

Humanization of Inner Nature

The previous chapter offered a critical introduction of Li Zehou's ethics in the field of political philosophy. In this chapter, we will turn our attention to the psychological aspects of Li's ethical theory, i.e., to the field that he denotes as the realm of moral psychology (*daode xinli xue* 道德心理學) in his *General Scheme of Ethics*. As the reader might remember from previous parts of this book, Li Zehou has assumed and upgraded the Marxist notion of the humanization of nature. While Marx has mainly concentrated upon the external aspects of this process, Li was even more interested in the humanization of inner nature (*neizai zirande renhua* 內在自然的人化). In his notion of the humanized nature, Marx has mainly emphasized the relation between human beings and the outward nature. In contrast to such a view, Li understands it rather as a process directed not only toward the external, but also toward their internal worlds, for both are constitutive parts of humanness in the sense of the traditional Chinese notion *ren xing* 人性. While engaging in the technical transformation of the external nature, humankind also transforms, modifies, and develops its inner nature. This means that the process of the “humanization of nature” works in two directions: throughout their evolution, human species humanize their external nature in order to make it a place suitable for their living. Through this very activity, they also humanize their own physical and mental constitution (Li, Zehou 1994, 177). Through such humanization of their inner nature, they became increasingly deanimalized, i.e., cultivated and hence better adapted to living in organized human societies.

In this process of shaping and establishing humanness, i.e., in the process of becoming human, ethics and morality are of utmost importance. Hence, Li emphasizes they are “that, which makes human beings human” (*ren suoyi wei ren zhi suo zai* 人所以為人之所在) (Li Zehou 2010, 3). In other words, they are “the substantial root of human beings” (*rende benti* 人的本體) (ibid.).

In this context, one of the most important problems is the question about the origin and the structure of the free will; in Li's system, this concept belongs to the “substantial root of ethics” (*lunli benti* 倫理本體) and represents a part of the cultural-psychological formation (*wenhua—xinli jiegou* 文化—心理結構) of the human mind. Morality is essential to the humankind, for no other animal possesses the ability to choose freely and to decide by virtue of reason whether or not to act ethically. This is the uniquely human free will,

which has been gradually shaped in the process of social practice through millions of years by humankind itself as a part of the human inwardness. Li also points to the important auxiliary function of moral emotions in this process.

In contrast to Kant, Li does not see the free will as something completely detached from experience, but as a result of a long-lasting process of transformation from empirical into the transcendental (*jingyan bian xianyan* 經驗變先驗). And, while Kant's categorical imperative does not contain any empirical elements, Li understands this notion differently, namely as a result of the continuous process of preserving the sustainable existence of the humankind, which is empirical in nature (*ibid.*, 13). On the other hand, through education and socialization, this "ethical substance" is being implemented into the psychology of every individual. This is what has been denoted as the cultivation of the Self (*xiu shen* 修身) in traditional Chinese culture. Li points out that it is already evident in the earliest Confucian classics. In these discourses, people are not born as complete human beings. In order to become truly human, they have to complement their inborn dispositions through the cultivation of self-control and through the implementation of rituality. Through this process of condensation of reason and the establishment of rational concepts of right and wrong or good and evil, rituals are of utmost importance. As we have seen in previous chapters, Li Zehou sees rituals as condensed patterns of productive and operative human interaction. They help people to develop and cultivate the "good" and to reduce or even eliminate the "evil" instincts and inclinations. Typically, this can be achieved through proper rational recognition of ethical concepts, ideas, and valuations.

While Li sees both aforementioned moral notions, namely the free will and the categorical imperative, as belonging to the inward principles of moral psychology, i.e., principles that were shaped on the level of special sedimentation (*wuzhong jidian* 物種積澱), he understands Kant's conceptualization of human beings as ends in themselves as being different. For Li, it is a kind of social ideal that is a product of a specific developmental phase in social history. For him, this postulate belongs to the realm of modern social morality (Li Zehou 2016d, 9). But even though it pertains to modern life in contemporary societies, representing an important basis of social interaction and state legislation, it can still be seen as part of the humanization of inner nature, for it has to be incorporated and internalized by individuals in contemporary societies as a measure established in the process of cultural sedimentation (*wenhua jidian* 文化積澱).

All the abovementioned elements are important parts of the process of humanizing our inner nature. Below, we will take a look into their general structure and their mutual intertwining.

1 The Shaping of Free Will and the Role of Moral Emotions

The concept of free will (*ziyou yizhi* 自由意志) has a crucial significance for Li's ethical system. As we have seen, in Li's theory the will is a part of reason. In contrast to the changeable ideas that constitute its contents, the will is an unchangeable mental structure constituting its form.

When describing and defining his understanding of the free will, Li first explains his view on the meaning of freedom (Li Zehou 2007, 307ff). He exposes that the notion of freedom is often vague, for it entails different connotations in everyday language, economy, politics, and philosophy. Especially in present time, the debates regarding freedom—along with the explosive recent development of cognitive and neurological sciences—became a topical issue. Like Schrödinger who claimed that it is possessed by quanta (Walter 2001, 23), numerous scientists think that artificial intelligence can also possess free will. Li points out that most of the scientific experts deny the existence of free will (including the one guiding moral behavior), for in their view all human actions are primary effects of the activities that take place in neurons and synapses of our brain. According to Li, such deterministic views are the mainstream in this debate.¹

Li exposes that the question of free will is an issue that is primarily related to the actual individual life in concrete reality. In this sense, it represents a social value and has no direct connection to the issues investigated by neurological science. In other words, free will is not a problem that could (or should) be investigated and solved by natural sciences. Rather, it is a question pertaining to philosophy and ethics. Here, Li draws attention to Kant and explains that according to the German philosopher, just like the existence of God or the immortality of the soul, free will is a *noumenal* transcendental illusion. It has nothing to do with concrete empirical existence of human beings and the phenomenal world in which they live—the latter is ruled by the law of causality. But *noumenon* is different: human beings can obtain freedom only in this realm, which surpasses the phenomenal world. The *noumenal* sphere is one of practical reason that exceeds the physical limitations of humankind.

1 Actually, the field still remains largely controversial. Since the beginning of the 21st century, we also witness important developments in the opposite direction (see Jarrett 2016). In 2016, the authoritative scientific journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* published a paper written by German researchers, entitled "The Point of No Return in Vetoing Self-initiated Movements" (Schultze-Kraft et al. 2016). In this paper, the researchers examined whether individuals had the possibility to veto an action after the exposure of the so-called readiness potential, which is an occurrence of unconscious electrical activity within the motor cortex, discovered with the help of the EEG, that takes place moments before a human subject performs an action. The authors found evidence that movements can be vetoed even after this potential had been detected (*ibid.*, 1084). Scientists believe that this is proof of the existence of free will in human beings.

Li points out that Kant's concept of freedom cannot be understood as something belonging to the phenomenal world, which is determined by causal relations. As an object of observation, every human behavior is either an expression of reality or a reaction to it. Therefore, it is always being subordinated to a strict rule of causal laws. Here, we cannot speak about any kind of freedom. Li also points out that this is precisely the aspect that has been emphasized by the French materialists. They are convinced that all human behavior is mechanistically and necessarily guided by causal laws and that there is no freedom at all. Baron D'Holbach, for instance, was convinced that it was the same if a man was thrown out of the window or if he jumped out of it all by himself. He believed that both, the so-called will, and the external determination are equally effects of the same causal laws.

Here, Li is in line with Kant, who emphasizes that in such a case, all moral and legal laws would be completely meaningless. Blaming anybody for any kind of immoral act or crime would be the same as blaming a stone for falling down and hurting a human. In this case, any criminal could protect him- or herself simply by pointing to the fact that his or her behavior was a product of causal laws, a result of objective conditions. In this framework, all kinds of immoral or criminal behavior are necessarily determined by certain conditions, environments, individual characteristics, habits or customs, etc. In such a case, no one could be held responsible for anything and all legal sanctions would become completely senseless and redundant. Kant has severely attacked such mechanistic materialism. In its function of being a neutral object of cognition, every kind of behavior has definitely a reason. Since it happens in time, it is guided by the laws of causality. But when employed by subjects endowed with reason, these kinds of behavior become something completely different and must be evaluated according to the laws of the categorical imperative. Whatever a human being does in a sane state of mind is done under the guidance of his or her self-conscious will. In this sense, humans always possess freedom of decision and choice. One can either act or not act in a certain way. One can either follow the categorical imperative or not. Therefore, everybody is morally responsible for his or her actions. Although under consideration of causal laws, we can find reasons for any kind of behavior, the decisions and choices that led to this behavior are free; people can always freely choose whether or not they want to follow the categorical imperative.² Therefore, they are morally respon-

2 In this scheme, the objective conditions of any action can be seen as a necessary condition for its implementation. However, the implementation of each particular action cannot be seen as a one-dimensional result of these conditions. Hence, they can be seen as a cause, but not as the reason for actions, because human conduct always surpasses the realm of formal causality.

sible for all their actions. Irrespective of concrete situations and irrespective of various internal or external restrictions and constraints, one can always choose to act in accordance with the categorical imperative and hence, with one's free will. This is the uniquely human possibility to experience freedom. In this sense, human beings are different from machines and from animals. They are not confined to blindly or mechanistically follow the laws of causality. Precisely because we possess free will, we can liberally choose our actions and hence, we can be free:

Kant emphasizes that in their role of sensual beings who exist in the phenomenal world, people are confined to the conditions of time; in this realm, all kinds of human behavior, actions and motivations are only fragments of a mechanistic natural system, which is directed by a strict law of causality. But in their capacity of rational beings who exist in the noumenal world, human beings can become aware of the fact that they are not confined to these temporal conditions. Hence, the very same behaviors, actions and motivations can only be following rational self-legislation. Morality is superior to knowledge just as the noumenon is higher than phenomena. Freedom can be the reason to intervene in nature; therefore, Kant emphasized that "I can do" is because "I ought to do." "Can do" belongs to natural causality, but "ought to do" belongs to freedom.

Kant 強調，人作為感性現象界的存在，從屬於時間條件，他的任何行為、活動和意志不過是自然機械系統的一個部分，遵循著嚴格的因果規律；但人作為本體的理性存在，可意識到自己是屬於時間條件的，他的這同一行為、活動和意志只服從於理性的自我立法。而道德優於認識，本體高於現象，自由可以作為原因干預自然，所以 Kant 強調，我“能做”是因為我“應做”。“能做”屬於自然因果，“應做”就屬於自由。

LI ZEHOU 2008, 308

Hence, Li Zehou is convinced that autonomy and free will are ethical problems. They belong to the basic axiological questions regarding individual behavior that is carried out in the framework of collective sustainable human existence (Li Zhou 2018, 2). The corporeal or physical undertakings that result from neural activities, which are subject to neurological research, belong to a completely different domain.

Although we can find innate or external reasons for all kinds of people's behaviors and opposing choices, at the time they were made, these choices were of great ethical significance. Therefore, it is always necessary to determine whether the effect was positive or negative for the sustainable existence

of their social groups. In this sense, the “self-conscious choice” becomes the core of autonomy and the free will. Hence, Li agrees with Kant in his presumption that human beings cannot experience freedom without morality.

But on the other hand, Li’s view of this concept cannot be entirely compared to Kant’s. In order to show the difference, Li first draws our attention to Kant’s distinction between two different connotations of the concept of will. The first one (i.e., “*Wille*”) is the free will that refers to practical reason. The latter is called “*Willkür*” and is often translated into English as “choice,” or—more precisely: a “discretionary” or “arbitrary choice”³ (e.g., Kant 2001).

The ability to do or to refrain from doing something is a pure rational concept totally independent of objects. If this rational concept is combined with the conscious ability to bring about an object—end, by someone’s action then it is called a choice. If this rationality is not combined with this conscious ability to bring about an object—end by someone’s action then it is called a wish. The will, strictly speaking, is not the causation of choice; rather the will is practical reason itself.

KANT 1996, 4

As the power of self-determination, *Wille*, which is not a result of rational understanding, but rather a capacity of acting according to a conception of law, is the source of obligation. It is the practical reason itself, and therefore linked to the moral law. *Willkür*, on the other hand, is the capacity for decision or choice and belongs to the empirical sphere. It is both determined by *Wille* and affected by sensuous inclinations. It is the capacity to choose between the imperatives stemming from *Wille* and the desires or inclinations. Hence, *Wille* represents the transcendental and *Willkür* the empirical condition for freedom of moral behavior.

All moral philosophy rests entirely on its pure part, and when applied to the human being it borrows not the least bit from knowledge about him (anthropology), but it gives him as a rational being laws *a priori*, which to be sure require a power of judgment sharpened through experience, partly to distinguish in which cases they have their application, and partly to obtain access for them to the will of the human being and emphasis for their fulfillment, since he, as affected with so many inclinations, is

3 Sometimes, however, both terms are simply translated in English as “will” (see for instance Bunnin and Yu 2004).

susceptible to the idea of a pure practical reason, but is not so easily capable of making it effective in concreto in his course of life.

