

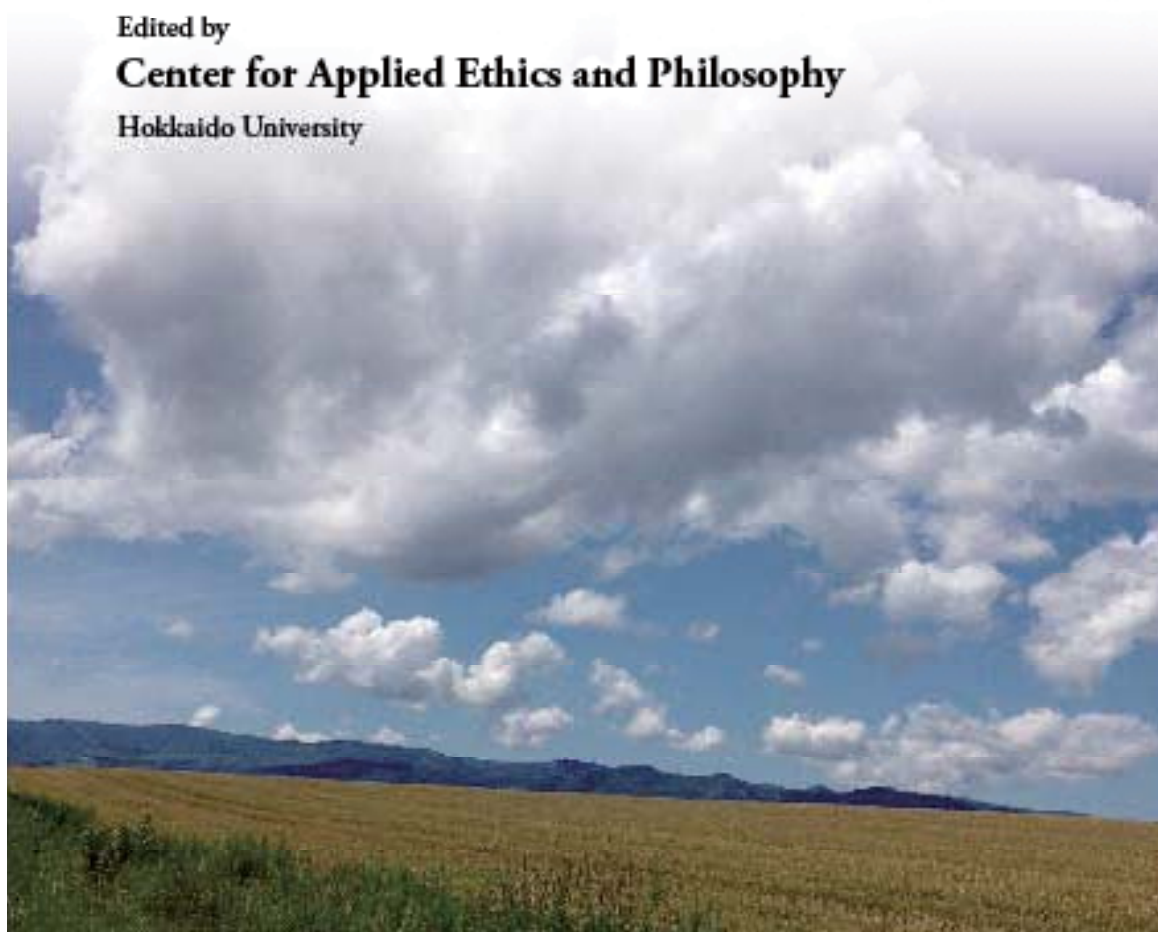
APPLIED ETHICS

Theories, Methods and Cases

Edited by

Center for Applied Ethics and Philosophy

Hokkaido University





Applied Ethics

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Center for Applied Ethics and Philosophy
Hokkaido University
Sapporo, Japan

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Introduction

This collection of essays is the final summation of the Sixth International Conference on Applied Ethics held at Hokkaido University on October 26-28, 2011. The conference was organised by the Center for Applied Ethics and Philosophy, Graduate School of Letters, Hokkaido University (Sapporo, Japan).

The purpose of this collection is to bring together the wide-ranging papers on various fields of applied ethics presented at the conference.

It is our hope that this collection will contribute to further developments in research on applied ethics and promote our Center's mission, which is 'to bridge the gap between theory and practice'.

August 2012

Center for Applied Ethics and Philosophy
Hokkaido University
Sapporo, Japan

Moral Goodness, Social Kinds, Natural Kinds, and Homeostatic Property Clusters

Thomas ADAJIAN

Introduction

According to a version of moral realism defended by Richard Boyd, moral goodness, natural kinds (like biological species), and social kinds (like races, genders, types of economies, money, death, persons, and so on) all have the same structure—they are all *homeostatic property cluster kinds*. (Boyd 1988, Boyd 1991, Boyd 1999a, Boyd 199b, Boyd 2003a, Boyd 2003b) Because it attempts a unification of some key concepts studied in ethics, social philosophy, and the philosophy of science, and therefore aspires to “break down the traditional distinction between natural kinds and kinds generated by human agency,” the view should be of interest to applied ethicists. (Griffiths 1999, 218; cf. Chiong 2005, Mallon 2007) This essay discusses some recent objections to Boyd’s view that moral goodness, social kinds, and natural kinds are all, *qua* kinds, the same. The first section sketches Boyd’s account of homeostatic property cluster kinds, paying particular attention to the case of moral goodness. The second section examines a criticism intended to show that the view fails to provide a necessary condition for moral goodness. The third section examines a criticism intended to show that important structural dissimilarities between natural kinds and moral goodness stand in the way of a unification of the sort envisaged. The focus throughout is on moral goodness.

1. Basics

Boyd’s version of moral realism holds that moral statements express propositions which are true or false (or approximately true, largely false, etc.), and whose truth or falsity is largely independent of our moral opinions. Barring the mention of approximate truth, this much is standard moral realism. More distinctively, Boyd holds that ordinary canons of moral reasoning—together with ordinary canons of scientific and everyday factual reasoning—often constitute a reliable method for obtaining and improving moral knowledge. But most distinctively, and of primary interest here, is Boyd’s notion of *homeostatic property cluster kinds*, which originates in the philosophy of science. By way of explanation: A family of properties F is homeostatically clustered if and only if either (i) under appropriate conditions, the presence of some of the properties in F makes more likely the

presence of the other properties in F , or (ii) there exist mechanisms or processes that make more likely the continued presence of the properties in F , or (iii) both. (Rubin 2008) An individual is a member of a homeostatic property cluster kind K if and only if that individual instantiates the properties in the cluster that define K , and the co-instantiation of these properties is brought about or maintained by the homeostatic mechanisms definitive of K .

To say that moral goodness is a homeostatic property cluster kind, then, is to say (i) that there is a family of properties that comprise moral goodness, (ii) that those properties cluster in stable ways, and (iii) that those clusters are homeostatically sustained by social and psychological mechanisms. The properties that comprise the homeostatic property cluster kind **moral goodness** correspond to things that satisfy important human needs: being educated, being healthy, sharing friendship, sharing love, enjoying leisure, engaging in physical recreation, engaging in cooperative efforts, and creating and appreciating art, and so on. The social and psychological mechanisms that homeostatically promote the co-occurrence and persistence of the properties in the cluster are, according to Boyd, “cultivated attitudes of mutual respect, political democracy, egalitarian social relations, various rituals, customs, and rules of courtesy” and so on. (Boyd 1988, 203) So homeostatic property cluster moral realism holds that, under suitable psychological and social conditions, the presence of any of the properties in the moral goodness property cluster (health, friendship, art, etc.) has a tendency to bring about and sustain the presence of the other properties in the cluster, in society generally. Social and natural kinds have the same basic structure, although, of course, the properties and mechanisms will be different.

Homeostatic property cluster moral realism’s meta-ethical and ontological background should also be noted. Boyd conceives of homeostatic property cluster realism as a species of consequentialism. (Boyd 1988, Boyd 2003a, Boyd 2003b) So understood, it provides an analysis of non-instrumental moral goodness, and is embedded in an ontology of states of affairs: the primary value-bearing entities are individual good states of affairs.¹ Making these meta-ethical and ontological commitments yields explicit yields the following formulation of homeostatic property cluster realism (HPCR).

(HPCR) A state of affairs S is non-instrumentally morally good if and only if S instantiates the homeostatic property cluster of human goods.

Finally, note that several features distinguish the homeostatic property cluster view from more traditional theories of natural kinds. First, in order to fall under a

¹ An non-consequentialist version of the view will be considered below.

kind, individuals need not instantiate all of the properties in the cluster: kinds are not defined by unchanging necessary and sufficient membership conditions, and need not figure in eternal, ahistorical, exception-less laws. (Boyd 1999a) Second, not all of the homeostatic mechanisms must be operating for an individual to fall under a homeostatic property cluster kind. Third, since imperfect homeostasis is possible, homeostatic property cluster kind terms are extensionally vague: biological and social entities admit borderline cases; some actions and character traits fall neither into the extension nor the anti-extension of the morally good.² Boyd's view is, as one philosopher of biology remarks, a "loosening of traditional realism [about natural kinds], not an abandonment of its core." (Wilson 1999, 200)

2. The Isolated Goods Objection

HPCR is false if it's possible that there be a good state of affairs which doesn't involve the instantiation of the homeostatic property cluster of moral goodness. The Isolated Goods objection takes off from a thought experiment intended to exhibit that possibility:

There is a hermit, alone in the woods. Although it is a relatively cool day, the sun peeks out from behind the clouds and warms the hermit's back. The hermit finds this sensation pleasurable. ... [But] this pleasure contributes neither to his nor anyone else's having friends. Nor does it contribute to his appreciation of art, his engagement in cooperative efforts, his sharing love, etc. In short, the hermit's experience of pleasure causally contributes to the realization of very few, if any, of the human goods. It follows that the hermit's being pleased does not instantiate the homeostatic property cluster that putatively constitutes *goodness*. ... The instantiation of only one property in a cluster is not the same thing as the instantiation of the cluster itself. Because the hermit's being pleased fails to instantiate the homeostatic property cluster that putatively constitutes *goodness* (and, moreover, fails to contribute to the realization of that homeostatic property cluster), ... [Boyd's view] *implies that the hermit's experience of pleasure is not good. It follows that the world in which the hermit experiences this particular episode of pleasure is no better than a world that is otherwise identical except that the hermit does not experience this pleasure. This consequence of HCl is surely counterintuitive.* (Rubin 2008, 509, emphasis added)

2 For two earlier endorsements of the vagueness of natural kinds, see Peirce's 1902 paper, "On Science and Natural Classes," in Peirce 1998, and Russell 1948.

A bit more explicitly:

1. Suppose, for *reductio*, that HPCR is true: a state of affairs S is non-instrumentally morally good if and only if S instantiates the homeostatic property cluster of human goods.
2. A state of affairs consisting in a hermit's experiencing isolated pleasure in the sensation of the sun's warmth does not instantiate the homeostatic property cluster of human goods.
3. So, that state of affairs isn't good. (1, 2)
4. So, the world containing a state of affairs consisting in the hermit's experiencing pleasure in the sensation of the sun's warmth is not better than an otherwise identical world lacking that state of affairs (i.e., a world that includes the state of affairs consisting in the hermit's feeling the sensation of the sun's warmth but does not include the state of affairs in which the hermit takes pleasure in that sensation of the sun's warmth). (3)
5. A world containing a state of affairs consisting in the hermit's experiencing pleasure in the sensation of the sun's warmth *is* better than an otherwise identical world lacking that state of affairs. (contradicts (4))
6. So, homeostatic property cluster realism is false. (*Reductio ad absurdum*, 1 - 5)

The Isolated Goods objection/argument fails, for a number of reasons: (a) the thought experiment it incorporates suffers from a crucial ambiguity; (b) it involves a faulty inference; (c) it relies on an account of the individuation of pleasures that is both contentious and inessential to HPCR.

2.1 An Ambiguity in the Thought Experiment, and a Dilemma

Are the psychological and social mechanisms which homeostatically sustain the clustering of the properties in the moral goodness cluster present in the hermit's world, or are they not? The thought experiment leaves this unspecified. But either way that crucial detail is filled in, the Isolated Goods objection is undermined. On the one hand, suppose that those homeostatic mechanisms are present. If so, then the hermit's pleasure will make some contribution to his health, though a small one.³ In

3 Moreover, if the reason that the other goods in the homeostatic property cluster are not realized is that the appropriate conditions/mechanisms aren't in place, this is obviously consistent with its being the case that *under appropriate conditions* the presence of some properties in the homeostatic property cluster make it more likely that the other properties in the homeostatic property cluster will be present. Pleasure in normal humans is connected with other dispositional properties, and the existence of dispositional properties requires not that they be manifestation under *all* circumstances, but only, rather, that they be manifested

that case, in the world in which the hermit feels pleasure, the homeostatic property cluster of human goods is instantiated to some small degree. If so, the hermit's pleasure-world *is* better, to a very slight degree, than the otherwise identical world in which he does not feel pleasure in the sun's warmth. But then the Isolated Goods objection fails, since it claims that an implication of HPCR is that the hermit's pleasure world is not better than the world in which he does not feel pleasure. On the other hand, if the required social and psychological homeostatic mechanisms are not present, then the hermit is in a Hobbesian state of nature, and his isolated pleasure in the sun's warmth has no tendency to affect either the rest of his psychology or anyone else. Arguably, in this situation, normal human life has broken down so radically that nothing has the property of goodness. (Sturgeon 2003, 550)⁴ But if nothing is good, then obviously there are no isolated good states of affairs. Nor are there any bad states of affairs: no states of affairs have moral properties of any kind. And if nothing has moral properties, then premise (5)—which says that the world in which the hermit feels pleasure is better than the world in which he doesn't—is false. In that case, the Isolated Goods argument is unsound. So, whichever way the thought experiment is filled out, the Isolated Goods argument/objection fails.

2.2 A Questionable Inference

From the fact that a state of affairs is not good, it does not follow that a world including that state of affairs isn't better than an otherwise identical world lacking it. (That is, (4) does not follow from (3).) A principle which would bridge the gap is *if world A and world B are identical except that A contains a state of affairs that is not good, then world A is not better than world B*. But that principle seems neither true, nor required by homeostatic property cluster realism. To see this, consider a state of affairs, *s*, consisting in a man's thinking of the prime numbers, while feeling neither pleasure nor pain, for five seconds. This state of affairs *s*, is not good. Now consider two nearly identical worlds, which differ only in that *s* obtains in the first but not the second. In both of these worlds, the man suffers pain from birth until age 20. In the first world, after 20 years of pain, *s* obtains—the man thinks of the prime numbers, while feeling neither pleasure nor pain, for 5 seconds. Then he dies. The second world does not include *s*, but is otherwise identical to the first. In the second world, the man is in pain for 20 years, and then dies. The principle *if world A and*

under *appropriate* ones. The fact that a diamond was never exposed to a hardness test is not a reason for thinking it soft

- 4 Once one focuses on the fact that the state of affairs that we have been describing as consisting in “the hermit's feeling pleasure in the sun's warmth” is more accurately described as consisting in the solitary, loveless, poor, unhealthy, friendless, artless, hermit's feeling a momentary passive pleasure from the sun's warmth, the temptation to say that that is a good state of affairs is much weaker.

world B are identical except that A contains a state of affairs that is not good, then world A is not better than world B entails that the first world, in which the man has a respite from his pain, is not better than the second world. This implication is hard to swallow.

Why, anyway, accept the principle if world A and world B are identical except that A contains a state of affairs that is not good, then world A is not better than world B? One might do so on the grounds that it is an instance of a more abstract claim, viz., *if A and B are identical wholes except that A contains s and B does not, and s is not F, then A is not more F than B*. But that more abstract claim seems doubtful. Something which in isolation lacks a certain property may interact with other parts of a whole and impart that property to the whole. Consider one sort of whole—the character of a virtuous person. A person’s character is a *mixture* of character traits, not a mere aggregation or sum of traits. As Gibbons and Legg have noted in a useful recent paper on the *Philebus*, character traits are not like Lego blocks, which, in atomist fashion, stay the same regardless of their arrangements. (Gibbons and Legg, 2012) In wholes which, like characters, are mixtures and not sums, the constituents *blend*.

This sort of whole provides a counterexample to the principle that *if A and B are identical wholes except that A contains s and B does not, and s is not F, then A is not more F than B*. Let character A and character B be identical wholes, except that one contains a little more pride than the other. Let F be *badness*. Assume, as seems unexceptionable, that pride is not in itself bad. If the principle presently under discussion is true, then the character with a little more pride cannot be worse than the one without that additional pride. But that seems false. It is possible that adding a little more pride to someone’s virtuous character, turning her to hubris, might spoil all her other good qualities, and so, as Gibbons and Legg remark, “what could manifest as perseverance turns to stubbornness, what could manifest as courage turns to rashness, and so on.” (Gibbons and Legg 2012, 17) That is, even though pride isn’t *per se* bad, the character/whole with additional pride might be worse—more F—than an otherwise identical one lacking it, because of the ways that pride interacts with the other character traits.⁵ There is, therefore, reason to doubt the principle that *if A and B are identical wholes except that A contains s and B does not, and s is not F, then A is not more F than B*.

2.3 Identifying Pleasures

The Isolated Goods argument/objection seems to rely on a contentious account of pleasure. As Plato argues in the *Philebus*, certain pleasures are identifiable

⁵ F here is *badness*, of course. There seems to be no reason that the moral valency of F should make a difference.

and evaluable only when their propositional content is taken into consideration. Pleasures of this sort are not to be identified with a certain sort of raw feeling. Rather, such pleasures are identified by their propositional contents. Their truth or falsity depends on whether or not the object enjoyed is in fact worthy of being enjoyed. (*Philebus* 36c-50e); cf. Frede 1985, Ionescu 2007) Now, by hypothesis, the hermit's pleasure is an *isolated* good, since, in the hermit's world, none of the other goods in the homeostatic property cluster of goodness are instantiated. Consequently, the state of affairs consisting in the hermit's feeling (without taking pleasure in) the sensation of the sun's warmth is not good. Hence, the hermit's sensation of warmth is not worthy of being enjoyed. Hence, the hermit's pleasure in the sensation in the sun's warmth is a false pleasure. Is a world which contains a false pleasure better than an otherwise identical world lacking it? At the very least, it is not clear that it is.

At this point, the critic of HPCR might object as follows: "The Isolated Goods objection doesn't depend on pleasure being the property in the homeostatic property cluster of the good cluster that is the only one instantiated. To succeed, the objection need only work for *some* isolated good, not necessarily pleasure." Reply: Of the properties in the homeostatic property cluster of the good (*being educated, being physically healthy, sharing friendship, sharing love, enjoying leisure, engaging in physical recreation, engaging in cooperative efforts, creating and enjoying art*), some are by nature social—*sharing friendship, engaging in cooperative efforts*—and therefore are not isolable. And the claim that the others might be isolated goods faces the dilemma urged above.

