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Contemporary New Confucianism and the Ancient European Philosophy: Analysis and Comparison

Introduction

The ancient philosophies in the East and West undoubtedly are the greatest cultural heritage of the world that impacts culture, mentality, social practices, and politics respectively in both the East and West. In the East, China's ancient philosophical concept of the Heavens, Earth and Human condition paved the thoughts of harmony between mankind and nature. Yet it was so much limited along the way by the ancient moral governances of five Chinese emperors including 皇帝 (*Huang Di*), 颛顼 (*Zhuan Xu*), 帝喾 (*Di Ku*), 尧 (*Yao*) and 舜 ("Shun"). Furthermore, the maintenance of social order to achieve it triggered the emergence of many schools such as Lao-Tzu?, Kong-Tzu 551–479 B.C.E., Mo-Tzu 479–381 B.C.E., Hanfei-Tzu 281–233 B.C.E., Ying-and-Yang school during the Zhou dynasty, that exerted a substantial influence on the Chinese people, history, and even more of an impact on society and politics. The worship of the Heavens for seeking a harmonious society was replaced by benevolent governments that began during the Western Zhou, and that provided an opportunity to nourish the Kong-Tzu doctrines aiming at perfection in adopting Confucianism. Ever since, descending Chinese thoughts never broke the ceiling to reach new altitudes, and instead they followed almost by rote in their ancestors' tracks. Coincidentally at about the same time in the West, the Greek philosophers Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle provided

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their own novel thoughts toward solving social problems. Socrates' greatness was not how many principles he held but the teaching methodology he conducted. By challenging his students to ask then answer questions (Socratic Method), he inspired more thoughts upward from younger minds and dialectical debating that resulted in the crafting of Plato's *Republic* that in turn left more philosophical ideas to Plato's students who included Aristotle. What followed was a mushrooming of metaphysical thought among students of Aristotle who included from 342 B.C.E. the future king of Macedonia, Alexander the Great. An initial idea that probed the relationship between matter and the world spawned the next idea.

1. Contemporary Philosophies in Ancient China and Greece

There is a parlance when Chinese people talk about the philosophy by 黄老 (*Huang Lao*) and 孔孟 (*Kong Meng*) that distinguishes Daoism and Confucianism. Huang which means the Yellow Emperor from the legendary record saying he was the father for the Chinese civilization and author of 黄帝内经 (*Huang Di Nei Jing*), also considered him as the initiator of many philosophical thoughts of the relationship of *Ying* and *Yang*, the harmony between nature, mankind, and the society. *Lao-Tzu* (Old Master), whose original name was 李尔 (*Li Er*), recorded him to write the series of 道德经 (*Tao Te Ching*), so called the philosophy of 道 (*Dao*) in which is explained the methodology and epistemology in exploring the relationship between nature and mankind. By *Kong* and *Meng* reference is made to Kong-Tzu (Master Kong) or "Confucius" in Latin, which is the foundation of original Confucianism and that revised by Meng Tzu (Master Meng) 372–289 B.C.E. respectively. Zhou Gong, a politician of Pre-Confucian presence who lived about 500 hundred years before Confucius, preached the "Mandate of Heaven" which legitimized the ruling power for the King of Zhou by the 天 (*Tian*), super power of nature. He asserted the virtues for the Kings, as a self-discipline in order to be a good pattern to others, and created the regulations systematically for the Zhou Dynasty regime that has kept order across China ever since.

What place Confucianism holds in academic research globally, particularly in China, is arguable. When compared to the emergence of Western political philosophy, it parallels ancient Greece in terms of time, Kong-Tzu having lived while Socrates lived 469–399 B.C.E., born ten years after Kong-Tzu's death. Kong-Tzu was succeeded by 77 disciples (some argue only 72) who knew him personally and recorded his thoughts in the written word, published as the *Analects*. Of them, his principal protégé was

Yan Hui, 521–490 B.C.E., but it remains unclear which individual disciple authored what part of the *Analects* attributed to what Kong Tzu said verbally during his lifetime. In contrast, Socrates' principal protégé was Plato, 429–347 B.C.E., whose lifetime probably began soon after the last of Kong-Tzu's personal students died. Plato's *Republic* captures some of the dialogue Plato enjoyed with Socrates. The most significant post-Confucian philosopher was Meng-Tzu (Mencius with name Latinized), who lived c. 372–289 B.C.E., and whose lifetime therefore overlapped that of Aristotle, 384–322 B.C.E., who had been Plato's student at Plato's academy for 19 years, 366–347 B.C.E., when he was between 18 and 37 years old, his studies at Plato's academy having ended with Plato's death.

The chain of intellectual content is considered to have been unbroken from Socrates through Plato to Aristotle. This chain does not pass directly from Kong-Tzu to Men-Tzu or to any other major post-Confucian scholar, for two reasons: Kong-Tzu declared that he left 77 qualified disciples, and history is unable to record which disciple wrote what part of the *Analects*. Some scholars do contend that among the most authentic Confucian philosophy is what is recorded from Kong-Tzu's grandson, Tzu Ssu, through Kong-Tzu's youngest disciple Tseng Tzu. Suffice it to conclude that passage of Confucian thought from Kong-Tzu to Men-Tzu over two centuries from 489 to 289 B.C.E. paralleled the passage of Socratic thought through Plato to Aristotle over one century from approximately 422 to 322 B.C.E. It is significant to note that most of what Socrates passed on to Plato and most of what Kong-Tzu passed on to his personal students occurred during the last decade or two of the lifetime of each master. Although Confucianism is at the core of Eastern philosophy and the Greek philosophy of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle is at the core of Western political philosophy, and although both of these intellectual milestones occurred during roughly the same epoch, they are very different, in part almost 180 degree opposites, and this difference does much to explain the dichotomous thought approaches adopted by East and West, by Asia and Europe (later America) across two millennia up to and including the 21st century. Although Greek philosophy is at the root of modern democracy, Confucianism is at the root of Chinese authoritarianism across the centuries.

