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Excerpts From: The Chinese View of Life: The Philosophy of Comprehensive Harmony

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During Professor Dorsey's year as visiting professor in Taiwan, he, Mrs. Dorsey, and their three-year old daughter lived in a home provided by National Taiwan University. Their neighbors were all university families. The Dorseys rented a pedicab and their daughter attended Chinese day school. They seldom saw Americans or Europeans. This was an ideal environment in which to hold discussions with Chinese scholars.

During this period Professor Fang H. Thome, a recognized scholar of traditional Chinese culture and teacher of Western philosophy in a number of American universities, strongly influenced Professor Dorsey's thoughts. Professor Dorsey's course in constitutional law focused on aspects of Chinese cultural heritage that could serve as a basis for creating a distinctively Chinese, yet modern, society and government. Professor Fang reviewed Professor Dorsey's lectures and notes and helped him to understand refined facets of Chinese culture.

Professor Fang was writing THE CHINESE VIEW OF LIFE during the 1952-53 academic year. For his part, Professor Dorsey advised Professor Fang as to English diction. Some of the results of their work are the following excerpts, which were assigned reading in Professor Dorsey's Juris-culture I sessions discussing China.

**EXCERPTS FROM:
THE CHINESE VIEW OF LIFE:
THE PHILOSOPHY OF
COMPREHENSIVE
HARMONY***

THOMÉ H. FANG**

. . . Western thought is often permeated with vicious bifurcation which sets a number of things in implacable hostility. The universe seems to be a theatre of war wherein all sorts of entities or phenomena are arrayed one against another. As the Evil One vies with God, so in one's own

* The Union Press, Hong Kong, 1957 at 17-28, 44-71. Special thanks go to Professor Fang's family who graciously authorized republication of this essay. As noted, this republication contains excerpts from the essay.

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person, the ugly Edward Hyde always tries to debase the old Henry Jekyll. As Nature is set in opposition to the Supernatural, so within Nature secondary appearance contrasts oddly with primary reality. And as Nature is made incongruous with Man, so within man himself, the shrinking ego is out of keeping with the elevated transcendental Selfhood. The instances of antithesis of this kind might be infinitely multiplied. In a word, the extreme importance of harmony is either simply ignored or hopelessly misconstrued.

Hereafter I intend to set before you a radically different philosophical temper which is characteristically Chinese. For several thousands of years, we Chinese have been thinking of these vital problems in terms of comprehensive harmony which permeates anything and everything. It sounds like an eternal symphony swaying and swinging all the sky, all the earth, all the air, all the water, merging all forms of existence in one supreme bliss of unity. The Chinese speculation has been centering on the three chief problems of Nature, Man, and Men's cultural achievement.

We have understood Nature not in the same way in which the Westerners have understood it. Nature, for us, is that infinite realm wherein the universal flux of life is revealing itself and fulfilling everything with its intrinsic worth. Nature is infinite in the sense that it is not limited by anything that is beyond and above it, which might be called Supernature. The fullness of reality in Nature does not prejudice against the potency of God, for the miraculous creation may be continually accomplished within it. Nor is there any gulf between Nature and human nature inasmuch as human life is interpenetrating with the cosmic life as a whole.

Furthermore, man's mission of cultural creations in different realms of art, literature, science, religion, and social institutions is being carried on so as to bring any imperfections that there may be in Nature and Man into ideal perfection. Thus we see that the magnificence of Nature is linked up with the glory of Man through the development of culture. History, as the unfolding of the fine spirit of culture, is Man writ large and Nature writ beautiful. . . .

In the light of this wisdom, philosophy is not a piecemeal study of specific matters of fact or issues of life disparate in connection. All one-sided forms of "isms", taken in antitheses, are misconceptions, if not untruths. Governed by the principle of comprehensive harmony, idealism as an expression of aspirations after supreme values may join hands with Naturalism which tends to affirm life, cosmic as well as human, and Nat-

uralism, thus understood, must be closely affiliated with Humanism which portrays the dignity of Man in cultural creations.