2.4 The Focus of the Isolated Goods Objection

Finally, it is unclear that the Isolated Goods objection actually makes contact with what is distinctive about the homeostatic property cluster view. This can be seen by considering a version of moral realism identical to Boyd's in all but one respect. On this non-Boydian view, the properties that comprise the morally good are exactly the same as on HPCR, but rather than being homeostatically clustered, those properties constitute unchanging individually necessary and jointly sufficient conditions for moral goodness. Against such a view, the Isolated Goods objection would have exactly the same force as it has against HPCR. This suggests that what the objection identifies as a purported defect in the homeostatic property cluster view is not its account of moral goodness as involving the stable homeostatic clustering of properties, but, rather, its account of moral goodness as non-simple or compound. But what is distinctive about HPCR is the former, and not the latter. If the Isolated Goods objection cuts against HPCR, that is, then (implausibly) it cuts against every view on which the good is non-simple.

3. The Structural Disanalogy Objection

This objection to HPCR is in some ways a more fundamental one:

For paradigmatic homeostatic property cluster kinds [like biological species], most ... of the properties that are part of the kind's definition are properties had by individual members of the kind. For example, just as ferociousness and being quadrupedal are part of the homeostatic property cluster definition of the kind **tiger**, individual tigers are themselves ferocious and quadrupedal. ... By contrast, the properties that putatively define the good are not had by individual members of the good: no good state of affairs is ... educated, enjoys leisure... To predicate one of these properties of a good state of affairs is to commit a category mistake. (Rubin 2008, 514)

A reconstruction:

1. Suppose that **good state of affairs** is a homeostatic property cluster kind. (for *reductio*)
2. Properties that are part of a (paradigmatic) homeostatic property cluster kind's definition can be possessed by members of that kind.
3. *Being pleased* and *sharing love* are parts of the definition of **good state of affairs**.
4. Individual good states of affairs are members of the kind: **good state of affairs**.
5. Individual good states of affairs can have the property sharing love. (2 - 4) (Absurdity!)
6. So **good state of affairs** isn't a homeostatic property cluster kind. (*Reductio*, 1 - 5)

It is now argued that this criticism can be evaded.

3.1 The Meta-ethical Form and Ontological Background

The Structural Disanalogy objection takes it for granted that the homeostatic property cluster moral realism's background ontology is one of states of affairs. Because HPCR is a species of consequentialism, that is not an unreasonable assumption. But if what is genuinely distinctive about homeostatic property cluster moral realism is its analysis of the structure of moral goodness, then there is no bar

to formulating a non-consequentialist version. A virtue ethics version, for example, could be constructed.⁶ In that guise, homeostatic property cluster moral realism might take the primary locus of value to be *lives*—specifically, good human lives—rather than good states of affairs. Following Plato’s *Philebus*, again, we might understand the kind **good human life** as embedded, not in an ontology of states of affairs, or their sums, but rather in an ontology of genuinely unified wholes, or mixtures, whose constituents—here, knowledge and pleasure—*blend* in a harmonious way, rather than merely being agglomerated. For, although knowledge and pleasure are constituents or ingredients in the good life, there is no proper part of the good life that is all knowledge and not pleasure, and vice versa.⁷ Wholes that are blends/mixtures—like the kind **good human life**, and its individual members, good human lives—have on this view a distinctive mereology, unlike that of, say, David Lewis, whose “axiom of unrestricted composition” has it that any plurality of objects whatsoever, no matter how dissimilar, composes a further object.⁸

If this ontology of wholes is combined with property-talk, we can say that the properties that belong to good human lives are properties like *involving knowledge* and *involving friendship*. This permits the following question: How much force does the Structural Disanalogy objection have if the ontology of states of affairs ontology and the consequentialism are jettisoned, and it is run it against a Platonic virtue ethics version of homeostatic property cluster moral realism? Here it is:

1. Suppose (for *reductio*) that **good human life** is a homeostatic property cluster kind.
2. Individual good human lives are members of the kind **good human life**
3. Properties that are part of a homeostatic property cluster kind’s definition can be possessed by its members.
4. *Involves friendship* and *involves knowledge* are part of the definition of **good human life**
5. Individual good human lives involve friendship and knowledge....

But clearly no absurdity can be derived. So the attempted *reductio* fails. If the kind **good human life** is a mixture of knowledge and pleasure, then there is

6 On homeostasis in Aristotle’s ethics, see Terzis 1992.

7 Cf. Harte 2002. On Plato’s *Philebus* view, the parts of genuine wholes or structures are structure-laden: their identity is determined only in the context of the structure of which they are part. Structure is no less essential to the parts of the whole than to the whole itself

8 As above: not just any combination of individually good elements generates a good whole. On the part-whole theory of the *Philebus*, see Harte 2002, Gibbons and Legg 2012; Moravcsik 1979.

no category mistake involved in its members, individual good human lives, being mixtures of knowledge and pleasure. Likewise, the (natural) kind **tiger** on this view is a mixture of properties—quadrupedality, ferocity, and so on.⁹ The individual tigers that are members of that kind are mixtures of those properties' instances or tropes. Hence, contrary to the objection, paradigmatic natural kinds and moral goodness are not disanalogous: there is no category mistake involved in treating biological species as mixtures. Similar remarks would hold for social kinds.

3.2 The Normativity of Structure, and a Worry

However successful this recasting of homeostatic property cluster moral realism as a species of virtue ethics is at getting around the Structural Disanalogy objection, Plato's *Philebus* view that the Good Life is a whole, and the distinctive mereology that goes with it, involve another claim which needs to be made explicit. Plato holds that wholes or structures, including mixtures, like the kind **good human life**, and individual good human lives, exhibit harmony, proportionality, and balance. And he holds that structure, and that harmony, proportion and order are good.¹⁰ In fact, in the *Philebus* Plato endorses an even stronger claim about structure and normativity: wholes necessarily have normative features—positive ones. There are no bad mixtures. (Moravcsik 1979, Harte 2002, Ionescu 2007, Gibbons and Legg 2012)

Now, the marriage of homeostatic property cluster realism with a non-consequentialist moral theory and a Platonic ontology, on which the structure of a good life is essential to the identity of its constituents, harmonizes with one of the responses made above to the Isolated Goods objection—that the value and identity of the hermit's isolated moment of pleasure in the warmth of the sun is not detachable from the hermit's life. But in the present context an obvious objection arises: If harmoniousness is a normative property, then if homeostatic property cluster realism packs normative properties like harmoniousness into its analysis of moral goodness, it rejects naturalism. But Boyd intends his view as a species of naturalism, and some, at least, allege that normative properties cannot be accommodated by naturalism.

In the space available here, only a very quick gesture in the direction of an answer to this reasonable objection is possible. Very briefly: Elegance is often a feature of successful scientific theories. (Zemach 1997, Kosso 2002) Harmony is a necessary condition for elegance. If elegance is a real feature of the world,

9 Or perhaps it is a mixture of kinds. If so, then this is a version of what Gibbons and Legg call the Eidetic Combination Problem: How can a Form be one while a mixture of disparate and unrelated ingredients. (Gibbons and Legg 2012, 9)

10 Interestingly, harmony is inseparable from Confucius' notion of the superior man and the ideal state, as it is for Plato's and Aristotle's. See Rudebusch 1989, 161.

then it would be unsurprising that it is often a feature of successful scientific theories. If elegance is not a real feature of the world, then it would be surprising that it is often a feature of successful scientific theories. (The view that elegance and harmoniousness are real features of theories and of the world, we might say, evidently harmonizes more completely with scientific practice than the view that elegance are not real.) So, here is an explanation: Harmony is a real feature of the world. Scientific realists, at least, should therefore be realists about harmony, on epistemic grounds.¹¹

Social Kinds, and a Conclusion

This paper has argued that two recent criticisms of homeostatic property cluster moral realism fail. Both criticisms involve atomistic or individualistic presuppositions. The Isolated Goods objection assumes that pleasures are identifiable in context-less isolation, without reference to their propositional contents, and hence presupposes an atomistic view of the properties that constitute the homeostatic property cluster of the good. Similarly, the Structural Disanalogy objection incorporates an individualistic view of the good, by assuming an ontology of states of affairs whose manner of combination is aggregation.

Neither objection really engages homeostatic property cluster moral realism at its holist core. For, on a very natural reading as a variety of virtue ethics, moral HPCR requires a holist view of the nature of pleasures, and requires that the value of a single part of a whole does not determine the value of that whole. Moreover, in making the kind **good human life** focal, rather than (aggregations of) good states of affairs, moral HPCR's ontology is one of properties that interact, blend or mix. A virtue ethics version of moral HPCR will also involve the holist assumption that good human lives are neither livable nor identifiable in isolation; this is both independently plausible and, since by hypothesis the instantiation of the homeostatic moral property cluster requires the operation of social mechanisms, required by any version of the view.

Turn now to social kinds. Recall that the homeostatic property cluster view under discussion interprets social kinds, *qua* kinds, as having the same sort of structure as moral goodness. If the view's attempted breakdown of the traditional distinction between natural kinds and kinds generated by human agency succeeds, then we would predict that theories of social kinds can, similarly, be classified as individualist or holist, and that a dialectic similar to that just rehearsed in the case of

¹¹ An earlier version of this argument is criticized in Goldman 1993. Those criticisms are answered convincingly in Gould 1994.

moral goodness would play out for social kinds.

That is what we do find. To substantiate that claim, let me now briefly sketch analogues of the Isolated Goods and Structural Disanalogy objections, modified so as to apply to a homeostatic property cluster account of social kinds. Consider race as a working example of a social kind, and recall that a family of properties F is homeostatically clustered if and only if either (i) under appropriate conditions, the presence of some of the properties in F makes more likely the presence of the other properties in F , or (ii) there exist mechanisms or processes that make more likely the continued presence of the properties in F , or (iii) both. On this view, an individual is a member of a homeostatic property cluster kind K if and only if that individual instantiates the properties in the cluster that define K , and the co-instantiation of these properties is brought about or maintained by the homeostatic mechanisms definitive of K . As we saw, to say that moral goodness is a homeostatic property cluster kind, is to say (i) that there is a family of properties that comprise moral goodness, (ii) that those properties cluster in stable ways, and (iii) that those clusters are homeostatically sustained by social and psychological mechanisms. Likewise, then, to say that race is a homeostatic property cluster kind is to say that (i) there is a family of properties that comprise (say) Blackness, (ii) that those properties cluster in stable ways, and (iii) that those clusters are homeostatically sustained by social and psychological mechanisms.

To come to specifics, consider an account of race defended by Haslanger. (Haslanger 2006) On Haslanger's view, races are racialized groups, and a group is racialized if and only if its members are socially positioned as subordinate or privileged along some dimension—economic, political, legal, social, etc.—and the group is 'marked' as a target for this treatment by observed or imagined bodily features presumed to be evidence of ancestral links to a certain geographical region. (Haslanger, 2006) Clearly, such a view might be construed as a homeostatic property cluster view. For it involves a family of properties, some having to do with social positioning and some having to do with (observed or imagined) bodily features and geographical origin, that cluster in stable ways and are homeostatically sustained by a variety of social, psychological, and other mechanisms. On it, individuals need not instantiate all of the properties in the cluster, to be a member of a racialized group; not all of the homeostatic mechanisms must be operating for an individual to be a member of a racialized group, and since imperfect homeostasis is possible, racial terms will on this view be—as in fact they are—extensionally vague.

The parallel to the moral case, then, is close enough. An analog of the Isolated Goods objection as applied to a homeostatic property cluster view of racial groups construed as social kinds would amount to singling out a single property in the property cluster (say, social positioning) and claiming that, because an individual

who exemplified that property in isolation would, contrary to the HPC view, fall under the kind, the HPC view is false. The strain of individualism underlying the objection so construed would, in this domain, amount to the assumption that properties like social positioning and bodily features are isolable from, and only contingently related to, the other properties in the cluster, as well as to the assumption that racialized groups exist and develop independently of other social kinds like classes and genders. And the analogue of the Structural Disanalogy objection would assume that the background ontology for a theory of social kinds like racial groups would be an ontology of states of affairs which combine by agglomeration (rather than an ontology of properties that mix and blend). Those assumptions can plausibly be denied, and should be denied, by the defenders of any holist view of social kinds (like Haslanger's) that is reasonably construed as a version of homeostatic property cluster realism.¹²

Of course, whether or not an explicitly holist, virtue ethics version of homeostatic property cluster realism is, ultimately, more defensible than an individualistic, consequentialist version remains an open question. Obviously, not all criticisms of homeostatic property cluster realism have been considered. But if the arguments of this paper are successful, as I believe they are, then some recent objections to moral homeostatic property cluster realism fail, and fail for reasons that point in the direction of more plausible virtue ethics versions of that view than have so far been considered. Homeostatic property cluster views of moral and social kinds deserve further consideration.

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12 Compare Elizabeth Spellman on gender: gender is not "a discrete component of an individual that gets added, like a bead on a string, to other discrete components like race and class," and social kinds like races and genders do not have "a simple additive relationship," but rather "a more relationally complex, perhaps emergent" one. (Bach 2012, p. 265) Marriage is another example of a social kind which combines economic, social, legal, and, historically, religious properties.

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Does Democracy Monopolize a Right to Rule?: A Critique of Thomas Christiano's Democratic Conception of Political Authority

Makoto SUZUKI

In *The Constitution of Equality: Democratic Authority and Its Limits*,¹ Thomas Christiano proposes an original conception of legitimate political authority. In this “carefully argued and thought provoking” book (Lefkowitz 2009), he argues that because only democracy embodies the justice of public equality between persons, democracy exclusively possesses a right to rule and everyone has the correlative obligation to obey its decrees in order to avoid treating others as inferiors. Christiano’s view is ambitious in that it confers on democracy the right to rule that grounds *every* citizen’s normally *overriding* obligation to obey its legislations *regardless of their contents*. Furthermore, Christiano’s theory is systematic because it simultaneously explains the limit of authority with the same principle of justice: a polity loses the right to rule when it ceases to embody public equality by disenfranchising some people, infringing upon their basic liberties, failing to provide the economic minimum for each of them, or creating a permanent minority. As one commentator notes, *The Constitution of Equality* “will surely strengthen Christiano’s well deserved reputation as a major theorist in the field” of political theory (Laitinen 2010, 88).²

This paper focuses on whether Christiano has successfully demonstrated that democracy exclusively possesses such a right to rule, and whether what he calls “public equality” is a satisfactory basis of the peculiar political authority. If his argument is successful, citizens are obliged to bring about a democratic assembly, and once it is established, they *owe* to it a moral duty to do whatever it decrees. Furthermore, even if the decree is morally objectionable or the decreed action is wrong if not thus decreed, in normal cases citizens are morally obliged to obey the decree. Therefore, under the democratic regime Christiano characterizes, violations of laws—including civil disobedience—will be rarely justified. Moreover, foreigners are obliged not to interfere with any domestic issues. This paper points out that Christiano’s argument fails to support these strong conclusions. Additionally, the

1 Reference to the page number is given to this book unless otherwise noted. Christiano 2004 is the precursor of this work.

2 Thomas Christiano is Professor of Philosophy and Law at the University of Arizona, and has published articles widely in the areas of democratic theory, distributive justice, and political philosophy. He is the author of two articles, “Authority” and “Democracy,” in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (URL=<http://plato.stanford.edu/>).

argument does not fit well with some intuition that another approach can easily accommodate. This examination will enable us to realize complex relations between equality, democracy, political authority, and the moral duty to obey the law.

1. Right to Rule and Its Bases

Christiano thinks the democratic assembly has a *moral* right to rule; other polities do not have such a right. He describes the right to rule in the following:

A robust right to rule is first and foremost a valid claim of the authoritative body against others upon whom certain duties are imposed. The valid claim is correlated with a duty owed to the authority on the part of the subjects of the authority and others not to interfere with the activities of the authority. The valid claim also generates duties in the subjects to comply with these rules and commands of the authority, which obedience they owe to the authority. Authority as a right to rule includes a liberty on the part of the authority to make decisions as it sees fit and it includes a power to impose duties on citizens. (240-241)

There are two caveats to Christiano's position.

First, Christiano does not claim that under a non-democratic regime, citizens may disobey any dictate of the government. The dictates might coincide with the things that are morally just independently of the dictates. Moreover, even if the dictates are not inherently right, it might be morally permissible or even recommendable for the citizens to comply with these dictates provided the government brings about worse consequences if they do not comply (234). However, a non-democratic government does not have the right to impose duties of compliance which are owed to the government upon citizens. Though a democratic assembly can make any dictate such a duty (within a certain limit), a non-democratic assembly cannot do so.

Second, Christiano argues that democracy's authority is limited by democratic rights and the core of liberal rights,³ the need of economic minimum for exercising these rights, and the requirement that there be no permanent minority (Chapter 7). A democratic assembly does not have the right to violate these standards because

3 Christiano does not specify the core of liberal rights, but claims as follows: "It seems to me that the core of liberal rights should be defined in terms of the central interests that the rights are meant to protect and in terms of the capacity for protection afforded people from unfortunate exercises of the rights." (166) I take the core of liberal rights to include not only freedom of conscience, freedom of pursuits, freedom of association and freedom of expression but also freedom from violence and deceit without prior consent.

it undermines the grounds of its authority, i.e., public equality (see below), when it issues a dictate that contradicts them.⁴ Christiano does not claim that every instance of so-called democracy has the full right to rule because many of them fail to give an equal say to each of their citizens (246-247).⁵

To understand Christiano's argument, we need to know its two main premises.

The first premise is the principle of equality: the equal advancement of interests is just. Christiano argues that as a matter of justice, the well-being (of a person) ought to be distributed equally by the institutions of the society (e.g., 25)⁶, where the well-being of a person consists in "the happy exercise of the distinctive authority of persons." (18) Christiano thinks the basic ideas of justice support this principle and contradict views such as utilitarianism, and prioritarianism—the view that gives priority to those who are worse-off. This is because justice requires that people be treated in the same way as far as persons' statuses and merits are the same, but only the equal advancement of interests avoids treating persons differently without the corresponding differences between their statuses or merits (22-23).⁷

This principle of equality is certainly disputable; why is it in any way significant to make the level of each person's well-being the same? Even if, as Christiano argues, the basic ideas of justice imply such a principle, this might merely extend the reach of skepticism from the principle to (distributive) justice itself; why does such justice matter anyway? For the sake of argument, however, I will hereafter treat the equal advancement of human well-beings as at least one relevant consideration.

The second premise for Christiano's argument is that it is required that the principles of equality be publicly realized. Christiano argues that the principles of equality, including the equal advancement of interests, are the principles of social

4 In addition, Christiano admits the possibility that when a democratic assembly initiates or conducts warfare, people may disobey their own democratic government (262).

5 Christiano argues that only the democratic assembly has the right to rule (245). Other political institutions, such as judicial, executive and administrative branches, have authority over us only insofar as they implement what the democratic assembly dictates. Citizens owe their duties of compliance not to these institutions, but to the assembly (255-259).

6 There are several important questions about this principle of equality, which Christiano does not address. For example, which is relevant, equality at any given moment or equality between different people's entire lives? Does equality matter between different generations or only among individuals living at the same time? Does equality matter between all persons or only among members of an interacting community? (Cf. Kagan 1998, section 2.4.)

