

Deshun Li *Editor*

Values of Our Times

Contemporary Axiological
Research in China

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Contents

Introduction: A New Approach to Contemporary Studies on Axiology	1
Deshun Li	
Part I The Gist of Values and Contemporary Philosophy	
Value and Time	17
Wei-ping Sun	
“To Be” of Value: A Direction of the Research into the Essence of Value	29
Meitang Sun	
The Course of Human Subjectivity	37
Zhan Guo	
Value is Human Being Itself and Human Self-realization	47
Jintian Liu	
A Philosophy That Addresses Chinese Issues	57
Ping Feng	
The Formation of Value and Modern Axiological Questions: From the Perspective of Being and Nothingness	65
Shuguang Zhang	
Change from Abstract Value Philosophy to Realistic Value Philosophy	75
Zhuzhi Zhou and Jing Pan	

Wanted: Dialogue at the Level of Value Beliefs Among Chinese, Western and Marxist Philosophies	85
Lai He	

Part II Towards the Depth of Human Life

Interactivity Between Virtue and Wisdom	99
Chang Jiang	

On the Transformation of Value Orientation of Commodity Symbols: Some Philosophical Considerations on Spiritual Transformation of Consumptive Activities	109
Zhen Han	

The Social Self-criticism on the Threshold of Evaluation: Thinking on the Thought of Marx's Social Self-criticism	119
Xinhan Chen	

On the Intimate Relation Between Social Facts and Three Types of Values	135
Qun Gong	

The Practical Survival State of Public Society and the Occurrence of the Reasonable Value Experience.	147
Zu-she Yuan	

On Marx's Politic Economic Method of Value	161
Ping He	

Historical Understanding and Historical Appraisal.	167
Kaifeng Huang	

A Brief Study of the Hierarchy Value Thought of the Pre-Qin Confucianism	185
Jun Zhang	

Part III Value Conceptions and Value

An Analysis of the Concept of Justice from the Perspective of Value Theory	199
Junfeng Ma	

Contents	vii
How is Environmental Ethics Possible?	207
Xinyan Wang	
Ideal of Social Values for Hermeneutics of Human History.	215
Qiusuo Cui	
Three Dimensions of the Formation of Values	225
Zhilong Tang	
On the Value Orientation of Modern Market Economic System	231
Zhen-ping Hu	
Three Doubts About the Comparison Between Western and Chinese Views of Harmony from the Perspective of Axiology.	239
Maotang Dai and Jialian Li	
The Value Basis of Evidence Rules	249
Baosheng Zhang and Chuanming Fan	
The Connotation of Rule of Law: In the View of Axiology	263
Liqing Zhang	

Introduction: A New Approach to Contemporary Studies on Axiology

Deshun Li

Cultural clashes between core values and ethical prospective connected to those values have generated issues of global concern. In the current world with the increasingly diversified interests and cultures, the issue of whether such clashes can be resolved not only highlights the significance of the study of axiology, but also further motivates us to reflect upon and adjust the theories and methodologies that we are using in axiological studies.

1 Axiology and Traditional Chinese Philosophies

The term “Axiology” originated from western philosophies, especially from the research and advocacies by Neo-Kantians. Contemporary Chinese studies on value theories have accepted the terminology and have proceeded to conduct academic research centered on this concept in ways that have allowed the field to be augmented and enhanced. Thus, this kind of acceptance of the term in Chinese studies has not entailed just a simple introduction, imitation or blind following of neo-Kantian thought. Instead, contemporary Chinese scholars have provided an extended and unique understanding of the commonality and universality of axiology in our own way—a way that makes sense against the background of Chinese traditional culture and philosophy. Specifically, Chinese scholars have endeavored to explore the possibilities of providing more appropriate ways of thinking about value. The aim has been, and still is, that of providing a philosophical view that is consistent with the specific conditions present in china in modern times.

Value thinking has been the priority and central focus of traditional Chinese philosophy. This has been true since ancient times. Traditional Chinese philosophy has aimed at constructing an ethical and political system within

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Chinese society in general, and within the state specifically, by taking the relationships among “heaven, earth and man” as a starting points for contemplation. The most important concepts and categories of various schools of thoughts in China include “ethics”, “benevolence (Ren) and righteousness (Yi)”, “good and evil”, “beauty and ugliness”, “superior and inferior”, “gain and loss”, “success and failure”, “auspicious and ominous”, “weal and woe”, “endowment”, “honor and disgrace” etc. while the most common philosophical concepts or categories in Europe are those that deal with and focus on Ontology and Epistemology. These areas, in turn, deal with such concepts as “existence”, “substance”, “rationality”, “experience”, “knowledge”, “truth” etc., That are linked in crucial ways to empirical science. This suggests that when, compared with western philosophies, Chinese philosophies are revealed as actually being more concerned (proportionally speaking) than are generic western views, with traditions and concepts of value that have humanism as the main and most emphasized thread.

Take for example the treatment of the concept of faith, which is the core and highest forms of value. Faith embodies the values of people. People with differing values will have different sorts of faiths. Some western scholars tend to believe that Chinese people have no faith at all. The reason for this view is that they see western philosophy as being based on Christianity and they confuse the broad concept of faith with Christianity view of faith which is only one particular form of faith. In contrast, we philosophers working in Chinese cultural settings distinguish faith from religion and regard religion as one particular form (but not the only form) of faith. In fact, we follow the principle that “faith is above religion”. For example, the *Book of Changes* (Zhou Yi), an ancient Chinese book, establishes a form of faith, which advocates that being related to “Heaven (Tian)” is the highest form of faith with people being the target of heaven-ordained mandates and care. Thus, there has been an agreement in Chinese cultural settings that all persons should adhere to the principle of “following the mandate of heaven and complying with the popular wishes of the people”. “Heaven (Tian)” and the “Way (Dao) of Heaven” (taken together) are regarded as the ultimate law of nature, society and human relations. It is also agreed that this is the law of the omnipotent and omnipresent supreme master of universe. Chinese traditional philosophy has for centuries believed that “Therefore, Heaven produced the spirit-like things, and the sages took advantage of them. (The operations of) heaven and earth are marked by (so many) changes and transformations; and the sages imitated them (by means of the Yi)” (The *Book of Change*, Xi Ci).

The logic behind this view is that “Heaven (Tian)” does not give commands per se. Instead, its commands are shown in the words and actions of sages. Man gets to know the greatness of Tian from sages, who are respectable men and righteous men who trace the way of Tian to its source, and use it to explain the success and failure—both the auspicious and ominous aspects of life—and then, through example, guide the thoughts and actions of all of the people.

“Tian” has always been and will always be a kind of force that is combined with secular man and real society but is never interpreted as the almighty deity, or God. This logic underlies that it’s not that faith does not exist in traditional

Chinese culture, but that people in traditional Chinese culture have a people-centered faith which is different from God-centered faith. This kind of people centered faith does not take the form of a religion, but it does not reject religion either. Instead, it regards and accepts all of deity and all gods as the secondary representatives under “Tian”.

The inclusiveness of Tian has nurtured the tolerance toward religions in Chinese history and Chinese culture where “Confucius, Daoism and Buddhism coexist with each other”. One can never understand the traditional Chinese view of values, or the gist of Chinese culture, without understanding this.

This point was supported and accounted for by, Zhang Dainian, a famous Chinese expert on theories developed in china, and also an expert on the history of philosophies in China. Dainian, has suggested that the basis for Chinese philosophies is “the *unity of the ways of Heaven and man, and virtue is knowledge*”. *He has pointed out that “philosophers in China believe that knowledge is virtue, and the pursuit of knowledge is the pursuit of virtue. Knowledge and virtue are not two different categories. True knowledge is real virtue. One that has knowledge has virtue and one that has virtue has knowledge. Thus, Chinese philosophers believe that the pursuit of knowledge cannot be separated from the nurture of virtue. The pursuit of the ultimate truth of universe and the pursuit of ultimate virtue of [or within human] life are the two sides of one coin.”*¹

Influenced by such philosophical thoughts, Chinese people are more focused on the “ought to be” than on “is” and have accumulated rich wisdom and huge values systems.² By contrast, little attention is given to the “to be”. Therefore, the traditional Chinese philosophy centers on immediately applicable standards and rules instead of fleshing out or inventing systems of critical thinking and/or logical reasoning given for the sole purpose of supporting metaphysical theories. As a result, some of the genius of Chinese culture is that, while its ideas come from philosophers of ancient China those ideas have not been tested and deepened systematically through actual practice—and that in spite of the fact that sores logical reasoning and analysis are not independently developed, particularly after pre-Qin period. (Even Hegel agreed that the Chinese people had reached where they are today 2000 years ago, but they came to a standstill afterwards³). Therefore, in the general flow of philosophical studies worldwide, traditional Chinese philosophy, in comparison with western philosophies which have always focused on reason and logic, didn’t receive due respect and attention and even were not regarded as “philosophies” in many parts of the world.

¹ Zhang Dainian, *Outline of Chinese Philosophies*, China Social Sciences Press, 1982, p. 7.

² These enriched the wisdom of mankind. “Don’t do to others what you don’t want others to do to you”, “harmony in diversity”, “too much is as bad as too little”, “harmony” and other golden rules and Chinese expressions of values have been understood and accepted by more and more people in the world.

³ Friedrich Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, Volume I, Interpreted by He Lin and Wang Taiqing, Commercial Press, 1981, p. 8.

However, these facts do not entail that ancient philosophers in China had no inquiries in basic theories or that the huge values system in China lack philosophical logic. In fact, the basic Chinese philosophy of “*unity of the ways of Heaven and man, and virtue is knowledge*” has included some of the ideas on values which are regarded as “advanced” by most philosophers today. To support this claim I shall move to considering some specific views for which such a claim can be reasonably made.

One outstanding example to consider is the situation through which in both Confucianism and Daoism the “nature” and “relations” among values are shown. Ancient Chinese philosophies had reached a consensus from the very beginning on how these might be seen by asserting that (1) the existence and nature of man is a ruler for the purpose of measuring all values, and that (2) the understanding one may achieve concerning the nature of values is based totally on the understanding of the nature of man. Confucianism and Daoism take two different approaches to exploring these two assertions and many of the arguments between the two schools of thoughts mark the peak of the pre-Qin philosophy on value-directed thinking.

Confucianism tries to understand values by understanding human nature. It argues about whether the nature of men is good or evil and/or in what proportions, and this then lays the foundation for Confucian thoughts on value. No matter whether the nature of men is good or evil, or a combination of both, the premise is that “good or evil” is regarded as the nature or innate quality the existence (of men). In other words, this mode of thought connects values such as good and evil directly with the existence of men and turns its interpretation of human nature from subjective description to value judgment. For example, Confucius said that “of all (creatures with their different) natures produced by Heaven and Earth, man is the noblest” (Xiaojing—The Government of the Sages). Xun Zi said that “Fire and water possess energy but no life. Grass and trees have life but no intelligence. Birds and beasts have intelligence but no righteousness. Man possesses energy, life, intelligence, and, in addition, righteousness. Therefore, man is the noblest being on earth” (Xun Zi, Wang Zhi).

Obviously, in Confucianism, superior and inferior are regarded as the related results of the nature of man, and so the real measure of value cannot be concealed or avoided. This point is consistent with the nature of values in the west. For a “Nature of Values” approach regards values as the innate element—and the nature of human beings decides matters with values instead of through examining a phenomenon found in certain relations. The logic behind it is that given that human nature provides the measure for determining the values of all objects; Thus, human nature itself must have values. Similarly, one might say that given that rulers are used to measure the length of objects, rulers themselves must have “length”. Apparently, the two meanings of length are mixed up (one is descriptive while the other appraises) and the existence of values are mixed up with the appraisive results of values. Therefore, this approach often regards value judgments as having the same power as knowledge and truth. This approach continued for many years and resulted in an over-simplified and dogmatic interpretation of values.

Daoism takes a different approach to values. Daoism holds that “the law of nature is connected with the Dao. You will gain if you follow it and lose if you breach it” (Tai Ping Jing). Good or bad fortune and weal or woes are not the “Dao” or the “permanent nature” of all existences. Instead, they are relative phenomenon resulting from the behavior of man. Lao Zi said that “In the Way of Heaven, there is no partiality of love” (Dao De Jing). Good or bad fortune and weal or woes are results of man’s desire and behavior. He said that “With no desire, at rest and still, all things go right as of their will.” (Dao De Jing) Zhuang Zi said that “Everything has its inherent character and its proper capability. There is nothing which has not these,” (Zhuang Zi, and he added (in *The Adjustment of Controversies*): That one should “Hold all things in your love, favoring and supporting none specially. This is called being without any local or partial regard; all things are equally regarded; there is no long or short among them.” (Zhuang Zi, *The Floods of Autumn*).

It follows that all things have their nature and character. Long or short and gains or losses are not eternal but changing. Zhuang Zi noticed that “long or short” is an appraisive judgment which is different from description. He further pointed out that the judgment of “long or short” and “gain or loss” depend on the perspective of man (observer) and the measure he adopts: “Looking at them from the services they render, allowing to everything the service which it does, there is not one which is not serviceable; and, extending the consideration to what it does not do, there is not one which is not unserviceable. We know (for instance) that East and West are opposed to each other, and yet that the one cannot be without (suggesting the idea of) the other—(thus) their share of mutual service is determined. Looking at them with respect to their tendencies, if we approve what they approve, then there is no one who may not be approved of; and, if we condemn what they condemn, there is no one who may not be condemned.” To put it simply, “Every man has his strong and weak points”. Based on these, Zhuang Zi concluded that “there is a time for noble acting, and a time for [being] mean—these characteristics are subject to no regular rule”, “When we look at them in the light of the Dao, they are neither noble nor mean. Looking at them in themselves, each thinks itself noble, and despises others. Looking at them in the light of common opinion, their being noble or mean does not depend on themselves.” (*The Floods of Autumn*) Whether things are good or bad, superior or inferior is not determined their nature. They change with time and space. In real time, every existence (thing) and spontaneously created entity thinks itself noble, and despises others. In secular life, whether a man is noble or not does not depend on himself (instead, it depends on others’ perspectives).

Zhuang Zi and Lao Zi believe that long or short, noble or mean, are not THE nature of all things including men, but are judgments; THEY INVOLVE THE identification and choice of certain relations decided upon by considering it with regard to the measure of “function (property)” and “tendency”. People usually interpret such approach as a kind of “relativism” and fail to recognize the philosophy of value behind the approach. If we realize that good or evil, noble or mean, long or short are appraisive instead of descriptive concepts, we can see that

Lao Zi and Zhuang Zi's interpretation of absolutism is based on understanding of relations and leads to a reflection upon the position and standards of the subject or "observer". In other words, Lao Zi and Zhuang Zi take another approach that is totally different from the approach of Confucianism in that they believe values are DISCOVERED IN nature of all things. They enable the observer to reflect on their perspectives and include the judge (THAT IS, observer) of values into the realm of philosophy. We believe that this is a more timely and appropriate approach to the studies of values nowadays—than perhaps it was in ancient times.

However, just as the weakness of "*unity of the ways of Heaven and man, and virtue is knowledge*" is found in Confucianism in the unclear division between subject and object, existence and value, ought to be and to be etc., the weakness of Daoism is that it fails to recognize that value varies with individuals, and thus to establish the theory of relations and subjectivity IN thinking as the principle way of thinking about values. Therefore, there aren't many constructive ideas of Daoism apart from "*Wu Wei (let things take their own course)*" and "*Shou Ci (He knows his masculine power, but maintains his female weakness)*". Due to this flaw, there aren't any substantial historical breakthroughs in Chinese philosophy on the studies of values. Most of the attention of these widespread philosophical views were focused the formulation and demonstration of the consequences of applying the ethics and the studies on values, and not on theoretical efforts to move the theories forward.

Of course, time goes on and philosophy continues its development. In China, due to our attention to the issue of values and our findings in ancient China, axiology has identified a fertile soil and unique basis for analyzing values in china in 2013—more than 2000 years later. For over 30 years, in terms of axiology, we have learned from the experiences of western philosophies based on traditional Chinese culture and methodologies through practice, and further have developed sophisticated theories regarding the theory of relationships and approaches to subjectivity with regard to assessing the various merits of value studies. This development has been achieved by utilizing modern processes of critical thinking, to develop an axiology that preserves and/or is compatible with Chinese characteristics.

At the same time, we can also see that in the research on axiology in the west, that also involves deliberations concerning the "relations" approach is also drawing some fresh conclusions. Hence in the west also there are new conclusions and methodologies that western philosophies have found as recently as in the twentieth century.⁴

⁴ FRANGDIZI (Argentina), *What is Value?—An Introduction to Values Studies*, Taipei: Linking books Co., Ltd., 1986 Chinese version. The book is a critical observance to the western values history and regards "relations" approach to values studies as the latest form of axiology in the west.

2 Learn From and Build Upon the Western Thoughts on Values

The attention to and studies on values in the history of western philosophy to achieve its present status as twentieth century thought, also went through a long and tortuous journey. It is to an analysis of this journey that we shall now turn.

As early as the times of Socrates and Plato, great minds have put forward the issue of the relations between “good will” and “knowledge (truth)” through the proposition of “virtue is knowledge”. Similar to the thoughts in pre-Qin period in China, virtue and knowledge are the sources of each other and can be unified (or blended) to an initial state. Afterwards, Hume and Kant found out the divide between “good will” and “truth”, “is” and “ought”, and “faith” and “knowledge”. As a result, we have to limit the scope of knowledge and reason to make room for faith and sensation. The confirmation given to “faith” has led to a wave of thought which believes that Will is the key to all existence. Voluntarism proposed by Arthur Schopenhauer and Nietzsche promotes humanism based on the value of man. Pragmatic philosophy present within us interprets truth through our values and experiences of the kind that produce observable results. The forgoing suggestion is not my own; It is based on the description of pragmatise given by Russell in his book *A History of Western Philosophy*.⁵

2.1 *The Essence and Importance of the Issue of Values: The Finding and Limitations of Russell*

It was by such a review and analysis of pragmatism that Russell came across the following important issue which he states in this way: “Philosophy, throughout its history, has consisted of two parts inharmoniously blended: on the one hand a theory as to the nature of the world, on the other an ethical or political doctrine as to the best way of living. The failure to separate these two with sufficient clarity has been a source of much confused thinking.”⁶

Russell goes on to suggest that this means that existence and value, ought to be and have to be, facts and standards drawn from knowledge and faith, science and humanity and other different theoretical realms can be divided into two categories: “science about knowledge and truth” and “science about values”. In other words, Russell has realized that “truth” and “value” are the two major themes throughout the history of western philosophies. This finding of Russell has promoted the importance and significance of the issue of values in philosophy. Russell’s problem is similar to the Hume’s problem of trying to find where in the physical world

⁵ Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy*, Volume II, Commercial Press, 1976, pp. 395–396.

⁶ *Ibidem*.

value occurs; recognizing this is indeed a milestone is a matter of great significance in the history of global philosophy.

What's surprising is that Russell himself did not attach much importance to the study of values. He never associates "ethics and politics" with the study of values. Instead, he tried his best to exclude value studies from scientific research. Maybe this is because Russell regarded pragmatism, a view which provides a good basis for studies on value, as his major opponent and made efforts to expose the theoretical fallacies of it. Thus, he adopted a skeptical and negative attitude toward the study on values. When some pragmatists interpret or even replace scientific truth with values and claimed that "truth is a form of value and logic is an appraisive judgment,"⁷ Russell refuted them by saying that "Science is not about 'values'"⁸ and that "the issue of 'values' is beyond the scope of knowledge."⁹ Thus quite amazingly, Russell, while being himself a master of logical positivism, once had a fierce argument with John Dewey, a master of pragmatism.¹⁰ We can see from examining Russell's argument with Dewey, that the argument that Russell presented had within it the spirit of adhering to the reason of science and truth. However, when criticizing the philosophy of Dewey, Russell made a small mistake in the replacement of concepts.¹¹ The mistake occurred because Russell never really understands or realizes the significance of studies on values. He, in effect, "threw away the baby with the bath water" when criticizing pragmatism. He thus shut the door to the study "values" by denying that it could be done through scientific methodologies.

2.2 Inspiration Drawn from Western Value Studies and Utilized in China

The argument between positivism and pragmatism happened during the beginning of values studies in contemporary China. I think both of these two schools of

⁷ Schiller, *Studies in Humanism*, English version, p. 198.

⁸ Russell, *Religion and Science*, Commercial Press, 1982, p. 119.

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 336.

¹⁰ Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy*, Chap. 30, Commercial Press, 1976, Chinese version, pp. 379–388.

¹¹ Russell mocked that "whether the perception on things which have happened should be "good" or "bad" is not based on what really happened but because of beliefs in the future. The result would be interesting. Assume some people say to me: 'Did you have coffee this morning?' If I'm a common person, I would recollect what happened this morning. However, if I'm a follower of Dewey, I would say: 'Wait, I have to do two experiments before I can tell you.'..." (*A History of Western Philosophy*, p. 385). Russell didn't realize that he has replaced the concepts. Based on the perception of "good or bad", the question here should be designed as a question on values: "whether the coffee you had this morning was delicious?" But Russell turned into a question regarding existence and facts because he had misunderstandings about the concept of value.

thoughts have very clear grounding in logic and offer logically well-developed or complete systems; they are thus worth being a focus of our study and research. The disputes between positivism and pragmatism and The arguments offered in the course of these disputes, fully demonstrated the nature of value and truth, and the relation between value and truth as a common philosophical issue (not ethical issue or analytic philosophy), and thus elevated the studies of value to a higher level. As a result, the study and analysis of Russell, Dewey and other great minds and their theoretical explorations have become the basis for us to further study on the issue of values. Of course, we do not blindly agree with any one side of the argument or simply accept the conclusions of either side. Instead, we are greatly inspired by the argument itself to explore new ways in which the essential aspects of the argument might be clarified or developed.

One direction in which the inspiration leads us is to examination of the positioning of axiology. What should be the scope of axiology or study of value? When we are talking about “value”, do we also know about “non-value”? Can we answer the question of “what is value?” by defining “what is not value?” To clarify this matter we must ask these questions: “are truth and falsehood and good and evil naturally integrated or are they totally separate entities?” “What is the basis upon which we can separate and/or connect “truth and falsehood” with “good and evil”?”

The traditional Chinese philosophy featuring “unity of the ways of *Heaven and man, and virtue is knowledge*” never paid much attention to these questions. However, the argument between positivism and pragmatism lands us in a dilemma concerning whether we have to choose between “truth” and “value”, or whether perhaps we can accept and/or follow either. We also feel compelled to ask why “truth” and “value” often coexist and interact with each other in human history and social practice? What should we do to maintain the consistency and/or compatibility between aspects of truth and aspects of value?

When thinking about these questions, contemporary Chinese studies on values are naturally based on the realities of life and adopt new methodologies to answer the questions. We explain the positioning of value and the relationship between value and truth through practice.¹² The new philosophical methodology has advanced from a mode focused on hypostasis in the past to a mode focused on relations (practice).¹³ We try to explain the positioning of value and its relationship with truth through practice.

From the perspective of ontology, it’s pointed out that practice is not a substance, but a special aspect of human existence. Practice is an interactive relationship between subject and object, and it is this process itself which creates the basis of both truth and value. “Value” is one of the directions of the interactive

¹² This new philosophical methodology came from the practical materialism founded by Karl Marx. See Karl Marx, *Theses on Feuerbach*. The practical materialism can still be fully understood, applied and tested nowadays and it is still a brand new methodology—by author.

¹³ About the “relation” approach, see Li Deshun, *Theories on Values* (2nd edition), China Renmin University Press, 2007, pp. 33–35.

relation, or the nature and effect of the relation measured by man's subjectivity. Based on this, the principle of value and the principle of truth are identified as the two basic principles of human progress. Philosophers have been trying to interpret the definition and significance of truth and value based on the division and connection of the two. Truth and value are not absolutely divided as positivism maintains, nor does truth replace value as pragmatism suggests.

Another inspiration drawn from western thought is that we should interpret value through scientific and reasonable logic. Positivism emphasizes that "value" is a special phenomenon which cannot be described by science and reason. This may seem to protect science from having to talk about value, but the position actually undermines science, because it fails to interpret the existence of human beings as a whole by "seeking truth from facts"—that is, from facts alone—(for this limited "facts only" approach is what constitutes "science" for Russell¹⁴).

Therefore, starting from studies on practice—which takes into account the special values in the existence of humans, we regard practice and subjectivity as the basis of value analysis in order to make it a logical starting point. "Subjectivity" is a concept that describes the position and function of human in his practice. Its core is the rights and obligations of man. We believe that value and value relations can only be interpreted on the basis of rights and obligation of subjectivity. At the same time, based on the understanding of human existence and awareness, we do not simply regard subject as equals to abstract "human" or subjective intention, but the relational existence of human. Value relations and values, values and appraisals, value standards and appraisive standards should be differentiated from each other to show that practice is the source of values, and to connect the change of values with the change of society. In general, all these follows the direction of "treating the issue of values in a scientific and reasonable manner" to find out the in-depth nature and features of values and provide basis and solution for value decisions in our daily life.

The third inspiration is that we should properly deal with the relation between science and values. The study on values is a scientific research which should be "value neutral". Researchers' description and analysis of the subject matter should not be subject to the favor of the researchers. The same situation applies to value studies. Of course, the ultimate goal of all the scientific research endeavor is focused on the destiny of human, pursuit of human value as well as the value of science. Therefore, our studies on values should aim at establishing reasonable and healthy values.

Science is the premise of reason. Only when we understand value relations and the nature of values in a scientific manner can we establish reasonable value system. Much of the research projects on values in past lacked A scientific basis. They simply started from a predetermined target and attempted to demonstrate which values, from their own perspectives, were the "best" values and/or standards to adopt. Thus, their studies lack scientific basis and are similar to the

¹⁴ Russell, *A History of Western Philosophies*, p. 397.

recommendations found in traditional non-scientifically based religious and ethical views.¹⁵ Learning from their mistakes, our studies on values focus on exposing the nature of value to demonstrate the position and function of human understand and follow the nature of values, and understand, respect and fulfill the rights and obligations of every subject in practice. On the other hand, we should have clear value stances which are consistent with the civilization of mankind, and protect the rationality and justice of value and science. I believe that such approach will help us to avoid the mistakes of “value studies either becoming derailed from reality or reduced a tool to promote value stances” and maximize the unity and positive interaction between science and values.

3 Change in Axiology Studies

Although Chinese values studies and western axiology adopt different concepts and approaches, both are focused on the same issues and faced with similar difficulties. I believe that the major difficulty with values study today is that it does not offer a reliable basis for reasonable consensus in the age of intensified value and cultural conflicts in the world. The lack of a scientific and reasonable basis is not that the motive and passion for analyzing issues concerning values are not strong enough, but, rather, because the approach to value studies is backward.

The approach to value studies is backward in the sense that the traditional theoretical framework of value studies lacks critical retrospection and advancement with times. It is limited by ontology in the twentieth century which is centered round subject and epistemology which, in turn, is centered around knowledge theory (truth), and fails to adopt any new ontology featuring relations (practice). Our studies on values prove that a change in approaches is what we need and that values studies must go through and are going through a profound revolution.

I would like to illustrate the needed change through an example dealing with how to identify and apply the “subject, object” category? Should we stay with the “subject-object dichotomy” mode left behind by Descartes, or should we render a new dialectical nature to the “subject, object” category based on the inspiration from contemporary science and practice?

Some critics think that values studies in China adopt the concept of “subject and object” and believe that we have followed the subject-object dichotomy found in the philosophy in the west. However, in fact, the subject-object dichotomy

¹⁵ Some scholars believe that we can only use “positive value” such as “good”, “beauty”, “satisfy reasonable demand” to identify the concept of value, and there will be negative consequences if we identify value through the common features of positive and negative values and render the same value concept to man and things. Such idea lacks proof and reflection on the predetermined value concepts including “good”, “beauty” and “reasonable”, and thus are similar TO THE TRADITIONAL TEACHINGS OF religion and ethics.

approach (which has even been criticized in the west) is exactly what all of us should get rid of. We have reflected upon the approach and found out that it was generated from the traditional “substance” approach.

Subject-object dichotomy proposes that “man is the subject and nature is the object”, and thus divides the universe into two categories (apart from human and nature (thing), there are no other relations and subject-object categories). To some extent, it renders superiority to subject over object. The major fallacy of subject-object dichotomy is that it confuses the relation between subject and object with the substance of existence (human and thing). As a result, the subject/object concept loses its scientific property. For example, Martin Heidegger has pointed out that when appraising value, we often neglect that “The thing to be appraised is an object for the subject. The being of the thing is not contained in the above fact.”¹⁶ This is what we emphasize: Values only demonstrate one dimension of the subject/object relation—the significance of subject to object. To “understand the thing in its being” is the other dimension of the subject/object relation—the requirement for humans is that they obtain both knowledge and truth. (Under this circumstance, the object is only a cognitive object instead of a value object).

If we abandon the overall background and meaning of the subject/object relation and require value judgment to play the role of obtaining knowledge and truth, then we will not have a means of criticizing, in any instance, cases where the “dignity” of the object is being “deprived.”¹⁷ Otherwise, there would be no difference here from raising the criticism that “the left hand does not have any relation to the right hand and that depriving the dignity of the right hand does not entail that the left is being deprived of anything”. This would be misalignment and misunderstanding of concepts and a bias in values. If we try to understand values through this approach, there would be even more serious chaos.

One typical example of this chaos is found in some ecological or environmental value theory which denies “subject-object dichotomy” while upholding a similar logic: for while denying “anthropocentrism”, it tries its best to maintain the “subject” position of nature and wildlife and argues for an equal “subject/subject” relationship between nature and man. However, it does not consider, or is not able to answer, the following questions: in practice, how are we to explain the rights and obligations of human persons who are concerned with protecting environments? Should the rights and obligations of man involve “subject/subject” negotiations with wildlife? It also does not consider or is not willing to answer these questions: when nature is considered “subject”, how can nature uphold its rights and obligations to protect environment? Should there be mysterious representatives for the “subject of nature” and “subject of wildlife” to interact with humans, just as there should be mysterious representatives for “deity”? Should these mysterious representatives must enjoy both the rights and fulfill both the obligations of “human and animal”?

¹⁶ *Collected Works of Martin Heidegger*, Shanghai Sanlian Bookstore Press, 1996, pp. 391–392.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*.

From this perspective, environmental value theory does not explain the meaning of “subject” and ignores the fact that only the human person can be the subject that has the responsibility to protect environment. The aim of the theory can thus be distorted to render certain people the opportunity either to gain privilege in the name of “environmental protection” or to shirk the responsibility and deprive people the rights of environmental protection. Without a dialectical understanding of the concept itself and the appropriate practice that displays the significance of the subject/object concept, studies on values, such as the kind sketch out above, will be arbitrary and will offer strategies that are distorted and thus false.

The dispute on subject/object concept in the studies of values shows that we need to reach a consensus on the definition of basic concepts which are consistent with science and practice. I believe that to get rid of the rigid mode of “subject-object dichotomy”, we should abandon the ideas which separate the world into unchanging substances or classes and establish a dialectical subject/object concept which is based on practice. For example, we should position “subject/object” as a relational category which describes the structure of practice. Then, through observation and research on human practice and history, we should understand the unity of rights and obligations of humans as a specific subject. In the process, we can reach the conclusion based on practice: in the realm of values, different subjects should be treated as equals and “return the rights and obligations of human to human”. This should be a principle and starting point for solving the issues that pertain to the values that humans face in real life. This is the “subject” principle proposed by the value studies in China. I believe this approach will help us to establish clear and self-disciplined values.

4 Conclusions

4.1 In the World of Human Kind, Truth is Monistic While Value is Pluralistic

The “monistic theory of truth” represents the overall cognitive ability and the process of existing that actually occurs in human life. In other words, truth is monistic because it represents the monistically reliable cognition of the subject matter, but it can only be tested through continuous practice of man. Monistic truth does not change with people. It comes from scientific cognition where the human being as a whole is the only subject.

The “pluralistic theory of value” represents the life and development of man. Value (values) is pluralistic because value refers only the significance of the object to the subject and it varies with subjects. Only when there is a sole subject will values be monistic. In real life, there isn't a sole subject, each man, group, society or even the whole of humankind are only specific subjects in standing in certain

relations to one another and they each are irreplaceable. In short, values are always pluralistic when subjects are, as a matter of fact, pluralistic too.

“Division” is always accompanied by “unity”. The reasons behind division are the reasons for unity. The divide between truth and value is due to the division in human practice. Monistic truth and pluralistic values are due to the divide between subjects and objects. Therefore, truth and value must unify through practice. And the unity of pluralistic values will result from the overlap of subjects.

“The empire, long divided, must unite; long united, must divide.” Under the backdrop of pluralistic values and cultural diversity, how to pursue unity and harmony among the pluralistic values has come into the spot light. Whether we can deal with the pluralistic values reasonably is the key to theories and practices and depends on whether we fully understand the nature of value and whether we can solve the issues in the realm of values through reasonable approaches. We lack the basis for reasonable consensus because studies on values lack a scientific basis. As a result, there are a great many conflicting views that tend to lead us toward chaos in values studies today.

Many tragedies in history happened because some people are too eager to work out certain monistic value structures to benefit themselves by violating or depriving other people of appropriate opportunities to exercise their rights and obligations. Therefore, I believe that the priority for the values studies needs to be that of following scientific methodologies to offer a basis for consensus. Only by having a basis for consensus can we seek harmony among pluralistic values by fully understanding and respecting each other’s rights and obligations.

These are the conclusions this paper defends as the conclusion to its thesis (July 2012 in Beijing).

Part I
The Gist of Values and Contemporary
Philosophy

Value and Time

Wei-ping Sun

Value is a historical category, and there does not exist any “super-historical” value. The value, as the distinctive character of historical category, needs to be studied from the historical dimension by applying historical methods. This is just like what Hans-Georg Gadamer says: the value-concept has to historically describe the philosophical dilemma by means of self-contemplation. The social history, however, is only the one-directional and one-dimensional extension of time. In accordance with the irreversibility of time, the past, present and future altogether constitutes a long and entire historical picture, which is the “background” and “spatiality” of all human value activities. To research the value theory, it is necessary to comprehend and grasp its historical dimensions and methods from the perspective of time concretely.

1 Time Dimension of Value

Since time is a philosophical category pertaining to “actual humans”, time dimension becomes indispensable to understand the value. Human beings are the temporal existence and the living organism generating and existing with the historical development, namely, time is the existent living form, the existent positive state, and the necessary requisite of human life practice. The extension of “abstract” and “objective” time, prior to human beings or outside human beings, has no special meaning and no relevant to human value possessed with the practical trait. In consideration of the value theory, only when time is related to actual humans and practical human activities, does it have constructive and constitutive significance. It is just the purposeful, independent and initiative human beings by the creative social practice that bestow time on the distinctive meaning.

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Conforming to the time fleeting, both the object and the world do have certain change-“humanization”. To be specific, the objection and the world, in the process of unceasing “humanization”, emerge into the meaningful existence and the significant social space for human living and development. At the same time, by making full use of time in life practice, humans do realize, cultivate and improve themselves, and contribute the social and historical meaning to the extension of life as well. From this point of view, time is the “space” in which humans take the value activities to “change the world” and make self-cultivation, self-creation and self-improvement. As Karl Marx points out, “time is IN FACT the active existence of the human being. It is not only the measure of human life. It is the space for its development”.¹ Without time, the social space for human activities and the measure of subjective life, we can neither truly comprehend and elaborate the concrete and historical value, nor grasp how the value comes into being and exists in time, especially in the limited life of each person.

What is one crucial feature of western philosophy since the contemporary time is to pay attention to the historical and time dimension. Basing on the achievements of natural science like the theory of evolution and of relativity, the time dimension is essential, even the main factor and hermeneutics dimension for the philosophy of Marxism and the conspicuous schools, like the creative evolution (Henri Bergson), existentialism, phenomenology, historicism, process philosophy and modern hermeneutics. Heidegger claims that “time must be brought to light and genuinely conceived-as the horizon for all understanding of Being for any way of interpreting it”.² Time, of course, should also be the horizon for all understandings of value for any way of interpreting it.

The historical dialectic, by emphasizing history and time dimension, is distinguishable from the mechanical historical view in spatiotemporal view. Ignoring time means that, in the social and historical field, people neglect the influences from the historical and cultural tradition, from the duration of human life and from the active role in human life practice. Hence, it is believed that what people can only do is to submit to fate and accept the arrangement of fate negatively, so they reckon social history and life outlook as wasting the time. On the contrary, stressing the importance of time means to emphasize human positive existence, the inheritance of social history, the human active role as the subject, and to grasp humans own destiny as well. The human life, by the activities and creation in every second, bestows the significance to the passing time, even “change the world” by the physical or mental creation in order to make their lives (especially their mental life) to “be immortal” after death.

Since the ancient time, the close relationship between time and value, in fact, had already been thought from the rational and sensory aspect for many times.

¹ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works (Volume 33)*, Moscow: Progress Publishes, 1991, p. 493.

² Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. by Joan Macquarrie & Basil Blackwell, New York: Harper Collins Publisher, 1962, p. 39.

What we think at once is plenty of apothegms, such as “time is life”, “time is money”, “wasting our own time equals to suicide, and wasting others to murder them for money”. Social psychological professor Robert Levine, in his book called *A Geography of Time*, summarizes some “power” of time: time is money; the law of supply and demand regulates the line; we value what we wait for; status dictates who waits; the longer people will wait for you, the greater your status; the more powerful control who waits; The Siddhartha move³; time can be given as a gift, etc.⁴

Time, indeed, is extremely indispensable to humans and human value, because the one-dimensional and limited time is the one-off resource which cannot be stored, reused, lent and exchanged. Since each of us just has one life which is the limited duration of time, all value is created in this limited time. There is a saying—God creates the world and bestows the value to creatures before human coming-into-being—which is just the religious and theological hypothesis only understood by believing unconditionally. If we ground human value on the ration, we will find that all human value is, in fact, created in the social and historical activities. Therefore, apprehending the historical value without time is in vain. Even though it were true that God did create the world and bestow value to creature, this “almighty” power would only be possessed by God instead of the historical and realistic ordinary people. Time, hence, is a sine qua non for human practice and all value creation. How to create and achieve maximum value in the limited time is a vital life issue confronted by people. The human realistic value ends up with consuming their entire time, and as time goes by, the value of human life will be judged and verdict impartially.

Karl Marx once uncovered that the value of commodity, in economic sense, refers to the labor time spending on per unit of product. So the contradictions and struggles based on material interest, in the antagonistic social formations, even in some non-fundamental confrontations, often manifest in fighting for the survival time and labor time.

The exploitation made by slave-owners to slaves, by land owners to farmers, by capitalists to employees, by power grabbers to the ruled, appears to occupy on other’s labor and product, but, in essence, often on “the *theft of alien labour time*”.⁵ For example, the capitalist accumulates and improves their wealth precisely by stealing worker time as the premise, just as “The *theft of alien labour*

³ Young Siddhartha believes “Everyone can perform magic, everyone can reach his goal, if he can think, wait and fast”. With the right attitude, waiting is a potent tool against the obstacles of life; waiting can in itself be a powerful act. This is consistent with what we are often sayings: Time cures the hurts, time eliminates pain...choosing nothing is a kind of choice, doing nothing in itself is also a kind of action.

⁴ See Robert Levine, *A Geography of Time: the Temporal Misadventures of a Social Psychologist, or How Every Culture Keeps Time Just a Little Bit Differently*, New York: Basic Books, 1997, pp. 101–126.

⁵ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works (Volume 29)*, Moscow: Progress Publishes, 1987, p. 91.

time, which is the basis of present wealth."⁶ The theft and exploitation of time results in the alien employees who have to unceasingly sell their time cheaply in order to obtain the limited subsistence necessary for their survival, and often falls into this vicious cycle. Karl Marx, in *The Capital*, ruthlessly exposes and criticizes the capitalists, after the wonderful analysis on which the capitalists exploit the surplus value from the workers. In contemporary world, the capitalist owners run around the world, even move their factories to the developing countries constantly, just because there are cheap employees (relatively low wages per unit time) and the huge time of surplus value which can be deprived. Karl Marx asserts that the history will evolve into the communist society in which the "alien" phenomenon of time will vanish with eliminating the antagonistic social classes gradually. Until then, "the growth of the productive forces can no longer be tied to the appropriation of alien SURPLUS LABOUR, and that the working masses must, rather, themselves appropriate their own surplus labour...then, on the one hand, necessary labour time will be measured by the needs of the social individual; and, on the other, society's productive power will develop so rapidly that, although production will now be calculated to provide wealth for all the DISPOSABLE TIME of all will increase."⁷ With the more free time, human beings will have more "free space" for free and comprehensive development on which the society will be undergoing a profound and historical progress.

Time, in actual and social life, plays a much more conspicuous role than it did before, according to the evolution of times, the deepening of industrialization and the acceleration of life pace. The utmost loss of value, as often as not, lies in the time-wasting and needless time-spending. Besides the following common-sense phrases about time, such as "time cannot flow backwards", "history does not repeat itself", "fleeting youth never returns back", "happy times fleets quickly", "things flow away day and night", we still have some new ones: "an inch of time is an inch of gold, but you cannot buy that inch of time with an inch of gold", "when an opportunity is neglected, it never comes back to you", "the waste of time amounts to the waste of life", "wasting other people's time is tantamount to robbery or murder". These are all needless time-spending and time-wasting, which cause to sigh deeply for some damage of value, even for vanishing value forever. In contrast, the real gains and utmost savings are almost the saving of time. All these notions, like "time is life", "time is money" and "efficiency is life", reveal that value is progressively generated and added within time flying and consuming. Due to this, the conspicuous and valuable creation is more likely to design for saving time and improving efficiency. For example, transportation means like carriages, automobiles, ships, trains, airports and spacecrafts, aim at shortening human time in travelling and transmission; the communicational tools including

⁶ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works (Volume 29)*, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1987, p. 91.

⁷ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works (Volume 29)*, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1987, p. 94.

the telegraph, phone, internet, and mail delivery, intend to reduce the communicational time; kinds of machines such as manual, semi-automatic and automatic machines, are conducted to shorten the processing time. Moreover, with the improvement of labor efficiency and social progress, free time is increasing as labor time is becoming less, thus humans have the more liberal conditions and possibilities for comprehensive and free development.

Certainly, some people also uncover that human beings do make some technological creations so as to save time, such as the massive new inventions and considerable new technology, which do not save time indeed, but rather beget more time-wasting. The invention of telephone makes the remote communication become convenient and swift by saving considerable transmission time. However, as the widespread of telephone, the telephone seems to be “the time killer” because much precious time, without calculating by people, is spent on the unnecessary calls, even with long time, especially owing to its cheaper price. Newspapers, magazines, televisions, movies and internet, and so on do save the information transit time, but also “murder” a great amount of time by reading or watching insignificant materials. For instance, plenty of people unconsciously spend their countless leisure time on lots of “soap opera series” which flood in TVs. What a time we waste! Obviously, it is lack of logic to connect the invention of new technology with time-wasting. After all, the new technology is in people’s hands and actually decided by the subject itself about whether to use it or not and how to use it.

In any case, with the development of times and of society, people are gradually aware of the significance in time value and life practice. The creation of human value enduring in the revolution of time has already been or is enormously changing the world. Meanwhile, in the duration of time, the world with more efficient and greater ability to innovate becomes more “humanization” and turns into a value world keeping pace with times and changes. When the social progress provides human beings with more free time, human beings gain more free and comprehensive development, and become more “being a man” and unceasingly improving.

2 Past, Present and Future

The arrow of time eternally targets one direction, and appears the basic pattern of “past–present–future”. In the flows of this singular and one-dimensional time, human value not only possesses the character of Da-sein and irreversibility, but also faces future ideality and transcendence. In other words, in this time stretches of “past–present–future”, human beings are different from any other animals. They are never satisfied with the present situation, and always develop for surviving, explore and turn into the desired direction at all times.

In the time dimension of value, human value practice has inseparable relations with history in accordance with the one-dimensional and singular time flowing.

The present human living world originates from the past human value practice, so human value practice cannot be unaffected by realistic environment and historical tradition. The contemporary human value practice, meanwhile, is also limited by the future ideality and the value goal, for the future contributes the structure meaning to the present. This is typically reflected in the distinctive tool activities of human beings. The Tool, as a result from the prior human activities, not only condensates our ancestors labor, the past innovative ideas and wisdom, but also is designed by the realistic needs and future ideality, and is the prerequisites and means for future creation and the key to open the future gate as well. Therefore, we know that human value activities for living inherit the historical memory and tradition, benefit from the social heredity of human accumulation and confined by it, and also clearly point to the future, to create the idealist world in the future.

For instance, we are living in a world full of past inventions and creations, in a “humanization world”, even the “artificial world” transformed by the past life practice. By looking around our homeland, engaging in our learning and working environment and introspecting our lives and entertainment, we can discover that everywhere is permeated with the imprints of past value activities. This, of course, is not just the entire enjoyment of the positive value, but also engages humans to suffer the massive negative value. Typically, environmental pollution and ecological imbalance caused by human previous activities have made so many people lose their survival homelands, suffer from effects like the raging sandstorm, scarcity or pollution of drinking water, littered rubbish everywhere, air pollution, energy shortages, frequent calamities and so on. By virtue of these ill consequences, many people have to endure varieties of inexplicable sufferings for a long time, and even to end their lives in advance.

At the same time, people still live in the ideal construction and transcendent fantasy for the future. It is indeed important to have the present consumption and entertainment and so forth. But if we indulge ourselves in this, have no beliefs and ideals in our lives, even give up the openness and transcendence for the future, there is no difference between us and other animals, which are solely drove by the instinct and only abided by the “measure of matter” to muddle along. The reason why humans can transcend the past and create the future constantly lies in consistent with the “measure of human beings” (including the aesthetic measure), besides the “measure of matter”. Human beings never succumb to the plight of history and reality, and never be satisfied with the gained achievements, but rather gradually improve themselves and create the glorious future, based on the ideality and transcendence of their own initiative and consciousness. For example, although human beings, in the past and present, have beset by plenty of environmental and ecological disasters, the responsible person is never willing to let it worsen in this way and wait passively by doing nothing, but to plan and design future with rational and scientific attitudes and practical actions for their generations. With regard to the deep introspection of the past sufferings and the profound dissatisfaction with the existing world, it is a far-reaching significance for people to advocate the environmental protection and sustainable development, so we form the following kind of value judgment about the future: never overdraw our future

life and environment, never overspent our generations' resource and wealth, and must take practical actions by self-adjustment so as to save the earth, ourselves and our future.

It is worth pointing out that "the samsara of cause and effect" in Buddhism was once involved in the value relations of the "past-present-future" between cause and effect. Although this value relation of the "past-present-future", to some extent, does have some similarities with ours, these two kinds of value relations are not simply identical with each other. The doctrines of Buddhism are believed that human life is an instant and continuous transmigration leaving nothing after experiencing, and has sufferings from the "Karma" made by the previous life. To be specific, the doctrines of Buddhism demonstrate "two aspects of cause and effect in the three times", namely, the present suffering results from the illusion and karma chiefly in previous existence, and the future suffering the present illusion and karma. It should be said that the samsara of cause and effect in Buddhism can only be understood on the basis of faith, and not be testified by the rationality or the science. Here, we want to uncover and approve that the reasons for all this do not lie in the Buddhist so-called mysterious fate, but in the realistic human and life practice. It is the human beings and the specific and historical practice that lead to the generation of value and the relations of cause and effect manifested in the time chain. That is to say, the value relations of "past-present-future" are not entirely unreal and false, but rather the realistic phenomenon caused by human being in the real life practice. Only when we embark on the concrete and historic human beings and on the realistic practice, can we comprehend the chain of cause and effect correctly, and carry out the proper transformation.

Humans need to evaluate the past and present value actions carefully on the grounds that the value has the inseparable relations, even the relations of cause and effect, with the time series. The aphorisms, like "history is the best judge" and "time is the most impartial judge", illuminate that the time plays an indispensable role in the value judgment. The value does not reverse from the perspective of time, so the past events have gone and cannot be pursued again, and the past mistakes cannot be made up by reversing the time. We are always unavoidable to have the regrets, and do not have the so-called "regret medicine" to eat. The purpose of evaluating the past is to summarize the experience objectively, to learn from the experience carefully, and try our best to avoid repeating the past mistakes again. If so, the experience and lessons, as the "gift" or the inheritance bestowed by the past time, will become the "booster" to create the present and future value. Meanwhile, human beings need to carry out the prudent designs and plans for the future by themselves. As a kind of animal striving for living by the value creation, human beings are confronting the future creation at all times. Thus human nature, rather than some kind of fixed or static state, is a dynamical trend and a generation of historical process toward the future. We construct the glorious dream and reasonable anticipation for the future, which is not only the goals and directions of life practice, but also provides the passion and motivation for human activities. Certainly, we can construct and anticipate the future, but whose realization needs

to take the past achievements as the foundation, to start from the present and to fulfill it by “realistic present”—the present state of consuming time.

It can clearly be seen that the crucial issues of value is to sum up the past carefully, to strive for grasping the present and to create the future attentively. The present is a time link between the past and the future, and a crucial factor to create all the values. The present is continuously fleeting and vanishing, but Jacques Lacan puts forward that the death brought by life or the death bringing the life, whose two kinds of death has the essential meaning for it indicates whether a person adopts the positive or the negative attitude toward life. The positive life attitude requires the urgent sense of “living-towards-death” and the transcendence of “tending-towards-eternal” to grasp the present by producing the maximum value of the present and the positive possibilities for the future. Only when we really hold the present, can we make up the past wasting time, overcome the past mistakes and confusions, inherit the value creation of the past, live up to the past hard work and effort, in order to produce the substantial benefits from the past experience or lessons. What is more, by holding the present effectively, we do not let the present become regret again, make the solid foundation for the happy future life and guide to construct the glorious blueprint of future value. By virtue of this, these following ideas and behaviors cannot be accepted by us: let a day pass negatively and passively without doing anything; *carpe diem* of the consumerism by caring noting; tend to “smash a pot to pieces just because it’s cracked—write oneself off as hopeless and act” with the destructive attitudes, trifle with youth and life, and so on. All these cannot be taken as our lives attitudes and behavior-orientations for they show the disrespecting to our lives value and the self-destructive possibilities for the glorious future.

3 Temporality of Value

Although we assure the time dimension of value and its relevance with the time extension, we, by no means, mean all the objects, at any time, have the same value to every subject (human beings).

As mentioned before, there does not exist any value beyond the time in fact. It doesn’t like what some thinkers believe that we can ignore the differences of value in the past, present and future. We often need to emancipate our minds, get rid of the superstition, keep pace with times and “reevaluate all values”, particularly in the social transformation or social reformation, because of the great changes in the condition of times, the spirits of age, the needs and abilities of subject, the ideas of times, the technology of measuring time, the pace of life, etc. As often as not, this is the era of great value transformation as well.

The distinctive temporality of value originates from the concrete historic subject itself, from the purposes and needs of the subjects accordance with the times, from the constant generation and improvement of subject basing on the life practice. Whether the subject at different times or the same subject at different

developmental stages confronts different environment for subsistence and activities, thus are asked to solve different questions. Moreover, their needs, cultivations and abilities vary from time to time. There is not possible for people to always feel and think alike on the nonfactual value issues, and more possibly to change with time. Actually, “all the things transfer with the time, place and conditions”. Today, if we measure the past by present subjectively and simply, the ancients may be just “speechless” or “acquiescence”, but are not really identical with it. Also, if we simply outline the future from the past and present aspects, our descendants may be laughed at it, just like what we treat many past prophecies in the value field.

The basic fact is that if we analyze the specific and historic value subject, we find that even if it had value in the past, it maybe does not have the same value for the present and future. The ancient bow had played an indispensable role in the age of broadsword and lance on account of its remote destruction. However, due to the emergence of modern firearms multiplied their destruction, bows and arrows gradually lost their power once they had, even have already been abandoned in actual combat, and now become the traditional athletics or recreational activities. The ancient transportation tools like the ox-drawn cart, carriages, mule cart were once the important means of transportation. After the more efficient tools like bus, train and airplane were invented, these ancient transportation tools gradually lost their existent meaning as the transportation, can only be found in some remote rural areas that lag behind. Likewise, some materials is valuable at present and future, but may be valueless the past, or whose value had been neglected. For example, considerable “newly” “discovered” recourses and “new” materials, leaving aside those artificial synthesis, others were said to have been neglected their values mostly. Also, some rare ores were abandoned in nature without ignoring, because there is no need in the relevant industrial production or the restriction of the smelting technology. But now, thanks to the production needs and technological advances, the rare ores are becoming the indispensable production resource. Today, people, “rereading the classics” and rewriting the history, actually “revalue the value” as well. Moreover, the valuable materials at past and present may become little value or even valueless in the future, just like the development process of the abacus. The abacus—so-called “ancient computer”—becomes almost useless in front of the calculator and modern computer. Therefore, it is reasonable and realistic to have these common sayings, such as “wait to sell at a good price”, “await an opportunity to take action” and “opportunity knocks but once”.

Even though the value is of temporality and varies with time, place and conditions, we constantly discuss these two issues, namely, the eternity and the immortality, which are even taken by considerable people as their ultimate values to pursue in their lives, like Shu Sun-bao, the Chinese aristocrat from the State of Lu in the Spring and Autumn Period. He puts forward “three kinds of immortality”: “the highest immortality is the establishment of the gracious virtue; the

second, the realization of the glorious achievements; the third, the generation of the famous speech. When these kinds of immortality are not forgotten after a long time, they are what so-called ‘immortality’ is”.⁸ Then, does the eternal and immortal value exist?

As far as I am concerned, the eternal and immortal value does exist in theory, for it can be the time state for the existence of the subject value.

For example, human beings, as a whole, favor the things and activities which are good for their entire reproduction, subsistence and development, so these things and actions have the eternal and immortal value for human beings. It is far-reaching significant for human beings to protect environment and to maintain the ecological balance, because it protects the eternal existent homeland and the activity venue, and maintains the life quality of human beings and the fair and justice of intergeneration. For most social communities, the objects or activities either protective or beneficial to their lasting existence, sound subsistence, collaboration and development should also have the eternal and immortal value. Alternatively, the eternal and immortal value should also be endowed with the subjects conforming to the life-long primary purposes, interests and needs, as well as the vital events and achievements significant to the human life.

From another perspective, the value activity is irreversible in time. The value of the things, at any time, does not have repeatability. Thus, it is the “present” that has the crucial significance in the subjects’ value activity. The present going to become past comes to the future. Indeed, it is not unreasonable for someone to say that grasping the present and moment is just getting the eternal. Each of us, just recalling back, have gone through some important moments, and have some historical moments worth memorizing and cherishing, such as the happy childhood memories, the experienced vital events, the distinctive life experience, the achieved vital success, the aesthetic moment of “fall in love at first sight”, and so on. Although all these classic “historical moments” pass in the twinkling of an eye, they are the wonderful and precious experience in our lives. Once we missed, it cannot come again, and repentance is unavailable. Once we grasped these moments memorized in our lives, they will become the eternal. We have not only the video products concluding the photos, music records, documentary films and other audios, but also the documentary works compounding the diaries, random thoughts, faithful records and reportage, and historical materials as well including the reminiscences, archival resources, oral history, whose importance lies in cutting off the time, and making the unforgettable historical moments and events become eternal for remembering and summarizing. Broadly speaking, human life is composed of considerable moments and events. Once we let the time, especially in the youth, slip away by accomplishing nothing, what we can do is just to recall it, rather than to trace it back. Therefore, it is important to grasp present, “retain the time” in order to realize the value of youth, and make the fleeting time become

⁸ *Zuo Zhuan-the Duke XIANG's Twenty-Fourth Year.*

meaningful, which becomes eternal for its value and has the immoral essence to human beings.

Of course, we must assure that the eternal and immoral value has the condition and limitation, and cannot be comprehended mechanically and rigidly or understood it in a stationary and absolute state. Only when the value has the specific subject in the certain development stage with the specific measure, can the value make sense. Definitely, it does not mean that what the world exists is like the fields of facts, and is the “value of iron” or the “truth of value”, which is not only beyond the specific subject, time and space, but also always right and universally applicable. Whether in history or reality, some people believe and accept this kind of “value of truth”, and even to sell it forcefully. As a fact, this kind of “truth of value” is nothing but the “mythology” of their beliefs, or the value judgment reflecting their purposes and interests, even the unscrupulous propaganda in order to achieve specific purposes. This kind of immoral and eternal value establishing on deception, hegemony and power, cannot stand up to measure from other specific subject and history by standing on other position. After all, its selfishness, hypocrisy and ridiculousness will be testified by history and time.

“To Be” of Value: A Direction of the Research into the Essence of Value

Meitang Sun

The former definition of “value” used to be focused on “being” of value, that is, to seek the predicate of value. This paper seeks to interpret value as its production and manifestation as well as its effects in the dynamic subject-object relation. The key to understand value needs to be switched to “to be”. Hence, the value philosophy of cutting-edge in China—“Relation theory” needs to be deepened and further concretized.

The discussion on the essence of value used to be focused on “being” of value, that is, to seek the predicate of value and free regularities of value, so as to determine its essence. However, is this substantialism or essentialism thinking feasible?

1 The difficulty to define “value”

In order to define the connotation of the predicate of value, we must first decide the counterpart of the signifier—the signified. What is the reference of value? Where and how does it exist? In other words, we have to find out the corresponding object of value. It may be a physical property or a psychological trait or other things. However, it is awfully difficult to define.

Subjective theory attempted to attribute the “signified” to the projection of something subjective and psychological, such as emotion, desire, pleasure and interest; whereas objectivists to an objective and inherent component, character or attribute. Although philosophers may differ in specific explanation, their basic

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ideas are in chorus: the complex subject-object interaction is neglected, and value is treated as a pure and isolated substance, a concrete and actual quality. These two obviously mistaken interpretations have evoked a lot of academic criticism, which is unnecessary to be repeated here.

Marx Scheler discovered the feature of value that it is but not only is the subject, likewise is but not only is the object, but explained value as “the third world” seemingly independent from the subject and the object. He still tried to grasp the inherent nature of value, yet this pattern of phenomenological value theory in fact does not transcend substantialism.

Based on the criticism and reflection on the viewpoints above, philosophers in China have gradually gained a consensus: value exists in the subject-object relation. Value is neither an entity concept, nor an attribute concept, but a concept of relation. Therefore, value should be defined from the perspective of subject-object relation and interaction, as a positive or negative relationship generated by the object and its attributes on human subjectivity. This view is known as the “relation theory”.

“Relation theory” is a breakthrough in the research into value. It effectively explains that pure subject or object is of no value, and value is produced and exists in the subject-object interaction. It has solved some old puzzles in value philosophy, namely, non-substantivity and relativity of value and subject-object unity.

The “relation theory” of value is not only a point of view, but a revolution of thinking. Unfortunately, many scholars still naturally or half unconsciously follow the old fashion. There exist mainly two problems.

First, substantialism is still adopted to annotate “relation theory”, which remains committed to “ontology”.

Some scholars regard value as a new quality engendered by the combination of a fixed substance (subject) and another fixed substance (object). When they define value, they pay much attention to determine what the relation is, not how the value will take forms in the complex subject-object interaction with the help of generation thinking and process thinking. Although the new wording “relation” is employed, a priori thinking habitually determines the essence of that relation, which will definitely lead our exploration back to the beginning.

The “relation theory” is also simplified to equate value to relation, further to a relation that the properties of the object meet the needs of the subject, as if value is the chain to bridge the two entities. Yet this proposition¹ does not exceed the stereotype of substantialism, but vulgarizes the “relation”, and is not the “relation” under discussion. The subject-object relation, more precisely, the subject-object interaction, is the residence, formation condition of value, rather than the value itself; value is generated in the subject-object interactive relation, but not equal to that relationship.

¹ It is a misunderstanding by some scholars to attribute such a “relation theory” to Li Deshun.

Secondly, human value² is understood in mode of “use value”, as if human value lies in its function and utility to others and society.

The “relation theory” confirms and highlights human subjectivity in subject-object interaction with much emphasis. Hence, the “relation” way of thinking to understand human value is consistent with the understanding of human value from the subjectivity stand. Some scholars do not understand it, explain human value by the routine—value is a relation in which the properties of the object meet the needs of the subject, and conclude human value as one meeting the needs of others, and the slogan “human value lies in dedication” best exemplifies this mode of thinking. This proposition precisely reverses the substantive content of human value, namely, subjectivity, human dignity and basic rights.

The above analysis discloses old traces of ontological thinking in the current “relation theory”. Ontological thinking has its drawback of transcendently establishing the inherent substance of value, simplifying the complex and dynamic relation, and fossilizing the open process of subject-object interaction. This can explain why the current discussion of the essence of value stigmatizes. It is imperative to enhance the “relation theory” to “generation thinking” and “process thinking” in order to exclude the influence of substantialism and essentialism, and further explore the nature of value.

2 “Value” unable to be materialized

It has been pointed out by former philosophers that value cannot be materialized and its inherent nature can barely be grasped. Plato once stated that beauty was not something beautiful. Later philosophers also commented that “good” was not “goods”. Mole regarded “good” as indefinable because he realized that the predicate of value was too difficult to determine. Rickert once said, “in terms of value, we cannot simply conclude whether it exists or not. Instead, we can only decide whether it is meaningful or not.”³ Those ideas are reasonable given that value cannot be materialized and essentialized.

That value cannot be materialized and essentialized is determined by the peculiarity of its existence with two basic characteristics.

Firstly, the existence of value is reflected in the emergence and manifestation of value in the dynamic subject-object relation, and the process in which value constantly “develops into” itself.

To be sure, value does exist objectively. However, value exists neither in the object nor in the subject, but in subject-object relation and the process of subject-

² Doctor Lai Jinliang has criticized this thinking mode a lot. See Lai (1995). “Several Issues that Marxist Philosophy and Theory of Value Should Be Noted.” *Zhejiang Sciences* 6. Lai (1994). “The Questioning of Subject-object Value Relation Mode.” (eds.). *Neo-Chinese and Japan value philosophy*. Shanxi People’s Education Press.

³ Rickert Heinrich (1982). *Cultural and Natural Sciences*. The Commercial Press.

object interaction. Value exists neither in the form of certain analyzable substance, nor isolated from the dynamic process of the subject-object interaction. It is the effects in the light of human being's combined purposiveness that displays in the process. Value comes into being when the object relates to the subject, and has "good" (benevolence) or "bad" (evil) meaning in terms of meeting the subject's needs, realizing its goal and accomplishing its transcendence. Since value is not determined by steady-state essence, it can only exist in the relation of interaction, exist as the effects of such an interaction, and exist in the dynamic forms of deepening, expanding, and mobilizing. It means that value has to consistently develop into itself and manifest itself so as to gain its regularities. Thus, value can never exist without the ever-lasting and deepening subject-object interaction, though the substantial subject and the object do not vanish.

Second, value's existence depends on the function of the subject and the practice. To be more expressive, we can simply treat value as the dependent variable of the two.

Value is a certain meaning and effect manifested in the process of the subject-object interaction in various aspects, such as meeting the subject's needs, showing its ideal and satisfying its survival and development goal. Therefore, the subject is the axis of value generation. The subject does not passively receive value, but actively unfolds and creates value, turning value into itself. In short, the content of value is a process in which the object is turned into the target of value (through practice) by the subject and manifests value to the subject. The element of subjectivity plays an essential and active part in the process of "formation" and "manifestation". To put in another way, as one party to create value, the subject can never be excluded, but stands at the nominative position. Such a position exhibits itself in the following facets: the subject is the origin of value—the conscious and free existence of man is the cause for subject-object separation, and triggers the question that what value and meaning the world has for human; the subject projects itself into value by constantly discovering, transforming and developing the target's value in the activities of combined purposiveness; the subject further explores the target's value for himself in the historical activities of objectification of himself and subjectivation of the object, etc. The characteristics of value's existence indicate that value does not have fixed and static essence. Instead, it acquires its essence in the historical practice by the subject. The regularity of the essence of both the subject and the object is not rigid and changeless. Conversely, it is a variable that develops and deepens with the changing practice. Similarly, the manner, content and extent of subject-object interaction are not still and unchanging. On the contrary, it is the process of extending, deepening and innovating with the development of history. That being the case, value that manifests itself in this interaction and process naturally is an ever-deepening and infinitely open process.

3 The new research with a focus on “to be” of value

Based on the analysis above, I tentatively propose that more importance should be attached to “to be” of value instead of “being” of value, which might be a new direction of the research into the essence of value. To be exact, the crux of value is not what it is or the essence it refers to, but its dynamic process of formation, or “to be” (sein). Value, in the complicated dynamic subject-object relation, completes its process of “to be”, developing into value, so it is clear what the value is.

The new angle, with focus on “to be” of value, has assumed new features from the traditional one:

(1) The focus of the new angle is not “being” of value, that is, the regularity of the predicate or the essence referred to, but “to be” of value, the process and mechanism of value formation; the regularity of value is regarded as some fruit and visualization of “to be” of value. What does it mean?

Value philosophy aims not to define value by genus and differences in breed, subordinating it under a larger concept. In other words, its stress is not on certain conclusions but on probing into the concrete historical process of the formation of value. The subject, in the social and cultural practice for his existence, development, and improvement, reforms the reality, equipping the object with a good or bad influence on the ideals, needs, and purposes of the subject’s activity. This is the source of value issue. Whether value tends to be effects, meaning, function, etc. will be naturally demonstrated in specific occasions. It means that “being” of value is the result of “to be”; it is not absolutely fixed but ambiguous innately. The concrete connotation of value is determined by the occasion in which it comes into being. In all, the answer to the question of “to be” will shed light on “being” as a matter of course.

(2) The new angle does not acknowledge some prior essence of value. Its essence is generated and manifests itself historically, so our thinking should be transformed to forming and manifesting mode.

Inquiring into “being” of value presuppose its essence for sure which seems to be fixed before subject-object interaction; inquiring into “to be” of value holds that no value exists before the interaction. Value takes shape and manifests itself in subject-object interaction. The concept of self-manifestation (scheinen) is the key to comprehend “to be” of value. Manifestation is a course of formation and change from micro to noticeable, from latent to realistic. An object or a fact is originally chaotic, possible, and latent, being nil. However, such a “nil” contains various possibilities of existence, numerous chances of possible but unrealistic being. To exist, the object (fact) has to manifest itself in a large amount of elements, conditions, and intermediary systems. Value comes into being by self-manifestation, generating its own regularities from nil, the state of abstract possibilities. Value, existing before subject-object activities as nil in a state of being latent and possible, is able to manifest itself only in the specific subject-object interaction. With the two-way deepening of the objectification of the subject and the subjectification of the object, the connotation of value shown by the subject and that shown to the

subject by the object are displayed in a constantly-deepening and fluid manner, and thus result in the fluid essence of value.

Given this characteristic of the essence of value, we need to adopt the derivative, fluid and self-manifesting thinking mode. As far as existentialism is concerned, modern philosophy has changed its direction from metaphysical substantialism to the theory of process, and the concept of self-manifestation, clarification, and appearance replaces that of being. Is the philosophy of value confronted with a similar change of direction?

(3) The new angle explores the rich and profound connotation of value from the view of subjectivity and the practice. The active practice of the subject is the key to comprehend of the essence of value.

Firstly, the question of value is virtually that of human, that of the realization and improvement of subjectivity, and that of the effect of the object to human in term of purposes, ideals, and needs of his existence, development and perfection. "To be" of value is essentially in line with the deepening of subjectivity, as well as the purposes, ideals, and needs of the existence, development and perfection of man; the latter is a ever-widening and deepening process. There is innately no concept of value in pure nature. When tracing back according to embryology, we find no clear dividing line between subject and object in a chaotic state, and value to be unclear and indistinct. Human conscious and free practice gives rise to subject-object separation, thus what value the object has to human needs, ideals, and purposes has since turned into a question.

Both subjectivity and objectivity are enhanced and intensified in the interaction of the objectification of the subject and the subjectification of the object. Value also comes into being in this two-way interaction. When the subject externalizes his inherent strength, the subjectivity of men, in addition, his needs, characters, ideals, and purposes of men are all elevated on account of the exercise of active practice and anti-function of labor gathered in the object, thereupon the subject manifests the value of the object from a deeper level. With the launch of a new round of objective activities, objectivity of the object will be intensified, so that it manifests its qualities to the subject from a deeper level. Both sides of value in the manifestation—the subject along with his activities of purposiveness and the object along with its properties—develop jointly in the mutually interactive pattern, and value forms right in this dynamic course.