2. Different Directions

Confucian philosophy and Confucian political thought especially is top down and feudal with a rigid authoritarian hierarchy over which ordinary mankind is given little control, expected to remain obedient.

It was triggered by social problems in terms of wars and killings that have occurred all the time. At first, conflict occurred over morality and virtue as principles, but then escalated to conflict over territory where the bigger and more powerful vassal merged his smaller counterpart into his realm, ignoring the tribute they were honor bound to pay to the King of Zhou, evidencing filial disrespect. Confucius attributed all problems to 礼崩乐坏 (*Li Beng Yue Huai*).¹ The system of 礼 (*Li*) or ritual 乐 (*Yue*) or music was one of the five political instrumentals created by Zhou Gong during the earlier Western Zhou Dynasty period, 1046–771 B.C.E., for maintaining Zhou's regime. *Li* regulated the occasion of the reception and ceremony, and requirements of the funeral differentiating from King and vassals. *Yue*, one could interpret music in order to distinguish the hierarchy from the King and vassals. However, *Li Yue* only served the ruling class, which means top down from the King, duke, grant master, down to the servicemen, that was called the superstructure. Confucian doctrine partially is a theme of restoration of the *Li Yue* in order the turn social disorder around. Another part of Confucian thought is 苟正其身矣，于从政乎何有？不能正其身，如正人何² which means if one makes his own conduct correct, what difficulty will he have in assisting in government? If he cannot rectify himself, what legitimacy has he to rectify others?" This theory cited the 以正治国 (*Yi Zheng Zhi Guo*) which governs states by righteousness.³ In spite of the fact that one hundred schools boomed during the Warring States Period, the theme of the political prospective unexpectedly traced back to the Chinese ancient philosophy, Daoism. Kong-Tzu's contribution to Chinese ethnical morality is to set up the standard upon his predecessor's achievement such as Zhou Gong and Lao-Tzu. He summarized the virtues 仁 (*Ren*), 义 (*Yi*) and 礼 (*Li*) from scratch in the establishment of Confucianism (probably he did not realize the importance of it). As to the purpose of his school, benefited from Confucian thought, Men-Tzu who was a student of and inspired by Kong-Tzu, extended the virtues with 智 (*Zhi*)⁴ into the Kong-Tzu's three. At the time of the Wu emperor of Han, Dong Zhongshu (179–104 B.C.E.), a Confucian-style scholar promoted the importance of the Con-

¹ *Li* and *Yue* were two mechanisms in order to maintain the society in good order that moment, likely the laws regulations nowadays. Kong-Tzu's viewpoint over the social problem that due to the system of *Li* was collapse and structure of *Yue* disordered – by the author.

² See “论语·子路” [*Analects. Zi Lu*].

³ See “道德经” Daoism. chapter 57.

⁴ See 孟子·告子上 (Men-Tzu. Gao Zishang). “是非之心，智也” [*Knowing what right and wrong, which is wisdom*].

fucian ethic, and claimed in that way that his thought bore neither co-existence nor co-development with Confucian doctrines.⁵ Once more he added the 信 (*Xin*), which consisted of the Five Constants, claiming the codes for the people's normality.

About contemporaneously with Kong-Tzu, in the West the Socratic approach for philosophy had been made by the Greeks that pivoted from the cosmology and ontology, the natural science of humane studies reflected in the motto of the oracle at Delphi, 'know thyself', in order to care first about the greatest perfection of the soul. He thought the soul was immortal, and a part of the nature that earmarked as the father of idealism in Western philosophy. In that way he became a devoted teacher. Compared to knowledge, which is varied and a matter of recollection, however, truth is eternal. He endeavored to pursue it not from outside but from inside of mankind. Also, Socrates advocated a Political philosophy, and the state ruled by virtue, where that virtue is not material wealth as is the common concept of Kong-Tzu's 君子 (*Jun Zi*). Yet in the field of education "I know but I know nothing," so went the Socratic paradox that incomparably to Kong-Tzu's looked like an irony. Questions arose from the audience hardly to be answered. It is the differentiation between the teacher and the sage. The former passes knowledge and the latter imparts wisdom. Obviously it triggered more thought and contradiction into conversations in which the approval of "Wisdom begins with wonder" in dialectical Epistemology over the matter. The methodology of the "Socratic circle" creates an approach from one question to another in a spiral ascendant to another philosophical altitude, which is the way to be in better understandings over the matter. However, the Socratic philosophical contribution is that ideas are made from a dialectical thinking, not for answers but for an exploration to truth. Tucked into *The Republic* is a very important dialogue with "the other" carried forth in a systematic design of the politics with the true good and the philosophical aesthetics for the city. In his "Allegory of the Cave," Plato (427–347 B.C.E.), the student of Socrates, advanced a theory concerning the perception of knowledge through the sense that is no more than the reality of truth. It tries to explain what shadows one sees that are not representative of the truth, arguing that one could see the truth through the shadow. The philosopher should be like the "escaped prisoner" to break the chains, which means

⁵ See 董仲舒. 天人三策 (Dong Zhongshu. Tianren San Ce). "臣愚以为诸不在六艺之科, 孔子之术者, 皆绝其道, 勿使并进" [*I think it is not trustful to the one is not trained by the six disciples of Confucian. It should stop and not allow to be co-existence nor co-development*].

to transcend empirical knowledge to seek the truth. For the approach of the methodology in getting to know more of the world, Plato became the father of Metaphysics, in which the abstract becomes reality. In spite of the metaphysics taken over by Aristotle (384–322 B.C.E.), the viewpoints argued the causality of the thing that existence of the thing one is to know for its existence. By knowing the relation of them, Aristotle identified the sequential theories of modes of causation, which divides the proper (prior) from the accidental (chance) in order to explain their reciprocal relations and all relations in between.

