SELF-CULTIVATION, MORAL MOTIVATION, AND MORAL IMAGINATION: A STUDY OF ZHU XI'S VIRTUE ETHICS

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

IN

PHILOSOPHY

MAY 2008

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Dedicated to my mother,
PYO, Hyon-Joo (1932 – 2007)
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It takes a village to raise a child. – African Proverb

I would like to express my deep appreciations to all those who have made this dissertation possible. First of all, I cannot help but thank my committee members. I truly appreciate Dr. Chung-ying Cheng, my advisor for this dissertation, whose intellectual guidance and insightful comments have been most valuable throughout writing my draft writing in Hawai’i. He has taught me how to develop a thesis and express myself through philosophical eyes. I owe a special debt to Dr. Roger T. Ames who had taught me how to challenge established perspectives by showing new hermeneutic horizons on the Chinese intellectual tradition. If readers can find creative interpretations of Zhu Xi in my work, it only proves how deeply he has influenced me. My heartfelt thanks must go also to Dr. Jim Tiles who has led me not only to realize the refined ways of Western philosophical thinking, but also to write this dissertation with critical mind. He spent many of his precious hours reading and commenting on my work, and responding constructively to my questions both in e-mail and in person. I am especially grateful to Dr. Thomas Jackson, whom I always called “Dr. J.” I have benefited emotionally and academically from conversations with him in the intellectual safety of the student lounge. Finally, I appreciate Dr. Ned Shultz for always encouraging me to keep working on my dissertation when things got tough. As a historian of Korea, he inspired me to place my philosophical thinking within its cultural and historical contexts.

I have been fortunate to meet many scholars who have leant me advice and comments in various conferences and academic milieus. I want to thank especially P.J. Ivanhoe, who offered me his sincere comments on my draft via e-mail. His unique and perceptive ideas on self-cultivation helped to inspire my own

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philosophical themes. I always stand grateful as well to the inspiration gotten through conversations with Kwong-loi Shun, Xiao Yang, Manyul Im and Steve Angle.

How can I forget to mention the help and friendships of my many buddies in the philosophy department at the University of Hawai‘i? Without them, this philosophical journey would have been much less enjoyable. They also made my stay in Hawai‘i joyful and convivial. Over the years, Jungyeup Kim, Amjol Shrestha and Kyle Takaki became the most intimate of pals. I take lasting memories of times shared together wagging our philosophical tongues. In addition to these friends, I must also thank Renee who has lavished upon me her warm care throughout my years in the philosophy department. I also truly appreciate Dan Kane, a Korean Specialist librarian at Hamilton Library. Thanks to him, my draft became more refined as well as more readable. Thank you, Dan.

I would also like to extend my many thanks to as many friends - fellow alumni of KU, teachers, and colleagues who have provided me their tremendous support and confidence during my years of study at the University of Hawai‘i. There are many others who merit my equal gratitude in Los Angeles, namely at the Buddhist Society, JTS, as well as the University of Southern California. Before ever coming to Hawai‘i, moreover, I had the good fortune to meet my teachers, friends and colleagues who not only helped chart my intellectual map but also helped form my character during the eight years I spent at Korea University. My appreciation of them all is deep and heartfelt. After careful deliberation, however, I decided not to enumerate their individual names here for fear of missing anyone. I can only say, “thank you with from the bottom of my heart!”

I despair of adequately acknowledging the devotion of my family. First of all, I appreciate my mother-in-law for always praying for me. I would like to thank my sister-in-law Jisook, her husband Hakjoon and niece Soyoung, for their encouragement and continuing support in my work. Despite the fact that I study
Confucian ethics, I regret that I have not always been fully available to my family. I cannot help but deeply thank my brother, sisters and their families for constantly encouraging me throughout my years of graduate school.

I cannot find the words to express my heartfelt gratitude for my parents, who have shaped and made me who I am, encouraged me to complete my studies, and always instilled me with invaluable confidence. Most especially, I regret that my mom’s passing in the spring of 2007, still wishing to see me complete my Ph.D. Throughout her life she was the very representation of motherly virtue and devotion. Even though she had never received a higher education, she was the exemplar of the wisest mother and she taught me how to live with others in harmony. I have not always been a reliable son, for I will receive my degree too late to grant her wish. And so, in order to return in some small portion her endless love, I dedicate this dissertation to my late mom, Hyonjoo Pyo.

