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**Confucius' Spirituality in the *Analects*:  
A Zen, Psychoanalytic, and Postmodern Hermeneutics**

Martin Lu

# 『논어』에 나타난 공자의 정신세계

## — 선, 심리분석, 포스트모던적 해석

Martin Lu

『논어』는 공자의 제자와 그 제자의 제자들이 기록한 책이다. 따라서 공자의 가르침에 대한 내용은 그 추종자들에 의해 그 해석이 좌우되었을 것이다. 동서양의 고전(『논어』와 그리스도교의 『성경』을 포함한)들이 모든 시대에 같은 방식으로 해석되었다면 그것은 고전으로 남아있지 못했을 것이다.

“저자의 죽음”을 설파하는 포스트모던적 해석학은 어떤 텍스트의 뜻이 항상 그 텍스트가 속해 있는 언어세계의 규정에 따라 문화적으로, 그리고 사회적으로 “구성”된다고 보는 데 그 특징이 있다. 따라서 저자의 본래 의도에 지나치게 집착할 필요는 없다. 일단 텍스트가 쓰여진 후 텍스트는 그 자체로서 생명력을 지니며 텍스트의 뜻은 독자와 텍스트 간의 상호 작용에 의한 결과물로 보아야 한다. 공자의 사후 공자를 따르던 무리들은 8학파로 나누어진다. 따라서 공자의 “진정한 가르침”을 빙자한 정통해석의 존재를 너무 고집할 필요는 없다.

이 글에서는 『논어』를 시론적으로나마 포스트모던식으로 해석하고자 하며 그 과정에서 선불교와 칼 융의 정신분석학의 방법을 적용시키고자 한다. 또한 『논어』의 몇몇 구절을 인용해서 주장을 뒷받침할 것이다. 이는 분명히 새로운 접근방식이기 때문에 이 글의 여러 전제가 임시적인 가설에 불과할 수도 있을 것이다.

그러나 중요한 점은 동서고금의 모든 텍스트들이 역사 이래 다양하게 해석되어질 여지가 있었으며, 또 실제로 그렇게 다양한 방식으로 해석되어져 왔다는 사실이다. 각 텍스트에 단 한 가지 의미와 실체만 있는 것이 아니며, 단 한 가지 해석만 적용될 수 있는 것은 아니다. 만약 그렇지 않다면 유교를 포함한 인류의 다른 문화전통이 발전하거나 전진하는 것을 기대하기 어려울 것이다.

『논어』에서는 무의식적으로 하늘(天)을 언급하는데, 이는 종교적인, 그리고 아무 것도 말할 수 없을 때 침묵을 지켜야만 하는 초월적인 경험의 영역과 관련된다. 이 때문에 공자는 인간의 본성(잠재의식)과 하늘의 법칙(초월적 경험)에 관한 내용을 대했을 때 제자들에게 삼가는 태도를 보인 것이다. 이 글에서는 『논어』를 해체하고 재해석함으로써 고전에 대한 새로운 이해의 지평을 열고자 한다. 이 글에서 이루어지는 내재성과 초월성에 대한 분석은 포스트모던식 해석학이 넓게는 중국철학연구에, 좁게는 『논어』 연구에 얼마나 공헌을 할 수 있는가를 보여주는 하나의 예시가 될 것이다.

『논어』를 짜임새 있고 창의적으로 읽으려는 다양한 모든 시도들은 중국 역사상 유학자들이 이론화하고 개념화하고자 했던 공자의 정신세계와 선불교 체험에 대한 연구에 빛을 밝혀줄 것이다. 이러한 노력들은 공자의 정신세계에 활기를 주어 과거의 다양한 도전에 대응할 수 있게 해주고 있다. 또한 미래에 있을 공자의 정신세계에 대한 새로운 요구에도 반드시 응할 수 있을 것이다. 이 글에 나타난 이론적이고 정신적인 노력은 단지 초보적이고 임시적인 가설일 뿐이다. 더 정교하고 잘 짜여진 작업을 위해서는 『논어』에 대한 포스트모던식 해체(문화적으로 조건 지워진 의미를 배제하기 위해)와 탈권위적인 읽기(새로운 의도되지 않은 의미를 찾기 위해) 작업을 진전시켜야 한다.

# Confucius' Spirituality in the *Analects*:

A Zen, Psychoanalytic, and Postmodern Hermeneutics

(孔子在《論語》裡的精神境界：  
禪，心理分析，和後現代的詮釋)

Martin Lu\*

## Confucius (551-479 B.C.) : Modern Interpretations

The multifarious dimensions of Confucius in the *Analects* could be seen from the following diametrically different interpretations.

(1) *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*: "His (Confucius' ) philosophy is aimed at injecting moral principle into the exercise of political power to substitute government by virtue for government by force. By cultivating humanity (*jen* or *ren*仁), a person becomes great in personal and public life, and when all individuals do this, happiness will be achieved. Doing this requires observing the rules of propriety (*li*) embedded in social life, so Confucianism also stands for a defence of the moral significance of the

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extant traditional forms of social order.”<sup>1)</sup>

Comment: This seems to be a general secular interpretation of Confucius.

(2) Homer H. Dubs: “Confucius actually read his own high ideals into the teachings of ancient Chinese, and then taught them to his disciples.” “*Ren* is furthermore qualified by social relationships — one has different and stronger duties to those closer to oneself. ... This graded love is a defect in Confucius’ ethics. It was remedied by the great medieval Confucians, but it remains a permanent feature in Confucianism.” “In a polytheistic age, Confucius was a monotheist. This supreme God, he believed, had sent him to teach his people. He also believed that God would protect him as long as God needed him. Such a religious attitude stamps Confucius as possessing an extraordinary deep insight into the fundamentals of religion.”<sup>2)</sup>

Comment: Did Dubs read his Christian view into Confucius?

(3) Mou Zongsan (牟宗三): “The unbroken line of *daotong* (道統) began with Yao, Shun, the Three Dynasties, Confucius and Mencius. However, from the perspective of man’s self-awareness of Tao, Confucius genuinely

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1) Simon Blackburn, *The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 75.

