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A Chinese Philosopher's Theory of Knowledge

I

In this essay an attempt will be made to deal with theoretical knowledge in a more or less comprehensive way. It is an attempt at a theory of knowledge. For quite a number of years, the writer has had in mind the idea of elaborating more satisfactorily a hint given him in the discovery that Western philosophical problems are not exactly similar to those which were in the minds of Chinese philosophers. There seems to be some difference between the Western and the Chinese intellectual processes. With this in mind, it is desirable to have our view of the Western theory of knowledge somewhat clarified. For the Western theory of knowledge has taken knowledge as the universal knowledge of mankind. As a matter of fact, however, it is only one kind of knowledge, other kinds being present in other cultures. Support for the view that knowledge can be studied sociologically or culturally came recently in Karl Mannheim's *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*. Nevertheless, there are points of difference between Mannheim and the present writer.

The sociology of knowledge, historically, has merged with Marxism. But the Marxian interpretation of society is different from the point of view to be elaborated here in that it laid its emphasis on the antagonism of economic classes. Its sociology of knowledge is, therefore, characterized by class interests: In other words, it is nothing but an attempt to give knowledge its background in class struggles. This theory of knowledge cannot be properly called a sociological theory of knowledge but rather a class interpretation of knowledge. It is evident that the influence of social relations upon thought will not be adequately accounted for merely in terms of economic interests. Mannheim's merit lies in the fact that he has transcended this limit. Still there is much to be desired in his work, because it has been entirely in the field of concrete thought, or the prevalent thought of a given time, such as particular "isms" and theories. It is legitimate, of course, to analyze the social relations underlying such thought, but we must realize that in concrete social thought, there are also categories employed, and these categories themselves can also be analyzed from the sociological point of view. The attempt of this essay, is primarily concerned with the latter, that is, the categories used in social thought. In other words, our interest here lies more in the structures underlying thought than in concrete thought as such.

By the nature of the problem our approach should be similar to that, of Kant. The Kantian type of interest in knowledge is concerned with the fundamental conditions of knowledge, and to this extent the Kantian theory of knowledge seems to be acceptable for a theory of knowledge should be a study of the forms of knowledge

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without touching upon its contents. But a socio-logical theory of knowledge will inevitably go beyond Kant, for Kant himself thought that he was treating the universal categories employed in the thinking process of all mankind, while as a matter of fact he has treated the forms of thought characteristic only of Western culture. Yet it is not to be taken to mean that it is not possible to have universal categories applying to human thought in general, or that only ethnically and culturally determined forms of thought are possible. Universal categories for human thought may be recognized, but not those defined by Kant. The Kantian theory of knowledge is within the limits of the Western type of knowledge; he attempted to establish a foundation for the great tradition of the West. He himself, of course, was influenced by his time and the culture of the Western tradition. He attempted to use the problem of knowledge to make a new approach to metaphysics in order to revive it. In his view, should he succeed in establishing the non-empirical aspect of human *understanding*, his metaphysics, as a prelude to the philosophy of life, would be on solid ground. Our problem today does not seem to be parallel with his.

We are in need of a theory of knowledge, but its use is not for the support of metaphysics. Our attitude, therefore, is different from that of Kant. It is nearer to that of Spengler.^[1] Following the latter, we may attribute the genesis and differences of the categories of thought to cultural differences. A given culture must have a given set of categories. This does not mean that a given culture is derived from a given set of categories, or that a given set of categories gives birth to a given culture. It means that the establishment of culture and categories is one and the same thing. The formation of a given culture lies in the use of a given set of categories, but the relation between them is not in terms of cause and effect. They are two aspects of the same entity.

Being a philosopher and not a student of cultural anthropology or any other social science, the writer's treatment of knowledge from the cultural point of view may not necessarily be in agreement with that of the cultural and social scientists. The point of view expounded here arises from the findings of the history of philosophy. It is for the social scientist to revise or modify this contribution if necessary.

To recapitulate thus far: firstly, a theory of knowledge and cultural history must be treated simultaneously; secondly, not only does concrete social thought have its social background but logical forms and theoretical categories also have their cultural determinants; thirdly, the difference between Western and Eastern thought can be explained from this point of view; fourthly, from this we may understand that Western philosophy is nothing but a particular form of knowledge characteristic of and for the use of Western culture. All these points will be further elaborated in the following pages in which an attempt will be made to establish a new theory of knowledge.

II

Before proceeding further, it is well to distinguish the various types of knowledge. Generally speaking, there are two kinds of knowledge, the perceptual and the conceptual. Take a table or a chair for instance. It can be touched and perceived directly. This is perceptual knowledge: The uniformity, of nature and the idea of a

¹ Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West*, London, 1928-1928, 2 v.

Supreme Being, on the other hand, cannot be verified by the senses, and causality, teleology and the like are also conceptual in nature. It may be noted that perceptual knowledge cannot be outside the conceptual, nor can conceptual knowledge be separated from the perceptual. As a matter of fact, any conceptual knowledge contains perceptual elements and vice versa. The differentiation between the two is always for the mere convenience of discussion. They do not exist separately.

The kind of knowledge treated in this essay, it will be seen, is not perceptual but conceptual knowledge. In so far as the conceptual guides the perceptual, the importance of the former surpasses that of the latter. This point is often neglected by the empiricists, but from the standpoint of cultural history it is desirable to have it emphasized.

Conceptual knowledge is also interpretative in nature. By interpretation we understand the manipulation of concepts and the employment of categories. For instance the apprehension of a flower is a perception, but it is an interpretation to say that flowers are derived from leaves, or that the formation of the flower is for the purpose of reproduction. In an interpretation of this kind, at least, the following concepts are being used: any event must have its antecedent; each change must have its cause; and, the final result in a concept of evolution is so much the more derived from interpretation. Therefore, interpretative knowledge, because it contains concepts and results in concepts, is conceptual knowledge. The manipulation of concepts is for the purpose of interpreting perceived facts. Thus, it is evident that conceptual knowledge is interpretative knowledge, and interpretative knowledge is theoretical knowledge.

At this point we may mention the thesis of Pareto,^[2] the Italian sociologist, for purposes of comparison. According to him, theoretical knowledge has very mixed elements: descriptive elements, axiomatic elements, concrete elements and imaginary elements, in addition to those appealing to sentiments and beliefs. He also classifies theoretical knowledge into two kinds: the experimental and the non-experimental. And, with these two as *matter* he has as *nexus* the logical and the non-logical. Thus there are four classes, the logico-experimental, the non-logico-experimental, the logico-non-experimental and the non-logico-non-experimental. In this connection we are not interested in developing his theory, but merely in pointing out that his experimental knowledge is outside the theoretical knowledge discussed herewith.

His distinction between the logical and the non logical indicates that the non-logical is not very important, but the term "the logical", itself seems very ambiguous. The thought of man may not necessarily be in agreement with formal logic, but it cannot be otherwise than in agreement with a logic. We are treating, therefore, not formal logic but real logic.^[3] The type of logic used by Chinese philosophers is different from that of the West, while the Hindus may have a logic different from both the Chinese and the Western. Logic follows the trend of culture. Western scholars often mistake their logic for the universal logic of mankind, as we have seen in the case of Kant. We will have more to say on this point later. It suffices here to say that the distinction between the logical and the non-logical is of no particular importance,

² Vilfredo Pareto, *The Mind and Society*, tr. Andrew Bongiorno and Arthur Livingston, New York, 1986, v. 1, p. 8ff.