7 Utilitarians and prioritarions will retort that Christiano mistakenly thinks their views fail to treat persons in the same way as far as persons' statuses and merits are the same. Utilitarianism allegedly treats persons in such an equal way because it gives the same weight to the same amount of well-being whoever enjoys it. Prioritarianism allegedly treats persons in such an equal way because it gives the same weight to the same amount of well-being that is had by any being whose status—level of well-being—is the same.

justice, and that in a fundamental respect, such principles must be publicly realized (Chapter 2). A principle is publicly realized just in case it is implemented, and every person with ordinary cognitive abilities who understands relevant information and makes a conscientious effort can see that the principle is implemented. The relevant information consists of the facts of disagreement, diversity, fallibility, and cognitive bias, as well as the fundamental interests people have under the circumstances of trying to establish justice among themselves. A principle of equality is publicly realized if and only if it is implemented, and every person with these idealized attributes could see that it is implemented, i.e., they could understand that they are being treated equally (69-70). Christiano calls the publicly realizable principles of equality “public equality” (70).

Christiano argues that public equality includes the principle that citizens should respect each other’s judgment—each citizen should be given an equal say in establishing justice. He then argues that this principle—together with the idea that as a matter of justice, interests ought to be equally distributed—implies that a just society is one that publicly embodies the equal advancement of interests (287). Furthermore, he argues that democracy is “a uniquely public realization of the equal advancement of interests” (78f).

I offer two comments on these underpinnings before considering the argument for democracy’s exclusive right to rule. First, Christiano has not succeeded in showing that each citizen should be given an equal say in establishing justice, or that democracy is a realization of the equal advancement of interests.⁸ Because people have different levels of competence, the equal advancement of interests might rather support the conclusion that their voices should be given *different* weights. Christiano addresses this line of criticism (116-130) while admitting that an equal say should be given only to the persons who have minimal moral competence—the capability of elaborating, reflecting on, and revising ideas about justice (128). Children do not have minimal moral competence, so they should not be given an equal say. The possibility Christiano has not addressed is that even adults cannot

8 Christiano does not explain what counts as the implementation or realization of principles, in particular, the equal advancement of well-being. If the full implementation—the completely equal advancement of well-being—is required, apparently the principle cannot be realized, publicly or otherwise. If the fullest implementation available—the most equal advancement of well-being among practicable options—is required, then it is possible that the realization is not public: any public way of approaching the equal advancement of interests—democracy included—can be a suboptimal practicable option. However, Christiano does not consider this possibility when he requires that the principle of equality be public and contends that democracy is its public realization. So perhaps Christiano has in mind some more loose sense of implementation, which he does not specify. Without the sense of implementation defined, however, it is hard to assess Christiano’s claim that democracy is the unique public realization of equality. I set aside this uneasiness in the following discussion.

gain this capability without certain education. He might try to address this possibility by showing the equal advancement of interests requires that each citizen go through such an education before joining in political decision making. If Christiano goes in this direction, in addition to defending such compulsory education, he needs to say what his approach implies when a regime does not provide and fund it. Should a citizen without such education lose an equal say? Is the regime still fully democratic and hence with a full right to rule?

Secondly, because democracy occasionally produces the outcomes that fail to advance the citizens' interests equally, the outcomes—the laws and institutions enacted by the laws—will not be the full implementation of the relevant principles (though the democratic assembly and process themselves might be so). What the democratic assembly produces is not always the realization of the equal advancement of interests, public or otherwise. As you will see, this point is relevant when considering whether citizens have the duty to obey the decrees of a democratic assembly.

2. Christiano's Argument for Democracy's Exclusive Right to Rule

Christiano's argument consists of two steps: first, showing why only the democratic assembly has a right to rule that correlates with the duties of citizens to obey; and second, showing that the duty to obey is preemptive or at least especially weighty (249). Additionally, Christiano argues that foreigners have the duty of noninterference in the democratic assembly (253). We will examine these three parts in order.

2-1 The First Step: Does the Democratic Assembly Monopolize a Right to Rule?

Each human being has a fundamental and natural duty to treat other human beings as equals and this implies that each person must try to realize the equal advancement of the interests of other human beings. But this duty is only fully realized among persons when each person attempts to treat others publicly as equals. Hence, each has a duty to attempt to bring about, and to conform his actions to, those institutions that publicly realize the equal advancement of interests. I have argued that democracy and liberal rights are necessary to the public realization of equal advancement of interests. So each citizen has a duty to bring about democratic institutions and to comply with those democratic institutions when they are realized at least as long as those institutions do not themselves violate public equality. (249)

I will examine below whether this first step in the argument succeeds.⁹ I divide the examination of the argument into several parts, each of which deals with a distinct aspect of democracy's exclusive right to rule: a. citizens' duty to bring about a democratic institution; b. citizens' duty of compliance; c. whether the duty is content-independent; d. whether the duty is owed to the assembly; and e. whether democracy monopolizes the right to rule.

a. Do citizens have the duty to bring about a democratic institution?

In such dire situations as we find in premodern history and in some Third World countries, citizens might not have the duty to bring about a democratic institution. Trying to bring about democratic institutions where there hasn't been any might be detrimental to the equal advancement of interests, or to securing the liberal rights or economic minimum for the citizens. For example, trying to bring about a democracy often incurs conflicts accompanied by the violation of liberal rights and wide-spread poverty. In addition, the prospect of democracy can invite ethnic cleansing, for one ethnic group will be able to establish its hegemony by decreasing the population of the opposing ethnic groups. It is arguable that ethnic cleansing in Rwanda and Yugoslavia has been triggered by this thought (Kato 2008, 65). Moreover, it takes a lot of sacrifice to introduce and stabilize a democratic regime where many people do not support democratic institutions. These points suggest that, despite Christiano's argument, in certain situations citizens might not have the duty to bring about a democratic institution.

b. Does it follow that citizens have the duty of compliance?

I would like to clarify the issue first. Christiano and his potential critics agree that citizens have the *legal* duty to comply with the decrees of their polity as far as these

9 The cited paragraph does not address the question of whether a democratic assembly has the liberty to make decisions as it sees fit (as far as it does not violate public equality). Christiano defines "a right to rule" to involve such a liberty (241), so he presumably want to answer the question affirmatively. He would argue that the public realization of the equal advancement of interests requires that a democratic assembly has the liberty to make decisions at it sees fit. I wonder whether this line of argument can allow room for a plausible version of the thought that a polity does not have the liberty to make a certain set of legislations. Lon L. Fuller, for example, famously argued that a set of legislations is morally problematic and fails to be law if it is not promulgated, incomprehensible, retroactive, contradictory, humanly impracticable, unstable through time, or not administrated by the government accordingly. I am unsure whether such a problematic set of legislations fails to be law, but it is plausible that a polity, democratic or not, does not have the right to make such a set of legislations. However, Christiano's argument seems to imply that a democratic assembly has the right to make even these problematic legislations, because limiting the liberty will undermine the public realization of the equal advancement of interests.

decrees count as laws. The question is whether they have the *moral* duty to comply with each decree of their democratic assembly in every situation.¹⁰

As I have mentioned above, the *outcomes* of democratic processes might not realize the equal advancement of interests, publicly or not. Thus, it does not follow that they have a duty to comply with every decree of the assembly; it can only follow that citizens have a duty to comply with decrees when it helps bring up or maintain the democratic process, which (I assume for the sake of argument) publicly realizes the equal advancement of interests.

He would reply that ignoring the outcomes of a democratic process will—and will be taken by the citizens to—fail to take seriously the citizens' equal say in the process, for a say without effect has no significance. Such argument is indicated by the following passage:

Citizens who skirt democratically made law act contrary to the equal right of all citizens to have a say in making laws when there is substantial and informed disagreement. Those who refuse to pay taxes or who refuse to respect properly laws on the grounds that these are unjust are simply affirming a superior right to be arranged. Thus, they act unjustly and violate the duty to treat others publicly as equals. (250)

This argument does not fit with our intuition. Suppose, for example, you jaywalk across a road when there is no car or bicycle running. This is disobeying a legal rule dictated by a democratic assembly. It might be morally wrong, but is this violating the duty to treat others publicly as equals? This does not seem to be so: apparently, you treat nobody as inferior.

In some cases, compliance is not necessary for taking citizens' equal say seriously and for publicly treating them as equals. It is sometimes enough that when one is found to violate the dictate (say, of the prohibition of jaywalking), he or she willingly accepts the legal consequence, i.e., being arrested, charged, penalized by the criminal code and perhaps paying compensation the civil code requires. The citizens' say is then made effective and treated publicly with respect because the violator lets the dictate be enforced. Even given Christiano's argument, a democratic assembly might not have the right to make citizens comply with its dictates in some

10 A polity issues not only orders and prohibitions, but also decisions about obligations to make an effort (but not to accomplish successfully), recommendations, the validity of contract, entitlement, finance, grant, the political ideal of the nation and education, and so on. Christiano's argument apparently implies that citizens has the moral duty to comply not only with orders and prohibitions but also with these other types of decisions, but it is unclear what counts as complying with those decisions. He should explain what sort of actions the duty of compliance requires about them. In the text I focus on the cases of orders and prohibitions.

situations, though it might have the right to enforce the dictates in all situations.

In addition, when civil disobedience or illegal whistle blowing is the only feasible way to reveal or publicize some alleged injustice (see, e.g., Singer 1993, Chapter 11), the violation might not treat other citizens as inferior. If its purpose is to publicize the issue and relevant information that many citizens have never thought about, the laws participants violate or dispute might not reflect these citizens' considered judgment. The agent can be said to respect their considered judgment in that she expects that once (but only once) the issue and relevant information is publicized, the laws can be changed through the democratic process. Thus, the agent might not respect the citizens' present judgment but their informed judgment. In some cases of such civil disobedience or illegal whistle blowing, the duty to respect each citizen as equal might only require that the agent accepts the legal consequences if she violates the relevant law.

c. Is the duty of compliance content-independent?

As Christiano points out, if his argument were successful, it would show the duty of compliance is independent of the content of the democratic assembly's directive (250). However, as the last part suggests, depending on its content, one might not have the duty to comply with the directive. The content of the directive might be such that violation of the dictate has nothing to do with undermining democracy, and accepting the legal consequences of the violation is enough for publicly treating citizens as equals.

d. Is the duty of compliance owed to a democratic assembly?

Christiano argues that the duty of compliance is owed to each citizen and hence to the democratic assembly.

This duty is correlated with the right of each citizen to an equal say. So each person has a duty to each other citizen to afford them a right to an equal say and to respect that equal say. But the political rights of all citizens are polled in the decision-making activities of the democratic assembly. So the duty to comply with democratic institutions is correlated with the rights of the democratic assembly to rule. And since this duty is owed to each citizen and the democratic assembly embodies the equal political rights of all citizens, the duty is owed to the democratic assembly. (250)

This argument is problematic. On the one hand, if the right of each citizen to an equal say is transferred to the democratic assembly, the correlative duty is owed to the democratic assembly (it is not owed to each citizen because he or she has lost the

right). However, how can the right of each and every individual to an equal say be transferred to one collective body? It makes little sense. On the other hand, if each citizen keeps the right, it does not follow that the democratic assembly will have the right. This inference is invalid even if the democratic assembly is an organized whole of each citizen; to think otherwise is committing the fallacy of composition. Christiano fails to show that the duty of compliance is owed to a democratic assembly.

e. Does democracy monopolize the right to rule?

Christiano does not show that other moral considerations, say, desert—the idea that people ought to have better or worse treatment in virtue of her action and character—are irrelevant. So, a certain deviation from democratic regime might have a right to rule, for we can make up an argument parallel to Christiano’s argument for democracy’s right to rule. For example, suppose one deserves more well-being than another. Each person has a duty to achieve the situation that the more deserved get more of well-being. Hence, each has a duty to bring about, and to comply with, those institutions that publicly realize the desert-sensitive advancement of interests. Perhaps giving the more deserved the right to cast a weightier vote is necessary for the public realization of desert-sensitive advancement of interests. Then, each citizen will have a duty to bring about such a partly meritocratic institution and to comply with those institutions when they are realized.

2.2 Step 2: Is the Duty of Complying with the Democratic Assembly Overriding?

Christiano argues that this duty of compliance preempts or at least normally outweighs other duties that citizens have to bring about substantive justice in law and policy. (244)

Democratic equality has precedence over the other forms of equality that are in dispute in a political society, within the limits defined by public equality. The reason for this is because of its public nature. Public equality trumps other egalitarian considerations. So when there is a disagreement on what equality requires in substantive legislation and the process for resolving the disagreement is a publicly egalitarian one, then even if the equality chosen for the substantive legislation is mistaken in some way, those who see that it is wrong still have a duty to go along with the decision. (250-251)

The main problem is that this argument fails to compare the weight of public equality with that of other considerations. Christiano argues that publicity makes

a consideration of equality really significant in our pluralistic societies; for in such societies, humans have fundamental interests in correcting others' cognitive bias, in being at home in the world, and being treated as a person with equal moral standing among one's fellow citizens (Chapter 2). However, first of all, this is not the same as showing that publicity of an egalitarian consideration makes it more important than any other consideration, or a combination of the considerations. Secondly, Christiano presupposes that moral considerations—other than public equality—are less public concerns. However, he has not shown this point: he has not excluded the possibility that other egalitarian concerns, desert, special obligations, perfectionist ideals and so on are such that when they are realized in institutions, everyone with certain idealized attributes can see that they are implemented. If they can be public principles, they might not be outweighed by public equality.

And whether or not these other considerations can be public, they might outweigh public equality. First, let us consider the strength of other egalitarian considerations vis-à-vis public equality, i.e., giving each citizen an equal say. Now, Christiano apparently thinks the equal advancement of interests supports distributing fundamental goods equally between youth (24-25). Can't this consideration sometimes outweigh public equality in such a way that citizens can reject unequal distribution between youth if their democratic assembly enforces it, for instance, by excluding some children from education or from healthcare system?

Other egalitarian concerns are also relevant. Even under a democratic society, there is no guarantee that the interests of non-human animals, human beings with heavy mental handicap, future generations, stake-holding foreigners and so on will be treated equally with the interests of normal citizens. In fact, apparently any democracy has a systematic tendency to favor normal citizens over these other populations: for example, democratic governments often sacrifice the interests of future generations by issuing huge sums in deficit-covering government bonds, having natural resources deplete quickly, and letting harmful wastes accumulate and ecosystems collapse. Can't such consideration of (in)equality sometimes outweigh public equality?

Second, let us think about whether non-egalitarian moral considerations can outweigh public equality. Desert, perfectionist ideals, special obligations and so on might be powerful considerations. Actually, Christiano admits specifically that people have obligations due to special relationships; for example, a person has an obligation to give precedence to his or her own family, friends, and colleagues (30-32). Furthermore, he says that the role of the principle of the equal advancement of interests, on which his argument for the democratic authority depends, is limited. "The principle plays a large role in our lives not primarily by getting each person to try to ensure equality among all persons but by regulating the institutions people live

in. The principle does not require that each person abandons her roles and special relations within society. Nor does it replace the special duties one owes to family, friends, and colleagues.” (31) If this is correct, then, when the democratic assembly tells you to do something that your obligations of special relationship forbids, you may ignore the decree of the assembly.

To these criticisms, Christiano has the following reply:

The questions are, are there cases in which the setback to public equality is less weighty than the loss to the interests in less public concerns and what is one to do with these possible cases? The problem is that in the normal case of disagreement with the outcome, a person would have to make a special exception for himself from the legal framework involved in decision-making by saying that in this instance he is right and thus ought to be able to act contrary to the generally accepted procedures for decision-making. But this seems to violate the idea of equality. Such a person may be justly accused of placing his interests before those of others. So if I say that only I may do these things and no one else may, given the facts of diversity, disagreement, fallibility, and cognitive bias, this would have to be seen as an indefensible hubris and a treatment of others as inferiors. (100n14)

This reply has several problems.

First, as we have seen, in some cases where people disobey the dictates of a democratic assembly, they are not intuitively treating other citizens as inferior.

Second, violators are not always placing his interests before those of others. In many cases of civil disobedience, participants disobey the dictates of a democratic assembly in a public place, knowing that they will be criticized, stigmatized, arrested, and put into jail or even tortured. In these cases, the participants risk their personal interests, so they are hardly placing their interests before those of others. Furthermore, sometimes participants in civil disobedience will damage their personal interests if the legal change they demand is accepted. For example, a construction worker might participate in illegally blocking the road to the dam construction site in order to have it legally stopped. Again, in such cases, whether they are placing their interests before those of others is doubtful.

Third, a person who disobeys a dictate of a democratic assembly need not make an exception for himself. He can hold, for example, that when and only when violating the decree of a democratic assembly is objectively permissible, anyone may do so, and that the case at hand is such a (rare) case.¹¹ The dissenter can also

¹¹ Note that the violator does not have to hold a subjective claim that when and only when

hold “that everyone else similarly subjected to the same degree of injustice has the right to protest in a similar way.” (Rawls 1999, 184)

Ultimately, Christiano’s reply falls short of showing that public equality is normally weightier than other egalitarian or non-egalitarian considerations. He needs to demonstrate that the duty to treat others as equals, which the above argument takes to underlie the duty of compliance, is more significant than these other considerations, but he fails to do so.

2.3 Argument for the Right of a Democratic Assembly to be Free from Interference about Domestic Issues

The principle of public equality also grounds the right of a democratic society to be free from military, economic, or political interference in its domestic affairs. To the extent that the democratic assembly pools all the political rights of all of its members, when an external society attempts to coercively to interfere (by means of military force, or economic or political sanctions) for the purpose of alternating the domestic laws and policy of a society, the members of the external society treat the members of the imposed upon democratic society publicly as inferiors. Naturally, this rationale does not immunize all the foreign policy activities of a democratic society. Nor does it immunize a democratic society that has engaged in severe and widespread violations of the fundamental rights of its citizens. (253)

The two problems of this argument stem from the fact that some domestic policy activities affect foreigners as well.

First, domestic policies influence the interests of aliens within the country as do those of citizens. Unless the aliens have full democratic rights in the country, it is unclear how his principle of public equality can justify the right of the democratic society to be free from their interfering with or disobeying the dictates.

Second, various domestic policy activities influence the interests of foreign people as much as foreign policy activities do. This is true of many regulations on environmental, economic, agricultural and commercial activities, and legislations concerning natural resources, let alone military budget and organization, tariff and immigration laws. Apparently, if, as Christiano admits, interference into foreign policy activities is sometimes permissible, interference in these domestic policy

someone thinks violating the decree of a democratic assembly is permissible, he may do so. This subjective claim might lead to many unwarranted violations of the dictates of a democratic assembly, which Christiano worries about (100-101).

activities should be permissible, too.

3. An Advantage of a More Traditional Conception of Political Authority

The above criticisms of Christiano's arguments do not cast doubt upon the basic approach, i.e., the idea that political authority is to be based on the duty of treating people equally. However, this approach itself might not be adequate, and its natural remedy has a different answer on whether a democracy has an *exclusive* right to rule.