Last but not least, this acknowledgement would not be complete unless I express my deepest gratitude to my one year old baby daughter, Yeonwoo and my wife, Jihye. My daughter, Yeonwoo, literally means lotus in the rain, and she is the joyful source of my inspiration as well as the crucial motivation of my studying. As a sociologist and gerontologist, Jihye is my intellectual comrade with whom I have pondered many philosophical questions. From our daily life together, I have learned many things that cannot be learned in a philosophy class. I will dedicate my next project to my beloved wife, Jihye. I love you my sweetheart!
ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to show that Zhu Xi's moral philosophy can best be reconstructed by exploring his views of self-cultivation in accord with moral motivation, moral imagination and virtue ethics. I define the nature of self-cultivation not as an instrumental tool for attaining virtue, but as a continuous process of a way of living. Accordingly, I argue that the distinctive feature of Zhu Xi's self-cultivation has a role to play in unifying all dyadic factors in ethical discourse: the external/internal, the rational/emotional, and the intellectual/virtuous.

Zhu's ethical insights into an organic unification between binary frameworks has clearly been substantiated within his way of thinking on human nature and the mind, which imply an axiological disposition and emotive/cognitive faculty, respectively. Establishing his view of the "New Discourse of Equilibrium and Harmony", Zhu Xi harmoniously unified human nature with the mind by assigning the two states of weifa and yifa into the same entity, the mind, which is conceived as a creative vitality of the cosmic order. The total unity of all dyadic frameworks makes us interpret his ideas of moral motivation from a different angle: the unity between the inside and the outside. Rather than a kind of internalist, therefore, Zhu Xi should be read as one claiming proper resonance between axiological disposition and specific situations that are independent of desire. Hence, in the ethical dimension the matter of moral motivation as the proper way of resonance is tightly bound up with the development of the human capacity of sympathetic deliberation that resonates with the heart of another. This is termed moral imagination, and it is a breakthrough in delineating the human capacity of moral judgment in light of a unified perspective, combining rationality with sentiment.

My thesis demonstrates that Zhu Xi is a kind of ethical naturalist in the sense that he never imagined moral values or properties as independent of the natural order of the Heaven-Earth. Finally, Zhu Xi's ethical thought eventually comes down to the matter of how to carry on in daily life, viz. the ethics of ordinariness in the sense that all efforts to become an ethical being are inseparable from how one should live in this world.
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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1. THE ISSUES

The goal of this dissertation is to explore the moral psychological aspects of self-cultivation in the philosophy of Zhu Xi (朱熹, 1130-1200). My philosophical interest in self-cultivation began with questioning one of the oldest ethical problems: why people do not always do the right thing even when they know they ought to. Is it possible to warrant morally right actions through self-cultivation? If self-cultivation can make my actions or judgments morally right, then how does it accomplish this? In other words, how can one be morally motivated to do right?

In order to answer these questions, it is first very important to examine Zhu Xi's ethical theory of self-cultivation. Since the Northern Song period, neo-Confucian philosophers have articulated ideas of self-cultivation in order to become aware of the dispositions of one's own mind (xin 心). Needless to say, their persistent inquiries into

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1 Neo-Confucianism was an intellectual movement founded by Confucian literati (shidafu士大夫) in the transition from the late Tang to the Song periods. For this, see Peter Bol (1992). The intellectual movement continued to exert great influence in the countries of East Asia, including Japan, Korea, and Vietnam. For this, see Rethinking Confucianism: past and present in China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam, edited by Benjamin A. Elman, John B. Duncan and Herman Ooms, Los Angeles: UCLA (2002). On the issue of the nomenclature of neo-Confucianism, see Tillman, Hoyt C. “A New Direction in Confucian Scholarship: Approaches to Examining the Differences between Neo-Confucianism and Tao-hsiieh” in Philosophy East and West 42, no.3 (1992): 455-474.