Throughout the Universe there is an all-pervasive Flux of Life. Whence does it come and whither will it go are the sorts of mysteries that are forever hidden from the knowledge of men. Life in itself is infinite in extent. So from beyond the Infinite, the infinite Life comes; and to the Infinite, the finite life extends. All is in the process of change and of incessant change, getting and spending inexhaustible energy. It is a path; it is a way, good in its track to be followed by good steps. It is Tao in perpetual creative advance. It gushes out and swells forth in the form of primordial Nature which is the essence of the Good. Being so good that it excels all in value, it must be the transcendental, nay, the transcendent. The Tao is the Infinite endlessly continuing itself into the infinite form of Consequent Nature which is the fulfilment of the Good. Being so good in its way that it brings all creative forces under its sway, it must be the immanent—the Creator revealing creativity in the created. Hence between the Primordial Nature and the Consequent Nature, there is a nexus, a chain of creations constituting the cosmic order.

Such a theory of Nature as creative advance has been best expressed in *The Book of Change* in which you also find the following statement: "The fulfilment of Nature which is Life in perpetual creativity is the gate of Wisdom bodying forth the value of Tao and the principle of righteousness." From this you can see that, according to the Chinese philosophical tradition, a system of ontology is also a theory of value. All forms of existence are charged with intrinsic worth. Nothing in the entire universe is void of meaning. Everything is valuable as it is, since it participates in that Universal Life which is immortal in virtue of its infinite ideal of perfection and its eternal continuity of creation.

Now let us turn to the consideration of Man. In what, by what, toward what, and for what shall man live?

Man lives in Nature where the passage from the Primordial to the Consequent stage is an overflow of Life, getting and spending with it inexhaustible energy. Should anyone come in contact with this directional energy from without, he would feel that something has encompassed him with hardness. Like a raindrop falling into the river, it is being borne away and forever lost. Nature encountered by any one individual man in this way is felt to be an encumbrance and blind necessity. But when the drops of water have been deeply merged in the river, they become ingredients of its wave. Now they are one surf, rising and falling

in the same rhythm as the lover and the beloved beat their hearts together in the same measure of music.

The force of propulsion in the on-going process of Nature passes into an ideal excess, swinging in concurrent motion, as it is displayed in an elegant dance, full of the sense of joy. The feeling of restraint and compulsion entirely expires in a new ecstasy of freedom. Therefore, Nature, confronting Man as necessity, is finally transformed into communal fellowship fostered through the magic of felicitous sympathy. Nature is a continuous process of creation, and Men are cocreators within the realm of Nature. Nature and human nature are two in one, giving form to what I have called the comprehensive harmony, a harmony between in-growing parts as well as a harmony with surroundings. In this form of primordial unity, all that seems various and antipathetic is so intrinsically related that it strikes together sympathetic chords to the accompaniment of a song of love, which is an encomium of life.

Man lives by virtue of the ideal of the Good which has been infused into the creative passage of Nature from beyond the Infinite to the infinite in fulfilment. "The Good," as meditated on by Tai Cheng, a renowned Chinese thinker of the eighteenth century, "diversifies itself into Jen—the Loving Consciousness of Kind, and Li—the Elegant Cultural Order, and Yi—the Principle of Righteousness. All these are great measures of value. As exhibited in the heavenly Tao, the Good is Conformation or Congeniality; as fulfilled in the form of luminous virtue, it is Truthfulness; and as adumbrated in the concatenation of specific orders, it is Constancy. Tao designates the ever-changing and never-ending process of creativity; Virtue, its achievement of immortality; Concatenated Order, its attainment to full and complete elaboration. Thus the Good, considered from the standpoint of man, consists in a knowledge of what is constant, a penetrative experience of what is truthful, and an accomplishment of what is most congenial."

"Human nature, taking its origin from the cosmic process of creative Nature, issues in so many forms of spiritual being, that are rich in character, and important in mission. Human destiny is conditioned by what man partakes of the cosmic life in a special way and human life is achieved by the completion of uniquely given natural dispositions. The capacity of living consists in the shaping of psycho-physical constitution in accordance with the goodness of original human nature such that an inner mind will bud forth into full bloom and a healthy body will execute its function in a complacency of composure, demeanour, and expression.