Christiano's argument basically takes the following form: each citizen has a duty to treat each other publicly as equals, and this requirement of equality implies her duty to comply with a democratic assembly. Suppose this argument is correct. Then apparently, if any citizen loses a democratic right, *everyone* will uniformly lose or diminish the duty to comply with the decree of the government, for the government now ceases to embody public equality (Ten (2011, 4) also points this out). Intuitively, however, the disenfranchised are more entitled than the rest to disobey the government. For example, in ancient Athens and the 19th century 'democratic' countries, women, slaves, blacks and so on are more entitled to disobey the government. The rest, who still have democratic rights, do not have the same liberty to disobey the government.¹² Christiano himself expresses this intuition (277), but it is unclear how the structure of his argument can allow it to be vindicated.

A natural remedy is to hold that one's duty of compliance comes from the government's granting her a democratic right (and other entitlements). If this were the case, the disenfranchised would not have the duty to comply with the government while the enfranchised would still have the duty. However, this traditional type of theory grounds the duty of compliance not on the requirement that each citizen be treated as equals, but on a certain reciprocal exchanges between the government and each citizen. And, in contrast with Christiano's conception, such a "reciprocal exchange" conception implies that over those who are granted democratic rights (and other entitlements), a partially non-democratic regime can have a right to rule.

Concluding Remarks

Christiano's arguments fail to support his strong conclusions, such as that democracy exclusively possesses a peculiar right to rule, and that what he calls "public equality" is a satisfactory basis of the peculiar political authority. In certain cases,

¹² In normal cases, the enfranchised should rather object to the government over the partial disenfranchisement *by legal and democratic means* while obeying its decree.

citizens are not obliged to bring about a democratic assembly. It is not shown that once it is established, they *owe* to it a moral duty to do whatever it decrees. Even under the democratic regime Christiano characterizes, some violations of laws—including certain civil disobedience—can be justified, depending on their contents. Furthermore, it is not demonstrated that foreigners are obliged not to interfere with any domestic issues.

In addition, the structure of Christiano's argument makes it difficult to save a certain intuition that another, more traditional conception of political authority can easily accommodate. And, in contrast with Christiano's view, such a "reciprocal exchange" conception implies that over those who are granted democratic rights (and other entitlements), a partially non-democratic regime can have a right to rule.

The examination of Christiano's arguments has enabled us to recognize nuanced relations between equality, democracy, political authority, and the moral duty to obey the law. His ambitious and systematic work has taught us valuable lessons, and we should thank Christiano for his original and constructive argumentation.

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Conceptualising Environmental Ethics

Deepak SRIVASTAVA

Introduction

The concern for environment is global and unavoidable. There is now almost a tradition of environmental ethical thought. Despite having a significant history of its own, the issue of environmental ethics is still struggling for its clearly definable form.¹ There are thinkers like *Aldo Leopold*² who hold that environmental ethics is an evolutionary advance upon the earlier moral perspectives. Morality, he holds, has gradually evolved and logically developed from the closed and limited perspectives of immediate kith and kin i.e. of small groups and tribes to the universal anthropocentric moral outlook and finally to environmental morality, which he prefers to name as the 'Land Ethic'.³ Poised against this gradual moral evolution theory of *Leopold*, there is a conception according to which the emergence of environmental ethics is a radical break with the prevailing moral discourses which are primarily anthropocentric in approach. This paradigm shift, thinkers like *Mary Anne Warren* believe, involves redefining of the sense and reference of the meta-ethical terms often used in the context of the environment.⁴ Broadly speaking the entire debate and discussion on environmental ethics can be seen as operating on two different planes; one, the practical plane with the anthropocentric outlook, and two, the conceptual or the theoretical plane with non-anthropocentric outlook. Most thinkers and ethicists holding the non-anthropocentric outlook agree that there is

- 1 The issue, whether there can be any meaningful ethical theory considering the non-humans and the non-sentient as moral agents or moral subjects is still being debated. An important unsettled issue concerning the nature of environmental ethics is that of intrinsic value in nature. Ethicists are yet into the process of developing conclusive arguments in favour of intrinsic value in nature. Those who have chosen to by-pass this issue have other difficulties in their theories. See Gruen, Lori 'Re-valuing Nature' (1993), in *Applied Ethics*, Earl R. Winkler and Jerrold R. Coombs, (eds.), Blackwell, USA.
- 2 Aldo Leopold (©1949 Oxford University Press, reprint 1981), in his much acclaimed *A Sand County Almanac*, introduces the idea of the 'Land Ethic' and evolutionary view of environmental ethics.
- 3 According to Leopold's 'Land ethic' the criterion of morality is, 'A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.' Ibid.
- 4 Warren, Mary Anne (1983), 'The Rights of the Non-Human World', in *Environmental Philosophy*, Robert Elliot and Arran Gare (eds.), St. Lucia, Queensland: Univ. of Queensland Press. Also available in Eugene C. Hargrove (1992), *The Animal Rights/Environmental Ethics Debate*, State Univ. of New York Press, Albany, N.Y., USA

'intrinsic value' in the environment, that is good and desirable in itself; the contrast is with the anthropocentric outlook, which holds that environment has only the 'instrumental value', that is value as a means to some other human end or purpose.

In section **I** I shall examine both of these outlooks to environmental ethics and try to show that both are inadequate. Since the anthropocentrism in environmental ethics has been duly but not quite sufficiently criticized, I shall add a bit to these criticisms. The non-anthropocentrism has been evolving as the more appealing and acceptable form, but to me it appears that its prevalent and popular theorizations, are not flawless and they have difficulties of their own. Thus I shall present a critique of these. Finally in the section **II** I shall try to present and propose my own conceptualization of environmental ethics. This conceptualization based on the ancient Indian metaphysics, I shall argue, is neither anthropocentric nor ecocentric⁵ in nature. Of course, this can be seen as a variety of non-anthropocentric environmental ethics, but more logical, consistent and convincing than prevailing theories.

Besides these two different and rival approaches contesting to determine the nature of environmental ethics there is one more important philosophical issue that needs to be considered in this context. In the history of ethics, since G.E. Moore, it has been a prominent view that it is fallacious to derive normative principles from the factual reports. To base ethical judgments on the facts (the facts of nature in the case of environmental ethics) or the non-discrimination between the two, would amount to ethical naturalism. Since in majority of discussions about the nature of environmental ethics, the basis of morality and human action happens to be derived from the information and knowledge of the ecological facts and principles, it becomes interesting to inquire whether the *naturalistic fallacy* is inherent in the project of environmental ethics.⁶ My stand with reference to this issue is that - with the kind of conceptualization of environmental ethics I propose, there hardly arises any question of naturalistic fallacy. In the course of discussion in section **II**, I believe that the non-naturalistic ethical standpoint taken by me shall gradually become clear and therefore no special address to this issue is required in this paper.

5 See 'The Search for an Environmental Ethics' by J. Baird Callicott, (© 1980) in Tom Regan (1993), *The Matters of Life and Death: Introductory Essays in Moral Philosophy*, (ed.), 3rd edition, McGraw Hill, New York

6 Rolston, Holmes III (1986), 'Is There an Ecological Ethics?' in *Philosophy Gone Wild*, Prometheus Books, New York

I

On the practical plane with the anthropocentric outlook, there are discussions on the environmental implications of growing technology and of technologically mastering or even changing the environment for human use. This understanding may be called practically useful and as meant to mould the environment. Here the approach is to treat the environment only as a means to man's ways of progressing and making use of the environment as a resource. But this merely policy oriented and practical environmental concern is realized to be inadequate for two reasons. 1- It is piecemeal and selective and focuses on specific environmental issues and problems as and when they arise. Such an approach generally fails to appreciate the environment in its entirety as a great system with multi-linear interconnected chains of cause and effect. 2- Because of its predominantly practical orientation this approach has no scope for critical moral evaluation of need based policies. This approach ignores the formulation of fundamental normative assumptions and the moral presuppositions that should underlie our practices. The basic values of gaining output and resource utilization are not critically examined in the light of their unintended consequences for present and future generations.⁷

Yet within the anthropocentric framework of morality, there are quite convincing arguments in favour of environmental ethics. Some of these arguments appeal to the aesthetic sense, some to human life sustaining value of environment, some to intergenerational equity, and so on.⁸ This concern for the environment entails certain very significant duties to be performed by human beings. Despite aiming to protect and conserve the environment, this approach does not carry enough moral force. With this approach, the dutifulness of man towards the non-human and especially the non-sentient entities, of which a large part of our environment consists, issues not from intrinsic worth realized in the environment, but predominantly from the anthropocentric view that the community of man is entitled to better, safer, congenial and so on environment and therefore it is the duty of every human being and society on the whole to protect the environment. Such kind of regulative environmental ethics bases itself upon the ecological information and is sensitized by the awareness of possible consequences of neglect. Largely it

7 Naess, Arne (Trans.) Rothenberg, David. (1989), *Ecology, Community and Life Styles*, Cambridge Univ. Press, New York. Olen, Jeffrey and Barry, Vincent (eds.), *Applying Ethics* ed. IV, (1992 pp. 384-85) also raise the same issue while discussing the reason for environmental ethics.

8 Arguments having nearly the same purport have been discussed by Peter Singer (1993, pp. 271-280), *Practical Ethics*, second ed., Cambridge University Press, U.K., Indian reprint 2003

is in the light of these foreseen consequences that the degree and nature of human tempering with the environment is decided. On the nature of such a moral theorizing, *Arne Naess* rightly opines that, this type of concern towards the environment is a form of enlightened utilitarianism, only a surface ecology which broadens the field of utilitarian calculations by taking into accounts the new parameters and inputs but does not fundamentally change the presuppositions of such moral calculations and deliberations. In such kind of environmental concerns the end or the good is still seen in the terms of maximization of human welfare.⁹ In this type of awareness relating to the environment, the end is still the human interest and wants and the non-human factors are still the means or resource.

This monopolistic moral significance of man, rightly criticized by *Naess* is strengthened, we see, by the ancient philosophical traditions of the west where everything empirical or natural is condemned as merely a copy of the real and ideal; or the universe is conceived as a teleological theater wherein the matter and form dichotomy is exaggerated to the point that matter is stated as something ultimately opposed to the ideal form and therefore as categorically inferior to the form.¹⁰ Further the theology which conceives man alone in the image of God and relegates the entire bounties of nature under the dominion of man; and such theology finding expression also in the dualistic philosophical systems wherein mind and matter are so differentiated that mind has to exercise itself over the nature only in a regulative way, all tend to make a strong and a convincing case in favour of moral anthropocentrism.¹¹ *Peter Singer* has rightly observed that, “Western attitudes to

9 Naess, Arne (Trans.) Rothenberg, David. (1989), *Ecology, Community and Life Styles*, Cambridge Univ. Press, New York.

10 For Plato the empirical world is an imperfect copy of the ideal world. Ideal world alone is ultimately real. His idealism and epistemological positions render only humans as morally significant. Human soul is immortal and it alone can discern the eternal truths through the faculty of reason. All other things and beings in the nature are temporal and thus have no lasting value. To be a moral being knowledge of the truth(s) is necessary. He shares and expands the Socratic idea that ‘knowledge is Virtue’. Similarly Aristotle’s dualism of form and matter also sees matter as opposed to ideal or God. The teleological aim in his metaphysics is the evolution of pure form. As for non-human animals and the non-sentient, Aristotle declares in *politics* that, ‘Plants exist for the sake of animals (man is a social animal), and brute beasts for the sake of man—domestic animals for his use and food, wild ones for food and other accessories of life,—since nature makes nothing purposeless or in vain, it is undeniably true that she has made all animals for the sake of man.’

11 The biblical story of creation, in Genesis makes clear the Hebrew view of the special place of human beings in the divine plan. St. Thomas Aquinas in his monumental *Summa Theologica* mixes Aristotelian teleological views with Christian theology, announcing that man’s domination over the nature is in accordance with the God’s command, as given in Genesis. In modern philosophy the Cartesian concept of mind-body dualism further supports this idea of man’s domination over nature.

nature grew out of a blend of those of the Hebrew people, as represented in the early books of the bible, and the philosophies of the ancient Greeks, particularly that of Aristotle.—both the Hebrew and the Greek traditions made human beings the centre of the moral universe—indeed not merely the centre, but very often, the entirety of morally significant features of this world.”¹²

Disillusioned and dissatisfied with the anthropocentric conceptions of environmental ethics, ethicists, on the more conceptual or theoretical plane, discuss, as to what ought to be the nature of man’s relation with the nature? Here the thinkers and ethicists are interested in re-defining the status of the environment with prime focus on the issue—whether the nature is only a means to man’s needs, or can this be somehow treated as an end? Whether the environment holds only the instrumental value or does it have some intrinsic value also? Once our environment is accorded the status of an end and its intrinsic value is acknowledged, there arise certain meta-ethical questions. One is obliged to re-consider and reform the existing concepts of rights, duties, obligations, etc., in the wake of the considerable and significant extension (to the environment) of the sphere of application of these moral terms.¹³

Merely rejection or even a sound criticism of the influences of the ancient philosophical and theological traditions does not amount to sufficient grounds for non-anthropocentric ethics. Other difficulties involved in extending the sphere of morality so as to encompass the environment within it, are also obvious. Kantianism as well as the social contract theory, the two very significant players in the formulation of ethical theories, we find, both do not permit an easy formulation and development of non-anthropocentric environmental ethics. Kantian ethics tells us that conceptually man alone can be the moral agent as human kind alone possesses self-reflective consciousness. Where this consciousness is lacking there can be no moral rights, though there is always a possibility of man’s duty towards the non-humans and the non-sentient also. Unlike Descartes, Kant did not deny that animals can feel or suffer, but he did deny that they are persons. To be a person, for him, is to be an autonomous being, one with the capacity to reason, to act for reasons and to reason about its reasons. Since non-humans do not have this self-reflective faculty of reason, they cannot be included into the fold of moral persons or agents. Social contract theory is also equally exclusive of non-humans’ moral subject-hood. Social

12 Singer, Peter (1993, p.265), *Practical Ethics*, second ed., Cambridge University Press, U.K. Indian reprint 2003, In the same passage he also mentions that some other traditions, especially those of India stand as exceptions. This view of Singer will be substantiated in the following paragraphs of my paper.

13 Warren, Mary Anne (1983), ‘The Rights of the Non-Human World’, in *Environmental Philosophy*, Robert Elliot and Arran Gare (eds.), St. Lucia, Queensland: Univ. of Queensland Press. Also available in Eugene C. Hargrove (1992), *The Animal Rights/Environmental Ethics Debate*, State Univ. of New York Press, Albany, N.Y., USA

contract theory also holds that morality is the product of an informal agreement among the members of society who have contracted with each other. Non-human animals are incapable of entering the social contract and therefore there are no moral obligations to them.

The opponents have well argued that with a view to developing environmental ethics, it is not necessary to be either Kantian or Contractarian in approach. But the different and the alternative approaches suggested by them and argued for; also are not free from difficulties. *Lori Gruen* for example, points out, “The objectivist ontologies that ground these approaches to environmental ethics are problematic in a number of ways. They do not appear to provide particularly defensible or coherent ways of justifying moral claims about our environmental concerns. Moreover, even if such claims could be justified by appeals to objective, non-anthropogenic intrinsic value, it is not at all clear that such claims provide compelling reasons for acting morally.”¹⁴ *Tom Regan*, a thorough adherent of intrinsic value in environment and therefore an advocate of non-anthropocentricity of environmental ethics, is also obliged to remain a skeptic with regards to the discovery of such value.¹⁵ The problem with this intrinsic value theory, we see, is escalated when not only the non-humans but also the non-sentient entities (which do not suffer) are to be accorded the status of moral agents. This is reflected in *Peter Singer’s* remarks that, “There is, of course a real philosophical question--. For it is necessary, not merely that trees, species and ecosystems can properly be said to have interests, but that they have morally significant interests. If they are to be regarded as ‘selves’ it will need to be shown that the survival or realization of that kind of self has moral value independently of the value it has because of its importance in sustaining conscious life.”¹⁶ On the attitude and argument of deep ecologists he further comments, “—the argument from the intrinsic value of plants, species, or ecosystems—is at best problematic”¹⁷

14 Gruen, Lori ‘Re-valuing Nature’ (1993, p.296), in *Applied Ethics*, Earl R. Winkler and Jerrold R. Coombs, (eds.), Blackwell, USA, Gruen covers and discusses ‘naturalistic moral realism’ espoused by social ecologists as well as non-naturalistic theory of value, espoused by deep ecologists as objectivist ontologies.

15 Regan, Tom (1985), *Deep Ecology*, Salt Lake City: Pergrine Smith Books

16 Singer, Peter (1993, p.283.), *Practical Ethics*, second ed., Cambridge University Press, U.K. Indian reprint 2003

17 Ibid, p. 284

II

The foregoing discussion brings out how the the anthropocentric and the non-anthropocentric views of environmental ethics have been criticized and what kind of arguments, exposing their vulnerability, can be forwarded. The conclusion is that environmental ethics in the discussed forms is not strong and cogent enough to sustain an abiding adherence. It is also noticeable that mind-matter or the thought-extension dualism has been tremendously influential and instrumental in the most of our moral theorizations. The essence of man has been conceived in contrast and in opposition to the natural. Reason and conscience are found to be the seat of moral authority and accordingly the source of moral principle is something that distinguishes man from the nature. Now if we are to have some dependable structure of environmental ethics we must resort to some alternative theorization that can free us of inherent dualisms involved in our conventional thought.

Seeing or marking of what differentiates man from the rest of the nature at various levels is definitely broadening of our knowledge of man as well as of the nature. But this dualism generated over enthusiastic chauvinism in favour of man i.e. anthropocentricity, has so much estranged man from the rest of the nature (at the conceptual level at least) that it is now appearing and proving difficult to search a comprehensive ethics equally encompassing both—man and nature. Looking for such an alternative and firmer conceptualization of environmental ethics, it appears that a different outlook based on unifying metaphysics (in contrast to dualistic metaphysics) is necessary. *Radhakrishnan*, concerned with the possibility of ethical theory, remarked that, “Any ethical theory must be grounded on metaphysics, in a philosophic concept of the relation between the conduct and the ultimate reality. As we think the ultimate reality to be so we behave; vision and action go together.”¹⁸ If the empirical realities only are insufficient for the purpose of moral conduct in the light of what *Radhakrishnan* said regarding the ground of moral theory, it is important to search such a metaphysical ground for morals. It is also important to realize that metaphysical beliefs influence conduct, as vision and action go together. We cannot consistently develop a comprehensive non-divisive and non-discriminative system of values with dualistic metaphysics. To see the natural world as not merely the context of application of morality but also as a necessary input in moral theorization, it can be assumed, can help us transcend the anthropocentric and the divisive limits of morality to a significant extent. If at all there is some ontology that can relate man with the nature in a stronger than yet conceived sense, if there

18 Radhakrishnan, S. (1958, p.80), *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*, Clarendon Press London

is some metaphysics which can transcend the mind body dualism to unite man and nature in one composite reality, then it is perhaps not very difficult to build an environmental ethics on the basis of not what differentiates man from the nature but rather on the basis of what necessarily associates or rather binds him with it.