³ Formal logic as a matter of fact is influenced by real logic; this will be further elaborated later.

because there is no theoretical knowledge which does not imply real logic. It sounds like nonsense to speak of non-logical theoretical knowledge. Pareto has made a real point in saying that approval and disapproval of non-experimental knowledge depends upon sentiment, and thereby speaks of the "logic of sentiment". But from the logic of sentiment we must exclude experimental knowledge before we can go any further. What we are interested in here is a kind of knowledge which is both interpretative and conceptual and outside the experimental.

The newly arisen Vienna school has noted this point. Carnap, for example, has made a distinction between the problems of facts and the problems of logic.^[4] The former are those arising from facts while the latter are problems of words symbolizing things, and of the judgments which are made about things. This distinction may be of use by bringing before us the fact that much of our knowledge is not directly related to things, but merely to views about things. This kind of knowledge has a great place in human life. In our discussion we are dealing with this kind of knowledge which in concrete cases is comprised of political thought, social thought, philosophical thought and moral points of view, as well as the theoretical part of religious beliefs. Scientific knowledge, apart from its experimental elements, belongs here also in the form of interpretative theory.

It is worthwhile to note that experimental knowledge is guided by conceptual knowledge. Whitehead is very clear on this point.^[5] According to him, science is a synthesis of two kinds of knowledge, one direct observation, the other interpretation. Thus he speaks of "observational order" and "conceptual order." The former is explained as well as supplemented by the latter. Points of view among scholars may differ as to the priority of the two, but since the emergence of higher animal forms, both of them have co-existed. New observations may modify original concepts while new concepts may lead to new points of observation. We may take the evolution of physics as an example. Newtonian physics starts with matter in the form of concrete things. Hence the conceptions of absolute motion, and absolute space and time. But modern physics takes cognizance of concrete matter only as a point in the framework of time and space. Hence, what Whitehead calls "simple location" is discarded. From this it may be seen that the development of physics follows the conceptual scheme which is employed in it. In addition to Whitehead, V. F. Lenzen, the American physicist, in his *The Nature of Physical Theory* has illustrated the changes and developments of physical concepts in relation to physics. In the field of biology, Woodger in his recent book, *The Axiomatic Method in Biology*, has also demonstrated very clearly that categories have guided observation. All these examples show that experimental knowledge is perceptually derived knowledge which is guided and influenced by underlying non-experimental knowledge or conceptual knowledge. It is easy to see that experimental knowledge can modify conceptual knowledge, while it is not so obvious to many people that conceptual knowledge may be underlying and guiding the perceptual knowledge.

Another point to be made concerns the social nature of conceptual knowledge. All experimental knowledge is derived from the senses, and thus is individual and private, in other words, non-social. Consequently, perceptual knowledge can hardly be

⁴ Rudolf Carnap, *The Logical Syntax of Language*, London, 1987, p. 217.

⁵ Alfred North Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas*, New York, 1983, ch. 9.

social knowledge. Yet no knowledge can do away with its social content, the emergence and existence of which occurs only in the field of interpretative knowledge. S. Alexander⁶ has pointed out that the problem of valuation has a social nature, and that without presupposing society we cannot speak of value. It is needless to say that valuation is possible only in the field of interpretative knowledge. So far as perceptual knowledge is concerned, by the nature of the fact that it is private and individual, there is no problem of objective valuation. The importance of perceptual knowledge is self-evident, while non-experimental knowledge is apparently unimportant because its importance is not so evident, though nevertheless real.

III

The reason for the social nature of theoretical knowledge is not far to seek, it is that it is thinking expressed in terms of language, which in scientific terminology is called "linguistic thing". It is needless to say that language is a social product. Although the child's language has a stage of monologue, it is self-evident that language implies or presupposes an audience. Primitive man, we are told, often takes language as a concrete entity. The lower the culture, the greater the power of words. In primitive society language has magical power, therefore there is a direct connection between language and thought. If a primitive man is accused of being a thief, he most certainly becomes angry. But in modern society a sophisticated person can turn aside this accusation by a smile, provided he is innocent. We may take the degree of the power of words as a gauge to measure the development of an ethnic intellectual development. This point has been sufficiently demonstrated by modern students of child psychology and "primitive mentality", so we do not need to dwell upon it any further.

The arguments thus far seem to reveal the discrepancy between, language and things, and thus to advocate the emancipation of thought from language. Almost all the philosophers, from remote times to our own, have been aware of the limitations imposed by language, with the implication that real thinking cannot be clothed in language. The ordinary view is something like this: thought is primary, and with new terms thought has a better chance for expression. But this argument does not necessarily reveal the nature of the development of human thought. As a matter of fact, it is better to say that language has been a contributing factor rather than an obstacle to the development of thought. Viewing human history as a whole, any new creation in language, e.g. new terminology, represents a development of thought along a new line. Language and thought are fundamentally indivisible. Any thought can only be articulated through language or symbol. That which cannot be thus articulated most likely will not be counted as thought. Although language and thought cannot be absolutely identified, they cannot be separated. It is not that language limits thought or hinders it, but rather that language creates thought and develops it. Should we consider the two points together, namely, that thought develops with language and that language is a form of social behavior, it will be clear that apart from the experimental elements all knowledge is social.

With the cognizance of the determination of thought by social conditions, there develops the sociology of knowledge. But the sociology of knowledge has shown

⁶ Samuel Alexander, *Space, Time and Deity*. London, 1920.

only that human thought is determined by socially visible or invisible forces without realizing that apart from all these immediate concrete forces there are underlying social forces of a remote nature. We may identify these remote forces with cultural relations. All thought, in addition to being influenced by our immediate social environment, is also moulded by our remote cultural heritage. The immediate forces determine the trend of our thought, while the remote cultural heritage determines the forms in which thought is made possible. All these forces help to determine interpretative knowledge. With different interpretations come different cultures. And, being born into different cultures people learn to interpret differently. Thus we may use culture to explain categories, and categories to explain mental differences, e.g. these between the West and the East.

IV

With regard to types of language, a distinction may be observed between "emotive language" and "referential language".^[7] The first is used to arouse, with necessary gestures and appropriate sounds, the corresponding gestures or mental attitudes in the person to whom they are addressed. The latter is used to refer to things and ideas about things, largely in terms of organized symbols or articulate language. According to Darwin, the animal expressions in the form of singing and roaring may be taken as the precursors of human language. Thus emotive language is nearer to elemental expressions and more concerned with mental attitudes while referential language, being nearer to abstract thinking, is more concerned with grammatical constructions than mere changes in sounds.

With grammar and sentence-structure comes logic, and in this connection we have to deal for a moment with the nature of logic. Western logicians take it for granted that the object of logic is rules of human reasoning. This assumption, however, is not quite justified. Take Aristotelian logic, for example, which is evidently based on Greek grammar. The differences between Latin, French, English and German grammatical forms do not result in any difference between Aristotelian logic and their respective rules of reasoning, because they belong to the same Indo-European linguistic family. Should this logic be applied to Chinese thought, it will prove inappropriate. This fact shows that Aristotelian logic is based on the structure of the Western system of language. Therefore, we should not follow Western logicians in taking for granted that their logic is the universal rule of human reasoning.

In so far as the object of logic lies in the rules of reasoning implied in language, the expression of reasoning must be implicitly influenced by language-structure, and different languages will have more or less different forms of logic. Hence the difference between Chinese logic and Aristotelian logic. In a previous article^[8] an obvious example was taken. The traditional type of subject-predicate proposition is absent in Chinese logic. According to the usage of Western logic, in such a sentence as "A relates to B" the form is not a subject-predicate proposition but a relational proposition. Another sentence like "A is related to B" is in the form in ques-

⁷ C. X. Ogden and I. A. Richards, *The Meaning of Meaning*, London and New York, 1930.