KANT 2001, 5

With such separation between the will as practical reason and the volitional capacity for choice, Kant aimed to set aside the traditional problem about the relation between free will and determinism (Bunnin and Yu 2004). According to Kant, the will per se is neither free nor unfree; it becomes free only in its inner connection to the principles of practical reason. In its autonomous capacity, *Wille* can thus be seen as the “practical reason itself” (ibid.). Similarly, *Willkür* can also only become free when following the moral will irrespective of any other empirical motives such as feelings, inclinations, or desires. In order to be free, it has to act by following moral obligations; in such a case, the subject has to accept the moral imperatives as the maxims of his or her actions.

Li sees *Wille* as the will of universal legislation and *Willkür* as the will of individual execution (Li Zehou 2018, 11). The former without the latter is empty, while the latter without the former loses its moral significance and cannot be established. Moral action can only be realized when *Willkür* implements the *Wille*, which consists of moral laws, as an executor (Li Zehou 2008, 307).

In Li's *General Scheme of Ethics*, which includes three basic elements that constitute individual moral behavior, *Wille* refers to ideas (*guannian* 觀念).⁴ Although from the viewpoint of the executor, this element seems to be an unchangeable, universal principle of legislation, Li points out that it is still a dynamic and changeable factor, modifiable in accord with different concrete cultures, geopolitical spaces, and periods of time. In his *Critique of Critical Philosophy*, Li has therefore renamed Kant's “universal necessity” to “objective sociality.”

Willkür, however, is different. In Li's schematic depiction of the three basic elements of individual moral behavior, it constitutes the will (*yizhi* 意志) as a relatively fix psychological form accumulated by human beings for millions of years, regardless of the changeable ethical norms prevailing in various human cultures and periods of time. For Li Zehou, it is the most important of the three elements, for it enables humans to implement moral actions. But even this

4 Here, we have to draw attention to the fact that in Li Zehou's *General Scheme of Ethics*, the concept of will (*yizhi* 意志) is mentioned twice. The first time it occurs as a part of reason, which is constituted by will (*yizhi* 意志) and ideas (*guannian* 觀念), and the second time as a part of internal individual morality, which is constituted by will, ideas, and emotions (*qinggan* 情感). In both cases, *yizhi* is comparable to Kant's idea of *Willkür*, and *guannian* to Kant's notion of *Wille*.

psychological formation is not an inherent natural instinct, but rather a result of long lasting human evolution and socialization.⁵

In this context, Li Zehou aims to complement Kant, who has fused the component of rational will in a sense of an inherent power to act in accordance with the categorical imperative, with the rationalized concepts of good and evil. In Li's view, this leads to numerous problems, for these concepts or ideas are changeable through different times and cultural environments (Li Zehou 2016b, 211). They cannot be generalized in a universally valid ethical framework:

Kant's universal legislation and his free will cannot serve as an external ethical norm. The premises of not committing suicide or not to lie cannot be seen as normative criteria valid for the whole world. They cannot be understood as historically unchangeable ethical principles and guidelines that are equally binding in past and present times. However, they can be seen as specific psychological characteristics, which appear in human moral behavior. One can believe that his or her own behavior can be universally legislated, and that everyone should behave in the same way. This is precisely what the free will is about: it is the self-aware, voluntary (autonomous) decision.

Kant, 這兩條普遍⁶ 立法和自由意志無法作為外在倫理規範, 如不自殺, 不說謊都無法成為放之四海而皆準, 歷史古今而不變倫理原則和行為準則, 但它們倒恰恰可以作為在道德行為中的人的心理特徵: 認為自己如此行為可以普遍立法, 即人人均應如此作為。這就是自由意志: 是人自覺自願 (自律) 所作出的決斷。

LI ZEHOU 2015, 196

5 The line of separation between dynamic ideas and relatively fixed mental forms is also often blurred. Some ideas, which prevail in societies for long periods of time—as for instance, the Confucian concepts of loyalty (*zhong* 忠) or trust (*xin* 信)—can also be sedimented in the form of mental formations, which can surpass concrete societies and diverse historical situations (Li Zehou 2018, 11).

6 At first glimpse, Li's transformation of Kantian concepts in this framework seems confusing, for he translates the notion of Kant's will (*Wille*) with the Chinese word referring to concepts or ideas (*gainian* 概念), yet he applies the Chinese word *yizhi* 意志 (which means *will*) to Kant's concept of choice (*Willkür*). Another problem might occur if we consider the Kant saw the choice (or *Willkür*) as something connected to the empirical domain, whereas the will (*Wille*) is a priori. But in Li's model, this basic schema is turned around: that which is a priori in Kant becomes completely empirical in Li's theory, and vice versa: that which is empirical in Kant becomes (relatively) transcendental in Li's system.

Hence, for Li Zehou, the distinction between the will (as a mental form of reason) and the concepts or ideas (as the concrete contents of reason) is of utmost importance. He emphasizes that even though they are not fixed and static, these ideas still represent an important element of human moral behavior.

The will is merely an operational power, which ensures that physical human actions are guided by the orders from the mind. It is an innate human capacity. However, it is the ideas of good and evil that decide what kind of orders a human being will follow in this process. In other words, the will is a self-aware, self-conscious capacity to establish a domination and guidance of reason over sensitivity. It is a mental power of rational form. The concrete contents of this rational form, however, are the ideas of good and evil, right and wrong.

意志只是一種使肉體行為服從精神指令的行動力量，是人的一種人性能力，但它服從於何種精神指令，這種精神指令是甚麼，便屬於善惡觀念了。也就是說，意志是人的自覺的，有意識的理性對感性的支配，主宰的能力，這是心理的理性形式力量，但這理性的具體內容是甚麼，便是善惡，是非觀念。

LI ZEHOU 2016b, 210

Even though in Chinese (and in Li's system as such), such a categorization makes sense, there seem to be some problems concerning Kant's own differentiation. In this regard, we could namely also follow the opposite line of thought and ask ourselves whether it would not be more concise to translate *Willkür* as *guannian* (ideas) and *Wille* as *yizhi* (will). Notwithstanding the fact that Li's translation can be misleading because the common (including philosophical) translation of the German term *Wille* is *yizhi*, we cannot ignore the fact that in Kant's view, it seems that *Willkür* (arbitrary choice) is the changeable, and *Wille* (will) the unchangeable element.⁷

Irrespective of the possible interpretations of both particular notions, the differentiation between these two realms (i.e., will as choice or will as ideas) is doubtless a crucial paradigm defining Li's ethical system. He demonstrates this

7 Li's interpretation or translation appears even less suitable if we consider the modern connotations of the term *Willkür*, for in its present usage, it refers to modes of individual or political (autocratic) behavior, which means to follow personal own desires and interests without consideration for others.

important distinction with the traditional Confucian differentiation between ritual (*li* 禮) and self-control (*keji* 克己):⁸

This can be shown with the phrase “controlling oneself in order to return to the ritual.” Here, “self-control” denotes the power of the will, whereas the concept of “ritual” in the phrase “returning to the ritual” refers to the ideas of good and evil. The “ritual” in the sense of the ideas of good and evil is changeable, but the “self-control” is unchangeable.

以‘克己復禮’來說，‘克己’是意志力量，‘復禮’的‘禮’是善惡概念，‘禮’—善惡概念有變遷，‘克己’却是不變的。

ibid., 211

Here, again, we must consider that it would also be possible to translate (or align) the two abovementioned concepts the other way around and interpret *keji* (克己 self-control) as the (unchangeable) will in the sense of a transcendental form, and *li* (禮 ritual) as the (changeable) arbitrary choice. In this line of reasoning, ritual would be comparable to Kant's *Willkür* and self-control with his concept of *Wille*.

For Li Zehou, Kant's free will as a dominant force of conscious choices of moral behavior is another proof for the fact that reason guides emotions (*li zhuzai qing* 理主宰情), which is an important presumption of his own moral theory.

But, on the other hand, Kant's interpretation of the free will is also linked to the question of “radical evil,” which cannot be found in Chinese philosophy. In Li's view, the absence of “radical evil” discourse in traditional Chinese culture is connected to its emotion-based paradigm. While the question of radical evil is rooted in Christian theology and is tightly linked to the concepts of original sin and the culture of guilt, the problems regarding the goodness or the evil of humanness (*ren xing* 人性), which were formed in traditional Chinese philosophical thought, were following a completely different line of reasoning. The former is a product of the two-world view; hence, radical evil is something that stands in direct opposition to the ultimate good. In Christian theology, its crucial germ is to be found in Eve's conscious decision to act in opposition to the orders from God. Hence, in this framework, the free will enables human beings to choose evil instead of good. In the Chinese one-world tradition, however, the ultimate good (*zhi shan* 至善) is not identified with God nor with ideas, the transcendental reason, or any other supernatural power.

8 In the *Analects*, both elements constitute the condition to achieve humaneness (*ren*): “To return to ritual through self-control is humaneness (克己復禮為仁)” (*Lunyu* s.d., Yan Yuan: 1).

In his *Anthropo-historical Ontology*, Li describes this ultimate stage of moral endeavors as being guided by the criteria of the sustainable preservation of the existence of humankind as a whole (*renlei zongtide shengcun yanxu* 人類總體的生存延續). In such a framework, there is no place for radical evil or the evil of human nature, for humanness is necessarily good.⁹ It is born anew with the birth of every single human being. Simultaneously, such a view represents a high-level affirmation of social life. This kind of ultimate goodness is neither a transcendental entity nor a purely biological instinct. In its various appearances, it is changeable and moldable, but it always remains steadily positioned into the greater framework of pragmatic reason, always achievable through socialization, cultivation and learning.

This transfer from the ultimate good, which is an effect of the sustainable existence of humankind, to the goodness of individual humanness, is of course also based upon a faith, or better, a general, basic trust that is also permeated with emotion. One feels that one's own existence is a good thing. To be born into this vast, unintelligible universe, is good in itself and therefore, I should be kind in my accidental little life. Such a setting can offer people a very positive and optimistic feeling about the survival and life in this world. This is also the basic significance of the emotion-based worldview (*you qing yuzhou guan* 有情宇宙观), a notion that pertains to the co-existence of cosmos (nature) and humankind.

At this point, Li compares this ethical framework once again with Kant's distinction between the premises of "ought to do" and "can do." If there is a self-legislative "*Wille*," there must necessarily also be a "*Willkür*," the executive choice of action. In the Christian theology, the discerning instance that helps people carry out morally good and righteous actions is God. In Chinese philosophy,

9 In this regard, readers who are familiar with the Chinese philosophical tradition might object that according to Xunzi's line of thought, humanness (*ren xing*) is doubtless seen as evil. As is well known, he explicitly states that the crucial features or inclinations defining human beings are bad (人之性惡，其善者偽也). The character *e* 惡, which has in the history of Western interpretations of the Chinese ideational tradition mostly been translated as "evil" occurs in comparable connotations for the first time relatively late, namely, in the Confucian *Analects*. In earlier works, the contradiction or negation of the idea of goodness is mostly expressed through its simple negation *bu shan* 不善 (not good). Here, we should consider, for instance, the second chapter of the *Daode jing*, which states that the opposite of 'good' is 'not good' (皆知善之為善，斯不善已, Laozi s.d., 2). In this work, the character *e* 惡 is used in the sense of (aesthetic) ugliness. And even in later Confucian sources, the notion is mostly understood as a kind of bad inclination, which is directed against humanity and good life. According to most traditional dictionaries, its origin is linked to the semantic scope of a negative feeling (such as hate), to the aesthetic feeling of ugliness, or simply to mistakes in human conduct (see for instance, Xu Shen's *Shuowen jiezi*, 6844). Hence, we have to be careful not to confuse this connotation with the moral implications of the Western concept of evil.

there is no God. In Li's view, the emotion-based worldview replaces such supernatural instances in the guiding of individual moral behavior. It blends strong feelings of good and bad with the rational comprehension of right and wrong. In this sense, it helps people to transform "ought to do" into "can do." Here, the executive potential of the will (*yizhi*) is still functioning as the crucial driving force of moral behavior. However, the assisting role of emotions is also important.

In this context, Li also elaborates on the difficult and complex question of moral emotions (*daode qinggan* 道德情感). He begins with the question about the very nature of such emotions. Does this concept denote emotions that precede moral actions? Or are we talking about emotions that arise during or after the moral action? Concerning the first connotation, most people believe that they arise from sympathy or empathy. Li reminds us that Hume sees them as the driving force of moral action, while Schopenhauer believes they are its basis. In Li's view, contemporary moral sentimentalists are even more radical and even less compatible with Kant's rational deontology. Because emotions are unreliable and can be destructive or simply wrong, Li strongly opposes this stream of thought (Li Zehou 2018, 12). In this context, he always emphasizes the guiding function of reason over emotions.

Regarding the emotions that arise during or after a moral action, Li agrees with Kant by emphasizing that they belong to feelings of reverence or respect. In the beginning, the feeling is rather unpleasant, for it contradicts the elementary inclinations of self-interest and individual desires. But as soon as it is overcome through self-discipline and self-restriction, it can become joyful. Hence, people who act in accordance with deontological principles can experience a kind of spiritual, intellectual pleasure, similar to the aesthetic feeling of the sublime.

