The Inner Chapters* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1981), pp.21-12.

3. Our present edition of the *Chuang-Tzu* is an edited version compiled some 600 to 650 years after its composition. Since it is an abridgement and edited, there is no reason to take the present order of the text as sacred. For different reasons, Graham also arrives at this conclusion: "The order of the episodes in the INNER CHAPTERS... is not sacred, since there is no reason to suppose that Chuang-tzu ever did put his jottings in a definitive order. The occasional passages which break recognizable continuities may be moved to more suitable contexts." *Ibid.*, p.32. Thus, there is a precedent for my general approach. For the dates and the problems of editing the text see also pp.3, 27. See also A. C. Graham, "How Much of Chuang-Tzu did Chuang-Tzu Write," in *Studies in Classical Chinese Thought*, ed. Henry Rosemont and B. Schwartz, *Journal of The American Academy of Religion*, (47/3: September, 1979), pp. 459-502 for more of Graham's arguments on the date and composition of the book. Kam Louie also goes into some detail on this question in his *Interpreting Tradition, Interpretations of the Classical Philosophers* (Oxford: 1986), pp. 110-129 as does Livia Knaul in, "Kuo Hsiang and the Chuang Tzu," JCP 12 (1985), pp. 429-447.

4. The translation is that of Wing-tsit Chan in Wm. Theodore de Bary, *Sources of Chinese Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), p. 74.

5. This premise actually appears anterior to the first three but I have simply made a slight alteration for the sake of discussion without affecting the sense of the passage.

6. This translation is by Burton Warson in *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), p. 47.

7. *Op. cit.*, p. 74.

8. *Ibid.*

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 47-48.

10. The importance of the point of the Great Sage dream being explicable in principle cannot be underestimated. There are two equally important statements which are made: 'And someday there will be a great awakening when we know that this is all a great dream' and '...a great sage may appear who will know their meaning.' As to the first statement, there is a clear indication that there will be an awakening. Even if one argues that it can only be after an awakening that one will know that all is a dream, the fact is that even this implies an inherent possibility of both an awakening (a great awakening) and an inherent possibility of making a distinction between reality and illusion. This is a very definite and explicit avowal of the fact that knowledge, in principle, is possible. As to the second statement, even if in attempting to talk about this knowledge one seems to involve oneself in contradictions, even this seemingly paradoxical use of language is also explicable in principle. Even if one wishes to argue that this is only true if a great sage were to appear, it still means that the seemingly paradoxical use of language is inherently intelligible. Knoweldge in principle is possible and even the paradoxes involved in talking about that knowledge can also be explained. It seems as if this pays a way to the finality of the butterfly dream anecdote conclusion being that we can never tell if we are awake or dreaming for this rules out in principle veridical knowledge. From the forward of translation by Watson, pp. 47-48.

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# Chapter Seven

## FROM PHENOMENOLOGY INTO THE CHINESE

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## Introduction

After being "schooled" in phenomenology and finding myself in San Francisco, the western edge, where do I go? This is it. Walk the beach three hours a day each morning, to, fro and back again. What does all this mean? Standing on the edge of the world wondering what all this is about with no place to go but to, fro and back again, along comes an introduction into the Chinese.

This presentation will take, as example, walking along the beach and turning toward the reflecting pond, the ocean. Along the shoreline there is no separation of knowledge from what is not-knowledge. It is! The same is true in phenomenology, where the mind/body question becomes a matter of body-subjectivity. In this presentation I begin as a phenomenologist discussing intentionality, consciousness in relation to experience. Naturally, I then consider Descartes. Next is the return to experience and abandonment of abstraction. With an oncoming wave I follow out the subjective/objective problem and return to its critique. The theory/praxis problem now flows forward and is readdressed, and I am again returned to experience. Back again. Now where? Into the Chinese. Chinese philosophy not only takes me beyond the opposition of separation presented by western thought but reveals a non-separation from the outset. It is integral--it is!

## Seashore Philosophy

Seashore philosophy, as an acquaintance has aptly named it, describes my life for the past seven years. After landing on the western edge of the continent, my head filled to overflowing with the rigors of years of

phenomenology, here I found myself. I found an openness beyond which I could not see, much like the vista that stretches out to touch other worlds past this side of the ocean. I knew there was another side, another water's edge but I could not see it. Finding myself in San Francisco, living near the ocean, my own future faced me--the future of a person who read books and articles, whose life was just as open as that seashore horizon whose edge I now wander along each day.

Each morning I walk out to meet the beach, the sun rising at my back. I welcome the day as I walk back and forth on this narrow strip of California coastline while my thoughts wander. Over the years I have come to know by sight and name many other beach walkers. We share this ribbon of foaming, everchanging edge of the world. We collect together each day. Many familiar faces approach, others are unknown. We are like shells cast on the beach for only a short time, disappearing as if swept away by the next wave, carried back into the ocean. We are here for a moment, then washed back into the sea of humanity.

I walk along. Some mornings are fogged mirrors--vision limited, cold winds whipping the sand around and about. Some mornings glisten in pristine clarity. The water sparkles like a jewel; tails of red fire seem to flare atop the waves as the sun shines through the mist. The ocean moves in, moves out. This place where water, sky and earth meet is never the same. The tide comes in, the tide goes out, each wave returning against the incoming swell as it is pulled back into the boundless depths and swallowed into the vast depths.

I walk, wonder and think. Ocean Beach friends are out again today, they approach. We talk, we laugh, we share. Then we go our own ways. We change each other and for each other. What to do? Where to go next? My consciousness drifts out to ride with the rubber-suited surfers bobbing along like corks on top the freezing water, waiting to catch the next big one paddling like small windmills, arms flailing in an attempt to go with the surging momentum of a wave as it crests and roars beachward, carrying the surfer for a short, wild distance. Suddenly the water upends the board into the sand and brine, then crashes on the sandy beach, washing its path, reaching as far toward dryness as it can. Momentarily, between in and out, a profound pause and silence, a motionless moment; the wave, as if undecided, reverses its flow, rushing back against itself, pulling sand, shells, pebbles with it into the source from which it welled up in uniqueness. This motion is relentless, never ending but never the same.

I turn away from this reflecting pond. There is too much to know. I know

nothing. Here come my Ocean Beach characters again; all my senior, they constantly amaze me. Each offers a new insight. Each suggests an alternative. I have gone scenic with their views. Theirs is the way of practical daily life and experience. Mine is different, the conceptual, philosophical, abstract. Each character is different, sometimes not agreeable to one another but with one another. No one owns this beach to the exclusion of others no matter what their differences. Here we are ourselves, here where water, sky and earth mingle, where separation is an everchanging illusion. I have followed my own path and it led me here today.

The next wave in this existential paper washes in the theoretical. For phenomenology, consciousness is consciousness of something. It is intentional. It is not a complete activity in itself. It is always about something, real or not. Intentionality means being directed toward something other than oneself. For phenomenology the fundamental way of being in the world is intentionality. Reflection is based upon intentionality. One finds oneself through reflection--here, I am.

I exist, said Rene Descartes, as long as I think. This is absolutely indubitable: I am as long as I think. For Descartes the departure for philosophy was "I think, therefore I am." To begin with, I think. Yet thinking is an abstraction. "I think" is an abstraction of "I am thinking something." An abstraction is a segment of something, so something is fundamental to thinking itself. If one begins with an abstraction, then any variation on this abstraction will be a further abstraction. Descartes' absolute principle cannot stand on its own because it presupposes the first principle of metaphysics: why is there something rather than nothing? From this view metaphysics is an existential possibility opposing absolute nothingness, which cannot even be thought.

Descartes divided the world, starting with the certainty of thought. From this came a philosophy about thought and the surrounding world. This division was presented in the conceptions of objectivity and subjectivity. With this split, based upon abstract thought, the world outside of consciousness, by way of observation, verified consciousness. Yet one could ask: Is it possible to decide what is objective and what is subjective when residing in abstraction?

Swept away by another wave is the theory/praxis problem. Theory is not the primary departure for the human being's orientation. Attempting to reduce all realities to a single principle, in purely rational terms, inevitably accounts for the existence of human beings as sheer abstractions. But this does not succeed in touching person as each person is both a unity and continuity.

Even one who thinks in order to live, is confronted by thinking of the possibility that one day one will cease to exist. This is not to dismiss ideas as irrelevant but to oppose laying down principles which are out of touch with experience.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty calls for a return to the lived situation, "The world is not what I think, but what I live through."[1] This is a fundamental ground for body-subjectivity. The body itself is an existence, a subject. My body and my consciousness exist as a unity. For Merleau-Ponty, "Consciousness is being towards the thing through the intermediary of the body."[2] The body as subject is a being-in-the-world and the world remains subjective. This seems a comprehensive view of the world itself.

Along comes Sandra A. Wawrytko who introduces me into the world of the Chinese and writes, "The keynote of harmony sounded by Chinese philosophy can serve to dispel the dissonance of discord which has long plagued Western society."[3] Then comes Kuang-ming Wu who brings forth a difference between phenomenology and Chinese thought and writes, "Merleau-Ponty intimated the lived world as a total integrated horizon. Chuang Tzu's description, in contrast, is always in the context of total picture of human nature and Nature as a whole."[4]

I find that Chaung Tzu breaks the paths, opens the views of knowledge and threatens all values. For me, "This is philosophy!" For Chuang Tzu:

> Nothing does it, something makes it like this--these are speculations born out of doubt. I look for the roots of the past, but they extend back and back without end. I search for the termination of the future, but it never stops coming at me.[5]

When I considered the view, "I think, therefore I am," I understood that "I think" was an abstraction of "I am thinking something." For phenomenology, intentionality means being directed toward something other than oneself. As for myself, I look for the ground. I think something is not definite because something is indefinite. For Chuang Tzu, "There is life, there is death, there is a coming out, there is a going back in--yet in the coming out and going back its form is never seen."[6]

Coming out and going back in is to release oneself into the open dimension of ongoingness.[7] Nothingness and existence are here understood in harmonious change and transformation. The self is then an achievement of disclosing one's own self and a becoming in relation to others within the

environment. There is no dualistic subjective/objective distinction, nor is it monism.

Pierre Thevanaz, a Swiss phenomenologist, presents a view that seems harmonious with the Chinese. For Thevanaz, "Immediately reflexsive consciousness of self is a *constituting power* more original, a fact more primitive than intentionality."[8] Instead of interpreting reflection by means of intentionality, Thevanaz interprets intentionality on the basis of reflexive consciousness. There is then no loss of continuity. Consciousness is a centripetal/centrifugal dynamism, proceeding inward toward the center, moving outward from the center. It is like the yin-yang principle; yin is reflexive, yang is reflective. This is not dualism but an explicit expressing an implicit unity. The reflexive/reflective resides in dynamic interplay; it is a blended harmony. There is a continuous flow; one chopstick without the other is not useful.

At the beach, experience is the ground I walk on. There is no separation between myself and my body, between my feet half buried in the sand and my head moving in the foggy air.

For life out here on the edge, the bench in front of the Cliff House is a resting place for some of the Ocean Beach regulars. It is reserved by some unseen sign. For other regulars the ongoing conversation goes on along the walkway as each moment passes. We meet each day, we flow out to the beach, pull back into daily life. Each day is different; we come together, then part. Probably the best known character at Ocean Beach is a woman named Liz Zanassi who is fond of saying, while walking along looking at the ocean, "Nothing ever comes back twice the same."

Along a wall beside Ocean Beach waves crash relentlessly against a buttressed cliff in winter. The water retreats at year's lowest tide, leaving sea life stranded on drying rocks, marooned in tidal pools. Caverns appear, beneath the rocks revealing dark mysteries that had been filled by water most of the time. A rubberized man pads up beside Liz and me, barefoot and oblivious to everything but the water's mood and movement. He studies the water like a map engraved on his eyes, plotting an unseen oceanographer's chart. All this is done to figure out just where on this western edge to enter the surf and paddle out into the waves with a surfboard tied to his ankle. The force of the sea can separate him from his surfboard only so far--just as far as his leash. I wonder, who has whom?

In our ongoing conversation Liz amplifies this unity by mentioning an experience she once had in Hawaii. She was swimming when it began to

rain, a light Hawaiian rain that comes and goes before you know it. Others called
to her, "Get out of the water, it's raining!" Liz, realizing it was raining, called back, "I'm already wet" and continued on. She laughs, says to me, "They never did understand!"

Then I quoted to her an example from Chuang Tzu. Confucius was sight seeing, went the account, where the water fell some thirty fathoms and raced along so swiftly that no fish could swim in it. Confucius saw a man dive in. Thinking something was wrong, he summoned his disciples to the bank in order to pull the man out. But after a short while the man came out and began to stroll along the embankment. Confucius then asked the man what special thing he had done to stay afloat. The reply was:

> I have no way. I began with what I was used to, grew up with my nature, and let things come to completion with fate. I go under with the swirls and come out with the eddies, following along the way the water goes and never thinking about myself. That's how I can stay afloat.[9]

Seashore philosophy is like this, looking to nature and everyday life experience. There is small need to "find" anything when it comes naturally. At such moments the words of Chuang Tzu seem so clear, so true:

> Make few your needs, lessen your desires, and then you may get along even without rations. You will ford the rivers and drift out upon the sea. Gaze all you may--you cannot see its farther shore; journey on and on--you will never find where it ends. Those who came to see you off will all turn back from the shore and go home, while you move ever farther into the distance.[10]

Few needs, less desires, this I will call giving way. Giving way is not giving up. I cannot push the ocean--it gives, surrounds. It gives, stays. It does not run away. Yet those who turn their backs to the water will not see. With penetrating simplicity Chuang Tzu says:

> You can't discuss the ocean with a well frog--he's limited by the space he lives in . . . You can't discuss the Way with a cramped scholar--he's shackled by his doctrines. Now you have come out beyond your banks and borders and have seen the great sea--so you realize you own pettiness. From now on it will be possible to talk to you about the Great Principle.[11]

The spontaneity of the ocean is natural. There is a suddenness, then a gradualness within the flow. The ocean flows while you are here and it flows when you are not here. An unbroken nearness is a long way off--end and

beginning in an unbroken round of non-differentiation between motion and rest, change and permanence. Rest does not seem apart from motion, nor motion apart from rest. Yin and yang both exist. Currents are given to interpenetration, coming and going, gathered and poised to hurtle beyond self limits into boundless exchange. This is an endless alternation of change and transformation. The water comes in with a whirl, goes out with a swirl. Yet Chuang Tzu was able to describe the sea like this: "Never to alter or shift, whether for an instant or an eternity; never to advance or recede, whether the quantity of water flowing in is great or small."[12]

It is, Chuang Tzu further said, "That which can be increased without showing any sign of increase; that which can be diminished without suffering any dimunition."[13] This depth, subtlety and simplicity are not founded upon purposeful striving but rather all is a spontaneous natural flow.

Seashore philosophy, too, is a continuous flow of discovering-describing-disclosing ongoing meaning. Foghorns sound across the chasm of waters, ships answer through gusting shrouds of fog and make their way into the safety of the bay. It is like ourselves: We move along in life calling out to the depths, calling across distances from which an answer may never be heard.

Here, lighthouses indicate a rocky crevasse, buoys mark the shipping lanes and tugboats act like butlers to escort visiting vessels to moor at the docks. My thoughts have drifted again, I've forgotten how long I've been walking. Ideas ramble, knocking one against another. I've forgotten myself, what a delight! This is.

# Notes

1. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1976), pp. xvi-xvii.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 138-139.

3. Sandra A. Wawrytko, "Chinese Philosophy on Its Way to the Twenty-first Century: Meeting the Challenge of Cultural Imperialism," *Proceedings of the First World Conference on Chinese Philosophy* (Taichung: Tunghai University, 1985), p. 721.

4. Kuang-ming Wu, "Trying Without Trying: Toward a Taoist Phenomenology of Truth," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 8 (1981), p. 144.

5. *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu,* trans. Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), p. 293.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 256-257.

7. Coming and going is without end, without stop, without words. The word is not the thing itself. I cannot sit on the word *chair*. Abstraction of the word derives from a process of distinction and separation.

8. Pierre Thevanaz, *What Is Phenomenology?*, trans. James M. Edie, Charles Courtney and Paul Brockelman (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1962), p. 131.

9. *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu*, op. cit., p. 205.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 212.

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 175-176.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 186.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 239.

# Part Four

## Harmony, Science and the Chinese Worldview

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# Chapter Eight

## THE ORGANIC TENET OF CHINESE PHILOSOPHY: A COMPARISON OF TRENDS IN WESTERN AND CHINESE THOUGHT

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If we review briefly the history of Western philosophy, we find that, generally speaking, the development of ancient Greek philosophy nearly concluded with Aristotle, through Socrates and Plato. Entering the Greek-Roman period, Greek philosophy under the expanding political power of the Roman Empire had contact with philosophies and religions from the eastern coast of the Mediterranean, especially the Hebrew traditions. The contact induced changes in the life-prospects of these peoples who seemed to believe that they could put the ancient Greek ideas into practice under the new empire.[1] To some extent the Greek conceptions of the immortality of the soul and the superiority of the world of ideas supported newly formed Christianity--the Judeo-Christian outlook. Therefore, in later years philosophers and theologians regarded Socrates as a pre-Christian. During the Middle Ages, which lasted almost a thousand years, the philosophical concern of the times was how to integrate Greek ideas, whether Platonic or Aristotelian, into Christian theology. And therefore St. Paul, St. Augustine and many church fathers were in a sense neo-Plantonists or neo-Aristotelians.

From the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries, the European Christians engaged in wars against non-Christians, wars which lasted for more than three hundred years. During the Crusades, Teutons and Gauls had contact with peoples living along the northeast coast of the Mediterranean where Greek arts and the lifestyle of the ancient Greek people had been preserved. The Christian aggressors may have conquered the land but their frame of mind was undergoing a tremendous change, from an attitude that aspired to God's kingdom, to an earthly interest in enjoyment. Their renewed interest in Greek philosophy, arts and mode of life led to a new era which was called

the Renaissance.

Among important features of the new era in the West was a newly discovered sense of humanity which historians called "a new man in a new world." "A new man" meant that man was no longer a sinner who needed to be redeemed by God, according to Christian doctrine, but a self-reliant individual. "A new world" meant the conception of the universe had changed from geocentric to heliocentric. These new discoveries served to shock the then Europeans away from old beliefs that the world had been created by God and that there was no way by which individuals could seek salvation except to surrender themselves to the church. Early scientists went further to state that celestial bodies moved according to the laws of mechanics, which could be ascertained by human reasoning, and they cast doubt upon miracles described in the Bible. In fact, the new concept of humanity overwhelmed the verbal authority of the Bible and later the authority of the church.[2]

In academic circles people turned away from the Bible and church and emphasized observation and reasoning. Although there have been many different schools of thought since the Renaissance, including rationalism, empiricism, skepticism, and positivism, "to appeal to reason" or "to appeal to experience" have become catch phrases among academic circles. In short, human reasoning or experience became a final resort for help in knowing, believing and acting. Moreover, through reasoning and verification scientists discovered additional natural laws, and through these, men of affairs learned how to control nature.

In practical life, secularism, utilitarianism, pragmatism and various kinds of social materialism have prevailed in the West since the Renaissance. Few people seek the mystic experience of a union with God, or maintain their faith in the absoluteness, perfection and permanence of the cardinal values of goodness, truth, beauty and holiness. Instead, industrialization and commercialization have accelerated human desires for satisfaction from food, clothing, housing; an inexhaustible variety of needs, has accompanied the modern mode of life. Wealth and power have become preoccupation for both individuals and nation states.

Science and technology are today entwined. The search for scientific truth is frequently less important than its applicative value, and often the motivation behind scientific research is its eventual cash value. This is perhaps indicated by the Nobel Prize awards which in recent years have gone mostly to those whose scientific achievements have practical merit, while

mathematicians who search for pure and abstract truth, or philosophers who search for metaphysical truths, have been overlooked by the Nobel selection committee.

As mentioned, the Renaissance represented a renewal of interest in Greek arts, literature and philosophy; during its first phase, painters, sculptors and thinkers created new forms in art and a new concept of man and his place in the world. The European mind was liberated from old confinements and readied for new adventures and expansion. Although the zeal for new forms in art lasted for a discrete period of time, the newly adventurous spirit was more long lived.[3] In the fifteenth century, the beginnings of modern states emerged in Europe. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, ocean exploration led Columbus to discover America and Magellan to navigate in the Pacific. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, seeking more territories, natural resources and markets, the European countries seemed bent on imperialistic conquest of Africa and Asia. In the view of some of the colonized, they turned the human condition into a modern jungle, and the world suffered through two world wars.

The communist movement arose in Europe as a by-product of industrialization and commercialization. Historically, and with reservations, the movement might be regarded as also an outgrowth of the Renaissance due to its atheism and materialism. Although communism failed to win power in Western Europe, it has appealed to undeveloped countries that have suffered under imperialism or colonialism. After the Second World War, China was lost to the communists and, at the same time, the Eastern European countries, Vietnam and North Korea fell victim to communist intrigue. Today more than half of the world's population lives under the yoke of communism. While those living under communism still strive for their human rights and freedom, there remain many intellectuals in the West who sympathize with the communist cause. It seems a puzzling contradiction that true Marxists may be harder to find in communist countries than on the college campuses of the USA. However, it is more understandable when viewed from a historical context with a focus on contributory causes.

Modern science stemmed in good part from common sense, which took what sensation and perception provided as real knowledge; science has been strongly tinged with our practical and utilitarian motivations. Common sense is inclined to believe that there is an independent, objective and material world out there, which is visible and tangible, and that by knowing and experiencing this actual world we will be able to control it and utilize it for our benefit.

This deep-rooted scientific materialism has been felt ever since the times of Galileo (1546-1642) and Isaac Newton (1642-1727). However, some new discoveries and theories, including quantum theory and the theory of general relativity developed early in the twentieth century, have contradicted these convictions.

Quantum physics has discovered that things can be, as it were, created from a vacuum; that is, virtual particles and anti-particles can be materialized from a vacuum for a short time while beta decay can be described as decay into vacuum conditions. And yet there are still physicists and philosophers of science who believe exclusively in an independent, objective and material world. Some would assert that space can be dived to $10^{-35}$ of a meter and that time can be divided to $10^{-43}$ of a second. They will describe the world of particles as a multidimensional foam, like a kind of soap film, in which energy or forces perform like vibrating strings.[4]

What we have learned about from recent theories in physics is a never-never world, full of wonders which contradict everyday experience. The concept of "matter" has evaporated for some physicists, and so-called matter has lost its very nature and might turn into "no matter" or "anti-matter." But while old concept of matter may have lost its meaning in physics in the realm of scientific materialism, it is hanging on as the very subject matter of biology, sociology and other scientific fields. For example, in biology Darwin's theory of evolution depends upon several very ambiguous phrases including "the survival of the fittest," "natural selection," "mutation by chance." By careful examining the meaning of those phrases, we see that Darwin's concept of evolution in the animal kingdom is based upon a doctrine of adaption to the environment, by which is meant adaptation to geographical, climatological and other physical conditions.

Instead of telling how living things evolve from the nonliving, or how the lower animals really evolve into higher and more complex organisms, Darwin's theory implies a kind of materialistic and mechanistic determinism and, upon reflection, offers a poor explanation of the evolutionary processes of the universe after all.[5]

From another perspective, animals have progressively undertaken the task of adapting the environment to themselves. Birds build nests; wild beasts and even some fish have very complex dwelling places. Beavers have cut down trees and dammed rivers; insects like the ants and bees have an elaborate community life and a variety of impacts upon the environment. In general the more characteristic actions of animals are those activities that modify the

environment. Spiders may let their prey fly into a web, but higher animals chase their food, catch it and masticate it. In so doing they are transforming the environment for their own needs. In the case of mankind this active attack on the environment is a most prominent fact of existence. In the western view man is born the master of the nature. He is no longer an animal but the man of culture and he seeks means to live and to live better. He invents tools to increase his efficiency; he uses symbols to convey his intentions and communicate with others.

Evolutionists and many anthropologists see man through eyes which have long regarded the animal world; they see a nature-man who is in good part the product of their speculative imagination. It is questionable whether *homo sapiens* ever lived as an ape-man. Even so-called "primitive" tribal men or savages as the scientists call them, live a human life colored by human nature. The savage may use stones as tools but he must have strong moral sentiment in order to keep to his family, and he has evidenced an exquisite sense of beauty in art to create cave paintings, cliff carvings, pottery, early dance and music. He may share his sense of religious piety with his community and manifest his religious sentiments in ritual. He is born into cultural surroundings, and from some vantages is a cultured man in contrast with the brutishness and materialism found in aspects of modern society.

Moreover, historically man has lived a life of hierarchy, the higher level overarching the lower. In most cultures the spiritual has been placed above the psychological; the psychological above the physiological, the physiological over mere chemistry. Once he is understood as born as a man, not as an ape, his growth follows this hierarchic pattern toward an apex of spirituality. In such a context attempts to interpret the higher in light of the lower amount to regarding parts without seeing the whole. Unfortunately modern science has fallen victim to such reductionism. Many biologists, cultural anthropologists and archaeologists have seemed to degrade man to a kind of species of primate. Such scientific interpretations have had deep and widely spread influence.

In the fields of anthropology, archaeology and some branches of sociology human history has been divided into stages. The criteria for this division, which have not been stated explicitly, have been based on a kind of evolution, any theory in which human history is thought to have developed in the fashion of a linear progress.

For example, Augustus Comte (1798-1857) divided history into three ages: the age of myth and religion, the age of philosophy and the age of science.

Such a division implied that the later stage was better than the previous ones. Since we have entered into the age of science, we must give up myth-making, worship and philosophizing. This is a naive and simple-minded evaluation. Comte and his followers are called positivists who believe scientific knowledge is the only valid knowledge and that it can solve most human problems. But scientific knowledge from science is not the only valid knowledge and it has not greatly lessened the real problems men face. In many areas, including nuclear weaponry, science and its applied technology have created vast new problems. Viewing the human situation after nearly four hundred years of scientific triumph, we might find that we urgently need a new sense of religion and philosophy in this age of science.

In his *Ancient Society*, L.H. Morgan, a contemporary of Comte, divided human social life into periods of the savage, the semi-civilized and the civilized. His division also implies a conception that social life has evolved along a linear progression towards the civilized. He can easily illustrate with the tribal peoples of Africa and the Americas to represent the savage, the Oriental to represent the semi-civilized, while the peoples of Europe are the civilized. In similar vein, Hegel (1778-1831) in his *Philosophy of History* described the Chinese as semi-civilized because they were not Christian. Even Franz Weidenreich, a modern paleontologist, suspected that the ancient Chinese, or primitive *Sinonthropus pekinensis*, ate human brains because skulls discovered in a cave near Peking had holes in them.[6] Some cultural anthropologists and sociologists portray primitive man as both cannibalistic and highly promiscuous. If these things are true, our ancestors were not mere animals but rather worse than animals.