2) Homer H. Dubs, *Confucius: His Life and Teaching*. This is an old article in my possession, whose details of publication I have somehow lost track of. Professor Dubs also published another essay, “*The Date of Confucius’ Birth*,” *Asia Major*, N.S., vol. I, 1949, part 2, pp. 139-146.

initiated the creative break-through. In other words, he established the teaching of *jen* to create a spiritual sphere of its own. ... This creative break-through viewed along with the institutional rules and achievements is what posterity regards as the Way of "Inner Sageliness and Outer Kingliness".<sup>3)</sup>

Comment: Mou highlights Confucius' self-awareness in initiating the *ren* teaching.

(4) Yuri Pines' Confucius and his followers were "moved primarily by the sense of urgent political necessity to put an end to the ever-increasing international turmoil, wars and suffering." Thus their central concern was political ideals such as the "Great Unity" (*da-yi-tong* 大一统) paradigm and not moral values or metaphysical speculations.<sup>4)</sup>

Comment: Pines focuses on Confucius' political ideal of the Great Unity.

(5) Wing-tsit Chan: "Confucius can truly be said to have molded Chinese civilization in general. ... However, judging on the basis of the *Analects* alone, we find that Confucius exerted great influence on Chinese

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3) Mou Zongsan, *Mind Substance and Nature Substance* (xin-ti-yu-xing-ti《心体与性体》), pp. 192-193.

4) Martin Lu et al. (ed.), *Toward A Global Community: New Perspectives on Confucian Humanism* (Gold Coast, Australia Centre for East-West Cultural and Economic Studies, Bond University, 2004), p. xx

5) Wing-tsit Chan (ed.), *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton Princeton University Press, 1963) , hereafter *Source Book*, pp 14-15

philosophical development in that, first of all, he determined its outstanding characteristic, namely, humanism.”<sup>5)</sup>

Comment: Chan stresses Confucius’ humanism

(6) Tu Weiming “In certain aspects, Confucius’ role in Confucianism was somewhat similar to that of the prophet in Judaism. ... He was a great synthesizer, a transmitter, but not an innovator. He was not a founder in the strict sense of the word. ... The early development of Confucianism tended to be multifarious and all-embracing.”<sup>6)</sup>

Comment: Tu compares Confucius with the Judaic prophet

(7) Lionel Jensen, *Manufacturing Confucianism*<sup>7)</sup>

“... Confucius assumed his present familiar features as a result of a prolonged , deliberate process of manufacture in which European intellectuals took a leading role. Our Confucius is a product fashioned over several centuries by many hands, ecclesiastical and lay, Western and Chinese.”<sup>8)</sup>

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6) Tu Weiming, *Xian-dai jing-shen yu ru-jia chuan-tong* (現代精神與儒家傳統 Modern Spirit and the Confucian Tradition, Beijing: San Lian Book Company 三聯書店, 1997), p. 409

7) Lionel Jensen, *Manufacturing Confucianism. Chinese Traditions and Universal Civilization* (Duke University Press, 1997)

8) Michael Ing, *A Review of Manufacturing Confucianism: Chinese Traditions and Universal Civilization* (www.confucianstudies.com), 2004.

Comment: This is a postmodern deconstruction of Confucius. Jensen suggests that "(ru 儒) left China as explained by the Jesuits, was interpreted by European intellectuals, and returned as 'Confucianism' rather than the native original concept."<sup>9)</sup>

## Reading and Misreading the *Analects of Confucius*<sup>10)</sup>

*Lun Yu* (論語 *Confucian Analects*) means discussions (*lun* 論) and sayings /telling (without being asked first) (*yu* 語), because it contains mostly Confucius' discussions (conversations) with or his sayings (teachings) to his disciples. These discussions and sayings were recorded either by his disciples or the disciples of his disciples. Scholars have further confirmed that the work was recorded by different disciples at different times without consulting one another.<sup>11)</sup> As a result, complete consistency cannot be expected and some mistakes in the process of transcribing from memories are unavoidable.

As a result, the *Analects* has often been regarded as fragmentary and

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9) Ibid

10) Unless otherwise indicated, English translations in this paper (sometimes with revisions by the present author) are taken from <http://www.hmtyg.jp/~acmuller/fiveclassics.htm> The Five Chinese Classics are translated by Charles Muller as part of his Web Resources for the Study of East Asian Language and Thought established · 1995 07 30, and updated 2004.06.11.

11) Chen Daqi (陈大齐), *Confucius' Theories and Doctrines (Konzi Xueshuo 孔子学说)* (Taipei: The Publishing Committee of National Political University, 1964), pp 11-19.



unsystematic. How could this fragmentary and unsystematic classic shape the direction of Confucianism and influence East Asian societies for hundreds of years? Even prominent scholars in diverse disciplines are wondering whether it is justifiable to characterize contemporary East Asia as “Confucian”. They could not agree upon the meaning of “Confucian”. Perhaps it does not “describe anything other than the texts written by Confucius and his disciples.” Some even asked “whether Confucianism is real or merely imagined by scholars to enable them to speak with each other about their perceptions”<sup>12)</sup>

The fact that nowadays we are unable to define “Confucian” and “Confucianism” is because the *Analects* is not amenable to systematic interpretations and analysis of terms by their essential meanings (essences) which modern scholars are so used to. The supposed weakness of the *Analects* mentioned above may actually be a source of strength if we interpret it from a postmodern perspective. This essay will exercise this postmodern allowance for more flexible reading of its meanings that could be constructed in various cultural and disciplinary contexts in accordance with the different rules of “language games” suggested by Ludwig Wittgenstein.

Cai Renhou (蔡仁厚), a close disciple of Mou Zongsan (牟宗三) in the traditional sense, suggests that in our reading of the *Analects* we should have

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12) Tu Weiming et al (ed.), *The Confucian World Observed: A Contemporary Discussion of Confucian Humanism in East Asia* (Honolulu, Hawaii: The East-West Center, 1992), p. 1.

13) Cai Renhou, *Kong-zi-de-sheng-ming-jing-jie* (孔子的生命境界 *Confucius' Life*

the attitude of “engaging in conversations with the ancients” (subject to subject).<sup>13)</sup> Especially one must be a good listener like Confucius’ most favorite disciple Yen Hui. David Hall and Roger Ames in their book “*Thinking Through Confucius*” consider Confucius a “great communicator” as the Chinese character sage (sheng 聖) has the components of ear (listening) and mouth (presenting)

『2-1』子曰 「爲政以德，譬如北辰居其所而衆星共之。」

[2: 1] Confucius said: “If you govern with the power of your virtue, you will be like the North Star. It just stays in its place while all the other stars position themselves around it.”

