

Lecture 19

The Perfection and Ripeness of the Vertical System

If we have a solid understanding of the fundamental concepts in Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism, then we will know where their ultimate concerns lie and will understand that all three systems are directed toward the final and ultimate plane. In other words, in terms of plane, no one system among the three systems is higher than any other. They all belong to the plane of the ultimate mode. In terms of this ultimate mode, they are all vertical systems. That in reaching this ultimate plane Confucianism is a vertical system goes without saying. The fundamental concepts and central concerns of Daoism are also directed towards where the ultimate lies. From this standpoint Daoism is also a vertical system. Likewise Buddhism. There are numerous concepts in Buddhism, but if we arrange them in a rational manner after a critical evaluation of its doctrines, we will find that the ultimate direction of Buddhism is also what is called the final [*jiujing*] and ultimate truth [*liaoyi*]. Buddhism has “the ultimate truth [*liaoyi*],” and “non-ultimate truth [*buliaoyi*].” Perfect Teaching [*yuan jiao*, Perfect Doctrine] is the authentic ultimate truth. Hinayana of course is not ultimate truth because it is transitional. Even Mahayana, if it has not arrived at the state of Perfect Teaching, is not the final, ultimate truth. What Perfect Teaching points to is the ultimate. In terms of this ultimate, Buddhism also has this vertical system. The vertical system stands in contrast to the epistemic [*renzhi*, cognitive] system, which is horizontal. When these two systems are contrasted, the epistemic system is on a lower plane. Thus everything that points towards the plane of the ultimate mode belongs to the vertical system. From this perspective, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism are not dissimilar. But this is just speaking broadly. We are speaking from the perspective of the ultimate and not from that of the epistemic system. The epistemic system is on a lower level, not the ultimate or final direction. From the perspective of the place pointed to by these three schools, we may say broadly that all three are vertical systems.

But the phrase “vertical system” fits Confucianism best of all. Thus although we use this phrase to cover all three doctrines, we are in fact making Confucianism the standard. But for the moment we need not hold the preconceived notion of making

Confucianism the standard. Instead, we will use the vertical system to cover all three doctrines. This is because our understanding is as follows: No matter which one we treat as the standard, all three doctrines point to the same plane; none of the three higher than the others. Here is the ultimate for Confucianism, the ultimate for Daoism, and the ultimate for Buddhism. Their methods of formulating principles may be different, but they all belong to the same plane. Thus for the moment we can conveniently say: They all pertain to the vertical system. The meaning of “vertical” fits Confucianism best. In contrast, Daoism and Buddhism in this regard do not teach in a vertical way, but in a way that I describe as “horizontal discussion of the vertical.” This is where they differ from Confucianism. In regard to the ultimate, Confucianism is actually a vertical system, and furthermore, discusses the vertical vertically, whereas Daoism and Buddhism discuss the vertical horizontally. There is this difference among them. This is what we must say if we have a proper understanding of the systems of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism in their entirety, as well as the structure and character of these systems, on the basis of their fundamental concepts.

Historically the similarities and differences among these three doctrines have never been clearly distinguished. Where do the three doctrines differ from one another? No one has been able to give a clear answer. That is why we have to first state clearly that these three doctrines all point to the same plane. All three must be compared side by side, none higher or lower than the others. If I say that I am higher than you, then that would be favoring a certain doctrine, and this is a position that we will not take right now. From the Confucian standpoint, Buddhism and Daoism are heresies. From the Buddhist standpoint, Confucianism and Daoism are heterodoxies. In this way, there will be the problem of higher and lower, and moreover, the question of truth and falsehood. But we will not take this attitude now. We will only, on the basis of what they ultimately point to, affirm that they all belong to the same plane. We will put them side by side to distinguish their similarities and differences, and not discuss the question of higher or lower, the true doctrine and the false doctrine. With this understanding, Confucianism discusses the vertical vertically; in keeping with the meaning of the vertical, it enables the meaning of the vertical to be clearly manifested. That is why Confucianism has always looked upon Buddhism and Daoism as being awkward. However, thinkers like Lu

Xiangshan [1139-1193] and Wang Yangming [1472-1528] had a sympathetic understanding of Buddhism and Daoism and did not regard them as very low, nor did they regard them as heresies. Nonetheless, they still felt that Buddhism and Daoism were somewhat awkward, that they did not sit naturally or comfortably and were somewhat slanted. They felt this because of the difference in mode.

From our present standpoint, the vertical system should be discussed vertically if it is to befit the meaning of the vertical. But although Daoism is a vertical system, it is not amenable to a full vertical discussion. That is why scholars historically have always thought that it was incomplete. For example Lao Zi said: “Dao procreates it; virtue nurtures it [道生之，德育之].” “Nothing [*wu*, also Non-Being] is the name of the beginning of Heaven and Earth; Being [*you*] is the name of the mother of the myriad things [無名天地之始，有名萬物之母], also .” “Dao procreates one, one procreates two, two procreates three, three procreates the myriad things [道生一，一生二，二生三，三生萬物].” “Heaven having oneness is pure; Earth having oneness is calm [天得一以清，地得一以寧].” He was also seeking the ultimate source of Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things. All such questions belong to the vertical. According to the Christian tradition, the final source of Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things is God, who is Creator of all things. In terms of His creation of all things, our pursuit of the final source pertains to the vertical. Daoism also pertains to a vertical system, although it cannot fully satisfy the substance of the vertical. That is why it always gives the impression of being not well-rounded nor complete. This, however, is from the Confucian standpoint. At present we will not look at it from the Confucian point of view, but rather view Daoism objectively and understand it correctly. Then it is a horizontal discussion of the vertical—the vertical mode expressed in a horizontal manner. From what do we see that it is a horizontal discussion of the vertical? It is on the basis of the fundamental concepts of Daoism that we are able to determine its fundamental character. Such Daoist statements as “Dao procreates it, virtue nurtures it” and “Nothing is the name of the beginning of Heaven and Earth; Being is the name of the mother of the myriad things” all pertain to the vision-based mode and not the being-based mode.

Not only is the Daoist “procreates” different from the “creates” of God created the myriad things, it is also different from the “creativity” [*chuangsheng*] of Confucianism when it speaks of the mandate of heaven. The Confucian Dao-substance [*Daoti*] can really create the myriad things. The *Doctrine of the Mean* [*Zhong Yong*] says: “The Dao of Heaven and Earth can be uttered in one sentence. It is constant and pure in making things and so its procreation of things is unfathomable [天地之道可一言而盡，其為物不貳，則其生物不測].” [26.7]. This is creativity. Thus the Confucian Dao is a metaphysical creativity. This kind of creativity is of course different from the “God’s creation” of religion. This is also the doctrine taught by Zhuang Zi’s “Great Ancestral Teacher [Da Zong Shi]” chapter, the *Doctrine of the Mean* and *Yijing* Commentaries [Yi Zhuan]; and when the *Analecets* [*Lun Yu*] speaks of *ren* [humanity, humaneness], or when *Mencius* [*Meng Zi*] speaks of mind and nature from the perspective of morality, they are also expressing this doctrine.

Daoism also yearns for a Dao (the source of Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things). This Dao can also procreate the myriad things, which is why Lao Zi says: “Dao procreates [births] it, virtue nurtures it, matter forms it, circumstances complete it [道生之，德畜之，物形之，勢成之].” Zhuang Zi also says: “Dao ...inspirits the demons, inspirits the gods, procreates Heaven, procreates Earth [夫道。。。。神鬼神帝，生天生地].” (“Great Ancestral Teacher” chapter). This is the same as: “Heaven having oneness is pure; Earth having oneness is calm; spirits having oneness are potent [天得一以清，地得一以寧，神得一以靈].” Dao is expressed in “oneness.” When Heaven gets “oneness” (Dao) it is able to become Heaven. When Earth gets “Dao,” it is able to become Earth. When ghosts and spirits get “Dao,” they are able to be potent. Nothing can depart from Dao, for Dao makes them what they are. These teachings are similar to what Leibniz [1646-1716] called “sufficient reason.” Sufficient reason explains why a thing is as it is and not something else. According to Leibniz, the final sufficient reason is God. This is what is called the vertical system. Daoism was really vertical, but its method of teaching was such that towards the end it lost the meaning of creation. That is why it does not belong to the being-based mode [*shiyou xingtai*] but to the vision-based mode [of ontology]. The “procreates” it speaks of is “a procreating that does not

procreate,” a negative sense. Despite the negative sense, it contains wisdom of a very high order, and requires great wisdom to attain.