Secondly, the question of value is also that of practice. Value forms with practice as the medium. The open and historical practice determines that the formation of value is an infinitely deepening process.

Practice is to create value. Value is the crystallization of labor and human inherent strength externalized through practice. In practice, human transforms the object according to their own scale, and integrate their inherent strength with the nature of the object, providing a realistic source of value for the society. Consequently, human practice and deeds are true motives of "to be" of value.

Practice is not an abstract static concept but a concrete historical one, an unlimited widening, evolving, and deepening activity. New objects, new scopes and new characters of the subject all created by the subject himself in practice will

bring about new content and forms of practice. Interaction of this kind is endless. Practice, a free activity, is in essence open, evolutive and progressive, which determines that the formation of value is ongoing forever.

(4) The new angle comprehends value from human distinct agency—to create value and make it come true.

I stand against defining human value by the same method for the object, and treating human value as that of the object. Firstly, human value is of higher level than that of the object, and it would be better to call it meta-value. To put in another way, human possess value by way of his own unique agency—to create value and turn other values into their own. Only human, a conscious and free subject, is able to creatively fulfill their needs, attain their goals and ideals, provide themselves with value, and make value come true. This characteristic is of distinctive value to human. Obviously, value and the value to create value do not dwell on the same level.

Secondly, the mention of human value does not reduce it to the level of the object in order to serve other people, and manifest itself to others as well as to the society. It means that human labor, his practice and its fruit become the object of human value. When creating value, the status of human as an agent is not degraded but confirmed. What is consumed and enjoyed by human is not human himself, but the fruit of his labor. To sum up, it is creating value and making value come into being that make human a distinctive subject. This feature and its social and cultural effects caused are the true meaning of human value.⁴

⁴ Sun Meitang. (2001). “Human Value: Bases and Types”. *Beijing Institute of Technology Journal Social Science* 2.

The Course of Human Subjectivity

Zhan Guo

1 From Material Noumenon to Human Subjectivity

Subject and object are a pair of juxtaposed categories, and each of which can only obtain its own definition in relation to the other. Every material being has an effect on others, namely, the other surrounding beings. In such actions, the one producing, initiating the effect is the subject of the effect, while the one receiving the effect, being acted upon, is the corresponding object of the effect. Since actions between things are mutual, any particular thing is both actor and acted upon, is both subject and object, and thus the distinction between subject and object has a relative character.

Human as a subject of limited being, both in terms of time and space, undoubtedly belongs to and originates in the unlimited material noumenon and its forms of existence. However, man is not only in general a subject with material movements like other natural forms of matter but is also in particular a material subject with advanced forms of motion like thought and socialization. Consequently, man as a subject which can think and socialize is, within the spatio-temporal realm affected by his activities, obviously superior to other material subjects in specific interactive relationships. In the face of the sparklingly rational brilliance of human subjectivity, the sensual radiance with a poetic flair of the subjectivity of other material beings inevitably appears pale.

Yet, people should never forget that, within another frame of reference, man, society and nature together comprise the materials subjects of the movements of all the things in the cosmos and within these universal interactions the superiority of man as a subject is not absolute. The linkage and consistency of these two

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frames of reference are shown not only by human subjectivity originating in the subjectivity of the general forms of material existence but also by its intrinsic determinations and conditioning by material factors in the course of evolution.

2 The Meaning and Characteristics of Human Subjectivity

A number of investigations have been done from different angles with regard to the meaning of human subjectivity. In principle everyone tends to agree that subject and subjectivity have to be delineated from within the interconnection of subject and object. This common starting point makes it possible for us to derive a generally unanimous perspective: human subjectivity is the qualitative definition of man acting as an active subject and is the specific characteristic of human self-conscious initiative and creativity developed during the interaction with the object.

Philosophers before Marx, both the materialists and the idealists, each in their own different way and from different perspectives, probed the mystery of human subjectivity. With the so-called rediscovery of man in the Renaissance, the question of human subjectivity became a burning issue for philosophic exploration in Europe. Philosophers divided into two schools on this question: the material subject and the spiritual subject school. According to the perspective of the material subject school, in the final analysis natural matter was the ultimate subject, and was even seen as the only subject, man usually being dissolved into the material world of nature. Man could display limited subjectivity in his own activities but only if he unconditionally recognized the objective reality of the external world and conformed to its inner necessities. The spiritual subject school on the other hand bypassed the material world's objective reality and objective necessity and saw the subject as a conceptual, spiritual substance. Since the limitations of matter's objective reality and necessity were cast off, idealism achieved its maximum flexibility in the so-called conceptual movements of the cosmic spirit or man.

Superficially, the two schools above dealt not with human subjectivity but with subjectivity as related to the noumena of the world. In fact, however, anyone who observed the world and pondered over it could not but begin first of all with man himself and, consciously or not, go through man himself to understand the world.

Invariably the subject, man himself, was abstracted, objectified, and made into a miniature of the entire world, which was then visualized with the aid of this mental model. Thus the image of the human subject was reflected in the world subject of its own understanding. This was what was meant when philosophers spoke of the mutual reflection between the "macrocosm" and the "microcosm" man. Man concurrently had both material and spiritual attributes as subject, was a duality of so-called mind ("心") and matter ("物"). Grasping the world solely through the material attributes of man led to the view of the subject as material; solely through

the spiritual attributes, to the view of the subject as spiritual. From a reversed perspective, both of these views of the subject could be seen as explications of the human subject from one aspect. The rational elements contained in each of these two partial accounts needed to be joined together.

The dialectical synthesis of the intellectual fruits of the investigations into human subjectivity by philosophers has been realized by Marxist dialectical materialism which includes the dialectical materialist view of history. The premise of this synthesis is the introduction of the scientific concept of praxis into epistemology and historiography, uniting in an organic relationship the two sides in the activities of the subject, the material attributes and the spiritual attributes (practice and knowledge). It is only through the affirmation of man's identity as the subject of practice and knowledge that it is possible to truly understand the essential determinant of man's relationship to the object of his activity, i.e., human subjectivity. Man as subject is not something abstract and invariably fixed but a concrete, historically active subject. The objects corresponding to particular subjects are also in flux and possess nonrepeatable spatiotemporal features.

Individual differences in human subjects, as well as differences in the same individual at different stages of development, create polychromatic variations in human subjectivity which make it difficult to grasp. The question is, did human subjectivity evolve in the same or similar sequence as in the changes demonstrated by individuals? Can an empirical description of this phenomenon be outlined using logical forms? If this can be positively-answered and demonstrated, then there is reason to argue further that the differences in subjectivity between people which are apparent when they are compared are essentially synchronic embodiments in different individuals of the different stages of the evolution of human subjectivity. Therefore, it is not necessary to trace the entire process of the development of subjectivity for every person; one need only analyze and synthesize the distinctions in subjectivity of numerous individuals coexisting in space to have the possibility of understanding the general process of the evolution of human subjectivity over time.

3 The Process of the Development of Human Subjectivity

In accordance with a historical and logical sequence, the developmental process of human subjectivity may be divided into three periods and nine stages: (1) Initial Period Human Subjectivity, which includes four stages, subjectivity in itself (zizai), natural (ziran) subjectivity, self-cognizant (zizhi) subjectivity, and egotistic (ziwo) subjectivity; (2) Transitional Period Human Subjectivity, which is one stage, the stage of self-less (zishi) subjectivity; and (3) Advanced Period Human Subjectivity, which also has four stages, self-conscious (zijue) subjectivity, self-strengthening (zi-qiang) subjectivity, self-acting (ziwei) subjectivity and free (ziyou) subjectivity.

Initial Period Human Subjectivity

Stage One: Subjectivity in Itself

In the beginning, when individual men or mankind as a whole appears, there is no actual human subjectivity to speak of, but this does not mean that there is absolutely no subjectivity. For while the links in the process which produce man go from nonexistence to existence, it is not pure nonexistence. For man to be born and become man, there have to be specific relationships with surrounding things. Thus human subjectivity sprouts from the subjectivity of the existing material forms of the natural world. The fountainhead of human subjectivity is the dynamic tendencies which accumulate in the evolution of natural matter, especially the animate organic world, and which are inexorably expressed in human society. Human subjectivity as Hegel recognized, in its initial existence is determined in itself.¹ As Lenin understood this, “in itself” = potentially, not yet developed, not yet unfolded”.² This potential, in-itself subjectivity is located at the juncture point of nature and society in the transition from animal to man, and thus has a mediate, transitional nature. It is the starting point of the transformation from the subjectivity of real things to the subjectivity of real men, the beginning of the transition from man’s natural attributes to man’s social attributes. The significance of human subjectivity in itself as an intermediate link in the transition from latent to real man does not lie primarily in what it itself is but in what it conjoins and whence it leads. Only in reality is man’s latent subjectivity in itself able to reveal itself and its necessity.

Stage Two: Natural Subjectivity

This is the stage of human subjectivity redolent with the rich breath of nature, subjectivity being gradually realized from the latent, in-itself stage. Although immediately at birth man enters into society, what he encounters initially is not true social relationship so much as what might be called consanguineous, natural relationships. Whether it be an individual or mankind, during youth the relationships between people, as well as those between the individual and his surrounding environment, initially possess natural characteristics. For man to become a subject in a particular natural relationship is something wholly natural, of which he himself is still unaware. Within the perceptual, natural world of mother and family, of flora and fauna, he is carefree and self-satisfied. Man at this point is still an incomplete subject physically and mentally, unable to distinguish objects, not to mention transform them. Man and others, man and nature are in a primitive, direct, murky unified state. “Man is confronted with a web of natural phenomena. Instinctive man, the savage, does not distinguish himself from nature”.³ In terms of primary characteristics, it would be better to say that the man of this time is more of Nature than of society and a subject living within this natural nexus whose

¹ G. W. F. Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, quoted in V. I. Lenin. *Conspectus of Hegel’s “Science of Logic”*, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXXVIII, p. 226.

² Lenin, *op. cit.*, p. 226.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

subjectivity can only be considered to be a sort of natural subjectivity. However, this subjectivity is also not purely natural; social elements are already included therein and moreover are constantly increasing. Man essentially is a social being but this social essence does not arrive intact with birth but is subsequently obtained during the person's social activity. In one sense, the growth process of the child is the process of human socialization, as well as the process of transformation from natural man into social man.

Stage Three: Self-Cognizant Subjectivity

As man gradually distinguishes himself from nature, he also becomes conscious that as a subject he is different from the object. Man is aware that he can be the dynamic, effective initiator in relationships with the object, causing the objective to undergo certain changes in these actions. He observes with curiosity the result directly caused by him, knowing the inexplicable joy of serving as an active subject. In children's games as well as practical jokes, it is easy to see this kind of experimentation which is naive but also takes seriously playing the part of the subject. Self-cognizant subjectivity is a sublation of natural subjectivity, the beginning of the transition from subjectivity obtained from outside to human subjectivity unearthed from within. The self-cognizance of this subjectivity is merely preliminary, superficial, hazy, not really understood, or though well known it is not for sure that it is truly known. Even if man at this time is conscious that he has a certain subjectivity, he also does not understand what this subjectivity is. This is to say, what appears at this stage is a long way from self-conscious, rational (vernünftige) human subjectivity and perhaps could be called understanding (verständliche) subjectivity. Since the scope of man's own activity at this time is narrow, knowledge of the object is limited and any profound grasp of the subject-object relationship difficult, this subjectivity can only be imagined for the most part from individuals.

Stage Four: Egotistic Subjectivity

Up to this stage, man is still living in the environment of a "community".

(Gemeinschaft), the vast ocean of "society" (Gesellschaft) still does not confront him. Generally speaking, this "community" bears a special, protective significance for the immature subject. The subject in this state finds it relatively easy to obtain from the external environment basic satisfaction of superficial needs, including such aspects as material life and emotional psychology. He still does not understand the difference between "community" and "society", nor the nature of the special care which the external guarantees of his subjectivity have; he mistakenly believes that he intrinsically, naturally, possesses this subjectivity, and it seems a matter of course that objects and others should revolve about this subject. This is a self-satisfied, conceited, willful intoxication of the ego, which can be called egotistic subjectivity. Expanded out of control, it will lead inevitably to solipsism and the use of egotistic subjectivity to negate and eliminate the subjectivity of others; like Diderot's harpsichord which had feelings, "There came a moment of madness when the feeling harpsichord thought that it was the only harpsichord in

the world, and that the whole harmony of the universe resided in it”.⁴ In the early history of some individuals as well as of certain nations, there is no lack of extreme expressions of this egotistic subjectivity. But it should be pointed out that not every subject goes to extremes during this stage. Moreover, egotistic subjectivity in general acts as a stage in the development of human subjectivity, and has its positive role: it determines and strengthens the subject status of the ego and is a further attempt at self-realization which promotes the development of the subject’s self-consciousness. Even so, egotistic subjectivity remains an expression of the subject’s immaturity. No matter how long or severe this stage is for ‘a specific subject, as the subject and the actual state of the subject and object changes, egotistic subjectivity will ultimately be negated by subsequent stages.

Transitional Period Human Subjectivity

Stage Five: Self-Less Subjectivity

Once the subject emerges from “community” and enters into “society” there is a weakening and even loss of that special care which in the previous small environment allowed him to have a certain self-pride and willfulness, and man must use his original state to link up with and have an effect on objects and others. The appendages evincing his subjectivity which were added to him formerly by nature and “community” gradually fall off and the conceptual subject-sense inflating in the human ego tends to contract. The subjectivity which originally appeared quite arrogant suddenly depreciates; man finds himself subject to the object, virtually dissolved within the object. Under these conditions man develops a severe sense of loss, feeling that along with the departure of those appendages evincing subjectivity and the ego’s subject-sense he also seems to be losing even the ego. “Will-less,” a concept in Schopenhauer’s philosophy, can best encapsulate this human predicament and state of mind. The “will-less” subject, according to him, loses the self in contemplation of an object. “We *lose* ourselves entirely in this object... we forget our individuality, our will”.⁵ Man enters into the real world, and when he still does not comprehend reality, still lacks the capacity and means for real life, reality remains alien and apparently opposed to him, and the objectivity of things stifles the subjectivity of man. Developed to an extreme, this state is so-called -alienation, i.e. what the subject has objectified becomes an alien force opposed to the subject, causing subjectivity to lose its reality. At this stage, human subjectivity does not disappear but it repressed, distorted or ruined, and hence is called self-less subjectivity.

Advanced Period Human Subjectivity

Stage Six: Self-Conscious Subjectivity

Within the perplexity of self-lessness man critically reflects on his conception of subject, reclarifying and purifying his original conception. Reversals and

⁴ Denis Diderot, “Conversation Between D’ Alembert and Diderot” in Jonathan Kemp (ed.), *Diderot, Interpreter of Nature: Selected Writings* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1963), p. 61.

⁵ Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation* (New York: Dover, 1969), Vol. I. p. 178.

adversity in the development of human subjectivity function to present unequivocally before people implacable objectivity. Grim reality reveals that it is impossible to rely on other persons or things; only by depending on the strength of one's own thought and action can one stand up in the world, struggle for and win survival and development. The great weight of objectivity can produce two contrary results in people. Those squashed by it are craven weaklings who become slaves taking orders from objects in which are included other "subjects" which appear using the status of the object (real or mystical "subjects" like power, money, gods, fate, etc.). People capable of withstanding reverses; not flinching from adversity or historical hardships but becoming more steadfast, reconfirm their own positions as subject in relationships with objects. The former result leaves people for a long time in a state where subjectivity is selfless and alienated; the latter frees people from the vexations of self-less subjectivity and brings them to the self-conscious stage. In practical activity and knowledge or reality man becomes aware that he is not a passive being which can only be set in motion by the actions of outsiders or others, and does not have to accept the whirl of some fate. On the basis- of knowledge of the object, man can actively draw support from practical action on the object and in this objectifying activity realize human goals, thereby substantiating his own essence and power. As this power increases and becomes more at one with man's essence, man has a greater sense of himself as human subjectivity. Self-conscious subjectivity is more real and deep than the previously mentioned self-cognizant subjectivity, and represents a further development or awakening on a higher level of human subjectivity. The self-conscious stage realizes a remarkable leap in the evolution of human subjectivity, starting with which human subjectivity enters a series of developmental stages qualitatively unlike the preceding stages.

Stage Seven: Self-Strengthening Subjectivity

The subject's self-consciousness does not lie merely in knowledge of the object's state and its laws but also in understanding the subject's own state and the contradictions between the subject and object, i.e., in self-knowledge of the subject's own reality. The subject steeled by passing through the stage of self-less is conscious during introspection of the weaknesses and disparities of man himself confronting real objects. As the ancients have said, "Know helplessness. Only then will it be possible to strengthen oneself".⁶ The subject is no longer blindly satisfied with his conditions; in order to grasp the object dynamically in both theory and practice, the subject urgently needs to improve and strengthen his intellectual capacities and practical abilities. Self-strengthening subjectivity has a dual nature: on the one hand, it is the self-enrichment or strengthening of the subject' in the realm of 'knowledge, embodied in the thirst for knowledge and wisdom and the spiritual pursuit of the good, the true and the beautiful; on the other hand, it is also self-conscious training in the practical realm of the subject's ability to actually grasp the object, whose direct purpose does not lie primarily in transforming the

⁶ Liji-Xueji (The "Study" chapter of *The Book of Rites*).

object but in transforming the subject himself. Self-strengthening subjectivity indicates that human subjectivity is tending toward maturity, making the transition from self-conscious conceptual subjectivity to self-conscious active subjectivity.

Stage Eight: Self-Acting Subjectivity

As soon as man acts as a self-conscious subject not only conceptually but also in action, being oriented toward and transforming the object from the position of a vigorous subject, human subjectivity has reached the stage of acting by itself. As Hegel has said, "In truth, man's true existence is his activity... the way a man behaves is what he is".⁷ Only when man has conducted his own actions from the attitude of a subject and used his own subjective activity to control the object is he then the subject of his own actions and may be called man the subject. During this stage man is not only a subject with self-conscious initiative but also a subject whose initiative is creative. Creativity is the supreme expression of self-conscious human initiative. To repeat a creation is not to create, but at most to imitate or copy. Repetitive activities are useful for stabilizing certain states, but to break through and change an initial state, non-repetitive, creative action is necessary. To be sure, stress on the creative significance of the subject's actions does not mean that everything the creative subject does must be creative. In fact, outside the specific realm concerned with the pursuits which realize his life, especially in the sphere of everyday life, the subject's behavior is probably very ordinary, simple, and uncreative. Habits are second nature to man and what results from ingrained habits is nothing but inertial, repetitive behavior. The overall energy of an individual subject is limited and to average out the utilization of effort would be ineffective. It is only by conserving a relatively large amount of energy in habitual behavior that the subject is then able to concentrate it on his primary goal and give full play to his creative capacities in practice within specific fields.

Stage Nine: Free Subjectivity

The "acting by itself" and the "free" together form the categories marking the highest stages of subjectivity; rather similar to one another, they may even signify one another, the subject acting by itself being free and the free subject acting by itself. The difference between the two lies in that the acting by itself focuses on the state when the subject is oriented toward the object, i.e., the high degree of human subjectivity expressed in dynamic, effective action on the object, while the free focuses on the state of reflecting the subjective itself from the subject's essence objectivized within the object, i.e. the full human subjectivity embodied in the testimony of those powers of the object vis-à-vis the subject which were changed by the subject. Should one say that the self-acting is outer-directed and objectified, ultimately the self realized in the objective object, then the free is inner-directed and subjectified, in the end the psychological experience of reaching the subject's realization of his own worth. But the freedom of which we speak is not merely a psychological experience; there must be the preconditions of being self-conscious and self-acting before the subject can be truly and really free. Freedom bereft of

⁷ G.W.F. Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (Chinese edition), Vol. I, p. 213.

self-consciousness and unable to be self-acting is no more than a subjective, factitious hallucination, the sort of freedom imagined by the prisoner who shuts his eyes to his iron bars or experienced by the scholar who merely dreams he has written a masterpiece. In terms of this developmental stage of human subjectivity, freedom and liberation are synonymous. But freedom may be understood within the relationship with the object, as well as merely from the subject's side, while liberation necessarily takes the existence of an object restricting the subject as its condition, clarifying the relationship of the subject vis-à-vis the object. This distinction is clearly embodied in Rousseau's famous remark: "Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains".⁸ Essentially free man shedding the fetters of the object's chains, it is this outcome which is so-called human liberation. As Rousseau recognized, since people renounce their unlimited "natural freedoms" when they ratify the social contract, they 'are thereby entitled to "civic freedoms", including spiritual freedom, which make man truly become his own master. The freedom which Rousseau said man possessed at birth, i.e. "natural freedom", can at best only be considered to be freedom in its potential form, appropriate to the stage of subjectivity in itself. True freedom, like true liberation, is the real result of the development of human subjectivity and not its starting point. However, merely relying on the social contract cannot achieve the subject's true freedom or liberation. Both the objects fettering the subject and the relationships between object and subject really exist and "true liberation can only be realized in the real world and using real means".⁹ The freedom of the subject is not accidentally, individually realized but is an overall state which clarifies the subject's innate characteristics and constitutes a stage in the evolution of human subjectivity. Free subjectivity is the highest state of development of human subjectivity, the true reality of man's being man or man acting as subject. This is the most rousing, most splendid and inspiring movement in the symphony of human subjectivity; at this moment life radiates a unique luster.

The preceding nine stages of human subjectivity are arranged in ascending order. While self-less subjectivity forms a turning point, the former four stages and the latter four stages are divided into the two major periods of initial and advanced. The qualitative, even quintessential, changes which create all these divisions, and all the links which join up this set of changes, are not external connections but are internal dialectical negations within the development of human subjectivity. In terms of dialectical development, within the process of the affirmation of human subjectivity, there are necessarily a certain number of denials of human subjectivity in earlier stages. With the aid of a number of positive self denials which include self affirmations, human subjectivity can then complete its uninterrupted transition from abstract conceptual, partial and narrow subjectivity to concrete, real, comprehensive and broad subjectivity.

⁸ J.-J. Rousseau, *Du Contrat Social*, Bk. I, ch. 1.

⁹ Marx, "Draft of 'The German Ideology'" in *Collected Works* (Chinese edition), Vol. 42, p. 368.

4 The Subjectivity of the Individual and of Mankind

Mankind as a whole constitutes the subject of historical action, the general course and logic of the evolution of its subjectivity being at one with that of the individual which can be seen as its epitome and individual realization. The general degree of development of subjectivity for the individual in a particular historical period indicates the level reached by the subjectivity of mankind as a whole in that historical stage. When the individual subjectivity of a minority greatly exceeds a specific period's general level, if it is not an abnormal inflation achieved by relying externally on the sacrifice of others' subjectivity but is the full internal development of individual subjectivity under given historical conditions, then this anticipatory expression of subjectivity is doubtless a harbinger of history, presaging and leading to a higher general stage of development of subjectivity for mankind. Therefore, even though the previous analysis focused on the evolutionary process of individual human subjectivity, in principle and logic it is applicable 'as well to the history of the development of the subjectivity of mankind as a whole.

By cosmic standards, the entire history of mankind is but a brief moment in the evolution of the cosmos. Similarly, when compared to the entire history of mankind, the history of the existence of any individual is also transient. But the limited, temporary nature of the existence of individual subjectivity in time and space does not mean that the human subjectivity connected with the individual subject is insignificant. One would rather say that it is precisely due to the limited and temporary nature of the existence of the individual subject and of even mankind as a whole that the significance or value of human subjectivity stands out. The individual subject will inevitably consciously or unconsciously affirm his subjectivity in some way. A self-conscious understanding of this point is valuable for a true, comprehensive realization of the value of the existence of man as a subject. Man should especially cherish those stages in his journey through life which are most capable of embodying essential human powers. Society too should create conditions for the healthy development of everyone's subjectivity and pay attention to the best years of each person's life, so that they aid in the advance of society and civilization and are allowed to bear the most beautiful flowers. If each person's subjectivity is better realized, then the subjectivity of mankind as a whole will reach higher standards. At present the development of mankind as a whole has still not reached the realm of freedom, nor even fully entered into the stage of self-conscious subjectivity. In short, mankind is still in the process of rising from initial period human subjectivity and going through the transitional period to advanced period human subjectivity, and still requires self-conscious, self-strengthening and self-acting efforts before it can reach the realm of freedom for the development of human subjectivity. The development of human society is just unfolding, the future is bright and beautiful, and it is really worth our struggling for it unremittingly, generation after generation.

Value is Human Being Itself and Human Self-realization

Jintian Liu

Value is the core concept in the Philosophy of Value. I think that value is the human being itself and self-realization. Value can be divided into the value itself and the valuable things. The human being itself and self-realization are the value itself, and those things, which are valuable to human being itself and self-realization are valuable things. The value itself is the core that the Philosophy of Value specializes in, and the valuable things are the objects that the Philosophy of Value specializes in.

The relationship between the generalities and particularities, between transcendence and experience is a true philosophical question. On one hand, philosophy pursues for the existence of generalities and the transcendence from the particularities and experience, on the other hand, guides the particular and experimental things by using them, but philosophy just focuses on the seek of the generalities and transcendence. The Philosophy of Value takes the value as its main task, but its key point is the general and transcendent value, not particular and experimental value. The dialogue written by Plato who is a philosopher in ancient Greece, was called as “*the dialogue of Socrates*”. The dialogue shows the universal and transcendent definitions of morality. What Kant’s philosophy pursues is also the transcendent capacity of human being and its general forms. As philosophy, what the Philosophy of Value talks about is the transcendent value itself, but not the experimental and valuable things, just like what Plato had pursued, is mainly the “goodness itself”, but not “the good things”.

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1 One: The Value is the Human Being Itself

Value itself being different from the valuable things is the human being itself and self-realization. To understand it, we need to dispel a kind of common sense of thinking. In our everyday life, people always confuse the valuable things with value itself. For example, when one cup can meet the demands for water, people say that the cup is valuable, value is the attribute that the cup has itself. Actually, the value of cup is not the cup itself, but human being. Because the value of cup is endowed by human being. When the cup is made, the material of glass and steel was given the shape of cups, thus, cups have the value to meet people the demands for water. When we understand it, we should enclose the materials that cups were made with parentheses, then comprehend the shapes left, observing where they are from, only in this way can we find the man who endowed the materials with shapes. Thus, human being is the origin that valuable things are valuable. And all the value origin in the artificial world comes from here, thus, humanity has value, and there's no humanity, there's no value. Value emerges because of humanity, and varies from person to person, being identical and changing because of humanity. Pro De shun Li, who is a Chinese philosopher of value, calls the view as value subjectivity.¹

From the proposition of "value emerging because of man", we can further deduce the proposition of "value being because of man". This is the turn from the theory of epigenesis of value to ontology of value. The meaning of value emerging because of human being is that the value of valuable things are endowed by human being, and value comes into being, humanity is the origin of value. This is one way of epigenesis. According to it, humanity will raise questions: what causes value of human being? Thus, questions emerge: firstly, it seems that there's much more noble value above human being, and humanity comes from the value which is much further. Secondly, human being is considered as one means or tools of value. We will not agree to the view.

Because "value emerging because of human being" means that there's no earlier and much more lofty value, and we can't make a detailed inquiry. Thus, we originate the value behind human being, so we should give up the train of thought, entering into the train of thought of ontology. That's to say, we should change the train of "value emerging because of human being", going in for "value being because of human being". "Being" is the ontology. The "being" of value is human being, in other words, value is man itself, and it is about the ontology of value. It's just like what Paul Lee Branch, who is a French philosopher, had said, "the concept of principle is the disappearance of the origination of the origin". Value is human being itself, and it means that human being itself is not only the origin of all valuable things, but also the value itself, the ontology of value.

¹ Li deshun: *Axiology*, the second Edition, Renmin University of China press, the 2007 edition, p. 102.

The thought of “value being human being itself” has formed in the pre-Qin Period in China. The thought of “Benevolence” is the whole and fundamental value of Confucian philosophy, and it is the general designation of other concrete value. Feng Youlan had said, “‘Benevolence’ can be translate into perfect virtue”, then what’s benevolence? Mencius answers it in the view of “humanity”, he said, “benevolence is human being”. In other words, the benevolence which is as the whole value, is human being itself. Value is benevolence, and benevolence is humanity itself. In Chinese traditional philosophy, value is called “gui”, and Mencius explains the connotation of “gui” taken as value with “humanity”. He proposes that “everybody be nobler than himself”,² and Mencius persists in the view that “gui lie mainly in one himself”, “one himself” is somebody who is himself. The thought of Mencius comes from Confucius. Confucius says, “being benevolent lies in one himself”.³ That’s to say, benevolence is decided by humanity. Because of it, favoring value is to love humanity, Confucius thinks that “the benevolent loves others”.⁴ In Song Dynasty, the Confucians propose that “heart is reason”, “nature is reason”. “Heart” and “nature” are the provisions in humanity’s inner subjectivity, “reason” is not the reason of substance, but the reason of value. So, the opinion of “heart is reason” and “nature is reason” refers to value of humanity.

In the history of western philosophy, Protagoras who is the wise man proposes the proposition that “humanity be the measure of all things”. And this is the beginning to propose that value be human being itself. Socrates defies the opinion that we should pursue for the truth outside the natural world, and for the first time, he proposes that we pursue for the truth in inner soul and heart. Kant explicitly claims, “humanity is the final goal to be made in the world”.⁵ and Kant said, “it is only humanity and all reasonable creatures can be a free goal”.⁶ “The last aim”, “free aim” are value itself, and the value itself is humanity.

Then, how to understand “human being itself”? “Human being itself” has two meanings: firstly, it refers to the common humanity that exists and hides in the individual man, secondly, refers to “human power” that can be considered as the fundamental characteristic.

Firstly, “humanity itself” refers to the common humanity that exists and hides in an individual man. Humanity itself is not the God, not the objects, also not “what”, but “human being is”. “Humanity itself” refers to the common humanity

² *The Mencius, the Analects of Confucius·Gao zi Shang*(M), noted and translated by Yang Bojun, Zhong hua Book Company, Beijing.

³ *The Analects of Confucius·Yan yuan*, noted and translated by Yang Bojun, Zhong hua Book Company, Beijing.

⁴ *The Analects of Confucius·Yan yuan*, noted and translated by Yang Bojun, Zhong hua Book Company, Beijing.

⁵ Kant: *critique of judgment*, translated by Deng Xiaomang, press of people, the 2002 edition, p. 284.

⁶ Kant: *critique of practical reason*, translated by Guan Wenyun, the Commercial Press, the 1960 edition, p. 89.

that exists in individuals and above them. Every individual is particular, but he will not be particular until he is the humanity, and they are humanity, having the common humanity. The common human nature is called personality. In the world, though men, women, ancient people, modern people, yellow people, white people, the capitalist, workers, farmers and criminals are different, they are all human being, and having personality.

The common humanity and the universality of humanity are inter-connected, but still different. Both of them have the nature of humanity. While the common humanity has the meaning of nature of transcendent humanity. In Rome Law, there are three concepts about humanity: *home*, refers to the biological people, *caput*, refers to the subjectivity of the legal rights and obligations, *persona* refers to the personality. The common people refers to the personality. Human being itself is the value of nature. John Rawls emphasizes that persons of personality are the concepts of the significance of standardization. He says, “the concept of person should not be misunderstood as the concept of human being, while mankind is one of the homosapiens, because the latter can be regulated by Biology and psychology instead of the concepts of kinds of regulations such as concept of moral capacity, moral virtue and political virtue”.⁷ Everybody has the characteristic of the common people, thus has value. Good men have value, wicked men and criminal s have value, too. The value between person and person is different in quantity, not in quality. As Aristotle says, wick is the reduction of good, not materialization. So the personality of criminals should be respected, can’t be insulted. Because value is the value itself, every person is equal. Equality being value is an important concept that contains in the proposition of human being itself.

Secondly, “humanity itself” refers to “the human ability” which is the fundamental characteristic of humanity. “Human power” is the fundamental ability that humanity has. It is the ability to identify, affirm and establish “valuable things”. In *the Bible*, Adam and Eve who are earliest ancestors are tempted by snakes and eat apples on the trees which know the good and wick, then they have the ability to distinguish good and wick, being real humanity. The ability is “human power”. The main contribution of Kant is to research on the “human power” roundly and deeply. Li zehou points out, “in Kant’s philosophy, he puts forward the question of “psychological form” that human being is what he should be, and I take it as ‘human power’ or ‘psychological structure of culture’”.⁸ (I think that “human power” includes the born forms of soul, but not the complete form, because the form has the fixed characteristics, and human power has much more transcendence and unlimitedness.) “Human power” of Kant mainly refers to the born ability of recognition, desire and appreciation of beauty, they are the ability to recognize and establish truth, good and beauty. And it is called essential strength, inner scales of human in Marxism philosophy. Marx defines human power as “aim itself” in his

⁷ John Rawls: *justice as fairness—Justice Theory*, translated by Yao Dazhi, Sanlian bookstore in Shanghai, the 2002 edition, p. 40.

⁸ Li Zehou: “*Outline*” of *philosophy*(M), Peking University Press, the 2011 edition, p. 65.

Capital. Marx claims, “on the other shore of the realm of necessity, with the development of human power which is as aim itself, the real realm of freedom begins”.⁹ “Human power” which is human fundamental capacity is called subjectivity. The subjectivity is the subjectivity which is in the sense of ontology, not in the sense of function.

“Human power” is value itself, and it has the function to identify and establish valuable things. In ancient China, there’s customs for women to be bound feet, and at that time, it was thought that it was beautiful for women with small feet, on the contrary, ugly. Then small feet are valuable things, later on, people think that bound feet ruin body of women, the custom discontinued. People have the cognitive ability of value about the custom, and when they think it worthless, they discard the outdated customs. Behind it, it is the function of human power. We will always evaluate things around us, and our capacity to evaluate things is the demonstration of “human power”. What John Rawls talks about “the two moral powers” is actually “human power”. John Rawls thinks that one human moral power is the power to possess sense of justice: it is the power to understand, apply and fulfill (not only submit) the principle of political justice, and the principles regulate the articles to cooperate impartially. The other moral power is to possess conception of the good: it is the power to possess, modify and pursue for conception of the good reasonably.¹⁰ Rawls considers “the two moral power” as the power above value of justice and good, and it can have, understand and modify kinds of value. “Human power” or “two moral power” is actually the show or characteristics of oneself or personality. People pursue for some aim, some value, but there’s much more prior existence to confirm, control and adjust kinds of concrete aim, this is the “human power” or oneself and personality of value itself. Just as Rawls had said, “because of oneself being prior to aim, aim is confirmed by oneself, and even one dominant aim is also chosen among numbers of possibilities by oneself”.¹¹ Oneself, personality or “human power” is prior to the existence of concrete value, concrete aim or valuable things, and it establishes, modifies concrete value, thus, it is value itself. Kant understands personality in the sense of “human power”, and establishes the human being who have the “human power” or personality as free aim or value itself. “Kant calls the power that people cast off outside laws, being independent and free, at the same time, obey the regulations he establishes, and the dignity people take as sole and moral subjectivity, as ‘personality’, and he thinks it is personality that can make people different from objects, thus, humanity turn into free aim or objective aim”.¹² Human being become the value itself because of “human power”. Concrete value is various, and

⁹ Karl Marx: *Capital*, volume three, the press of people, Beijing, 1975 edition, p. 927.

¹⁰ Reference to it:[the United States]John Rawls: *justice as fairness—Justice Theory*(M) translated by Yao Dazhi, Sanlian bookstore in Shanghai, the 2002 edition, p. 31.

¹¹ John Rawls: “*justice*”, translated by He Huaihong, Social and Science Press of China, the 1988 edition, p. 547.

¹² Chen Xiuzhai, Yang Zutao: *the history of European Philosophy*, press of people in Hubei province, the 1983 edition, p. 458.

changes with ages, but humanity itself or human power keeps its transcendence and metaphysics about kinds of concrete value, being the sun to reflect concrete value, being the highest scale and criterion to judge. Without doubts, in the perspective of practical Materialism, human being is created in practical, and is the result in the long-ranged practice.

2 Second: Value is Human Self-Realization

Above, we think that value is humanity itself, while humanity itself refers to common humanity and human power. As transcendent and metaphysical power, human power is open. The open makes people be in un-realized condition, and the condition points to the realization. Thus, self-realization becomes the fundamental and goal of humanity itself or human power contains, becoming value itself. All things that can promote and benefit humanity itself are valuable things, having concrete value, while humanity itself and self-realization are value itself.

Human self-realization is the fully accomplished of human power, is “the utilizing of human power which is as aim itself” (Marx), and “in a overall way, human being possesses his own nature as total humanity”.¹³ Human power or human total nature include human angle of view, sense of hearing, sense of smell, sense of taste, sense of touch, thinking, audio-visual, feeling, desire, action and love and so on. All the capacity of humanity has inner demand for substantiality and accomplishment. Let—Paul Sutter points out, “value exists from the demand, while not getting demand from its existence”.¹⁴ The full utilizing and realization of human power are human self-realization.

Being different with the characteristics of “being what it is” of objects, the existent characteristic of actual humanity takes “not being what it is” as its characteristics. Humanity are always not satisfied with his own current situation, thinking that he is the existence that still does not be accomplished, thus, pursuing for self-realization. Confucius said, “the gentlemen are not utensils”,¹⁵ humanity is the utensils, utensils have been completed, but humanity has not been completed, so value of humanity is to accomplish oneself. The highest goal Confucians pursue is to be gentlemen through “being humanity”, “establishing fate” and “creating fate”, that’s, to accomplish what humanity should be. Mencius said, “if the five cereals are not ripe, they will not as good as weeds”. Being ripe is to accomplish. There are imagines of “circle”, for example, Parmenides who is an ancient Greek philosopher, thinks that existence is the rounded sphere, and in Chinese

¹³ Karl Marx: *the economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, Press of People, the 2000 edition, p. 85.

¹⁴ Let-Paul Sutter: *existence and nothingness(M)*, Sanlian bookstore in shanghai, the 1987 edition, p. 72.

¹⁵ *The Analects of Confucius-weizheng*, noted and translated by Yang bojun, Zhong hua Book Company, Beijing.

philosophy, there is the diagram of the universe about circle. "Circle" symbolizes perfect, perfectness is the full achievement and accomplishment. In philosophy of Socrates, he takes "the improvement of the soul" of humanity as purpose and interest. "The concept of good" of Plato is the perfect good, when it is arrived at by humanity, it is human self-realization. Mou zong-san translated the "aim cause" of Aristotle into "final cause", means that aim is the final self-realization of humanity. God in Middle ages is to lead humanity to accomplish the goal of self-realization. Decare thinks that God is the perfect substance, but oneself is not perfect, thus, oneself needs to pursue for perfectness to attain self-realization. Rousseau emphasizes that humanity has one capacity different from other creatures, that's, the capacity of "self-perfection". Human needs many conditions in the course of self-perfection, self-realization, thus, creating human culture, civilization and kinds of concrete value. Heidegger understands value in the significance of human self-realization. He said, "the essence of action is to accomplish. The accomplishment is to tap its rich contents and its essence, leading to procedure when the thing is shown".¹⁶ It shows that many important philosophers consider value as self-realization in Chinese and western philosophy.

Self-realization which is as value itself of humanity is clearly embodied in human value consciousness and mind. When we are children, we always admire youngsters, wanted to be youngsters. And when we are junior middle school student, we want to be senior high school student, which is the psychological experience that little kids accomplish self-realization. Max Stirner who is a Young Hegel school philosopher, expounds about human value consciousness, he said, "I've never been convinced of my presence, but catch sight of myself in the future. The kid believes that if he becomes an adult, he will become an actual ego, an actual fellow. An adult will regard: only in the other of the shore, can he become some actual man".¹⁷ One doctor always wants to be a best doctor, one teacher wants to be a best teacher. This is the show of value consciousness of self-realization. The concept of Confucian sages, benevolent gentlemen, Plato's idea, Christianity's God, Hegel's absolute spirit, Marx's whole person and Nietzsche's Superman, and so on, is the highest model made for the human self-realization.

Value being humanity itself aims to explain the essence of value, value being human self-realization aims to explain the quantity of value. Value being humanity itself aims to show that every person has value, and every person is equal, having dignity; value being self-realization shows that there's the difference from person to person in quantity, that's, some persons is high in self-realization, some are low. The view of value being human itself proposes foundations of value for the construction of modern social institution, and it belongs to the public reason, but value being human self-realization mainly belongs to individual consciousness. All social systems and things that can affirm and promote humanity itself are valuable systems and things, otherwise, are systems and things short of value. Concrete

¹⁶ Sun Zhouxing: *Heidegger anthology*, Sanlian bookshop in Shanghai, the 1996 edition, p. 359.

¹⁷ Max Stirner: *the only person and belongings*, the commercial press, the 1989 edition, p. 243.

value comes from value itself, thus, all those things that have positive effects to humanity itself and self-realization are valuable things, and having concrete value.

3 Three: Three Dimensions and Highest Good

Humanity itself and self-realization which are as value must be realized in human life. Human being has three attributes, that's natural attributes, mental attributes and social attributes. Accordingly, human life is developed in the three relationships, that's, the relationships between man and nature, man and man, and, man and oneself. Humanity itself and self-realization which are as value embodies in the relationships between man and nature and then substantiate as happy value, embodies in the relationships between person and person, and then substantiate as just value, embodies in the relationships between man and ego, and then substantiate as noble value. Thus, happiness, justice and noble are three value that human being pursue for. Because of the relationships of two antinomy between happiness and noble, humanity take the unity of virtue and happiness as the highest value that humanity pursue. The unity of both is the highest good of value. Thus, the highest good becomes the highest value that humanity pursue. The relative unity between virtue and happiness depends on justice, thus, justice becomes the highest value in social system and field of public life.

Happiness is the reflection that value embodies in the relationships between man and nature. Humanity has natural attributes, and it is human common nature. Human natural attributes decide that humanity has perceptual desire. Desire is the wanting and dependent condition that humanity should have in existent materials and conditions. Deficiency is the characteristics of desire, the nature of desire is to seek satisfaction, that's, make up the deficiency, arriving at satisfaction. Happiness is the satisfaction of human perspective desire and happy conditions in body and mind.

Human pursue for the happy value bases on not only human common nature, but also human self-realization. Both humanity and animals have desire, but human desire has unlimited characteristics. Chinese character of “欲” is made up of “欠” and “谷”, which means that human deficiency is unlimited. When deficiency develops to unlimitedness, it becomes “kong” and “wu”. “kong” and “wu” have the inner demand to develop to “shi” and “you”. So-called human desire and sufficiency is the transition from “kong” and “wu” to “shi” and “you”. The former is deficient, while the latter is sufficient. Sufficiency is perfectness, while deficiency is uncompleted condition of humanity, perfectness is human completed condition. As the sufficiency of desire, happy value is self-realization in the relationships between human being and objects. Satter had said, “we spend much of our life on being adequately fed. The kid realizes that he has a hole on his body from the primary experience. When he put his fingers into mouth, he tries to block the hole, and wishes to make the fingers, mouth and jaw into the whole, and blocks the hole of mouth, just like what people try to block the chink in the wall, he

explores the fullness of existent sphere of Parmenides”.¹⁸ In ancient Greek myths, the god of love is the son born by Poor god and god of wealth. After the poor is fed to the full, then produces the valuable love. Lao zi who is a philosopher in ancient China, compared dao to “Ceres”, saying “Ceres” is the roots of heaven and earth, which is the metaphors to human desire which satisfies value or happy value.

Justice is the reflection that embodies in the relationships between person and person. Humanity itself is personality, and the essence of personality is freedom. Value regulations lie in the relationships between person and person, the freedom regulations lie in the relationships between person and person. Happiness and freedom will be realized in the relationships between person and person and the social relationships. But in what forms and conditions can social relationships embody value? Only in the forms and conditions of justice can value be embodied. Thus, Rawls emphasizes, “justice is the primary value in social system”.¹⁹

The fundamental connotation of justice is not to do harm to others, and is not be harmed, people should not harm each other. In the horizontal relationships between person and person, not harming others is to change justice, while in the longitudinal relationships between person and person, not harming other is to distribute justice. Not injuring others mainly refer to not injuring others’ freedom, that’s, not injuring others’ personality and dignity. According to the thought of Hegel, human free personality, that’s value will embody in his own property, thus, will not harm others, preventing from harming others’ property. Justice ensures that the individuals will not be harmed in social cooperation and association, which guarantees the realization of value in social relationships. If there’s no value of justice, the value itself will not be realized. So Kant affirms, “if just and justice have lost, mankind will not be worthy to live in the world”.²⁰ Thus, “the biggest question for the mankind to solve is to set up a civil society with general rule of law”.²¹

Loftiness is the show of value in the relationships between humanity and ego, and humanity is not only the perspective experience of ego, but also transcendent experience of ego, while the actual ego different from animals is transcendent ego that transcend perspective experience ego. Transcendent experience is not personality, but human power. According to Kant, human capacity to transcend natural rule and set up rule for himself and obey the regulations, is just the human power, is the personality different from animals. Such personality is lofty value.

¹⁸ Let-Paul Sutter: *existence and nothingness*, Sanlian bookstore in shanghai, the 1987 edition, pp. 782–783.

¹⁹ John Rawls: “*justice*”, translated by He Huaihong, Social and Science Press in China, the 1988 edition, p. 1.

²⁰ Kant: *metaphysics principle of law*, translated by Shen Shuping, the Commercial Press, the 1991 edition, p. 165.

²¹ Kant: *anthology of critique of historical reason*, translated by He Zhaowu, the Commercial Press, the 1990 edition, p. 8.

Loftiness is to break away from the natural desire and materials and transcend them in the negative sense, while in the positive sense, humanity can not only set up rules, but also obey rules and act according to responsibility. Thus, the essence of loftiness is freedom, is independent personality. Confucius is aware that independent will is what humanity becomes human being. He said, “the armed forces may be robbed of its general, but an ordinary man cannot be captured ambitious”.²²

“zhi” refers to independent will and independent personality. Independent personality is the connotation of humanity itself, thus independent personality is also value itself. Zhang dainian said, “those who have independent personality, who can fully embody ‘humanity is what it is human being’, is just a valuable man”.²³ Obviously, loftiness is the valuable forms or types that directly embody value.

Loftiness(virtue) and happiness(good fortune) are not the relationships of analysis, and we can not only get happiness from loftiness, but also not get loftiness from happiness, in life, the relationships between virtue and happiness are in antinomy. Those who are virtuous are always short of happiness, while those who are happy are short of virtue. In order to overcome the antinomy, mankind establishes the highest good which is the unity of happiness and virtue, as the highest goal. And justice is the bridge to unite the virtue and happiness. We should approach the highest good of value constantly in the course of our pursuing for justice.

²² *the Analects of Confucius·Zi han*, noted and translated by Yang Bojun, Zhong hua Book Company, Beijing.

²³ Zhang Dainian: *Culture and Values*(M), Xinhua Press, Beijing, the 2004 edition, p.54.

A Philosophy That Addresses Chinese Issues

Ping Feng

A hundred and fifty years ago, Marx completed an important philosophical reform: marked by the establishment of the principle of practice. This principle covers three basic meanings: 1. Human life and everything related to it is the sole object of philosophy; the underlying purpose of all questions in philosophical research is to improve human life. 2. Philosophy interprets the world in order to change the world. Changing the world is the ultimate value and objective of philosophical research and interpreting the world is the prerequisite for and means of reconstructing the world. 3. In changing the world to realize an ideal future, man follows the principle of value; that is, man is the yardstick for measuring the utilization of objects. A logical extension from these meanings relates to philosophy itself; that is to say, the ultimate criterion for weighing the legitimacy and rationality of philosophical questions and answers is their capacity to solve (not merely explain) practical problems. Marxist philosophy, based as it is on the principle of practice, is not a philosophy of **viewing the world** (though it contains views about Ways of “perceiving the world” as well as views about the world) in nature, but a philosophy of **changing the world**. The essential requirements of such a philosophy are: addressing the concrete actualities of life, finding problems therein that need to be solved, and taking these problems as its research task. The question that attracts most attention in such a philosophy is this: what ideals should we establish on the basis of real life, and how should we realize them? In the present development of philosophy in China, we especially need to reflect on and plan our research according to these philosophical principles.

If we expect that Our philosophy should be able to have a positive effect on Chinese life and the development of Chinese society, we, as philosophers born and brought up in China and in the midst of this process of development, should regard **Chinese issues** as our research task. What we call “Chinese issues” refers to the grave issues that trouble Chinese life and the development of Chinese society. **As the**

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subject of philosophical research “Chinese issues” refers to the most fundamental values and modes of thought which are directly relevant to these issues. Therefore, what we call “a philosophy that addresses Chinese issues” expresses this belief: **the objective of philosophical research in China should be to improve Chinese life and promote the development of Chinese society; the task of such research should be those fundamental values and modes of thought that will influence Chinese life and the development of Chinese society.**

In our intellectual and cultural systems, philosophy is a **kind** of mental activity that involves reflecting upon and planning for human life. This kind of mental activity has its own functions mode of working, and limitations. Whether or not its objective is to change the world, philosophy is not capable of changing the world **directly**. That is a limitation of philosophy. Philosophy transforms human practice only through the transformation of man’s **concepts**, and realizes its aim of changing the world through human practice. Practice alone is a direct force for changing the world; however, practice is a kind of conscious and purposeful activity. Man’s values dominate his consciousness and purposes, i.e., concepts about what can be acquired, what is worth acquiring, and what should be acquired first. The fundamental nature of human existence lies in the values that dominate human actions. It is precisely when he is under the sway of the values of specific space–time conditions that man becomes dissatisfied with his circumstances, is tempted by certain possibilities, gains the energy to change the status quo, and takes action to do so. And it is philosophy that supports human values. **In reflecting on and planning for human life, the fundamental mode of philosophy is to expound “value/good”¹ and the path to “value/good” through the mode of “truth”. The method of work for philosophy is to criticize and construct values and modes of thought.**

Philosophy has been affecting human life by exploring values and modes of thought that can improve human life since its origin. The fundamental objective of philosophical research in the West since Socrates has been to seek the “value/good” in human existence and the path leading to it. The Chinese philosophical quest for “*Tao*” manifests that objective more comprehensively.

The philosophical pattern of existence is to expound “value/good” and the path leading to it in human life, in scientific research as well as in the ontological research of philosophy, through the mode of “truth”. This has two basic meanings: firstly, philosophy employs a method similar to that of scientific studies of the material world to study the actual circumstances of human life, its causes and effects and the laws of its development. These studies are the foundation and premise for the philosophical recounting of “value/good” and the path leading to it. Philosophy cannot imagine reality; it must crawl on the rough ground of reality. That is where philosophical research differs from art. Secondly, reasoning is adopted as the method of philosophical statements. That is where philosophy diverges from literature and art as well as religion. Exposition through “truth” is a

¹ “Value/good” refers to worthwhile, deliberate aspirations.

prerequisite for philosophy. But this is all it is. There should be no philosophy without a statement of “value/good” and the path by which this may be attained. Philosophy makes itself philosophy and distinguishes itself from science and other reflective activities by its combination of the mode and the contents of reasoning. Philosophy aims to expound “value/good” and the path leading to it by describing facts and revealing laws, not to provide for mankind an objective truth that excludes value choices. Metaphysical studies are directed at human existence and how man becomes what he is to be; epistemology and logic are directed at “value/good” in cognition, a “value/good” whose basic standard is human life. If cognition departs from human life and from efficacious and purposeful life choices, whether it is right or wrong, how it is undertaken and what results are reached are all beside the point. Therefore epistemology is basically for man, for human life, and for value judgments and choices. Furthermore, ethics and aesthetics are directed at “value/good” in judgments and choices. The purpose of description in ethics and aesthetics is “value/good,” without which the description and exploration of relevant laws lose their primary significance. Even those philosophies that place a high value on empirical verification actually expound a kind of “value/good,” although in speaking of it they seek to excise “value/good” in human life and social development.

Seeking “wisdom” is a goal established from the beginning of philosophy. Wisdom relates to human beings, not to nature, addresses the future and not the past, and consist in preparation for instead of dreams of the future. Preparation must be solidly grounded. Life is concrete and actual, and we can only plan to transcend actuality on the premise that we acknowledge and clearly understand present conditions. We must first accept the riches as well as the burdens left by past activities whether we wish to or not. On that basis we can plan for the expected future. “Value/good” is above reality, yet this transcendence has reality as its base. Any “value/good” and the paths leading to it are material and actual, being part of specific activities in particular circumstances. Referring to “value/good” abstractly without considering relevant circumstances and specific activities is similar to discussing a beautiful dream that can never come true. That is not wisdom, nor philosophy. Philosophy should be in a position to provide reflection on ideals and objectives for man’s specific and actual activities. Such reflection is about **a possibility of realizable values**. Therefore, reflection must aim at reality, base itself upon reality, and in the meantime surpass reality.

Philosophy must regard research into “truth” as an indispensable component and a necessary measure in the statement of value/good, though that is not the ultimate goal of philosophy. The true modality of existence for philosophy in human life is to recount goodness, beauty, and value/good through “truth”. That is not only what philosophy once did but also what it should continue doing. Husserl once pointed out, “human philosophizing and its results in the whole of man’s existence mean anything but merely private or otherwise limited cultural goals. In our philosophizing, then—how can we avoid it?—we are functionaries of mankind. The quite personal responsibility of our own true being as philosophers, our inner personal vocation, bears within itself at the same time the responsibility

for the true being of mankind; the latter is, necessarily, being toward a telos and can only come to realization, if at all, through philosophy—through us, if we are philosophers in all seriousness”.²

The above exposition of philosophical views is required because it is the premise of the belief that “philosophy must address Chinese issues,” a belief that has long been impaired in the midst of the veneration of positivism. This veneration has almost accustomed us to considering philosophical ideals and beliefs as some kind of wishful thinking or inappropriate soliloquy. “Veneration” here refers to the excessive advocacy of positivist science arising from the immense progress of science, as well as the negative impact of this advocacy on culture, life and philosophy. As Husserl put it, “the exclusiveness with which the total world-view of modern man, in the second half of the nineteenth century, let itself be determined by the positive sciences and be blinded by the ‘prosperity’ they produced, meant an indifferent turning—away from the questions which are decisive for a genuine humanity. Merely fact—minded sciences make merely fact—minded people”. Before it was eroded by veneration for verifiability, philosophy had no fundamental doubts about the mission or capacities described above. “In its first, original establishment, ancient philosophy conceives of and takes as its task the exalted idea of universal knowledge concerning the totality of what is. In this it feels called to initiate a new age, completely sure of its idea of philosophy and its true method. As men of the present, having grown up in this development, we find ourselves in the greatest danger of drowning in the skeptical deluge and thereby losing our hold on our own truth”.³ Veneration for verifiability makes facts the final arbiter and therefore expels from philosophy questions vital to man such as values or man’s fate. Consequently philosophers have become more and more servile, talking about smaller and smaller questions and falling more and more into line with positivist science; philosophers do not dare to or feel embarrassed to discuss what we would call significant problems such as human fate, social development, and the progress of mankind, since philosophy that venerates verifiability considers these questions purely as expressions of personal sentiment or as “ejaculatory” cries (A. J. Ayer) that tell us nothing. If we approve this veneration. We will certainly give up the quest to influence human life through philosophy as well as philosophical criticism and construction of values and modes of thought, for values and modes of thought are baseless according to criteria of verifiability. Having given up all this, our beliefs, judgments and choice of values and the actions they control will be at the mercy of custom, authority, and natural impulses.

The veneration of empirical verification has obliterated philosophy. If we advocate such veneration, we will think that philosophy is not capable of carrying out such an important task, and will laugh at its ambitions to do so. Yet why must we

² Edmund Husserl, “Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie: Eine Einleitung in die Phänomenologische Philosophie” in *Edmund Husserl: Selected Essays*, Zhang Qingxiang (trans.), Shanghai: SJPC, 1997, p. 994.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 991.

advocate the veneration of verifiability? In the cultural and intellectual system of mankind, there is no need for a philosophy that has as its basic goal the description of facts, and this is especially so today. Though the “value/good” in philosophical studies is based on research into “facts”. It can by no means be summed up in “facts”; though philosophical studies include description, they cannot stop at description or have this as their purpose. True philosophy is the construction and relation of well—founded ideals. Philosophy would lose its reason for existence unless it related the ideal and “value/good”. It is necessary for philosophy to make use of the achievements and some of the methods of positivist science, but it must not yield to them; furthermore, the methods of positivist science cannot be regarded as the criteria for evaluating philosophical studies. Empirical verification is not a model for philosophy. There is no reason for us to fetter philosophy with “positivism”. Philosophical conclusions are a kind of value judgment based on “truth”. Such judgments are concerned with future activities; they are anticipatory, not retrospective; experimental, but not reportage; hypothetical, but not declarative. They are not subject to empirical verification (John Dewey).

“Philosophy that addresses Chinese issues” has two basic forms: one form takes the study of Chinese problems as its direct task, considering those problems as the objective of its research; the other regards Chinese problems as fuel for philosophical research, lighting up studies in other aspects of philosophy that gain life and vigor through their attention to Chinese problems. While the former is a direct form of the “philosophy that addresses Chinese problems,” the latter is indirect.

The indirect form of “philosophy that addresses Chinese problems” is equally important in philosophical studies. It is necessary for us to understand philosophers interpretation of the world in their studies, as such interpretation contains their perceptions about laws, views on the world and their criticism as well as constructive activity regarding values. The indirect form of “philosophy that addresses Chinese problems” is presented as the interpretation of interpretations. In the philosophical research of that field there is an immense difference between “interpretation aimed at gaining intellectual resources” and “interpretation for the sake of interpretation”. The latter can be labeled “bad,” for it is a kind of simple. Often unsatisfactory, and even injurious “restatement” of an original interpretation, and is lacking in consciousness of modern problems. It is essentially not philosophy; at best it is merely an earlier stage of preparation for philosophy. However, the former kind of interpretation can be labeled “good”. for it is a kind of **research** with an intense consciousness of problems and attention to reality. Novel ideas are brought into this interpretation, illuminating the original interpretation which is thus endowed with new life, promoting the continuity as well as the development of philosophy, and fostering the birth of new philosophy. We can only obtain the intellectual resources to study real problems through interpretations that have ideas, a background of actual problems and a problem—consciousness. The richer and broader such interpretation, the richer and broader the intellectual resources we gain, and the more profound and beneficial our research on actual

issues will be able to be. Therefore, such interpretation is essentially an indispensable component part of the philosophy that addresses real issues.

Concern with real issues is important (though not the whole question) in distinguishing between good and bad “interpretation of interpretations”. The vital drive for philosophical research does not derive from philosophies of different types, but from facts and issues.⁴ We particularly need to emphasize that the “interpretation of interpretations” should draw its impetus from attention to Chinese issues, since only in this way can we possibly gain a deeper understanding of and bring alive the most profound and greatest thinking in the history of philosophy. Philosophy is a kind of rational thought, yet it is filled with passion; it expresses values concerning man’s life and social development. Such theory must be rooted in living practice. If we deviate from concern for real problems and lose our enthusiasm for reconstructing the world, it is likely that we will consider past philosophical theories to be a pile of related yet lifeless concepts; we may sever the lifeline of these theories just because we do not see the problems these concepts solve or the original impetus behind them. Philosophical concepts as well as theories are only capable of obtaining vitality or rejuvenation when they are founded on human practice. When we adopt the bad modality of interpretation, the difference between the great philosophers we interpret and ourselves is that in their concepts are found insights into reality and passion for the future; the joys and sorrows of their times are integrated into their research issues. If we depart from the actual problems which they wished to solve, we will not understand their poignant feeling for real issues, and thus their thoughts will become fragments, specimens, and corpses.

However, no matter how good the “interpretation of interpretation” is, it is by no means the only mode of philosophical research. Philosophy would lose the significance of its actual existence and become a type of history if its only objective were its own history. The history of philosophy is a true instrument of philosophy, yet it is not philosophy itself.⁵ Philosophy must look at and study real issues if its life is not to be exhausted. Therefore, looking at real issues is a more basic form of philosophical research, though a more difficult one. Marx once stated “The fate which a question of the time has in common with every question justified by its content, and therefore rational, is that the **question** and not the **answer** constitutes the main difficulty”.⁶ This is because the true “questions are its mottoes; they are the supremely, practical utterances proclaiming the state of its soul”.⁷ Hence questions that arise from all the conflicts and confusions in real life are the creation of philosophy. They are likely to be meaningfully answered only

⁴ Edmund Husserl, *Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft*, Ni Liangkang(trans.), Commercial Press, 1999, p. 5.

⁵ Cf. Wilhelm Windelband, *A History of Philosophy*, vol. 1, Luo Daren(trans.), Commercial Press, 1987, p. 928.

⁶ Marx/Engels *Collected Works*, vol. 1, People’s Publishing House, 1995, p. 203.

⁷ *Ibid.*

when the questions are raised **appropriately**. “Just as the solution of an algebraic equation is given once the problem has been put in its simplest and sharpest form, so every question is answered as soon as it has become a **real** question”.⁸ When questions are too abstract, either there is no method for arriving at a solution, or such a method is so abstract as to be inoperable. However, questions raised in too concrete a way will dissipate the necessity for philosophical research. In philosophical creation, raising real life questions is most important and most difficult. Therefore, we need to accomplish at least these two points: first, we need to feel reality intensely. Philosophical research that addresses reality must depend on perceptual experience and profound emotional experience of reality. Perceptual experience is the source of our intense emotional experience and this emotional experience furnishes the drive for our philosophical thinking. Intense emotional experience may lead us to the roots of the human spirit, awaken our consciences, and guide our research, thus making our philosophy into true and vital thought. “Value neutrality” is a thorn in the flesh imposed on philosophy and academic research by the reverence for verification. It makes our philosophy maintain the phraseology of philosophy while losing the task of philosophy, as Husserl described it. The second object is to grasp reality forcefully. Philosophy cannot stop at emotional experience or the expression of such experience. Philosophy must use “truth” to recount “value/good” and the path leading to it. Therefore, philosophical research that addresses problems must grasp the rules, the multiple possibilities in actual development, and the values and modes of thought that dominate and guide these multiple possibilities. In order to reach that goal, philosophy must employ as much as possible all existing intellectual resources of human culture, including philosophy and academic achievements in other disciplines, while at the same time appealing to arduous ideological creation.

“Since every true philosophy is the intellectual quintessence of its time, the time must come when philosophy not only internally by its content, but also externally through its form, comes into contact and interaction with the real world of its day”.⁹ We expect that Chinese philosophy which takes Chinese issues as its research object will be capable of becoming the essence of the spirit of our times, of offering vital thought that will enable present—day Chinese to live a better life, and of becoming “the living soul”¹⁰ of China culture.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid., p. 220.

¹⁰ Ibid.

The Formation of Value and Modern Axiological Questions: From the Perspective of Being and Nothingness

Shuguang Zhang

Abstract: Value and evaluation, which concern the orientation of human's life and spirit, arise from the dual relations between life and death, body and mind, community and individual, and so on. They manifested to be the relationship between "being" and "Nothingness", "the real" and "the unreal" in the history of philosophy. Thus, "value" and "evaluation" are by no means merely categories of axiology, but also of ontology. In the past, thinkers had put forward theories (which are differential related in the West and China) concerning these categories. As modern values come to be dominant in modern times, the west is facing up to "get rid of God", and China is facing up to the questions that whether it should be, and how to "get rid of parents". Nihilism is only a temporary transitional phenomenon, the tasks that modern researches of axiology should undertake are to build reasonable and proper relationship between "being" and "nothingness", "the real" and "the unreal".

As is well known, modern history is a process of disenchantment, the mystery and sanctity of the traditional political systems, cultural and moral institutions are all deconstructed by rationality, by which I mean science, technology, market economy and democratic politics. At the same time, the lifestyle of the middle class is manifested to be secularized, homogenized and mediocre. In this background, Nietzsche realized that whilst fideism is decline, "nihilism" comes to be dominant. He clearly put forward the proposition "God is dead", negated the Christian faith and even the positive meaning of modern rationality, which are replaced by the will of power. Nietzsche's philosophy, which proposed to "reevaluate all values", can be described as the "incarnation" of western ontological. He did not deny but admit that life is nothingness, and strived to overcome the weakness and subservience of the mass with strength and dominance of superman, and to transform

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“passive nihilism” to be “active nihilism”,¹ so as to revive the ethical standards and value systems, which take “the noble” and “superman” as prime example.

However, as Nietzsche completely rejected the Christian value of “love”, “tolerance”, “patience” and “equality”, his theory in the end was only a repeat of Hegelian schema of master–slave relationship, and strengthened of the law of the jungle that Darwin found in the biosphere, even if he was longing for the “nobility” and “excellence” of human beings. So Nietzsche’s philosophy, which was meant to be a fierce critique of Platonic philosophy, was no more than “reversed Platonism”.²

It should be noted that the fundamental question here is how to grasp the relationship between “being” and “nothingness”, “the real” and “the unreal” of human existence.

Life itself contains two opposing aspects of being and nothingness. Modern nihilism was already underlying in the traditional society, especially in the faiths of major religions, such as Christian faith in God and paradise, because nihilism and fideism are two sides of one coin. If we simplified to take fideism to be dominant in the traditional western society, then with the evolvement of modernization, the supernatural beliefs and transcendent values are subverted. Nihilist comes to be dominant.

If fideism and nihilism are two sides of one coin, what is the coin? It is human himself. The duality, such as life and death, body and mind, community and individual, is the most fundamental character of human life. All of these contradictions concern with the relationship between being and nothingness. Being and nothingness constitute both the basic conditions of human being, and the source of all value and axiology.

Before self-consciousness comes into being, human and the world are like black boxes, are “in-itself” and even nothingness. Self-consciousness develops along the perceptual activities. It gradually illuminates the outside world and human themselves. Its innate properties and acquired changes, as well as its reality and the possibility, open to human one by one in the history. Thus, human discover and invent more and more possibilities for themselves and the world. Nothingness comes to be being, and the unreal comes to be the real in this process on the one hand, and new possibilities entered into human consciousness and perception on the other hand.

Human consciousness of life and practical grasp of the external object is closely linked to each other. “Being” in fact is the differential unity of the “existence” of human (by which I mean self-consciousness and mutual recognition) and outside world (perception and belief); Existence and non-existence lies upon each other, and both of them lie upon the separation and transition of life and death. Human instinctively wants life, but they cannot escape death. This fact is the biological ground of the being and nothingness of life. But human’s attitudes towards life and

¹ Nietzsche, *The Will of Power*, trans. Xingzhou Sun, The Commercial Press, 2008, pp. 400–401.

² Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, trans. Xingzhou Sun, The Commercial Press, 2002, pp. 830–833.

death are not merely instinctive reactions, but associate with cultural consciousness of value, which are evaluation and its standards.

If life brings forth too much pain, there is no need to worry about death. Fearless to die is just in order to live a better life—an “eternal life” of his own, or longevity of the community. So it can be clearly noted that the problems concerning the relationship between individual life and death are connected with the relationship of community and individual, elder and younger (generation), and even the ancient and modern (times).

In traditional society, the reason why people believed in an absolute or eternal value is that they need to resist the fear of death, and to overcome the feeling of nothingness. This belief formulates the consciousness of history in the process that people go toward the future, and establishes “consistent” principles. Thus, being and nothingness lie upon each other in human’s life. A series of dual relations, such as perception and reason, feeling and will, limitation and freedom, reality and ideality, individual and society, nature and culture, history and future, develops in correspondence to the relationship between life and death, body and mind, community and individual. These relations form complex conflicts and tensions in human life, they not only constitute the basic rules and living form for human, but also put forward problems that human have to deal with all their life time.

Human is not an identical entity, but numerous individuals with flesh and thinking. The individuals are the products of human sexual relations. They can only live in kinship Community at first, although they then grow up, have their own identity and interest, but still cannot isolate from specific community and the relationships with other people. So, the relationship between the community and individual is as fundamental as the relationship between life and death, body and mind. Physically speaking, individuals are different in terms of gender, strength and intelligence and so on, so they play different roles in the division of labor, which results in differences between the individuals in their community. But in facing up to external pressure, the community must be co-operating and united for the sake of the overall survival of the community. Accordingly, as different communities are competing in order to survive, inequality often overruns equality.