Yet studying the terms *savage*, *semi-civilized* and *civilized*, we begin to see the preoccupations, implied biases and distortions of the describers. Their classifications of social patterns and their divisions of history are often based on a purely material outlook on human life, where food, clothing, housing, means of transportation, assume central importance, and less importance is given to spiritual aspects. Furthermore, the view of history as a linear progression appears unwarranted. We would be hard pressed to pass judgment on whether Socrates and Plato were less civilized than Sidney Hook and Martin Heidegger, and we certainly should not say that it was so because Socrates held symposium with his friends by torchlight, while Sidney Hook and Martin Heidegger wrote their books and met with friends under the light of electric bulbs.

Following the general trend of scientific materialism in the nineteenth century, a group of ideologists in Europe, including Feuerbach, Engels

(1820-1855) and Marx (1818-1883), interpreted man's social and historical development in terms of materialism. Their sense of materialism came to be used as a slogan against various types of idealism. Their materialistic interpretation of history was actually a kind of economic interpretation based on modes of production and the ownership of the means of production. In terms of modes of production, fishing, hunting and domesticating corresponded to the paleolithic and neolithic ages. Farming and trade corresponded to the Bronze Age. International trade and colonization corresponded to the Iron Age. In terms of the ownership of the means of production, they described a sequence in which the means of production was at first commonly owned by a community, then afterwards by merchants, then later by the trade-guilds, and lastly by capitalists. This seems a narrowly focused interpretation of history, confined to economics and a form of scientific reductionism. It served to arouse hatred in the laboring classes against the capitalists and has inspired revolutionary conflict in many countries.

This brief discussion has indicated the compartmentalism found in some schools of thought since the Renaissance and in the scientific disciplines. We notice that in the West philosophical wisdom may have been barred by so much knowledge derived from science or, perhaps, pseudo-science. Currently the field of philosophy is full of defeatism, and philosophers are not handling genuine and perennial problems. They appear to squabble for the sake of squabble. Still worse, under the influence of scientism, philosophy has lost its reason for being and has frequently turned to maid service for science. On many first-rank campuses in the U.S., courses in metaphysics, cosmology or theology are no longer offered. How horrifying it sounded when Karl Popper remarked, "Not only God is dead, philosophers are dead too!" Comte may have been right when he said that we live in the age of science by getting rid of philosophy and religion.

I believe we need alternatives besides scientism and materialism. Others must agree, because the Christian traditions are reviving. There was also another religious tradition, natural religion, which flourished during the eighteenth century in the West. Those who advocated a natural religion believed there were principles or natural laws which prevailed for all men of all races, for all time. The laws of different societies were good to the degree that they approached universal principles which any man could find within his heart. The concept was something like divine providence, which guides man and nature. To a degree Voltaire (1694-1778), Rousseau (1712-1778), Kant (1724-1804) and others agreed on this. Behind even the American Revolution and the Constitution of the U.S. are traces of natural religion's influence.

This kind of understanding is in ways skin to the Chinese philosophies of Confucianism and Taoism, and to Mahayana Buddhism.

Having briefly reviewed undesirable trends in the historical development of Western philosophy, I want to present some features of Chinese philosophy for comparison.

Since a movement like the Renaissance in the West did not occur in China, Chinese history should not be divided into ancient, medieval, and modern periods, following the Western convention. Chinese philosophy, despite experiencing its ups and downs in history, is still holding to the traditions, provided by Confucianism, Taoism and Chinese Mahayana Buddhism. Although Buddhism was introduced to China from India, the Chinese monks have transformed this religion and made it an important part of Chinese culture. They produced such setcs as T'ien-T'ai, Hua-Yen and Ch'an (Zen) Buddhism. In general, the interpretations of these three schools varied according to different needs at different times.

During the last hundred years Chinese philosophy has seemingly been abandoned by Chinese intellectuals returning from Europe and the U.S.; however, the three schools have survived intact. If a Western scholar expects to find some new school of philosophy in order to explain what has happened politically in modern China, most likely he will find nothing except the Western ideologies which may be disguised under Chinese conditions. But the Western ideologies have never really mixed well with the three schools, and are rather hostile to them. I believe it is advisable that when we discuss Chinese philosophy we stick to the three schools, which have shaped Chinese character, served as the reservoir of Chinese wisdom and will guide the Chinese culture. This is comparable to what happens in the West when Western philosophers and scientists feel misdirected in their studies, and return to the ancient Greek tradition for new insight.

The three sects of Mahayana Buddhism in China need some explanation. T'ien-T'ai, Hua-yen and Ch'an are generally regarded by Chinese scholars as belonging to Mahayana. In both their doctrines and practices they differ from Hinayana Buddhism.

The sutra of the T'ien-T'ai, *Saddharmapundarika*, and the sutra of the Hua-Yen, *Avatamsaka*, were originally written in Sanskrit and translated into Chinese during the fourth century. Ch'an Buddhists avoided committing themselves to any of the sutras, and distrusted concepts and systems. They wanted to be free to interpret Buddhist doctrine and practice in their own

way. The three sects were imbued with a Chinese flavor because their founders were well-versed in Taoist and Confucian classics.

Mahayana Buddhism differs from Hinayana Buddhism. Both view this world as illusory and life as full of misery. Both believe in the three precious jewels--Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. But Mahayana Buddhists believe that each individual is born with Buddha-nature, and through reasoning and meditation and the accumulation of good deeds an individual can obtain supreme wisdom (*prajna*) and enter on the bodhisattva path to enlighten others. An individual prepares for Buddhahood by practicing the six *paramitas* which emphasize charity, patience, progress forward, meditation and wisdom. This emphasis on individual effort in order to elevate one's spirituality was familiar to Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu of Taoism and to Confucius and Mencius.

Mahayana Buddhists differ from Hinayana Buddhists also in that, after renouncing this impure world, they return to share joy and sorrow with their fellow men for the sake of bringing all sentient beings to enlightenment. Their dedication will never end until all are saved. So, it has been thought the bodhisattvas never enter the realm of *nirvana* because there is always someone still suffering. This compassionate love for all beings sounds very similar to Confucian universal love. Buddhist "patience under insult" sounds similar to the mercifulness advocated by Lao Tzu.

The spirit of Chinese Mahayana Buddhism was fully expounded by Chinese monks during the sixth to the eight centuries, and deserves inclusion among the three schools of Chinese philosophy. In contrast with the general characteristics of modern Western philosophy, the following features of the three schools may be noted:

In opposition to the dualistic, deterministic "substance philosophy" in the West, which has prevailed from Aristotle to modern scientific materialism through Descartes, Hume and others, the three schools of Chinese philosophy represent a more organic mode of thought. When I say organic, I mean the ability to see harmony and complementarity among apparent opposites, a way of transcending and comprehending all kinds of contrasts. In addition, this approach does not pursue a single cardinal value, but instead pursues a combination of values or a synthesis of them, because a single value is of limited value.

From the traditional Chinese perspective it would be unwise to stand on rationalism, empiricism, intuitionism or any other isms because reasoning,

experience, intuition and other things are involved in seeking supreme wisdom. In the texts of the three schools, including Confucius' commentaries on the *I Ching*, Lao Tzu, Chuang Tzu and the *Avatamaska sutra* and its commentaries, we see the basic tenet that there is an organic relation among heaven, man and earth. Man is situated in between heaven and earth, as Chinese Mahayana Buddhists conceived, man and all the sentient beings live in the realms of karma and of Dharma. Man cannot separate himself from the universe, and the universe is known through man. In Buddhist terms, "Without sentient beings there are not the realm of desire, the realm of colors and the realm of the colorless." Therefore, man and the universe should be apprehended mutually. For Chinese philosophers of the three schools, the universe is not merely a system of blind physical forces like the interactions among electrons, or the nuclear strong force and the nuclear weak force. The universe exhibits a hierarchy of purposes from the lowest level of particles, where there is a rhythm to life, to the highest level of human activity. Human beings are born with Buddha-nature and can act for serious and conscientious purposes. Among practical and impractical values, beauty, truth, goodness and holiness are outstanding as cardinal values. Not one but all of the four cardinal values need to be pursued. A systhesis of four cardinal values is found in the realm of Ultimate Goodness of the Confucianists, or the realm of *nirvana* of Mahayana Buddhists.

As to the origin of such cardinal values and how they motivate human beings, there is little satisfactory explanation from the West. R.B. Perry's theory of "interest" is rather too narrow to be accepted, but the idealist Bradley, the pragmatist John Dewey, the gestalt psychologist William Kohler have not offered better explanations. It seems that a general theory of value should not be built on a metaphysical dialectic (Bradley) or on psychological grounds (Kohler). It should be more organically rooted to provide value with ontological and cosmological significance. Value is not a fiction or a mental projection. Value has its origins in the process of creativity (cf. Confucius' commentaries on the corollaries to the hexagrams *Ch'ien* and *Kun* of the *I Ching*), and human participation makes the value realization possible.

When we deal with the practical values concerning our survival, we see human beings respond to their situations spontaneously without considering the four cardinal values. But the practical values, projected from self-interest, are not sanctified unless they are compatible with the four cardinal values. Realization of the cardinal values always involves deliberation, choice and decision. Mahayana Buddhism has a very elaborate procedure of ten stages (*dasabhumi*) of renunciation and confirmation before the apex of spirituality, *nirvana,* is reached.

Chinese philosophy, in general, deals with the problems of value within the framework of natural religion which contains the following essentials:

1) A philosophical concept of supreme reality which has been given different names by the three schools. For Confucianists it is everlasting creativity; for Taoist, the absolute Tao; for Mahayana Buddhists, transcendental *nirvana* beyond the realm of contingency.

2) Principles concerning creativity. Creativity is understood to involve the principle of extensive relatedness and interpenetration, or the ingress of the conceptual into the actual. It involves accumulation and transformation, or changing patterns. It means a unification of truth, beauty, goodness and holiness.

   Each issue of creative action represents an increment of value, positive or negative, while in the realm of the transcendental, negative values are totally eliminated (cf. the Hua-yen sect of Buddhism).

3) Man and the universe are mutually apprehensible. In the very act of knowing the universe, human participation is necessary. Man is a channel through which the universe presents in order and sequence, and at all times it is the universe which sustains man in his body and soul. Therefore, any dualistic philosophy is a fallacy.

4) Obligations. Only man on this earth is aware of his obligations which are derived from the essential notion mentioned above. Chinese philosophers of the three schools recognize that mankind possesses the conscientious capacity for knowing and doing good. Doing good to one's fellow man and to all the sentient beings does not require a god or a religion to justify it. It falls within the proper scope of humanity. Worship or veneration of a god who is totally other than man or whose attributes are inconceivable may be a sophisticated act but also unreal. Genuine religious sentiment does not stem from self-interest or from a hope for redemption for oneself only, but springs from a deep awareness of suffering of all beings, and from this the awareness turns to an urge to help them. To feel this keenly and to act on it is to live an ethical and religious

life.

In this discussion of the Chinese conception of a natural religion we notice that it implies a general theory of value.

> The conscientious capacity for knowing good aims at truth.
> The conscientious capacity for doing good aims at good.
> The veneration for supreme reality aims at holiness;
> Beauty is a general and primary value, aimed at by creativity.

However, the natural religion under discussion differs from that of the eighteenth century in Europe in several ways. (1) The Chinese philosophers of three schools are not deists. They do not believe in a god who has created the world and will be a judge over humanity. (2) They are not agnostic either because they believe in the human capacity for knowing the truth. (3) Nor are they atheists because they believe in a supreme reality and have a philosophical concept of God. Confucius called this "heaven"; Lao Tzu called it the Tao; Sakyamuni called it Vairocana.

# Notes

1. R. Livingstone, *The Mission of Greece* (1928). p. 4.

2. Walter Pater, *The Renaissance* (1930).

3. Frierick Friedell, *A Cultural History of Europe*, Vol. 2, *Renaissance.*

4. Michael B. Green, "*Superstring" in Scientific American,* (1986), pp. 48-60.

5. A. N. Whitehead, *Function of Reason* (1945), pp. 8-20.

6. F. Weidenreich, *Ape, Giant and Man* (1946).

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# Chapter Nine

## NORTHROPIAN CATEGORIES OF EXPERIENCE REVISITED

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Nearly half a century ago, Filmer S.C. Northrop expounded his now famous theory of the categories of experience, i.e., the aesthetic and theoretical components of things, as a unique way to provide a cultural meeting ground between East and West. Much, of course, has occurred and changed since. The meeting ground has changed profoundly in ways that none could have imagined, then or now. World War II was soon followed by the Korean conflict and that in turn by the Vietnam War. These accelerated and fostered a commingling of psychological, religious, sociocultural, economic and political elements. Should Northrop appear on the scene today, he would most certainly be astonished at the breadth and depth of global interchange, an interchange that shows no signs of letting up.

It is now time to pause for a critical revisit of the Northropian categories. In this brief essay I will focus on three aspects: the categories of experience, a critique of the categories, and finally I pose the question, whither the categories?

### The Categories of Experience

Northrop first presented the categories of experience at the East-West Philosophers' Conference held in Honolulu in 1939.[1] Although only a handful of scholars from both the East and West were in residence, it was a carefully selected group that participated in a landmark conference, the first of its kind. It set the stage, spirit and standard for later conferences.

In retrospect, however, none of the four later conferences in the series can be said to have distinguished itself in terms of contributing a unique character as compared with the first conference, although subsequent conferences did not lack contributions by well known, high caliber scholars

from the respective traditions. None of the contributors, however, provided an ideological and methodological framework in which to work out an East-West dialogue, to set astir further philosophical discussion. Much of the effort was channelled in the direction of mutual exchange and mutual understanding of the different cultures. In a word, the meeting ground expanded considerably but in the process became diluted by pluralistic and relativistic elements that stymied the fruitful dialogues aspired to by the scholars. Certainly, the exposure to and knowledge of each tradition, East and West, had not been at par in the beginning, and so these conferences served an important role in opening up avenues for rapprochement. Considered in this light, the conferences have had a definite positive effect which is still being felt in many quarters long after the proceedings. The conferences were organized along thematic lines and yet, as valuable as they were, it simply was too much for a director to control and guide each scholar's thoughts and contributions, especially in light of the fact that the conferences grew larger and larger.

Considered within this context, Northrop's categories of experience fared quite well in spite of severe scrutiny and immediate criticism. I will take up some of the criticisms in the next section, but it is true that the categories are still alive, as is evidenced by numerous references to them made over the years by a wide range of scholars in various disciplines.

Northrop starts off with a bold and adventurous spirit to arrive at a common understanding of ordinary experience. His logical and scientific background dictates that he seeks a common denominator to determine the relation between diverse things.[2] And further, he observed, "before there can be a trustworthy comparative analysis of Oriental and Occidental philosophical doctrines, there must be an unambiguous, commensurable terminology in which to express them. When such a terminology is provided, certain very interesting and important relationship appear."[3] Thus he sets out confidently to seek a technical terminology.

He concludes that there are two major types of concepts--concepts arrived at by intuition and concepts arrived at by postulation. A concept is defined as a term to which meaning is assigned, and this occurs in two ways. First, concepts are associated denotatively with some data that is given immediately. In the second way, a concept's meaning is proposed theoretically by the postulates of the deductive theory in which it occurs.[4] He expands thus:

> A concept by intuition is one which denotes, and the complete meaning of which is given by, something which is immediately apprehended. "Blue"

> in the sense of the sensed color is a concept by intuition.
>
> A concept by postulation is one the complete meaning of which is designated by the postulates of the deductive theory in which it occurs. Any concept which can be defined in terms of such concepts we shall also call a concept by postulation. "Blue" in the sense of the number of a wave-length in electromagnetic theory is a concept by postulation.[5]

According to Northrop, concepts by intuition refer to positivism, not of the *Comtean* type but where simple direct contact is made with reality by way of immediately apprehended experience. By contrast, concepts by postulation refer to the world indirectly apprehended or the world of science which is able to "introduce unobservable entities and relations into its theory, and to predict the existence of scientific objects theoretically which are confirmed experimentally only later, and even then only indirectly."[6] From all this he concludes that the aesthetic (intuitive) and theoretic (postulational) components of things are ultimate and irreducible. These components make up our basic experience. Yet, basic experience manifests in diverse ways, and to justify this fact Northrop discusses possible types of the two kinds of concepts. First, the concepts by postulation.[7]

I. Concepts by intellection are concepts by postulation that designate factors which can be neither imagined nor sensed. (a) Monistic, e.g., the space-time continuum of Einstein's field physics. (b) Pluralistic, e.g., Plato's atomic ratios.

II. Concepts by imagination are concepts by postulation that designate factors which can be imagined but cannot be sensed. (a) Monistic, e.g., the concept of ether found in classical, pre-relativistic field physics. (b) Pluralistic, e.g., the atoms and molecules of classical particle physics.

III. Concepts by perception are concepts by postulation that designate factors that are in part sensed and in part imagined. (a) Monistic, e.g., the public space of daily life. (b) Pluralistic, e.g., other persons, tables, chairs and the spherical moon with a back side which we do not see, as well as a presented side which we do see.

IV. Logical concepts by intuition are concepts that designate factors whose content is given through the senses or by mere abstraction from the totality of sense awareness, and whose logical universality and immortality are given by postulation. (a) Monistic, e.g., the "unmoved mover" in Aristotle's metaphysics. (b) Pluralistic, e.g., Whitehead's "eternal objects," Santayana's "essences" or Aristotle's "ideas."

What is listed above is certainly an extensive coverage of concepts by postulation, and it should be noted that an important connection with the concepts by intuition is made in the last section. To wit, since logical concepts by intuition are concepts by postulation merely insofar as their universality or immortality is concerned, and are concepts by intuition with respect to their content, they provide a natural transition from one generic type of concept to the other.[8] And thus the concepts by intuition come into play.

Northrop asserts that any experience must start with all-embracing immediacy and from it any theory arises. This immediacy exhibits itself as a continuum or field which is the differentiated. From these premises, he draws conclusions about the nature of the differentiated aesthetic continuum. He elaborates: the "continuum" denotes the immediately apprehended as an all-embracing field in which one factor is different from another. For example the factor may be blue here but white there. "Aesthetic" denotes the qualitatively ineffable, emotionally moving continuum of colors, sounds and feelings that an artist, for example, presents.[9] Out of all this, Northrop neatly classifies the major possible concepts by intuition thus:[10]

I. The concept of the differentiated aesthetic continuum refers to the totality of what is immediately apprehended.

II. The concept of the indefinite or undifferentiated aesthetic continuum refers to the intuited continuum apart from all differentiation.

III. The concepts of differentiation refers to the various qualities, factors, etc., apart from the continuum.

IV. Field concepts by inspection include differentiations inseparable from the intuited continuum.

These concepts point at the positivistic grounds of all experience because, in the Northropian sense, positivism is the thesis that there are only concepts by intuition.[11] By this he means that all non-theoretical intuitive experiences are direct and immediate, a way that is characteristic of the Eastern approach to life. In short, he seeks to bring Asiatic tradition under the sway of his brand of positivism. For example, the Hindu is a thoroughgoing positivist because he understands as real no concepts by postulation but only concepts by intuition.[12] In this view the Brahman is that from which all qualities

have been separated. It is not an unseen, imagined or thought-postulated entity; but when one separates from the immediately apprehended all differentiations and distinguishable qualities, only the indefinite or undifferentiated intuited continuum remains. This undifferentiated is the cosmic principle or Brahman.[13] Moreover, the intuition of the undifferentiated is the psychic principle or Atman (the great self), thus establishing the identity of Brahman and Atman.[14]

Northrop expands:[15]

> The indeterminateness of the undifferentiated continuum is as important as its all-embracing intuited continuity. It is because of this indefiniteness that primary reality can never be positively described for the Oriental.
>
> ...This follows because any positive attribute gives a differentiation of the otherwise indeterminate continuum rather than the indeterminate continuum itself.
>
> ...For this reason there is nothing in common between Brahman and ultimate reality as conceived by Democritus, Plato or Aristotle. The atoms of Democritus, the ideas of Plato and the forms of Aristotle were definite determinate things, the very antithesis of the unspecifiable Brahman. Also the Democritean atoms, the Platonic ideas and the Aristotelian Unmoved Mover were concepts by postulation, whereas Brahman, besides being indeterminate, is a concept by intuition.

In a similar vein, he speaks thus of Madhyamika Buddhism:[16]

> The final reality arrived at by the Buddhist dialectic of negation is what remains after everything determinate, whether mere determinate idea or postulated thing beyond idea, has been negated and rejected to the limit. There is no bringing together of the antithetical factors into a more inclusive absolute synthesis. It is quite erroneous therefore, to identify Brahman or Nirvana or the Buddha-nature of Hinduism and Buddhism with the absolute of Hegel. Hegel's absolute includes within itself all antithetical determinatenesses and differentiations. The ultimate reality as envisaged by the East is without specific properties: it is bare indeterminate experience designatable by no determinate concept, known only by intuition, and even then only after the differentiations, ordinarily apprehended along with it, are neglected.

Likewise with Chinese thought, Northrop goes on to give his positivistic account of Taoism and Confucianism. He says, "the primary factor (in Taoism) is the indeterminate ineffable material of intuition from which comes the differentiations which are described within it through the determinate senses and specific introspection."[17] Confucianism, on the other hand, is "defined by the state of mind in which the concept of the indeterminate

intuited manifold moves into the background of thought and the concrete differentiations in their relativistic, humanistic, transitory comings and goings form the content of philosophy."[18] In Confucianism the emphasis is more on the humanistic side of the determinate aesthetic continuum, but it is on the naturalistic side in Taoism. The Confucian *jen* is determinate to the individual concerned but indeterminate in terms of its ultimate extensive humanistic nature, which has lasting value for human relationship. The lasting value comes by virtue of the felt undifferentiated aesthetic continuum which is not only unlimited but timeless, in contrast to the determinate, transitory and perpetually changing differentiations.[19]

Northrop concludes that reality for the Oriental is not merely the indeterminate aesthetic continuum but also the determinate differentiations, equally aesthetic, given through the senses which appear in it.[20] So that any differentiations immediately apprehended, in Taoism, Confucianism and even in Buddhism and Hinduism, are determinate and therefore only temporary and transitory; they are mortal, not immortal. What is immortal is the immediately apprehended aesthetic field-component which is experienced by all persons and exists in all things aesthetic. This is the nature of the Brahman, Atman, Chit (consciousness), *nirvana*, Tao and *jen*. In sum, then, Northropian categories seek to efficiently cover both Eastern and Western traditions and make way for a meeting ground. We move on now to the final contribution of his methodology.

Northrop, time and again, asserts that the East emphasizes the aesthetic component and the West the theoretical, and that, because these are complementary phases of experience, each tradition has much to learn from the other. Where the West developed science because of its emphasis on theory and postulational method, the East lagged behind in science because of its preoccupation with the aesthetic and the undifferentiated continuum. On the other hand, the West is blamed for trying to deduce aesthetic nature from the theory, an attempt that has failed and stymied scientific advance as witness the newer, relativistic perspective brought to us by Einstein and Heisenberg. Indeed, Northrop rightly asserts that the direction should always have been the other way around, i.e., from the aesthetic to the theoretic.[21]

Having established the two ultimate and irreducible components of intuitive (aesthetic) and postulational (theoretic), Northrop sees that they will be meaningless and ineffective in any dialogue unless they are somehow brought together. Here he introduces the novel concept of "epistemic correlations." Epistemic correlations are what relate a thing known empirically, in its aesthetic component, to what is in some sense that same thing known postulationally in its theoretic component.[22] In short, epistemic correlations join intuited reality to postulated reality.[23] But how is this possible?

He asserts that the intuited relates to the postulated by virtue of the

"symbolic character of the immediately apprehended, the capacity to point beyond itself to the postulational.[24] He expands:

> the aesthetic, intuitive, purely empirically given component in man and nature is related to the theoretically designated and indirectly verified component, not as traditional modern Western science and philosophy supposed, by a three-termed relation of appearance, but instead by the two-termed relation of epistemic correlation.[25]

Here he invokes Albert Einstein's words: "Science is the attempt to make the chaotic diversity of our sense-experience correspond to a logically uniform system of thought. In this system single experiences must be correlated with the theoretic structure in such a way that the resulting coordination is complete and convincing."[26]

Northrop states emphatically that the West became enamored with the power of symbolic character and neglected the source, immediately apprehended nature. The East, for its part, turned to other means like Yoga or Buddhist negative dialectics to capture the undifferentiated aesthetic continuum in its fullness. Both sides lack understanding of the complete nature and function of epistemic correlations.[27]

Northrop emphasizes that both components are required. Ideally a society must return to the traditional intuition of the past with respect to its aesthetic grounding, and advance to the sophisticated science of the present with respect to its theoretics.[28] We must move into the future scientifically while taking along earlier aesthetic intuition. This, in short, is his program for tomorrow and he specifically labels it the philosophy of natural science.[29]

This has been, in capsule, a description of the categories of experience, for the most part using Northrop's own words. Now, we shift to a critique of his methodology.

## Critique of the Categories

In 1946 Northrop capped his epistemological endeavors with an award-winning book, *The Meeting of the East and West*.[30] Written during and shortly after World War II, it was a bold attempt at an inquiry concerning world understanding, as the subtitle indicated. In 1945 the United Nations was established and many were euphoric, expecting to enjoy decades of peace and freedom to come. In this atmosphere Northrop's purpose was quite simple: let the nations of the world draw closer together by focussing on a common epistemic ground of discourse. The nature of that ground we have discussed in the previous section, namely, the aesthetic and theoretic components of things and their epistemic correlations.

Within a few years, however, Northrop's philosophy was examined critically from both Western and Eastern quarters, sometimes by those who knew little or nothing about Eastern thought, sometimes by those who knew it well. Some analysts were conciliatory about the categories, some remained aloof or held strict reservations, and some were resolutely opposed. Let us examine some of these views.

Auburey Castell, writing in *Journal of the History of ideas*, was highly skeptical about *The Meeting of East and West*. He observed that he read it both as story and argument.[31] Expanding, he expressed two grave doubts: "The first is the doubt that philosophical beliefs play anything like the important role which Northrop assigns them. The second is the doubt that the sort of doctrine proposed by Northrop would enable him to perform the task which he set himself to do."[32]

Castell found it highly unlikely that the doctrine of epistemic correlations would really work, whether for the West or East or in crosscultural situations. More particularly, he looked dubiously at the following Northropian statement:[33]

> That conception of good conduct and the good state is the correct one, valid for everybody, which rests upon the conception of man and nature as determined by immediate apprehension with respect to the aesthetic component and by the methods of natural science with respect to the theoretic component; procedures which, when correctly applied, give the same results for one person that they give for another.