Very important to understand is that the line of philosophical thought inspired by Socrates and written by Plato and Aristotle spanned out as spokes on a wheel, radiating in many directions across the West to become the core foundation of ethical and political thought across Europe in the centuries afterwards, gestating as it migrated, taking on new forms of thought from place to place. In contrast, the ethical and political thought of Confucius remained constant, largely unchanged across centuries and places. It is evident in the ethical and political values of countries that paid tribute to China historically, but largely in its original form. So the philosophy of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle has become dynamic, catalyzing intellectual and social change in many parts of the world for over 25 centuries. On the other hand, the philosophy of Confucius has remained largely just as it began, authoritarian and rigid and intractable such that it has held the old order in place without yielding to new orders, much less spawning them.

3. People, States, Democracy and Politics

For politics, Socratic, Platonic, and Aristotelian Greek philosophy, separately and especially their combined political thought, created the birth of democracy with a “bottom up” approach invested squarely in mankind, primarily the individual, albeit more in a middle class than universally. “Man is by nature a political animal” in the many understanding that could be a political rights equipped with, as a man. Therefore the component consists the constitution as an institution which “is set forth in Politics”. Also they divided government into different forms by the constitutional classification, as below:

The hypotheses in the presumed forms of the governments were classified as being either “correct” or “deviant,” the methodological analysis logically directed at the political form for the future’s evolution. It worked, and it still works at the 21st century. It differs from that advocated by Kong-Tzu where the political view often times belonged to the King’s

position on the top, and one ruler reigned among the super four classes, outlined below. Under it was the 庶人 [Shu Ren] class⁶ to which the ethnical requirements of ritual would not reach. Instead of justice, they would receive punishment.⁷ Yet justice must be proportional to harm done that justice seeks to remedy, such that excessive punishment is not justice at all, only more harm.

Figure 1. Politics in Aristotle's Viewpoint

	Correct	Deviant
One Ruler	Kingship	Tyranny
Few Rulers	Aristocracy	Oligarchy
Many Rulers	Polity	Democracy

Source: Aristotle, *Politics* III. 7.

To Aristotle, justice will come in two forms if it will come at all: distributive and certificatory, the former having to do with the relationship between people and state powers, the latter being concerned with relationships such as commercial transactions between individuals and legal entities.⁸ We might call the former public justice, the latter private justice. Some scholars have contended that Aristotle did not believe any form of justice was adequate, not even his own.⁹ Arguably, this reflects how little confidence Aristotle held in the state, any state, compared to Confucius who, one might conclude, placed the state high on a pedestal. Derivative of this assumption may be the roots of democracy: if we doubt the wisdom of any known theory of justice, we must canvass the population in an ongoing effort to construct what we lack. That exactly is what post-Aristotelian thinkers have done, and what post-Confucius thinkers have failed to do. Autocracy remains substantially as it always has been. Democracy is fluid, subject to innovative changes.

⁶ The class without an aristocratic title, or ordinary people who the group without the treatment by the system of *Li* and structure of *Yue* – by the author.

⁷ See 礼记·曲礼 Li Ji. Qu Li. “刑不上大夫，礼不下庶人” [For the punishment not up to the Grand Master, for the ritual requirement not reach down to commoners].

⁸ D. Johnston, *A Brief History of Justice*, Oxford and Malden MA Wiley, Blackwell 2011, p. 63–88.

⁹ D. Winthrop, *Aristotle and Theories of Justice*, “American Political Science Review”, Dec. 1978, Vol. 72, No. 4, p. 1201.

Aristotle's greatest personal impact was on his own student who became a ruler instead of a philosopher, Alexander of Macedon. In fact, it is possible to contend that Aristotle's concern went beyond mere knowledge and into actions by people and states, as is evidenced by some elements of his book, *Nicomachean Ethics*.¹⁰ Subsequent Greek philosophers of the Peripatetic School took up Aristotle's intrigue of what we might call asymmetry, another significant change from the five traditional Chinese elements (Earth, Water, Fire, Wood, Metal), in that to his four basic elements (Earth, Water, Air, Fire) three of which overlap Chinese elements exactly, he added Aether, a type of alcohol, that Aristotle considered to be a heavenly sphere and symbolic of what is unknown. Perhaps Aristotle's strongest influence came in *Summa Theologica*¹¹ written by St. Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), the most influential of the early Christian philosophers, and the gateway to the Enlightenment. If Confucius limited his concern to what was temporal, Aristotle and his progeny expanded their concern beyond the temporal and into the spiritual. Aristotle's influence over the post-Renaissance philosophers was strong also. It is believed that 19th century German existentialist Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche was influenced in all his works primarily by Aristotle.¹² Martin Heidegger advanced an entirely new interpretation of Aristotle.¹³ Scottish philosopher Alasdair Chalmers MacIntyre attempted to bridge the gap that exists between liberal and Nietzschean interpretations of Aristotle following his conversion to Roman Catholicism after a Marxian past.¹⁴ The Vienna Circle of Western philosophers likely contributed more than others toward understanding Aristotle in the 20th century, if only because their commitment to positivism inspired them to share Aristotle's doubtfulness of his philosophy that transposed into their feelings of doubt about themselves. Confucian philosophy, on the other hand, is authoritarian and lacks doubt in most respects. In the West, rulers require popular consent, as is evidenced by the question the authority performing a coronation (Pope, Archbishop) used to ask the people gathered to witness the coronation of French kings at Reims Cathedral: "Will you have him?" Invariably they assented, but they were asked as no Chinese person ever has been.

