



大學通識教育部
Office of University General Education

GENERAL EDUCATION BEST ESSAY AWARD

通識教育優秀論文獎

得獎學生論文
SELECTED STUDENT ESSAYS

2020-21



香港中文大學
The Chinese University of Hong Kong



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Selected Student Essays

通識教育基礎課程發展基金贊助

Sponsored by the General Education Foundation Development Fund

通識教育優秀論文獎

GENERAL EDUCATION BEST ESSAY AWARD

聲明

優秀論文獎旨在表彰學生的努力和成就，展示優秀作品。在此收錄的得獎作品通過優秀論文獎的甄選準則，惟並不一定符合所有通識教育基礎課程對論文的課業評分要求。

Disclaimer

The Best Essay Award is intended to recognize students' efforts and achievements, and to promote their exemplary writings. Essays receiving the Award and included in this booklet have been reviewed according to the selection criteria of the Award and do NOT necessarily meet all of the requirements for a written assignment or the coursework of the General Education Foundation Programme.

初選委員會 First round adjudication

方星霞	FONG Sing Ha
司徒偉文	SZETO Wai Man
余之聰	YU Chi Chung Andy
呂永昇	LUI Wing Sing
李明	LI Ming Kenneth
吳俊	WU Jun Vivian
吳家亮	NG Ka Leung Andy
李駿康	LI Chun Hong
林吐金	LAM To Kam Cherry
高莘	GAO Xin
梁卓恒	LEUNG Cheuk Hang
張恆鏘	CHEUNG Hang Cheong Derek
彭金滿	PANG Kam Moon
黃穎瑜	WONG Wing Yu Esther
楊陽	YEUNG Yang
楊潔	YANG Jie Jasmine
葉鶯鳴	YIP Lo Ming Amber
鄭威鵬	CHENG Wai Pang Damian
黎志偉	LAI Chi Wai Kevin
盧駿揚	LO Chun Yeung Edwinn

遴選委員會 Final adjudication

王永雄	WONG Wing Hung
李行德	LEE Hun Tak Thomas
何偉明	HO Wai Ming

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序言

與人文對話和與自然對話兩門大學通識基礎課程，都強調同學除理解文本的主要觀念外，還能把經典的理論，活用在思考各種與人生、社會、以至自然的問題之上。這些問題看似高遠離地，但實則與生命息息相關；蘇格拉底在《辯解篇》說過，人沒有反思，生命也就沒什麼意義。不管與人文還是與自然，「對話」就是給同學一個思考和反思機會。

基礎課程的期末論文，大多要求同學就題目所定範圍，運用文本內容評論。題目內容變化多樣，既有「永恆」課題的討論，如科學知識的價值、人與自然關係、生命與死亡、愛與自由等；也有請同學回應較具體的議題或題目擬定的場景，好像基因編輯、夏娃的抉擇和抗議行動等，擬定場景可以虛構，也可以真實。文體方面，除了傳統議論文外，根據題目要求，同學可用書信或對話形式寫作。形式雖不限一格，但對文本的理解、分析和評論，仍是寫作和評核的重點。

這次參與通識論文獎的三百多篇作品，以不同形式討論不同議題，表現出經典對應人生與自然問題的寬廣適用範圍和超越時空限制的「生命力」。同學不是作家，更不是思想家，他們的文章不是什麼名著，但卻反映他們的學習成果，而入圍及獲獎作品更是在文本解讀和討論上水平較高的文章，閱讀這些文章，可以對大學通識基礎課程的教與學有一些初步的了解。

為鼓勵同學的自主精神，本年的通識教育基礎課程學生論文獎仍沿用主要由學生自薦的參與方法，與此同時也可以有老師推薦的文章。完成課程的同學遞交參賽作品後，參與比賽的文章先由授課老師組成的初選委員會初步遴選，然後入圍的作品由通識教育基礎課程主任、署理主任、和副主任作最終評審，選出金銀銅的得獎作品。2020至21年度的參賽作品共345篇，經初步遴選入圍的參賽作品共38篇，最後獲得金銀銅獎的作品共九篇。其中金

獎一篇，銀獎三篇，銅獎五篇；金銀銅獎以外，另有九篇論述水平較高的作品獲優異獎。得獎的作品雖然不多，卻展現了同學不同的風格、精闢的見解和嚴密的推理，也展現了同學對與人文對話和與自然對話兩門基礎課程的深刻反思。對人生的苦難、人性和慾望、生命的意義，以及科學的真善美的思考，都反映出同學對學習的認真，也讓通識老師們感到鼓舞。

最後，我們謹代表通識教育基礎課程同仁感謝鄭承峰博士及其家人對課程的支持。他們的捐助成就了通識部的各項配合活動，讓學生們能夠在課堂以外以不同形式豐富了他們關於通識教育的學習體驗。鄭博士及其家人對通識教育的貢獻，我們心存感激。

黎志偉

學生通識研討會工作小組召集人

何偉明

獎學金及獎項事宜聯絡人

Preface

The two courses of the General Education Foundation (GEF) Programme—*In Dialogue with Humanity* or *In Dialogue with Nature*—both emphasize not only understanding of key concepts of the classic texts, but also application of these concepts in pondering questions about life, society and nature. Remote or high-sounding as they may seem, such questions are closely related to real lives. As Socrates says, “an unexamined life is not worth living” (*Apology*). *Dialogue*—whether it be *with humanity* or *with nature*—is meant to offer students an opportunity to ponder and reflect.

The term paper assignment of the Dialogue courses generally requires students to apply the content of the texts to address topics laid out in the questions, which cover a wide range, including perennial issues such as the value of scientific knowledge, human’s relation with nature, life and death, love and freedom; other questions deal with specific issues and scenarios—real or imaginative—concerning gene editing, Eve’s choice, and protest actions, among others. Other than the usual argumentative essay, students may also write letters or dialogues, as prompted by the questions. The variety of genres allowed encourages students to utilize their strengths and show their temperament and imagination; it also shows that criticism can take many forms. However, regardless of the genre adopted, the quality of textual understanding, analysis and criticism remains the core of writing and assessment.

This year, there are more than 300 entries competing for the Best Essay Award. With different genres and subject matters, the entries show that classics have a broad scope of application on questions about life and nature as well as the “vitality” to overcome the limitations of time and space. The participating students are not renowned authors or thinkers. Their papers are no masterpiece, but they embody students’ precious learning outcomes. Those that have been shortlisted or, better still, awarded with a prize, are papers demonstrating a higher quality in textual interpretation and depth of thinking. Through reading them, we can catch a glimpse of the teaching and learning of the GEF Programme.

To encourage students to take the initiative in entering the contest, this year’s Best Essay Award for the General Education Foundation Programme adopted

the method of student self-nomination. Apart from this, nominations by teachers were also accepted to ensure inclusion of excellent writings that had not been self-nominated. All submitted essays were forwarded to the adjudication panel formed by the GEF teachers for shortlisting. The Director of Foundation Programme, the Deputy and the Associate Foundation Programme Director formed the final adjudication panel to select outstanding essays for Gold, Silver, and Bronze Awards. In 2020-21, we received 345 entries, of which 38 were shortlisted. There are a total of nine recipients of awards, with one for the Gold Award, three for the Silver Award, and five for the Bronze Award. Apart from the awards mentioned, another nine essays which demonstrated a relatively high standard of discussion were given Merit Awards. Despite their limited number, the award-winning essays all exhibit students' diverse styles of writing, insightful ideas, rigorous reasoning, and in-depth reflections on sufferings of life, human nature and desires, on meaning of life, as well as on truth, goodness and beauty in science. One can see students' diligence in learning, which is encouraging to the teachers of the Foundation courses.

Finally, on behalf of the General Education Foundation Programme, we would like to thank Dr. Baldwin CHENG and his family for their support of the Programme. Their generous donation has enabled the Office of University General Education to organize various activities and enrich students' learning experience outside the classroom in many different ways. We express our heartfelt gratitude for the contributions of Dr. CHENG and his family to General Education.

LAI Chi Wai Kevin

Convener of the Working Group on GE Student Seminar

HO Wai Ming

Coordinator for Scholarships and Awards

通識教育 優秀論文獎

簡介

通識教育基礎課程為同學提供了扎實的寫作訓練，期終論文每有佳作，部分更極具創意。有見及此，課程於2011年設立年度論文獎，以表揚學生的努力及成就，同時為優異作品提供發表平台。

遴選過程

本年度論文獎除繼續由學生自行提交作品，亦加入老師推薦類別，基礎課程的老師先就論文作初選，獲選入圍的作品再由遴選委員會作最後甄別。「與人文對話」、「與自然對話」兩科各設一個金獎（獎金3,000元）、三個銀獎（獎金各1,000元）及十個銅獎（獎金各500元），各獎項最終獲獎數目，由遴選委員會決定；此外，遴選委員會也可加設優異獎，頒予水平較佳的入圍文章。

評審的準則包括：

- 論據有力
 - 組織嚴密
 - 表達方式具有創意
 - 見解精闢
 - 行文流暢，用字準確
 - 參考資料運用恰當
-

General Education Best Essay Award

Introduction

With the intensive writing training they receive in the General Education Foundation classes, students have produced many well-written essays that are precise, original and creative. The annual Best Essay Award was first introduced in 2011 to recognize students' efforts and achievements and to provide a venue for the promotion and publication of these quality writings.

Nomination and Selection Process

Following previous practice, students were invited to submit their essays on their own. Since 2018–2019, teachers have also been invited to nominate entries for the award. All essays submitted were first screened by the First Round Adjudication Panel, which was formed by the GEF teachers. The Final Adjudication Panel then selected from the shortlisted essays for the awards. The following awards were set up for each of the “Dialogue” courses: one Gold Award (\$3,000), three Silver Awards (\$1,000 each), and ten Bronze Awards (\$500 each). The Final Adjudication Panel reserves the right to determine the final number of awards granted. It may also confer additional merit awards to papers of remarkable qualities among those shortlisted.

The selection criteria are:

- Soundness of argument
 - Originality of ideas
 - Strength of organisation and structure
 - Grammatical accuracy and precision of expression
 - Creativity of presentation
 - Appropriateness of references
-

得獎及入圍名單一覽*

List of Awardees and Honorary Mentions*

通識教育優秀論文獎 - General Education Best Essay Award

金獎 Gold Award

與人文對話 - IN DIALOGUE WITH HUMANITY

THEODORES JESSICA

新亞書院保險、金融與精算學三年級

Year 3, Insurance, Financial and Actuarial Analysis, New Asia College

與自然對話 - IN DIALOGUE WITH NATURE

本年度獎項從缺

No prize awarded this year

銀獎 Silver Awards

與人文對話 - IN DIALOGUE WITH HUMANITY

李浩洋 LEE HO YEUNG

新亞書院哲學二年級

Year 2, Philosophy, New Asia College

蔡致鏗 TSOI CHI HANG

崇基學院運動科學與健康教育一年級

Year 1, Exercise Science and Health Education, Chung Chi College

與自然對話 - IN DIALOGUE WITH NATURE

黃摯毅 WONG CHI NGAI

善衡書院細胞及分子生物學一年級

Year 1, Cell and Molecular Biology, S.H. Ho College

* 學生資料以2020-2021學年為準。

Student information was obtained in the academic year 2020-2021.

銅獎**Bronze Awards**

與人文對話 – IN DIALOGUE WITH HUMANITY

陳慶澤 CHAN HING CHAK

崇基學院經濟學一年級
Year 1, Economics, Chung Chi College

許霽陽 HUI CHAI YEUNG

新亞書院建築學一年級
Year 1, Architectural Studies, New Asia College

黃兆軒 WONG SIU HIN

伍宜孫書院內外全科醫學一年級
Year 1, Medicine, Wu Yee Sun College

黃詠琪 WONG WING KI

和聲書院內外全科醫學一年級
Year 1, Medicine, Lee Woo Sing College

與自然對話 – IN DIALOGUE WITH NATURE

林永同 LAM WING TONG

新亞書院藝術四年級
Year 4, Fine Arts, New Asia College

優異獎**Merit Awards**

與人文對話 – IN DIALOGUE WITH HUMANITY

吳卓瑩 NG CHEUK YING

崇基學院英國語文研究及英國語文教育一年級
Year 1, English Studies and English Language Education, Chung Chi College

郭穎如 KWOK WING YU

新亞書院內外全科醫學一年級
Year 1, Medicine, New Asia College

張蘊曦 ZHANG WAN HEI

善衡書院內外全科醫學一年級
Year 1, Medicine, S.H. Ho College

優異獎 Merit Awards

黃凱琳 WONG HOI LAM

敬文書院生物醫學工程學二年級
Year 2, Biomedical Engineering, C.W. Chu College

黃滢 WONG YING

新亞書院建築學一年級
Year 1, Architectural Studies, New Asia College

與自然對話 – IN DIALOGUE WITH NATURE

芦佳奇 LU JIAQI

新亞書院專業會計學一年級
Year 1, Professional Accountancy, New Asia College

廖靜妍 LIU CHING YIN

崇基學院英文二年級
Year 2, English, Chung Chi College

盧珮絃 LO PUI YIN

善衡書院內外全科醫學一年級
Year 1, Medicine, S.H. Ho College

鄺子浚 KWONG TSZ TSUN

逸夫書院歷史二年級
Year 2, History, Shaw College

入圍名單 Honorary Mentions

與人文對話 – IN DIALOGUE WITH HUMANITY

朱晞藍 CHU HEI LAM

逸夫書院心理學二年級
Year 2, Psychology, Shaw College

吳子心 NG TSZ SUM SHEMAIYA

伍宜孫書院法律學一年級
Year 1, Laws, Wu Yee Sun College

入圍名單 Honorary Mentions

李阳阳 LI YANGYANG

善衡書院工商管理學士綜合課程四年級
Year 4, Integrated BBA Programme, S.H. Ho College

李妙珠 LEE MIU CHU

新亞書院歷史一年級
Year 1, History, New Asia College

姜杉 JIANG SHAN

伍宜孫書院工商管理學士綜合課程二年級
Year 2, Integrated BBA Programme, Wu Yee Sun College

梁振嶸 LEUNG CHUN YING

逸夫書院哲學二年級
Year 2, Philosophy, Shaw College

麥曉琳 MAK HIU LAM

伍宜孫書院文化研究一年級
Year 1, Cultural Studies, Wu Yee Sun College

焦瑞祺 CHIU SUI KI

聯合書院生物醫學理學二年級
Year 2, Biomedical Sciences, United College

楊逸軒 YEUNG YAT HIN

聯合書院歷史一年級
Year 1, History, United College

甄子游 YAN TSZ YAU

和聲書院英文二年級
Year 2, English, Lee Woo Sing College

鄭雪瑩 CHENG SUET YING

伍宜孫書院社會學一年級
Year 1, Sociology, Wu Yee Sun College

蘇樂兒 SO LOK YEE

崇基學院護理學一年級
Year 1, Nursing, Chung Chi College

入圍名單 Honorary Mentions

與自然對話 – IN DIALOGUE WITH NATURE

張一鸣 ZHANG YIMING

逸夫書院社會科學一年級
Year 1, Social Science, Shaw College

陳穎心 CHAN WING SUM

聯合書院語言學二年級
Year 2, Linguistics, United College

張竣峰 CHEUNG CHUN FUNG ANTHONY

聯合書院社會學一年級
Year 1, Sociology, United College

張凱斌 CHEUNG HOI PAN HARRY

逸夫書院護理學一年級
Year 1, Nursing, Shaw College

楊位恒 YANG WAI HANG

新亞書院歷史一年級
Year 1, History, New Asia College

盧曉婷 LU XIAOTING

崇基學院中國語言及文學一年級
Year 1, Chinese Language and Literature, Chung Chi College

鍾宇晗 ZHONG YUHAN

逸夫書院社會科學一年級
Year 1, Social Science, Shaw College

羅德懿 LO TAK YEE

新亞書院中國語言及文學二年級
Year 2, Chinese Language and Literature, New Asia College

Beyond the Difficulties

> IN DIALOGUE WITH HUMANITY BEST ESSAY AWARD – GOLD AWARD

THEODORES JESSICA

New Asia College, Insurance, Financial and Actuarial Analysis

The protest on the passing of the Sexual Violence Eradication Bill (RUU PKS) in Indonesia is one that has had a long history. Since it was first proposed in 2016, efforts to pass the bill has remained futile (CNN Indonesia).

On the last week of September 2019, a series of student-led mass protests took place in the major cities in Indonesia. The people marched and rallied to urge the House of Representatives (DPR) to pass the Sexual Violence Eradication Bill that has been stalled for over three years. In the capital, Jakarta, the masses gathered in front of the National Parliament Building, demanding for an open meeting with the House leaders. Unfortunately, the government remained silent. Having received no response, the people persisted and continued their efforts for six days, eventually a clash was sparked and was forcefully stopped. The protest, however, did not end here. The fight for the bill soon turned into a movement across various social media platforms and was united by the hashtag #sahkanruupks, which was translated as “pass the bill”.