The ancient *Rgvedic* notions of the *Rta*¹⁹ and the *Satya*²⁰ appear to serve the purpose. *Rta* is the inexorable, supreme and the eternal law of the physical universe, i.e. of the entire nature. The same *Satya* and *Rta* have descended into the *Upanisadic* wisdom as the Brahman and the Dharma respectively. The *Satya* or the Brahman has been identified as the eternal, unchanging and the highest truth or reality. The realization of the Brahman is the summum bonum, the ultimate end of morality according to *Upanisadas*. The *Rta* or the Dharma on the other hand has been identified as the dynamic principle that operates for the realization of the Brahman. In the *Rta*, especially in its Dharma version, is also included the supreme moral law also called the law of *Karma*. This law of karma or the law of action is at once a metaphysical principle and the moral law. Deviation from this supreme moral law generates demerit called *Anrta* or *Adharma*. Dharma is a word which signifies the law and the regulating force behind the movement of planets, stars, galaxies, the entire universe on one extreme, and on the other it is also the guiding principle of each and every individual human being. Thus this ancient Indian wisdom sees the natural and the moral courses as the two complimentary aspects of the same metaphysical reality. It is true that man as moral agent, by virtue of his free will and volition, has a freedom of choice and faces much lesser determinism than unreflective and non-sentient natural world does, but this freedom enjoyed by man often leads him to act counter-wise to the moral law. He unfortunately does not only often disregard the moral law but also to a sufficient degree tempers with the (course of) laws of nature. It is needless to emphasize what havocs are faced by attempting to change the course of nature. What is needed to be emphasized, especially in the moral discourse, is that by so doing mankind accrues double demerit. The disrespect to the supreme law either by way of immorality, or by way of straying nature from its course, or both, amounts to generation of demerit. More the demerit is generated more removed mankind (and individual as a moral agent) is from the *Satya* or the Brahman which is the highest value, the highest good, the Summum bonum to be realized. Thus it is necessary that while enjoying the freedom to choose, there ought not to be disregard for the supreme law which at once applies to the moral as well as

19 *Rta* is discerned speculatively. The law of conservation of energy is well established in the natural course. How does one account for the so called unearned or the undeserved pleasures and sufferings in individual's life? This law also limits chance theory and accidentalism in the moral sphere and tends to present a more logical explanation of relation between actions and their results.

20 *Rgveda*, 10.190.1-3

the physical sphere. In such a moral framework based in monistic metaphysics and deriving the moral status of the environment from the single and supreme moral law encompassing the moral and the physical realms alike, it appears that it is possible to obtain a comprehensive and convincing non-anthropocentric structure of morality.

Once the respect for the sanctity of the environment is derived from the underlying law which applies to the natural and the moral alike, but is not itself a natural law, the issue of naturalistic fallacy also becomes redundant in this kind of moral theorizing. Much like Moore's 'good', the criterion of dharma applies to everything but dharma itself remains non-natural. It is to be grasped intuitively and it defies all definition.

Thus it can be maintained that a well tenable non-naturalistic environmental ethics, non-discriminative and comprehensive in scope, can be structured on the foundations of the non-dualistic metaphysical reality (called the *Satya* or the Brahman) and the entire cosmic movement should be seen as the operating of the all-encompassing universal law (called the *Rta* or Dharma) for the realization of the ultimate reality which is also the ultimate aim of morality and knowledge. Mankind can safeguard the good of itself as well as that of the environment by following the path of Dharma.

The Quality of Life of Experimental Animals: A Critical Reflection from Confucian Point of View

Hsuan-Ju WANG

1. Introduction

For the development of new drugs and treatments, large numbers of animals are used for experiments. According to one estimation, there were about 40,000,000 (forty million) a year (Bekoff 1998, 215). The quality of life of experiment animals were much neglected and many were subjected to unnecessary painful treatments. At the end of the experiments, they are usually discarded through euthanasia. In order to reduce unnecessary sacrifice of experimental animals, in 1959, two English scholars, W.M.S. Russell and R.L. Burch introduced the 3R principles in the treatment of experimental animals.¹The 3R principles are: reduction, replacement, and refinement. The goal of the reduction and replacement is to minimize the number of experimental animals such as by employing computer simulations to replace vivisection. The purpose of refinement is to reduce pain and distress of experimental animals such as by using objective evaluation of the pain felt by animals (Invasiveness Scales), and using numb-causing medicine to reduce the possible pain of the experimental animals (Bekoff 1998, 5-9). However, despite the proposal of the 3R principles, due to the need of fast development of biotechnology, the pain suffered by experimental animals remain the same.

In this paper, I would like to show the terrible fate of experimental animals and my solution for them. First, I will explain *ren*, the key concept of Confucianism, and the moral principles and virtues derived from this concept. Second, I try to elaborate the Confucian ethical point of view and make a critical re-evaluation of the quality of life of experimental animals, based on the principle of non-maleficence and the principle of benevolence² and try to construct a benchmark for the quality of life of experimental animals. Finally, I will illustrate Confucian ethics through the analysis of the problem of euthanasia for experiential animals.

1 For a fuller discussion, see W.M.S. Russell and R.L. Burch, *Principles of Human Experimental Technique* (Universities Federation for Animal Welfare, 1992).

2 For a fuller discussion of the principle of non-maleficence and the principle of benevolence, see Tom L. Beauchamp and James F. Childress, *Principles of Biomedical Ethics* (New York : Oxford University Press, 2009), ch5 and ch6. In this paper, about the two principles I mentioned were derived from Confucian ethical point of view, I will discuss them in the next section.

2. Sympathy and Empathy as The Ground of Morality for Confucianism:

For Confucianism, the central concept of morality is *ren* or the heart of *ren*. It is the ground or origin of morality. It expresses itself as the sympathy and empathy with the sufferings of others. When anything evil or unfortunate happens to somebody, it reveals as our moral self-command that sufferings should not happen. We not only feel sorry for the sufferings of the other but also feel that we have a duty to help lessen or remove the cause and the sufferings. *Ren* is also the motivation that promotes our actions. For Confucian, such moral command is universal and reasonable. In a word, *Ren* is our moral consciousness which is both reason and passion. According to Confucianism, it is the foundation and origin of morality.

The second most important Confucian after Confucius, namely, Mencius points out that our moral consciousness is the unbearable mind towards the sufferings of others. It reveals itself when we realize something terrible happening to somebody, for instance when we suddenly see a small child about to fall into a deep well, a deep uneasy feeling pops up automatically in our mind. This is our internal moral feeling and the essence of human qua human or a moral agent, Mencius called it our "human nature" (*ren hsing*) (D. C. Lau 1970, 80-83). According to Professor Shui Chuen Lee's interpretation, it is the moral self awareness that we naturally have when we meet something dangerous happening to somebody. For instance, we feel an empathetic uneasiness popping up in our mind when we see a small child about to fall down from the window of a high building or running towards the edge of a high cliff. This internal direct response we naturally have towards the suffering of others is something that could not be taught nor need be taught. The situation arouses this deep-seated empathy of our mind. It is thus regarded as something that we are born with. That is why Mencius called it our human nature. We do not and could not learn such internal uneasiness from others. Furthermore, such uneasiness usually have a strong push, a command that imposes upon us that we have to do something in response to stop or remove the possible danger or sufferings. The proper response, say, the helping of the child away from danger, is our duty. This is the morally right act. Otherwise, we judge ourselves acting immorally in our own eye even though no one knows or see what we have done. It marks the distinction between moral and immoral. That is why for Confucianism, it is the source of morality (Lee 1999, 27-28).

The unbearable mind is the source of the categorical command of our action. As the origin of morality, it is comparable to Kant's idea of a free will. According to Mencius, it expands into the four major principles of *ren* (benevolence),

yi(justice),*li*(ritual or politeness) and *chi*(moral distinction) (D. C. Lau 1970, 82-83), which as Professor Lee again points out, have a similar structure and are comparable with the four principles of respect of autonomy, non-maleficence, benevolence and justice. The most important two principles are “non-maleficence” and “benevolence” principles, which have close affinity to Confucius’ *ren* and Mencius’ moral consciousness of our mind in response to other’s suffering (Lee 1999, 59-61).

For Confucianism, as a strong unbearable feeling of the suffering of others, the principle commands us not to inflict evil or harm to any person or any other living thing. The principle means a positive prohibition for our actions. Confucian regards the maltreatment of animals as going against the principle of non-maleficence. All animals have the capacity to feel pain and look forward to safety and avoidance of danger. If we do harms to animals we are depriving of them their proper growth and causing unnecessary pain to them. The principle of non-maleficence is a direct command from our unbearable mind towards other’s suffering. Without good reasons, our maltreatment of animals in experiment is immoral (Lee 1999, 39-42). This principle requests us to help and benefit the important interests of others. We have the duty to protect those important interests of others such as right to live, right of freedom, right to choose, right to live not in fearful conditions and other similar rights. It falls within the principle of benevolence to help others to avoid serious harms (Lee 1999, 42-47). Though Professor Lee employs this principle mainly towards the human being, we could expand it as a moral. For Confucians, we have similar duties to be benevolent to animals

Mencius once mentioned the story of King Hsuan of Chi that he relieved the calf sending for sacrifice when he sensed its sadness and commanded to replace it with a goat. Mencius pointed out that though it seemed not to make any difference between sacrifice a calf or a goat, it indicated that at the time of seeing the sadness of the calf, King Hsuan of Chi revealed his unbearable mind towards the sufferings of others and in this case a calf. (D. C. Lau 1970, 54-59) It means that for Confucianism, our moral mind applies not only to human beings but also extends to other animals species. Thus we have a direct duty not only towards fellow human beings, but also towards animals as well. This leads us to take responsibility towards the sufferings of animals especially those for experiments.

In principle, Confucianism rejects vivisection and cruel experiments. Such experiment will arouse our disapproval in opposite to our sympathetic and empathetic feeling towards the animals. Though there are many therapeutic treatments required animal experiments as a first step to test the availability of further experiment, Confucianism supports only those that are important and necessary. For any necessary animal experiment, it is our first priority to protect the life of experimental animals during and at the end of experiment, Accordingly,

Confucianism rejects the use of cruel experiments such as LD50 (Lethal Dose 50%) kind that causes great harm to the experimental animals. We have to recourse to accumulate related data in a humane and maybe longer time period to complete the experiment. In preparing the experiment, the researcher has a duty to prevent the death of experimental animals. If there are cases that animals died during the experiment, we have to find out the reason and to avoid it in later similar experiments.

3. Benchmark for the Quality of Life of Experimental Animals

The welfare or well-being of animals, that is, a good or satisfactory condition of existence, is closely related to their quality of life. In order to find out whether the animals receive a good quality of life condition, scientists utilize various methods to measure and decide whether the animals have a life with quality.

It is a universal practice that no harm should be allowed for the subject of a human experiment. This may be re-considered in terms of quality of life of the subjects. Since animals possess a similar kind of capability to suffer pain, we have to consider whether we need to apply similar standard for the evaluation of the life quality of the animals. Pain is one of the most important elements in the evaluative standard for the measurement of the life quality of experimental animals. In 1985, Moron and Griffiths established an evaluative method. This method applies five measures to evaluate the pain-condition undergone by animals during the experiment. The five references are: weight, outward appearance, clinical symptoms, social behavior and excited reactions.³ However, it is not the only one measurement of the quality of life of experimental animals. For example, fear is also one of the aspects of animal behaviors that is closely related to their happiness and hence their quality of life. Hence, for animal experiments, we need a wide compass to include other elements such as the necessity of the experiment, the necessity of infliction of pain and others.

To measure the quality of life of animal means to consider what are the elements that constitute the welfare of animals. There exist, unavoidably, many thorny questions with the evaluation of animal welfare. For what counts as the welfare of animals is related to our views on the value of animals and further the relation of man and animals. The latter question involves deeply in different philosophical and theological background. Furthermore, we have to consider how effective are these quantitative measurements in the estimation of the welfare of the experimental animals. Many of the fundamental questions are beyond the capacity of this paper, we may take it as a beginning to solve the controversy by employing a

3 Quoted from the website: <<http://www1.ndmctsg.edu.tw/www/web/student/uptStudent.aspx?webid=30&lid=CH&p0=154>>.

The principles of Confucianism	Classification	benchmark	content
the principle of non-maleficence	the conditions of Body-mind of animals	B1. satisfaction of bodily needs	body weight: whether the body weight has reduced and food and water supply are adequate outward appearance: whether the furs are shiny and bodily movement is normal
		B2. social behavior	whether come up with attacking behavior to fellow animals
		B3 enrichment of the raising environment	offering suitable entertainment stuffs like balls for intelligent animals such as Chimpanzee
the principle of non-maleficence	in the process of experiment	B4 examine the necessity of the experiments	whether the necessity of experiment and reducing the number of experimental animals
		B5 the use of alternative animal experiments	using computer simulations to reduce the number of animals used
		B6 avoid repetitive use	in some experiments such as cancer experiments, avoid using the same animals
the principle of benevolence	the experimental workers	B7 concerned with attitude of the animals	the experimental workers treat the animals as living beings not material objects
		B8 professional experience of the experimental workers	experimental workers should have professional training to master, such as, the protection and lessen stress of animals for experiments by close observation in daily care of animals to make raising more humane and less improper actions upon them
		B9 professional training of the animal mangers	

Confucian approach to the evaluation of animal quality of life.

The two Confucian principles of non-maleficence and benevolence could improve the evaluative items proposed by the Science of Animal Welfare. The basic command of the non-maleficence principle is to prevent unnecessary harm to the experimental animals. The import is to protect the psycho-physical condition and living condition of animals during the experiment. There are six items:(1)

satisfaction of physiological needs,(2) social behavior,(3) enrichment of the raising environmental,(4) evaluate critically the necessity of the experiments,(5) the use of alternative animal experiments,(6) avoid repetitive use. The basic command of the benevolence principle is to provide and protect the necessary and important emotional needs of the animals: adequate professional training and attitude of the workers in the laboratories and the reduction of pain undergone by animals are important for the adequate treatment of experimental animals. Hence there are three important benchmarks: (1) worker's attitude towards animals, (2) professional experience of the experimental workers, (3) professional training of the animal managers.

Each of the benchmark elaborated above and its contents could be classified into an evaluative form for the quality of life of experimental animals as the table in the previous page.

4. The Problem of Euthanasia for Experimental Animals

Besides protection of the well-being of the animals before and during the experiments, the benchmarks of the quality of life also provide an important function in the post-experiment care of them, especially the issue of euthanasia of experimental animals. We may consider two major questions here. First, there is the question of how many experimental animals need to suffer unbearable pains during experiment. For, when we want more experimental data the animals will suffer more. The design of the experiment may imply that the animals will be euthanized after experiment. Second, when experiments are over, animals suffer harms a second time by euthanasia. Is there no other way out with some basic consideration of quality of life other than euthanasia?

For the first problem, we may try to apply the golden means of Confucianism also called the Principle of *Ching-Chuan* (Lee 1999, 82-85). Facing the moral dilemmas between the quality of life of experimental animals and the benefit of experiments, Confucianism would not stick non-reflectively upon any particular moral principles. The Principle of *Ching-Chuan* requests us to refer back to the basic moral foundation and principle, that is, our moral consciousness of the suffering of others. We must take full considerations in all respects and make the best choice in according to our moral sensitivity in situation. The point of principle in this case is to protect the best interest of the animals involved. We could set out the steps of the employment of the Principle of *Ching-Chuan* according to Professor Lee's elaboration as follows:

First, we need to understand what are those moral principles in conflict.

Second, we have to display all factors for consideration and analyze those details concretely in every situation. The reality of every moral obligation was made sure and figured out in details. Third, the moral and life experience of agent would give help to what deliberated decision we must finally make. Lastly, but most importantly, we should refer back to the essence of *principle of ching-chuan* and rely upon the command of our unbearable mind, which usually take the course that would reduce the damage of the conflict (Lee 1999, 88-90).

Let us apply this strategy to the first part of our dilemma. In this case, the two principles in conflict are the principle of non-maleficence and the principle of effectiveness. The former principle requires that we should avoid experiments designs that would lead to the euthanization of experimental animals. On the other hand, the principle of effectiveness implies that in accordance with the cause of the experiment, we need to carry on the experiment further in order to have better data to improve our medical knowledge and treatments for patients. Although it is a moral duty that we should make the best outcome of the sufferings of the experimental animals, and in this case to promote other's interests involved that is the relieve of pain or saving of life of the human patients (the principle of beneficence), the principle of non-maleficence implies a stronger duty to stop short of making deteriorating effects on the experimental animals. It means that the latter has *priori* especially when the pain caused has exceeded reasonable limits for the experimental animals. Therefore, according to the Principle of *Ching-Chuan*, we should not design an experiment that results in the euthanasia of experimental animals and they will not suffer beyond the reasonable kind of pain in experiments.

For the solution of the euthanasia problem of post-experimental animals, we may invoke another Confucian basic idea of a moral person. Confucian emphasizes that a moral person is one who is benevolent to people and kind to things. She or he has a moral duty to see that every human being and nonhuman being could extend to the utmost their natural endowment, so that no one is mistreated and feels regretted. In this sense, Confucian conveys the idea of equality of all beings. Everything under Heaven and Earth is endowed with the same *hsing*, that is equally morally worthy nature and thus has the moral reason to have their *hsing feng* (natural endowments) be rightfully protected and let expressed (Lee 1999, 63-69).

Hence, according to Confucianism, if experimental animals satisfy the following requirements, they should be spared of the ending by euthanasia:

1. Physiological performance is normal
2. No infective diseases

3. No insanity behavior to human beings because of seriously harmed and become very painful.
4. If experimental animals suffer disability due to experiment, they need be remediated and given protection after experiment

When experimental animals satisfy the above requirement after experiment, according to Confucianism, we should help them in aftermath such as seeking adoptions, let them continue their growth and development, avoid any further harm and dying. In this way, we show our gratitude towards their contribution to our development. Experimental workers have to follow the requirements of the principles of benevolence and non-maleficence. If we have better and more careful considerations before the experiment we shall have better and easier aftermath reciprocation.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, Confucianism regards all lives being under the cover of the unbearable mind of the suffering of others. Animals are included. Though Confucianism does not object to the use of animals and human subjects for necessary and reasonable experiments, we have to limit the harms to animals to the least just like when we use human subject in experiments. We should have a sense of gratitude towards the contributions of experimental animals for our welfare and should have remedial compensation for the experimental animals.

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Community of No-Self: The Ethical-Existential Structure of Community in Watsuji Tetsurō and Jean-Luc Nancy

Anton Luis SEVILLA

This paper was triggered by a series of questions posed at the 41st International Research Symposium on “Modernity and Buddhism” at the International Research Center for Japanese Studies (Nichibunken), chaired by Prof. Sueki Fumihiko in October 2011. Amidst discussions on the role Buddhism played in nationalist discourses in Japan and Sri Lanka, Japanese colonial activity, and in legitimizing wartime efforts, Prof. Brian Victoria (author of, among others, the controversial *Zen at War*) asked: “Can Buddhism overcome nationalism? Should Buddhism overcome nationalism? If so, how?”

This is a complex series of questions whose scope expands beyond the boundaries of Buddhist studies alone. They raise the problem of the fundamental relationship between private disciplines of subjectivity (religion, spirituality, existentialism, psychoanalysis, even postmodern philosophy) and socio-political ethics. Do private disciplines have definite socio-ethical demands? Conversely, do political ethics have distinct ramifications for the structure of individual subjectivity?