Here, regardless of conflict and struggle or union and alliance, strength and intelligence are all the same fundamental. The final purpose is the survival of the community. Kinship and affinity act as an internal contact and identity link in both the clan and the larger tribes. Thus, the moral principle is that the community outweighs the individual. What is useful to the survival of the community is “good,” harmful is “evil”. The “good” should be esteemed and promoted, while the “evil” should be suppressed and eradicated. “Good” or “evil” concerns first of all the survival and its conditions, and the individual independence, freedom, and dignity as well. The representatives of the community are naturally the “parents”.

Obviously, within the Community, the “good” commands the individual takes the community and others in the first place, so it undoubtedly has the universal significance of enhancing the individual moral level, it is helpful to the socialization of individuals. The good is “good for others.” At the same time, in facing

up to other communities, the “good” is good for the community’s interests, which are usually against the others’ interests. The good is usually self-centered.

In sum, because human are fond of life and afraid of death. As this instinct develops into an inclination of promotion of the good and extermination of the evil, the good comes to be “the greatest power of all ancient peoples.”³ This power rooted in the collective consciousness of the community, was also what they most valued. Anyone who can maximize the significance of the good, unite the community and bring them safer living conditions, who can become the leader of this community. So there is a value pyramid in the Community, the good and its personalization locates at the peak of the pyramid. The “upper” and “lower” of the pyramid are hierarchical, but depend on and reflect into each other. They show the direction of the individuals’ life on the one hand, and produce a value world for them on the other hand.

The above duality comes into being in the process of social intercourses. All the contradictions between public and private, loyalty and benefit, gain and loss, advance and retreat, honor and disgrace arise from that duality. Interestingly, the basic values of good and evil were intended to resolve the distinction between life and death, body and mind, community and individual at first, but were extended to resolve other dual problems in human life subsequently. What is good and what is bad seem to be obvious in these contradictions, so human can be led to live a positive life, to construct a favorable life style. The fact that more and more contradictions come into being in history shows that they are not just opposite, but lie upon each other. They all exist in human’s practices. Thus, value and meaning can never be absolute, immobilized, but change and float in the course of history.

If we take the spindle of western thought to be “Platonism”, which is criticized by many modern scholars, we then can clearly find that western philosophy, from ancient Grecian to the modern German philosophy, has its own logic, which can be described as “binary opposition and one in dominance”. This logic arises from the western attempt to answer the duality of being and nothingness of human life. The theories such as fundamentalism, essentialism, and centrism are all explanation and revelation of the nature of that logic.

Heraclitus, who is appreciated by Nietzsche, said “we can never step into the same river twice. We exist on the one hand, and do not exist on the other hand.” This proposition can be taken to be his understanding of the basic traits of life. This may sound contradictory, but reveals the duality of human’s existence, which can be grasped by experience and intuition. This proposition tells that what seems to be opposite can have common characters. No entity can sustain forever, but the whole can maintain coherence and unity, just like a river keep relatively stable in floating.

³ Nietzsche divided between “morality of the masters” and “morality of the slaves”. He pointed out that the evil that arose from hierarchical social structures is not truly evil. Cf. Nietzsche, Zarathustra, Culture and Art Publishing House, 1993.

Heraclitus' proposition divides between perception and rational, phenomenon and essence. So he can be easily led to relativism. Relativism is not conforming to the law of contradiction. Thanks to the connection between "man cannot step into the same river twice" and "man can never step into the same river", so as to break the skepticism brought about by this connection, Parmenides put forward the unity between existence and thought. The existence of thought and rationality comes into light. Western philosophy since then went beyond going after the origins of the world, and was open to ontology, which concerns the essence of the world. Parmenides' proposition is a great discovery and invention for his descendants.

Based on the contradiction between body and mind, Plato put forward metaphysics of Idea, which claimed the phenomenal world is unreal, and the ideal world is real. This is contrary to our natural beliefs. Plato's metaphysics is grounded on the opposition between the forms of Idea and perceptible objects. Ideas are much more real than perceptible objects in his theory. Perceptible objects are material, temporary, changeable, worthless, and even evil. The Ideas are eternal, divine, perfect, good, and thus embody the highest value. Plato's Ideas are not only supported by the rational cognition, but also embodied human's beliefs of life.⁴ It was a version of "essentialism", and endowed with perfect divinity.⁵

Later on, Augustine combined the Neo-Platonism and Christianity together. He established the foundation for Christian theology. It is his theory that promoted Christianity coming to be the "state religion" of Roman Empire, and established legitimate foundation for the power of church and the pope (God's representative on earth). From then on, the westerners were continually involved in a struggle "to embrace God" or "to get rid of God" in their life.

No doubted, for the members who believe in God, God is real, has tremendous power, and is the source of life and its reproduction. "The individuals who believe in God desire a life in the holy, just as they desire a home in the objective reality, desire not to be confused by the pure subjective experiences, and desire to be able to live in a real, rather than illusive world."⁶ Because people believe in God and paradise, they have a spiritual perfect world, which gets rid of death, change, and the feeling of nothingness caused by suspicion. The mainstream of western values can be presented as: rationality dominant perception, essence dominant phenomenon in philosophy, and spirit dominant flesh in religion.

Religious beliefs construct spiritual faiths for the people. This is good for them to upgrade from the natural states, gives people the chances to transcend the existing conditions. Of course, no matter how self-contained people think spiritual beliefs can be, they still cannot get rid of their flesh and his secular life, because

⁴ Taylor, *From the Beginning to Platon*, trans. Donghui Han, etc., China Renmin University Press, pp. 418–419.

⁵ Guangming Zhao, *The Idea and god*, Jiangsu People's Publishing, 2004, pp. 91–115.

⁶ Mircea Eliade, *The Holy and the Secular*, trans. Jianguang Wang, Huaxia Publishing House, 2002, p. 6.

spiritual beliefs arise from the duality of human's life and death, body and mental, and community and individual. It is just in order to pacify the sufferings this duality bringing about, human believe in the gods. If the faiths in God and heaven are bad to their physical and mental life, they will not only be resisted by human themselves, but also contrary to God's blessing.

After the middle ages, religion reformation and renaissance arose in Europe. Essentially speaking, they are inevitable. The fact that they believe in God brought the Europeans so many sufferings urged them to sublimate Platonic dualism, bridge the gap between heaven and earth, and break down the division between the holy and the secular. Since then, human were reinterpreted as an organic life.

Secularization and rationalization of religion in philosophy were firstly presented as Cartesian proposition, "I think, therefore I am", which was based on suspicion and reason. Descartes' thinking "I" has dual significances in contrast to Platonism and Christianity. On the one hand, it inherited of Plato's metaphysical theory, such as non-embodied thought is completely self-autonomous. Thinking since then was free from any restrictions, and his theory paved the way for the development of science and knowledge. On the other hand, since thought is self-autonomous, Cartesian thinking subject can be an alternative of God. Cartesian God can be expressed to be an incarnated God. Since human are finite, relative, and individual, the absoluteness and eternity would sooner or later be deconstructed, Christian history in the name of God will be transformed to be the history in the name of human. The world of values is bound to undergo tremendous changes.

Originally, the westerners thought that God is not only the source of value, but also absolute value. Only through the beliefs of god can life attains its value. If we deny God, we will deny the value of life. This is severe to the westerners. However, if God is created by human, and emerges from human's desire of unlimited power in their "childhood", then, after human grown up, they will be self-enlightened, self-liberated, break through religious and political suppress, and leave the embrace of God. They construct new moral rules relying on their own secular activities, and endue new social systems with legitimacy. But in considering of "dialectic of the enlightenment", which was proposed by Frankfurt School, although reason has broken down the traditional sanctity and mystery, it still cannot solve all problems, cannot replace the will and feeling, and thus cannot eliminate faith. If rationality itself comes to be human's faith, rationality will lose its power of suspicion and criticism on the one hand, and new beliefs and faith that conform to rationality cannot come into being on the other hand. In such a bad circumstance, modern people are curse to fall into irrationality, relativism and nihilism.

Fideism and nihilism seem to be contrary to each other, but rely upon each other. Once we eliminate fideism, we will eliminate nihilism. Thus, the nihilism and relativism in the western world is only a transient phenomenon after God is broken down, just like people who see the sunlight for the first time will be dizzy. It is not necessary to exaggerate nihilism. What is helpful is rather to construct a situation in which being coexist with nothingness. It should be noted that the

Anglo-American empiricist philosophy tradition, which is not discussed in this article, played a role as antidote of Platonism, and gave birth to the utilitarian and pragmatic axiology. The debate between continental philosophers (such as Heidegger, Sartre, Gadamer, Derrida, Foucault, and Habermas) and English-American philosophers (such as Rorty, Rawls, and etc.) deconstructed and reconstructed western ideology and culture, and paved the way for the rational life of contemporary people.

Due to the differences in natural and geographical environment, the east and west have different history and culture. But they have one common logic, which can be described as: in facing up to the question concerning the relationship between life and death, mind and body, community and individual, they all put forward the categories such as being and nothingness, the real and unreal, and established moral principles and value categories, such as self and the other, center and periphery, and etc. to maintain the social orders.

Although the Chinese and western thought both aim at the transcendent and eternal, there are still differences in specific ideas and the way of approaching them. First, if we take the western thought to be the so-called “external” transcendence, the Chinese thought then can be taken to be the so-called “intrinsic” transcendence. Westerners set differences between experience and transcendence at first, and then go towards Plato’s Ideal world and the Christian City of God. This process can be taken to be external transcendence. Chinese ultimate concern is inherent in everyday life. Its concerns can be called internal transcendence. People in China are able to live a normal life under the instruction of common sense. Chinese people are not easily deranged in this sphere. But beyond the experiences, they are easily falling into a non-rational state.

Second, the westerners focus on the duality and even the opposition of life. They take absolute reason and universal faith (God can be incarnated) as the essence and dominant force of the whole world. So they are inclined to conquer and crush everything, they are invasive and aggressive. Chinese people emphasizes on the unity of life, the whole of community. They are trying to unite the community with the authority of moral principles (usually the authority of parents). They place the community and state in the first place, and are humble and conservative. Although both western God and Chinese parents cannot completely eliminate the sufferings and tragedy of life, and even created a lot of sufferings in the history, but both of them provide basic living faith and moral principles for the people. Concerning their existence, they are legitimate.

The rationality of history means that the historical rationality is continuously eliminated. In the West, the absolute faith and universal reason and their inherent tension is the spiritual motivation already contained in traditional society, which will sooner or later break down the legitimacy of autocratic monarchy and hereditary feudal society in the process religious reform and cultural revival movement. It is the spirit of capitalism which as Weber described can directly guide people’s secular life. As a result, the traditional Western values and social structure of a pyramid shape are converted toward an oval shape, the original

relationship between the self and others, center and periphery, and the upper and lower, has also been changed fundamentally.

The transformation in the west is internal, but in the east, especially China, is external, which means the transformation is forced to adopt under the powerful pressure and impact of the west. Therefore, the modernization of China (a country with long history, massive people, big land square, and colorful civilization) is especially difficult. Under internal and external conflicts, the process of Chinese modernization is filled with dilemma, such as be radical or conserve? Put morality or interest in the first place? Pay more attention to the whole or part? Should be nationalism or individualism? So far as concerned, this circumstance still plagued the Chinese to form a reasonable axiology, especially hinder Chinese people to lead a self-reliant interaction with other nations in this world.

If the question that modern westerners is facing up to is how to organize a life after getting rid of God, the question for Chinese people is whether it should be and how to get rid of the “parents”.

In modern times, “Salvation” for Chinese people is no longer merely to recover the tradition, but to build a modern state. The significance of enlightenment is no longer a purely ideological and cultural task, but must connect with salvation. So, the emperor and feudal parents must be eliminated, but this does not mean the end of the patriarchal history. In considering of the survival of the nation, the relative relationships, such as being and nothingness, the real and the unreal, the good and the evil, are transformed into absolute relationship between black and white. The whole nation had to accept the thinking framework of binary opposition and one in dominance. This is good to unite the nation on the one hand, but facilitate the parental totalitarianism on the other hand.

Once new China was built to be a modern state, it should get rid of the traditional holism, which is patriarchal system in essence, and promote the differentiation of social domains, especially propel modern division of labor. This is good for modernization and civil society. However, because internal and external contradictions in China entangle with each other, Chinese people need active reform programs. Thus, political power comes to be dominant, leads the development of Chinese society in all aspects.

There are different thought schools in China, but they have one common thinking framework—holism, which arose from the tradition and was enhanced by the reality. Paradoxically, whether we simply to confirm or to deny the dominant role of the totalitarian system, we cannot get rid of that holism. For the holism in China is different from in the West. The former is based on peasant economy and family based social organization, while the latter has its root in spiritual life.

Until nowadays, we can be more clearly aware of that: firstly, parents have a natural legitimacy in the family, but the “patriarch” rule must be transformed into democracy in social life. Accordingly, Chinese traditional culture is still of great importance in the private domain, while we should receive western civilization in the public domain. Secondly, assisted by a new kind of authority, Chinese development can be more effective from the perspective of possibility and feasibility. But we should keep in mind that the aim of these political forms is not to

strengthen the traditional bureaucratic system, but rather to produce conditions for the differentiation of community and society.

In the process of modernization, there will always be a question concerning the relationship between “we” and “the others”. For the Chinese people, who have a deep-rooted and self-centered cultural consciousness, there is a question concerning the relationship between “center” and “periphery” as well. So, since the westerners who were alien to us invaded into our vision and territory, the relationship between “we” and “the others” has come to be a key issue. Every nation would have to face up to this question, no matter when “the others” invade into their own territory, or on the contrary.

In a globalized times, human come to be a universal and specific “species being”, and live in a public world, which belongs both to us and someone else. The opposite feeling, such as “strange” and “familiar, and “intimate” and “hostile”, will constantly weaken or strengthen relative to each other. Thus, all nations and states have responsibility to go beyond self-centered consciousness and “black or white” thinking model, and guide their own behaviors according to public reason and rules. Besides “universality and particularity”, the thinking frameworks, such as self and the other, center and periphery, and even multiples and unity, are indispensable for us to understand and analysis our living conditions.

Obviously, we need not only to break with traditional framework of philosophy and thought, but also should be comprehensive innovative, so as to construct a universal theoretical framework. I think this framework can be called a unity of “symbiosis” and “autogenesis”, can also be called “multiple interaction and differential symbiosis.” The differentiation of value and interaction of diverse cultural forms are the only reasonable way to ensure social development and stability, which is the highest purpose of cultural and social modernization.

Change from Abstract Value Philosophy to Realistic Value Philosophy

Zhuzhi Zhou and Jing Pan

The British philosopher rests the paradigm on “is” and “should” or subjective and objective principle. It has already got bogged down in predicament and crisis. The exit which comes out predicament and crisis lies in developing a value philosophy to study. Making use of the realistic value philosophy, the worth philosophy research probably comes out of predicament and crisis and be worth of philosophy research. This text draws up the discussion on the “transformation from abstract value philosophy to realistic value philosophy”.

1 Reflection on Abstract Value Philosophy Paradigm

The British philosopher Hume set question and found abstract value philosophy research, which led western value philosophy studied for several a 100 years, the study had already got bogged down in predicament and crisis now.

The book by Hume “*human nature theory*” during 1739–1740, claims “be or be not “question with morals proposition “should with shouldn’t”, which does not logically induce “should or shouldn’t” is of moral proposition.

Hume remarked “In each moral system, I always notice the author reason in an usual logical way, to carry on in a period and made sure God’s existence, or make some kind of comments to the personnel; But suddenly, but I get a shocking discovery, what I meet no longer is set question medium usual ‘BE or not BE’ etc. but none of these questions should be linked with ‘should or should not’. This variety is unperceivable, but has a significant relation. Since this ‘should or shouldn’t’ means a kind of new relation or affirmation, it must be discussed with

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elucidation; It seems to be a completely unimaginable affair to this kind in the meantime, namely this is new to relate to how ability from totally differently moreover some relations release, should also enumerate reason to take into explain. However the authors usually since is not so careful be engaged in, so I pour to think to suggest and be careful to guard against toward the readers; And I believe, so the attention of a little will overthrow everything popular morals to learn system, and make us see, bad with virtuous differentiation isn't the relation which only builds up in the object up, drive also not the reasonableness knows the Cha"[1] (pp. 509–510). Posterity rest Hume of this discovers to call it as to rest Mo to set question, and generally accepted rest Hume is worth philosophy to study of found. In fact, rest what Hume found is abstract worth philosophy research, and become western value philosophy a kind of tradition of the research.

I think that transformation is a current achievement, but has defects as well. Its achievement first lies in it to learn "fact" and "morals" of the angle detection from the logic is to grow different philosophy category, "fact" category lies in generalize existent is what or is not what, the reasonableness understanding of the person to the existent fact object is to want to attain to factual is or don't know yes. "Morals" category but is a person to the oneself behavior should or shouldn't make a make firm decision of, it usually in person's oneself of behavior didn't take place people of the past have to make should or shouldn't do of estimate judgment. Therefore set question an inside usually logic ground to deduce the morals which is contact by "should or shouldnot" to set question impossibly from the fact contact by "BE or not be". In order to discover that fact and morals are to grow different philosophy category, this found out logic premise, point of departure and starting point for the moral value research.

Secondly, distinction to settle a dispute solid understanding and moral value is to grow understanding and two kinds of different thinking modes, the fact understanding is the host and guest body relation thinks that the corpus faces to a body object mode, moral value understanding then the corpus face to will do to the moral value behavior in the future make firm decision of new host and guest body relation thinking mode, can't use an epistemological host and guest body a relation thinking mode to replace the new host and guest body of moral value theory relate to of thinking mode. This is another merit of Hume's idea.

Again, the posterity discover not only the moral value set question the logic which is contact by "should or shouldnot" to set question, and all logics that value's set question is all contact by "should or shouldnot" set question, therefore can say that Hume learns meaning in the abstract logic up deeply announced to public worth philosophy essence. This is the biggest merit place.

Once guiding western value philosophy studied for several a 100 years, after any research value might it not for teacher, German classic philosophy master's Kant be direct from Hume, the first German philosophy everyone Luo who definitely puts forward the word concept of "value philosophy" adopts in 1864 is also follow to concerning the fact and be worth two cent principle, after Luo adopt of more than 100 year inside western value philosophy study output subjective doctrine axiology, objective doctrine axiology and compromised doctrine axiology

three universities a parties and also all approve to concerning value the essence be the provision of “should with shouldn’t”, therefore, the merit which should well affirm.

I think although the achievement can’t put on, it also exist to be stronger than to lose very much. It a, is the philosophy category that grows totally different to the opposition because of the fact and the morals as, this become the morals and the worth problem completely the problem of subjective consciousness realm. The value isn’t a fact, the fact isn’t a value either, value is leave fact but existent, so, he inevitably at logical get is only subjective heart doctrine of emotion moral value conclusion. Hume says: “As for virtuous or evilness contribution and mistake, that be the happiness or not quick an obvious result of motion” [1] (p. 602). Rest the influence of Mo very big, the western scholar almost sees the “value” as an after rest Mo subjective consciousness category. “Positive like contemporary and American philosopher Hillary Putnam especially south objective equitably point out:” ‘The value judgment be subjective’, this idea is a kind of philosophy dogma which is continuously been similar by many portrait common senses to take into accept” [2] (p. 1).

It too, put forward fact understanding and worth the understanding to grow understanding, is two kinds of different mode of thinking’s and have very important apocalypse meaning to the later worth philosophy researcher. But, because he affirms moral value this kind of to lately relate to be also a kind of relation category, this mislead later of the worth philosophy researcher think worth is a kind of abstract corpus and guest body of relation category, mistaking value research should take the thinking mode of relation of abstract corpus and guest body. For example, some scholars in China lay claim to at present of value is the corpus need of satisfy is a body to the corpus with value of the effect be this kind of abstract of the outcome of the thinking mode of relation of corpus and guest body. I think that this kind of the thinking mode of relation of corpus and guest body that is abstract is in essence the fact epistemological thinking mode, person while know objective thing, the person is always a corpus, the exterior object world is always a body, and the person’s understanding is the corpus subjective thinking activity of relation or subjective and objective relation of corpus and guest body that the corpus faces a body reflection and heavy Gou guest a body. So, the thinking mode of relation of corpus and guest body is a completely suitable reasonable on the epistemology of with correct of. But, in the axiology last circumstance dissimilarity. Because value oneself not necessarily subjective, it can be worth sport of the objective and existent thing to incline to; Be also likely to be corpus person subjective worth mindset; Or correct of thought understanding, emotion love, the beneficial fulfillment activity is certainly also likely to be person and ego it occasionally the person and person’s take place of the of the relation, person and thing of the moral value of “should or shouldnot” take place of “should or shouldnot” of economic value relation, the of thing and thing take place of “should or shouldnot” of natural value relation. But, usage abstract of the thinking mode of the relation or the thinking mode of the subjective and objective relation of corpus and guest body are basically to can’t be correct elucidation

above these value phenomenal. The problem which meets first is a concept to prohibit indeed and the phrase doesn't reach an idea. For example, some scholars in China lay claim to at present of value be the corpus need of satisfy or the value is a body to the corpus of effect, they all completely confused two meanings of the most basic concepts in "corpus" and "guest body". The meaning of "corpus" concept originally means in corpus and guest body relation be placed in on their own initiative, predominate, dominate and make decision of thing or person a square, the meaning of "guest body" concept originally means to be placed in in corpus and guest body the relation passive, is move, obey with from belong to the thing or object of the position a square. But, usage abstract of worth corpus and guest body relation of the scholar of thinking mode but say "guest body" is value carry a body, is worth promoter, is satisfy the corpus demand be worth of a square, but "corpus" is value enjoy use of, be worth a demand of contented namely person a square, very obviously, "corpus" and "guest body" the meaning of the concept was make completely to reverse and make anti-, mixed up. Secondly, be their usage abstract of worth the relation thinking mode of corpus and guest body explain a person of worth, perhaps chase person penny is two, say the value is a body person to need to the corpus person of satisfy; Perhaps say the person's value corpus relation. BE a corpus of what relation? They can not remember clearly. In fact, the corpus relation returns a knot a bottom still a corpus the relation which with each other is a host and guest body. Obviously, the problem returns to again abstract of worth corpus and guest body of relation thinking mode this dead beard together in come. No matter how it speaks, can't explain the person's ego value. Again, be their usage abstract of worth the relation of corpus and guest body of when the thinking mode explain society value, speak the society satisfies person's demand, don't speak a person to the social contribution. Although there is rationality, the unilateral be also very obvious end, be their usage abstract of worth the thinking mode of relation of corpus and guest body explain nature value, also just speak a natural thing this guest body to need to person's this corpus of satisfy, but can't explain person and thing it occasionally how does the of thing and thing keep ecosystem equilibrium. Therefore, our having to come out value is the maze which relates to the abstract thinking mode of category.

Thirdly, the biggest mistake, be subjective and objective opposition, the theories leave reality, abstract empty, can't explain realistic of personal worth life in realistic world, can't be correct explanation reality worth. Although rest Mo at abstract of the logic learn meaning up deeply announced to public worth philosophy essence, because of rest Mo to see the fact and the morals as is the philosophy category that grows totally different to the opposition, value the category completely return knot for subjective realize the problem of realm, therefore, his axiology only is a morals theory, and is an abstract moral value theory.

Rest the Mo found of abstract value philosophy research Fan4 Shi4 because it is subjective and objective opposition, the theories leave reality, inexplicability reality personal realistic value life, therefore, two war after of the contemporary and western philosopher has already seldom interfered with value philosophy foundation theories, mostly at concrete application the ethics learn up do an article,

rest Mo to found of abstract value philosophy research Fan4 Shi4 have already got bogged down in predicament and crisis, poor and helpless, in the evening of life, dying, walked to an end.

Introspect international value philosophy field from worth philosophy research, people discover into an article, the article, countless book of the tired Du mostly are endless debatable on the abstraction empty concept, at abstract of the logic reason logically up round around, the theories leave reality, can't answer reality personal realistic value life. Everyone annoys very much now with this kind of metaphysics of the concept think the theories of Kant to leave reality of subjective imagine of empty have no thing of abstract value philosophy studied. So, how should do? I think that should come out this kind of is abstract is worth philosophy research, old custom with old tradition, found theories contact reality of worth philosophy research of new Fan4 Shi4, new custom with lately traditional.

2 Realistic Value Philosophy New Idea

Found theories contact worth philosophy of the reality study of new Fan4 Shi4, new custom with lately traditional, have to also create science of worth philosophy foundation theories, this is found theories contact reality of worth philosophy research, new custom and lately traditional logic premise. Certainly found new prior condition and key a wreath is to be creative. I think that the core principle of new concept of value in response to is "the whole the value is all reality value". Therefore, here have necessary folio to create first realistic value philosophy study new prior condition and key the core principle of new concept of value of one wreath, namely the lately- set question connotation in "the whole the value be all reality value" take into definition with elucidation. The merit which lately sets question complete applause to open "value" and "fact" distinction to found worth philosophy a research logic premise, point of departure and starting point in "the whole the value is all reality value". Certainly, to two kinds of comprehensions of the category different connotations in "value" and "fact" s and the provision again with dissimilarity, think that "fact" means the independence is at the person of consciousness outside of objective true, but don't be to feel elemental compound; The "value" is much more than abstractly should or shouldn't, is personal more realistic reality of history of existence method.

The abstract value philosophy comprehend the "value" as abstraction of the idea exist, become very mysterious, in fact worth isn't mysterious of abstract of empty existence, be worth originally in we daily the reality the life, "value is the realistic person's history existence way"[3]. Be say, it a, the value is personal realistic existence method, artificial value but living, artificial value but live, artificial value but dead, the person's whole life is to pursue value, creation value and realization value of whole life, the meaning of life lies in a person to live have value. Otherwise, the person doesn't become its behavior, or the person waste to

live whole life. Therefore, value philosophy research should from reality of personal realistic existence set out, instruction reality of personal is a worthy person, but not from abstract of so-called value the host and guest body's relation set out and make reality of personal sink into the logic self-contradict perplexity or of no value fan blind medium can't from pull out. It two, the value mainly is personal on the contents realistic value life, include personal realistic physical life of realistic value namely the use value, merchandise of thing of exchange value and material produce labor of worth etc., this value first is for promise realistic of personal life existence, can be called existence worth. Certainly, this value rules that the person depends labor but livings honor, the person begs by gain without labor to living shameful, express a person of existence value is choice and fulfillment that the person makes in the dissimilarity the existence the way, person depend labor but living value, person depend don't labor but living an invaluable value or living not equal to dead. Certainly, people will also see the person's dead for have as have value the hoof than person have larger higher value, that is because of one person to die for the sake of his life or public living, the person died still live in heart of live the person to moderate speech to talk medium. Reality the value still includes personal realistic association the social activities of the occurrence of realistic value namely family ethics value, moral value, organization value, public value etc., this value first is for promising that the people realistic social activities contains preface, its content is to people behavior of norm, can be called norm value. If people's behavior is without the norm, the behavior has no preface, a hideous mess, personal realistic normally realistic social activities can't exist, reality personal can't exist, so, people are generally accepted without the norm have no the behavior invaluable value of preface. Reality the value still includes realistic of personal spiritual life of realistic value namely personal character value, knowledge value, ability value, believe in value, happy emotion value, freely develop completely of worth etc., this value is personal realistic for make oneself can lead up the ideal living, become ideal medium of person, therefore, this value can be called ideal value. All these reality the value return to knot till 1 PM, being personal realistic life should have value, and the more realistic than today's life should be more happy and fine tomorrow. It three, value of the essence be realistic personally continuously creative develop the fulfillment activity of this kind of history, it is reality personal realistic value activity of life with live of the soul be personal realistic value movable process in a with Guan it of the most basic principle, because of reality of personal only the continuously creative development then can create in the reality worthy freshman live, beg realistic existence or better existence, otherwise, if reality of personal can't in the reality continuously creative development, not only by all means will lose a fine life now, and by all means can't exist in the reality under go to, can be a dead end. Personal continuously creative development of reality this kind of history practice activity since is have inevitability lately old substitute, metabolism of objective and existent sport change of natural history fact, again is have in response to however sex of point to in the future put forth new ideas, drive out the old and bring in the new of corpus

of realistic value activity, it is thus clear that, personal realistic continuously creative development this kind of history practice the activity was real to completely carry out worth and factual organic unify [4].

It opens the value and the fact distinction to is necessary, don't make a distinction to have value philosophy research impossibly. Is the problem in nowadays it value and fact that has unity? Can twos put together? Realistic value philosophy then answered a worth and factual cent with the relation problem for match. The key of problem lie in how the exactitude comprehend "reality" category. What is the "reality"? The reality isn't a dead existence, but now true of the living existence be personal realistic therein living of the realistic world be personal realistic of the life practice an activity, is personal realistic continuously creative development this kind of history practice activity. Personal realistic daily life fact of the reality is different to choose site for capital value, really exist the of no value fact that shouldn't exist in the reality and have some what value then can carry out in the future. Worth philosophy return a knot bottom is not to reality of personal realistic value living does the factual abstraction generalize? Reality of personal of reality worth life fact iniquity is worth philosophy take it not and to the utmost use of abundant source? Thorough thinking people will discover, past however from "BE" the fact which contact "is not" set question in impossibly and directly and logically deduce from "should" with "shouldn't" contact of the value set question, but in from "should" set question with the value that "shouldn't" contact but logic of implicit from "BE" the fact which contact "is not" to set question, "should" of, necessarily is the fact which matches feeling reasonable. This elucidation shouldn't make the value and the fact separating or standing opposite, but see value and fact completely absolute include cent have already match. All value must take fact as to carry a body; otherwise, the value exists for it is impossible for root. We still see "reality" be a historical concentration point, reality since is to in the past inherit, and then is a future beginning, is also the center in nowadays, therefore, the whole histories can be treated as realistic history, and the whole the value also is all reality value. "Reality" of the essence be realistic of personally continuously creative develop this kind of history to practice value activity, once personal realistic stop or terminated continuously creative development this kind of history practice value activity and the "reality" also overfed Therefore should say, be worth is a "history" category. So, should with realistic history development process of mode of thinking research value the truth [5], instruction reality personal daily reality once live have to have value.

Putting forward "the whole the value be all reality value" this to set question don't deny the general concept of the "value", also don't deny various meaning with respectively particular value, isn't also the important persons give up to in the future great and lofty fine ideal of the value pursue or of the blindness tube at present, but in affirmation and the acknowledgement worth general concept and various value all have respectively particular meaning of premise and foundation up, again special all value have a common worth meaning and direct of worth target, namely the whole the value is all thing(especially realistic person) first for

resolve own of reality existence and development problem. This be realistic worth philosophy study new Fan4 Shi4 of the new concept of value of prior condition and key link namely lately- set question basic connotation in “the whole the value be all reality value”.

In fact, abstract the value also has realistic value meaning. Abstract value of realistic value meaning on its abstraction. Because reality existence too much more complicated change, the person wanted to comprehend with control reality combine in the reality life, can pass to reality of abstraction, abandon realistic phenomenon and idea, sample realistic phenomenon and essence and regulation of idea, formation abstract of concept theories system, therefore, all arises including value philosophy ores is all abstract. Problem the abstraction which lie in you is that science is abstract, still non- science be abstract; Science of the science abstract formation value the theories still wants don't, can, whether return to return reality. We criticize abstract value philosophy research, be because of it have never completely attained science abstract, and the theories don't contact reality, the theories doesn't return to return reality. In fact, the whole sciences are abstract of the worth priestess all come from reality of, and then should return to return reality. Tallest the most large and the most deep and abstract value the classification see, return a knot bottom have no is not for resolving a realistic person the better existence and the development problem in the reality. The tallest the most large and the most deep and abstract value classification can is divided into a life time value, special value, be worth three major layer of subclass separately. The life time value is widespread value, is the mankind's type value, had it, mankind then can in the reality mutual association, the mankind then can exist. The special value is the value of the special crowd, had it and the crowd social common body then can build up in the reality, then can carry out a life time value. Individual worth be our everybody of worth or the value of each thing, each value of thing(especially realistic person) is their egos value, namely at value with outside value, had it, a life time the value then can carry out in the reality with special value, the whole value end then can change into reality.

Be showed from this, the whole the value be all reality value. So, be worth philosophy research should stand opposite from subjective and objective of theories and reality mutually escaped from of metaphysics of the concept thought of purely subjective abstract value philosophy studied and change direction subjective and objective unify of theories contact reality of take “the whole value all is reality value” as a core principle of realistic worth of philosophy study, research reality personal daily and realistic life fulfillment of realistic value problem, just probably made value philosophy to study to come out from the predicament and the crisis, make world worth philosophy alignment development and prosperity, this be the responsibility and contribution that the Chinese scholar should exert.

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Wanted: Dialogue at the Level of Value Beliefs Among Chinese, Western and Marxist Philosophies

Lai He

1 Dialogue at the Levels of “Knowledge,” “Methodology” and “Value Beliefs”

Philosophical dialogues are generally conducted at three basic levels, namely the level of “knowledge,” the level of “methodology” and the level of “value beliefs.”

A historical review suggests that there have been innumerable serious “dialogues,” or in other words, a huge amount of “communication,” among Chinese, Western and Marxist philosophies ever since the latter two were introduced into China. Over different times in the twentieth century and to varying degrees, Chinese philosophers have striven to explore new ways of developing a modern Chinese philosophy by integrating the three philosophical systems. However, such efforts have been made primarily at two levels—the level of “philosophical knowledge” and the level of “methodology.”

At the level of knowledge, dialogue and communication have never ceased since Western and Marxist philosophies first entered China. This is shown by the fact that the ideas and categories, the thinking of different schools or figures, and the evolutionary logic of philosophical history in Chinese and Western philosophy have become an essential background or framework for Marxist philosophy’s elucidation of its own content. In a similar way, some of the basic ideas and theoretical principles of Marxist philosophy have had a great influence upon the study of Western philosophy. Marxist and Western philosophies have also provided some important conceptual frameworks and principles for interpreting and understanding traditional Chinese philosophy. Therefore, at the level of

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philosophical knowledge, dialogue and communication among the three philosophies are a long-standing practice.

At the methodological level, each of the three philosophies interacts and learns from the others and so reinterprets its own theoretical traditions; this, too, is a widespread academic activity in which many Chinese philosophical researchers are engaged. These researchers tend to reinterpret traditional Chinese philosophy through language analysis or the phenomenological approach or from the perspective of philosophy of life or existentialism, or else they compare Chinese philosophy's theory of the "way of heaven" (tiandao 天道观) with its counterparts in the ideas of modern and contemporary Western philosophers. Still others use the dialectics and historical materialism of Marxist philosophy to elucidate Chinese and Western philosophy.

Therefore, as far as philosophical knowledge and methodology are concerned, there has actually never been a break in dialogue and communication among Chinese, Western and Marxist philosophies in modern and contemporary Chinese philosophy. Why, then, do we repeatedly and strongly call for dialogue and integration among the three philosophies and raise the issue as a significant priority on our research agenda? What kind of underlying meaning and objective does this call imply?

What it actually shows is a desire for dialogue at a higher level, in greater depth and with more open-mindedness and a more tolerant attitude. On this point, dialogue at the third level, i.e. the level of value beliefs, is extremely important.

I have observed that despite differences in presentation, Chinese, Western and Marxist philosophies all contain and offer a rational expression of their own understanding and awareness of the essence of human life as well as reflection on life values and beliefs based on this reflection. The Chinese philosopher Feng Youlan has claimed that "Philosophy can actually be defined as systematic reflection upon man's life."¹ His confrere Liang Shuming believed that at bottom, different philosophical ideas were different forms of expression of the "intentions and desires" of human life or the life-spirit.² One point on which philosophy differs from empirical science is its transcendental metaphysical character. When philosophy takes the form of a "cosmology" and explores the universe, it captures an understanding of "man's position in the universe" rather than aiming to provide knowledge about the universe in terms of physics. When it takes the form of "epistemology" and examines the cognitive process, it expresses man's conscious reflection and self-awareness, rather than aiming to provide psychological knowledge about the mind. When it takes as its sphere of research "existentialism" or "ontology," it seeks to project an ideal image of human life through its hypotheses about "being." And when it turns to examine "social" and "historical" development, philosophy does not provide sociological and historical knowledge; rather, it stresses understanding of the meaning and value of man in society and

¹ Feng Youlan, *A brief history of Chinese philosophy*, p. 2.

² See Liang Shutning, *East and West: cultures and philosophies*, p. 62.

history. In a word, philosophical ideas vary in intellectual approach, theoretical emphasis and form of expression, but they all bring together human awareness and perceptions of life values, the life realm and attitudes to life. In this sense, Chinese, Western and Marxist philosophies, regardless of their great differences in form and content, definitely have common features. They all represent self-understanding of life's meaning and values and of ideal life gained by different nations and cultures on the basis of their own life worlds and life experience. It is these commonalities that make dialogue necessary and possible among the three philosophical systems; otherwise each would confine itself to a monologue within its own discourse system.

The way value beliefs are expressed in philosophy is different from the way they are expressed in, for example, religion or theology. Philosophy tends to present value beliefs and their content rationally and reflectively; it is these beliefs that are crystallized in the philosophical works and records of thought created and handed down by Chinese, Western and Marxist philosophers. This feature of philosophical research determines that value beliefs expressed philosophically are public and open, rather than being irrational and mysterious things that can be proved only by personal faith. There can be no doubt that value beliefs are not knowledge or ready-made tools; rather, they always bear the character of an "ultimate concern." Philosophers, however, can only attain this "ultimate concern" through their dynamism of consciousness and rational contemplation. Moreover, philosophers managed to use language to "objectify" the fruits of their reflections in the classic texts of philosophy, making them an open, readable, explicable and understandable spiritual world. This means that the value beliefs in philosophical expression are not a purely private, hidden experience or the object of a "value intuition" that is usually exclusive and closed and hence a monologue. On the contrary, the value beliefs of philosophy are condensed through language into the works of Chinese, Western and Marxist philosophers. As Gadamer said, "the understandable being is language. Understandable things can always be expressed in language; language is what fundamentally communicates with all communicative ways in the world."³ Therefore, the value beliefs expressed in philosophy are open and understandable. This makes dialogue among Chinese, Western and Marxist philosophies at the level of value beliefs entirely possible.

2 The Shortage of Dialogue at the Level of Value Beliefs: a Serious Flaw in Communication Among Chinese, Western and Marxist Philosophies

Dialogue at the level of value beliefs is the underlying dimension of philosophical dialogue, yet at the same time it is the hardest and most problematic. This is

³ Hams-Georg Gadamer, et al., German–French disputation, p. 13.

determined by the special character of philosophy. In their philosophical expression, as in other expressions, value beliefs have the following basic characteristics. The first is their “ultimate” nature. Whether it be Chinese, Western or Marxist philosophy, all express their self-understanding of the human way of life. They condense the hopes and dreams of a people or society, and constitute people’s ultimate motivation for thinking, living and acting. In view of this, value beliefs are always related to an “ultimate concern.”

The second characteristic of the philosophical expression of value beliefs is “individuality.” Karl Marx asserted that the “most subtle, valuable and invisible juices” of man flow in the ideas of philosophy⁴; however, different nations or societies have different perceptions of these “subtle, valuable and invisible juices,” perceptions that are always inherently related to their particular surroundings, life histories and fates. Heidegger has said that the spiritual fate of the West is implied in its persistent examination of the basic metaphysical question of the meaning of “being”; philosophy is most inherently consonant with “the true and genuine process of national history.”⁵

Therefore, the value beliefs expressed in a particular form of philosophy inevitably have a “particularity” that distinguishes them from those of other nations and societies.

The third feature is completeness or “comprehensiveness.” This conception is borrowed from Ravels, and is intended to point to the fact that every value belief has a natural tendency to universalize itself: a comprehensive theory or doctrine, whether religious or secular, aspires to cover all of life⁶; although it cannot really do so, that is its aim.⁷

The “ultimateness,” “individuality” and “comprehensiveness” of the value beliefs expressed in philosophy ensure a natural inclination to avoid and even reject dialogue. For precisely this reason, dialogue at the level of value beliefs is hard to conduct and thus far from adequate, compared with dialogue at the knowledge or methodological level. “Knowledge” and “methodology” are usually relatively easy to accept because of their instrumental nature, but at the level of “value beliefs,” people tend to be suspicious and cautious, and averse to entering into dialogue; consciously or unconsciously, they choose to avoid it and may even invent artificial conflicts and clashes over the ranking of values. That is why it is so difficult to start an in-depth dialogue among Chinese, Western and Marxist philosophies at the level of value beliefs.

A review of history may help to highlight the different forms taken by conflicts at the level of value beliefs in different historical periods. In relative terms, these conflicts may be divided into three types.

⁴ Marx and Engels, *Collected works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels*, p. 120.

⁵ Martin Heidegger, *Einführung in die Metaphysik.*, p. 10.

⁶ John Ravels, *Political liberalism: criticism and defense*, p. 252.

⁷ John Ravels, *Political liberalism: criticism and defense*, p. 252.

The first places the value beliefs expressed in traditional Chinese philosophy at the top of the value hierarchy and on this basis comments critically on other forms of philosophy. This approach holds that in the relationship between Chinese and Western philosophy, Chinese philosophy represents paramount value ideas and must be at the heart of philosophy in China. Chinese philosophers like Liang Shaming, Xiong Shili, Tang Junyi and Mu Zongsan acknowledged that Western philosophy had its good points, but in terms of fundamental value critique they steadfastly averred that Chinese philosophy was fundamentally superior to Western philosophy. With regard to the future of human culture, in particular, they believed that Chinese philosophy should take on the mission of restoring the prestige of philosophy and seeking a new way forward. Liang Shaming put it plainly: "In psychological terms, a notable distinguishing feature of modern.

Westerners is that they expend too much energy on reasoning activities... However, this has caused them mental and physical suffering. This has been a fact plain for all to see since the nineteenth century."⁸ By contrast, China's Confucian philosophy had a unique perception and understanding of the life-spirit and so could overcome these defects in Western culture, ensuring that "the future of world culture will be the renaissance of Chinese culture."⁹ His fellow philosopher, Tang Junyi, took an approach based on moral rationality: he summed up Chinese philosophy and culture as having a fundamentally "humane spirit," while its Western counterpart had a "non-humane or super-humane spirit." Chinese philosophy and culture could encompass Western philosophy and culture, but the latter were rootless due to their lack of "humanism." Hence he concluded that "the mainstream of world humanism is in China, not in the West," and "Chinese culture is surely much superior to the culture of any other country in the world as the spirit of Chinese culture stresses consolidating the fundamental to integrate the incidental and aims to find ways of preventing turmoil and tumult, bringing order out of chaos and achieving permanent peace."¹⁰ Clearly, such a viewpoint accords to Western philosophy and culture the status of a mere "use" or "instrument"; once value judgments are involved, Chinese philosophy and culture have to be pre-eminent while Western philosophy and culture are denigrated as "the other" in value terms.

The second and opposite view puts the value beliefs expressed in Western philosophy at the top of the value hierarchy and assesses other forms of philosophy on this basis. This approach, as summarized by the philosopher Yu Yingshi, "worships Western philosophers as gods and takes their writings as Holy Writ."¹¹ For this approach, Western philosophy is the orthodox form of philosophy: its basic questions, conceptual framework and way of thinking determine the direction and path for philosophy. Expounding and researching Chinese and Marxist

⁸ Liang Shuming, *East and West: cultures and philosophies*, p. 70.

⁹ Liang Shuming, *East and West: cultures and philosophies*, p. 202.

¹⁰ Tang Junyi, *Spiritual development of Chinese culture*, pp. 45, 667.

¹¹ Yu Yingshi, *The modern crisis and great thinkers*, p. 39.

philosophy should be carried out unconditionally according to the problem construction, basic framework and way of thinking of Western philosophy. As a result, as Yu Yingshi complained, “Most scholars who talk about literature, history or philosophy nowadays are adherents of one or another school of Western thought.”¹² It was precisely out of dissatisfaction and discontent with this approach that the debate on whether China had really had philosophy arose among Chinese philosophers, alongside a move to safeguard and defend “the legitimacy of Chinese philosophy.” These sentiments also gave rise to calls for “exploring a new way forward for the development of Chinese philosophy” and creating “Chinese-style Marxist philosophy” among Marxist philosophers.

The third view takes a simplistic and dogmatic approach to understanding the value beliefs in Marxist philosophy and uses this to pass judgment on or quote selectively from Chinese and Western philosophy. At a certain historical period, some people depicted the evolution of Chinese and Western philosophy within a simplistic framework of “materialism” vs “idealism” and “dialectics” vs “metaphysics.” They also used “progressive” vs “reactionary,” “revolutionary” vs “anti-revolutionary” and “the philosophy of a corrupt and decadent class” vs “the philosophy of the progressive class,” to give definitive judgments of Chinese and Western philosophers or philosophical schools. Among other things, all of philosophy was given a schematic interpretation in terms of materialism, dialectics, epistemology and historical view, and the rich contents of Chinese and Western philosophy were artificially jammed into these categories. All these approaches arbitrarily separated Marxist philosophy from the superb achievements of human cultural development, made Marxist fundamental principles abstract and absolute, and simplified the leading position of Marxist philosophy into the right to make conclusive judgments on traditional Chinese philosophy and Western philosophy.

It is clear that under the guidance of Marxist philosophy, achieving an open, positive and healthy relationship among Chinese, Western and Marxist philosophy is an important prerequisite for successful in-depth dialogue among the three. Only with greater conscious awareness of this point will it be possible for us to overcome the many historical misunderstandings on this issue, and open up new horizons for more in-depth dialogue among the three philosophical systems.

3 Dialogue at the Level of Value Beliefs: The Question of Modernity that has to be Tackled in Developing Modern Chinese Philosophy

The difficulty that hinders dialogue at the level of value beliefs among Chinese, Western and Marxist philosophies is not accidental. It is a “phenomenon of modernity” that typically occurs in the context of modernity peculiar to China. It is

¹² Yu Yingshi, *The modern crisis and great thinkers*, p. 39.

well-known that Western philosophy and Marxist philosophy were introduced into China when the country was undergoing a transformation from a traditional to a modern society. In the course of this transformation, Chinese, Western and Marxist philosophies were simultaneously present in the spiritual life of the Chinese, and thus dialogue among them was proposed. In traditional society, the value beliefs expressed in Chinese philosophy were undoubtedly dominant. However, as society gradually made the transition from traditional to modern, the dominance of Chinese philosophy was no longer supported by the Chinese social system and life foundations. Meanwhile, Western and Marxist philosophy entered the Chinese spiritual world. This caused an immediate problem—arguments and conflicts over value beliefs among the three philosophies. Max Weber once pointed out that a primary difference between modern and traditional society lies in the fact that the former is a disenchanted world. “The disenchantment of the world” implies the removal of the “one thing that is needful” from pre-modern society, which makes “polytheism of values” and the “struggle of gods” inevitable. According to Weber, polytheism of values will definitely lead to a “struggle of values” in which people who stick with the value beliefs they have chosen must necessarily reject those of others. When you decide to adhere to this position and you serve this god, you offend the others: “many old gods ascend from their graves; they are disenchanted and hence take the form of impersonal forces. They strive to gain power over our lives and again they resume their eternal struggle with one another.”¹³ This indicates that modern society is necessarily one in which a variety of philosophical, moral and religious principles and intellectual systems coexist, all of which are trying to find their own adherents and supporters and have an impact upon people’s spiritual world and social life. Rawls termed this characteristic of modern society “the fact of reasonable pluralism.”¹⁴ In this sense, we may say that the historical conflicts and disagreements at the level of value beliefs among Chinese, Western and Marxist philosophies are the result of the disenchantment of the world, and will accompany the process of exploring and constructing Chinese modernity.

Struggle and confrontation over value beliefs is a deep and intense conflict shot through with the deepest feelings, imaginings and expectations of different nations and cultures; their encounter inevitably causes a kind of fundamental agitation and tension. Before Chinese, Western and Marxist philosophies met, each had been developing in its own way, expressing people’s ideals and faiths under different temporal and spatial conditions, crystallizing the wisdom, experience and feelings of different nations and cultures and regulating people’s way of perceiving and experiencing the world and their attitudes and emotions. However, as China becomes a modern society, heterogeneous value beliefs originating from different life-worlds and life experiences gather in a single space and time, triggering inevitable arguments and conflicts. The question of how to deal with the relations

¹³ Max Weber, *Wissenschaft als Beruf: Politik als Beruf*, pp. 40–41.

¹⁴ John Rawls, *Political liberalism*, p. 3.

between the three forms of philosophy and their value beliefs poses an unprecedented challenge.

The usual strategy for dealing with such arguments and conflicts is to refuse dialogue. But this means that each of these heterogeneous value beliefs would strive to give itself an absolute and central position in an attempt to gain discourse hegemony and sole authority. This would necessarily rule out granting other value beliefs the status of equal dialogue participants and make it natural for them to be suppressed, whereupon the eternal life-and-death struggle between different value beliefs would become unavoidable. In such conditions, dialogue and communication in a real sense are out of the question, with serious consequences for philosophical, cultural and social development. It is precisely in this sense that the criticism and deconstruction of metaphysics centered on “identity thinking” has become a primary theme in modern philosophical research. Among other philosophers, Adorno has made the profound observation that “after Auschwitz,” any identity value belief, any sole understanding of human nature, and any absolute life principle could lead to catastrophe because they might contain “metaphysical horror.”¹⁵ Such a strategy and its consequences are well exemplified in the historical attempts of different philosophies to establish their own value hierarchies and in the problems that arose therefrom.

The life worlds and life experiences of Chinese who have made the transition to modern society have changed greatly. The life worlds and life experiences reflected in Chinese, Western and Marxist philosophies converge in the same time and space. This means that circumstances of being and way of life of the Chinese have lost their uniformity and homogeneity and become full of heterogeneity, variety and complexity. In this situation, to persist in one kind of value belief and refuse to engage in dialogue will certainly lead to an abstract and one-sided life world and life experience. Therefore, refusal to engage in dialogue runs completely counter to the life world and the character of life of modern Chinese. If modern Chinese philosophy is to develop, Chinese philosophers have to face the question of modernity: how can they transcend egocentricity in value beliefs and gradually attain a state where different forms of philosophy can engage in positive dialogue?

The reason this issue is important is primarily because positive dialogue at the level of value beliefs is a prerequisite for more open and deeper communication and integration among Chinese, Western and Marxist philosophies. Constructive interaction on an equal basis among the three philosophies will be achievable only when dialogue at that level is realized; otherwise, the channels for dialogue will be blocked. Gadamer, a representative of philosophical hermeneutics, has made a thorough study of the preconditions for dialogue. He observes that “good will” is the precondition for all communication and dialogue in the true sense of the word. What is meant by good will is overcoming one’s own narrow-mindedness and limitations to understand the will of “the other.” It implies willingness to openly

¹⁵ See Theodor W. Adorno, *Negative dialektik*, p. 362.

¹⁶ Hans-Georg Gadamer et al., *German–French disputation*, p. 123.

face and listen to everything “the other” wants to say, and thus bridge the gap between dialogue participants, so as to reach a creative consensus.¹⁶ Like.

Gadamer, Habermas believes “honesty,” “genuineness” and “rightness” are normative requirements for “dialogue” or “negotiation.” Both philosophers emphasize the significance of openness and tolerance in value beliefs as a precondition for meaningful dialogue. This shows us that communication and dialogue at the level of value beliefs are essential for a more profound and fruitful integration of Chinese, Western and Marxist philosophies.

More importantly, dialogue at the level of value beliefs is an important content and basic path rooted in the contemporary Chinese life-world for promoting self-understanding of the contemporary Chinese life-being, constructing contemporary Chinese philosophy and generating a “philosophical self” for our nation.

Historically, traditional Chinese philosophy enjoyed a long dominance. It was rooted in the life-world and life experience of traditional Chinese and crystallized their self-understanding and self-comprehension of life values, the life realm and life attitudes. It provided an inner basis for their understanding of the world, society, history and the meaning of life. Here, traditional Chinese philosophy actually expressed the self-identity, and further, the “philosophical ego” of the Chinese nation.

But traditional Chinese philosophy was primarily rooted in the social life of a pre-modern, traditional society; as China has transformed itself into a modern society over the last 100 years and more, the value beliefs about life expressed in traditional philosophy are not in some respects suited to the life world of the Chinese today. Unlike traditional Chinese philosophy, Western philosophy emphasizes rationality and the dynamism of consciousness and promotes individual values and on this basis has developed values of modernity in relation to the public life of society. All of these elements are wanting in traditional Chinese philosophy. Nonetheless, that is not to say that the value beliefs manifested in traditional Chinese philosophy have lost their active meaning for modern society; on the contrary, Western philosophy is lacking in many elements of traditional Chinese philosophy, like its awareness of the inherent moral dynamism and creativity of human life and its understanding of a unified, indivisible, organic and harmonious relationship between man and nature and between man and man. In other words, Chinese and Western philosophy stress different dimensions or facets of the conscious understanding of human life; each has its own strengths and weaknesses in terms of value beliefs. One of the great contributions that Marxist philosophy has made to philosophical history is that it has provided a realistic basis for a conscious understanding of man’s life-being and for realizing the development and improvement of man’s life and distilled from this a lofty and universal value belief. Marx wrote, “The whole character of a species, its species-character, resides in the nature of its life activity, and free conscious activity constitutes the species-character of man.”¹⁷ Here, “free conscious activity” refers to man’s

¹⁷ Karl Marx, *Economic and philosophical manuscripts of 1844*, p. 57.

practice activity—objective practice, through which negative unity will be created between man and man and between man and nature and a dialectical reconciliation achieved between man’s natural and supernatural life and between his individuality and his social nature, to arrive ultimately in a realm where “Man appropriates his comprehensive essence in a comprehensive manner, that is to say, as a whole man.”¹⁸ Therefore, unlike traditional Western philosophy’s “abstracted elaboration” of the dynamism of consciousness, Marx emphasized perceptual practice activity as being more basic and original than conscious activity. And unlike traditional Chinese philosophy’s bias toward moral dynamism, he also stressed seeking and achieving the emancipation of human life through real practice activities. On the other hand, rather than negating the dynamism of consciousness and moral dynamism, Marx regarded them as internal links between practice activity; he believed that they could be realized only when they were based upon and carried out through practice activity.

To sum up, Chinese, Western and Marxist philosophies all originated from a self-understanding or self-apprehension of man’s life value. From different perspectives, each provides unique life wisdom and value ideas for a rational way of life and an ideal life realm. This is their greatest intellectual contribution. Hence, dialogue and integration at the level of value beliefs among the three forms of philosophy will inherently offer a point of integration and a deep foundation for the creative blending of their life wisdom and value ideals, enriching and extending our self-understanding of man’s real life-being and opening up new intellectual horizons for man’s life values, all anchored to the real life-world of the Chinese people. The author believes that in the course of unceasing openness to “the other” on the part of Chinese, Western and Marxist philosophy and through their mutual disputation, communication and integration, a dialogue on value beliefs will truly open up a path to exploring and developing a new form of modern Chinese philosophy and reconstructing the “philosophical ego” of the Chinese people in a modern context. That is the basic point of this study’s emphasis on conducting dialogue and integration at the level of the value beliefs among these three philosophies.

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Part II
Towards the Depth of Human Life

Interactivity Between Virtue and Wisdom

Chang Jiang

Virtue is connected with wisdom as early as in ancient Greece. Wisdom is looked as one of the four main virtues and virtue is required by wisdom. The ancient Greek enlightens us to explore the relationship between virtue and wisdom in our research of virtue. In this sense, we hold that wisdom has decisive effect in the process of virtue formation and the action of virtue calls for the participation of wisdom. The relation between virtue and wisdom is very complicated. The paper will mainly discuss the mutuality of the two concepts.

1 Mutual Accompany Between Morality and Wisdom

The Old Testament of Bible has written the following story. Adam and Eve, Human ancestors, in the Garden of Eden, enjoy a careless life. 1 day, tricked by the serpent, they make the first sin by eating the fruits of the tree which is desired to make one wise, then the eyes of both are opened and they have the ability to discriminate good from bad. Worrying they take and eat the fruits of life tree which can make them be same with the Lord God who is wise and live forever, the Lord God drive them out of the Garden of Eden to till the ground from which he is taken. The implied meaning of the story is very rich and profound: man is not born to have wisdom, but to acquire it in their life; wisdom is with the Lord God who is only wise; man has only finite wisdom, it is only the man who can possess it in the world; wisdom is closely connected with the judgment of good and bad, and it accompanies with morality for the man of the world.

As a kind of mentality, morality is not formed by nature, but by rethinking, comparing, and choosing conducted by the subject who utilizes wisdom in practice. Julia Annas has analyzed the point as following. Students generally

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completely accept all moral ideas concerned with virtue told by teachers and parents at the beginning. Accompanying with the growth of age and knowledge, their eyes of the Mind will be lightened and they will judge these accepted moral ideas with their own eyes and reconcile inconsistencies by rethinking and comparing. At the same time, they will make their own judgment and choice, gradually make their action away from what they are required and try to find some reason or the right ideas affirmed as correct by themselves for their own action. Once this kind of reason is found, they will put it into practice. Once the practice is approved by others and themselves, it will be done and redone, and gradually changed into virtue.¹ The analysis of Julia Annas is roughly right. However, the process doesn't begin with school, but with the time of self-consciousness. What's more, the process of practice is the process of "trial and error" which connects one's own choice with concrete situation from childhood to adulthood, besides, the process is also the process in which morality will be gradually comprehended and their moral ideas, moral mentality and moral habit will be formed. The whole process is the one which changes the person from moral dependence to independence and is also the one which can be called moral formation.

All activities of rethinking, comparing, discriminating, judging, choosing, taking trial and error, affirmation and transforming the affirmation into will in the whole process of moral formation are not merely the intellectual activities, but the activities of wisdom, especially the activities of virtue wisdom. The process of morality formation is the one which is pushed by virtue wisdom. Some psychologists define wisdom as synergy of "knowledge and experience" and "thoughtful application for welfare promotion".² If "knowledge and experience" can be comprehended as ideas, knowledge and ability, if "thoughtful application for welfare promotion" can be comprehended as striving for good life, the process of morality formation is the process in which all elements of wisdom function together for good life. Therefore, it can be found that wisdom has great significance for virtue formation. No wisdom, no virtue. In this sense, virtue is the product and embodiment of wisdom.

On the other hand, the process of morality formation for a person who changes from dependence to independence is the process for the one grows from without moral wisdom to with moral wisdom. Wisdom, which generates morality, generates itself. It's mentioned that wisdom contains the requirements of morality. If wisdom fails to fulfill the requirement, the wisdom is not the genuine one. It is in the process in which the acquired moral ideas have been put into practice by rethinking, comparing, judging, choosing and recomprehending, the teenagers gradually form their own moral ideas, moral mentality and action habit. The process lasts for a long time, generally speaking, it begins with childhood and ends

¹ Julia Annas, "Moral Knowledge as Practical Knowledge," in E. E. Paul, F. D. Miller and J. Paul, eds., *Moral Knowledge*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 236–256.

² Christopher Peterson, Martin E. P. Seligman, *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 106.

in 45 years old (by the way, it has to be pointed out the moral maturity is much later than physiological maturity. The moral maturity generally can't be gotten until middle ages.) The long process is the one which morality and wisdom generate each other. Logically speaking, morality takes wisdom as its preconditions with, and it is also the application of wisdom, therefore, wisdom comes before morality. However, realistically speaking, it seems that morality comes before wisdom. Once the person being born, the moral formation process has been started. Wisdom preconditions with self-consciousness which doesn't exist at the time of the person's birth, therefore, morality comes before wisdom. Of course, the morality which comes before wisdom is natural morality, not the conscious one. In fact, it is very hard to define the time order of the two ones (especially the natural morality and wisdom). Therefore, it can be said that the two ones accompany with each other.

The above analysis shows the accompany relationship between virtue and wisdom from the perspective of their generation. Besides this, the relationship can be reflected from their change. The generation of wisdom and virtue is not a smooth sailing, but full of difficulties and reverses. Everyone knows that virtue and wisdom are good and wants to be wise and virtuous; however, it is impossible for quite a number of people to be virtuous and wise, why? The reason lies in the difficulties. Moreover, someone who has been wise and virtuous can change into the one who is neither wise nor virtuous. The important reason for the two cases lies in that the change of virtue and wisdom can affect each other.

The change in the generation of virtue and wisdom shows that once one of the elements of wisdom has been in trouble, the generation of virtue will be affected. For example, the improper moral ideas will influence the generation of wisdom, and if wisdom has met some problem in its ideas, the problem of virtue will be inevitable. Both great mistake in knowledge and some defects in ability will influence the generation of virtue. On the other hand, if there is some problem in virtue, especially in the basic virtue, the generation of wisdom will also be influenced. If some vice character, such as greed, has been formed in one's personality generation process, the generation of virtue will be destroyed, which will influence the generation of wisdom. It's hard to imagine that a greedy person is a wise one. It cannot be said that every problem in virtue will make destructive influence to the generation of wisdom. However, once any one kind of vice has been formed, the generation of wisdom will be completely destroyed. If vice is not eliminated, it will be impossible to generate wisdom.

When wisdom and virtue has been formed, the benign change of them will promote each other. However, when one side has malignant change, both of them will be seriously influenced. For example, when an upright person changes into an egoist under the influence of various factors, the person cannot be called as the virtuous one any more, of course, nor be called as the wise one, although all of his other character doesn't have any obvious change. Another example concerns with the wise and capable person who has been an unconscious one for a traffic accident which severely harmed his brain, the person is bound to loose wisdom, of course, he has no virtue any more. However, he cannot be looked as the evil.

Therefore, the change relation between wisdom and virtue shows that both of them will rise and fall together, just like Aristotle has pointed out that, “one cannot be, strictly speaking, good without Practical Wisdom nor Practical-Wise without moral goodness”.³

It has to be pointed out that the wisdom and the virtue discussed above concern with their ideal or highest requirement in their extension and depth, in this sense, both of them are ideals. In realistic life, it’s hard to find there is any person who can meet the requirement, if there is indeed the one, the person can be called the great one possessing both wisdom and virtue. Generally speaking, the requirement can’t be met by ordinary person; however these persons can also be called as wise or virtuous one. Both of them can’t contain any evil, once there is evil, the person can’t be called neither wise nor virtuous. Evil can make fundamental damage to wisdom and virtue, which shows mutual interdependency of each other.

2 Mutual Construction Between Virtue and Wisdom

Wisdom and virtue not only accompany with each other, but also construct each other. Their mutual construction shows that they are closely connected. On the one hand, virtue is the inner requirement of wisdom, if there is no virtue, there is no wisdom; on the other hand, virtue is the crystallization and embodiment of wisdom, if there is no wisdom, there is no genuine virtue. The absence or problem occurrence for either of them, the other one will be influenced. There is no one in the world who has genuine wisdom has moral deficiency, and vice versa. The mutual construction between wisdom and virtue which is now lack of enough attention should be paid attention.

Wisdom should meet basic requirements of virtue. We hold that there are twenty kinds of basic virtue, i.e. self-love, persistence, temperance, thrifty, kind hearted, honesty, upright, modesty, caring, reciprocity, faithfulness, credit-keeping, responsibility, compliance, environmental protection, energy conservation, life-preserving, loving all living things and to be pious. All of the twenty ones (especially the former fifteen ones, the latter five ones have not been universally approved) are basic requirements of virtue and the embodiment of wisdom. To be wise and prudent, as two kinds of key virtue, are directly embodiments of wisdom and of course the moral requirement of wisdom. A man of wisdom should be wise: he has foresight and is provident, knows how to utilize rationality, is good at using all kinds of factors and power by considering overall situation while dealing with problems, he is open and profound, has keen insight and special mind, never avoids one fault by falling into another. A man of wisdom should also be prudent: he has the habit of deliberation while treating people, can size up the situation by

³ Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, 1144b31–32, trans., by D. P. Chase, E. P. Dutton & Co, 1934, p. 148.

keeping steadiness and firmness, being as cool as cucumber, pays attention to and is good at harmonizing all kinds of relations without recklessly hasty, too extreme or rush for quick results.

Virtue is the crystallization and embodiment of wisdom. We have discussed that, virtue is a kind of mental set and behavior custom. However, virtue is not usual mental set and behavior custom, but the one formed by wisdom in human life practice. When one person is born, some characters will be formed under the influence of parents and environments, some of these characters are similar to the quality of virtue. However, these characters which are similar to virtue are not genuine virtue, because they are not the one approved by the free choice of the agent himself.

For a grown up independent person, when he faces complex living environment and all kinds of living problems, he will reflect, select and define the characters similar to virtue. If there is no wisdom, it's very easy for him to discharge these characters which are similar to virtue under the negative influence of environment and to form some kind of bad characters, even to do some vices. The real world is very complicated; besides, there is great temptation from the negative influence of reality which often lures the person to give up some good characters, such as simple-living style, and to select or gradually form some vice characters which are looked to be advantageous and in fact harmful to better life. May be it's for this reason, some thinkers hold that the human should return to simple life style living like an innocent child. Of course, it's impossible to be realized in real life. The reason lies in that, once the person enters into society and becomes an independent subject, it's impossible for him to return to his childhood period and to be innocent like a child, the only method to escape from the bad influence of environment is to depend on wisdom which can help the person keep away from the bad influence of environment and can raise their former simple character into genuine virtue good to their better existence.

It's from two perspectives that virtue can be looked as crystallization and embodiment of wisdom. On the one hand, the agent's activity which is the basis of virtue is independent activity of wisdom; on the other hand, wisdom is gradually formed by this kind of activity of wisdom under different situations. Although virtue is the set of mind and the habit of action, it is not in born, but gradually formed by human independent activity of wisdom which is the basis of it. Human activities can be divided into two sorts according to whether there is the function of wisdom, one is with the function of wisdom, and the other is without. Human independent activity of wisdom refers to the activities with the function of wisdom which can be expressed as the activities of rethinking, comparing, selecting, judging, choosing, finding reason, error-trying, confirming and transforming the conforming into will, desire and action. Rethinking refers to consider whether the activity which has been done or will do is advantageous to the better existence of oneself. Comparing, selecting, judging and choosing mean to compare, select, judge and choose different activities which can all be done by oneself and the other ones in order to make a choice by finding out which kind of activity is more beneficial to one's better existence. Finding reason means to find a reliable and

persuading reason for one's own choice basing on the primary activity of selecting. The meaning of error-finding is to put the choice into practice to prove itself and to make some amending if there is necessary. Confirming and transforming it into activity means to confirm the choice which has been proved and amended and to transform it into intention, aim and motive by changing it into external activity with the help of will. This is a very complicated process which is participated by wisdom. When the process is repeated again and again under different situations, the experience confirmed by wisdom will be gradually formed; the set of mind, the habit of action and the virtue will be formed with the basis of this kind of experience. Therefore, virtue is gradually formed not by the activity without wisdom, but by the activity with wisdom, it is the crystallization and embodiment of wisdom.

It has to be noticed that, as the crystallization and embodiment of wisdom, when virtue is formed, it doesn't mean that wisdom becomes unnecessary; on the contrary, wisdom is always necessary in the practice of real life even after the formation of virtue, although it doesn't have comprehensive function anytime and anywhere. Generally speaking, the human makes their independent action proper according to virtue which is an experience set and habit. However, in some special situation where virtue can't keep the action proper, wisdom is needed to keep the action being virtuous. Besides, virtue itself has to be nursed by wisdom in order to adapt to its changing environment and keep pace with the times.

3 Mutual Promotion Between Virtue and Wisdom

The above analysis has shown that, the relation between virtue and wisdom, in some sense, can be looked as the relation between the accumulation of wisdom and the application of it. Virtue is the accumulation or crystallization of wisdom which is a kind of human comprehensive control function. Once the function of wisdom is utilized, it is the action of wisdom which can be accumulated to become virtue and some kind of real ability. The more active and the more complicated virtue action, it will be more helpful to the formation of virtue capability. On the contrary, the higher of the virtue capability, it will be more helpful to the convenient and efficient conduct of wisdom action. Here the "convenient" refers to the action of wisdom can be carried out more convenient by the person who has the higher virtue and capability. Here the "efficient" refers to the cost of wisdom action is much lower and the efficiency of it is much higher. Therefore, it can be found that virtue and wisdom not only accompany and construct with each other, but also promote with each other.