You may wonder, “why are the people protesting about the bill?” Currently, the only legal framework that provides protection to Indonesians against sexual violence is written under the Indonesian Criminal Code (KUHP), which was drafted over a century ago during the era of colonialization. And under such archaic laws, only two forms of sexual violence are recognized – rape and molestation. Each year, thousands of victims of sexual violence were denied from getting justice because there exists no law that condemns such act.

In 2016, a new sense of hope emerged for the people. The National Commission on Violence against Women and the Service Provider Forum (FPL) cooperated to draft the Sexual Violence Eradication Bill and successfully put it through to the 2016 National Legislation Program. This new bill is much broader in its scope and includes nine distinct forms of sexual violence. Following this event, over thirty thousand people signed a petition on Change.org that urges the House of Representatives to pass the bill (Fikrie). However, in the process of legislating this bill, opposition appeared mainly from the Islamic political parties such as PKS and PKB, claiming that the bill supported the liberal feminism and LGBT behaviour, despite the fact that the bill has no mention about either issue.

Unfortunately, on July 4, 2020, the long-battled bill was officially dropped by the House of Representatives from the National Legislation Program (Prolegnas) because “the discussion regarding bill’s deliberation was rather difficult”, quoted the chairman of House Commission VIII, Marwan Dasopang (Nathaniel). Following the removal of the bill, multiple smaller-scaled demonstrations emerged, mainly in the capital. Once again, the government disregarded their voices.

Now, four years later, the fight to provide justice for victims of sexual violence seems to come to a status quo. I find myself exasperated and aggrieved. Exasperated at the authorities that govern the country and how they have responded. Aggrieved at the outcome that extinguished the last spark of hope in the people. Is this how the government responds when encountering difficulties? What qualities make up a good governor?

Contextualization

Responding to a protest happening in the 21st century, we might not immediately consider the viewpoints of thinkers such as Confucius from 500 B.C. and Huang Tsung-hsi from the 1600s. Yet as I dig deeper and understand more, I realize that these two figures brought ideas and perspectives on governing that ought to be applicable even in current times.

In *Waiting for the Dawn*, Huang Tsung-hsi was able to recognize and identify the flaws and disorders in the reality of the Chinese dynasty era. Though his writings might have come out of cynicism and are sometimes full of criticism, he proposed suggestions and valuable insights on governing that is based on good intention of attaining peace and order. Most importantly, he emphasized the noble duty of those

in authority, which was to stive for the common good of the people.

Confucius, on the other hand, having lived at a time of political turmoil and transition, sought for restoration of unity and stability by approaching governance matters from a philosophical and practical point of view. In *The Analects*, Confucius mentioned a variety of difficulties tied to governing. He then provided guidance in making decisions regarding these difficulties as well as highlighted the desirable morals favoured in a person.

In the context of the protest on the passing of the Sexual Violence Eradication Bill, these two thinkers and their ideas inspired me to broaden my perspective and gain a deeper understanding on what it truly means to govern.

The Purpose of Serving

In *Waiting for the Dawn*, Huang Tsung-hsi began by discussing the situation of the beginning of human life where each man lived for himself and served his own interest. Then came forward a prince, “one who did not think of benefit in terms of his own benefit but sought to benefit all-under-Heaven and who did not think of harm in terms of harm to himself but sought to spare all-under-Heaven from harm” (“On the Prince”; Huang 91). Here, he pointed out that the prince’s purpose – which was his noble task – was to safeguard the people’s interest and wellbeing. In the same way, a government’s purpose is to serve the people.

When Zigong asked about what is essential for governance in book XII of *The Analects*, the Master replied with three things – enough food, enough weaponry, and the trust of the common people (12:7). However, in the situation where only one can be opted, the Master opts for the trust of the common people (12:7). The governance can still do without weaponry and food, but not without the trust of the common people. This emphasizes the importance of the people in governing, and how the government should aim to prioritize and put the people first.

The Path to Serving

As we have understood, a good governor is one that serves the people, one that safeguards the peoples’ interest and wellbeing. But how can the government serve the people if it does not know the people’s needs?

Listening and understanding are the keys to knowing. The importance of understanding can be seen in *The Analects* when the Master said, “Don’t worry about whether other people understand you. Worry about whether you understand other people” (1:16). Here, Confucius teaches us on how to attain understanding through self-retrospection. This understanding also enables people to drive away from resentment and discomposure when others don’t reciprocate the same understanding.

In *Waiting for the Dawn*, Huang also brought the idea of understanding through various instances. According to Huang, “whether there is peace or disorder in the world does not depend on the rise or fall of dynasties, but upon the happiness or distress of the people” (“On Ministership”; Huang 95). During the Three Dynasties, all-under-heaven was safeguarded by the law (it was known as the “law without laws”, “On Law”; Huang 98). How did the law come to be constituted? By listening and understanding the needs of the people. “The Two Emperors and Three Kings knew that all-under-Heaven could not do without sustenance and therefore gave them fields to cultivate (“On Law”; Huang 97). They knew that all-under-Heaven could not go without clothes and therefore gave them land on which to grow mulberry and hemp (97). They knew also that all-under-Heaven could not go untaught, so they set up schools, established the marriage ceremony to guard against promiscuity, and instituted military service to guard against disorders” (97). It is only then when the government curbed to their selfish desires, they stopped listening and understanding. Their actions then follow (such that they constituted “un-Lawful” laws) and disorder looms (98). From here we can observe how through listening and understanding, a governor is able to serve the people accordingly.

Often times, there is a gap between the ruling power and the people that creates a barrier to attain a full understanding. In “Schools”, Huang Tsung-hsi gave guidance on how the sons of the emperor, along with the sons of the high ministers, should study (104-110). Note that Huang not only suggested that these sons of the emperor and high ministers should get informed (and therefore know) about the real conditions, but also suggested that they must experience difficult labour and hardship (“Schools”; Huang 107). Here, we can see that for governors to truly understand their people, they couldn’t only observe and learn. They have to walk in their shoes and undergo what they go through.

As mentioned before, whether there is peace or disorder in the world does not depend on the rise or fall of dynasties, but upon the happiness or distress of

the people. Looking at the reality of the thousands of victims of sexual violence in Indonesia who are forced to live in injustice, it is clear to me that the people are in distress. These two texts invite the government to listen and to understand to this distress of the people, and more than that, to rule for the interest of the people.

Going Beyond the Difficulties

Difficulties are bound to happen, not just in governing, but in all aspects of our lives. Despite his idealistic views on how a leader should be, Huang Tsung-hsi in his writing was also aware that humans have limitations. To engage in strenuous labour for the benefit and interest of others is against human's inclination. He acknowledges the reality that governing is difficult.

Similarly, the presence of difficulties in governing exists in *The Analects*. Duke Ai questioned You Ruo on what to do in the event of bad crops that lead to insufficiency to fulfil the government needs (12:9). You Ruo's answer in solving this difficulty was centred back on what is important in governing – the people (12:9). He prioritized the suffering of the collective over the suffering of the government.

Ultimately, the two thinkers lead us back to the initial purpose of governing, which is to serve the people. By staying true to this purpose, one can face any difficulties ahead. Just as in *The Analects* and *Waiting for The Dawn*, the Indonesian government, particularly those in the House of Representatives who hold the power in law-making, ought to remind themselves again of their purpose to serve the people when encountering difficulties, and perhaps ask themselves, if by avoiding difficulties I sacrifice the interest and wellbeing of my people, am I really being a good governor?

Adding on, fighting for justice with a seemingly futile result may leave many hopeless. As I reflect more, I realize I tend to direct my eyes outwards, forgetting to look inward. We frequently talk about losing faith in the system, failing to realize that we are also a part of the system. Taking a step back, I recall the words of Confucius when Duke Jing of Qi questioned him on governing. He said, "Let the ruler be a ruler; the subject, a subject; the father, a father; the son, a son" (12:11). Here, he did not direct his focus to the governor in performing their duties alone, but to each and every part of the society. As part of the people, I too have been assigned a duty that I have to adhere to. Though it

is constructive to evaluate and criticise the government in the event of distress and disorder, it is also worthwhile for all of us to reflect on our own roles and how we can contribute to the fight for the common good.

Conclusion

To govern is to hold a noble duty, it is a duty that isn't granted to everyone. Yet at the same time it is challenging, it can be demanding, and it sure comes with difficulties. It takes a deeper understanding to realize that sometimes these difficulties in governing are pale in comparison to the difficulties of those whose justice and rights are taken as a result of this governing. However, despite the seemingly hopeless outcome of this protest, I remain hopeful. Difficulties are opportunities for both the government and the people to practice understanding, and work towards the greater good. May these two texts serve as a reminder to the Indonesian government on their purpose to serve, and as a compass that guides them as they continue to rule and serve the people.

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Teachers' Comments

/ YEUNG YANG

While Jessica Theodores begins her inquiry with a geographically and historically specific phenomenon, the meaning of her inquiry reaches far beyond it. Her work shows careful and close reading of the ancient and classical texts, which leads to purposeful analytical moves that build relations between relevant contexts. To address the complex and arguably abstract notion of justice, she examines concrete situations where intellectual and moral dilemmas are real for those involved. She speaks as both a responsible citizen concerned with affairs of the world, and as a young scholar who directs her inquisitiveness and intellectual rigor to the examination of a good individual and shared life. If one core purpose of General Education is to nurture lifelong learners who persistently guide themselves on the paths towards the truth, this paper is evident of the student's commitment to the purpose.

/ HO WAI MING

In her paper on the legislation against sexual violence in Indonesia, Jessica demonstrates how classics can be related to current issues. As a foreign student, Jessica made a challenging attempt to base discussion on two Chinese thinkers, Confucius and Huang Tsung-hsi. Even though the protests were of little avail, but, as the title suggests, she goes beyond disappointments and frustrations to bring in hope and continuous efforts for a better world.

/ THOMAS LEE

A sensitive, in-depth discussion of the ideas of Confucius and Huang Tsung-hsi on governance, as applied to a current political issue in Indonesia, based on well-chosen excerpts from *The Analects* and *Waiting for the Dawn*. The Chinese Confucian concepts of governance and of serving the people are made relevant to a contemporary situation and are articulated convincingly. This is a well-written piece that contributes to cross-cultural understanding.

佛教與存在主義談

「自我」與苦難

> 與人文對話 優秀論文獎 - 銀獎

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於是悉達多道：「他已經六十高齡而仍未證得涅槃，他會這樣一直修行到七十歲，然後八十歲；而你我也將如他一樣老，卻仍在無休止的修行、齋戒與冥想，但我們無緣證得涅槃，無論我們自己還是那位長者都不能。僑文達，我相信所有沙門中甚至不會有一人能夠證得涅槃。我們只找到一點安慰，找到一些麻醉，我們只學會一些把戲來欺騙自己，但那件最根本的大事——道中之道——我們沒有找到。」

——《流浪者之歌》（赫曼·赫塞 39）

壹、前言

佛家和沙特都認為人生是痛苦的，但他們對痛苦來源的看法，以及免除苦難的方法卻截然不同。此文旨在解釋和對比兩種苦難觀，特別是苦難與自我的關係，由此揭示佛家的觀點終究體現了存在主義的精神。

貳、與生俱來的苦難——「有」「無」皆苦

佛家與沙特均同意苦難是與生俱來的，雖然所言的苦難均指向人的心理狀態，內容卻不盡相同。沙特的苦難是必須為人生作選擇的存在壓力，而佛家以「苦」指涉人慾望不能滿足的心理狀態。

沙特苦難觀的起點是「存在先於本質 (Existence precedes essence)」。沙特認為上帝並不存在，故人並非由一造物主創造，人存在就是單純地、偶然地存在，而沒有被賦予生存目的和價值以作人生指引。因此，人與工具不同，工具是先有用途，然後才被製造，例如小提琴是為奏樂而被設計，存在前已有存在目的。但人並沒有先驗的存在目的，我們一誕生就是單純地存在，並沒有超越的存在根據 (Sartre 20-22)。這就是沙特言的「被棄」(abandonment)。我們於世上沒有可以訴諸的客觀價值，如無可依靠的孤兒一樣 (Sartre 30-31)。他又言「人是命定自由 (Man is condemned to be free)」 (29)，人是能動主體，每一刻都必須行動。我們可以選擇如何行動，但不能選擇不行動，即使不行動，其實也是行動 (選擇了維持舊狀)。因此「命定自由」是對存在的實然描述。再者，我們要為選擇負上責任，於是沙特指出所有人都承受著存在的憂慮 (anguish)。我們不得不選擇，不得不承擔其帶來的責任，這使我們憂慮作出錯誤選擇，要為自己和世界負上後果 (Sartre 25-27)。沙特的觀察十分深刻：每個人都承受著沉重的存在苦難 (existential suffering)。

而佛家有言「有漏皆苦」，指人生而有慾望，例如性慾和物慾，而不能全部滿足，因而感到痛苦。人有無盡慾望，所以隨之而來的苦也是無窮。世間萬物又會隨著時間不停流變，如《雜阿含經》言「過去未來色無常，況現在色」，此謂「諸行無常」(勞思光 191-193)。過去現在未來的事物都是不住流變，而人對事物有所追求，想成為自己生命的主宰，想追求青春、溫飽、生命的永恆。無常的世界宣布慾望的永恆滿足不可能，人想執於定常的自然慾望被流變的世界徹底否定。因此，佛家認為人生本質是痛苦的，苦難與生俱來。

由此可見，沙特認為人沒有可以依靠的人生價值，面對意義的虛無、必須行動，並為此負責是痛苦的；而佛家認為人對「有」、「實」的追求永不止息，因而讓自己墮進無盡苦難之中。對此，兩種思想又是如何安立人生的苦難呢？

叁、在苦難中安立：兩種自我

沙特和《心經》都為我們提供了安立苦難的方法，然而兩者方向剛好相反。

佛家認為苦難的來源是人的執念，因此脫苦的唯一方法就是認清事物流變不定的事實，於精神層面擺脫執念。一行禪師在〈般若之心〉提出「互即互入」，指世上沒有事物能獨立存在。他以例子說明：一張紙需要陽光、樹木、伐木工人等存在才可能存在，因為它們都是成就紙的因素（142）。宏觀而言，世上事物互相影響，所有事物是在互相成就的前提下才得以存在。事物只是它的成因的集合，並沒有「孤立的自性」，此謂「緣起性空」（144-145）。

《心經》言「照見五蘊皆空，度一切苦厄」（141），人認清「諸行無常」和「緣起性空」，就能放下執著，從根源消除苦難。如一行禪師解「不生不滅」，指出定相如生死其實是互相造就，例如枯萎的樹葉能成為樹木的養分（152-155）。認識到「空」，人就能放下對定相的執著。更進一步，若人認清自己只是因的集合，並非恆常不變的獨立存在，就能破除「我」執，不再拘泥於「自我」這個體的觀點，而從世界整體、萬物互即互入的宏觀視角思考，從而徹底消除因個人慾望而生的苦難。

另一方面，沙特說：「你是自由的，所以抉擇吧——這即是：創造（You are free, so choose; in other words, invent）」（33）。對他而言，我們沒有客觀價值可依，於是只能創造屬於我們的價值。一個人的價值就在於他的行動。人不能逃避自己的責任，要直面存在的憂慮，承擔自由帶來的責任，以行動顯示對生命的承擔，為自己提供存在的基礎。沙特更認為存在主義的中心精神就是對人生選擇的絕對承擔（43），人要徹底擁抱自己作出的決定，無怨無悔，擺脫存在的憂慮，在存在困境找到慰藉。

兩種思想都強調自我本質的虛無，為何沙特認為此是苦難來源，佛家卻認為是脫苦的關鍵？這是因為二者言的「自我」不同。沙特言「虛無」是指人沒有生而有的本質，故要藉著主體選擇和承擔責任以建構人生意義，是從「無」到「有」；佛家則認為苦難源自對「自我」的執著，因此要藉著「互即互入」把自體連同煩惱消融於宇宙整體，是從「有」到「無」。因此兩種解脫形成強烈對比。佛家認為苦難生於執著，認知到萬物皆空，就能內在地超克苦難；沙特認為苦難源於意義的虛無，而自造價值，勇敢承擔生命的責任就能安立自我。沙特以「有」的追求安立缺乏意義的不安；佛教以「無」的認知來消除因欲求而生的痛苦。

佛家與存在主義的苦難觀看似矛盾，但筆者認為佛教式的解脫終究是一種存在主義式的意義追尋。

人不能真正消除自我，佛教仍是在安立有欲的自我。雖然表面上佛教對苦難的消除十分徹底，比存在主義更勝一籌——連「我」都沒有，苦難也就徹底消除了——但人不可能真正達致自體消除的狀態。即使人認清自我是空，嘗試放下我執，也只是以形而上的佛理安立真切存在的自我，是一種精神的解脫。換句話說，佛教免除苦難並不是把自體真正消解，而是通過行動（例如八正道）實踐佛理，為精神建構可以依靠的世界觀。這是一個實現自我的過程，佛教的價值觀就在人生實踐中體現。這種解脫仍是在安立沙特所言的自我。如《心經》所云「照見五蘊皆空，度一切苦厄」（一行禪師 141），只是佛者通過建構自己的存在根據，讓自我在苦難中有所依靠，而不是對世界實然狀態的改變。佛教並不能真正免除「我」執，因為對佛理的追尋仍預設有一「我」在追尋，而「佛」也是一種人格。若「我」已被完全消解了，那在追尋佛理的是何物¹？人之所以能以佛理擺脫苦難，是靠著一種存在主義式的自我建立、生命承擔：通過實踐佛理，獲得生命

1 此與佛學中有關佛性的討論直接相關。既曰「無我」，那是誰在追求「成佛」？例如印度大乘經典《涅槃經》指出智者以「空」無掉的是流轉於生死煩惱的「無我」，就能照見常樂我淨、真實不空的「法身本體」（或曰「有我」），此「空性」和「佛性」的區分便是對上述問題的一種回應。佛性思想在中國佛學後有更精緻和長足的發展。參看林朝成、郭朝順 185-224。

意義，在不住流變的世界、無所依靠的人生中得到慰藉。

肆、結論：如何回應人的存在困境?