⁸ "On the philosophical difference between China and the West from the standpoint of language-structure",

“從語言構造上看中西哲學的差異”，東方雜誌，卅三年，第七號。

tion, because there is the distinction between the subject and predicate. For both forms, however; there is in literary Chinese only one, that is, *chia lien yi* 甲連乙. Although we may say colloquially *chia shih lien yi* 甲是連乙, the function of the *shih* is that of the so-called "empty words" 虛字, which are used only for emphasis or intonation, without any grammatical function. Both of these Chinese propositions mean the same thing, without grammatical distinction except that the latter is more emphatic. Neither is a subject-predicate proposition. *Lien* relates the two terms *chia* and *yi* but it is not a copula.

Regarding the "empty words" such as *che* 者, *yeh* 也, *hu* 乎, *tsai* 哉, *yi* 矣, *wei* 爲 and so forth, they were not primarily so, their original meaning having been lost. Their function is based on their sounds. As such sounds do not have proper characters, they are represented by characters of similar sounds, which are called "borrowed" 假借 words. Such a "borrowed" use denotes only the sound without any implications as to meaning. The original characters had their own meaning. For example, the *wei* 爲 mentioned a moment ago originally meant *hou* 猴 or "apes". It is the sound, not the meaning of the original which is borrowed. In the formula "... *che* 者...*yeh* 也", *che* serves the function of a comma and *yeh* that of a full stop. According to the types of language mentioned above, the referential and the emotive, the Chinese "empty words" are emotive words. These empty-emotive-words are closely related to the ideographic nature of Chinese characters, on which we will have more to say later. Now it suffices to say that Aristotelian logic is based on the sentence structure, characterized by the subject-predicate form. Should we alter the sentence structure, the validity of the traditional Aristotelian logic may be questioned. With these preliminary remarks we may proceed to a discussion of the differences between the Western linguistic family and the Chinese language, and their respective influences on logic.

V

Western thought is in the last analysis confined to Aristotelian logic although later developments in logic have gone beyond the Aristotelian type. Modern mathematical logic, for example, is only an extension of formal logic. In no way can it unify all the formes of logic. The reason why Bertrand Russell is opposed to the idea of substance lies entirely in the fact that he has discovered a new logic not based upon the form of subject-predicate proposition. As a matter of fact, however, this new system of logic applies, apart from mathematics, only to the physical sciences. It is not applicable to the social sciences. Therefore, traditional logic is still, the "living logic" in the mind of Western thinkers. Now it can be shown that the "ten categories" and the later modified "five predicables" in Aristotelian logic are based on Greek grammar. And so long as definition and division are derived from the "ten categories" and the "five predicables" they in their turn are limited by Greek grammar. The "fallacies" pointed out by Aristotle are essentially those found in the Greek language.

Apart from the obvious examples mentioned above, the basis of Aristotelian logic may be seen definitely to lie in the subject-predicate form of language structure. It is seen in the English sentence "it is", which means "it exists". The verb "to be" has the meaning of existence, and Western logic is closely related to the verb "to be" in

Western languages.[⁹] It must have occurred to the readers of Plato that the verb "to be" is quite rich in meaning. Many philosophical problems come from it. Because the verb "to be" has the meaning of existence, the "law of identity" is inherent in Western logic; without it there can be no logical inference. Western logic, therefore, may be called "identity-logic".

The law of identity does not merely control logical operations such as deductions and inferences but also influences concepts of thought. As we know, Aristotle's philosophy was made possible entirely by the use of "identity-logic". For him the substance is merely derived from the subject and the verb "to be". From the latter, because its implication of existence leads naturally to the idea of "being", and from the former because in a subject-predicate proposition the subject cannot be eliminated. From the indispensability of the subject in a sentence, only a short step leads to the necessity for a "substratum" in thought. For example, when we say, "this is yellow and hard", yellowness and hardness, are the so-called "attributes" which are attributed to something, the something in this case being "this". The "something" general is the substratum. With a substratum emerges the idea of "substance". The idea of substance is indeed a foundation or fountainhead for all other philosophical developments. If there is any description, it becomes an attribute. An attribute must be attributed to a substance, thus the idea of substance is absolutely necessary in thought in the same way as the subject is absolutely necessary in language. This is the reason why in the history of Western philosophy, no matter how different the arguments may be, pro or con, about the idea of substance, it is the idea of substance which itself constitutes the central problem.

The English word "it" also has its own peculiarities. It is a non-definitive. It denotes *something*, but not *what*. Once the *what* is stated there develop the subject and predicate, or in other words, the substance is characterized by its attributes and the attributes are attributed to the substance. Thus, the separation between existence and whatness was the fundamental condition under which the concept of the substance was born. And this condition is expressed only in Western language-structure. It may be agreed then, after considering the peculiarities of the verb "to be" and the word "it", that many philosophical problems are merely problems of language.[¹⁰]

The Chinese language has its own peculiarities. First, it is not essential for a Chinese sentence to have a subject. It i[s]* often understood. In a sentence like *hsüeh erh shih hsi chih pu yi yüeh ku* or *kou chih yü jen yi wu a yeh* [¹¹] the subject is eliminated: Examples of this kind are too numerous to mention. The above two are random examples from the *Analects*. Secondly, in Chinese there is no verb "to be"

⁹ The English forms are used for examples, because they are representative of the general characteristics of the verb "to be" in the "West."

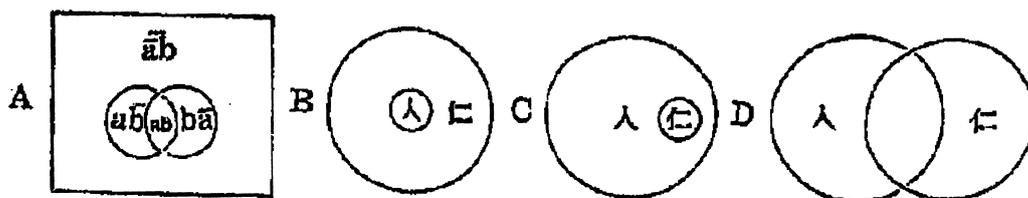
¹⁰ This view differs from that of the Vienna school, in that according to that school once language is clearly defined some problems will cease to exist. But it seems to me that there are problems arising from language which indicate emotive drives which cannot be eliminated.

* Note_by_evgo: The original sentence is: "It is often understood."

¹¹ "When [we] study and constantly review it, is it not pleasant?" "If there is devotion to benevolence, there is no evil"

學而時習之，不亦悅乎？
苟志於仁矣，無惡也。

comparable to the English form. The colloquial *shih* 是 does not convey the idea of existence. The literary *wei* 為 on the other hand conveys an idea of *ch'eng* 成 which means "to become". But in English "becoming" is exactly opposite to "being". Such a formula as "... *che* 者 ... *yeh* 也" does not mean anything identical, and consequently, does not constitute a logical proposition in the Western sense. If we say "*jen che jen yeh*" 仁者人也, we cannot say the first 仁 is the subject and the second 人 the predicate. In such a sentence the idea cannot be expressed diagrammatically, as is often used in Figure A in the case of Western logic.



The other figures B, C, D cannot convey the exact idea of the sentence. It may be either of the three, or it may be in between the three. This is the best proof of the absence of the word "to be" in Chinese.