In this respect, we can also find a crucial difference between Li Zehou and Kant. Kant's "starry heavens above" and "the moral law within" both belong to the unknowable things in themselves and to the world of noumena, which exceeds the world in which people live. For Li, such a view is a cultural-psychological formation that was formed as a result of the "two-worlds view." In the originally shamanistic "one-world" culture, every attempt to reach the transcendental realm as something external to concrete human life must necessarily fail.¹⁰ Li acknowledges that he does not know the meaning or the reason for the existence of the starry heaven above us, but he believes that there is a very sensible reason for the existence of the moral law within us: it is the aforementioned sustainable preservation of the existence of the entire humankind (*ibid.*).

10 In this respect, Li is very critical toward the Neo-Confucian and Modern New Confucian efforts to establish a theory of immanent transcendence (see Rošker 2019, 130ff).

According to Li, the ancient Chinese culture of pleasure was based on such axiological presumptions. He repeatedly points to many examples for the awareness of this basic value and the existence of the free will in the Chinese tradition.

In China, we say that “virtue is established at the highest level.” This kind of uniqueness of each individual existence shows its incomparable brilliance. Such existence can only become possible through conscious and self-aware rational construction, which takes place in the framework of constructing subjectivity. This construction implies practice, behavior, and action, but also emotions, desires, and other sensations, which agglomerate in human reason (similar as in epistemology, in which the sensuous intuition is internalized into reason). This is the real free will.

中國古話說,「太上立德」,個體存在的這種一次性,這這裏顯示出它的無比光輝。而這卻只有通過人的自覺有意識的理性建構才存在。這屬於建立人的主體性的範圍。這是在人的實踐、行為、活動、情感、願欲等感性中的理性凝聚(如同在認識論的感性直觀中有理性內化一樣),這才是真正的自由意志。

LI ZEHOU 1994, 469

This is the real reason as to why “noumenon” of morality is superior to the “phenomenon” of knowledge. In exploring the basic characteristics of such a “Chinese version” of free will, Li begins with Mencius, who wrote:

Yan Yuan asked, “What kind of man was Shun? What kind of man am I? He who exerts himself will also become such as he was.”

舜何人也? 予何人也? 有為者亦若是。

Mengzi s.d., Teng Wengong 1: 1

This, in principle an extremely egalitarian view, which allowed all people to become as morally perfect and intelligent as the legendary sage-king Shun represents one of the most important heroes of the Chinese culture, was emphasized in many other passages of the *Mengzi*. For instance:

All things of the same kind are similar; why should we doubt it only in regard to man? The sage and I are of the same kind.

凡同類者,舉相似也,何獨至於人而疑之? 聖人與我同類者。

Mengzi s.d., Gaozi 1: 7

In contrast to numerous other scholars, Li does not value Mengzi for his theory of the four sprouts (of goodness);¹¹ more precisely, he does not agree with scholars who interpret the feelings underlying these sprouts as a kind of transcendental forms. In his view, some (but not all) of these feelings belong to biological instincts that can also be possessed by some animals. For him, Mengzi's greatest contribution to the development of Chinese ethics lies elsewhere (Li Zehou 2018, 13). Li believes that Mengzi's work mirrors and exposes the unique, independent, and autonomous personality of this pre-Qin intellectual, who has developed and described the specific free will, which is typical of traditional Chinese, especially Confucian ethics and morality. He upgraded and developed many original Confucian approaches, exposing the holistic nature and order of the world. He also pointed out the vital linkage between men and nature, emphasizing hereby its mutual organic interaction, empowered through the flow of the vital and creative potential *qi* (氣).

In Li Zehou's view, all these are relicts of the ancient Chinese shamanistic culture, in which the shamans were known for communicating with spirits through their inner heart-mind in various mysterious ways. Li stresses that it was Mengzi who rationalized these mysteries. This rationalization has had an extremely profound influence on later developments of Chinese culture. In Li's view, it is precisely that which makes human beings human. Li emphasizes that this is not something that could be solely achieved through some moral feelings, as for instance the "feeling of commiseration" (*ceyin zhi xin* 惻隱之心, *ibid.*). Hence, it is by no means coincidental that Mencius laid great emphasis upon individual moral self-cultivation. He demanded from people in highest positions to be morally accomplished and to fully develop their moral competences. This task demanded a harsh process of self-discipline. Mencius wrote:

They have to exercise their heart-mind and their will with suffering. Their muscles and bones have to experience the hardships of heavy work, and their bodies must experience great hunger. They must be subjected to extreme poverty. Their undertakings must be confounded. In this

11 The four sprouts (*si duan* 四端) are four inborn beginnings of goodness; they are based on four types of emotion that makes human beings human: "Whoever does not possess the feeling of commiseration is not a human being. Whoever does not possess the feeling of shame and dislike is not a human being. Whoever does not possess the feeling of modesty and complacency is not a human being. The feeling of commiseration is the sprout of humaneness; the feeling of shame and dislike is the sprout of appropriateness. The feeling of modesty and complacency is the sprout of ritual. The feeling of right and wrong is the sprout of wisdom." (無惻隱之心，非人也；無羞惡之心，非人也；無辭讓之心，非人也；無是非之心，非人也。惻隱之心，仁之端也；羞惡之心，義之端也；辭讓之心，禮之端也；是非之心，智之端也) (*Mengzi* s.d., Gongsun Chou I: 6).

way, their heart-mind will be moved and they develop endurance and patience, something they could never achieve before.

苦其心志，勞其筋骨，餓其體膚，空乏其身，行拂亂其所為，所以動心忍性，曾益其所不能。

Mengzi s.d., Gaozi II: 35

All such practices belonged to the cultivation of moral personalities, and they led to the establishment of a firm will, which is under the control of reason (Li Zehou 2016b, 176–177). Li explains that such cultivation led to the aforementioned “solidification of reason,” a process that is of great importance in his ethical theory.

Li also believes that Mencius has established the fourth element constituting the “structure of humaneness” (*rende jiegou* 仁的結構), which implies the free will.¹² These germs were developed further by many later Chinese philosophers. Here, Li specifically mentions the famous Neo-Confucian idealistic philosopher Wang Yangming from the Ming dynasty, who established an epistemological-ethical distinction that can be compared with the Kantian differentiation between “ought to do” and “can do”¹³ (Li Zehou 2018, 13).

In Li’s philosophical system, the notion of free will potentially belongs to the capacity of humanness (*renxing nengli* 人性能力), a concept that will be introduced in detail in later sections of this chapter. However, for a better understanding of this idea, we first need to illuminate Li’s theory of transforming experiences into the transcendental formations, beginning with the methodological foundations of this process and then proceeding to the specific features of its historical development.

12 In the Confucian discourses on humaneness, the free will has to be cultivated; hence, this fourth element, which includes free will, is defined as the ideal individual personality (*geti renye* 個體人格, see Li Zehou 1980, 77). The three other elements are the basis of kinship relations (*xuanyuan jichu* 血緣基礎), the psychological principles (*xinli yuanze* 心理原則), and humanism (*rendaozhuyi* 人道主義, see *ibid.*, 82).

13 In Li’s view, this distinction is visible in Wang’s theoretical construction regarding his theory of the unity of knowledge and action (*zhi xing heyi* 知行合一, see Wang Yangming 2018, 1: 5), for this framework is based upon his presumption expressed in the phrase *ji zhi ji xing* 即知即行, which means that one can act (“can do”) as soon as (or simultaneously with) one knows (“ought to”).

2 Transformation of the Empirical into the Transcendental

The question of gradual conversion of empirical elements into universal mental forms belongs to the key issues by which Li Zehou has altered and transformed Kant's views on pure and practical reason, on the very nature of perception and cognizance, and also on the autonomous human subject and his or her actions.

It is often claimed that in this respect, Li's theory can be considered as an upgrading or a completion of Kant's philosophy (Ding 2002, 248). Nonetheless, in terms of philosophical reflection, this can hardly be the case, because Kant himself has repeatedly warned against a mingling of the empirical with the rational.

I here ask only whether the nature of the science does not require the empirical part always to be carefully separated from the rational, placing ahead of a genuine (empirical) physics a metaphysics of nature, and ahead of practical anthropology a metaphysics of morals, which must be carefully cleansed of everything empirical, in order to know how much pure reason could achieve in both cases; and from these sources pure reason itself creates its teachings a priori, whether the latter enterprise be carried on by all teachers of morals (whose name is legion) or only by some who feel they have a calling for it.

KANT 2001, 23–24

Therefore, Li's aim to synthesize the two approaches (or disciplines) within this process of transformation is rooted in the holistic, "one-world" nature of Chinese philosophical tradition, the existence of which has not been acknowledged by most of the traditional European thinkers, including Kant himself:

That which mixes those pure principles among empirical ones does not even deserve the name of a 'philosophy' (for this distinguishes itself from common rational cognition precisely by the fact that what the latter conceives only as mixed in, it expounds in a separate science), still less of a 'moral philosophy,' because precisely through this mixture it violates the purity of morals and proceeds contrary to its own end.

ibid., 6

Irrespective of what one might think of such approaches, it seems certainly better and more suitable to categorize Li's ethical system as a theory, which rests on completely different paradigms that are not comparable to (and,

even less compatible with) the ones that determine Kant's referential framework.¹⁴ Instead of speaking about Li's theory as a system, based upon Kantian approaches, it could therefore be claimed that for Li Zehou, Kant's philosophy was but a valuable source of inspiration.

Hence, Li's "transformation of empirical into the transcendental" (*jingyan bian xianyan* 經驗變先驗) is not an element that could be directly compatible with, or even assimilated into, Kant's transcendental philosophy. It belongs to the process of evolutionary sedimentation, in which experiences of the entire humankind are being transformed into the transcendental forms incorporated in the cultural-psychological formations of each individual (Li, Zehou 2016, 1140). Li explains:

Ancient Greeks said, "Human beings are rational animals," and Franklin said, "Human beings are tool producing animals." I want to connect these two opinions and investigate how "the tool producing animals" became "rational animals."

古希臘說「人是有理性的動物」，富蘭克林說「人是製造工具的動物」——而我是要把這兩個定義結合起來，即研究人怎樣由「製造工具的動物」變為「有理性的動物」。

LI ZEHOU AND LIU XUYUAN 2011b, 77

The transformation of the empirical into transcendental is actually the precondition for the realization of both abovementioned defining elements of humanness. The concepts such as transcendentality, reason, and psychological or mental formations are nothing mystical, for they are all derived from human experiences, and from the historical practice. These principles encapsulate Li's system of proceeding from Marx to Kant, from the instrumental (*gongju bentu* 工具本體) to the psychological substance (*xinli bentu* 心理成本體), and from the techno-social formations (*gongyi—shehui jiegou* 工藝—社會結構) to the cultural-psychological formation (*wenhua—xinli jiegou* 文化—心理結構).

Li exposes that this process of changing experience into the transcendental was especially clearly visible in China: in the Chinese tradition, reason was never only shaped as a part of epistemology, but always simultaneously as an

14 For a contrastive analysis and illumination of the crucial differences between the two referential frameworks that have defined Li's and Kant's work, respectively, see Rošker 2019, 254ff.

integral part of ethics.¹⁵ Hence, there was no sharp distinction between the pure and the practical reason.

As we have seen in Li's *General Scheme of Ethics*, this process of transformation started and ended in Chinese culture with emotionality and emotions, respectively. In this framework, reason and emotion were amalgamated in a specific mental formation, which he termed "emotio-rational structure" (*qingli jiegou* 情理結構). The ethico-epistemic structure of the empirical transforming into transcendental forms a part of the Chinese cultural-psychological formation, which always, i.e., on the universal level, represents an antipode (and a regulative principle) of the more basic techno-social formation.

The process of transforming the empirical into the transcendental can be seen as a kind of synthesis of empiricism and rationalism. In such view, all forms of understanding are *a priori* only from the viewpoint of the individual; from the viewpoint of humankind, they are derived from experience, and are therefore *a posteriori* (Li Zehou 1999g, 175–176), for they were gradually shaped through the practice of the human species over millions of years. This theory of "psychosedimentation" (*ibid.*) is comparable to Piaget's view, according to which forms of logic and mathematics, for instance, come from the abstraction of such practice-related activities.

Although there is hence no supernatural or metaphysical origin of human cognition, it is neither simply established in one-to-one correspondence by an empirical world. The transformation of empirical into the transcendental is a dynamic, nonlinear and long-lasting procedure, which evolves through and within human beings during the course of history, which takes place in their concrete and tangible world.¹⁶

The process of transforming empirical into transcendental offers human beings possibilities of consciously restraining their natural inclinations, instincts, and desires and adapting their behavior in accordance with social norms. It leads to the condensation of reason (*lixing ningju* 理性凝聚). In such a framework, there is no room for any isolated forms of pure, nor for any

15 Therefore, one does not have to reject and depart from one's everyday relationships with others and empirical existence in order to pursue the transcendent, the *a priori*, the boundless, and the substance, since these can all be found within actual reality and human relationships (Li, Zehou 1999c, 53).