Looking at the methods of the Communist Party today, we can readily see how Daoism was able very early to discern the source of human calamity. We can say that Daoism is thoroughly anti-Communist. In this respect we can say that there is truth in Daoism. Confucianism affirmed objectively that there is one Dao, that “Heaven’s mandate, oh, profound without end” [天命之於穆不已] creates the myriad things. This is objective affirmation and belongs to the being-based mode [of ontology]. Daoism’s approach is different. It goes about it in a completely subjective manner; it climbs up from the perspective of the humanly-contrived and artifice. In pretence, artifice, and unnaturalness, no one is more adept than the Communists. Everyone possesses a certain degree of artifice and unnaturalness, but humans of the free world can still retain a small measure of the natural and the human. But artifice, pretence, and unnaturalness have reached their apex in the Communists, an apex unsurpassed and unsurpassable. Our problem is how to extinguish this artifice, pretence, and unnaturalness, for eventually it will become intolerable. These are precisely the conditions where Daoism can be useful. The Communists monopolize, control, pretend, dissimulate, behave unnaturally, consistently tell lies, hold society in their clutch, refusing to let go. If they exercised a bit of control, everyone could forgive them. But they hold a grip on everything, even all the thoughts in one’s mind. But what goes on in the mind is continually changing from minute to minute, twenty-four hours a day. How can they possibly hold it in their grip? Wouldn’t such control be much too troublesome? But they insist on doing it, which is really abominable. If this goes on, society will wilt and become a closed society. The nature of society is to be open; but the Communists insist on closing it until it can no longer breathe. They think that this is the way to build a celestial kingdom. In fact, society has wilted and shriveled up, and no progress is possible. It is exactly this sort of control, this tightness of grip and the man-made unnaturalness that Daoism wants to get rid of so that Dao and wisdom may be revealed. We do not have to affirm a Dao-substance or a God in order to create. As long as we get rid of this monopolizing, this control and the man-made unnaturalness, then the myriad things will naturally grow, and this is equal to creation. This is very high wisdom and requires effort and cultivation

[*gongfu*]. For all humans are eager to move forward. No one wants to go backward. Daoism, however, wants us to take a step back. To take a step back is great effort and is by no means being passive.

These are vertical principles but Daoism discusses them horizontally. Daoism first affirms objectively that Dao is a creative substance. Then it turns this objective substance into a subjective vision or wisdom. If we simply take a step back, then Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things will grow of their own accord. This is called Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things “returning to their roots and regaining their mandates/destinies” [*guigen fuming* 歸根復命]. As soon as we do not disturb Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things, do not block up the well-spring, do not obstruct their nature, then the sources will be open and will flow without obstruction, and that is all that is needed. When Lao Zi speaks of “returning to their roots and regaining their mandates,” he means that as soon as I return to my roots, then Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things will all return to their roots and regain their mandates [*ming*, Heaven-decreed destinies], all rising up together. Thus Daoism involves a contemplative vision [*jingjie*], an artistic vision. Dao is not placed over there for us to affirm; Dao lies in me. And what is Dao? Daoism expresses it as “roaming [*xiaoyao* 逍遙, wandering, roving] “, “equalizing things [*qiwu* 齊物]”, “Nothing/Non-being,” [*wu* 無], and so on. Dao receives its affirmation in me; it is my mental state [*xinjing* 心境], my wisdom. Once I open up my mind, Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things will do likewise. As soon I roam [*xiaoyao* 逍遙], Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things will also roam. When I regard Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things as equal, and I am without any bias, then Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things will be absolutely self-sufficient and will rise up together. If I do not roam and do not experience the presentation of Dao-mind, then all things will descend into the world of calculation and attachment. Here there will be the problems of comparison and dependence. When I ascend, the myriad things will arise with me. When I descend, the myriad things will descend and be suffocated to death. Under the horizontal [soteriological] treatment of the vertical [ontological], the subjective mind and the objective world are presented together. If you have the Dao-mind [*daoxin*], then all things will rise into the mental state of Dao; if you are without the Dao-mind, then they

will all drop down. We can only say that “The Dao-mind is presented/manifested with every single grass and every single tree as one body [道心與一草一木一體呈現]” but cannot say “The Dao-mind creates every single grass and every single tree [道心創造一草一木].” This is what is meant by discussing the vertical horizontally. Thus Daoism opens up the artistic vision; it assumes the contemplative and reflective attitude. In contemplation and reflection [*guan zhao*] we attain the mental state of roaming and every grass and tree also rises up to roam, becoming self-sufficient and non-dependent, the Dao-mind and every grass and every tree appearing simultaneously. This does not mean that the Dao-mind creates every grass and tree but they that they are presented together.

As to Buddhism, it also treats the vertical horizontally. At least Daoism affirms that “Nothing [*wu*] is the name of the beginning of Heaven and Earth; Being [*you*] is the name of the mother of the myriad things,” and “Dao procreates it, virtue nurtures it.” At least there is an appearance of the vertical. Buddhism is without even this appearance. Buddhism does not agree with Christianity’s affirmation of a God. From the standpoint of Buddhism, to affirm God is to be utterly absurd. Similarly, it opposes the Brahman of Brahmanism. This is why Christians call Buddhism atheism. Buddhism does not affirm these things; nor does it affirm the Confucian Dao-substance or the “Dao” of the “Dao procreates, virtue nurtures.” Buddhism does not find it necessary to affirm a Being that creates or ensures the myriad things or appears together with the myriad things. It makes no affirmation at all of the vertical style of creative substance. Then why do we still say that it is a vertical system? Because what it finally points to belongs to the same plane as Confucianism and Daoism. That is why we can still regard it as a vertical system. Even though at the beginning it does not affirm God or Brahman, nor affirm the Confucian Dao-substance nor the Daoist “Dao” of “Dao procreates and virtue nurtures,” yet from the standpoint of the ultimate concern, it still pertains to a vertical system, and moreover is more strikingly a horizontal discussion of a vertical system. If you say that Buddhism is a vertical system Buddhists will be very uncomfortable because they do not like to affirm that there is a Being that creates the myriad dharmas. Whether it is God, Brahman, the Confucian Dao-substance, or the “Dao” of “Dao procreates it, virtue nurtures it,” they regard it as heterodoxy.

But we should not because of this call Buddhism a heresy, or conversely, from the Buddhism standpoint, call the other doctrines attachment. Even if Buddhism rejects the notion that there is one thing that created the myriad dharmas [the phenomenal world], it ultimately points to the ultimate and the ultimate truth. Thus it can be counted as being vertical. But it cannot begin by speaking of a vertical reality. What is to be done then? The God, Brahman, Dao-substance [Daoti] and the “Dao” of “Dao procreates it, virtue nurtures it” that is objectively affirmed by the other philosophies is transformed in Buddhism, which does not begin by affirming them objectively. Looked at objectively, Buddhism should be seen as being more sympathetic to Daoism, for although Daoism also speaks of “Dao procreates it, virtue nurtures it,” it pertains to a vision-based mode, where the meaning of the objective Being-based mode [of ontology] has been transformed. Thus one would expect Buddhism to be closer to Daoism. But even if it is closer to Daoism it still does not initially affirm Dao.