Comment: The “*wu-wei*” (無爲) concept in the *Analects* shows that sometimes the distinction between Confucianism and Taoism is not clear. Besides, the sense of indeterminacy prevails in the *Analects* is also postmodern in nature

『2-14』子曰：「君子周而不比，小人比而不周。」

[2: 14] Confucius said: “The Superior Man is all-embracing and not partial. The inferior man is partial and not all-embracing.”

Comment: The superior man is liberally educated and well-rounded, whereas the inferior man is more narrowly focused (specialized). This is in

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*Spirituality*》(Taipei: Taiwan Student Bookstore, 1998), pp 423-424 This is Cai's comment on a paper presented by Lin Anwu (林安梧).

harmony with the view that “discriminative selection” (the inferior man) is the modern style, and “combination” (the superior man) is the postmodern fashion.

『2-17』子曰 「由，誨女知之乎。知之爲知之，不知爲不知，是知也。」

[2: 17] Confucius said: “Yu, shall I teach you about wisdom? Part of yourself you know; the other part you do not know. To access both is called wisdom.”

Comment: The secular Confucian ethics tends to be over-moralizing. According to Carl Jung’s psychoanalysis, self-knowledge covers both the conscious and the unconscious. Most people know about the conscious (“what you know, you know”), but not the unconscious (“what you do not know, you do not know”). To have wisdom, a person must access both and “make whole” the tension and conflict between the two through Zen and Confucian spiritual cultivation involving *li* (禮 rites) performance.

『3-3』子曰 「人而不仁，如禮何。人而不仁，如樂何」

[3: 3] Confucius said: “If a man does not access his deep self (the transcendent religious self), what can his propriety be like? If a man does not access his deep self, what can his music be like?”

Comment: To apply Jung’s Zen analysis, *ren* is the transcendent religious experience accessed through the unconscious. Without the support of this experience, a person could not sincerely and genuinely perform the cultural

lifestyle (propriety and music) of a mass-society, in which the individual would easily be at the risk of being submerged.

『7-29』子曰：「仁遠乎哉？我欲仁，斯仁至矣。」

[7: 29] Confucius said: "Is the transcendent religious self far away? So long as I aspire after it, it is right here!"

Comment: The transcendent religious experience (obtained through the unconscious or subconscious) is always within you. Whenever you want it, you could reach it

『8-9』子曰 「民可使由之，不可使知之。」

[8: 9] The Master said: "The common people can be made to follow a path but not to understand it." <sup>14)</sup>

Comment: Just as following the Zen discipline of inner golf , you should trust your intuitive self, keep your consciousness silent, and swing the club. Don't be too analytic and think too much. Too much intellectualization or conceptualization will not be conducive to your Zen spirituality.

『9-4』子絕四，毋意，毋必，毋固，毋我。

[9: 4] There were four things the master had eliminated from himself: imposing his will, arbitrariness, stubbornness and egotism

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14) D C Lau (trans.), *Confucius — The Analects* (Penguin Books, 1982), p 93

Comment: These are the character symptoms of rationalistic dogmatism and intolerance, which are not compatible with a postmodern multicultural society. A person with Confucian Zen discipline will be free from these symptoms.

『12-16』子曰：「君子成人之美，不成人之惡；小人反是。」

[12: 16] Confucius said: "The Superior Man develops people's good points, not their bad points. The inferior man does the opposite."

Comment: This is the character of a Confucian noble person in a postmodern multicultural society. A postmodern person not only tolerates but also appreciates other people's merits assessed in the latter's relative situations.

『13-23』子曰：「君子和而不同；小人同而不和。」

[13: 23] Confucius said: "The Superior Man is in harmony with others but does not follow them. The inferior man follows people, but is not in harmony with them."

Comment Isn't this another characteristic of a postmodern superior man?

『15-2』子曰：「賜也，女以予爲多學而識之者與？」對曰：「然，非與？」曰：「非也！予一以貫之。」

[15: 2] The Master said, "Ssu, do you think that I am the kind of man who learns widely and retains what he has learned in his mind?"

"Yes, I do. Is it not so?"

"No. I have a single thread binding it all together."<sup>15)</sup>

Comment: The Greek poet Archilochus writes: "The fox knows many things, but the hedgehog knows one big thing." This is the central theme of Isaiah Berlin's book on Tolstoy, "*The Hedgehog and the Fox*", where he distinguishes between those (foxes) who are attracted by a variety of things and those (hedgehogs) who relate things to a comprehensive system. Even though the *Analects* is more of the nature of the fox (postmodern) but historically it has also inspired philosophical hedgehogs such as Zhu Xi (朱熹) and Mou Zongsan(牟宗三) (modern).

#### The Transcendent and Immanent in the *Analects*

『2-4』子曰：「吾十有五而志于學，三十而立，四十而不惑，五十而知天命，六十而耳順，七十而從心所欲，不踰矩。」

[2: 4] Confucius said: "At fifteen my heart was set on learning; at thirty I stood firm; at forty I had no more doubts; at fifty I knew the Decree of Heaven; at sixty my ear was obedient; at seventy I could follow my heart's desire without transgressing the norm."

『14-37』子曰：「莫我知也夫！」子貢曰：「何爲其莫知子也？」子曰：「不怨天，不尤人，下學而上達。知我者，其天乎！」

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15) D. C. Lau (trans.), *Confucius – The Analects*, p. 132

[14: 37] Confucius said “Aah! No one understands me!”

Tzu Kung said, “What do you mean, ‘No one understands you’?”

Confucius said, “I have no resentment against Heaven, no quarrel with men. I study from the lower sphere (secular cultural learning) and attain to the higher spiritual realm (the Way of Heaven). Who understands me? Heaven does!”

The first passage [2-4] is a succinct summary of Confucius’ learning and spiritual development, whereas the second [14-37] refers to the continuity between the lower sphere (of secular cultural learning) and the higher realm (of spiritual attainment). They are often quoted by scholars to illustrate the different stages of Master’ s life (*sheng-ming-jing-jie* 生命境界) and his communion with Heaven.