16 According to Catherine Lynch (2016, 723), this is one of the main differences between the philosophies of Li Zehou and John Dewey. Li goes further than Dewey's instrumental understanding of the world because for him, human beings are exactly creatures within and of that world. Hence, his theory does not belong to pragmatism but rather to anthropological ontology.

independent kinds of the practical reason in the Kantian sense. Li's pragmatic reason (*shiyong lixing* 實用理性), on the other hand, is an assortment of both types; it is rational and practical at the same time and therefore, it belongs to both epistemology and ethics. Besides, pragmatic reason is not *a priori*, nor is it fixed or absolute:

It is close to reasonableness that is historically constructed and empirically approved. It can be termed as historical reason because it is attached to human history (i.e., the temporal process of the actual existence, living, and life of humankind as a whole), and thus comes into being and grows along with it.

WANG, KEPING 2018, 233

Through this transformative process, the sense experiences shape and transform reason, which is thus internalized, condensed, accumulated, and sedimented into the human mental forms. As each person becomes a member of the human community through a long-time education and training via rational faculty, their moral sense is the product of such condensation of reason, which dominates the sensational aspect of human existence and is a uniquely human characteristic. This elementary moral sense (*daode gan* 道德感), which underlies Kant's categorical imperative, can also be found in the philosophies of the Song and Ming dynasty Neo-Confucianism. Zhu Xi saw the categorical imperative as permeating the Cosmic structure or the patterned principle of Heaven (*tian li* 天理)¹⁷ and Wang Yangming described it as

17 Even before Zhu Xi's time, the concept of *tian li* was understood as an all-encompassing structural order of the universe. Zhu Xi described it as follows: "The structural principle of Heaven is all pervasive and endless" (天理固浩浩不窮) (Zhu Xi s.d., Li qi 1, Xingli yi: 41). *Tian li* did not merely include the essential ordering of the external reality, but also permeated the human mind (see Rošker 2012, 47ff). At this psychological level, it possessed moral connotations: "Since the structural pattern of Heaven is everywhere, there can be no evil!" (全是天理, 安得不善!) (Zhu Xi s.d., Li qi 1, Xingli yi: 53). It was a moral principle, which was seen as the oppositional notion to (and hence, a negation of) the concept of human desires (*ren yu* 人欲, *ibid.*, 55). In this sense, it was also used in the Neo-Confucian discourses, as for instance in Wang Yangming's note "Eliminating human desires and preserving the cosmic structure" (去人欲存天理) (Wang Yangming s.d., Chuan xi lu 1, 3, 11, 28, 99, 111).

the inner (or inborn) knowledge (*liangzhi* 良知).¹⁸ Such a moral sense guides human beings “to acknowledge the meanings, values and responsibilities of life as though they drop an anchor to locate a floating boat” (ibid.) and regulates human behavior from inward “without any resistance or disputability” (ibid.). It is transcendental, which means that it is an a priori formation of the human consciousness, but at the same time, it is deeply empirical. On the one hand, it is a product of concrete human historical development, and on the other, it requires sensations, emotions and feelings of respect in order to support actual human conduct. Hence, in Li’s view, elementary moral rules are formed by the empirical in the process of human evolution through which they develop into transcendental formations guiding human actions from within as they are self-consciously chosen by the power of free will.

In this framework, no transcendental form can exist independent of experience. The transcendental arises from empirical through sedimentation, and reason is therefore nothing mysterious, but rather something constructed from the historical practices of humankind. Through their formal qualities, these practices are sedimented into human psychological formations. As already mentioned, in Li’s view these processes are not only primarily linked to epistemology, but even more to ethics. The transformation of empirical into the transcendental helps us understand Li’s interpretation of the categorical imperative. Just like the Chinese concepts of the cosmic structure or inner knowledge, it is absolute and universal. Its origin can be compared to the shaping of religious moralities in which we can also observe a similar transformation from the social to the individual realm, for it represents a process leading from external norms to internal values.

18 Wang connected the structures of heaven (*tian li* 天理) and humanness (*ren xing* 人性) through the concept of innate knowledge (*liang zhi* 良知). See for instance: “The innate knowledge in my mind is congruent with the so-called structure of the universe” (吾心之良知, 即所謂天理) (Wang Yangming s.d., 11: 135). He defined the concept in the following way: “Knowledge is the substance of the heart-mind. A heart-mind knows spontaneously. When you see your father, you will naturally know (how to act in accordance with) filial piety. When you see your brother, you will naturally know (how to act in accordance with) the fraternal bond. When you see a child falling into a well, you will naturally know (how to act in accordance with) the feeling of commiseration. This is precisely what the inborn knowledge is about. There is no need to search for it outside. In the moment the inborn knowledge is discovered, all obstacles derived from private inclinations are gone” (知是心之本體。心自然會知。見父自然知孝, 見兄自然知弟, 見孺子入井, 自然知惻隱。此便是良知。不假外求。若良知之發, 更無私意障礙) (Wang Yangming s.d., 1: 8).

Originally, religious moralities were certain kinds of social moralities. Initially, they were common modes, standards, and criteria of conduct established by different ethnic groups and human communities in different periods of time and different regions, under different conditions in order to maintain, protect and continue their survival. Due to various subjective and objective conditions determining their environments, these social moralities had to appear in forms that exceeded society and human life.... However, these forms were often attributed to the deeds and speeches of legendary, great personalities embodied by people such as prehistoric shamans, ancient masters and priests, and even the early modern leaders. In this way, the empirical was transformed into the transcendental.

宗教性道德本是一種社會性道德。它本是一定時代、地域、民族、集團即一定時、空、條件環境下的或大或小的人類群體為維持、保護、延續其生存、生活所要求的共同行為方式、準則或標準。由於當時的環境和主客觀條件，這種社會性道德必須也必然以一種超社會超人世的現象出現 ... 但從遠古巫師、古代教主到近代的領袖，它又常常憑藉某種傳奇性的偉大人物行為、言語而賦以超越這個世界的嚴重的神聖性質，經驗便由此變成了先驗。

LI ZEHOU 2003b, 53

More concretely, Li explains this using the central Confucian virtue of family reverence (*xiao* 孝)¹⁹ as an example. It results from the period of the small-scale farming economy, in which the family clans were the basic social

19 This term is usually translated into English as “filial piety.” However, since it actually refers to a broader network of connotations regarding different family relationships, “family reverence” seems a more appropriate translation. Henry Rosemont and Roger T. Ames, who recently published a newest version of the *Xiaojing* 孝經 (i.e., *The Chinese Classics of Family Reverence*) wrote about this translation in their introduction: “*Xiao* has conventionally been translated as ‘filial piety,’ and to the extent that the pious are deferential, the term is not altogether misleading, for deference is certainly called for in the Classic of Family Reverence (*Xiaojing* 孝經). But it is to *people* living and dead in *this* world that Confucians defer, not to religious figures, usually associated with the Abrahamic traditions, who inhabit another, transcendent world. Moreover, ‘piety’ often carries a sense of the ‘sanctimonious’ that is absent from the Chinese *xiao*. Hence, we believe *xiao* is better rendered as ‘family responsibility,’ ‘family deference,’ ‘family feeling,’ or ‘family reverence’” (Rosemont and Ames 2009, 1).

unity.²⁰ Later, it was ritualized and spiritualized through shamanistic ceremonies and became a transcendental notion incorporated in concepts such as the aforementioned cosmic structure or innate knowledge. Hence, it became a kind of sacred categorical imperative that surpasses the human relationships in the concrete world (*ibid.*, 56).

Li has explicated the theoretical grounds of such transcendental notions with the help of his interpretation of Kant's epistemology:

Kant's "transcendental reason" is a uniquely human form of perception and cognition. Where does it come from? Kant has never answered this question. He merely stated that "transcendental" is prior to experience. With my elaboration on the problem of "how is the humankind possible," I have replied to Kant's question: "How is the faculty of thought itself possible." In this context, I have proposed the notion of experience transforming into the transcendental. The transcendental forms of the individual are shaped through the historical sedimentation of experiences. This kind of sedimentation belongs to my concept of the "cultural-psychological formation" ... Heidegger explained the famous Kantian problem of the unknown common origin of sensitivity and cognition as originating in the transcendental imagination, but I believe it is a result of producing and using tools, i.e., of vital practice. Sensitivity arises from individual sensitive experiences of practice, and cognition from psychological forms shaped by the practices of the humankind.

康德講“先驗理性”，是人所特有的感知認識形式。它們如何來的呢？康德沒有說，只說是“先驗”即先於經驗的。我用“人類如何可能”來回答康德的“認識如何可能”，也就是要提出經驗變先驗，對個體來說是先驗認識形式是由經驗所歷史地積澱而形成的，這也就是我所說的“文化-心理結構”... 康德那個著名的的感性和知性不可知的共同根源，海德格爾認為是先驗想像力，我認為是使用-製造工具的生產、生活的實踐。感性源自個體實踐的感覺經驗，知性源自人類實踐的心理形式。

LI ZEHOU AND LIU XUYUAN 2011, 77

20 In agrarian societies, farming-related experiences were precious. Hence, the elder generations were valued and worshipped as bearers of such experiences. Against this background, family reverence became important, because filial piety is an important and basic part of this virtue (see Li Zehou 2003b, 55).

In Li's view, this process of transforming experiences of practice and production into transcendental forms was developed in the Neolithic period through shamanistic ritualization. He emphasizes that reason (including the elementary laws of logic) is not a product of individual undertakings, but was rather produced and shaped in the course of collective activities and their ritualization which originated in shamanistic ceremonies and was sedimented through language and thought (Li Zehou 1999c, 508).

As regards the essence of mathematics, Li obviously differs from Kant. For Li, mathematics is different from logic, for it is linked to sensibility. However, this sensibility is not connected to Kant's transcendental intuition, but rather refers to the perceptual practice of the humankind. The origin of mathematics lies in the practice of its primitive activities, that is, in primitive operations of labor activities, characterized by the use and production of tools. In the beginning, these practical activities were concrete operations directed toward certain objects. Later they were transformed into symbolic operations incorporated into mystical forms of shamanistic ceremonies. In its essence, the universal necessity of mathematics is hence the universal necessity of the very form of abstracted practical activities of operational labor (*ibid.*, 94–96). Li sees the elements of formal logic, which form a part of mathematics, and the formal logic as such, as products of high-level abstraction, derived from the long lasting history of practical activities. The evolvement of such abstractions was possible because they were supported by social coercions (*ibid.*, 97–98).

Another important difference between Li Zehou and Kant is linked to their respective views on the nature of causality. Similar to the forms of logic, causality is in Kant's transcendental philosophy a category of cognition, i.e., a kind of transcendental form that is independent of experiences. In Kant's view, its origins cannot be explained, for they are merely one type of human rational cognitive forms, which exist a priori. In his critique of such a view, Li applies the Marxist historical materialism in order to illuminate the origin of these categories (*ibid.*, 171). He believes that they are uniquely human patterns of cognition that were similarly created through the long lasting evolutionary development of collective social practices (*ibid.*, 172). Hence, he comes to the following conclusion:

Categories are not results of the empirical induction of common sensibility (empiricism) nor are they derived from rational a priori deduction (Kant). They are not operational regulations (pragmatism), nor biological structures (Langer). They are not an induction of individual perceptions or experiences but rather are results of the internalization of historical

practices in human societies. Proceeding from the unconscious archetypes to conscious symbols and then to the abstract dialectical concepts, they were always established on the basis of the contents of such social historical practices.

範疇不是一般感性的經驗歸納（經驗論），也不是理性的先驗演繹（康德），不是邏輯假設和情感信念（邏輯實證論），不是操作的規定（實用主義），不是生理的結構（朗格）。它們不是任何個體的感知或經驗的歸納，而是人類社會的歷史實踐的內化成果。從無意識的原型到有意識的符號，到抽象的辯證觀念，都只有建立在這種有著社會歷史內容的實踐基礎上。

ibid., 174

On such basis, it is easier to investigate the grounds of Li's transformation of empirical into the transcendental. But before exploring these contents, we have to clarify some terminological questions.

In Kant's philosophy, the terms "a priori," "transcendental," and "transcendent" have different meanings. In his *Critique of the Pure Reason*, he explained the *a priori* knowledge as knowledge that does not rely on any kind of experiences. It means "before experiencing," and refers to necessary truths (or knowledge) that are independent of reason. Kant has also clearly and unambiguously defined the notion of transcendental:

I call all cognition transcendental that is occupied not so much with objects but rather with our *a priori* concepts of objects in general. A system of such concepts would be called transcendental philosophy.²¹

KANT 1998, 133

Here, "transcendental" means the necessary conditions for the possibility of every experience. Some *a priori* truths also refer to transcendental conditions, for example, time and space, basic categorical judgments, or the law of

21 This English translation of the first sentence of this citation could be a little misleading, for the semantic connotations of the term "concept" are too wide. The German original seems to be more precise: "Ich nenne alle Erkenntnis transzendental, die sich nicht so wohl mit Gegenständen, sondern mit unserer Erkenntnisart von Gegenständen, so fern diese a priori möglich sein soll, überhaupt beschäftigt" (Kant 1919, 68). In order to preserve the meaning of "*Erkenntnisart von Gegenständen*," the following translation seems more appropriate: "I call all cognition transcendental that is not so much occupied with objects as with the *mode of our cognizance of these objects*, so far as this mode of cognition is possible a priori."

causality. In his *Critique of Judgement*, Kant associated “transcendental” principles with “those, through which we represent *a priori* the universal condition under which alone things can become objects of our cognition generally” (Kant 1911, 181). Hence, the term transcendental refers to that which enables the human mind to constitute concepts and thus, to be able to experience them as objects. In contrast to everyday knowledge, which is knowledge of objects, transcendental knowledge is knowledge of how human beings experience those objects as objects. Kant believes that our consciousness provides us with structures that make this kind of experiences possible. The human mind generates both such structures and its own unity through a synthesis.