While this question is of tremendous importance, I cannot hope to answer it here. Both Buddhism and nationalism have many forms and definitions, and the relationship between the two is subject to many historical and cultural forces that I cannot discuss here. What I do hope to do is to make a *suggestion* as to *one* factor that seems to be under-discussed in relation to this problem. This factor is the fundamental relationship between subjectivity and the structure of community.

I wish to consider this fundamental relationship from a broader angle of philosophical ethics by asking: In what way does the dislocation of subjectivity affect the structure of communities formed by such subjects? While this does not satisfactorily answer the problem of the relationship between Buddhism and nationalism, perhaps it will provide a hint on the relationship between the “emptying of self” and the formation of communities (like a *Volk* or a nation-state).

In this paper, I will take up two thinkers who tried to address the question of the existential structure of ethical community: Watsuji Tetsurō and Jean-Luc Nancy. In the first section, after briefly introducing the two thinkers, I will examine their views on the basic structure of the individual and community and how it leads to a sense of ethics. In the second section, I will delve into the essential differences of Watsuji and Nancy, beginning with their differing responses to Heidegger’s notion

of being-toward-death. I will then proceed to a critical re-reading of Watsuji's ethics possible from Nancy's thought. Having done so, I hope to further elucidate this prolegomenon to a response to Prof. Victoria's pressing question.

1. Community, Individuals, and Ethics

1.1 On the Two Thinkers

Watsuji Tetsurō 和辻哲郎 (1889-1960) is known as Japan's premier ethical theorist and historian of ethical thought. He is also highly regarded for his phenomenological studies of art, culture and religion. He was deeply influenced by Western thought (Hegel, Heidegger, Dilthey, and Kant), but toward the middle of his career, he shifted his focus to Japanese thought (primarily Buddhism, but also Confucianism and Shinto). Although he was primarily based in Tokyo Imperial University, he was considered a peripheral member of the Kyoto School of Philosophy. His key works are his *Ethics* (Rinrigaku 倫理学) and his *History of Japanese Ethical Thought* (Nihon rinri shisōshi 日本倫理思想史) (See Heisig 2011 for biographical data).

Jean-Luc Nancy (1940-present) is a French philosopher who has taught in various universities around the world: the Institut de Philosophie in Strasbourg, the Freie Universität in Berlin, the University of California, and so on. He has written more than fifty books on a wide range of topics: commentaries on the works of key philosophers, writings on art and literature, and his original thought on politics, technology, and Christianity. He is heavily influenced by Heidegger, and is sometimes referred to as a neo-Heideggerian. His most famous works are perhaps *The Inoperative Community*, *Being Singular Plural*, and *The Experience of Freedom*. He also collaborated with Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe in 1980 to put up the *Centre de recherches philosophiques sur le politique*, which produced two important volumes on political philosophy (See James 2006 for biographical data).

Nancy does not seem to have studied Watsuji's thought, and Watsuji died when Nancy was around 20. But while there is no direct connection between their thought, they share the influence of Heidegger, the concern for the relationship between the individual and the whole, and a specific focus on the problem of the nation-state (especially in light of World War II). Hence, I believe there is much that can be learned from a comparative study of these two thinkers.

At present there appears to be only one major work that tackles the relationship of Watsuji and Nancy, Prof. Sakai Naoki's *Translation and Subjectivity: On "Japan" and Cultural Nationalism* (1997). In this work, Prof. Sakai critically details the role Watsuji plays in schematizing the difference between Japan and other cultures, his failure to respect the differences between people and change in relationships, his totalitarian sense of community, etc., all situated within the context of Japan shortly before, during, and after the Pacific War. This criticism is heavily grounded in

Nancy's thought, which becomes clear in the 4th chapter where Sakai directly applies a Nancian critique to Watsuji's thought. While I agree with Prof. Sakai's critique, I wish to further contribute to the discussion here by more extensively comparing the parallels and points of conflict between the two thinkers, as well as seeing more positive ways to read Watsuji through Nancy's thought.

1.2 Watsuji's Ethics

Let me very briefly summarize the ethical system of Watsuji, which is found primarily in his *Ethics*, but also in his *Ethics as a Study of Ningen* (Ningen no gaku toshite no rinrigaku 人間の学としての倫理学). This ethics was constructed in a period when Japan was reeling from the disorientation of rapid modernization and westernization, and developed in the period immediately preceding and during the Pacific War. In this context, Watsuji tried to develop an ethics that opposed the "one-sided" individualism which he saw as prevalent in modernity. Hence, Watsuji defines ethics as the study of *ningen*, the Japanese word meaning both a human being (individual), but also all humankind (totality). Watsuji highlights this amphibology as one that expresses the *dual-structure* essential to human existence (Watsuji 1996, 12-15).

1. *The Negative Dual-Structure*. That human existence has a *dual-structure* simply means that human existence is always both individual and communal. Watsuji points out that while humans are individual, individuals are always in relation to others and are formed in every way (physiologically, emotionally, cognitively, epistemologically, etc.) by relationships. Hence while individuals exist, they have no independent existence. Watsuji uses the Buddhist term "empty" (kuu 空). Individuality is empty because it is formed by communality, and the standpoint of individuality is established only through negating the collective by individuating (Watsuji 1996, ch. 3 & 4). But in the same way, while we are communal beings, groups are always dependent on the presence, participation and commitment of individual members. Hence communality does not have independent existence either. Like individuality, it is empty. And also, the standpoint of the whole is established only through the negation of individuality by the suspension of the separateness of individuals through commitment. Hence the dual-structure of *ningen* states that human existence is both individual and communal (Watsuji 1996, ch. 5). Neither side alone can explain human existence. But both sides exist only in negating each other. Hence it can be described as a *negative dual-structure* (Watsuji 1996, ch. 6).

2. *Absolute Negativity and Ethics*. So how do we get from the above description of human existence to a prescriptive ethics? Watsuji's argument is a bit ambiguous on this point, but one way to interpret it would be through the idea

of *authenticity*. In order to be authentically *ningen*, we need to live out both our individuality and our communality. But because these two facets are mutually negating and interdependent, the only way we can live out both is to constantly carry out the movement of negation. We have to constantly prevent ourselves from being merely “dissolved into totalities” by individuating, and thus negating these collectives to retrieve a sense of self-awareness. But at the same time, we have to prevent ourselves from becoming merely detached and individualistic existents by re-committing to collectives or forming new relationships, and hence negating individuality once again. For Watsuji, this cycle continues infinitely (Watsuji 1996, ch. 7).

What we see here though is that the movement of negation is the very thing that these two antagonists have in common, that establishes each—both individuality and communality. Watsuji develops this conceptually as “absolute negativity” or “absolute emptiness,” which becomes the ground for the fundamental law of ethics, the principle that allows *ningen* to exist as *ningen*. Watsuji writes:

The negative structure of human existence is, as previously stated, the *fundamental law* that makes human existence form itself as human existence. If we were to deviate from this fundamental law, human existence would no longer be capable of existing. This is why this law is the foundation of human existence. However, at the start, we defined the existential foundation of human communality, the *law of human existence*, as ethics. As such, the fundamental law itself must be said to be *fundamental ethics*. Fundamental ethics is the originary principle of the study of ethics. We can thus generally define the originary principle of the study of ethics as “the movement of the self-return of absolute negativity through negation.” (own translation from Watsuji 1962, 181)

Humanity is true to itself through the principle of absolute negativity, by which totalities are *negated* to establish individuals, and individuals are *negated* in order to establish the whole. Each finite negation thus manifests absolute negativity/emptiness and expresses humanity’s ethics of authenticity.

3. *Problems in Watsuji’s Ethics*. While we cannot closely scrutinize Watsuji’s ethics here, I would like to point out several problems therein. The first is a tendency to privilege totality over the individual. If we examine Watsuji’s examples (in Watsuji 1996, ch. 3-5) we see that while it is clear that the individual needs the whole not merely to survive but for any sense of meaning, the individual appears to only be necessary for the continued existence of the whole. Looking at Watsuji’s examples, one is left with a lingering doubt—does the individual really contribute

anything irreducibly individual to the whole, or is it just a necessary cog in the gears of the collective?

A second problem is a sense of ethical ambiguity in the movement of negation. In Watsuji's explanations, (Watsuji 1996, ch. 6-7) it seems like any negation of the whole that creates a sense of individuality manifests the "self-negation of emptiness," and any negation of the individual that establishes any collective manifests the "self-return of emptiness." He instantiates this with two religious examples, one of Buddha, and another of Jesus. Looking at the first: Siddhartha Gaotama, a) negated his family and kingdom to practice (self-negation of emptiness) and b) negated his solitary practice to form the *sangha* (self-return of emptiness). While this is clearly an ethical movement, how about a) negating the needs of your community for your own desires, or b) negating individuality to merely maintain a status quo? Do these two negations really manifest the authentic ethics of absolute negativity? Let us keep these questions in mind as we proceed to an overview of Nancy.

1.3 Nancy's Inoperative Community

In this section, I would like to briefly summarize the (proto) ethical ideas in Nancy's *The Inoperative Community* (1991). The original book was published in French with the title *La Communauté désœuvrée* (1983). While Watsuji's *Ethics* was primarily opposed to individualist discourses, Nancy's work moves from the opposite direction, working against totalitarian notions of communal identity. He accomplishes this through a focused critique of the idea of *immanence*.

It is precisely the immanence of man to man, or it is *man*, taken absolutely, considered as the immanent being par excellence, that constitutes the stumbling block to a thinking of community. . . . Consequently, economic ties, technological operations, and political fusion (into a *body* or under a *leader*) represent or rather present, expose, and realize this essence necessarily in themselves. Essence is set to work in them; through them, it becomes its own work. This is what we have called "totalitarianism," but it might be better named "immanentism," as long as we do not restrict the term to designating certain types of societies or regimes but rather see in it the general horizon of our time, encompassing both democracies and their fragile juridical parapets. (Nancy 1991, 3)

Immanence refers to when something is taken as a self-enclosed identity that exists for itself alone. Such a closed identity would reduce any sense of otherness/difference to its own order or rationality. Nancy criticizes the manifestation of

immanence in both individual subjects and communities.

1. *Against Immanent Subjectivity.* Nancy inherited the western critique of closed subjectivity & metaphysics—Nietzsche, Heidegger, Levinas, Derrida, etc. (See James 2006). For instance, for Heidegger, the immanent subject is incapable of dealing with its own mortality, and is unable to open up to the truth of Being. For Emmanuel Levinas, closed subjectivity (he uses the term “ego,” as the word “subjectivity” has positive connotations for Levinas) is the origin of violence that refuses the otherness and transcendence of the face of the other. In his own take on the western critique of subjectivity, Nancy develops his own idea of *singularity*.

Singularity is a unique origin, irreducible to anything else or any other singularity. But for Nancy, a singularity cannot exist in itself and exists only in *inclining*, opening up to, and touching other singularities. Singularity is always plural—*plus*, more, beyond itself (See Nancy 1991, 7).

2. *Against Immanent Community.* Because of singularity’s self-transcendence and plurality, it always opens up to community. But community is not immanent either! According to Nancy, people have always pined for a “lost community” in which people were bound tightly and shared a seamless sense of collective identity. But this immanent community is a myth, it has never existed (Nancy 1991, 9).

Further more, this immanent community is a *murderous* myth: the only way there can be true collective identity is if we try to eliminate all that makes us irreducibly individual, which means society taking over the individual’s death. This is tantamount to the logic of sacrifice (Ex. “Die for your country,” or German Nazism) (Nancy 1991, 12).

Against this myth of immanent community, Nancy intones the idea of “inoperative” or unworked community. Nancy writes:

Community is, in a sense, resistance itself: namely, resistance to immanence. Consequently, community is transcendence: but “transcendence,” which no longer has any “sacred” meaning, signifying precisely a resistance to immanence (resistance to the communion of everyone or to the exclusive passion of one or several: to all the forms and all the violences of subjectivity). (Nancy 1991, 35)

What we see here is that community is not a collective *formed from* self-transcending singularities. Instead, the *transcendence itself* is community. Therefore community is nothing more than the liminal space by which singularities transcend themselves, touch, and share (*partage*) each other.

3. *Proto-Ethics in Inoperative Community.* It is difficult to speak of ethics in Nancy’s *Inoperative Community*, precisely because such a community is not an

oeuvre, not a *telos*, not an ought that is achieved. It describes what we fundamentally *are*: being-singular-plural (See Nancy 2000). Hence the “task” is not to construct anything but to *unwork* immanence to return to this original space of being-with (Nancy 1991, 31). So perhaps one can speak of a *proto-ethics* within this idea of community. Let us look at two central proto-ethical ideas that take the place of the binary of evil and good: myth and literature.

Myth goes hand in hand with the immanence Nancy critiques. “Myth is not simple representation, it is representation at work, producing itself—in an autopoietic mimesis—as effect: it is fiction that founds. . . . In other words, the fashioning of a world for the subject, the becoming-world of subjectivity” (Nancy 1991, 56). Myth is any discourse, act, lifestyle, or policy that manufactures an illusion of immanence and closed identity, be it in an individual, in a select group, or in a general whole (ex. Myths of “chosen people”).

In opposition to myth, let us examine the idea of literature:

Being-in-common *is* literary, that is, . . . it has its very being in “literature” (in writing, in a certain voice, in a singular music, but also in a painting, in a dance, and in the exercise of thought), then what “literature” will have to designate is this being itself . . . in itself. In other words, [literature] would designate that singular ontological quality that *gives* being *in* common, that does not hold it in reserve . . . but that rather makes for a being that *is* only when shared *in common*, or rather whose quality of being, whose nature and structure are shared (or exposed). (Nancy 1991, 64)

Literature refers to anything that reinscribes the fundamental openness and irreducible singularity that constitutes our human existence. Literature interrupts myth.

2. Re-reading Watsuji’s *Ethics* from Nancy’s *Inoperative Community*

In the previous sections, I have briefly sketched out the core ethical theory in Watsuji’s *Ethics* and Nancy’s *Inoperative Community*. We have seen some parallels in the two thinkers. Both of them stress that human existence has two facets: Individuality:totality and singularity:plurality. Both facets can be seen to be empty & insubstantial, not existing in themselves and opening up to their self-negation. Also, both show how substantializing or adhering to either facet (as closed immanence) results in the inauthenticity of human being. Hence, ethics can be unanimously seen as a need to resist this substantialization of the individual or the totality.

However, despite these similarities, essential differences are highlighted if

we examine how they differ in their response to Martin Heidegger's idea of being-toward-death (*Sein zum tode*).

2.1 On Heidegger's Being-Toward-Death

Let us briefly sketch out Heidegger's notion of Being-Toward-Death. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger points out several things about the phenomenon of death. First, it is impossible to have an experience of my own death. The minute I experience death, I am dead and hence no longer capable of experience. Yet despite this "inaccessibility to experience," death is imminent in every moment of this mortal life. Furthermore, I do not truly experience death in the face of other people dying, because it is not my death. Only I can die my own death. Hence, death is seen as one's "ownmost non-relational" possibility. Nobody can take it from me. As such, facing one's death is facing something that only the individual can face. It hence individuates the person, wrenches him from any dissolution into a herd (*das Man*) and allows him to be authentic (Heidegger 2010, 237-266).

1. *Watsuji's Response*. For Watsuji, Heidegger's view of death and authenticity is too individualistic. Rather, the proper limit of *Dasein* is not death but other people, the totality of *ningen*, which "although inclusive of 'being-toward-death', is also that totality that goes beyond death" (Watsuji 1996, 224). As to this totality, Watsuji writes, "We are now able to call this totality of *ningen* the authentic self. But the authentic self in this case is the superindividual subject . . . The authentic self must consist in the nondual relation of the self and other" (Watsuji 1996, 225). Furthermore, it is because of the totality of *ningen* that preparedness for death is meaningful, because facing death with courage allows one to serve others fully.

2. *Nancy's Response*. Nancy generally agrees with Heidegger that death is always one's own, and that one cannot experience one's own death, even in the death of others. But at the same time, he agrees with Georges Bataille's opposing idea that the only way we catch a glimpse of death is through others, and it only because we share death that there can be community (See James 2006, 180). The result of trying to combine these tensional views is a unique treatment of the experience of the death of another:

I recognize that in the death of the other there is nothing recognizable. And this is how sharing—and finitude—can be inscribed: "The ending implied in death does not signify a *Dasein's* Being-at-an-end, but a *Being-toward-the-end* of this entity." The similitude of the like-being is made in the encounter of "beings toward the end" that his end, *their* end, in each case "mine" (or "yours"), *assimilates and separates in the same limit*, at which or on which they compear. (Nancy 1991, 33)

One can schematize Nancy's view of death with four aspects. 1) I realize that the death of the other is not my death and is incomprehensible to me: an experience of inassimilable alterity. 2) I realize that I too am capable of dying. 3) I realize that the other is being-toward-death and I am being-toward-death. This sharing and solidarity means I cannot ignore the death of another. 4) I realize that though we share this finitude, my death is distinct and irreducible to the death of the other and vice versa, and thus this sharing cannot be assimilated into an identity.

These four aspects detail the rupture of the subject and the self-transcendence of the singularity into community. In contrast to Watsuji's view, Nancy writes, "Community does not sublate the finitude it exposes." It does not make the death of the individual subservient to the whole. Rather, "Community itself, in sum, is nothing but this exposition. It is the community of finite beings, and as such it is itself a finite community" (Nancy 1991, 26-27). Hence community is none other than the space where the irreducibly singular experience of death is shared.

3. *Watsuji vs Nancy*. Both Watsuji and Nancy see that beyond one's death is opening up to others and community. But Watsuji, in articulating this passage, ignores the individuality of death and sublates it to the "immortality" of the totality of *ningen*. On the other hand, Nancy articulates this passage by showing that death itself is singular-plural, and hence both opens up the subject toward the other, but at the same time preserves its irreducible singularity. I think this difference is key to answering the doubts I raised surrounding Watsuji's *Ethics*.

2.2 Re-Reading Watsuji's *Ethics*

After the discussion of Watsuji's ethics, I raised two main concerns. First was Watsuji's tendency to privilege the totality over the individual, with individuality seeming to be a next to meaningless detour on the road to the self-establishment of the absolute whole. And second was the lack of specificity in the articulation of the mutual negation of the individual and the whole, which led to ambiguities in the ethical application of the fundamental law of absolute negativity. In response to this, Nancy's greatest contribution to this discourse on ethics of emptiness is in the way he articulates the phenomenon of finitude, such that it specifies the structure of the transcendence of singularity that demands its sociality, as well as the structure of the irreducible alterity of each singularity that resists any assimilation into a collective.

1. *Re-reading the dual-structure*. In this articulation of finitude, how might we re-read the emptiness of the individual in the dual-structure of *ningen*? Watsuji focused on the ontic fact that the whole shapes the individual. But just because the whole shapes me does not mean I ought not to turn my back on the whole. Perhaps it is more sensible if we focus not on the ontic relatedness of the individual to others but on the self-transcendence that is necessary in our reckoning with finitude:

Because a singularity is finite, it cannot be a subject, an individual. Because it is mortal, there always remains a facet of existence that is shrouded from experience, a facet that exceeds the subject's attempt to reduce everything to the same. And because this mortality is discovered alongside the mortality of others, we are called out of ourselves to be responsible for the death of our fellow beings, to walk alongside them as they face their own finitude, to be part of community.