2 It is well known that the Chinese conception of the mind (xin 心) has a totally different philosophical context from that of the Western. Though the Chinese character, xin, includes the capacities to think, perceive, and reflect, it has nothing to do with the dualistic framework of the Cartesian mental standing in contrast to the physical. Hence, sinologists have adopted the term heart-mind as its English translation in order to clarify the different implications between them. For instance, the English translation of xin, heart-mind, explicitly exhibits the comprehensiveness of the Chinese term, indicating the élan vital present in all living things, the heart as a biological organ, a cognitive capacity, and even a presidential ability toward the body. For this, see Ames, The Analects of Confucius: A Philosophical Translation (1998): 56.

Hence, in the Chinese philosophical context there are no issues related to the “mind-body problem”, one of main issues in contemporary philosophy of the mind, because the translated term, “heart-mind,” already involves an organic identification of the physical with the mental. So, many key questions in current analytic philosophy of the mind would be meaningless or have completely different implications in the Chinese philosophy of the mind. For example, in order to highlight the different aspects of mind, George Lakoff coined “the embodied Mind”, which is based on recent achievements of contemporary
self-cultivation are bound up with the idea of improving virtue, or moral character, which constitutes one of the main themes in the contemporary Western philosophical movement known as “virtue ethics.” That is to say, the topic of self-cultivation aims precisely at one of the most crucial questions in virtue ethics as follows: how does one become virtuous? Does self-cultivation motivate us to do virtuous action? Self-cultivation is concerned with many other actions, i.e., emotional reactions, choices, attitudes, desires, and sensibilities. So, to undertake self-cultivation is to become a certain kind of person aiming to live well, that is, in a virtuous way.

In order to understand self-cultivation, I need first to explicate how Zhu Xi, the well-known synthesizer of neo-Confucianism, understood and defined self-cultivation in his own ethical context. The reason self-cultivation has not become a primary ethical topic is, I think, due to the fact that it has been seen as an instrumental tool for developing moral virtues. But is it really considered as an instrumental method in Zhu Xi’s ethics? Despite the view that it plays a crucial role in attaining moral virtues, I believe that self-cultivation should be interpreted as an ongoing process of everyday life. When neo-Confucian thinkers attempt to understand how to act morally through

cognitive science. Unlike the mainstream traditional understanding of the concept of the mind, “the embodied Mind” means to capture human cognition, up through the most abstract reasoning, in terms of very concrete and a low-level neuro scientific sensorimotor system and emotions. For this, see Lakoff, Philosophy in the Flesh (1999): 16-44.

Nevertheless, I want to translate xin simply as “mind”, rather than “heart-mind” or the addition of another adjective like “embodied”. No matter how the Chinese term, xin, ontologically involves different connotations from the Cartesian concept of mind, it has basically been understood as an organ of thinking, as Mencius declared. In neo-Confucian literature, the mind (xin) vis-à-vis human body (shen) mostly implies a capacity of thinking, including the sensible as well as the intellectual, although it can also indicate the physical organ of the heart. In short, the notion of the mind is in charge of human cognition, perception, sentiment, and emotions etc. Therefore, the Chinese word xin is pragmatically akin to “mind” even though it semantically covers the two notions of heart and mind. Moreover, just as many philosophical terms, e.g., substance, have different implications in accordance with different philosophers or philosophical contexts, so the mind also can have its different meanings in light of different philosophical contexts without the addition of other adjectives or expressions. In choosing this translation, I think that we can enrich the meaning of mind in terms of comparative perspectives between East and West.
observing the human mind, for example, rather than engaging in armchair speculation on virtue, their persistent concerns are how to live uprightly within the context of daily life. So, most discussions about self-cultivation in Zhu Xi’s moral philosophy converge on how to conduct oneself uprightly. What then does Zhu Xi mean by self-cultivation? Can it be defined as a series of efforts directed towards acting in a morally upright manner by transforming the dispositions of the human mind? If so, how can the transformation of such dispositions develop moral judgments? Do intellectual achievements help to develop moral judgment? To neo-Confucians, in self-cultivation reading books – studying the classical texts – is as important as being aware of the dispositions of one’s mind.