Concretely speaking, the relation of promotion can be understood from the perspectives of their mutual promotion function and can be reflected in the following three aspects:

Firstly, the wish of virtue promotes the person to cultivate wisdom, and the wish of wisdom can also promote the person to possess virtue. The daily life shows

that the child has been given virtue requirements by family, school and society in the early age, and is rewarded by “good child”, “sweet child” and “nice child” and other languages. This kind of environments makes the child have the wish to possess virtue in the early age. For the children who treasures this kind of wish, they learn to obey the direction of parents, teachers and society and cultivate their virtue according to their requirements, however, once they have independent self-consciousness, they begin to do the activities such as rethinking, comparing, discriminating, judging, selecting, looking for reasons, trying with error, confirming and transforming the confirming into intention, desire and behavior, all these activities are the wisdom activities, i.e. the exploitation and realization of wisdom potential. The process changing from obeying others to being independent cannot be realized in everyone’s life, because there are indeed some persons who cannot get rid of being dependent on others in their characters; however large amount of persons can make the process be realized. That’s to say, the wish of virtue indeed promotes the awakening of wisdom and the development of it. For example, many persons were educated “not to lie” in the early age and they cultivated the character of “not to lie” which is similar to the quality of virtue. However, the character which is not the genuine virtue for its lack of agent’s independence is often challenged in real life. The challenge pushes some persons to rethink the belief of “not to lie” and gradually makes the person cultivate the virtue of honesty in the wisdom activities of comparing, discriminating and so on. Obviously, in the real life, the challenge to the similar virtue character and the wish of cultivating genuine virtue can promote the persons to develop and utilize wisdom.

Some families pay special attention to cultivate the wisdom of children. Although different family understands wisdom differently, children will be conscious of the virtue required by wisdom while acquiring the wisdom and will cultivate their virtue at the same time. For example, dealing with the relation between the individual and the others by cultivating the wisdom of rethinking, comparing and judging, the person will find they must have be kind, caring, cooperative, and justice in order to deal well with these relations, therefore, they will try to cultivate these virtues in order to make himself have the wisdom of dealing with these relations. At the same time, the process in which the person cultivates and gets wisdom is helpful to the formation of virtue. When the person tries to get wisdom, their virtue will be elevated with the increasing of wisdom day by day. For example, when the person has the wisdom of dealing with the relation between the body and the mind, he will find that self-love, temperance and other virtue are very important for the health of body and mind, therefore he will try to cultivate these virtues.

Secondly, in order to cultivate virtue, the person is required to utilize wisdom, and the formation of wisdom also requires the person to be virtuous. In order to cultivate virtue, it has to utilize wisdom, the basic difference between virtue and other mind set lies in that, virtue is the application of wisdom. Without wisdom, there will be no virtue. For example, the precondition for virtue cultivation is to know good and bad, and the main function of wisdom is to make the person know

what is good and what is bad, the tree of wisdom in Bible express it with the mythical language like this, “1 day when you eat of it (the fruits of wisdom tree), your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and bad.” In other words, once having wisdom, the human can know good and bad. Although it is a prophet, it fully confirms that wisdom has great moral significance.⁴

As to virtue, the significance of wisdom is far from this. The person who wishes to cultivate virtue has to utilize wisdom, in this sense, it can be said that the process of virtue cultivation is the process of wisdom application. For example, the person who intends to cultivate the virtue of cooperation has to apply wisdom. The human being naturally tends to look other person as the competitor of himself and to believe that there is the conflict of interest, therefore, the person often learns to keep away from others or even applies the “beggar-thy- neighbor” principle. However, this sort of natural tendency is not right, because it is not beneficial to human better existence; cooperation which aims to overcome the natural tendency is much more beneficial to human better existence. If a person wants to cultivate the virtue of cooperation, he has to apply wisdom, because it is the application of wisdom that makes the person, by rethinking, comparing, selecting, judging and other wisdom activities, find what human being most need among all of the needs is the man and the cooperation will produce mutual benefits. At the same time, it is the application of wisdom that helps the person to solve the problems encountered in the process of cooperation. In order to cultivate virtue, it’s required to utilize wisdom.

On the other hand, in order to acquire wisdom, it’s required to possess virtue. Wisdom is a sort of ability; it is different from intellectual ability and other ones in that, it contains the requirement of virtue. It is for this reason that, as a kind of ability, wisdom means the positive value and always is good; other abilities are neutral, which means they can be good or bad. It means that for the person who wants to possess wisdom, he has to possess virtue, if he has lack of this consciousness, he is impossible to acquire the genuine wisdom. If a person intends to have the wisdom of science, it means he has to have the virtues such as diligence, eagerness of learning, innovation and so on, if he does not cultivate these virtues, it’s impossible for him to acquire the wisdom of science. Let’s take diligence as example, the acquirement of science wisdom needs the sacrifice spirits such as endurance and perseverance, when these spirits are turned into a kind of mind set and action habit, it can be said the person has possessed the virtue of diligence. Without it, the person will be impossible to have the wisdom of science; he has at most some abilities of doing scientific research.

Thirdly, the elevation of virtue requires the elevation of wisdom and vice versa. For both wisdom and virtue, there is the difference of “quantity”, that’s to say, both of them have the difference of extension and depth. The elevation of virtue has direct correlativity with the elevation of wisdom. The elevation of virtue has

⁴ Cf. Nicola Hartmann’s *Ethics*, from *Western Ethics Classics in twentieth Century*(II) edited by Wan Junren, China Renmin University Press, 2004, p. 251.

comparable demands on the elevation of wisdom, in other words, virtue is elevated on the assumption of the elevation of wisdom without which the virtue is impossible to be elevated. If a person intends to develop the extension of his virtue and to possess all sorts of virtue, he has to utilize wisdom, make it be reflected adequately and change it into virtue, in all fields of life. On the other hand, if a person intends to have his wisdom elevated, he has also to elevate his virtue. If the person wants to cultivate his wisdom of science, he has to be highly responsible for society, he has to have higher reasonability, because the fruits of scientific research can make great influence to human life and the whole nature, without strong social responsibility, it will be possible for these fruits to become the weapon which can bring serious harm to human being and the whole environment. The nuclear weapon invented by scientists is the result which lacks this kind of virtue, the damage brought by it to human being is much more serious than the one brought by 9.11 terrorists event. It can be definitely said that the scientists who invent nuclear weapon have very bad quality in morality; they have no genuine wisdom of science, but the competence of doing scientific research.

On the Transformation of Value Orientation of Commodity Symbols: Some Philosophical Considerations on Spiritual Transformation of Consumptive Activities

Zhen Han

At the very beginning of *The Consumer Society*, Jean Baudrillard pointed out in the very beginning:

Today, we are everywhere surrounded by the remarkable conspicuousness of consumption and affluence, established by the multiplication of objects, services, and material goods. This now constitutes a fundamental mutation in the ecology of the human species. Strictly speaking, men of wealth are no longer surrounded by other human beings, as they have been in the past, but by *objects* [1, p. 29].

Europe and the United States first embraced the prosperous consumer society during the first Industrial Revolution and its resultant colonial plundering. In China, residents of the developed coastal areas have also started to experience this kind of change, influenced by the “reform and opening-up” policy and by socialist market construction of the past 20 years. In other words, we have left behind the “deficit economy” and entered into a consumer society surrounded by all kinds of objects or commodities: a consumer society has come to the Chinese people.

1 The Appearance of a Consumer Society and its Problems

Consumption is a social phenomenon generated as humans meet their life-needs for survival and development. In human life, people have all kinds of needs, but not all needs are satisfied through consumption; rather, consumption is only associated with commodities—things that are produced or that are, out of necessity, modified from their natural state. The use of those things that have not been worked upon by human labor cannot be considered consumption, even though the things themselves may satisfy some human needs. For example, swimming in a rural pond is definitely not consumption whereas playing in an urban swimming

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pool is. The major difference lies in that the former is not a commodity while the latter is.

As far as the human society is concerned, not all societies with consumptive activities can be regarded as “consumer societies”; the consumer society, a modern concept, results when consumptive activities become universal to everyone regardless of class. Strictly speaking, human society before industrialism cannot be called a true consumer society insofar as it was incapable of producing surplus life-materials. In primitive society, people’s living conditions were only slightly better than those of animals, and man’s activities and survival needs were in many ways still similar to those of animals. Therefore, primitive society’s social norms were dedicated to enabling different groups to hunt cooperatively and to distribute life-necessities. In slave and feudal societies, the surplus life-materials could only meet the luxury needs of a few people, and a minority of people could be liberated from laborious manual work to engage in mental work or spiritual production. Thorstein B Veblen maintained in *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, written in 1899, that in the early stages of economic development an orgy of consumption, and especially of high-grade supplies, was a patent possibility for the leisure class. That is, all consumption beyond the basic needs for survival were theoretically exclusive to the leisure class [6, p. 6]. In such conditions, social norms are more likely to promote hierarchy and asceticism, making the majority content with their basic survival needs and the privileged minority pleased with their entertainment and spiritual activities.

The true essence of consumption lies outside the realm of survival. Consequently, the consumer society or era truly arrives only if people pursue consumption beyond the simple biological sense, and if the majority is able to consume in this way. Starting from the industrial revolution in which the mass production of products became possible, luxury went from being the privilege of the few to being available to most ordinary people. In this sense, the arrival of the consumer era could be seen as being innately egalitarian and opposed to hierarchy: the things once considered available only to the privileged could now be consumed by everyone.

However, the improvement of the material standard of living invites a tendency toward hedonism: people’s consumption is no longer necessary simply for healthy living. Rather, things seem reversed. Why are physical needs limited while desire is boundless? According to Marx’s theories, the life-materials took the form of commodities, which could be embodied in currency, which could then be represented in paper money. As a symbol of value, paper money broke through the practical limitations imposed on peoples’ possession of wealth, opening an infinite space for man’s desire. Real wealth takes up space and is easy to lose, while symbolic currency could, in theory, be infinite. As Marx stated, “Before being replaced by exchange value, every form of natural wealth is built on the premise of the essential relationship of individuals to things, and people hence materialize themselves in the objects. A person’s possession of objects meanwhile represents a certain development of his personality; those feeding the flock become shepherds while those tilling grain become farmers, and so on. In contrast, currency is an individual entity with general wealth which is produced in circulation. It is purely

the result of the society, not based on any relationship between a human and his possessions. Therefore, the relation of currency to the individual represents a pure, incidental, and irrelevant one. It is this relationship that endows the human with the general power to rule over the society, enjoyment and labor, and the entire world. Therefore, currency is an object of a desire for getting rich—the only one” ([2], Volume One, Volume 46, 171). People lost their sense of boundaries in the pursuit of money.

Contemporary Western scholars have had another explanation concerning the unlimited expansion of consumption. Jean Baudrillard, for instance, explored the consumptive phenomenon from the perspective of semiotics, holding that consumption will inevitably lead to a positive control over symbols. In the system of “commodity symbols”, the autonomy of the signifier means that the symbols can control such media as advertising and television, freeing the symbols from their original commodity and granting them cultural meaning. Culture can break through the limits of physiological needs: people can spiritually possess and pursue endless consumption in the cultural pleasures of symbols, which will inevitably lead to so-called excessive consumption.

Physical needs are not the most basic ones, but possess a certain element of hallucination, as people are capable of pursuing them endlessly. In interpreting Baudrillard, the American scholar Kellner considered: “In the purchase of commodities and their display, symbolic value is thought to be equally important to exchange value, and the phenomenon of symbol value has already become the most important component of commodities and consumption in the consumer society” [4, p. 5]. He has not treated the issue from the perspective of its genesis. Actually, the reason from Marx’s point of view is the consumptive inflation of the substantive mechanism. The symbolization of consumption is the characteristic presentation of the consumptive inflation, and hence, there was no need to put them in opposing positions. However, we must be clear that the symbolization of money is the cause and foundation of the symbolization of a commodity’s consumption. Excessive consumption comes from excessive money chasing, and in turn stimulates the latter.

Excessive consumption habits spoil people from their childhood, inevitably inviting extravagant and voluptuous social phenomena. In a consumer society, consumption seems to be a meaningful activity. As Gilles and Charles have said, “the concepts of fashion and consumption have been occupying a growing public and personal life space” [5, p. 21]. Here, floating values take the place of tough systematic discourse, and unlimited “meaning” is replaced the absolute bondage of an a priori “framework”. Humans “are involved in an endless meaning program without sacredness or substance, [and] this program determines the rule of the completely fashionable” [5, p. 20]. The pursuit of fashion becomes the impetus for consumerism. In this super-consumptive society, subversive and changing value—not the non-existence of the same—causes people’s anxiety. Living and thinking in a fashionable and changing setting transforms all fixed things to constantly changing ones. We pursue more and more changeable fashion and give it the good name of “constant innovation”. Consumption increasingly becomes an important

means of promoting or fulfilling oneself. In an era advocating nonsense and frivolity, man's consumptive activities are characterized by the pursuit of difference and novelty. This finally leads to excessive consumption, and consumption without substantially positive meaning.

But human needs cannot be satisfied in excessive consumption. Behind the reckless waste and the extremely extravagant consumptive activities are more and more mental diseases and social problems. Peoples' reactions have been diverse: some continue to sing hymns to consumerism, asserting that "I consume, therefore I am." In this situation, the human being is justified to assert that "super-consumption and super-modernity have declared the decay of meaning's grand traditional structure and the way of obtaining meaning through fashion and consumptive concepts" [5, p. 111]. Others have commenced anti-consumerist campaigns. For instance, amidst America's prevalent consumerism, the political performance artist Leif Lund Billy has advocated that the last Friday in November should be a "no-consumption day", coining the slogan "Buy Nothing, Feel Good!" As far as I am concerned, neither response is correct. It is possible to be against consumerism but not against consumptive activity itself; we can criticize consumerism but cannot deny consumption itself. Reasonable consumption is the foundation of existence and of the development of human civilization.

2 The Solution of the Problem: The Transformation of Consumptive Value Orientation is the Key

Since society has entered into the consumer era, consumption cannot be suppressed, asceticism cannot be claimed, and even the scope of the consumption cannot be limited. The proposition of asceticism is anti-civilization, and limiting consumption's scope is unequalitarian. The true outcome of a consumer civilization is reasonable consumption that realizes people's common needs rather than abstinence. Therefore, the nature of consumption and its pursuit are issues worthy of exploration. From the scientific-conceptual perspective and its ideas of transformative development, the author of this paper maintains that instead of being suppressed, consumption should be transformed and granted a new orientation. The only way available to super-consumerism is to transform the orientation of consumptive activities, that is, to motivate a transformation from material consumption to spiritual consumption, and from material possessions and spending to spiritual pursuit and enjoyment. The author holds that this transformation of consumptive activities is possible, necessary, and logical when it conforms to the value of humanity.

First of all, the possibility of the advent of the consumer era implied the necessity of spiritual transformation regarding consumptive activities. Modern industrial production laid a premise for the common people's general consumption: it not only made the current general consumption possible, but also increasingly contributed to

the production of new needs and new objects of consumption. Mass commodities' appearance created the conditions for humans to enjoy those things which went beyond their natural biological needs. According to Baudrillard, people's consumption began to have more and more power over symbols and to increasingly pursue the symbolic meaning represented by commodities. Now that people's physical needs have been satisfied, further consumption would inevitably be characterized by culture. On the one hand, the non-material forms of commodities such as Hollywood films, pop music CDs, books, and cartoons played an increasingly important role in the consumer society; on the other hand, traditional commodities have also been saturated with cultural or intangible factors. For instance, the aesthetic factors in buildings and furniture have carried more weight. Obviously, culture as symbolized by symbols is the basic element of a consumer society: if previous societies were ones that celebrated physical goods, then consumer society advocated symbols, images, and information.

Consumptive activities are essentially transformed, moving from material things to cultural ones. The possibility of changes in "commodity symbols" noted by Baudrillard means that it can arouse in people an endless desire for consumption (even here, people consume the cultural symbols embodying the consumption of material commodities rather than material things), and also encourage people to turn to spiritual pursuits. In fact, when people's essential biological needs are satisfied, all new needs will take some spiritual or symbolic form. The ancient "showing-off" of consumption preserved in today's "presidential suites" and VIP lounges is more than likely rooted in the need for recognition, identity, and qualification than in the satisfaction of physiological needs. Making a parade of one's identity is already a sort of spiritual pursuit, although not an entirely reasonable or positive one. The visible, intrinsic contradiction of consumerism is this: the more one pursues material consumption, the farther one strays from physiological needs. In this sense, the arrival of the consumer era and its resultant activities implies the possibility of spiritual transformation. The key is that spiritual transformation must be pointed in a positive and healthy direction.

Second, spiritual transformation is also determined by human nature. Human beings do not live on the earth mainly for the satisfaction of their biological functions. They become the master of the universe through the externalization of their capacity for creative thinking. Through wisdom, humans created tools that transcended their bodily functions. Spiritual inspiration is the source of human power, and hence human beings' spiritual consumption is the sort of consumption that possesses the most productive and creative character. According to Marxist understandings, man's real need is to labor, and this kind of labor essentially reflects the practice of spiritual production—in other words, activities that transform nature and society. In consumptive activities with a spiritual orientation, knowledge acquisition, thought exchanges, cultural polishing, and emotional communication are positive consumer processes, and reproductive of spirit and knowledge productivity.

Third, limited resources also determine the spiritual transformation of consumption. With respect to their origin and existence, people are part of nature, and

hence their capacity for activity is a function of nature itself. Historically, the relationship between man and nature has gone through three phases, each with different aspects. In the first, humans used ready-made natural objects, simply changing them to tools such as stone tools or sticks. In the second, humans applied existing natural phenomena such as fire to change the forms of natural objects, for instance smelting ores into more effective tools. In the third, the transformation of nature through the changing of natural objects was subverted by the appearance of modern science and technology, with such results as electricity, nuclear energy, and information technology. We can say that the energy contained in natural forms was released in a passive way. At present, the development of human power has completely broken the balance between man and the environment, creating a demand for more and more natural resources. Nevertheless, the exploitation of coal and oil has obviously been approaching the boundaries of the earths' natural capacity at a much faster rate. Technological innovation is not omnipotent; it often delays the solution of problems, or brings about new problems. We cannot destructively consume natural resources, but should rather maintain a balance between man and nature. As such, we must transform the desire for consumption into a spiritual pursuit. In a sense, human productive capacity meets basic physical needs, but then along comes a new consumptive desire. Along with education and the great-leap-forward that is the development and improvement of information technology, consumer groups using consumer culture and its symbolic awareness have rapidly grown; the production and dissemination of spiritual products has gained speed as well. The original warmth, quality, and quantity retreat into the background, while the style, grace, and temperament gained from consumption has won the attention of new consumer groups. Experience is what they are interested in, not affordability. The emergence of these consumptive groups opens up the possibility of the spiritual transformation of consumption. China's "revolutionary tourism", rural tourism, overseas "prison hotels", and so on are evidence of the transformation of spiritual consumption.

Furthermore, the spiritual transformation of consumption does not deny material consumption; instead, it is the sublimation of material consumption. Certainly, consumption includes material consumption and is always based on it. However, people can after all turn this sort of consumption into cultural and spiritual enjoyment. Humans are limited in the sense of time and space, as are the material needs in life. Therefore, man is unable to truly occupy or consume infinite materials. It follows that on a certain material basis, the pursuit of material goods has no substantial meaning for man's survival. The problem lies in that people can essentially surpass, go forward, or produce innovation. After physical survival has reached its basic boundaries, man's real and meaningful pursuits can only be the promotion of society, knowledge, culture, and spirit. This is the human motivation contributing to the transformation of spiritual consumption in the consumer era.

At present, China's economic and social development has witnessed a new historical starting point: only when the comprehensive scientific developmental view is implemented, the development objective is considered, and development

thought and mode is changed can we ensure China's sustainable and harmonious social development.

In poverty, people only bear one kind of worry. On the other hand they may suffer hundreds of miseries after their material needs are satisfied. The necessity of the spirit of humanity in human existence and development is to transfer these worries away; and this is also the way in which any society can hope to properly construct a functioning culture. We must solve the relationship between man and man by constructing a harmonious society, improve the relationship between man and nature by establishing a resource-efficient society, and approach human beings' inner conflict and their conflict with the external environment through the spiritual transformation of consumptive activities.

3 The Meaning of Spiritual Consumption

The scientific developmental view has prompted the spiritual transformation of consumptive activities, which is of significance for China's construction of a harmonious and resource-efficient society.

First of all, the spiritual transformation of consumptive activities can promote the developmental mode and reduce the cost of material resources. Development is the absolute principle: the development of China must transform from relying excessively on exports to encourage consumption, which necessitates the improvement of Chinese people's consumption level. Reasonable development must be sustainable development. The key problem is how we can avoid unnecessary material costs, and avoid transforming the precious resources into surplus in the meanwhile. Since consumptive power is uncontrollable, the only possible way forward is the spiritual transformation of consumptive activities. Mike Featherstone has pointed out: "An ever-changing flood of commodities complicates the interpretation of position or level of commodity holders. In this case, taste, unique and keen judgment, and knowledge or cultural capital play an important role" [3, p. 25]. This is because human beings' sense of self-worth depends completely on whether people can understand the cultural meaning of consumptive activities. Some of the new economists have begun to realize in connection with ecological problems that "[t]he pursuit of quality in a satisfactory and meaningful life is regarded as more important than quantitative value. Human's development and the satisfaction of the needs of nature, society, economy, and culture are considered as more meaningful than economic growth. [...] demands should transcend the level of material living needs and include the well-being of the culture" [7, p. 394]. Thus, according to the new economic indicators, the satisfaction of positive spiritual culture and of healthy needs have replaced money, material enjoyment, and economic growth. As Pierre Bourdieu said, "The 'pure' aesthetic principles are applied to daily affairs, such as cooking, clothing, or decoration" (quoted from [6], p. 48). Therefore, the spiritual orientation can achieve fruition. Material

consumption is no longer fundamental; rather it is inner experience and joy. When life is presented in the form of thoughts and arts, life becomes better.

Second, the spiritual transformation of consumptive activities can change peoples' desire and redirect them from the pursuit of material cravings to internal promotion and development. Although people's desires should not be suppressed, their direction can be transformed. A society marked by the spiritual transformation of consumptive activities is similar to Erich Fromm's "existence" society and dissimilar to the "occupation" society. The more people are "occupied," the more insufficient resources are. Therefore, if people are only concerned with "existence", social resources can be reasonably arranged. This complete value orientation is a favorable reformation of human nature and a huge elevation of human virtues. Such low-level consumption is green, reasonable, and sustainable. The key to the problem is making the exchange value of commodities subject to human spiritual targets, aesthetic experience, and elegant cultural pursuits, and to ensure that man's spiritual world is not controlled by market logic. Since the market economy is in the service of human needs, human needs should not submit to the processes of the market economy and commodity exchange. Different leisure activities indicate diverse consumptive directions, such as indulgences in dissolute places or the infatuation with bookstores, museums, libraries, theatres, music halls, and stadiums. The former is material desires-oriented, while the latter is spirit-oriented. Consumptive activities based on spiritual orientation can result in cultural recreation and be nurtured by literature, art, and music. While enjoying spiritual recreation, people can also exercise the mind and body, promote accomplishments, increase knowledge, sharpen their thinking, and improve their ability.

Finally, the spiritual transformation of consumptive activities blurs the distinction between consumptive activities and production activities. Consumer cultural products at the same time will stimulate spiritual production, and the consumptive process becomes a spiritual production directly. In fact, art and knowledge consumption can "promote the expansion of cultural commodities, stimulate people through the continuous application of art and knowledge trends, and help people create new conditions of art and knowledge through the job at hand" [2, p. 53]. Here, popular culture is worthy of our notice. Some criticize popular culture from the perspective of elite culture, claiming that popular culture erodes cultural quality and shakes the foundations of the elite culture. The author of the present paper maintains that what the public was capable of consuming at the very beginning could only be popular culture. Besides, it was a part of culture, and as such better than nothing. The public draws upon the cultural essence, increases its knowledge, and improves its appreciation and cultivation in the culture it can enjoy and understand. Our responsibility is to gradually improve the aesthetic appeal and spiritual content of popular culture, not to hold a disdainful and even hostile attitude. Popular culture is an important carrier of the spiritual transformation of consumptive activities and a critical ladder in the promotion of spiritual cultural consumption.

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The Social Self-criticism on the Threshold of Evaluation: Thinking on the Thought of Marx's Social Self-criticism

Xinhan Chen

1 The Thought of Marx's Social Self-criticism

Marx's social self-critical thought has been proposed in the passage of "political economy approach" of the book named "the Introduction of the 'Critique of Political Economy'" (hereinafter referred to as the "Introduction"), the main contents are the following two paragraphs:

Human anatomy contains a key to the anatomy of the ape. The intimations of higher development among the subordinate animal species, however, can be understood only after the higher development is already known. The bourgeois economy thus supplies the key to the ancient, etc.

The so-called historical presentation of development is founded, as a rule, on the fact that the latest form regards the previous ones as steps leading up to itself, and, since it is only rarely and only under quite specific conditions able to criticize itself—leaving aside, of course, the historical periods which appear to themselves as times of decadence—it always conceives them one-sidedly. ...Likewise, bourgeois economics arrived at an understanding of feudal, ancient, oriental economics only after the self-criticism of bourgeois society had begun.¹

Marx wrote these two paragraphs in the "political economy approach" of the "Introduction". Therefore Chinese scholars understand the content mainly from the view point of understanding of pre-capitalist society methodological. For example, a scholar wrote the paper named "Human anatomy contains a key to the anatomy of the ape—Critique of Historicism", who did not emphasize "one cannot know the *past* deep, know *impossibly now*", but emphasize that "without a proper understanding of now, it is impossible to explain the past"; then the author

¹ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels. *Marx & Engels Selected Works* (Volume 2) [M]. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1972, p. 108.

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directly quoted the words of Marx's "bourgeois economics arrived at an understanding of feudal, ancient, oriental economics only after the self-criticism of bourgeois society had begun".² Another author pointed out: "bourgeois economics is the key to understand all social life forms" after citing Marx's words that "Human anatomy contains a key to the anatomy of the ape", because from the view point of Marx's world history, "the capitalism marks a commanding height".³ This kind of understanding is correct and profound certainly, but only one aspect of the understanding.

Marx does not generally emphasize "the bourgeois economy thus supplies the key to the ancient", but especially emphasize "bourgeois economics arrived at an understanding of feudal, ancient, oriental economics only after the **self-criticism** of bourgeois society had begun" (Emphasis is added by referrer). In other words, only making bourgeois society "human anatomy" in the "self-criticism of bourgeois society" can understand the form of previous economic before the bourgeois society, so that provider a "key" for "ape anatomy". At the same time, understanding the economic forms of the former bourgeois society is in order to reveal bourgeois economists "always conceives them one-sidedly", just as "the so-called historical presentation of development is founded, as a rule, on the fact that the latest form regards the previous ones as steps leading up to itself",⁴ in order to make the economic forms of bourgeois society eternal. It is the Marx's emphasis that through understanding the forms of the former bourgeois society in order to recognize the bourgeois economic form is the same as the passed economic form which just is historical and temporary.

Here, Marx actually proposed the important thinking of the "social self-criticism" by writing the "self-criticism of bourgeois society"; the social self-criticism is that the communities do the "human anatomy" to themselves. In China, almost all scholars understand Marx's words which were cited above from the view point of understanding social methodology so that Marx's important theory of social self-criticism was sheltered in long time.⁵

² Yu Wujin. Human anatomy is the key of monkey anatomy—Critique of Historicism [J]. *Exploration and Free Views*, 2007, (1).

³ Sun Bokui. Marx's theory of social existence—Comment on Lukacs's social existence theory. *The Journal of Jiangsu Administration College*, 2001:2. In addition, in Feng Jingyuan's book named "Human Condition and History—the Study on the 'Notes of Anthropology' and 'Notes of History'" also exists this kind of point of view, which was published by China Renmin University Press, 2004, p. 71.

⁴ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels. *Marx & Engels Selected Works* (Volume 2) [M]. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1972, p. 108.

⁵ Li Yaning, Wang Zhongshi has studied the theory of Marx's social self-criticism from the aspect of "bourgeois society's self-criticism" in the book named "the Thought on the Marx Social Self-criticism" (*Journal of Sichuan University* No.4 1995), but they have not make a deep study on the general mechanism of the social self-criticism.

In the process of “contacting and interaction with their own age’s real-world”,⁶ the contemporary interpretations of Marx’s social self-critical thought can fully show the vitality of this theory. According to the practice of contemporary Chinese socialist reform, to study the methodology revelation of Marxist social self-critical theory for socialist reform can fully show the vitality of this theory.

2 The Criticism, Self-criticism and Social Self-criticism

Philosophical criticism was the first proposed by Kant. Kant’s critical thought is clear: any self-consistent formal system is incomplete, and must beyond the rationality of the system on its premise to propose questions, and then analyze. The criticism is always linked with the negative part of dialectics. In this regard, Marx said: “Dialectics in a firm understanding of existing things at the same time contains a negative understanding of existing things”⁷ So it is necessary to reveal its inherent negative aspects in order to promote the development of things. Marx stands in the commanding heights of the time; firmly grasps the characteristics of the time, and relentlessly criticizes the existing social system and its theoretical service system, so he can create Marxist theory.

The criticism in philosophical sense inner contains the structure of subject and object, which means that the subject criticizes the object. Criticism in nature belongs to the areas of evaluation activity. In the evaluation activities, the subjects starting from their own needs reflect the significance for the subjects which are included in the objects and their attributes in order to form valuable awareness. In the activities of criticism, the subjects starting from their own needs reflect the negative aspects of significance for the subjects that are included in the objects and their attributes, thus forming the negative value of awareness.

But the criticism is different from the general evaluation. First, the subject endows the object’s significance with different nature. In the general evaluation activities, the subjects take the interest, namely the subjects’ needs that they are aware of, as the standards, when the objects and their properties can meet the subjects’ needs, the subjects endow the objects and their properties with positive significance; when the objects and their properties can not meet the subjects’ needs, the subjects endow the objects and their properties with negative significance. In the criticism activity, although the subject endows the object and its properties with affirmative meaning, but emphasizes the valuable relationship that the object and its properties can not meet the needs for the subject, so that the subject endows the object and its attributes with negative significance. In criticism

⁶ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels. *Marx & Engels Collected Works* (Volume1) [M]. Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 1956, p. 120.

⁷ Karl Marx, *Capital* (Volume 1) [M] Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 1975, p. 24.

activity, the main performance of the object for the subject is negative value, which is inevitable to overshadow the reality as the object.

Second, the depth that the subject reveals the value relationship between subject and object is different. In general evaluation activities, the subjects reveal the value relationship between subjects and objects which develops from perceptual knowledge to rational knowledge in order to understand the value relationship as the fact from the phenomenon to the essence. In the criticism activity, the criticism, that the subject criticizes the object, namely the subject reveals the negative value relationship between the subject and the object, not only has the characteristics of general realization activities, but also has the characteristics of “reflection”. Hegel pointedly: “Only critical evaluation would require a “thinking-over” (Nachdenken) in the ordinary meaning of the word”.⁸ The “thinking-over” in a general way involves the principle (which also means the beginning) of philosophy. So no criticism can exist if there is no reflection. “The reflection means ‘reflective’ thinking, which has to deal with thoughts as thoughts, and brings them into consciousness”.⁹ This means in the criticism activity, the subject not only experiences the course from perceptual knowledge to rational knowledge in revealing the negative valuable relations, but also should take the negative significance of itself which is endowed by the subject as the reflective content, in order to “deal with thoughts as thoughts, and brings them into consciousness,” hence give analysis to its premise transcending the negative significance of itself, so that the negative link in the premise of negative significance can be revealed. This is because why the criticism is more profound than the general evaluation.

Evaluation can be divided into a lot of types; the criticism which belongs to the evaluation areas also can be classified into many categories. Self-criticism is the subject criticizes the subject itself. In the Self-critical activity, the object has double roles, which is not only as the object but also as the subject. Though the subject who is in the dominant position and the object which is in the object position is the same subject, but the two are different. First of all, the positions of the two are different: the subject in the dominant position always can initiate, organize and order the relations between the subject and the object as a dynamic side; the object in the object position always in a passive position and sustainable status. Understanding from this perspective, the self-criticism activity is one kind of activities that the subjects criticize the subjects as the objects. Secondly, the contents of the two are different: the first subject thinking from the its own needs treats the latter subject to reveal the latter subject’s negative significance for the first subject and the negative link in its premise; and the latter subject with its own inherent properties meets the first subject in order to make its negative significance and the negative link of premise appear. Understanding from this point, the self-criticism is one process that the subject thinking from its own needs reflects the

⁸ Hegel. *The science of Logic* [M] Beijing: Commercial Press, 1980, p. 7.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 39.

negative significance of the subject as the object and its attributes for the subject and “thinking-over” the negative significance.

Social self-criticism is the society criticizes itself, which inner contains the society as the subject. Historically, a relatively complete society is always linked with “a common economic life” and connects with a corresponding economic basis, while the “common economic life” is “the most important sign of the formation of a nation”,¹⁰ thus which always is closely linked together with the county which is based on the nation. The society as the subject specifically linked with the state.

In the social self-criticism, the society is doubling the parts of a subject and an object. In the social Self-criticism is that the society as the subject criticizes the society itself as the object. The social self-criticism activity is one process that the society as the subject thinking from the society’s own needs reflects and “thinking-over” the negative significance of the society as the object for the society as the subject. The social self-criticism belongs to the social self-evaluation areas, but different from the general social self-evaluation activities, which is the specialization of the general social self-evaluation activities. It can be understood in the following two ways:

First, the self-criticism requires special conditions. The societies recognize themselves by self-awareness and self-evaluation; so long as the societies exist and in operation the societies always carry out self-evaluation. Marx said that the society “rarely and only under certain conditions to be able to conduct self-criticism”, the societies are not always going self-criticism. Only when a society fully demonstrate itself and the dialectical relationship of basic social contradictions especially the conflict of the basic contradictions in a society are fully demonstrated, which means the subject of social self-criticism tends to be mature; which also means the object of social self-criticism tends to be mature, namely the rich provisions of the social object has been rendered or being rendered. Thus, the social self-criticism starts.

Second, the social self-criticism has the nature of great profundity. In the period of social self-criticism, social subjects take their own needs and interest in the history development as the standard to rethink the doings of the society as the objects, and reveal its inner contradictions. In the meaning of a profoundly understanding itself, the general social self-evaluation activities have no profound characteristics especially like self-criticism because of lacking of specific conditions. The society is inevitable to connect with the negative links of the history development in the dialectical process that the social subjects profoundly reveal the contradictions of movements through self-criticism, so the subjects of social self-criticism always can profoundly understand their own society from the negative aspects. Therefore, the social self-criticism inner contains the social self-denial.

¹⁰ Feng Qi, editor, *Great Dictionary of philosophy* [M]. Shanghai: Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House, 2001, p. 1004.

3 The Authority Evaluation Activity of the State, The Public Evaluation Activity of the Society and the Ways of the Social Self-criticism

Social self-criticism can deepen the social self-evaluation. There are two basic ways of social self-evaluation activities which are the authority evaluation activities of the state and the public evaluation activities of the society. When the social development has the “special conditions”, the authority evaluation activities of the state and the public evaluation activities of the society can translate into two basic ways of social self-criticism.

In the book I have written named “the Authority Evaluation” and “the Public Evaluation”¹¹ I have profoundly studied the mechanism of the two kinds of evaluation activities which take the community as the subject. The authoritative evaluation activity, in which authoritative agencies is as the real subject of the evaluation activities, becomes a reality form of evaluation activities in which the community is as subject. The evaluation activity, which reflects the role of community but not by authoritative agencies, can be called public evaluation activity. The public evaluation activity is another reality form of evaluation activities in which the community is as subject.

The word “state” is put before the authority evaluation activity and the word “society” before the public evaluation activity, which is intended to emphasize that the real subject of evaluation activity is not an ordinary community but relatively complete society. Hegel called the authority evaluation activity of the state as an “organic form” and the public evaluation activity of the society as an “inorganic form” which are the forms that the social subjects express their will. For the former, Hegel said, “in a state real thing certainly is expressed by an organic form, various parts of state are so”, for the latter, Hegel said, “the public opinion is inorganic way that the people express their will and opinions”.¹²

An organizational structure, which is linked with all layers of society and the power, forms an authoritative system, and the state apparatus is built on this basis. “The difference between the democracy country and autocracy country is not whether there is power and authority of the pyramid, but whether there are different ways about how that the authority and power could be used”.¹³ The highest state machinery is at the top of all levels of the state apparatus. The authority evaluation activity of the State is the “organic” form of the social evaluation activities which takes the state apparatus as the real subject.

¹¹ Chen Xinhua. *The Theory of the Public Evaluation* [M]. Shanghai: Shanghai People’s Publishing House, 2004; *The Theory of the Authoritative Evaluation* [M], Shanghai: Shanghai People’s Publishing House, 2006.

¹² Hegel: *the Philosophy of Right* [M] [M] Beijing: Commercial Press, 1982, p. 332.

¹³ Comter & Marks, *Main Current in Sociological Thought* Bantam Doubleday De ll Publishing Group, Ine New York 1989. p. 203.

The public in the society always starting from their own needs and interests express their views on the social phenomenon and common interest. Discussing various views on the surface is confusing; but the will of the society as the subject as “absolute universality, existence things and real things”¹⁴ are achieved. The subject role of the social subjects is reflected realistically through the public evaluation activities of the society, so the public evaluation activity is the “inorganic” form of the social evaluation activities.

The basic form of social public evaluation activities is the public opinion. Public opinion is the published discussion that a number of people discuss the common social events and tend to get agreements. When public opinion is suppressed, people will exchange their views by using illegal, underground channels, and then there will appear the phenomenon of a trail of rumors, which are called the social rumor. Folk ballad is one kind of “impromptu song” which is extracted out of millions of people who spread the word in the social sphere. The ballad is one kind of art of public opinion. The ballads are the mirrors that show the feelings of the people.

If we say, public opinion, social rumors and folk ballad are pure public evaluation activities, and then the social thought is one kind of together form which is formed in the public evaluation activities and (unofficial) authoritative evaluation activities. Social thought reflects “people’s particular interests and requirements”, so it is essentially is one kind of public evaluation activities; “have a broad impact on social life”, which is not only linked with the huge number of attending people as evaluate subject but also linked with the depth and width of social events’ impact on the society in “special environment” as the evaluate object. The authority evaluation activity of the State which takes the society as the object has become a realistic form of social self-evaluation activities. To evaluate the social status and its actions is an important content of the authority evaluation activities of the State. Compared with the public evaluation activity, the state apparatus generally can consciously stand in the position of social subject, consciously coordinate and conduct the members of their institutions to “orderly” carry out the evaluation activities, and form unity evaluation opinions in form. As a result, the authority evaluation activity of the State which takes the society as the object has become an “organic” form that the social subjects evaluate themselves, reflecting the consciousness of social self-evaluation activities.

The public evaluation activity of the society which takes the society as the object has become a realistic form of social self-evaluation activities. Various evaluations on the social situations and its actions are the important elements of the public evaluation activities of the society. The individuals in the public evaluation always consciously stand on the individual’s position to evaluate, so the will of social subject is reflected through the “inorganic” form of numerous opinions. This is the spontaneous characteristic of the public evaluation activities, although in which the authority evaluation activities of many kinds of

¹⁴ Hegel: *the Philosophy of Right* [M] Beijing: Commercial Press, 1982, p. 332.

communities make it with a certain consciousness and theory color. As a result, the public evaluation activity which takes the society as the object has become an “inorganic” form, reflecting the consciousness of social self-evaluation activities.

When a specific society in the process of self-development with a “special conditions”, the subjective and objective conditions of the social self-criticism are mature, so the social self-evaluation activity is transformed into a social self-criticism activity. The social self-evaluation activities, including the authority evaluation activity of the State as the “organic” form and the public evaluation activity of the society as the “inorganic” form, is transformed into the two basic forms namely the “organic” form and “inorganic” form in the process of social self-criticism.

As we have pointed out above, the social self-criticism period we referred is different from the period in which the society is social breakdown. In the period of social self-criticism, the state apparatus does not lose its reality so the social subject necessarily translates the authority evaluation activities of the state into an “organic” way of social self-criticism. In the process of social self-criticism, the state apparatus, in order to consolidate and develop the economic base of their existence, necessarily carry out the social self-criticism from the economic, political and ideological and other aspects by its judicial institutions, government agencies, and moral evaluation institutions of society. Although such kind of criticism has various limitations, but always is profound. For the ruling class this is true, in particular, for different individuals of the ruling class which is true.

In general, the public evaluation activities of the society can truly reflect the will of the social subjects, so Hegel used an old saying that: “the voice of the people is the voice of god”.¹⁵ In the period of social self-criticism, the social subject necessarily translates the public evaluation activities into an “inorganic” way of social self-criticism activity to criticize the society itself. The social self-criticism process was reflected by public opinion, social rumors, folk ballad, especially the social thought and other ideologies. In the social thought the thinkers as “the forefront” can observe and feel the dialectical relationship among the basic social contradictions which are reflected in the social events and movements, to proposed theories and opinions; while the majority of the people starting from their own immediate experience can feel the dialectical relationship among the basic social contradictions which are reflected in the universal events and movements, to from some agreements with “the forefront” in theory and provide some support on comments for the thinkers, so “Millions of people gave agreements in response”.¹⁶ In 1968, Paris’ “the May storm” as the center of Western social thought was developed like this way.

The mechanism of the authority evaluation activities of the state is different from the mechanism of the public evaluation activities of the society, so the difference between the social self-criticism which is transformed from the

¹⁵ Hegel: *the Philosophy of Right* [M] Beijing: Commercial Press, 1982, p. 332.

¹⁶ Liang Qichao. *Academic Introduction to Qing Dynasty* [M]. Shanghai: Fudan University Press, 1985, p. 2.

authority evaluation activities of the state and the social self-criticism which is transformed from the public evaluation activities of the society has necessary. According to the basic principles of historical materialism, in general, the social self-criticism which is transformed from the public evaluation activities of the society can more truly reflect the dialectical relationship of the movement of the social basic contradictions, although the spontaneous especially prone to produce blindness in the mechanism of its formation. The social self-criticism is reflected in the tension between the “organic” form and the “inorganic” form.

4 The Consciousness of Hardship and Practice will in the Social Self-criticism

The depth embodied in the social self-criticism always is reflected in the negative links of the process in which the society development is revealed, and thus it always understand the society itself from the negative aspects. Therefore, the social self-criticism, which denies the social reality in order to reflect the social existence, always is intrinsically linked with a consciousness of hardship. In this sense, whether a nation or a society has a strong consciousness of hardship is an important symbol for whether the society is carrying out the social self-criticism.

Two thousand years ago Mencius has proposed a famous proposition: “survive in disasters, perish in comfort”. The consciousness of hardship is opposed to the consciousness of enjoyment. The consciousness of enjoyment is the consciousness of satisfying with the current status. The persons who have consciousness of enjoyment always sing the praises of the reality and make no progress. The consciousness of hardship is the consciousness of the distress and persecution, which reveals the inherent negative aspect of the reality things, and is expressed by forms shocking the world, so it reflects an active and enterprising spirit. For a nation or a society whether it can tolerate the consciousness of hardship reflects the society has confidence for itself.

The social self-criticism of capitalist society always connected with full of consciousness of hardship. Spengler’s “Decline of the West—the perspective of the history of the world” is the masterpiece for the consciousness of hardship in Europe in the beginning of the last century. In the book, the writer shocking the world declared to the world: Western civilization has been in the state that is no history, lifeless and rigid, “Who does not know that such outcome is inevitable, and can not be amended,” “who should abandon the understanding of history”.¹⁷ The advent of this work has caused a huge reaction in Europe, marking the western world into an anxiety age of self-denial.

¹⁷ Spengler. *The Decline of the West—perspectives of world history* [M] Beijing: Commercial Press, 1963, p. 43.

The consciousness of hardship has profound philosophical connotations. In the Enlightenment period of the German bourgeoisie, Hegel provided an important spiritual weapon for the transformation of German real history with the Negative Dialectics Theory. He advocates the negative, “thought exclusively becomes a negative thinking, denying the world prescribed in so many ways, while the negativity of free self-consciousness becomes a real negation in the diversities of life forms”.¹⁸

Hegel examined German situations at that time by using the negative dialectics and proposed “What is reasonable is actual and what is actual is reasonable”.¹⁹ The proposition caused the gratitude of William dynasty and the anger of the opposition to the dynasty which both were in the short-sighted opposition, which obviously made the existing philosophy of all sacred. In fact, Hegel believed that “real” category has a special meaning: “In a detailed Logic I had treated among other things of actuality, and accurately distinguished it not only from the fortuitous, which, after all, has existence, but even from the cognate categories of existence and the other modifications of being.” Because “any freak of fancy, any error, evil and everything of the nature of evil, as well as every degenerate and transitory existence whatever, gets in a casual way the name of actuality. But even our ordinary feelings are enough to forbid a casual (fortuitous) existence getting the emphatic name of an actual”.²⁰ “And so, in the course of development, all that was previously real becomes unreal, loses its necessity, its right of existence, its rationality. And in the place of moribund reality comes a new, viable reality—peacefully if the old has enough intelligence to go to its death without a struggle; forcibly if it resists this necessity”.²¹ Thus the Hegelian proposition turns into the other proposition: “All that exists deserves to perish”.²² This proposition from the philosophy concentrated the expression of Germany social self-criticism.

The initiative of the social self-criticism not only can profoundly reveal the dialectical relationship among the movements of basic social contradictions, but also “make the reality itself tend to ideology”,²³ so the conclusion is that it is “inevitable to transform the society”.²⁴ The history of mankind should have a reality expanded in reasonability in order to have a brilliant future. To do this, we need some ideas acquiring from the social self-criticism, and then return to carry

¹⁸ Hegel. *The Phenomenology of Spirit* (Volume 1) [M] Beijing: Commercial Press, 1979, p. 136.

¹⁹ Hegel. *Philosophy of right* [M] Beijing: Commercial Press, 1982, p. 10.

²⁰ Hegel. *The science of Logic* [M] Beijing: Commercial Press, 1980, p. 44.

²¹ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels. *Marx & Engels Selected Works* (Volume 4) [M] Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 1972, p. 211.

²² Karl Marx, Frederick Engels. *Marx & Engels Selected Works* (Volume 4) [M] Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 1972, p. 212.

²³ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels. *Marx & Engels Selected Works* (Volume 1) [M] Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 1972, p. 10.

²⁴ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels. *Marx & Engels Collected Works* (Volume 42) [M] Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 1979, p. 358.

out the criticism of the society itself using the ideas. This is what Marx has called “the weapon of criticism”. This is because “the weapon of criticism cannot, of course, replace criticism of the weapon, material force must be overthrown by material force; but theory also becomes a material force as soon as it has gripped the masses”.²⁵ Therefore, “the weapon of criticism” and “criticism of the weapon” is indispensable. The social self-criticism is the Dialectical unity of both.

Hegel analyzes the will link in the transformation from “the weapon of criticism” into “criticism of the weapon”. The consciousness of hardship as a positive entrepreneurial spirit in the denial of reality inner contains “should” which is formed in the base of reflecting the subject’s needs. The objective world “which is it be” does not automatically meets the needs of the people, “the efforts of will is to make this world should be so”,²⁶ so the will is one kind of “thinking that put the subjects themselves into the set”.²⁷ As a result, the consciousness of hardship should be transformed into the practice will of changing the reality. The social self-criticism provided the conditions for the subject to fully grasp dialectical relationship among the movements of basic social contradictions. The practice will of changing the reality has the contents about the dialectical relationship among the movements of basic social contradictions and “the intermediary which transforms the subjective things into the objectivity, only in this way, it is the reality will”.²⁸ Thus, the thinking can be transformed into the reality through the will.

In December, 1978 the central working conference of china was held in Beijing, in which in the light of the view of “two whatever” Deng Xiaoping said the famous words that: “When everything has to be done by the book, when thinking turns rigid and blind faith is the fashion, it is impossible for a party or a nation to make progress. Its life will cease and that party or nation will perish”.²⁹ This sense of crisis had a profound impact on the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the subsequent meeting of the party, marking the beginning of the social self-criticism of the socialist society. The course of China’s reform and opening up for 20 years is the manifestation of the practice will.

5 The Social Self-criticism in Contemporary China

China’s socialist reform is ups and downs, getting both the experience and lessons. Using Marx’s social self-critical thought to exam, it can be made the following reflections.

²⁵ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels. *Marx & Engels Selected Works* (Volume 1) [M] Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 1972, p. 9.

²⁶ Hegel. *The science of Logic* [M] Beijing: Commercial Press, 1980, p. 420.

²⁷ Hegel. *Philosophy of right* [M] Beijing: Commercial Press, 1982, p. 12.

²⁸ Hegel. *Philosophy of right principle* [M] Beijing: Commercial Press, 1982, pp. 20–21.

²⁹ Deng Xiaoping. *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping* (volume 3) [M]. 1994, p. 143.

First, the socialist reform is the social self-criticism. Mao Zedong recognized that the basic contradictions of socialist society still existed and produced a fundamental role. But he distinguished the basic contradictions of the social structure from the contradictions among the members of society, and thought the former can not be intensified but the latter was increasingly intensified so that the class struggle must be remembered and talked day by day, month by month, year by year. This kind of theory was put into the practice making the old original social structure and institutional more severe and rigid, so the basic social contradictions was constantly *intensified* to induce a crisis. In the light of the situation about China from 1958 to 1978, Deng Xiaoping said: “the political situation as a whole, is a chaotic state; the economic situation as a whole, is actually in the slow development and stagnation”,³⁰ what he said is the political and economic crisis in China. The dialectical relationships among the movements of the basic contradictions in socialist society are reflected by the form of social crisis, which provided objective and subjective conditions for the social self-criticism. As a result, we can understand what the Deng Xiaoping’s words that “reform is a profound revolution”.³¹

China’s social self-criticism focused on the socialist construction which is undergoing. Deng Xiaoping clearly pointed out: “What is socialism? What is Marxism? We could not clearly understand these issues in the past time”.³² The task of the Socialist reform is to make clear about “what socialism is and how to build socialism not only in theory but also in practice”. For the exploration of these two issues mainly reflects the self-criticism of the Chinese contemporary society.

If we say “how to build socialism” belongs to the problems in the economic field which is mainly because the scope of “socialism” is not only linked with the state’s basic economic system but also linked with the state’s basic political system, then “What is socialism” belongs to the problems not only in the field of economy but also in the field of politics. More than 20 years, China’s socialist reform focused on the conversion from the traditional planned economy system to the socialist market economic system. Although the reform of the socialist economic system will inevitably lead to changes in the political field and the field of culture, it is no doubt that an imbalance between economic reform and political reform exists. The movement of basic social contradictions is the dialectical unity about the contradictory movement of the productive forces and production relations and the contradictory movement of the economic base and superstructure. Unfolding of the contradictory movement of the economic base and superstructure should be based on unfolding of contradictory movement of the productive forces and production relations; the solution for the movement of contradictions between the productive forces and production relations also should be dependent on the

³⁰ Ibid., p. 264.

³¹ Ibid., p. 264.

³² Ibid., p. 63.

solution of the movement of contradiction between the economic base and superstructure. Thus, as early as in 1986, Deng Xiaoping pointed out “when we mention the reform the reform of the political structure is included”.³³

Second, deepen the recognition on the socialism in the social self-criticism. Understanding “what socialism is” is directly linked with the historical position of the socialist society in human development. In China, there are two kind theories of social patterns that are the theory of “five types of social formation” and the theory of “three social formations”. Stalin said: “there are five basic types of the relations of production that are “the primitive communal system, the slave-holding system, feudalism, capitalism and socialism”.³⁴ While according to Marx’s dependency theory: “Relations of personal dependence (entirely spontaneous at the outset) are the first social forms”, in which human productive capacity develops only to a slight extent and at isolated points. “Personal independence founded on objective dependence is the second great form”, in which a system of general social metabolism, of universal relations, of all-round needs and universal capacities is formed for the first time. “Free individuality, based on the universal development of individuals and on their subordination of their communal, social productivity as their social wealth, is the third stage”.³⁵ The three great social formations are respectively based on the natural economy, the commodity economy and product economy, and the historical inevitability of the three great social forms replacing one another in turns are rooted in the inevitability of the alternate replacement of the three economic forms: the natural, commodity and product economics.

Prior to the reforms, people used the theory of “five types of social formation” to locate their historical position of the socialism. It was believed that the East nations had stridden over “crafting gorge”³⁶ in their proletariat revolutions, and socialism was a new social form that transcended capitalism and that, given this, the development of the social forms in China had not only transcended the first stage, but also the second and was in a transition to the third form of the product economy, that is, the socialism. In the contemporary social self-criticism, People finally discovered that they misplaced them in regard to the social form and they were in fact still in the first form of the social development. From then on, the Chinese communists have gradually reached to a common understanding that China is in the primary stage of socialism. Deng Xiaoping once pointed out that “the primary stage of socialism means an underdeveloped stage”. A basic characteristic of primary stage is “underdeveloped”³⁷; that is a process from “underdeveloped” to “developed”. In Chinese context, it is a process of transition

³³ Ibid., p. 176.

³⁴ *Co-operation* (Bolshevik) Central Ad Hoc Committee. *The Concise Course Co-operation (Bolshevik) Party History* [M] Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 1975, p. 137.

³⁵ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels. *Marx & Engels Collected Works* (Volume 46) [M] Beijing: People’s Publishing House, p. 104.

³⁶ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels. *Marx & Engels Collected Works* (Volume 19) [M] Beijing: People’s Publishing House, p. 451.

³⁷ Deng Xiaoping. *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping* (volume 3) [M]. 1994, p. 252.

from a system of planned economy to a system of market economy, which causes the transformations of politics, science, and culture, education and so on. Chinese society is essentially a transformation from the natural economy formation to the commodity economy formation.

To re-position China's society necessarily involves how to look upon the market economy. Market economy not only is the basic pattern of allocation of social resources in the forms of market economy but also the basic carrier of "the matter pattern that must be taken"³⁸ in the relationship among people. Therefore, the market economy has become the basic characteristics of the social form of the commodity economy. In this sense, leaving the market economy people can not understand "what socialism is" and "how to build socialism".

The logical conclusion of which the social form of the commodity economy and market economy are inherently linked together is inherently linked with capital. It is necessary for China to transform from the natural economy form to the commodity economy form so that the capital is insurmountable; the phenomenon of capital is not peculiar in capitalism only but also in socialism. Contemporary social self-criticism should reflect on the role of capital in the social transformation and modernization.

The nature of capital is the relationship among people using the goods as the media. In the contemporary world, capital is one kind of powerful forces which dominates social resources, modern social economic movements, and even constructs the entire social system. "Capital makes the surplus labor into the system of material production, and the constant expansions of the value leads to the modern society appear. The process of the capital expansion advances the monetization of the world life, which is the most fundamental change that the capital brings to human society, and the process filled with contradictions is the main line in the generation process of modern society".³⁹

As a result, if China wants to achieve the modernization, the great role that the capital promotes the development of productive forces must be fully played. However, the dual nature of capital must be recognized, the *civilization function* of the capital is to overcome the natural limitations of human to create the modern culture, but also cause the social limitations of human, let something that originally belongs to the means of human be promoted to the purpose of human so that the human itself is debased as the means. The issues of recognizing capital, developing capital, but also managing capital and limiting capital are the major problems that the social self-criticism must study in both theory and practice.

The third, building social relations to promote the full development of human in the social self-criticism. Marx believed that society is the sum of the people

³⁸ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels. *Marx and Engels Collected Works* (Volume 3) [M] Beijing: People's Publishing House, p. 73.

³⁹ Wang Chuanfa. Capital: The two-way questioning human nature and properties [J]. *Philosophical Trends*. 2006. (10).

“contacting with each other and the relationship”.⁴⁰ Social self-criticism should take the social relations as a reflection object.

Marx divided society relations into the material social relations and *ideological* social relations, and takes the core of the material social relations as the economic relations among the people. On this basis, Marx focused on revealing the materialization of social relations in the commodity economy social patterns, in which “the social relationship among people can be said to be reversed, that is to say, which displays the social relations of goods”,⁴¹ which is the materialization of social relations. This kind of materialization of social relations is based on the materialization of the material social relations; at the same time which is inevitable to reflect the materialization of the ideological social relations. Marx put the materialization of social relations in the course of history to understand it, pointed its positive significance, till at this stage “can form the general social material exchange, the overall relationship, a wide range of needs, as well as full capability system”⁴²; then more criticized the negative aspects of the materialization of social relations. The materialization of social relations makes the social relations become the external things of the people which originally belong to the internal things of the people. The social relations are Independent, external and alien, resulting in the widespread alienation of the individual with others; at the same time the rule of the materialization of social relations performs the reversed concept and the awareness of the rule in personal consciousness.

In China, the development of market economy not only promoted the rapid economic development, but also gave a strong impetus to the development of people, social relationships and the whole society. However, the people have to face the negative consequences of the materialization of social relations, which *wholly* reflects the fetishism which is inevitably produced in the commodity economy. About the phenomenon that the real social relations among the people is reflected by the form of illusory relations among things, “which is called the fetishism” by Marx.⁴³ The fetishism is the objective foundation and the important performance for a lot of ugly social phenomena existing in the current society.

One important task of the social self-criticism is to study how to avoid the negative impact of the materialization of social relations. Studying social self-criticism is to study this kind of mechanism in the socialist system in order to limit the negative impact of materialization of social relations, eliminate its antagonistic factors appeared in the society. The important aspect of this mechanism in the

⁴⁰ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels. *Marx and Engels Collected Works* (Volume 46) [M] Beijing: People’s Publishing House, p. 220.

⁴¹ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels. *Marx and Engels Collected Works* (Volume 13) [M] Beijing: People’s Publishing House, p. 23.

⁴² Karl Marx, Frederick Engels. *Marx and Engels Collected Works* (Volume 46) [M] Beijing: People’s Publishing House, p. 104.

⁴³ Marx. *Capital* (Volume 1) [M] Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 1975, p. 89.

socialist system is “to return the human world to the people themselves”,⁴⁴ which regards the all-round development of human as the ultimate goal of building social relations. Marx pointed out: the human nature “in its reality, is the sum of all social relations”,⁴⁵ which determines that in the final analysis sculpturing human is dependent on the construction of the social relations. Human always takes freedom as the ultimate goal. Freedom is in the other side of the realm of necessity, “which, however, can blossom only with this realm of necessity as its basis”.

⁴⁴ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels. *Marx and Engels Collected Works* (Volume 1) [M] Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 1972.

⁴⁵ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels. *Marx and Engels Selected Works* (Volume 1) [M] Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 1972, p.18.

On the Intimate Relation Between Social Facts and Three Types of Values

Qun Gong

1 Introduction

Since 1900, a considerable number of philosophical works have been published on the relation between facts and values. Are facts totally separated from values, or is there some intrinsic or intimate relation between facts and values? The traditional division between “is” and “ought”, outlined by David Hume, suggests one major approach to this issue. Yet while a number of scholars have worked on this subject, research continues, and the possibility of a new way to approach the subject is still open. My opinion is that in order to discuss the issue—the relation between facts and values—first we need to divide “facts” into “natural facts” and “social facts”. If we focus on this division, we can find that facts and values are not totally separated from one another, for there is an intrinsic entangling relation between social facts and values.

What is a fact? And what is a social fact? Facts can be defined as that which human beings can know and feel through sense experience (the object of human sensibility) or through the mind (the object of human consciousness or thinking). There are two types of facts: one is natural facts, and the other is social fact. Natural facts exist in nature; they are things such as mountains and rivers. Social facts exist and have existed in the social field or the social world, and so there are historical facts as well as present facts in the world.

Social facts can be divided into two types: spiritual facts and facts designated by material objects.

We also need to define the conception of value. “Value” deals with the meaning of human spiritual culture. The term “value” may refer to conventions, moral ideas, religious ideas, and even those wild spiritual and cultural ideas that are found in all human pursuits, as well as to the understanding of spiritual existence and the relationships between human beings or between humans and

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nature. In other words, only notions which are found in and kept, respected, and pursued by the human mind imply value. We can call this Value I. Value I is the conception that indicates human spiritual meaning. Value for human behavior—namely, “oughtness” value (which distinguishes itself from “what is”)—is Value II. Finally, the elements of values in those things in which we can find the presence of the human spirit have cultural meaning; such value elements we can call “Value III”. These three kinds of values have different relations to social facts.

In human society, cultural phenomena include both spiritual facts and facts expressed through physical matter. In a sense, values are the central conception of culture. What makes human existence different from natural existence? We hold that it is culture. The existence of a human being is that of a cultural being. In any kind of culture, institutions, rules, moralities, conventions or customs are necessary factors. Culture is the living space and living field of human beings, and so there are obviously objective (material) elements in it, such as churches, temples and so on. Still, if the facts in culture can be divided into different levels, spiritual facts can be said to be on the first level, and the facts expressed through material objects are on the second level. The spiritual facts appear directly as values. In different kinds of spiritual facts, conventions and moralities are seen as pure spiritual phenomena; this is also seen in religion. Religion is the important cultural phenomenon whose internal center consists of religious ideas and whose external forms are such symbolic things as religious organizations, religious communities, churches and temples. In a sense, religious ideas are typical values because religion holds belief to be a holy thing which is above all else. Human beings live with their belief, by their belief and on their belief, which indicates that they take their belief as the most valuable thing in their lives.

However, religious values and moral notions have an intrinsic relation. In religion, transcendent existence is its value focus. But if you go deep into the ideas of any religion, you will find that the transcendence of values is in fact present in the following situation: namely, a transcendent super existence is used to protect and support real social norms. We know that one of the functions of religion is to justify secular morality or, in other words, to let human morality have a religious centre and to teach human beings that our secular behavior can be moralized by following a morality that reflects the commandments of God; we see this in Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism and Islam. We all know the Ten Commandments, the ‘Love your neighbor’ command given by Christ, the Eight Precepts in Buddhism, and so on. I think if there were no secular moralities to serve as a foundation, religious belief would just be a castle in the sky. Recently, Hans Küng has been advocating “A Global Ethic” that looks towards the common secular morality implicit in different religions. If there were no such secular morality present in religions, Hans Küng could not possibly have put forward his proposal.

Morality is not only enforced by religion, but it is rooted in society. Throughout human history, moral phenomena and social institutions have always been integrated, and we can hardly separate them by saying that ‘*this* is morality, not a mere institutional norm’, and ‘*that* is an institutional norm, not morality’. All moral systems involve at least parts of a social system. One’s duty, mission, and task by

which people can evaluate one's performance to determine whether one is good or not—all come from the social responsibilities that one has. Our social duty is determined by the social system and by our status in this system. Indeed, behind morality we can always find deeper factors—which are those of social institutions or institutional norms.

A norm is a social existent that universally constrains or directs members of a social community in some mode of action. The central content of a norm is constraint or that which makes people's actions conform to some pattern; if a norm has no constraint or coercive effect, or is rejected by people, or erodes social life, it cannot be regarded as a norm. All institutions, rules, and conventions that constrain social action can be called norms; in this sense, 'norm' has the meaning of a social mechanism which involves not only behavior, but the context of social behavior.

From the perspective of social action, norms play the role of constructing social life. For instance, norms (moral norms) in the family and in the clan system determine social order—e.g., how man and woman come together, and which ways are reasonable for male and female to relate. Norms, such as duty, sense of mission, and conscience, embody the individual side of social duty. Conscience is that which preserves social and legal order in the human heart and which embodies the constrictive effect of the social norm. In terms of legal order, a norm is a kind of institution with the effect of producing communal constraint. In many societies, norms are universal, valid, and legal. A norm inside and outside the human mind is, in its essence, one and the same thing. What is more, in relation to social institutions, Habermas argues: "In the terminology of Max Weber... we can say that in a certain way sociology presupposes the value-interpretation of the hermeneutical science, but is itself concerned with cultural tradition and value-systems only insofar as they have normative power in the orienting of action. Sociology is concerned only with institutionalized values".¹

It is not only that an institution is a kind of values, but also that all conventions, customs, religions, moral norms and the inner workings of cultural and spiritual phenomena are values. These values are basic for human beings and necessary for human respect. Therefore, in order to define the concept of value, we must first focus on the characteristics of human existence. What is more, those facts implying values are "natural" facts that are part of the human world, and they come into our practice in the context of our social and practical activities, they underline practical activities, and they affect our practical activities. We can undoubtedly evaluate them as "good" or "bad" by some kind of social standard.

Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that each type of social institution or basic construction entails duties, missions and tasks. In other words, it is the social institution or the basic construction that regulates the subject of social behavior and that gives the reason of "oughtness"—namely, the reason why the subject of

¹ Jürgen Habermas, *On the Logic of the Social Sciences*, tr. S.W. Nichol森 and J.A. Stark (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1988), p. 75.

social behavior should act in this way. The power of the imperative sentence, “You ought to.....”, comes from the value implied in the social fact. In fact, the route goes from factual value to behavior value; the former generates the latter. We can call the value of the former, “Value I”, and the value of latter “Value II”. The distinction between Value I and Value II is the distinction between “what is” and “what ought to be”—a distinction which people often recognize.

The value of “ought” appears in both institutional norms and in ideas of norms. The moral concept “ought” may be used in two senses. One is that which is present when we prescribe actions to people in social practice—such as when we say “You ought to do that, because you are”, or “You ought to do that, because it is moral” according to institutional facts (norms), the duties and missions of social institutions, or the general norms of morality. The other sense is that where we use the above presuppositions or make a general demand (where we evaluate people’s conduct in moral terms) in order to point out that some particular action ought to be carried out or not. For example, we say that a policeman ought to do certain things in his work, and that he ought not to do such things as striking others or being rude or tough. In this sense, “ought to” entails that sense of that which is right. The proposition that “stealing conduct” [theft] is not “ought conduct” implies that the moral man ought to respect the property of others. Therefore, understanding the value of “ought” cannot be separated from the social fact of institutional norms or from moral norms as general cultural facts. In other words, it is impossible to break the relation between the value of “ought” and Value I. Value I not only implies a demand (an ought) imposed on human behavior, but is the root of behavioral value.

Why can such facts become the root of behavioral value? Simply because there are values or factors of value implied in those facts. Of course, not every use of “ought” is equal to value. But we cannot deny the characteristic of “ought” as an evaluative word, given that we say things like “You ought to... because you are ...”. In this sentence, “because” points to the root of value. The content that appears after “you are” is always some kind of social fact implying value, and a fact defining the value of the action. In other words, the ideas of values, evaluations, and value judgments are never just kinds of psychological, emotional or spiritual needs, but things rooted in social convention, morality, and an institutional background. Value notions, which appear in statements about human motivation, attitudes, and intentions, can be found in certain cultural backgrounds and social contexts. If we think that the sources of action value are simply attitudes, desires, or the motivations of acting agents, then we cannot answer the question of changes of attitudes and desires in history. Social basic construction and other aspects of cultural context are the deep sources whose changes necessarily affect the desires of agents. If we look at the differences between the period before “Open China” or “Reform in China” and afterwards, we see that there are totally different values. (Before this period, people respected spiritual values; now, people no longer do so, and respect utilitarian values instead.) This is the result of a historical cause involving a change of social context.