The term transcendence, on the other hand, refers to that which has surpassed the limits of physical existence and does not necessarily depend on it. The differentiation between the transcendental and the transcendent designates the boundary between theoretical knowledge and mere thought, for beyond all possible experience, we cannot have theoretical knowledge but can only think. For Kant, the “transcendent,” as opposed to the “transcendental,” is that which lies beyond what our cognitive ability can reasonably know. In this context, Li emphasizes the important role of experiences in the functioning of transcendental structures.

I certainly believe Kant has paid close attention to experiences. In Kant’s theory, transcendental is different from transcendent. Transcendental is transcendental precisely because on the one hand it precedes experience, but on the other hand, it cannot be separated from them. Therefore he wrote at the very beginning of his *Critique of the Pure Reason* that all began with experience, but experience could not be equated to knowledge. Kant’s transcendental categories tell us precisely this, namely, that there can be no science without experiences.

我認為康德恰恰充分關注了經驗。康德講先驗與超驗有區別，先驗之所以為先驗，一方面先於經驗，另一方面不能脫離於經驗。所以《純粹理性批判》開頭就說一切都要從經驗開始，但經驗並不等於知識。康德的先驗範疇恰恰要說明只有不脫離經驗，才能成為科學。

LI ZEHOU AND YANG GUORONG 2014, 125

Hence, in Kant’s system, the difference between “*a priori*” and “transcendental” is obvious. In the Chinese academia, the term “*a priori*” is usually translated as *xiantian* 先天 and “transcendental” as *xianyan* 先驗. Li uses the term *xiantian* (which, in China, is predominantly applied as a translation of Kant’s concept

of *a priori*) in the sense of “inborn” or “innate” (Li Zehou and Liu Yuedi 2017, 2, 8), a term, which, again, is usually denoted in Chinese with the notions *tianfu* 天賦 and *neizai* 內在, respectively. “Transcendence” or “transcendent” is usually translated into Chinese with the notion *chaoyan* 超驗. For Li Zehou, the difference between “transcendent” (*chaoyan*) and “transcendental” (*xianyan*) is also reflected in their mutual dialectical relation:

Transcendent objects must be applied in experiences to become “transcendental.” Without a connection to experience, there can be no “transcendental” ... For human beings, transcendence has positive and negative aspects.

超驗的東西，必須應用到經驗上來，才是 “先驗”，挪不到經驗上面來，那就不算“先驗” ... 超驗對人有正負兩方面的作用。

LI ZEHOU AND LIU YUEDI 2017, 7

He exposes that the realm of transcendence is illusionary but it still has a positive influence on people, for it provides them with ideals and enhances their activity (ibid., 8). On the other hand, he points out that, due to his two-world paradigm, Kant’s *noumenon* also belongs to transcendent notions:

For him, *noumenon* and reason are without origin and they are simultaneously higher than humankind. Hence, we can speak here about a two-world view. However, I have established a different concept of the thing-in-itself. For me, it is material substance that exists as a synergetic interaction between the universe and human beings. Such a conceptualization is directly linked to my “one-world view,” in which both of them are parts of one world. Since they still belong to this one and the same world, this is not a contradiction.

他那個本體，他那個理性，是沒有來源的，而且高於人類的。從而可說是兩個世界。而我所設定的物自體，是宇宙與人協同共在的物質實體，與我的 “一個世界” 觀直接相通，所以毫無矛盾，仍然是一個世界。

ibid.

In such a context, it becomes clear that Li understands and applies Kant’s notion of transcendental in a different way. In a one-world paradigm, transcendence in the sense of surpassing one world and existing in another is

impossible. Hence, Li concludes that in Chinese philosophy, there is no transcendence (*chaoyan* 超驗) but detachment (*chaotuo* 超脫):²²

In a philosophical sense, we can only speak about detachment in China (which means that people can surpass the limitations of their individual life). There can be no transcendence (in the sense of surpassing the realm of the experiences of the humankind).

從哲學上, 中國人只是超脫 (超脫此有限的個體人生) 而不是超驗 (超出人類經驗範圍)。

LI ZEHOU 2016, 36

But while the Chinese one-world paradigm cannot include transcendence (*chaoyue* 超越), it certainly includes a kind of transcendental (*chaoyan*). Li's conceptualization of transforming the empirical into the transcendental is a processual account of the elementary construction of such transcendental. In this framework, Li has tried to elaborate on some of Kant's central concepts. In this process, he aimed to replace certain "problematic" definitions of such concepts with others that have—in his view—better expressed their positioning into the schema of a processual, dynamic and materialistic-historical development. A good example of such minor (but important) shifts in the semantic connotations of Kant's terminology is, for instance, visible in Li's specific understanding of the term "universal necessity":

Kant claims that mathematics is valid everywhere. This is what he sees as the universal necessity. And he emphasizes that his idea of "transcendental" implies universal necessity. I am against such understanding. In my book *Critique of the Critical Philosophy* I have explained universal necessity with the notion of objective sociality (or social objectivity), which can even include mathematics and logic ... This is because experiences are always specific and they cannot be universal.

康德講, 數學到哪裡都行, 普遍必然. 講的就是這個. 康德講的 "先驗", 主要是強調它有普遍必然性. 也正因為此, 我反對這種絕對的 "普遍必然", 《批判》一書把康德的普遍必然性都解說成客觀社會性 (或社會客觀

22 In this context, Li Zehou—once again—exposes the "absurdity" of the notion of immanent transcendence, emphasizing that Kant himself also saw it as "a paradoxical theory, which mixes together gods and people" (是神人混同的悖論) (Li Zehou 2016, 37).

性，甚至包括數學和邏輯 ... 因為，經驗是個別的，經驗都不是普遍必然的。

ibid.

However, in his epistemological treatises, Kant did not speak about experiences as something concrete and specific; rather he wrote about them on the level of theory. In this context, Kant has attempted to describe the function they assume as a general factor within the universal mode of the construction of human knowledge. Li, on the other hand, writes about experiences *in concreto*. While in Kant's view, experiences are only seen as tools for inducing sensual impressions that stand at the beginning of any perception and comprehension, Li emphasizes their particularity, uniqueness, and their specific but continuous impact upon the shaping of the human mind. Against this background, the terms "objective sociality" is not necessarily in mutual contradiction with the notion of universal necessity, for they do not exclude (and might even complement) one another. Hence, Li did actually not replace "universal necessity" with "objective sociality"; by employing the latter term, he merely exposed the social and historical nature of the former:

There are exceptions to any law, but this does not harm their "universal necessity," because the so-called universal necessity is actually objective sociality.

規律總有例外，但並無損它的 '普遍必然'，因為所謂普遍必然性也不過是客觀社會性。

LI ZEHOU 2003b, 32

In such a framework, reason can only be constructed by and through the historical development:

In fact, the "universal necessity" is a historical objective sociality. It does not surpass human activities, the scope of their thinking, including their investigations of the universe and the nature. Besides, it necessarily includes the observer or the experiencing person. Reason is constructed by and through history and its foundation is rationality.

所謂 '普遍必然性' 其實就是歷史的客觀社會性，它不越出人類活動、思維範圍，包括對宇宙、自然的研究，也以觀察者或經驗的人為其不可或缺的要素或方面。理性是歷史地建立起來的。理性的基礎是合理性。

ibid., 43

Li established the term “objective sociality” in the 1950s. He mentioned it for the first time in his first important essay, “On the Aesthetic Feeling, Beauty and Art” (1956), in which he stated that aesthetic feeling—and even beauty as such—is socially determined (Li Zehou 1956, 45). However, he applied this view to reinterpret Kant’s universal necessity much later in his book, *Critique of the Critical Philosophy—A New Approach to Kant*, in which he aimed to posit Kant’s thing-in-itself onto a material basis (Li Zehou 1990, 162ff and 263ff):

Kant’s philosophy has utterly exposed the structure of human psychology—including the *a priori* nature (universal necessity) of human cognizance, ethics, and aesthetics. This book aims to assess the modern significance of Kant’s proposal regarding this problem. It aims to show a new direction in its understanding and explaining. This is precisely the critique of Kant’s “critical philosophy.”

康德哲學...全面提出了主題心理結構—包括認識, 倫理和審美的先驗性 (普遍必然性) 問題。本書目的就是特別看重康德所提出的這個問題的現代意義, 以及了解和決解這個問題的新方向。這就正是本書對康德 “批判哲學” 的批判。

ibid., 267

In Li’s broader theoretical system, the transformation of empirical into transcendental represents the core element of Li’s “three teachings” (*san ju jiao* 三句教). The other two postulates that what constitute this threefold model are “the creation of reason through history” (*lishi jian lǐxing* 歷史建理性) and “psychology grows into substance” (*xinli cheng benti* 心理成本體). The former emphasizes that rationality is integrated into mental forms through the historical process of human practices that leads to the condensation and sedimentation of reason. On the other hand, reason is valuable and meaningful only when it is employed as a tool for human living (Wang, Keping 2018, 234). The latter teaching is rooted in a presumption, comparable to Heidegger’s philosophy of *Dasein*. In Li’s theoretical model, human psychology, including feelings, is seen as possessing an “ontological” quality because it enhances the substance of human life (ibid.).

In the transformation of empirical into transcendental, reason can—as we have already seen above—only be constructed through the social and material objective nature of historical development, because it is derived from human experience. Through condensation, it is amalgamated with emotion into the emotio-rational structure (*qingli jiegou* 情理結構) of the human mind. In this model, in which no transcendental formations can exist completely detached from experiences because they are constituted and shaped through

sedimentation of historical practice, reason is constructed through the historical activities of practice, which is then integrated into mental structures, in which the techno-social formation (*gongyi shehui jiegou* 工藝社會結構) is complemented by the cultural-psychological formation (*wenhua xinli jiegou* 文化—心理結構). Just as the first postulate (transformation of the empirical into the transcendental) of this triple teaching conditions the second (construction of reason through history), the second in turn enables the realization of the third, namely, the postulate of psychology growing into substance (*xinli cheng benti* 心理成本體).

Contemporary Chinese scholar Yang Guorong 楊國榮 comments on this third postulate, which he considers as being of utmost importance. He believes that with this idea, Li has highlighted the essential significance of the inner substance, or to put it in a more sinicized form, the inner substantial root (*neizai benti* 內在本體). He suggests, however, that in this context we should consider the “existence of psychology within the substantial root” (本體存心理), which refers to the inner nature of the substantial root as such. According to him, the universal substance possesses a logical form that has also been integrated into individual mental forms. From the viewpoint of moral practice, this simultaneously refers to the inner mechanisms of moral conduct: the “existence of psychology within the substance,” which includes the amalgamation of universal rational forms with emotion and meaning. In such a way, it provides us with inner instruments for moral actions (Li Zehou and Yang Guorong 2014, 127).

Even though Li agrees with this aspect of human psychology, he emphasizes the material origins of psychological substance, which, in his view, represents an important part of humanness. The psychology of humanness was formed after human beings left the animal world (Li Zehou 2016, 474). It arose from various material and spiritual activities performed by people living in different social communities. In the early Neolithic history, humanness was shaped through material practice and shamanistic rituals. In the advanced course of historical development, mental formations were further developed, enriched and enhanced through the continuous evolvement of cultural inheritances. Gradually, they became increasingly universalized as a common feature of the humankind. In Li's view, the psychology of humanness by no means *a priori*, neither is it a product of ideas provided by sages and prophets.

In this process of establishing the psychological substance of humanness, the role of communities was of utmost importance. However, Li also highlights that communities consisted of individuals who were not entirely dependent and determined by them. Individual functions, positions, and creativity contributed immensely to the further development of societies. Their particular activities and deeds have often challenged and modified the existing

sedimented structures of human beings. The general progress of humankind is hence based upon a dialectical interaction between individuals and societies (ibid.). Li denoted this kind of psychological substance, which was constructed through the historical evolvement of humankind, as “the new sensitivity (*xin ganxing* 新感性)”:

This is still an animalistic biological sensitivity, but it differs from the animalistic psychology. It is a product of “humanizing” the corporeal, i.e., biological sensitivity of the humankind. This is precisely what I mean by the so-called “humanization of the inner nature.”

它仍然是動物生理的感性，但以區別於動物心理，它是人類將自己的血肉自然即生理的感性存在加以“人化”的結果。這也就是我所謂的“內在的自然的人化”。

ibid.

Hence, as we have seen, Li’s “three teachings” regarding the establishment and development of the humankind are interconnected and condition one another. While the human psychological substance grows from the conditions that are tightly linked to the first postulate, i.e. to the construction of reason through history, the evolvement of elements in which “psychology grows into substance” is conditioned by the transformation of the empirical into the transcendental. This transformation thus represents the elementary, primary and most basic process of human development. In this context, we (once again) have to be aware of the fact that such assessment is possible only in a radically dynamic and processual understanding of reality. Only in such a framework of transforming empirical into the transcendental can reason be constructed by and through history, and human psychology can grow into substance.