This approach of progressing from the lower secular sphere to the higher spiritual realm shows that Confucius’ priority is upon the latter. His self-portrayal of “knowing *Tian-ming* (天命), the Decree of Heaven, at the age of fifty” has attracted a lot of close reading.<sup>16</sup> The most significant issue with *Tian-ming* is whether *Tian* (Heaven) is transcendent or immanent. Mou Zongsan considers *Tian* transcendent. So his philosophical system, the transcendent *Tian* could send down its *ming* (Decree) to man as his nature

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16) *Analects*, 2.4. Ku Hungming (辜鴻銘)’ s translation of the same statement is this “At fifty I understood the truth of religion”. D.C. Lau’ s rendition is “At fifty I understood the Decree of Heaven”. Interestingly the popular New Chinese Dictionary (*zuxin hanyu da cidian* 最新漢語大詞典) compiled in 1979 soon after the Cultural Revolution has this definition of *Tian-ming*: “What the superstitious people believe as the will of Heaven. It also means individual human destiny determined by Heaven.”

(as metaphysical substance), and man could cultivate full realization of his mind leading to the “knowing” of his nature and Heaven

David Hall and Roger Ames argue that although *Tian* clearly has some anthropomorphic characteristics (probably due to its association with the Shang Di 上帝 of the Shang dynasty), it should not be construed (like the Genesis in the Bible) as a transcendent deity creating universe out of nothing. To them, *Tian* in the *Analects* is immanent:<sup>17)</sup>

There is as much validity in asserting that phenomena “create” *t'ien* (*tian*) as in saying that *t'ien* creates phenomena, the relationship between *t'ien* and phenomena, therefore, is one of interdependence. The meaning and value of *t'ien* is a function of the meaning and value of its many phenomena, and the order of *t'ien* is expressed in the harmony that obtains among its correlative parts.<sup>18)</sup>

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17) David Hall and Roger Ames in their co-authored book, *Thinking Through Confucius* (Albany State University of New York Press, 1987), disagree with this view of Mou Zongsan on *Tian-ming*. “The concept of *Tian-ming* as expressed in its transcendent aspect has imperceptibly within it an immutable, unchangeable standard which causes us to feel that under its sanction we must not err or transgress at all in our conduct. To have a sense of *Tian-ming*, one must first have a sense of transcendence, a possibility only when one accepts the “existence” of the transcendent.” However, they share Tang Junyi’s (唐君毅) following observation of *Ming*: “The term ‘*Ming*’ is often used interchangeable with *Tian-ming*, and represents the interrelationship or mutual relatedness of Heaven and man ... [W]e can say that it exists neither externally in Heaven only, nor internally in man only, it exists, rather, in the mutuality of Heaven and man, i.e., in their mutual influence and response, their mutual giving and receiving.”

18) Hall and Ames, p. 207.



Their arguments are also well supported by quotations from the *Analects*, the *Mencius*, and the *Zhong-yong* (中庸 *Doctrine of the Mean*). First, let us look at this passage from the *Analects*:

The Master said, "I am thinking of giving up speech," Tzu-kung said, "If you did not speak, what would there be for us, your disciples, to transmit?" The Master said, "What does Heaven ever say? Yet there are the four seasons going round and there are the hundred things coming into being. What does Heaven ever say?"<sup>19)</sup>

This passage implies that the universe exists by itself (zi-ran 自然) and is not created by *Tian*. There is clearly no hint whatsoever that *Tian* (Heaven) creates the four seasons and the hundred things in its capacity as a transcendent deity or entity (at least not as an independent Holy Otherness). It is also true that the Taoist tends to explain existence of the universe immanently and naturalistically.

*Also Tian-ming in the Mencius:*

"... When a thing is done though by no one, then it is the work of Heaven (*Tian*), when a thing comes about though no one brings it about, then it is decreed (*Ming*) ..." <sup>20)</sup>

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19) *Analects*, 17-19. D.C. Lau (trans.), *Confucius: The Analects* (London: Penguin Books, 1979), p. 146. (hereafter, D.C. Lau).

20) *Mencius*, 5A: 6. D.C. Lau, p. 145

The passage actually discusses whether the sons of Shun (舜) and Yu (禹) are worthy and qualified enough to succeed the thrones of their fathers. This has to do with *Tian*'s Will and *Ming* (destiny). It is not clear that the passage supports *Tian*'s immanence, which Hall and Ames want to maintain.

#### Man as a co-creator in the *Zhong-yong*

“Only those who are absolutely sincere can fully develop their nature. If they can fully develop their nature, they can then fully develop the nature of others. If they can fully develop the nature of others, they can then fully develop the nature of things. If they can fully develop the nature of things, they can then assist in the transforming and nourishing process of Heaven and Earth. If they can assist in the transforming and nourishing process of Heaven and Earth, they can thus form a trinity with Heaven and Earth.”<sup>21)</sup>

Here humans (at least sages) are regarded as equal partners of Heaven and Earth. In this passage, there is hardly any trace of Heaven's serving as a transcendent creator of the universe. In fact, the Chinese phrase, *tian-di-wan-wu* (天地萬物 Heaven, Earth and Ten Thousand Things), simply means the universe. So for Hall and Ames it is obvious that the terminology used here is of the nature of transformation and not of the nature of creation.

The issue of ‘immanence’ and ‘transcendence’ is highly complicated. It has been made prominent by Contemporary New Confucians and particularly Mou Zongsan. It also involves his attempt to transform Kant's

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21) *The Doctrine of the Mean (Zhong-yong 中庸)*, 22, *Source Book*, pp. 107-108

philosophy and in turn use Kant's philosophical framework to reconstruct Confucian moral metaphysics. The above criticisms of Mou's "transcendent Tian" have elicited responses from his followers. Basically Mou's view that Tian-ming or Tian-dao (the Way of Heaven) is both immanent and transcendent has to do with his intention to meet the transcendent and religious challenges of Buddhism and Christianity. He wants to illustrate that Chinese cultural life does have its transcendent dimension, its moral spiritual substance, and Confucianism which inherits this cultural life is more than secular human relationships.<sup>22)</sup>

Furthermore, Mou's life-long efforts to transform Kant's philosophy and use it to reconstruct Confucianism have brought about some tension and conflict between the two. Consequently, this results in the difficulties of understanding *Mou's* concept of Tian's "being both immanent and transcendent" His early (1960s) formulation of the relationship between immanence and transcendence was this'

"The Way of Heaven (*Tiandao*) high above us has the meaning of transcendence. When it is bestowed upon us as human nature within us, *Tiandao* becomes immanent. Thus we could use Kantian terminology to describe *Tiandao* as both transcendent and immanent, which has religious and moral implications. The transcendent is religious, and the immanent moral."<sup>23)</sup>