God, Brahman, the Confucian Dao-substance, and even the Daoist Dao that is closest to it have been transformed. Into what have they been transformed in order to reach the ultimate? Into Buddha-nature [*foxing*, Skt. *buddhata*] and Buddha Dharma-Body [*fashen*, Skt. *dharmakāya*, Truth body]. The Buddha-nature and the Buddha Dharma-body are fundamental concepts of Buddhism and should be recognized by both Mahayana and Hinayana. The concepts of Buddha-nature and Buddha Dharma-body are of course spoken of in terms of the ultimate direction; they are simply the Buddha-nature and Buddha Dharma-body of Perfect Teaching. Buddha-nature and Buddha Dharma-body can guarantee the existence of the myriad dharmas but cannot create the myriad dharmas. Here we will not speak of creating but only of ensuring. How should this relation of ensuring be understood? The purpose of Mahayana is to ferry over sentient beings to salvation and not merely to become a Buddha oneself. Merely to become a Buddha oneself is the goal of Hinayana. The *arhats* [*arhans*] of Hinayana are self-salvation individuals who care only for deliverance and salvation for themselves, for one’s own release, but is indifferent to whether other sentient beings attain deliverance and salvation. This shows that there is not enough compassion. If we had enough compassion we would not only have compassion for ourselves but also for other living beings. Thus, not only should we save ourselves, but we should save other sentient

beings as well. Consequently, if we are released from Hinayana and speak of Mahayana, then the concept of compassion will have to be involved. If our compassion is expansive, then all sentient beings will be covered by it. If our compassion is shriveled up, then it will be limited to Chinese people and not to Europeans. If it shrinks further, then it will be limited to only our immediate family, to the exclusion of other people, or even limited to just ourselves, to the exclusion of parents and siblings, until finally we will not have any compassion at all. Conversely, compassion can expand until it is unlimited, with all sentient beings within its compass. The Buddha-nature and the Buddha Dharma-body must expand in this way. Becoming a Buddha is conditioned on all sentient beings being saved; becoming a Buddha must be in terms of [*ji* 卽] salvation for all sentient beings. Therefore, the Buddha Dharma-body of Perfect Teaching must include all dharmas.

However, we should not hold that Buddha-nature and Buddha Dharma-body can create the myriad dharmas. We are only saying that my becoming a Buddha is conditioned upon all sentient beings being saved. It is in this sense that all dharmas are gathered in. My becoming a Buddha depends on involvement with all these dharmas. I cannot become a Buddha by being apart from them.

I cannot become a Buddha apart from all these dharmas, but must involve all dharmas in order to become a Buddha. Once I become a Buddha then all these dharmas are also guaranteed. If I can become a Buddha by leaving all these dharmas and going to the top of a mountain, then these dharmas are dispensable, and there would be no necessity to their existence. Attaining Buddhahood requires involving [*ji*] [the salvation of] all dharmas, and the necessity of all dharmas lies in this word “*ji* 卽 [also translated is/are, identical to, identify with, in terms of, on the basis of]”. This is an intriguing question in Buddhism which usually goes unnoticed. But it is readily understandable when Buddhism is compared with Western philosophy. If you do not understand it, you can easily say that this is nihilism. But that would be because you have not understood it, for Buddhism is not nihilism. This is the way in which Buddhism ensures the necessity of the existence of dharmas, but this does not hold unless Perfect Teaching is reached. It does not hold in Hinayana because in Hinayana my becoming a Buddha is a personal matter which does not have to involve all dharmas. In such a situation the existence of dharmas has nothing to do with me, and the existence of dharmas is merely accidental,

not necessary. As to Mahayana, although we know that becoming a Buddha involves [the salvation of] all dharmas, yet those who have not attained Buddhahood cannot make that involvement thorough and complete, which is to say, cannot really involve [the salvation of] all dharmas. If this happens, then all those dharmas cannot necessarily be guaranteed. This is according to the Tiantai school's critical valuation of doctrines.

When Christianity speaks of God creating the world, it also must affirm the necessity of the existence of the world. Confucianism affirms Dao-substance which creates the myriad things, which is why it vehemently opposes the Buddhist teaching that the myriad dharmas are illusory. Illusory indeed! They are quite obviously real facts and real principles, and this is where Heavenly Principle resides. But this kind of opposition is a rudimentary view. When Buddhism speaks of the myriad dharmas being illusory, it does so from the standpoint of absence of self-substance. But not a single one of these dharmas that are illusory and without self-substance is dispensable. Isn't this intriguing? Here two levels are implied. According to our ordinary understanding, if all dharmas are illusory and without self-substance [self-nature], then it stands to reason that they are without necessity. But this is not the way Buddhism sees it. According to Buddhism, the illusoriness of all dharmas is from the standpoint of their being without self-substance; however, the existence of these dharmas that are illusory and without self-substance has necessity. This implies two issues. Such necessity does not depend on God's guarantee, nor on the assurance of Dao-substance or the "Dao" of "Dao procreates it, virtue nurtures it". It is instead guaranteed by the Buddha Dhama-body. But the Buddha Dharma-body does not create the myriad dharmas; instead, the Buddha Dharma-body is involved with [ji] the myriad dharmas and is presented together with them, being tied together forever. Thus the existence of the myriad dharmas has necessity. This is what is called "the horizontal treatment of the vertical."

If we are unaware that these are two issues and merely think of them as being illusory and without self-substance, then the existence of dharmas would not have necessity—using the terminology of Western philosophy, the existence of dharmas would be unintelligible. If they are seen as only one issue then since all dharmas are illusory and without self-substance, there would be no guarantee of the existence of dharmas, and they would have no necessity, with the result that one would not be able to speak of

ontology. When Western philosophy speaks of ontology, it speaks of being, whereas Buddhism does not speak of being at all. Therefore at this juncture we have to turn round a corner onto another level and look at it from this other level. It is through the Buddha-nature and the Dharma-body that Buddhism ensures the dharmas that are without substance. But we should not presume that all dharmas will have substance once there is the Buddha-nature and the Dharma-body. This would be wrong, for all dharmas would still be illusory and without substance; they would still be conditioned-arising dharmas. Thus the Buddha-nature and the Dharma-body are not what Leibniz called “sufficient reason.” “Sufficient reason” enables all conditioned-arising dharmas to be intelligible, justifiable; it is then that they have substance. In this respect the Buddhist perspective is very distinctive. Thus the Buddhist understanding of causality in conditioned origination is different from the West’s understanding of causality. It ensures the myriad dharmas by means of the Buddha-nature and the Buddha Dharma-body and not by means of creation; nor does it make the Buddha-nature and the Dharma-body the sufficient reason of all conditioned-arising dharmas. Consequently the Buddhist understanding of causality and dependent arising/origination is different from causality as understood by the West. Because Buddhism uses the Buddha-nature and the Dharma-body to guarantee the necessity of the existence of dharmas that are illusory and without substance, it can still speak of ontology. This kind of ontology is called a Buddhistic ontology, entirely different from the ontology of the West. Regardless of the illusoriness and the absence of substance of the myriad dharmas, Buddhism still wants to guarantee the myriad dharmas and enable them to have necessity. Does this not imply an issue on two levels? As long as it can guarantee the necessity of the existence of dharmas, we can still call it ontology (although this term comes from the West, we may borrow it). If you can properly clarify the term “Buddhistic ontology,” you will be making quite a contribution. It would be very meaningful to speak of this kind of doctrine in the present age. We must not continue the tradition of misunderstanding this aspect of Buddhism. For example, Confucians of the past criticized the Buddhist concepts of conditioned-origination substance-empty and illusoriness as if once you spoke of illusoriness everything would vanish. On the other hand, Buddhism cannot on account of this level of meaning oppose everything that is affirmed by the other schools. Once we make this kind of comparison

the real sense will be able to emerge. (See Lecture 6 on the horizontal treatment of the vertical by Buddhism and Daoism.)

What I have just explained is the “horizontal treatment of the vertical.” “Vertical treatment of the vertical” is easy to understand because Western philosophy and Confucianism are all vertical treatments. The vertical treatment of the vertical is more normal and is therefore relatively easy to understand. The Daoist mode of treating the vertical horizontally is not easy to understand, although it is still relatively easy. As for Buddhism, the minute you say that it is a vertical system, it grates on the ear, but this in fact is how it is. If we then say that it is a horizontal treatment of the vertical, it becomes even harder to understand. That is why Buddhistic ontology is actually not easy to understand. In terms of the ultimate, the three great doctrines of Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism are by and large vertical systems but they are presented through two different approaches: Confucianism treats the vertical vertically whereas the other two doctrines treat the vertical horizontally.