3 The Forgotten Significance of Rituality

As we have seen in the previous section, the transformation of the empirical into the transcendental is tightly linked to the transformation of social to religious moralities, which occurred in the earliest human communities. Simultaneously, a shaping of religious moralities also represents a process leading from external norms to internal values, and from the social to the individual realm.

Given the various environments and the subjective nature of their conditions, social ethics must appear as a phenomenon that transcends society and the human world. The beginning of these processes, which led to the formation

of religious moralities, was the abstraction, symbolization and universalization of moral principles, norms, and cultivation methods that were originally rooted in the phenomenal world.

Just like the social moralities, religious moralities also vary in accordance with the specific times, geographical locations, and cultures in which they were established. Under these different conditions, religious moralities were always particular types of shared standards, principles or methods, enabling human beings to maintain, preserve, and extend the existence of their communities.

In such a way, morality began as a principle of maintaining stable human interaction in a community. It has constantly being formed and developed to fit the particular social environments, which were always continuously changing. It was not designed as a set of customs established by people in a conscious way. Worldly customs, regulations, rules and experiences were taken in in the light of sacredness, and became doctrines, a kind of absolute power that cannot be escaped by communities and neither by individuals living in them. Such doctrines demanded their absolute belief, submission, reverence and respect. They included external pressures, which ordered people to follow certain ethical norms and procedures. These norms were then integrated and formed internal moral consciousness, concepts and emotions. In this way, ethics (in the sense of external demands, requirements, and institutions) was transformed into morality, rooted in internal psychological formations and the free will.

Li Zehou explained this process as one which leads from the rituals (*li* 禮)²³ to humaneness (*ren* 仁). In the course of this transformation, the capacity of humanness (*ren xing* 人性) moves from experience to the transcendental, from habit, tradition, and education to common mindset. In his view, Confucius's historic achievement was his transformation of the shamanistic rituals of the primeval past into the internalized principle of humaneness, a mission that was continued by Mencius. Eventually, the self-disciplining of the individual became more important than external social constraints. This emphasis on inner self-cultivation gave rise to the formation of what Li calls the typical

23 Li Zehou translates the character *li* 禮 with the notion »ritual«. However, we must not forget that "it is at least beyond doubt that the semantic field of *li* cannot be grasped by any single Western notion ... The common English translations of *li* as 'rites' or 'rituals,' while certainly in some cases applicable, can be misleading and are without any doubt far too narrow" (Sigurðsson 2015, 12). Roger Ames, for instance, opts for referring to *li* as "propriety in one's roles and relations," because such an understanding does not reduce the term to generic, formally prescribed 'rites' or 'rituals' performed at stipulated times to announce status and to punctuate the seasons of one's life (Ames 2011, 173).

cultural-psychological formation of Chinese consciousness, which was completed by Han times (Chong 1996, 155).

In the course of such development, rituality is thus of crucial importance. At the beginning, rituals arose from human experiences, customs and natural emotions of desire, fear, love, aversion, delight, sorrow, anger, etc. Through ritualization and rationalization, they formed social, political, and ethical regulations, which in turn educate, refine, transform and nurture natural emotions to fit everyone's social status (Jia Jinhua 2018, 172).

Geir Sigurðsson points out (2015, 12) that while ritual (*li* 禮) is one of Confucius's most discussed notions and an integral component of the entire Confucian tradition, the term itself does not owe its origins to the Confucians:

Initially, it belonged to no particular school of thought and is by convention believed to signify ritual actions enacted by royal families during the first three Chinese dynasties of Xia, Shang, and Zhou in order to please the spirits. During this course of these dynasties, the notion gradually received a much wider reference, and has since then been expanded, deepened, and modified in a multiplicity of ways by Confucius and his followers and commentators up until the present day.

ibid.

Li Zehou also exposes that in China, the Confucian rituals were developed from the Neolithic shamanistic ceremonies. Following the tradition, established by the Duke of Zhou (Zhou Gong 周公 or Zhou Dan 周旦), Confucius was in Li's view a "transformative creator" (*zhuanhuaxinde chuangzaozhe* 轉化性的創造者)²⁴ who has importantly adjusted the long-lasting shamanistic tradition, which dominated in China at the verge of the Zhou dynasty. In this way, shamanistic ceremonies were converted into a system of rites, which formed the crucial basis for Confucian rituality. This rituality is documented in numerous Confucian classics:

The classics of the Songs, the Documents, the Rituals, and the Music are the most important components of the Zhou rituals. They originate from human life and natural emotions, but they are not just a copy of human experience. The raw sources are arranged, ordered, and patterned by the sages and cultural heroes to become social, ethical regulations. These regulations are in turn used to educate people and foster their

²⁴ Li Zehou inverted Lin Yusheng's 林毓生 idea of "creative transformation," in the reversed phrase "transformative creation."

role emotion and moral character to reach consummation. In other words, natural emotions should be refined and regulated by the modes of music and ritual, in order to develop ideal character traits and high moral virtues.

JIA JINHUA 2018, 173

Li emphasizes that according to the *Guodian bamboo slips* (*Guodian Chu mu zhu jian* 郭店楚墓竹簡)²⁵ “rituals were generated from emotionality” (*li sheng yu qing* 禮生於情). He also points out that from the viewpoint of history, shamanistic rituals that were rationalized and later transformed into Confucian rites did not directly ascend from individual emotions (Li Zehou 2015, 11). Shamanistic rituality arose from and was based upon forceful factors of collective emotionality that widely exceeded the individual feelings. In Li’s view, shamanistic ritual practices have involved various elements of powerful communal emotional commitment. These emotions were predominantly rooted in the existential circumstances of social communities and groups to which the individuals who took part in these ceremonies belonged. As we have seen in the previous sections of this book,²⁶ rituals ordered, systematized and categorized these collective situational emotionality, a process that then led to the condensation of reason as a part of the human emotion-rational structure. In this formation, reason guides and influences individual emotions, which arise and are shaped in this process. Although early Confucianism had broken with the magic and mythical form of the Rites of Zhou, it had maintained the ritual focus on the ruler that was characteristic for shamanism, transforming his magical powers into moral ones (Chong 1996, 173).

In this paradigm, “heaven, earth, and the myriad things all reside within specific and concrete circumstances of emotionally interactive relationality” (Li Zehou 2016b, 1099–1100). Such a view contrasts essentially from the accent on logos, reason, and logic that later determined the prevailing streams of Western thought. This kind of “interactive relationality” has been preserved in the predominant Chinese cultural and ideational standards. It is grounded in the human capability of emotional responsiveness (*gan* 感), which empowers people to act not only in resonance with the cosmos, but also in harmony with other members of their own community (Rošker 2019, 107). On such a basis that is founded on the Chinese shamanistic historical tradition (*wushi chuantong* 巫史傳統), Confucius later managed to formulate his teachings as a kind of “emotional cosmology” (*you qing yuzhou guan* 有情宇宙觀).

25 These bamboo slips were excavated in 1993 in the Guodian tombs in the Hunan province and published in a restored form in 1998.

26 See particularly the section entitled “Historical and developmental foundations: from *qing* 情 as collective emotionality to *qing* 情 as individual emotion.”

In the shamanist cultures, sacred ceremonies not only gave symbolic form to such emotionality but also to many other manifestations of human existence, life, and consciousness. They shaped and ordered primeval, muddled experience. Hence, they belong to the earliest forms of human spiritual civilization and symbolic production. Shamanistic ritual activities enabled the sustainable existence of the community, maintaining the rational character of the social collective (Li, Zehou 2010, 4). These kinds of symbolic cultural activities were practical as well as conceptual. On the one hand, they involved the cooperative material (or physical) activity of the collective, but on the other, their main effect was on human thought and consciousness. In this respect, rituals were qualitatively different from all other activities related to material production (such as hunting or agriculture), which directly produced material objects.

Chinese models of ritual were universal and sacred; already in the very beginning, they were conducted by social elites of shamanist cultures. Even the oldest Chinese texts affirm that communal totemic dance and magical ritual have an early origin, a long history, and display a variety of patterns, later even acquiring specialists (shamans or master dancers) to lead or instruct in such matters²⁷ (ibid., 5). As we have seen, they originated from experiences and emotions and also from the customs of early Neolithic societies. In performing rituals, different individual sensuous existences and feelings were consciously woven together and melded into a unity. Early rituals stimulated and fostered the beginnings of a sense of the collective and of order in human action and thought. This led to the standardization of individual emotions and even to the shaping of thought patterns. Such a regularization and social generalization was based in the assumed order of the spiritual world, reestablished and reflected through the magical arts and the religious imaginary (ibid.), which held the sprouts of intellectual activity while simultaneously permitting the expression of human instinctual emotion.²⁸

In this process, the natural senses and the biological emotions were melded with the requirements, principles, and norms of socialization in a

27 According to the *Shuo wen* dictionary (see Xu Shen s.d.), the shamans were “able to communicate with the formless, and bring down the spirits with their dances, as when people assemble for the rain dance” (能事無形，以舞降神者也。象人兩袂舞形。)(See Xu Shen s.d., 3018).

28 In such ritual procedures, dance was an important method of bridging the chasms between this world and the realm of spirits, demons and deities. In this context, Li Zehou often refers to the work of Susanne Langer, who has commented that in early shamanist societies, dance was “the most serious intellectual business” (Langer 1953, 190). It offered the human beings an “envisagement of a world beyond the spot and the moment of one’s animal existence, the first conception of life as a whole—continuous, super-personal life, punctuated by birth and death, surrounded and fed by the rest of nature” (ibid.).

mutually influential interaction in which the disparate elements become indistinguishable.

Here we see the expression and release of the natural and animalistic aspects of the individual person, and at the same time the beginnings of his/her “humanization.” With the infusion of sociocultural elements, the animal psyche is transformed into a human psyche. All kinds of human psychological functions—imagination, cognition, comprehension, and other intellectual activity—sprout and develop, all the while retaining their connection to and intermingling with basic animalistic psychological functions like perception and emotion.

ibid., 6

As we have seen, these ritual procedures led to the creation of psychological formations that were gradually shaped and sedimented in the course of history, and were structured as the fusion of rational and sensitive elements within the human psyche. On the level of external standardization, these processes have led to the rational internalization of regulations that determined human behavior or, in other words, to the rational condensation of collective demands and purposes. In this way, moral dictates were developed from primeval taboos. Hence, rituals have led to the formation of humanness. In this context, the role of cultural forms is of crucial importance, because, in Li’s view, the cultural gives specific form to the psychological (ibid., 7–9).

These cultural forms and the binding nature of ritual prescriptions as such were enhanced in the course of the institutionalization of rituality. In China, the rituals were institutionalized during the transitional period from the Shang to the Zhou dynasty (ca. 11th-century BC). Interesting and valuable descriptions of these processes can be found in several Chinese classics; however, the most important source for the research in these issues is doubtless the *Book of Rites* (*Liji* 禮記), which gives the following historical account of these procedures:

The Duke of Zhou took the seat of the son of Heaven, and governed the state ... He instituted ceremonies and established music; he standardized weights and measures, which led to a great submission throughout the kingdom.

周公踐天子之位以治天下；六年，朝諸侯於明堂，制禮作樂，頒度量，而天下大服。

Liji s.d., Ming Tang Wei: 2

Li Zehou repeatedly emphasizes that these developments were of epoch-making significance in Chinese history. He regrets that this significance has been forgotten due to the widespread neglecting of this fact in the historical analyses carried out by the Chinese academia:

Many studies over the past three decades, however, have focused solely upon general social formation, ignoring the important historical phenomenon of the establishment of ritual institutions. The real reason that Confucius and his followers so extolled the Duke of Zhou, and that later generations would even regard the Duke of Zhou as Confucius's equal, is precisely his systematization of the rites and music that Confucius so staunchly upheld.

LI, ZEHOU 2010, 11

Hence, Li highlights the fact that in the pre-Qin Confucianism, ritual became an important source of establishing moral psychology and spirituality. This fact is clearly reflected in numerous classical works of this dominant stream of thought. Throughout the *Analects*, Confucius stresses the importance of learning and practicing the rituals that contain rationalized social and moral regulations for the purpose of cultivating the gentleman (*junzi* 君子) who symbolizes the ideal character of self-realization (Jia Jinhua 2018, 163). They contain numerous descriptions of the crucial role of such institutionalization of rites in the shaping of moral psychology:

If (people) are led by virtue, and obtain universality through the rites, they will have a sense of shame and establish their moral character.

道之以德，齊之以禮，有恥且格。

Lun yu s.d., Wei zheng: 3

Such a universalization of moral psychology was achieved through the process of internalization of external behavioral regulations expressed and reinforced through rituality.

In essence, rituals were primarily guidelines reflecting and mirroring authoritative sets of requirements, rules and restrictions, which are imposed on the individual's social behavior. The social order and stability of the communities are preserved and protected through these individual constraints. Rituals were respected and followed for they provided an axiological matrix of symbols that helped individuals to fulfill the demands and obligations pertaining to their

particular social positions and functions. Such patterns of social obligations were then extended into human inwardness and mirrored in people's psychology—in their emotions, imaginations, ideas, language, thought and understanding. In this context, Huang Yong points out that ritual here “refers to one's internal wellbeing and not material condition” (Huang 2018, 223). In Huang's view, this is clearly visible from the famous saying by Confucius in which he emphasizes:

Without understanding the ritual, one cannot establish [one's moral character].