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22) Mou Zongsan, *sheng-ming-de-xue-wen* (生命的學問 *The Learning of Life*) (Taipei: San-min Bookshop, 1970), p. 74

23) Mou Zongsan, *zhongguo-zhexue-de-tezhi* (中國哲學的特質 *The Unique Features of Chinese Philosophy*) (Taipei: Taiwan Student Bureau, 1974), pp. 30-31

Mou Zongsan's philosophy is hard to understand even for scholars. To my knowledge, the best introduction to Mou Zongsan's philosophy is Professor Zheng Jiadong's (鄭家棟) book, *Mou Zongsan*,<sup>24)</sup> which is philosophical, objective, well-researched, and clearly written. Zheng maintains that Mou's above formulation represents the latter's view of early years, but that later in Mou's life the theory of "immanence and transcendence" tends to be discussed in light of "zi-you-wu-xian-xin" (自由無限心 "free unlimited mind" or "intelligible intuition").<sup>25)</sup> This free and unlimited mind is Mou's main difference from Kant. For Kant it is impossible for man to have "intelligible intuition" to gain knowledge of noumena, things-in-themselves, only God could have this knowledge. Yet Mou retrieves from the traditional resources of Chinese philosophy to make possible man's obtainment of this knowledge. As a result, the distinction between phenomena and noumena, and the barrier between man and God are demolished.

### Zheng comments cogently on Mou's notion of transcendence:

"What he (Mou) calls transcendence is not an ontological being opposite to man. It is related to practical and spiritual activities of subjective moral substance. The transcendence is man's self-transcendence, it is his spiritual endeavour and pursuit in moral practice, and a spiritual self-uplifting. As far as spiritual cultivation is concerned, Confucians do not believe that any barrier or constraint is unsurpassable.

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24) Zheng Jiadong, *Mou Zongsan* (Taipei: Dong-Da Books Pty. Ltd., 2000), p. 80

25) *Ibid*, p. 132

The above-mentioned processes of Confucius' spiritual progress and Mencius' transcendent experience of 'fully realizing the mind, knowing human nature, and knowing Heaven' are not perceived by Mou to encounter any barrier.<sup>26)</sup>

In other words, the transcendence for Mou in the context of Chinese moral metaphysics has been shown to be entirely different from the Western and Christian perspective of transcendence. With this in mind, we could understand better the complexity of the issues involved. From the perspective of postmodern cultural linguistics, these are different language games, which have their distinct rules of games. I would propose that during this transitional age between modernity and postmodernity the Confucian moral metaphysics of the inner sageliness could be explicated in terms of the phenomenological experience of the unconscious and Zen without any unnecessary metaphysical assumptions. This will be further discussed later.

## Reconstructing Confucius' Philosophy in the Light of Postmodernism

Finally, regarding the prospect for the postmodern reconstruction of Confucius' philosophy, I must mention Dr. Thomas Leung In-sing (梁燕城), who is both an original Chinese philosopher and a Christian evangelical

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26) Ibid., p 151

preacher. He does not agree with the direction of Contemporary New Confucianism. In a recent article on “*Reconstructing Chinese Philosophy in the Light of Postmodernism*”, he writes.

“Western philosophy attempts to extrapolate beyond the limited scope of human knowledge and attain absolute answers, whereas Chinese philosophy aims at “presenting” (呈现) the metaphysical world in personal experience. This traditional Chinese philosophizing is through practice and experientially related description. In my view, all Western rational arguments cannot avoid the Kantian antinomy,<sup>27)</sup> because owing to the fundamental restriction of reason hardly any arguments could be conclusively established.”<sup>28)</sup>

Leung criticizes Mou Zongsan for attempting to solve the supposed problem of Kant (which to Leung is a pseudo problem) and employing Kantian framework to reconstruct Confucianism. First, what Mou regards as Kant's theoretical limitation of man's not knowing noumena is actually

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27) See Simon Blackburn, *The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 19. Antinomy is a Kantian paradox of exercising pure reason, which shows that “contradictory conclusions about the world as a whole can be drawn with equal propriety. Each antinomy has a thesis and a contradictory antithesis. ... The solution to this conflict of reason with itself is that the principles of reasoning used are not ‘constitutive’, showing us how the world is, but ‘regulative’, or embodying injunctions about how we are to think of it. When regulative principles are taken outside their proper sphere of employment, as they are when theorizing about the world as a whole, contradiction results.”

28) Leung In-sing (梁燕城), “*Reconstructing Chinese Philosophy in the Light of Postmodernism*”, *Cultural China*, No. 1, Vol. 11, January 2004 (Burnaby, B.C., Canada: Culture Regeneration Research Society), p. 13

Kant's wisdom, Mou's attempt to know things-in-themselves by "intelligible intuition" is to Leung the primary cultural defect of China. In Leung's view, man as a limited being should not be so self-conceited as to think he could now "play God" by becoming omniscient. Elsewhere he has also criticized Chinese culture for lacking the spirit of Christian repentance.

In other words, he feels that Mou and other Contemporary New Confucians should not go the Western way such as using Kant to reconstruct Chinese philosophy. Instead, they should return to the Chinese philosophical approach of "presenting" (呈现) the metaphysical world with a personally-experienced description. However, he admires Tang Junyi's "phenomenology of life" (人生現象學) and believes that it could solve problems which Mou could not resolve. Regarding Mou's doctrine of "*liangzhi kanxian* 良知坎陷" (the self-denial of the inner knowledge of the good), Leung argues that science has nothing to do with *liangzhi*, our inner knowledge of the good.