Confucianism is a vertical system through and through which also treats the vertical vertically. It is close to Western philosophy and is comparatively easy to understand. Not only do the Song [960-1280] and Ming [1368-1644] *lixuejia* [School of Reason-Principle Learning] philosophers belong to the ontological mode of treating the vertical vertically, but this has been the mode of Confucianism beginning from the pre-Qin period [pre-255 BCE]. Confucius’s discussion of *ren* [humanity], and Mencius’s discussion of *xing* [moral nature] are all concerned with moral creativity. What do we mean by moral creativity? To use an old Chinese expression, it means that virtuous conduct is purity without end [德行之純亦不已]. Analytically, virtuous conduct can be pure without end because it has a transcendental ground. This transcendental ground is the “nature” in what Mencius calls “nature is good” [*xingshan*]. This “nature” is simply moral creativity. It is only with this moral creativity as our “nature” that we can continually, prolifically, develop endless purity of moral conduct. The purity without end of moral conduct comes from the creativity of nature-substance [*xingtǐ* 性體, one’s moral ability or capacity] and did not exist previously. What exists can be made to disappear and what does not exist can be made to exist. Is that not creation? The closest meaning of creation lies in the creation by moral conduct; in other words, it is what Kant called

“causality of the will.” From the perspective of knowledge, the causality that we speak of is natural causality. Kant called the causality of the will a “special causality.” This is a principle of creation, which, in Confucianism, is represented by “*xing*, [moral] nature.” Confucianism does not begin his teaching from the will but from *ren* [humanity, humaneness] or from the “[human] nature” [*xing*] of “nature is good.” “Nature” is not an empty concept, but one with content. The mind of commiseration, the mind that is ashamed of wrongdoing, the mind that distinguishes right from wrong, and the mind of humility are all included in it. Confucius’s *ren* is also included in it. It is fundamentally a creativity and the original meaning of creation lies here. The understanding is not the creative principle. Rather, the will is the creative principle. And this kind of creation is moral creation.

Men of letters also speak of creation. That kind of creation originates in the natural life. That creation belongs to a specific faculty and once that faculty is exhausted, creativity will also disappear. That is why there is the saying, “The young man Jiang’s talent is exhausted [*jiang lang cai jin*江郎才盡].” At the height of his powers, essays came out of his mouth as he spoke. But when talent was exhausted, not a phrase could he utter. That kind of creativity belongs to a special faculty. As for the creativity of the moral nature [*xingt*, nature-substance] that presents moral creativity, it is called “creativity-itself”. This creativity-itself is ontological substance and does not belong to any special and definite faculty. For example when Christianity speaks of creation in terms of God, God is not a special faculty. His entire essence is creativity-itself. This kind of creativity does not belong to anything. It is not like the creativity of the men of letters which belongs to the physical life. God Himself is all creativity-itself, and this creativity-itself is the ontological substance of the universe and the myriad things. To call it God is the religionist’s way of speaking, personalizing and objectifying creativity-itself. Actually, the real meaning of God’s creativity must be spoken of in terms of the causality of the will (moral creativity). Kant had this idea when he said: “Even if it is the only Son of God of the four Gospels, before we can acknowledge Him to be the Son of God, we must compare him to our morally perfect ideal. Thus he said Himself: ‘Why do you call me [whom you see] good? Besides God [whom you cannot see], no one is worthy of being called good. But from where can we obtain the idea of God as the

highest good? To put it simply, we can only obtain it from the concept of the morally perfect. This concept of the morally perfect is formed *a priori* by reason and, moreover, is inseparable from the idea of free will.”¹ In terms of Confucian terminology, the "purity indeed without end" (the endlessness of human moral nature) of moral conduct that arises from moral creativity [*xingti*, nature-substance] is simply the concept of moral perfection.

Thus, Confucius’s “*ren*”, Mencius’s “*xing*” [moral nature] are not names of classes, not the class concepts of definitions. If we regard them as class concepts of definitions, that would be an error. That would be to understand “*xing*” as merely the nature of humans, where we first separate humankind as a class belonging to the class of animals, then using a “*differentia*” to differentiate the person from cows, horses, and other animals. This is the method Aristotle uses to make a definition. Once this happens, “nature” becomes a class concept. But Mencius’s “*xing*” [moral nature] is not a class concept, even though it appears in humans; but once it appears, it is not limited by humankind but has absolute universality. This is a very special aspect of the Confucian discussion of nature. That is why we cannot use the “essence” of Western philosophy to translate “*xing*.” The usual translation of “*xing*” into “nature” is not very good, but to use essence to translate it is even worse. In the West the term essence has a definite meaning, based on Aristotle’s logic. Using essential or essentially to describe it is acceptable because these two words can be used in a broad sense. But the noun essence will not do. Therefore, even though Mencius said “How small is the difference between humans and beasts [人之所以異於禽獸者幾希],” (*Mencius* 4B.19) this is not a definition; nor is “difference” here the “*differentia*” in a definition. This “difference” is a value concept, not a classifying concept. That is why Mencius opposed Gao Zi’s interpretation of “What is innate is called nature [生之謂性].” (*Mencius* 6A.3).

“*Xing* [nature]” has absolute universality. All concepts have universality but the universality of the class concept has limits. But when Confucians speak of *xing* its universality is without limit. Thus this “*xing*” has unlimited universality. It is when *xingti* [nature-substance] presents itself as unlimited universality that it can unite with Dao-substance [*daoti*]. That is why ultimately mind-substance, nature-substance, Dao-substance, and *zhi*-substance (substance of *liangzhi* 良知, moral intuition), are all one substance [*yi ti*, one body]. From the objective standpoint of its creation of the myriad

things, it is called Dao-substance. When it drops down on persons, it is called nature-substance. However, this is not to say that *xing* is limited by the person. It means that the term *xing* is a term directed at the individual entity. But the concept of *xing* is not limited by any class of individual entities. With respect to your individuality it is your nature [*xing*]; with respect to my individuality it is my nature. With respect to a grass, a tree, it is the nature of the grass and the tree. This is what Zhang Hengqu [Zhang Zai, 1020-1027] called “The nature of Heaven and Earth [天地之性].” But they are all the same in being nature. To summarize, it is Dao-substance. When taken apart and said of the myriad things, it is nature-substance. The boundaries of the two terms are different but the meaning of the contents is completely the same. Therefore we can say: Outside the mind there is nothing, outside Dao there is nothing, outside nature there is nothing. “Outside Dao there is nothing [道外無物]” can be readily understood by everyone because when we speak of Dao we mean that it penetrates Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things. Of course outside of Dao there is nothing, just as outside of God there is nothing. But not everyone can find it easy to understand “Outside nature there is nothing [性外無物]” or “Outside mind there is nothing [心外無物],” but they have the same meaning. For here “mind” is the “original [moral] mind [*ben xin*]” of Mencius, and it is from “original mind” (namely the mind of commiseration, the mind of shame over wrongdoing, the mind of right and wrong, the mind of deference and yielding) that Mencius begins to speak of nature [*xing*]. Thus if we can say “Outside nature there is nothing,” then we can of course say “Outside mind there is nothing.” To Wang Yangming, the *zhi*-substance of *liangzhi* represents mind, which is to say, outside of mind there is nothing, and mind-substance, Dao-substance, and nature-substance all interpenetrate and are one. In Cheng Mingdao, however, sincerity-substance [*chengti*], nature-substance, *ren*-substance, Change-substance [*yiti*], reverence-substance [*jingtí*], spirit-substance [*shenti*], etc. are all one. These terms are set up according to different boundaries, but actually there is only one.