Human capacities are to be fully developed through the interplay of events sufficiently sustained by creative Nature and the functions performed are to be rationally controlled by inner conscience. . . . And, therefore, in the complete fulfilment of life, we can, by virtue of the Key of Nature, trace back its origin and we equally can, in conformity with the Excellence of Spiritual Wisdom, anticipate its final destination.”

A thorough understanding of the complete potency of human mind from its initial incentive to knowledge up to its final achievement of spiritual eminence will enable a man to do anything that he ought to do in the spirit of loving consciousness of kind—especially of *humankind* or to perform any function that he is capable of performing under the guidance of wisdom. His conduct of life with a view to achieving significance and value will be in unison with the cosmic rhythm of creativity. His own spirit will be imbued with the transcendental Spirit, becoming one with it. His realization of the Good in his own unique way will coincide with the Supreme Good as is found in Tao. His motive force of creative life is sympathetic love. His cultural refinement can give birth to rational order. His decision for moral action, thus based upon the rational order, naturally exemplifies the principle of righteousness or justice. His spirit is, then, ablaze with a dazzling light of wisdom. He will have eventually become a sage or saint, realizing in his own person the sacredness of life. What a bliss of existence! Is there anything greater than this in this actual world of ours?

In the very process of living in concord with creative Nature, Man is charged with an ideal to be fully realized in the light of the principle of comprehensive harmony. With regard to himself, he must exert all the potency of his mind to the utmost so that life, given him by Nature, will reach forward to perfection through the development of his personality. The reason for this is that in the very constitution of a human being the creative forces of Nature have come in as relevant ingredients. Man and Nature together form a sort of interlocked unity. If man is incomplete and defective, then Nature must be so for that reason. There is a breach or infringement of creation here.

So it is very important for Menicus to point out to us that all things have an ingression in our selfhood. We are perfect because we are complete. We are great since we can embrace so much. In regard to creatures, we must be kind to them. In regard to people, we must love them. The benevolent men embrace all in love as the wise comprehend all for their objects of knowledge. This harmony sheds light on the universal

path of life, which all should pursue. Let this state of harmony exist in perfection, and a happy order will prevail throughout heaven and earth, and all things will be nourished and flourish.

With such a noble sentiment in our mind, we can thoroughly understand that great teaching embodied in *The Doctrine of the Mean*. "It is only he, being most truthful and sincere in all the world, who can completely fulfil his life. Being able to fulfil his own life in a perfect way, he can, also, completely fulfil the life of other men. Being able to completely fulfil the life of other men, he can, furthermore, completely fulfil the life of all creatures and things. Being able to completely fulfil the life of all creatures and things, he can participate in the process of cosmic creation. Being able to participate in the process of cosmic creation, he is a cocreator with Heaven and Earth."

When man is elevated into the plane of ideal perfection through his own creative efforts, he may become godlike and run a godly race in this actual world. The Man so depicted is the man of ideal perfection. Confucians call him a sage in whom all excellences and values are accumulated and realized in fulness. Taoists take him to be a supreme man, noble in nature, great in action, and exuberant in wisdom. Motze and his followers portray him as a comprehensive and all-round man who loves all beings and holds men together in the practice of universal love.

The above portraiture of the ideal man is a vindication of his possibility and potentiality. But, taken in actuality, is he really so great as he is presumed to be? I think it is Shakespeare in the West who said something like this: "Some are born great; some achieve greatness; and some have greatness thrust upon them." Shakespeare might have taken these nice distinctions to be exclusive alternatives. But I am of opinion that they are not. The primordial creative Nature has thrust greatness upon men so that they are born great, and, imbued with this great endowment, men can not but achieve greatness.