How do we understand what people say in general concerning the distinction between “what is” and “what ought to be”? In order to answer this question, first we need to know what Hume said. Hume argued in his *Treatise on Human Nature*:

I cannot forbear adding to these reasonings an observation which may, perhaps, be found of some importance. In every system of morality, which I have hitherto met with, I have always remark'd, that the author proceeds for some time in the ordinary way of reasoning, and establishes the being of a God, or makes observations concerning human affairs; when of a sudden I am surpriz'd to find, that instead of the usual copulations of propositions, *is*, and *is not*, I meet with no proposition that is not connected with an *ought* or an *ought not*. This change is imperceptible; but is, however, of the last consequence. For as this *ought*, or *ought not*, expresses some new relation or affirmation, 'tis necessary that it shou'd be observ'd and explain'd; and at the same time that a reason should be given, for what seems altogether inconceivable, how this new relation can be a deduction from others, which are entirely different from it. But as authors do not commonly use this precaution, I shall presume to recommend it to the readers; and am persuaded, that this small attention wou'd subvert all the vulgar systems of morality, and let us see, that the distinction of vice and virtue is not founded merely on the relations of objects, nor is perceiv'd by reason²

Many understand from this that Hume is arguing that there are two kinds of judgment—factual judgment and evaluative judgment—and that neither has a logical connection to the other. For these scholars, Hume is regarded as having made an important claim—one that has had a key role in later moral philosophy. We know that Hume indeed raised the question of the difference between “what is” and “what ought to be”. But a close examination of his moral writings reveals that this distinction is not the same as the distinction between a factual judgment and an evaluative judgment, nor does it entail that the two kinds of judgments are logically incompatible. What Hume actually said was only that moral writings in his age used “ought” rather than “is” in connecting propositions, and that this new relation was entirely different from the prior one.

How should we understand Hume’s ‘discovery’? Why had description in moral philosophy undergone such change? We consider that any answer here must first take note of the social milieu, culture, and thought in which Hume lived. As we know, the political conception of divine power had been definitively challenged by the theory of natural right. Though the influence of Christianity was still very strong, people had no longer viewed the state as a kind of divine institution. Secondly, before Hume, Hobbes—and Mandeville—had twice already raised the issue of egoism. Therefore, though there were some very famous theological moralists (such as Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, and Joseph Butler) who still advocated moral principles drawn from ethics of Christian benevolence, God’s status in relation to moral authority had been seriously attacked. Hobbes and Mandeville explained moral phenomena without depending on God, but rather through the egoistic psychology of the human being. For Mandeville, the fundamental motivation of social development was not the morality advocated by Christianity, but the egoism in human nature. This was quite unlike the view in the Middle Ages, where the ultimate origin of moral

² Hume, *Treatise of Human Nature* III, 1, 1.

value was regarded as being only God. Of course, at this time the existence of God still had not been radically challenged. But by Hobbes's time, the development and change in social notions was so great that moralists—and even common people—would no longer try to infer anything directly from existence of God, and could not know what “ought to be”, starting with the goodness of God, because the relation between human beings and God had been broken. Hence we have to see, in context, why it was that Hume was troubled by the transformation from “what is” to “what ought to be”. And this shows, in that historical period, God's authority as the source of value had been shaken.

Although God was no longer the source of values, people could not shake off social conventions, institutions, and their norms and rules. To take the ought value (Value II) of behavior as rooted in social conventions, institutions and so on, is the viewpoint of neo-naturalism. Philippa Foot argues that we can derive evaluative conclusions from factual presuppositions. John Searle points out that conventional facts, social-institutional facts and values are intrinsically connected. As noted above, the sentence “You ought to do that, because you are ...” omits the position or duty of the agent (which is an institutional fact) and that cannot be separated from relative values. For example, from the factual proposition “He is the head of the ship”, we can effectively derive an evaluative judgment: “He ought to do what the head ought to do”. Every subject has a certain role or roles; his duty or mission (Value I) determines the value of his action (Value II). If the institutional duty or cultural values carried by one social subject were taken away from him or her, the subject of values would become a ghost—with no characteristics, no identity, and no personality. Therefore, the human being has not only a psychological existence, but a social existence. What is more, his psychological contents are not merely individual ones, but include elements of historical culture and embody a whole background rooted in social history. Further, we can understand a normal person only by social-communicative actions. Human beings are properly understood in their social action, not in abstraction. The human being is just a series of actions in an interpersonal, social context. In other words, we understand human beings as existing in social life; this means that individuals are never isolated; he or she is integrated into social-interpersonal relations. And at the same time, the intersubjective relation as such is one kind of life-world relation in a greater social context. When we look at the background composed of social institutions, cultural constructions, and the characteristic of subject action in the background, Value I (which lies behind the subject-object relation) will appear before us. It is the real source of the value of action. The root of the value of “ought” or “ought not” can be found in the social-institutional background or in the cultural background. Therefore, if we recognize the real nature of the social subject of conduct, we can know what an ‘ought value’ is.

Spiritual social values are not only the root of Value II, but also the root of Value III. In social life, the spiritual pursuit of human beings is embodied in some kind of physical form. Some kinds of physical things made by human beings will always embody ideas of cultural value. Max Weber argues that the phenomena of social culture are significant ones. Why is this so? His answer is the

concept of culture is a value-concept. Empirical reality becomes “culture” to us because and insofar as we relate it to value ideas. It includes those segments and only those segments of reality is colored by our value-conditioned interest and it alone is significant to us. It is significant because it reveals relationships which are important to us due to their connection with our values. Only because and to the extent that this is the case is it worthwhile for us to know it in its individual features.³

The viewpoint of Weber here illuminates our understanding of Value III. The nature of social fact expressed by the physical elements in human experience and in the perspective of the natural physical world, is still only physical and is a part of a rich natural world. There are various social facts—such as buildings, artificial productions and so on, which are sealed by human will though these are physical things. However, the natural characteristics of these things are not objects of research of the social sciences. Only a very small part (implied value) of the elements of reality (Weber words: ‘colored by our value-conditioned interest’) has a special significance for our research. Implied value in reality has significance if we need to understand or recognize the cultural meaning of the social object in question. Furthermore, we must pay attention to its relation to values in researching the cultural meaning of social facts that is carried by physical material in the perspective of culture; in other words, we can understand and recognize them only when we put them in the context of values. And when we put them in the context of values, we will find value in these cultural things. We call this kind of value “Value III”, due to the implied values in social facts carried by physical materials.

Compared with spiritual social facts, we can know Value III better. Spiritual facts stay and are contained in the human mind or human heart; in other words, they exist in the way that human consciousness or understanding is aware of them. Of course, people cannot avoid experiencing some kind of effect of conventions or social systems and, in general, people have deep experience and knowledge about them because these factors regulate or constrict people’s actions, and determine what is good and what is bad. Therefore, they are the factors that construct the social world. Of course, we need to employ some visual objects (such as a crown for ‘king’, and a stick for ‘power’) in order to have ideas for them. But the knowledge we get is through consciousness. Spiritual fact presupposes spiritual relationships of human beings, and spiritual relations lie in the intersubjectivities of social life. This relationship differs, depending on the nation, culture, and period of history.

Value III lies in social facts carried by physical materials—or, better, Value III defines the nature of the social facts. Of course, the existence of social facts presupposes natural objects or materials of the natural world. In other words, it is in physical substance. But, how we can call such a thing a “social fact”? We do so just because there are ‘colored by our value-conditioned interest’, just as Weber said, namely value factors. Therefore, we can distinguish such a thing from a

³ Max Weber: *The Methodology of the Social Sciences*, translated by Edward A. Shils and Henry A. Finch, The Free Press, New York, 1949, p. 76

natural fact. However, though it is a very small part of a social fact with physical materials, it is very complicated, and the degree of complication is not less than that of materials. What kind of value it is, and how large the value it is, do not depend on natural elements by which the social fact existed as such, but on its status in the context of social culture. In this sense, the very small part in reality or in social facts, its color, and its significance, is very different for different individuals or different cultures and civilizations, for instance, though different buildings constructed by human beings in this globe have same physical nature. The physical nature of the materials used in architecture does not change in different nations and different cultures. The things which have value do not depend on any correspondence to natural law, because the nature of the elements of a social fact, which has special significant for social science, is not determined by its relationships with other majority elements, or natural elements.

In fact, the value significance of a social fact is defined by its position in the context of social culture or by the agent's position in social relations. Social facts carried by physical materials have not only an intrinsic physical construction, but also some features of social values. Physical social fact takes a physical form, such as a letter for love. Its existence in this world requires material or some papers as a physical foundation which is important to the construction of its value or significance. The value of a letter for love, for a particular individual, is priceless. It is a testimony of love. Love is one kind of conception, so it is Value I—and the love letter is a testimony for love and is its physical foundation. We can see both in a relation: Value I produces Value III.

The value factors (Value III) of social facts carried by physical materials are one kind of social meaning construction. If we want to know exactly what Value III is, we must show its relation in context—with an institution or a culture, and relative to people's values and their purpose. In other words, we can understand its value significance, its rationality of existence, only through the background of social culture and in the context of interpersonal relations. Alfred Schutz points out that the common world in which we live.

from the beginning, is a cultural world of intersubjectivity. Why is it an intersubjective one? It is because we live with others as one group, and understand them, and are understood by others, with common influences and working relations. Why is it a cultural world? It is because this common living world is, from the beginning, a meaningful world—that is, it is a texture of meaning. If we want to find our position in it and in accordance with it, we must interpret it. However, this meaning texture originates from human actions—our self's and our companion's, and contemporaries' and senior's actions—and is always defined by human actions. It is at this point that the cultural field is distinguished from natural field.⁴

We still need to point out that the texture of meaning must reflect the social relationships among people. However, we understand social relationships, not only from the perspective of social existence, but also from the value perspective.

⁴ Schutz, Alfred, *The Problem of Social Reality*, translated into Chinese by Huo guifan, Beijing, huaxia Press, 2001, pp. 36–37.

Therefore, we can interpret its value meanings, and find rich values implied in social facts.

The value meanings in social facts which we can understand in its social backgrounds appear social relationships or intersubjectivities of people, therefore, we can know the value meaning if we know what kind of relation of people. In the Chinese life world, gift-giving is a very well-known social fact. As a social fact and a social reality, the implications of gifts can be understood only from the perspective of the particular interpersonal relation. A gift—such as a carton of cigarettes, a car, and so on—has only the status of a thing or of goods before it becomes a gift. As a kind of objective reality, it does not carry any implications other than its usability. However, when it becomes a gift, it functions to express someone's feelings, or has the value significance of exchange (e.g., in taking the gift, there is a change in the status or power that is held in the hands of a person of high social status). Chinese gifts move in two kinds of contexts: one is the horizontal or transverse direction—among classmates, friends, and relatives; the other is the vertical direction—namely, between those of a higher social status (leaders) and those of lower social status (those to be led), or between a leader and the masses. The masses or lower officers send gifts to their leaders when the latter celebrate important events, such as holidays, or illness, suffering, mourning, or marriage, and so on:

lower officers or the common masses give a leader a gift, and in this way they express their respect and loyalty, which in turn reflects the leader's power and authority in the eyes of lower officers and the common masses. Cadres often compare the numbers of guests who are invited to share in the important activities of a family, and they feel that a greater number of guests reflect their authority and achievements. Therefore, if some lower officer did not send a gift when his leader or his family celebrated or commemorated an important event, his behavior could be understood as an offence to his leader.⁵

If a gift does not have a value, or does not have other value implications, can we call it a "gift"? Of course not. A social value implied by a gift is in fact one kind of social construction. Value significance takes the role of constructing a social relation. It is because there is such social construction, through movement and transference, that a common thing becomes significant and a gift. Can we say that a gift is not a social fact, or a pure objective reality?

The existence of Value III and its constructing role are often embodied in symbolic things. What is a "symbolic thing"? A symbolic thing is a thing that is bestowed with a special meaning of cultural value. For example, a gravestone or a church is a symbolic thing that has a meaning of value. The meaning construction of Value III is an intrinsic function of certain value (cultural meaning) systems. In other words, it comes from Value I. It means that, without the relevant knowledge of the culture or the background knowledge of human spiritual life of some society, we cannot understand the value implied in that symbolic thing. What's more, the feelings stimulated by the symbolic thing are very different, depending

⁵ Yan Yunxiang, *the flow of gifts*, Shanghai People's Press, 2000, pp. 158–159.

on whether you are (or are not) in some interpersonal or spiritual relation. An observer standing before a gravestone of someone he does not know may have no feeling about it. But if the gravestone belongs to a dead relative, the feeling in his heart would be totally different. The feeling for a church in the heart of one person who does not believe in Christianity may be the same as that which he or she has for other buildings; at most, his feeling about the church may simply be based on something about its shape. If he hates Christianity, his will may be to destroy the church, even all the churches in the world. However, for an alien from outside of the Earth, what meaning does a church have? He does not know what it is, because he has no knowledge of its cultural value on Earth. He cannot distinguish the value meaning of a church from that of any other building. We all know that a church is not an ordinary building because we know about the history of Christianity, and we may be moved by Christ, or are touched by Christians and understand the actions of Christians. Of course, another example of a symbolic thing in Christianity is the cross. But if we do not know about the death of Christ and the Christian interpretation of it, we cannot understand the very rich symbolic implication of the cross. To suppose we found some ruins of the Mayan civilization, where the position of the ruins was similar to that of a church in Western countries. Suppose that we also see there something like a cross—though we would not know if it was a sign of some religion because we do not have any information about that religion. In such a case, we would have no any feeling about the cultural meaning and have no feeling about the ruins and the like, for they are only a collection of materials (supposing that knowledge of the civilization that built them had disappeared). The materials indeed exist, but they lose all the cultural meaning; we cannot even take them as ruins. The ‘symbolic thing’ is too little to have any significance to us.

The significance of Value III that is carried by physical materials may change with the change of the social-cultural system, and some holy meaning may be lost in the course of history. The construction and transformation of social value (Value III) is carried out among intersubjectivities, and meanings of Value III need to be read into the thing by some subject. Furthermore, a change of subject necessarily has an implication for the understanding of value.

Take the example of the ‘earth’ temples in the countryside of China. Before 1949, we could see earth temples in almost every village; the earth temple was considered to be the most holy thing, and nothing could challenge its divine authority. Peasants worshipped the god of ‘earth’ and prayed to the god of earth for his blessings and protection and for a greater harvest. The meanings of Value III were here illustrated in the collective ceremony of worship, reverent activities for the earth god, and the devout attitude towards the earth god. In a sense, the earth god was the center of both the farm and spiritual activities. Peasants believed that a good harvest solely depended on their reverent attitude toward the earth god. Its meaning construction lay in peoples’ behaviors. If I wrongly moved one idol in a temple, villagers would punish me—but this was not because I had mistaken what it was in its objectivity, but rather (for those who participated in the meaning community and who identified the construction of social meaning) what I did

offended the value meaning which they constructed. It was, as it were, an activity of rebellion against its holiness. Therefore, my action was not only unreasonable, but also illegitimate in the context of their value system.

However, if we examine the situation during the period from the 1950s to the 1960s, attitudes concerning objects in relation to the earth god were totally different. Communism and atheism had constructed a new value system. If someone thought the earth god was divine, people would take him away—which was just like taking away the earth god and pulling down the earth temple—because the old value system no longer functioned. The new value system that people had constructed left no position for the earth god and thus the earth god had no value significance. It is just as Habermas says: “The reconnection of *Verstehen* to the initial hermeneutic situation is linked with value-interpretation, which has to direct itself to historically objectivited cultural meanings from within the irreducible value relationships of its own situation.... For cultural values not only serve to regulate social systems; they also function as goals within the system, goals that are not reflected in the values themselves”.⁶ Cultural values are the values of meaning-contents objectified as such.

The value systems that people live by have an objective meaning for them. We can experience the meaning or significance not only of Value I in the social world, but also of the order for action (‘ought’ value), and of the Value III in objective things of the human world. These three kinds of value constitute the system of value life. Human beings live in the world and take part in the construction of value meaning. The system of value meaning maintains the life and spirit of human beings. The system of value meaning gives meaning to one’s life, goals and ideals. In each person’s eyes, the value meaning is a real one, which cannot be denied because each lives in such a system of value meaning. In this sense, to understand any text or social fact is to understand the ‘self’. Self-understanding must take the form of understanding one’s value world. Meaning construction embodies some kind of value direction. If meaning construction is different from the value direction held by some particular person, value understanding will make the person unable to identify with the outward value system, resulting in a crisis of existence. In other words, if some value system identified by a person has been destroyed, the destruction is equal to that of his spiritual life.

A good example is Wang Guowei’s death during the transformation period of China from the Qing dynasty to modern times.⁷ Human beings bestow rich meanings on this world, and at the same time, they are interpreters of meanings of this world. But when society has changed the construction of value meaning, a new interpretation is needed. People living in the system need to change their understanding of social reality. Otherwise, the social system that has a new order or a

⁶ Jürgen Habermas, *On the Logic of the Social Sciences*, p. 86.

⁷ For the story of the suicide of Wang Guowei (1877–1927), see for example Q. S. Tong and Xiaoyi Zhou, “Criticism and Society: The Birth of the Modern Critical Subject in China, *boundary 2*, vol. 29.1 (2002) pp. 153–176.

new construction cannot personally involve you as a member of it, because the very life construction of the interpreter is a meaning construction. Whoever can understand can know how to plan his future in terms of his possibilities. To plan one's self is to plan one's history and social future. To construct oneself means to construct the value meaning of and for one's society. To construct the value meaning of human history does not come to an end as long as human beings live still in the world. The meanings of this world are bestowed by people, and the bestowing activities and the meanings are real events—indeed, they are the meaning of human existence as such. We can find the point from the ontological meaning of human being. The bestowing activities are not over only if there is still human being living in the world. Life is one vast river of meaning. If some river of meaning stopped at some point in time, it signifies only that one value meaning world had been closed by the past. If the river continues to flow, it means that the human life-world nonetheless continues to advance. We are continuing to build and rebuild 'things' of meanings. We can end our discussion by quoting Hans-Georg Gadamer:

What is at issue is not only the well-known distinction between facts and values that is especially dominant in southwest neo-Kantianism and the way it influences the social sciences (Max Weber). The present-day discussion shows that this distinction is pointless on the level of reflection we have reached today—especially after the dogmatism of the concept of 'fact' has been critiqued by theory of science, hermeneutics, and ideology critique.⁸

Acknowledgments I gratefully acknowledge my debt to Professor Willian Sweet, for providing very helpful suggestion for this article.

⁸ Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Hermeneutics, Religion, and Ethics* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999), p. 58.

The Practical Survival State of Public Society and the Occurrence of the Reasonable Value Experience

Zu-she Yuan

There is only one morality, just as there is only one geometry.
—Voltaire.

It is a very important academic phenomenon in the 1980s that the value philosophy appeared in the acknowledged area of China. Around some basic theoretical issues, such as the value of the nature, value generation, creation and implementation issues, the absolute value and relative value, the multivariate value and one-dimensional value issues, value evaluation, value and culture, value and historical conception, the value of human, scholars have engaged in a fierce controversy, however, they haven't reached an agreement yet. One of the important reasons of this situation is that we have not agreed on what is the real subject in the value philosophy. This problem does not clear, the premise of the value philosophy—the value of rational logic default the legitimacy of norms can not be established. We believe that the value philosophy must find its own unique words expression and problem presentation. Over the years, there is a very important dimension which the value philosophical study in missing or not yet attracted sufficient attention to. It is the problem on the culture of public social practice and its survival value experience. Although this issue has been for a long time, it acquires increasingly rich and real substantive implication in our time. Based on the present situation of the human and focus on “the future of value”, the public experience of the cultural value should be one of the main reasonable themes of the contemporary value philosophy. Accordingly, we should solve this problem smoothly to support the position of the legitimacy of the value of philosophy and the legitimacy of the existence justifications.

First, the value ontological existence of the facts found, created, confirmed by the value from the experience the way in the past.

We need estimate the conscious of subject status and problems of awareness of the value philosophy clearly, rationally, scientifically, objectively. Domestic scholars study on the nature of value philosophy, usually in a reduction theory: whether “Relationship”, “property theory”, the “entity theory” or

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“comprehensive theory” (level theory) as well as the value of naturalization from it as a “relationship, the need to meet that, “meaning”, “belief” and “effect” and “joint purpose of way of saying “people say” and so on are all the performance of such way of thinking, because the performance of value can not be separated from the “relationship”, “properties” and “the presence of purpose exist” etc. Nevertheless, the value itself definitely cannot be owned by any kind of above concept.

From the perspective of basic theory, the value philosophy is always deeply troubled by the following problems: the first problem is the establishment and generation of the so-called “value ontology”. Secondly, the logical construct and effective practices of the Value Thinking. Thirdly, how to communicate and share the “value experience”? Fourthly, how to out of the path that is relative to the value of the plight in the context of cultural conflict? Fifthly, how to response the value nihilism advocates rationally?

We believe one of the moment themes about philosophical reflection on the value philosophy is that past the value philosophy statements were made about the value of their own self-expression and the resulting persists. We should recognize that the philosophy thought on the value far from being established on the sense of the rational theory of the disciplinary norms. However, value and culture, history, ethics, life, mental grasp of the complex, multidimensional relationship have always been stuck in a brief description of “the experience on the level”, not into “the substantive reflect on the critical level”. Therefore, facing the plight of value which suffered “multiple”, “relative” and “nothingness”, we can hardly avoid the faults during the study of value philosophy. One of the themes of philosophical reflection on the question of the existence of the value philosophy should be that we must reflect on our words, development, use, treatment, and the way that we treat and fulfill “value” in that almost all the value out of here, just as Victor-Massu said: “From the beginning, humans have been eager to absolute, eternal and independent of the historical value—such as truth, goodness, the divine beauty. When declaring the ‘death of God’, nihilism is a useful tool to subvert the truth. Soon found a close ally in the ethical theory of relativity, it challenges the concept of goodness, questioning the quality of all values are we further come to realize, we insisted on the value of target, power relations, self-protection and resentment exists in the subjective bias.”

Since the history of mankind, each nation has its own unique way to find and establish its own values theory and paradigm. In fact, after human appeared, mankind has been living in and enjoying the world of “value” created by their own. They obtain all personal meaning and feeling from the world. Whereas, it is strange that the same person always full of suspicion and distrust to the world which made him.

The most important reason is that, although value is the product of human’s activities, it is a difficult question that what should be the manner to show their own lives. Such as Heidegger said, the survival of mankind in the world, exists only a “tentative”. The face of all the disappointments of human existence, life, we have no good reason and confident enough to confirm what kind of existence is most suitable for them a reasonable manner. Jerome Bender noted the seriousness

of this problem, “Historical value and cultural relativism suspicious, philosophy, religion and art, has shaken the belief of absolute good and the beautiful. Thoroughly shaken numerous uncertainties generated by the crisis of value over the past two centuries” [1]. But at the same time, he was confident about the human intellect: “However, the lack of significance may be only an illusion—a nostalgic product in the exploration significance of the future, if we are fine to speculate such a loss, is to limit themselves in a dim and partial answers. We should talk about the significance of the change and create new meaning.

If we think over our philosophical reflection on the problem of value, we will find that it is far into the consensus bounded domain. Generally, when it comes to the background and positions of the various values which have been the fundamental clash of civilizations, scholars should have forgotten their immediate survival and living conditions. What they usually do and what they are concerned about is still the following questions: What is value? Or what is the substance of the value etc.? Then there will be a wide range of speculation and custom, after that there will be a self-demonstration, self-interpretation, self-regulation, and then they will claim things that they provide are about “knowledge” of the value. Please comparing the way ignoring the cultural destiny and historical value with the following categories: naturalistic way; the way of rationalism; way of historicism; religious doctrine; way of aestheticism; practice ‘; the way of the philosophy of language way, postmodernism. The results of these methods have been played, the value of the field to be “rational” and “relative” and “pluralistic”, “difference” and “nothingness”, “transcendental”, “mysterious” and “uncertainty” face presented. As for the rationality of these ways themselves, most of them stick to their respective positions, the result can only be artificially delineated and limited every other field, can not elaborate. An understanding and reflect on the value of the way, is a typical value of metaphysical discourse. In accordance with the view of some scholars, this method of thinking about the value of the problem is a “prescriptive thinking”, the basic features for the entity set and the entity as a ready-made object to be provided for, and against the logic to determine the reasoning style proof. In fact, the metaphysics of “fiction”, but also with the existence of human life is closely related to value not only not a As Gal Ghani said: “human existence is not etched in pure boundary domain of metaphysics, but also informal confined to the narrow intrinsic nature of the historical, social and anthropological, but the performance of the various phenomena of human existence and its the tragic cycle of the differences in evolution.”

A very basic question: if we accept that the world itself is a value exists, then, the world itself will certainly have its own inherent value of the existence and evolution of logic. This logic, the first objective value of the world’s logic, it is the basis for the value of all personal subjective logic. For a long time, our self-righteous, that our way is to establish the value of logic and subsequent human rational reflection and awakening of the fact that to prove that on this issue, human exactly how arrogant, childish and pathetic. Ontology as an anthropological sense of the facts, the value of design and the existence of human existence, activities and their corresponding historical, cultural and institutional Community together.

In this sense, the value is the world itself, that is, human existence itself, is the world according to the nature of the show in their own way, and is the way people treat the world and present their own survival and way of life itself.

In the contemporary value of many irrelevant philosophical thinking, it is difficult for us to read the depth of thinking to characterize the true reality of the contemporary human survival picture with the spirit of situation, which undoubtedly is a confusing thing. Obviously, it is not because thinkers do not want to experience the contemporary reality, but if they want to hold on the contemporary academic position, the first question they will facing is: How can we value position to enter the position of these realities, and reveal the nature of reality now that there are real life things in our vision? Especially in this generation which is full of value confusion, thinkers invariably gave up the weight-bearing sense of social mission, do not want to stand in the sociology or cultural thinking, and that a new value has not been fully established. The important feature of contemporary society is that its performance is the fragments of life, not a continuous life. Contemporary society filled with complex “modern” illusion, to make people’s lives, loss of self, split personality, value collapse, the loss of ideals and the vagrant fantastic life, people’s living condition has become worse and worse. We have the real value of the case has to experience it? We had a reasonable manner in accordance with the human experience of local experience?

Most of the “reality” modern people live in it are “reification world” which are built by the rational value. Actually, most of modern people receive are some stylized surface, or even false even unreal experience. It doesn’t show the modern life with their situation. What is the real life of contemporary people in a time of change and survival experience and psychological condition? What this change is the optimization of human nature, enhance or shelter, against human nature? It seems that nobody has really focused seriously.

We believe that the key to the contemporary value philosophical thinking is going to look for the ways of the people’s contemporary spirit to relieve the confusion. The value of philosophical thinking both to pay attention to individual existence experience, and the individual public experience, and individual survival experience to the public to experience conversion path is to help the experience out of their own private domain, to obtain a rational expression, toward the public nature of experience. Thirty years ago, loneliness, anxiety, despair and other psychological experience for the Chinese people seems to be an exotic landscape, however, it has become the real life of Chinese people today. People in the modern practice of Chinese found that modernity provides a lot of material living space to us, at the same time gives the mind space installed on the fence of apathy. This makes both sides are able to reach the inner truth and in doubt or hesitation in the pericardium to hide.

The most positive results of culture are giving people joyful existential experience. For a kind of culture, experience is the right to live; but for another culture, experience becomes a luxury. It seems that we need to establish the value of considering own and an appropriate as well as reasonable to create value. Otherwise, we will deviate from the purpose and direction of our research. It will

become an ineffective speech or purely subjective logic regulation under the guidance of a lack of “public” theoretical self to itself.

Second, “the cultural public value experience”: the origin of its justifications

In a sense, all the theme and mission of the value philosophy seems to be understood by this way: how the people and the world to become a value exists?

The real logic of value’s exist must not be judged by pure subjectivity, but the value at the same time could be judged. Because the so-called value can be simply said as a kind of rational recognition and collective pursuit to “cultural public reality” facts which is related to the real situation of human’s existence. The seeking for cultural public is a kind of real subject’s effort at the meaning of value-rights, it works for arguing the value’s nature of its presence and mode of action. It considered that: the value is not like it should, but be shadowed relentlessly.

Then people have a question: why and in what sense does the “real value experience of culture public” constitute one of value philosophy’s important and reasonable topics?

In value philosophy, “the cultural public value experience” is a value psychological phenomenon which has the meaning of ontological significance. As to its nature, it is the pleasure feeling and understanding, as well as the distillation and rebirth of the comprehensive personality-boundary when the real one meets a perfect absolute existence. Experience contents the significance of the value of ontology; there is no one experience of the world, there is no value in itself.

The core goal of all about the concept of the value is to pursuit the “cultural public”. Cultural public can judge whether a culture is mature and thus becomes an important sign which has the characteristic of recognized reasonable and progressive by public. It can be say that all the thing mankind fought and pursuit for is related to establish the culture public’s real ideal, and then to establish the culture public’s supreme authority. Many concepts that human invented, used and created are all advertised to the public. The concepts that have feature of cultural public contain a kind of equal treatment idea which exists between person and object; they live together, give each other, exist at the same time and share everything.

Survival is a natural fact, and learning to survive has a deeper meaning. Human’s existence is a natural and social cultural fact, but there is a question: what made it is different from other things’ exist. What should the human do to achieve a dignified, elegant and dignified existence? In all possible ways, the rationality of the human justice, the creation of the effectively concept, practice and identity practice are all indispensable. The way concept to form itself is the way of human self-understanding; it is also the way people to root properly in the present world. We believe that this process followed the normal logic—the real experience of culture public. At all times and in all countries, all logic about the value come from it and then is established.

Human’s survival and life practice is a kind of “real public culture” survival scenario and reality creative progress. The mode of real public culture thinking is the thinking relayed on practicing result, it shows that when we are seeking for where the “value” is and how it exists, we are try to find out how the value be sized and tasted by us in fact. In this sense, not so much the value was found or created,

but rather than was tasted publicly in the social world of culture public as a whole world. It can be said that the value is the infinite, unified world itself. It is also the way of world presents itself independently, the way human let world present itself as it is. At the same time, value is human's existence and life itself, it is the way that human autonomy to present their own and the way that humans present their own naturally.

However, looking from the value phenomenon that actually affects us, regulation with us and be tasted by us, they are all some external, limited splinter of value. Although these values are expressed in words, stood by rules and Fulfillment in action, lots of words like "natural, social, system, culture, practice, absolute versus relative, noble versus humble, reasonable versus unreasonable" only express two phenomenon: one is valuable; another is worthless. When we are thinking very hard while it is difficult to ascertain the truth, many words as "utility, relativism, diversification and spiritual emptiness" are created and selected to cover up and defend the helpless phenomenon for human intellect, while the real, true "value itself", in fact, already quietly faded gradually from the "real world".

On the value of experience and thinking on the world cultural public, we need an overall "program", which constitutes the possible original theory of such experience. Contemporary India's leading religious scholars Krishna Krishnamurti provide us with the true prompt of effective thinking: "what we care about is a whole life, your whole words and deeds, thoughts and feelings, but not a local fragmented. If the thing that we care about is a whole life, we are unlikely to solve all problems through the fragmented thinking. Thinking may be licensed itself to organize all the pieces together, but these fragments are still a product of the thought itself."

It is visible that one of the purposes of culture public value is portraying people into a person with public feeling and value belief, the progress is according to reasonable public cultural concepts. In the sense of cultural anthropology, the history of human society's development is a value's self-see and proved history under the banner of the social cultural public. Many scholars have a profound insight and awareness on this. Scholars have found that, when innocent and holy value was infringed by theology, religion, authoritarian, scientific, cultural and other abuse, it began to lose its own identity. Thus, a variety of false and distorted value experience appears on turn. The value philosophy should strive to discover the real, rational culture public value experience. "Because the crises we are experiencing showed that we have lost the direction of ethics and can not discern the horizon of the forward. We are facing is not a crisis of values, but the crisis that value's meaning itself, the crises we self-governance capacity, so the priority is how to position ourselves in value."

Generally speaking, human's value experience has mainly experienced three stages. (1) Natural value experience stage. At this stage, based on natural instinct, people were living in a natural community. It basically is a kind of natural existence. Man and nature were in a primitive identity, the world was not be "imaged", people lived in the natural, and there is no separation between people and the nature. Then people able to freely devote to their own richness, open to the

world inflexibility, people has not yet be formed by the time, reason, history, culture, system, they have not joy because of boning and fear of death. The value tasted by people to experience is what they feel, create, and owned. People treated everything in a natural way. Through this kind of experience and then understanding the truth of nature, people connect with the absolute truth and have dialogues with truth. In this stage, people is the people as a natural sexual existence, they do not need to defend for themselves; (2) the social value experience stage. This stage is the value's degenerate stage. In science the way of the social value experience is a technology or artificial way, outside the natural instinct, human's existence joins the "desire" that beyond instinct. People are no longer satisfied with the natural living conditions. In this stage, people put their own into a "timeliness", "space" form, among the form people realize the conflict between the limited flesh and the unlimited spirit, so they have a desire to achieve themselves according to the human way. People need a new way to display their rich and unique, which is a real people's value create and tasted way. Thus, there are sign like social, culture and system; the idea like freedom, democracy and equality; the commitment like rational, development, progress and civilized; of course there are also the implementation of the law and discipline, barbaric violence, class and oppression; while there are no lack of persistent yearning for the Millennium Kingdom, Utopia and communism. While people experience the positive results of this choice, at the same time they also need to defense for their choice which is not OK. So we can find many social logics, such as with the "commodity logic, the logic of capital, consumption of logic", but just not the "people logic". (3) The ecological value experience stage. It was found that the natural way can't let person be ourselves, social way made people become inhuman. During the progress that people make their own efforts to become a "value exists", people gradually moved toward the negative and went into a "non-the value of existence." Trying to find "value", create value, and experience the "value", but at last people find that the value be found and created are all full of the virility anti-value. People trying to establish itself by value, but the result is they continued relentlessly, resolutely gradually away from their own, and even rebellion itself, at least people become not itself. So people ask the question "a thousand times: "I seek you no matter how far away, but you do not care, I've become no longer I, but you are still you."... The ecological value experience is the reflection of this Call. In this stage, people show a consciousness of return to the reason. They started to review the way that how they treat to the nature and society. It is a narrow anthropocentrism that we treated nature as one that can be obtained and conquest in any way. It has been proved to be a wrong view of the world. We need a more humane way to treat nature, we should change the way treated our homeland. We should to be a "natural caregivers", "natural shepherds". The ecological value experience is a real-life experience of a cultural public; it is the contemporary human's new experience way on value.

Third, the value rational game between the culture public value experience and the survival of pure self-interest: seeking the logic of true meaning in the tension between the "facts" and "norms".

Since the free world is created and objected into a man's world, the world has been followed the man's logic, which contains both the logic of practice, and the logic of the culture and history. Under the domination of these "subjective logic", the world becomes not the world itself. We establish it by social and State; and judging it with the words as progress or regress, civilized or savage, well-off or poverty. It just impose people's unilateral feel to the world, and doesn't care about the true situation of the world's existence should be at all.

The true situation is like this: as the world becomes not the world itself, people becomes not the people should be, so does the culture. In the case of such a premise, the world's knowledge of value we strived to explore can only be full of loopholes and not be justified. Western scholars were aware of the value paradox that caused by the survival paradox for a long time, and they also do everything possible to try to achieve "intellectual breakthrough", but this effort is still on the way. Ponty said: "philosophy does and always break with the objectivism, it begin from the structures and back to the subjective experience, or begin from the world and back to our own". Since we recognized that the inner world philosophy brings us back to be not the personal life, but the subjective nature which links the whole history and us together gradually. On this condition, philosophy is not able to explain the philosophy's characteristics. Philosophy is not brought to the hard introspection, or to a field which is different from the scientific field in numbers, the necessary way is antagonistic to knowledge. When I realized my social that society is not just an object but first and foremost is my situation, I recognized my synchronic. Through it I am able to imagine the last as the past was, it could show the consistent and inconsistent activities of historical groups lively.

Now humans are still facing the logic of market economy and civil society which has become institutional facts since the Enlightenment, which is the logic of purely self-interest survive and narrow value rational. The logic of capital is the logic of separation, which is the secular person using logic of interests justify digests all the "sacred" logic. It is far away from the nature of human society. The logic of capital are trying to create a community truth belonged to the capitalist class by themselves, which is unreal and abstract. The capitalists lived in different period created culture of the public nature reality, and then they give it the maximal social consensus by the power of national authoritarian, ideological, cultural regulatory. The essence of the logic of capital is the culture without the public nature or removing the culture's public. The logic of capital wants to lead the truth into the logic of private existence and experience which is dominated and led by a certain class' interests. Follow that, they will extend it to be the value of the whole society through a institutional and legal way. The result is it becomes living reality which the people had to accept. Alain Touraine said something about this condition: "the most important impression is the complete separation of the ubiquitous tools in the world with a high degree of non-social-oriented self-conscious pursuit. There are no things that can be called 'social' any more: the culture is just an unthinkingly called thing, which is endless and fragmentary experience in nature, and an empty and blindly world that only satisfy the needs of the commercial development " [a] 192. Alain Touraine said the status quo as "modern's modern", it makes us feel a need, and definite ourselves as

non-social, it is the core of our experience and desire: the main problem facing all of us is to re-organize our religious heritage, management our body (life, death, sex, etc.) as well as our relationship with the object, its forms is opposite to the tools and the world of communitarians, they individual themselves to false collective”.

In the sense of people is the only realistic vector that pursuit, embodied, bear, achieve the significance of public life goals, they are the origin of cultural public value experience. So far, what people work hard and strive for is to establish him, or to achieve a “cultural public existence”. Reasonable way of human existence is to create value in the practice public way, share the value in the social public way as well as taste and evaluate cultural public.

It seems that the real and true value experiences’ achieve needs to work together in order to create a culture public practice and social survival scenario.

First of all, the logic of public social practice—survival is logic of whole exit. In the view of whole theory, the value is the inner reason and way of the world to become the world and the people to become the people. Heidegger divided person’s rasion into two types in his book, one is computational thinking, and the other is the contemplation [6] 123. Compatible with these two kinds of thinking, we find the world’s “two kinds of order”—the fact order and value order. The value order has been covered by the fact order for a long time, which resulting in the separation and stress between the “significance” and “value”. Contemporary famous French thinker Maurice Merleau—Ponty were awarded of this separation of reality: “... there are value, real things, the spirit, the body, the inner world, the outside world. However, whether the scope of fact occupies the areas of value, whether people are aware of the binary opposition is valid only in a certain degree of poverty and danger?”

Our time is a value exit era with reviving the concept of “culture public real” as a symbol, and going to the value of the “organic unity”. The famous American philosopher Robert Nozick’s views are well worth attention. In his view, the value is the important aspects of the concept of reality and one of its dimensions. Values is not just some vague praise terms. The value of something owned only because they are way leading to some sort of valuable things. Certain things have their own value that is an intrinsic value... the concept of this intrinsic value is a basic concept; other types of value exit because their contact with the intrinsic value exists [7] 146. Then what is the things that have value? “Theorists believe that when a painting—often in the way of vivid and compelling—managed to reorganize a large number of materials into a compact unity, it will have the aesthetic value. This kind of ‘diversity in unity’ has been called ‘organic unity’ contact, which is used to sustain life” [7] 147. “Some things have intrinsic value that is its organic unity. It is a kind of value structure which constitutes the unity of organic structure at least [7] 149”. However, with respect to each larger goal that is similar to this unity, we can find the limits of this unity. Even when we saw our universe as a whole, we can also see that it’s limited.... Then it leads to a retreat. In order to prevent this retreat, we seem to need some things with kind of meaningful inherent—some thing own meaning itself but not things that own meaning by contacting with other things. Otherwise, we need some kind of things without

limits, those things we can not take a step back after from it—even in the imagination—to think about what its meaning is. Because of this, religious seems to provide a stop place for the question of meaning, it also provides an ultimate foundation for a sense. The religious' way is to believe an unlimited exist, a not exactly limited exit, an exit unable to retreat in order to see its limits. “150–151 [7]. Therefore, “the value involved a thing's inherent unity of coherence, the things need not to connect with another thing—any more things—in order to obtain the value.

Second, the logic of public social practice—survival is the logic of cooperative. Just simply identify the characteristics of the exits' experience and nature is far from enough, there is a deeper question: in what way can we truly experience the “real value”? Human desire for true value, and attempt to discover and create the real value by their own, they also wish to live among the true value. But what exactly is true value? How does real value generate? How can we find value and how has it been established? Human's intellect try to answer these issues, which has not get the proper interpretation yet in the field of value philosophy. A kind of survival cooperation or cooperate survive culture public true experience based on human's cooperation nature can provide effective help for these issues. What is the value? We believe that value is a culture public true experience with survival cooperation or co operational survival based on human's cooperation nature in the sense of people is a social exit. The nature of “chemo tactic social” and “cooperation” nature urge us go toward to “value experience” culture of the public nature of social practice and the logic of survival.

In the sense of cultural anthropology, the history of mankind so far shows us that the value we recognized must be something outside our basic needs. This is not something else, but cooperation. The concept expressed by cooperation is culture public logic of value experience. It can be said that the value in the philosophical sense has been both since phenomenon of cooperation became the human's instinct. There are many true values—together, living at the same time, share everything and etc. are all recognized when cooperation is recognized. Cooperation reflects the value has significance. The value appears in the progress of cooperation; value can be illustrated and embodied the cooperation among people and the object world.

The consortium formed by society and history is the value's body itself. Marked by the cooperation phenomenon was the holy side of the humanity generated in the history, which was exit so elegantly, decently that human are longing. All the things that people ever fought seem to prove and confirm the human's cooperation nature. It can be introduced that all the answers of mysteries about value suffered by human's survival and their life is limited to cooperation.

Cooperation brings the real logic of sharing, win-win results and survival situations for us; it is the sharing circulated closer to real nature of the value. It is due to the presence of the “ideal community” and goals & hard works of cooperation, the value determined by the experience can has legitimacy. As Samuel Bowles said: human cooperation is unique in nature, the cooperation can be extended to a large number of individuals unrelated to each other and can take many different

forms. Our understand cooperation as this way: individual cost individual cost and participate in joint activities, its benefits exceed the costs incurred” [8] 52. The concept of value in the sense of cultural public in fact is the identity of the whole society based on cooperation in history.

It can also be understood by this way. Using experience to express the value would let the value of philosophical become value mysticism and value agnosticism because of experience’s vague and uncertain. All of these made the value itself lose its common degree, exchanges and communication, and so that value into a purely personal experience. If we recognize any kind of personalized experience’s generate can only happened in the historical, social, cultural and spiritual field, then this experience must obtains the character of communicate and exchange. Experience of such a value generated must rely on or ignited an ideal “community” lives. It can be said that the value comes from the experience, in essence, is an expression of the nature of human the chemo tactic social and “cooperation”, is a phenomenon based on cooperation and cultural. All able value phenomenons are the show of different aspects of the cooperation.

What is human? “Human is a limited freedom.” religious philosopher Tillich answers it like this: this means if you want to understand the true meaning of value, you must go beyond the persistence of the main logic value on the issue and return to the value’s realms. What is the value? Value only can be the things we have experienced, it is the way that natural and human show and create themselves in their own way, it is the way between man and nature, man and society, people with each other to go into and talk to each other, it is the way how different cultures, the inter subjectivity treatment each other, it is the way listen to the world with a whole body.

Finally, the logic of public social practice—survival is the logic of the panoramic view of the Light of the human’s spirit. The achievement of the culture public value relies on the establishment of a social community, its purpose is to promote the modern individual mental order and integrity of personality development.

Chinese people’s spirit of cultural ecology and spiritual situation is not optimistic now. In Chinese traditional culture and social organization, there are some characteristics in the value of people’s experience which is distinguished from other nationals. This experience molded the personality of our nation, and the pursuit of temperament and personality realm. Over the years, our nation has a more personal survival experience, and little collective experience of the public cultural value. So not only our culture and the personality caused by this culture are flawed. Such a feature, even constitute the “deep structure “of our own culture in a sense.

Flowed the actual situation of China’s social reform and opening, with the gradual differentiation of the traditional unitary values, it can be found a loss of social and public culture and core values, the Chinese people suffered harassment and entanglement of all kinds of false, distorted experience value. From the reality of individual survival and the real situation of the world point of view, it is on the absence of the meaning and value. Living in the transformation society, when the

past, shared values and experience way are total been negated and exit the stage of support organizations and individual standards of behavior, while the new shared values and experience has not yet formed or did not get the recognition of the community, social it is easy to vacuum form the experience of shared values: there is no clear boundaries between right and wrong, true and false, rational and irrational, it opens the door for social speculation, then leads to serious identity crisis, society is no longer universal values and ethical standards. Even with the morality, due to lack of common objective criteria, but also conflict and internal contradictions. As McIntyre said: “so-called contemporary moral differences, but in face these will conflict each other, each will be decided by some of its own arbitrary choose” [9]. When the value lost the objectivity of the source and lack of public discussion for consensus and self-legislation, the emergence of value relativism, pragmatism and even nihilism begin appeared. People consider the center of gravity of life and action no longer a measure of what the ultimate significance, but as a means to achieve a specific secular purpose, effective and reasonable. The meaning of contemporary people’s spirit, the establishment of personal identity, all of these depends on the desire to meet the material desires of possession and endless consumption, the social thoroughly be secularized.

The wane of the core values of social community has closely related to the lack of real practice and experience of public life. Since the establishment of new China, the public and political life of the nascent state power concept is well developed, but that is a top-down unilaterally by the State-led social and public—in fact over-politicized. The establishment of market economy system symbols the beginning of the quasi-secular society, after the transition of the 1980s and 1990s into excessive “private”. Scholars have generally recognized that in today’s Chinese society, private life is very rich and quite free, the various forms of contacts and relations become unusually activity. However, national public life organized by the uniform in the past did not translate into the “civil society” or “civil society”, which is the basic premise of modern public life. It should be recognized that the practice of market economy, civil society development, and the consequences of globalization is a new scene of public life, there is the experience way of belonging to this practice of the special “public culture of the real”, it makes a conflict and tension generation of space be possible between Chinese the field of private and public value of the experience, but also a very good training place for the formation of our national personality.

Observed from a public perspective, what stage does today’s Chinese society in the culture public nature of the concept? We believe that, according to China’s economic base and national nature, China today is the masses of the people all enjoy the governance of the public nature of the times. The actual opening of the so-called masses of the people all enjoy the governance of public is open to all people, to allow the people freedom to access, participation and sharing places significant as well as a pursuit, emotion, and reflect the interests of the masses of the people purpose, value and aesthetic taste of the broad “public space” is increasingly generated, all of the people to effectively share the fruits of reform and opening up.

Formally, the real, vivid value experience seems to be a very personal thing. However, in essence, it is based on the existence of excellent “public life”, and cannot stay away from the logic of “publicity”, which is a truth of human cultural history of ideas clear to us.

On Marx's Politic Economic Method of Value

Ping He

Marx's Politic Economic is different from the Classical Politic Economic. The classical Politic Economic only researches into the economic phenomena, but Marx's Politic Economic try to reveal into the law of Capitalism. So Marx's Politic Economic is not only the theory of Capitalist Economy, but also the philosophy of the law of human history. Especially, Marx revealed the value law of the Capitalist society and gives us the method that researches into value at a philosophical angle. This paper will give the methodological explanation, differentiation and analysis on Marx's definition of value and his paradigm in researching value.

1 Philosophy or Political Economics?

What is the economic definition of value? What is the philosophical definition of value? This includes the key method of researching into Marx's theory of value.

In *On Adolph Wagner's Textbook of Political Economy*, Marx criticized Wagner for distorting the theory of value of *the Capital*, and expounded his basic theory of political economy again. In the viewpoint of Marx, the substantial mistake of Wagner's general value theory lies at confusing the concept of value and price, and value and utility-value, "calling generally the use-value theory as value general or value concept",¹ and "changing secretly the value into market price or the commodity price diverging from the value at that time",² owing to the mistake, Wagner regarded value as the need relationship between man and the wealth for satisfying the

¹ Marx & Engles Collected Works, Volume 19, p. 411, published in 1963 by People's Publishing House.

² Marx & Engles Collected Works, Volume 19, p. 402, published in 1963 by People's Publishing House.

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needs, furthermore, the establishment of the relationship also originates from man's natural expectation, so that "man is in the relationship of the things of the outside world for satisfying the needs."³ Marx opposes Wagner's naturalist explanation that defines the value with the need of man for the external things, and emphasizes that value is related to the general labor of man, therefore it is necessarily socialized; Only through occupation by labor can things of the outside world become wealth able to satisfy man's the need. Marx points out that "as a matter of fact, people firstly appropriate things of the outside world as material for satisfying their own needs, and so on; Then in language, people call things existing like this in the actual experiences, namely the material for satisfying their needs, the substance which enables people to satisfy."⁴ Herein Marx explicitly takes labor as the precondition for things of the outside world to become wealth, and thinks that only the things of the outside world being targeted through labor will become the substance for satisfying the needs, and can exist as object with value. But in this case, the specification of value is entirely changed, which value does not originate from the relationship between the substance needed for the man and for satisfying the need, but stems from labor. The way of saying that the value originated from the relationship of people to things of the outside world, necessary for satisfying their need, is just an expression of abstract theory, after having omitted labor and with perceptual knowledge. This expression is entirely wrong. From Marx's description, we can know that: First, Marx emphasises taking labor as the essence of value, not taking satisfying man's need as the essence of value. This thought is consistent to that of "specifying value as the pure and simple coherence of indistinctive human labor".⁵ Second, value that Marx talks about herein does not render a philosophic definition on value, but talks about the problem in political economics, and explains the nature of natural things able to obtain wealth under certain conditions. In this case, even we understand the whole meaning of value originating from the relationship of people to treat the things of the outside world, as described by Marx, we still can not confirm the value specification in philosophic sense. Furthermore, Marx holds a negative attitude to the saying that value engendering from the relationship of people's need to external things, so we may not understand it as the Marxist philosophical definition of value.

To that extent, does Marx specify value from philosophic viewpoint in his political economy works or not? It should be yes. Whereas this specification does not exist in the description whether things of the outside world have values, but exist in the specification of man's nature. In *1844 Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, Marx specifies value with labor not from the condensation of the labor and in the aspect of existence of things, but takes labor as man's alive creation activities, as man's nature, and specifies value in man's existence. Marx's

³ Marx & Engles Collected Works, Volume 19, p. 405, published in 1963 by People's Publishing House.

⁴ Marx & Engles Collected Works, Volume 19, p. 406, published in 1963 by People's Publishing House.

⁵ Marx's Capital, Volume 1, p. 51, edition of 1975 by People's Publishing House.

theory of labor alienation reveals the laws of humankind history through the creation, loss and final realization of man's existence value. In opinions of Marx, humankind history is the process of self-creation and self-realization. The self-creation and self-realization enables the labor to become man's life activities, yet alienation of labor enables the man's activity to lose the nature of "the free conscious activity".⁶ Therefore, the process of the history of man's self-creation and self-realization is the process of coming into being and conquering of labor alienation. This is the Marx's description and specification for the philosophy of value.

In comparison of dissertation of value by Marx in his *A Contribution To the Critique of Political Economy* and *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, we can deduce two conclusions as follows: (1) The political economy definition of value given by Marx is entirely different from the philosophic definition. When defining the value in political economics, Marx emphasizes the result of labor, and dissertates the value condensed in the substance, but in the philosophic definition of value, he emphasizes the process of labor, and dissertates man's life activity. Generally speaking, in Marx's opinion, the value as political economy concept mainly explains the nature of the substance, yet the value in philosophic concept mainly reveals man's development. In accordance with the difference, we think that Marx's political economy definition of value cannot be taken as a philosophic abstract. We admit that as Marx defining the value in political economy sense, he applies means of the philosophic abstraction, but the means of philosophic abstraction is not the philosophic definition. The method may not be confused with the theoretical definition. Therefore Value Is the Satisfaction of the Object for the Need of the Subject may not be taken as philosophy for defining the value, to be more accurately, nor be taken as Marxist philosophic definition of value; (2) Marx's philosophy of value substantially excludes utility-value. This viewpoint has been explicitly expressed either in his discussion of value of political economy, or in the discussion of philosophic value. When talking about political economics, Marx consistently emphasizes that value may only relate to general human labor, and absolutely opposes to equal use-value to the value, and opposes to the specification of regarding the utility relating to use-value as the value. In the philosophic definition of value, Marx expresses his thought in the dissertation of labor alienation that practice is not an activity of utility, but an activity of non-utility. As a non-utility activity, practice becomes the creation of man's nature and activity of man's life creation, and practice will create and present man's value. On the other hand, if practice becomes means for a living, it will be an activity of utility with only usefulness, in this case, practice will become the negation of man's nature and life creation, and can not manifest as man's value. All this indicates that Marx's theory of man's value does not include utility-value, and even negates substantially utility-

⁶ Marx & Engles Selected Works, Volume 1, p. 46, edition of 1975 by People's Publishing House.

value. In accordance with this thought, we should not bring utility-value as the partial man's value into Marxist philosophy of value.

2 Epistemology or Ontology?

What is Marx's paradigm in researching value? Or, whether Marxism philosophy of value is ontology or epistemology? This is another key method in researching value. When solving the question, we should not only return to the texts of Marxist philosophy, but also combine the questions in the theoretical aspect with that of the methodological aspect.

The earliest research in philosophy of value by Marx could date back to his *Doctoral Thesis* titled "The Difference between the Democritus and Epikouros Philosophy of Nature". In it, Marx sought out the value of Epikouros Philosophy. Epikouros was a prominent philosopher of ethics during the period of Greece. The spirit of ethics advocated by Epikouros runs through his ethnic and politics as well as atomistic philosophy of nature. Marx's interest in Epikouros Philosophy centralized on the spiritual freedom and independent spirit of ethics. Just because of this, Marx didn't study the specific thought of Epikouros ethics of, but paid attention to his Philosophy of Nature, attempting to find the inherent spirit of Epikouros philosophy by comparing the Democritus and Epikouros Philosophy of Nature and hence establish a kind of brand—new philosophy. In Marx's opinion, the fundamental difference between the Democritus and Epikouros philosophy of nature belongs to the difference of two philosophical traditions. Democritus philosophy belongs to the philosophical tradition with positive science, which studies the celestial bodies, while Epikouros Philosophy, which studies human's perceptual world, belongs to the tradition of practical philosophy. This difference is reflected in every proposition of their atomistic philosophy—their attitudes towards inevitability and contingency, their explanations of the movement of atom straying from straight line and their analysis of the quality and quantity of atom, etc. Each proposition of Epikouros Philosophy carries forward human's self-awareness and manifests "more meaningful and interesting in its subjective form and character".⁷ In fact, study of human's self-awareness was the theme of philosophy in Marx's age. Marx was dissatisfied that the philosophers in his age hung human's self-awareness high above the palace of the abstract reason, so he turned back to Epicurean Philosophy, attempting to find out the foundation of human's self-awareness in the perceptual world. And because of this, Marx attached great importance to Epikouros's emphasis on contingency and the demonstration of human's free thought from the point of contingency as well as the thought of resisting inevitability with contingency. Marx thought that the essence of Epikouros thought was to oppose the philosophy with positive sciences and

⁷ Marx & Engles Collected Works, Volume 40, p. 195, published by People's Publishing House.

approve that human's perceptual world is the true and meaningful world of philosophical research. On this basis, Marx generalized the metaphysical characteristics of Epikouros philosophy of self-awareness as follows: in contents, it mainly considered the questions concerning the creation of world, including "how spirit creates the world", "what's the relationship between philosophy and world" and what's the spirit of philosophy—creativity", etc.; in ways of thinking, it was beyond determinism and inevitability, and had the characteristics of non-determinism and contingency, so it was philosophical, not scientific according to the method of Marx's division. Marx's metaphysical generalization of Epikouros Philosophy is actually the ontological generalization of human perceptual world of human—human practice, through which Marx established the philosophical framework of practical ontology and hence laid a philosophical foundation for his research on human value.

After establishing his framework of practical philosophy in *Doctoral Thesis*, Marx mainly studied the creation and realization of human value within the framework in *1844 Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*. He regarded the industrial society and the capitalist mode of production associated with it as the perceptual world of philosophy and held a critical attitude towards it, which constituted the three important characteristics of Marx's philosophy of value: first, Marx's philosophy of value is a kind of philosophy concerning human's life world, belongs to the tradition of practical philosophy essentially and it is a kind of theory of ontology concerning practical philosophy. Second, it is complete and critical. The "completeness" means that human value exists in production, living and all activities of cultural creation. In Marx's opinion, the perceptual world is the world of human value. It's the whole industrial society, not only including ethics and politics, but also including production, science, art and religion—altogether all the aspects of human life including production and every life and all cultural forms; accordingly, human value exists in all the fields including production, daily life, mode of production and ideology and all cultural forms. The "critique" means that Marx's philosophy of value fills with critique and negativity towards capitalist society. Marx thought that industrial society and capitalist mode of production created new form of human civilization, but led to the alienation of human and loss of human value, so the tasks of philosophy were to criticize and reform world and created new and more advanced form of human civilization. Thus perceptual world in Marx's philosophy is filled with critical and negative contents. Marx's theory of alienation of labor criticizes the capitalist by the creation, alienation and final realization of human value, discloses its inherent contradiction and future and manifests at the same time that Marx's philosophy of value is a kind of positive and future—orienting philosophy. Third, Marx applies the paradigm with historicism to study the creation and realization of human value. In his opinion, historicism has the meanings of both ontology and methodology. Its meaning of ontology means the historical existence of human's creative activities; and its meaning of methodology means the ways of thinking associated with historical relativism. Both of them associate with each other and complement each other. If philosophy wants to carry through human creative activities completely, the ways

of thinking of historical relativism must be established. The historical relativism is different from the relativism of cognition. The latter negates the ontology and leads philosophy to skepticism; the former places human creative activities in the course of human history and regards them as a ceaseless course, which proves and supports the noumenon of human creative activities. When studying the creation and realization of value of human life, Marx combined the ontology and methodology of historicism organically and created the paradigm of historicism. The above-mentioned three characteristics prove theoretically that Marxist philosophy of value belongs to ontology, not epistemology and that studying Marxist philosophy of value should apply the paradigm of historicism rather than that of the value relationship between the subject and object.

The methodological analysis of the definition of value and the paradigm leads the research in Marxist philosophy of value to the practical perceptual world, in which, we can find the differences and junction points between Marxist philosophy of value and modern western philosophy of value, the problems faced by Marxist philosophy of value and the new growing points of the development of Marxist philosophy of value. Altogether, only based on the practical perceptual world, can Marxist philosophy of value gain broader space for its development.

Historical Understanding and Historical Appraisal

Kaifeng Huang

This paper focuses on probing the intrinsic relationship between historical understanding and historical appraisal, maintaining that understanding history and the appraisal of its value are parts and parcel of the study of history in its entirety. My claim is that subjectivity in the appraisal can be integrated with objectivism in understanding. Not only is understanding history merely in the service of factualism, but can also be utilized for finding out how the past would impose its influence upon present social progress. If only we could combine the appraisal of value with the understanding of historical facts, we could create a complete process for our research. As long as the understanding and comprehending of historicity do not come to a halt, historical appraisal will continue. In order to acquire an understanding of the objectivism in history, one must commence one's exploration by developing a proper and reasonable outlook on value and on the philosophy of life; one must stand at a height that promotes the value of social progress and at a height that treats people as the main body. A proper and reasonable outlook on values allows historians to acquire an objectivist view of historical understanding. Even so, objectivism still is of primary importance, because it is the symbol of turning the study of history into a science. A once existed past restricts and defines the boundary for our appraisal of history after all.

1 Viewpoints on Appraisal of Value

Many contemporary philosophers of history fail to take “value” as a key topic for discussion in their study of history. But because social history comprises the activities and practices of human beings, within which the quest for value or the

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actualization of value is an important facet, people find it impossible to avoid the problems associated with the appraisal of value with regard to objects of history and with regard to research focused on historical understanding.

1.1 Some Former Soviet Scholars Take “the Spirit of the Party” as an Important Principle for Historical Understanding

Some former Soviet scholars once accepted “the Spirit of the Party” (hereafter known as “the Spirit”) as an important principle of their historical understanding—one that involves the problem of the relationship between “value” and “appraisal of value”. What then is the “Principle of the Spirit?”¹ “The principle of the Spirit demands a revealing class origins and class content of historical phenomena and events, while assessing them in the view of the interests of the revolutionary proletariat and the building of socialism. This principle opposes subjectivism as well as objectivism of bourgeois, manifesting a higher degree of scientific objectivism.”² The former Soviet scholars believe that the principle of the Spirit logically contains the principle of objectivism or the principle of science—in other words, the principle of objectivism indeed exists as a part of the principle of the Spirit in the field of history (i.e. a given value-position determines the content of objectivism). For this, their arguments are as follows:

First, while the principle of objectivism (meaning the objective truth based on facts) is the highest principle pursued by the natural sciences, social sciences (including history) are somewhat different, because “without exception, in the field of social sciences both the objects of research and the subjects who carry out the research (hereafter known as subjects of research) are linked to all of the complicated relations of the social classes. These relations constitute all possibilities of the process of social life, observed by those from the standpoint of the class to which they belong. The science of Marxism-Leninism openly recognizes that a subject of research is subordinated to a given class’s interests expressed by the Spirit of the subject of research (scholar).”³ In social sciences the category of the Spirit of the proletariat (Marxism-Leninism) and the category of objectivism are inseparable.

Secondly, in social sciences (including science of history), “the Spirit is the utmost expression of objectivism, and it does not deviate from the category of objectivism.”⁴ As the Spirit in social sciences is concrete, the actualization of the Spirit must include objectivism.

¹ *History: Issues of Methodology*, p. 93.

² *Ibid*, 101.

³ *Ibid*, 102.

⁴ *Ibid*, 102.

Thirdly, in social sciences the coverage of contents of the principle of the Spirit is wider than that of objectivism. On the one hand, the Spirit does not deviate from the category of objectivism, and on the other hand, it simultaneously “manifests the subject’s (the researcher) exhibition of subjectivism in his initiative attitude towards his research materials, while being consistent with the objective truth of history.”⁵ That is to say, although the Spirit does not conflict with objectivism, and the former logically includes the latter; objectivism itself does not include the Spirit because the initiative attitude of the subject lies in the principle of the Spirit but not in the principle of objectivism.

I do not agree with these Russian scholars’ conclusion that the Spirit entails objectivism because the standpoint of the Party and the interests of a certain class represented by the Party do not always reflect the real and objective demand of an entire society. However, the problem of value-position put forward by them is very important because it helps reveal an objective phenomenon concerning the interaction between the activity of understanding and the activity of appraisal in historical researches. When they took the viewpoint of the Party of the Proletariat to analyze historical phenomena and made judgments that satisfied the then-social demands and the people’s interests, they indeed engaged in activities that involved appraisals. The interests of the proletariat thus became a yardstick used in their appraising activities.

1.2 In Discussing Objectivism in Historical Understanding, Jerzy Topolski, an East European Scholar, Also Addresses and Recognizes the Role of the Appraisal of Value

Topolski believes that the result of historical understanding one must rely on the subject who engages in historical understanding (hereafter known as the **subject** of understanding) as well as the **subjectivity** embraced by the subject of understanding, and so he categorizes the source of the subjectivity in the following way: first, the social status possessed by historians that determines their point of view in their research; second, value-reference (a translated term in Chinese from Topolski’s book entitled *Methodology of History*; third, the general or theoretic knowledge possessed by historians at the time their research is carried out; and fourth, the personality of historians. The interactions of these four factors interweave as a complex network.⁶ Topolski points out that it is incorrect that relativists take the subjectivity of the subject of understanding as a pretext for denying the objective contents in historical understanding. He believes that an appraisal (Topolski equates it with value) rests at the foundation of all sciences, from which

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Yuan. *Study on the Problems of Objectivism in Historical Understanding*. (2000), pp. 67–69.

human must firstly draw a conclusion: it is worth seeking the truth before a scientific research is set off. Therefore dependence on value is a common starting point for all sciences, and it is also impossible and mistaken to draw a well-defined boundary between the world of value and the world of science. He further points out that the effect of historians' value-systems in their understanding of history is in fact the function of their already-acquired theoretic knowledge. As historians' learning processes go, so goes the expansion of this value-system. Scientists (including historians) form specific groups and develop recognized value-systems and research-norms, which have lent support to their acquiring objective understandings from facts.

The proposal of the concept of value-reference (value-system) is beneficial to us so that we are able to examine deeply the positive function of appraisal towards historical understanding without adopting a subjective view.

1.3 Lai Jinliang, a Chinese Scholar, Perceives a Need to Handle the Relationship Between Objectivism and the Appraisal of Value in the Perspective of the Methodology of Social Science

In his thesis "What are Social Sciences and Objectivism in Social Sciences?" published in *Philosophical Research*, 1996, 6th Issue, Lai Jinliang discusses the relationship between the scientificity of social sciences and the nature of ideology. Here, he nevertheless perceives a need to *handle with kid gloves* the relationship between the objectivism and the appraisal of value encompassed within the perspective of the methodology social sciences. Any object of research in social sciences is a found within a united world of fact and value, and since the object itself contains the element of value, the problem does not lie in whether or not researchers make any appraisal of value, but in *how* they make the appraisal. Lai's thought on this matter may be explicated as follows: social scientists should base their findings on value-seeking and value-standards in human society rather than on their individual value-seeking and use value-standards to proceed with their appraisal. While social scientists cannot fully comply with this requirement, they can, at the very least, make a rigorous and sincere attempt to do so. In my view, his analyses give inspiration to the study of history, which is considered part of social science, and to its standards of appraisals.

1.4 Liu Chang, a Chinese Scholar, Involves in the Value-Goal of the Study of History and the Timeliness of Historical Value

In his *History in People's Mind*, Liu Chang takes the opportunity, while discussing the problem of the objectivism in historical understanding to touch directly on the value-goal in the study of history and on the timeliness of historical value.⁷ He believes that for human beings, the history that we know at present can only reach as far as the historical understanding we have grasped thus far, but not the one known as “history in itself (the noumenon of history)”, which is independent of our existence. Therefore, to ensure the authenticity of this history, historians and those who care about history have been reviewing and criticizing their methods of understanding history for years. On the one hand, this has signaled the possibility as well as the limitation of human understanding about history; and on the other hand, it has affected the intensity of the possibility of authentic history viewed within the scope of an objectivity-focused epistemology.

As per Liu Chang's thought, in as much as history comprises the sphere of historical understanding within our cognitive reach, we must ask, “in what way we can judge which historical understanding is better?” He believes that Marx's outlook on practice can bring us the answer. Whether or not human thought contains objective truth becomes more a problem of practice than a problem of theory. We should prove the truth of our thought in our practice, meaning the reality and power of our own thought, or meaning “das sein” (being) of our thought. The progress of historical understanding does not find expression in whether or not our historical understanding is close to some professed absolute historical ontology. Rather, it is embodied mainly within our historical understanding's continuous correspondence with social reality and with the level of knowledge required by the times. In other words, the standard by which we are to judge whether or not our historical understanding has achieved a progress rests with the times and social reality (and so upon the principle of the timeliness of historical value). Within any given historical stage *S*, as our historical understanding is subjected to restrictions of the objective needs of the subject in *S*, as well as restrictions pertaining to the direction of social development and the main theme in *S*, whether or not our understanding has progressed cannot depend on the standard suitable to the historical stage prior to *S*—rather, it depends only on whether it corresponds to our objective needs and realistic requirements for social progress relative to *S*.

History is required to respond to the difficulties of human beings who occupy specific times, and to address their perplexity, anxiety, and aspirations. The reason why people continuously try their best to understand history is not because they wish to explore the entirety of its sundry details or because history makes them

⁷ Liu. *History in People's Mind*. (1987), pp. 91–93.

identify with any absolute historical ontology. Rather they strive to follow and understand the continuously changing nature of reality. This kind of hardworking applied thought has been existing from the beginning of human existence and will never cease unless the reality itself ceases to change.

Furthermore, he believes that while our reality comes from history, history itself is nevertheless a ceaseless accumulation of reality; ceaseless changes of reality have gradually revealed every face and every layer of history, and all restrictions against the influence upon our reality by history that is perceived. The reason why the ever-changing reality requires our ceaseless renewal of historical understanding lies exactly in this fundamental point. If only history is not disrupted, if only reality is still in a state of changing and developing, if only the future still calls on us, then human being's quest for historical understanding is logically embodied as a gradual, enriching and deepening process (even though it might not exclude repetition and distortion). Moreover, this process, analogous to mathematical calculus, indeed mirrors a reality that human's history itself has been ceaselessly "deepening." For each generation's understanding of history is true, relative to the times in which they live, and for any given times history lies exactly in the sphere of historical understanding and within the human person's cognitive reach. In other words, historical understanding and history itself exist within the reality of every given time's attainments and relative, temporary unification. Ceaseless changes in reality, as well as the ceaseless deepening of historical understanding enable the validity of each specific history in any given times to gain an increasingly richer content and connotation. It is exactly in this process that individuals can thus discover the temporality of historical understanding for any given time and the historical ontology which underlies it.