VI

We have seen above that Western logic is essentially based upon the law of identity.[¹²] Division, definition, syllogism and even conversion and opposition are based upon it. All these are correlated and constitute a system. The basic structure of Chinese thought is different from this system. The Chinese system of logic, if we may call it a system, is not based upon the law of identity.

Let us begin with Western logical division. As it is based on the law of identity, it must be dichotomous in such forms as "A and not-A", "literary books and non-literary books." Cases like "A and B" or "Good and Evil" are not dichotomous in form because besides A and B there may be C and besides Good and Evil there may be Not-Good and Not-Evil. Thus, there is the need in classification for the rule of exclusiveness. But Chinese thought puts no emphasis on exclusiveness, rather it emphasizes the relational quality between above and below, good and evil, something and nothing. All these relatives are supposed to be interdependent. In a sentence like *yu wu hsiang sheng, nan i hsiang ch'eng, ch'ang tuan hsiang chiao, or ch'ien hou hsinag sui* [¹³] we have a logic of a quite different nature.

Next we come to the discussion of definition. In Western logical definition it is necessary to make the sign of equation between the "definiendum" and the "definiens". For example, "a triangle is a portion of a plane bounded by three

¹² The rules of "contradiction" and "excluded middle" are simply corollaries of the law of identity.

¹³ "Something and nothing are mutually generative; the difficult and the easy are mutually complementary; the long and the short are mutually relative; the front and the rear are mutually accompanying."

有無相生，難易相成，長短相較，前後相隨一老子

straight lines". But in Chinese thought the problem of equation between the two is never thought of. For example, "wife" is denoted as "a woman who has a husband".

This cannot constitute a definition in Western logic, in which it must be condemned as a fallacy, or as begging the question, but it is characteristic of Chinese logic. *Chuan chu* 轉註 or the "inverted use of a word" in classical commentaries belongs to the same category. So also the "metaphoric" use or *chia chieh* 假借. The most important concept in ancient China might be said to be concerned with "heaven" (*t'ien* 天), but according to the definition in the *Shuo Wen* 說文, *t'ien* means the "human head" or that which is above the head 天者顛也. It is evident that that which is above the head may not necessarily be "heaven". There may be many other things such as clouds, wind, the moon, birds and what not. This "indicative" method of definition 指事的訓詁 is quite different from the Western type. Examples of this sort of definition, such as 仁者人也, 禮者宜也, are too numerous in the Chinese Classics to need mention here. It suffices here to point out that in addition to its difference from the Western type of definition, a Chinese term may also be explained or indicated by another term similar in sound and associated in meaning. To explain a term by means of others of similar sound is inconceivable in Western logic, for Western logic always aspires to be detached from language, and the explanation by means of sound is merely linguistic, it contains no logical implications. In short, it may even be safe to say that ancient Chinese literature contains no such method of definition as that found in the West.

It may be well, at this juncture to discuss the Chinese characters *fei* 非 and *pu* 不. In an English sentence like "A is not-B" or "A is not B" the affirmative or negative nature is easily determined. But if in Chinese we say *chia fei yi* 甲非乙 it may mean either the first or the second. The difficulty is not so apparent in this simple proposition, but it is clear that conversion is unnecessary and opposition impossible. In the nature of the case it is, therefore, evident that Chinese thought cannot be placed in the Western logical framework. We must give it an independent name.

It may be proposed to call this type of logic "correlation-logic" or "the logic of correlative duality". This type of logic emphasizes the relational significance between something and nothing, between above and below, and so on. It is expressed sufficiently in the *Book of Changes* 周易. Although modern archaeologists may not accept the *Book of Changes* as one of the earliest records, we cannot say that it does not contain the traditional thought of China. The most dominant note here is the so-called *i yin i yang shih wei tao*.^[14] With *yang* 陽 or the positive principle we presuppose the *yin* 陰 or the negative principle, and with the *yin* we presuppose the *yang*. Each is dependent upon the other for its completion. Other examples like *kang* 剛 and *jou* 柔, *chin* 進 and *t'ui* 退, and *chi* 吉 and *hsiung* 凶^[15] are exactly similar. Should we wish to adopt a terminology much in vogue, we might call this way of thinking an illustration of "dialectical logic". But this term is very ambiguous, and its historical allusions do not allow it to be adopted in this connection. We will have to be content with noticing that Chinese ways of thinking are different from those

14 一陰一陽之為道."The positive and negative principles constitute what is called *tao* 道 or nature."

15 Emotive and phlegmatic, assertive and resigned, lucky and unlucky.

characterized by the use of the law of identity. Without defining the different terms used, it is impossible to speak intelligibly in the West. But the Chinese language, which is characterized by the use of correlation-logic, has nothing to do with identification. Rather it uses antonyms to make an idea complete.

Opposition as a means of expression is not only used in propositions like "death without passing away", "a great sound but scarcely audible", "the greatest omen without being visible", "non-resistance means strength", or "the most fluent speech seems to stutter",^[16] but it is also used to denote a single term. In the *Shuo Wen*, for example, "outgoing" 出 means "incoming" 進 and "disorder" 亂 means "order" 治.^[17] In this case, it is better not to consider the words as having contradictory meanings, because it is the meaning, not the word, which awaits its opposite for a complete illustration of the connotation. For example, *ch'u* 出 must wait for *chin* 進.^[18] Without *chin* there cannot be *ch'u*. Other examples such as *luan* 亂 and *chih* 治 and *kung* 貢 and *t'zu* 賂^[19] are similar in nature. The explanation of the word "to sell" is also given by means of its opposite "to buy". "To sell" and "to buy" in contrast to each other become clearer, because buying and selling constitute the same transaction when viewed from the different standpoints of the buyer and seller. From this it is seen that Chinese thought is not based upon the law of identity, but takes as its starting point relative orientation or rather the relation of opposites. This type of thought evidently constitutes a different system. This system is probably related to the nature of Chinese characters. Being ideographic 象形 Chinese characters put emphasis on the signs or symbols of objects. The Chinese are merely interested in the inter-relations between the different signs, without being bothered by the substance underlying them. Hence the relational or correlational consideration. (In later developments of the same trend we have in literature the styles called *p'ien wen* 駢文^[20] and *lü shi* 律詩^[21] which are not paralleled in other countries.)

VII

The ideographic nature of Chinese characters influences not only the structure of the Chinese language but also the thought or philosophy of the people as well. The *Book of Changes* may be taken as the best example. Most probably words were originally coined as token-symbols. Thus, it is said "the sage arranged diagrams 卦 in order to see the significance of any sign 象".^[22] Although we are not quite justified in saying that the diagrams are the original Chinese characters, it may at least be granted that they are similar in nature to Chinese characters. The creation

16 死而不亡，大者希雷，大象無形，守柔用強，大吉若枯。

17 See more examples in a recent article by Tung Fan, 董璠, "反則辯辨", 燕京學報, 第二十二號, 1937年十二月, p. 119-174.

18 "Outgoing" and "incoming"

19 "Disorder" and "order", "tribute" and "grants".