不知禮，無以立也。

Lunyu s.d., Yao Yue: 3

Ritual regulations have hence significantly helped individuals to enhance self-restriction and to control of their intentions and inclinations. These processes were also described in the *Book of Rites*:

People have (feelings of) love and hate, likeness and anger, sadness and joy. They are all products of the six vital potentials. Hence, we have to model ourselves carefully according to the suitable category in order to control the six intentions.

民有好惡喜怒哀樂，生于六氣，是故審則宜類，以制六志。

Chunqiu Zuo zhuan s.d., Zhao gong ershi wu nian: 2

Hence, controlling natural instincts and feelings was an important function of traditional Chinese ritual systems. Rituals guided human emotions, and ensured they remain moderate and did not lead to excesses. Li Zehou mentions that these issues had been elaborated in great detail by the early representatives of the Modern Confucianism such as Liang Shuming 梁漱溟 and Feng Youlan. The latter argued that in China, with its emphasis on spiritual transcendence, rituals did not belong to religion but rather to sensual human existence (Feng Youlan 1984, 139). He also repeatedly pointed out that the emphasis on the importance of controlling emotion in order to establish a moral character, which is based upon humaneness, can already be found in the Confucian *Analects*:

I think that regarding the questions about “humaneness,” the most important passage can be found in the chapter entitled “Yan Yuan asks about

humaneness.” It reads: “Yan Yuan asked about the humaneness, and the master replied: ‘Humaneness means to control oneself and to repeatedly perform the rituals. If one can do this at least for a day, the whole world can return to humaneness.’ ‘Is the practice of humaneness grounded in one’s own self, or in other people?’ Yan Yuan asked: ‘Please, tell me your view on this’ and the master answered: ‘Look not at what is contrary to humaneness; listen not to what is contrary to humaneness; speak not what is contrary to humaneness; make no movement which is contrary to propriety.’” Yan Yuan was the disciple with whom Confucius was most satisfied ... Hence, when he asked about humaneness, his reply was naturally different from his reply to other disciples. The answer he gave to Yan Yuan was over twenty five characters long. The first sentence of this reply was “Humaneness means to control oneself and to repeatedly perform the rituals.” This sentence clearly explains the crucial meaning of humaneness.

在這些講“仁”的話中，我認為“顏淵問仁”一章，最為重要。這一章說：“顏淵問仁，子曰：‘克己復禮為仁。一日克己復禮，天下歸仁焉。為仁由己，而由人乎哉？’顏淵曰：‘蕭周其目’。子曰：‘非禮勿視，非禮勿聽，非禮勿言，非禮勿動’”。顏淵是孔子最得意的學生 ... 在他問“仁”的時候，孔子給他的回答，自然要比別的學生的回答不同。孔子果然給他了一個長達二十多個字的回答。其中頭一句就是“克己復禮為仁”。這一句明確地說明了“仁”的主要內容。

FENG YOULAN 1961, 63

Liang Shuming, on the other hand, accentuated:

What makes humans so far superior to animals is not their capacity to rational knowledge and wisdom, but rather the richness of their emotions. They arise from inner feelings and are then formed externally. This is the origin of rites and music, manners and culture, which establishes the essence of their contents. The reason why Confucians so strongly emphasize rites, music, and cultural ceremonies can probably be found in the fact that they are capable to guide and cultivate the emotions from the outside in. The emotions must be deep, truthful, sincere, and prudent. They must be ordered and modest. Joy and anger, sadness and happiness must not depart from a harmonious mean. Only on such grounds human life can achieve continuity and natural stability.

人類遠高於動物者，不徒在其長於理智，更在其富於情感。情感動於衷而形著於外，斯則禮樂儀文之所從出而為其內容本質者。儒家極重禮樂儀文，蓋謂其能從外而外以誘發 涵養乎情感也。必情感敦厚深醇，有發抒，有節蓄，喜怒哀樂不失中和，而後人生意味 綿永乃自然穩定。

LIANG SHUMING 1986, 441

Li highlights that in spite of the importance of such shaping of human psychology, we must not forget that the rites were primarily providing norms that order and regulate people from outside:

Actually, their relationship with the individual's nature as a flesh-and-blood human being is often one of confrontation, since the molding and influence that the rites exert on the human heart are externally imposed. They constitute a sort of compulsory regulation and systematization not necessarily directly linked to people's natural sensuous experience or to the expression of their desires.

LI, ZEHOU 2010, 16

These external regulations are then integrated into human psychological structures. Moral principles are produced and rationalized from the basis of human emotion and experience and in turn standardize and nurture morality. Thus, the rational, ethical principles are founded on a psychological basis, and morality and psychology, reason and emotion, are integrated to shape ideal humanity and moral character (Jia Jinhua 2018, 175).

In the process of extending the norms of conduct into the human inwardness, music has played an important role. It complemented and supplemented the rites by its direct appeal to human heart-mind and people's emotions. In this framework, it coordinated and synchronized collective feelings in order to achieve interpersonal harmony.

Ancient Confucian scholars have often described these processes, in which the ordering of society, as well as the structure of individual human inwardness were accomplished through rituality as a part of the humanization of nature. In numerous other classical works of other early Chinese intellectual traditions, this process was also evidenced in historical documentations, which provided first theoretical reflections of the specifically Chinese humanization of inner nature, but also included first written regularizations, systematizations and categorizations of all objects.²⁹

29 Li states that these theoretical systematizations "included the realms of experience and observation, such as astronomy, geography, the calendar, weather, the body, life and

These groundworks were elaborated upon and developed in a coherent philosophical system by the Neo-Confucian thinkers of the Song and Ming dynasties. In the course of such developments, the teachings derived from rituals have been subsumed under the term “ritual doctrines” (*li jiao* 禮教), which evidences their status as religious morality (Li Zehou 2016b, 35). These doctrines were centered on the aforementioned elementary virtue of traditional Chinese morality, namely the virtue of family reverence (*xiao* 孝). As we have seen, this notion expresses the crucial method for preserving, condensing, and evolving social rules that urge the individuals to follow their moral duties. It enhances the role of the family as a primal unit, which was clearly the product of an agricultural society. Through ritual ceremonies, family reverence was gradually institutionalized and integrated into the psychology of the Chinese people, who regarded it as “the rule of the heaven, and the duty of humans” (*tianzhi jing, dizhi yi* 天之經, 地之義). Gradually, it was understood as a part of transcendental “Cosmic structure or a patterned principle of Heaven” (*tian li* 天理), or of “inner (or inborn) knowledge” (*liangzhi* 良知), i.e., as a manifestation of the categorical imperative, which transcends the limitations of the human world. Hence, people who failed to act in accordance with the values of family reverence not only violated the principles of human relationships, but also those inherent in natural patterns and heavenly ways. Already in the Han dynasty text *Xiao Jing* 孝经 (*Classic of Family Reverence*) this virtue was considered a heavenly rule and earthly duty, and the various stories contained in this text elaborate on the notion of family reverence as a religious morality (ibid.). Such interpretations of moral principles have thus focused upon the relation between human beings and the heavens and in this view, virtues such as family reverence obtained a sacred value as universal standards of human conduct, that were even meant to guide the court politics.

However, family reverence is by no means the only moral imperative in Chinese thought. As already mentioned, Song Neo-Confucianism established the notions of the patterned principle of Heaven and the inborn knowledge as innate natural features of humans that authenticate rules for interpersonal relationships.

All these were instances where the empirical contents of social moralities filled in the transcendental formation of religious morality. These instances were perceived as sacred, universal, and necessary categorical imperatives. When integrated into human psychology and human action, these moral imperatives broadened the individual psychological landscape from the

death, hierarchy, dress, and also encompassed things beyond the reach of observation and experience as well as society, politics, and the ideals and realities of individual existence” (Li, Zehou 2010, 9).

narrow bounds of experience to a type of command that is independent of external constraints. This has simultaneously implied that the individual's considerations could surpass material desires and personal advantages. Because of such a mindset, people could act in accordance with the ethical and moral state of free will.

In this way, the contents of the empirical social morality are, according to Li Zehou, always expressed through the structure of transcendental religious moralities.

However, given that shamanistic (and later Confucian) traditions lack a personal God who could directly disseminate moral orders, Chinese religious morality contained spiritual notions of the "Way of Heaven" (*tian dao* 天道) and the "Heavenly intention or will" (*tian yi* 天意). But these concepts were often tightly connected with the "Way of Humans" (*ren dao* 人道) and the "Human intention or will" (*ren yi* 人意). From this we can see that there is a much higher degree of penetrability between the heavens and humans in Chinese thought than its Western counterpart, especially regarding the premodern and modern Western philosophy (*ibid.*). In the Chinese intellectual history, the "Way of Heaven" is amalgamated with the "Way of Humans."

The foundations of traditional Chinese beliefs and moral norms were thus formed through a tight connection to heaven or nature (*tian* 天). Confucian scholars have been applying this method for thousands of years in order to find the best way to live contently, in harmony with other members of society, and to obtain spiritual peace. Due to this long tradition, it is difficult for Chinese people, particularly intellectuals, to truly believe in religions with transcendent deities. It is difficult for them to explicitly affirm or deny their existence. Confucius has expressed such an attitude with his famous saying,

To give one's self sincerely to the duties of men, and, while respecting spiritual beings, to keep a distance from them, can be called wisdom.

務民之義，敬鬼神而遠之，可謂知矣。

Lunyu s.d., Yong Ye: 22

In this context, Li Zehou comments on Emile Durkheim, who claims that the split between the secular and sacred is the mark of religious thinking (Li Zehou 2016b, 37). Furthermore, he points out that Max Weber and Clifford Geertz also believe that religious states and experiences are very uncommon or even abnormal,³⁰ and entirely different from the more average human condition.

30 Here, Li Zehou uses the term *biantai* 變態, which is usually translated as abnormal, deviant, or even perverse.

From such works, we can conclude that the relation, range, and authority of the two kinds of morality can vary depending on cultural differences. In China anthropomorphic God was never truly established, and so the Chinese culture is determined by a unification and mutual pervasion of the two kinds of morality. The Confucian ritual doctrine emphasizes that the Way of Heaven can be found in daily relationships. In principle, social and religious elements are included in all parts of human life. In Chinese culture, religion, politics and ethics are fused together and form a unity.³¹ In this way, social institutions direct spiritual beliefs, the government and morality. In such a unified ideational system, each individual concentrates on problems and affairs of the concrete, tangible world in which they live, and on their everyday life experiences, feelings and actions.

This kind of religious psychology profoundly differs from the exclusive and monopolistic nature of monotheist religions such as Christianity or Islam. Therefore, it is quite understandable that in China, even followers of religious Daoism and Buddhism also stick to the Confucian values of humaneness, moral duties, loyalty, sincerity, and family reverence, which lie at the center of Confucian religious morality. This morality is grounded upon a transcendental understanding of “valuating one’s own moral uplifting” (*du shan qi shen* 独善其身), which is itself Confucian (*ibid.*). Thus, the institutions, rituals, and doctrines established by religious Daoism and Buddhism are not entirely detached from Confucian moral laws. On the contrary, they are regularly in communication with, and altered by, traditional Confucianism. Throughout history most Chinese people have been followers of Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism, and can pay their respect to symbols of all three religions at the same temple.³² This means that people’s thoughts, language, actions, and feelings cannot leave the space between heaven and earth (*ibid.*, 38). In such a worldview, subjective human needs prescribe that human affairs sometimes become endowed with sacred meaning. Forming ethics and morality in this way implies that the individual cannot resist, argue, or defend against accepting, submitting to, and implementing them. In such a system, ethics and morality become the individual’s own self-conscious understanding of the meaning of life, value and his or her ultimate concerns.

31 宗教, 政治, 倫理三合一 (Li Zehou 2016b, 37).

32 Li points out that this might also be the reason why Chinese intellectuals as well as common people could easily accept Marxism. They invest their belief, emotions, and rationality into the unification of religion, politics, and ethics, as a way of viewing of the cosmos as well as concrete human life.

4 The Capacity of Humanness and the Relation between Right and Good

The formation of transcendental structures in the human mind is closely linked to morality, which in Li's view consist of internal norms. This type of norms differs essentially from the external norms of ethics. In this sense, morality is a mental configuration, which is inherent to the individual mind and which is influencing people's attitude and their actions.

In Li's view, Kant's philosophy is one of *a priori* psychology, because it presupposes that human beings are human due to their psychological structures.³³ In principle, Li agrees with Kant in this respect, but aims to highlight that these structures are by no means entirely *a priori* (in the sense of a fix and unchangeable inborn formation), but are rather defined by dynamic, social and historical factors. Hence, he denotes these structures with a broader, more universal and semantically less determined term "capacity of humanness" (*renxing nengli* 人性能力). In this configuration, morality is a part of the so-called cultural-psychological formation (*wenhua xinli jiegou* 文化心理結構).