Northrop had infinite faith in his procedure, but for Castell it was an argument that couldn't be sustained and that bordered on the fictional, a story, finally, which could not be affirmed or realized.

Nearly unanimous criticism came from both East and West with respect to Northrop's monolithic treatment of diverse Eastern cultural traditions. As we have seen, Northrop took Brahman, Atman, Chit, *jen*, Tao and Nirvana to be fundamentally the same, and identified them with the undifferentiated aesthetic continuum. This sweeping synthesis was quickly denied by many scholars, including Walter T. Stace, writing in *Ethics*. Restricting his considerations to Hinduism, Stace countered the argument, presented by Northrop, that Brahman represented the undifferentiated and indeterminate, and could only be grasped by intuition.[34] He pointed out, first of all, that yoga, a discipline in intuitive comprehension par excellence, does not aim at the undifferentiated aesthetic continuum in any narrow or restrictive sense, and that in the case of Brahman, there is a differentiable nature -- that is, Hinduism accepts the identity of the differentiated and undifferentiated, quite contrary to Northrop's understanding. The concept of *maya* or illusion is

always a vital perceptual component of the differentiated phenomenal realm and is, in the final analysis, the focus of meditative discipline that will liberate the self from attachment; otherwise, the identity of Atman and Brahman, as Hinduism understands it, would not be possible.

Another strong criticism by Stace had to do with the "extent to which ideological and philosophical factors govern history."[35] Northrop had maintained deep faith in those factors, but Stace asserted that he exaggerated the influence of philosophy on culture and also of science on philosophy. The truth of the matter, according to Stace, was that the influence was mutual from the beginning in both instances.[36] In reality, then, one could not assign a dominant role to either philosophy or science. There are, other important factors such as religion, economics and politics, which constantly come into play in molding the spirit of any cultural tradition.

To Northrop's contention that the East could not develop a scientific method due to its preoccupation with the immediately apprehended continuum, no less a figure than Hu Shih countered immediately and tellingly. He found the bifurcation of intuitive (aesthetic) and postulational (theoretic) components inaccurate and unhistorical so far as the intellectual history of China was concerned.[37] He emphasized that use of a technical language did not in itself affirm a dichotomy, and moreover ordinary men in ordinary ways are constantly engaged in both postulational and intuitive grasping of things. Further, the Confucian tradition, with its profound emphasis on love of learning, has admirably fostered the scientific spirit, a kind of Chinese Socratic method.[38] He expanded:[39]

> ...those great men working with only "books, words, and documents" have actually succeeded in leaving to posterity a scientific tradition of dispassionate and disciplined inquiry, of vigorous evidential thinking and investigation, of boldness in doubt and hypotheses coupled with meticulous care in seeking verification--a great heritage of scientific spirit and method which makes us, sons and daughters of present-day China, feel not entirely at sea, but rather at home, in the new age of modern science.

This marvelous statement certainly has contemporary ring, and has been subscribed to by many scholars and laymen in this Age of the Pacific Basin when cultural and economic exchange has increasingly heightened. Modern Japan and other Asian countries have demonstrated that both cultural and scientific pursuits can go hand in hand.

E.R. Hughes took a similar stand concerning the scientific method inherent in Chinese tradition. He questioned, however, too narrow an interpretation

of the postulational concept, a restrictive interpretation of Northropian postulates as mere "mathematicals" and "physicals."[40] The Chinese view, by contrast, depicts an orientation where man and things are in basic affinity at all times. And so methodology must not be dichotomous, an either/or situation, but more inclusive, incorporating both postulational and intuitive components. Thus, Hughes boldly asserted that the postulational method must extend beyond science and mathematics to include intuitive (aesthetic) concepts.[41] Here Hughes made a startling statement: "the two concepts of *jen* and *yin-yang*, concepts which have exercised so profound an influence on Chinese ways of thinking, are concepts by postulation, not concepts by intuition in the Northropian sense."[42] He justified *jen* as having a postulational nature by introducing a syllogistic analysis of man and society.[43] In *yin-yang*, the early Chinese apprehended two forces, heaven and nature, distinguished but vitally related. From them all phenomena are produced. Hughes wrote that from this point the Chinese analyzed "a cosmic situation in their minds, and--I would say--arrived at a hypothesis that there were two theoretic forces behind this range of phenomena viewed as a whole: a constructive force and a destructive force working in conjunction, the one the logical antithesis of the other, but the two working as one indivisible existential process."[44]

Hughe's argument is plausible and should be understood within the context of both intuitive and theoretic components of things. Edwin A. Burtt, in *Essays in East-West Philosophy*, also followed this line of argument and complimented Northrop for adopting a neutral terminology to relate East and West. But he criticized Northrop for his failure to realize that knowledge, in the East, is more than an intellectual affair, his belief that Chinese and Indian philosophies exemplify a single type, and his apparent assumption that a valid reconciliation between East and West can be worked out in advance of active methodological cooperation on the part of thinkers representing these diverse cultures."[45] Burtt's last point seems quite cogent. A methodology drawn from one westerner's viewpoint, however ingenious and powerful it might be, still lacks the force of applying to cultures other than his own. A cooperative effort from the very beginning is indeed a desideratum.

In recent years, Herbert Fingarette, writing of the Chinese tradition, has emphasized the both/and theme in a thought-provoking work, *Confucius -- the Secular as Sacred.*[46] His is an insightful analysis of the substance of existence as ceremony, and a vision of man as a ceremonial being.[47] He ends the analysis thus: "Human life in its entirety finally appears as one vast, spontaneous and holy Rite: the community of man. This, for Confucius, was indeed an 'ultimate concern'; it was, he said, again and again, the only thing

that mattered, more than the individual's life itself."[48]

The Confucian interpretation of life did not fall into the trap of neatly outlined categorizations but approached man holistically.

A severe criticism of Northrop came from P.J. Saher in his *Eastern Wisdom and Western Thought.* He referred to Northropian methodology as a dangerous oversimplification.[49] Taking his cue from Einstein's successful reduction of energy and matter to a single equation ($E = MC^2$), Northrop had tried to do the same for comparative philosophy. He had reduced the realization of truth to an either/or situation, as in: Either W = E (Western philosophy = Eastern wisdom) or W + E.[50]

Northrop had opted for the second equation, W + E, and went on to assert his theory of complementary phases in which both the theoretic and intuitive components come into play. But Saher objected that the East's intuitive component has a different nature than what it is assumed to be in the West. In fact, attitudes toward the two components by East and West differ drastically from the outset, and consequently any attempt to blend them in the Northropian sense is quite problematic and bound to fail.[51]

Chinese thinkers, on the whole, have been more accommodating towards Northropian methodology. Y.P. Mei, for example, said (in *The Chinese Mind*) that without subscribing to all of Northrop's uses of the term, one might say that *jen* was to Confucius "an immediately apprehended aesthetic continuum."[52] This is a rather innocuous statement which appears to maintain some reservations about Northrop's methodology and does not endorse Northrop's concept very positively.

Fung Yu-lan in *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, on the other hand, was more specific and critical. He believed that, although Northrop's methodology with its concepts by intuition and by postulation showed a keen understanding of the difference between Chinese and Western philosophy, it stopped short of a full accounting of the Chinese view of life. Thus he wrote, "those philosophers who start with concepts by postulation have a liking for the distinct, while those who start with intuition value the indistinct."[53] From the farmer to the intellectual, the Chinese have cherished the indistinct, but they all apprehend reality in its immediacy, or intuitively. Finally, with respect to the aesthetic continuum, there is no demarcation of any kind but rather unity between the knower and the known.[54]

So far we have seen a fair amount of criticism of Northropian categories of experience. We now move on to consider whether the categories are still worth pursuing.

## Whither the Categories?

Northrop has contributed to the field of comparative thought as few Western thinkers have done in the twentieth century. In a sense he legitimized the emerging field of comparative philosophy. All comparativists have encountered his categories of experience and, although critical of them in one form or another, all have benefitted by the sharp focus he gave to the problem he tackled. Most of the criticism covered in the previous section, I believe, was constructive in describing shortcomings. At the same time it indicated factors that must be considered to shore up Northrop's epistemology. Although the categories today have a relatively shadowy existence, it is possible that they will return and reassert themselves in new ways, unimaginable now, due to the heightened East-West exchange in many areas.

Let us look more closely at the categories as they relate to Northrop the man. Northrop was a child of Western tradition and remained so, although later in life he expressed extreme fascination with things Eastern, especially Chinese and Japanese culture. This background shows up clearly in his preferential approach to the categories. Of the two, he decidedly favored the theoretic or postulational, and made it the standard for any accommodation in East-West exchanges. He did not deviate from this stand and went on believing that the East had more to learn from the West than vice versa. He saw the East, with its well developed culture based on the aesthetic component, as a mere complement to the dominance of scientific methodology. Intellectually the aesthetic component, being ultimate and irreducible, should have been equal to the theoretic, and he said it was; but in function he made it a handmaiden to the theoretic. This semblance of equality is a profound flaw in his theory of categories.

In upholding the supremacy of the theoretic component, he also turned his back on his teacher, Alfred North Whitehead.[55] Where Whitehead focussed on the aesthetic to resolve the division from nature, Northrop staunchly maintained the theoretic to support and build on the powerful scientific methodology sweeping the West.

Like Heidegger and others, Whitehead also sought to take soundings of reality in poetry--Holderlin and Wordsworth, for example. The poets knew the limits of language and of thought, a position also underlying the writings of Wittgenstein who bordered on the mystical. For philosophers of this genre, philosophy in the final analysis paled before the task of penetrating or unraveling the true nature of the reality we experience. Northrop did not listen to such men among whom we might include the existentialists. He quickly brushed them aside as inconsequential or as deterrents to his attempt at overall synthesis. He had an opportunity early on to correct himself and to extricate himself from the self-imposed theoretic conundrum, but he did not. His theory suffers for it.

The Northropian tilt toward the theoretic might be adjusted. As Hu Shih and Hughes have rightly protested, the postulational method is not restricted to the sciences alone but is always relevant to man's basic thinking processes, whose sources may not be apparent at all times.

This brings us to the nature of the relationship between "reality" and methodology. Understanding this relationship is at the very core of the philosophical enterprise. Northrop's overconfidence in scientific methodology skewed his philosophy. His methodological bias prevented him from fully recognizing and using the intuitional/aesthetic component of things to approach reality. His concept of epistemic correlation is a beautiful attempt to relate concept and immediacy, to be sure, but this is a vital flaw. Like the Cartesian dilemma of mind/body dichotomy, the ultimacy and irreducibility that Northrop assigned to the aesthetic and theoretic components bind us to an unrelenting dichotomy.

Northrop looks to the aesthetic component as an opening to reality because it represents the most direct, immediate apprehension of things. So far he is correct, but then he does not pursue the matter beyond a mere description and designation of the aesthetic nature. We will pursue the matter further because, of course, it is a most fruitful area to explore.

First of all, with reference to the four possibilities for concepts of intuition (pp. 4-5, this MS), they are all conceptual classifications. Northrop readily availed himself of appropriate language such as totality, immediately apprehended, intuited continuum, differentiations, qualities and inseparable from the intuited continuum, but he did not go into any detailed analysis. He seems to acquiesce in the sufficiency of an ordinary understanding of these terms. In this respect, it would not be wrong to conclude that his concepts

by intuition are methodological through and through. And on the methodological level, his theory is consistent. However, when the methodology reaches out to touch reality--and there are different ideas about what reality is, especially in the Eastern traditions--then trouble begins. Northrop's solution was simply to organize the aesthetic component into four possible concepts by intuition and thereby present them as analogs to the possible concepts by postulation. Consequently, the epistemic correlations became for him a most important bridge between the two irreducible realms.

What, then, can be done? The methodology is still a powerful means of disciplining the mind to focus on the nature of reality as we experience it. One hopeful sign is Northrop's fourth possible concept by intuition, that is, field concepts by inspection. He expands on this by stating that it involves differentiations which are not separate from the intuited continuum. This description is as close as Northrop gets to an Eastern conception of reality, to things as I believe they are rightly perceived. Northrop's knowledge of the East was generally confined to secondary sources and to limited personal contacts with Asian scholars. Still, it is to his credit that he developed a vision.

He was quite confident that a common thread ran through the aesthetic East and could be neatly sewn together with his theoretic postulates to form an embracing synthesis, In particular, he was fascinated by the identity of contrasting terms found in different Asiatic traditions, terms such as Atman-Brahman, *vidya-avidya, samsara-nirvana, atman-anatman, yu-wu, yin-yang*, and emptiness-nonemptiness. But his fascination stopped short of reality, and he stood his methodological ground by choosing to bring the terms under his dipolar treatment of the differentiated and undifferentiated aesthetic continuum.

At one point, he asserted that while the differentiated realm is temporal and transitory, the undifferentiated continuum is neither. The first comes and goes within the continuum, but the continuum itself is not in time.[56] Having made this clear demarcation, he seeks to accommodate the seeming identity of the contrasting terms mentioned above. There is something very unique and insightful here. He is able to accommodate the differentiated temporal and transitory natures of the ordinary self or experience, and to accommodate the higher form or nature of the self in the undifferentiated realm. Thus, for example, he says that the Buddhist non-self doctrine (*anatman*) is really so because it belongs to the undifferentiated aesthetic continuum.[57] Likewise, the Confucian concept of *jen* belongs to the undifferentiated but shows up in

individuals as the differentiated. The Hindu concept of the ordinary self (*atman*) is again a differentiated entity, but in order for it to identify with the greater nature of Brahman, it must become the undifferentiated, Great Self (*Atman*).

All this is very well. Still, Northrop has not sought to explain the nature of appearance and disappearance, or the rise and subsidence of the differentiated within the undifferentiated. He takes events in nature as matters of fact, but are they so from the experiential standpoint? He merely distinguishes linguistically between the "immediately apprehended" and the "immediately apprehended continuum," one transitory the other not, and one temporary the other not. Is this just another exercise in abstract referencing?

We have seen that for Northrop the aesthetic component posed some fundamental problems. As many scholars have intimated, the central point is to understand its nature. But for Northrop, it remains highly conceptualized, in service to a theoretic methodology. In the East, however, disdain for conceptualization as such is widespread; reason has its place but there are higher forms. The Eastern concept of mind involves more than an instrument for quantitative analysis, and includes a qualitative character as well, the attainment of which is a goal for many.

The aesthetic continuum as understood in the East is also a more extensive concept than the theoretic; in fact, it readily encompasses the theoretic. The East in general takes the aesthetic as extending to the whole realm of existence such that it has an existential or ontological character but without particular features. It is understood to extend unobstructively everywhere, hindered chiefly by the self-imposed limitations of our perceptual and conceptual natures. Northrop's notion of the positive nature of the aesthetic component might have been improved on by better recognizing this basic background, the filler of experience that is always continuous with nature and has a quality of its own.

I would like to conclude by indicating several fruitful areas which have direct relevance to the aesthetic nature and which might be explored with the aim of giving more balance to the Northropian methodology.

The first is the need for further exploration of the meditative disciplines. The West has nearly forgotten this phase in human experience, although the early Greeks and modern man up to about the seventeenth century had honored its role. Yet despite the success of science in this century we have witnessed a

great resurgence in non-scientific, quietistic and humane attitudes towards life. In this area, the East has always been a great resource and inspiration because some form of meditative discipline permeates all the Asiatic traditions, e.g., yoga, Zen and Taoist quietism. A better understanding of the disciplines could reveal something of the dynamic between the differentiated and undifferentiated aesthetic realms.

Secondly, traditional Eastern philosophy is profoundly organic, suggestive of a grand harmony, an understanding that is being sharply undercut in contemporary times by science and materialism. Whether we think of Taoist naturalism, the *I-Ching* or Hua-yen metaphysics, or samsara-nirvana or Atman-Brahman, the organic whole is always seen intact. We, too, should continue to probe into the everpresent, grand, open and vast natures of the immediacy of things. This requires attention. Maurice Merleau-Ponty's theory of holistic perception is a good beginning. Olivier Lacombe has recently asserted in *Philosophy East and West* the need for an intellect that can work in symbiosis with the senses, the need for one "endowed with a capacity of perceiving intuitively metaempirical being through empirical data, and not merely of dealing rationally with sense material."[58] At any rate, it is right to channel our energies toward an understanding of a holistic nature of experience, paradoxically science may help us in this effort.[59]

Third, and this is a most difficult area to discuss, let us continue to seek to understand the unique Eastern concepts of emptiness (*k'ung, sunyata*) and non-being (*wu*).[60] We have not yet heard the last word on either concept, although we are reminded again and again of their valued presence and effect on the ordinary actions. Although these concepts began differently in Buddhist and Chinese traditions, they have been so well synthesized in China that, generally speaking, they are almost indistinguishable--a view to which purists might take exception. The point, however, is that both concepts are vital components of the aesthetic realm to which Northrop pointed.

Fourth, there is need for a recovery of a moral posture in life. Moral posture is a difficult matter to discuss because of a stigma attached to things having to do with moral or ethical concepts. But ethics has always been central to both Eastern and Western philosophy. In the East, the Hindu and Buddhist *dharma*, the Confucian *jen* and Taoist *tao* are pillars around which other, lesser principles are perpetuated. It is important to recognize that these pillars are basically aesthetic in nature. Here Northrop quickly grasped an important point, that the "good which is identified with the indeterminate, all-embracing factor is the only good which is absolute in the sense that it holds

for all people under all circumstances."[61] By contrast, a good identified with the determinate or differentiated is good only on a temporary or relative basis. But clearly ethnics or morality cannot be founded on that basis.

These are some areas of contact with the Northropian methodology. His categories are flawed but can take us a long way and will probably be around for a long time to come. The challenge is actually on us. Do we ignore the Northropian categories or take up their challenge?

# Notes

1. Filmer S.C. Northrop, "The Complementary Emphases of Eastern Intuitive and Western Scientific Philosophy," in Charles A. Moore, ed., *Philosophy--East and West* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1944), pp. 168-234. Hereafter PEW. This pathfinding essay contains the most elaborate and systematic development of his categories.

2. *PEW*, p. 168.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *PEW*, p. 172.

5. *PEW*, p. 173.

6. *PEW*, p. 177.

7. *PEW*, pp. 185-86.

8. *PEW*, p. 186.

9. *Ibid.*

10. *PEW*, pp. 187-88.

11. *PEW*, p. 190.

12. *PEW*, p. 193.

13. *Ibid.*

14. *PEW*, p. 194.

15. *PEW*, p. 196.

16. *PEW*, p. 203.

17. *PEW*, p. 204. He deduces this from first chapter of *Tao Teh Ching*.

18. *PEW*, p. 205

19. F.S.C. Northrop, *The Meeting of East and West: An Inquiry Concerning World Understanding* (New York: MacMillan, 1946), pp. 342, 352. Hereafter MEW.

20. *MEW*, p. 341.

21. *PEW*, pp. 229-30.

22. *MEW*, p. 443.

23. *PEW*, p. 231.

24. *Ibid.*

25. *MEW*, p. 443. The traditional three-termed relation of appearance refers to: (1) observer of the material object, (2) theoretic component based on mathematical space and time, and (3) the apparent sensed qualities in the apparent relative sensed space and time of the aesthetic component.

26. *Ibid.*

27. *PEW*, pp. 231-32.

28. *MEW*, p. 459.

29. *PEW*, p. 227.

30. Besides this book, he has written extensively on his methodology in such works as *The Taming of the Nations* (1952), *European Union and United States Foreign Policy* (1954), *The Logic of the Sciences and the Humanities* (1959) and *Man, Nature and God* (1962). In addition, he has written numerous articles touching upon the methodology, especially in law journals.

31. Auburey Castell's review of F.S.C. Northrop's *The Meeting of East and West* in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 9 (1948), 237-44; p. 237.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 242.

33. *MEW*, p. 470.

34. Walter T. Stace's review of F.S.C Northrop's *The Meeting of East and West in Ethics,* Vol. 57 (1947), 137-41; p. 139.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 137.

36. *Ibid.*

37. Hu Shih, "The Scientific Spirit and Method in Chinese Philosophy," in Charles A. Moore, ed., *The Chinese Mind* (Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1967), p. 105. Hereafter CM. It should be added that P.T. Raju, in his highly informative and provocative work, *Introduction to Comparative Philosophy* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1962), voices a similar objection. He points out that Northrop's dichotomy of the intellect and intuition leaves much to be desired since both usually function together (p. 279).

38. *CM*, p. 107.

39. *CM*, pp. 130-31.

40. E.R. Hughes, "Epistemological Methods in Chinese Philosophy"in *CM*, p. 95.

41. *Ibid.*

42. *CM*, p. 97.

43. *Ibid.* Hughes' crude syllogism:

> Man can live well only in society.
> We men of Lu State and it neighbors are men.
> Therefore, we must be socially minded, i.e.,
> man-to-man-ly (*jen*)

44. *CM,* pp. 97-98.

45. Edwin A Burtt, "Basic Problems of Method in Harmonizing Eastern and Western Philosophy," in Charles A. Moore, ed., *Essays in East-West Philosophy* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1951), pp.

119, 123n, fn4.

46. Herbert Fingarette, *Confucius--The Secular As Sacred* (Harper Torchbook, 1972)

47. *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

48. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

49. P.J. Saher, *Eastern Wisdom and Western Thought* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1969), p. 201.

50. These terms, Western philosophy and eastern wisdom, are Saher's. To be fair to Northrop, it may be said that he did not employ such terms in the exact sense that Saher constructs an algebra, and in this regard the very same criticism of oversimplication (of Northropian methodology) can be lodged against Saher.

51. P.J. Saher, *op. cit.* See especially pp. 202-12.

52. Y.P. Mei, "The Basis of Social, Ethical and Spiritual Values in Chinese Philosophy," in *CM*, p. 153.

53. Fung Yu-lan, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy* (New York: The Free Press, 1966), p. 24. It should be noted that very early in his career Fung Yu-lan wrote a piece on why China did not develop science. In it, he points out that the Chinese mentality was more inward in controlling man and his mind rather than outward in controlling nature. This is clearly a Taoistic non-manipulative (*wu-wei*) stand. See his, "Why China Has No Science," in *The International Journal of Ethics*; April, 1922.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

55. *PEW*, pp. 176-77.

56. *Ibid.*, p. 194.

57. F.S.C. Northrop, "Methodology and Epistemology, Oriental and Occidental," in C.A. Moore, ed., *Essays in East-West Philosophy. Op. cit.*, pp. 152-53.

58. Olivier Lacombe, "Transcendental Imagination-- A Study in Comparative Philosophy," in H.D. Lewis, ed., *Philosophy East and West* (Bombay: Blackie & Son (India) Ltd., 1976), p. 79.

59. Here I am immediately reminded of Dr. Thome H. Fang's clear enunciation of the nature of a grand harmony. In his first major work in English, *The Chinese View of Life* (Hong Kong: The Union Press, 1956), he expressed the philosophy of comprehensive harmony beautifully. It is a philosophy that has profoundly influenced my own view of things Chinese and has been a constant challenge and guide. In his crowning work, superbly translated by Professor George C.H. Sun as *Chinese Philosophy: Its Spirit and Its Development* (Taipei: Linking Publishing Co., Ltd., 1981), Dr. Fang showed how the Chinese spirit of comprehensive harmony permeates Confucian, Taoist, Buddhist and Neo-Confucian systems. Much indeed can be learned from this work.

60. Recent studies by Japanese thinkers including Nishida Kitaro (*A Study of Good; Fundamental Problems of Philosophy; Art and Morality*), Nishitani Keiji (*Religion and Nothingness*), Abe Masao (*Zen and Western Thought*) and Matsuo Hosaku (*The Logic of Unity*) have delved deeply into the philosophic and religious dimension of the concept of emptiness (*sunyata*). Their independent but commonly focussed studies have automatically brought them to the comparative scene, although the Northropian scheme has yet to be treated systematically.

61. *MEW*, p. 386.

# Chapter Ten

## YIN-YANG DIALECTICAL MONISM

### A New Attempt to Explore the Symiotic Relationship of Man and Nature Through Reformulation of the Confucian-Taoist Metaphysical System

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The idea of a symbiotic relationship between human beings and nature has been basic to the Confucian-Taoist philosophical creed. However, in the West the basis of any such conceptual framework--the relationship of yin and yang--has been obscured by the impact of modern science, particularly by Aristotelian logic and Newtonian physics. Severe criticism has also centered around the over-simplification and metaphysical, if not occult, nature of this aspect of Confucian-Taoist thought.

The light of a preliminary acceptance of this aspect first came indirectly through the rise of Marxian dialectical materialism via Hegel. There is strong evidence that Hegel's trilogy was influenced by the yin-yang concept in *The Book of Changes*, with which Hegel became familiar while at the University of Heidelberg. Indeed it is difficult to differentiate the concept of the unity of yin-yang from the concepts of the unity of opposites and the Hegelian synthesis of thesis and antithesis. More recently, the advancement of quantum theory and the new geometry, as well as other scientific discoveries, have lent support to the symbolism expressed by the relationship of yin-yang. The concept of complementarity in contradictions, which is surprisingly like the Confucian concept of *Xiang fan er xiang cheng* as enunciated by Dong Zhongshu of the Han dynasty, is fundamental to quantum theory. The fact that Niel Bohr adopted the diagram of *taiji* as his coat-of-arms, after a trip to China in 1937, may not have been merely accidental.

During the last few decades new discoveries in the realm of subatomic

particles and in the field of molecular biology have revealed a world of potential possibilities rather than a world of observed things and facts. In order to make a complete description of atomic activity, theoretical approaches have moved toward postulations far different from those which one could obtain by means of experimental measurement. Quantum theory has provided us with a logical technique which is, in Aage Petersen's words, "well suited for analyzing epistemological problems because of the profound kinship between quantum theory and philosophy."[1] The discovery of "fractal geometry" in 1975 has shown us that the revolution that separates the classical mathematics of the nineteenth century from twentieth-century mathematics was forced upon us by the discovery of mathematical structures that did not fit the patterns of Euclid and Newton. The shapes of classical geometry are lines, planes, angles, spheres and cones. They represent a powerful abstraction of reality. But clouds are not spheres, mountains are not cones, lightening does not travel in a straight line. Fractals are everywhere. A new kind of symmetry has emerged, not of left-to-right or front-to-back, but of small scale patterns and patterns on larger and larger scales. B. B. Mendelbrot realized that the mathematical description of such patterns seemed to apply as well to other areas, ranging from the fluctuation of cotton prices during the nineteenth century to the rise and fall of the river Nile.[2] Fractal geometry has brought together a number of analyses from diverse sciences, and presents a new mathematical and philosophical synthesis.