20 Characterized by dissyllabic phrases.

21 Verse in couplets.

22 "聖人設卦觀象".

of the diagrams served the purpose of divination, but there must have been previously arranged limits of possible combinations for the purpose of divination. Each combination is a possible sign. "Heaven indicates good and bad fortune by signs which are signified by the sages".^[23] The "sages" must have been such heroes of cultural history as Pao Hai Shih 包犧氏, to whom the discovery of the diagrams was attributed. It may be said that the signs do not merely symbolize something external but also indicate possible changes. For example, it was from the *yi* 益 diagram that farming implements 耜 were invented, and from the *li* 離 diagram that fishing nets 網罟, were invented. Dr. Hu Shih has well said, "Confucius was of the opinion that with the genesis of the signs there come things. The signs are the primeval archetypes after which things are modeled."^[24]

According to ancient Chinese thought, first came the signs then the development of things. This assertion is quite different from that of the West. Although Platonic ideas have a superficial resemblance, it must be remembered that Plato's "ideas" are self-existent, which is not true in the case of the eight diagrams. As we have seen, Western thought is consistently based on the idea of substance. Consequently there is the need for a substratum, and the final result of this trend of thought gives rise to the idea of "pure matter". It is characteristic of Western philosophy to penetrate into the background of a thing, while the characteristic of Chinese thought lies in exclusive attention to the correlational implications between different signs, such as *yin* and *yang*, *ho* 圖 and *p'i* 圖.^[25] It is also because of this fact that there is no trace of the idea of substance in Chinese thought. It should be noted that the presence of an idea gives rise to word-forms with which to express it. In China there is no such word as substance. Such words as *t'i* 體 and *yung* 用^[26], *neng* 能 and *so* 所^[27] in their function of expressing subject and object came from the translation of the Buddhist scriptures. It makes no difference to the Chinese mind, whether or not there is any ultimate substratum underlying all things. Because the Chinese characters are ideographic, Chinese thought takes cognizance only of the signs and the relations between them.

It must be evident thus far that there is not only a close relation between logic and language, but that a logical system must presuppose a philosophy, that is, cosmology and the philosophy of life. Chinese cosmology may be called "signification" 唯象論 or "omenism". The Chinese character *hsiang* 象 which we have translated as "sign" has all the meanings of the English words phenomenon, symbol and omen, but it must be noted that behind the *hsiang* no concrete things are implied. Its signification is only concerned with human affairs. Thus a sign is for the purpose of giving lessons to the people, and consequently, all the heavenly phenomena such as stars and comets were taken as evil omens. The Chinese cosmogony characterized by omenism is essentially a practical guide to human life. In this point it also differs

23 "天垂象，見吉凶，聖人象之".

24 Hu Shih, "孔子主張象生而後有物：象是原本的模型，物是仿效這模型而成的".

25 Involution and evolution.

26 Body and function.

27 Similar in use to "knowing and known".

from the West. It may be true that in Western philosophy, cosmology is a preliminary step to the philosophy of life, but the two cannot be confused. Chinese thought, on the contrary, does not make any distinction between the cosmos and all the problems of human life.

According to Western tradition philosophy may be classified into ontology, cosmology and the philosophy of life. In China there are only cosmogony and the philosophy of life, without any ontology or cosmology proper and even cosmogony is absorbed into the philosophy of life. The reason for this lies in the neglect of the law of identity on the part of Chinese thinkers. Even such expressions in the *Lao Tzu* 老子 as "t'ien ti ken" and "tao chi"^[28] are only concerned with the origin of the universe. In spite of the fact that the later development in the *Chuang Tzu* 莊子, in such a sentence as "whether an object is made or unmade it remains same thing."^[29] is often alleged to be similar to Western substance, the aim of *Chuang Tzu* is only "the proper degree of adjustment".^[30] Consequently, his identification of the cosmos with the self is only a sort of mystic experience. In other words, he is concerned with "participation" or "transduction"^[31] rather than with the problem of existence. The book *Chuang Tzu* has a mixed origin. It is doubtful whether there may not have been insertions and alterations on the part of the Wei and Chin scholars, but it is evident that the author's ideas are more or less similar to those of the Hindus.

The later cognizance of the problem of substance on the part of the Chinese is due to the influence of India. The ethical systems of the Sung and Ming dynasties are merely reactions against Buddhism. It is often said that Western philosophy began with the idea of substance and later got rid of it, and that China originally did not have it – but later acquired it. She acquired it through cultural contact, a fact which raises problems which cannot be discussed here. Our problem is whether or not there are original forces which still underlie Chinese thought, whether, for example, the Chinese mind is still characterized by neglect of the idea of substance. The weight of evidence, in spite of abundant Western influences, is that it is.

VIII

Because the idea of substance is related to the idea of causality most of the sciences are still determined by the concept of causality. At this point it may be said that Kant was the first to reveal the mystery of Western thought. He is not surpassed by anyone, even today. He puts the idea of reciprocity between the ideas of substance and causality in order to make the three interdependent. Consequently, wherever there is causality there must be reciprocity, and wherever there is reciprocity there must be substance. No one of the three is dispensable. From this we may learn that the idea of causality is derived from that of substance. That causality is later combined with substance gives rise to the idea of the atom. On this ground is based our

28 天地根 root of heaven and earth; 道紀 beginning of the Way.

29 物無成與毀，復通為一。

30 適得而幾已。

31 These terms are borrowed from Jean Piaget, *The Child's Conception of the World*, New York and London, 1929.

thesis that in Western thought religion, science and materialism are interdependent, a position which is not taken by recent Chinese scholars.

Roughly speaking, there are two forms of religion in the West, the early Greek type and the Christian type. The first is neither monopolized by the Greeks nor is it exclusively Western. It is similar to that of the early Chinese life. It should be remembered in this connection that in Greek mythology there are potentialities of materialism. And the early religion of China, as of all early societies, was close to Nature. But when theology developed it had to be based upon the idea of substance. The idea of the Supreme Being or a Creator is closely correlated with the idea of Substance. Furthermore, it is also closely connected with the idea of identity. Metaphysics, which is based on substance, is religion. An Ultimate Reality is in essence God. Thus it may be maintained that metaphysical or ontological philosophy is a type of religious thought. The logic characterized by the law of identity underlies this type of religious thinking. Finally, it may be said that ontology in philosophy, the idea of God in religion and the law of identity in logic are in essence one and the same thing.

Spengler^[32] has shown that "there is no natural Science without a precedent Religion." Whitehead also maintains that the development of modern science was closely related to the religious beliefs of the medieval ages. So long as science is related to religion it is to be understood that in Western culture the two are but different streams from the same fountain head. They are not so much opposed as ordinarily assumed. But this should not be understood in causal terms; the one does not determine the other, they are both parallel developments from a common origin. Thus although science and religion are opposed to each other on the surface, they are not opposed in their innermost nature.

Furthermore, Spengler has informed us that Catholic cosmology and materialism are not different things, but the same thing expressed in different terminology. Leaving aside Catholicism, we may say that materialistic thought is based on the idea of atoms, and the idea of atoms is related to the ideas of substance and causality. We may maintain that there are three fundamental categories in Western thought, substance, causality and atoms. Religion has a foundation in substance. With causality science is developed, and from atoms materialism is derived. Behind these three categories there is another to string them together, namely, that of identity. The French philosopher Meyerson has done a service in pointing out that all scientific theories and quests are concerned with identity.^[33] It may be easily seen that with identity there must be substance; with substance there must be causality; and the atom is between the two. Thus Western thought is essentially based on these four categories. Without understanding the importance and priority of these categories, we cannot thoroughly understand Western culture and thought.

Chinese culture, on the other hand, has no relation whatsoever to the above-mentioned categories. Let us begin with early religious life in China. The Chinese religious life is not very unlike that of the Greeks. Yet religious ideas in China were not associated with the rituals of worship and the institution of official

³² Spengler, *op. cit.*, v. 1 p. 380.