¹⁰ Book I, Chapter 7.

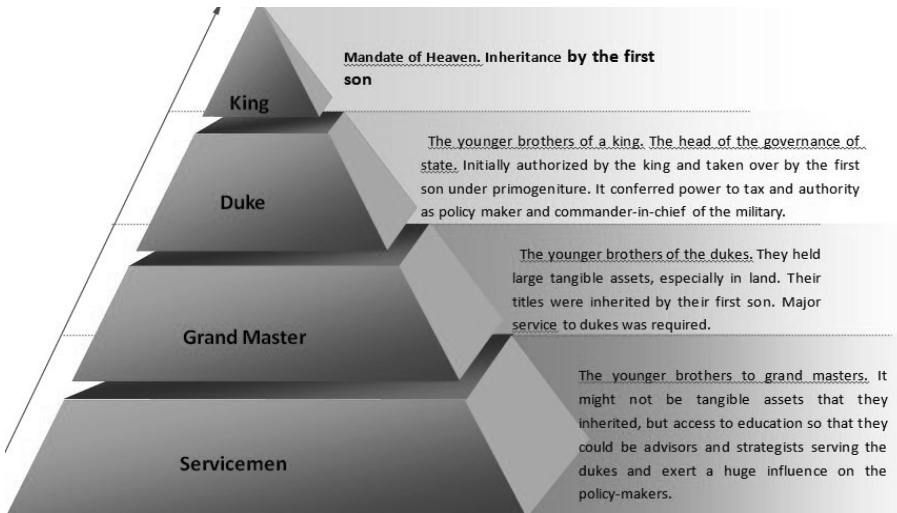
¹¹ Written 1265–1274. See particularly Book I, Question 3.

¹² W. Durant, *The Story of Philosophy*, New York 2006, p. 86.

¹³ W.A. Brogan, *Heidegger and Aristotle: The Twofoldness of Being*, Albany 2005.

¹⁴ A.C. MacIntyre, *Dependent Rational Animals: Why Human Beings Need the Virtues*, Chicago 1999, p. 127.

Figure 2. Hierarchy of Nobility in the Zhou Dynasty China



Source: as adapted by the author.

Confucian disciples placed authority and responsibility in the hands of families: an Imperial family in command of national governance, under them a hierarchy of families responsible for regional governance, with the ordinary family at the center of most individual lives, regulated from oldest to youngest, formally by male elders, informally in some respects by female elders. Greek philosophers, on the other hand, invested the individual with both authority and responsibility, the foundations of democracy. European thought patterns favored male over female persons also, and in both traditional societies, Confucian Chinese and Greek European, accumulated family position and wealth counted significantly. Regarding the education and personality respects, the ancient Greek philosophers asserted that men and women have equal rights to education and all wives and children share private property ownership. It is impossible it could happen in the ancient China, where an education was the privilege of the aristocratic classes, and women had no property rights, but on the contrary women were the property of the family. From the formula of 三从四德 (*San Cong Si De*), “the three obediences and the four virtues,”¹⁵ one could observe that women in

¹⁵ 三从四德 (*the three obediences and the four virtues*), The women in Chinese history requested to follow up the rulers accordance with the Confucian doctrines in three obedience: be obedient to father before marriage, be obedient to husband when married; be obedient to son in widowhood, and four virtues (fidelity, physical charm, propriety

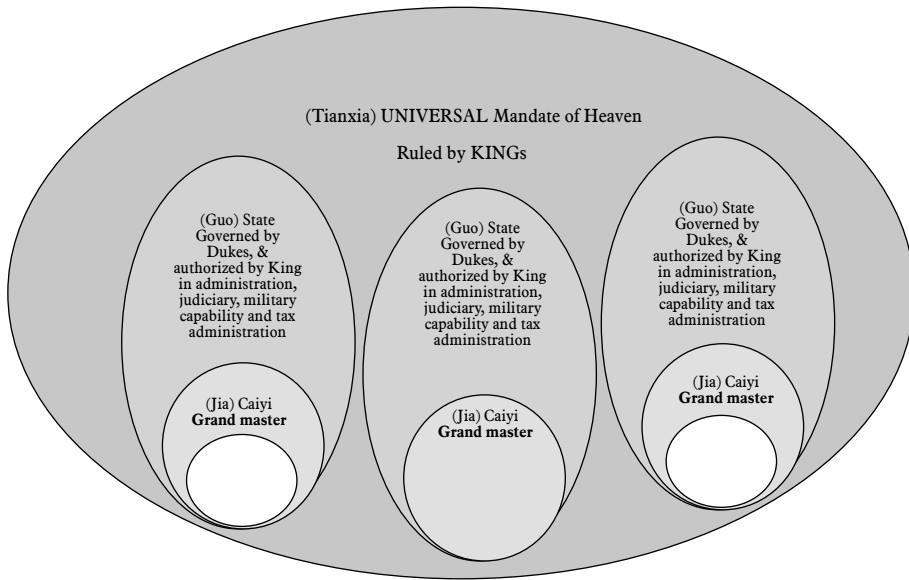
China had no independence, no social position, nor were women entitled to any respect.