From the answers to the question, "is it possible to have an authentic history in the sense of one that is grounded in or that is epistemology?" we can draw this further conclusion: history consists of human activities; the process of research on and understanding of history is an important aspect of human learning about themselves. Accompanied by an increasing improvement in human's own self-discovery and self-examination, a book of rich and realistic history of human activities has gradually been taking shape. Without doubt, such a process is ceaseless and will last as long as humankind continues to exist.

Our peers in the circles of historical philosophy generally criticize both Liu Chang's unilateral exaggeration of the subjectivity and realism of the subject of understanding with regard to their historical understanding, without paying sufficient attention to the importance of the value-orientation of historical activities and historical researches as proposed by him. No matter how this far from complete reasoning is viewed, it is not hard to discover that in the researches on objectivism in historical understanding scholars have actually taken note of the problem of "value infiltration," and have been able to form certain viewpoints and opinions upon combining it with their knowledge in epistemology.

2 Subjectivity in Appraisal of Value

In the study of history, it is difficult to separate clearly the activity of understanding from the activity of appraisal, given the fact that the subject of understanding and the subject who does the appraisal of value (hereafter known as the subject of appraisal) is, in the narrow sense of “activities aimed at historical understanding,” a single body. This characteristic is specifically embodied in the research carried out by historians themselves. For the sake of convenience what is highlighted here is the subjectivity of historians who act as a subject of appraisal.

2.1 *The Nature of Independence in Selection of the Object of Research*

When historians focus on the subject of appraisal, in most cases the driving forces of realistic interests and social requirements actually play an extremely important role in the selection of the objects for their research.

We are all children of our times. Historians are no exception. They are acted upon as human beings in real life, and a part of all historians' lives in today's societies involves their finding themselves encircled by all the difficulties and problems that occur in the times of ever new that have not been sensed by their predecessors, but are being demanded and restricted by their current profession; yet the other part of each historian's life must also be lived as reflection on the past. And so when they face subtle but not trivial opposition between reality and professionalism, with regard to their selection of objects for their research, historians cannot help but rely on the system of appraisal of value that has been gradually taking shape in real life, and as such it comes with a strong hue of subjectivism. *The Peasant War in Germany* by Friedrich Engels aims at drawing certain meaningful conclusions from the then proletariat's struggles through the study of the history of the peasant war in the sixteenth century, pointing out that in the sixteenth century the German incongruence provided a reason for the split and failure of their revolutionary forces and the prevalence of counter-revolutionary forces, and that the failure of 1848–1850 European Revolution Movement exhibited many similarities.

Nowadays, this nature of independence is embodied as historians' latent expectation that they will be engaged in exchanges of views with the masses. In the classical era of history, there existed quite a wide gap between history and the masses, and this unwritten “fixed rule” has continued to exert a significant influence on contemporary historians up until modern times. There is a strong tendency today, however, for historians to place more upon the “consumption inside the circle”, and ignore or even look down on “consumption outside the circle” (i.e. consumption by the masses). For scholastic professionals' works, highbrow publications are reasonably expected. It is hardly convincing, I believe,

that the entire historiography should follow this direction as it will deprive the masses of access to the understanding of history. However, the market economy has been increasing this negative factor which is strongly affecting those in academic circles. For modern Chinese historians, in comparison, to their predecessors, can more easily to feel the importance of keeping close to the masses and yet still naturally understand and grasp the outsiders' evaluation standards (consumers' preference) for their works. Subsequently they could be tempted to readjust their objects for research and also their modes of narration. Nevertheless the value of the choices of objects or subjects for their works enables historians to acquire a newly energized, and wide-ranging foothold. As long as historians' independence rests on their sense of responsibility and does not blindly follow the direction of their feelings in the piecemeal, superficial and raucous voices of others, their choices should not raise fearful worries in someone's mind that the research of history will fall to pieces. On the contrary, so long as the historian writes with authentic concern for objectivity, the history that is written will inject new vigor into our on-going study of history and will bring about a positive result.⁸

2.2 The Subjects of the Appraisal Determines the Goals of the Study of History of the Subjects

The goal of most historical works is to forecast the future by learning about and understanding the past. We can easily witness how some historians use the past to prove the causal sources of present; some also use the past to scrutinize the present; some use the past to explain the present; some use the past to inspire the present; some use the past to satirize the present. While our knowledge of history has become an enormous net to capture the fruits of reality, yesterday's success or failure often is a direct reference vis-à-vis today's results. These activities, which had once appeared in the classical era of the West's history, became an enlarged skeleton in the tradition of Chinese ancient history. It goes without saying that not just Sima Qian, Ban Gu, Liu Zhiji, Sima Guang, Wang Fuzhi, Gu Yanwu, and Zhang Xuecheng, the noted ancient Chinese historians, were steadfast advocates for and actors within these practices, but some second-class and third-class historians were so as well. So far as the gramophone of Chinese traditional history was turned on, people would hear these kinds of exhortations again and again.⁹ Marxism also generally concludes the study of history requires a value-goal, which is inseparable from the Marxist viewpoint that history does embrace the Spirit. Of course, Marxism also maintains that, as the subjects of appraisal, the historians' systems of appraisal of value do not for ever determine the goal of history study.

⁸ Peng. *Forest Lives Through History*. (1997), pp. 15–18.

⁹ *Ibid*, 7.

Under certain circumstances, when the historians' goal is merely to discover the truth of history, presetting a value-goal will become unnecessary.

Viewpoints on future obtained from making references to the past are never entirely free from perplexity. Simply depending on the "past" may result in the weakening our *noesis* without achieving the goal of predicting and thus "knowing the future." To understand the *present deeply*, we must seriously face our past, and must thoroughly scan and survey our past's checkered, sinuate, and interwoven footmarks. The proper process does not simply require us to focus our thought on the gains and losses of the past, nor does it simply require us to compare some of the external phenomena of our historical practices with that of our real life. What contemporary historians who are in the capacity of the subject of appraisal of value should do is to get rid of the belief in a simplifying process of mimicking the past but rather nurture a keen and solemn sense of learning from historical lessons.

2.3 Personality Blending into the Interpretation of Historicity and into Exhibiting the Essentials of History

Historiography is the history of the soul of historians; only those who can make use of their standard to comprehend the meaning of historical facts thoroughly, while not blindly admiring the past's genius can become real historians.

Chinese ancient historians set straight moral character and factualistic writing style as their most cherished ideal goals. In fact, "straightness" and "factualism" are usually connected to historians' independent spirit of criticism. While sincerity and conscience are the pillars for "straightness" and "factualism," courage is the pledge for practices of sincerity and conscience. For Chinese historians, the most difficult but also the most urgent trait to possess is courage, which makes them fear no color of political authoritarianism. Through such courage emerges an expression of respect for independent thought and freedom of speech. In the paces of traditional historiography, those impelling exhortations always engulf the feeble voices of "straightness" and "factualism."

With respect to the selection, processing and interpretation of historicity, as well as the opening out of the essentials of history, and with regard to the objective depiction of history, at the time when historians are putting their pens into overdrive, their system of appraisal of value requires their earnest devotion to their homestead, to the human being's sense of justice and to their ardent song and dance. Historians can reveal the power of human nature contained in history by way of repeated inspiration from the refinement and sublimation of the activities that occur in real humans lives.

This flow of processing, refining and recapitulating further cultivates historians' souls and personalities as well. Each of these judgments, recapitulations and analyses is no doubt done at the price of abandoning other viewpoints, other

observations and other things. A thing “lost” does not necessarily mean another thing “gained,” and for anything “gained,” one must have the courage to “lose” something else; as such all genuine historians must possess the courage and the knack to “lose” something. What Sima Qian, a noted ancient Chinese historian, lost was the annalistic writing style and the persistence in straightforward style of narration, but then what he gained was the anecdotic writing style—a style which entails the ‘set-the-new-fashion’ stylistic rules and layout, reaching the height of “learning the relationship between heaven and human; comprehending changes of the past and of the present; becoming a master of historiography.” The affirmation of personality predicates the showering praises on the self-consciousness of the subject of appraisal, allowing historians’ self to seep into the realm of the objects of their research. Different inputs from different bodies of historians into the same historical fact and collisions among different bodies do not turn historical understanding into something elusive; rather they enable it to become multifarious but not disorganized, and more flexible and powerful.

Certainly, historians’ appraisal of value is often implicative vis-à-vis their giving an account of history. As Li Zhenhong, a Chinese scholar put it, “Historical understanding is a kind of the understanding of value judgment, nevertheless, the manner historians apply to express their value-consciousness may be too implicative. Under normal circumstance, historians do not make their value-goal, value-standard and value-consciousness explicit, nor do they disclose in any of their languages their subjective purpose. This often misleads their readers to believe that they have no secular purpose and are purely interested in discussing history that has become a specific style and tradition of historiography.”¹⁰

3 Subjectivism in the Appraisal of Value and Objectivism in Historical Understanding

How can understanding with strong hue of subjective evaluation ensure the ought-to-have objectivism? In other words, will the subjectivism in the appraisal of value impose influence upon the objectivism in historical understanding? Will “right” and “wrong” in such activities of understanding equates to “should” and “should not” in the process of appraisal? The understanding of the inbeing of history simultaneously implies an appraisal. It is a thing with two faces. The law of historical development is actually the law of the masses’ collectively creating history, and it intrinsically includes the confirmation of the masses’ fundamental interests. Nonetheless, the law of the development of social history corresponds with and is beneficial to the actualization of the masses’ fundamental interests. Thereby, the subjectivism in the appraisal of value can, in principle, be unified

¹⁰ Li. *Theories and Methods of History Study*. (1989), p. 231.

with the objectivism in historical understanding, though the two seem to be opposed each other.

Generally speaking, between truth and value there is difference as well as opposition. Just as truth is not value, so neither is value truth. Truth is not necessarily useful for everybody, and something that is useful to us does not necessarily conform to truth. Nonetheless, if a value stands at the height of appropriate facilitating of a human person's historical progress and development, it takes into account the creators of human's history and promoters of the masses' interests as subjects. If it conforms to the masses' interests and regards the satisfaction of the masses' needs as its standard, then there exists an intrinsic, undeniable and high-degree consistency between this value and the objective truth of social development. In the capacity of a display and reflection of the essential and law of the existence and development of a society, the objective truth of social history is, in the final analysis, the truth of the essential and law of the subjects of social history and of their activities. It must lie and find expression in the subject of social history—that is, in the depth of the masses' existence and activities, as well as the conditions for and process of their existence and activities. Sometimes, it can be found in the internal and fundamental interests of the masses and in the conditions whereby they change, and at other times it can be the outside of them. The objective truth of social history is actually human beings' existence, interests, and activities, as well as the logical basis on which their conditions move and change; the logic represented and followed by the change of development in the ways humans produce and live is the objective truth of social history. Illumination consists in the intrinsic unification of truth and value: if one wants to acquire a proper understanding of the "inbeing" of objective history, one should form a proper and reasonable outlook on values and life, and one must both stand at a height that promotes the values of social progress, and explore by standing at such a height all that recognizes people as the subject.

A proper and reasonable outlook on values will lend its support to historians' task of acquiring the objectivism in historical understanding, and of discerning what lies between the positive appraisal of value and objectivism—this is the relationship between means and end; in the meantime, because the objectivism in history entails the element of appraisal, what exists between objectivism in historical understanding and subjectivity in the appraisal of value, there is again a dialectic relationship between whole and part.

A passive outlook on values often hampers historians' abilities to acquire an objective understanding of historicity. Two situations are worthy of our concern: the first is that sometimes historians know the truth of history, but due to the bias derived from their narrow-minded outlook on values, they purposely distort the historical facts. As Marx put it, "In France and in England the bourgeoisie had conquered political power. Thenceforth, the class-struggle, practically as well as theoretically, took on more and more outspoken and threatening forms. It sounded the knell of scientific bourgeois economy. It was thenceforth no longer a question, whether this theorem or that was true, but whether it was useful to capital or harmful, expedient or inexpedient, politically dangerous or not. In place of

disinterested inquirers, there were hired prize fighters; in place of genuine scientific research, the bad conscience and the evil intent of apologetic.”¹¹ Although the preceding passage originally relates to economic circumstances, its connotative meanings are equally applicable to history. The second situation is that limitations of a narrow-minded outlook on values prevent historians from acquiring the truth of history. How can those flaunters of the outlook that heroes create history gain an objective understanding of the sheer nature of human’s history?

To a certain extent the relationship between the subjectivism in historians’ appraisal of value and the objectivism in their historical understanding turns out usually to be the relationship between the nature of ideology and objectivity.¹²

We cannot but agree that there is a certain difficulty in placing the truth of history within our grip because, under most circumstances, what we can do is make use of historical remnants or records as a medium to construct the existence of history itself, but what the very objective existence of the objects’ history seeks to understand is a naked fact after all. Therefore, we see no reason to deny the possibility that we can achieve an objective understanding of any historical object only because of the subjective factors involved in the process of our understanding and appraisal. Of course, we recognize the relativism or temporal character contained in such understanding. Absolutism and objectivism lie somewhere in this ‘sense of time’ and relativism. Objectivism is the central link and core content of our understanding of social history, from which we must differentiate the value-goal of historical understanding. The task of our understanding of social history is to acquire a real or objective understanding, while its ultimate value-goal is to serve practice, that is, to put our acquired understanding of social history into social practice. These two must not be confused.

The value-goal of historical understanding is indeed the embodiment of realism with respect to history. Many contemporary historians put emphasis upon the realism of historical understanding. Marc Léopold Benjamin Bloch, a founder of the Annals School of Historiography, claims that “the theme of history is human beings themselves and their behaviors, and the ultimate purpose of study on history obviously rests on the promotion of human beings’ interests.”¹³ The ultimate purpose he refers to is exactly the realism of history, and this realism signifies the realism of the content, that is to say, the content that researchers embody, in their studies, as they work to reach their goal of serving the reality. But what kind of a relationship exists on earth between this realism and the objectivism in historical understanding? With regard to this question, at least the following viewpoints are available for our consideration.

¹¹ “Afterword to the Second German Edition”, *Capital*, K. Marx, in *Anthology of Marx and Engels*. Vol. 2. (1995), p. 107.

¹² Yuan. *On the Problems of Objectivism in Historical Understanding*. (2000), p. 190.

¹³ *The Historian’s Craft.*, translated by Zhang Hesheng and Cheng Yu, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences Publishing House, (1992), p. 12 .

4 Including Objectivism in Realism

This viewpoint holds that, like all humanities, the purpose of history is to serve reality, and whether or not it entails objectivism does not matter; and, moreover, objectivism is not an innate feature of these academic subjects. The professed School of Modernistic History in 20th century America, for instance, maintains this proposition.

5 Excluding Realism by Objectivism

This viewpoint places realism in absolute opposition to objectivism, claiming that history has only one aim and purpose, which is pursuit of objectivism—that is, the pursuit of the only objective historical truth. If researchers blend in the objectivity with the consciousness of serving the reality, then objectivism must be damaged.

6 Fusion of Realism with Objectivism

The “Fusion of Horizons,” proposed by Hans-Georg Gadamer, is a typical embodiment of this viewpoint, which sees the study of history as a kind of mode of existence, a mode of existence through which a human being achieves perfect harmony with nature by understanding historical phenomena.

7 Connect Realism Externally to Objectivism

This viewpoint maintains that realism and objectivism are both features of history, but that essentially there is no connection between them. On the one hand it pursues objectivism, but on the other hand it one-sidedly links the acquired result of objectivism to some sort of necessity of reality so as to achieve a purpose too vicious to be known.

8 The Dialectic Unification of Realism and Objectivism

This is Marxism’s viewpoint. Marxism does not shy away from realism in the understanding of social history. On the contrary, it demands the researchers’ self-consciously acknowledge realism in their research, and realism is the application and embodiment of an objective understanding of reality. Under certain

circumstances, objectivism provides references and proofs for reality. Under some other circumstances, it summarizes objective law for a better understanding reality that provides a basis (as a service of reality) for decision making. Regardless of the circumstances, however, the value-goal of serving reality must depend on objective understanding and respect for the conclusion logically drawn from an objective understanding and from the use of this understanding within the appropriate scope of its application; it must not ignore the permission of objective understanding so as to materialize realism at will.

Comparatively speaking, the task and purpose of historical research (the task, namely, of objectivism) takes the first place, since it is the symbol that historical research has become a branch of science, whereas realism is an important feature of historical research and reflects that historians are engaged in their unique ways in the practical activities of realism.

The important embodiment of realism consists in the nature of ideology, which for the purpose of this discussion exhibits two layers of connotation: first, it is observation of the object of research in the perspective of a certain class in a specific period of history; second, it is a conscious appraisal based on such a value-position. These two features of ideology must be dealt with separately. When the first feature of ideology is brought into play, it is necessary that it remains compatible with objectivism: that is to say, it should not ignore objective facts and make use of an excuse to elaborate its own idea at will. The reason is that the historian must try to prevent damage to the objectivism in historical understanding. If the second feature of ideology is correct and reasonable, then it itself is part of objectivism, constitutes a part-whole relationship with objectivism, and is subjected to the constraints of objectivism. Ideology itself can also be reasonable or unreasonable, and reasonable ideology is beneficial to us by way of acquiring objective historical understanding, and vice versa. Thus reasonable and scientific ideology and can be unified with objectivism.¹⁴

Debates on objectivism and realism have inspired us: historical understanding and the appraisal of value of history are parts and parcel in the study of history in its entirety. Surely, historical understanding is not simply an endeavor whereby we attempt to discover what has occurred in the past, but also an endeavor that aims to thoroughly investigate the impacts of past events upon the course of society at present. The latter, in fact, is the appraisal of the social value of historical events. These past happenings are objects of research for historians, but if only their historical significance can be found discerned, then the study of history will not be purely the accumulation of the traces of things. If the value of historical facts is ignored, history will remain on a level that is virtually indistinguishable from that of the mere appreciation of antiquities; if only the appraisal of value can be combined with understanding of past events, a complete process of studying can then be developed. The purposes of historians' tracing back historical events and examining linkages amongst all kinds of elements thereof are not merely the result

¹⁴ Ibid.

of their trying to find out the thoughts of those actors and details of these given events, but also the attempt to have meanings put forth by the appraisers in the cause of history. As long as we do not cease to learn and understand historicity, we will not stop offering appraisals. And the meaning of history will thus subsequently and continuously be enriched and deepened. From this perspective, it is not without reason that Wilhelm Dilthey linked “meaning” to “understanding.”¹⁵ It is an analysis from such a perspective that can make crystal clear both the “insight” and “blindness” of modern historiography, especially of the New Historicism.¹⁶

The New Historicism debuted in 1980s among British and American culture circles and literati as a “new” method of doing literary criticism and reinterpreting historical texts textually and politically. Protagonists of the New Historicism include Stephen Greenblatt and Hayden White. The former puts emphasis upon the rewriting of history of literature whereas the latter emphasizes the framework of “Meta-History”.

New Historicism, being a form of nihilism, denies the objectivism in history; and it even goes further to disagree with the idea of the existence of the so-called ultimate being. It directly boils history down to text and narration. Text, of course, does not depend on historicity itself, but on those who narrate and interpret it, including their conscious or unconscious intentions, as well as their understanding and even prejudice, in which case one may find misunderstanding, misinterpretation and even serious distortions of ideology. As all of these also link to a given era, a given social background, and a given power of discourse, history is invariably a *history written by humans*, and there exists none of the so-called objective history, so all histories are fabricated by human beings. Any history is irrevocably contemporary history, which is driven by the power of discourse of “the present day,” with some being explicit and self-conscious, while others remain implicit and not self-conscious. What the New Historicism highlights and endeavors to popularize is this extreme concept which plays a certain role in revealing the falsity of value-independent scientific study proclaimed and advocated by the absolute rationalistic outlook on history.¹⁷ Its insight is also justly embodied by the sharpened vigilance over the text of history.¹⁸ Text is not glass; different words and phrases depict different pasts and therefore draw out different historical pictures. When changes occur in chapters of the writings, selections of information, perspectives and logics of descriptions as well as the words and phrases, the historical picture changes accordingly. In this sense, the style of writing or narration of history itself does deserve our attention. Even so, we cannot agree with the viewpoint of the New Historicism.

¹⁵ *Pattern and Meaning in History: Thoughts on History and Society*, the Preface of Chinese translation, pp. 2–4.

¹⁶ Ge. *Lecture Series for the Study on History of Thought: Vision, Perspective, Method*. (2005), pp. 90–91.

¹⁷ Li. *Discuss Historical Ontology*. (2003), pp. 123–125.

¹⁸ Ge. *Lecture Series for the Study on History of Thought: Vision, Perspective, Method*. (2005), pp. 90–91.

Regardless of viewing it from the angle of theory or practice, holding a neutral or negligent attitude towards the real “past” and the written “history” is inadvisable. The New Historicism utterly denies any truth and objectivism, seeing the whole shoot as just a textual game, and believing that history is merely a series of competitions and choices among different texts, which, as a proposition, is obviously ungrounded. In the perspective of the fundamental layer, the everyday life and basic necessities of life of human beings are not fictional, nor textual. The principal part of history is actually composed of the records and descriptions of human’s daily life and basic needs including clothing, food, housing and transportation, for the purpose of retaining our experience, reinforcing our human groups and passing it to our offspring, and in the final analysis it is about our very basic necessities. History can be continuously explained and interpreted by tangible objects and relics kept and passed down from generation to generation, but can not be entirely submerged in texts written by the all too human historian; even imaginations and fabrications are not able to spread their wings at will. On the contrary, all types of texts always go around some given historical material objects to set on scientific, ethical, aesthetic, and ideological description and interpretation. After all, the shoes, hair and false teeth left behind in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp are solid proofs of the Nazi’s holocaust that cannot be overridden by any text of denial. These relics left over from the calamity exactly illuminate the facts of its occurrence.

History never is text, and text can never replace historicity. Any existence of the past restricts and defines historical narration’s boundary, and we cannot totally obliterate this latent restriction always there. The relics, literatures, legends, stories and so on of the past remind us all the time not to talk nonsense. Just because of this, history can in no way be a prose of the sort that literature clearly is.

Yet a relatively clear narration of history can, in fact, not omit the notion of an “Ideal Type” put forth by Max Weber, either. In other words, it cannot omit a rational order and framework. Existence of history in its original form may be rambling and disorderly, but to narrate it is not to offer a messy account. A Chinese sutra says even if one is “to dismantle a house of seven kinds of treasure (gold, silver, color glaze, tridacna, carnelian, pearl, and rose), they may not lie in fragments!” Surely enough, the New Historicism has discovered some defects in history and left us with an inability for a time to tackle them, but what is the ultimate result now? History may be afraid that it has no alternative but to dismantle itself. In this sense, blindly agreeing with and pursuing the “insight” of the post-modern historiography is unproductive; it will lead to a path of no return.

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A Brief Study of the Hierarchy Value Thought of the Pre-Qin Confucianism

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In the ancient Chinese cultural classics it is difficult to find a modern sense of the term “value” which matches the traditional concept. But the expression of the content of value and value judgment can be found everywhere, such as “the noble”, “the honor”, “the good”, “the worship”, “the convenient”, etc. These concepts have a common characteristic, that is, the subject operation orientation and choice intention in the composition of the meaning which they express are far more than the value of the phenomenon itself and the cognitive, description and judgment. While the operation of orientation and choice intention are determined, it contains a logical premise which is for a variety of possible or actual value to make a necessary comparison, and according to the degree of the fundamental and the incident to make the arrangement of order. This theory objectively shows that the ancients pay attention to the practical application of value rationality, at the same time it is also a main feature different from western value theory. In other words, the ancient Chinese theory of value is always around the hierarchy of value issue, its central theory is about the life theory of social value hierarchy. The pre-Qin Confucian is an important representative of the ancient Chinese theory of value which shows the value hierarchy typical thought.

1 The Pursuit of Life Value Hierarchy

Concerning as a main set of ethical life theory of Confucianism the level of life of value has always been the core content of the thought system.

The division of ancient life value in the ancient which in the earlier time is the representative thought of “three eternities”, it will be divided the value of life into two levels, that is “the inheritant fortune” and “immortal” which points out that the supreme value of life is “to set one’s virtue”, then “to set one’s meritorious”

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and last “to expound one’s ideas in writing”. The thought has a far-reaching impact on the formation and the development of the Chinese traditional value ideas and becomes the origin of life theory that Confucianism constructs.

1.1 The Value Hierarchy of the Life Existence

The initial point of the Confucian value doctrine is the confirmation of life’s significance and value. From the standpoint of realism Confucianism makes a hierarchy division of life into the natural life (life and death) and the spiritual life (benevolence and righteousness) according to the content of life existence, and makes the value judgment and location by its positive life orientation.

The man’s natural life is to be confirmed firstly. “*Fasting, war and sickness* were the things over which the master exercised care.” (“the Analects of Confucius and” under the “Analects of Confucius”, the following citation abbreviates the Analects) Xunzi said: “The most important things to human being is life and security” (“Xunzi country”). To treasure the life and the death is the basic concern and cherish about human life.

Confucianism affirms certain natural life value under this premise, it pays more attention to the social and spiritual life value, namely, benevolence and righteousness. That the latter is the essence of life, is the human’s fundamental; and claims that in the course of life, it should pursue the great truth, moral and great cause, which are the true meaning of life, it is higher than the natural life value. Confucius said: “*High ideals, no survival* for victims of *benevolence, have killed themselves* in order to *pay the price*”. Another translation is “the determined scholar and the man of virtue will not seek to live at the expense of injuring their virtue. They will even sacrifice their lives to preserve their virtue complete” (“the Analects”); Mencius said: “life is what I desire, and righteousness is also what I desire; if I cannot have both, I will give up life for righteousness” (“Mencius”). The Pre-Qin Confucianism analysis of the existence of life value hierarchy, shows the original understanding about life: the essence is spiritual transcendence and the manifestation of the spirit of life value; the individual life’s true and complete significance lies in Morality, aiming at supreme good. Moral life is the more authenticity which life cannot be missed. If ignore the benevolence and righteousness, life cannot be attached. Building up the moral and standing it up is also that human’s Metaphysical Spiritual life and moral life are building up and standing up in the body, that is to say, to break up the limit of soul and body and surpass the limits, which can be called “recognizing and developing one’s being”. Only if human have an active self-control, they can enjoy the meaning of life existence.

1.2 The Value Hierarchy of Life Level

According to Confucianism life is most vulnerable to the two temptations of the rank and the wealth, and of the rich and the noble. Therefore, the Confucianism

considers the rearrangement of the life as their self duty, the life's desire and level are divided into two states that is "righteousness" and "interest", and are committed to the universality, the moral practice and the validity of the actual operation.

In the Pre-Qin Confucian theories of needs hierarchy, "the interest" reveals the relationship between the human and materials or goods, it means the material interests from the point of need; from the point of social subject, "the interest" can be divided into personal interest, the monarch interest, state interest and the common human interest. Confucianism is not the absolute asceticism, it recognizes that a variety of material desire is the natural existence of human nature, but they do not consider that the ideal of life should be placed in the material level. From the point of their views the needs of food and clothing is low in the level of the value of life, If human seeks only interest, indulges in material desires of wealth and rank, it makes no difference between human and creature. Therefore, it should break through and surpass the limitation of the material and spirit needs, and enhance the significance and the value of human nature.

The real significance of life desire is attaining benevolence and righteousness. The thoughts in the Pre-Qin Confucian conception include the following; firstly, benevolence and righteousness is a sign of distinction between human and creature. It is the human's ultimate attribute, and therefore it is also the true value of human activities that carries the most powerful social forces. The value and force of benevolence and righteousness is much stronger than weapons and soldiers, wealth and rank, liege and officials. Secondly, practicing and attaining benevolence and righteousness is human most essential needs. Practicing benevolence and righteousness originates from human good nature which is innate, involuntary or natural and fit for all people in the world. Only if the practice of moral life achieves the moral self, temptation of rank and wealth is to be resisted and to be got rid of, the body and mind is to be calm down. The significance of the morals and the good is to be truly revealed out in the level of human nature need. Thirdly, practicing and attaining benevolence and righteousness is the noblest level of human life. While entering this kind level of human life, the best happiness which is rational and moral can be gained. From dwelling in benevolence and righteousness to impregnable faithfulness, to cultivate Junzi (the gentleman) and Shidafu (another term to the gentleman in ancient China) personality which is indomitable spirit.

1.3 Value's Hierarchy of Personality Target

Personality as the collection of human cultural mentality and social action embodies the individual itself and the multiple factors of social and cultural phenomenon corresponding to it. In the early Confucianism personality issues were discussed in two aspects, which are realistic personality and ideal personality. The so-called realistic personality refers to comprehensive performance of

personal behavior and moral orientation in the social and historical circumstances; the so-called ideal personality embodies the Confucian theory purport and personality paradigm.

The Confucian expression of realistic personality is the Xiaoren (“villain”) and Junzi (“the gentleman”). The hierarchy division between the gentleman and the villain corresponds to that of value hierarchy between the life value and human desiring value expressed above. In the views of Confucianism the gentleman carries out his own ideal through being satisfied with benevolence (“Anren”), and regards the attainment of benevolence (“Daren”) as the content of life activities; while the villain considers the satisfaction of desire as the goal, they sacrifice other person’s interests for attaining their own interests.

The ideal personality expressed typically concerning to hierarchy is “the saint inside and the king outside”. The saint inside and the king outside unites both the “work of Saint with carrying out benevolence” and “the work of the king with carrying out rule” into one. According to the thinking logic that the moral practice creates moral personality, the pre-Qin Confucians firstly emphasize the cultivation value of the subject soul and spirit. Learning and cultivating is considered as the main content in order to improve their self and carry out their own value. “Cultivate yourself in order to be honored”, “cultivate yourself in order to satisfy human”, and “cultivate yourself in order to satisfy the people”. “Self-cultivation” is mainly to cultivate the subject inner “benevolence”, its ultimate level is the saint; while the subject achieves the level of benevolence and saint, he will release tremendous spiritual force, and can achieve the enterprise of “the king outside”, namely the full realization of the social value of life if further in political practice. (Although “the king outside” is in the latter, it is the extension and the result of “the saint inside” . Therefore the value of “the saint inside” is higher than that of “the king outside “), when the subject unites the “the saint inside” and “the king outside” into one, overlapping in “the saint”, “the Confucian ideal personality of “the saint inside and the king outside” will appear in the real personality, which keeps the benevolence and righteousness, keeps the enterprise and the achievement, and is not only used in : “the saint”, but also surpasses the single level of “the king” and “Saint” in order to achieve the fullest and the most perfect combination of the human personal value and social value. In short, it inherently contains three hierarchy values, which are “the king outside”, “the saint inside”, and “the saint inside and the king outside”.

2 Hierarchy Value of Moral Practice

The pre-Qin Confucian thought that the meaning of life is to complete a moral mission, and to realize the goal of ethics. The cultural design makes the Confucian sage regard the moral value in the system of social value hierarchy structure as incomparable loftiness and holiness, and form the rational ethic spirit of teleology. At the same time, appeal to the moral ideal isn’t bold aesthetic and devoid, its

detailed connotation includes a classification similar to religious hierarchy, which classifies the relationship implemented from metaphysical level to physical level. The hierarchy theory of moral value practice can use the logic design in the “Analects of Confucius” to generalize it, which is “Ambition of way, according to morality, according to righteousness, depend on art” (“the Analects”), another translation is “let the will be set on the path of duty”, “let every attainment in what is good be firmly grasped”, “let benevolence be accorded with”, “let relaxation and enjoyment be found in the polite arts”.

2.1 Let the Will be Set on the Path of Duty

Tao is the central concept of ancient Chinese philosophy, and is on behalf of the Confucian ontology. Thought of Tao contains Confucian theory including nature, society, human and its relationship with each other. From the natural dimension Tao is the ontology of world being and the rule of world movement, that is Tian Tao (Heavenly Law). From the social dimension Tao is the fundamental goal of social development and accords with the Patriarchal ritual system so that it can realize the ideal of Datong (Chinese traditional ideal society) and harmonious state, that is Shi Tao (Social Law). From the human dimension, Tao also refers to the individual conscience and the self-cultivation. It helps to sublimate the individuals and achieve his/her goal as the way of becoming gentlemen and saints, it is Ren Tao (Human Law). The connotation of the three dimensions and their integration shows the full significance of the Confucian Tao. Tao is the union of Tian Tao and Ren Tao. In fact, Tian Tao is guided by Ren Tao, the value or ethics of should-be integrates the fact or nature of to-be, therefore it forms the characteristic of practical reason which Confucianism regards Jian Tao (practiced or performed moral) as its life ideal and living goal.

The Pre-Qin Confucianism considers that the sages, the worthy men and gentlemen have the same fundamental trait, that is they regard Tao as their own life ideal and the supreme belief. Tao is not only an ideal, but also a principle, it is of its importance that it is the ultimate ideal and the supreme principle. Thus Tao is regarded as the supreme category of the early Confucian moral value theory. “If a man hears the right way in the morning, he may die in the evening. That would be all right” (“the Analects”). This explains the value and significance of Tao for the subject

2.2 Let Every Attainment in What is Good Be Firmly Grasped

In the moral and value system of Pre-Qin Confucianism, the origin and significance of virtue is twofold, which on the one hand is moral nature that is the talent

of human, it is the inherent essence with human nature, human ethic and human relations. Therefore to raise all things and to construct the human ethic with morality is the fundament of life; On the other hand, the individual morality is the sharing and internalization of external “Tao”. So it has two different internal ways and value orientation. First, it needs to identify “Tao” unconditionally. The inner gain is beneficial to oneself, that is, to grasp the essence of life and maintain the interpersonal harmony through the virtue cultivation and rapport with mind and will. The second is the reflection of Tao, then internalizes it. The former process is pursuit of individual perfection, while the latter process is to pursuit the rationality of the Tao which is the social norms, and then to form their own virtue, or even just to pursuit the rationality of social norms without the moral requirement for himself. In the history of the process of the moral and spiritual construction, individual perfection and social perfection pass from the start to the end.

2.3 Let Benevolence Be Accorded with

Tao is the fundamental basis while virtue is the basic spirit, and the further presentation of Tao and virtue is to comply with the norms of “benevolence” in their behaviors. Pre-Qin Confucianism unites the various moral qualities with “benevolence” Ren based on moral ideals, which, from the point of view of the normative structure, is divided into three levels. The first level is the “Xiaodi” (filial piety). Xiaodi is the fundamental of Ren” and represents Tao, that is the “kinship of Tao”. The second level is Zhongshu (principle of benevolence and loyalty), that is “wish to be established himself, seeks also to establish others” and “not to do to others as you would not wish done to yourself”. This is the people of the same class to get along. The third level is Hui (“benefits”). It means that trying to dominate the people through the benefits. Mencius said in one word, “the kinship leads to benevolence, and the benevolence leads to love the world” (Mencius), this can explain the progressive relation between virtue and benevolence.

2.4 Let Relaxation and Enjoyment be Found in the Polite Arts

The Six Arts originally contain ritual, music, archery, riding, calligraphy and the mathematics. However, in Pre-Qin Confucianism, where the “art” is not simply refer to some specific professional and craft skills, is also not refer to some kind of culture and institutions, but on behalf of a whole ritual culture of self-cultivation. Ritual culture of the value function as the subject self-cultivation is that it is both a rich external form of “benevolence” and an important mean and way to achieve “benevolence”. Concerning to the individual practice, through comprehensive

regulation of the ritual culture, people can elevate to a higher level of noble spirit. At the same time, the ritual culture is also the foundation of the politics and governance. To extend the spirit of the ritual culture to politics, the pre-Qin Confucianism makes a special contribution to the ritual culture tradition. To train the political character by ritual culture, that is the ritual culture by the role of self-cultivation, then further to govern the country, this is a logical extension, it lays the ideological foundation of feudal society benevolent governance over thousands of years.

3 Value Hierarchy of the Social and Political Level

3.1 The Whole World as One Community and the People are More Important Than the Ruler

In ancient China, the concept of “the world” has the meaning of social integrity and force, and thus became the core of the concept of the political ideas. The breakthrough contribution of Confucianism is to reverse the traditional center model that “the world” is vital to “the Son of Heaven” or “the Heaven”, and that it endows “the world” with profound democratic humanism connotation. The whole world as one community is a typical Confucian term.

In the Confucian view, the “world” does not belong to the monarch emperor, but depends fundamentally on the “Heaven will” and the people’s will. That is so-called “people’s eyes are the eyes of heaven; people’s ears are the ears of heaven. This well describes the case in point” (Mencius). Thus the “community” is also the consecrated “people”, and “the Heaven will meet what people desire” (“Zuozhuan”). It is based on this thinking motive which builds up social and political structure order with characteristic of community and humanism. In view of the state, “Of the first importance are the people, next comes the good of land and grains, and of the least importance is the ruler” (“Mencius”). At the same time, the hierarchy theory of the value is that “world” is most important, the state next, and “monarch least. So the early Confucianism concludes a view, that is “there is a way to win the world: win the people’s support and you will win the world”. This kind of value hierarchy conception characteristic with strong humanism becomes not only the basic norms of social justice conception in Chinese political culture, but also the origin of the ancient state legitimacy about its government and its authority.

3.2 Wang Tao (King or Sage Government) and Ba Tao (Military Lord Government)

The choice of social operating mechanisms and governance principles was an issues of thinkers’ common concern in the history. In ancient China how to distinguish the good and the evil government is righteousness.

In accordance with the point of view of the pre-Qin Confucianism, Wang Tao is no doubt the governance principle accord with righteousness. The core of Wang Dao ethics is Rende (benevolence and virtue). The only scale of how to distinguish righteous or not is to see if it is fit for Rende or not. Tao and Ren (benevolence) interacts each other. “The benevolent loves people”, the spirit of love is the basic content, in other word, the theme of Wang Dao ethics is spirit of love and benevolence.

Bao Tao is contrast with Wang Tao, its connotation is to rule the country by spell and penalty, and its basic characteristic is to use the interests or violence to balance their opponents. Han Fei who advocates Ba Tao considers that the power is the determining force in the social and political realm while the people’s support or not is insignificant.

The focus of disagreement between Wang Tao and Ba Tao is how to unify and govern the state. As for the Confucianism, the difference of that is that of “the good” or “the least good”. Confucianism analyzes the difference between Wang Tao and Ba Tao through the debate of moral and interests difference, and considers that the value of Ba Tao is lower than that of Wang Tao as governance method. The common point of traditional Confucianism is to govern the state with Ren and ritual, and regards rule and enlightenment as a fundamental way to rule the state, and as a standard to judge the political pros and cons. Therefore, the relationship between Rende and Fashuxingming (spell and penalty), the basic idea of Confucianism is that the law should be subordinate to the propriety and righteousness enlightenment, the moral enlightenment is complementary to penalty, authority to virtue, and ritual to criminal affairs.

The thought of Confucianism about value is not only broad and incisive, but also quite serious and flexible. Its content is more than what to discuss in the former. This dissertation selects some methodological issues from three levels—the life, the moral and the political—in order to get some inspirations to think about the Methodology of the traditional Chinese value.

4 The Basis for Distinguishing the Hierarchy of Value

In the view of Pre-Qin Confucian concept, the hierarchy of value shows a fixed and absolute system by which the basis and the standard are determined. The basis and standard come from two a priori assumptions ultimately, one is the mandate of heaven or Tao of Heaven; the other is human nature or humanity.

4.1 The Ultimate Basis of the Value Hierarchy

The Pre-Qin Confucian human-centered thinking can be summed up as the investigating nature through observation of human and identifying human with

nature from methodology and form. In the guidance of this thinking of harmony between nature and human the ontology of world existence, the ontology of value and the ontology of history merge into one, and the nature of human mind and Tian Tao or Destiny of Heaven merge into one and interact each other. Therefore the human affair should be denied in order to comply with destiny of heaven. Knowing destiny and attaining destiny are the basis and end of Junzi's action. This ideas of understanding the superior and the inferior, identifying the inner with the outer, harmony between heaven and human and identity of the world shows in its real connotation that there is a eternal, objective and absolute standard which learn Tian Tao and know human nature in the structure of value system. If it is said in contemporary term, it affords with the content of the ultimate concern.

The ultimate concern is not only the ultimate goal of human value pursuit, but also plays in fact a role of the supreme value standard. Accessing to Tian Tao or Destiny of Heaven as fully as possible becomes the "ultimate concern" of Confucianism. According to this standard and its deduction a unified hierarchy value can be given which determines different values of the world. Xunzi said: "Water and fire possess vital breath but have no life. Plants and trees possess life, but lack awareness. Birds and beasts have awareness, but lack a sense of morality and justice. Humans possess vital breath, life, and awareness, and add to them a sense of morality. It is for this reason that they are the noblest being in the world". (Xunzi) It is by the more or less full degree of the natural endowment (such as breath, life, awareness and morality etc.) that the whole world and human are arranged high and low, noble and humble, the fuller the nobler, and vice versa, the less full the humbler. The Confucian division and arrangement of human life value hierarchy is also like such, that is benevolence and righteousness is more important than life and death, morality nobler than interest and desire, Junzi better than Xiaoren, sageliness within superior to kingliness without; Tao, moral, benevolence and art develop step by step by its false and the truth, by its superiority and its inferiority; people is nobler than monarch, Wang Tao superior to Ba Tao, etc. All of this is the closer to perfection of Tao, the nobler and the more superior.

Pre-Qin Confucian philosophy, with the help of Tian Tao of personification and righteousness of God, regulates ethics order and moral action of the secular society. As for the individual's life practice, Destiny of Heaven is the irresistible and unaltered personal fate such as life and death, fortune and misfortune, good luck and ill luck, lowliness and nobleness etc.; As for social being and community practice, Destiny of Heaven is mystic inevitability of historic development; As for value system of social life, the hierarchy order of nature under the will of Heavenly Destiny possesses the universal objectiveness and authority. The benefits of doing so is that the thought of Confucian value hierarchy indeed maintains a complete and consistent system of "ultimate concern" so that it can provide a set of supreme belief and ideal system as substitute for the religious belief, further more this system cannot depart from human but concentrate on human and the human purpose.

It can effectively guide judgment and choices of the life value. In the Confucian philosophy thinking, not only human emotions, habits, instrument skills and

cultural structure were seen as the experience accumulation adapted to the Destiny of Heaven in the past, but also the socio-political and ethical institution was understood as the extension of Tian Tao idea which symbolizes the ultimate law. All these in conform to Destiny of Heaven and Tian Tao are considered to be the principles of morality, and to be confident that all evils violate of law of Heavenly Destiny will eventually be defeated, and that all kinds of human follies will be eliminated away.

4.2 The Real Basis of the Value Hierarchy: Human Nature

In Confucian philosophy there is no issues concerning the relationship between the existence and its significance. The identity of the existence and significance, of life and value to a great degree becomes an obvious thinking conjecture or thinking premise. Existence without significance and significance without existence are considered as impenetrable “prodigies, prowess, lawlessness or the supernatural” and disregarded totally. Here Tian Tao has broken away from pure external form of objectivity, and the human nature is by no means the subjective which originates from heaven, is developed by heaven and is connoted by heaven. The meaning of human nature being Tian Tao elaborates that “able to give its full development to his own nature, he can do the same to the nature of other man. Able to give its full development to the nature of other man, he can give their full development to the nature of animals and things. Able to give their full development to the natures of creatures and things, he can assist the transforming and nourishing powers of Heaven and Earth. Able to assist the transforming and nourishing powers of Heaven and Earth, he may with Heaven and Earth form a ternion” (The Doctrine of The Mean). Therefore although Chinese ancient theory of human nature includes theory of virtue and naturalism just like the west, the logic of Confucianism is that if it is based on Tian Tao being supreme good, it becomes inevitably the theory of virtue based on the theory of good nature, therefore the theory of evil nature cannot be the orthodox and the mainstream logically and emotionally.

The Confucian human nature implies a conception that “the human nature” or “human good nature” has different levels and hierarchies, and these hierarchies develop according to the complete extent which contains and symbolizes Tian Tao (the Heavenly Way). In fact the division and arrangement of the value hierarchy is also the premise, the basis, standard and the rule of the human nature.

For example Confucianism does not deny that the appetite and sexual desire and the pursuit of the interests are human immanent nature and don't belong to the human evil nature, but considers that they do not represent the essentials of human good nature and cannot reflect the perfection and the fullness of human nature. Therefore they are placed on the low level; but the need of benevolence, ritual and righteousness etc. is the need of high-grade, characteristic of human nature and embodying human good nature, therefore it is noble and lofty. In the detailed

normativeness hierarchy the Confucian considers the method rule, that is, the essential is more important than the periphery, the internal important than the external, the community important than the individual, mind (motive) important than body (consequence) and void (general and universal) important than solid (detailed and separate). Mencius says, "In the case of a great man not every word must be truthful, and not every action resolute. He only adheres to what is right", this explains that there is a hierarchy level among benevolence, righteousness, ritual, wisdom and faith.

From the above description we can see that the direct basis of Pre-Qin Confucianism is its human nature which is the essential success of the value thought and is also the essential failure of the value thought. Speaking it concretely, the characteristic of the Confucian value theory of human nature is its excessive abstraction, moralization and idealization.

The abstract of the Confucian value theory of human nature is that the human and the human nature which it discusses are non-history and non-individual. Although the individual is often mentioned in the sense of "gentleman and villain" etc., these individuals are only used to represent different levels of "behaving", it does not mean that people is essentially a different kind and diversification.

The tendency of Confucian values theory of human nature is very obviously moralized. That Moralization Of human nature has its positive aspects is to guide people to emphasize the importance of human society and social relations. But Confucianism in the name of Heaven generalizes human relations to infinity, and then the standard of generalizing human relation is regarded as the only scale to judge the value. This moralism without division between heaven and human means not only abstract and absolute, but also simplistic and one-sided.

Confucian excessive abstraction and moralization in the understanding of human and human nature lead to absolute idealism on the value-oriented. The ideal is the soul and core of any outlook on life and values, while there is no significance without ideal outlook on life and values. The key is of what kind of ideal and how the relation between the ideal and the reality it is. The Confucianism insists on a mode of moral idealism. This set of life ideal of "showing us the right way" including "the World of Datong (Great Harmony)" and "everyone being the saints" is based on the abstract theory of human nature and moralism, rather than based on the scientific social theory of history. Furthermore its realization appeals to the individual pursuit from self-denial "rather than the way of transforming the society. Its goal is often "response" to the rites which is backward-looking rather than the innovative which is forward-looking. Therefore it will eventually not be able to build up a bridge from reality to the ideal. In the history this idealism has of course encouraged numerous people with principles and virtues and has shown its charm for life and enormous effect for society, but it also fully exposes its fundamental flaws alienated from the reality and even deviated from the historical trend.

Part III
Value Conceptions and Value

An Analysis of the Concept of Justice from the Perspective of Value Theory

Junfeng Ma

In Recent years, social justice has become an issue of great concern to all walks of life in China and provoked great disputes and debates in Chinese theoretical circles. Many philosophers, ethicists, political scientists, economists, sociologists, etc., are involved and many world-famous theorists are frequently recited, such as John Rawls, Robert Nozick, Alasdair Chalmers MacIntyre, Friedrich (August) von Hayek, Arthur Melvin Okun, and the recent Nobel Prize winner in economics Amartya Sen. Chinese history has rarely seen such an extensive discussion on social justice, which reflects the degree of concern over it in contemporary China. In this chapter, the author tries to analysis the concept of justice from the point view of philosophy, hoping to promote its in-depth discussion.

1 Justice is a Normative Concept

Justice is a central concept in ethics, and an important one in political philosophy and philosophy of law,¹ and both of the latter two are branches of practical philosophy. Although many scholars since ancient times have put forward their views about how to understand justice, their opinions and arguments are widely different. One of the important reasons for this is that, many thinkers, including some ethicists and political philosophers understand and define it from the angle of theoretical philosophy, trying to make a uniform, generic and truth-like definition and find an objective, united and sole standard of it. But, just as Alasdair

¹ The Chinese words for “justice” is Gōngzhèng (公正) or Zhèngyì (正义). In the Chinese text of this chapter, they are used as synonym alternatively depending on the different contexts.

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MacIntyre points out, these attempts are all in vain, because there are many theoretical traditions of justice, and people's conceptions about justice in different times are often conflicting, "...underlying this wide range of judgments upon particular types of issues are a set of conflicting conceptions of justice, conceptions which are strikingly at odds with one another in a number of ways. Some conceptions of justice make the concept of desert central, while others again to a standard of utility. Moreover, the rival theories of justice which embody these rival conceptions also give expression to disagreements about the kind of equality which justice requires, about the range of transactions and persons to which considerations of justice are relevant, and about whether or not a knowledge of justice is possible without a knowledge of God's law."²

We know that a typical characteristic or premise of theoretical philosophy is the unity of its subject, whether the subject taken as the abstract human one, or as rational individuals or individuals' rationality. Therefore, so long as the real essence of the object is grasped, it will be generally accepted. In the field of epistemology, this may be reasonable; in practical philosophy, however, when facing the process of actual practice, this premise can not be established, because the differences and even opposition of interests of the people is a basic fact. So long as we examine issues from individuals in reality and their practice, we can find that people usually make their choices and activities based on their own different interests, different cultural backgrounds and different values. People living in a certain social conditions, when doing activities, do not exist homogeneously like atoms, but form or are divided into families, hierarchies, classes or groups. And social activity is a game process between these different individuals, groups or classes, and also a process in which different subjects compete dependently and cooperate interdependently simultaneously through labor division. A community must establish its own competition rules, social regulations, relevant cultural norms, etc., to prevent the community from disintegration in the process of competition and conflicts among its members. On the one side, the formulation and establishment of these rules, regulations or norms are spontaneous rather than designed by any genius or sage, and they are the result of balance of power of the parties, the specific historical backgrounds and issues, as well as the historical and technical conditions for addressing these issues, therefore they are gradually formed through constant explorations and continuous trials and errors, and their rationality and universality are obtained from gradually extended practice. But on the other side, to some extent they are also the result of rational construction and subjective choices, because more often than not, there exist multiple rather than single solutions or plans to one problem in a specific historical context. In this situation, theorists' analyses, argumentations and debates over the advantages and disadvantages of the solutions, the wisdom of the statesmen and the common understanding achieved through compromise of various political forces, all play

² Alasdair MacIntyre, *Whose Justice? What Rationality?* (Translated by Wan Junren, Contemporary China Publishing House), p. 1.

important roles. This is a process combining both spontaneity and consciousness, and also a process of achieving some common understanding in which purposeful choice and various other choices accommodate and compromise each other, and a process of system evolution in which different system designs exclude and accommodate each other.

It is for the convenience of discussion that we analyze value criteria and evaluation standards in a separate manner; whereas in actual life, people's views on due interests, legitimate rights, obligations, and so on, in a large extent determine their feelings on these things and their attitude toward reality. That is, when people use justice as a criterion to evaluate a system, they use it in a mixed and blend way. If they feel that a system is relatively fair, they will naturally identify with and abide by its arrangements and feel satisfied with what they get. As a result, social conflicts or contradictions will decrease or can be easily resolved and the society will be more stable. This precisely shows that justice is a normative concept. To some extent, norms is always the overlapping and integration of value standards and evaluation criteria, and those that are in accordance with the norms are reasonable, valuable and justified, and vice versa. Therefore value attitude and value feeling show a high level of consistence. And the evaluation criteria and value standards are associated directly with cultural traditions and can always find their grounds and supports from them, and just because of their relationship with traditions and customs that they can easily get identification and recognition.

Justice, fairness, righteousness and equity are concepts belonging to the same sequence in terms of meaning, and their nuances are of pragmatics rather than substantive. They are not descriptive but normative, playing the role or function of standard or principle for people to evaluate and criticize certain behaviors, especially certain systems. From this we can understand that, there are always some "rival justices and competing rationalities" due to different cultural traditions,³ times and levels of development, as well as different social groups and stances. This is actually a normal phenomenon. We can only try to achieve the greatest common understanding through dialogue instead of a universal unanimity on them like what we have on truth. In real life, in fact, justice is never a "line", but a "scope" or "range". When parties of different or even opposite interests or positions reach an institutional arrangement or agreement on a rule or a convention, it is regarded as fair and reasonable, with its uppermost limit being "very satisfied", and the lowest "basically acceptable", whether it is about domestic or international affairs. In standard engineering inspection or production test, it requires a tolerance range in quality control. Analogously speaking, in discussing justice as a standard concept, we should also introduce the idea of "tolerance range": those falling within the range should be regarded as fair, and the "range of tolerance" of a standard concept of justice with certain flexibility is not fixed, but rather changeable along with different conditions and historical and human development.

³ *ibid.*

2 Justice is the Synthesis of Freedom and Equality

As mentioned above, as a normative concept and meta-norm, justice not only prescribes the planning and establishment of a system, but also influences the identification and implementation of the system through evaluation. This in fact means that justice plays a role of value adjustment principle. In modern society, freedom and equality are both considered as basic values and basic rights of citizens. At least it is fair to say that, in modern society, the discussion of the concept of justice is inseparable from the discussion of its relationship with freedom and equality.

For a long time many people believe that positive values or goodness such as honesty, courage, loyalty, modesty, etc., exist in harmony, so do freedom and equality; and that contradictions or conflicts can only happen between positive and negative values, such as confrontation between the good and the evil, between the kind and the bad, and between honesty and hypocrisy; and it is unimaginable that there is any opposition between good things, just as it is unimaginable for them that kind people cannot live in harmony. Modern researches show, however, this is not the case; and contradictions and confrontations do occur in specific conditions at least among some good things. Likewise, freedom and equality as two basic values of modern society can oppose each other under certain conditions. For instance, freedom means to act one's own will within the limits of laws without externally imposed restraints. But due to the differences of factors that cannot be prescribed, such as natural endowments, abilities and life opportunities, the final results can be severely unequal, although nobody in his behavior is in violation of the principle of freedom. Moreover, inequality has a cumulative effect: the existing inequality as a result will turn into inequality of starting point. When this inequality accumulates to a certain level, it may cause serious confrontation and conflict among people and even lead to social unrest. Thus, in order to maintain social order and stability, it is necessary to prevent the expansion of inequality and set limits of people's freedom. Many provisions of the modern laws thus are formulated for this purpose. When conflict occurs between freedom and equality, it becomes an important problem to make a choice between them with respect to priority. Many controversies among thinkers are around it, such as the debate between liberalism and communitarianism, debate among Rawls, Nozick, and Hayek.

In our view, there is a problem of gap between form of provisions and substance (results) for both freedom and equality. Freedom and equality are modern citizens' fundamental legal rights, which can be exercised freely. However, it does not mean that an individual will naturally has and enjoy such rights. Equality as a right means to measure with the same scale, which is fair in form. But at the same time it also means the acceptance of the differences of ability and quality of individuals. And this inequality will increase in the process of the individuals' free use of their own innate and acquired abilities. Thus the conflict between the two is an objective fact. Facing this problem, from the point view of theoretical philosophy, it is hoped

that a universal and truth-like solution or pattern is to be found to permanently determine the priority; while from that of value theory of practical philosophy, a certain balance between the two is needed, so as to find a temporary solution to the contradictions; and a system of justice is just such a solution, which can make both of them restricted while maintain their relative rationality respectively. In philosophical words, justice is the synthesis of freedom and equality and solution to the contradictions between them as well.

Justice and equality are mutually related but different from each other. Justice takes equal treatment of everyone as its basis and recognizes that all men are equal, so the law should give everyone the same basic rights and everyone can equally pursue their own happiness by using his abilities under certain conditions. But on the other hand, it also recognizes that the inequality among people is an objective and unchangeable fact, and that any forced change of the fact is another kind of inequality. Justice and freedom are inherently linked: it is recognized that everyone has the right to pursue their own happiness according to their own understanding of freedom, and a fair system is to protect this right and to create social conditions for the realization of this right and to provide with it prevention from intervention of others. However, competitions and conflicts among people insisting on their own rights to freedom do take place and even are inevitable, so are the principles of freedom and that of equality. It is under this condition that certain systems and rules of game are needed. The purpose of establishing system of justice is to solve these contradictions or mediate the conflicts. As the synthesis of freedom and equality, justice means, on the one hand, that freedom needs to be appropriately restricted for the purpose of equality to avoid the unlimited expansion of inequality; on the other, appropriate inequality needs to be allowed for the purpose of freedom, and equalitarianism demanding absolute equality of results needs to be fought against in particular. This is so because only through this way can a society maintain a competitive but not chaotic order and make all gaming parties relatively satisfied, or at least have identification and acceptance, so that the society is full of vitality and less impediments in its operation.

Justice as the principle mediating the contradictions between freedom and equality as well as their synthesis also means that, development level of justice is always determined by the development of freedom and equality. Therefore, we can neither abstractly discuss justice by neglecting the level of realization of freedom and equality in real life, nor by neglecting the specific contradictions between them. For example, at a time when egalitarianism spreads unchecked, we need to break the “pseudo-equality” that uses equality of results to deny equality of opportunity, so as to highlight the positive significance of ensuring equality of opportunity and the appropriate disparity of income (inequality). Whereas in a strict hierarchical and rampant privilege-ridden condition, the emphasis of equality should be put on the equality of basic rights; and in a condition of great gap between the rich and the poor and serious polarization, legal measures such as collection of progressive tax, estate duty, and systems such as secondary distribution and social security to limit certain right of freedom of the rich as a compensation or relief to the vulnerable populations. These measures obviously can

help to alleviate social conflicts and promote social development and are generally regarded as fair. It is in these processes of flexible regulations that the positive significance of social justice to social and human development is manifested and people's respect and aspiration for justice stimulated.

3 The Inherent Tensions of the Concept of Justice

Justice is always a value goal pursued by people, although its contents vary in different times. To better understand this, we need to pay attention to another aspect of it, that is: as a principle or norm regulating conflicts between various subjects and basic values and as a meta-norm, justice itself is very complicated and consists of a wide range of contents, in which certain tensions exist.

First, the tension between formal justice and substantive justice. Formal justice is also known as procedural justice, and substantive justice as result justice. They constitute the two sides of justice, reflecting different demands on justice from different angles. Procedure here does not refer to any specific one, but to an abstract of various procedures; likewise, result here does not refer to any concrete one, such as judicial result, distributive result, but rather an abstract of the results achieved under various procedures. Procedural justice is needed to ensure fair outcomes, and the rationality of procedure needs to be testified by outcomes; on the other hand, procedural justice is a resort to explanation when the fairness of the result is under suspicion or in dispute. In short, they constitute two interrelated and indivisible sides of justice.

But there are differences and contradictions between them both in theory and in practice, because formal or procedural justice represents the general respect while outcomes are always related to specific people and things under specific conditions. Due to the differences of position, mentality and ability of understanding of the parties and the differences of complexity of specific matters, procedural justice cannot necessarily guarantee the justice of the outcome. Even in judicial field where procedural justice must be most seriously and strictly complied with, unjust verdicts and wrong cases are not uncommon.

Obviously, it is one-sided to overly emphasize formal justice of procedure while ignore substantive justice and result; but, on the other hand, if procedural justice and legitimacy are not respected or intervened at will by using the injustice of result as a reason, it will also cause very serious injustice. The contradiction between formal and substantive justice exists in every aspects of justice and cannot be solved once and for all. It is exactly this contradiction that creates the tension between the two, which promotes our constant pursuit of more reasonable procedures and the development of substantive justice to higher levels.

Second, the tension between the idealized state and the realistic situation. Whether seeing from the relationship between rights and obligations in terms of ethics, or between deserve and real gain, justice means both an idealized state and realistic characters. Theorists, including philosophers, ethicists, jurists, political

scientists tend to fly their thinking in the abstract sky of theory, preferring the design of a set of idealized notion of justice, or to make debates in the logical level of pure theory, seeking a kind of justice theory of ultimate nature; but in reality, people engaged in practical activities, are gaming and competing for practical interests, power, honor, status, etc., and are restrained by self-interest, desire, narrow-minded prejudice, class position, partisan political views, religious creeds and so on, and they make their own choices under specific game situations. This of course does not rule out a few theorists concerning about practical problems, and politicians and entrepreneurs cherishing lofty ideals, but in general, when intellectual production become relatively more independent, thinkers tend to discuss justice on an ideal level, plus their control of the discourse power of the time, the ideology of the age is influenced and this, in the course of time, become a cultural tradition. It creates an illusion that the social situation at the time was really like what they wrote. But in fact either history or real life is quite a different story. The actual situation and ideas of right at any time cannot go beyond the actual level of development of economy and man, which is determined by social structure of the time. The idea of what rights, interests and status one should have is formed on the basis of actual life, interests and rights he has. Even their dissatisfaction and criticism of the reality is also based on the reality and takes this reality as its object of transcendence. In other words, although thinkers discuss the ideal of justice theoretically, in practice, however, people does not simply compare reality with the ultimate ideal of justice described by theorists, but rather, on the one hand they decide whether to accept a system or policy according to their practical needs and interests, on the other, they draw arguments favorable to them from cultural traditions and theories to prove whether system or policy is fair or reasonable. Given this situation, among the various competing concepts of justice, there is always a tension between the idealized and actual justice, and the competition of the concepts lies only in the different emphases and stages.

Third, the tension between the requirements of social order and individual claims. Justice, fairness, public opinions and so on, all cannot be separated from the public and always involve the relationship between different subjects, and the original purpose of system is to mediate contradictions within a certain group or community and to set norms for the activities or behaviors of its members. This determines that, among the various notions of justice, some stress the requirements of social order, others on individual claims. When the existence of the individuals is more dependent on the community and the relationship of dependence is the main tendencies of the social relations, the content of justice will tend to highlight the obedience of individuals to the requirements of community order, which is obvious in Plato's views of justice. When the independence of human based on materials prevails in social relations, people may be more willing to accept the logic of justice starting from individual claims, and the emphasis of the content of justice as a whole will be on how the community to handle individual claims, as of the liberalist notion of justice. The theoretical debate on the concept of justice between two major contemporary schools, liberalism and communitarianism, is essentially a manifestation of this tension.

Fourth, the tension between historical and realistic dimensions. The concept of justice always contains both the positive definition of how it should be and a negative criticism of the unjust historical conditions; a fair system is required not only to regulate current and future interpersonal relationships, but also to compensate or rectify historical injustices. “Logically speaking, the principle of justice is the premise of evaluating and measuring the historical injustice, and through it, historical injustice should be identified and corrected.” But on the other side, justice is a historical category,⁴ which must be dealt with historically, rather than be simply evaluated using present new understanding of it. Moreover, history can not be severed, and even though some historical injustices have been identified, it is difficult to determine the duration of compensation. Also, some historical injustices are not remediable and therefore difficult to deal with. This inconsistency of historical and realistic dimensions forms a tension of the concept of justice, which needs a balance rather than extreme driving.

It is mainly because these tensions in the concept of justice that debates over justice last, which in turn promote the historical development of the concept of justice. In other words, these contradictions can only be temporarily solved in the course of human history, and any attempt to try to resolve or remove them permanently is impossible and will inevitably create more serious contradictions.

⁴ Han Shuifa, “Horizon of Justice (正义的视野)” in Yao Yang ed. *China in Transformation: A Examination on Social Justice and Equality* (转轨中国: 审视社会公正与平等), p. 498, China Renmin University Press, 2004.

How is Environmental Ethics Possible?

Xinyan Wang

Since the second half of the twentieth century, more and more people around the world have consciously acknowledged the importance and urgency of protecting nature and our environment. Environmental ethics has been playing an important role of norms in the treatment of the relationship between human being and external environment, in economic development of every country, and even in our daily life. Therefore, whether environmental ethics is possible has already been out of question. However, in environmental ethics, the question how environmental ethics is possible, or the question how the possibility of environmental ethics is warranted, remains a pending question till now, and there is still substantial divergence and severe controversy today. To give rational answers to this question concerns not only the legitimacy of environmental ethics and its theoretical construction, but also the future and destiny of environmental ethical practice, i.e., the environmental movement.

The main reason why the question how environmental ethics is possible becomes a question consists in the different nature of the subject of environmental ethics from traditional ethics. It is well known that, in the history of ethical thoughts of China and the West, ethical relations are always regarded as social relations among people, and the objects to which ethical norms apply are targeted for social business or man's behavior. What traditional ethics concerns is ethical relationship among people or ethical feature of social business or man's behavior. By comparison with it, environmental ethics has a good reputation for its research on ethical relationship between human being and natural environment. It has been discussing and reconstructing ethical relationship between man and nature from the very beginning, and requires ethical solicitude or moral concern for natural environment. As a result, environmental ethics has to answer the question how it is possible.

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Generally, this question is replied by the prevailing views of environmental ethics in two ways.

First, the prevailing views of environmental ethics accept moral expansion as to the relationship between the subject of environmental ethics and the subject of traditional ethics. Early in the 1930 and 1940s, Leopold, an American scholar, who definitely pointed out that the subject of ethics should be extended from the area of social relations to the land or nature, became the founder of environmental ethics through the comprehensive actualization of this idea. Leopold thinks that there is a crucial flaw for traditional ethics to limit ethical relationship within social area. The activities that people damage nature receive no moral condemnation, just because those activities go beyond traditional ethics. The only way through which ethics could face the increasingly serious ecological problems is to extend the boundary of moral community so that nature becomes another object of ethical solicitude and our moral obligations and duties are to be established. Leopold's moral expansion is adopted by most environmental ethicists who have different opinions about the boundary of moral community. Some of them hold that moral community should be extended to animals with ability of perceiving bitterness and happiness, some hold that it should be extended to all living beings, and others hold that moral community should include ecological system made of soil, water, plant and animal, even include the whole nature. After all, according to moral expansion, the exploration and construction of environmental ethics imply the extension of the boundary of traditional ethics, imply the extension of the subject and scope of ethics from the relationship between man and man to the relationship between man and nature, and also imply the acknowledgement of our obligations and duties to natural things in ethics. Just as Taylor mentioned in *Respect for Nature*, Environmental ethics is concerned with the moral relations that hold between humans and the natural world. The ethical principles governing those relations determine our duties, obligations, and responsibilities with regard to the Earth's natural environment and all the animals and plants that inhabit it.¹

Second, the prevailing views of environmental ethics take up the position of non-anthropocentrism as to the aim and value orientation of environmental ethical construction. And it argues that the extension of the boundary of moral community and the acknowledgement of our obligations and duties to nature are not based on human's need and interest, not on instrumental value of nature to humans, but on intrinsic value of natural beings. Actually, this sort of views is very popular in the recent studies of environmental ethics. For instance, John O' Neil, a contemporary British environmental ethicist, indicates that one insists that non-human beings and states of affairs in the natural world have intrinsic value if he adopts the basic position of environmental ethics. This explicit expression has recently become the focus of philosophical discussion around environmental problems.² Although

¹ Taylor, Paul W., *Respect for Nature: A Theory of Environmental Ethics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 3.

² O' Neil, John, The Varieties of Intrinsic Value, *The Monist*, vol. 75 (1992): 119.

environmental ethicists have different understandings of the concept of intrinsic value, there is a general view that intrinsic value is inherent in natural beings, and it is independent of human's need and interest, even independent of human's evaluation of natural beings; that this kind of intrinsic value determines moral qualification of natural beings as the object of moral concern and our moral obligations and duties to nature. In term of non-anthropocentrism, the representatives of environmental ethics strongly criticize the value judgments of anthropocentrism. They point out that, anthropocentrism which only recognizes instrumental value of nature to human beings, will necessarily result in human's unscrupulous exploitation of nature and thus ecological problems today. In this sense, we could effectively protect natural environment and thus resolve our contemporary ecological problems on the premise that we absolutely get rid of the value of anthropocentrism, acknowledge intrinsic value of nature and give moral concern to nature.

It should be recognized that environmental ethics is the development of traditional ethics in a new era, and that the establishment of environmental ethics and its role as norms imply a big move of human's ethics and morals. However, the above-mentioned responses of environmental ethics to the question how it is possible are not convincible.