本文的核心問題是：「自我」究竟是苦難的來源，還是脫離苦難的關鍵？佛家認為人生煩惱皆源自對「自我」的執著，強調「我執」為人帶來無盡苦難，故消解「自我」是脫苦關鍵；沙特則認為人只有藉著一己的主體性才能成就、確立「自我」，免除因意義和價值的虛無而生之存在憂慮。

筆者認為沒有什麼思想能擺脫沙特對存在狀態的描述。任何思想只要有對生命意義和價值的主張，助人承擔其生命，都體現了存在主義精神。佛教著眼於慾望不能滿足的心理狀態，通過建構萬物皆空的世界觀，給予人在世界中的存在根據。雖然佛理強調世界的虛無，但背後仍是在慰藉渴望意義的自我。

我們是被拋擲到世上的，每人都面對不同的歷史、文化和苦難。縱使每人生命中所面對的苦難不一樣，出路也是共同且唯一的——建構自己的價值，賦予自己意義，使自己面對苦難有存在的根據，用自己的肩膀負起自己的人生。

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老師短評

/ 劉保禧

上乘之作，可稱頌者有三。其一，問題意識清晰，以「苦」為題，比較佛教與存在主義的自我觀；其二，綜合能力出眾，文本理解與個人評論的比例均稱，既不止於複述前賢意見，亦非游談無根；其三，語言能力上佳，用字平白而又準確，以抽象的「無」「有」概括兩家學說特色尤其精彩！

/ 何偉明

浩洋從沙特和佛教無常談苦難，就苦難來源，各有不同說法；對在苦中如何安身立命，二者也不盡相同：沙特主張藉建構自我，佛教卻教我們放棄我執，就如同學所說，一個從無到有，另一從有到無。文章後段浩洋嘗試取二者相同之處，論證佛教滅苦之道，實為存在主義式的意義追尋。文章主題明晰，對理論之間的異同，掌握準確，表達精簡，不失為一篇扎實的論說文章。

慾望和需要 · 世上第一個拿着果子的 女人的疑惑

> 與人文對話 優秀論文獎 - 銀獎

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草原，中午，一把如天高的火劍插在了草原上（〈創世紀〉3:24）。火劍燃燒形成了尖厲的風，把草原吹得嗖嗖作響；亞當的皮衣被風吹動，亞當打了個哆嗦，把皮衣拉緊了。

亞： 妻子，我們要走了。

（夏娃空洞地望着火劍，隨著風聲流逝，畫面隨夏娃的思緒進入伊甸園。）

伊甸園知善惡樹旁。園中夾雜鳥和其他動物的叫聲，越近知善惡樹，聲音越小。到了知善惡樹旁，霎時間所有聲音停了，只見蛇在樹下跟夏娃談話，亞當與夏娃正在聽着，夏娃摘了樹上的果子，準備吃掉它。正在這時，柏拉圖、莊子、孔子和蔡致鏗（我）坐着半個大葫蘆順流而下，來到他們身旁。

我： 時間剛剛好，夏娃，我為你帶來三位思想家，容我在你吃掉知善惡樹果子前耽誤一下，他們是來給準備吃果子的你一些建議。

（夏娃有點愕然，一時間說不出話來。）

柏： 夏娃，請問你打算吃掉這個果子嗎？

夏： 是，我準備好了。

柏： 為什麼？

夏： 因為這棵果樹挺好看，果子好像很好吃。

(柏拉圖把無花果樹的果子摘下來，放在手心上。)

柏： 我想你應吃過這種果子了，它好吃嗎？

夏： 好吃。

柏： 有你手上的果子好吃嗎？

夏： 我想差不多，伊甸園所有果子都是這麼好吃。

柏： 那麼為何你選擇吃這個果子而不吃其他果子？

(蛇搶答了。)

蛇： 只要吃了這個果子，夏娃的眼開了，能如同天主一樣（〈創世紀〉3:5）。

(沒有人理會蛇，大家繼續望着夏娃。)

夏： 因為這個果子能帶給我智慧（〈創世紀〉3:6）。

柏： 所以，其實善惡對你來說不重要，您只是渴望跟天主一樣，這樣說可以嗎？

(夏娃閉了閉眼，與亞當同時點了點頭；蛇卻安靜下來，同時離開了他們。)

柏： 果然伊甸園不缺好吃的果子，但人始終渴求自己缺乏且好的東西啊
(《會飲篇》200b)！

(莊子走到夏娃面前。)

莊： 嗯。你認為天主是宇宙的開始嗎？

夏： 是。

莊： 那我告訴你，屬於天主的「開始」本來自一個未曾開始的「開始」，
而這個開始最初的「有」和「無」，甚至未曾有「無」的無（《莊子·
齊物論》；陳鼓應 105）。

(夏娃皺了眉。)

莊： 如你變得跟天主一樣，你想變得跟創造天主的「開始」一樣全能嗎？

(夏娃立即點了點頭。)

莊： 如你跟那個開始一樣，你會想變得跟創造那開始的「開始」一樣全能嗎？

(夏娃又點了點頭，但表現出不太明白的樣子。)

夏： 為什麼這樣問？

我： 莊先生指的是，這個果子的誘惑只對你不斷產生慾望，令你受無窮膨脹的慾望束縛，沉溺在無止境的追逐（《莊子·齊物論》；陳鼓應101）。

莊： 知我者莫若蔡君也，一旦走進這個輪迴，不論是否得到都會為你帶來煩惱，消耗精力（100），我想天主告訴你吃掉這個果子後的那種死亡，指的就是這樣的心靈死亡吧！

（夏娃立即把果子放下，似乎有點忌憚。孔子撿起地上的果子，凝望着它。）

孔： 這方面我就不太認同莊先生了，人當然有慾望，正所謂克己復禮為仁，我認為想做的事只要行為合乎禮義都可追求（《論語·顏淵》12.1）。

（夏娃受鼓舞，眼睛投射出怡然的亮澤。）

夏： 這樣說，只要合乎禮義，我就可以吃這個果子嗎？

孔： 可惜的是天主為妳和亞當的創造者本已是倫理關係，你們應當發從內心順從祂（《顏淵》12.1），擁有住在這裏的權利時也要擔當在伊甸園中的責任。欲得到的事物都要以正途得之（《論語·里仁》4.5），不符合天主命令的都不要去做。只有克制自己，戰勝私欲才能達致「仁」的境界（《顏淵》12.1）。

柏： 我與你立場相同，曾有朋友告訴過我，我信奉的神曾因人類蠻橫無理而懲罰我的始祖，把他們斬開兩半，令現在的我們一生都追逐自己另外的那一半，我不想你們變成這樣，可以的話我寧願你們一直待在這樣舒適的狀態（《會飲篇》190b-c）。

莊： 我不太熟悉天主的概念，我大概知道有個沒有形體的主宰在支配這世界（《莊子·齊物論》；陳鼓應100-101），不過它是否存在都沒有太大影響。夏娃唯一需知道的是，人跟天地共存，已經成為一體（105-106）。當然你還是你，這個果子還是果子，這個天地都是天地，只不過大自然渾然一體，沒需要特地吃掉這個果實讓自己能夠

分辨自己和他人和善惡。因此好好享受不需苦苦追逐的疲倦生活，不要做些沒有意義的事了！

（莊子望着夏娃。）

莊： 請問對人來說肉好吃嗎？

夏： 是的。

莊： 請問對鹿來說草好吃嗎？

夏： 是的。

莊： 請問那一種食物比較好吃？

夏： 我不知道。

莊： 所以善惡也是一樣，本已模糊不清，順着事物善的一面去看它當然會認為它是善的，順着事物壞的一面去看它當然會認為它是壞的（《莊子·秋水》；陳鼓應 130）。所以人相對的道德觀念，對事物的評價會隨角度或時間而改變（129），而仁義，是非途徑如此錯亂，我們要擺脫這種對於束縛就要本於自然，處於自得的境地（131）。

孔： 我反對莊子看法，人與自然最大的分別，亦必要有的分別就是人有道德標準。你看，這裏天上的飛禽，地下的爬蟲，與我們最大的分別就是我們有惻隱、是非之心（《孟子·公孫丑上》）。雖我曾認為要跟隨禮而為人，但夏娃和亞當不是禽獸，他們缺陷的確是判斷善惡的能力（《孟子·告子上》）。

（亞當揮了揮手，大家都安靜了。）

亞： 請問對我們來說，缺乏分辨善惡能力的我們還算是人嗎？

（夏娃凝重地看着莊子。）

夏： 可能我們天生沒有這種能力，聽完大家討論後我都不太清楚什麼是善惡。可能這樣問會比較好，請問順應天父是順應自然，還是得到分辨善惡、他人和自我的能力才是順應我們作為人的自然？

（莊子走到知善惡樹坐下了。所有人都低着頭沉思，樹下突然安靜起來。）

柏： 夏娃，你愛亞當嗎？

夏： 我不確定。我只知道我是他的妻子。

柏： 無奈的是，即使你是他的妻子你們都感受不到愛，愛是對於善的人和事的希冀（《會飲篇》205d）。有善惡之心，你們才感受到愛（《會飲篇》178d）。有了愛，你們才懂得分辨自己和他人，有了愛你們才懂得選擇自己的伴侶。

（夏娃眼睛睜得大大，凝望着柏拉圖。）

柏： 在我看來，你們的幸福並不是在這裏吃好住好，而是要成為善者，辨別事物好壞，當你們獲得善良的人和物的時候才會真正快樂（《會飲篇》178d）。

（柏拉圖看了看亞當，亞當微笑了一下。）

孔： 柏拉圖的想法跟我差不多，只有仁者才懂愛人，通過分辨自己和他人的善惡準則衡量人正直與否，遠離不正直的人（《論語·里仁》4.3），以仁待人，別人也會以仁相待，一同建立人與人之間的愛。

柏： 對，為一個人的品德而愛人是件非常美好的事（《會飲篇》185b），這種愛是不變的（《會飲篇》183d-e）。要判別人的品德，首要分辨善惡，其次要分別他我。不然凡俗的愛會因人的肉體衰謝而容易逝去，這是不被認同的（《會飲篇》183d-e）。

（莊子站了起來。）

莊： 我想通了，夏娃和亞當的狀態與我心目中的「道」非常相似，但大不相同。從外在觀察，兩者都是希望把人的自我觀念都一同摒棄，以無憂無慮、忘我的心態與萬物合為一體。的確，在伊甸園不會生老病死，對生活毫無掛慮，但從內在角度而看，唯獨你們欠缺心神，即屬於你自己的靈性，之前我曾提及人的行為要本於自然，絕對需要你們有靈性和通達事理的基礎，正如不能隨便受蛇的言行而決定行為，不受外物傷害（《莊子·秋水》；陳鼓應 131-132）。

亞： 其實嚴格來說，我們還不算是人吧？

莊： 還未，你們現在的情況跟管理伊甸園的木偶沒有兩樣，因此你們正需這個果子能夠給予的判斷能力基礎，讓你們在危險或安全的地方，都能懂得觀察自己和外在環境，以安心、謹慎的方式處於環境之中（《莊子·秋水》；陳鼓應 131-132）。雖然我反對兩位大師對要秉持善惡對待人生的看法。但我認為天主要求你們所做的不合乎「道」的標準。善惡能力，分辨自我他人的能力對你們來說才真正可讓你們安於世上，真正與萬物合為一體。

孔： 正如我徒弟孟子所說仁義禮智信（《孟子·告子上》），仁在前，要達致對待整個社會的仁有時不得不犧牲一些繁瑣禮節，包括對待創造者的仁。

柏： 智慧果然是事物中最美的（《會飲篇》204b）。

莊： 吃不吃這個果子值得你們思考。人非萬物之主，生命亦是自然賦予，子曰汝安知魚樂云者，既已知吾知之而問我。我知之濠上也。（《莊子·秋水》；陳鼓應 137）！

我： 希望幾位思想家的建議幫助到你的決定。

夏： 感謝您們，我明白了，我現在沒有以前般渴望這個果子了，但我今天覺悟到我和亞當確實需要這個果子。

（柏拉圖、莊子、孔子和我回到大葫蘆，沿着河流飄走了。）

草原，一把如天高的火劍插在草原。夏娃從沉思中醒來，聽到了丈夫叫喊，回頭看了看火劍，與他一起步行離開了伊甸園。

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老師短評

/ 余之聰

蔡致鏗同學以話劇形式闡述柏拉圖、莊子和孔子的思想，探索人之為人的意義。人的意義不論是為了追求智慧、順應天道還是合乎仁，都離不開先有一顆反省思辨的心靈。禁果因此不再是想不想吃的問題(慾望)，而是必須吃的問題(需要)。蔡同學的話劇表現手法不是簡簡單單的將經典內容轉化為眾人的對話，而是在對話或描述之中反映蔡同學自身的思想深度。例如蛇在話劇開始時已經表現出其地位毫不重要（沒有人理會蛇……蛇安靜下來，同時離去），反映蔡同學暗示夏娃吃禁果不是出於蛇的引誘，為往後「出於人的需要」這一論點的發展作出預示。又例如莊子走到知善惡樹坐下，眾人低頭沉思這一幕亦影射著蘇格拉底在《會飲篇》中的形象，暗示反省思辨的重要。另外，經典內容亦不是簡簡單單的各說各話，不置可否的總結，而是有贊同有反對的思想交流，協助亞當夏娃作出決定，最終使讀者反思人之為人的意義。

/ 何偉明

文章重新演繹伊甸園故事，作者「暫停了」夏娃與亞當正要吃分辨善惡果子那一剎那，帶進了柏拉圖、孔子和莊子，鋪演出一篇論說生命意義和追求獨立自主的對話。致鏗通過人物的論辯，簡潔表達了不同經典的思想；論述內容以外，同學也重視戲劇細節：故事以倒敘開始，中間加進不少表情與動作描寫，特別夏娃形象鮮明，她的點頭、沉默、以至種種神態都有特定含義，給讀者留下解讀空間。

Science and Divinities

> IN DIALOGUE WITH NATURE BEST ESSAY AWARD – SILVER AWARD

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1. Introduction

Modern science, a field involving vigorous experimentation with falsifiable hypotheses (Popper 9) to generate scientific knowledge for application (Bunge 19-20), is often juxtaposed to religions, which involve faith in untestable or unobservable divinities (National Academy of Sciences 12). Such supernatural entities do not depend on empirical evidence, thus it is widely believed that religions and science contradict and cannot co-exist. However, can divinities play roles in science? Can they be independent yet complementary? In this essay, the possibility of coalescing science with divinities will be discussed, in order to impart a more meaningful representation of the world.

2. Science in Divinities

One possibility of bringing science and divinities together is to investigate whether science can prove the presence of divinities. Due to their unobservable nature, immaterial divinities are often indirectly inferred from natural phenomena, instead of robustly experimented. C.S. Lewis, an English novelist and philosopher, discussed how scientific discoveries suggest the existence of a supernatural designer. He pronounced that the general rules hidden in the complexity of biological systems, such as multi-facetious signal transduction cascades, involves a purposeful design rather than solely random mutations or natural selection (Breitbart 168),

resonating with Poincaré's definition of intellectual beauty – “similarities hidden under apparent discrepancies” (163). The purposes would be the creations of deities as no beings can acquire that much knowledge and wisdom. Therefore, some may argue that the unified laws and theorems brought out by scientific development are signposts of intelligent divinities, instead of purposeless natural processes.