But in the same way, how might we re-read the emptiness of the totality? Watsuji focused on the dependence of the whole on the survival, participation, and commitment of individuals, giving very little indication as to why the whole ought to respect the individuality of individuals. Here, perhaps it is useful to shift our gaze to something irreducibly singular that each member brings to the whole: In the transcendence that rejects the isolated subject, community is formed, a community of finitude, an unworked community. But because death always belongs to each and every person, and cannot be abdicated to another, then each individual is called to face his or her own death as a singularity. And because the death that we see in the dying of another is never our own death, we are called to respect the alterity of the other and see the other as an irreducible singularity as well.

What we see here is a re-reading of Watsuji's notion of the dual-structure of *ningen*. Not only does the whole shape individuals, but one's reckoning with death necessarily leads one outside oneself in solidarity with others. Not only do individuals participatively sustain community, but a community owes its existence purely to a death that is singular and irreducible to a collective identity.

2. *Re-reading emptiness.* With this, the word "emptiness" as in the emptiness of individuality and the emptiness of totality, acquires a different connotation. No longer is emptiness merely about the ontic fact of dependence on one's other (as the totality is the individual's other, and the individual is the totality's other). Nor is it reduced to the insubstantiality that arises from the fact that one can only exist by negating its other. Instead, *emptiness is in that in being self, in realizing self, one must face and embrace the "other."* It means that for individuality to have a hold of itself, it must make way for the whole, and for the whole to be what it is, it must respect the particularity of singularities. This is something that while Watsuji did not develop, perhaps he could agree with, for Watsuji himself wrote, "This negation [of the totality] is also the self-awareness of that totality" (Watsuji 1996, 22). Also, "Only by abandoning independence is it possible for the *I* to obtain the self-awareness of *I*" (Watsuji 1996, 83).

3. *Re-reading the movement of double-negation.* If emptiness is in the need to face and embrace the other that lies at the limit of self, then the movement of double-negation cannot be one of negating totality to *establish* the individual wholesale or of negating individuality to establish the totality wholesale. If individuality and

totality are empty in the first place, why is there a need to establish it?

However, perhaps Watsuji's contribution is that, in a world where individualism is real (and collectivism is real), the establishment of the individual or the collective can be necessary moments in *resisting* the immanence of the individual or the totality. In other words, it is not so much as establishing both the individuality and the communality of *ningen*, but of resisting egotism and totalization that obscure being singular plural.

Furthermore, while to a certain extent it is necessary to establish singularity, this is very different from establishing individuality wholesale. As I have mentioned previously in the problems concerning the specificity of Watsuji's mechanism, establishing individuality wholesale can mean many noble things, but far more ignoble things, such as establishing individual desires-fixations, profit-monopoly, control-domination. But in light of Nancy's articulation of the phenomenon of finitude, establishing singularity means establishing the irreducibility of the singularity's facing its own finitude, and how this self-transcendence shapes the way the singularity participates in how others face their finitude. Nancy's view restricts negation to a purely ethical form, and better describes even Watsuji's examples (such as how Siddhartha Gaotama turned his back on his kingdom and how Jesus Christ refused many conventions of his Jewish community).

In the same way, while it is necessary to establish relationality/plurality, this differs from the wholesale establishment of a totality. For once again, an immanent totality, like a subject, possesses its own ambitions and tyrannical drives, and while establishing these do "negate individuality," they do so in a largely unethical way. Instead, establishing plurality means uncovering the phenomenon of the death of the other, and the responsibility it demands from the individual in sharing in this path of beings-toward-death. It means reminding all of us that we are finite *together*, and we cannot turn a blind eye to the fate of our fellows. Again, Nancy's view gives negation a specifically ethical form, which sheds further insight into Watsuji's examples of the formation of the Buddhist *sangha* and the early Christian community.

4. *Re-reading the position of absolute negativity.* If negation is not about *establishing* individuality and totality but rather about *resisting* the self-immanence of each, then perhaps absolute emptiness as absolute negativity is not both self and other, (or both individual and totality) but also *neither-nor*. Let us re-read Watsuji's key paragraph:

If this totality is the negation of separateness [of individuals], then "absolute totality," which transcends the finite and relative totality, is the absolute negation of separateness. Because of its being absolute, it must be that

non-separateness which negates the very distinction between separateness and non-separateness. Hence, absolute wholeness is absolute negation and absolute emptiness. (Watsuji 1996, 99, translation amended)

By negating the very distinction between individuality and totality, can individuality remain as individuality and totality remain as totality? Must individuality not become singularity, and totality become plurality? Here singular and plural are no longer opposed but are one as being singular plural. As such, absolute emptiness as being singular plural would be the “excluded middle” between the individual and the totality, a neither-nor that in our forgetfulness loses its orbit and spills into the immanent excesses of individuality and totality.

5. *Further questions.* Beyond what little I have discussed above, there are many more points of convergence/divergence of Watsuji and Nancy. For one, while Watsuji does have “totalitarian” tendencies, his notion of the whole and his articulations of trust and so on are much more detailed in ways that Nancy’s articulations of the public sphere are not. While this paper focused on a re-reading of Watsuji from Nancy’s texts, the reverse is also possible. Some questions that might be raised are: While a community of finite individuals cannot become an immanent subject, can it form a collective singularity? If it can, than does this not require a certain degree of loss of independence in commitment, one that Nancy’s *Inoperative Community* does not account for? There are also other fields that might be questioned. Beyond the core ethical/communal ideas of both thinkers are their articulations of application: How might Nancy respond to Watsuji’s discussions of family, friendship, and the state, as present in the latter volumes of *Rinrigaku*? How might Watsuji respond to Nancy’s discussions concerning the war, politics, and globalization? Both Watsuji and Nancy have many writings on shared interests as well: space, the body, art, Christianity, Nietzsche, and so on. Perhaps other interested scholars might wish to work on these questions as well.

Conclusion

In this paper, I analyzed the core structure of Watsuji Tetsurō’s *Ethics* and Jean-Luc Nancy’s *The Inoperative Community*. Despite some main structural similarities, the essential differences of both works were revealed through an analysis of their differing responses to Martin Heidegger’s being-toward-death. With such revealed, it became possible to re-read Watsuji’s *Ethics* from Nancy’s framework. In particular, the notions of the dual-structure, emptiness, the movement of double-negation, and the position of absolute negativity were rethought from the point of view of being-singular-plural. With this re-reading, it became possible to resolve the doubts

concerning the totalitarian tendencies in Watsuji's thought and the ethical ambiguity of the notion of negation.

Let us return to Prof. Victoria's questions: "Can Buddhism overcome nationalism? Should Buddhism overcome nationalism? If so, how?" In so far as Buddhism is a religion of dislocating subjectivity and emptying ego, the history of its usage in supporting ego at a national level is a shocking travesty. (But of course such a description of Buddhism is itself historically conditioned, largely by the modernization and westernization of Buddhism, and is hence not necessarily appropriate for describing many of the forms of Buddhism in Japan, as well as elsewhere.)

Even if we presume the discipline of emptying ego as essential to Buddhism, we can see (as in Watsuji's *Ethics*) that even this idea can be bent to serve totalitarian, imperialist, and fascist regimes. A key deciding factor is the structure by which finitude is articulated: Is finitude seen as shared, as individual, or both?

If the notion of finitude is articulated merely as the end of self amidst an immortal whole, the path of facing finitude can be used as a means to absorb the self into a higher self—the ego of a nation. On the other hand, if the notion of finitude is articulated as purely individual, then whatever spiritual resources there may be in the discipline of facing this finitude, these cannot be carried over to any socio-ethical dimension. However, I argue that if finitude is articulated as *both* shared *and* irreducibly singular and personal, then any discipline of facing finitude becomes a resistance against ego on any level, including a national one.

With this, I hope to share what is no more than a hint, one piece in the Buddhist problem of collective ego. Of course, what I have presented is nothing but a theory. By itself it is incapable of overcoming the problems it seeks to confront. But in trust, I leave it to other scholars, teachers, and practitioners to develop the other unexplored areas that remain—other facets of finitude (other than death), the *actual practice* of facing singular-plural finitude, other factors in the essential relationship of individuals and communities, historical concerns (surrounding Buddhism, Buddhist philosophy, and nationalism) and of course criticisms of this theory itself.

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Fathers' Supportive Parenting Practice and its Effect on Emotional Dependence and Self-reliance of High School Students: A Case of Rural Families in China

Nan LIU

The one-child policy was implemented in China in 1979. The policy is strictly enforced, especially in the city, where having a second child leads to losing employment, and only public supervision allows for the birth of a second child. In rural areas of China, however, having many sons means financial wealth because family income depends on a strong labor force (Wakabayashi 1994). Therefore, enforcing of the one-child policy was difficult in rural areas, where a traditional concept of “The more sons, the more happiness” [More children bring more happiness] prevailed. This has led to a simultaneous implementation of a household-responsibility system and an equal land distribution system. This system did not allow land to be allotted to children of an unplanned birth and also decreased the parent’s amount of “private land” [land set aside for peasants to cultivate for private use] and what new cropland would be distributed. On the other hand, being granted a “one-child certificate” meant distribution of twice as much cropland to the family. Planned birth is enforced in rural areas as well, but a rural region two-child policy was approved after 1984, in consideration of farming households with a small labor force (Wakabayashi 1989). This rural area’s planned population policy was unique from that of what city families were required to follow, because in rural areas it became legitimate to have more than two children.

Family formation differs between the city and rural regions of China, however, a common parenting philosophy is that parents give extra attention to the education and grade performance of adolescent children. City parents tend to have excessive expectations, whereas rural parents tend to control and interfere with their children (Lei & Douno 2003). Although it is often pointed out that parents in modern China, faced with the one-child policy and reduced birth rates, give great care in raising their children, their interest is geared toward academic achievement with excessive interference.

Paternal grandparents typically take care of young children in rural areas (Fei 1985). Once the children are ready for middle or high school, parents often choose to send them to boarding school in hopes to provide a better learning environment (Yang 2010). Non-boarding school students are psychologically healthier than boarding school students at the beginning of their boarding experience, because non-boarding school students receive more support from their parents (Zhang et al. 2009). Yang

says that boarding school students from rural areas are not as independent in taking care of themselves in daily life (Yang 2010), and it is because rural children tend to be more spoiled by their parents or grandparents, they often are waited on hand and foot. Also, students' personal independence is disregarded in boarding schools. On top of that, classes and homework place high levels of burden on the students, then they have little time to nurture their personal independence for daily life in boarding school (Yang 2010). Therefore, previous studies focused on boarding school students and their proneness for developing psychological problems at the beginning of their boarding experience and their lack of personal independence in daily life, but it has not been made clear how the fathers and mothers influence the child's independence.

This study has two objectives that compliment these previous studies. The first objective focuses on high school students and their parents, and examines how a father and mother's supportive behavior influences the adolescent child's mental dependence to their parents and independence in daily life. As for the parental influence on their children, although mothers are more influential throughout elementary and middle school years, the father's dignity more than mother's is acknowledged by high school children. Therefore, this study focuses on the fathers' supportive behavior (Song 2009). The second objective examines the fathers' direct and indirect influence on their children while using the Family system theory. It is because father-mother-child relationships are an inseparable family unit, behind a mother-child relationship, stands a father, and behind a father-child relationship, stands a mother, and the mutual influence within the family is meaningful (Okadou 1989).

Theory and Previous Studies

1. Reasoning for Introducing the Family System Theory and Invocation in This Study

Belsky (1981) indicates that the family transforms as a system through reciprocal relationships arising from marital relationships, children's behavior and development, and interaction through parenting. Ogata (2007) indicated Belsky (1981) failed to clarify which of the two mutual influences that construct the marital relationship, by the mother or the father, accounted for the central role. On the notion of "marital relationships" being the sub-system of a family system, Ogata urges an incorporation of the perspective of "marital relationships" that develop based on fathers' cooperative involvement as the main concept; he calls for the necessity to investigate how the fathers' involvement including communication and help with chores greatly influences family members. Following Ogata's (2007) suggestions, this study centers on "marital relationship", which develops from father-child

involvement, investigates how fathers' supportive behavior toward their child influences marital relationships, how marital relationships intermediate mothers' supportive behaviors, and lastly, fathers' direct influence and indirect influence through their mother on their child. Although Ogata's study (2007) did not examine mothers' supportive behavior for their child, this study incorporates mothers' supportive behavior because the study presupposes that a mother's involvement largely influences the child's personal independence. The main component of this study is the direct influence of fathers' supportive behavior to their child and the indirect influence through "marital relationships" on mothers' supportive behaviors.

Many studies based on the family system theory often examine infants, but in this study I will examine high school students while using the family system theory. Adolescents are essentially the same as infants in a sense that they are both financially and mentally dependent on their parents, but high school students are able to live without parental care unlike infants. While infants who cannot interact with the outside world without their parents, more-independent adolescents have increasing opportunities to interact at school, in the community, etc., without their parents. As children grow, they will eventually break away from their current family system and create their own family system. Therefore, it is indicated that "adolescents must separate and become independent from their current family system to gain independence" (Yagi 1990 P.38). This not only means that gaining independence is an important goal in adolescence, but adolescents must first separate themselves from their current family system and maintain and develop their current family system on the premise of creating their own new family system in the future. This is the reason why this study applies the family system theory on adolescents.

2. Previous Study

"Adolescence" is a transitional time when children gain independence from being completely dependent on their parents and become adults, where they are established as individuals (McCandless & Coop 1979=1985). Children going through adolescence show a strong will in breaking away from parents mentally and in their personal lives, achieving individualization, but complete mental separation from parents is not necessarily possible (Okamura et al. 1995). This study defines the state of dependence of adolescents to parents as "mental parental dependence". They also try to gain personal independence, and the degree in which they can take care of themselves on a day-to-day basis is defined as "independence in daily life" (Zheng 2008). No correlation was found between emotional independence and personal independence of adult males, but adult females who are very mentally independent tend to be personally independent (Yoon 2007). Parents' supportive parenting behavior is said to encourage dependence in adolescents, and the closer

they live to their parents, the more dependent they become because it is easier to receive parental support (Miyamoto et al. 1997; Yoon 2007). The study also shows that females rather than males tend to be more influenced by the attitudes of parents.

On how fathers' participation in parenting influences the mothers and children, father's parenting defines the quality of marital relationships, and fathers' participation in parenting and high emotional support for wives improves their marital relationship satisfaction (Yamato 2001). It is also reported that marital relationship harmony influences mothers' involvement with their child, and positively influences psychological health of an adolescent child (Takahashi 1998). Poor marital relationships, however, increase mothers' involvement with their child and also have a positive influence on the child (Engfer 1988).

Factors that influence parents' supportive behavior are the concept of gender ideology of, mainly, the father and the mother, fathers' participation in housework, fathers' value on the child, the child's gender, the number of children and the father's age.

On gender ideology, fathers who think "men work while women stay at home" are less likely to help with housework and parenting than fathers with a less traditional mindset, and fathers who help with housework are more likely to be involved with parenting (Ishii-Kuntz & Coltrane 1992). Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Family Research Laboratory (1994) indicates that people in metropolitan areas have children mainly for emotional satisfaction and to realize their parents' dreams, whereas people in rural areas still hold a traditional mindset that raising a son maintains their ancestry and promises safe and happy post-retirement years. On the gender of the children, boys continue the family ancestry and are the successors of their fathers. Sons are seen as the individuals who pursue an important family role in the future. On the other hand, daughters, "sooner or later they must marry" [daughters must marry when they become adults], are viewed as costly to raise (Lynn 1978=1981). Mothers of families with many children require more help and the fathers tend to help more with parenting (Ishii-Kuntz 2009). This study also incorporates the fathers' age because the spread of compulsory education and the expansion of higher education in the 1980's may have led to a generation gap with the fathers' age.

In keeping with these previous studies, this study hypothesizes that the father and mothers' gender ideology, fathers' participation in housework, fathers' value on the child, the child's gender, the number of children, the father's age influence fathers', mothers' parenting behavior, and fathers' supportive behavior towards their children can influence mothers' supportive behavior through their marital relationship as shown in Figure 1. This study also examines the hypothesis that a direct influence of fathers' supportive behavior and an indirect influence of fathers through mothers' supportive behavior exists.

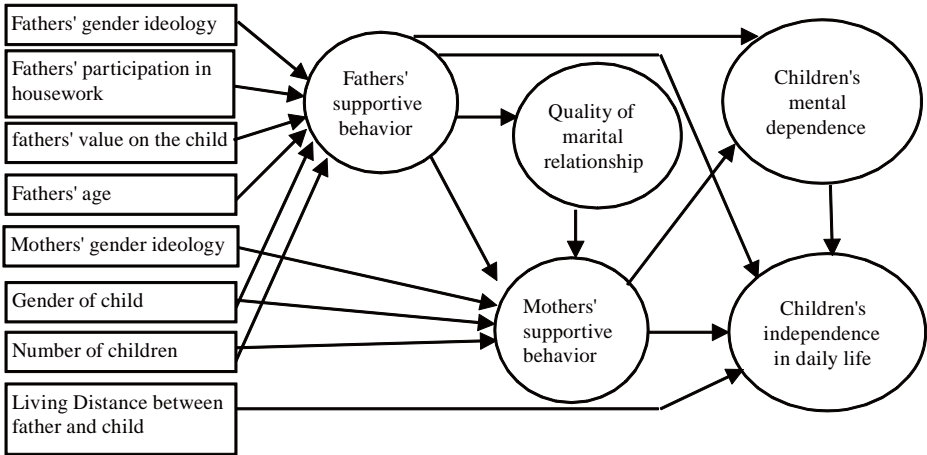


Figure 1. Conceptual Model Predicting Children's mental dependence and Independence in daily life

Method

1. Period and Method of Study

I took a questionnaire survey from September to October 2009, and collected data from second-year high school students of two public high schools and their father and mother by purposive select¹ in the suburbs of a small city in Shanxi province, China. The questionnaires of 372 groups (fathers, mothers and children) were collected out of 400 sets (collection rate 93%).

2. Characteristics

Table 1 shows the fathers' characteristic: age (average 42.67 years old), education (middle school graduate: 50%, high school graduate: 28.8%), occupation (farmer: 41.3%). Slightly more than 30% of fathers' annual income was 5,000 yuan or more (\$773.23)² but less than 10,000 yuan (\$1546.46), and slightly less than 40% were 10,000 yuan or more (\$1546.46) but less than 50,000 (\$7732.28). The average annual income per family in rural areas in Shanxi is 4,097 yuan (\$633.55) per person (National Bureau of Statistics of China 2009), which is slightly lower than the income of this study's participants. Other statistics are as follows: number of children (only child: 34.7%; two children: 54.9%), child's age (average: 16.9 years

1 Shanxi is located in the central region inland of China with production of coal and agricultural industry supporting their peasant economy. Both high school students that live at home or board were carefully selected from one key school and one common school.