Zheng Jiadong, however, views the doctrine differently:

"The issue of democracy and science is after all a question of how to deal with Chinese and Western cultures. It is also related to the understanding and hermeneutics of the spiritual characteristics, development, and evolution of Chinese history and culture. ... The thesis of *liangzhi kanxian* is the most skillful and philosophical expression of Mou's dealing with this sort of issues. If we realize that the solution of philosophical problems could only reveal their relative meanings (and not absolute truths or reality in the historical contexts),

any criticisms and apologia of the thesis might be de-emphasized”<sup>29)</sup>

Mou feels that his lifetime work is simply to theorize what Confucius embodied in his life and to make it understandable to those who are more amenable to theoretical analysis, especially in the academic community.<sup>30)</sup> Mou quotes from Zhuang Zi's (莊子) to make the point “The sage embodies it in his life whereas other people (his followers) debate (theorize) it to show (express) to one another [莊生有云 「聖人懷之，衆人辯之以相示也。」]<sup>31)</sup>

## Confucius' Spirituality: Beyond Modernity and Postmodernity

### Habermas' Communicative Theory

We shall begin with the discussion of Jurgen Habermas (1929~ ) because he attempts to smooth over the transition from modernism to postmodernism. Moreover, his communicative theory is compatible with Confucius as a great communicator (mentioned above). Here we must bear

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29) Zheng Jiadong's (郑家栋) 《Mou Zongsan》, p 89

30) For a detailed discussion of this thesis, see Zheng Jiadong's (郑家栋) 《Mou Zongsan》 (Taipei Dongda Books Pty Ltd, 2000), pp 79-89

31) Mou Zongsan, Xin-ti-yu-xing-ti [《心体与性体》Mind Substance and (Human) Nature Substance ], Preface, p 2



in mind that modernism and postmodernism are not characterized primarily by time as they often overlap and the concept “postmodernism” initially appears in art and architecture.

Postmodernism tends to question the function of rationality. Although Habermas realizes that modernity and rationality encounter difficulties, he is still convinced that rationality is the only reliable tool to understand and resolve the defects of rationality, giving rise to “communicative rationality”. Habermas criticises Weber for identifying instrumental rationality that manifests in the development of capitalism as the only possible form of rationality. By rationality, Max Weber has the goal-rationality (instrumental rationality) in mind leading to his pessimistic view of reason-oriented modernity whereas Jürgen Habermas attempts to remedy the defects of modernity by proposing “communicative rationality”, which is in agreement with the conversational style of the *Analects*.

Arie Brand (1936~ ) has the following succinct summary of Habermas’ “theory of communicative action”

“The most characteristic element of the philosophy of consciousness is that it conceives of subjective reason as regulating two relations which the subject can have to the object, namely that of *cognition*, in which the object is allegedly represented as it is, and that of *action*, in which it is produced as it should be.

...

Habermas believes that critical theory can only get out of this blind alley

by replacing the paradigm of the philosophy of consciousness with that of communication theory, in which not the subject-object relation (with its two elements: *cognition* and manipulation) but the subject-subject relation is put central.”<sup>32)</sup>

## “Rectification of Names” and Postmodern “Deconstruction of Constructed Meanings”

According to Ludwig Wittgenstein, all words (“linguistic signifiers”) participate in “language games”, which influence the way we experience the world. So if language does construct meanings (concepts) and does not reveal an objective meaning already existing in the world, then the goal of the philosopher is to “deconstruct” this meaning-constructing process in order to “break the control of ‘constructed meanings’ over our thoughts and actions.”<sup>33)</sup>

There is a well-known passage in the *Analects* expounding the Confucian rectification of names, “Let the ruler be a ruler, the minister be a minister, the father be a father, and the son be a son.”<sup>34)</sup> The traditional interpretation is that the social roles of names must correspond to their implied duties in reality. This interpretation implies a realist notion of the transcendent status

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32) Arie Brand, *The Force of Reason An Introduction to Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action*, (North Sydney, Australia Allen & Unwin Australia Pty Ltd, 1990), p 6

33) Stanley J. Grenz, *A Primer on Postmodernism*, pp. 42-43.

of duties and their meanings. Nevertheless, these social roles could be better regarded as expressing their cultural meanings in the context of the rites prevailing during Confucius' time. This reading would be in accord with the postmodern view that the Confucian "rectification of names" is a matter of names corresponding to the "culturally constructed meanings" and not to any independently existing meanings with a transcendent status

### Self and Spirituality in the *Analects*

(1) "The imagery in the *Analects* is dominated by the metaphor of traveling the road. ... The notion of a Way (*tao*) is, not surprisingly, congenial to the central Confucian notion of *li*, rite or ceremony. *Li*, for Confucius, is the explicit and detailed pattern of that great ceremony which is social intercourse, the human life. The transition from the image of walking the true Path uprightly to carrying out a ceremony properly is an easy and congenial one. We may even think of *li* as the map of the specific road-system which is *Tao*.<sup>35)</sup>

(2) "Since the *chun tzu*'s (君子 Confucian superior person) will is thus ideally the medium by which, and through which, the *tao* is allowed and enabled to work and to be actualized, the 'I' of the *chun tzu*, as purely personal, has become, as it were, transparent ... This way of looking at matters is reminiscent of things Lao Tzu (老子) says, as for example, that

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34) The *Analects*, 12 11, *Source Book*, p. 39.

35) Herbert Fingarette, *Confucius - the Secular as Sacred* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1972), pp. 19-20

the sage has no heart of his own, .. and simply rides the *tao* ... for it is a way of expressing, ..., the spirit of the phrase, 'Not my will, but Thine be done.' " 36)

I quote the above two passages by Herbert Fingarette to show what he considers (1) Confucius' lack of internal deliberation in choosing alternative paths of the Way, and (2) the superior man's "no mind" state (similar to that of the Taoist sage). Yet this may actually be a Confucian Zen approach to awakening the unconscious in order to attain *wu* (悟 enlightenment). The Taoist and Zen attitude of "*wu-xin* 無心 no mind" is the traditional Chinese deconstruction and spiritual liberation as illustrated in Zhuang Zi' Chapter of "Happy Excursion" (*xiao-yao-you* 逍遙遊).

Deconstruction is a poststructuralist theory, based primarily on the writings of Jacques Derrida (born in Algiers in 1930), a French philosopher. It is a critical reading of written texts to uncover and remove the hidden structures and constraints that limit our thinking of the world. It also has the function of discovering the unintended meanings of written texts. Derrida challenges the view that a text has a fixed and unified meaning. To him, there are various legitimate interpretations of a text and the author's intentions are not relevant. Once the work is completed, it has a life of its own - thus the thesis that "the author is dead".

This poststructural and postmodern thesis of "death of the author" has

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36) Herbert Fingarette, "*The Problem of the Self in the Analects*" *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* (Honolulu University of Hawaii) This is an old paper on hand, which I do not have the date of publication,

opened up a new horizon for textual interpretations, but this does not mean that “anything goes”. Although there is a joy of reading new meanings into a text, whatever new explications we offer must still have their own inner logic of coherence. The Chinese style of deconstructive interpretation does not have to end up in extreme relativism and nihilism. For the Taoist, deconstruction is simply a way of removing the unnecessary rituals, forms, and shackles in order to attain freedom. Taoism is not nihilistic.