However, this argument is subjected to fallacies. The intangible divinities are assumed to be intelligent, despite the fact that there is no empirical evidence of the divinities' having personalities. Divinities are also assumed to be a necessary condition for intellectual beauty. The existence of intellectual beauty can be due to multiple factors, which may or may not include gods. Hence, divinities may be a *sufficient* condition for intellectual beauty, but not a *necessary* condition. To disprove these fallacies will be a philosophical or religious question beyond the scope of this essay. Consequently, the possibility of co-existence should be viewed from the impacts of religion on science, but not from science to religion.

3. Divinities in Science

Although scientific discoveries cannot prove the existence of divinities, their supernatural power is a tool to explain unknowns. Isaac Newton, the founder of classical physics, attempted to explain planets' orbital motion by inertia. Each planet previously received an unknown force in a direction different to the gravitational attractive force by the sun will result in an orbital motion, whereas the non-imparted planets will be drawn towards the sun (Cohen 61). Newton eventually related the origin of the initial force to an “intelligent Agent” (Boyd). He even went as far as defining space as God's sensorium, or “emanative effect”, which was regularly intervened by the Agent to prevent natural processes from going astray (Jacquette 344-370). This incomplete explanation and the reliance on untestable divinities further promoted dissatisfied astrophysicists to develop new theories. The initial momentum of planets leading to orbital motion can be explained by the formation of the Solar System (Jordan), in which collapsing gas clouds spin due to gravity, gaining speed. Newton's sensorium is also later elucidated by theories of dark matter and quantum fields (Skullerud 76).

On the other hand, when unknowns have been explained, divinities are no longer dependent on. Charles Darwin was originally a pious Christian, who never doubted any word in the Bible, and had even considered it as the truth (Darwin 45).

His belief in an omniscient divinity encouraged him to study natural philosophy, thus he later joined the HMS Beagle voyage, during which he garnered biological evidence of organisms evolving in a self-controlled manner, or natural selection, “the preservation of favourable variations and the rejection of injurious variations” (Darwin 74). The slow changes in the structure of organisms over thousands of years improve the fitness in new biotic and abiotic conditions (Darwin 76). His theory made him question the existence of God as he could no longer argue that organisms’ variability was His design, and the failure of creationism was marked (Hitchens 94). It is noted that Charles Darwin only refuted the traditional creationism¹ in his younger years. He later offered a modified theological view that God only created one or a few primitive life forms (Cosans 362-371). Now, the emergence of life can be explained by the primordial soup, where random collisions of molecules in water bodies on the early Earth resulted in living systems (Lazcano 2010-2014), with the theory of divinity rejected in the scientific field. This demonstrates divinity as an intermediate step in explaining natural phenomena, capable of arousing scientists’ interest and provoking criticism, until a scientific theory is pushed forward with adequate proof.

When evaluating the role of divinities in science, it is important to recognise the negativity of assigning divinities to an overly generalised and non-scientific explanation of mysteries. However, it is the scientific spirit of “seeing is believing” that drives scientists uncomplacent. Divinity is thus a positive stepping stone, or a normal pit stop, instead of a betrayal of empirical science.

In addition to the practical application, the position of morals in applying scientific knowledge can be found in divinities. Joseph Murray, a Nobel laureate, invented organ transplantation with his expertise in physiology and anatomy. Its use and regulations are ascertained by ethics and religious views, and cannot be scientifically quantified. Despite religious advocacy from Pope John Paul II as a service of life and reverence towards the Creator (Cotrau et al. 12-14), it received doubts from Islamic scholars concerning the possibilities of commodification and commercialisation (Mousavi 91-93), as the Islamic God teaches that a human being is not the owner of any part of his body (Bruzzone 1066). The Catholic Church also declined the objectification of organs, only accepting transplantation with the consent of the donor and without excessive risks (Bruzzone 1064-1067). Joseph Murray understood the implications and was aware of their repercussions, such as

1 All life forms were created by God.

organ harvesting and trafficking, compelling him to consult religious leaders about its rightness (Snyder 110). Moreover, whether organ transplantation is right or wrong would be beyond the scope, but assuming that scientific development is by itself neutral, it is still subjected to maleficent abuse. The involvement of religious bodies in science and bioethics can minimise the risks.

Rachel Carson has further elaborated on the morality of scientific inventions. It is necessary to provide sufficient grassland for grazing, or to remove roadside vegetation which obstructs drivers' vision; the problem lies in the destructive use of synthetic herbicides. The extensive and pre-emptive use of toxic chemicals destabilises the food web, eradicates the natural aesthetics and takes its toll on the agricultural economy (Carson 144-149). She reasoned that selective spraying and biological control would be better alternatives, bringing a long-term control whilst minimising unfavourable side-effects on the ecosystem (Carson 150, 155). Being a devout Presbyterian, she believed that mankind's arrogance in technology and science, unless scrutinised spiritually and ethically, would destroy the beauty of the earth by overriding the values of God ("Faith, Science & Action"). Her emphasis on humanitarianism and protecting God's creations formed the basis of her book *Silent Spring*, which uncovers how men condemn undesirable natural objects to destruction without full awareness of the consequences (Carson 141). It is the spiritual humility that guides her scientific research. Hence, divine doctrines of numerous religions can act as a moral compass to guide not just the development of scientific knowledge, but also its applications.

Nevertheless, no religions can be viewed as the definition of morality in science, as their creeds differ and the ultimate "good" is yet open for discussion. Divinities are solely a placeholder of morality, providing moral and mental comfort for making a more peaceful world.

4. Independency and Complementarity of Science and Divinities

In the above section, the roles of divinities in science have been briefly explored, hinting that divinities and science can co-exist. The major conflict between the two is the unfalsifiability of divinities, which is apparently in opposition to the principle of falsifiability in science. It would be impossible to resolve this fundamental difference between the physical and ethereal domains, and thus meaningless to contemplate this issue. Putting aside falsifiability, science and divinities then provide divergent interpretations of the world – the former mechanistic, and the

latter teleological. It is remarked that the divergence only applies to the discourse about the physical world, as science cannot provide an interpretation to the spiritual world or divine miracles defying the laws of physics. Science yields explanations for how the divergence of character and rarity lead to the extinction of species (Darwin 83-87), how DNA is replicated and hereditary information is passed to offspring (Watson 137-138), or how emotions are processed consciously and unconsciously (Kandel 189-190). Divinities such as the Christian God offer plans to employ the divine faculty of reason, such as all lives are God's beautiful gifts (McFadden 1), and God is intelligent and He designs universal laws to allow harmony and order (Corey 6-7).

In other words, scientific method is only limited to objectively quantifying or qualifying results in order to deduce laws and theorems, but fails to satisfy teleological concerns: what is the purpose of having Newton's laws? What is the purpose of the Big Bang? On the other hand, divinities subjectively suggest the purpose of the world, all beings and the scientific mechanisms, but are insufficient to give logical or testable explanations to physical phenomena: how do Newton's laws govern projectile motion? How did Big Bang occur?

It is now evident that the divergent interpretations can find a common place, or converge to complement each other's demerits and limitations. An outstanding scientist can be a dedicated believer; a dedicated believer can also be an outstanding scientist. Science satisfies men's curiosity; divinities fulfil men's psychological and emotional needs. Only when logos and ethos come together can men truly understand themselves and the surroundings.

5. Conclusion

Although science is examined with reasoning and evidence whereas divinities are governed by faith, the exploration of the spiritual world with the heart and mind can co-exist with the empirical, tangible scientific world. Science can be used to reflect upon religious beliefs, while religions can be used to reflect upon the morality of science, or even motivate scientific pursuits through the manifestation of inherent beauty. To understand the world, neither objectivity nor subjectivity alone serves a greater purpose. The coalescence of science and divinities forms a more concrete depiction of oneself and the world.

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Teachers' Comments

/ CHEUNG HANG CHEONG DEREK

Have you ever wondered if an eminent scientist can also be a true believer in divinity? Science and religion are two seemingly contradictory approaches to understanding nature. The author provided insightful analysis on the role of divinities in scientific development and as moral guidance in technological advancement. This paper also leads us to reflect on whether science and divinities' coalescence could possibly contribute to a more complete human understanding of nature.

/ WONG WING HUNG

Science and religion are both edifices of human knowledge and experience. Researchers have paid a lot of efforts to study the intricate relation between them. Different topics reveal different facets of the relation. According to Ian Barbour, those facets can be categorized into four types, namely conflict, independence, dialogue and integration. In this essay, the author attempts to argue for the independent relation between science and religion. The essay presents a convincing argument. Strong evidence and good examples are provided to show that science is about natural phenomena and their descriptions, while religion is about values. Science and religion therefore belong to different spheres of human knowledge and experience that they are independent of and also complementary to each other.

/ HO WAI MING

According to Kant, one has to limit the validity of knowledge "in order to make room for faith". Chi Ngai's paper on science and divinities in some sense follows Kant's advice.

「人是萬物的尺度」—— 從儒釋兩家尋求回應

> 與人文對話優秀論文獎 - 銅獎

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引言

「人是萬物的尺度，是存在的事物存在的尺度，也是不存在的事物不存在的尺度。」在柏拉圖的對話錄（《泰阿泰德篇》152a）中記載了普羅達哥拉斯這句說話。這句話可以從兩個層面解讀：一方面強調不同人對事物有不同的感覺，而這證明了人在對世界理解上感官經驗的主觀性¹；另一方面則與亞里士多德所指的「人是理性動物」相似，強調理性是人把握社會事物善惡的尺度，而人們的理性是相同的，由此透過相互主觀性可以建構起公共群體中社會公共價值的一般標準²。筆者認為可以從第一種解讀方式中探究出人相對萬物而言的特性和相應的責任。

一、儒釋兩家對人的理解

「人是萬物的尺度」這句話的意義在於探討人對於世界的地位，對於此儒釋兩家有截然不同的看法：以《論語》為代表，儒家認同人有超然於萬物的道德情感價值，強調「仁」的道德超然性；而以《心經》為代表，佛家認為人並

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- 1 這說明了人類判斷的主觀性。每個人對同一件事的判斷可能不同；亦說明人與萬物本質上有別。
 - 2 指向判斷的客觀依據。有一些標準或理性是全人類共有的，因此才能建構社會。

沒有個體的獨特性，人只是隨著五蘊的變化而不斷流變的意識。筆者認為佛家所秉持的觀念能令人更客觀理性地理解人存在對於萬物的意義。

1.1 人與萬物之別——仁

對於人與天地萬物的關係，孔子在（《論語·陽貨》17.19）中提到：「天何言哉？四時行焉，百物生焉，天何言哉？」，指出天道不只在人身上，也同時在天地萬物之內。換言之，人和天地萬物都具有同樣的最高價值。可見儒家認為天地萬物具有和人一般同等的存有地位。在生命本義的存有上，一切有情之物都平等，具有喜生惡死的取向。而人與其他生命的區別在於道德情感的存在和彰顯。《論語·衛靈公》中提到：「人能弘道，非道弘人」，指出人具有道德的主宰性，人與萬物的區別在於人具有道德創造之性，即為「仁」³。因此，我欲仁，斯仁至矣⁴（《論語·述而》7.30）。

儒家認為，「仁」有超然的道德價值地位。《禮記·中庸》（20）中記載「仁者人也」指出仁的德性是人之所以為人的基本道理。孔子說：「為仁由己」，指出人雖然本能地具有仁的道德之性，但需要靠其個人行為才彰顯出來（《論語·顏淵》12.1），「仁者安仁，知者利仁」（《論語·里仁》4.2），不同人對於仁會有不同的彰顯方式和程度。然而儒家思想側重講述人與社會的道德倫理，「修身齊家治國平天下」（《禮記·大學》2），尤其孔子在《論語》從中清楚表明：關心他人對於人的存在是不可或缺的。只有將自我定位於人際關係之中，才能認識到自我對於整個人類的價值。而要彰顯仁，就要做好與人倫社會網絡的交流，透過禮實現忠、信、孝、悌，例如：孝敬父母（孝）、友愛兄弟（悌）是我們的為仁之本（《論語·學而》1.2）。不但如此，孔子講到：「己欲立而立人，己欲達而達人。能近取譬，可謂仁之方也已。」⁵（《論語·雍

3 這一觀點在宋明理學中，朱子透過「氣異」的觀點補充了人與物的區別——人透過心情之靈能使義理本然之性有多變的體現，而物不能。（《朱子語類·性理一》）

4 《論語·述而》（7.30）：「子曰：『我欲仁，斯仁至矣。』」當中指出仁與人的距離在於，人心所向之時，仁便能實踐。

5 所謂仁人，只要能做到自己想成功時先幫別人成功，自己想得到時先幫別人得到，就可以了。推己及人，可算實行仁的方法。

也》6.30），要做到推己及人才能彰顯仁之道。這種由己推至他人的「仁」正是人與萬物的區別，也是人之所以為人的道理。

1.2 人為眾生

而對於佛家而言，人與萬物皆為眾生，都是在因緣網絡中不斷流變的現象。佛家認為「諸法空相」：宇宙間的事物都是因緣和合而成的假相，因此並無自性，所以為「空」（不固定）。在這基礎上，《心經》提到「五蘊皆空」（一行禪師143-145），指出構成人的色、受、想、行、識「五蘊」皆為「空」，認為人並非作為獨立個體存在於世上，而是因緣而生出五蘊。所謂五蘊皆空，即是不論物質現象或精神現象都因緣所生⁶，並沒有固定不變的自性。也就是說「色空不異」，色的自性是空、空是色的本質屬性，「色不異空、空不異色」。

對於「五蘊皆空」的實際理解可以從「有即是空」出發。由於萬物都沒有一個固定不變的實體，因此一切現象的存在都是「空」。舉個例子，獅子之所以為獅子是因為各種條件的聚合成：獅子是肉食動物、兇殘、強壯等。但是獅子的特點與由來都有一定的因緣，並不是永恆不變的。將上述形成獅子的條件消除，獅子就只是生物而已，與羚羊、豺狼無異。五蘊、萬物亦是如此，一切的現象都只是處於非有非無的狀態。由此可見，不論人還是萬物，都是沒有特定的個體存在，且在經驗存在上受到因緣變化而不斷流動，因此佛教中不存在「人具有超然於萬物的地位」這種說法。

另外，「人是萬物的尺度」這句話背後的意義並不恰當。這句話隱含著人要成為超然萬物的、存在追求凌駕一切的執著。而正如佛家透過《心經》，除了指出「五蘊皆空」的概念外，更進一步指出，人要認識到一切假有現象背後的本質真相，破除對與外法的執著。《心經》的核心在於般若學的體現——「色空相即不異」的關係，即是不執著於有或空，要直接看清萬事萬有的真實本

6 色為物質現象，反映有形物質；受、想、行、識為精神現象，分別指承受事物時心之作用。想像事物時心之作用。關於嗔貪等善惡一切的心之作用。了別識知事物的心之本體。五蘊是覺知境界的五層存在次第。

體。回到「人是萬物的尺度」這句說話，不恰當的理由不單是在於其執著於要超越萬物的宣揚，更是這句話使人看不清人與萬物都只是因緣結合而成的現象，落入虛幻的假象當中，執著於超然萬物而最終在苦惱中難以自拔，不得解脫。

1.3 小結

由此可觀之，儒釋兩家對於「人是萬物的尺度」及背後所隱含人對萬物有超然且獨立的地位的論點有著截然不同的見解。前者從道德情感上認為人具有道德的主宰性而令「仁」有多變的體現而物不能，認同人的超然性；後者認為人與萬物本質上都只是因緣結合的現象，沒有區別，同時人亦不應秉持人超然萬物的觀點。

二、人對於萬物的責任

伴隨著生產力的高速發展和人類改造自然的能力的急劇增強，人類對自然進行了超出其承受範圍的破壞。工業革命之後，出現污染環境的公害問題。近年亦出現了臭氧層破壞、氣候變暖、森林減少和生物滅絕等生態問題。面對嚴酷的現實，人應該有相應于萬物的責任，需要保護自然環境。

2.1 儒家「天人合一」之道

對於儒家而言，儒家主張「天人合一」，認為人是自然秩序中的其中一個存在，與自然中所有的存在互相依存而成為一個整體。《禮記·中庸》(31)中記載：「萬物並齊而不相害，道並齊而不相悖」，天、地、人三者的關係應該放在一個整體中考量，達至人與自然的和諧，「天人合一」。孔子提到：「天何言哉？四時行焉，百物生焉，天何言哉！」（《論語·陽貨》17.19），說明了天是生生不已，自然界自有其運行的規律，不能被人類主觀意志支配和影響。因此，一旦人類為自身生存而對自然進行過量的改造和利用，會破壞天道自然的運行，危及人類的生存基礎。《論語·述而》(7.27)記載：「子釣而不