Li explains the reason for such a reconceptualization through a contrastive analysis of his theory and Kant's transcendental philosophy. He states that Kant's idea of practical reason is what everyone uses without even realizing it (Li Zehou 2016b, 89). His universal law comes from the self and is tightly linked to our inherent good will. In this view, we only have to intentionally follow the universal law to be anti-utilitarian, look calmly on life and death, surpass the mechanism of cause and effect, and transcend the realm of time and space. It is precisely because of these inner mental facilities that we are human beings. For Li, morality is therefore the substantive root of human existence (*benti cunzai* 本體存在). While Kant sees morality as being rooted in his notion of *a priori* practical reason, in Li's system it is grounded in the above-mentioned capacity of human nature (*ren xing nengli*), which is conditioned by the condensation of reason (*lixing ningju* 理性凝聚). In contrast to Kant's view, Li's notion of reason is not *a priori*, but arises and evolves within the dynamic and changeable course of history.

Hence, in this respect, the difference between Kant and Li is that the former understands this type of capacity as the *a priori* reason, which is by no means connected with any kind of experience. Li, on the other hand, argues—as we have seen in the previous sections—that human reason certainly does

33 Kant actually does not speak of human beings only: he never limits the property of practical reason and good will to human beings, but extends it to "all rational beings" (see Kant 2001, 5).

come from experience; through the long history of humankind, it has slowly accumulated, condensed and sedimented in the formations of human mind. Just like the internal emotions, the psychological structures of thought are also products that come about through culture. Even though they seem to be *a priori* from the viewpoint of the individual, they are being shaped through the sedimentation of experience in terms of humankind as a whole. This process is characterized by the absolute domination and control reason has over emotional actions and desires. Because of these characteristics, Li names this process as “the condensation of reason.” In its early stages, which can be observed in the evolution of primeval humans or small children, it develops through external pressures and learning. In such a model of advancement, certain ethical standards and requests need to be followed, and then gradually there is internal moral consciousness, concepts, and emotions.

In terms of the experience of a particular place and time, this capacity of human nature is transcendental. Because of its objective and universal nature, there is no need to be concerned with any empirical environments, utilitarian desires, or fear about life and death when establishing a sense of spiritual belonging. This kind of development cannot be led astray by any empirical conditions that determine the life of particular individuals. This human capacity, which is reflected in psychological structures, forms an extremely important and unique value for the sustainable existence and continuous development of human beings, who are thus able to exceed time and space as well as cause and effect.

In the Chinese tradition, this process of moral advancement was developed through self-cultivation, a method that in principle could lead individuals to reach high levels of moral accomplishment. This endeavor has been expressed by the principle of “establishing virtue at the highest level” (*tai shang li de* 太上立德) (Li Zehou 2016b, 89). Here, Li sees virtue (*de* 德) as a dynamic human potential that is capable of transcending the limitations of individual life and is higher than any external achievements (*li gong* 立功) or established teachings (*li yan* 立言). In his view, this potential also belongs to the capacity of humanness. It is sublime and extremely important because it forms a moral spirit that continuously establishes the actual substance (or the root) of what makes humans human. In this sense, the capacity of humanness is comparable to Kant’s categorical imperative. In this regard, Li Zehou exposes that it is precisely because Kant reveals this type of substance-characteristic in moral human practice that his moral philosophy is incomparable to any type of consequentialist “greatest happiness for the greatest number” ethics. Its greatness and its sublime nature are instead comparable to the beauty of heaven and earth (Li Zehou 2016b, 89). However, as we have seen above, Li understands

the moral characteristics of Kant's categorical imperative as a kind of human capacity, which represents a part of mental forms. In his view, it should not be confused with external ethical norms and social orders, because such understandings separate the capacity of humanness from reality and leads to a state in which it can be associated with the weaknesses of formal justice:

Precisely because people, including Kant himself, did not see that which he named "categorical imperative" as a kind of capacity of humanness in a sense of a mental formation, but have instead entangled it with external ethical norms, social orders, discussing both aspects together as if they were a unity, this model has led to numerous weaknesses of "formalism," which is separated from concrete reality.

正因為包括康德本人在內，都沒有把康德稱之為“絕對律令”的道德特徵看作人性能力或心理形式，而把它與外在的倫理規範，社會秩序糾纏一起，混為一談，便出現了許多脫離實際的所謂“形式主義”的弱點。

LI ZEHOU 2016b, 89

Li Zehou believes that it is important to see that ethics, as an order of external norms, is a product of history. Because of differences in time, place, and environment, ethics (in this external dimension) is always relative. Cultural anthropology already confirmed that, as a system of external norms, ethics changes according to different times and social orders. This fact has been highlighted by Hegel and Marx as well as various consequentialists and relativist theories. However, Li's theory differs from such approaches: while others focus on a relativist model of history, Li's historicism is absolute: natural human transformation, including both the external environment as well as internal mentality, is the product of the continuous accumulation and sedimentation of such objective "history."

As it is a form of sedimented reason, the capacity of humanness also belongs to such products of history. But even though it seems formal, it is actually a concrete structure of the relationship between emotions and reason in the human mind, which means that it is by no means empty. Although in the process of development it was defined by the continual historical evolution of unceasingly changing relative ethical norms and institutions, this "form" itself transcends their relativity and the kind of historicity that is limited to a discrete time and space. Even though ethical orders and their norms for human conduct change according to different times, environments, societies, culture, and religions, and are thus different and even contradictory or at odds with one another, the constraints of individuals in relation to their social groups form a common

psychological structure. In terms of establishing the trails and formations of the brain that distinguish human beings from animals, the various ethical orders and norms are similar. This dialectical interaction and mutual amalgamation of constancy and dynamics is the main methodological supposition, on the basis of which Li has established his theory of the capacity of humanness.

In this way, such a capacity obtains absolute value and meaning for the entire humankind. It can transcend any concrete individual or community and represent humankind as a whole. Because of this, the capacity of humanness also simultaneously obtains a kind of divine, religious, and absolute nature.

In the light of such actual historical dimensions, Kant's moral philosophy is obviously too formal and lacks operational potentials. While in his epistemology, Kant systematically focuses on experience and operation, the opposite is the case with regards to his moral philosophy, because in its framework Kant mainly elaborates on the existence of the rational substance that makes humans human. However, Li points out (2016b, 90) that those who criticize this formalism in Kant overlook his basic presumption regarding the primary properties of the existence of substance.

Besides, Li highlights the fact that the most prominent part of Kant's moral philosophy, namely the categorical imperative, is a human capacity, which was developed and elaborated upon during the European enlightenment. Although it is a mental formation, and as such, separated from the norms of external ethics, its contents are products of a specific stage in human history. Hence, it is difficult to separate the categorical imperative from the postulates on which it is grounded (such as the principle of human beings as ends) and from the external ethical requirements and demands of the time in which they came in existence. In this regard, Li emphasizes that Kant's philosophy (similar to those of Hobbes and Rousseau) was opening up a new path for modern people and modern society.

In this context, Li exposes that rational ideas such as "all humans are born equal" as well as freedom, human rights, independence, and so forth are all integral parts of modern social morality and its laws. He criticizes the interpretations that aim to completely divorce such products of particular spatial-temporal materialistic environments from actual life practices, and view them as eternal absolute values that determine and define the significance of human life.

On the other hand, he praises the discourses of the European enlightenment because they managed to depart from the traditional, theologically defined Christian moral theory, even though they were simultaneously still grounded on similar understandings of transcending the empirical realm. In such a system, God is an unknowable noumenon, but people can still obtain

universal (scientific) knowledge because they possess *a priori* reason. In this respect, Li admires Kant's philosophy because it proves that human understanding does not need to rely on God. It presents on a high theoretical level an unprecedented praise of humanity, announcing a new freedom and dignity of the human subject: in and by his philosophy, people were liberated from the medieval political and ideological yokes of God's authoritative rule.

In Li's system, the capacity of humanness can be expressed in a way that is comparable to Kant's free will. People are free to choose between good and evil and no person can make an excuse for shouldering the responsibility of their own conduct or attempt to blame for it the external conditions, the ideas of benefit and harm, or cause and effect (Li Zehou 2016b, 90). However, there is an important difference between this capacity and the rationalist conceptualizations of the free will, which is connected to the problem of sensibilities and rationality. In Li's view, different emotions enter into the various capacities of humanness; they influence the process of establishing particular understandings of norms. Feelings of reverence, respect, pride, love as well as hate, shame, and distress are hence associated with moral action. Therefore, humanness is an extremely complex entity, which can by no means be reduced to a simple capacity of reason. For Li, humanness is grounded in the emotion-based substance. It is precisely through such an interrelation of reason and emotion that the free will as a product of the condensation of reason and the humanization of the inner nature can achieve the possibility of transcending natural mechanisms of cause and effect.

In such an outline, the concepts of good and evil are closely connected to the individual's feelings of pleasure and sorrow. As such, they are shaped as part of institutionalized norms, ideological, and conceptual systems in concrete social community during particular periods of history. Since they belong to human psychological structures, they become the concrete content of the capacity of humanness and play an important role in the employment of rational imperatives of the "free will." Simultaneously, such concepts are also infiltrated into human emotions and profoundly influence them.

Although the concepts of good and evil belong to the private religious morality and are hence relative, they have to be in accord with the principles of social morality prevailing at a certain stage of human development. In this respect, Li points to the example of suicide bombers who employ rational imperatives in their religious war. Even though at first glimpse, they seemingly demonstrate a respectable function of the capacity of humanness, their conception of good and evil is utterly wrong. Hence, they violate the elementary principles of modern social morality, and their actions bring about strong universal negative emotions, obscuring thereby the elementary respect-worthy

capacity of humanness. Actual, widespread, and historically influential recognition can only be obtained for those human actions in which the capacity of humanness exhibits itself through the affirmation of such human emotions that are in concord with appropriate conceptions of good and evil. Hence, we can only talk about the connection and relationships of emotions and the conceptions of good and evil in their mutual penetration in the capacity of humanness through the analysis of the concrete relation between religious and social morality in a certain concrete time and space. For Li, this also demonstrates that not all negative emotions are necessarily harmful or wrong and not all affirming emotions are right or beneficial. Their actual worth can only be determined with regard to concrete circumstances in which they arise, for without considering these concrete empirical factors, they remain limited to the level of formal psychological states and cannot become a part of concrete judgments and social values.

This question is also connected to the opposition between the notions of right and good. In Li's view, contemporary Western ethics is bifurcated, as it considers human rights and justice as the key subject of political ethics and goodness as the main topic of religious ethics. In his elaborations on this issue, Li emphasizes that right and wrong are different from good and evil, highlighting that the analysis of their mutual difference should not follow the latter conceptual pair in determining the morality of the former.

Right and wrong is clearly different from good and evil. Irrespective whether in form of the Confucian theory of the goodness of humanness or of the Christian theory of the evil human nature, the latter cannot be used for constituting, constructing or affecting the legal order or moral adjudications of the former.

明確對錯與善惡有別，不應該從後者，不管是儒家的性善論，或基督教的性惡論來建立，構造或干擾前者法律制定和道德裁決。

LI ZEHOU 2016b, 93

On the other hand, social moralities should not interfere with religious problems such as defining the value and meaning of human life or explaining the goodness or evil of human nature. In such a case, social morality would necessarily assume the moral values of certain religious moralities or doctrines as its ideological basis. A vital function of social moralities is to guarantee that no individual violates the fundamental requirements of life, which include the freedom to choose and follow private beliefs in any values or doctrines. In Li's view, this is also the most basic right of individuals in modern societies, which

should be marked by the priority of the right over the good. In concrete societies, however, these two aspects of moral life cannot be entirely separated, because the moral values always influence the prevailing notions of right and wrong. Hence, in spite of the primary and normative position of social morality, private religious moralities should still preserve a regulative and properly constitutive function in moral judgements and conduct.

Religious morality must not constitute social morality. In such a case, they would lead to coercion and the good would rule over the right. But religious morality includes emotions and ideals in which people can satisfy their ultimate concerns. Hence, it should still preserve a guiding and regulative function.

宗教性道德不是去建立社會性道德，如果是建立，那就是強制了，那就變成善優先於權利了。而宗教性道德有情感、理想的寄託，牽涉終極關懷，所以可以是范導。

LI ZEHOU AND YANG GUORONG 2014, 124

The relationship between right and wrong on the one hand and good and evil on the other is based upon the priority of the former conceptual pair but is at the same time regulated and properly guided by the concepts belonging to the latter. Since Li Zehou strongly supports the division of church and state, it is even more important that this regulation is carried out in an “appropriate” (*shidang* 適當) way. This appropriateness can be achieved through the “art of politics” by grasping in each situation the fitting criterion provided by the dynamic proper measure (*du* 度).

Since in the present era, modern social morality is determined by the conditions of the contemporary stage of technological development, the dominant conceptualizations of right and wrong still have to follow the fundamental values of enlightenment, which manifest themselves in the protection of human rights and the postulate of human beings as ends. For Li, this is another reason for the absolute necessity of establishing the priority of right over good; in the opposite case, human beings could namely never obtain the position of being the ultimate value. If the good would prevail over the right, such value could necessarily only be ascribed to transcendent entities such as the immortal soul, God, collective or revolution (Li Zehou 2016b, 96).