2 The author calculated the currency conversion from Chinese yuan to Japanese yen with the conversion rate of "100 yen=6.6 yuan".

old); child's gender (male: 46.5%, female: 53.5%); residence (at home: 22.3%, boarding: 73.6%); and living distance between father and child (live together: 26.3%, within 30 minutes on foot: 5.8%, within 1 hour by car: 33.4%, 1 hour or more by car: 34.4%).

Table 1. Participant attribution of Fathers, Mothers, and High-school students (N=339)

	Father			Mother		
	Average	SD	Range	Average	SD	Range
Age	42.67	3.61	33~54	41.14	3.67	35~54
Education	2.46	0.82	1~4	2.23	0.85	1~4
Finished primary high school	8.40%			20.10%		
Finished junior high school	50.00%			43.80%		
Finished senior high school (junior college or vocational/technical school)	28.80%			28.80%		
Finished 4-year college/university, graduate/professional school	12.80%			7.30%		
Occupation	4.01	1.77	1~8	4.16	1.69	1~8
I am a government official	13.90%			9.00%		
I am a regular, permanent employee	9.40%			9.40%		
I am a contract employee	9.00%			12.20%		
I am self-employed	17.40%			14.20%		
I am a famer	41.30%			41.40%		
Others	9.00%			10.00%		
Unknown	0.00%			3.80%		
Annual income	2.32	0.86	1~4	1.88	0.87	1~4
less than 5000 yuan (\$773.23)	20.80%			42.30%		
5000 yuan (\$773.23) or more, but less than 10000 yuan (\$1546.46)	31.40%			29.20%		
10000 yuan (\$1546.46) or more, but less than 50000 yuan (\$7732.28)	42.40%			26.40%		
more than 50000 yuan (\$7732.28)	5.40%			2.10%		
Number of children	0.77	0.66	0~3			
One child	34.70%					
Two children	54.90%					
Three children	9.40%					
Four children	1.00%					
Child's age	16.93	0.67	14~19			
Living Arrangement	1.84	0.57	1~4			
At home	22.30%					
Boarding	73.60%					
Apartment	1.60%					
Others	2.50%					
Gender	1.53	0.5	1~2			
Male	46.50%					
Female	53.50%					
Living Distance between father and child	2.76	1.18	1~4	2.69	1.09	1~4
Live together	26.30%			28.40%		
Within 30min in foot	5.84%			6.00%		
Within 1 hour by car	33.44%			33.30%		
1 hour or more by car	34.42%			32.30%		

3. Variables Used for Analysis

3.1 Children's Mental Dependence

Using Hoffman's (1984) dependence scale of adolescents, children were asked the following 6 questions: "Are you close to your father?"; "Would you seek advice from your father when daily-life problems arise?"; "Would you choose to spend most time with your father in daily life?"; "Would you seek help from your father when you're in trouble?"; "Would you feel lonely when away from your father?"; and "Is your father the most important person to you?". The children answered these questions on a scale of 1 to 4, 1 being "Yes (4 points)" and 4 being "No (1 point)". The result was named "Children's mental dependence" and it was used as a composite variable for analysis ($\alpha=0.75$).

3.2 Children's Self-dependence in Daily Life

According Kato's (2001) study about behaviors of children at home, mothers were asked of their children's behaviors at home with the following three questions: "Child cleans up his/her own room"; "Child makes his/her own bed"; "Child wakes up without being told by their parents", on a scale of 1 to 4, 1 being "frequently (4 points)" and 4 being "Never (1 point)" ($\alpha=0.68$)³. To compare actions of children that are at boarding school and that live at home, their mothers were asked the same questions on the survey.

3.3 Parent's Supportive Behavior

Fathers and mothers were asked to answer twelve items from scales established by Hombeck et al. (1995) and Suemori (2008) on a scale from 1 (frequently (4 points)) to 4 (Never (1 point)). The result of factor analysis regards fathers' supportive behavior yielded three factors excluding four items with low points. The first factor included "My attitude to my child always nice", "I always encourage my child", "I listen to my child", and "I listen to my child's opinion even when it opposes mine", thus this was named "emotional support and nurturing" ($\alpha=0.74$). The second factor consisted of two items related to daily life: "I wash my child's clothes" and "I clean my child's room", and this was named "involvement in child's daily life". The third factor was in regard to discipline: "I tell my child to clean his/her room" and "I tell my child to do his/her own laundry", and was named "instructions in child's daily life". Items related to mothers' supportive behavior was analyzed by the principal

3 Cronbach's α coefficients were quite low for children's personal self-dependence, marital relationship satisfaction, and mothers' concept of role division, but they were used since they were considered to be an important variable in this study.

factor method, just like with fathers'. The same factors, "emotional support and nurturing" (4 items, $\alpha=0.74$), "involvement in daily life" (2 items), and "daily life instructions" (2 items) were revealed.

3.4 Quality of Marital Relationship

In Suemori's study (2008), quality of marital relationship was divided into two parts: marital relationship satisfaction and marital conflict. In this study, mothers were asked to answer questions about their amount of satisfaction in their current marital relationship based on the three items: "involvement with housework"; "involvement with children"; and "overall marriage", on scale from 1 (I agree (4 points)) to 4 (I do not agree (1 point)) ($\alpha=0.67$)⁴. On marital conflict, mothers were asked how often they argue about their children over the following four items: "discipline"; "grades"; "future"; and "daily life" from 1 (Everyday (4 points)) to 4 (Never (1 point)) ($\alpha=0.87$).

3.5 Gender Ideology

Fathers and mothers were asked the following items on a scale of 1 (I agree (4 points)) to 4 (I do not agree (1 point)); "Men should work and women should be devoted to housework and raising children"; "Housework are a women's job, so men don't have to help"; and "Men should also do housework" (Fathers: $\alpha=0.70$, mothers: $\alpha=0.61$)⁵.

3.6 Father's Participation in Housework

Measurement variables on father's participation in housework were created in reference to Kato (2001). Fathers were asked the six following items on a scale of 1 (frequently (4 points)) to 4 (never (1 point)): "taking out trash"; "every day shopping"; "cleaning rooms"; "laundry (even if it is only taking in the clothes)"; "meal preparation"; and "cleaning up after the meal" ($\alpha=0.80$).

3.7 Child's Value

Referring to a scale established by the Management and Coordination Agency (1987), fathers were asked to answer ten items, and the five highest-ranking items selected by the principal factor method were used for analysis. The five items were "I am raising an heir to pass down my vision to", "I need my child to be a labor force for the family", "My child will take care of me when I am old", "I had a child to carry on the family name", and "My child strengthens the bond within the family", and was named "attitude toward family continuity" (hereon referred to as "attitude toward family continuity"). Fathers answered these questions on a scale of 1 (I agree

4 see footnote 3

5 see footnote 3

(4 points)) to 4 (I do not agree (1 point)) ($\alpha=0.74$).

4. Analysis Method

In this section, we will discuss the descriptive statistics and correlations for each variable and the result of analysis using path model in AMOS based on a conceptual model. Missing values due to the lack of responses concerning gender, the number of children, the fathers' age, and the father-son residence distance were excluded, and missing values of other variables were replaced with the mean value, resulting in 339 sets of participants (339 fathers, 339 mothers, and 339 children) for analysis.

Results

1. Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 shows the mean, range, and standard deviation of each variable. Children's mental dependence is slightly high but independence in daily life was also high. This result was different from that of a previous study (Yang 2010) which suggested low independence in daily life in boarding school students. 70% of the child-participants boarded at a young age (kindergarten/elementary school: 30%, middle school: 50%, high school 20%), became accustomed to their boarding school lifestyle, and were able to do personal tasks on their own, leading to high self-dependence levels in daily life. Emotional support and nurturing was relatively high for father and mothers' supportive behavior, but mothers scored higher for involvement and instructions in the child's daily life. Marital relationship satisfaction was also somewhat high and

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

Variables	Number	Range	Averag	SD	α
Children's mental dependence (Children)	6	6~24	17.10	3.44	.75
Independence in daily life (Mother)	3	3~12	9.18	1.94	.68
Emotional support and nurturing (Father)	4	5~16	12.28	2.37	.74
Involvement in child's daily life (Father)	2	2~8	3.46	1.63	-
Instructions in child's daily life (Father)	2	2~8	4.66	1.86	-
Emotional support and nurturing (Mother)	4	5~16	12.63	2.31	.74
Involvement in child's daily life (Mother)	2	2~8	4.94	1.77	-
Instructions in child's daily life (Mother)	2	2~8	5.35	1.75	-
Marital satisfaction (Mother)	3	3~12	9.41	1.50	.67
Marital conflict (Mother)	4	4~16	7.63	3.09	.87
Participation in housework (Father)	6	7~24	14.64	3.79	.80
Attitude toward Family Continuity(Father)	5	5~20	10.58	3.50	.74
Fathers' gender ideology (Father)	3	3~12	5.97	1.96	.70
Mothers' gender ideology (Mother)	3	3~12	5.65	1.77	.61
Living Distance between father and child (Father)	1	1~4	2.76	1.18	-

marital conflict was low. Lastly, attitude toward family continuity of fathers was low.

2. Correlation Analysis

Table 3 shows correlations of each variable. Positive correlation was found between children's mental dependence and fathers' emotional support and nurturing ($r=.302, p<.001$). Marital relationship satisfaction and children's dependence on fathers was high when fathers scored high on emotional support and nurturing. Also, a negative correlation was found between children's independence in daily life and fathers' and mothers' involvement in daily life (father: $r=-.137, p<.05$; mother: $r=-.386, p<.001$). When fathers have a conservative gender ideology concept, the score for fathers' emotional support and nurturing was low and children's independence in daily life was also low. When the father and child live far from each other, children tended to have high personal dependence.

Table 3. Correlations and Descriptive Statistics

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1.Children's mental dependence(Children)	1																
2.Independence in daily life (Mother)	.072***	1															
3.Emotional support and nurturing (Father)	.302***	.048	1														
4.Involvement in child's daily life (Father)	-.014	-.137*	.049	1	***												
5.Instructions in child's daily life(Father)	.032	.036	.097***	.224	1												
6.Emotional support and nurturing (Mother)	.102	.169**	.406***	.016	.048	1											
7.Involvement in child's daily life (Mother)	.057	-.386	.069	.291	.036***	.005	1										
8.Instructions in child's daily life (Mother)	-.021	.123*	-.037	-.022	.327	.064	.026	1									
9.Marital satisfaction (Mother)	.197	.123*	.227	.013	.003	.248***	-.101	-.044	1								
10.Marital conflict (Mother)	.058	-.042	-.003	.127*	.178**	-.021	.091	.053	.016	1							
11.Participation in housework (Father)	.010	.081	.057	.273***	.285***	-.046	-.049	.001	.110*	.083	1						
12.Attitude toward Family Continuity(Father)	.055	.029	.078	.218	.197	.073	.084	.066	.110*	.205	.131*	1					
13.Fathers' gender ideology(Father)	-.081	-.136*	-.193***	-.014	-.060	-.069	.091	.070	-.068	.112**	-.119*	.174**	1				
14.Mothers' gender ideology(Mother)	.032	-.101	-.178	.118	.041	-.135*	.053	.064	.015	.161**	.022	.215***	.471	1			
15.Fathers' age(Father)	.132*	-.032	.040	-.106	-.134*	.068	.027	-.015	-.043	-.084	.030	-.013	-.044	-.083	1		
16.Living Distance between father and child	-.020	.202	.059	-.120*	.020	-.120*	.020	-.008***	-.145**	-.095	.003	.032	.070	-.017	.064**	1	
17.Number of children (Children)	-.072	.047	-.085	-.107*	-.056	-.013	-.198***	.058	-.119*	-.033	-.075	-.039	.066	-.022	.178***	.016	1

Note: * $p<.05$; ** $p<.01$; *** $p<.001$

3. Path Analysis

Figure 2 shows the result of the path analysis. The proposed model yielded a chi-square of 141.115 with 82 degrees of freedom (GFI=.956, AGFI=.908, RMSEA=.046) and it could be said the model fits the data reasonably well. Analysis revealed that marital relationship satisfaction, mothers' emotional support for their children, and children's independence in daily life were higher when the fathers provided more emotional support and nurturing. The same factors, high emotional support and nurturing from fathers, were associated with children's high mental dependence on fathers. More instructions from the fathers led to more marital conflict. Marital conflict, however, did not significantly influence mothers' supportive behavior. Another finding was that each factor of fathers' supportive behavior positively influenced respective factors of mothers' supportive behavior. Thus, when all three factors; emotional support and nurturing, involvement in child's daily life, and daily life instructions by fathers scored high, the same factors were high for mothers. The more daily life instructions mothers gave to their children, the

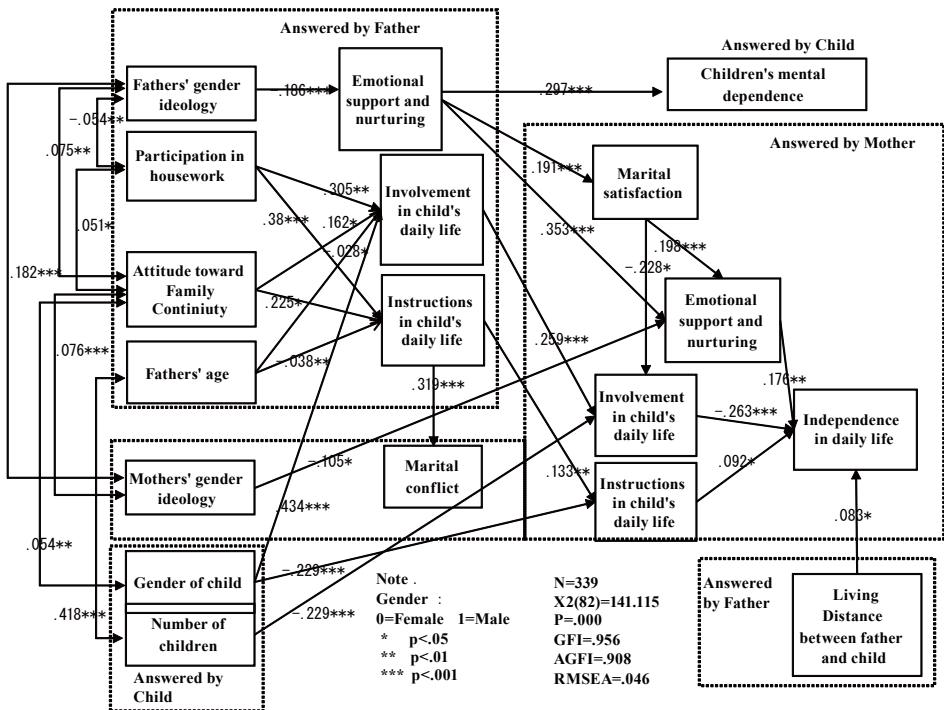


Figure 2. Path Model Predicting Children's mental dependence and Independence in daily life

higher independence of the children. However, the more involved mothers were with their children's daily life, the lower the children's personal independency in daily life.

Significant deciding factors for fathers' supportive behavior were fathers' gender ideology, fathers' participation in housework, attitude toward family continuity, fathers' age, and child's gender. When fathers have a more conservative gender ideology concept, their emotional support and nurturing for their children were lower. On the other hand, the younger the age of fathers and higher attitude toward family continuity led to greater fathers' involvement in housework and involvement and instructions in children's daily life. On child's gender, fathers of boys rather than girls tended to be more involved with their children's daily life. Significant deciding factors for mothers' supportive behavior were mothers' gender ideology, the child's gender, and the number of children. When mothers have a more conservative gender ideology concept, their emotional support and nurturing for their children are lower. On the child's gender, mothers of girls rather than boys tended to give more frequent daily life instructions. Also, mothers of families with one child were more involved with their child's daily life than mothers of families with multiple children.

Conclusion and Discussion

Three main issues were found in this study. First, although fathers' supportive behavior did not directly influence children's independence in daily life, it did influence mothers' supportive behavior with marital relationship as an intermediate, and mothers' supportive behavior also influenced children's independence in daily life. The reason why fathers do not directly influence children's independence in daily life may be because fathers generally provide less nurturing than mothers, but supportive behavior of the fathers influenced that of the mothers. Family system theory, which states fathers' way of supporting children influences mothers' way of raising children and children's independence in daily life, was also applicable to families in rural China. To promote independence in daily life in their children, daily life instructions and emotional support from both the father and the mother are important, but excessive involvement in their life interferes with nurturing their self-dependence.

Secondly, while children's mental dependence was generally high, the more emotional support and nurturing fathers gave to their children, the more mentally dependent their children became on their fathers. Most of child participants were boarding school students, and taking a look at how often they talk to their parents,

50% answered “almost every day” or “2,3 days a week”⁶ about their mothers, but only 38% answered the same for fathers. Adolescence is a crisis-prone period for the parent-child relationship and distance often starts to grow between them. In this study, however, children (including many boarding school students) were rather mentally dependent on their fathers. It is often assumed that boarding school students do not interact much in person with their mothers and especially with their fathers, but thanks to communication devices and parents visiting their children when they do not come home, children are not necessarily receiving less daily essentials and mental support. This may be contributing to children’s mental dependence on their parents. Also, high emotional support and nurturing from fathers was associated with children’s high mental dependence on their fathers. This means that fathers’ emotional support and nurturing promotes their children’s mental dependence and strengthens ties between parents and their children.

Thirdly, almost 60% of families had two children in rural parts of Shanxi where this study took place, which was more than families with one child. This study found that mothers of an only child were more involved with their child’s life than mothers of two or more children. Many comments such as “I want to take care of everything for my child so that he/she can concentrate on studying as much as possible” were written in the comment space. Parents from rural regions value their children’s education and emphasize the importance of going to college, thus hold high hopes under the following equation: good grades ⇒ good college ⇒ good job ⇒ social success. Fathers of boys held a higher awareness for the family’s continuous existence than fathers of girls. Traditional concepts such as raising sons for maintaining family ancestry and retirement and high hopes for boys to carry down the family name, as mentioned in previous studies, were also confirmed in this study. Fathers with a traditional gender ideology have an awareness of family’s continuation, such as “yang er fang lao” (the child takes care of parents when old) and “chuan zong jie dai” (succeed the blood line for generations), and have high hopes for the child’s college education and future social success. This leads to fathers with high concepts of family name survival to become more involved and give instructions in children’s daily life. Supportive behaviors of such fathers influence mothers, which leads to more involvement by mothers in children’s life. When this happens, children become personally dependent on their parents and their self-dependence becomes low.

Next, I will mention limitations of this study. Firstly, data collection was only conducted in the rural areas of Shanxi. However, new findings in the rural areas

6 The following percentage shows how often children talk with their fathers (mothers in parentheses): “almost every day” 12.3% (20.3%); “2, 3 days a week” 25.7% (29.7%); “2, 3 days a month” 57.1% (46.5%); and “rarely” 4.9% (3.5%).

were obtained by asking how fathers' nurturing behavior influences mental parental-dependence and independence in daily life of high school students. Secondly, this study did not investigate the influence of instructions and lifestyle at boarding schools on mental parental-dependence and independence in daily life of adolescent children. These influences need to be investigated. Factors such as instructions at boarding schools should be contemplated for future investigations.

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