綱，弋不射宿。7」，孔子認為取物需有所節制，認為只有重物節物的態度才能令萬物按其規律正常地生生不息，人才有取之不盡的生活資源。由此可見，孔子強調人與自然的互為關係，認為兩者需要互相平衡，達至天人合一的境界，才能互相達至可持續的發展。

2.2 佛家「緣起」之理解

對於儒家的看法，佛家有近似的觀點⁸。佛家般若學的中心概念——「緣起」指出世間萬物因緣和合而生，一切有情物、無情物都是互相依持而生滅，由緣而生、由緣而滅。一行禪師在《般若之心》中利用樹和樹葉講述了「互即互入」的概念，繼承「緣起」的概念，指出萬物都是互相依存的關係（一行禪師152）⁹。人與萬物的關係亦然：環境在人之中，人是環境的一部分。因此保護環境即等同於保護人，所以一行禪師主張以人為本解決氣候危機，重建人與自己、與他人、與地球的真正交流。

而對於「緣起」，佛家有更進一步的多重詮釋。一種是果起因待性，即是指現時存在的事物都是相依相生相滅，強調「此有故彼有，此生故彼生」（《雜阿含經》）¹⁰的因待性；另一種是因果序列的必然性，即是在一切事物是彼此的因果關係之上，強調因果生滅次第的必然性，例如十二因緣¹¹。一切現象都受著因果序列制約。由此可見，佛家認為人類與萬物的關係除了是互相依存外，更進一步是人類對自然的善舉惡行都必然會按因果次序而一步一步受到相應的善報惡業，具有「緣起」的必然性。

7 孔子只釣魚而不撒網、只射飛鳥而不射睡鳥。

8 五蘊中的「空」可以作為一種理解。我們對世界正在發生的事情有意識，並且由於這種意識，我們產生其他相關的想法、意圖。「緣起」開始。

9 一行禪師在《般若之心》中以樹葉和樹的關係來說明萬物都是互相依存的關係：樹葉作為由樹而生的存在，最終都會化成原始樹液，輸送回樹里，成為樹的滋養物。

10 「此有故彼有，此生故彼生...此無故彼無，此滅故彼滅」《雜阿含經》卷第十，T02: 67a5-7

11 十二因緣：由無明到行，到識、到名色、六入、觸、受、愛、取、有、生、最後到老死。

2.3 個人見解

佛家以「萬物皆空」、「互即互入」、依靠因緣業報關係來強調人類對大自然有保護的責任。我認為這種論述並不合宜。明代管東溟在《勸人積陰德文》中指出程朱說「君子有所為而為善，則其為善也不必真，何事談及因果？」，有目的而行的善舉都是不真的行為，缺乏道德善性。即使是保護環境的善舉，若只是為求有善報而為之，而不是由心中的仁義所發而行，都不具道德善性¹²。孔子強調「為仁由己」的自發性，認為一切善舉都應該是發自內心的仁義而行（《論語·顏淵》12.1）。保護環境的責任和行為都應該是由仁出發，推己及人及萬物¹³。因為察覺到自身行為對於環境的破壞會對人類社會造成威脅，因此在考量自我實現的時候會同時考量天地萬物，滿足天地萬物的需要，來做到「贊天地萬物之化育」，實踐人與自然互相依存的可持續發展。

總結

總括而言，雖然儒釋兩家對於「人是萬物的尺度」一說法有著截然不同的看法，但不論是「人的道德超然性」還是「人與萬物皆為空」，兩家都強調人與自然萬物是互相依存的關係，人類需要背負保護自然的責任。而筆者認為，雖然佛家「萬物皆空」的觀點能令人更客觀理性地理解人相對於萬物的存在地位，但儒家在「人因實踐自我道德善性而需要保護環境」的論述能令人更深刻地理解人對於自然的責任具有對於整個世界運行的重要性。

12 孔子認為一個人道德行為的動機不是由於獎勵或對懲罰的恐懼，而是出自於一種義務。即出於義務的道德。但說佛教依靠獎懲（業力聯繫）對佛教徒來說可能是不公平的。人與人之間的共存感和平等意識不僅僅是對獎懲的考量。

13 正如現今所做的環境教育都只是指出行為會導致環境的破壞，然而並無教育大眾破壞環境的行為在道德層面為不仁不義，沒有誘發出大眾對於萬物被破壞的惻隱之心。

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老師短評

/ 何偉明

普羅哥拉斯 (Protagoras) 的名言「人是萬物尺度」因柏拉圖的引錄而不朽，但也因柏拉圖的解讀而成爲只強調主觀感受的「荒謬」命題。慶澤以此入手，討論孔子和《心經》對人在自然及在世界中定位的異同。佛教以緣起性空切入，衆生平等，人與自然的和諧，以平等作爲基礎。孔子重仁，人以仁心贊天地之化育；前者否定人爲萬物尺度之說，後者則以仁心為尺度之本。同學論述清楚，在解讀以外提出自己意見，批評因善惡果報而行善，動機不純；但業報固是因緣，因緣卻不限於業報，性空而生的互即互入，或者確有超越個人利害考慮之處。慶澤在註十二裏指出佛徒行善避惡，非只因獎懲，而是出於人與人的共存感及和平意識，看來同學對佛教因功利行善的批評，也非絕對。

建築與自由

> 與人文對話 優秀論文獎 - 銅獎

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一、引言

人生而自由，亦無往不在建築之中。建築承載了人們對空間的想像，在生活中扮演重要角色，為何當我們討論自由這重要議題時，卻鮮少思考建築與自由間之關係？以下我將從消極自由與儒家式積極自由兩個方向出發，探討建築如何體現人的自由。

二、建築中的消極自由

根據以賽亞·伯林，消極自由指免受限制及阻礙而行事的能力（Berlin 15-16）。對使用者來說，建築設計似乎充滿對自由的限制：商場中通往下一樓層的扶手電梯常位於另外一側，顧客需經過該層店鋪才能繼續樓層跨越。設計限制了顧客的行動自由。

在消極自由傳統中，彌爾的理論為「不受限的自由」提供了清晰的解釋。彌爾在《論自由》一書中著力探討社會合法干涉個人權利的性質及限度，他強調，在不傷害他人的情況下，個人擁有完全的行動自由和思想言論自由，公權力不可干涉。

為什麼我們需要免於限制的消極自由？彌爾提出，自由使人得以發展個性（Individuality），使自己以至社會得到最好的結果（Mill XVIII: 260）。不同人個性不同，故並無標準模式能使每個人都過上自己認為的美好生活。

我們可從麻省理工學院的20號大樓中發現消極自由的存在¹。20號大樓是低成本、無規劃空間的經典例子，是學院戰時擴建的臨時產物，建於1942年。由於時間緊迫，建築師只用一個下午的時間便完成設計，在簡單但承重力良好的木質結構基礎上，以膠合板、空心磚等廉價建材建成。大樓本應在戰後6個月內拆除，卻因大量使用者湧入，持續服務至1998年。建築本身毫無規劃、結構脆弱，但若僅如此，便只是一棟質量低下的普通大樓；除此之外，學院因其簡陋，無意修繕管理，甚至未把大樓分配給任何學系或機構，大樓內發生什麼事情，學院亦置之不理。簡陋的環境與寬鬆的行政結合，便帶來不尋常的自由度，使其成為科學家們實驗的理想空間。

斯圖爾特·布蘭德指出，大樓使用者根據不同的使用目的，客製化屬於自己的空間，推倒牆板進行研究，甚至在建造原子鐘時，打通樓層放置器材。建築師與行政人員的位置在大樓中幾乎消失，入駐的使用者才是大樓真正的設計者、管理者，大樓充斥著一個個『微環境』（micro environments），每一個都是獨特的創意空間（Brand 24-33）。使用者們享有不受限的行動及言論思想自由，所有不傷害他人的行為，都在大樓內不受限制地發生。大樓服務55年間孕育出多項影響世界的成果，包括9個諾貝爾獎。若將大樓的經驗放大到社會的規模，便如彌爾所言，社會之中的自由使人們活出各自精彩的人生，其「生活實驗」更能啟發社會中的其他個人（Mill XVIII: 260），由此可見消極自由對人類自我發展的正面意義。

三、建築中的儒家式積極自由

建築不是孤立的，每一棟建築的落成都會對周邊社群造成影響，故除使用者外，建築亦會影響他人自由。假如一人本可在家中享受窗外美景，卻被一處新建起之住宅阻隔風景，他免受阻礙欣賞景色的自由就被剝奪了。

1 20號大樓的圖片可見Brand, Stewart. MIT Bldg.20 (Photograph), How Buildings Learn: What Happens After They're Built, New York: Viking Press, 1994. 及 DJungarrayi. MIT Building 20, wing A, looking along the hallway (Photograph), Wikimedia Commons, 1997. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:MIT_Building_20,_wing_A,_hallway.jpg/。

新駐住戶的自由是享用空間，周邊住戶的自由是享受風景，二者之間的自由出現衝突，自由何處為界？回到彌爾的傷害原則：除非一人之行為對他人造成傷害²，否則不應被禁止（Mill I: 12）。然而，某行為不應被禁止不代表其道德上正確，亦難以判斷其是否造成重大利益傷害。單從保障消極自由的角度出發，未必能夠解決上述問題。

儒家式自由³或可成為自由界限問題的解答。與自由主義不同的是，儒家對個人的定位，並非與其他個人以及整個社會切割開來的互相對立乃至對抗之局，相反，他人與社會乃是構成個人自我實現不可或缺之場域（何信全 222）。盧梭以理性為人之特點，儒家式自由以「仁」為核心，外在表現為「禮」，孟子更從「仁」發展出「四善端」，以此為人之本性。實踐仁義禮智之本性，才能體現出人作為人之自由（何信全 223）。儒家式自由與盧梭「自律即自由」的說法有異曲同工之妙，因此我把它劃分為積極自由一類。

子曰：「七十而從心所欲，不踰矩」（《論語·為政》2.4）從心所欲即「縱己心之所至，不復檢點管束」（錢穆37）之自由。「不踰矩」之「矩」即「禮」，亦即「仁」等善端的外在表現。個人的自由與和他人相處之道德是融貫的。

「夫仁者，己欲立而立人，己欲達而達人」（《論語·雍也》6.30）人欲成就一己之「仁」，以實踐自我之自由，其必須一方面追求自我人格及知識，另一方面對他人毫無條件地感到有應盡的責任（徐復觀 20）。從儒家的觀點看，當人以自由為自我之追求，就必保有對他人之關懷。一己自由之行使，必須關顧他人之權益，行「仁」之自由。自我之自由與他人之自由之間的矛盾，因「仁」可緩和甚至瓦解。

2 實質傷害，包括身體上的傷害及重大利益傷害。

3 「儒家式自由」的概念由牟宗三先生提出，參見《生命的學問》（臺北市：三民書局，1991）、《政道與治道》，增訂新版（臺北市：台灣學生書局，1987）。

在日本的東海林健建築設計事務所於新宿設計興建的住宅項目，「中之島的家」⁴中，我們能發現這樣一種關懷的自由。建築師接受訪問時提到，業主自幼在農村長大，各家各戶之間關係緊密，家中孩子可放心交給鄰居看管。業主希望重現過去緊密的社區關係。因此，住宅放棄了部分現代人注重的私隱，採用半開放式的設計，在前方設置了一個三角形開口，配以低矮的門檻，讓路過的鄰居、朋友和孩子可以自由地坐在門廊上閒聊⁵（“hara house”）。業主對面臨衰退危機的家鄉感到其應盡的責任，委託建築師將自己的住家打造成鄰里之間的「社區中心」，在實踐一己自由建造家園的同時，由衷地關顧整個社區，通過建築重拾社區間緊密的鄰里關係，建築中體現了儒家式積極自由的精神。

四、結語

香港曾因「街影法」⁶出現一批「斜面樓」⁷，通過限制街道兩旁樓宇受光的的角度，縮小街道的陰影面積，使行人可享受陽光和清新空氣。街影法的原意是改善公共衛生，但這是否隱含一種對平民百姓以至社會的關懷。若斜面樓的出現不源於法規，而源於發展商、建築師對人的關懷，這將表現一種「仁」的自由。

4 「中之島的家」的圖片可見村井勇，Hara House (Photograph), Takeru Shoji Architects, 2019. <https://takerushoji.jp/works/housing/hara-house/>。

5 拙譯。

6 為了保持公共空間的日照及通風，大廈興建時必須呈特定的日光角度斜面（76度角）。

7 斜面樓的圖片可見呂諾君，斜面樓（照片），香港01，2020. <https://www.hk01.com/18區新聞/516095/社區風景-街影法下產物-舊樓高層呈樓梯狀-可令街道衛生/>。

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老師短評

/ 劉保禧

建築是具體的，自由是抽象的，本文揉合具體與抽象而為一，解釋建築如何表達自由的理念，立意新穎，視野獨到。在結構上，借用以賽亞·伯林論兩種自由的理論框架，豎立論文的骨幹。在表達上，圖片與文字交錯出現，互補不足，手法清新可喜。最重要的是，字裏行間洋溢著作者的熱情，用心解釋建築並非冷冰冰的死物，背後其實可以展現人文關懷。論文結合了本科專業與通識教育的知識，值得欣賞。

/ 何偉明

「建築與自由」是個新穎的組合，作為文章主題，也是饒有新意的切入點。霽陽是建築系同學，在文章裏，他結合彌爾 (J.S. Mill) 和孔子討論建築和自由的關係。霽陽把彌爾的傷害原則與簡約、無規劃設計連合；至於孔子的仁，他理解為人際關係的自由與和諧，並以此討論建築中呈現的「關懷的自由」。受限於文章篇幅，同學的論述也許還可以更深入精闢，但以經典思想評論現代建築，把本科知識結合通識所學，文章的取向頗有意思，內容廣度也不錯。

/ 李行德

這篇文章吸引我的地方，一是它的跨學科創意，把兩種關於「自由」的概念分別跟兩個具體建築聯繫起來，認為麻省理工的第二十號樓體現了伯林的「消極自由」，而日本新宿的「中之島的家」則體現了「儒家式積極自由」；二是第二十號樓是我多年前經常路過的樓宇，有一點具體印象。應該說，用精緻的哲學概念來描述建築特色，只能在一個比喻和相似性 (iconicity) 的層次上進行，難以進行嚴密的推論。本文採用的角度是大膽和新穎的，但推論卻有不少瑕疵。

The Meaningless Meaning in the Meaningless World

> IN DIALOGUE WITH HUMANITY BEST ESSAY AWARD – BRONZE AWARD

WONG SIU HIN

Wu Yee Sun College, Medicine

“You will never be happy if you continue to search for what happiness consists of. You will never live if you are looking for the meaning of life.” (Camus, *Youth Writings*, 156).

In this essay, I would extend the discussion of a rigidly purposeless and meaningless life to a broader sense to make the discussion richer in content and more in-depth. In my opinion, a highly purposeless life can be better than a purposeful life due to the enjoyment of full autonomy and the devoid of external constraints.

Aristotle starts *Nicomachean Ethics* with “Every craft and every line of inquiry, and likewise every action and decision, seems to seek some good” (1094a1). Aristotle’s ethics is teleological, as for him “If life is to be worth living, he argues, it must surely be for the sake of something that is an end in itself—i.e., desirable for its own sake.” (Kenny and Amadio). He adds that some ends are subordinate to other ends, as “the lower ends are also pursued for the sake of the higher” (1094a4). Aristotle argues that the highest good that one can attain is eudaimonia, which means human flourishing or blessedness, it has to fulfil both ‘self-sustaining’ and ‘final goal’. Also, the activity leading to eudaimonia has to be peculiar to man as eudaimonia is solely an activity of man but not other natural beings, leading him to conclude that eudaimonia arises in the soul in accord with virtue and reason

(Copleston 334). Hence, it can be concluded that Aristotle regards visions of purpose and meaning as one of the prerequisites of living a good life.