But when Confucianism speaks of these principles, it does not begin from the objective side. Confucius, for example, begins with “*ren*.” We have often said that Chinese culture and Western culture differ in the paths of their development. Chinese culture has not really negated the objective side but instead has temporarily put aside the

objective side and taken the subjective approach, and has opened the subjective door. The West has always failed to open the subjective door. The Greek tradition has failed to do so, and likewise the Christian tradition has failed to do. The reason is that the Christian religion has the greatest loathing for the subject while it lays stress on the object. It wants to affirm a transcendent and objective God. In contrast, Eastern cultures lay particular emphasis on the subject and open the subjective door. Not only is this true of Confucianism but also of Daoism and Buddhism. The Confucian opening of the subjective door starts with Confucius's discussion of *ren*. However, to open the subjective door does not mean that the object is discarded. Rather, it means that the object can be understood through opening the subjective door, and ultimately the subject and the object are united into one. Nature-substance, mind-substance, *ren*-substance, *liangzhi*-substance, and so on, are all united with Dao-substance into one. Once this happens, the Christian mode will be naturally transformed. This must be understood from solid reasoning and not senselessly asserted as a proselytizing expediency. Of course you can say: In the *Book of Poetry* [*Shijing*] and the *Book of History* [*Shujing*] there is also an anthropomorphic God (though not emphasized). You can say: We have to take as our standard the Three Dynasties of Xia, Shang, and Zhou; the development after Confucius is not good and we have to develop it all over again. You may well do this but can you be certain that this other development will be good? Besides, whether you can even develop it remains questionable. If you replace the Confucian tradition with another, it may not necessarily be better. However, whatever you do, this is the tradition that has been developed over the past several thousand years, and you must not misinterpret it. That is why I abhor the interpretations given by some Catholic missionaries. What they are doing is "usurping," and fraudulence [*dao liang huan zhu*, stealing the beams and replacing the pillars], without moral conscience and without intellectual sincerity. What difference is their usurpation from Communism? The Communist Party has used Marx to replace Chinese culture; they on the other hand use Jehovah to replace Chinese culture. What difference is there? All this comes from not having one's own mind and being taken over by evil spirits.

The Confucian approach is utterly vertical. Its doctrine starts from the person and opens up the idea of “moral nature [*xingti*, nature-substance, inner moral ability or capacity].” [Moral] nature is the *a priori* basis of moral creativity.

Moral creativity is "the purity without end" of moral conduct. “Purity without end” comes from the *Doctrine of the Mean*. The *Doctrine of the Mean* says: “The *Book of Poetry* says: ‘Heaven's mandate, oh how profound without end!’ For it is saying why Heaven is Heaven. ‘Oh, is it not radiant, the purity of King Wen’s virtue.’ For it is saying why King Wen is *wen* [cultivated], his purity also without end. [“詩曰：‘惟天之命，於穆不已。’ 蓋曰天之所以為天也。‘於穆不顯，文王之德之純。’ 蓋曰文王之所以為文也，純亦不已。]” [*Doctrine of the Mean*, 26.10]. From the subjective side it is the “purity also without end” of moral conduct. From the objective side it is “Heaven’s mandate, oh how profound without end.” Here there are two sides, but the two sides both mean the same thing; they have become identical. Let us first look at them separately. “The *Book of Poetry* says: ‘Heaven’s mandate, oh how profound without end!’ For it is saying why Heaven is Heaven.” This means that “oh how profound without end” is the essence of Heaven. The next sentence goes on to say that King Wen [Wen Wang, sage-king, fl. 12th cent. BCE] emulates Heaven. On the one hand it speaks of the Way of Heaven, on the other hand it uses the human person to bear witness to it. Of course you can say that Confucius can also do that. “Oh how profound without end” is speaking from the objective side. “*Wu mu* [oh how profound]” is an adverbial phrase meaning profound. Heaven’s mandate is invisible. What we see normally is the scattered Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things, but actually they are being driven by Heaven’s mandate. Later on this statement metamorphosed into *Yijing Commentaries*’s “Heaven’s action is vigorous. Therefore the superior man strengthens himself ceaselessly [天行健，君子以自強不息].” [*Yijing* , Appendix II.i.1: "'Qian' Xiang (Explanation of Symbolism of the 'Qian' Hexagram)"]. Historically the Chinese people have had an intimate understanding of these principles, for they had an “existential resonance” that was transmitted from generation to generation. The modern person often presumes that he is superior to people of the past, which is really a delusion. The modern person is very much “cut off.” He has cleverness but no wisdom and is completely without “existential resonance.” How could he possibly carry on this

mandate of wisdom! “Heaven’s action is vigorous” corresponds to “Heaven’s mandate, oh how profound without end.” “Therefore the superior man strengthens himself ceaselessly” corresponds to “The purity of King Wen’s virtue, his purity indeed without end.” Mencius said: “The sages before and the sages after, their judgments are the same [先聖後聖，其揆一也].” [Mencius, 4B.1.4] Lu Xiangshan also said: “If a sage comes from the Eastern Sea, this mind will be the same as his, these principles will be the same as his. If a sage comes from the Western Sea, this mind will be the same as his, these principles will be the same as his. If a sage comes from the South Sea or from the North Sea, this mind will be the same as his, these principles will be the same as his. If a sage came ten million ages ago or comes ten million ages hereafter, this mind and these principles will not be any different from his.” This is what is meant by “existential resonance” and the continuation of the mandate of wisdom. Dao of course is an objective entity, with absolute universality. To see this is to see Dao; not to see it is not to see Dao. Although there is a difference between the subjective side and the objective side here, yet the “substance [ti 體]” without end is the same. This sort of teaching is a vertical treatment of the vertical. In other words, it is teaching vertically in response to the vertical so as to open the wellspring of our life, the wellspring of our wisdom, and the wellspring of our morals. This is the most apt, incisive, most naturally flowing, and most unobstructed method of teaching.

Plato was unable to treat the vertical vertically, for Plato still had the flavor of a horizontal treatment of the vertical. Of course this treatment was different from that of the horizontal treatment of the vertical by Buddhism and Daoism. His horizontal treatment leans towards the cognitive, first, because he was unable to open up the subject, and second, because his Creator built like a carpenter and did not create. Later on, when Christianity emerged, it began its teaching from God's creation. Here one may call it creation but it only had the side of "Heaven's mandate, oh how profound without end." It lacked the side of "The purity of King Wen's virtue was also purity without end." Thus it could not open up the subject. This was the Christian mode. The Chinese way of thinking was different. Confucianism also attaches importance to creation, but it does not have God create Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things. The substance of creation appears in our moral creativity. Thus nature-substance and Dao-substance interpenetrate and are

one. As a result Confucianism opens the door of the subject and emphasizes moral practice. How then is nature-substance presented? Through "vigilance in solitude [*shendu* 慎獨]" . Thus opening the door of the subject is opening the practice of vigilance in solitude. The Christian religion has always failed to open up the practice of vigilance in solitude, which is why we cannot become Jesus through moral practice.

In Western philosophy the philosopher who is most capable of presenting the vertical system and can furthermore open up the subject is Kant [1724-1804]. That is why, if in discussing Confucianism we wish to connect it with Western philosophy, the only place where we can make the connection is through Kant. Since making this connection will reveal a number of issues, it will be possible for Chinese philosophy to progress further. If Western philosophy makes Kant its center, and if it is dissatisfied with the present performance (by and large the performance of present-day Western philosophy is in analytic philosophy and existentialism--analytic philosophy pertains to a technique while existentialism is fin-de-siècle thought) and wants to move forward, then it must adjust itself and must take a look at Chinese philosophy. Only with Kant's philosophy can we make the connection, for it is very difficult to connect with the other philosophies. But why must Western philosophy make Kant its center and not Russell its center? Quite obviously it cannot make Russell its center because Russell does not discuss these issues. Why can it not make Aquinas its center? Because Aquinas's philosophy has its origins in the Greek tradition. What he advocates is precisely the heteronomy of the will that Kant wants to strike down. [The latter's] vertical system teaches the autonomy of the will. Thus Western philosophy cannot make Aquinas its center and connect with Chinese philosophy. Only Kant can provide the connection. If Chinese philosophy wants to make its way forward, then it must develop along this path. It is a necessity. If Western philosophy makes Kant its center and wants to move forward, then it cannot stop with Kant but must take a look at the Chinese tradition, turn, and take a step forward. As the saying goes: "The hundred-foot pole moves one foot forward [百尺竿頭，更進一尺]." Otherwise Kant's philosophy cannot continue unobstructed, and the life of Western philosophy will ultimately not be able to stand on firm ground but will continue to be shaky and unstable.