Zen is deconstruction at its best; so is psychoanalysis. In fact, the two have been combined in the psychoanalysis of Carl G. Jung. The significance of applying Zen and psychoanalysis of the unconscious to the inner dimension of man in the *Analects* is far greater than what the limited scope of this essay could describe. There might be a need for Contemporary New Confucians to open up a modern sphere of “new outer kingliness” (*xin-wai-wang* 新外王). Even more pressing is the need to creatively read into the *Analects* a psychological dimension of “new inner sageliness” (*xin-nei-sheng* 新內聖), which would constitute a postmodern Confucian spirituality.

The urgency for discovering or recovering man’s inner spirituality has been variously expressed by William Barrett’s books, “*Irrational Man*” and “*Death of the Soul*”, Carl Jung’s works, “*Modern Man in Search of a Soul*”, “*Psychology and Religion*”, and “*The Undiscovered Self*”, and more recently Tu Weiming’s essay “*The Ecological Turn in New Confucian Humanism: Implications for China and the World*”<sup>37)</sup> and his newly published books

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37) Tu Weiming, “*The Ecological Turn in New Confucian Humanism. Implications for China and the World*”, first published in *Daedalus: Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, vol. 130, no. 4, (fall 2001) 243-264. Also in *Toward*

"*Confucian Spirituality*" (vol. 1 and 2). The central question Tu raises in this essay is: what wisdom the axial-age civilizations can offer "to reorient the developmental trajectory of the modern world in light of the growing environmental crisis."<sup>38)</sup> His answer is the Confucian anthropocosmic vision of the peaceful "coexistence of Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things" (treating all living things with respect and consideration).<sup>39)</sup> His prophetic words for China are: "This ecological turn has great significance for China's spiritual self-definition, for it urges China to return to her home base and rediscover her own soul. It also has profound implications for the sustainable future of the global community."<sup>40)</sup>

Tu urges China to "rediscover her own soul", which echoes Mencius' call for "recovering the lost mind / heart (*ren*)",<sup>41)</sup> as China's rediscovery of her soul depends on Chinese people's rediscovery of their own "lost mind/heart". Elsewhere I have discussed in details the three dimensions of the *Analects*: *Tian*, *ren*, and *li*. On the one hand, *ren* (*jen*) opens the door to the ultimate source of the universe, *Tian* (*T'ien*), on the other, *ren* could be realized in the sphere of social transformation through the performance of *li* (禮 ritual forms). The former direction (inner sageliness) signifies the transcendent dimension of *ren* (仁), whereas the latter orientation (outer kingliness) manifests its power of social transformation.<sup>42)</sup>

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*A Global Community. New Perspectives on Confucian Humanism*, pp. 1-29

38) Martin Lu et al (ed.) , *Toward A Global Community New Perspectives on Confucian Humanism*, p. 19

39) *Ibid* , p 28

40) *Ibid* , p 29

41) *Mencius*, 6A: 11

As far as the relationship between “inner sageliness” and “outer kingliness” is concerned, basically the former is the foundation of the latter. To accommodate science and democracy, Contemporary New Confucians innovate “new outer kingliness” by taking a detour from the traditional moral path of “inner sageliness”, which has been quite awkward theoretically. It is about time that we rejuvenate inner sageliness and even cut loose the connection between inner sageliness and outer kingliness.

Intellectually we have gone through the experience of the “death of God” and the “death of the soul”. How do we now recover the soul if not also God? Fortunately, the poststructural “death of the author” allows us hermeneutical freedom to “recover our traditional soul” by accessing it in the realm of the unconscious, which we modern and postmodern persons could more easily accept. After all, the unconscious actually exists and is more objective than the conscious. Although the unconscious may be dark and sometimes mysterious, it is far more real to us than the various metaphysical speculations.

In Carl Jung’s view, “most people confuse ‘self-knowledge’ with knowledge of their conscious ego personalities. Anyone who has any ego-consciousness at all takes it for granted that he knows himself. But the ego knows only its own conscious contents, not the unconscious and its contents.”<sup>43)</sup> So most people know very little about their unconscious and

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42) Martin Lu, “Confucian Theory and Practice. Tradition and Transformation in the 21st Century”, *Toward A Global Community New Perspectives on Confucian Humanism*, pp. 73-102.

43) Carl G. Jung, *The Undiscovered Self* (Boston Little, Brown and Company, 1957), pp 6-7

hidden selves, which not only exist but also influence them all the time. The danger is that these people will be easily affected by the latent cases of insanity, "whose views and behavior, for all their appearance of normality, are influenced by unconsciously morbid and perverse factors."<sup>44)</sup> One cannot properly guard against unconscious insanity such as political fanaticism if he is unaware of his own unconsciousness and its irrational needs.

In a mass society where its bureaucracy (which Habermas calls the System) is becoming more and more complicated, man needs inner transcendent experience as anchorage to protect him from the System and "inevitable submersion in the mass." This is particularly true in countries where religions are not allowed and the State takes the place of God.<sup>45)</sup> The unconsciousness is important because most people access inner transcendent experience through it, and for Jung this serves to maintain the psychic balance:

"Its evident purpose is to maintain the psychic balance, for the natural man has an equally natural 'knowledge' of the fact that his conscious functions may at any time be thwarted by uncontrollable happenings coming from inside as well as from outside."<sup>46)</sup>

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43) Carl G. Jung, *The Undiscovered Self* (Boston Little, Brown and Company, 1957), pp 6-7

44) *Ibid* , p 5.

45) *Ibid* , p. 24.

46) *Ibid* , p. 26.



In the *Analects*, Confucius is very concerned about “maintaining this psychic balance” through his communion with *Tian-ming*. Even as a sage, only through hard efforts of learning and spiritual cultivation, could Confucius understand *Tian-ming* at the age of fifty. He said, “Life and death are the Decree of Heaven (*ming*); wealth and honor depend on Heaven.”<sup>47)</sup> Also, “(A morally superior man) stands in awe of the Decree of Heaven.”<sup>48)</sup> The Confucian saying, “A person should exert his best efforts and wait for his destiny to unfold. (盡人事, 聽天命)”, is in perfect accord with Jung’s above view of maintaining the psychic balance. “Exerting human best efforts” is at the conscious level, whereas “waiting for destiny to unfold” is a transcendent experience accessed through the unconscious.