For Zhuangzi, his virtue ethics is rather opposing to that of Aristotle. Chad Hansen regarded Zhuangzi as a naturalist that seeks guidance from *dao*, the natural path. Zhuangzi is regarded as an unorthodox philosopher like David Hume, a British empiricist famous for his philosophical scepticism, instead of a traditional philosopher like Aristotle and Plato (“Philosophy of Language in Classical China”). Zhuangzi puts great emphasis on ‘the use of uselessness’ in *Free and Easy Wandering*, in which Zhuangzi’s opponent Huizi is criticising the uselessness of a big tree, as it is neglected by the carpenter and lumberjack, and insinuate it to be as useless as Zhuangzi’s philosophy. Zhuangzi then argues that Huizi should not fret over the tree’s usefulness and says “Why don’t you go and plant it in the village where there is nothing whatsoever, in the broad and empty fields; hang around without aims at its side, freely and easily nap underneath it.”¹ (“Zhuangzi: Free and Easy Wandering”). People may argue that Zhuangzi does so since being ‘useless’ is the only way to avoid misfortune and to keep one’s life, especially in chaotic times like the Warring States period, nonetheless, some scholars argue that it has far-reaching implications as to remind people that freedom and ease are the utmost values of one’s life (沈維華 167). I would regard this ‘freedom’ as the closest possible to the purposeless and meaningless of life, while still living a good life, a life of following *dao and tian* (天), as Zhuangzi’s ultimate goal is still to achieve ‘eudaimonia’ and flourishing life. We can also observe Zhuangzi’s transcendental ideology regarding life and death, in which he was indifferent towards the death of his wife and decried the practice of mourning since by understanding the nature of things, one will reach the state of non-action (*wúwéi*, 無為), that involves the acceptance of what is inevitable in our life and death (Down), eliminates the constant fear of our life and helps to create a better life.

Another characteristic of Zhuangzi’s philosophy is letting go of the obsession with all man-made concepts such as power and success and shall follow *dao* and achieve *wuwei*. In *Free and Easy Wandering*, Rongzi of the Song was indifferent to the encouragement or criticism from everyone, he ‘differentiated the divisions of inner and outer and distinguished between glory and disgrace’ (“Zhuangzi: Free

1 Original text: 「今子有大樹、患其無用。何不樹之於無何有之鄉、廣莫之野。彷徨無爲其側、逍遙乎寢臥其下。不夭斤斧、物無害者。無所可用、安所困苦哉」 (《莊子·逍遙遊》)

and Easy Wandering”).² He also did not chase for fame and fortune, yet, Zhuangzi said Rongzi was not perfect since he was still obsessed with differentiating object and self (“Zhuangzi: Free and Easy Wandering”). Liezi albeit riding the wind he still held on to his abilities. Zhuangzi commented that if one follows the *dao* and conquer the changes of the six vapours, he can course in the limitless and achieve the state of *wuwei*. Hence a wise man would not dwell on oneself, would neither obsess with one’s accomplishment nor one’s reputation³ (“Zhuangzi: Free and Easy Wandering”). Zhuangzi’s *wudai* and *xiaoyao* strive for absolute freedom and being unharmed by any adversities since matters play no roles in a sage’s life, as he follows *dao* and has no obsession in living. Zhuangzi’s ideology lies very close to the meaningless and purposeless of life, his philosophy guides us to live in tranquillity autonomously, somehow similar to the Stoics in terms of attaining freedom.

The rationale behind arguing against Aristotle’s ethics are multi-folded. Immanuel Kant criticised Aristotle’s ethics to be “fatally flawed by its failure to provide for the crucial moral significance of the notion of ‘duty’, so that the line between prudence and morality is badly blurred” and regarded it as “the epitome of moral confusion” (Sullivan 24-25). Some commented that “Virtue Ethics may therefore be accused of being a theory, not of helpful moral guidance, but of unhelpful and non-specific moral platitudes.” (Fisher and Dimmock), thus obstructing our way to a good life. Apart from that, his ethics cannot solve the issues of clashing virtues and circular reasoning, in which he claims that one becomes virtuous by doing virtuous acts, and an act is virtuous if a virtuous man will commit it (Copleston 334). This reasoning serves no purpose in transforming one into a virtuous person and ultimately reaching eudaimonia and good life. Also, living virtuously does not always guarantee eudaimonia and secure a good life, sometimes vices instead of virtues can actually be contributing to our own flourishing⁴ (Fisher and Dimmock). Furthermore, contra Zhuangzi, one’s life under Aristotle’s ethics is largely dependent on the societal values, as well as showing over-reliance on others’ thoughts and opinions. This is exactly opposite from Zhuangzi’s *wudai* and

2 Original text: 「宋榮子猶然笑之。且舉世而譽之而不加勸、舉世而非之而不加沮。定乎內外之分、辯乎榮辱之境、斯已矣。」(《莊子·逍遙遊》)

3 Original text: 「至人無己、神人無功、聖人無名」(《莊子·逍遙遊》)

4 We were asked to imagine a girl that is very generous to the point that she dedicates much time to solve others’ problems. We can describe her as virtuous given her generosity (generous rather than profligate). However, such dedication may limit her ability to flourish (her action is a vice of excess and is profligate rather than generous) (Fisher and Dimmock).

is passive rather than active in terms of Spinoza's terminologies in *Ethics*⁵ (Spinoza 5). At last, Aristotle's ethics is too goal-oriented and utilitarian, as he mentioned that every action aims at some good, neglecting the aesthetic and spiritual elements of actions, unlike Zhuangzi's. The abundance of flaws unavoidably hampers the attainment of a eudaemon life.

Nonetheless, Zhuangzi's ethics is not flawless. One can argue that Zhuangzi is "cynical and misanthropic" (Liu 39), opting for arcadian life instead of being the chief minister of the state of State of Chu, nevertheless, Zhuangzi had a solid reason for his preference. He detested being restrained by the position and the loyalty to the State, but preferred having fun and enjoying life while playing in the pool.⁶ Also, his ethics are very demanding, if not impossible to execute perfectly, the wudai and *xiaoyao* are seemingly very promising but such a level of 'unworldly' is hardly attainable.

I certainly agree that a purposeless and meaningless life can be happy. Many ideologies and religions stress that good life and the absence of purposes and meanings in life are not mutually exclusive, such as Buddhism, Daoism and existentialism. However, I found optimistic nihilism the most approachable and practical. This is not the kind of nihilism that most people found despairing and hopeless, but exactly the opposite. They share some common features such as the negation or denial of some aspects of thought or life (Crosby), simply life has no meaning. "There is no inherent meaning to the universe and the pursuit of meaning will not bring meaning itself." (Plizga). Yet, a famous philosophical channel "Kurzgesagt – In a Nutshell" suggested in the video "Optimistic Nihilism" that realizing how insignificant we are in terms of our infinitesimally brief lifespans compared to the universe does not necessarily lead us to dread and hopelessness. On the contrary, he says that "You only get one shot at life, which is scary, but it also sets you free. If the universe ends in heat death, every humiliation you suffer in your life will be forgotten. Every mistake you made will not matter in the end.

5 "Our mind is in certain cases active, and in certain cases passive. In so far as it has adequate ideas it is necessarily active, and in so far as it has inadequate ideas, it is necessarily passive." (EIIIP1 5) "Hence it follows that the mind is more or less liable to be acted upon, in proportion as it possesses inadequate ideas, and, contrariwise, is more or less active in proportion as it possesses adequate ideas." (EIIIP1Cor. 5) (Spinoza)

6 Original text: 楚威王聞莊周賢，使使厚幣迎之，許以為相。莊周笑謂楚使者曰：「千金，重利；卿相，尊位也。子獨不見郊祭之犧牛乎？養食之數歲，衣以文繡，以入大廟。當是之時，雖欲為孤豚，豈可得乎？子亟去，無污我。我寧遊戲污瀆之中自快，無為有國者所羈，終身不仕，以快吾志焉。」（《史記 老子韓非列傳》）

Every bad thing you did will be voided. If our life is all we get to experience, then it's the only thing that matter... If the universe has no purpose, then we get to dictate what its purpose is" (Kurzgesagt – In a Nutshell). It is similar to the idea of *you live only once* or *memento mori* (which is translated as "remember that you have to die"), as life does not have any meaning, one should enjoy and treasure every opportunity to try everything. Hence, the purpose of life no longer lies in the amount of wealth that one accumulates, nor the power one holds, one can embrace every opportunity and achieve eudaimonia. When we are obsessed with usefulness and *yauwai* demonstrated in Huizi's conception, one would not be having the capacity to explore whatever he can in such a short lifespan.

Similarly, the interpretation of absurdism by Albert Camus gives us another perspective in creating a good life. The absurd refers to the conflict between human desires to seek inherent value and meaning in life and the inability to find any in a meaningless world (Ezebuilo and Ojiakor 130). Camus lists 3 attitudes of facing the absurd, namely, suicide, seeking spiritual belief in the transcendental realm and acceptance of the absurd in *The Myth of Sisyphus*. Suicide makes one's life even more absurd while seeking transcendental belief is regarded as a "leap of faith" or "philosophical suicide" (The Myth of Sisyphus 50). The only way out is to acknowledge the absurdity and by "revolting against the Absurd while simultaneously accepting it as unstoppable, one could possibly be content from the personal meaning constructed in the process" (Ezebuilo and Ojiakor 130). Hence, the revolt of Sisyphus against God is a futile act but through the process of pushing the rock, "One must imagine Sisyphus happy." (The Myth of Sisyphus 123), explaining why Camus (The Rebel 108) writes "I rebel; therefore I exist." in *The Rebel*. Camus successfully illustrates the good life and happiness brought by understanding and revolting the 'purposeless purposes', albeit being pessimistic but nevertheless appears to be the only option given the increasing absurdity in this contemporary world.

Just as in Pixar's movie *Soul* says "I'm going to live every minute of it." (Soul). Life is just for living, but not for pursuing any meaning, this is how we live a good life.

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Teachers' Comments

/ CHENG WAI PANG DAMIAN

Wong is able to look into the details and kernels of the discussed texts with penetrating eyes. The essay is thoughtful and sophisticated. Through in-depth textual analysis and philosophical arguments, the author helps us to rethink the unexpected relationships between meaningless-ness and good life.

/ HO WAI MING

Siu Hin made an interesting attempt to discuss meaninglessness in a meaningless world. In the course of the exposition, meaninglessness is first interpreted as purposelessness, and then as uselessness. From this conceptual framework, Siu Hin gives a critical review of Aristotle and Zhuangzi with respect to the use of morality and to the purpose of life. Even Zhuangzi's use of the useless seems to be more appealing to him — this is more in line with the focus on meaninglessness — Siu Hin still tries to work out possible *shortcomings* of Zhuangzi's thought. Cultivation of critical thinking is always a major goal of our foundation programme. Siu Hin's paper is a proof of how students engage in critical analysis and evaluation in reading and writing.

The Intertwinement of Life, Death, and Love

> IN DIALOGUE WITH HUMANITY BEST ESSAY AWARD – BRONZE AWARD

WONG WING KI

Lee Woo Sing College, Medicine

Blinded and Numbed

As I approached the patients' family with light steps, limply dropping a word, "your father still has three months left. Be prepared." As if premediated and pre-programmed in my mind, the patients' family would cry or even shriek, while I would simply walk away, leaving them in the bleak, endless corridor of the oncology department. Time is the little death. Ten repetitive, monotonous years working in the department would dwindle any great intentions, wash out any lofty dreams, and kill any zealous hearts. Numbing my human nature of grief, I have since befriended death, in the battle against which I have lost my fear, struggle and toil.

Little did I know the odds would eventually be against me.

"There is nothing that we can do," said the doctor unfeelingly, his words short, sharp and stinging like a blade. When sinisterness is, particularly when it is too apparent to dissent, and too ignorant to change, arbitrated as a reality, it renders a nauseous sensation of surrealness and perplexity. The perpetual tick-tocking clock stirred up swirls in my mind, which was an expanse of fog and murk, halting my impulse to utter any word at all to vent my confusion. The old clock still clinking, reminding one of the protracted time that aggravated the exasperation and excruciation.

The callosity of the doctor, the adversity of the situation, alongside my incapability, blew a crushing defeat in me. It is only human to pass the buck when facing adversity. I started to interrogate, in my restless mind, the doctor of his apathy. Even though his words of reassurance would not have helped much with my father's prognosis, I would have clung onto them.

Shortly, I saw myself in him. Identical machines churned out from medical school, standardised by time, we were programmed to be dispassionate, anaesthetised even when witnessing the strongest tide of humanity.

Thinking that this painful encounter might be my defining moment, I must take a last struggle against becoming a cold and unfeeling machine to my patients. To get back the humanity part of me, I probed into my terra incognita—classics, and took a stroll down the historical lane of humanity.

Love— the Origin of the Pain

As I probed into the philosophical cruxes asked in the classics, my past professor's words, saying that doctors are crucial because they are the only hope amidst the patients and their family's toughest time, sprung to my mind. Acknowledging that dying is only natural, what is the origin of the excruciating pain?

Objectively and biologically, families are symbiotic. As the renowned Buddhist monk, Thich Nhat Hanh has said, "interbeing" is the manner we exist (一行禪師 142). Though everything is interdependent and intertwined, families, who share time, memories, and lives together, are especially dependent on each other. Losing a member of this important miniature community, or the ominousness of such, is akin to obliterating a big part of one's life. "This paper exists because of every other thing." (一行禪師 142) Likewise, we exist because of everything surrounding us, amongst which our family plays one of the, if not the most, monumental part.

Subjectively, families, who have endured much together, are bonded by love. An intangible and ambiguous concept, love can be associated with a wide range of descriptions. Upon observation, love, according to Eryximachus, "possesses happiness and a power which enable us to be companions and friends of each other" (188d). People are always free to leave one another, especially after growing up—yet families, bonded by love, last forever. Think about interim partings— children sent abroad for school, parents leaving the family frequently for work, and children

getting married and moving out, to name but a few. Which of these events is not accompanied with desolation, if not wretchedness and tears? Breaking a strong chemical bond stirs up an immense chain of energy release and reactions. Likewise, humans are bound to develop a whirlwind of emotions if they are to be parted permanently. The patients' family's poignancy is therefore as natural as death is to life.

To buttress the aforementioned point of the pain brought by parting, Socrates has argued that "love is the desire for permanent possession of the good" (206a). The "good" is happiness. Humans are gregarious. Happy, blissful moments are shared between intimates, who are mainly family, the smallest unit of society, and with whom we spend most of our time. Bereaving someone of their family is equivalent to depriving him or her of the level of happiness previously possessed, as each family member has his or her own place and role. A void will therefore be left should any of them de cease. By then, "the good" can no longer be maintained, as happiness and contentedness will certainly plummet, and as "the desire" cannot be slaked, love, the strong bond, will be broken, alongside which great pain and poignancy will be caused.

Had I understood this earlier, would I still have behaved so barbarically to my patients' families?

The Fear of Death and Its Nature

Pain always comes with fear—the fear of death. We do not fear any other natural process— such as giving birth, growing, as much as death. Every living organism will eventually stop respiring and pass away. We know death is the eventual curtain call to everyone's lives, be them glamorous or solitary, so what is it that we fear? What is the nature of death?

Is death the end of everything? Probably not. Though some scientists and atheists may disagree, this can be explained in a logical and scientific way. For one thing, we cannot use science to deny the existence of afterlives, a soul, or even a higher power, since there is no proof against them. For another, from a highly scientific perspective, energy cannot be created or destroyed, and we form part of the total energy of universe, so none of us can be created, and none of us will really vanish. In view of this, we already exist before the birth of this life, since according to Thich Nhat Hanh, we can never go from "nil" to "one" (一行禪師 149), and so death is not really death, but just an end of one life cycle. We cannot, according to

Zhuangzi, hold back time and tide: obliteration, growth, fulfilling, void, the end, and start all over again” (〈秋水〉；陳鼓應 131). A lot of people, especially those with religion, have already understood this, that death is not really the end, as the Bible also, though not agreeing with the “cycle of life”, states that there are indeed “the Kingdom of God” and “eternal life” (Mark 10:23-30). I have nonetheless observed, throughout the decade of being a doctor, the fear of death and that of their loved ones in agnostics and religious people alike.

It is thus inferred that we fear death, for it is unknown. Akin to about to open a door and enter a room which seemed dark, death is cryptic, rendering us fearful and apprehensive. Especially to the patient’s family, the obscurity lies not in the repeating of the cycle of life, but in the fate of the patient’s next cycle, and the fear of their lives without a crucial family member, which is unknown as well. Will I grieve for him for a long time? Will I be able to support myself mentally? Will he be able to lead a good life after this one? This I can no longer answer—for I also cannot see through the aftermath of one life. In this kind of deadlock, we must find a way out by reassuring ourselves.

Addressing the fear of the patient’s afterlife, Thich Nhat Hanh has given a good answer by stating that “nothing can be born, and nothing can die” (一行禪師 153). If everyone of us will never be gone, why would we fear what we will become? Our time in a lifetime may be limited, but our existence in this universe is infinite. On top of this, the Bible also states that “give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven” (Matthew 19:21), so as long as the patient was a kind person during his lifetime, he should enter heaven, if he is a Catholic or Christian.