The life of Western culture has been very turbulent, always swinging back and forth. In the Middle Ages people gazed on God every day, while people of recent times have stopped looking at God. This has resulted in the emergence of Marx, who places the highest value on the material. That is why Western culture is turbulent and inharmonious. Chinese culture has been more harmonious. But now, because of the Western influence, it too has become turbulent. The turbulence in Chinese culture is a reflection of the turbulence in Western culture. This reflection of the West has resulted in disaster for China. Otherwise, how could Chinese culture have allowed Marxism to crash in and produce a Mao Zedong? That is why as students of philosophy we should not let our minds follow the trend of the West and keep rolling downhill. It is not a healthy trend. Analytic philosophy is not without its value but we should put this value in its proper place and not exaggerate it. Although the European continent does not concern itself with analytic philosophy exclusively, it has not gotten on the right track either. Philosophies like those of Husserl [1859-1938] and Heidegger [1889-1976] will never find a way out of the morass.

To put it simply, in terms of the ultimate, the Confucian system is a vertical system. It is the legislating level of practical reason in what Kant calls two-level legislating. When the Confucian system is compared with Buddhism and Daoism, the latter two are horizontal treatments of the vertical while Confucianism is the vertical treatment of the vertical. Kant is also the vertical treatment of the vertical. The reason why Kant can connect with Confucianism is because he teaches the autonomy of the will. This turn-around is very important, and one favored by the Chinese because Confucianism belongs to this mode and it is immediately recognizable. In the West, despite Kant's tremendous effort, the turn-around is incomplete. But Kant has made it very clear that regardless of whether God's will is the basis or whether perfection or happiness is the basis it is all the heteronomy of the will.² The autonomy of the will is necessary, indisputable, and indispensable to the discussion of morals. This was recognized by Confucianism long ago. Objectively speaking, the Confucians of the Song and Ming could all preserve the meaning of the vertical taught by the pre-Qin Confucians in terms of Dao-substance. The ancients found it very easy to understand the meaning of the vertical. People of today find it easy to understand the horizontal cognitive relations, the thrust is most easily

applied here, whereas they have great difficulty understanding the meaning of the vertical. The Song and Ming Confucians, with the exception of Cheng Yichuan [Cheng Yi, 1033-1108] and Zhu Zi [Zhu Xi, 1130-1200] who were slightly divergent, could all fully maintain the meaning of the vertical. On the other hand, the terms and expressions used by Zhu Zi were distilled from the vertical system all the same. They simply unconsciously shifted their direction, with the result that they became similar to the mode of the Platonic tradition. That is why I have called it "another son establishing another lineage" and not the Confucian orthodox tradition. To stress this side is also very good. It is not without its value and furthermore it can lead to knowledge. However, in the development of Chinese culture, creation in the vertical system was treated first. In the West, someone like Plato laid emphasis on knowledge, as a result of which he was unable to discuss morals. Zhu Zi fell into this mode. It is good to open this side, and in the pre-Qin period Xun Zi [ca. 298-238 BCE] gave primacy to this side. But Zhu Zi borrowed orthodox Confucian terminology to fit over this type of discussion, with the result that he confused people.

Although "nature [*xing*]" is presented in the human person, it is not a class concept. Nature-substance and Dao-substance are one and the same. According to Cheng Mingdao, nature-substance, mind-substance, *ren*-substance, sincerity-substance, Dao-substance, spirit-substance, "awareness in stillness of the true inner springs of nature" [*jigan zhenji*, 寂感真機], etc.. are all one and the same. The subjective "purity indeed without end" and the objective "Oh how profound without end" are completely one. That is why he said: "Just this is the Becoming of Heaven and Earth. There is no separate Heaven and Earth apart from this [只此便是天地之化，不可對此個別有天地]."³ The changes in us twenty-four hours a day are the Becoming of Heaven and Earth. It is not that this is the Becoming of the human person and that is the Becoming of Heaven and Earth. But is this then naturalism? It is not naturalism because it enables the person to rise up and not drop down. According to the Confucian view, the moral order is the cosmic order. Conversely, the cosmic order is the moral order, the two of necessity interpenetrating and one. To see this is to see Dao, which is by no means easy to do. In the past the Chinese called it enlightenment [*wu*]. For present-day people who use the language and concepts of the West, it is even less accessible. *Wu* does not only mean

understand. For example, when Zhu Dao Sheng [355-434] speaks of attaining Buddhahood through sudden enlightenment [*dunwu*], it does not mean that becoming a Buddha can come about merely through understanding; rather, one must see Suchness [*shixiang*, realness, Skt. *bhutatathata*, ultimate reality]. "Only Buddha and Buddha can fathom the suchness of dharmas."⁴ Becoming a Buddha through sudden enlightenment requires opening the Buddha-knowing and seeing [*kai fo zhi jian*]. It also requires that in instant enlightenment all ignorance be completely dissolved away so that "*prajñā* as such" is confirmed and the Nirvana Dharma-body attained. Otherwise one's entire life will be spent in ignorance. How then could one become a Buddha? So enlightenment does not only mean a matter of understanding.

We must first realize what "nature" is, what "mind" is, and what the *zhi* [knowing right and wrong] of *liangzhi* is, before we can advance a step forward and realize that mind-substance, nature-substance, *zhi*-substance, and Dao-substance are identical. This "identical" is difficult for the contemporary person to understand, be he Westerner or Chinese. Present-day people wonder how mind, nature, *liangzhi*, and so forth, can be identical with the objective Dao-substance. They cannot even acknowledge that there is an objectively speaking Dao-substance. But this kind of attitude goes against Chinese tradition. By the standard of the past, this shows that one is simply unenlightened on Dao! The identity of these two sides--outside mind there is nothing, outside [moral] nature there is nothing, outside Dao there is nothing--is recognized by all Confucians. There was consensus among Cheng, Zhu, Lu, and Wang on this. Furthermore, not only is it true of Song and Ming Confucians, it was true long ago of the pre-Qin Confucians, because it is simply the character of the vertical system. Unless this is so there cannot be enlightenment on Dao. People these days find it difficult to understand this point, but it was easy for Chinese of the past. Why can present-day Chinese not understand it? Because of the Western influence. They think the modern way is clear whereas the way of teaching of the past is too general. There is no disputing that we need to employ modern means of expression, but we should not lose the original meaning of past philosophy.

What does *wu*, enlightenment, mean? It means that the "substance [*ti*]" described on the subjective and objective sides is one. To take Kant as an example, Kant's system

fits the Confucian vertical system most closely, for Kant's system is a typical vertical system. Nonetheless, he is unable to attain the unity of the two sides, for he has proposed three postulates--the free will, the existence of God, and the immortality of the soul. He did not say that these three postulates are one. But according to the Confucian view, mind-substance, nature-substance, *zhi*-substance, and Dao-substance are one. Here there can only be one, not three. The reason Kant proposed three postulates is because he was influenced by the Christian tradition.

Going a step further, *wu* [enlightenment] has yet another level of meaning. Besides the level of "the substance of the subjective and objective sides is one and the same", true enlightenment on Dao is not merely conceptual understanding. Theoretical reason can also have conceptual understanding. However much theoretical reason cannot affirm the objective reality of freedom, God, and the soul, it understands that these concepts are not contradictory and are possible. The *Critique of Pure Reason* wants to open this door. Only practical reason can give these concepts objective reality. The Chinese *wu*, enlightenment, does not mean merely to understand the possibility of a concept but one must also enter into what Kant calls "mysticism". But Kant cannot acknowledge this point because he does not approve of mysticism. What must *wu*, enlightenment, imply? That the substance on the subjective and objective sides are identical, because this substance is not merely abstract, but is mind, is *liangzhi*, and is also *ren*. That is why it must imply intellectual intuition.

Kant can refuse to acknowledge intellectual intuition but it is not certain that the Chinese did not acknowledge it. Although this term did not appear historically in Confucianism, they had to affirm this fact. It was in the vertical system that intellectual intuition was affirmed and not in the horizontal, epistemic, system. When we have affirmed intellectual intuition we have not expanded our knowledge. This does not conflict with Kant's epistemology. Intellectual intuition cannot give us knowledge, for it is a creative principle and not a cognitive principle. Sensible intuition lies in the horizontal relations, able to give an object but not to create an object. Intellectual intuition lies in the vertical system. When it intuits a thing it creates that thing. We must not misunderstand this and think that when we acknowledge intellectual intuition we acknowledge it on the knowledge level. Confucianism would obviously not do this, for

Confucianism is not concerned with knowledge questions. Horizontal, cognitive, relations pertain to what Kant calls sensibility and understanding. Intellectual intuition, however, lies in vertical relations because God's creating is found in vertical relations. But the difference between Kant and Confucianism lies in this: Kant maintains that only God has intellectual intuition while humans do not have it.