The concept of state in ancient Greece was concerned with the territory where the people lived, in accordance with Aristotle's philosophy. In the many thoughts, people also were viewed as being the carriers of politics and democracy in divergence studied scientifically. Thucydides (460–395 B.C.E.) witnessed the Peloponnesian War between the Peloponnesian League (led by Sparta) and the Delian League (led by Athens) therefore claimed the power of state, noticing security congregating with alliance against war and believing that powerful regions would be able to defeat the invasion. With the participation of the war, Thucydides witnessed the bigger power of alliance bringing the bad the consequence than smaller, and the expansionism therefore has the chance to go wild to make even more damage, because he felt that all human nature was the same. Security and war seemed to be only the alternative to maintain honor at the chaotic period in the East and West. During the Peloponnesian War, 431–404 B.C.E., in the Greek islands, in the East contemporaneously wars were taken for the security of the states. However, multiple mechanisms of the strategies applied for the surviving, such as the theories of vertical and horizontal coalition, the opposition of the board doctrine seeking the power of state strong enough to maintain an upper position in the War. At the moment Confucius experienced the consequence of war, as seen by Thucydides, war was the violence of advisor in terms of awakening the cruel side of human nature, which can cause extreme damage when war breaks out. In Thucydides' book on the Peloponnesian War, apart from the terrible sense and damage of the war he described, he also tried to explore of the origin of human nature.

Contemporaneously in the East there were a lot of states in Zhou's territory, in opposition to the concept of state in the West. However, this design was much more likely a room of the family ruled by a brother. Less attention was drawn towards the people (commoners) living in another location than the rulers themselves. After the defeat of the Shang dynasty, the King of Wen in Zhou claimed for himself the exalted position of the Mandate of Heaven for legitimacy, as an ultimate ruler of the kingdom that was also called *tiaoxia* (universe). The deployment of the administration by the system of enfeoffment that ceded the kingdom into the different regions to his brothers and relatives, the former aristocracy of Shang, and the merit bearers in battle, as the head of the states. Each level of position was inherited by the right of lineal primogeniture which was one of the strictest rules in the system of clan (see the figure below).

in speech and efficiency in needle work).

Figure 3. Zhou System of Universe Under Mandate of Heaven



Source: as adapted by the author.

This is the power divergence limit among rulers to fellow rulers resulting the center for the Zhou's kingship and emphasized political power only among the aristocratic classes. Commoners had no rights even to be mentioned. When the same sense of the war seen by Confucius claimed to build virtue in individuals, especially to the rulers in order to prevent war, he tried to restore Zhou's order for keeping a harmonious society. On Zhou's order of Li (ritual) and Yue (music), he widened and deepened the rigid relationship between father and son in the home, King and minister in government, that was asserted in legislation of power – whatever the kingdom and family, the senior positions of king and father held absolute power as authorized by heaven (God), which the representative of the regime and states enforced. Such power mostly resulted in the turning out of totalitarianism carried on by a dictatorship playing the very important roles throughout of Chinese history.¹⁶

Philosophers in the East and West agreed that “Men need moral restraints” but there is no guarantee to keep the restraints working well

¹⁶ See “论语·颜渊” [*Analects. YanYuan*]. “齐景公问政于孔子。孔子对曰：君君，臣臣，父父，子子” [*In response of the questions about politic by Duke of Qi, Kongzi replied saying King acts as a Kings', Minster acts as a ministers', Father acts as a fathers', and Son acts as a sons*].

when the needs of the people are extreme. In the West, the birth of democracy in ancient Greece, the way to know the world in dialect and metaphysics paved the way to governance by regulations and laws, given in order to limit the power of the mighty in order to enable the commoner to share power. That limitation of power and increase of popular rights never happened in China, or one could say never was allowed to happen in China. If a region with its power is too concentrated in one respect, or a few elite people, that means neither regulation nor laws could be considered, and it finally was replaced by another one from which we can study eleven bigger dynasties in Chinese history.

4. The Transmutation during the Middle Ages in Europe and China

De Bary and Bloom have defined this concept as follows:

“Neo-Confucianism” is a general term used to refer to the renaissance of Confucianism during the Song dynasty following a long period in which Buddhism and Daoism had dominated the philosophical world of the Chinese and also to the various philosophical schools of thought that developed as a result of that renaissance. Neo-Confucianism had its roots in the late Tang, came to maturity in the Northern and Southern Song periods, and continued to develop in the Yuan, Ming, and Qing periods. As a whole, Neo-Confucianism can best be understood as an intellectual reaction to the challenges of Buddhist and Daoist philosophy in which avowedly Confucian scholars incorporated Buddhist and Daoist concepts in order to produce a more sophisticated new Confucian metaphysics.¹⁷

By putting indigenous religions such as Taoism together with Confucian doctrines, the Neo-Confucianists of the Southern Song dynasty, 1127–1279, as Confucian revisionists, sought to construct China’s own identity in governance, moral ethics and in foreign commerce. Ever since 理 (*Li*) theory was created by the two Cheng brothers, Cheng Hao (1032–1086) and Cheng Yi (1033–1107) in the latter part of the Northern Song Dynasty, what followed was an integration of the scriptures of Buddhism and Taoism. Thanks but no thanks to the tremendous dynamism of Buddhism prevailing in architecture such as pagodas standing everywhere to be seen, the Buddhist institutions were left very open throughout the Tang dynasty. They respected Confucianism as the essential tradition of China, and ex-