To my dying patients and their families, I will say this—“A process cannot be understood by stopping it. Understanding must move with the flow of the process, must join it and flow with it.” (Herbert 32) According to Thich Nhat Hanh, “we should not bewail change, as without change, we will cease to exist” (一行禪師 148). Variations are in our nature. We adapt to changes naturally, and things will eventually find their places.

Humanity and Agility in the Ward

A fundamental question to ask is, why should I spend my time on these emotions and even sentimentality, when my workload is already overwhelming? Frankly, saying these words may contribute little towards the situation.

Taking a step back, why would I have this question? Is it not a natural reflex of humans to develop empathy towards the suffering ones, for humans are marked by the capacity to empathise? Alienation, I have learnt from the “Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844” by Karl Marx, was what occurred to me after toiling restlessly for over a decade. “The fact that labour is external to the worker, that he therefore does not confirm himself in his work” (Marx 173), was the reason for my sabotaging the doctor-patient relationship, as I no longer view my patients’ families, who are so crucial to patients’ prognosis by supporting them with a healthy mindset, as someone to whom I need to devote my mind, time, and integrity.

Doctors, especially those in my division, oncology, enjoy a high social status not only because they are agile, but also for their benevolence in caring for the physical and mental health of patients and their families, providing them with a second chance in life after falling victim to diseases. Thinking back, I realised that, started with dogged determination, my passion was gradually obliterated by the overwhelming and tremendous workload, leading me to the blind pursuit of efficiency and quantity at the expense of quality, akin to the factory workers in the Elizabethan era.

One cannot curb world problems with his own strength. The severe shortage problem has left all doctors in the world with insurmountable workload. There are, however, two worlds that we live in: the external environment, and the internal, intrinsic world, the latter of which is always changeable with one’s own will. Our intrinsic world is guided by our own paradigms. A positive paradigm shift shall refine my actions. Though I may have scarce time to communicate well with my patients, I can still treat them as individual humans, as they are; as opposed products or problems. I am not an unfeeling factory worker, and it is only by treating my job as a human-oriented one that I can uphold a genuine respect for my duty, and therefore treating my patient’s families and myself better. The job will cease to be a torment so long as I relish the daily content of my job with more dedication and care.

The Intertwinement of Life, Death, and Love in the Ward

It seems ironic to me as in how new lives are born, a pardon from death be granted, and the livings shall exhale their final breath all in the same place—the wards. How could I have forgotten what the wards mean to patients? They are where they are born, where they fight their diseases, and where they say a final

word to their families. My job is to cure the sick, but I clearly understand that setting hard sciences and medicines aside, I am a person who has to witness all these vicissitudes of life. Instead of being passively numbed by the frequency of these colossal events, I should actively treat my patients' and their families' cases with humanity. What make us humans are not only our high thinking, but also our emotions and empathies.

These delicate factors that knit and connect patients and their families, as well as my life. My mind is full of thoughts that I hope I could have told, and will tell my patients and their families. First and foremost, I will always spare no pain in trying to understand the despondency, but I cannot claim that I can comprehend. As Thich Nhat Hanh said, the only way of comprehending a person is to become "one" with that person (一行禪師 145). I have, though, gone through this stage before, and if you happen to have a religious belief, it will be of much help in terms of overcoming the fear, as it may provide explanations for some unknowns about which we are apprehensive. Even if you do not, please understand that there is a possibility that death is not the end, and our loved ones still exist somewhere, free from disease.

With the hard evidence, I cannot say that I am absolutely optimistic or pessimistic with your family's prognosis. On one hand, being candid and rational, the time left may not be as long as you would have anticipated. On the other, optimistically, life is not defined by time, and the patient and all of you should decide how you want to spend your time. If there are still memories to be filled, then go ahead and spend more time with your loved ones. Or if there are great expectations that are not yet fulfilled, then maybe plan out how they can eventually be met. I have read "A Room of One's Own" by Virginia Woolf, and she argues that great people "do not die; they are continuing presences; they need only the opportunity to walk among us in the flesh." (Woolf 112) This echoes my thoughts very well, for I have seen how family members continue to help their loved ones attain their unfinished dreams and goals, as they are bonded by love, which transcends death.

I am a doctor who faces death every day, but I will not be blinded by it. In fact, I shudder to think that death is so close. Death is unknown and obscure, as are your lives after the decease of your loved ones. Be it emotional or treatment related issues, I will spare no effort in assisting you all to adapt to the new circumstances. Lastly, though life may not be always kind, please remain optimistic about the things that you can do. I now therefore ask that you work alongside with me in the fight with the disease, and we will definitely go through the tough time together. We are in this together.

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Teachers' Comments

/ FONG SING HA

Alienation, just like a curse, which has been put on everyone in our society, no matter you are a student, a teacher, a lawyer, or even a doctor, more or less you must have experienced alienation, either here or there. In this paper, the writer tries to imagine to be a doctor who works in the Division of Oncology for almost 10 years and becomes insensitive and indifferent to the patients. But then, one day, when the doctor realizes that she is, this time, the daughter of the dying patient, things changed. She starts to ponder what is love and pain, where is beyond death, and what are important elements in the ward. This paper is well-structured, comprehensive, and I would say very touching as well. I believe the writer will be a sympathetic doctor in the future.

/ HO WAI MING

Following the requirements of the question, Wing Ki plays the role of a doctor who is used to keeping a cool and indifferent tone when approaching patients and their close relatives. Story has it that her father has been diagnosed with a deadly disease. The doctor becomes “the victim”. In a nicely told story, Wing Ki reflects on life and death, love and family ties, and on the fragility of happiness. She shows her nuanced understanding in particular of Thich Nhat Hanh’s thought. Wing Ki is a medical student and will “face death every day”. After all, as she says, the ward is where Life, Death, and Love intertwine: Not only life and death, but, as she wrote, love should be present there.

/ THOMAS LEE

Putting herself in the context of a doctor trying to empathize with family members of a dying patient, the author provides sharp and lucid answers to such perennial questions as “Why does death cause pain?”, “What is the nature of love?”, and “Why does one fear death?”, drawing from a variety of classical texts from the Socratic, Buddhist, Christian and Marxian traditions. While the application of the Marxian notion of alienation to the situation of an overworked doctor may be questionable, the author’s effort to unify ideas from different intellectual traditions to address important issues of human concern is a laudable one.

Pursuing Truth, Beauty, and Goodness with Modern Science: An Analysis of the Strengths and Limitations of Scientific Methodology

> IN DIALOGUE WITH NATURE BEST ESSAY AWARD – BRONZE AWARD

LAM WING TONG

New Asia College, Fine Arts

Truth, beauty, and goodness have been three persisting themes in human history that transcend time and places. People approach these grand goals with different frameworks, philosophy and religion being two popular choices. In the modern age, we are given a third powerful tool—science, the discipline that now establishes itself as practical and precise, our society’s synonym of ‘reliability’. Are we finally well-equipped enough to accomplish the trinity? More fundamentally, *what* are truth, beauty, and goodness anyway? While it is impossible for me to provide a complete account of all these great debate themes as well as the endless list of scientific achievements and disasters, I will begin the discussion with an analysis of the theoretical strength and limitation of ‘scientific methodology’, with reference mainly to the teaching materials from the course In Dialogue with Nature.

In this essay, I argue that while scientific method does guide humanity towards objective truth, its contribution towards goodness and beauty, which is relatively subjective, is limited and difficult to assess. Hereby I will articulate these ideas in the order of ‘truth’, ‘beauty’, and ‘goodness’ with two reasons, namely in the

descending order of how concrete are they discussed with arguments in the texts, and how direct they are related to scientific method's greatest strength—the generation of universal, value-free¹ knowledge. 'Truth' here refers to the property of human perceptions that are corresponded to facts, which allows it to be independent from individual judgement²; the definition of beauty is the possession of aesthetic value³; Finally, goodness is defined as the property of being morally correct⁴.

Science and Truth

Among the three concepts, truth is the most direct result of science. Modern science primarily seeks to investigate and explain natural phenomena that are corresponding to the observable world—the facts, and it is currently the most accurate tool in doing so. Sivin summed up science's strengths by stating, 'It would be foolish to deny that modern science has attained a verifiability, an internal consistency, a taxonomic grasp, a precision in accounting for physical phenomena, and an accuracy in prediction that no other kind of activity shares' (Sivin 228). This claim is supported by modern scientific achievements. One of the landmark examples was Newton's *Principia*—the discovery of the laws of motion. The laws were applied in accurately predicting Halley's comet cycle, which demonstrated the immense reliability of science (Cohen 62). What makes science so powerful? Upon close observation, we can notice that there are key features of scientific methodology that closely correspond to the two common reasoning methods, deduction and induction. For instance, the application of mathematics in science is a form of

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- 1 'Value-free' means the knowledge is true regardless of people's perceptions. It however does not mean that they are unselected. The scientific method does prefer certain types of knowledge. For example, in his theory of hierarchy of facts, Poincare states that scientists prefer general, recurring facts (Poincare162). This means that not only knowledge should be 'true', but also the more 'universally applicable' the better. Therefore, the scientific method does have value judgement in itself.
 - 2 This statement is developed from Blackburn's introduction of 'Truth' on Britannica. He defines 'truth' as 'the property of sentences, assertions, beliefs, thoughts, or propositions that are said, in ordinary discourse, to agree with the facts or to state what is the case.' This shows that 'truth' is a property that can be verified objectively by rather it corresponds with factual evidence ("Truth").
 - 3 This statement is developed from Scruton's article about 'Aesthetic' on Britannica. He defines 'aesthetic' as 'the philosophical study of beauty and taste' (Munro and Scruton).
 - 4 This definition is developed from Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy's article about 'Moral Naturalism', which explains moral naturalism as 'a label for views in normative ethics which hold that things are good if they are natural' (Lutz and Lenman). Reversing the logic, the word 'good/goodness' is equated with moral-correctness.

deduction reasoning⁵. It is best illustrated in its utilization in the understanding of nature, such as Newton was able to prove the force of attraction with mathematical formula (Cohen 52). Inductive experiment is another means that allows scientists to verify results by observing the particular and applying it to the general. Although unlike deduction, the conclusion of induction is uncertain as one cannot verify every single phenomenon infinitely, it is still largely considered trustworthy within human limits. This is because while not all events are being observed, scientists tend to do repeated experiments to include as much data as possible to enhance reliability. In addition, scientific results should be falsifiable, which means that scientists are ready to declare their mistakes if new evidence appears. This indicated truth value as a goal of modern science.

Another indication of the emphasis of truth in modern scientific methodology is the application of the two theories of truth in determining the validity of scientific claims, namely the coherence and the correspondence theory of truth⁶. The former refers to the internal harmony of different theories and knowledge (within the modern science system); the latter concerns whether the claim is correspondent to reality accurately. For example, unlike Aristotle's theory of motion that separated the terrestrial and celestial region, Newton did not need two systems to explain the movement of objects—his single theory applied to both realms and were corresponded to observation (Cohen 55). Thus, his theory was considered truer than Aristotle's by the two theories of truth.

In addition, the rise of modern science changed the nature of the question and answers scientists want. As Sivin suggested, since the Scientific Revolution, the crucial concern of science moved away from other equally important questions such as 'is it beautiful?' or 'is it morally improving?' to the domination of 'is it true?' (Sivin 237). For example, in *On the Origin of Species*, Darwin proposed the Natural Selection theory to explain the evolution mechanism (73-74). Instead of claiming an animal's feature was for a certain purpose as a teleologist would, he

5 The definition of deduction is 'Under a given premise, the end product achieved through logical demonstration must be certain.'(With reference to "How to Argue") As mathematical calculation is precisely a process of setting premises and demonstrating logically, its result is supposed to be always true, given that the premise is correct.

6 The coherence and the correspondence theories of truth are used here with reference to the article "Truth" in Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Quoted here, Coherence theory being "A belief is true if and only if it is part of a coherent system of beliefs.", while correspondence theory being "A belief is true if and only if it corresponds to a fact" ("Truth").

reversed the process by observing the feature of the animal and theorizing about what caused it⁷. For Darwin and modern scientists, nature has no goals in itself⁸ and is value-free. Therefore, enquiring about nature with scientific methods should only give descriptive, factual results. This, according to Sivin, leads to the novel invention of knowledge that has no value except truth value (Sivin 237). This claim is significant. If he is correct, then one-third of our question is answered. Science indeed helps us acquire objective truth, and its ability of pursuing beauty and goodness depends on whether the two properties are objective and value-free as well. Sivin, who separated science's ability to answer the question of 'is it true?' with the questions of aesthetic and morality, indicated that he did not believe the latter two were so.

Science and Beauty

Yet not all agree with Sivin. Many authors of the selected texts believe that both the *process* towards truth and truth *itself* are beautiful, while science assists this achievement. Firstly, for some, exercising scientific methodology sufficiently is beautiful. For example, Greek geometry was not only an intellectual but also an aesthetic movement, and their standard of beauty was best demonstrated in Euclid's *Elements* (Dunham 259-260)⁹. As Dunham explains, Euclid refused to use a rigid compass and avoided unnecessary assumptions under the aesthetic principle—to make pure, streamlined, perfect, *beautiful* postulates (Dunham 266). For the Greek Geometers, beauty could be displayed in mathematical deduction, a tool we discussed before that allows modern scientists to pursue truth. Therefore, since they defined simple and correctly proven theories as beautiful, advancing towards truth could be beautiful for them.

7 This contrasted with Aristotle's worldview. For Aristotle, the world was orderly and with purpose, in which things developed to reach an end result, making the important task to understand the 'goal' of nature (Lindberg 24-25).

8 One may claim that by the Natural Selection theory, the goal of change occurring in all species was to survive. This is not true. Survival is the end result instead of a conscious purpose in generational development, in contrast to individual strategy and purposeful human selection. The features we observed in the current species aided survival since those without such features failed to survive.

9 Although Euclid was an ancient Greek, his deductive axiom structure was inherited by modern scientists, including Newton's *Principia*. This included the process of logical demonstration by stating definitions, postulates, then proving propositions (Newton 63-69).

Secondly, Poincare's definition of 'intellectual beauty' further explained how truth itself was beautiful, and that the exercise of intelligence by scientific methods would eventually lead to it. For him, scientists who study nature for the universal, objective truth prefer simple, recurring facts (Poincare 162-163). This is based on both practical and aesthetic principles. On the one hand, recurring facts allow us to develop knowledge that can be applied more than once, and such facts tend to be simple, hence more practical (Poincare 162-163). On the other hand, he believed that simplicity and vastness were beautiful in themselves, so the pursuit of beauty would naturally lead us to the truth (Poincare 166). But why were these two characteristics beautiful? For him, it was because that they present the harmony in nature, and by wishing to contribute to this 'intimate beauty', scientists succeed in pursuing the beautiful and the useful/truth at the same time¹⁰ (Poincare 166). Such a view was agreed by Watson, who exclaimed 'anything that simple, that elegant just had to be right' appoint the discovery of the DNA structure (Watson 132). His definition of beauty matched the Greek's 'pure, streamlined' notions and Poincare's 'simple', 'harmony'¹¹ notions, forming a united preference of intellectual beauty.

The problem, however, is that the understanding of beauty was subjective. While facts are objective and are true regardless of individual understanding, aesthetics involves a judgement process. It is one thing to say something is in harmony, but saying it is beautiful because it is in harmony is an extra step that needs not to be agreed upon by all. 'But what about some widely agreed beauty standard that transcended cultures, such as symmetry or golden ratio?' One may ask, 'if we really find a universally agreed beauty standard, does this mean beauty is objective?' This is an interesting question. In fact, theorists had investigated Darwin's evolution theory to explain how such standards were formed. They believe that seeing something as 'beautiful' is tied to our survival instinct through spending time in nature for generations. Under this logic, something that was 'naturally' or even 'universally' believed as beautiful was ultimately developed from the concept of 'useful for survival' ("Why Beautiful Things"). In this case, I believe that science

10 Such definition also perfectly fits the tool for verifying truth in science as mentioned above, which was the two theories of truth—the coherence and correspondence theories. They should be beautiful, according to Poincare, as they allowed no contradiction and led only to the perfect coordination of any claims.

11 He mentioned 'The double helix made sense chemically and it made sense biologically.' (Watson 133), fitting the coherence theory of truth.

may help us discover ‘*why*’ we find something beautiful or even help us to create things that all humans find ‘beautiful’. Yet, even so, beauty is not an objective feature. It *must involve perception and judgement* from an entity by definition, while objective truth can exist independently, and this is the difference between reaching truth and reaching beauty.