In the above we have considered men in connection with Nature and we are now going to reckon with men as they are in and by themselves. Men are great because they are creative in the sense that they, by persistent efforts, can bring about all forms of values into existence. The achievement of greatness is the realization of value. This is what men should live for. Under the circumstances of Nature,, we see what men could be, but, through the development of History, we see what men should be. Men living in Nature only represent so much creative forces coefficient with the display of other forces. But in the realm of History

they are masters of their own creations, gathering and directing those forces into specially designed channels. There is not merely an emergence of novelties, but also an awakening of spirit cast into the form of culture. The good of life or pattern of value is not proffered to us as natural gifts; it is born of a new conscience, a new inspiration, a fresh genius. Thus a new style of life is taking shape after the model of the ideal of culture. Mere life becomes refined life. . . .

CHAPTER II ESSENTIALS OF COSMOLOGY

. . .
The "Universe" or "Cosmos," as expressed in Chinese is "Yü-Chou," designating Space *and* Time. What we call "Yü" is the collocation of three-dimensional spaces; what we call "Chou" is constituted by the one dimensional series of changes in succession—the past continuing itself into the present and the present, into the future. Yü and Chou, taken together, represent the primordial unity of the system of Space with the system of Time. Yüchou without a hyphen is an integral system by itself to be differentiated, only later on, into Space and Time. The four-dimensional unity of Minkowski and the "Space-Time" of S. Alexander even cannot adequately convey the meaning of that inseparable connection between Space and Time that is involved in the Chinese term "Yüchou." The nearest equivalent to it would be Einstein's "Unified Field." Yüchou, as the Chinese philosophers have conceived it, is the unified field of all existence.

According to the latest development of modern science, any state of physical entities, any process of natural events, and any display of cosmic energy must be found within the frames of Space and Time. So far so good. But, as judged by the Chinese philosophers, the scientific explanation of this type is far from being adequate. And we can see the reason for it. Space-Time is only the field of physical existence, which, if taken to be the environment of life as a whole, would be valid in one sense, but not entirely valid in another. For life, apart from its necessary physical conditions, is also permeated with spiritual meaning and value.

The Universe or Yüchou is seen by the Chinese philosophers to embrace within itself a physical world as well as a spiritual world, so interpenetrated with each other as to form an inseparable whole. It is not to be bifurcated, as it is done in Western thought, into two realms which are mutually exclusive or even diametrically opposed. The universe is not a

battlefield. There can be no, to borrow a phrase from Bergson, 'Life and Matter at War'. It is true that some kind of distinction may be drawn within the integral universe. Thus we find a statement like this in the *Conspectus A* of *The Book of Change*: "What is super-physical (or supra-physical) is called Tao, and what is infra-physical (or hypo-physical) is called matter." Later on in the Sung Dynasty, philosophers like Chang Tzai and Chu Hsi were making a similar distinction between the diaphanous Void and the physical effluvium, or between Reason and 'physis'. But they were trying by all means to find out a thread of connection between these apparently different states of affairs.

All these theories must neither be confused with Western metaphysical dualism nor be twisted into any form of one-sided spiritualistic or materialistic monism. The universe, as conceived by the Chinese, is a comprehensive realm wherein matter and spirit have come to be so thoroughly osmosed or percolated as to form a coalescence of life, which issues in a continuous process of creation, forever pressing against any limitation imposed by Space and Time and upholding triumphantly a new consciousness of perfect freedom.

"It exerts itself wholly with one object: to escape above from the fatality below, to evade, to transgress the heavy and sombre law, to set itself free, to shatter the narrow sphere, to invent or invoke wings, to escape as far as it can, to conquer the space in which destiny encloses it, to approach another kingdom, to penetrate into a moving and active world." In the light of Chinese wisdom, these pretty words, quoted from Maurice Maeterlinck, are a true description of the cosmic facts, and not a mere flight of poetic imagination about the intelligence of the flowers. Having disposed of this specific point of interest, I now proceed with our discussion of Chinese cosmology centering on three principal features. In order to effect easy understanding I sometimes set Chinese speculation in contrast with Western thought.