If we can acknowledge that one of the main goals of self-cultivation is to motivate us to moral action in a specific situation, then we need to inquire into the moral motivational source in Zhu Xi’s ethics. Categorizing three kinds of virtue-internality, for example, Kwong-loi Shun considers Zhu Xi as a kind of act-internalist in understanding moral motivation. That is, we need to examine if dualistic approaches to moral motivation such as the internal/the external and reason /desire are adequate to delineating Zhu Xi’s view of moral motivation.

The understanding of moral motivation can give rise to a question of motivational source, i.e. what motivates us to moral conduct. In western ethical tradition, Kantian and Humean accounts of moral reason have been the most dominant approaches to spelling out a moral motivational source. Recently, however, there has been a remarkable renaissance of Aristotelian virtue ethics for providing more reliable

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3 Chapters 4, 5, and 6 of Zhuzi yuki, a topically arranged anthology of conversations between Master Zhu (Zhu Xi) with his students, are replete with discussions on temperamental nature, original nature, mind, emotions, human, moral virtues, etc. (Hereafter referred to as ZZYL).
and attractive alternative than the aforementioned two theories. Yet it would seem that Aristotelian accounts of virtue fail in part to tackle the established theories of moral reason: the Kantian and the Humean theories. If we concede that the Confucian ethical tradition has continuously paid attention to the deep understanding of moral character traits, then I think Zhu Xi's view of virtue can at least have a role to play in understanding the nature of virtue in relation to the contemporary debate around it.

Basically, it seems obvious that all possible answers to the problems outlined above are tightly bound up with Zhu Xi's interpretations of human nature and the mind, which are based on the ontological worldview of his li-qi framework. However, I will leave it aside in my argument because it may take me far from my goal to highlighting Zhu Xi's ethical enterprise of self-cultivation. Of course, I will briefly sketch the gist of human nature and the mind Zhu Xi emphasized in light of the "New Discourse of Equilibrium and Harmony (zhonghe xin shuo 中和新說)." The "New Discourse" was the outcome of his painstaking reflection on the mind and human nature. After the

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4 The transition toward the li-qi framework is tremendously important to defining the identity of neo-Confucianism. Roughly speaking, neo-Confucian thinkers of the Northern Song attempted to explain all discourse on philosophical anthropology, ethics, and politics within the framework of an elaborate metaphysical scheme linking humans to the Heavens-Earth. Such cosmological ideas provided a new ground for Confucian ethical theories and fortified a tendency towards the identification of the self with the universe. According to Philip Ivanhoe, "these changes also helped to transform the earlier Confucian concern with self-cultivation and steady moral improvement to a more dramatic quest for spiritual enlightenment, replete with a distinctly Confucian style of meditation." For an outline of neo-Confucianism, see Philip J. Ivanhoe (1998), "Neo-Confucian Philosophy," In E. Craig (Ed.), Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy. London: Routledge, from http://www.rep.routledge.com/article/C004, 1998.

Whether he consciously tried to establish a "new" Confucian paradigm is different story. At least it is quite obvious that Zhu Xi developed an understanding of the human mind and things in accordance with the li-qi paradigm as a theoretical response to Buddhism.

The translation of these terms is philosophically controversial. Wing-tei Chan itemized translated terms of both li and qi in his Reflections on Things at Hand. Even though li (理) has usually been rendered into English as principle, order, and reason etc. [Chan (1967): 367], these English terms do not grasp the exact and perfect meaning of the term. This is also true of qi, which has been translated in turns as material force, ether, and vital force etc. [Chan (1967): 360]. These days, however, most sinologists and Chinese philosophers often leave such Chinese terminologies untranslated as doing so would render them into different English meanings according to their context within a single text. Willard Peterson has proposed an interesting translation of li, "coherence," by examining statements of Cheng Yi (1033-1107) and Zhu Xi. Willard Peterson, "Another Look at Li" in The Bulletin of Sung-Yuan Studies (1986): 13-31.
philosophical encounter with Buddhism, on the one hand, Zhu Xi elaborated theories of self-cultivation, along with deepening their understanding of human nature. On the other hand, his theory of self-cultivation underwent revision through exchanges with other Confucian scholars. Briefly, Zhu Xi seamlessly unified the mind with human nature in the “New Discourse.” His new interpretation of the mind can be paraphrased as an unceasing process of unity between the internal and the external (he wainei zhi dao 合外內之道). In relation to self-cultivation, Zhu Xi’s account of the mind is bound up with the question of how to unify human nature with such emotional dispositions as desire, intention, and will, etc. (xin tong xingqing 心統性情). Thus, I will inquire into how the unity between the two can provide adequate alternatives to the dualistic problems of contemporary virtue ethics: reason and desire. In other words, I should first examine what constitutes the subject as well as the object of self-cultivation, namely, the nature of human beings in Zhu Xi’s moral philosophy.