The Confucian tradition does not have three postulates but only one. Under this condition, man of course has intellectual intuition, which is manifested in nature-substance, mind-substance, Dao-substance, and *ren*-substance. Intellectual intuition appears as a result of the transforming effect of moral practice; it is not found in actual reality. From the standpoint of actual reality, where do we have a specific faculty called intellectual intuition? Thus, from the standpoint of anthropology, intellectual intuition is not to be found. Kant also took the standpoint of anthropology. From the anthropological standpoint man is simply what Buddhism calls "a determinate sentient being," finite, and created. The Chinese, however, did not take the anthropological point of view but the viewpoint of practice in looking at man. From the standpoint of spiritual practice there is no such thing as a determinate sentient being. In actual reality man is of course finite, but although finite he can be infinite. Man can become a Buddha and a Buddha is infinite. Of course this "infinite" is different from the infinity of God, but that does not prevent it from being infinite. Buddhahood is attained through the practical spiritual cultivation of the sentient being. Thus there is no determinate sentient being nor a determinate *chanti* [Skt. *icchantika*, a sentient incapable of attaining Buddhahood], nor a determinate *arhat*, nor a determinate bodhisattva, nor even a determinate Buddha. It follows then that Buddhism can speak of the principle of indeterminacy. But Buddhism also has the principle of determinacy. What is this principle of determinacy? That all sentient beings have a Buddha-nature is determinate; that the human person can become a Buddha is determinate. Thus the three postulates must join into one; the subjective mind-substance, nature-substance, and [*liang-*] *zhi*-substance, and the objective Dao-substance are one, and intellectual intuition is implied therein. *Wu*, to be enlightened, means to be enlightened on this point, and to see Dao is to see this point. And this is what Kant called "the kingdom of God".

But the Chinese do not use such terms as "the kingdom of God", all being the transformation [*hua*, becoming] of Heaven and Earth. Normally we think of the transformation of Heaven and Earth as being on one side and virtuous conduct, "its purity also without end", on the other side. In fact, virtuous conduct, "its purity also without end", is precisely the transformation of Heaven and Earth, and the transformation of Heaven and Earth of "Oh how profound without end" is precisely moral creativity. These two are the same and one. Is this then not equal to the kingdom of God? This is a transformation of the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is dependent on intellectual intuition, since intuiting it is creating it, with the result that it is clearly presented, clearly laid out. This is to see Dao. Similarly, the purest dharma-realm [*fajia*, Skt. *dharma-dhatu*] that appears after one achieves Buddhahood is not merely an idea. That is why on this point we cannot follow Kant's standard and keep dropping down, for that would make us go against the Chinese tradition, rendering it meaningless. Nowadays there are people who maintain precisely this attitude. They acknowledge only the viewpoint of Mencius and Wang Yangming, confining the philosophies of Mencius and Wang Yangming, moreover, to the moral ought and not involving the question of existence. Mencius and Wang have thus been shrunk down. How can this be allowed? If existence was not involved, then to whom do we hand over existence? Westerners have handed over existence to God. To whom are you going to hand over existence?

If you say that *liangzhi* does not involve existence but merely determines moral right and wrong, determines the "ought," then to what do you hand over existence? Besides, Wang Yangming made it clear that "Outside the mind there is nothing" and clearly said that "This moment when there is no sound nor smell and one knows alone, this is the foundation of Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things [無聲無臭獨知時，此是乾坤萬有基]." Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things cannot exist apart from *liangzhi*, and these biased people cause *liangzhi* to wilt and shrink. If it is merely confined to the moral sphere, to whom do we hand over Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things? This makes no sense. Thus at this juncture we cannot drag down along Kant's path. Besides, Kant gave an accounting on this point. Although he did not hand over existence to our free will, he did hand it over to God. Now these biased people who have struck off the

entire objective side represented by God and Tai Ji [the Great Ultimate] do not hand it over to *liangzhi*. Then to whom should it be handed over to?

It is not that Kant does not want God. God is one of his three postulates. In China, Confucianism has substituted God with Dao-substance, has made mind-substance and Dao-substance interpenetrating and one, with the result that what remains is one. If you want to speak of God then this is God; if you want to speak of freedom, then this is freedom; if you want to speak of the immortal soul, then this is the immortal soul. The Chinese do not speak particularly of the individual soul. Mind [*xin*] refers by and large to the absolutely universal mind, existent from time immemorial, and there is only one. Thus we cannot follow Kant and call this mysticism or moral fanaticism, but must flow along with Kant and press forward a step. If Western philosophy makes Kant its center, it must develop and move ahead further. Otherwise it will continue the present downward slide. Those German philosophers who came after Kant, such as Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, all saw this. But they did not develop well, especially in the case of Hegel, who was often repellent. When it turned into Marxism it was even more repellent. But even in Hegel there was a propensity to digest the three postulates into one. On the other hand, the Confucian development was not repellent like that of Hegel. There are those who say that Hegel's philosophy has helped totalitarianism, but rarely has it been said that the Three Teachings of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism have helped totalitarianism. In this manner we have moved a step forward: turning from what Kant calls "moral theology" into Confucian "moral metaphysics". We may only affirm a moral metaphysics, just as Kant affirms a moral theology. We may not conversely affirm a metaphysical ethics, just as Kant may not affirm a theological ethics. A theological ethics makes a heteronomous morality and should not be affirmed.

But where we differ from Kant is: What we call "enlightened on Dao" [*wu Dao*] and "joined into one" [*he yi*] Kant calls mysticism. He does not acknowledge intellectual intuition. This is very unsound. Kant says in the chapter "Of the Typic of Pure Practical Judgment" in *Critique of Practical Reason* that the judgment of practical reason can only treat natural law as type or symbol but not as schema. This chapter is very difficult because of its density. Granted we need schema in knowledge, when we apply moral law to our actual life we do not need schema. According to Kant's view, as soon as we speak

of action we drop into the phenomenal world where we must obey natural law. Thus natural law is symbol (or typic) of moral law, and schema does not enter in here. But mysticism turns what is merely symbol (typic) into schema, believing that we have intellectual intuition of the kingdom of God. This approach of Kant's, which employs the terminology of knowledge to speak of intellectual intuition, is highly inappropriate. If we want to speak of intellectual intuition, we cannot have schema and cannot even use the term "schema". But this is where we find the kingdom of God, where we find the transformation of Heaven and Earth. In intellectual intuition we can say natural law is typic, but we cannot say that there is schema in intellectual intuition. But according to Kant, mysticism treats typic or symbol as schema, thereby affirming intellectual intuition. Kant, however, does not approve of mysticism.

Kant's criticism of mysticism is not very apt. Perhaps one can direct this sort of criticism at Western mysticism. In any case, unless it is properly clarified, it will close off the road that leads upward. This will result in a huge error, affecting the ordinary person. Kant opposed the discussion of morality through empiricism. Although he frowned on mysticism, he nevertheless felt that it was compatible with the gravity and purity of morality but was somewhat exaggerated. He held that, from the standpoint of human moral practice, rationalism was most proper. From the perspective of Chinese philosophy, if Wang Yang-ming's philosophy is made the standard, the Four-Haves [*si you*, four affirmations] statement of the instruction on *liangzhi*⁵ falls within the sphere of rationalism. And Wang Longxi [1498-1583]'s Four-Withouts [Four Negations] statement⁶ has entered into mysticism. But this kind of mysticism is reached by going forward directly along the path of rationalism. Here mysticism and rationalism cannot be cut in two, for they are interpenetrating. However, if we follow Kant's view, then it would be impossible to ascend along the path of rationalism because the road would be sealed. This creates a huge problem, because once this happens the "enlightened on Dao," "becoming a sage," "becoming a Buddha," and becoming the "True/Authentic Person" that the Chinese taught will all be reduced to myths. But these are not myths; they are actually possible. According to Kant's view, however, they are all mysticism, all exaggeration. In this way he has confined "real reason" [*shi li*].