(a) The Universe, in our regard, is not merely a mechanical field of physical actions and reactions, but also a magnificent realm of the condescence of Universal Life. Such a theory may be called Organicism as applied to the world at large. Nothing in the world is really dead. There lurks in every phenomenon an impetus of life. . . .

It is only the majority of modern European savants who think otherwise. For they, much influenced by physical science, cannot but assume that the universe consists of a system of inert matter. The universe, in their opinion, is made up of the ultimate units of matter and energy,

distributed and redistributed in all sorts of ways in observance of rigid mechanical laws. It is true that this habit of thought, as exhibited in the procedure of scientific investigations, has worked successfully, giving rise to a system of laws which are abstract and accurate.

But if the scientific materialism of this type is made use of in the very attempt to account for human life, then it will be overwhelmed with insurmountable difficulties. . . .

With regard to this problem, the Chinese philosophers have worked out a theory which is quite satisfactory. The universe, considered from our viewpoint, is fundamentally the confluence and concrescence of Universal Life in which the material conditions and the spiritual phenomena are so coalesced and interpenetrated that there can be no breach between them. And, therefore, as we live in the world, we find no difficulty in infusing the spirit into matter and immersing the matter in spirit. Matter manifests the significance of what is spiritual and spirit permeates the core of what is material. In a word, matter and spirit ooze together in a state of osmosis concurrently sustaining life, cosmic as well as human. . . .

Chinese philosophers do not use the term "Yüchou" very often exactly for the reason that they are unwilling to look upon the universe merely as a mechanical system of Space and Time. In the ancient classics and the philosophical treatises, we constantly meet with such concepts as "Heaven," "Heaven and Earth," "Chien" and "Kun" designating the creative and procreative functions of Heaven and Earth, "Tao," "Nature," "Ying" and "Yang," the "Five Ingredients" involved in the process of Nature, the "Void," "Reason," the "Effluvium," "Mind," so on and so forth. Besides these, many other terms are also employed to describe the characteristics of the universe.

All these concepts and terms, though various in meaning, are really designed to give a rational explanation of the cosmic order and structure in an adequate way. If we are befooled by these differentiating terms, unable to understand their real meanings, then Chinese cosmology may seem fragmentary and sophistic. But, I think, all these different theories can be made to converge on one essential point, enunciating a great philosophical thesis: *The Universe, as it is, represents an all-comprehensive Urge of Life, an all-pervading Vital Impetus, not for a single moment ceasing to create and procreate and not in a single place ceasing to overflow and interpenetrate. . . .*

(b) The Universe, as conceived by the Chinese, is a kind of well-bal-

anced and harmonious system which is materially vacuous but spiritually opulent and unobstructed. Its physical form may be limited in extent, but its ideal function is infinite in essence. I have elsewhere characterized the Chinese cosmology as a conception of finite substance which is, withal, a conception of infinite function. In regard of this, I may refer to Western thought for contrast. The Greeks used to look upon the universe as comprising concrete things. Their universe, geometrically considered, is a limited canopy of physical phenomena to be spread out into a finite expanse of Space. Within the limit of such a finite Space, all things occur as if they are confined to the present. The past was not and the future will not be. What is real is realized in the eternal present.

But such a viewpoint is not acceptable to the modern Europeans. Ever since Descartes discovered his analytical geometry, Space has come to be regarded as essentially infinite extension, that is, analyzed in such an abstract way that it is infinitely great as considered from without and infinitely small as considered from within. Astronomers, looking at the universe through a huge telescope, are "invited into space boundless." Upon observation of the solar system, the sidereal system, as well as the nebular system, they can *see*, and not only imagine, that there are worlds upon worlds, beyond and above. The universe is an infinite expanse of Space. If you try to calculate the length of its diameter, the astronomical number will be awfully great. As regards Time, the present is preceded by the past and the past by its past till it was extended into an infinite past. Again, the present continues into the future and the future into its future till it will stretch into an infinite future.

Our destiny, our being's heart and home,
Is with infinitude, and only there.