Firstly, moral expansion prevailing in environmental ethics seems to be unjustifiable.

Compared to traditional ethics, environmental ethics has its specificity in subject. In some sense, it can be viewed as a treatment of the ethical relationship between man and nature. But, its specificity would be exaggerated, thus leading to a complete misunderstanding of the nature of environmental ethics, if the inquiry and construction of environmental ethics implies, just as some moral expansionists have argued, that the categories applied to moral and ethics have been expanded from the relationship between man and man to the relationship between man and nature, and that the relationship between man and nature regulated by environmental ethics goes totally beyond the former. It should be noted that, the emergence and development of environmental ethics is nothing but a theoretical response to the gradually deteriorating environmental problems. It aims at healing the worsening environment and overcoming the threats imposed by contemporary ecological problems against human's existence and development. Ostensibly, the environmental problems are caused by the distorted relationship between man and nature, but essentially, they are caused by the distortion of relationship between man and man. In other words, environmental problems are results of the conflicts of interest between social groups. Correspondingly, the object what environmental ethics regulates is not the relationship between man and nature, but the relationship between man and man, which appears in the form of the man-nature relationship, or which is the man-man relationship mediated by nature. Therefore, environmental ethics has not completely gone beyond the scope of traditional ethics, since its inquiry and construction of man-nature ethical relationship is far from the extension of the man-man ethical relationship which is the subject of traditional ethics.

Now that the subject regulated by environmental ethics is essentially the relationship of man–man, what moral expansion argues that the construction of environmental ethic implies the acknowledgement of our moral obligations and duties to the nature is unconvincing. As stated above, ecological problems are caused by the distortion of relationship between man and man, especially as a result of interest conflicts among people. This kind of conflicts can be embodied by the conflicts among different social groups and different generations. That is, in pursuit of their own interest, people often devastate the environment and thus damage the interest of others and next generations. As a theoretical response to the worsening ecological problems, contemporary environmental ethics tries to explore and construct a new ethical relationship between man and nature, so that it could reconcile and eliminate interest conflicts among different social groups and different generations which are mediated by nature or represented by ecological problems. So, the construction of environmental ethics is by no means the confirmation of our obligations and duties to nature, but the confirmation of our obligations and duties to others and next generations when dealing with the man–nature relationship.

Moral expansion in environmental ethics is not only hard to be grounded, but also a completely encumbrance. In fact, there is no need for us to exaggerate the particularity of environmental ethics, and the question how environmental ethics is possible will be resolved by its own nature. In my views, what environmental ethics deals with is nothing but the ethical relationship between man and man, which is represented in the form of the relationship between man and nature, or mediated by nature; what environmental ethics confirms is nothing but the moral obligations and duties among human beings, which refer to the obligations and duties to others and next generations when dealing with the relationship between man and nature. The characteristics of environmental ethics itself, which is identical with traditional ethics in object and different in representation, suffice to provide a very important basis for the possibility of environmental ethics.

Secondly, the position of non-anthropocentrism prevailing in the contemporary research of environmental ethics is also controversy.

Most popular opinions in environmental ethics are clothed in anti-anthropocentrism, but with severe misunderstanding of the term anthropocentrism. The concept human implied in anthropocentrism is divided against non-human beings, at the same time it is contrary to individual or group. Correspondingly, this term can be used in following extremely different senses of axiology: first, it particularly means human beings take an integrated long-run interest of human beings as the value orientation when dealing with the relationship between man and nature; and the second, it generally means a value orientation that human beings always think first and principally their own needs and interests in the treatment of nature. Obviously, the former is an anthropocentrism in a narrow sense, and it is opposite to various forms of individual-centrism and group-centrism, both of which respectively esteem individual interest or group interest as the criterion for dealing with the relationship between man and nature. Correspondingly, the latter one is an anthropocentrism in a broad sense, which not only includes the anthropocentrism

in the narrow-sense, but also various forms of individual-centrism and group-centrism. However, since human beings have been in the age of civilization and been under the social condition that the division of interest always depends on private ownership, anthropocentrism in the narrow sense, which esteems the integrated long-run interest of human beings as the fundamental criterion for value judgment, never becomes the value orientation of human practice. But various forms of individual-centrism and group-centrism do take a role in human practice. Historically, it's just because of the domination of individual-centrism and group-centrism that various subjects of interest exploit nature furthest and violently for their particular and present interest, in disregard of the long-run impacts of their action on natural environment. Undoubtedly, a gradually worsening environment is the only result of them. The prevailing views of environmental ethics attribute all the evil fruit of individual-centrism and group-centrism to anthropocentrism generally, and claim that anthropocentrism is the source of all environmental evils. In fact, those views are totally imprudent and wrong because they confuse individual-centrism and group-centrism with anthropocentrism, and finally deny all kinds of anthropocentrism by denying individual-centrism and group-centrism.

Non-anthropocentrism expressed by the prevailing views in environmental ethics is based on the misunderstanding of anthropocentrism stated above, and it is by no means helpful for us to illustrate how environmental ethics is possible. As noted above, the principal doctrine of non-anthropocentrism can be formulated as following: if we are to establish an appropriate relationship between man and nature, we should convert ourselves from the value judgment of anthropocentrism that regards natural beings only as instruments to another judgment that acknowledges intrinsic value of natural beings. Nevertheless, it is not justified for us to illustrate how environmental ethics is possible by the concept of intrinsic value or to underlie environmental ethics by intrinsic value of natural beings. Only from the arguments of non-anthropocentrism for the particularity and necessity of intrinsic value of natural beings, we can hardly acknowledge any conclusions of this kind of environmental ethics, not to mention the term intrinsic value itself is a misunderstanding and abuse of the term value, which implies intrinsic value has nothing to do with human's need and interest. This is very clear from a simple analysis of some arguments of those scholars who insist upon non-anthropocentrism in environmental ethics.

Leopold once said that there couldn't be a relation between ethics and the land, if we have not yet show our love, respect and praise to the land, as well as a high cognition of the value of the land.³ As to this, Taylor seems have the same tone, saying that to acknowledge environmental ethics is to acknowledge that all non-human beings have intrinsic value, vice versa.⁴ And for Burch, no matter how

³ Leopold, Aldo, *A Sand County Almanac*. See Ye Ping, *Ecological Ethics* (Ha Er Bin: Northeast Forestry University Press, 1994), p. 78.

⁴ Taylor, Paul W., *Respect for Nature: A Theory of Environmental Ethics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 71.

civilized we are, we will miss the effective natural ethics if we value natural beings only as instruments. He writes that the foundation of environmental protection will be insecure if we can not provide a basis for this protection that every creature has its intrinsic value. Unless all these creatures have their intrinsic value, or all we do in the grand name of environmental protection are only to satisfy endless and various human purposes that are always changing anywhere at any time.⁵ All the statements above seem to tell that our acknowledgement of intrinsic value of natural beings is a sufficient and necessary condition for the possibility of environmental ethics. But this is not the case. On the one hand, we can positively establish an effective environmental ethics, even though we don't accept the so-called intrinsic value of natural beings. The argument of Burch is a falsity, which thinks the evaluation on natural beings as an instrument can not lead to an effective environmental ethics because of the always changing human purpose, since the anthropocentrism he criticizes is nothing but individual-centrism and group-centrism in various forms, and since only the purpose of different individuals and groups, just like what he says, is "always changing anywhere at any time". On the contrary, the anthropocentrism, which regards the integrated long-run interest of human beings as the standard criterion of valuation of the relationship between man and nature, can satisfy the intrinsic demands of environmental protection. And its purpose, i.e. the integrated long-run interest, is not "changing anywhere at any time", though it also puts an instrumental evaluation on natural beings. Therefore, the anthropocentrism concentrating on an integrated long-run interest can definitely lead to a sound and effective environment ethics, without applying any intrinsic value of natural beings to illustrate the necessity of environmental protection. On the other hand, the claim of intrinsic value of natural beings is not a path to an effective environmental ethics. According to those environmental ethicists who hold non-anthropocentrism, we should not evaluate natural beings as instruments, since they have their own intrinsic value, which means their end is themselves. Now we need to inquiry further here: what does it mean by saying natural beings are their own end? And again, what is on earth the end or goal of natural beings? In any case, we would never conversely say that natural beings are the end of human activities, and we human would never see natural beings as our end or goal. As to this, even Burch has to admit that the effective ethics based on the intrinsic value of every creature is hard to be justified, since "no matter how enlightened human being is, he cares only about his own interest, and thus can't provide a sufficient motivation for our environment to be continued." And Murdy makes a remark on Burch, in which he says, even if this statement gets an advantage of guide, namely, even if we have acknowledged intrinsic value of natural beings, he has not yet a sufficient motivation to keep environment in

⁵ Murdy, William H., Anthropocentrism: A Modern Version, in *Translation of Foreign Philosophy* vol. 2 (1999): 13.

balance.⁶ Thus it can be seen that the concept of intrinsic value does little help for non-anthropocentrism environmental ethics to illustrate how environmental ethics is possible. Furthermore, it should be noted that the claim of intrinsic value of natural beings is not incompatible with anthropocentrism, just as some environmental ethicists who also claim intrinsic value of natural beings, for instance, Murdy and Pasmore, have pointed it out. This is a further exposure of the theoretical defects of non-anthropocentrism ethics based on the doctrine of intrinsic value.

What's more, the position of non-anthropocentrism in environmental ethics must be self-contradictory from the very beginning. Non-anthropocentrism has various forms, such as life-centrism, creature-centrism, ecospecies-centrism and so on, and without any exception, they only take nature or natural beings rather than human beings as the options of center. This is quite questionable. It is because that, though excluded from the concept of human beings, the so-called nature or natural beings is not irrelative with human beings, but relative with the conditions of human existence and development. Therefore, the claim of natural environment as the center which held by non-anthropocentrism in contemporary environmental ethics is self-contradictory in theory. In fact, natural environment is always opposite to human beings, and human beings are always of the center of natural environment. And the concept of environmental ethics presupposes human beings as the center. Whether on the part of the nature of human activity, or on the part of the nature of environmental ethics, what we can surmount in environmental ethics is not the position of anthropocentrism itself, but some certain forms of anthropocentrism. As to the resolution of contemporary environmental problems, we must surpass or walk out of any form of individual-centrism and group-centrism, and then walk into an anthropocentrism which regards the integrated long-run interest of human beings as the criterion of evaluation when dealing with the relationship between man and nature. Otherwise, it will lead to some conclusions totally contrary to the purpose of environmental ethics, even lead to some anti-humanistic or anti-human conclusions, if we, like what those non-anthropocentrism ethicists claim, cast away the anthropocentrism completely. For example, some environmental ethicists declare perversely that when the last man, woman or child disappears on the earth, it will not bring any harm to the existence of other creatures, but bring profit to them instead, since the damages from the development of human civilization on them will cease immediately along with that. If we stand on the position of those creatures, creation of human beings is definitely unwanted.⁷ In fact, the environmental ethics of non-anthropocentrism speaks for no other than those other creatures. It advocates strongly offering our ethical solicitude and moral concerns to natural beings other than human beings. And for

⁶ Murdy, William H., *Anthropocentrism: A Modern Version*, in *Translation of Foreign Philosophy* vol. 2 (1999): 14.

⁷ Brennan, Andrew, *The Ethics of the Environment* (Aldershot, Hampshire, U.K.: Dartmouth Publishing Co., 1995), p. 208.

them, human beings are noting but a disaster which should never appears on the earth. In this sense, though they would like to call their non-anthropocentrism as a New Humanism, this kind of humanism is a completely Animalism!

Therefore, non-anthropocentrism in contemporary environment ethics is not only absurd in theory, but also harmful in practice. We must realize that the world where we live is still full of serious inequality and conflicts of interest between man and man. This is a world in which we need firstly do our utmost to admit other people's value, and to care other people's interest. And it's far from a world in which we should utterly esteem the so-called intrinsic value of natural beings by sacrificing proper human interests and human existence. The ideal of non-anthropocentrism is nothing more than an illusion. What more important is, if we talk about the necessity and importance of environmental protection with the view of non-anthropocentrism, we will lead the environmental movement to a dead end.

To sum up, the mainstream views in environmental ethics, based on the position of moral expansion and non-anthropocentrism, can't and won't explain how environmental ethics is possible. In my opinion, what environmental ethics deals with is no other than the ethical relationship between man and man represented by the relationship between man and nature, what it confirms is no other than our obligations and duties to others and next generations when dealing with the relationship between man and nature, and finally, the criterion of evaluation it pursues in dealing with the man-nature relationship is no other than the integrated and long-run interest of all human beings. All these are the ground on which the contemporary environmental ethics stands possibly.

Ideal of Social Values for Hermeneutics of Human History

Qiusuo Cui

Abstract The history of human being is not only the process of subject's activity with pursuing, creating and realizing the value, at the same time, it is also that of objective history, determined and restricted by the internal law. The contradictory and unified relationship between them constitutes "the mystery of human history", which is very hard to be solved for a long time. The mystery of human history lies in social values. In this paper, I try to prove that the ideal of social values for understanding of human history is a possible way to reveal the mystery of history. This paper will focus on the establishment of the ideal of social values. Firstly, I shall argue the dual values, that is, material value and human value, which are the secret of the development of human society and history. Then I shall point out that in the process of pursuit of individual values and community values, it also contains the creation and realization of social values. On the basis, I shall claim that the nature of social values is striving of everyone for his own nature as a man. Finally, I shall come to the conclusion that the development of human history is the process of pursuing, creating and realizing the social values.

Keywords Historical interpretation · Historical law · Social values · The pursuit of value · The generation of man

For the issue of "the mystery of human history", the key to the solution doesn't lie in whether we can unify objective law and subjective law or not, but how we understand the complicated and contradictory relationships between "the value" and "the fact", "the subjective end" and "the objective end", "individual values" and "social values" in the development process of history. In order to clear these complicated relationships, it is very important to seek the foundation. Actually, "the mystery of human history" lies in social values. The key to reveal the "the mystery of human history" is just in the view of human history. Consequently,

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construction of the ideal of social values becomes a reasonable choice to deal with “the mystery of history”.

1 The Significance of Dual Values of Practical Activities of Production

On Marx’s view, human history began with human’s activity of material production in order to meet their living needs, which means that, “men must be in a position to live in order to be able to ‘make history’. But life involves, before everything else, eating and drinking, a habitation, clothing and many other things. The first historical act is thus the production of the means to satisfy these needs, the production of material life itself. And indeed this is a historical act, a fundamental condition of all history, which today, as thousands of years ago, must daily and hourly be fulfilled merely in order to sustain human life.”¹ Thus it can be seen, this activity is not only “the first premise of all human existence, and, therefore, the premise of all history”,² but also the basic premise of the whole human life and the historical development of them. Consequently, Marx emphasizes, “To observe all its significance and implications of this fundamental fact and to accord it its due importance is the first thing of any historical views.”³

However, from this “basic facts”, what people see is just its direct result and its existence meaning, instead, its generative value and sublimated significance are lost. In fact, it is Marx who firstly discovers and underlines the dual values and deeper meaning of practical activities of production. In this regard, Marx points out, “The way in which men produce their means of subsistence depends first of all on the nature of the actual means of subsistence they find in existence and have to reproduce. This mode of production must not be considered simply as being the production of the physical existence of the individuals. Rather it is a definite form of activity of these individuals, a definite form of expressing their life, a definite mode of life on their part. As individuals express their life, so they are. What they are, therefore, coincides with their production, both with what they produce and with how they produce. The nature of individuals thus depends on the material conditions determining their production.”⁴ Besides that, for “while such a wealth of human endeavour, unfolded before it, means nothing more to it than, perhaps, what can be expressed in one word—‘need’, ‘vulgar need’”,⁵ Marx also expresses his dissatisfaction and criticism for so-called science, “hitherto this was not conceived in its connection with man’s *essential being*, but only in an external

¹ Marx/ Engels Collected Works, Volume 5, New York: International Publisher, 1975.

² Marx/ Engels Collected Works, Volume 5, New York: International Publisher, 1975.

³ Marx/ Engels Collected Works, Volume 5, New York: International Publisher, 1975.

⁴ Marx/ Engels Collected Works, Volume 5, New York: International Publisher, 1975.

⁵ Marx/ Engels Collected Works, Volume 3, New York: International Publisher, 1975.

relation of utility, because, moving in the realm of estrangement”.⁶ These arguments show that, according to Marx’s conception of history, for people, in their practical activities of production, there is not only the important value of living, but also the significant generative meaning. It is in the dual values and multiple meanings of practical activities of production that the whole contents and secrets of human society and the development of human history are contained. Accordingly, people’s practical activities of production becomes the basis in reality and the real key to reveal the nature of human history’s values, find out the secret of social history, and seek the mystery of social history.

According to modern theory of axiology, any practical activity is an activity of value, which is the process of human’s pursuing, creating and realizing the values. Of course, practical activity of production is without exception. The question is, whether the value activity is only an activity of producing “material values” and “objective values”, or, that of generating and realizing the “human values” and “subject values”. The former pays much more important attention to the significance of objects for human being, while, the latter focuses on the pursuit, creation and realization of values (including human values in itself and object’s values) by human’s own practical activities as subjects. Moreover, according to the duality of practice of production, in which, there are not only the values of creating and generating materials and object values, but also human values and subject values. Naturally, the conscious purpose of human’s engaging in the practice of production is for some values of materials and object values, while, the unconscious purpose hidden behind it, is to realize human values and subject values. The process of practice of production is a direct process of generating of values of materials and object values, however, it also creates and realizes human values and subject values meanwhile. The result of practice of production is to get and achieve all kinds of values of materials and object values, satisfied with human being’s living needs, but in which human values and subject values are included.

However, this doesn’t mean that human values and subject values are only a kind of by-product of values of materials and object values, that to say, the former is only the secondary and subordinate aspect of the latter. On the contrary, according to the relationship of generation of values, it is human values that constitute the generative origin of values of materials, and values of materials is only the realistic performance of human values. Subject values creates object values, meanwhile, object values displays subject values. That is to say, values of materials and object values are ultimately the achieving result and external manifestation of human values and subject values. Therefore, in essence, practice of production, even all of practice of human being, are activities, by pursuing and producing of values of material and object values, to realize and embody in human values and subject values.

⁶ Marx/ Engels Collected Works, Volume 3, New York: International Publisher, 1975.

2 Individual Values, Community Values and Social Values

As the subject, people always pursue and choose values. The value, as its form, is the aim, goal and ideal, which people pursue, choose, create and realize. In fact, people are pursuing and creating values everyday. Different people have diverse needs and goals of value, at the same time, different subjects also have various expressions and forms of value. Thus, it turns out that there are differences and connections between existing forms of different subject values, such as individual values, community values and social values, etc. Whatever form of subject values is, embodies in the pursuit, creation and realization of human's value goals. However, because of diversity of value subjects, their value ideals and meanings of existence are different from each other, accordingly, which determine that diverse subjects of value play different position, effect and role in social history. Therefore, here the key is to discover and seek social values, which is contained in individual values and community values.

In the social life and the development of history, what people firstly face are various pursuits of individual values. Everyone has their own needs of value, pursuing respective aims of, which are restricted and influenced by other's value pursuit yet. The consequence, just as Marx said, "That which is willed happens but rarely; in the majority of instances the numerous desired ends cross and conflict with one another, or these ends themselves are from the outset incapable of realization, or the means of attaining them are insufficient."⁷ The conflict and limitation between the pursuits of individual values, inevitably result in the generation of community values. But due to diversity of existing forms of community subjects, the pursuit and creation of group value, on one hand, is the common foundation and premise.

Which makes individual realize their respective individual value, on the other hand, it also makes itself trapped in the new and endless contradiction and conflict between individual values and community values, even the different community values. As a result, people, consciously or unconsciously, produce higher forms of purpose and pursuit of values, in the direct sense for some utility and material benefits, but in higher sense for pursuit, creation and realization of social values.

The social value is not some kind of independent values by itself, completely separated from individual values and community values. The relationship between them, is just as the same as relationship between "the single will" and "history join forces", which Engels presents in the process of history. "But from the fact that the wills of individuals—each of whom desires what he is impelled to by his physical constitution and external, in the last resort economic, circumstances (either his own personal circumstances or those of society in general)—do not attain what they want, but are merged into an aggregate mean, a common resultant, it must not be concluded that they are equal to zero. On the contrary, each

⁷ Marx/ Engels Collected Works, Volume 26, New York: International Publisher, 1975.

contributes to the resultant and is to this extent included in it.”⁸ In this sense, social values, as social ideal pursued by social subjects, is actually that people’s pursuing the ideal of a man as the man, who stands in the position and height of social subject. However, this pursuit of values, is always indirect rather than direct, transcendental rather than realistic, universal rather than special, and hidden rather than manifested. Therefore, it is unconscious, rather than conscious. Just as Engels said, as the result and outcome of interplaying and conflicting each other among many single wills, it is “the product of a power which works as a whole *unconsciously* and without volition”.⁹ Therefore, as far as its form and characteristics are concerned, social value is generated and formed in the interactional and conflicting process between the pursuit of individual values and community values, which embodies in the universal end and the common wills of many individual and community. Social value, as social ideal and historical aim of subject of social history, is not only values of social life and social ideal, social universal values and objective values, but also pursuit of values of nature of human genus, that it to say, a man as the man.

3 The Nature of Social Values is the Genus Nature of a Man as the Man

As the pursuit of value ideal of social subject, actually, social value is “the value of genus”, that is, “the value of human being” or “the value of genus as subject”. The value of human being as subject, certainly taking the life and living of individual and community as precondition, however, it is not equal to the pursuit of individual and community values. That is to say, it can’t be on the basis of the concrete life, special existence and unique essence, but on “the life of genus”, “the existence of genus”, “the characteristic of genus” and “the nature of genus”. According to Marx’s view, in reality, person is not only “the natural being,” but also “the social being”. Moreover, philosopher Gao Qinghai from China presented the conception on life, which is, human is a being of dual life with the nature of dual life. That is, human is actually the unity of “the life of species” and “the life of human genus”, “being as natural life and being as cultural life”, and “the nature of life in itself” and “nature of life for itself”. However, the nature of human genus, distinct from animal, doesn’t lie in being as natural life and being as life in itself, but rests with being as cultural life and being as life for self, which is the social practical activity of human being. Just as Marx said, “But man is not merely a natural being; he is a *human* natural being. That is to say, he is a being for himself. Therefore he is a *species-being*, and has to confirm and manifest himself

⁸ Marx/ Engels Collected Works, Volume 49, New York: International Publisher, 1975.

⁹ Marx/ Engels Collected Works, Volume 49, New York: International Publisher, 1975.

as such both in his being and in his knowing.”¹⁰ This means that, practice is not only the special living way with a man as the man, but also the nature of life for itself, that is, the nature of human genus.

In accord with human's nature of dual life, on the pursuit of values, the value of human life is also dual, which is unity of “values as life in itself” and “values as life for itself”. The values as life in itself, is that of maintaining and preserving natural life of human being, while, the values as life for itself, is that of creating and generating cultural life of human being. It goes without saying that both dual values of life are important for person. However, the value of genus with a man as the man determined by the nature of human genus, is essentially the values of human being's life in itself, rather than for itself. As if the nature of human being's life in itself breaks away from that of human being's life as for itself, it will be just the nature of natural life as animal, likewise, if the values of human being's life in itself depart from that of human being's life for itself, it will be only the value of natural life similar to the animal. Therefore, the values of human being's life is determined by the values of human being's life for itself, rather than that of human being's life in itself, that is, the latter depends on and serves the former. The social value and value of human being's life for itself are both with internal unity. The pursuit of person for social value is actually that a pursuit of “the values of human life for itself”, which is the values of human genus.

The essence of social value is human's pursuit, creation and realization of human being's nature, while the nature making human become human being is just the nature of human genus. However, the nature of human genus is radically different from the nature of animal's species. The essence of animal is determined by that of its group, which is not only innate, in itself, but also changeless from birth to death. Consequently, for animal, there are no the pursuit, creation and realization in its nature, conversely, for human it is different. Nature does not rule some kind of innate nature, and the nature of human being is also not given by god. The nature making human become human being, which only depends on the pursuit and creation of they own. Moreover, even although human becomes human being, the nature of human being is not stable and changeless. For it, Marx points out, “Since for the socialist man the *entire so-called history of the world* is nothing but the creation of man through human labour”.¹¹ Heidegger claims, “*Das Wesen des Daseins liegt in seiner Existenz*”, “*Dasein ist je seine Möglichkeit*”.¹² Sartre presents, “being is what it is and not being what it is”.¹³ Bergson emphasizes, we are what we did, and we create ourselves continuously.¹⁴ It means that the nature of human being is not predetermined, innate and changeless, rather than generated,

¹⁰ Marx/ Engels Collected Works, Volume 3, New York: International Publisher, 1975.

¹¹ Marx/ Engels Collected Works, Volume 3, New York: International Publisher, 1975.

¹² Heidegger, M, *Sein und Zeit*, Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1967, p. 42.

¹³ Sartre J.-P, *Being and Nothingness* (H. Barnes, Trans.), Colorado: Press Colorado University, 1990, p. xlvii.

¹⁴ Bergson H, *Creative Evolution*, Press Book Jungle, 2007, p. 11.

historical and unfinished, that is, human being is in the process of continuous generation forever. For the individual, when person is born, at the beginning they only have the essence of natural life, and at this moment, they have no essence of human being's life for itself, that is to say, they don't develop the real and complete man, even at some sense, who is not equal to human being. Therefore, it is necessary for person to grow up to human being, be cultivated to human being, be educated to human being and make efforts to be human being. Although, to some extent, person has already been to human being, it doesn't mean that he is a complete man. Because it is likely for him to lose the humanity, forget the personality, even give up the nature of human being, finally turn into "zombie", "anthropomorpha" and "the human beast". Just as people often says: some person is "not human being", "not enough to be human being", "not to speak as human being" or "not to do as human being". Consequently, human to be human being is not only aim to pursue and come true, but also a kind of noble, dignified and divine being.

Thus it can be seen, person is not innate man but has the nature of human being, and it depends on himself to learn and develop by their pursuit, creation and realization, which is the generating basis and existing significance of values of life for itself. Because the nature of human being is always unfinished, person needs to create and realize the nature of life for itself by the pursuit of values of life for itself. Only when person has the nature of life for itself, that is, a man as the man, person can sublime the pursuit of values of life for itself. Besides, because the nature of human being is generated, it is necessary for them to create, generate and develop it by their continuous pursuit. Human's pursuit of values of life for itself and social value are identical in itself. Because under the pressure of living, always, the pursuit of individual values and group values more pays attention to realistic problem. Only when person is as a social subject, they can take the position of subject of human genus and stand in the lever of value of human genus, then think and attach importance to the question of creation and realization of nature of human life for itself. Hence, in some sense, the basis of value of life for itself, is that of social value, accordingly, the significance of value of life for itself, is also that of social value, and the contents of value of life for itself is the same as it. Actually, the pursuit of value of life for itself, is realized by pursuing for social value of human being, while, the pursuit of social value is also pursued, created and realized by the pursuit of nature of human genus.

4 The Realization of Human Nature is the Inherent Nature of Human History

The person's pursuing, creating and realizing of social values, is not just a kind of subjective activity embodying in person's needs and end. Conversely, in terms of its historical position and significance of value, as a "historical law", it goes

throughout the process of human being's development and constitutes the most powerful internal dynamic and the deepest nature. This law is just "the law of social values" of human being, that is, that person is pursuing and creating and realizing of human's social values. Firstly, we should give the reasonable definition of "the historical law", otherwise, it is possible to make the question astray. It goes without saying that, the historical law is different from the natural law. This difference, not only lies in that it is not equal to "causality" and "mechanical determinism", but also rests with that it can't break away from the practice activity and the pursuit of value of human being and independent from it. About is, maybe we can get some inspirations from some arguments and discussions of Marx and Engels. For the former, Marx points out, "Under capitalist production, the general law acts as the prevailing tendency only in a very complicated and approximate manner, as a never ascertainable average of ceaseless fluctuations."¹⁵ For the latter, Engels not only definitely points out, that the history law, that is, is "the law of human's own social action", but also claims the profound interpretation of its the formation mechanism and the form of expression, that is, "history is made in such a way that the final result always arises from conflicts between many individual wills, of which each in turn has been made what it is by a host of particular conditions of life. Thus there are innumerable intersecting forces, an infinite series of parallelograms of forces which give rise to one resultant—the historical event. This may again itself be viewed as the product of a power which works as a whole *unconsciously* and without volition."¹⁶ Here so-called "the product of a power which works as a whole *unconsciously* and without volition", actually, is the form of expression of "the history law", while, the internal relationship between "the single will" and "history joint forces", is the formation mechanism of the history law.

From the arguments of Marx and Engels, it can be seen: in fact, the historical law is the historical necessity embodied in the potential trend, the main tendency and the approximate average of historical development. Meanwhile, this necessity is a kind of history joint force, which generates by the interacting and conflicting among some single wills. Besides, this history joint force is as a kind of "the product of a power which works as a whole *unconsciously* and without volition". As a result, for the individual, it is the objective force which is not moved by some individual's volition. However, because the objective forces, itself, is be composed of the joint force of some individual volition, it is not moved by the volition of human being, conversely, it is the reflection and embodiment of social will and historical end as social subject of human being. According to the ideal of social values, the "single will" is the diverse pursuit of individual values and community values, while the "history joint force" is the pursuit of values of human being generated on the basis of the pursuit of individual values and community values, that is, human being's pursuit, creation and realization of a man as the man. As a

¹⁵ Marx/ Engels Collected Works, Volume 25, New York: International Publisher, 1975.

¹⁶ Marx/ Engels Collected Works, Volume 49, New York: International Publisher, 1975.

kind of object trend or historical law, it determines and restricts the diverse pursuit of individual values and community values, and the development of the whole history of human society. Whether the diverse pursuit of individual values and community values realized or not and how its destiny is, ultimately, depends on whether they are identified with the pursuit of human being's social values or not. In this sense, the development of human history is essentially that of social values, that is to say, the development of human being in itself and the generated process of human being's nature. Marx's "Three morphology theory" profoundly reveals this internal nature and the deep law in the process of history's development.

Of course, it doesn't mean that human history is firstly the conscious pursuit of social value, on the contrary, until now, in the most time of development of social history, the pursuit and creation of social values is unconscious and blind, which is submerged in the various pursuit of individual values and community values. Meanwhile, the pursuit, creation and realization of human being's nature, is also not direct manifested and completely conscious, rather hidden in material's values and objective values. Actually, this is not surprising. It is just the realistic way and necessary form, arising from the pursuit of human's social values, that is, the self-realization of human being's nature. Man as human genus, is not only as being in itself, by their own practice activity to go beyond the natural being and create their own essence, but also always pursues the negative and united relationship with others. Just as Gao Qinghai points out, the genus stands for a kind of the highest unity, embodying in the essential and united relationship among different species. The entity of genus, firstly taking the independence of individual as the pre-condition, is the unity of diversity and pluralism, with the freedom personality.¹⁷ The pursuit of social values of human being is realized by the pursuit of individual values and group values, while, the nature as human genus is generated by human's "activity of objectification" and "being of objectification", which is embodiment of life of human genus, values of human genus, existence of human genus and nature of human genus. In some sense, in fact human history is the historical process to realize social values by the pursuit of individual values and community values, at the same time, it is also the historical process to pursue, create and realize the nature with a man as the man by the individual activity and community's practice.

The nature of social values of human history is usually under the veil of the pursuit of individual values and community values, for the sake of short term satisfaction and partial interests. Besides, in the process of the development of human history, the nature of human being's generation is always diluted by the living meaning and utility desire of values of object and material. Consequently, the social life and historical life is often distorted and alienated. Therefore, the significance of establishing social ideal from the view of human history is to eliminate the veil, manifest the humanity and overcome the alienation. This means

¹⁷ See Gao Qinghai, *Gao QingHai Collected Works of Philosophy*, Changchun: Jilin People Publisher, 1997. p. 24.

that, when person pursues their own individual values and community values, they also should be guided by social values consciously, to make the value of object and material become human values and subject values, similarly, to sublime social practice and history activity into activity of the nature and value of human genus consciously, in the process of realizing their own realistic goal and individual goal. In other words, it can make social life of human being beautiful and become the real life and world of human being; it also can make human social history humanized and become the real society and history of human being; it can make human being itself become more sublime and great and deserve to be human being, who has not only the appearance of human being, but also the nature of human being. In conclusion, in the development process of human society and history, we should have more humanity and less animality, more creation and less predation, more glory and less evil, and more civilization and less barbarism.

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Three Dimensions of the Formation of Values

Zhilong Tang

Values are basic viewpoints on faith, preference, opinions and attitude of value. They are a theoretical system of human being's evaluation, judgment and choice criteria of the meanings of all social practice, and are significant in guiding people's thoughts and deeds. A thorough study of the forming of the values is greatly helpful to the establishment of people's scientific values and the construction of harmonious society.

1 Attaching Importance to Man's Proper Needs

As a part of social consciousness, the values, restricted by social being, reflect the needs and interests of man in certain economic relations. At the logical starting point, needs are the objective premise and foundation of the forming of man's values. Reflecting the demands, desires, and intentions inside man himself in the process of his survival and development, need is the source of all kinds of human activities. Man's need is closely related to human nature. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels state that man is not an isolated individual. "Man's need, which is his nature, together with the way he seeks satisfaction, links one another among people."¹ The satisfaction of man's proper needs is his inalienable right. Our party has on many occasions emphasized that "we should take people's spiritual and cultural needs as our start and end-result."²

¹ "Karl Marx and Frederick Engels (Volume 3)", People's Publishing House, 1960, p. 514.

² "The Central Committee of the Communist Party's Decisions on Some Important Issues Concerning Deepening Cultural Restructuring and Promoting Vigorous Development and Prosperity of Socialist Culture", People's Publishing House, 2011, p. 8.

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Generally, with four basic features, human being's natural needs are different from animal instincts, which decide the characteristics of interest. Firstly, it is the social practicality. Man's need which is not willed by individuals is created by the society and decided by the historical conditions. The object and means of needs are the creation of social practice, which also leads to the birth and development of human beings. Secondly, it is the objective existence. Man's need seems to be subjective. Yet it is actually the objective existence and regulation decided by man's social nature and his place in the production relations. In other words, it depends on man's objective living conditions rather than his conscious thought and physiological and psychological elements. Thirdly, it is the infinite prospects. The infinite prospects and richness of man's need are in close association with the ways and abilities of satisfying the need. Through labor and creation, man constantly enriches his knowledge and improves his ability to transform nature, society as well as himself. Consequently, the interest gains infinite prospects. Just as Karl Marx states, man's "need is highly elastic and changing. Its fixity is an illusion."³ Fourthly, it is the subjective initiatives. As the subject of cognition and practice, man shows his initiatives in the process of "need—practice". On the one hand, man constantly creates new needs and new ways of satisfying the needs. On the other hand, production can't go without man's need which is its drive and aim. Besides, need is rich in varieties, colorful and glamorous.

Man's needs fundamentally determine and restrict the forming and development of the values. After all, the setting of the objectives, the pursuing of the value orientation, the conducting of value activities and the undertaking of value assessment should all take man's need as the start and end-result. The difference is that values established on man's proper needs are right and scientific, while those based on improper needs are wrong and unscientific. Of course, the essence and content of need lie in the interest, which requires further study while the forming of values is explored.

2 Satisfying Man's Pursuit of Interest

Interest, the essence and content of man's need, is the driving force of all human activities and is bound to be the inner motivation of forming people's values. Xunzi, a great ancient Chinese thinker, held that "man is born to pursue interests." Helvétius, the modern French philosopher, believed that interest is what can bring man happiness and eliminate his pain. Examining interest in a biological sense and explaining it in terms of man's "perceptual need" and "biological instinct", both of them failed to reveal its essence and function, and were thus unable to break loose the bondage of the historical idealism. Based on the critical inheritance of

³ "Karl Marx and Frederick Engels (Volume 25)", People's Publishing House, 1995, p. 210.

forefathers' thoughts, Marxism has developed the scientific view of interest by using the outlook of historical materialism.

Interest is the fundamental objective of all human activities. The history of human society is composed of human activities, in which each individual has different motives. The historical idealism has exposed the critical role man's motives have played in pushing forward the advance of history. On this basis, Marxism further explores the reason underlying the motives. It is man's interest, especially the material or economic benefit that works. As a consequence, it is a must to reasonably relate people's labor to reward and help them benefit accordingly in practice. By adhering to and creatively using the principle of interests of Marxism, our party not only acknowledges individual's material interest, but also regards the degree to which the interest is achieved as an important indication of social progress. Deng Xiaoping points out that "revolution is grounded on material interest, and it is idealism to talk about sacrifice without considering material interest."⁴ The statement, from a perspective of integration of theory with practice, explains that the principle of interests is the ultimate material reason for the all-round development of individuals as well as the society.

Interest is the root of all social contradictions. Engels says "in a given society, economic relation appears first and foremost in the form of interest."⁵ Man's interest is closely tied to social relations. As a result, if some people's needs are completely or largely satisfied while some others' are not, interest differences and disputes will emerge, leading to social contradictions. In a class society, all class struggles are political struggles which ultimately center on economic emancipation. Political power is nothing other than the means of realizing economic interests. In addition, class contradictions and class struggles are the direct impetus to social development, pushing history forward. In socialist society, however, due to the non-antagonism of basic social contradictions and the consistency of people's fundamental interests, stormy class struggles are unlikely to be found. Therefore reform is the direct impetus to the development of socialist society.

Interests are inner reasons for forming values. On the basis of needs, values and certain interests are inseparably joined. Consistent with man's needs, interests are what man's activities aim for, including both material interests and spiritual interests. While man's needs are inherent, different kinds of interests which satisfy different needs are gained from the outside world. The process of man's value activities is one inspired and guided by interest as motivation, reflecting more than the needs of the subject and its instinct. Undoubtedly, the forming of man's values cannot be separated from interest selection and pursuit which are closely related to oneself. In real life, different individual interests and interest relations may result in many different or even completely opposite values. Therefore our party attaches great importance to the realization of people's fundamental interests so as to promote the wide recognition of the system of socialist core values.

⁴ "Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping (Volume 2)", People's Publishing House, 1994, p. 146.

⁵ "Marx and Engels: Selected Works (Volume 3)", People's Publishing House, 1995, p. 209.

3 Correctly Handling the Individual and Collective Relation

Both need and interest are restricted by certain social relations. Marxism maintains that interest belongs in essence to the category of social relationship, and is the need shown through certain social relations. It characterizes the relationship between the needs of the subject and the object. Apparently, the forming of values has a lot to do with the individual and collective relation.

Interest stems from need, but need itself is not necessarily interest. Need is the inner subjective base of interest. The fruits of man's labor that meet his needs constitute the actual content of interests and thus are valuable. Nature cannot naturally satisfy man's need, and man has to transform the nature through joint labor to tailor it to his own need. In this way, the social relations between people come into being. Marx says that "the nature of human is not the abstract thing inherent in a single person, but the amount of all the social relations in reality."⁶ Consequently, there appears an intermediate body or bridge of social relations between man's need and the natural object. With the diversification of man's needs and continuous differentiation of labors which satisfy the needs, one's need is increasingly attached to others' labor, which is surely to lead to closer and more complex social relations. To deal properly with the relationship between the self and others, and the self and the society in practice, people should focus on the correct handling of the individual and collective relation, and then establish correct values. The term "collective", which is a set concept here, refers to group and community such as groups, classes, parties, peoples and countries; the term "individual" refers to one's own self. Only when one carefully solves the problem of the relationship between collective interests and individual interests can he establish a reasonable value objective, grasp the correct value orientation, conduct fair value assessment, and adopt preferable value activities in practice. Zhang Dainian holds that "the issue of relationship between the individual and collective, and between spiritual life and material life, is the key issue of values."⁷

The realities, namely practical activities, are indispensable to the solution to this key problem. It is by means of practice and through the drive by both need and interest that man's values are actually developed. Practice is the premise of the forming, development and satisfying of men's needs. Without it, there will be no mankind, or man's needs. In this sense, it can be believed that practice is man's only way of life and sole source of his value activities. In the meanwhile, it is in essence purposeful and conscious value activities which distinguish human activities from animal instincts and show how people create, test and enjoy values. Only through this eternal practice, can people establish various social relations with nature, social groups and individuals, and create and enjoy certain material

⁶ "Marx and Engels: Selected Works (Volume 1)", People's Publishing House, 1972, p. 18.

⁷ Deng Jiuping, "Zhang Dainian's Philosophy: An Anthology (Volume 2)", China Radio and Television Publishing House, 1999, p. 482.

and spiritual values. While handling and coordinating these social relations and pursuit of values, people show their unique value orientation and value pursuing, forming certain values. Definitely, the established values do not remain unchanged. They will change and develop accordingly with social development and change of people's needs, and are constantly enriched and developed through the test of practice. "When one's value recognition, value experience and value emotions of certain kind of things are proved through practice and accepted by others or the society, they may be intensified in his mind. By and by, after repeated testing, a set view and attitude will come into being, giving birth to new values."⁸ It is the case with personal values and so it is with the forming and developing of groups' or the social leading values in a given society.

To correctly handle the individual and collective relations is in fact to correctly understand and scientifically cope with the relationship between devotion and the principle of interests. In other words, the interests of the individual must be subordinated to the interests of the collective, which will scientifically promote the externalization of the key issue of values. In the new century, it is of great value to combine devotion with the principle of interests. It has important implications not only for the adherence to and development of historical materialism in theory, but also for the construction of harmonious society and development of harmonious world in practice.

⁸ Yuan Guiren, "An Introduction to Axiology", Beijing Normal University Press, 1991, p. 382.

On the Value Orientation of Modern Market Economic System

Zhen-ping Hu

China today is in the critical historical period transiting from a centrally planned economy to a socialist market economy. The way to understand modern market economy and its value orientation and how to establish and implement consistently the correct value goals during the construction of a new economic system, will play a very important role in the realization of China's socialist modernization ultimately. And it matters much as to the construction of a socialist market economic system. This essay focuses on the value orientations of modern market economic system.

1 The Value Orientation of Economic System

As we all know, the mankind related Values are the concept system of individual subjectivity. They refer to the understanding and reflection of objects as to the subjectivity and the relationship to its self. It could be meaningless as to value or its concepts without the relationship to the subjectivity of human being.

In the process of understanding and transforming the objective world, the outside world was marked by the imprint of mankind's own will. In this way, the objective world gets its own will or indicates people's desire. Thus it has a meaning of value. For example, People in the primitive society polished stones into stone axes. Although the material had not been changed, its form had changed. The cutting edge reflected the people's desire and aspirations. Stone axes obtained the cutting function as a certain tool to human being, which could be considered as **Value**. As to many things existing in the natural world, their value lies in the cognition of people. We can take the coal as an example. Only after we got to know that we could burn it to get heat, that is to say, when we recognize its nature as fuel material, the value relationship between people and the coal established. In

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addition, the natural world as an ecosystem closely related to mankind, there are many connections we haven't yet discovered or recognized. But they have been impacting actually favorably or unfavorably on people, no matter whether you are aware of it or not. It's just a thing-in-itself before we become aware of the connection that really existing and functioning. When we get to know them, we could use, change or develop them in the process of understanding and transforming the objective world. Let's take another example, in recent decades, people gradually recognized that forest and botany vegetation had been playing a critical important role in human development and the living ecological environment. And this had caused for serious concerns. We began to realize the great significance of forest and botany vegetation to ourselves and therefore tried to take measures to protect them, improving the ecological environment by planting trees and reforestation. Above shows that, humanized nature was endowed with value by understanding, reconstruction and use of the natural world.

With human society being reformed, knowing and changing the world is also the process in which human beings cultivates themselves and heighten their values. Human society as the sphere in which people live and work has its own objective laws that are independent of man's will. The objective laws demonstrate will, desire, requirements of countless people in the process of reforming the World. In a word, all sorts of organizations in the community, such as infrastructure, economic systems, laws and regulations, etc., are developed with the imprint of human beings' will.

Economic system, as a means of economic operation and management, has a dual nature. On the one hand, it must accord with the objective laws of the productive forces development, being independent of human will. On the other hand, as an operation scheme established by mankind, it embodies the concern of human being's value choosing, value appealing and value goals. It is generally accepted that the value guidance differs as to the economic system and the basic social structure. Systematically, basic social structure is about the question of class status in social and production relations. It is the choice of a certain class driven by its own interests, which directly represents the fundamental interests of this class. Economic system is directly related with economic activities, production and the development of productivity, which reveals the objective necessity and inevitable requirement of socio-economic conditions. This distinction between the two is very important. Deng Xiaoping, former leader of China, absorbed the perspectives of this distinction, distinguished market economy and capitalism, and adopted market economy as a mean in the construction of socialism. In the meantime, the value guidance of market economy cannot be ignored.

2 The Value Orientation of Modern Economic System

Socialist market economy under construction now in China requires the transformation of the traditional planned economy system into a modern market economy system, integrating the basic system of socialism and socialist spiritual

civilization into it. The probability and the way of combining the basic system of socialism, socialist spiritual civilization and modern economic system require value analysis of all parties that concerned, especially the deep value analysis of modern economic system. To clarify the similarities and differences of the value orientation of all parties that concerned, to differentiate what is primary from what is secondary, will do great in forming the values perspective adapt to socialist market economy. In this process, we have to identify the direction and seek common ground on major question while reserving differences on minor ones on value guidance of modern economy.

The market economy came into existence with certain objective prerequisite and basis, and its operation and further development as well. The introduction of the market economic system should be based on those preconditions and conditions. We need to acknowledge the impact to people's thoughts of market economic operation because of its value orientation and guidance.

As we all know, the market is a product of the division of labor and the exchange of commodities, and its objective environment is private ownership. Through careful analysis of the formation of market economy, we could find that the emergence of commodity exchange, even the formation of market economy, eventually aimed to solve the conflicts between the private ownership of production and the development trend of production socialization. As pointed out by Karl Marx in "Das Kapital": "We saw in a former chapter that the exchange of commodities implies contradictory and mutually exclusive conditions. The differentiation of commodities into commodities and money does not sweep away these inconsistencies, but develops a *modus vivendi*, a form in which they can exist side by side. This is generally the way in which real contradictions are reconciled."¹ Later in the Middle Ages, with the expansion of production scale, production efficiency, and especially the emergence of industrial machines, the conflicts between the socialization of production and private ownership were becoming more and more acute. Within the transition of feudalism to capitalism, the solution was to accelerate the operation mode of the market economy because of no fundamental change in the production of private ownership. While modern market economy is more a reflection of today's world socialization of production and the trend of globalization. Compared with the classical market economy, under the objective requirements of regulation in economic operation, modern market economy gradually developed a relatively complete market rules and other measures to make its working systems more suitable for the socialization of production and the trend of globalization, including economic planning and governmental intervention means. On the view of occurrence and development, modern market economy came into existence to fulfill and reflect the requirements

¹ Marx Karl. *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, Volume I, Part I, Chapter 3. *The Process of Capitalist Production*. Edited by: Frederick Engels. Revised and Amplified According to the Fourth German Edition by Ernest Untermann. Translated by: Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling, from the Third German Edition (of *Das Kapital*). Published: Chicago: Charles H. Kerr and Co., 1906

of socialization of production. Certainly, it's also a way to solve the contradictions within a society favoring production of private ownership, as to retain but not abolish private ownership. At the same time, we admit that, to adapt for the recent development of social productive forces and increasingly strong demands for further trend of the requirements in production socialization, the specific forms of ownership are also undergoing profound changes. The emergence of joint-stock is obvious a sign of those changes. The above analysis shows that, the fundamental values of the modern market economic system are oriented to the socialization of production and globalization, while others actually lie in serving the socialization of production and even the general trend in social development.

From the actual operation point of view, inherit of the classical market economy and great changes both achieved in the development as to the value orientation of modern market economy. The market economy demands as many market entities of their own independent economic interests as possible. These market entities are not only free accessible to markets, but also entitled to the pursuit of the maximization of their own benefits. Otherwise, neither a rational price system can be formed, nor can we achieve the optimal allocation of various resources. Otherwise, there is the market failure and market economy can not operate normally. The basic value requirements of the market economy imply to cultivate high qualities of market entities, such as independence, freedom and a sense of equality. Market economy played a significant role in promoting self-awakening; cultivating a positive and progressive attitude; stimulating initiative, creativity and pioneering spirit of each participant; and it enhanced the awareness of utility and effectiveness as well. At the same time, it would induce self-interest of individuals, non-ethical utilitarianism as well as a mere pursuit of fortune, material comforts and efficiency. While mostly the spiritual and cultural values and social justice was neglected. By enacting necessary laws and regulations and governmental policies on macroscopic readjustment and control etc., the modern market economic system strives to play its positive role in value guiding and maintaining its guiding principles. At the same time, it would effectively restrict its negative tendencies to prevent its impact on the economic development of the country overall. Western developed countries mature of the modern market economy, the Anglo-American economic model, the French model, the German model, or the Japanese model, all economically operate in different specific ways. But in order to reduce and eliminate the negative impact of market mechanisms, to ease numerous fierce contradictions in economy, politics and society, the modern market economy emphasizes enterprise market behaviors through specification, guidance, intervention and adjustment, on behalf of the overall interests of the capitalist countries to some extent. Some countries adopted a number of social security and social welfare policies. This shows that the modern market economy does not simply attach great importance to individualism or self-interest, nor connive laissez-faire, but tends to combine individual's interests with the interests of the community as a whole.

3 The Importance of Regulation, Sublation and Guidance in Value

There is a variety of modern market economic systems, which shows that every country built its own market economic model based on its special circumstances and the target of its own country. During the course, its own economic model has been infiltrated by the value target of the country's ruling class. The East Asian model, including the Japanese model, paid more attention to the collectivism. It is a combination of modern market economy and East Asian traditional ethical and moral concepts itself. While Anglo-American model emphasized on the personal role of the Anglo-Saxon, which was directly related to their tradition of personal-centered and centrally valued individualism in history. So nowadays people in the construction of a modern market economy system have not been inactive. Conversely, they could integrate their own values and orientations of value into the modern market economic system. Of course, this is conditional, which means there could not be any fundamental conflicts between the value orientations of the two. For example, in a modern market economy, you cannot adhere to the local protectionism or authoritarian, because it will completely conflict with the basic requirements of market economy.

We shall build a socialist market economy with Chinese characteristics, which means we should endeavor in combining socialism with a modern market economy system. This innovation in economic operation seemed incredible as to the traditional theory. However, if we put away all preconceived ideas, such as "capitalism is equal to market economy", and put aside the rigid understanding of socialism, undoubtedly we should be able to combine socialism with market economy. The fundamental possibility of combining the two together mostly lied in the fact that both of them were the result and requirements of socialization of production. The basic directions of the two for the future social development are common and consistent. The modern market economy was the economic operation transformed to adapt to the requirements of socialized production with no fundamental changes in private ownership. However, socialism will require eventually the elimination of exploitation. It will eliminate polarization and ultimately achieve common prosperity. Honestly, we admit that it is a movement from the reality; it could not be deviated from the universal existence of private ownership and the concept about it in modern China although. This is the total circumstance in which we promote social progress. In this case, there is no wonder that we would adopt the market economy as economic means for our own sake.

To be more specific, we also can find that socialism and market economy share a lot compatible to each other in value orientation, even many value guiding principles of socialism were upgraded from the modern market.

Under the condition of market economy, each individual can get what he needs through equivalent exchange the products of labor on the market with others. Only when his own products meet other people's needs, or his service or labor is accepted by others with satisfaction, he will get his reward. The enterprises will

find it's hard to survive in the fierce competition, if they can not provide high quality and efficient services and commodities. You can forecast their gloomy prospects of future growth and development. Furthermore, no enterprises and individuals can keep away from the needs of the society. They must adjust themselves to adapt to the community and provide service for it. Thus you could obtain recognition of the community or others, and achieve your own interests and values; However, on the contrary, the enterprise or individual will achieve a higher level of production and create higher production efficiency, only when they provide cost-effective service for the community and others.

The market economy relies on serving each other, and it's a mechanism that makes the services more and more considerate and increasingly efficient. The modern market economy put this service-oriented sense to a very important position. For example, the authors of *The New Business Values for Success in the Twenty-First Century: Improvement, Innovation, Inclusion, Incentives, Information* described the Western business values before and after the Second World War and looked through many different ideas and strategies for success in the twenty-first century and challenge our thinking at a conceptual level. Finally they pointed out that there is a transformation from "Total Quality" to "Total Value. The former referred to satisfy the customers' needs, and the latter "*may be defined as the value possessed by an interested individual plus the value that the customers will receive.*"² That is to say, the modern market economy has made business managers to consider not only the interests of the shareholders and themselves, but also the customer's benefits. And this value guiding direction is not contrary to the socialism concept "serve the people", it even demonstrates this conviction, that is, different approaches but equally satisfactory results.

A Market Economy is an economy which operates according to the rules and can effectively improve the level and quality of services. The market mechanism is driving by benefits, which would stimulate people's production enthusiasm, and meanwhile it could stimulate the desire of some people to desperately gain greedy personal interests. Particularly, when the rules for economic operation have not been set up, we would find social ethics ruined, moral declining, and commercial fraud and bribery really common. These serious situations are great obstacles for the development of market economy, which have already destroyed the principle of equivalence exchange and disturbed the normal operation of market economy. Therefore, it is severely urgent to set up strict legal system and market rules, just like other competitive activities such as rules for playing chess, poker or football. If not subjected to rigorous regulations and strict law enforcement, the economy can't make itself the market economy and it cannot run normally. To fulfill this target, we also need a large number of people with certain legal consciousness. The perfectly established economic laws and regulations and widespread popularity of legal

² P. R. Morris, John Persico, *The New Business Values for Success in the Twenty-First Century: Improvement, Innovation, Inclusion, Incentives, Information*. Haworth Press in New York 1997:18.

consciousness will forcefully guarantee economic operation and the quality of people's mutual service. Throughout the formation and development history of the market economy in western developed countries, we could find that most of them had experienced hundreds years of barbarism at early stage. Till this day, they did have enhanced a lot in the quality of mutual service and moral status due to the maturity and perfection of the market economy rules, with lots of people aware of legal and code of ethics. The modern market economy that based on laws and institutional rules that would apply to everybody, has certain enlightenment and reference to draw on for building our socialist country ruled of law, especially its pursuit of strengthening the rule of law.

As for the connotative meaning of market economy, the subjective consciousness such as independence, autonomy and equality, is not opposite to socialism, as long as it is not transforming to egoism to the extreme and it does not harm the benefit of the community or damnify collective and personal interests. This would coincidentally agree with what MAO Ze-dong wrote in a letter in the Yan'an period (for the town in Shaanxi where the communists were based), "*If individuality is not emancipated, there will be no democracy and there will be no socialism thereupon.*"³

Nowadays, China is undergoing the transition of economic system and unsurprisingly there exists a turbulence and confusion of moral concept in moral field. This turbulence and confusion might be caused by many reasons, but mainly lies in: Firstly, the modern market economy system is still under construction, many of the rules and regulations urgently need to be enacted and perfected. And it takes time for the citizens to get to know and accept them. Secondly, in such a big change at the turning point of transition, there would arise many doubts and questions in people's ideological understanding, consequentially causing problems in beliefs and faith. Thirdly, the transformation from planned economy to market economy was a process of two totally different operational systems displaced by each other; there inevitably co-exist a lot of internally conflicting rules and regulations while it failed to offer applicable guidelines to meet the demand. Fourthly, the market economy itself truly has a dual nature in value direction and guiding.

In such a complex case, the correct value guidance is very important for us to get out of the vicious cycle of misunderstanding. This value guidance should be based on the combination socialism and modern market economy, and also should be based on the development of social productive forces and production socialization. First of all, this sort of value orientation should be reflected in our laws and policies, and at the same time it embodies in ideological education and people's spiritual and cultural life. As to the rapid expansion of negative phenomena in the running of market economy, it is quite important to note that we should not treat the bad as good. We should pay close attention to the construction of a market

³ Mao Zedong, Selected Letters of Mao Zedong (Chinese Edition= Mao Zedong Shuxin Xuanji). People's Publishing House, December 1, 1983:239.

economy and fight consciously bad behaviors at the same time. In short, for all the orientations of value emerged in the transformation to the market economy, it is vitally important to regulate, abandon and guide them. This is helpful for the establishment of correct values of the people through continually improving people's knowing and moral level.

Three Doubts About the Comparison Between Western and Chinese Views of Harmony from the Perspective of Axiology

Maotang Dai and Jialian Li

Moral ideas are the production of a particular history, the reflection of a certain culture, and the symbols of a national thought. Western and Chinese views of harmony are respectively formed into different system of theory with quite different historical, cultural and ethical background. Researchers, starting from various standpoints, have put forward some important conclusions on comparison between views of harmony in Western and Chinese ethics. Some of these studies have promoted the comparison between the two cultures, while some are quite confusing and needed to be clarified. The chapter is going to doubt three popular statements, such as “Only individualism is promoted in western ethics”, “Virtue is promoted only in Chinese ethics” and “China has no law of western style in some sense” and tries to clarify some misleading conclusions on the comparison between Western and Chinese views of harmony.

1 Is Only Individualism Promoted in Western Ethics?

It is commonly found that the view of harmony in Western culture has not been attached much importance by Chinese researchers, who believe that individual values are so highly promoted that the concepts of harmony do not even exist in Western culture.

Many researchers in China believe that individual orientation is the root of Western morals, which is established by means of commodity that breaks the sense of community. As the basis of western morals, individualism, which promotes individual rights, achievements and enjoyments, penetrates all the aspects of western ethics, and represents the nature of western moral principles. In western cultures, self is the measure of value, and the individual is the subject of value.

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People in western countries believe the dignity and even divinity of the individual. They think from the perspective of their own, make judgments and decisions for themselves, and live in a way they consider appropriate. Anything that violates these individual principles is regarded morally wrong, which profanes the God. What is worshiped by them is closely related to individualism. They never argue whether they should give up individual values or not, because the abandon of individual values means the abandon of their nature.

Researchers further argue that concepts like self, autonomy and individuality are very popular in Homer Age. Each God in Greek Mythology has his or her own distinctive features and unique personality. Hegel used to assert that the personality of Greece is the feature of beauty. In ancient Greece, Atomism of Democritus, from the perspective of natural philosophy, demonstrates that individual principles are the general principles of the universe. According to Democritus, inseparability, as the most fundamental rule, expresses the inviolability of private property and the independence of individuals. Protagoras of Sophists regards human sense organs as the starting point of all judgment, and comes to his famous conclusion that “Man is the measure of all things”. Socrates, from the perspective of ethics, further explores the rationality and core values of individual consciousness. He puts forward the philosophical task of “knowing yourself”, and first establishes the concept of self-awareness in philosophy. Epicurus demonstrates the autonomy of individual activity by assuming that atoms can automatically deviates from straight lines. In middle ages, although all the souls are regarded as an integral entity—the Holy Spirit, which breaks through the external independence of individuals, each soul, in its mortal life, is independent with respect to other souls, and at the same time each soul confronts the God independently. The Renaissance Period is even flourished with the power of individual ideas. With the advancement of modern science, modern western philosophy moves towards Subjectivism which focuses on the promotion of the value and independence of the individual. Modern Monadology of Leibnitz further provides philosophical evidence for the independence of an individual. The theory argues that just as monads, which cannot be intruded, each individual is independent and incommensurable. Kant says man is the ultimate goal of the world. According to Fichte, self is the most absolute and the highest source of all creation. These are all typical evidences of Subjectivism. These German philosophers demonstrate individual principles from rational perspective, while some British and French philosophers argue these principles from experience and perceptual perspective. Like Hobbes, Mandeville expresses the idea of egoism in *The Fable of the Bees*. Claude Adrien Helvetius, from the perspective of egoism, claims that self-protection, self-respect and the pursuit of self-interest are the common nature and basic law of human beings. Contemporary Western ethics, which proposes the maintenance and development of individual liberty, mainly explains individual rights from political and national perspective. If Karl Popper is regarded as the representative of neoliberalism in terms of philosophy, Hayek in terms of economics, then Robert Nozick did so in terms of politics.

However, if these are taken as proof to believe that the values of individuality are so highly promoted that the concept of holism and harmony does not even exist in Western ethics, it would be a big mistake. As a matter of fact, many researchers, in their comparison between western and Chinese ethics, have asserted that the concept of holism and harmony is the distinctive feature of Chinese ethics. Indeed, Chinese traditional ethics emphasizes that the group's interest is the supreme, which need to be given precedence. In China, an individual, as a part of a group, is supposed to attach and submit unconditionally to the group. Nation and family are the subjects of value in Chinese collective orientation, which means an individual is expected to be loyal to the nation and filial to his or her parents. Nevertheless, this by no means implies that collective orientation does not exist in Western culture. Actually, rational western societies, on the one hand, promote individual autonomy and liberty, which is the aim of itself with supreme values; on the other hand, they emphasize that liberty does not imply an individual is allowed to do what they wish, and assert that genuine individual liberty has to suppress unreasonable desires and the freedom has to be based on certain rules. These are principles that are able to guarantee the freedom of all social members without hurting others and violating harmony.

The purpose of westerners' emphasis on rational rules is to maintain harmony and social justice. Overall, Western ethics both highlight the protection of individual rights, and stress the maintenance of social justice. In this kind of ethics, an individual and a group are not mutually exclusive. The development of an individual's goals does not mean to sacrifice the goals of a group, and the protection of the group's interests does not necessarily mean to sacrifice the interests of an individual. In ancient Greece, justice is the summary of all morals. Harmony, order and proportion are the most profound believes in Greece.¹ "Beauty is harmony" is the rule that is obeyed by all kinds of Greek arts, it can be found that the buildings and sculptures in Greece reveal proportional structure in human body and objects, and show the harmony in quantitative relation. Besides, "Harmony is virtue" is also the basic belief of Greek ethics. Democritus claims "National interests should be placed beyond of all things, so that the country could be governed well. Neither excessive argues is permitted to influence fairness, nor violence is allowed to impair public goodness".² Plato constructs his Utopia strictly following the principle of justice. According to Plato, to know oneself without transcending the boundary of a man can be looked as the sign of justice, which implies a harmonious relationship among different parts of a society, and means that each individual with different social status can perform his own functions. Therefore, in *The Republic*, Plato does not clarify what a good man is, but he clearly describes what a good society is supposed to be. Hegel, in *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*

¹ Dai Maotang: *Western Ethics*, Hubei Renmin Press, 2003, p. 130.

² *Ancient Greek and Roman Philosophy* edited by teaching and research office of the history of foreign philosophy, philosophy department, Beijing University, the Commercial Press, 1960, p. 120.

(Volume 2), holds that, what Plato concerns is his Republic and his ideal country, as for the individual, he is mere the means, to establish relationship with the individual is to realize his Republic, and that individual is insignificant. In *The Nicomachean Ethic*, Aristotle says that, just like ethics is subject to politics, between the goodness of an individual and that of a community and country, to acquire and preserve the good of the latter is apparently more important and more satisfying. Aquinas in middle ages also pointed out “If a society of free man is under the governance of rulers for public well-being, this kind of politics is just and suitable for free man. Conversely, if all facilities of that society are subject to the ruler’s private interests instead of those of public, this kind of politics goes against historical trend, and is no longer just”, and he even claims “Public interests are prior to individual interests, and the former is more sacred.”³ In the time of modern age, ethics attempts to integrate the pursuit of individual happiness into social responsibility. Therefore, individualism does not go to the extreme of denying the interests of others and the public, which turns the value of individualism into a sort of reasonable one. The viewpoint of Kun Bulan of modern Britain Cambridge Platonist is typical: “The benevolence to all the mankind that each rational agent has, constitutes the basic elements of the happiest state that every one tries to reach within their ability; it is also a necessary condition for them to achieve the happiest state, thus the common interests of all people are supreme interests.”⁴ As to how to balance individual interests and public interests, Francis Bacon advances social welfare theory. He explains that the good of an individual belongs to the integral part of the good of a society, and that the latter is prior to the former; in other words, social welfare is prior to that of an individual, thus what is good for the happiness of the mankind as a whole is the highest moral ideal. John Locke also stresses that while pursuing individual happiness, people has to consider the happiness of others and that of the society. He points out, in his work of *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* that universal happiness is the greatest good, which is also what our desires tend to. David Hume not only faces up to the selflessness in human nature but also requires establishing a social alliance. He holds that, we must abandon the theory that explains all moral sentiments by self-love principles and we need to adopt a kind of sentimentalism of more justice and to admit that the interests of a community are not entirely unrelated with us. Jeremy Bentham, from the perspective personal interests, regards the greatest happiness of most people as the supreme principle of his ethics; he claims that the best political system is the one that is able to acquire maximum benefits and to ensure the balance of interests. Spinoza also emphasizes the harmony between an individual and a group, in his *Ethics*, he says that in order to maintain one’s existence, the most valuable thing to do is no more than to strive for harmony with all people, so that the mind and body of all are alike that of one,

³ *Selected Works of Aquinas’ Politics*, the Commercial Press, 1963, p. 70.

⁴ Edited by Zhou Fucheng: *Selected Classic Works of Western Ethics*, book one, the Commercial Press, 1964, pp. 694–695.

all are united to maintain their existence, and all are pursuing public welfare, therefore, everyone who is in the guidance of rationality is the one who is pursuing personal interests with rationality, all one is pursuing is also what one is seeking for others. Political philosopher Rawls has made the most typical statements about contemporary justice in his *The Theory of Justice* that justice is the primary value of a social system, every one, on the basis of justice, has the inviolability, which can not be infringed even in the name of overall interests of society, therefore, justice denies that it is legitimate to deprive some people of their freedom for others to share more interests, justice does not admit the greater interests that the majority enjoy are sufficient to compensate the sacrifices imposed on a small number of people, in a society of justice, equal civil liberty is guaranteed and it is not subject to political transaction or the balance of social interests. According to contemporary communitarianism, the value of a moral community is higher than that of a moral individual, which emphasizes the priority of community, relationship and interactivity among people to the self and uniqueness of an individual, and the priority of public interests to individual interests.

2 Is Virtue Promoted Only in Chinese Ethics?

In the comparison between Chinese and Western views of harmony, there is a viewpoint that the concept of harmony is the unique of Chinese culture, the reason for which is that Chinese culture pay special attention to virtue.

Different from the affirmation of interests, happiness and desires, which westerners take as the basic nature of human beings, Chinese traditional ethical values identify virtue with humanity. In Chinese ethics, man is regarded as a sort of moral existence. To be virtual or not is considered as the critical point of human and inhuman. It's for this reason that China is named as a nation of courtesy. In ancient China, moral philosophy is highly developed; the knowledge of natural science is overwhelmed by morals, so that it is generally believed that virtue is best promoted in China, and that the study of China is also the study of virtue.