All ethical issues related to self-cultivation boil down not only to the matter of moral actions, viz. how truly to realize what one knows to be morally right, but also to the matter of how to become the sages, namely, moral person. Such an issue of moral practice allows me return to the philosophical question that launched my thesis: why people do not always do the right thing even when they know they ought to. It can be typically read as a moral weakness of will. Through the voice of Zhu Xi, I will mull

5 In addition to such rivalries within Confucian circles, the most formidable adversaries were Buddhists. Just as Mencius severely criticizes Mohists and Yangists by regarding them as heretical adversaries that threaten the Confucian tradition, so Zhu Xi regards Buddhist and Daoist teachings as bringing disorder to Confucian society. Ironically, it seems that this hostile relationship led them to resemble each other. For a succinct summary of the relationship between Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism in the Southern Song, see Theodore de Bary, Confucian Spirituality (2004): 73-77. Not only does Zhu Xi become a champion for neo-Confucianism, he also established his own philosophical stance by holding many debates on various issues with other Confucians. For the detailed contents of this intellectual history, see Hoyt Tillman (1992). Sometimes, Zhu Xi harshly criticized Buddhist-Confucians or Daoist-Confucians like Su Shi, rather than Buddhist monks because he believed that they constituted more of a threat to the socio-political order by straddling both ideologies.
over how to solve the problem of moral weakness in light of self-cultivation. In the final part of this thesis, furthermore, I shall explicate how Zhu Xi's idea of moral imagination is understood in light of self-cultivation. To do this I will first investigate the sage as the paragon of the moral person, in order to capture the nature of moral imagination in his moral philosophy. Neo-Confucians, who enthusiastically devoted themselves to recapturing the original Confucian vision, pursued the Confucian way, Dao.  
Furthermore, neo-Confucians attempted eagerly to emulate the ideal moral person, as personified by the legendary sage-kings Yao and Shun. Hence, one of the most significant ethical ideas of neo-Confucianism is their emphasis upon cultivating an ideal moral person, a sage. What sort of people are sages to neo-Confucians? The answer is that the sage is considered to possess moral sensibilities in the sense of having some immediate concern for the interests of others. Self-cultivation, then, is a process of practice, or a way of learning, the development of moral sensibilities, like sympathy and impartiality. Therefore, I shall inquire into what role the Confucian understanding of the sage plays in moral judgments. For instance, whether it helps to determine with regularity and reliability what actions are appropriate in dilemmatic situations.

1.2. OVERVIEW

In chapter two, I shall briefly describe the human self as the object of cultivation in order to examine features of the self in terms of cultivation. In other words, I will provide reasons why self-cultivation is philosophically problematic in an ethical context. I will begin by examining Philip Ivanhoe's models of self-cultivation. Ivanhoe clearly

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6 Tillman, Ibid. (1992): 456. "Cheng Yi insisted that only those scholars who knew the Tao... deserved to be called 'ju' (Confucians)." For the Southern Song 'learning of the Way' movement, see Peter Bol This Culture of Ours (1992): chapters 7, 8, & 9. Zhu Xi especially was explicitly aware of the orthodoxy of Dao. See Zhu Xi's introduction to the Commentary of Zhongyong.

7 It means the degree to which one responds well to moral situations.
formularized four models of self-cultivation by Confucian thinkers, namely, the development model of Mencius, the reformation model of Xunzi, the recovery model of Zhu Xi, and the discovery model of Wang Yangming. These models are good starting points for an attempt to capture the relationship between self-cultivation and human nature.