While science aims at an exhaustive account of the limited domain of our experience, philosophy focuses on our situation as a whole, in search of a view by which to comprehend the overall relationships that hold between nature and human beings, and among human beings. To accomplish this objective, philosophical descriptions must be compatible with scientific observations, but not confined exclusively to them. If the ancient concept of sameness or similarity on different scales can be dusted off to illuminate this special kind of complexity, then the Confucian-Taoist concept of yin-yang may legitimately be considered a still fresh conceptual tool for philosophical analysis. This discussion is an attempt to reformulate the Confucian-Taoist world view on the basis of new discoveries in the sciences to show that it can fill the need for a rational new system for the future. This new system may be referred to as yin-yang dialectical monism. The definition of dialectics as used here implies a twofold nature of being and becoming in all phenomena as symbolized in the primordial pair, yin and yang. The relationship is polar, manifesting itself in the principle of complementarity in contradiction. The two are identifiable yet interdependent, interpenetrable and intertransformable. By the term monism is meant that there is a harmonious unity or oneness in the diversity of the world in which the unity of yin and yang represents the being and becoming of all. Neither yin nor yang can

exist by itself. In the process, complementarity is primary, contradiction, secondary.

We can proceed to focus on three fundamental categories, nature, human beings and society, and see how recent scientific discoveries can be corroborated with our premises and what conclusions can be drawn.

## The Basic Constituents of the World as Twofold

In their effort to find a unified theory that describes elementary particles and forces to explain the material world, physicists have found that all matter is built from just two classes of elementary particles: leptons and quarks. Frank Wilczek noticed that "all the fundamental constituents of matter came in matched pairs: for every kind of particle there is an anti-particle that is identical in mass but opposite in other properties such as an electrical charge. Indeed, a particle and anti-particle have often been discovered simultaneously when the two were created as a pair by a high energy collision in a particle accelerator."[3] If two protons of sufficient energy collide, a proton and an anti-proton pair emerge, and an infinitely large number of fragments are produced as well. It has become apparent that all particles are coupled more or less strongly to each other. Scientists do know that the twofold nature of positive and negative charges constitutes the basic nature of matter, and affects its structure and functioning, but to this day they do not know why the charge has a twofold nature.

In contemporary times the universe is understood to be organized into galaxies of many sizes and shapes, while the stars are expanding and contracting in various stages of life-cycles. Applying Einstein's theories, Friedman proposed two world models, closed as well as open, depending on the critical density of the ratio of matter to volume. After the *Voyager's* adventure in 1984, scientists speculated that an enormous supercluster of galaxies share the universe with an equally enormous void. The idea of a "dark" matter existing alongside a "light" matter has aroused widespread attention. Astronomers and astrophysicists have even argued that the regular oscillation of the solar system above and below the plane of the galaxy drives a periodic extinction of mass. Two distinct mechanisms, thermal and compositional, have also been proposed as the driving forces of the connective flow that generates the earth's magnetic field within its outer core.

The question whether or not man may be a microcosm of the macrocosm of the world, or a part of it, has continued to invite debate among philosophers

for centuries. Whatever the topic or fucus, it is astonishing that the deeper the probing of life processes, the more is revealed of a twofold nature. In their efforts to uncover the origin of life forms, scientists since the 1950s have realized that DNA is the key to understanding the evolution of biological change. DNA always comes in pairs; always a short nucleotide is joined to a long one. They appear to exist only in pairs. The subunits of DNA, the nucleotides, are strung together in pairs that form the two strands of a double helix. Cells grow due to the synthesis of cellular protoplasm or intercellular materials formed by cells exclusive of waste from the division of the cells themselves. One cell divides into two cells. As this process repeats, each of these two cells can result in an exponential growth.

In the process of fertilization, the twenty-three chromosomes of a sperm and the twenty-three chromosomes of an egg pair to form a single nucleus which then splits to form two new cells, each with its own complete nucleus. The two cells then divide to form four, then eight. After seventy-two hours a human egg has grown to a thirty-two cell state. Then, myriad cells form. The sequence of this division could be described as:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 Female | 1 Male Sperm |
| 01 | 1: |
| 0101 | 1:1: |
| 01010101 | 1:1:1:1: |
| 010101010101010 | 1:1:1:1:1:1:1:1: |

One can recognize that this sequence of progression in cell growth is the same pattern as the yin-yang sequence in *the Book of Changes* as arranged by Neo-Confucian Shao Yung; and it is like Leibniz's binary table.

| Shao Yung | Leibniz |
|---|---|
| — ·· | 01 |
| — ·· — ·· — ·· — ·· | 0101 |
| — — — — — — — — | 01010101 |
| — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — | 0101010101010101 |

Is such a similarity merely coincidence or is it a reflection of the unity in diversity of the world in our minds? This is obviously an attempt to describe a simple yet very complex universal phenomenon in easily understood

symbolic terms. We have mentioned physical aspects of the world, such as DNA, but might it also be said that mental activities are subject to a description of a twofold nature? That remains a question. As Harold Fritzsch has pointed out, we can compute and as it were assemble a person who might weigh 165 pounds (U quarks 7.0 X $10^{28}$ + D quarks 6.5 X $10^{28}$ + Electrons 2.5 X $10^{28}$), but this does not mean that we are able to create life.[4] We can map the brain physically but this does not explain how consciousness arises in it or from it. On the other hand, we have often categorized our mental activities into reason and emotion, and that is a twofold nature. In the realm of the mind, there is familiarly logic contrasted with intuition, induction in contrast to deduction, and analysis contrasted with synthesis, etc. In the most important activities of cognition, we consider true as opposed to false, yes opposed to no, right to wrong, abstract to concrete, known to unknown. Our emotions display the twofold nature of love and hate, joy and sadness, acceptance and rejection, happiness and anger, hope and fear, like and dislike. Modern psychologists continue to wrestle with the twofold problem of the conscious and the unconscious.

Insofar as using a twofold perspective as a method of study and analysis is concerned, Karl Marx provides another example. In his *Das Capital*, Marx claimed that he "was the first to point out and to examine critically this twofold nature of the labor contained in the commodities" (use value and exchange value). In his view, "it is an eternal nature without which there is no life."[5] This twofold nature operates in economic activities as he described them, as follows: "An increased quantity of material wealth may correspond to a simultaneous fall in the magnitude of its value." "This antagonistic movement has its origin in the twofold character of labor." Marx saw a twofold nature in the production process: the productive force and the productive relation. As a result, there emerged the twofold antagonistic classes, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, evolving through a constant class struggle which constitutes the moving force of social change. Marx's interpretation of history was materialistic, and his analysis of the capitalist mode of production for long exercised a powerful influence on economic and political thought. Perhaps for as long as human beings live an organized life, the state will not disappear, as Marx would have had it, and the twofold nature will continue to manifest in the relationships of the ruler and ruled, sovereign and subject or citizen, authority and servant, autonomy and integration, central and local, no matter what forms of government may prevail.

In view of examples like these, although extremely cursory and in some cases representing common sense approach, the twofold nature of being and becoming seems to be apparent everywhere. Let us go one step further to

examine some relationships within this primordial pair. This will be our next attempt.

## The Relationship of Yin and Yang Manifests in the Reciprocal Interaction of Complementarity in Contradiction

Everything contains yin and yang as Neo-Confucians have long contended. The most fundamental of all is that the two interact to attain a unity in a relationship of complementarity in contradiction to constitute the source of being and becoming of all things and events in a multilevel and multicompartmental organic whole. The complementarity of yin-yang in achieving harmony is seen as a way of existence and of change that produces different new forms or individual, diverse things or events. Continuity necessitates the unity of yin and yang, the unity of opposites and the harmonization of polarities. The contradiction of yin-yang maintains balance among and between things and events. It is a way of achieving structures and phases of development, and propels oscillations, to-and-from movements from one pole to a complementary opposite.

In general, three basic principles can be described from observation of the cooperative, self-regulating and self-generating process of change and progression described by the yin-yang interaction in an evolving world as follows:

(1) One plays a dominant role in maintaining or effecting the changes of structures and functions of things and events, but not to the exclusion of the other, so that equal opportunity is preserved for all. There is an element of yin in the dominant sphere of yang and vice versa. As a consequence, uncertainty is seen to exist in certainty, choice even in a fixed order, both indeterminancy and determinancy. Surprise occurs in every incident.

The concept of oscillation in dominance is a kind of reciprocal conditioning viewed from a functional perspective. Every entity has a functional role to play in the whole process, which accounts for its reason for being. In performing its function to fulfill the requirements of its being as a whole, each individual thing, event and person is unique. For example, the driver of a car in which the president of a country rides may be unimportant in terms of rank or status, but in terms of function the driver is all important insofar as the president's life depends on his safe driving. The driver is dominant from the functional perspective of maintaining safety in driving. The cost of a single screw in a spaceship may be negligible, but its functional value (use value) is all important in this same sense. The values

of the world are all relative, as Zen (Ch'an) Buddhism contends.

The study of fundamental particles shows that the two basic constituents of matter, leptons and quarks, constantly interact as a result of four forces; nature never turns its processes on or off. The four forces are gravity, electromagnetic force, what is called the "strong" force and the "weak" force. The strong force binds quarks together to make the atomic nucleus. The weak force is responsible for certain kinds of nuclear decay. Thus, they are contradictory. The strong force is dominant in the function of binding which accounts for stable hadrons; the weak force is dominant in the function of decay which accounts for unstable mesons. In classical physics, electrically charged bodies interact. Two carrying the same charge repel; dissimilar charges attract. Quantum mechanics reveals that normally an atom is electrically neutral. But if one electron is taken away from a neutral atom, the positive charge of the nucleus predominates. The oscillation of attraction and repulsion is of prime importance to the formation of matter.

It has become apparent in recent years that the core of the earth, the mantle, the crust, the oceans and the atmosphere can be seen as a complex interacting system in which a vast recycling corresponds to a physiological model of dynamic equilibrium known as homeostasis. The earth's orbit around the sun leads to oscillations in the advance and retreat of the ice caps; the actions of the interior affect the exterior and vice versa. In cycles of weather and ice formation, temperature is dominant; in influence on the earth's structural alternation, pressure is dominant. In our solar system as a whole, the sun is dominant where providing light, heat and energy are concerned.

With respect to life processes, the human body furnishes a most precise support of the oscillation model of dominance from a functional perspective. Thus the heart during its period of contraction, is dominated by the centripetal tendency. In its period of expansion, it is dominated by the centrifugal tendency. The heart, which operates involuntarily, has two sets of nerves leading to it: one serves to stimulate the heart and one to retard it. The brain appears to keep such an organ under control with two reins, and the brain itself operates in two hemispheres, the left and right. Each is dominant with respect to certain kinds of functioning. Generally, it is thought, the left side of the brain tends to be dominant where the functions of logic and language are concerned, while the right controls intuition, the emotions. In body chemistry, sodium exerts a biologically contractive role while potassium exerts a biologically expansive role by breathing, inhalation is followed by exhalation. When one walks, either the left foot or the right foot takes a lead step, but never the two together.

In social phenomena, whether a capitalist or socialist mode of production occurs, there is typically a minority or elite in the dominant position with respect to the terms of power, status and privilege. However, this dominance is constantly oscillating between those who have or are already in power and those who do not share power. The time for ascendance may vary but there has never been a group that remained in the position of power and wealth permanently and exclusively, no matter how hard power-holders may have tried to hold on to the status quo. Historical development suggests a mutual conditioning process that allows chance, too, to play a role even in deterministic settings.

In the subatomic world for the first time fairly recently scientists have found that the electrical charges of objects are not integers but are the sum of quark charges. Anti-protons and anti-neutrons are understood as composed of the corresponding anti-quarks denoted as up and down (U,D). Mesons are described as composed of quarks and anti-quarks. A neutral meson has two possibilities, a 50 percent probability of its being either a UU or a DD system, for the neutral meson is a sort of hybrid. Thus, nature does play the dice to a certain degree.

And, if the theory of the "big bang" still holds, then there are signs which indicate that vast order was created out of a primordial random turmoil of disorder (like the Taoist *hung tun*). The organization of galaxies is thought to have begun with chance submicroscopic fluctuations that grew on a large scale, amplified by gravity yet always retaining something of their past. These fluctuations tended to produce both high density and low density features in equal measure. In general the laws of physics are not purely determining; the principle of uncertainty applies. What we may consider as law is a static statistical average and does not describe a precise dynamic reality.

The new geometry tells us that a system that manifests complicated behavior may have emerged as a consequence of the simple, non-linear interactions of only a few components. Also, interacting components on one scale can lead to complex global behaviors on a large scale. In a kind of exponential amplification, a slippage of only a few centimeters along a fault in the earth's structure can trigger an earthquake and generate seismic waves that travel for thousands of kilometers through the earth's interior. On another plane, a creative minority can shift a whole society, or a small incident, unimportant in rational terms, can change and has changed the course of history. Quantum mechanics has discovered for us that initial measurements are always uncertain. The concept of chaos allows that uncertainties can overwhelm our ability to predict, or the term chance is used to convey the

limitation of lack of predictability. In biology, the evolution of the genes is sometimes understood merely as a chance occasion, while the innate creativity of the artist may include an underlying process of chance that selectively amplifies small fluctuations and molds them into larger, highly original mental perceptions. In this light, the existence of chance provides a mechanism that allows for the expression of free will within a world more apparently governed by deterministic laws.[6]

(2) *When the development of the dominant one, either the yin or the yang in a thing or an event, reaches its fullest expression or magnitude, either the direction of the course of its advancement turns to its opposite, or the anticipated result of its development becomes contrary to its original objective, or both may occur.* The polar relationship of the two features sets limits that restrain the linear and causal development of things or events and generate a reversion pattern of cyclical, spiral progression which may be endless. It seems that everything and every event has its own self-imposed, self-regulated limit or turning point that shapes its being and becoming. At the most basic level, the coming-to-exist of any entity carries within it or foretells a boundary or completed lifespan.

The clearest indication of the phenomena of reversion, limit, nodal point, turning point or exception in all development is most easily seen in nature and in ordinary experience, and philosophers have long observed it. The *Tao-te Ching* says that reversion is the way of heaven (*Tien tao ho huan*); the *I-Ching* says that it is "P*iji tai lei.*" Commonly in a single day we all have experienced that late afternoon warmth signifies the beginning of the evening cool, and we all expect the brightness of the noonday sun to be followed by the darkness of midnight and back again. The question is: If this is true in the simplest case of day and night, is it also true profoundly in many other cases?

If we turn again to quantum mechanics, we find some insight from the observed properties of subatomic particles. That is, when two protons are a centimeter apart they repel each other because they carry similar electric charges. If they are forced closer, the electrical force of repulsion also increases. But when they move so close that they are only $10^{13}$ of a centimeter apart, the two suddenly no longer repel, but on the contrary attract each other strongly. This newly found force has been called the "strong" force. It appears that only protons, neutrons and mesons participate in such "strong" interactions, all others lack it.[7] In general the relationship of positive and negative charges is polar, and the electrical charge is fundamental to particle phenomena. A reversal of a negative charge is a positive charge and vice versa. Together there is a parity, almost a mirror

reflection.

As another fascinating illustration, when an electron and a positron collide, a quark and anti-quark, either a UU-pair or DD-pair, are produced. It is not that one is produced to the exclusion of the other, nor does the opposite disappear in the succession of replacement. And when quark and anti-quark are annihilated, they become two photons. It appears that nothing comes to rest in the long run, but instead cycles periodically through a sequence of stages. As an analogy, consider traveling over the earth's surface in an airplane. The surface is for us, characterized by the directions, east-west and north-south, and although finite in size, it is boundless in the experience. Because it is spherical, if we start out anywhere on the earth's surface in whatever direction, we will never reach the end, but after a given period of time, we will find ourselves where we began.

Or consider the concept of "the reversion of time," formerly thought contrary to the scientific view of linear progression. But the "big bang" theory of the origin of the universe contends that the distant galaxies are receding faster than others, and the light from them is taking so long to reach us that they may be said to represent conditions in the early universe close to the beginning of time.[8]

Another polar phenomenon is the magnetic field of the earth, which has reversed many times. In a reversal, the north magnetic pole switches from pointing north to pointing south or vice versa. Such reversal has occurred not only in the earth but also in the sun, and appears to be self generated.

In a sense, the principle of polar relationship or complementarity in contradiction reveals that everything and every event carries its own seeds of birth and death. The reversal manifested does not indicate that an old person can revert to childhood health; it does signal that when one reaches maturity one begins to decline. Another observation comes easily to mind: we do not know precisely the point at which inhalation of the breath changes into exhalation; the two processes, although opposite, are continuous and subtly change from one to the other. Or, in the body's circulatory system, red blood rich in oxygen flows from the left chamber of the heart to the extremities of the body. As this occurs, oxygen and food leave the bloodstream. The color of blood turns bluish and returns to the chamber on the right side of the heart. From there it proceeds to the lungs for an exchange of gases. In the lungs the temporily bluish liquid of the blood regains its oxygen-rich, life-giving redness. The chemical sequence can be described as a harmonic oscillation process.

A most unusual example of reversing polarity can be found in oysters, which first become males, then change into females, and back to males during a single lifespan.[9]

Reversal in the pattern of oscillation from one pole to another is everywhere evident in human activities, though it may not be very precisely measured. The expression of our emotions oscillates between love and hatred, joy and sorrow. And then, extreme joy may end in tears, or extreme grief and sadness, when not overwhelming, can be transformed into strength and a stronger character. The operation of human reasoning in cognition is a process that oscillates between known and unknown, synthesis and analysis, etc.

In economics, free competition, if developed to its extreme, tends to end in monopoly. An excessive concentration of wealth in the hands of a few often leads to the deterioration and dissipation of the whole structure. Price controls, either enforced by government as in a planned economy or rigged through a private cartel structure, may work in the short run, but in the long run, they often lead to great price fluctuations on a black market or to market disorder. The stock market, which is a reflection of investors in action, never repeats a performance exactly, but the recurrence of similar characteristics is sufficient to permit investors to identify a reversal of the trend at its turning point. This is possible for the very reason that the market fluctuates, has ups and downs, and oscillates back and forth between a bull and a bear market. As a whole, an economy possesses tremendous momentum, either in the expanding or contracting phase and consists of a host of individual sectors that are operating in different directions at the same time. A business cycle, it has been observed, usually takes about five or six years to turn around. Contraction occurs after a peak has been reached; expansion begins again when the market has bottomed out. An important thing for economists and investors to do is to look for major turning points.

In a broad sense, the boundary and lifespan of an individual entity constitutes a limitation upon itself. Or if we consider twentieth-century industrial civilization, it has greatly extended the human lifespan and in some places provided cradle-to-grave security for modern populations; but it has also applied unparalleled technological ingenuity to engaging in total war and sophisticated weapons of death. Some of the most highly civilized people have dealt most savagely with others.

(3) The harmonization or the unity of polar opposites in producing something new is a process of reciprocal dependency. One helps to generate the other and in turn, generates itself. Neither yin nor yang can exist by itself. The

process is one of "if then" and "it may be."

Examples of this type of harmonization can be found, again, in the subatomic world, where each hadron is held together by a force associated with the exchange of another hadron, which, in turn, is held together by forces to which the first hadron makes a contribution by releasing or rejecting electrons. Electrons orbit a nucleus, and some atoms have eight electrons and are stable. Others have fewer electrons and the deficiency makes them unstable. Such deficient atoms will readily link with other unstable atoms until a state of stability is reached. The very unstable phosphorous atom has electrons that quickly bond with oxygen atoms to form phosphate molecules. The links of such atoms are high energy bonds that, when broken, release energy.

Electrons themselves are thought to emit photons which are absorbed by protons (Yukawa hypotheses) and vice versa. In the process, momentum is transferred from the electron to the proton. Thus the electron and proton throw photons, which are massless and which transfer light, back and forth. The interaction of atoms is also seen in intermediate particles or mesons, whose decay is due to the mutual annihilation of quark and anti-quark. But this decay only results in two photons. This interaction is known as the "weak" force. Scientists have observed that there has never been an ultimate disappearance of matter except as atoms displace atoms. Reciprocal transformability appears to be a characteristic of all known elementary particles.[10]

In biological processes, the principle of reciprocal dependency is even clearer. Living organisms rely on reproduction to ensure their continuity. There are two basic types of reproduction: sexual and asexual. The former involves a process of union or fusion between polar types, male and female, the latter involves the division of the present body which creates a new organism. Viewed over time, this is a process of the replacement of the old by the new, replacing the parents by offspring. Viewed at the time of occurrence, sexual reproduction is a process of mutual transformation, called fertilization. Neither the egg of a female nor the sperm of a male is able to start a new life or even to preserve its own unless this transformation occurs. The sperm cell is incomplete in itself and survives only if it finds and unites with an egg cell to form a single nucleus.

The preservation of a DNA nucleotide sequence across a broad range of individuals in a species tells us that the significant functional role of the sequence must be maintained for the species to survive. The shared sequence appears as the DNA double helix. Among the four nucleotides of RNA, two

pairs are complementary and known as hydrogen bonds which provide the basis for the pairing of the two strands of the DNA double helix and, in similar fashion, two stretches of RNA can form a helical region if they contain complementary nucleotides. What we are concerned with here is heterozygosity and the fact that a reciprocal interaction gives greater assurance for survivability than exclusiveness.[11]

In human activities, reciprocal interaction in the unity of male and female to perpetuate the species is but the simplest of processes that tell us that, although human beings are born and die alone, human needs, even intellectual satisfactions, cannot be met by one's self alone. Fundamental to the experience of life are to exist, to enjoy life and to search for life's meaning; none of these can be realized without the invovlement of others.

In society, the division of labor may be regarded not only as the natural consequence of human diversity, but also as a harmonization of two poles in human relationship. From the standpoint of maintaining survival, the division of labor is a harmonious cooperative reflection of the unity of human diversity. In terms of the single individual in a social organization, the division of labor may appear coercive and restrictive to freedom and personal development, but the reciprocity lies in the simple fact of an exchange of labor for life. In order for one to get something, one has to give something in return. The unity in the division of labor is transmitted through the authority of command in an organization, while diversity is reflected in the co-ordinated diverse constituents. Few organizations could exist without the exercise authority or function without the cohensive efforts of constituents.

The division of labor leads to social stratification and social classes in the form of an elite and the masses. But it appears that, whether the relationship is between ruler and ruled, lord and serf, or management and labor, one cannot do without the other. The elite who have risen to power and wealth depend on the support and acceptance of the masses to achieve their status; the masses, in turn, rely on the leadership of the elite to ensure their direction and security and, in the course of history, changing economics, error and sheer chance play a role and make it impossible for the elite to maintain their superiority. In most societies some among the masses have the opportunity to elevate themselves to elite status. This oscillation, between the elite and masses, contributes to social mobility.

The division of labor entails the exchange of the value of labor for the distribution of the fruits of labor. On one hand the elite, by virtue of their advantageous position and skills, gain a better material bargain than the masses, and gross disparities often occur between the two in terms of

material rewards. On the other hand, a luxurious life and extremes of comfort by their very nature often tend to accelerate dissipation, like a kind of entropes. Alexander the Great did not die in battle but in the arms of a Persian princess. The turning point seems to come when the vast majority can no longer secure a real livelihood. When this happens, a new elite will rise to replace the old either through violent revolution or by other means. This process of change goes on because the elite and the masses mutually generate each other. History has never indicated otherwise.

## Complementarity is Primary; Contradiction, Secondary

What is suggested by this brief description is that interaction in the manner of complementarity in contradiction of the primordial pair contributes to the existence and development of all things and events in the world. A question would then arise: Is there an order of priority in the twofold process of complementarity in contradiction, or, is one primary although both aspects are indispensable to change and existence? In the order of existence of which we have experience, complementarity seems to be primary. In order for an entity to exist, its contradictory constituents, yin and yang, must maintain a harmonious balance to attain stability and continue to exist. Any thing or event that exists can change only if it continuously exists. The moment it ceases to exist it can no longer change. That unity of male and female which sustains the existence of the human species indicates that unity, which implies complementarity, is primary. Both the phenomena of birth and death are necessary in maintaining the survival of the human species but birth is primary to living and being alive. Both phenomena of "in" and "out" are equally essential to the existence and function of any entity but "in" is prior to "out" just as eating is prior to excerting. So is the drive gear prior to the reverse gear in the operation of an engine.

Recent discoveries in science have also revealed a world that is not dual but rather built on a myriad of replications of the simplest structures that operate by a subtle interplay between the two poles of symmetry and asymmetry. Quantum mechanics describes a system of identical particles that appear as a wave function with a coordinated vector. The wave function may be either symmetrical, even and stable, or asymmetrical, odd and unstable, with respect to the interchange of coordinates for any pair of particles. The symmetrical ones have been termed bosons; the asymmetrical ones, fermions. Symmetry is bound up with stability, for with stability the asymmetrical wave function vanishes. And the atoms themselves are stable when the electrons that orbit the nucleus are symmetrical.

More generally, the symmetry of left and right spatial configuration appears fundamental to stability. The very interactions among the various particles in the course of subtle interchange are symmetrical, invariant and unchanged.[12]

In nature, similarity often implies symmetry. The function of equations in mathematics, and the way we use our watches, are based on such similarity and symmetry. However, in recent studies a phenomenon termed spontaneous broken symmetry has been discovered; it is known as the Higgs mechanism. An example of it comes from magnetism. At a high temperature, the thermal energy of atoms overcomes magnetic forces and there is zero magnetization; but at a low temperature, magnetic force overcomes the atoms' thermal agitation; as it were, then the internal magnets line up.[13] Symmetry is static, essential for stability, while asymmetry is dynamic, essential for movement and change. They complement each other. Neither of them is exclusive.

Another indication of the primacy of balance appears in the phenomenon known as homeostasis with respect to our bodily organs. Most of the organs in the body perform in a most precise and subtle harmonious balance to ensure their proper integration and coordination in sustaining life. If any one is seriously out of balance, death could result. Not only does this process of balance regulate the internal functions of our organs, but it is also found in the external cosmic environment such as the rhythms of day and night, the new moon and old, summer and winter. Our bodies reflect this balanced change. Sleeping and waking are tied to the earth's rotation. The female menstrual cycle coincides with the time it takes the moon to orbit the earth.

Our automatic nervous systems have been divided both structurally and functionally into what are described as sympathetic and parasympathetic systems. The internal organs receive their stimulation from both. The impulses traveling along the fibres of the one are antagonistic to those traveling the other; whereas the heartbeat is speeded up by the sympathetic system, it is slowed down by the parasympathetic system. By regulating the movement of the body organs and preventing excesses, the automatic nerve system maintains balance in the body's internal condition.