Jung is well aware of the prejudices against psychology in general and the unconscious in particular; the unconscious is what makes human existence meaningful and what protects man from losing himself in the modern and postmodern mass society. He states “The unconscious, if not regarded outright as a sort of refuse bin underneath the conscious mind, is at any rate supposed to be of ‘merely animal nature’.”<sup>49)</sup> But he advises us not to hold a low esteem of the animal nature as Jesus himself was born in a stable among the animals.<sup>50)</sup> Time and again, he cautions us that without the transcendent (or religious) experience we will need the political fanaticism of a totalitarian state to substitute for it.

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47) *Analects*, 12· 5. *Source Book*, p. 39.

48) *Analects*, 16· 8. *Source Book*, p. 45.

49) Jung, *The Undiscovered Self*, p. 91.

50) *Ibid*, p. 91.

To him, “a natural function which has existed from the beginning, like the religious function, cannot be disposed of with rationalistic and so-called enlightened criticism ”<sup>51)</sup> The irrational factors of the psyche must be satisfied by our access to the transcendent (religious) experience through the unconscious. So what is significant of the unconscious is that it is the gate or window through which all our religious or transcendent experiences are made available to us. Here we must note that Jung does not commit himself to the existence of God or gods, or for that matter Confucius' *Tian* in the *Analects*. He simply asserts that the religious or transcendent experience does exist regardless of the origin of this experience.

Therefore, the above-mentioned theory of Jung will enable us to give a deconstructive reading of the Confucian moral metaphysics (inner sageliness) relating to “What Heaven confers upon man is called human nature (*Zhong-yong*)” and “Full realization of the mind (cultivating the conscious) will facilitate ‘knowing human nature (the unconscious) and knowing Heaven (the religious and transcendent) (the *Mencius*)” . Furthermore, a Confucian Zen perspective of spiritual cultivation (*xu-shen* 修身) could be incorporated into the *Analects* to establish a postmodern Confucian spirituality.

In fact, some contemporary Zen practitioners do consider Confucius a skillful cultivator (if not master) of Zen. In March 2002, I spent one month on the Manoa campus of the University of Hawaii participating in the activities of the Diamond Sangha, a Zen group established by Robert Aitken

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51) Ibid , p. 28.

about half a century ago. They invited me to give talks on the *Analects*, which they believe provides inspirations for their Zen practice. Robert Aitken actually regards Confucius as a predecessor of Zen practice.<sup>52)</sup> Due to the constraint of the space, I am unable to elaborate more on the postmodern Zen spirituality of the *Analects*, but I believe that the prospect for this is quite promising. Here Zen could be understood as a universal spirit and not necessarily limited to Buddhism.

Even more exciting is Jung's view that the unconscious is the source of wisdom and the secret to Zen enlightenment. This is also the fountain head of Confucius' spirituality as a sage when he states, " At fifty I knew the Decree of heaven (the truth of religion) ; at sixty my ear was obedient; at seventy I could follow my heart's desire without transgressing the norm."<sup>53)</sup> To Jung , "the conscious is only a part of the spiritual, and is never therefore capable of spiritual completeness; for that the indefinite expansion of the unconscious is needed."<sup>54)</sup> Jung argues that there are limits to consciousness, the sphere of intellect and rationality:

“The world of consciousness is inevitably a world full of restrictions,

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52) Martin Lu' s *Introduction , Toward A Global Community New Perspectives on Confucian Humanism*, p xx1

53) *Analects*, 2.4. English translations (sometimes with revisions by the author of this present paper are taken from [http //www.hm tyg jp/~acmuller/fiveclassics.htm](http://www.hmtyg.jp/~acmuller/fiveclassics.htm) Five Chinese Classics, translated by Charles Muller Part of Charles Muller' s Web, Resources for the Study of East Asian Language and Thought, Established 1995.07 30, Updated 2004 06 11

54) Carl Jung' s *Foreword* to D T. Suzuki' s *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism* (New York. Grove Weidenfeld, 1964), pp 27-28

of walls blocking the way. It is of necessity always one-sided, resulting from the essence of consciousness. No consciousness can harbour more than a very small number of simultaneous conceptions. All else must lie in shadow, withdrawn from sight.”<sup>55)</sup>

But unlike Kant, Jung believes that Zen discipline could bridge the gap, resolve the tension and conflict between the conscious and the unconscious, and “make whole” our personality, which Western psychoanalysis has long been trying to achieve without much success. The Zen approach lies in emptying the contents of consciousness (*wu-xin* 無心/No Mind) and concentrating on *koan* (for some Zen students). The amount of energy saved from attending to the contents and maintaining the kinetic of the conscious will move to the unconscious. This is Jung’s psychoanalysis of the actual working of Zen and the secret to subsequent enlightenment’

“The amount of energy that is saved goes over to the unconscious, and reinforces its natural supply up to a certain maximum. This increases the readiness of the unconscious contents to break through to the conscious. ...If the fragments offered by, or forced up from, the unconscious are successfully built into the life of the conscious, a psychic existence form results, which corresponds better to the whole of the individual personality, and therefore abolishes fruitless conflict between the conscious and the unconscious personality.”<sup>56)</sup>

In the *Analects*, the unconscious link to *Tian* is the sphere of our religious

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55) *Ibid.*, p. 21

56) *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23

and transcendent experience where if one cannot say anything at all he must keep silent. This is why Confucius expressed to his disciples his intention of remaining reticent when facing the subjects of human nature (subconsciousness) and the Way of Heaven (transcendent experience). Hopefully our above postmodern hermeneutics may have created a horizon of new meanings, in light of which the *Analects* could be deconstructed and reinterpreted in order to retrieve unintended meanings. Our analysis of immanence and transcendence is just an illustration of how this postmodern hermeneutics could bear fruit in our study of Chinese philosophy in general and the *Confucian Analects* in particular.

The reading and misreading of the *Analects* in this essay will undoubtedly throw light upon Confucius' spirituality and even his Zen experience in life, which have inspired Confucians' subsequent theorizing and conceptual constructs later in Chinese history. These efforts have facilitated Confucianism to rejuvenate itself to meet both modern and postmodern challenges. My endeavor both theoretical and spiritual so far is merely preliminary and tentative. Further elaboration and fine-tuning is required to promote a postmodern deconstruction (for the purpose of removing culturally conditioned meanings) and author-less reading (in order to create new unintended meanings) of the *Analects*.