³³ Emile Meyerson, *Identity and Reality*, New York, 1930.

temples. It is not certain whether there were any other deities before the concept of Heaven arose. But so far as Heaven 天 and God 帝 are concerned, the Chinese have never been concerned with them primarily. When we speak of Heaven we have in mind only Providence 天意, which is merely a manifestation of Heaven. In other words, the Chinese are concerned with the will of Heaven without being too particular about Heaven itself, because according to the Chinese point of view the will of Heaven is Heaven itself, and to inquire into Heaven without paying attention to its will is logically inconceivable in China. Heaven and the will of Heaven are the same thing. There is not first Heaven and later the manifestation of its will. Because Heaven and its will are identical, the Chinese have never considered Heaven as an entity, and so long as it is not an entity it is not a substance. Thus the Chinese Heaven has no relation whatsoever to the Western substance. Mr. Creel in *The Birth of China* has taken Heaven as a spirit because the Chinese character looks like a human figure 人 in the inscriptions on metal. This theory may be objected to. Taking it for granted for argument's sake that the Chinese character *t'ien* 天 is a human figure, this inference of Creel's does not necessarily follow. The Chinese always take *t'ien* to be something beyond the collective will of the people, uninfluenced by human effort. It is inconceivable for Heaven to be similar to a human figure, even if this human figure be that of a Great Man and not an ordinary person. Creel seems to have adopted the Western point of view in interpreting this Chinese character. Chinese scholars have classified the character *t'ien* 天 as "indicative" or *chih shih* 指示 which is very practicable and needs no modification. The reason why Heaven is identified with its will lies in the fact that the latter is only known by means of divination. Through divination the gap between man and Heaven is bridged. The Chinese are only interested in knowing the will of Heaven in order to seek good fortune and to avoid misfortune. As to the nature of Heaven as such they are indifferent. This fact shows that the Chinese have not applied the category of substance to the idea of Heaven and have not taken Heaven as the ultimate stuff of the universe.

Another point of interest is the fact that most of the statements concerning the will of Heaven in the *Shang Shu* 尚書 indicate only the transfer of political power among different dynasties or from one dynasty to another. Political power was alienated in China in two ways, the hereditary and the revolutionary. When hereditary rule was abused it gave rise to revolution. No trouble arose in the case of the hereditary transfer, but there had to be a justification for a revolution, and the justification was found in the will of Heaven. Such a revolutionary transfer has great political and social consequences. That this is attributed to the will of Heaven is evidence that all great changes are beyond the control of the human will, and that the will of Heaven is only manifested in politics and social life. This is just the reverse of the case in the West in which the concept of substance was taken as the basis for its emphasis on religious thought.

In this connection something might be said about the changes and influences of religious life in China and the West. In the West the Greek type of religious life ended by the time of the unification of the Roman Empire, but the new form of religion survived the decay of feudalism. Consequently, Western religion and politics are dual currents. Chinese religious life, which bore many resemblances to that of Greece, was a powerful support of Chinese feudalism, which was similar to the

European. In the time of the *Ch'un-Ch'iu* feudalism was shaken and the thought of the people was no doubt affected. Hence such statements as "the Heavenly path is far and the human path near",^[34] and "what has Heaven said? Yet the four seasons are functioning regularly".^[35] Confucianism, without having done away with the doctrine of Heaven, pushed it beyond human affairs. This type of thought had a tendency to make religious belief less influential in China, and later there was only politics and no religion. The same trend is manifested in thought, and we may recapitulate by saying that the law of identity in logic, the subject-predicate proposition in sentence-structure, and the category of substance in philosophy all have religious thought as a background. This is characteristic of Western culture. Correlation-logic, non-exclusive classification, analogical definition, all have political thought as a background. This is characteristic of Chinese culture.

IX

These two types of thought differ not only in their categories and their basic rules of logic but also in their attitudes. In putting a question about anything, it is characteristic of Western mentality to ask "What is it?" and then later "How should one react to it?" The Chinese mentality does not emphasise the "what" but rather the "how". Western thought is characterized by the "what-priority attitude", Chinese by the "how-priority attitude". In other words, Western people use the "what" to embody and absorb the "how". The "how" is to be determined by the "what". The Chinese on the other hand use the "how" to imply the "what". The "what" type of thought may develop through religion to science. This is one of the characteristics of scientific thought. The type of thought characterized by emphasis on the "how" can develop only in the socio-political sphere, especially in connection with the problem of ethics. Neglect of the "what" accounts for the neglect or absence of epistemology in China.

That Chinese thought always centers on human affairs while neglecting nature may thus be accounted for. It is often alleged that in Chinese philosophy there are disputes between nominalism and realism and the problem of the relation between Man and Nature, thus implying that Chinese philosophy is similar to Western philosophy. In fact, it is not so. The Chinese interest in the problem of nominalism and realism, as well as in the problem of the relation between Man and Nature, is concerned with socio-political thought and the philosophy of life.

Chinese and Western thought differ also on the question of inference. The syllogism, which is based on the law of identity is the form of inference in Western logic, while the Chinese use analogy instead of inference. The formula, mentioned above, *jen che jen yeh* 仁者人也, is a type of analogical thinking. Other examples from Mencius are more to the point, for example, "the goodness of human nature is like the downward tendency of water"^[36] and "Does not life mean nature just as white means white? Does not the whiteness of a white feather mean the whiteness of white snow, and the whiteness of white snow mean the whiteness of white jade ?

34 天道遠人道邇。

35 天何言哉？四時行也。

36 人性之善也，猶水之就下也。

... if so, then is the nature of the dog similar to that of the cow, and the nature of the cow similar to that of man?"^[37] Such examples in Mencius are too numerous to need further quotation. I. A. Richards in his *Mencius on the Mind* contrasted this type of argument with the Western type. The former may be called the "logic of analogy". This logic, as a matter of fact, though it cannot be appropriately applied to scientific thought is what is largely used in socio-political arguments. Analogical argument indeed is one of the characteristics of political thought. Marxism may be taken as one of the best examples. The formula, Thesis-Antithesis-Synthesis, which is to be applied to any historical process, is analogical in nature. In the same way we may consider the transformation of seeds into trees, as the antithesis of the seeds. So also the theory of the class struggle is argument by analogy. Without criticising the fallacy implied in Marxism it may be profitably observed that the Marxian philosophy is political in nature.

X

The type of thought primarily interested in politics may also have some connections with language. Thus, Confucius was for the "rectification of names" or *cheng ming* 正名. The rectification of names was not advocated by Confucius for the sake of logic but rather as the means by which the order of society was to be maintained. Hence the saying "If names be not correct, language is not in accordance with the truth of things. If language be not in accordance with the truth of things, affairs cannot be carried on to success. When affairs cannot be carried on to success, proprieties and music will not flourish".^[38] The function of the rectification of names lies in the discernment between what is above and what is below, the determination of the superior and the inferior and the distinction between good and evil. Its aim lies to human affairs rather than in logic. For example, to kill a king is called murder or *shih* 弑, implying that this involves a violation of the superior by the inferior. The killing of an inferior by a superior is called execution or *cham* 斬, implying that the executed is justifiably punished according to law. For the emperor to travel is called *hsing* 幸 or "to favor". To "come directly" is called *lai* 來 and "to come to settle" *lai kwei* 來歸. To go from the local districts to the central government is "to go up" or *shang* 上 as in the expressions "to go up west" 西上 and "to go up north" 北上. And to go from the central government to the local regions is "to go down" or *hsia* 下, such as to "go down south" 南下, to "go down east" 東下. There are similar distinctions in English as seen already in these translations, but their emphasis is not so obvious and systematic. Dr. Hu Shih considers all these distinctions merely those of parts of speech with grammatical functions. He further remarks "Confucius by rectifying the names is the first logician in China".^[39] But such, as we have seen, is not the case.