A recent study of the controlling metabolic system reveals that the balance between the two opposed yet complementary chemical twins, cycling AMP and GMP, determines whether cells proliferate or stop growing and become specialized. As one scientist writes, "There is evidence that events antithetical to 'growth' and 'no growth' may be modulated by the balance of cAMP and cGMP".[14]

The fact that a gross disparity between the distribution of sexes in the world's population has never been known is another example of balance biologically. Currently the number of men and women stands at approximately 1.7 billion each, despite the vicissitudes of events.

The primacy of balance pervades in many human activities too. In economics, if at a given price there is a preponderance of buyers over sellers, it follows that the price will have to rise in order to bring buyers and sellers into balance. Banking institutions cannot function without a balance sheet. It generally takes harmonious integration and cooperation, rather than struggle, for management and labor to generate surplus value from any productive organization. This dynamic balance between the individuals and the organization may have to be adjusted frequently in order to sustain the adaptiveness of the operation.

From a macroeconomic point of view both the prevailing economic theories of those who back a central by planned economy, and those who argue for a market-established equilibrium, would seem to rely on the same framework of balance to advance their causes. The former see that a centrally planned economy will achieve a balanced development that benefits society as a whole, and curtails disparities in the distribution of the fruits of labor that plague the majority to enrich a few. The latter tolerate a degree of imbalance in the development of diverse sectors of the economy through financial and fiscal policies that strive for an overall balance of the economy to sustain prosperity and improve productivity. In a sense, the first approach can be seen as symmetry which constrains asymmetry, while the second can be seen as asymmetry which achieves symmetry.

In politics the primacy of balance seems equally as obvious as in economics. Few states have been established without resort to force, and ultimately the existence of the state tends to rest on the armed forces it possesses. The role of force is to establish balances of power internally and externally. The reason a single person can command an army of thousands is the fact that none can be sure what individuals might do in situations in which they seriously question the command or commit themselves to actions contrary to the goal of the larger unit. It is the balance of power that makes the organization functional because it is predicated on the acceptance of, if not the complete acquiescence to, the common will.

More abstractly, what is usually defined as justice is a balanced dispensation of reward and punishment. Injustice is considered out of balance. The objective of the principle that maintains checks-and-balances in a government seeks to prevent excessive use of authority by any one factor.

In the conceptualization process, the mind operates as a unifier and coordinator that transforms the visibly infinite diversity of the phenomenal world; the mind conceives abstractly and makes and applies to the world invisible generalizations. In perception, the mind exercises value judgments and discrimination to arrive at notions of part and whole, known and unknown, true and false; and to identify, classify, and organize the object of cognition. Ultimately the mind operates as an adapter or adjuster to reconcile static knowledge and the dynamic changing world. This is vividly illustrated by the perception of apparent motion as distinguished from real motion in the experience of watching film and television. Apparent motion is seen as a creation of the mind that can "fill" the gaps when an object moves across the visual field.[15] As mentioned, the interaction of the left and right hemispheres of the brain are indicative of a dialectical harmonization; it may be that they also establish a cognitive relationship between subject and object which Kant described as bringing things-in-themselves to things-for-us.

## Conclusion

The descriptive support we have provided for yin-yang dialectical monism may be rudimentary and frequently based on common sense, but the evidence does seem sufficiently indicative that the ancient concept of yin-yang cannot be shelved because of its antiquity or over-simplicity. The essence of yin-yang dialectical monism lies in its naturalistic metaphysics, its empirical epistemology, and an axiology of creativity. The insights of quantum theory indicate that the symbolic representation of yin-yang is a suitable conceptual tool that corresponds to reality. The yin-yang dialectical monistic world view seems to accurately describe the characteristics of many things, as pointed out by Stiskin in seven steps (with minor modification, as follows). The world view:

1. Displays polar relationships as it indicates the beginning and end of all things.

2. Links the two poles or the primordial pair of existence by showing them to be contradictory yet complementary in a continuum.

3. Portrays stages of development as occurring in spiral progression.

4. Suggests an alternate dominance of the two poles at different levels within the diverse and complex, self-sustaining world.

5. Implies reciprocal conditioning in cyclical change.

6. Demonstrates spontaneous self-regulation resulting from an oscillation process.

7. Recognizes the interconnectedness of our diverse world and accounts for the creativity of the human mind.[16]

In the light of the quantum discovery, yin-yang dialectical monism not only can reconcile dialectical logic with empirical logic in a two-level structure without the exclusion of one from the other, but also can remedy the difficulty in the Marxian "qualitative leap" of dialectical materialism that evolved from the age of classical physics by relating the concept of "quality" to the Neo-Confucian concept of Li and the concept of "quantity" to Qi, without altering the basic structure of either one.

Yin-yang dialectical monism, in more spiritual terms, reconfirms the cosmic unity that transcends individuals, and yet also makes us realize that actions are unique in the cosmos, just as every second is unique. It is the creativity of the mind which attempts to unlock the secret of nature in finding ways for civilization to advance. Life appears as a process where movement operates between two poles, and change unfolds through opposites and cycles in a never-ending rhythm of birth and death.

The human mind can bring about limited innovation and refinement within these parameters. When one grasps the significance of the dialectical harmony within the process of change and acts accordingly, one may be said to have attained the ultimate freedom of expressing one's true and original nature. Training in this principle is a refining of the capacity of the mind to discern the constituent poles of a given whole, and to comprehend their relationships. In the Confucian sense "timely" change will attain harmonious balance (*shi zhong*). Herein lies the basic principle of Yin-Yang dialectical monism.

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# Part Five

## Care and the Way of Heaven

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# Chapter Eleven

## THE WAY OF CARE: THE IMAGE OF THE MORAL GARDICAN IN CONFUCIAN PHILOSOPHY

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Man is an image-bearer. And the image that bears most heavily upon him--the image that he must endure from the time he becomes self-conscious--is none other than the image he forms of himself. Indeed, there is no civilized endeavor, thought or practice that is not in some sense a self-reflective appropriation, that is, an act of self-representation and self-justification whereby man seeks to measure himself, to take hold of himself, to become himself in accord with the dictates or implications of his self-image. In essence man is the appropriational product of his own homology; it is the same measure (*homologos*) which underlies the way he sees himself and the way he is.

This paper is an initial attempt at a homological understanding and reconstruction of Chinese philosophy. Taking advantage of the dual meaning of *homo* in Greek and Latin, as well as the multifaceted meaning of the Greek *logos*, we combine in the term *homologos* or homology the following sets of signification: (a) *homologos* as the study of man (equivalent to *anthropologos*), (b) *homologos* as the image of man, and (c) *homologos* as the same measure. Homology then is the study of man insofar as he is the bearer of his own self-image which procures for his humanity an identity of measure between being and understanding, life and thought.

We ask: What has been the dominant homology in Chinese philosophy since its inception in early Chou times? What is the underlying image of man which has impregnated the main streams of Chinese philosophical thought? What are the distinguishing characteristics of the homological paradigm exemplified in Chinese philosophy as contrasted with the homological paradigms governing, respectively, the Greek-European and Indian philosophical traditions? Is there a universally operative homological

paradigm--a common order or grammar of appropriation--binding on all paths of civilized humanity and thought? Is there such a thing as an archetypal image of man, a perennial "master image," if you will, that has been borne by men everywhere and at all times? And if the answer to the last two questions is given in the affirmative, how is the universal homological paradigm structured by this archetypal image? What, homologically speaking, is the meaning and significance of Chinese philosophy? Or, to put it more specifically, what position does Chinese philosophy occupy in the common order of appropriation? In what way does the dominant image of man appropriated in Chinese philosophy exemplify or vary from the archetypal image? What, after all, is the nature of philosophy considered as a homological discipline? If man is essentially a homologizer or homological appropriator, how does the philosopher stand in relation to the cultural-historical and philosophical traditions which form the homological or homogizational background of his thought? And, last but not least, what is the relationship of all these questions to that which is the source of all questioning, the source of silence and speech--that is, the power of appropriation whereby all things are as they are?

Needless to say, we cannot answer all these questions in the limited space of this paper. What is intended in this preliminary homological study is the bringing forth of a philosophical problematics of such questions. In using the word problematics I wish to imply that what we have to say here about some of these questions will remain at the end exploratory rather than definitive. To be sure, the possibility of a problematics depends on a commitment to certain underlying presuppositions which form the basis of our questioning. Laying bare presuppositions, and clarifying certain insights that emerge from them, are mainly what I wish to convey to the reader in this preliminary homological study.

Man is an image-bearer. This statement must be properly understood. What is an image and in what sense is man an image-bearer? The term image here is not only used in its ordinary or familiar sense, but needs to be thought through in terms of its homological import: namely, "image" or "imagery" in what we can call its wholesome signification. This wholesome image pertains to the integrity or health of our humanity, and is what reflects the inner connection between being and understanding, life and thought. More specifically, the wholesome image is definable as the quintessence of man's concentrated or integral experience of being by which he consciously or unconsciously, explicitly or implicitly, takes hold of himself and what is not himself in its otherness. It is indeed a concentrated and integral experience insofar as it decisively reflects the inner decision or resolution between

ownness and otherness whereby both self and not-self are simultaneously appropriated. Since the wholesome image is precisely what becomes the measure or appropriational principle in the depth of our humanity, such integral concentration of experience may be aptly characterized as an act of "deep beholding." Deep beholding means that the being lies in the holding and the holding of being is constitutively beheld. A deep-beholding act is then at once appropriational and imagistic: appropriational insofar as it resolves decisively, and imagistic insofar as it is self-reflective, that is, a constitutive beholding. Thus understood, the wholesome image that is reflectively decisive in man's deep-beholding concentration is a homological matrix for philosophy. Like life itself, philosophy is in the final analysis an appropriated or beheld expression of some imagery of man.

"To appropriate," as the etymology of the word tells us, is to make something one's own. While everything else in the universe is seen as always itself, always self-identical in its ownness, man is that peculiar being essentially characterized by a profound imagistic negativity. This, the inspiring genius of deep beholding, is at once the plague and the blessing of his self-appropriating existence because not only is man, once he attains self-awareness, both attracted and repulsed by the presence of what is experienced by him as other, but he also has the more or less conscious and painful intimation that not-self or otherness is not something merely outside him, but rather belongs to the core of his humanity. Man is indeed a being for whom it makes sense to say that he is <u>not</u> himself, that is, his integrity is not given automatically, as in the case of a rock or a kangaroo, but won in a life-death struggle with the specter of profound negativity as he preceives the black of otherness and is aware of what he ought to be or is supposed to be, but is not. Overcoming this profoundly negative aspect in the self-appropriation of ownness can become the life task of the deep-beholding homologizer. Since man can only make himself authentically his own in light of and through the mediation of the other, his self-imagery is ineradicably shot through with the imagery of the other. Appropriation then becomes a dialectic and double-sided affair. Man brings his self-image to bear on the other, while concurrently he brings the image of the other to bear upon himself. This mutuality between self and not-self is the field for the deep beholder. Here, in the dialectics of appropriation between self and not-self, the image bearer constitutes himself through the very power of profound negativity.

But how or in what manner does the wholesome image become an integral measure in the experience of deep beholding? The image becomes the measure, we reply, in conditions of care, wonder, enjoyment and hope.

Care, wonder, enjoyment and hope--these four key terms of the homological language designate for us fundamental qualities of wholesome or integrally concentrated experience, and are primary forms of deep beholding. They also designate the nature of appropriational decision and resolution, and are at the root of our homological humanity. With each of the four terms may be associated a cardinal image of man. These cardinal images are, however, ultimately derived from an archetype--the image of *homo erectus*, upright walking man in the homological nakedness of his origin and orginality. This archetypal or master image of man is precisely what figures in the primordial words of *tao, logos* and *brahman*. Man was originally a *tao*-beholder, a *logos*-beholder, or a *brahman* beholder. Civilization is what has arisen from the self-beholding of primordial--upright--man.

Upright man beholds himself in care. Founded primordially on upright man's erectness as such, beholding in care concentrates the responsibility of ownness, of which a defining attribute is man as the overseer-guardian. When the responsibility for ownness is extended, upright man sees himself not merely as his own keeper and protector, but also as the overseer-guardian of fellow human beings and, extended to the utmost, of all things in heaven and earth. The "care-ful" or "curatic" man (from Latin *cura*, care) is also a skillful upholder of the middle or central position, a maintainer of equilibrium and balancer of opposites.

Upright man beholds himself in wonder. Comporting himself in response to the lure of otherness and the fateful awareness of separation in being, the "wonder-ful" or "thaumatic" man (from Greek *thaumazein*, wonder) tempts distance and chases after transcendence. We see the image of man as the explorer-penetrator. Prompted by a paradoxical, love-hate intolerance of the unknown, the mysterious and the ungraspable, the wonder-oriented homologizer becomes superior in the dangerous arts of possessive appropriation--the arts of conquest, objectification and organization. But as such he is also inclined toward extremes and opposites.

In care or in wonder, and in the interplay of care and wonder, upright man beholds himself in enjoyment, in the satisfaction derived from the free and uninhibited exercise of appropriational power. As such, he is the player-creator. Seeking fulfillment and reaping satisfaction, the joyful or ecstatic man resides momentarily in the neighborhood of the absolute. In the deep beholding and wholesome concentration of free play and fluent creativity (including all kinds of yogic concentration that may lead to *nirvana*), man succeeds in realizing himself as the consummate appropriator -- that is, he obliterates distance and unifies or transcends opposites. In the ecstatic

absolute of playful or creative moments there is no distance and no opposites.

Yet much of human life is dominated by the fact of distance and the pain of opposition. From the pain of care or the pain of wonder, and especially from the pain that arises from their interplay, the upright homologizer invariably reaffirms himself in hope. As the fourth aspect of integral concentration, hope has origins in the fundamental reality of finitude and limitation. The "hopeful" or "speratic" man (from Latin *sperata*, hope) is situated at the threshold of the limited; he is a posturer towards the unlimited. In the act of hopeful beholding, upright man holds himself as the redresser of pain to overcome suffering. This is the image of man as ritual symbolizer. Sensitivity to pain and suffering is what lies at the heart of symbols and rituals which seek to transcend these limitations. Symbols and rituals are originally a means of power to overcome the painful and limited. The hopeful beholder is a keen observer of the efficacy of power. Indeed, the intensity of pain forces man to come to grips with the reality of power.

Man cares, wonders, enjoys and hopes. Human life--in particular, civilized life--is lived under the sway of these four principles. In speech, in action and in measure, all human endeavors are enveloped in such a homological cocoon, determined in part by the profound negativity arising from the experience of deep beholding. The four wholesome roots and their interplay and mixtures may be said to determine what I have called the common order of appropriation--a kind of universal paradigm or homology binding on humanity's various paths and thought.

I want to assert that all human activity or endeavor participates in the order described, which exemplifies an inherent pattern, a variation of the same underlying homological theme. It seems that there is no human effort which does not have in its constitution some concentration of each of the four wholesome principles, while their proportions admit of countless variations. What gives a human endeavor its distinctive homological character is which of these is most prominent or accentuated in the grammar of appropriation. Thus with respect to the parental concerns of a father or mother, the leadership concerns of a tribal chief or statesman, the ethical admonitions of a moral teacher, it is the image of man as overseer-guardian with care accentuated which figures prominently. By contrast, in the adventures of the seafarer or hero, in the activities of the artisan or artificer, or in the intellectual undertakings of the theoretician or scientist, we witness the mark of accentuated wonder. As for the principle of hope, man as the hopeful appropriator, the redresser of pain and suffering, is recognizable in all walks

of life. In most concentrated expression this wholesome principle is found in those forms of endeavor that are ordinarily acknowledged as spiritual or religious in character--for example, in the performance of ritual sacrifice, in the sermon of a prophet, in devotional prayer, or in yogic practice. Just as morality and government are the province of care, and science and technology the appropriated products of wonder, spirituality and religion are the proper culture of hope. Care, wonder and hope--these principles of gravity, as we may call them--serve to define our humanity in its richness. But human life is inescapably weighted down by the heavy burden of a projective consciousness, torn by the separation and tension between ownness and otherness, and between means and ends. Life as expressed by these three principles is always a life of mixed satisfaction. To the extent that the careful, wonderful or hopeful man reaps satisfaction, there is a lightness in the burden by felt sympathy. Enjoyment or "lightness," as we may call it, thus possesses a rather unique character in relation to the other three terms. For all human activity seeks satisfaction; and at the heart of every homologization there always resides the would-be rejoicer, the player-creator who is beyond the burden of projective consciousness. Pure satisfaction or absolute lightness, variously expressed, has been a major spiritual aspiration of the human appropriator. But as long as consciousness remain projective, man's wholesome humanity will always be given by the homology of mixed satisfaction, where gravity and lightness are both felt.

The question, "What has been the dominant homology in Chinese philosophy?" and the related question, "What is differently accentuated, homologically, in the philosophical thought of the three great civilized traditions of China, the West and India?" may now be given an answer. While all three philosophical traditions exemplify the same universal homological paradigm described, they differ fundamentally in their appropriational preference or homological accent. The homological difference between the three traditions of philosophical thought might be described as the difference between the three principles of gravity: care, wonder and hope.

From its inception in early Chou times, Chinese philosophy, like Chinese culture in general, has developed under the dominance of the curatic principle. And what the caring principle is to the Chinese tradition, so the wondering and hopeful principles have been to be Greek-European and Indian traditions respectively. Homologically, Chinese culture has been from the beginning governed by the notion of accentuated care rather than (as in Greek-European culture) accentuated wonder or (as in Indian culture) accentuated hope. When one of these principles becomes accentuated within

the paradigm, the other two will be appropriated by the accentuated principle--that is, assimilated and absorbed into it. Thus the grammar of appropriation underlying the Chinese, Greek-European and Indian traditions may be outlined as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Chinese | The grammar of accentuated care; the appropriation and absorption of wonder and hope into the essence of care. |
| Greek-European | The grammar of accentuated wonder; the appropriation and absorption of care and hope into the essence of wonder. |
| Indian | The grammar of accentuated hope; the appropriation and absorption of care and wonder into the essence of hope. |

Here then is a representation not only of how the three traditions stand in relation to each other, but also of the field historical *a priori* configuration which conditions the birth of philosophical culture.

Whereas the birth of human culture in general was the feat of primordial man in the confidence of his uprightness, the birth of philosophical culture was marked by the already acculturated upright man in the confidence of his justifying, self-justifying consciousness. Philosophy might be described as a quest for justification carried to the limits. In this view, contrary to what Plato and Aristotle taught, philosophy did not begin in wonder--that is, not universally. It began rather in the birth of a seminal image of man with a corresponding seminal attitude of justification. The seminal image is an accentuated image of man's humanity which arose at the dawn of any distinctive philosophical culture, and the seminal attitude of justification derived from that accentuated image. The accentuated image is described as seminal because, once seeded at the dawn of a philosophical culture, it constitutes homologically the field-historical *a priori* condition for the further development of that philosophical culture.

With respect to the Greek-European tradition, philosophy may indeed be said to have begun in wonder because what was seeded at the beginning was none other than the thaumatic image of man the wonderer--the explorer-penetrator, naturally inclined toward a theoretical attitude of justification, an attitude which has come to dominate Greek-European philosophical development. In this tradition, philosophy is a matter of theoretical

exploration and justification, and what the theoretical homologizer seeks to justify is, in the final analysis, none other than the thaumatic image of his humanity. The world that he tends to see is reflected through that imagery.

But the thaumatic image of man and the theoretical attitude of justification are alien to the seminal spirit of Chinese philosophy. What was accentuated at the birth of philosophical culture in China was rather the curatic image of man and the attitude of justification appropriate to it, a moral attitude. Here, it is not man the theoretical explorer who takes the philosopher's role, but man the moral overseer-guardian who engages in the philosophical quest for justification. The theoretical justifier is a master in the art of rational or logical discourse, but the moral justifier is incurably a man of action because he is above all a defender and promoter of civilized order.

In contradistinction to both Chinese and Greek-European traditions, what we find in the early philosophical culture of India is an imagery neither of careful man nor of wonderful man, but man the hopeful ritual symbolizer whose justifying consciousness has an inherently "anti-care" and "anti-wonder" character. Although both Indian and Judeo-Christian cultures participate in the paradigm of hope, there is a fundamental homological difference: while justification in Judeo-Christian culture is essentially prophetic, being sensitive to the abyss separating ownness and otherness, justification in the Indian tradition is more emphatically transcendental. Ultimately it seeks to overcome the pain of both care and wonder by invoking the power of the absolute, a power of appropriation that goes beyond ownness and otherness. The philosopher as a transcendental justifier thus has an altogether different character than the theoretical, moral, or prophetic justifier.

In the final analysis, justification is an authentication of being, a conscious act of appropriation in response to an ideal. The passage from the undifferentiated archetypal image of upright man in his naked simplicity, to culturally differentiated seminal images of historical man brought about by the birth of self-justifying consciousness, is a passage from an innocent age to a problematic one. What is problematically at issue is the <u>authenticity</u> of being, whether it is the being of man, nature or the world. Philosophy as a quest for justification is in essence a quest to define authentic being. It is not merely "What is being?" but "What is authentic being?" that constitutes, at least implicitly, a universal theme in philosophical thought. The search for a conception of authenticity is precisely what marks the historical origins of philosophy. And on the configuration of the seminal image of man at the dawn of a philosophical culture, it may be said that there is written a seminal

equation or identification defining authentic being for the homological path of that culture.

Thus in the Greek-European tradition, the birth of pre-Socratic philosophy was marked by identifying authentic being with intelligible being, or to put it in the language of Plato, *ousia* with *logos,* or what is "really real" (*ontos on*) with that which is definable or graspable through rational discourse. By contrast, what we find emphatically written, though in less explicit language, in the scattered records of the early Chou thinkers is an altogether different conception of authentic being. Here, authentic being is not equated with intelligible being but with civilized being, the being of civilized man in the civilized order. What intelligible being is to the theoretical justifier, so civilized being is to the care-ful, moral justifier. In each case, the conception of what constitutes the authentic perfectly agrees with the intrinsic demands of the seminal image in question and its accentuated grammar of appropriation.

The same holds true of the emergence of philosophical thought in ancient India. The seminal equation is of course to be looked for in the insights of the Upanishadic sages, above all, in their conception of Atman as Brahman. Here authentic being is identified with painless or absolute, unlimited being. This transcendental equation (as we may call it) is essentially implied by the classic Vedantic description of the absolute, *sat-cit-ananda.*

Now that we have situated the homology of Chinese philosophy with morally upright man, let us proceed immediately to pursue further its salient characteristics. Authentic being for the Chinese is civilized being. In this seminal equation are contained, I submit, many of the issues and themes, and much of the meaning, of Chinese philosophy. The problem for Chinese philosophy is the problem of authentic, civilized being. Is authentic, civilized life possible? Implicitly this question has been the guiding question in Chinese philosophical thought. To it, Duke Chou and Confucius gave a fundamentally affirmative answer, whereas Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu responded with considerable doubt, if not downright denial. But whether pro or con, orthodox or heterodox, all schools of Chinese philosophy owed their lifeblood to the same underlying theme: authentic, civilized being. This theme is, in the language of contemporary hermeneutics, the perennial text of Chinese philosophy.

But in putting it so, one is apt to commit an error with respect to the intrinsic character of the Chinese philosophical quest: That is, one is apt to impose upon it the presuppositions and predilections of the Western theoretical

attitude. For to the Chinese philosopher, authentic, civilized being was never a merely theoretical matter, a hermeneutic text to be interpreted or deciphered, but a practical, vital concern, a living reality to be acted upon. This does not mean that theoretical justification has no place in the Chinese tradition, but the grammar of accentuated care dictated the subordination of theoretical concerns under moral concerns. Historically speaking, the seminal appropriation just described was primarily the accomplishment of Duke Chou, the father of Chinese philosophy.

The contributions of Duke Chou, together with other pre-Confucian early Chou thinkers, may be summed up under three major headings: (1) the idea of the authentic ruler as the moral overseer-guardian of the people, (2) the idea of *li* or civilized propriety as both the concrete content and ordering principle of civilized order, and (3) the doctrine of *t'ien-ming* or the mandate of heaven, conceived as the transcendent ground of authentication. The authenticated or authentic ruler is a virtuous ruler. In these ideas or themes attributable to Duke Chou, we can easily see how the emergent justifying consciousness conforms to the curatic paradigm or image of moral man, where authentic being is equated with civilized being. There is little doubt that Duke Chou originated the moral language in which Chinese philosophy is so often couched. Still, what is denoted by the term moral in the present context is not a specific aspect of culture, but above all the civilized order itself conceived as the embodiment of rightness. The homological signification of the term is the wholesome rightness of human experience as realized in civilized rightness. That, indeed, has been the main thrust of orthodox Chinese philosophy.

In any civilized tradition, a position of orthodoxy is defined by the consciousness justifying the prevailing homology--in other words, by the interpreters and defenders who are in accord with the seminal image. In the Chinese tradition, orthodoxy has been defined by the mainstream of Confucianism in which the heritage of Duke Chou and Confucius--the *tao-t'ung*--was maintained and transmitted. This has been precisely the seminal image of moral man and his *tao*--the way of care, the way of civilized rightness. Although the Chinese *tao-t'ung* originated with Duke Chou, it became firmly established in the hands of Confucius. Through the life and thought of Confucius, the homology of care came to receive its essential articulation and secure foundation. From Duke Chou to Confucius--this period must indeed be recognized as the seminal stage in Chinese thought.

Whereas Confucius decisively determined the curatic character of orthodoxy in Chinese philosophical culture, it was Lao-tzu, the reputed author of the

*Tao Te Ching*, who formulated the main heterodox position. What then, homologically, are the basic differences between Confucianism and Taoism, between the orthodox and heterodox appropriations of the curatic principle? The most basic difference may be succinctly put: While both homologize in care, the Confucian homology is careful, whereas the Taoist homology is carefree. Profoundly sensitive to the pain understood by care, Taoism represents the accentuated principle of transcendental hope within a culture dominated on the whole by the curatic principle. This may account for the Chinese philosophical receptivity to the Indian-Buddhist mode of thought.