Rather than criticizing Ivanhoe's models per se, my analysis aims to examine the meaning of self-cultivation from a variant perspective. Despite the fact that Ivanhoe's taxonomy of self-cultivation seems relevant, his reading of self-cultivation is simply derived from each Confucian thinker's respective idea of human nature. It misses an important factor of self-cultivation: the self and its relation to others. Hence, I shall argue that it was understood by neo-Confucians as "a mode of life" or a part of daily life by highlighting the philosophical characteristics of the self: reflexivity, inwardness, and correlative experience. These features of the self are closely tied to the idea of the relational self in a common field. Further, in order to establish the philosophical context of self-cultivation, I shall provide two angles: the Whiteheadian idea of reason as an urge to live better; and Socrates' question of how one should live.

In order to prove my conclusions, I must examine the idea of self-cultivation mainly through the Commentary on the Great Learning (Daxue zhangju 大學章句) by Zhu Xi. In short, I will bring forth the philosophical meanings of self-cultivation by examining how Zhu Xi reinterprets the Great Learning. In addition, I will examine the interpretation of "the investigation of things" (gewu 格物) in accordance with Confucian ethical cultivation. Moreover, I draw attention to issues pertaining to how we should cultivate ourselves, i.e., the dispositions of mind by analyzing the notion of attentiveness
(jing 敬) as the way of self-cultivation. That is to say, I will argue that the investigation of things with attentiveness provides an understanding of the strive towards the Confucian ethical maxim: “doing one’s best on their behalf (zhong 忠)” and “putting oneself in the place of others (shu 視)”.

In Zhu Xi’s philosophy, the focus on self-cultivation of the moral agent necessarily requires an ontological consideration of the human mind because Zhu Xi explains all activities of the human mind in light of the li-qi framework. Such an understanding will provide us with approaches to some issues of moral psychology and virtue ethics, which are related to human nature. Therefore, the question of whether or not persons can be morally motivated through self-cultivation is deeply bound up with the philosophical perspective of human nature and mind. So, in chapter three I will examine Zhu Xi’s main theme of human nature; “xing ji li (性即理)”, which may be rendered into “(human) nature is the cosmic order.” In order to examine this theme, I will first inquire into the Mencian idea of human nature because most neo-Confucian thinkers ardently advocated the Mencian theme that human nature is naturally good. Then, I will compare Roger Ames’ and Irene Bloom’s interpretations of xing to demonstrate how Ames and Bloom emphasize only their respective aspects of the term.

Following this I will inquire into Zhu Xi’s ontological understanding of xing by analyzing the notion of li (which we might term the cosmic order or pattern) in accordance with neo-Confucian ethical discourse. Furthermore, I highlight Zhu Xi’s main concerns with human nature (xing) and mind by expounding on his idea of the

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8 Cheng Yi glosses jing, attentiveness, as paying thorough attention to oneness. In addition to this, he thinks of oneness as sincerity (cheng). For this, see Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 103. So, it may be simply understood as a firm concentration upon sincerity. I will expound in detail upon this notion in the first part of chapter three.
state of the mind yet to rise (weifa 未發) in accordance with his “New Discourse of Equilibrium and Harmony”. According to Zhu Xi, what connects the way of self-cultivation with moral motivation is the resolute effort to keep the balance between “yet to rise (weifa)” and “rising (yifa 已發)”. To him, self-cultivation by “the New Discourse of Equilibrium and Harmony” neither means Li Tong’s way of only embodiment of the weifa-disposition nor simply Zhang Shi’s way of cautious observation of the yifa-disposition alone. In his ethical context, Zhu Xi chose an ordinary phrase, weifa, to have philosophical significance because he realized its potential to precisely capture a subtle momentum of emotions that could be developed into moral virtues. His new understanding of human nature and mind is an attempt to establish the authority of all human actions, which include even the subtle movements of mental states, in the integrative coherence between the Heavens-Earth and human experience. In fact, this new interpretation of them stems from a breakthrough in understanding the mind, namely, the will of life as vivid vitality of the cosmic order.