We have seen in the above that there are two types of cosmology in the West—the "finitude" theory of the ancient Greeks and the "infinitude" theory of the modern Europeans. The Chinese cosmology takes a position in between the two. The universe, as we look upon it, is finite in one way, but infinite in another. I will tell you why. Our perception of the universe is somewhat confined within the range of the "four seas" and under the "overhanging firmament" "fretted with golden fire"—that canopy of beautiful clouds. Therefore the expanse of space is actually not very great.

Now as regards Time, the transition from the distant past to the future, if dissected into four rhythmic epochs designated by Shao Yung as "generation," "destination," "congression," and "convertible consum-

mation," only covers an extensive period of some thousands of hundred years. (a generation=30 years; a destination=12 generations=360 years; a congression=30 destinations=10,800 years; a convertible consummation=12 congressions=129,600 years) It is needless to say, however, that these rhythmic epochs, taken in their alternate turns, can form a concatenating series of cyclic chronicle of time which will be infinite in extension. The universe, as interpreted by the Chinese in this way, is evidently finite in its substantial form. But this is only one aspect of the Chinese cosmology. On the contrary, such a finitude of substantial form can be converted into an infinitude of ideal function. How is it possible to bring about so miraculous a change as this?

The Chinese as a people, from time immemorial, have proved to be born geniuses in great trials of arduous task. Whenever we meet with anything that is material and obstructive, we are not at a loss on our way. We can, if we like, transform it into something that will be materially unobstructive and spiritually "versatile" in function to the utmost degree. We know how to strip the veil of materiality from the physical world, and lay bare, in the light of day, the fair appearance of form and the ideal essence of meaning, which, when united together, will become the most wondrous incarnation of pure spirituality. Thereby the world of reality is confirmed, the realm of truth is revealed, the exaltation of the Good is achieved, and the creation of beauty is accomplished. This is really a speciality that we Chinese have exhibited in the persistent attempt to attain wisdom.

It is said in *The Symbolics of the Book of Change*: "A large wagon accumulates full load in its void and will suffer no loss." You also find a similar utterance in Laotze: "Thirty spokes unite in one nave, but the active function of the cart displays itself only in the vacuous space. Clay is fashioned into vessels, but their actual function only displays itself in the vacuous hollow. Doors and windows are cut out in order to form rooms, but the actual function of the rooms only displays itself in the inner void. Therefore what has a material existence is of apparent use, but what has annulled it can perform real function." The function of many things in the mundane world lies, not in the material substance, but in the *ideal vacuity*. What is a hollow space in the glass can be filled with wine. The vacant seats in the automobile can accommodate people. A commodious mansion is most vacuous in the interior but it is rather comfortable for people to live in

Thus we come to the illumination of a thesis in Chinese philosophy.

What is materially solid is obstructive and uninteresting; what is spiritually functional is significant and fascinating. This is why we are always delighted with the philosophical transmutation of what is merely material into what is predominantly spiritual. Let us listen, again, to Laotze: "May not the cosmic vacuity be compared to a bellows? It is hollow, yet it loses not its power; being active, it sends forth air all the more." "Greatest perfection seems deficient; yet its function never wears out. Most fulness seems vacant; its function is inexhaustible." . . .

Chuang-tze was aware of this when he said: "As soon as one has the pivot of Tao, he can intellectually stand in the centre of the Cosmos and respond readily and adequately to things infinite." This great truth was also well expressed in *The Doctrine of the Mean*: "Let balance and harmony exist in perfection, and a happy order will prevail throughout the universe and all things will attain their fulfilment of life." Balance is constituted by thorough impartiality, and harmony, by adequate reciprocity.

How is it possible for the Chinese people to have been able to transmute the substantial forms of the finite universe into the pure spirituality of infinite function? It is because we, on our observation of the universe, always keep ourselves at the point where the pivot of Tao lies, intending to be thoroughly impartial and sympathetic to the rest of the universe. And, therefore, we are in a moral position to enable all things to be in a state of essential relativity and mutual sympathy, acquiescing in the feeling that there is a sense of infinite joy and bliss permeating every form of existence.