Now what, homologically, is the relationship of Confucius to Duke Chou in the establishment of the orthodox position in Chinese philosophical culture? In a nutshell, the answer might be formulated thus: While Duke Chou founded the way of care, Confucius completed its fundamental structure by universalizing and humanizing the curatic principle. The Confucian concept of the authentic man as implied in the doctrine of *cheng-ming* or the "rectification of names" is no doubt derived from Duke Chou's concept of the authentic ruler. But while for Duke Chou the notion of authentic humanity was concentrated in the ruler or ruling class, Confucius extended this to the class of *shih*, the knight of the way, in general. For Confucius, what qualified a man for the title of *shih* was not his birthright, his wealth or social position, but most emphatically his moral calibre which consisted above all in his will to be authentic, that is, his willingness to assume responsibility for his humanity. And that meant, for Confucius, that he was not only a careful keeper of his own being, but a concerned, moral overseer-guardian of the entire civilized community. What is superior about the superior man or *chun-tzu*, another name for *shih*, is then his inner commitment to the curatic principle, namely, the extension of responsibility from the self to the not-self, from ownness to otherness. This is true to the meaning of the well-known doctrine of *nei-sheng* (inner sageliness) and *wai-wang* (outer kingliness) in Confucian philosophy. The essence of *nei-sheng* lies in the authentication of ownness through consummate self-responsibility, whereas the extension of responsibility to other human beings, and ultimately to all beings in the universe, forms the basic meaning of *wai-wang*. Perhaps the link between self-directed responsibility and other-directed responsibility is what is intended by the relation between the two terms *chung* and *shu* in the *Analects*, the unity which was said to have formed the "one thread" that went through the Master's thought. This one thread seems to refer to the integrity of the curatic principle both for oneself and extended.

Duke Chou's doctrine of *t'ien-ming* or the mandate of heaven also underwent a fundamental transformation in the thought of Confucius. Heaven's mandate

was no longer confined to the ruler or ruling class, but to all *shih* or knights of the way--that is, to anyone willing to assume the solemn responsibility of moral guardianship. What was then mandated in the universalized doctrine of *t'ien-ming* was the right and obligation of any authentic human being, and a possibility for each and every human being. The universalization of the concept of authentic humanity entailed then a corresponding universalization of the concept of heaven, the transcendent ground of authentication. And this universalized concept of heaven is but one step removed from the notion of *jen*.

*Jen* or benevolence, in terms of our discussion, is the power of appropriation humanized as authentic, civilized humanity. With the emergence of philosophical culture, the power of appropriation appears as the source defining authentic being in civilized thought. Depending upon whether it is defined as intelligible being, painless being or civilized being, and upon whether the source is conceived as external or internal, transcendent or immanent as it stands in relation to the appropriator, the quest for justification admits of many variations. And yet among them there stands out a universally acknowledged crowning pattern, namely, the tendency towards what may be termed the consummately authentic type in which the external or transcendent ground and the internal or immanent ground of authentic being are identified. Thus in the Upanishads the identification is between the internal (Atman) and the external (Brahman) sources of painless being. In Parmenides' equation of *nous* and *etre*, it is the immanent and transcendent grounds of intelligible being that are equated. Both consummate types are now recognized by comparative students of philosophy. Less familiar, perhaps, to comparative scholars, but really no less discernible, is the consummate tendency which characterizes the process of authentication in Chinese philosophy--a tendency realized in the transition from Duke Chou to Confucius. While inheriting from Duke Chou the concept of heaven as the transcendent ground of authenticity, Confucius humanized the concept through his expression of *jen*, the internal source of authentic being. In the *Chung-yung* (Doctrine of the Mean) this is simply termed *hsing*, the proper nature of man. "What is mandated by Heaven in man is his proper nature": This opening line of the *Chung-yung* is surely a succinct expression of the consummate equation for authentic, civilized being in Confucian thought.

Although the explicit identification of transcendent and immanent grounds of authentic being in Chinese philosophical orthodoxy was a crowning achievement of the *Chung-yung*, the tendency was implicitly quite evident in Confucius' thought. While Duke Chou originated the way of care and the

image of moral man in the Chinese tradition, it was Confucius who laid down the foundation of the curatic principle with his humanized heaven or *jen*--that is, concretely stated, the authentically human capacity for benevolent, civilized existence. The way of care is thus the way of *jen*; and the moral man, the knight of the way, a man of *jen*, of loving care and solemn responsibility. That Confucian philosophy and therefore Chinese orthodox philosophy are governed homologically by the grammar of accentuated care is, I think, quite unmistakable. Although the full implications of this care-oriented mode of thought remain to be worked out, its outlines are already familiar to us.

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# Chapter Twelve

## IMMANENCE AND TRANSCENDENCE: A COMPARISON BETWEEN CONFUCIANISM AND CHRISTIANITY

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Confucianism is usually understood or misunderstood, according to my analysis,[1] as holding the view that human nature is originally good, and as a consequence of this, it is said to teach an exclusive self-reliance doctrine which is in harmony with Buddhism, a religion based on the notion of immanence. Christianity represents the other extreme. Its doctrine presupposes reliance on God; that is to say, the revelation of God to man, a message from transcendence, constitutes its essence. This difference between a religion of immanence and a religion of transcendence may be useful in tackling the relation between Buddhism and Christianity. But it is questionable whether the same division can be equally applied to the relation between Confucianism and Christianity. That issue should be addressed differently, once we understand the Confucian concept of human nature as tending toward goodness and the Christian concept of human nature as tending toward evil.[2] Thus, I venture to use two phrases, "immanence over transcendence" and "transcendence over immanence," to delineate respective emphases given by these two systems of belief, and furthermore, to show that they can learn a great deal from each other.

### Immanence over Transcendence

The theory of human nature as tending toward goodness naturally leads Confucianism to emphasize the realm of immanence. To put emphasis on immanence means that the way to perfection is none other than fulfilling man's nature since this nature as such possesses potential perfectibility. It is then within man's ability to attain salvation. This stance is close to the self-reliance type of religion. Confucius insists that "the practice of *jen* depends on oneself alone" (*Analects,* 12:1).[3] Following this spirit, Mencius declares,

"There is no greater joy for me than to find, on self-examination, that I am true to myself" (*Mencius,* VII,A,4).[4] For Confucians the initial step to the highest excellence consists in "enlightening the illustrious virtue" of man (*Ta-hsueh,* 1:1), and it is a virtue that belongs to man's inborn nature. The way for a man to follow is just an accord with his nature (*Chung-yung*, 1:1). However, self-reliance here does not suggest a thoroughly human-centered way to salvation. In other words, to stress immanence does not necessarily imply excluding of the realm of transcendence.

Far from it, the religiosity of Confucianism cannot be adequately understood without a transcendent reference. The religious dimension of Confucianism can be easily perceived in its stress on sacrifice and worship. Three kinds of sacrifice have been observed by the Confucian tradition; they are: sacrifices to Heaven, to ancestors and to the sages.[5] Heaven is worshipped because it is believed to be the source of all things; ancestors are worshipped because they are the fountainhead of the present life; and the sages are worshipped because they exemplify the perfect personality and play the roles of kings and teachers acting on behalf of Heaven. The worship of Heaven is sometimes understood as worshipping the whole Nature. However, in Confucianism Heaven never signifies mere Nature.

Confucius' Heaven not only makes "the four seasons go around and the hundred things come into being" (*Analects*, 17:19) but is also concerned with cultural transitions and thus confers a unique mission on Confucius, making him " the wooden tongue for a bell" (*Analects,* 3:24) to teach people on behalf of Heaven.[6] According to Mencius, Heaven does not speak, "but reveals itself through its acts and deeds" (*Mencius,* V,A,5). Moreover, its revelation is universalized in the reflection of man's heart. Every man has the presence of Heaven in his heart, which always reveals correct guidance for action. Therefore if a man fully realizes his heart, he will understand his nature; and if he knows his own nature, he will know Heaven. Meanwhile the proper way to serve Heaven is for a man to retain his good heart and nurture his nature (*Mencius,* VII,A,1). Far from being a mere hypothesis, Heaven is thought to manifest itself in the functioning of the heart. The heart as the microcosm of Heaven represents transcendence in the realm of immanence.[7] Hsun-tzu's Heaven is very likely influenced by Taoism and hence looks like Nature, but it still plays the role of a model on which the sages formulate rituals and music (*Hsun-tzu,* 19). Besides, a gentleman "broadens his heart by following Heaven as his way" (*Hsun-tzu,* 3).[8] The opening statement of the *Chung-yung* reads, "What Heaven has conferred is called the (human) nature" (1:1). Human nature is ordained by Heaven. Thus, a perfect man cannot depart from the revelation of Heaven: "Being sincere is the way of Heaven; becoming sincere is the way of man" (*Chung-*

*yung*, 20:18).

Confucianism believes in the perfectibility of man. This perfectibility entails an obligation that manifests as a categorical imperative. Men should be willing to sacrifice their lives for the sake of realizing the proper way of man, including the virtues of benevolence and righteousness. This would be to sanctify life by sacrificing life. The absolute obligation is not based on a closed immanence or an exclusive self-reliance. Rather, it is based on faith in transcendence, an equivalent of Heaven for Confucians. The original meaning of Heaven as understood in Confucianism is beyond the scope of the present essay;[9] suffice it to say that for Confucianism, the realm of immanence is open to that of transcendence, and self-reliance is complemented by reliance on Heaven.

## Transcendence over Immanence

From the very beginning of Christian history an awareness of transcendence is clearly manifest. It appears in the form of a personal God who communicates with man and leads him to believe that the universe has a purpose, that history involves some destination and that human life is full of meanings to be realized. A religion like this is naturally inclined to emphasize reliance on God. A typical example is Abraham's "justification through faith" in the Old Testament. However, since the time of Jesus and the New Testament, Christianity has shown an ever greater interest in emphasizing immanence. It is not difficult to discern three connected focuses in the New Testament.

1) *A Focus on Man.* In the Old Testament the sabbath is the day of God and whoever does not observe it might be punished with death. In the New Testament, we read, "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath "(*Mark*, 2:28). Therefore, it is permitted to do good (to others) on the sabbath day (*Matt*, 12:12).

2) *A Focus on Love.* While it is recorded in the Old Testament that God may be served with love, not sacrifice (*Hos*, 6:6), this ideal is fully realized in the New Testament. Jesus summarizes what the laws and prophets have taught in one sentence: Man must love God and his neighbors (*Matt,* 22:37-39). Mere faith is no longer enough. Jesus says, "It is not those who say to me, 'Lord, Lord,' who will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the person who does the will of my Father in heaven" (*Matt*, 7:21). The will of God means first of all benevolent deeds. We hear, "Insofar as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me"(*Matt*, 25:40). Charity thus

becomes a hallmark of the Christian community: "By this love you have for one another, everyone will know that your are my disciples" (*John*, 13:35).

3) *A Focus on the Heart.* While purifying the heart is mentioned in the Old Testament, in the New Testament the conversion of the heart is emphatically insisted upon. God's eyes see into man's heart: "If a man looks at a woman lustfully, he has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (*Matt*, 5:28). The initial movement of the heart will count for much when a man is judged. Jesus promises, "Happy the pure in heart: they shall see God"(*Matt*, 5:8). This doctrine is in conformity with the Confucian teaching, "If you wish to cultivate your persons, you first rectify your hearts. If you wish to rectify your hearts, you first seek to be sincere in your thoughts" (*Ta-hsueh,* 1.4). For Christians, this implies that transcendence and immanence manifest together: "God is spirit, and those who worship must worship in spirit and truth" (*John,* 4:24).

These three emphases indicate clearly that Christianity as a religion does not preach reliance solely on God; it also stresses self-reliance. It never ignores immanence for the sake of transcendence. The justification through faith of the Old Testament must be complemented by the justification through love of the New Testament.

## Conclusion

We may make the following closing observations. First, the transcendence of Christianity is embodied in the person of Jesus, and therefore he is able to preach a doctrine that asks the utmost of man. Such teaching as love your enemy, repay hatred with kindness and do unto others as you would have them do to you, are unacceptable, even inconceivable for some non-Christians.[10] Secondly, the transcendence of Confucianism signifies the decree of Heaven which is reflected in the heart as an innermost, spontaneous feeling, sometimes a feeling of uneasiness with an improper course. Confucianism teaches, "Do not do to others what you yourself do not desire" (*Analects*, 12:2). Also, "You repay an injury with straightness, but you repay a good turn with a good turn" (*Analects* 14:34). Thirdly, the apparent distinction between the above two teachings is sometimes explained as resulting from the contrast between theism and humanism. This explanation, however, is rather superficial if viewed in light of what has been discussed in this essay. I would suggest that a more accurate distinction derives from a different emphasis rather than a different essence. Neither of these systems of belief can be accused of one-sidedness in its comprehension of transcendence and immanence, or in its stress on relying both on God and

on oneself.

# Notes

1. Pei-jung Fu, "On Human Nature as Tending toward Goodness: An Understanding of Cassical Confucianism," a paper read at the International Symposium on the Philosophical Foundations of Moral Education in China, Fu Jen Catholic University, March, 1985. The Chinese version of this paper can be found in *Che-hsueh yu wen-hua*, No. 133, June, 1985, Taipei.

2. Pei-jung Fu, "Liang chung jen-hsing lun chih pi chiao" (Comparing Two Theories of Human Nature), a paper read at the "International Conference on Chinese Philosophy," National Taiwan University, November, 1985.

3. For the English translation of the *Analects*, I follow D.C. Lau, *Confucius, The Analects* (Baltimore: Penguin Classics, 1979).

4. Cf. D.C. Lau, *Mencius* (Baltimore: Penguin Classics, 1970).

5. For a detailed discussion of these three kinds of sacrifices, see Chun-i T'ang, *Chung-kuo jen-wen ching-shen chih fa-chan* (Taipei: Hsueh-sheng, 1974), pp. 382-399.

6. Pei-jung Fu, *Ju tao t'ien-lun fa-wei* (Taipei: Hsueh-sheng, 1985), pp. 109-112.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 145-147.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 164-165.

9. My study on this topic can be summarized as follows: (1) According to the *Book of History* and the *Book of Odes*, the character of Heaven can be drawn from such aspects as Revealer, Creator, Sustainer and Judges; (2) Heaven as Revealer is perceived from divination, the wisdom of the king and the collective will of the people; (3) Heaven as Creator is first of all understood in the sense of the ultimate source of life rather than that of a creator creating *ex nihilo*, and along with the act of giving birth, Heaven bestows on man a moral sense; (4) Heaven as Sustainer appoints a qualified king as its representative on earth and thus leads the people to follow the right path and gain happiness; and (5) Heaven as Judge is apparent in the way that it is itself absolute justice while the king, the son of Heaven, embodies of absolute justice. Cf. Fu, *Ju tao t'ien-lun fa-wei*, p. 40.

10. Lao-tzu expressed similar ideas but from a practical consideration. He said, "Do good to him who has done you an injury" (Ch. 63). The reason is: "When peace is made between great enemies, some enmity is bound to remain undispelled. How can this be considered perfect?" (Ch. 79) This is Lau's translation, see Lao Tzu Te Ching (Baltimore: Penguin Classics, 1963).

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# Part Six

## Revitalizing and Reconstructing Chinese Philosophy

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# Chapter Thirteen

## CONFUCIANISM AND MODERNIZATION

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### Basic Considerations

Confucian ethics has been gradually entrenched in Chinese society since the time of Confucius. This is so not only because Confucianism has been both popularly and officially absorbed, accepted by the intellectual elite and common people, but also because the teachings of Confucius and his school can be said to naturally preserve and develop the best elements of ancient Chinese political and social thinking and wisdom as embodied in the Chou culture.[1] This Confucian tradition has not only regulated the basic norms for Chinese family ethics, social ethics, and national ethics in the succeeding generations, but has also provided a foundation for the Chinese views of human life, the world, and the universe. The "Western Inscription" of Chang Tsai (1020-1077) and the "Essay on Benevolence" of Chu Hsi (1130-1200), both well known works in Neo-Confucian philosophy, are excellent illustrations of the Confucian Weltanschauung which blends metaphysics and ethics together. In recent times scholars have taken note that Confucian ethics has been intimately related to many outstanding characteristics of Chinese society. It has been observed that Chinese society is family-oriented and, since the time of the First Emperor of Ch'in, has been subjected to the ideology of being unified under one all-powerful ruler. Economically, China is agriculture based. These social, political and economic institutions provide a context for the arising and maintaining of the Confucian ethics as perceived and experienced by common people.[2]

From an interdisciplinary point of view, it is clear that either sociological, or political or economic considerations will shed light on the nature and function of Confucian ethics. On the other hand, one can indeed use Confucian ethics to explain certain important characteristics of traditional Chinese society, government and political economy. With this understanding, we can infer that Confucian ethics, Confucian metaphysics, and Confucian practical life in politics and economics form an integrated system. In other

words, Confucian ethics has a totalistic and organic structure and wields a totalistic and organic influence in Chinese society. No one can understand the formation and transformation of Chinese society without taking into consideration Confucian ethics.

In the last twenty years, the world has witnessed the tremendous development of economy and industrialization of Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea -- four regions in East Asia which are characterized by the presence of Chinese culture and Confucian ethos. The question has been often raised as to how one could make a theoretical explanation of this development. Many European and American scholars have suggested Confucian ethics as an explanation. What they are interested in is to understand how the economic productivity so quickly grew in those areas of East Asia. They thought that it must be due to the "work ethic" of Confucianism, just like the development and industrialization of Western Europe and America must be due to the "work ethic" of Protestant Christianity. But the difficulty of this explanation is that only one aspect of Confucian ethics is used to explain the economic aspect of the development of the East Asian regions mentioned above. Besides, the so-called Confucian "work ethic" must be also explained in the context of the total Confucian ethical theory and practice. Furthermore, we cannot ignore the fact that the economic development of East Asia is not simply a matter of the application of traditional values. This development in the last twenty years was preceded by more than twenty years of revolutionary changes in those societies themselves. Therefore, many historical factors have to be considered for evaluating the role of Confucian ethics in the development of East Asian economy. In fact, from a historical-developmental point of view, the development of the East Asian economies suggests an expanding circle, beginning with the development of Japan, but the Meiji Reformation was not possible without utilizing the Confucian or the Neo-Confucian ethics as a resource for organization and transformation. Hence we have to look into an indepth, integrated system of Confucian ethics in order to understand the recent economic developments of East Asian regions and their corresponding political and social reforms.

One approach to understanding Confucian ethics in relation to the event of modernization is to focus on the modernization and transformation of a central core of Confucian ethics when faced with the trends of social, political and economic modernization. As an example of a central core of Confucian ethics we can point to the ethics of filial piety and its related family ethics within the Confucian tradition. In order to understand the modernization and transformation of the Confucian ethics of filial piety in

modern Chinese society, we have to raise the following questions: What is the essential meaning of filial piety in Confucian ethics? What has been its role? What is its theoretical foundation? Does it have a reason for existence in confronting the demands of social and economic modernization? If it has any value for modern society, how can it be modernized to serve the purpose or to meet the demands of modernization? No adequate answers have been provided in philosophical discussions; and no adequate formulation of questions have been made relative to the context of social and economic modernization.

Since 1918, the time of the May Fourth Movement in China, the Confucian ideology, including the Confucian ethics, has lost its traditional positions of supreme authority. It has been severely criticized by scholars and writers, even though the practice of Confucian ethics cannot be easily destroyed without a rational examination and without a reasonable and useful replacement. The effort to make such a rational examination and to search for a reasonable and useful replacement has therefore become a prerequisite for the modernization and transformation of Confucian ethics. This means that we cannot simply speak of the Confucian "work ethic" except as an explanation of economic modernization. On the contrary, the phenomenon of economic modernization may have the potential to destroy the totalistic Confucian value system in the traditional sense. Hence we are confronted with the paradox of how to relate the Confucian ethics to social and political modernization in Taiwan and other East Asian regions under the influence of Confucian ethics.

Although we may not dogmatize the ultimate meaning of "modernization," we may readily point out that the so-called modernization consists of industrialization and economic development. This concept of modernization makes the minimum use of energy for an optimum goal with a maximum efficiency a central principle. This also means that a modernized society has to organize and satisfy its needs according to this principle of efficiency. Industrialization is only an institutional form of incorporating this principle, whereas the principle has been conscientiously incorporated in the acquisition of natural resources via organized knowledge and organized human labor. Thus, finally, modernization must consist of continual innovation and improvement of scientific skills and technology, which lead to economic growth and betterment of the quality of life. Under this impetus of modernization, ethical norms and values that regulate human relationships must be accordingly adjusted. There can be, of course, no exception for family ethics, which includes the ethical regulations of relationships between parents and children.

It is important to recognize that there are two ways of modernization or adjustment of ethical relationships. One way is the passive pressure. The second way of modernization comes from internal and voluntary efforts of individuals to make change. Hence, when we speak of the modernization of Confucian ethics, we could mean both forms of transformation. In fact, there must be imposed change necessitated by economical and social modernization. On the other hand, we can also introduce well-designed changes for ethical relationships in a modern society, and so make modernization of ethics a matter of voluntary and active cultivation. It is in this sense that we will discuss the modernization of the Confucian ethics of filial piety or any other vital human concerns.

Regarding the problem of understanding modernization, we will elaborate a little more on the problem of the relation between Confucian ethics and modernization. It is clear that there exists a contradiction between observation and theory. It has been mentioned earlier that many European and American scholars interpret the East Asian economic success as resulting from the Confucian "work ethic". On the other hand, we also pointed out earlier that economic modernization has created a breakdown of family relationships in East Asian societies. Hence, how could economic growth originate from the Confucian ethics which has become defeated and destroyed by economic modernization? If Confucian ethics only stands to be destroyed, how can it be cited to explain modernization? If the Confucian ethics is the central organizing force for modernization, it should not suffer the fate of destruction.

In order to resolve this paradox and contradiction, I wish to suggest a distinction between "macro-ethics" and "micro-ethics." "Macro-ethics" is the metaphysical life outlook and cosmic outlook basis of belief, action, and value decisions. It can even become a foundation for formulating a policy to accommodate change. On the other hand, "micro-ethics" only designates the specific norms and rules of conduct that reflect a particular doctrine or a particular community's mores. Using this distinction, we can easily see that modernization can be developed from the "macro-ethics' of Confucianism which consists of certain highly creative and progressive orientation such as is found in the philosophy of the *I Ching*. On the other hand, what the modernization movement has destroyed in China and other East Asian societies are the specific norms and values associated with the Confucian "micro-ethics." It is interesting to note that it is because of the destruction of the Confucian "micro-ethics" that the "macro-ethics" of Confucianism becomes emancipated, and therefore it releases its power of innovation and creativity, creating a context for modernization. With this explanation we are

not only able to resolve the paradox and contradiction between the modernization in East Asia and Confucian ethics, but we are also able to explain how the Confucian ethics of filial piety or any other virtues can be modernized as a source of creative transformation of East Asian society, especially Chinese society.

## Further Modernistic Implications of Confucian Ethics

We may now explore further implications of the macro-ethics of Confucianism for modernization movement and process. Modernization means many things and must be appreciated as a totalistic concept. Although modern West (primarily Europe and America) has achieved modernization, modernization is not identical with Westernization. In scholarly discussion of modernization, the questions on how modernization is caused and made possible are often confounded by the question on what model of modernization we have for understanding and emulation. It is clear that modernization first developed in the West and that certain elements from the Western tradition must be recognized as crucial for starting and sustaining the modernization process. Yet there still exist different models or forms of modernization processes which may or may not result in the same model of modernization. In light of this distinction, we can speak of the Japanese modernization as in some way distinguishable from the Western modernization. This distinction is however not to overlook certain universal ingredients of modernization nor to deny the existence of certain essential requirements for the initiation of the modernization process. What we must keep in mind in speaking of modernization is that modernization as a totalistic process finally has to realize itself in the form of an organic unity. There could be many forms of organic unities of modernization each with its distinctive ways of organization, yet each containing and exhibiting certain basic universal elements or patterns. What I am pointing out here is that modernization is both particularistic and universalistic. It would be misleading to conceive modernization as an exclusively universalistic entity or process.

It is by conceiving modernization as exclusively Western that many Chinese intellectual thinkers in the May Fourth movement 1918 came to oppose Chinese tradition with Western tradition, and therefore felt compelled to completely reject the former for the purposes of modernization. Perhaps this emotional and simplistic move was necessary and might be required by the urgency of the historical situation. But this certainly produced unfortunate consequences. The rejection of the tradition did not lead to the creation of

a basis for modernization. Modernization on the other hand requires motivation from one's own tradition and demands utilization of one's tradition both as incentive and resources. One has to learn how modernization in the West is both a universalistic context by learning how to reflect and utilize one's own particularistic tradition for the universalistic purpose. One cannot simply copy either the universalistic aspect or the particularistic aspect of Western modernization. By doing so, one would commit the great mistake of uprooting one's own tradition and depriving oneself of the basis and reason for really achieving modernization. This was the mistake committed by May Fourth intellectual thinkers such as Chen Tu-hsiu and Hu Shih. This was also the mistake of Chinese Marxism leading to the Great Cultural Revolution.

As a totalistic concept and as an organic process and system, modernization comprises major dimension of transformation from a traditional society to a modern society, primarily in terms of economic, political and social organization or reorganization. Change occurs on all aspects and all levels of individual and social life. As modernization in both the West and in Japan started with economic and technological change, we can inquire into how the Confucian ethics of man confronts this change and relates to it. Then we will see how the Confucian view adjusts and contributes to the other aspects of modernization such as value-orientation and ethical relationships.

Max Weber explained the rise of modern Western capitalistic economies in terms of the Protestant ethics of responsibility which leads to both formation of a spirit of exploration and adventure for the individual and the formation of a social process of rationalization for government and society. It is clear that for Weber, the Protestant perception of man together with its philosophical traditions, makes possible the rise of modern science, technology and economics as well as social development. Since the Confucian conception of man embodied in the Confucian macro-ethics is radically different from the Christian view, Weber's would-be conclusion regarding the modernization of the Confucian China would naturally point toward the negative direction. Yet modernization as a modern "must," does this would-be Weberian conclusion signify that the Confucian China must give up its conception of man and its philosophical traditions in order to be modernized? If so, the implications of a Confucian view of man for modernization and the implication of modernization for the Confucian view of man would be negativistic and nihilistic and nothing positive can be said. But as our analysis has shown, modernization cannot be so simplistically conceived. Modernization is not a mechanical process nor is confined to a mechanical model, but instead involves a highly organic human process and

is capable of producing different highly organic modernization combining the Confucian tradition and the modern universalistic sub-culture of economic/technological development. In the following, I shall briefly discuss three respects in which Confucian macro-ethics can be accommodated for making a successful modernization of Chinese society.