37 生之謂性也，猶白之謂白歟？白羽之白也，猶白雪之白；白雲之白，猶白玉之白歟？
然則犬之性猶牛之性，牛之性猶人之性歟？

38 名不正則言不順，言不順則事不成，事不成則禮樂不興。

39 孔子的正名主義實是中國名學的始祖。

Further proof may be found in a comparison with Western grammatical changes. Take the English word "sense" for instance. Its changes may take the following forms; senses, sensation, sensational, sensible, sensibility, sensum (sense), sensationism, senseless, sensitive, sensitivity, sensibly, sensory, sensorium, etc. All these forms are derived from the same root. Because of the use of inflections, cases, or other grammatical forms the "form" is an essential element in Western thought. In spite of the fact that the Aristotelian idea about "form" may be different from that of Bacon and the Baconian "form" from that of Kant, it may be observed that among all of them there is something basic and uniform, namely, the emphasis on the idea or "form". The Chinese characters are ideographic; though they have radicals or *p'ien p'ang* 偏旁 they do not have roots. The radicals are used merely for the purposes of classification, for example, certain words belong to the realm of water and others, to the realm of plants. Whenever there is a new idea a new word must be invented, a new word not derived simply from a root. Chinese ideographs are not subject to grammatical changes; there is no inflexion, declension or conjugation.

As the creation of new words must be based upon the needs of society, it is interesting to note that the most numerous terms in China come from two realms; the one, kinship, illustrated by *po* 伯 or father's elder brother, *shu* 叔 or father's younger brother, *t'ang* 堂 or paternal cousin, *piao* 表 and *yi* 姨 or other forms of cousins; the other from the realm of ethics, illustrated by *chung* 忠, or loyalty, *hsiao* 孝 or filial piety, *lien* 廉 or frugality in taking and *chisn* 儉 or frugality in spending. All the fine shadings in Chinese terminology in these two fields may be lumped together in such English terms as brothers, uncles, cousins, frugality. Such a lumping together is justifiable in the West, but in China all the differences must be preserved owing to their social significance, and we may attribute such fine shadings in Chinese terminology to the rectification of names.

It should be explained also why the type of thought which is interested in politics values more highly the logic of correlation. The reason lies in the fact that in social phenomena anything may be considered in terms of correlations, such as male and female, husband and wife, father and son, the ruling and the ruled, the civil and military, and so forth. It is but a short step from this realm to that of cosmology. For example, we say, "with heaven being superior and the Earth inferior the universe is fixed".^[40] Furthermore political affairs may have cosmological implications; for example, from the positive 陽 and negative 陰 principles in the cosmos we may derive the principle of evolution 開 and involution 闔 underlying the universe and human affairs, finally to be developed into such concepts as proper rule 治 or disorder 亂, in political affairs. It should be remembered that this type of thinking is characteristic of political and social thinking.

Even in this, however, there is a difference between China and the West. It is true that Marxism has done away with the law of identity, and has advocated the law of opposition in thinking, being essentially a philosophy concerned with political and social affairs. But its difference from Chinese thought lies in the fact that while Marxism puts emphasis on opposition and thus class struggle, Chinese thought puts

40 天象地卑,乾坤定矣。

emphasis on the result or adjustment of such an opposition. When Mencius said "mental laborers rule while manual laborers are ruled",^[41] the emphasis is on the division of labor, and mutual aid as conceived by him is thus made possible. In contradistinction to the Chinese logic of correlation, the Marxian type of logic may be called the "logic of opposition".

XI

Now we are in a position to discuss the relation between logic and categories on the one hand and human nature on the other. With a given event, we may have different interpretations. For example, sunset is an observed phenomenon concerning which there may be different interpretations, such as, the sun goes beneath the earth westward, or, the earth turns eastward. It is therefore, that identity, substance and causality, are all interpretations, or concepts employed in the act of interpretation, and these concepts themselves are interpretative in nature.

But it may be asked, from what do these interpretations arise and how do they become valid? We may borrow the terms from Pareto without following him in their further implications. According to him there are "residues" and "derivations". The first are the emotional drives and the latter, outward manifestations or rationalizations. A distinction may be made between two kinds of residues, namely, the "residue of persistence" and the "residue of dominance". From the "residue of persistence" develops religious thought; and the category of substance, the subject-predicate proposition, the logic characterized by the law of identity, and the concept of causality developed thereby are its derivations. From the "residue of dominance" comes all social thought, political theories and the concrete institutions developed thereby. All the derivations are derived from residues which are rooted in emotional drives. In order to express these emotional drives there are all the religious and political developments or derivations. Students of culture cannot afford to forget that these residues, persistence and dominance are universal traits of man. And, it must be granted that it is not only in the social and political fields but also in the linguistic and mental fields we can see the universal traits of man. The reason why there are cultural differences between China and the West, seems to lie simply to the development and underdevelopment of the derivations along certain lines. It is not that the Chinese do not have the "residue of persistence", but in their original culture or derivations it is not developed. But once in contact with India, the Chinese gave a warm reception to its religion, because Buddhism aroused the "residue of persistence" dormant in the Chinese nature. Chinese culture being underdeveloped in this respect, Buddhism found in China a second home.

Neither is it that the Western people do not have the residue of dominance. Western philosophy is certainly a transformation of religion. Kant, as we have known, in his study of knowledge has given a theoretical justification for the existence of substance. But his *Critique of Pure Reason* has left room for his *Critique of Practical Reason*. If in knowledge the substance is not revealed, it is certainly in conduct that it is realized. In these respects Kant, although trying to analyze Western thought, is limited by it. His attitude, it must be remembered, is the traditional Western attitude, namely, that of using religion as an indirect means for approaching society

41 勞心者治人,勞力者治於人.

and politics. From this it may be observed that all Western metaphysics, is essentially socio-political in nature. But the relation between the two is not so obvious. It is to the credit of Marxism that this point is clearly grasped. It is a pity however that it has too narrow a conception, in taking classes for society. In a previous article on "What is Philosophy?"^[42] a fuller demonstration was made. Metaphysics was taken as merely a rationalization of social and political thought. The pure theoretical aspect of Western philosophy is nothing but a disguised form of socio-political thought. This observation may seem to be exaggerated, but as a matter of fact, philosophy, is part of culture and culture always constitutes a total configuration. Politics, society and human life cannot be divorced from philosophy. It is often alleged that philosophy is primarily concerned with the unraveling of the secrets of the universe, but this view seems very superficial. Two attitudes are usually taken towards the social and political problems of the present. The one attitude seek to conserve, the other to change conditions. Marxism may have gone too far in identifying idealism with conservatism and materialism with revolutionism, but the fact remains that idealism and materialism are related to society and politics.

It is on this ground that the views of the Vienna school, for example those of Carnap should be reconsidered, Carnap considers all philosophical propositions as "nonsense" because they are not verifiable. He needs hardly be reminded that there is much in human knowledge that cannot be verified; and we cannot say that anything that is not verifiable is not true. Rousseau's famous sentence "man is born free" cannot be verified. Yet it helped in contributing towards American Independence and the French Revolution. Social thought is not concerned with verification. It is *unverifiable* but *realizable*. This is the basis for the Determination of Man to combat Nature,^[43] as we say in China. Western metaphysical thought is nothing but socio-political theory in another form. And consequently, philosophy has this unverifiable but realizable nature.