According to the present-day view, these are all myths that should not be given credence. All these Westernized intellectuals now belong to this mentality. Under this situation it is impossible for Chinese philosophy to stand. The more polite among them will say that all of this belongs to religion. But to Chinese of the past, these questions consisted of intellectual inquiry. Nor is Buddhism just a religion. To call all of it religion is to speak of Christianity as the norm. Ouyang Dashi 歐陽大師 [Ouyang Jingwu 歐陽竟無, 1871-1943] once said: "Buddhism is neither religion nor philosophy. It is also a religion and a philosophy." Buddhism is not a religion because it does not have Christianity as its norm. It is not philosophy because it does not have Western philosophy as its norm. But conversely it is also a religion and a philosophy. But why must we make Christianity the norm? If we take Christianity as the norm and say that Buddhism is a religion and mythology, how can we hope to convince men's hearts? A religion like Buddhism is obviously different from Christianity. It has teaching [*jiao*] and teaching is philosophy. Buddhism has "*zong* 宗" [dogmas] and "*jiao* 教" [teaching/doctrine]. "Doctrine" has a doctrinal path. The Buddha and the bodhisattva teach principles by going up step by step. Christianity has *zong* but no *jiao*. That is why it is only a religion [*zongjiso*]. It is only mythology. Modernists do not only call Buddhism mythology, they also call Confucianism, Daoism, and the Song and Ming *lixuejia* [School of Reason-Principle Learning] all mythology, a very bad attitude indeed. If they continue to slide downward they will simply do what is called "academic research," become mere *kaoju* [evidential research, philology]; then the "Perfected Buddha" and the "Dharma-body" that Buddhism spoke of will all be nothing but mythology.

The Academia Sinica [in Taiwan] exemplifies this trend. They occupy themselves looking for terms to classify and for statistics. For example, when did the word *li* [reason, Principle] first appear? How many times did it appear in a certain period? Under this situation, all the discussions of the *lixuejia* philosophers are no longer counted as intellectual inquiry but mere chatter. There are scholars of Song and Ming *lixuejia* philosophy in the Academia Sinica, but in this atmosphere all they do is collect statistics, for example, statistics on how the word *ren* was understood in ancient times. Then they study Ruan Yuan [1764-1849]'s "*Xingming Guxun* 性命古訓 [Exegesis of the Term

xingming (life, life-and-destiny)"]. Then they study Fu Sinian [1896-1950]'s "Critical Exegesis of the Word *xingming* [life, life-and-destiny]." Only this, and nothing else, is scholarship. When this happens, all the intellectual inquiry of Confucianism is wiped out. Mr Xu Fuguan[1903-1982] once said to them: "Why don't you talk about Chinese philosophy? Surely you could do research on Song and Ming *lixuejia* philosophy?" One of them replied: "We in Academia Sinica are certainly not going to study the Chan [Zen] school." He went so far as to look upon Song and Ming *lixuejia* philosophy as belonging to the Chan school! But surely even if it were the Chan school he could study it! Why doesn't Academia Sinica do research in comparative religion?

Kant studied rationalism but he was not able to make his way through and up. He was not able to attach importance to the level above. Present-day scholars follow along this kind of rationalism and look downward, with the result that even rationalism cannot stand up. It has only become intellectualism, in other words, the intellectualism of the Age of Enlightenment. Generally speaking "intellectualism" is not a good term. Everything that can be proved is believed; anything that cannot be proved is disbelieved. Such is the attitude of intellectualism. Since the intellect is confined to the sphere of experience, those who uphold intellectualism insist on proof and evidence. Hu Shih [1891-1958]'s slogan used to be "Bring me the evidence", which sounded quite impressive, as if he had truth on his side, but actually it made no sense. The others did not see things clearly themselves so they were taken in by him. You can bring out the evidence on some things but some things have nothing to do with evidence. Where are you going to find the evidence? For example, according to the old Chinese custom, you were not supposed to wear gold-rimmed glasses right after the death of your father or mother nor were you allowed to wear silk or satin. You could only wear sackcloth. But Hu Shih said: "Why can't I wear gold-rimmed glasses? If I can wear silver-rimmed glasses then of course I can wear gold-rimmed glasses. Both gold rims and silver rims are metal, so what's the difference?" If you do this then you have overthrown filial piety. Where are we to find the evidence for filial piety? Then take the question of so-called "fairness." The saying goes: "You say you are fair, I say I am fair. Whether you or I are fair or not Heaven only knows." Where do we find the evidence for fairness? That is why these people have no moral consciousness. Moral questions have nothing to do with

evidence. One can only bear witness oneself, one cannot ask why. If you ask why, then you are not a person but merely a beast. This is generally the attitude of what people these days call scholarship. Past scholarship was just the reverse. They focused their attention on how filial piety is manifested in themselves. Nowadays people look on such things as mysticism and not as a learning.

Of course Kant did not go so far as that, but he can open up this door. We have discussed Kant in order that his philosophy may make its way through obstruction and go upward. Only when it has penetrated upwards can we hold on to it firmly. As soon as we cannot hold on firmly, it will drop onto the level of positivism. That is why in a sense Kant was the greatest logical positivist of them all. From the perspective of the sphere of empirical knowledge, logical positivism cannot be considered wrong.

We will conclude this series of lectures here. The trend of thought since the fall [1644] of the Ming dynasty, through the reigns of Qianlong [1736-1796] and Jiaqing [1796-1821] to the years of the Republic [1912-] down until now has been very discouraging. That is because Chinese philosophy disappeared long ago.

Transcribed by Ming-huei Lee 李明輝

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¹ See Kant, *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. Thomas K. Abbott, chap. 2.

² See Kant, *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. Thomas K. Abbott, ch. 2, sect. 2 on "The Classification of All Principles of Morality Which Can Be Found on the Conception of Heteronomy." Also Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason*, part 1, bk. 1, ch. 1, "Principles of Pure Practical Reason," Theorem IV, Remark II.

³ *Er Cheng Quan Shu* 二程全書 [*Complete Works of the Two Cheng Brothers*], volume 2, "Er Xiansheng Yu 二先生語 [Conversations of the Two Cheng Brothers] A" and *Song-Yuan Xue'an* 宋元學案 [*Studies of Song and Yuan Scholars*], juan 13, "Mingdao Xue'an shang".

⁴ *Fa hua jing* 法華經 [*Lotus Sūtra*], "Fangbian Pin 方便品" [Chapter on the Expedient], 2.

⁵ The *siyou* [Four Haves, Four Affirmations] statement by Wang Yangming:

That which has no good and evil is the mind-in-itself.

That which has good or evil is the activity of volition.

That which knows good and evil in the activity of volition is *liangzhi*.

Performing good and removing evil is the rectification of things [our actions].

無善無惡心之體，

有善有惡意之動，

知善知惡是良知，

為善去惡是格物。

[This is Mou Zongsan's own translation, slightly edited. From Mou Tsung-san, "The immediate successor of Wang Yang-ming: Wang Lung-hsi and his theory of ssu-wu," *Philosophy East and West*, vol. 23(1973): 103-120, p.104.] See Wang Yangming, *Chuan Xi Lu* [*Instructions for Practical Living*], juan 3, and

Nianpu [Chronology], entry for *jiaqing* sixth year, under the item of ninth month. Also see *Wang Longxi Conversations* [*Wang Longxi Yu Lu*], *juan* 1, “Tian Quan Zheng Dao Ji 天泉證道紀” [Record of Verifying Dao at Tian Quan].

⁶ The *siwu* [Four Withouts, Four Negations] statement is from Wang Longxi [1498-1583]:

Since mind-substance [*xinti*, mind-in-itself] is without good without evil,

Volition is also without good without evil,

Understanding is also without good without evil,

Things are also without good without evil.

心體既是無善無惡，

意亦是無善無惡，

知亦是無善無惡，

物亦是無善無惡。

See Wang Yangming, *Chuan Xi Lu*, *juan* 3, and *Nianpu*, *jiaqing* sixth year, under the item of ninth month. [Also see *Wang Longxi Yu Lu* [*Wang Longxi Conversations*], *juan* 1, “Tianquan Zheng Dao Ji” [Record of Verifying Dao at Tianquan].