In the first place, man in the Confucian view has both potentiality and ability to develop himself. Specifically, it is man who can enlarge upon the way, not the way enlarging upon man. It is for the Confucianist to realize that modernization does contribute to the individual as well as to the social well-being of man. However, the appeal for the social well-being may not be as convincing as the appeal for the social well-being of people rather than on the well-being of an individual. It is a correct understanding that the Confucianist would regard pursuit of material comfort for an individual as unbefitting the moral idealism of individual self-cultivation and self-perfection. The self-cultivation and self-perfection of an individual requires the devotion of the individual to improving others (in graded circles of involvement) on the one hand and discipline and control of desires for self-interest on the other. It is an incorrect understanding that the Confucianist does not pay attention to the material well-being of others, the society and state. Not only has Mencius emphasized the importance of maintaining people's material welfare at large by the ruler, all other Confucianists in both the Ta Hsueh/Hsun Tzu tradition and the tradition of the Chung Yung/Mencius/Yi Chuan as well as the *Shu Ching*, all stress the importance of opening up the material world for the benefit of the people (*kai-wu-cheng-wu*). Even without taking the point of view of a ruler, the individual tends to be highly motivated toward securing benefits for his family and use the motivation as a legitimate justification in terms of Confucian ethics. Certainly the virtue of filial piety does not exclude pursuit of material comforts for parents as a legitimate goal within reasonable limit.

In light of the above analysis, we can see how Confucianism can be adapted for modernization. Insofar as modernization can be shown to conduce to social well-being of people and to problem-solving for management of state, Confucianism gives a strong motivation for modernization. Besides, Confucianism gives approval for the State to take initiative to improve the well-being of people at large. It also encourages the individual to devote himself for the pursuit of well-being for his family and sees this as a beginning toward benefitting a larger community. Of course, an individual may became simply family-centered and fail to apply himself to pursuing the well-being of the larger community, which may indeed create a difficulty toward modernization as a societal and national movement. Indeed, the

modernization process and movement in Taiwan precisely follows this pattern of Confucianistic adaptation and accommodation which leads to great success the tremendous development of economy. This success in Taiwan in the last twenty years can be interpreted as a Confucian phenomenon. In fact one may even interpret the Korean, the Singaporean and the Hong Kong economical successes as Confucianism-based. However, it must be pointed out that many advocates of East Asian Economical Development theory do not really know how to explain the economical development in East Asia in view of Confucian ethics.

As we see above, although Confucian virtues of thriftiness and hard work for the family may account for part of the motivation toward economic development, it is not the whole story. One has to give credit to the adaptation of Confucian motivation and initiative on the stress of well-being of the society and the sense of responsibility on the part of the government. One has also to specifically see that modernization as a base on the Confucian ethics is modernization already shown or seen to be useful and beneficial to the society and the state at large. The experience and the success of modernization in the West and Japan provide models for emulation and a lesson of stimulation. Whether Confucianism by itself and independently would have developed modernization as we know it today is another question. But it is completely congruous that the Confucian conception of man may not by itself lead to the Western-inspired modernization process, and yet can be motivated toward a modernization process which will entail a unique Chinese type of modernization. In the sense that Confucianism allows and contains potentiality for modernization, Confucianism could be regarded as a basis for modernization amidst the achieved modernization models in the world.

The second point about modernization and Confucianism is that as both modernization and Confucianism are organic and totalistic systems, economical development in modernization is just one aspect of modernization. Even though Confucianism has been appropriated and motivated for economic development in the East Asian countries, Confucianism offers and demands more than economic development in the modern world. With modernization only partially conceived as an economic process, there is bound to be problems of conflicts and maladjustment of values on both industrial and social levels. The economic development may corrupt traditional social values on the one hand, and will demand new values and codes of conduct for stabilizing and further development. This leads to the problem of modernization of the Confucian ethics and the Confucian social philosophy as a whole. Again Confucian insights into the

human nature should be reorganized for establishing a new order of human relating without compromising the needs of efficiency, standardization, objectivity and rationality in a modern society. Hence the Confucian ethics of self-cultivation must extend to cover new professional relationship and must be supplemented by enforcement of universal laws. Confucianism hence has to go through an extensive process of adjustment and adaptation to rationization, status/role, functional differentiation and re-organization in order to reach a state of balance and organic unity. This is to be a difficult and slow process. But it is the only way toward full modernization. Once achieved, the Confucian conception of man may also undergo some important changes. But these important changes do not affect the central thesis of the unity of man and heaven (nature) in the Confucian macro-ethics. With this central thesis well-maintained, the Confucian process of modernization will not only create a unique example of modernization underlying the tradition and the modernity, but may provide far-reaching insights for contributing toward improvement of modernization on a global basis.

The last point leads to the third aspect of the relationship between modernization and Confucianism. This third aspect concerns Confucianism as having both a modernizational implication and a post-modernizational implication. It has not been noticed that the Confucian view on man is essential to survival of human being as human being, and human society as a human society, whether in the modernization context or not. In fact, the demoralizing effects of modernization in the West has focused on the importance of post-modernizational adjustment of man. Western modernization and sometimes Western over-modernization have led to a loss of humanity in individuals and in society. The loss of humanity is both voluntary and involuntary: without conscientious efforts to reverse, modernization will bring about and accumulate problems which thereafter to destroy man both from the without (environment) and from within (mental health & society). There are typical social problems of drugs, juvenile delinquency and elder-care to cope with in a modernized world. Modernization has transformed a human world into an inhuman one and a human being into a machine or a social poison. There are deep problems of modernization which need to be addressed and to be cured. In this light, Confucianism with its views on man and his relation to nature and heaven becomes extraordinarily meaningful and useful. The Confucian values on harmony, integrity and organic interdependence and self-cultivation for responsibility and fulfillment also become antidotes toward the ills of the modernized society. These are the post-modernizational implications of Confucianism which can be explored for the benefit of a post-modern humanity. This also proves the timeless value of the Confucian view in spite

of, as well as because of, the challenges of modernization.

# Notes

1. Joseph Levenson spoke of China's Confucian fate in his *Confucian China and 15 Modern Fate* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968). China, for most of her history, has been no doubt dominated by the Confucian tradition which can be said to define and develop the original insights of earlier Chinese thinkers based on general Chinese experience. Hence the term Confucian China has a justified use.

2. Cf. his book: *Fear and Trembling Unto Death.*

3. Kant rejects metaphysics as such, yet he does speak of a metaphysics of morals. However, his metaphysics of morals is only hypothetically postulated on the equity considerations of a rational morality for man.

4. Cf. his *Capitalism and the Protestant Spirit.*

5. See my paper "The Concept of Face and Its Confucian Roots," in *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, Vol. 13-35.

6. See his *Hsing-Ti yu Hsin-Ti.*

7. See my article "On Human Rights in Chinese History and Chinese Philosophy" in *Review of Comparative Civilizations,* Issue I, 1980.

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# Chapter Fourteen

## THE CRISIS OF HERMENEUTICAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN MODERN CHINA

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### Introduction: A Disenchantment or Enchantment?

The urgent call for Chinese philosophical reconstruction, one of the highest issues on the agenda of modern Chinese intellectuals, is based on two assumptions: 1) the need for reconstruction, arising from a recognition that in modern China much of Chinese traditional philosophy has collapsed, and 2) the need to choose among different and even conflicting approaches toward the reconstruction of Chinese philosophy.

Let me take up the first assumption and assess what essential themes of traditional Chinese philosophy have fallen by the way.

Aside from political and ideological factors which come into play in the crisis of Chinese philosophy in modern China, I perceive several fundamental transfers--metaphysical and moral--that have contributed to the fall of traditional Chinese philosophy. Remarkably, these decisive transfers echo some distinct features of modern western philosophy. They may be identified roughly as the following five major changes in Chinese philosophy:

First, corresponding to the global triumph of modern science, there is a transfer from the traditional, ethically meaningful interpretation of the universe to a modern view of a universe of mechanical operations. The loss of an ethical and divine sense of the universe has destructive consequences for some fundamental claims of traditional Chinese philosophy because these traditional claims are based largely on an ethically meaningful interpretation of the relation between the universe and man. Devoid of the ultimate foundation of an ethically meaningful universe, some basic themes of traditional Chinese philosophy, such as the deep-rooted faith in human nature endowed with goodness, are jeopardized. Traditional Chinese philosophy, as a whole, has lost its authority to define the meaning and end of life for modern China.

Second, value-rationality, which is dominant in traditional Chinese philosophy, has been overshadowed by its increasing conflict with instrumental rationality as expressed in scientific technology, economics and institutionalized administration.[1] China's current commitment to modernization adds zest to the shaping impact of instrumental rationality on all walks of social life.

Third, and closely related to the second transfer, reason assumes an independent position in relation to morality. In other words, unlike traditional Chinese philosophy in which reason must conform to the claims of morality, now reason may be independent and, further, may be used to assess traditional moral principles.

Fourth, the subordination of material interests to moral ideals, a dominant theme of traditional Chinese philosophy,[2] has been strangely metamorphosed--to reinterpret material interests as moral ideals. This tendency is rooted in the introduction of Marxism, and scientific rationalism to China in modern times.

Last and not least, there is a transfer from the traditional metaphysical pursuit of the eternal within phenomenal change to an evolutionary idea of "progress".[3] The holistic interpretation of the meaning of life declines. The various forms of evolutionalism in philosophy endorse the view that life is an endless progress towards no destined end.

These fundamental transitions in Chinese philosophy may be viewed as (to use Max Weber's terminology) a series of "disenchantments," corresponding to the dominance of rationalization in modern times. Facing the decline of traditional Chinese philosophy, should our effort to reconstruct it be directed, as many students of Chinese culture in the PRC assert, to endorse and justify these transitions by disclosing the so-called "necessity of historical law" which allegedly underlies such transitions in human history? Or should the task of reconstruction aim to restore the "original spirit" of traditional Chinese philosophy by arresting these transitions? Concerning China's current commitment to modernization, should Chinese philosophical reconstruction utilize both traditional and modern thought exclusively for the realization of China's modernization? Will any of these different approaches prove effective in overcoming the tension between traditional and modern Chinese philosophies? If not, are there any other directions we may take to reconstruct Chinese philosophy?

Already latent in the very asking of such questions are different definitions of Chinese philosophical reconstruction. In answering the questions, conflicts

emerge between these divergent definitions and approaches. But I perceive a new enchantment, an enchantment variously with the ideals of "historical law," of "original spirit" and of "modernization." Let me analyze this enchantment.

## Three Approaches to Reconstruction

A critical reflection on the directions we students of Chinese culture have taken towards reconstructing Chinese philosophy reveals three dominant tendencies. I shall refer to them as: modernization-oriented, laws-oriented and restoration-oriented. Proponents of each approach claim that, if adopted properly, theirs is the cure for the crisis of Chinese philosophy.

I shall first provide a brief account of the distinct features of each of these approaches, disclosing the basic philosophical propositions beneath them.

The laws-oriented approach is one that most scholars in the PRC have adopted to interpret Chinese cultural tradition and its modern fate. Basic to this approach is the belief that the development of Chinese culture, traditional or modern, manifests a body of "historical laws," as when a society passes through a series of historical stages like feudalism and socialism. Here, a Marxist notion of historical law is used to explain the development of Chinese culture. This notion bears no resemblance to what Karl Popper and C.G. Hempel call "the covering laws model" in the interpretation of human history or culture.[4] For Popper as for Hempel, the meaning of "laws" refers to a workable relation or explanation, established by the mind, to cover a series of events under a coherent theory. In other words, an explanatory and coherent theory brings seemingly unrelated events in history into an intelligible relation or integration. It is something that we assign to history, rather than a necessity inherent in history.

For the laws-oriented approach, however, the idea of "historical laws" refers to an irresistible necessity, arising from the economic and productive forces of a society, about which human beings have no free choice. The task of Chinese philosophical reconstruction, according to this approach, should be directed to uncovering the laws underlying the traditional and current development of Chinese culture, and then reconstructing Chinese philosophy by predicting the "necessary" direction of China's future in light of these "historical laws."

To put this slightly differently: to proponents of the laws-oriented approach, the current crisis of Chinese culture on moral, ideological and philosophical

levels is a partial failure to cope, or to use the phrase popular in the PRC, to "follow the demands of historical laws." This approach reveals itself in the fact that so much philosophical endeavor in the PRC has been dedicated to the discovery and justification of "historical laws." This approach places faith in the possibility of actually predicting the future direction of Chinese philosophy. This, as I will show later, is an essential proposition of the laws-oriented approach, rooted in both Hegelian and Marxist views of history.

The laws-oriented approach provides a twofold explanation for both the rapid decline of traditional Chinese culture and the need for the reconstruction of Chinese philosophy. On the one hand, the feudal economic and institutional foundations, upon which traditional Chinese culture depended, fall apart, and traditional culture as a whole no longer meets the needs of a new or socialist society such as communist China. Any attempt to restore traditional culture, from this point of view, is a fruitless daydream. On the other hand, in order to reestablish a continuity between the past and the present of Chinese culture, any efforts to revitalize traditional Chinese philosophy, according to this approach, must "modernize" traditional philosophy to conform to the demands of historical necessity. Therefore, the task of Chinese philosophical reconstruction must coincide with rediscovering the historical necessity by which Chinese society has developed.

Contrary to the laws-oriented approach, what I will call the "restoration-oriented" approach finds a fresh message in traditional Chinese philosophy, especially in the Confucian tradition. This approach denounces contemporary Chinese philosophy as a degeneration or deviation from the original spirit of Chinese culture, a corruption caused by the invasion of Marxism and positivism into China. The crisis of Chinese philosophy, according to this approach, results from the fact that modern China has turned a deaf ear to the real message that Chinese traditional culture can deliver, even to the problems of our modern times. In brief, by this group the disintegration of Chinese philosophy today is perceived as a failure to uphold the spirit of Chinese tradition.

Those who champion the restoration-oriented approach propose a two-pronged solution: 1) to revitalize traditional philosophy by restoring its real Confucian spirit, and 2) to reform or modify traditional Chinese philosophy by subordinating western thought and science to Chinese wisdom. Contemporary neo-Confucianists in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and here in the U.S. have committed themselves to this cause. In the past few years, this approach has received both renewed interest and rigorous criticism in the PRC.[5]

A third influential attitude toward the reconstruction of Chinese culture is expressed well in what I will call the modernization approach, which has a strong utilitarian character. Recently the modernization approach has proved to be extremely appealing to the younger generation, awakening from the nightmare of the Cultural Revolution.

The modernization approach primarily depends on what Max Weber called the domination of instrumental rationality. It selects whatever is useful and suitable to the most-valued end of modernization, regardless of whether it is Western or Chinese, traditional or modern. In other words, it tends to judge value in terms of usefulness or fitness for the process of modernization. Aside from this pragmatic orientation, this approach also adopts a positive standard of "scientific truth" to measure the claims of Chinese philosophy. As a result, it denounces many traditional themes as unscientific and groundless conjecture. The meaning and value which traditional philosophy embody are understood as having mere "historical significance."

Those who uphold the modernization approach insist that only those parts of traditional Chinese philosophy that meet the needs of modernization deserve a modern hearing. This approach selects ideas and means from both the past and present, and does not exclude what is labelled "bourgeois thought."

Considering the ideological and political pressures existing in contemporary China, the increasing popularity of this approach may be interpreted as both a compromise with, and at the same time a deliberate deviation from, the laws-oriented interpretation, which has long been dominant. That is, on the one hand, this approach criticizes the laws-oriented approach for its dogmatism with respect to Chinese culture. On the other hand, it works hand in hand with the laws-oriented approach to justify modernization as demanded by historical necessity. Owing to its indifference to ideological conflicts and its openness to the West, this approach is now becoming a rising force in China, although it is often condemned by orthodox Marxists with the charge of "bourgeois liberalization." Since this approach concerns itself exclusively with modernization, it has no qualms about trading the partial or wholesale collapse of traditional culture for the sake of realizing modernization.

## The Use and Abuse of Traditional Chinese Philosophy

No one will deny that a fundamental task of Chinese philosophical reconstruction is to create a meaningful, rather than merely historical, continuity between traditional and present day Chinese thought. By

meaningful continuity I mean two things: first, through an interpretation and understanding of tradition, we feel or realize that tradition moves from the past to enter into us as a living force in our present existence; secondly, through an appreciation of this meaning, the tension between traditional and contemporary philosophy can be resolved. Unfortunately, the laws-oriented approach, which has dominated the minds of students of Chinese culture in the PRC since the 1950s, treats the task of interpretation as a tool or means to discover and display historical laws. A thorough refutation of the theoretical basis of the historical-laws approach is beyond the concern of this paper, because it would call for a criticism of both the Marxist view of history and historicism.[6] What needs to be done now is to see how the laws-oriented approach fatally widens the gulf between traditional and contemporary Chinese philosophy.

First, coming from within the framework of Marxist historical materialism, this approach tends to reduce the diversity of traditional Chinese philosophical thought to a conceptual corpus described as truth, falsehood, class struggle, revolutionary consciousness, structure, progress and so on. It ignores the fundamental interest of each generation in going about the interpreting tradition not to discover something called laws, but essentially to understand themselves and their time. For every generation, tradition is not tradition in itself, but always a tradition *for*.[7]

The interest every generation has in understanding itself by interpreting tradition was, ironically, perceived by Hegel, a forerunner of the laws-oriented approach to history. He observed, "One often advises rulers, statemen, and peoples to learn from the experiences of history, but what experiences and history teach is that people and governments have never yet learned from history." Also, "Every age has conditions of its own and it is an individual situation, decisions must and can be made only within, and in accordance with, the age itself."[8] This awareness, I think, is a bottomless source for deriving meaning from tradition, and thus breathes life into tradition. However, since the laws-oriented approach understands the fate of every generation primarily as a reflection of the demand of historical laws, there is little room left for each generation to regard itself as an end, creating the meaning of tradition.

Secondly, similar to Marxist philosophy, the laws-oriented approach refuses to admit that human beings have two basic needs--material interests and ideal interests--and that both shape history. In other words, it reads history from the bottom up. It treats philosophical thought, moral value and cultural ideals as mere expression or reflections of economic interests. It fails to realize that much traditional philosophical thought has roots not in economic interests but

in the deeper concern that human beings have concerning the meaning of life. Although the laws approach is sometimes valid as a tool to interpret traditional philosophy, it is often beside the point.

Thirdly, armed with the faith that the destination of human history is foreseeable and foreclosed, if only we grasp the necessity of historical laws, the laws-oriented approach must describe Chinese philosophy not as an open possibility but as pre-determined. To this end any efforts to reconstruct Chinese philosophy must conform. This denies any possibilities other than what has happened, what is happening and what will and "ought to" happen. By this interpretation, the multi-dimensional capacity of traditional Chinese philosophy to be meaningfully transformed into the present is denied. What is left for the future is, as it were, a thing of the past, a proof in the present of the necessity of historical laws. So, tradition loses its future. In my view, what this approach claims to disclose as historical laws, is nothing more than a contemporary conceptual framework projected onto history and the future.

Although this paper is by no means the first and will not be the last word of criticism on the laws-oriented approach, little effort has so far been made to uncover the hermeneutical consciousness that shapes the laws-oriented attitude. This hermeneutical or interpretative consciousness constantly fuels the enthusiasm and belief of the many students of Chinese culture in the PRC. Ironically, the "restoration-oriented approach," which is hostile to the laws-oriented approach and blames it for the decline of traditional culture, nevertheless shares with it the same hermeneutical consciousness reinforced by both Confucian tradition and modern historicism. I will now discuss the theory of "historical truth," which is central to the laws-oriented approach.

Briefly, this theory relies on two fundamental assumptions:

1) Historical truth is a correspondence between the essence of history and our interpretation or discovery of it.

2) Historical truth reveals not only what history had to be, but more importantly, what history will and ought to be. In this sense, historical truth is lifted up to the level of necessity.

The first assumption, we can easily see, is nothing new. It is an age-old philosophical credo, descended from the Platonic realists' "correspondence theory of truth." It was shaken by the emergence of pragmatism in the West at the beginning of this century, but in China it has so far not been seriously challenged. The second assumption is a modern theme traceable to the

philosophy of Hegel. Fundamental to Hegel's idea of historical truth is his assertion that truth is a totality in the sense that historical truth manifests the whole process of Spirit realizing itself through human history in time. By claiming that the journey of Spirit is a necessary, self-propelling movement starting within Spirit through human history and finally returning to Spirit with self-consciousness, Hegel believed that he could foresee the whole process of human history if he could discover the necessity inherent in this movement, because history would coincide with the logic of this movement as well as the human understanding of it. The determinate movement of history, as an expression of the return of Spirit to itself, is prophesied in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit and Logic*. Hegel wants to convince us that the totality of history--the past, present and future--could be crystal clear to the understanding of a single generation. The ambiguity or improbability of history, a real source from which history delivers meaning to each generation, is denied.

Marx's predictions of the future, although different in content from Hegel's, are based on the Hegelian assumption that historical truth, the totality of history, can be disclosed to a single generation. However, this view of historical truth gives rise to obvious serious problems. We are asked to believe that each generation can hold in its grasp the last chapter of the totality of history. But, first, the whole or totality, either in the sense of human history or nature, is Not a subject of human understanding, because all interpretation is selective. Secondly, history and tradition are never a matter of the past that is left behind the present. History is history for--for something we expect ahead of us--our hopes for the future, our relation to the openness of the future, and our present understanding of what we are and may become. History is always a partial point on a journey. In this sense, history, as well as tradition, is always incomplete, an unfolding of the possibilities of fate.

Nor does historical truth correspond to the "right" interpretation of history or what history really was. Rather, any historical truth is a partial disclosure of the inexhaustible ambiguity of history. The ambiguity of history does not arise, as historicism assumes, form our methodological failure or rational incapacity to crystalize history. Rather, it is rooted deeply in the nature of history and human experience. The tension or distance, emotional or intellectual, that we experience in interpreting history comes primarily from differences in the human experience of it.

Thus, in order for us to steer a proper course for the reconstruction of Chinese philosophy, we must first call for a shift in orientation, from a preoccupation with discovering "historical truth" to a self-understanding

released from tradition when its meaning is interpreted.

**Does Chinese philosophy have an "original spirit" or meaning?**

This question seems to be improperly formulated. Students of Chinese culture tend to ask what is the original spirit of Chinese culture, and how to identify and define it. I will turn the question around, first asking whether or not such an "original spirit" exists.

Although they are in deep tension concerning many important issues, the restoration-oriented approach and the laws-oriented approach have at least one thing in common. The restoration-oriented approach occupies itself with discovering and restoring an "original spirit," while the laws-oriented approach focuses on discovering historical laws underlying the development of Chinese culture. Both place faith in the possibility of discovering what the past really was, an ahistorical faith which contemporary philosophical hermeneutics is now strongly attacking.[9]

Contemporary Neo-Confucianists, ranging from prominent early thinkers such as Liang Shu-ming to the later Professor T'ang Chun-i, have pioneered this line of hermeneutical consciousness--a belief that the "original spirit" of Chinese philosophy can be discovered through interpretation. Their persistent intellectual endeavour to reinstate the "original spirit," whether it ends with far-reaching triumph as they intend, or with failure as their critics predict, has indeed inspired the rising self-consciousness and urgency behind the notions of reconstructing Chinese philosophy. Soon after the May Fourth Movement, some precursors of the movement to restore the "original spirit," including Liang Shu-ming and later Feng Yu-lan, devoted themselves to reconstructing Chinese philosophy.[10] Since then, for more than half a century, the movement has remained a persistent force among modern Chinese intellectuals, especially in Hong Kong, Taiwan and the West.

A reflection on the efforts contemporary Confucianists have made to revive Chinese cultural tradition reveals that their interests are mainly directed to 1) restoring a meaningful interpretation of the universe, upon which a moral man can anchor the meaning of his life, and 2) subordinating outer-directed knowledge--science, democratic institutions and economic interests--to the inner and higher realm of spirituality--Confucian notions of morality, self-enlightment and a meaningful union of nature and man. These two commitments in fact arise from contemporary Confucianists' rigorous resistance to two fundamental philosophical transitions affecting all walks of

modern life.

First, as I have mentioned, there has occurred a transfer from a moral or divine interpretation of the universe to a mechanical and scientific interpretation. Such a transfer shatters the metaphysical propositions of many traditional philosophies, including Chinese philosophy, whose central urge is to explore the age-old theme of a meaningful relation between the universe and man. Almost all the central themes of traditional Chinese philosophy with respect to morality, the meaning of life and the order of society, including *jen*, "love",[11] are in one way or another grounded in this proposition. The displacement of the universe understood as meaningful, by a modern view where the universe operates mechanically, has produced a chain of fatal crises for traditional Chinese philosophy.

Second, there is at the same time a transfer in which material interests are reinterpreted as moral principles. As a result, our pursuit of a better material life has worked out for itself a philosophical and moral justification. In so justifying scientific technology and "economic" progress, we pave the way for the domination of what Max Weber called an "instrumental" or formal rationality, which places highest value on rationally choosing means to achieve ends or results.

These two transfers, along with the ideas of progress and evolution, are among the most dominant features of modern thought. Contemporary Confucianists respond with sharp rejection. They want to restore or reassign lost meaning to the universe. They insist that a sense of cosmic meaning is necessary if human beings are to realize the value of life. Without such an ultimate source of value, as they have argued, there is nowhere to establish a firm basis for morality. In addition, contemporary Confucianists tend to urge the superiority of moral or spiritual knowledge over scientific knowledge and western democractic institutions. They express explicitly the idea of an autonomous "infinite" moral subject that embraces the universe.

Is this the direction that we should also take in reconstructing Chinese philosophy?

We must keep in mind that, like the paradox of rationality and freedom, a morality defeats itself if it regards itself as without limits. An infinite or unlimited basis for morality or philosophy is not the province of human beings, although it may be proper for religious images of God. Instead of prizing modern science and modernization above culture and tradition, as in the laws-oriented attitude, and instead of trying to subordinate science to tradition, we may seek to develop a new interpretive, hermeneutical

consciousness which understands the relation between tradition and modernization, between science and morality.

This new interpretative or hermeneutical consciousness can treat both economic interests and ideal interests as primary driving forces in history. The way to resolve the conflict between the two is not to subordinate one to the other, or to single either one out as representing the meaning of life. Rather, we can take a pluralistic and positive attitude toward both, and steer a communicative dialogue between them. This is one solution to a critical problem that faces not only China but the modern world.

Some Western philosophers, such as Habermas and Riceour, have sought to articulate various ways of overcoming the overwhelming domination of the instrumental mentality in modern life. For instance, Habermas proposes what he calls "communicative action" achieved by critical understanding. It aims to mediate between formal rationality and value-rationality to achieve a more balanced sense of modernity.[12] Seeking to balance a sense of human worth with the increasing scientific impress on both nature and society, Riceour suggests a narrative context of communication as a healthy way of being in modern world.[13]

In general, the imbalanced character of modern life, whether on the philosophical plane or in practice, has remained a unsolved challenge for both the scientific West and "unscientific" China.