¹⁷ W.T. de Bary, I. Bloom, *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, 2nd edition, vol. I, New York 1999, p. 704–705.

tracted some key theories from Buddhism and Taoism in combination with their own new philosophy, the so called Li, or Tian Li (heaven's power), which the common consensus of the Cheng Brothers hailed as the ultimate philosophically and as the true origin of the world, evidenced by the saying "Things being investigated, knowledge became complete."¹⁸

This debate over where the Li lay turned out two theories of thinking towards cosmic ontology and some different interpretations of anthropological ontology. They established the school in Louyang (currently in Henan province) to spread this theory. Nevertheless, it divided into two major schools, of Li and 心 (*Xin*), one representing Subjective Idealism and the other representing Objective Idealism. It withstood the ups and downs of scholarly criticism and debate for 140 years from its founding. In the fourth generation of this philosophy, student Zhu Xi (1130–1200) took it upon himself to preserve the heritage of Confucian thought by innovation, winning the favor of the Li Zong emperor (1225–1264) for his own purpose of using some point of it as a governmental tool in the maintenance of political ideology. Therefore, the Li school started prior to the Xin, and became the mainstream of theory which provided great help for Li theory, enabling it to penetrate deeper into the socio-political realm over the next 700 years of significant Chinese history.

Both Li and Xin theories, apart from the different epistemology to world, reflected common viewpoints to original Confucian doctrines joined together, such as the worship of the imperial power and following the way of Confucianism. Great favor of the 三纲五常 (*San Gang Wu Chang*), the restriction on the social ethnic which he considered to be characteristic of the gentlemen, similar to German philosopher Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche's "uber menchen" who were equipped with a good virtue and benevolence in achieving what was undertaken, and the petty men, similar to Nietzsche's "untermenchen" who just thought about themselves in being bean counters to enrich and gratify themselves and their families. In updating Confucian doctrine as being a virtue, Zhu Xi urged that the people "remove the desires of human in helping Tian Li."¹⁹ Perhaps this came to be a model for Nietzsche's god "Zarathustra" centuries afterwards,²⁰ as such works have overlapping themes distinguishing what is considered to be the good from what is evil.

¹⁸ See "礼记.大学" [*Li yi. Great Learning*]. "格物致知" [*Things being investigated, knowledge became complete*].

¹⁹ See 朱子语类 [*Zhu-Tzu quotations assembly with his students*], book 13.

²⁰ F.W. Nietzsche, *Also sprach Zarathustra: EinBuchfürAlle und Keinen* (*Thus Spake Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*), Chemnitz 1883.

The destination advocated by the Li theorists is limited by the frame out form which they are never able to jump: that they only can follow what they have been told by rote and which is the Confucian doctrines of education. In comparison with the theoretical debate between Li and Xin over the ontology that was always on paper, they did not intend to explain it within the reality of any concrete social aspects. They never even questioned why their current Song Dynasty emperor's surname was Zhao, or why their emperor's name in the previous dynasties were what they were: the Li Tang dynasty 618–907; the Yang Sui dynasty 581–619; Siam Jin dynasty 220–589; Liu Han dynasty B.C.E. 202–220 A.D., and Qin dynasty 221–207 B.C.E., nor had they studied the destination of each fallen dynasty after having been replaced by its successor. If the legitimacy of power was issued by Heaven as Confucianism always claimed, why could it not last as long as it wished?? Was it because of natural power, or just man-made?? They could not rise above anything like that to give more serious thinking to another topic besides that which followed on the roles of what they have been. Li theory turns out to be a false topic. Whatever, the definition became in reality by the Song dynasty for those theories that have changed over time. Neo-Confucianism just put the new contents into the old pottery jug. The transition is not meaningful at all.

5. Entangled Relations with the European Union: A Really Strategic Partnership?

The kick-off of the Opium war by Britain in 1841 with the Qing government in Guangzhou was the overture for Chinese relations with Europe. The war was taken at the soil of China, and the Qing government was defeated, ending up with the compensation of thousands of taels of silver, and ceded the regions of Hong Kong to Great Britain and Qingtao to Germany as colonized areas. It left humiliated memories to the Chinese people that have not healed in longer than a century. Dramatically, it generated nationalism and patriotism in the wars that followed with Japan, 1931–1945, and conflicts with the United States in the 1950s, and as an instrument to the central government applied since “Liberation” with the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) on 01 October 1949. For a new government isolated from the international community, patriotism was the legitimacy for the Chinese people to stand on without communication with the West. Until diplomatic relations were restored with the United States of America in 1972, the changes in political relationships followed one after another.