In western ethics, indeed, there is a profound tradition of natural science concerning human nature, with a focus either on the satisfaction of sensual desires or on the importance of happy secular life. For instance, Epicurus says that happy life is the supreme good that we are born with, all the decisions we have made are based on happiness, and our ultimate goal is to acquire happiness, perception is the yardstick to judge good.⁵ However, we can not definitely assert that neither virtue is promoted, nor is there no tradition of virtue in western ethics, just like it is contradictory and even ridiculous to believe that people who study ethics do not

⁵ *Ancient Greek and Roman Philosophy* edited by teaching and research office of the history of foreign philosophy, philosophy department, Beijing University, the Commercial Press, 1982, p. 367.

pay attention to virtue, which is the same as the belief that ethics fails to explore virtue. For every one, every nation and every kind of ethics, as long as the most basic rationality is respected and adhered to, virtue is pursued, which is a fact that should not be overlooked. Actually, “In western ethics, there are always two competing ethical trends. One is based on the precondition of nature. Representatives of this trend from Protagoras to Dewey believe that humanity lies in sensibility and animality, and the basis of morals is the original natural nature of human beings. The other trend is based on the precondition of liberty. Representatives of this trend from Socrates to McIntyre believe that humanity lies in the rationality, spirituality and freedom of human beings and that to pursue virtue is to be good, otherwise, it is vicious. The latter trend claims that the essence of human beings lies in their rationality, for which they are moral without the restriction of natural laws, so that morals are regarded as the ultimate goal of their life, and as the fundamental regulation for them to be taken as human. From this perspective, the theory of virtue is developed. According to the former moral trend, the nature of human beings tends to the pursuit of pleasure and happiness. Moral is no more than a necessary and efficient means to realize happiness. From this perspective, the theory of happiness is developed.”⁶

Let’s make a general examination of western tradition of virtue. The theory of virtue is the mainstream pattern of Greek moral life and moral thought. The main stream of Greek ethics is to defend moral ontology. According to Socrates, who changes the study of philosophy into the study of morals, temperance, courage, intelligence, and justice are the main items of virtue. From the perspective of rationality, he is only concerned with the soul of a man, and demands to exclude perceptual desires and material interests out of morals. Plato believes that the idea of good is the eternal moral principle, and that the highest level of moral is to free spirit from body and to control desires with rationality. Aristotle makes the most profound and systematic exposition on virtues in his time. He claims that happiness was realistic practical activity that conforms to virtue and that true happiness is rational and speculative life following virtue. He claims in his *Politics* that the best virtue is happiness which is to realize the ultimate state of virtues. Although Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle explain the meaning of morals in terms of happiness or perfect life, they all refuse to simply change the morals into external means of sensual pleasure; instead, they manage to demonstrate that morals have its internal purposes, and that a moral life itself is the sole aim ought to be pursued. Christians advocate a sort of life that is completely conformed to virtues required by Christianity. Augustine, the representative of Christian ethics, advances “Seven morals”, namely, belief, benevolence, hope, temperance, prudence, justice and persistence. Holbach, the French enlightenment thinker, holds in *System of Nature* (Book two), that for everyone, morality is the most reliable route to happiness. Modern rationalist ethics advocates the power of reason, despises material comfort, promotes morality, and is concerned with inner spirits. According to

⁶ Dai Maotang: *Western Ethics*, Hubei Renmin Press, 2003, p. 89.

Spinoza's view in his *Ethics*, happiness means to act in accordance with the command of reason, sensual pleasure might only sully rationality, the reward of virtue is not happiness, but virtue itself. He says that the greatest state of virtue of our soul is to know God; the reward of virtue is not happiness, but virtue itself. Kant believes that virtue is the supreme goal in the pursuit of all happiness; good-will is the greatest good, while the joy of sensual experience is not sufficient enough to constitute a universally valid standard for the values of human behavior. By criticizing utilitarianism and eudaemonism prevalent in Britain and France, Fichte clarifies every one's moral responsibility—to control passion with reason, and to promote continuous self-improvement of human beings. While criticizing that contemporary moral languages and evaluation emphasize that human action should be accord with some kind of established rules, without caring for behaviors' intrinsic qualities, namely, moral qualities and intrinsic motivation, Anscombe, the earliest founder of the renaissance of contemporary virtue ethics, hopes to rebuild morality by establishing a kind of moral psychology basing on the inner heart of human being. MacIntyre, the representative of contemporary moralist, intends to rebuild the authority of inherent virtue promoted by Aristotle in the moral crisis of contemporary society. He absolutely opposes that morality can be realized by means of desires, utility and emotions. He hopes that people could cultivate self moral character and virtues in order to realize a sort of virtual life. Michael Slote, from the perspective of contemporary emotionalism, constructs an evaluation system for moral ethics on the basis of caring, which creates a new path for the revival movement of moral ethics.

The above analysis shows that, it can not be said that the theory of virtue exist only in Chinese ethics, because there is also a tradition of virtue which has been promoted in every period of history in west. What's more, for the reason of virtue, it can be said that there indeed exists the view of harmony in western ethics. However, because the moral tradition between Chinese ethics and Western ethics is quite different, the view of harmony has been discussed quite differently. For instance, the virtue in Chinese culture is based more on natural blood relationship, while virtue in western culture more on free will; the former focuses more on family bond, while the latter more on scientific rationality.

3 In What Sense does China have no Law of Western Style?

The government by law and the government by man are two main types of negative restriction mechanism adopted by each society to realize its value ideal and moral objectives. In order to ensure social justice and to guarantee the realization of the value ideal of overall harmony, Chinese and western ethics move respectively towards the government by man and the government by law. Chinese traditional ethics holds that when morals, as a kind of positive constraint, are not

sufficient to regulate human hearts, and to make people willingly give up desires of private interest, therefore the government by man is an excellent effective means; while western ethics stresses that while individual liberty and social justice is challenged, the government by law is an excellent choice that has the force of deterrent.

As mentioned above, western values not only stress personal freedom but also emphasize overall harmony and justice. According to westerners, only law can basically guarantee personal rights in the pursuit of freedom, and can ensure that the freedom of others is not disturbed and violated, so that the society could move forwards to harmony and justice. Strictly speaking, Chinese traditional ideas of value fail to well balance personal freedom and social harmony and justice. Either personal freedom is sacrificed because of the so called group interests, which results in absolute autocracy and uniformity; or group honor is impaired for some kind of private interest, which leads to the state of disunity and extreme conceit. Chinese ethics holds that in order to get rid of such ethical dilemma, the best choice is not the punishment by law but the stimulation of sympathy and the sense of shame in each heart. This is what Mr. Liang Shuming says, "The social order in China relies on etiquette and customs, while the west on law. For those who rely on law, rights and obligations need to be clarified without mutual disturbance; for those who rely on etiquette and customs, what need to do is just to emphasize traditions and customs. If the custom and tradition are well kept, the people will get along well with each other. To judge whether human relationship is harmonious or not, the most important is to examine the relationship between a father and a son and among other relatives. It's for this reason that filial piety and honesty are highly emphasized when public employees are hired. As mentioned in *Book of Filial Piet'*, morals, originated and developed from filial piety, are the foundation of etiquette and customs."⁷ In this situation, Chinese traditional ethics can not and do not generate the need for the law of western style, which is generally acknowledged by researchers.

However, it can not be generally conclude that China does not have the law of its own. As a matter of fact, ancient China has its own laws of their distinctive styles with respect to western laws, such as *the Law of Tang Dynasty*, *the Law of Qing Dynasty*, and etc. Then, in what sense can we claim that China has no law of western style? This question might be analyzed from at least the following two levels:

First, western laws are rich in the spirit of freedom and democracy, both to protect civil rights and to limit the power of rulers. Western laws even regard the conscious acceptance of punishment as a necessary demand of criminals' free will. Criminals, as rational presence, are expected to have consistent personality before and after committing crimes. To punish criminals based on free will is to admit the premise that criminals have integral and consistent personality, which is both the most fundamental respect for the personality of criminals and the supreme respect

⁷ Liang Shuming: *Highlights of Chinese Culture*, Academia Press, 1987, p. 308.

for law. While ancient Chinese laws are rich in autocracy, in which rulers are placed in a position with absolute inviolability. In the country, the king or emperor has absolute power, just like the chief of clan in a tribe. Laws are formulated and issued by the kings or emperors, who are even regarded as the law itself (the so called 'king is law'). Some laws, such as *Six Chapters of Law* in the period of warring states, *Law of Qin* in Qin Dynasty and the *Nine Chapters of Law* in Han Dynasty, are formulated by the emperors themselves. In this case, the law can easily become a manifestation of the will of the king or emperor, and a weapon to punish political opponents and to suppress civilians. While discussing the entity of Chinese monarch, Hegel points out in *philosophy of history* that, the entity is mere a man—the emperor whose law dominates the opinions of every one. The autocracy of ancient Chinese law is also manifested in the fact that until Qing Dynasty, all the written laws in Chinese history are criminal laws, and that pure civil laws and economic laws do not exist at all.

Second, the mainstream thought dominating ancient Chinese laws is the moral legal concepts promoted by Confucianism, namely, to explain laws with morals, to integrate morals into laws, and to supplement morals with laws. We can find the moral essence of ancient Chinese laws from their typical reprehensive *Law of Tang Dynasty*. According to this law, if a woman gives birth to a baby during mourning, she will be jailed for one year; and if a person amuses herself during mourning, the person will be flogged eighty strokes; if a wife beats up her husband, she will be put into prison whether the husband is hurt or not; if the husband is seriously hurt by his wife, the woman will receive a punishment three times of ordinary ones; if the husband is beaten to death, she will be sentenced to death by hanging; however, if a husband beats up his wife, he will only receive a punishment two times less than ordinary ones, if she is not hurt, the husband will not be punished. Traditional Chinese ethical principles have absolute priority with respect to the knowledge of natural science, which opens the door for ethical principles to intrude into the principle of laws. Therefore, it can often be found that traditional ethical classics have judicial effect. In other words, ethical tradition become "quasi-laws"; which means that to violate the ethical principles is to violate law and the person who violates the law is the one who is guilty of ethical principles. Strictly speaking, in ancient China, rather than there is no law, traditional morals and ethics are law itself. In this sense, there is no need in ancient China to have another system of law. However, the subjectivity of ethics results in the lack of set patterns in judicial sentence, which has a great deal of uncertainty and flexibility (the so called "it can be punished severely or lightly, leniently or strictly"). In this sense, we can find that the secret of traditional tyranny lies in the fact: morals are endowed with the authority of law, which is good for the maintenance of feudal ethical codes; laws are dressed in morals, which turn cruel punishment to be something tender. If we examine ancient Chinese law from the perspective of definite western law, this sort of ethical law is fundamentally against the law of western style.

The Value Basis of Evidence Rules

Baosheng Zhang and Chuanming Fan

1 Introduction: Law and Value

Jurisprudential thinking involves a certain “value” element,¹ since “law is a creation of human beings. And just like other human masterpieces, law can only be understood from the perspective of its internal ideas”.² As Roscoe Pound once said, “in all classic times of legal history, either in ancient or modern world, argumentation, criticism and logical application of value norms were all among the major activities of jurists”.³

Legal rules, as an instrument we human beings utilize to realize certain values, are inherently an evaluation and balance of conflicting interests from a standing point of values dimension. “Law provides greater protection to certain interests, while none or less protection to others. It orders or prohibits certain activities, and punishes those who have violated it”.⁴ Therefore, law, not only reflects value-preferences on the ontology level of what it is; but also embeds value calculation on the methodological level of how it is applied.

Application of legal rules is a process of legal reasoning by applying legislatively predetermined value-judgments with respect to specific cases. Thus, legal reasoning is in essence a process of paraphrasing the inherent value-judgment of law; it is a “value-oriented” form of thinking. “When determining a case, one shall apply those evaluations originally contained in the regulations according to

¹ See Gustav Radbruch, *Rechtsphilosophie*, Pu Wang (trans.), Law Press, 2005, pp. 2–4.

² Gustav Radbruch, *supra* note 1, p. 3.

³ Roscoe Pound, *Social Control Through Law*, New Haven, Yale, University Press, 1942, pp. 103–104.

⁴ See Karl Larenz, *Methodenlehre Der Rechtswissenschaft*, Aie Chen (trans.), The Commercial Press, 2005, p. 94.

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their inherent meanings”.⁵ Of course, in order to prevent misuse of judicial power at trial, judges are generally required to abide by logical rules of legal reasoning, instead of resorting to value-balance directly. However, in trials of difficult cases, due to the fact that the language of law has an “open texture” nature,⁶ limitations of legislator’s understanding, the social context when the law was enacted, as well as compromises by and between conflicting interests, the specific legal rules may be vague and are practically incapable of responding to diverse and changeable facts in real life. These in return leave room for judges to exercise their judicial discretion. Thus, as we can see, the application of legal rules is not simply as a process of logical reasoning. Value-balancing is also indispensable in order to make up for the incapability of formal reasoning.

Therefore, understandings of legal rules and judicial adjudication lead us to interpret “value” on the philosophical level. “The value relationship is a kind of connection between subject and object, which is measured from the standing point of the subject; value is the specific substance in such relationship, meaning the importance of the object to the subject. ...it represents the nature and extent of an object-toward-subjectification process. That is to say, the nature and extent of the object’s existence, characteristics and changes in nature accord with (or correspond to, or close to) the subject’s measure”.⁷ While legal rules, on one hand, are a human creation, they are, on the other hand, a special kind of “object” in judicial practice. Evidence rules, as an important part of the legal system, certainly have their own value foundation. Such value foundation is the premise for making and applying such evidence rules. Only after an in-depth study and understanding of the significance of these values, is one able to consciously make or apply evidence rules to promote and realize such values.

2 Fact-Finding and Evidence Rules

The judicial trial process, which is also considered as a process of legal reasoning, generally covers two stages: fact-finding and law-application. Fact-finding is a prerequisite for law-application; we cannot correctly apply legal rules without accurate fact-finding in the first place.

Fact-finding, as an epistemic activity in court, is a process through which the subject acts on the object by certain means. These means include, but are not limited to, material instruments such as forensic identification, knowledge instruments such as evidence rules, and language instruments such as direct and cross-examination. The subjects of an epistemic activity in court are a complex social composition, including plaintiff and defendant, litigators (including prosecutors),

⁵ Karl Larenz, *supra* note 4, p. 94.

⁶ See H.L.A. Hart, *The Concept of Law*, Oxford University Press, 1994, p. 128.

⁷ Deshun Li, *The Theory of Value*, China Renmin University Press, 2007, p. 79.

witnesses, and fact-finders (judge or jury). They are distinguished from each other by their own interests, perspectives, knowledge, functions and so on. Each of these different roles comprise one “court group” in which all parties interact with each other. Specifically, on one hand, evidence-presenter tries to prove his or her proposition of a fact, which is a process of persuading and influencing fact-finders, as well as a process of evidence-presenters’ interacting with each other; on the other hand, fact-finders actively try to reflect and construct the factual object, which is a decision-making process. There is a certain kind of interactive relationship between the parties and with the judge or jury, which makes each side consciously or unconsciously affected by others’ reasoning while they themselves make effort to influence others. The final fact-finding may be an outcome of the combined force of their interactivities.

During the interactions among the three-party “court groups”, fact-finders make determinations through active reflection and construction of the factual object. This is a process of acquiring case facts through certain a means named the “mirror of evidence”. Fact-finders are able to directly perceive evidence reflecting certain facts, but unable to have direct access to the case facts that indeed happened. Even if they have collected and perceived plenty of evidence, that is still not equal to having found the ultimate fact. Inferences still need to be made in order to analyze and generalize relationships between and among different kinds of evidence, as well as to catch connections between evidence and ultimate facts that have yet to be proven; from outside appearance to inner essence, eliminating the false and retaining the true. Fact-finders can only find facts “through” evidence—that is to say “across” evidence, which functions just as some pieces of mirror, “refracting” case facts (the object). The fact-finder (the epistemological subject) can only determine facts through the “mirror of evidence”. Thus, evidence is the only “bridge” that connects a factual object with an epistemological subject. As Neil MacCormick once said that, “‘evidence’ is something which enables us (a) to hold true propositions about the present; and (b) to infer from these, propositions about the past”.⁸

The inferential process of fact-finders by the means of a “mirror of evidence” in determining facts constitutes a chain of inferences from an Evidentiary Fact to an Inferred Fact then to a Fact of Consequence and finally to an Essential Element. In this chain, Evidentiary Fact is evidence presented to the jury in the courtroom by both parties concerned; Inferred Fact is fact-finder’s inference about the truthfulness of evidence; Fact of Consequence is a proposition of fact that is not presented but that the jury can decide to believe, on the basis of drawing an inference; the Fact of Consequence connects to the Essential Element again through an inference. The Essential Element is prescribed by substantive law.⁹ To complete this chain of inferences relies on some empirical knowledge or common

⁸ Neil MacCormick, *Legal Reasoning and Legal Theory*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1978, p. 88.

⁹ See Ronald J. Allen, Richard B. Kuhns, Eleanor Swift, and David S. Schwartz, *Evidence: Text, Problems, and Cases*, Aspen Publishers (2006), p. 119.

knowledge hidden behind every inference. Therefore fact-finding is mainly a process of experiential inference, that's to say, inferring with empirical or common knowledge. However, the inference process of fact-finders in reconstructing case facts through the means of a "mirror of evidence" is not like the case of a scientist exploring water on Mars because it cannot be regarded as a pure epistemic activity isolated from social impacts. On the contrary, it is governed by a series of legal rules, including evidence rules. Such regulations can be divided into four parts: I. What facts may be presented as evidence? This is the question of admissibility. II. By whom must evidence be presented? This is the question of burden of proof, and incidentally, of presumptions. III. To whom must evidence be presented? IV. Of what propositions in issue need no evidence be presented?¹⁰ Therefore, evidence rules can be seen as a 'court epistemology',¹¹ based on the recognition that there are certain regular patterns in fact findings.

There are certain justifications for evidence rules functioning throughout the process of judicial fact-findings. On one hand, they are dedicated to promoting accuracy of epistemic activity in the courtroom; on the other hand, they contribute to safeguarding other policy goals besides accuracy. "The law of evidence, in short, is not concerned exclusively with the pursuit of truth; it is an integral part of a legal system that pursues many different, and often competing, interests simultaneously".¹² In evidence law, the pursuit for truth and pursuit of value are two different aspects of the same issue, which together constitute the justifications for establishing a given evidence rule. The unification of truth and value determines the dual functions of evidence law: one is to promote truth finding—in pursuit of accuracy; and the other is to protect the universal society values—in pursuit of good will. And there is a competitive relationship between these two functions. "The goal of truth is in competition with other goals, such as economy, preserving certain confidences, fostering certain activities, protecting constitutional norms".¹³ The dual functions are reflected in evidence rules' value basis.

3 The Four Value-Backbones of Evidence Rules

Evidence rules are based on values that are shared by the great majority of people in the society. Professor Ronald J. Allen once summarized the potential justifications of evidence law as efficiency, policy and accuracy. In addition, he

¹⁰ John Henry Wigmore, *Evidence in Trials at Common Law*, Peter Tillers Rev., Little Brown and Company, 1983, vol. 1 pp. 22–25.

¹¹ David P. Bergland, "Value Analysis in the Law of Evidence", Vol. 1 of *Western State Law Review*, pp. 162–184 (1973).

¹² Ronald J. Allen, "The Future of Evidence Law", Presented at *The Third International Conference on Evidence Law and Forensic Science*, Beijing, China, July 16–17, 2011.

¹³ See Richard A. Posner, *The Problems of Jurisprudence*, Harvard University Press 1990, p. 206.

discussed five important values in American evidence law: (1) the appropriate means of resolving disputes; (2) the nature of knowledge; (3) the dynamic of small group decision-making; (4) moral and ethical concerns; (5) the relationship between ideals of justice and the value of efficiency.¹⁴ Here “small group decision-making” refers to a jury’s verdict, which is a peculiar value foundation of the Anglo-American Legal System. Beyond that, the other four values are universally applicable to both common law and civil law legal systems. David P. Bergland has listed eight values which serve as the basis of American evidence law: (1) Life; (2) Individual Liberty; (3) Stability; (4) Due Process; (5) Truth; (6) Judicial Economy; (7) Federalism; and (8) Health and Safety.¹⁵ Excepting federalism, a social system in some Western countries, the other seven values are also applicable in China. Therefore, even though in a modern value-plural society it is impossible to contain all social values in law, evidence rules shall represent the values shared by the great majority of people or the ones which are crucial to the development of that society. Among these fundamental values, the four most universal ones are accuracy, impartiality, harmony and efficiency, which constitute the value-backbones of evidence law.

3.1 Accuracy

Accuracy is a prerequisite for realizing judicial justice in fact-findings. Only when an accurate fact-finding is conducted can a dispute be settled effectively and may the rights and interests of all parties be protected. “Facts are anterior to rights and obligations... Without accurate fact finding, rights and obligations become meaningless”.¹⁶ Indeed, in order to guarantee accuracy it is necessary to impose guidance in the fact-finding process by applying evidence rules. “One might reasonably suppose that natural reasoning processes based on innate epistemological capacities work reasonably well, and thus typically should be deferred to in the pursuit of factual accuracy. This means that the law of evidence can be quite brief, and basically just let natural reasoning processes determine the outcome of cases. However, there may be recurring situations that lead people to error. In such a case, rules of evidence may attempt to correct for that systematic error”.¹⁷ From the standpoint of accuracy, commonality among different legal systems is apparent.

Firstly, both the principle of direct-verbal-trial in continental legal system and the hearsay rule in Anglo-American legal system serve the same purpose of

¹⁴ Ronald J. Allen, Richard B. Kuhns, Eleanor Swift, and David S. Schwartz, *supra* note 9, p.li, 109–110.

¹⁵ David P. Bergland, *supra* note 11.

¹⁶ Ronald J. Allen, “The Theoretical Foundations and Implications of Evidence”, Vol. 15 of *Evidence Science*, Vol. 15 No. 1, 2 (2007).

¹⁷ Ronald J. Allen, “The Future of Evidence Law”, Presented at *The Third International Conference on Evidence Law and Forensic Science*, Beijing, China, July 16–17, 2011.

accuracy in fact-finding. Both legal systems demand that fact-finders should appear at trial in person, with all material and documentary evidence presented in front of the judge and that witnesses testify in oral form (rather than in written form) with personal knowledge. Otherwise the authenticity of evidence will be challenged. In China, according to Clause 3, Article 12 of the *Provisions on Several Issues Concerning the Examination and Judgment of Evidence in Handling Death Penalty Cases*, “witness testimony that contains guesses, comments and inferences cannot be used as evidence unless they are in line with the facts when judged by ordinary life experience”. This provision has a role similar to the Opinion Evidence Rule in the common law system, which reflects the requirement of personal knowledge. However, the Hearsay Evidence Rule has not been established in China yet, and in practice witnesses have a low frequency of appearance at Chinese courtrooms. Even though it is provided in Article 187 of the amended *PRC Criminal Procedural Law* that “where the public prosecutor or a party concerned or the defender or agent ad litem thereof raises any objection to a witness statement which has a material effect on the conviction and sentencing of a case, the witness shall testify before court if the people’s court deems it necessary”, the narrow definition on conditions for witnesses appearing at a Chinese courtroom are very different from the Hearsay Evidence Rule, and form a less favorable approach for achieving accuracy in fact finding.

Secondly, it is also the pursuit of accuracy that urges us to adopt the Character and Propensity Evidence Rule. Because there is a possibility that character and propensity evidence may mislead fact-finders by emotion, bias or self-indulgence, increasing the risk of incorrect fact-finding. Both jurors from Anglo-American Legal Systems and judges from continental legal systems face this kind of risk.

Thirdly, the rules of authentication, identification and forensic examination are also of great significance for accurate fact-finding. As a prerequisite for admissibility, before being admitted, material evidence and documentary evidence shall be identified (to confirm identity) or authenticated (to confirm authenticity) if the adversary party raises an objection. These measures for ascertaining accuracy are also named as the “foundation for proofing”. Without such underpinning work, the fact-finding process would be difficult to carry out.

Lastly, the value of accuracy is reflected in proof standards. The standards of proof in civil and criminal procedures are different. In civil cases, the standard of proof only requires preponderance of evidence for certain facts; while in criminal cases, it requires “beyond any reasonable doubt”, since prosecutors on behalf of the state shall take burden of proof and prove essential elements of the accused crime to a higher level. Thus, most nations worldwide established a “beyond any reasonable doubt” or similar requirement as the standard of proof in criminal procedures. Such a standard is also established in China’s new amended *Criminal Procedural Law*, which provides that the conviction of a defendant should be based on “conclusive and sufficient evidence”, with a three-prong requirement: (1) all facts for conviction and sentencing must be supported by evidence; (2) all evidence used to determine a case must be verified under judicial procedures; and (3) all recognized facts must be proved beyond reasonable doubt based on all

evidence of the case”.¹⁸ In the trial of a death sentence case, the defendant’s criminal facts must be ascertained based on “conclusive and sufficient evidence”, which means that: (1) All facts for conviction and sentencing are backed by evidence; (2) All evidence used to determine the case has been verified through legal procedures; (3) There is no contradiction between difference pieces of evidence or between evidence and case facts, or the contradiction, if any, has been reasonably ruled out; (4) In a joint offense, the defendant’s role has been ascertained; and (5) The process of using evidence to verify case facts conforms to the logic and experiential rules, and the conclusion reached from evidence is exclusive.¹⁹ Thus, as can be seen, such requirements adhere to the pursuit of accuracy in the fact-finding process of criminal cases.

3.2 Justice

“Justice is the first virtue of social institutions”.²⁰ Naturally and rightly, it shall also be the primary value of evidence rules. Firstly, the Principle of Evidentiary Adjudication reflects the value that “everyone is equal in front of evidence”. The significance of evidentiary adjudication is embedded in the fact that it denies irrational fact-finding approaches found in history such as Divinity Adjudication and obtaining confession by torture. This is a representation of progress and civilization in criminal procedure. “The truth of a criminal case cannot be presumed without evidence, and this reflects the Principle of Presumption of Innocence”.²¹ In China, Article 2 of the *Provisions on Several Issues Concerning the Examination and Judgment of Evidence in Handling Death Penalty Cases* requires that “fact-finding of a case shall be ascertained with evidence”. Such legislation marks the formal establishment of Principle of Evidentiary Adjudication in China.

Secondly, the Principle of Proceeding in Accordance with Law is also a basic requirement of justice. In the process of judicial proof, it is the very embodiment of justice to abide by the legal procedures of presentation, confirmation, and identification of evidence as well as the privilege against self-incrimination. Article 50 of the *Criminal Procedure Law of the People’s Republic of China* provides that “judges, prosecutors, and criminal investigators must, under legal procedures, gather various kinds of evidence that can prove the guilt or innocence of a criminal suspect or defendant and the gravity of crime. It shall be strictly

¹⁸ See *Criminal Procedure Law of the People’s Republic of China*, Article 53.

¹⁹ See *the Provisions on Several Issues Concerning the Examination and Judgment of Evidence in Handling Death Penalty Cases*, Article 5.

²⁰ See John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, China Social Sciences Publishing House, 1999, p. 1.

²¹ See Guangzhong Chen (ed.), *Criminal Evidence Law of the People’s Republic of China*, Press of China University of Political Science and Law, 2004, p. 128.

prohibited to extort confessions by torture, gather evidence by threat, enticement, deceit, or other illegal means, or force anyone to commit self-incrimination". This provision has established the principle against self-incrimination from the perspective of legal procedure, which reflects the value of justice.

Thirdly, justice is the one and only justification for establishing the Rules of Excluding Illegally Obtained Evidence. "Evidences obtained through methods which infringe others' legal rights or violate legal prohibitions shall be inadmissible to determine case facts".²² Such demand for legality with regard to the source of evidence echoes the supreme value of safeguarding human rights. According to Michael D. Bayles' "Principle of Moral Costs", we should minimize the moral cost of legal procedure. The conviction of an innocent person will result in economic cost and moral cost while non-conviction for a guilty person only generates economic cost. Therefore, we always give negative evaluation to those cases in which innocent persons are convicted.²³

3.3 *Harmony*

The concept of harmony, as one of the evidentiary policies, shows human beings' value choice between the pursuit of truth and the pursuit of equity. Two aspects of evidence law reflect the value of harmony. The first embodiment is evidence which is inadmissible to prove negligence, culpable conduct or liability, like subsequent remedial measures such as activities of repairing bridges and roads and product recall, compromise and offer of compromise, or paying medical and similar expenses. This evidence is relevant to one's negligence and culpable conduct. However they are inadmissible to prove the subject's liability. The purpose of excluding this evidence is to promote behaviors for the public good and social advantage; in other words, we would never punish someone just because he or she has done something good to the public. However, Chinese evidence law still has no such rules promoting harmony value. For example, in the case of *Peng Yu*,²⁴ evidence of offering a compromise and paying medical expenses were not excluded by the judge. Instead, such evidence was served as the basis of the court decision on the defendant's liability. Such judicial practice would not promote but deter development of social harmony.

²² See *Some Provisions of the Supreme People's Court on Evidence in Civil Procedure*, Article 68.

²³ See Michael D. Bayles, *Principles of Law*, D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1987, pp. 26, 29.

²⁴ In this case, the plaintiff (an old woman) was knocked down on the bus stop and had the bone broken. Afterwards she brought a lawsuit against Peng Yu, who she blamed for her harm. Peng Yu was the one who had helped the victim up and took her to hospital. In the first trial, the judge did not exclude Peng Yu's act of rescuing the plaintiff. Worse still, the judge held this as evidence to prove his liability.

Another embodiment of harmony in evidence law are the Rules of Evidentiary Privileges. “Most rules of evidence are designed to facilitate the fact-finding process, but rules creating evidentiary privilege are different. For the most part, they exclude relevant evidence in order to promote extrinsic policies unrelated to accurate fact-finding. Their primary aim is to protect certain relationships and interests in the world outside the courtroom that are deemed of sufficient importance to justify the costs imposed on the judicial process through the loss of useful evidence”.²⁵ Among various privilege rules, attorney-client privilege, spousal and parents-children privileges matter most for promoting the development of a harmonious society. One fundamental justification for the Rules of Evidentiary Privileges is to indicate that the legal system actually pays more attention to protecting certain relationships rather than punishing the crime. In other words, the evidence system assumes that the value of finding truth at the cost of destroying the above-mentioned relationships is trumped by the value of maintaining such relationships at a cost of not finding the truth.

It is provided in Article 188 of the *Criminal Procedure Law of the People’s Republic of China* that three kinds of defendant’s intimate kin can be exempted from appearing in courtroom for testifying: “where, after being notified by a people’s court, a witness refuses to testify before court without justifiable reasons, the people’s court may force the witness to appear before court, unless the witness is the spouse, a parent, or a child of the defendant”. This provision resembles but also bears much difference from the privileged immunity rule of intimate kin as witness in evidence system of western countries. In the common law system, subjects of the privileged immunity include not only intimate kin, but also the defendant. In the contrary, according to Article 188 of the *Criminal Procedure Law of the People’s Republic of China*, subjects of the right refer only to the three intimate kin: the spouse, a parent, and a child of the defendant. In addition, Article 188 only exempts the above-mentioned persons from testifying in courtroom; it does not entitle them to enjoy the exemption right during the pre-trial period or to be exempted from testifying in written form. Thus, although an amendment has been made to the *Criminal Procedure Law of China*, the rule of privileges has far from been established in reality, causing difficulty for the harmony value be truly realized. Besides, although in theory lawyers representing a defendant have the right to keep confidential all information regarding such client,²⁶ China so far still has not established a formal evidentiary rule of attorney-client privilege in its legal

²⁵ See Ronald J. Allen, Richard B. Kuhns, Eleanor Swift, and David S. Schwartz, see supra note 9, p. 787.

²⁶ See Article 46 of *Criminal Procedure Law of the People’s Republic of China*: “A defense lawyer shall have the right to keep confidential the conditions and information regarding a client known in the practice of law. However, if knowing in the practice of law that a client or any other person is preparing for or is committing a crime compromising national security or public security or seriously damaging the personal safety of others, a defense lawyer shall inform a judicial authority in a timely manner”.

system. The best example is probably the *Li Zhuang*²⁷ case, which generated tremendous negative social impact. Since that case, most lawyers in China have no incentive to provide effective advocacy for the accused. This dilemma not only breaks the balance between the prosecution and the accused, but also becomes a threat to the defendant's human rights, and it even shadows Chinese lawyers' practice in criminal cases.

3.4 Efficiency

Conflicts always exist between the two values of human activities: justice and efficiency. When we try to pursue justice blindly we will probably sacrifice the efficiency value, and vice versa. Faced with this conflict, some scholars who adopt an economic analysis of law propose that "efficiency or wealth maximization should be the sole aim of the law".²⁸ On the other hand, John Rawls thinks efficiency should be subordinate to justice. He stated that "laws and institutions no matter how efficient and well-arranged must be reformed or abolished if they are unjust".²⁹ He sees justice as an unchallengeable reason for sacrificing efficiency.

Nonetheless, justice and efficiency do not completely contradict each other. Seeking efficiency may sometimes also serve the purpose of promoting justice. There are two major reasons for evidence rules to consider efficiency while also stressing justice. The first one is that the state is using taxpayers' money to subsidize litigation activities, but the litigants will not pay any attention to saving these judicial resources. As a consequence, the evidence system should impose some reasonable limitations on the activity of proof and try to avoid unnecessary waste. The other reason is that the rich and the poor are not totally equal with respect to their confrontation status in litigations. The rich may drag the poor into a disadvantageous position through a lengthy collection and presentation of evidence, which would substantively affects judicial justice. Thus, efficiency is an important reason for establishing the Rules of Excluding Relevant Evidence. For example, Article 403 of the *Federal Rules of Evidence* of the United States excludes relevant evidence, "if its probative value is substantially outweighed by a danger of one or more of the following: unfair prejudice, confusing the issue, misleading the jury, undue delay, wasting time, or needlessly presenting cumulative evidence". The *Criminal Procedure Law* of China also considers efficiency

²⁷ The lawyer Li Zhuang, who had defended the suspect Gong Gangmo, was charged with involvement in evidence counterfeiting and testifying impediment. The defendant Gong Gangmo informed against his defender that during their meeting, Li Zhuang once induced him to making up the testimony that he had been extorted confession from by torture, and abetted him in withdrawing the confession. The report by Gong Gangmo was employed as testimony to convict Li Zhuang.

²⁸ Michael D. Bayles, *supra* note 23, p. xvii.

²⁹ See John Rawls, *supra* note 20, p. 1.

as an important value of evidence law.³⁰ Besides, the system of time limitations on evidence-presentation in civil procedures reflects the pursuit of efficiency: “Both parties shall present his or her evidence materials to the court before the deadline of evidence-presentation, otherwise it is regarded as abandoning right of proof. In trial the court shall not organize confirmation of the evidence which is presented beyond time-limit by one party, except that the opposite party consent to the confirmation”.³¹

From time to time, there are conflicts among the four basic values of evidence rules—accuracy, justice, harmony and efficiency, and legislators or judges should set the priorities through a way of value-balance. For example, justice value is always a priority when it conflicts with the efficiency value. Investigation activities or speeding up the process of a trial by autarchy and obtaining a confession may improve efficiency at trial.³² However, we cannot accept despotic rule or going back to torture to extract confessions just for the pursuit of efficiency. The Four Value-Backbones serve as guiding standards for evidentiary legislation, and only when they are fully understood can we rationally amend the evidence law and make new rules. In the meantime, they are also the criteria by which evidence rules should be applied, and may effectively control judges’ judicial discretion in evidentiary adjudication.

4 Value-Balance in Evidentiary Adjudication

The principle of evidentiary adjudication put out a request of three Progressive requirements: “first of all, the formation of adjudication must be based on evidences; secondly, the evidences as basis of the verdict must have competency (admissibility); finally, the evidences should meet the corresponding legal requirements so that they can be used to make a judgment”.³³ Evidentiary adjudication requires the establishment of the System of Relative Free Proof, and it mainly regulates fact-finding with respect to procedures of proof, qualification of evidence or admissibility, and burden and standard of proof, while the probative

³⁰ See Article 2 of *Chinese Criminal Procedure Law*: “The aim of the Criminal Procedure Law of the People’s Republic of China is to ensure accurate and timely ascertainment of facts about crimes”.

³¹ See *Some Provisions of the Supreme People’s Court on Evidence in Civil Procedure*, Article 34.

³² Japanese jurist PengLaiXiaoXong consider that, if we “average the number of settled disputes by inputs of manpower or material resources” and use this for the evaluating-criterion, perhaps modern judicial system will be recognized as the most inefficient model of dispute-settlement. See PengLaiXiaoXong, *The Settlement of Dispute and Judicial System*, Yaxin Wang (trans.), Press of China University of Political Science and Law, 1994, p. 26.

³³ See Guangzhong Chen (ed.), *Criminal Evidence Law of the People’s Republic of China*, Press of China University of Political Science and Law, 2004, p. 127.

force is rarely exposed to compulsory regulation. In most countries, judges in judicial trials serve as the principal adjudicator of evidentiary issues, whose exercise of adjudication is mainly reflected in “being entitled to admit and exclude certain evidences in accordance with the provisions of law during the procedures of presentation, confirmation and identification of evidence”.³⁴

However, once evidence rules are codified, there is risk of becoming rigid. Historically, legal formalism stuck to the rules and ignored conflicts among different values in real life, the consequence of which was a failure to adapt to complicated situations and changes and thus resulted in many substantial unjust rulings. Therefore, even though the process of evidentiary adjudication shall apply evidence rules, judges shall still be allowed to have some judicial discretion. When applying evidence rules, judges shall utilize their experiential wisdom of “practical rationality” while not taking evidence rules as dogmas, nor applying evidence rules mechanically. Rather they should consider evidence rules as guidance and make specific analyses case-by-case, based on their own understandings of the values behind evidentiary rules.

Firstly, judges shall execute the power of admitting and excluding evidence by balancing various values. In American evidence law, judges’ discretion in admitting and excluding evidence comes from Article 403 of the *Federal Rules of Evidence*, the balance-test of which is to decide whether the possibility of “unfair prejudice, confusing the issue or misleading the jury” outweighs the probative value.³⁵ It is judges’ ordinary judgment to make such a balance-test. In practice, through the value balance-test, judges may exercise discretion of excluding certain evidence if he or she believes that the danger of leading to an unfair prejudice surpasses the probative value. For example, there are investigations against illegally obtained evidence which severely violates human rights. Similar regulations can also be found in Australian *Evidence Act 1995* (Article 135) and British *Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984* (Article 135). Justice Traynor once discussed the methods of value analysis of evidence law as follows: “...3. Identify the values which the rule is designed to protect, i.e., the purpose of the rule. 4. Identify other values which will be affected by the decision in the context in which it is made. 5. Anticipate the value effects of the application or no application of the various rules which might apply. 6. Select and apply the rule which when applied will serve the values it is designed to protect and which has the least negative effect on other values”.³⁶

³⁴ See Baosheng Zhang (ed.), *Proposal for Judicial Interpretations and Drafting Commentary of “Uniform Provisions of Evidence of the People’s Court”*, Press of China University of Political Science and Law, 2008, p. 131.

³⁵ See *Federal Rules of Evidence* of the United States, Rule 403 (Excluding Relevant Evidence for Prejudice, Confusion, Waste of Time, or Other Reasons): “The court may exclude relevant evidence if its probative value is substantially outweighed by a danger of one or more of the following: unfair prejudice, confusing the issues, misleading the jury, undue delay, wasting time, or needlessly presenting cumulative evidence”.

³⁶ See David P. Bergland, *supra* note 11.

Secondly, judges shall prevent unjust adjudication by properly applying rules of distributing burden of proof. It is stipulated in Article 2689 of the Italian *Civil Codes* that: “where provisions on the inversion of onus probandi or provisions on the aggravation of onus probandi ... cause great impediment for the party concerned to exercise a right, those provisions are invalid”. This rule authorizes judges to exercise the value-balance process to fix loopholes in distributions of the burden of proof, when it is “extremely difficult for one party to exercise his or her rights”, which is a violation of fairness. Similar regulations can also be found in the evidence law of China which states “when no specific provisions of law are found, and the burden of proof cannot be ascertained in accordance with the *provisions* or other judicial interpretations, the People’s Court can divide burden of proof according to the principle of justice and principle of good faith, and taking factors such as litigants’ ability of presenting evidence into account totally”.³⁷ This rule thus also authorizes judges to exercise the value-balance process to determine the appropriate distribution of burden of proof.

When judges exercise judicial discretion on issues such as admissibility or burden of proof by way of value-balancing, they should follow the Principle of “Consequences of Wrongful Ruling”, which serves as the ultimate limitation on judges’ discretion. The wrongful admission or exclusion of evidence affecting the substantive rights of the parties shall be regarded as a main cause for appeals by the parties or by the procuratorate, as well as a main cause for the appellate court to change the original judgment or to revoke the original adjudication and remand for retrial.³⁸ Besides, the system of reason-explaining in adjudication shall be improved. Article 79 of the *Some Provisions of the Supreme People’s Court on Evidence in Civil Procedure* states that, “People’s Court should explain in the adjudication documents the reason why an evidence is adopted or not. In regard of evidence with no disputes among parties involved, it is not necessary to be explained in adjudication documents the reason why the evidence is adopted or not”. The Principle of Evidence Adjudication requires that judges should provide legal reasons and justification for excluding evidence, which is the hardcore of governance under evidence rules and a mandatory obligation that judges must comply with. It is thus clear that evading this obligation will give rise to judicial corruption.

³⁷ See “*Some Provisions of the Supreme People’s Court on Evidence in Civil Procedure*”, Article 7.

³⁸ See Guangzhong Chen (ed.), *Criminal Evidence Law of the People’s Republic of China*, Press of China University of Political Science and Law, 2004, p. 609. He argues that: “the second instance is only a relief proceeding, the relief involving relieving the misjudgment of evidence made by the court of the first instance; and the provision involves the adjudication of the misjudged evidence disadvantageous to the defendant”.

5 Conclusion

Apparently, evidence law does not come from nowhere; on the contrary, it has deep roots in human epistemology and in constantly changing notions of value. It does not only reflect interaction between different epistemic subjects in litigation; but also shows the significance of the object to the subject, and furthermore, the mutual relationship between subject's demands and means of satisfaction. Evidence law is a unification of epistemology and value theory.

Evidence law has the dual-function of promoting the discovery of truth and in maintaining universal values of the society. Competition between the "pursuit of accuracy" and the "pursuit of good will" determines that principles of evidence law are in nature principles of value. The values shared by the great majority of people or the ones which are crucial in the development of society shall be represented by evidence rules. The theoretical system of evidence law should reflect those fundamental justifications behind evidentiary rules, which are four values: accuracy, justice, harmony and efficiency, as four value-backbones. They serve as guiding standards for evidentiary legislation and are also the criteria for applying evidence rules, by effectively controlling judges' judicial discretion.

Conflicts are inevitable among these four competing value-backbones of evidence rules, and legislators or judges should set the priorities through a way of value-balance. When conflict does happen, compromise has to be made in constructing evidence rules. For instance, certain needed exceptions to the admissibility rules shall be established.

The Connotation of Rule of Law: In the View of Axiology

Liqing Zhang

1 The Status Quo of the Research of the Rule of Law in Chinese Academic Circles

The research of the rule of law in China has long seen an emphasis on studying the rule of law from a perspective of its value, the feature of which is hidden in ancient Chinese legal ideas, came into existence during a modern transition of Chinese law, and has evolved to what is the present, and of which is shown in people's doubts about the effects of "rule by law only" and worries about law going against the will of the people.

Ancient Chinese thoughts on the rule of law, which are largely reflected by the legalists prior to Qin Dynasty (221BC–206BC), consists of a variety of advanced ideas such as legal publicity and universality, taking law as the sole criterion, anyone including the monarch being subject to the law and even a contrast between "rule by man" and "rule by law".¹ However, the ideas of the legalists calling for "rule by law" failed to become the mainstream in ancient China because of its idea of "governing by force" rather than "governing by benevolence". In the late 19th century, some eminent Chinese thinkers began to accept the concepts such as liberty, rights and the rule of law. Some doubts were always cast on "rule by law only" throughout modern China even though some thinkers then dreamed of making the rule of law a reality and took it as "a good way to save China". Liang Qichao could serve as a good example in this respect as an influential thinker. Liang advocated the rule of law at the beginning of 20th century; meanwhile, he also repeated the shortcomings of the legalists and the ideas represented by them.

¹ Such as "the master depends on oneself; the law depends on the rules. If the rules just come out of oneself, it is not rational; so governance by master is a kind of dictatorship, but governance by law can govern perfectly." YinWenZi, DaDaoShang.

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According to Liang, rule of law was “too hard to be compatible with the features of China”, “legalists regard people as machine, so they use ‘the mechanic way’ to control people, they are not aware of the difference between human nature and objects”; “a strong belief in the rule of law is tantamount to a strong belief in the state power, and in the end individual liberty is doomed to be swallowed by the state;” “to let the people make use of loopholes of law to be free from punishment without feeling a shame’ as the Confucian school said”.²

An introspection about the legalists by Liang Qichao a good example to present a scenario of what were advocated by some Chinese thinkers in the first half of 20th century who grew up in the context of Chinese traditional culture, to show us what and how they expected of the rule of law. As for their doubts about the rule of law, they are worried about not only whether it could bring order and prosperity to China, but also whether it could meet the cultural requirements of the Chinese people, and they were concerned about what final consequences it would have on the people and what a life to live by the people. In one word, it was what the value of the rule of law would have on all people.

Following the 1920s, there were a lot of insightful ideas among people in the ideological sphere about the questions such as human rights, the state and the law, the rule of law etc. The ideas regarding the rule of law were full of aspirations for China by the thinkers based on the western model. Driven by the urgent needs of that time, modern Chinese thinkers insisted on a close relationship between the rule of law and the prosperous and powerful country, and at some extent taken the rule of law as one of the necessary measures to fulfill the latter, they paid more attention to the instrumental value of the rule of law.³ Nevertheless, it did not mean that they had nothing more penetrating thoughts about the rule of law as their thoughts were greatly influenced by the Chinese tradition when they tried to construct the ideas of the rule of law in China. By comparison western thoughts on the rule of law were shaped in practice. When the conception of the rule of law introduced into China by Chinese thinkers, some changes were made unconsciously partly due to their focus on whatever impact the rule of law on the way of Chinese life. In the depth of heart of most modern thinkers, it was urgent to have a rich and powerful country, but this was a short term goal, not the ultimate goal of a harmonious society. As far as the people’s lifestyle is concerned, both the rule of law and the prosperity are believed to be the instruments; the harmony of life of a “virtuous” man was the ultimate living picture of modern thinkers. So, “virtue” was the most important objective of modern Chinese thinkers. If the rule of law could not promote the virtue and could not help to realize a “good society”, it was

² See Liang Qichao, *The history of political thoughts in Pre-Qin period*, Tianjin ancient books publishing house, 2004, pp. 181, 256.

³ On this point, see Benjamin Schwartz, *Search of wealth and power—Yen Fu and the West*, translated by Ye FengMei, Jiangsu people’s press, 1990, in this book, “seek prosperity and regards liberty as the instrument or process to the objective of the prosperity of country” becomes the most popular explanation of the character of modern Chinese thoughts, it is called “the paradigm of Schwartz”.

not worthy of being struggled for and pursued. More exactly, the rule of law must have the value of promoting the virtue of a person.⁴

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, there was once a discussion about the rule of law, but it was not done in a full extent. After the 10-year disaster Cultural Revolution, a series of heated discussions began centering on "rule of law" and "rule by men" with topics ranging from "rule by law" and "rule of law", to "rule of law" and "rule of morality". Although there had seen a victory of the idea of the rule of law at the end of every discussion, there was no clear differentiation between "the rule of law" and "rule by law" in the practice of over 20 years. With the objective of "ruling the country in accordance with the law and building a socialist legal system" by the Chinese government in the 1990s, the academic circles embarked on a spree of a study of the rule of law. There were many kinds of expressions in how to understand the connotation of the rule of law. In general, the most important characteristic was to pay attention to the value of the rule of law. Popular attention was paid to such concrete issues as human rights, liberty, equality and justice as is quite different from the case focusing on the virtue of a person in the first half of 20th century,

For a long period in studying the rule of law in Chinese academic circle, the researchers attached great importance to the relationship between the rule of law and its value, gave much attention to the value objectives. However, this tradition was reversed at the beginning of this century. Following the introspection of the research of the rule of law and the rising of the methodology of jurisprudence, the mainstream of the research was how to realize rather than construct a theory, pay more attention to the concrete and technical methods in judicial practice, or under a more empirical approach to study the progress of reform in the Chinese road to the rule of law. On one hand, this endeavor was worthy of a good appraisal, especially at a time when China's socialist legal system is in its preliminary form, it is most important that the rules of law would be implemented in judiciary and the laws would be strictly enforced. Paying attention to judiciary is the reflection of the characteristics of the time; On the other hand, in the progress of introspection of the reasons of unsatisfied research of the rule of law, it seemed to be a "malady" or "defect" that pay more attention to the value of the rule of law since value is a subjective uncertain conception, too much concentration on the value will make the implementation of rule of law even more difficult.⁵ I agree that if we

⁴ See Zhang LiQing, *the research of human rights in modern China—in the view of thinkers*, China University of political science and law press, 2012.

⁵ "the theory of substantive value in the research of the rule of law, such as including liberty, democracy, justice, human's dignity... is a kind of conceit in theory, the ideal and substantive views lead to the sad prospective on the way to the rule of law in China", Huang wenyi, *the introspection of the development of Chinese law*, the law press, 2012, p 124; "Insisting on giving one or some value significance to the conception of law, it is sure to have some kinds of moral or political philosophy as its basis, and this results in a lot of unnecessary debates which are difficult to get common views and could distract the concentration on the basic problems of the rule of law." Pang Zheng, *the diversity and consistency of the conception of the rule of law—and the retrospection of the method of the studying of the rule of law*, Zhejiang social science, 2008.01,

try to find one or several concrete and unchanged objectives for the rule of law, it is harmful for the practice of the rule of law. But regretfully, in the progress of introspecting, the main problem is that it did not go in a right direction and went to another extreme point on the contrary. The discussion of the value of rule of law was “shelved” or just replaced by “inter-value of law”.

So, now, the key issue is that can we study the rule of law without taking into consideration of its value? What is the relationship between the value and the rule of law? Can we catch the connotation of rule of law without the conception of value?

2 The Root and the Problems of “to Belittle or Evade” Value in the Study of the Rule of Law

The research on the rule of law in China is influenced by the western academic trend. Since the middle of 20th century; formalism is one of the mainstream theories in the western academic circles. We can draw some common characteristics from various interpretations of the meanings of formalism:

1. As Raz said, the rule of law is an intrinsic priority of law and a perfect instrument to realize the law.⁶
2. The rule of law means a series of formal and procedural principles and rules with institutional construction as the core of the principles and these formalities make the law become the law.
3. If a society is regulated by these rules, the lives of people are controlled by these rules and the society has its orders, we can say the society is run under the rule of law.
4. The rule of law doesn't involve the substantive value,⁷ in other words, it keeps a neutral value. Even referring to value, the rule of law either has some kind of intrinsic value (or called intrinsic character of law, or priority of law) or evade a pursuit of value in the studies of rule of law.

The root of these views about the rule of law is the ontology knowledge of law. Any view of the rule of law was always supported by the corresponding views of law. Generally, formalism regards the law as “a system of rules” which has the following main characteristics:

(Footnote 5 continued)

p 72; “it has been showed that people were so good at studying at the rule of law in the view of value but not at the method and technology in the research of the rule of law in many years, this is an obvious defect in knowledge.” Jiang LiShan, *the method in the reform of the rule of law*, the law and the social development, 2012, 04, p. 3.

⁶ Joseph Raz, *The Authority of law*, translated by ZhuFeng, Law press China, 2005.

⁷ Joseph Raz, *The Authority of law*, translated by ZhuFeng, Law press China, 2005, pp. 186–187.

1. Law only refers to the existing rules. Even if it is not equal to the law just based on the legal procedure and guaranteed by the force of state, it focuses on the rules which can have its actual effects on people's acts.
2. Mainly rely on empirical method and positive approach and it dislikes the metaphysical or undetermined methods.
3. The legitimacy of law is mainly based on the formal requirements; it stresses the character of the system and believes that this does not impact the legitimacy of law whether the law accords to the standard of morality or social customs.
4. The formation of law does not rely on the value and the rules are not subject to appraisals by the value, in other words, "the division of law and morality" is advocated, the issues of value are left to be discussed in moral and political philosophy.

The research on the rule of law will focus on two aspects when the law is regarded as "a system of rules". One is about the requirement of regularization of rules from a standpoint of logic, for example, the percept publicity, universality, understandable, ought implies can, reconcilable of the rules; the other is the effect of the practice. "Similar cases be treated similarly", the formal characteristic become the key requirements of the rule of law.

The formalism has its historical background. In the late 20th century, there formed the basic legal systems which were relatively stable and included some principles to the satisfaction of the basic human needs, so it is necessary and rational that the academic circles pay attention to the system of law and its realization. But sometime this view goes to another extreme to tend to evade the value, just because the discussion of value is difficult and complex, thus in order to gain the clear and determined law some just pay attention to the authority of law and the formal probe, at the end, this research trend twisted the nature of law, resulted in some problems in theory and practice.

Firstly, as far as law is concerned, can the formalism be separated from the substantive content? I don't think the rule of law can be purely formal. For example, when we talk about the standard of "understandable rules", it seems to be a pure problem of logic and has nothing to do with "value", it seems that if the languages are clear and the logic is right, we can have a unified understanding of the meaning of one sentence. But the question is who is "we"? Who can get the same meaning from the same sentence? Or who is the subject to understand? The legal community or ordinary people? The different subjects are subject to different requirements on how to understand the same rules, and they will get different understands of the same words as they are in different situations. Should we adopt the professional or plain language in the rules of law? If you choose some group as the subject to "understand", you must give some reasons, and at last value must be taken into account. As for the precept "similar cases be treated similarly", the problems also arise, if the rules prescribed that only men have the right of vote, and in practice, it is the same case, is this "similar cases be treated similarly"? I think there will be different explanations, any explanation it will not be satisfactory if only formal principles are applied. Besides when new situations occur before the law such

questions as euthanasia, homosexuality and adoption, although the existing law can give us some thoughts on how to handle them, but we need to get the answer outside the existing law, the question of “value” must be involved in.

Modern society has witnessed two prominent trends growing up at the same time. One trend is the tide of the rule of law, which mainly refers to the fact that both the acts of the individual and the government were required to abide by the law; the other is that every individual’s uniqueness must be valued and his/her unique existence must be protected by law. The two trends have some tensions when they promote each other; the individual expects more choices and decisions to act on his own judgment. So under these two trends, the key issue is how can the individual accept a coercive legal obligation with his own interior value judgment? If one acts according to his own judgment but contrary to the law, or if the law made one’s act contradicts with his interior value, how can he obey the law? If he has to obey, what is the reason? If such explanations as god, belief, objective law, order, punishment, and coercion had been the reasons in the past, it is sure that these reasons have not the same effects as before. This can be embodied in today’s practice of law. The individual opinions are forming an important source of public evaluation relying on the modern legal principles and the modern technologies such as the internet to influence in every step of legal progress from legislation to judiciary. The most urgent and important task is how to make the law compatible with the public value judgment, and how to make the law with coercive force co-exist with a multi-cultural reality. The complex and difficult problem needs to be solved from a collective perspective of politics, law, morality and culture, and the discussion in the field of law is more important. It can not be solved by the way of formalism only. One cannot get dignity when only treated in the similar way as others, governing by oneself is the true source of dignity. The pure formalism of the rule of law can not give us an interior reason to obey the law, and also cannot preclude the dangers arising from law, the power can not be limited just by pure formalism. Law is not just the system of rules. How should we regard the nature of law?

3 The Nature of Law in the View of Axiology

What is the nature of law? Each legal school has its own answer. In the view of axiology, the descriptions are as follows:

1. Law does not have the same nature as the natural objects. Law is the result of design and arrangement by human beings for their own lives, and it is a reflection of human aspirations and demands. That is to say, law is the result of human beings who exist as value beings.

To someone living under some kinds of law, law is the standard which can guide, regulate, and restrict their conducts. There were many kinds of explanations about the origin or nature of the standard, some regard it as being made by the mysterious strength or some kinds of objective rules, or just argue that “existence

is reasonable”, one should accept the existing law. These explanations neglect the most important factor in law which is the creativity of human beings. Law is the result of human expectations of their lives, so the subjects in law are the core factors to understand the nature of law.

Law is the result of human beings as value beings. This means that law is the result of human arrangement. But another question arise, that is, how can law reflect the desire and need of all people? Theoretically, if we agree that the will of one individual does not have the specialty and superiority compared with others in nature, the will of somebody or some groups do not have the rationality to command others. Thus law, as the standard to regulate the act of all the members of this community, should reflect the needs of all the members in theory. That is to say, as long as law reflects the needs and desires of all the members, it is called common law.

In fact, there has never seen the law reflecting the needs of all people in human’s history. And it has been doubted that someone would just turn his will into law in the name of “rational will”, for example, Hayek gave an interesting and farsighted introspection on this and he regarded law as the emergence of “a spontaneous order”. It is vigilant that there were so many tragedies in the practice of law in history just because the law was decided by someone or certain people. But Hayek went to another extreme as he exaggerated the necessary doubt of human subjective will to lead a negation of human rationality; he paid too much attention to experience with a neglect of the factors of value in summarizing experience. Law should be made according to the will of the people who abide by the law and should not be designed at will by some.

Law reflects the economic reality of a society. As Marx said, the ability and needs of one subject cannot surpass the economic reality in which the subject lived. But this does not mean that the level of productivity is the only factor to determine the law. Law will see diversity under the same level of productivity as a result of different subjective factors such as cultural tradition, needs, abilities and the desires for the life. Law is beyond comprehension without an understanding of the concrete needs and objectives in a specified practice. It is obvious that every change of law including its emergence, development and extinction is inseparable from the expectations of the subjects.

The expectations of subjects are different in different periods and even so under the same environments in a certain period. In history, not all the appeals could be source of law or have some impact on law, law was a reflection of the will of the people who had dominant positions in the economic sphere(surely they had to pay attention to ordinary people in order to keep their domination in society, and the will of the ordinary people continued to influence law indirectly). With a highlight of one individual in economy, politics and culture coupled with publicity and universality of law and the advocacy of the idea of equality, it is increasingly difficult to make law represent the interests of some people, a separation of law maker and law abider has brought many problems, the rationality of law as the standards to regulate needs a more popular explanation which include approval of law abiders. We can imagine what effects of If a tax law were made solely by tax

administration officials regardless of what the tax payer thinks. In the past, law was the embodiment of the will of some people, nowadays a trend is desired in which law is a reflection of the opinions law abiders. In other words, law abiders should be law-makers; law is the restriction on us which was given by ourselves. It is ideal in some extent until now. As we know, most nations have a big population; it means a huge cost to make the relevant subjects express their appeals, and an arduous task to balance and coordinate different appeals rationally. However, it is not an impossible ideal and it is an objective we should strive to attain.

Law does need some formal conditions such as clarity, integrity and consistency. When we say law is a system of regulation which always exists to meet some kinds of needs and have some kind of value objectives. Rules are superficial dimensions of law but value is the essence of law. How to understand the meaning of “the nature of law as a system of value”? The answers are as follows:

1. Law is always “the law of somebody”. Here, “somebody” can be a family, some parts of the people or the majority of the people. Certainly there is no abstract somebody who is out of a certain time or history. “Who is law for?” is the first question to study the existing law. If we want to answer such questions as how and why it was so, what is necessary for us is to investigate the existing situations which mainly refer to the interests and demands of the subjects who live under such situations. It is the basic and important way to understand the real law.
2. The development of law is closely linked with the situation of subjects. The subjects here not only refer to law-maker or law-executer, but also refer to law-abiders. It is true that the relatively perfect legal system and the legal group play an important role in the development and realization of law, but the role of law-abiders is more important. How to understand the interests of law-abiders, how to retrospect their needs and how to claim their rights and responsibilities, all of these have a direct impact on the formation and realization of law.
3. What the value of law is depends on “who” and “how” to judge the law. It is true that one who values the order will have different assessment on the same legal system with one who values the justice. The evaluation results will be more objective when the subjects of evaluation are clearer on the “the fact of value”. That is to say, if the subjects of evaluation and the subjects in the legal value relationship are the same one, there will be more positive assessment. So the root of stability and confidence in law lies in whether the two subjects are identical or not.
4. It is very important and prominent in the research of law if we pay more attention to the research of the value of law. The research of value of law can not be separated from the ontology and epistemology of law. We never can get the objective conclusions if we ignore the value method in the research of law. Even we can say, the value is the basis of the study on ontology and epistemology of law. For example, in the research of the nature of law, if we neglect the needs and requirements of specific subjects in a specified practice, some absolute and universal theories will occur, such as regarding the law as “an

objective law” as a result. We cannot understand the different choices under the same practice, and cannot understand the rich diversity of the style of law; when talking about epistemology of law, we can analyze law with the conceptions such as factor, act, relationship and norm from a static perspective, we also can describe the law as such a link to bridge legislation, judiciary and law-abiding from a dynamic perspective, both are important for law to get a clear and complete system of knowledge, but no matter how simple, clear, complete, orderly, and consistent in form a law is, the law can hardly be realized without a survey of value, and is prone to be in the danger of alienating humans.

4 The Connotation of the Rule of Law in the View of Axiology

If the law taken as “a system of rules”, the rule of law just refers to the formal requirement of law, which means that, if we can apply the same standard to regulate the acts of all people, and realize the effect of “governance by rules”, there appears the rule of law in a society. Following the formal and procedural requirements, the rule of law serve the law and belongs to the inner conception of the law; But if the law taken as “a system of values”, “rule by law” is the basis of the rule of law, the formal and procedural requirements are equally very important, such as generality, universality, transparency and systematization. On one hand, they are the conditions to make the law effect and play its role perfectly; on the other hand, they make all people equal before the law and these are also the foundations and preconditions of the law system as the common evaluation criterion.

Actually, this rule of law is also a kind of “rule by law”. On the contrary, when we regard the law as a system of values, the connotation of the rule of law includes “rule by law”. A priority should be given to take the following two aspects into consideration:

Firstly, the precondition and foundation of the “rule by law” is the method of formation, adjustment and modification of the rules of law (the common evaluation criterion). Secondly, the connotation of the rule of law is beyond the limits of law, it is more important that the subjects in a society have the spirits and thoughts compatible with the rule of law.

In the first aspect, it is the question of the formation of the law. When the legal system was formed primarily, why do we still talk about the formation of law? And we can also want to ask who can “form” the law? Law is in constant change with practice in life. The method of the formation of law is the question of whether the law regulates the power or the power order of law, whether the subjects of law can accept the law from an inner perspective. It also decides the extent of realization of law. In the time of the awakening of individual consciousness, more and more attention are paid to solving of the question that how can common evaluation

criterion be consist with individual evaluation criterion as possible as it can, and how can individual action acquire the unify of intrinsic evaluation and external coercion.

It has been argued that different or conflicting individual ideas can gain common evaluation criterion on the basis of liberty and equality, which draws a popular research in modern times. In human history, the criterion for acts were determined by some kind of magic inhuman strength (like god, heaven, blind worship, and objective rules) or manipulated by a few mighty groups. Until today, some people think that we only can get the relatively common criterion by practice in history; human rationality is just a conceit. This is a kind of empirical historical views. It pays no attention to the nature of humans who are active with the ability of selection, ignoring the real function of the rationality owned only by human beings; some other people think the conflicting people never can accept the same criterion at the same time. As Kelsen said, just because the different subjects conflicted each other so the law had adjust function in this aspect, it was impossible to imagine that the conflicting parties can get a rule agreed by both sides. He gave us an example.⁸ That is, two gentlemen love one lady at the same time, but by law and the feelings of that lady, she just can choose one of the two, so the happiness of one gentleman is the sacrifice of good luck of the other. The example of Kelsen has some shortcomings, the key of which is whether his assumption is true that humans can agree with some decisions which are not in their own interests. If it is true, we agree that the two persons with conflicting interests cannot agree to one common criterion. But as we live in a society, we must have some public and common criteria. So maybe is the “coercion” necessary? Or just let them obey the existing law? Or act by some principles such as utilitarianism or “some kind of authoritative power”? All of these are absolutely wrong. They just present one unilateral and absolute opinion: all people are empirical and interest-motivated, or one can not introspect oneself by way of going beyond himself/herself. We shouldn’t talk too much about the human nature here and just give one simple example. A thief would feel happy when he succeeds in a theft, but it is not true that he has a positive evaluation to his own act, even if he think he has enough reasons for his theft. Supposedly if the thief would become a legislator to make law for all people, definitely he will agree to a punishment for the act of theft, because only when everyone is given the safety, he himself can live safely. When we are in a public position, we can have the retrospective ability to surpass our own interests. In kelsen’s example, the unlucky gentleman really feels unhappy but can accept the result rationally so long as he agrees to the way how to be chosen on that situation. The law just should pay attention to the “ought” in the individual and turn them into the public norms, then through some measures such as supervising and limiting to urge the individual act according to his own “ought”.

It is true that in our history law had been full of force, trick and conspiracy, but it is not what we expect. We can and should struggle to make the law in the

⁸ Hans Kelsen, *What is Justice*, Translated by Zhang ShuYou, www.legal-thory.org.

“ought” way. If we regard the law as a system of value, the nature of law is the public common evaluation criterion, and this criterion must be formed in a democratic way between the liberal and equal individuals. Democracy is the legitimate basis of the law and the precondition of the realization of the legal rules. The method of formation of law takes precedence over “rule by law”. The first and most important connotation of the rule of law is to ponder the precondition of the rule by law.

Generally speaking, the law-abiders are the law-makers; the law ought to be the choice of the people who will be the law-abiders. In other words, the law is the restriction on oneself by one’s own will, or the restriction of one’s rational side to the other side in oneself. Certainly this is an ideal state, it will never totally happen in our real lives. But it is on the basis to criticize, retrospect and promote the current situation and it is the strength to make the latter go forward.

This theory will meet many queries. Maybe most of them are related to the question of democracy. Can not the democracy mean “tyranny of the majority”? Can not the democracy be just an ideal and never realized really?

As for the question of “the democracy and the tyranny of the majority”, my own understanding is that: (a) if the democracy is prone to bring about “the tyranny of the majority”, the main reason is a lack of “rule by law” to support this kind of democracy. Rule by law is the necessary prerequisite of the democracy; (b) it is better to talk about something in a certain historical context. The democracy that we refer to today is quite different from that of ancient times, the ordinary ideas have seen many changes from the past to the present and some basic value principles enjoy a popular support. It is certain that when some basic human rights were guaranteed by constitution, there a possibility that “tyranny of the majority” can be limited to some extent; (c) Democracy is an undertaking of the practice of subjects, it is a progress in which the subjects make self-selection and shoulder self-responsibility and learn to how to make a rational selection and how to should their responsibilities continuously. It is a two-way progress to push forward each other. The subjects grow in the practice of democracy and in return promote the development of democracy. In certain periods, it is possible for some people to act blindly and passively, but when they are aware that they have to face the consequence, they will be more prudent and responsible in their next choice. Mature subjects are the key to the question and the only way to contribute to maturity of subjects is to let them make choices in practice.

Can the democracy be really realized even in theory? Before answering this question, we need to clarify what the meaning of democracy is at first. I want to mention two points here. One point is how to understand the concept of “agreed principles” and this is important in the progress of democratic decision-making. The “agree” really doesn’t mean that all the members totally agree in number and it is the “rational agree”.⁹ In a democratic society, there should be enough

⁹ See Rawls opinions, he distinguishes between the conceptions of reasonableness and rationality, reasonableness is suitable to the individual in a society, rationality is the character

opportunities for every one to make his/her opinions public on the affairs that matter to him or her. There should offer some mechanisms the dissident to argue and debate; as a result, it can not satisfy all people, but it can be accepted rationally by all people. Thus democracy is equal to a rational “agree” rather than a total “agree”; The other point is that, democracy does not apply every field of our life and democracy has its limitation. Some extreme clashes such as severe class or religious conflicts, the questions of the truth in the nature or something just belonging to oneself alone, and these do not need democracy and cannot be solved in a democratic method. Democracy is the most suitable approach to solve most of the public affairs which have relationship with value until now.

How to understand that democracy is the prerequisite of the rule of law with a view to the reality of law nowadays? Firstly, the important laws such as constitution, some basic and important ideas in law, and some new laws require the participation by as many people as possible. Secondly, there need some approaches and procedures to amend or change some laws in a democratic way within the framework of the law. For example, the procedure of public debate among the dissident, and the rights of civil disobedience in law; lastly I want to stress that I do not agree that it is a democracy for “the judiciary to respect public opinions”. As long as law is made, the judiciary must follow the rules of law.

As I stressed many times before, in the view of axiology, the connotation of the rule of law not only includes the meaning of the rule by law, but also needs to consider the formation of the rules of law. Besides, the second factor we need to know is that a culture of “rule of law” is needed to realize the rule of law. The core of this culture is that each individual has a unity of consciousness of rights and consciousness of responsibilities and the rule of law is a life style which is above the level of law. Some Chinese scholars have made a detailed elaboration,¹⁰ so I would not talk it here.

(Footnote 9 continued)

of a political citizen in a democratic society. See John Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, translated by Wan JunRen, YiLin press, 2000, pp. 50–56.

¹⁰ See Li DeShun, *The Outline of the Culture of the Rule of Law*, Journal of China University of politics and law, 2007.01.