Thus it is vindicated in *The Doctrine of the Mean*: "Balance is the great schema of the cosmos; harmony is the universal path of life as a whole." We keep up with ourselves the supreme excellence of balance and harmony, never tending to be selfish and partial, and never tending to be narrow and stubborn. We act in accordance with the great schema and we live in pursuance of the universal path. The universe that is claimed to be ours is not a closed system, but an open world forever creating itself. Life to us, who are equally creative in the very living of it, is not a doom, but an invitation into infinitude which is capable of being realized. Hence wherever we move we are told by Confucius to have a fitting place.

(c) The universe, seen in the light of Chinese wisdom, is filled with the attribute of morality and the attribute of art. Therefore it is fundamentally the realm of value. As regards that, Chinese philosophy is radi-

cally different from that of the West. It is true that some Greek philosophers also looked upon the world as a realm of value. But since the time of Plato, if not Socrates, their universe has come to be bifurcated. In the lower realm, namely, the physical world, evil prevails over the good and illusory beauty overshadows the pure beauty. Hence whenever the Greeks meditated on the Supreme Good or the Absolute Beauty, they had to step out of the physical world before they could dialectically ascend to the upper realm of pure spirit.

Modern Europeans, from the standpoint of science, have considered the universe to be made up of natural phenomena which in their process of continual transformation are entirely devoid of any value, whether positive or negative. If they ever come to think of value, they, like the religious philosophers or the artistic theorizers, must first be quit, intellectually at least, of the physical world which is either morally disdainful or axiologically neutral. It is necessary for them to leave out the physical world in order to establish a kind of transcendental realm, otherwise there will be no place to locate the values. This is especially true, explicitly in the case of Kant and implicitly in the case of Spinoza, the only exception being Leibniz. For this matter, Hegel and his school are susceptible of different interpretations.

Almost all schools of Chinese philosophy, as I have said repeatedly, take the universe to be the concrescence of universal life in the midst of which the material conditions and the spiritual phenomena are so coalesced as to form an inseparable whole without any sign of inherent contradiction. All ideals of value, including the supreme Good as well as the perfect Beauty, can come to be fully realized as the flux of vital energy swells forth exuberantly.

The universe, as we have become aware of it through our collective philosophizing, is both an active field of moral good and an ideal realm of precious beauty. It is repeatedly said in *the Conspectus of the Book of Change*: "The rhythmic movement of Ying and Yang (which are to be understood as the static and dynamic modes of life) constitutes what is called the Tao or universal path. That which ensues as the natural result is good; that which completely fulfils it is life. The benevolent witness it and call it benevolence. The wise witness it and call it wisdom." "Chien—the creative function of Heaven, reveals itself in change; Kun—the procreative function of the Earth, operates itself in order." "The excellence and order of change complies with the supreme virtue." "Order prevails throughout the universe, and the process of change occurs

within it. The complete fulfilment of Nature which is life in its perpetual creativity indicates the gate of Tao and righteousness." Thus everything leads through life to the attainment of ultimate value. . . .

All phenomena in the universe are saturated with moral values. And, therefore, we can come to assert that the universe for the Chinese is a moral universe. With regard to this, the cosmological theory of Tai Cheng is the most illuminative. He said in his *Treatise of the Good*:

The rhythmic operations of Ying and Yang designate the continuous process of change in the universe, forever manifesting the Tao. What are these but the modes of creative creativity in life as shown in the concatenation of order? Therein is revealed the congeniality of the cosmos. Therefore it is asserted that the sway and swing of Ying and Yang constitute the Tao. Benevolence, then, emerges from the creative creativity in life. And the never-ending creative steps of life ensure in the linkage of order, wherein the principle of propriety or cultural refinement is illuminated. And, furthermore, in the strictness of concatenated order, the principle of justice is illuminated. As a result of all this, the constancy of the cosmic order is brought to the light of day.

Hence we may come to the conclusion that Chinese philosophers always endeavour to explain the cosmic order in terms of value. The Chinese cosmology is essentially a value-centric philosophy. . . .