Firstly, changes at a political level since 1972 after China-US diplomatic normalization, which spawned ties among the major Western countries to restore diplomatic relationships with China. In reciprocation, China recognized the legitimacy of the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1975, a nine member state bloc. What of the achievement quantitatively by the economic boom between China and EC before the events of 04 June 1989 at Tiananmen Square in Beijing, could that be considered the period of the honeymoon? The first opening of China's market to foreign investment was the retail market right after economic reform. Carrefour, the multinational French supermarket corporation, probably was the first famous brand for the Chinese people to know. Not only did it bring convenience for Chinese shoppers but also better service as well for the customer. For example, the local supermarket owners tried to deliver the service to the customer, but they could not prevent the cost of items broken probably by children's wildness. The naïve solution for them was simply to prohibit kids from getting into the supermarket, instead of offering a playground for the kids to hang-out in where they could be watched. Once the Western brand supermarket Carrefour came to conduct business in China, surprisingly they facilitated the trolley-car with a folded board in order for children to sit down in the duration of shopping. This strategy improved the Chinese shopping practice a lot, and on another hand extended the human concerns of the Europeans to China. By the policy of exchange technology China's paramount leader Deng Xiaoping issued from 1981, China opened its market to the world, of course including EC member states. In 1984 both parties signed the first political consultations at the ministerial level in the context of the European Political Cooperation, and launch of the first cooperation projects in China for the management training and rural development. The 1985 Agreement on trade and economic cooperation signed between China and EC. Both sides reached the economic turn-over from USD2.4 billion in 1975 to USD 5.3 billion in 1981, and jumped to USD11.65 billion in 1986.

Secondly, changes turned around due to the split over human rights, constitutional values, and ideology. In the post-cold war period, although the EU embargoed China's sale of armaments to the EU, however the normal economic development kept going forward. The beginning of the political dialogue in 1994 earmarked China-EU relationship turning to the empirical orientation by passage of "A long term-policy for China-EU policy" by the European Commission. The paper emphasized the frame work in terms of the politic, economy and trade relationship between China and the EU, leading to the "Building a Comprehensive Partnership with China" in 1998. Trade value in 2012 reached EUR 165, 445 Million that China im-

ported from EU and EUR 261,244 to EU that China exported to the EU, making the EU the 2nd largest trade partner of China, after the United States, and from 2012 China's largest trading partner.²¹

Since 1995 EEC launched "a special dialogue on Human Rights issues" from time to time since the events of 04 June 1989, the dialogue on human rights in China took place at about 21 meetings between the EU and China up to 2013,²² the issue became an important weight in Sino-European relations. In 2010, Nobel Committee awarded the prize to the Chinese dissident Liu Xiaobo who was then serving an 11-year-sentence as a political prisoner to the Chinese government. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) criticized the award as being "against the purpose of the Nobel Peace Prize,"²³ but the prize carries the 21st century European spirit of "Freedom, Democracy and Human Dignity" to the winner as a leader in the development of a livable world for the individual, at the same time as the CCP is trying to strengthen its own autocracy and claiming to build up "the socialism in Chinese characteristic."²⁴ The differentiation worsened the relationship in comparison to the persistence of EU leaders who kept official relations with the Dalai Lama, as a bigger priority than the enhancement of the Sino-European strategic partnership²⁵ although "the meeting considered [His Holiness] as spiritual leader but not a head of states."²⁶ Yet the top leaders of CCP consider the Dalai Lama's influence much more of an attempt on the separation of Xi'zang (Tibet) from China's territory, as a political activity rather than a religion figure, a dual identity that is difficult to ignore. However, the cancelation in contracting of the 150 airplanes from France in March 2009 can be the consequence to former French President Nicholas Sarkozy for the meeting he had with the Dalai Lama in December 2008 that lost about USD 10 billion.²⁷

²¹ European Union, Trade in Goods with China, European Commission. Directorate-General for Trade, 27.08.2014, See: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2006/sepember/tradoc_113366.pdf p. 9 [last visited 20.10.2014].

²² EU-China Relations: Chronology, 05.02.2013, See: http://eeas.europa.eu/china/docs/chronology_2012_en.pdf [last visited 20.10.2014].

²³ Europe praises, China condemns Liu Xiaobo choice for Nobel Peace Prize, 08.10.2010, See: <http://www.dw.de/europe-praises-china-condemns-liu-xiaobo-choice-for-nobel-peace-prize/a-6093118> [last visited 20.10.2014].

²⁴ "中国特色的社会主义" [*The Socialism with Chinese characteristics*], See: <http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/ssrc/zgtsshzy/> [last visited 20.10.2014].

²⁵ Brussels stunned as Beijing cancels EU-China summit, 11. 27. 2008. See: <http://www.euractiv.com/foreign-affairs/brussels-stunned-beijing-cancels-eu-china-summit/article-177550> [last visited 20.10.2014].

²⁶ Ibidem.

²⁷ CS Staff, *Airbus "Loses" Chinese Order, and Everybody Has to Adjust China Stakes*,

It could be one stone killing two birds that the retaliation to France, and in the way was the warning to another country's leaders, that in meeting with Dalai Lamathe consequence likely will be expensive.

Thirdly, changes were attempted but got nowhere. When economic ties become closer across continents, more friction will arise also. For example, the anti-dumping allegations made frequently each year since China became "factory to the world." Countervailing duties imposed on Chinese goods exported to the EU, the investigation from Shoes, Batteries, Glasses, Solar Panels, and other products. The major argument over the dumping issue focuses on the subsidies Chinese manufacturers allegedly receive from the Chinese government. The EU blames the source of the cheaper products on subsidies. But those manufactures who got blamed are the Small to Medium-sized family Enterprises (SMEs), they even did not have either the money or the courage required to take a timely appeal. With many Chinese factories, dumping cases ended nowhere, China accuses the EU in the consideration of protectionism, because the EU appears to be minimizing damages to its local manufacturers. In fact, the problem attributes to China's political difference and its influence to the commercial field and the structure of the marketing design, plus the comparative inefficiency of technologies used by European manufacturers that are antiquated by current Chinese standards. As to the free economic marketing in EU and other Western countries, it seems to be unachievable in China at the current moment due to the various matters politically, historically and economically. To be clear, the Chinese dumping products in EU concerns does not save money for the Chinese workers and manufactures at all. On the contrary, it squeezes the Chinese people's welfare, pollutes China's environment, and damages the Chinese economy in the long haul. Debating over China's Market Economy Status (MES), used as a benchmark for the EU's trade regulations never stopped with negotiations between the high level political officials of china and the EU, but less efficiency to reach fulfillment thus far. Even the contribution China has made in post-financial crisis for the EU made the latter the 1st largest trade partner with China since 2012. Yet the year China was permitted to join the World Trade Organisation (WTO) on 11 November 2001, the squabble over MES shifted to the concrete text of the Information Technology Agreement (ITA), Trade in Services Agreement (TiSA), Government Procurement Agreement (GPA), and free access to the capital market that supposedly the Chinese government has failed to permit