XII

Before concluding this essay, my own theory of knowledge may be briefly formulated. It seems to me that human knowledge may be considered in four groups, each penetrating into and dependent upon the others. The first is the external "structure", which accounts for immediate sensation. The external world being merely "structure", we can only know its "mathematical properties", to borrow a term from Russell. As to its qualitative nature, we know nothing. But it must be pointed out that these mathematical properties are not static and rigid, but flexible and changeable. The second group is the "sense", to use the terminology of neo-realism. Our sensation is a curious thing. Although externally aroused, it is different from the external world in nature. There may be said to be correspondence and not identity between the two. Sensation by its nature is something independent. The third group consists of "constructions". The ordinarily perceived tables, chairs, houses, friends and what not, are "constructions". These constructions are often taken naively as independent self-existent things. But as a matter of fact, these things are con-

42 "哲學是什麼?" 東方雜誌, 34卷, 1號, p. 273-282.

43 人定勝天.

structured through the perceptions of the observer. The fourth group is what we have already discussed as "interpretation". These four groups are interdependent. Comparatively speaking, the first two are more closely related to the external world and, therefore, more objective, while the last two are more closely related to the inner world and, therefore, more subjective. The process from the last two to the first two may be called the process of "attachment" while the reverse may be called that of "detachment". Theoretical knowledge is a process of detachment. After detachment theoretical knowledge still invisibly underlies positivistic knowledge. The problem of validity occurs only after the process of detachment. Because of the fact that there may be different interpretations, the problem arises as to which is right and which is wrong, or which is reasonable and which is not. (As a matter of fact from the cultural point of view there is only difference, and no correctness or incorrectness). And this is characterization of theoretical knowledge to which philosophy, social thought, political themselves and religious beliefs all belong. For a fuller epistemological treatment in this case a previous article of the writer, entitled "Pluralistic Epistemology Retold"[⁴⁴] may be consulted.

In conclusion, we may say we have discussed the following points in order to show that human culture[⁴⁵] constitutes a whole first, what is Western philosophy? Second, what is the relation between language and thought? Third, what is the relation between logic and philosophy? Fourth, what is the relation between philosophy and socio-political thought? Fifth, what is the relation between philosophy, society, politics and religion? Sixth, what is the relation between theoretical knowledge and perceptual knowledge. Seventh, what is the relation between human nature and culture (between "residues" and "derivations")? Eighth, what is the difference between Chinese and Western thinking processes? All these points have been discussed from the point of view of philosophy; if they have any bearing on sociology, evaluation and criticism must be left to the sociologists.

Should the reader have the patience to follow through all the discussion, it may seem to him that the writer has been too ambitious and guilty of eclecticism. But there is eclecticism and eclecticism. Should eclecticism prove useful in offering a more synthetic view of all the related problems, it does not need too much apology.

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After the above had been penned, the writer was referred to a review[⁴⁶] by M. Kumano of a previous article "On the Philosophical Differences between China and the West from the, Standpoint of Language-Structure".[⁴⁷] It was misunderstood as maintaining that thought is determined by language. Mr. Kumano seems to be blinded by the traditional points of view, without realizing that it is certainly wrong to argue in deterministic terms, either in considering thought as determined by lan-

44 "多元認識論重述," 張其成紀念論文集, 頁 95-137.

45 Culture in our discussion is confined to the mental aspect, Its material aspect being outside the scope of the essay this is not discussed This should not however be taken as implying that culture has too material aspects.

46 藤野正平, 支那研究, 東亞學堂書院, 第 41 號, 1938 年 6 月

47 "從語言構造上看中西哲學的差異", 東亞雜誌, 第三卷, 第七號.

guage or in proposing that language is determined by thought. The thesis as expounded there as well as here is simply that language, logic and philosophical thought are interconnected and interdependent.

Chang Tung-sun 張東蓀
June, 1988.

Supplementary notes

1) "Categories" are to be understood in a broader sense, in the sense that they are used to guide and interpret perceptual knowledge. In Whitehead's "conceptual scheme" time and space are included. Thus he is justified in attributing conceptual knowledge even to animals other than man. To me, time and space constitute only a "framework", which may have the function of ordering perceptions, but which has no interpretative function in the realm of cultural events. By categories I mean especially those excluding time and space, and my interest is only in the field of culture.

2) By subject-predicate proposition we are neither to be understood as following the definition of ordinary grammar, nor as following that of the new school of logic. The latter is too narrow in accepting "He is wise" and rejecting "He is a wise man" as a subject-predicate proposition, while the former is too broad in taking as predicate any part of a sentence other than the subject and its modifier. Our use here is defined by traditional logic, especially based on Aristotle, in accepting as subject-predicate proposition. Any sentence which has a copula. "Brutus killed Caesar" is outside our definition unless it is changed into "Brutus is the man who killed Caesar". The change may seem to be unnecessary so far as sense is concerned. But our problem in logic is concerned with the subject and its attributes. And by using the subject-attribute category to classify any proposition, we may be forced to translate "Brutus is the man who killed Caesar" into "Brutes has the property of killing Caesar". The latter is the logical analysis of the former sentence. By subject-predicate proposition, by which we characterize Western thought, we mean such a sentence as "Brutus is the man who killed Caesar".

3) By "logical definition" people usually mean more or less the connotation and denotation of a term. Here we are more strict than this. We are only concerned with the formula *per genus et differentiam*. The so-called nominal definition is also to be excluded.

4) By correlation-logic we mean that kind of logic in which one term waits for its opposite in order to complete its meaning. "Relationism" may be better, had it not been used by Mannheim in his perspectivistic sense. Relativism or relativistic or relativity are also inapplicable because of their respective historical allusions,

5) By the Greek type of religion we mean the mythological beliefs of everyday life, not the establishing of institutions, temples and their corresponding rituals. The Greek type of religion, for our purposes, is not to be understood as Greek religion, which had different levels.

6) When we characterize Chinese thought by its emphasis on the mean or middle, the term is not to be understood in its mechanical sense, which would imply independent extremes. The Chinese term *chung* 中 is nearer to implication or dialectical implication. From this dialectical nature comes the law of correlation.

7) By analogical thinking we mean the method of expression by means of analogy, not merely thinking in terms of analogy. To think in term of analogy is a recognized feature of child psychology, as is shown clearly by Piaget. Although expression by means of analogy and thought in terms of analogy have necessary relations, they are not the same thing. We are interested here in the method of expression. In expression we find some connection with the law of correlation, which is not merely due to immature thinking. So far as

characteristic types of thought forms are concerned, the usual comparison between China and mediaeval Europe is not adequate, although Chinese life as a whole is not modern.

8) In saying that western philosophy is a disguised form of socio-political thought, we are interested in showing that any such thought, in order to be theoretically comprehensive, will result in a *Weltanschauung* which, in order to be thorough and consistent, will in turn result in metaphysics. Thus the philosophy of life is a justification for socio-political thought, and metaphysics is a justification for the philosophy of life. But limited by their own ethnocentrism, Western people do not know how to work consciously from their socio-political thought to philosophy, merely assuming the priority of their metaphysics, and thus thinking that political philosophy is only an application of metaphysics. The order from socio-political thought to the philosophy of life and metaphysics is the natural one, while it is the reverse, which is actually assumed. It is a service to reveal the natural objective order.

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