## Why the Need for a New, Hermeneutical Consciousness?

One urgent problem that Chinese philosophical reconstruction faces is how to find a role for traditional Chinese philosophy, or broader, for the whole of Chinese traditional culture, in modern China, which is now giving priority to its modernization. Tradition is by no means a natural enemy of modernization. Rather, as we have seen, tradition can find a future through and within the process of modernization. It is misleading to perceive the process of modernization, arising from a given tradition, as tantamount to digging a grave for that tradition. However, those who in contemporary China occupy themselves exclusively with modernization still cling to a widespread misconception, descended from the New Cultural Movement of the 1910s and 1920s. That is, they hold that traditional culture is largely responsible for China's failure in the modern world. According to both Chen Tu-hsiu and Hu Shih, the two most influential figures of the New Culture Movement, China must trade off the wholesale collapse of its traditional culture for the sake of modernization, if it is to regain glory and strenght.[14]

This view, persistent and popular, implies a very misleading presumption: that if necessary for the process of modernization, a nation like China can separate itself from its own tradition. In various forms this assumption has exerted impact on many students of Chinese culture, especially on the younger generation of Chinese intellectuals. The totalistic and inconolastic rejection launched by the May Fourth Movement has been rejected, but it has been modified and re-emerged in new forms. The modernization-oriented approach can be seen as one of these new forms and often arrives at a negative appraisal of tradition: that is, tradition as a whole is unsuited to the demands of modernization. Only a very limited portion of traditional culture can be utilized and thus transformed into the present. This assessment gains theoretical justification from the laws-oriented approach which takes a Marxist view of the relation between economic foundations and ideology and culture.

Tradition, in this line of interpretation, is misunderstood as an obstacle to realizing modernization.

Faced with these three influential but destructive approaches, I am led to suggest that some fundamental shift in our interpretive consciousness should take place. In the pages that follow, I will propose a new type of hermeneutical consciousness which orients interpretation primarily toward releasing meaning from tradition through creative understanding. I would like to call this new type of hermeneutical consciousness a "meaning-oriented" approach.

## The Meaning-Oriented Approach

Tradition lives or fades away by interpretation. Central to the meaning-oriented approach are four rather novel and interrelated themes which draw on some basic elements of contemporary hermeneutical philosophy.

A) Interpretation, either of tradition or of any aspect of the world in which we live, is not merely a mental activity. It represents a basic facet of human existence on an ontological level. In other words, interpretation is not primarily an epistemological concern. It lends itself to existential considerations. Without interpretation, human life, if not impossible, ceases to be very human. For man, interpretation is always an existential statement about his being, both in tradition and in the future. Viewed from altogether outside of tradition, human life become unintelligible, nearly unthinkable and meaningless. Man is who his understanding tells him he is, through interpretation and reinterpretation of his tradition, his present and his

expectations for the future.In short, understanding by interpretation is basic to man's way of being.

B) Tradition is preserved in language. We are born into a language which preserves tradition. It is not that we first choose language to understand tradition, but instead, tradition first enters us through language and constitutes a precondition for us to understand both tradition and the present. It is tradition, which comes with our acquiring a language, that makes our understanding possible. Therefore, we do not employ interpretation to contact tradition across time, but rather, tradition enters us first, prior to interpretation and understanding. Our self-forgetfulness of the period of language acquisition easily blinds us to the decisive role of tradition in shaping our understanding.

C) Interpretation and understanding constitute an essential aspect of man's existence in history, and the interest of every generation in interpreting both the present and tradition has been concerned primarily with self-understanding. The individual (or generation) seeks to understand himself in the present, his part in tradition which comes via language and his expectations for the future. Thus, the process of interpreting tradition is the very same process by which individuals and generations of individuals move toward self-understanding.

D) Understanding, from this perspective, is not, as in traditional theories of interpretation, a successful projection of the interpreter's mind into or onto the past. Nor does it result from discovering the "original meaning" of the past through sympathetic interpretation. Understanding, as hermeneutical philosophy perceives, is realized when two historical horizons fuse: that of the interpreted, such as tradition or a text, and that of the interpreter, thereby enlarging and changing the interpreter's horizon.[15]

As a result, the meaning that our understanding achieves in the fusion of two historical horizons is neither the "original" meaning of the past nor an arbitrary invention of the interpreter. It is something newly created and conditioned by the two historical contexts. There is therefore no possibility of discovering or restoring an original meaning without involving the projection of the interpreter, who is conditioned by his own self-understanding and his expectations for the future.

With this new interpretive consciousness, we first recognize that tradition preserved in language has always resided within us and has conditioned our interpretation of everything. Therefore we have no cause to regard tradition as merely a thing of the past, because tradition has been indispensible in our

current existence. Similarly, a philosophical reconstruction without tradition is an unthinkable thing.

As far as the current situation of Chinese philosophy is concerned, we need this new attitude or hermeneutical consciousness as much as we need a new future for Chinese philosophy. We need to re-orient our interpretation of Chinese traditional philosophy primarily toward releasing its "life significance" for us. If we interpret for meaning, rather than seek to discover "original meaning," "utility" or historical law, then tradition can regain its life in the present, and some of the tension between tradition and the present is resolved.

Here, I expect to confront challenges or questions such as: What do you intend by "meaning"? Where can we anchor the objectivity of interpretation if meaning is not the "original meaning" allegedly inherent in tradition?

Let me attempt some answers.

Meaning can never be separated from interpretation and understanding. A meaning independent of its interpretation does not exist at all. Even a meaning which is created by a text, a thinker, or a social practice, is an interpreted meaning. There is a widespread misunderstanding that we can reconstruct or rediscover meaning(s) in a text or cultural tradition as its creator(s) really intended, if we first rid purselves of our personal prejudices and employ sufficient methods in interpretation. This is a very attractive and seemingly convincing truth which satisfies our contemporary need for an objective standard for the "right" interpretation. It also fuels our enthusiasm about defending right interpretations and rejecting others which distort so-called original meaning. It is as if original meaning, were already there, existing somewhere independent of our interpretation, like an object waiting for our discovery.

This commonsense approach depends on both psychological and rational claims. Psychologically, it presumes that a present mind could transform itself, through the help of reasoning, imagination or method, into that of another mind or world, to reconstruct events of the past. We need only eliminate our own prejudices and place ourselves in the perspective of the past interpreter. This self-transcendence will guarantee discovery of the "original meaning" and therefore the objectivity of interpretation. This belief satisfies our contemporary wish for objectivity.

This persistent misconception has prevented Chinese cultural tradition from revitalizing itself. It has been reinforced by the dominant laws-oriented

approach to tradition in the PRC, and relies on a misunderstanding of essential preconditions for interpretation, both ontological and epistemological. Interpretation, as noted already in my presentation of the four themes of philosophical hermeneutics, is not a cognitive confrontation with the past. Rather, it constitutes something essential to our current state of existence, while tradition itself constitutes the indispensible precondition of all our interpretation. Anyone who sets out to interpret tradition (or the present) is no longer a cultural virgin; he has been interpreted by his own tradition and by his life experiences. Therefore, in any interpretation, one engages in a double relation, to tradition in general and to one's own various experiences in particular. This double relation nearly constitutes the interpreter's own concious existence. Unfortunately, this double precondition of interpretation, or if you like, pre-understanding of all understanding, has been condemned as personal and culture-bound prejudice by various modernists.

We must keep in mind that such prejudice, which traditional interpretation theory strives to eliminate completely, both makes up our historical existence and makes any understanding of it possible. Such "prejudice" at all times goes with us in interpretation and enters into our understanding of meaning--the meaning of tradition, the present and the future. This double relation, which describes the horizon of the interpreter, brings "meaning" into interpretation. Whenever there is a real fusion of the historical horizon of the interpreted, with the horizon of the interpretation, precisely there emerges the meaning of the interpreted. This meaning is no longer the horizon of the interpreted ("original meaning") nor is it the horizon of the interpreter (significance or "personal projection"). The meaning is conditioned by both horizons, but presents itself to the interpreter as an enlarged and modified meaning distinct from both "original meaning" and significance.

Part of the reason why this truth critical to the nature of meaning has been ignored is that language, as Heidegger reveals in his criticism of the Cartesian line of modern Western philosophy, has an unavoidable character--self-forgetfulness. It forgets that it imposes a system, the system of that language, onto what is described. And so, the self-forgetfulness of language gives rise to the delusion that with the help of proper method and an objective attitude, we can overcome "prejudices" and enter into the mind of another age.

We must abandon this delusion. Meaning is in no sense a property inherent in tradition, but rests with our creative interpretation and reinterpretation which will disclose what is meaningful for us. If we fail to realize this, our effort to revitalize Chinese philosophy will be driven into an ahistorical

preoccupation with undiscoverable "original meaning" and "historical laws". If we orient ourselves so, traditional Chinese culture has no way to release life significance and meaning into our present, and must fade away.

In addition, meaning, in the sense that hermeneutical philosophy understands it, in contrast to historical "truth," has a much larger role to play in revitalizing tradition. If we appreciate traditional Chinese culture in terms of its meaning, rather than as truth, law or original meaning, then even false or harmful paths in the tradition are as meaningful as truth in terms of what tradition holds for us. Error and falsehood are by no means devoid of meaning and worth. Both truth and falsehood, viewed from what I promote as the "meaning-oriented" approach to traditional Chinese culture, are meaningful to our process of self-understanding. But when tradition is valued only for what "truth," scientific or historical, we can salvage, then a large portion of traditional culture may fail to pass our test. If tradition is primarily sought after for the meanings that our interpretation can release, then we find that meaning permeates all facets of tradition. The reason is not difficult to understand: human practice, right or wrong, true or false, is pervaded with meaning and purpose from beginning to end.

The popular mind may assert that what our interpretation creates is a distortion, as a result of significance assigned, and is not the "original meaning". But the notion of meaning that I have, though related to both "original meaning" and "significance," is in no way identical with either of them. Meaning as a fusion of two different historical horizons entails both "original meaning" and "significance," and goes beyond them.

## Conclusion: Some Implications of the "Meaning-Oriented" Hermeneutical Consciousness

So far I have discussed a shift from old-fashioned interpretation to a creative understanding of meaning on a speculative level. In the concluding pages of this paper, I will descend from such abstract reflections and consider some applications. Specifically, I want to explore ways in which the new hermeneutical consciousness can be applied to reconstructing Chinese philosophy.

First, I must emphasize that this new type of hermeneutical consciousness or orientation is not primarily a method but a fundamental attitude toward some crucial problems that Chinese philosophical reconstruction must resolve, such as the proper view of tradition, the criteria for evaluating the philosophical

legacy, and the focus of interpretation. This attitude, not unlike the other orientations discussed above, decisively affects our choice of method, standards of evaluation, and choice of interpretation to resolve the conflicts between tradition and the present. One who adopts the "meaning-oriented" attitude, for instance, will not devote himself to fitting traditional Chinese philosophy into a conceptual body of historical laws. Nor will he naively search for a non-existent "original meaning."

Most simply, the "meaning-oriented" hermeneutical consciousness can provide students of Chinese culture with a new angle through which traditional Chinese philosophy opens onto the present.

The "meaning-oriented" interpretive consciousness promotes an attitude of inner tolerance toward a diversity of creative interpretations of tradition and the present. This is a spiritual virtue that modern China needs now if it is to grow. The spirit of inner tolerance hardly arises from convictions about "historical laws" and "original meaning" because these convictions tend to set the standard for interpreting tradition, and persecute variations. It is safe to say that, without the natural spirit of inner tolerance and a pluralist attitude, there will be no possibility of revitalizing Chinese philosophy.

Equally constructively, this new type of hermeneutical consciousness justifies a direction in which our creative capacity is oriented not to the business of rediscovery but of re-creation. It releases us both from a guilt about mishandling tradition through interpretation, and from dogmatic beliefs in authoritative standards. It also encourages both responsibility and a sense of our right to create something new from tradition.

Finally, in the "meaning-oriented" interpretation of culture, economic interests and spiritual ideals, scientific technology and moral values, are all treated as basic needs of human beings, defining primary forces in life. Neither pole must subordinate itself to the other; the exchange is a balanced life. Therefore, neither subordinating science to moral values, nor preferring scientific modernization and socialist ideals over traditional values, are directions that Chinese philosophical reconstruction should take to resolve the present imbalance. We must explore a more communicative understanding.

# Notes

1. I adopt the distinction between "instrumental rationality" and "value-rationality" from Max Weber's interpretation of modernization as a process of societal rationalization operating primarily with "formal rationality." Formal rationality, according to Weber, refers both to instrumental rationality--an ability to calculate probabilities and employ means for ends--and to "rationality of choice" where we set ends selected in accord with values. However, "value-rationality" tends to operate only in accord with the dictates of moral principles or a belief system. In other words, "value-rationality" orients life exclusively on ethical principles regardless of the profits and consequence. See Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, G. Roth and C. Wittch, eds. (Berkeley, 1978) pp. 25, 30, 85. See also Weber's "The Social Psychology of the World Religions," in *From Max Weber*, eds. H. Gerth and W. Mills, (New York, 1958) p. 293.

2. The germ of this theme, that is, the subordination of profit (*li*) to righteousness (*Yi*), is contained in the thought of Confucius. For instance, we read in the *Analects* (4. 16) "A superior man thinks of righteousness and an inferior man thinks of profit." Later, Mencius further developed this distinction between righteousness and profit, and asserted the unconditional subordination of profit to righteousness. He also proposed that one's actions should conform only to the demand of righteousness. (See *Mencius*: 4b33) Hsun Tzu expressed a similar opinion. Perhaps one of the most representative thinkers on this issue was Tung Chung-shu in his famous teaching: "The man of love (*Jen*) is one who confroms himself to the principles of righteousness (*Yi*) without seeking profit and manifests the Way without pursuing accomplishment." (Biography of Tung Chung-shu in The *Book of the Former Han Dynasty*). Chu Hsi also endorsed this persistent theme in Chinese thought by saying that "the theory of the relation between Righteousness and Profits is the Confucian primary principle." (A Letter to Mr. Li Yan-p'ing).

3. This transition was first marked by the overwhelming popularity of the idea of evolution soon after Yan Fu introduced evolutionalism into China at the turn of the century. For a detailed analysis of this transition and later development of this idea, see my article entitled "The Two Basic Trends in the Early Period of Contemporary Chinese Thought," in *Journal of Chinese Studies in Philosophy* (English), Vol. XVII, No. 2 (Winter 1985-1986).

4. Karl Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (London, 1952), Vol. II, pp. 262-4. For a theoretical summary of the "covering laws model," see Hempel's "The Function of General Laws in History," in *Readings in Philosophical Analysis*, eds. H. Feigl and W. Sellars, (New York, 1949), pp. 456-60. Also for a systematic criticism of this model, see W. Dray, *Laws and Explanations in History,* (London, 1957), especially pp. 1- 50.

5. Recent reactions of Chinese intellectuals to contemporary Confucianism in the PRC are found in the following articles:

   Chang Chuen-p'e, "Professor Tu Wei-ming Talks on the Future Perspective of Confucianism," in *Journal of Research in the History of Chinese Philosophy*, Nov. 1, 1987, pp. 120-24. Fang Ke-li, "Strengthen the Study of Contemporary Confucianism," in *Journal of Social Sciences in T'ienjin*, Nov. 5 1986, pp. 32-3. Pao Tsun-hsin, "A Critical Review of Contemporary Confucianism," in *Journal of the Chinese Intellectuals*, Nov. 1. 1987.

6. An influential criticism of historicism was developed by Karl Popper in *The Poverty of Historicism* (London, 1957).

7. For this view, I am indebted to both Gadamer and Ricoeur, two important figures in contemporary hermeneutical philosophy.

8. Hegel, *Reason in History* (New York, 1953), p. 8.

9. A contemporary criticism of the notion of objectivity in historicism is found in Paul Riceour, *History and Truth*, trans. by C.A. Kelbley (Evanston, 1965), pp. 21-40.

10. Feng Yu-lan, *Autobiography* (*San Sung T'ung Tsu Hsu*), (Beijing, 1984) pp. 367-8.

11. This is a fundamental philosophical idea of Neo-Confucianism elaborated by Ch'eng Yi.

12. Jurgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action,* Vol. I, trans. by T. McCarthy (Boston, 1984), pp. 94-107.

13. This discussion is based on a long conversation with Paul Ricoeur during a conference, May 1987.

14. Chen Tu-hsiu said, "I would much rather see the past culture of our nation disappear than see our nation die out because of its unfitness for living in the modern world" ("Ching-kao Ch'ing-nien"). The translation of this paragraph is quoted with minor changes from Teng and Fairbank's book, *China's Response to the West*, p. 242.

15. This summary is largely based on my article, "Defend 'Prejudices'," in *Journal of the Chinese Intellectuals*, No. 3. 1987. The article provides a basic bibliography of major works in contemporary philosophical hermeneutics.

# Index

absolutism, xi
abstract or abstraction, xi-xii, 5, 18, 131-132
Albert Einstein, 7, 155, 158-159. 163, 177
*Analects*, xiv, 16, 36-38, 207, 211-214
Aristotle, xii, 9-13, 16, 39, 139, 147, 155-157, 175, 203
Atman, 157-158, 16600-161, 166-168, 205, 208

Benjamin Schwartz, 29-30, 50
*Book of Changes* (*I-ching*), ix-x, xiv, 23-47, 148, 168, 175, 178, 183
*Book of Odes or Book of Peotry*, 31-32, 101
*Book of Tao* (*Tao-te-ching*), 16-18, 183-207
Brahman, 156-158, 160-161, 166-168, 200, 205, 208
Buddha, 70-71, 147
Buddhist and Buddhism, x, 39, 45, 62-66, 69-71, 78, 146-150, 157-159, 166, 168, 181, 211

Ch'an (Zen), 146-148, 161, 181
Chan Wing-tsi, 11, 37, 44-45, 48, 67, 74
Chang Tsai, 38, 44, 221
chasity (*lieh*), 69-70
*chen-i* (the sincerity of will), 103, 105
Chen Shih-Chuan, xii, 139
Cheng Chung-ying, xiv, 61, 73
Ch'eng Hao, 38, 40, 48
*cheng-hsin* (the normality of mind), 103-105
Cheng Hsueh-li, xiv, 97
Ch'eng I, 32, 38, 45, 48, 67
Chi-tsang, 6
*chih-chu* (the extension of knowledge), 103-104
Chong-san, x, 62, 69-71
Chou dynasty, xiii, 26-27, 67, 202-203, 205-208
Chou Tun-i, 38
Christian and Christianity, xiii, 10, 39, 41, 66-67, 71, 139-140, 145, 204, 211-213, 222, 226-227
Chu Hsi, 27, 48, 66-67, 221
Chuang Tzu or Chuang Chou, xi-xii, 5-6, 9-10, 12, 19, 115-125, 132-135, 147-148, 205
compassion, x, 71
Confucian or Confucianism, x-xi, 45, 661-68, 79-84, 97-109, 157-158, 175-177, 207, 211-217, 221-230
Confucius, xiii-xiv, 26-29, 32-34, 36-37, 40, 661, 663, 67-71, 80, 87, 98, 103-104, 107, 134, 147-148, 162-163, 205-209, 221
continuum, 18, 156-160, 166-167

David Hume, 39, 102-104, 110, 147
deontologism or the deontological theory of ethics, x, 61-64, 66, 68
Descartes, xi-xii, 129, 131-132, 147, 165
divination, 24-27, 37-38
DNA and RNA, 178-179, 1866-187
*Doctrine of the Mean* (*Chung Yung*), xiii, 36-37, 64-65, 70, 208, 212-213, 227
dream. xi-xii, 115-125
Duke Chou, 26, 206-209
duty, 62-66, 69-71

earth, 24-25, 35-36, 38, 42-44, 148, 161
ecology, 41
economy or economics, x-xi, 79-81, 185, 190, 221-223, 227-231
education or instruction, 3, 37, 64, 87-90, 108
Euclidian, 9-10, 12-13
European and Europe, 197-200, 202-203, 222, 224

filial piety (*hsiao*) and family, x, 63, 65, 67-68, 70-71, 81-82, 85-90, 103-106, 222-224
Filmer S.C. Northrop, xii, 52, 153-170
Five Agents, 27
Fu-hsi, 25-26, 31, 35
Fung Yu-lan, 8, 15, 18, 48-49, 61, 68, 75, 163

Galileo, 8-9, 42
God, xii, 10-11, 26, 67, 139-140, 145, 149-150, 213-215
grace, 70
*Great Learning (Ta-hsueh)*, xic, 37-38, 212-214
Great Sage, 115-125
Greek, 11-12, 16, 79, 139, 141, 197-198, 202, 204-205

harmony, xii, 9-10, 44, 88-89, 147, 168, 180, 186-191
Heaven (*T'ien*), xiii, 9, 17, 35-36, 38-46, 64-65, 70-71, 148, 150, 206-209, 212-214, 229
Hebrew. 139
Hegel, 144, 157, 175, 236, 238-240
Heraclitus, 9, 12, 44
hexagram, x, 24, 26-32, 35-36, 43
Hinduism, 11, 66, 157-158, 160-161, 168
homoloy, xii-xiii, 197
Hong Kong. 79-80, 222, 228, 236, 241
Hsiung Shih-li, 39
Hsun Tzu, 4-5, 7, 17-19, 212, 227
Hu Shih, 28-29, 50, 66, 161-162, 165, 2266
Hui Shih, 10
human nature and humanhood, 40, 64-65, 68-69, 97-103, 107-109, 208, 211-212
humanity, xii, 37, 42-43, 63, 101, 140-141, 149-150, 198-201

*I-Ching*, see Book of Changes
I-k'uan-tao (The Way of One Thread), xiii
immanence and transcendence, xiii, 36, 207, 211-217
India and Indian, xii, 11, 13-14, 202-205
induction, 16

Japan and Japanese, 78-80, 83-85, 228
*jen* (humanity, benevolence), x, xiii, 45, 63-64, 67-71, 98-100, 104-107, 140, 158, 160-163, 166, 168, 207-209, 242
John Dewey, 148
Joseph Needham, 29, 31, 41, 50

Kant, 39-40, 42, 45, 61-63, 65, 72, 191
King Wen, 26
Korea and Korean, x-xi, 79-81, 83-87, 222, 228
Kung-sun Lung, 5, 10

Lao Tzu, xii, 8, 12, 147-148, 205-207

Leibniz, 30-31, 178-179
Liang Shu-ming, 241
Liu Shu-hsien, ix-x, xiv, 23, 48, 51, 61, 73
*Lo-shu*, 30-31
loyalty (*chung*), 68-70, 82-84

Mao Tse-tong, 68
Max Weber, 226, 234, 237, 242
Marxism and Marxism-Leninism, 67, 69, 141, 145-146, 175, 179, 192, 2266, 234-236, 238-241, 244
materialism, 141-145, 147, 168, 175, 192
mathematics, xi, 3, 30-31, 176
Maurice Merleau-Ponty, 132, 168
May Fourth Movement, 40, 67, 223, 225-226, 241, 243-244
Mencius, xiii, 36-37, 61, 63-65, 68-69, 98-101, 105-109, 147, 211-212
*Mencius*, Book ofm 38, 211-212, 227
Mohist or Mohism, 44-45, 99
moral sense and moral justification, 97-109
Mou Tsung-san, 40-41
Mo Tzu, 63-64, 99

name, 4-5, 11, 17-18,
Neo-Confucian or Neo-Confucianism, 32, 38-39, 43-45, 180, 221
Newtonian physics, xii, 11-12, 142, 1775-176
Niel Bohr, 12, 175

obligation, 82-83, 89, 105, 149-150, 213

paradox, 5, 12, 18-20
Parmenides, 11, 13, 208
pattern, 4, 9-11
phenomenology, 129, 130-133
Plato, 10, 41, 102-139, 144, 155, 157, 203, 205
positivist or positivism, 13, 46, 156-159
principle (*li*), 45-47
Protestant, x, 81, 208, 211-217
propriety (*li*), 664, 67, 80, 90, 100, 206-209
Pythagoreans, 30

quantum physics and quantum mechanics, 8, 142, 175-176, 181-184, 188-189, 191-192

reality, xi, 7-8, 12-13, 149-150, 158-160, 165, 176
reason and feeling, xiv, 97-109, 167
religious and religion, xiii-xiv, 7, 145-146, 149-150. 211-214
right and wrong, 6, 62, 72, 100, 105-1066. 109
righteousness (*i*), 64-65, 69, 99-101, 213

Shang dynasty, 26
Shen-nung, 266
Singapore, 61, 67, 79-80, 86, 222, 228
Socrates, 102, 139, 144
Ssu-ma Ch'ien, 33
Ssu-ma Tan, 33
subjectivity and objectivity, 24-25, 98, 1077, 132-133
Sung dynasty, 32, 38, 40, 44, 64

*shu-tzu-kua* (numerical-grams), 24
symbol, ix-x, 4-5, 14, 24-36, 158
symbolism, ix-x, 23-47, 158

*T'ai-chi* (Great Ultimate), 24, 40
Taiwan, xiv, 79, 222-228, 236, 241
T'ang Chun-i, 39, 48, 241
*Tao-hsueh*, see Great Learning
Tao (Way or path), xii, 6-8, 16-177, 37-40, 43, 47, 64, 107, 149-150, 158, 160, 168, 206-207
Taoist and Taoism, xi-xii, 17, 38, 40-41, 66, 148-150
Thomas Hobbes, 10-11
Thome H. Fang, 32-35, 42, 50
*t'i* (substance), 39, 45
T'ien-T'ai Buddhism, 146-148
trigram, x, 24-36
*Tso Chuen*, 35
Tung Chung-shu, 27
Tzu-kung, 36-37
Tzu-lu, 107

unity, x, 23, 44, 163, 1775, 180, 185-187, 229
utilitarianism, 61-63, 66, 99-100
utility or profit (*li*), 62-63, 99-100

value, 8, 46, 79-80, 105-106, 147-150, 228-229
virtue, 37, 62, 64-65, 69, 71, 87, 98-102, 104, 106, 211-212
volition, 9, 103-104, 106

Wang Pi, 31-32
Wang Yang-ming, 42-43, 46-47, 52
Western Incription, 44-45
wisdom (*chih*), 47, 64, 69, 72, 100, 147-148

Yang Hsiung, 40
*yao-tz'u*, 26
yin and yang, xii, 24-25, 27, 37-38, 43, 162, 166, 175-188, 191-192
Yin-Yang school, 33, 37-38
Yin dynasty, 26
yoga, 159-160, 166-167

Zeno, 5

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