Therefore, I argue that the scientific method is insufficient to determine what is beautiful. ‘Beauty’ as a value is largely judged through perception, and there is no efficient way to disapprove other’s aesthetic judgement. As mentioned by Kandel in his study of human consciousness, *subjective experience* is difficult for the scientific method to analyze and compare (Kandel 186). We cannot yet accurately correlate subjective feelings with the physical brain activities even though the neurobiology of perception can be investigated independently (Kandel 186-187). Thus it is challenging to use science to measure how beautiful something is for someone, and rather people reach the same conclusion by seeing streamlined postulates, and this is the limitation of scientific methods. After all, intellectual beauty was only one definition of beauty with particular criteria for judgement agreed by some¹².

Science and Goodness

Akin to the case of beauty, the challenge to decide if science could bring goodness is that whether it was objective and universal. One could also consider if pursuing truth, which is the scientific method’s greatest strength, assists the *process* of seeking goodness. First, I shall indicate that ‘what is goodness’ is never concrete. The nature of morality has been debated over history. The study of metaethics has no definite answer, and people believe in varying degrees of objectiveness in moral goodness. For instance, Plato assumed ‘the form of good’ was the highest being in the knowable realm, and it was the source of all truth, beauty, and goodness (Plato 8-9). To achieve this was to acquire knowledge by philosophical reflection, so for him, certain features of the scientific method may assist the process (Lindberg 14)¹³. Not all agreed with this idea of goodness

12 Poincare thought that intellectual beauty was more ‘intimate’ than other kinds of beauty, and that it was hidden behind sensible beauty. I believe the first claim was a subjective judgement without much support, while the second one seemed to include truth value into aesthetic judgement. Even though intellectual beauty did carry ‘practical’ and ‘truth leading’ properties, in terms of aesthetic value, it should not have a substantial status.

13 Plato, however, insisted on the limitation of studying sense experience, so the study of physical nature was not his major concern (Lindberg 14). On the contrary, he was in favor of the logical deduction in geometry, which is also incorporated in modern science.

being an objective, prior existing property. In fact, it is immensely difficult to imagine goodness as only a property without any applying examples. The meaning of virtue, such as justice and courage, varies across cultures and time. A different perspective may also change the decision of rather something was moral, such as whether one judge from the intention or the consequence of an event, despite the event happened is a fact. Studying nature gives us the truth, but since goodness, much like beauty, is at least partly subjective, it is difficult to evaluate how much scientific method could contribute to it¹⁴. However, there are ways that truth may assist us in determining what is moral. With reference to W.K.Clifford's idea of epistemic responsibility, holding beliefs without sufficient evidence may be morally wrong since it potentially influences both ourselves and others to make misinformed choices ("Anti-Vaxxers, Conspiracy Theories"). Scientific methodology and its power to pursue the truth cannot tell us what goodness is directly, but it *may provide us information to make judgement truer to our moral beliefs*. Therefore, regarding pursuing goodness, I argue that the power of science is limited yet supportive.

Conclusion

Scientific methodology has allowed us to understand and investigate objective, physical phenomena with precision, and it has been a powerful tool to pursue truth. However, pursuing beauty and goodness is a more complicated process. It involves subjective judgement, and for that science could only provide us objective evidence to justify our beliefs. The criteria of 'what is beautiful?' and 'what is moral?' are inseparable from individual perception and unable to be fully determined by science.

14 I find David Hume's In-Ought Problem powerful against Naturalists who claim humans should follow certain rules because they are 'developed through evolution/nature was like that'. According to him, it is fallacious to assume that just because something is a certain way, that means something ought to be that way. In addition, moral debate still exists even if we follow nature. For example, survival instinct is 'natural', but to what extent we are justified executing such an instinct and harming others is debatable (With reference to "Natural Law Theory").

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Teachers' Comments

/ LI MING KENNETH

Science is one of the significant human endeavors to strive for understanding the world, which shapes our lives and beliefs today. While pursuing true knowledge is the primary goal, can science really do so? How does it contribute, if possible, to the pursuit of values transcending cultures and time? Miss LAM Wing Tong, Amy, addressed these meaningful questions through the fine dissection of the methodology of modern science. She demonstrated logical argumentations for pursuing truth and questioned the pursuit of beauty and goodness through modern science. The coherent integration of insights from multiple texts and the well-structured flow of ideas also make this essay a good piece.

/ HO WAI MING

It is often said that truth, goodness and beauty are three major concerns of humanity. Wing Tong discusses modern science from these perspectives. It seems indisputable that modern science can discover objective, value-free truth. But how about the other two? According to Sivin, science has little to do with beauty and goodness. Wing Tong challenges this position. In her paper, she does not simply affirm or negate, but engages in more in-depth discussions, attempting to give a balanced evaluation.

/ THOMAS LEE

This essay is well-researched and exceptionally clear in its explication of key concepts such as 'truth', 'beauty', 'goodness', 'deduction', and 'induction', and in its logic of argumentation. It demonstrates the limitation and inadequacy of the notion of beauty as ascribed to the simplicity and elegance of scientific theories, highlighting the essential role of sense perception in our judgment of beauty. Given that truth and morality are distinct issues that few will attempt to unify, the thesis that our analysis of goodness cannot be reduced to matters of truth seems to be a kind of straw man argument.

得獎學生論文所討論的問題

Questions Addressed by Awardees in their Term Papers

> 與人文對話 – IN DIALOGUE WITH HUMANITY

THEODORES JESSICA

In recent years, many places in the world have experienced people's protests against various kinds of mal-treatment, mis-rule, or disorder. Choose a specific protest (it could be in any scale, based in any place, and associated with any community) that you would like to understand more about. Imagine encountering* a specific protest with two (or three) thinkers in the "In Dialogue with Humanity" syllabus. You have many questions, and the thinkers have their own concerns and intellectual interests. You have been inspired by the thinkers' ideas to see the protests in ways that are less circulated in the mass and social media. Compose a dialogue between you and the thinkers that seeks to understanding the protest from multiple perspectives. You are free to hypothesize about how you and the thinkers might position yourselves in relation to the protest. It is not a necessity that you and the thinkers take any stance for or against the protests, although you may, if you so wish to argue.

** "Encountering" could mean to be on site with the protest, but you could also be encountering online protests. It could also mean you have been following the media reports or critical commentaries about this protest for a substantial period of time. You don't have to have experienced the protest in first person.*

李浩洋

苦難的慰藉

苦難是重大人文議題。我們總會遇到傷心小事，甚至深感絕望。一般相信，中西傳統經典具備動人的力量，有實際作用指導我們如何生活。在我們課程中，有些經典嘗試解釋苦難的源頭，倡議免受苦難的方法，甚或教導我們如何從苦難之中獲益。試以課程中最少兩篇文本為基礎，撰寫一篇論文。透過與思想家在觀念上的碰撞，寫出你對免除生命中的苦難有何省思。請自訂題目。

陳慶澤

What is human being?

Human nature is reflected, directly or indirectly, in different texts read during the semester, e.g. Rousseau regards liberty as the key of understanding human nature, while Confucius puts the emphasis on how human can achieve humaneness (仁 *ren*) through rituals (禮 *li*). Human nature is also addressed in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, in the Buddhist concept of emptiness or Thich Nhat Hanh's interbeing, and in the selected essays of Marx; in the *Bible*, human beings were created according to God's image, Adam and Eve can be regarded as representative for certain aspects of human nature; even Zhuangzi may allude to human nature in his conception of free and easy wandering (逍遙游) ... Please write a paper on human nature by making use of TWO texts or authors from the syllabus. Give your essay a TITLE.

許霽陽

自由

自由是大家都略有所聞，卻是一個抽象觀念，不能看見，不能摸到，不能達致。然而，在歷史上，人類不惜為自由而戰，為自由而死。到底何謂「自由」？自由是指做一切我們想做的事嗎？自由是否值得我們爭取？其實我們是否真的想要自由？試以課程中最少兩篇文本為基礎，撰寫一篇論文或一篇虛擬的話錄。請自訂題目。

黃兆軒

Does Life have Meaning and Purpose?

Perhaps, most of us would agree that human life should have purpose and meaning. Purpose and meaning are regarded as the foundations of good life. However, some may argue purposeless and meaningless of life are not necessarily something to be feared and avoided, even you don't have any vision of the purpose and meaning of being human, you may still have a good life. Do you agree with this? Please write a comment (either in form of essay or story) on this by engaging with ideas of two thinkers/texts from the "In Dialogue with Humanity" syllabus, to explicate your view of good life. Give your essay or story a title.

黃詠琪

Love, Death and Alienation

“Your father has about three months’ time to live as he is at the final stage of cancer. We can’t help anymore. You better prepare for the death.” It’s what you repeat to the patient’s family almost every week. You have no more interests to explain the details as you are so tired and hungry. Try to imagine the situation that you are a doctor or a nurse who has been working in the Division of Hematology and Oncology for almost 10 years. One day, an epiphany occurs, and you suddenly have a new understanding on love and death. What will you talk to the patient’s family now? Write an article on it by referring to at least 3 texts from the textbook. You may give your article another title.

蔡致鏗

當我們閱讀和思考亞當和夏娃的故事時，假設他們在伊甸園裡，吃禁果前，還不用憂慮生老病死，生活無憂無慮、方便而舒適。一旦他們吃了禁果，違背了上帝的命令，他們就開始有區分善惡的能力，並能分別自我與他人。此外，他們的抗命行為亦可看為自由選擇的結果。試想一下，夏娃決定吃禁果前那一刻，突然有三個思想家（只包括柏拉圖、孔子、莊子、一行禪師、耶穌或穆罕默德，其中三位）出現並與夏娃對話。他們會建議夏娃做什麼？這場對話可包括其他角色如亞當或蛇。（不能用議論文及書信形式書寫）

> 與自然對話 – IN DIALOGUE WITH NATURE

林永同

Can modern science help us to pursue truth, goodness and beauty? With reference with what you have learned in UGFN1000, please write a paper to explain in detail.

黃摯毅

Free topic. It is compulsory for you to communicate with the course teacher on paper outline.

通識教育 基礎課程簡介

背景

香港中文大學自創校以來，即着重通識教育。配合2012年的新學制，中大在原有的大學通識四範圍（即「中華文化傳承」、「自然、科學與科技」、「社會與文化」、「自我與人文」）及書院通識的基礎上，加設通識教育基礎課程。課程以閱讀和討論經典為主，分為「與自然對話」和「與人文對話」兩個必修科；前者探索科學與知識世界，後者反省何謂理想社會與美好人生。

為了做好準備，中大自2006年開始籌劃這個課程，並由2009年起試行，至2012年起為所有新入學學生修讀。課程推出以來，學生反應甚佳，每年期終論文之優秀，最能反映課程成果之豐碩。

目標與願景

通識基礎課程作為中大通識的核心部分，與上述其他部分相輔相成，旨在為學生建立共同的智性及文化基礎，提高學生對人類處境的敏感度，促進師生的智性對話。課程採取小組研討形式，着重閱讀和寫作，致力培養自主學習所需的知識、態度和技巧，讓同學能夠：

- 對塑造當今世界的主要思潮有所掌握；
- 以知性的眼光觀察切身的人生和社會問題；
- 有胸襟和能力去審視嶄新或不同的思想；
- 具備深度閱讀的能力；
- 以書面寫作及口頭溝通清楚闡述個人見解。

「與人文對話」簡介

本科與同學探討「人文」的意義，從個人和社會兩個層面思索人的本質與核心價值問題，確認人是追求個人幸福的獨立個體，也是謀求群體福祉的社會一員。同學將與文學家、哲學家、社會改革家的作品直接對話，一同反思三個基本問題：美好的人生應包含甚麼內容？理想的社會應具備甚麼條件？我們如何可達致美好人生與理想社會？

本科從不同的人文學科挑選影響深遠的中外經典著作，輯錄篇章，供同學閱讀、討論及撰文分析。同學需審視各篇章所提出的觀點和理念，思量它們是否適用於當代世界；並就上述問題，尋找自己的答案。

「與自然對話」簡介

自遠古開始，人類就對宇宙充滿好奇。古希臘哲人開展了以理性探索宇宙的傳統，為現代物理科學奠定了基礎。後來科學延伸至對生命的探索，科學家開始了解生命的定律，甚至控制生命。與此同時，科學探索所獲得的知識，迫使我們重新審視對人類自己的理解。中國哲人也發展了一套以陰陽和五行為基礎的觀念，卻與西方宇宙觀截然不同。中西文化的衝擊，勢將會影響未來科學的探索。

本科讓同學認識並比較中西科學發展，了解人類如何探索、認識，以至改變宇宙和生命，並反思人在大自然中的地位。本科選輯的篇章涉及哲學、科學史、物理、生物等不同範疇。

授課形式

「與人文對話」和「與自然對話」兩科各帶三個學分，皆是每星期導修兩小時，輔以講課一小時。導修每組以二十五人為上限，確保學生有充分機會參與課堂討論，並在論文書寫方面得到適當的指導。

老師致力幫助同學進入經典的世界，提升讀原典、論原典的信心和能力，講課時會介紹該星期所看文本的背景和主題，學生於課後自行閱讀文本，再參與導修課，按照老師提供的重點問題進行討論。同學須發揮批判思維，除堂上討論外，並提交短寫和論文，表達個人見解，深化討論。

About the General Education Foundation Programme

Background

General education, GE, has played an important role in CUHK's undergraduate curriculum since the founding of the University. With the 2012 new curriculum, general education at CUHK has been further enhanced with the introduction of the General Education Foundation Programme. The common core programme adds new dimensions to the existing programmes, namely the University GE that consists of four areas: Chinese Cultural Heritage, Nature, Science and Technology, Society and Culture, Self and Humanity, and College GE.

The GEF programme consists of two required courses, “In Dialogue with Humanity” and “In Dialogue with Nature”, in which students engage in dialogues through the study of classics, to reflect on ideal society and the good life, and explore the world of science and knowledge.

CUHK started planning GEF in 2006 and piloted it from 2009. Since 2012, all new entrants have studied under this new curriculum. The programme has been very well received by the students since its introduction. The fruitful outcomes of the programme are best epitomized by the high quality of students' term essays.

“In Dialogue with Humanity”

The course invites students to investigate the problem of “humanity”— i.e., what it means to be human—at two levels: human as an individual and human as a social being. Students will be engaged in a direct dialogue with three central questions: What is it that makes a “good” life for me? What is it that makes a “good” society for everyone? How do I make possible such a “good” life and “good” society? Students are expected to read, discuss, and write about a wide range of texts extracted from influential classics in the humanities East and West. They will be encouraged to discover their own answers to the three questions by considering

views and arguments expressed in the texts, and by exploring how far and in what ways such views and arguments may hold true for the contemporary world.

“In Dialogue with Nature”

Humans have long been curious about the universe. In the West, ancient Greek philosophers took the lead in exploring the universe with reason and hence laid the foundation of modern physics. Subsequently, science included also the study of the world of life. Scientists discovered the laws governing life and even ways of controlling life, and such discoveries have forced humankind to re-assess its understanding of human understanding. In China, with the concepts of yin, yang and the five elements, Chinese philosophers developed a view of the universe completely different from that of the West. The encounter between Western and Chinese cultures will certainly contribute to future scientific explorations.

This course invites students to study and compare the development of science in Western and Chinese cultures, to explore how the humankind investigated, understood and changed the universe and life, and to reflect on the humans’ place in Nature. Reading materials cover topics including philosophy, history of science, physics, and biology.

Pedagogy

Each 3-unit course is delivered in two hours of seminar discussion supplemented by one hour of lecture each week. The courses are delivered in small classes, with a maximum student number of 25 per class to facilitate discussion and intensive guidance on academic writing.

Teachers strive to help students enter the world of classics and develop confidence and competence in approaching primary texts. In the lecture, teachers provide a general introduction to the background and main themes of the week’s assigned reading. Students then read the texts on their own and come back to participate in the seminar based on the focus questions provided. Emphasis will be placed on students’ capacity to respond critically to the selected texts, in the form of class discussions, short write-ups and term papers.

GENERAL EDUCATION BEST ESSAY AWARD 2020 - 2021

通識教育優秀論文獎

得獎學生論文 | SELECTED STUDENT ESSAYS

THEODORES JESSICA

Beyond
the Difficulties

LEE HO YEUNG

佛教與存在主義
談「自我」與苦難

TSOI CHI HANG

慾望和需要，世上
第一個拿着果子
的女人的疑惑

WONG CHI NGAI

Science and
Divinities

CHAN HING CHAK

「人是萬物的尺度」—
從儒釋兩家尋求回應

HUI CHAI YEUNG

建築與自由

LAM WING TONG

Pursuing Truth,
Beauty, and
Goodness with
Modern Science:
An Analysis of
the Strengths
and Limitations
of Scientific
Methodology

WONG WING KI

The Intertwinement
of Life, Death,
and Love

WONG SIU HIN

The Meaningless
Meaning in the
Meaningless
World