03.03. 2009, See: <http://www.chinastakes.com/2009/3/airbus-loses-chinese-order-and-everybody-has-to-adjust.html> [last visited 20.10.2014].

to foreign investments since it joined the WTO. Furthermore, it could be interpreted that some of the frustration that EU companies face in China and that they claim to be discrimination really is explained otherwise. Although 71% of them think the following driver for China's economic growth would be "the transparent policy-making, and implementation of rule of the law"²⁸ that proves they have lack of awareness of what Guanxi (connection) is required in doing business in China. It is the typical Chinese commercial culture but hardly adopted by the EU companies. To fly in the face of the head-wind of China as a new member of the WTO, EU-China Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) came into reality in 2003.²⁹ China released a White paper on relations with the EU that was the first White paper on relation with a foreign partner. To achieve mutual communications, the EU-China Climate Change Summit became established in 2005 for the escalating cooperative frame in the future.³⁰ It followed with a communication entitled "EU-China: Closer Partners, Growing Responsibilities" in 2006,³¹ thereafter the stepped on a new EU-China Partner and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), which displays an intention to design a wider and deeper EU-China Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. Both sides reached to a range of global issues at the twelfth EU-China Summit in 2009 in Nanjing,³² China for the climate change, the financial crisis, energy and resource security, food security, the environment and public health security. By the time that a three-dimensional paradigm of the prospective of CSP between EU-China spread out and the dream seems to be ready to achieve step by step. Nevertheless, the dark side of China-EU relations in terms of the Intellectual Property Protection (IPP), marketing regulations, the policy-making transparency,

²⁸ Business Confidence Survey, European Business in China. European Chamber. See: http://www.ccilc.pt/sites/default/files/docs/EUCCC_RELAT%E2%80%A1RIO_AMBIENTE_DE_NEGOCIOS_2012_%5BEN%5D.pdf p. 28 [last visited 20.10.2014].

²⁹ Towards a stronger EU-China Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, Joint Press Communiqué 15th EU-China Summit, 20.10.2012. See: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/132507.pdf p. 1 [last visited 20.10.2014].

³⁰ Hot Issues, Cold Shoulders Lukewarm Partners: EU Strategic Partnerships and Climate Change, 11.2012. See: http://www.fride.org/download/RP2_EU_Strategic_Partnerships_and_Climate_Change.pdf p. 26 [last visited 20.10.2014].

³¹ EU-China: Closer partner, growing responsibilities, Communication from the Commission to the council and the European Parliament, 2006. See: http://www.politica-china.org/imxd/noticias/doc/1223294049EU_CHINAcloserparternsEN.pdf [last visited 20.10.2014].

³² Joint Statement of the 12th EU-China Summit, 30.07.2009. See: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/er/111567.pdf [last visited 20.10.2014].

and lawful implementation, the issues still obstruct improvement of the China–EU relations in good orientation. The “Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership” (TTIP), the negotiation over the cutting of tariffs and non-tariff barriers (NTBs), to tackle the differentiations in technical regulations, standard and approval procedures between EU and US, the two gigantic economic entities of the world. The marriage is obvious impacting to the world, and the benefits purposely affecting 1.1 billion inhabitants between the EU and North America. The purpose of TTIP was for a joint economic and investment community. Undoubtedly, it is still the fore-runner of international standards, re-set up however to reflect negotiations with China that have been left stranded.

Conclusion

Looking back, both of the two great ancient civilizations in the world, China in the East and Greece in the West, benefitted from philosophies that evolved almost simultaneously: Taoism and Mo-Tzu Confucianism in the East, and the trilogy of Socratic, Platonic, and Aristotelian thought in West. This exploration of philosophy in Europe, from the movement into the Renaissance in the fifteen century in Italy to industrialization in the eighteen century in England, the ancient Greek civilization blossomed, and the value of the different philosophical thoughts and opinions concerning the livelihood of mankind and demands on the human being were honed until they reached the achievement of democracy. In China, by contrast, over several thousand years from Huang Di to the latest president Xi Jinping, Confucian principles remained constant for the most part, with President Xi declaring at the first meeting at which he officially presided in November 2012 that “we are undertaking our Renaissance.”³³ It is very late in the course of human history to proclaim it, and this reflects that China lags behind the Western world. The reason for this is that the autocratic values of Confucian thought have remained constant and not changed into the democratic values of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle that in turn precipitated more modern philosophical thoughts and forms of governance during and since the Renaissance.

³³ 习近平：共圆中华民族伟大复兴的中国梦 [Xi Jinping, “Joint to the dream of the Chinese Renaissance], Xinhuanet.com, 19.02.2014. See: http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2014-02/19/c_119394028.htm [last visited 20.10.2014].