Chapter four is concerned with Zhu Xi’s understanding of moral motivation. First, I shall investigate xing by elucidating Zhu Xi’s interpretation of the debate between Mencius and Gaozi in the Mencius 6A:4-5. This is important because the debate in the Mencius considers whether or not yi (意) is internal or external. First, I shall examine Kwong-loi Shun’s analysis of Meng Zi 6A:4-5 in his book, Mencius and Early Chinese Thought. Analyzing the aforementioned passage, Shun provides us with three different interpretations of the internality of yi (意). These are based upon many neo-Confucian commentaries on Mencius (such as those of Zhu Xi, Zhang Shi, and Tai Zhen), which interpreted the internality of yi as “[1] a claim about the agent’s motivation for yi
behavior, [2] shared human dispositions to yi behavior, and [3] the source of one's knowledge of yi." Kwong-loi Shun holds that the first interpretation was proposed by Zhu Xi, and "takes the internality of yi to be the claim that an act is yi only if it is performed not just because it is proper, but because the agent is fully inclined to so act." By identifying Zhu Xi's interpretation of yi with David Nivison's understanding of Mencius as an act-internalist, it seems that Shun leaves room for misunderstanding Zhu Xi's idea of xing as confined to human action. So, I argue that Zhu Xi's interpretation of yi as xing differs from Nivison's idea of Mencius as a kind of act-internalist by examining the Chinese character, duan (端), a watershed of different interpretations of the internality of yi. In short, by examining Shun's sources\textsuperscript{10} for Zhu Xi I first question whether Zhu Xi's position can be defined as in the first interpretation. In relation to the matter of moral motivation, I will question whether Zhu Xi can be fit into a dualistic framework, viz. either the internalist or the externalist. In spite of the view that Zhu Xi tried to internalize moral virtues as a natural disposition, I will show you that Shun's categorization has no relevance for Zhu Xi due to of Zhu Xi's worldview of qi-cosmology. Following this I will elucidate how Zhu Xi's position of moral motivation cannot be trapped within the internalistic interpretation of moral virtue. To Zhu Xi, the process of motivation involves a constant consolidation of unity between human experience and the world. The reason being that motivation naturally leads us to manifest the normative virtues of the Heavens-Earth (tian-dì). Furthermore, I will briefly spell out Zhu's idea of moral motivation in terms of two ways of interacting with the world: the receptive and responsive resonance (ganying 感應) and the fitting into the proper way

\textsuperscript{9} Shun, Mencius and Early Chinese Thought (1997): 98.
\textsuperscript{10} Shun quotes a simple dialogue for the source of his argument in Zhu Xi's ZhuziYulei. For this see, ZZYL, 1378.
In Zhu Xi's ethics, a moral agent can be motivated not by certain causal relations, but by receptive and responsive resonance. In addition, the way of fitting in proper way is fully to manifest human nature as moral virtues via resonance. Through these two methodological processes, I will argue that the human mind attempts to attain dynamic entirety actualizing axiological dispositions.

In the context of moral motivation, it is important to understand the relationship between knowledge and action. In fact, knowledge of ethical issues is not so much a theoretical approach as it is the pursuit of behaving in a certain way. I argue that self-cultivation actually aims to unify knowledge with action by clarifying Zhu Xi's view of the relationship between them. To many neo-Confucians, the issue of the relationship between knowledge and action is a delicate problem concerned with defining the relationship between knowledge of moral matters and doing what knowledge calls for. This is a particularly important problem because it is bound up with the issue of how to understand those who know the good but do not always achieve it in action. Furthermore, this gives rise to the oldest question in the moral philosophy of mind: does learning to do what is right differ from learning what is right? In terms of the relationship between knowledge and action, I will briefly inquire into the matter of moral weakness of will by examining the case of a petty man's self-deception.

The aim of chapter five is to examine Zhu Xi's account of moral imagination and moral person in light of his self-cultivation. Through my arguments in the earlier chapters, we can see at least that one should inherently have a certain capacity to judge a specific situation in its relation to moral affairs. How, then, can we define it in Zhu Xi's ethics? It depends on how to interpret the Chinese terms, "lei er tui zhi (顔而推之)",
which are literally translated into “by classifying the same kind one inferentially extends”. Such an analogical extension can entail sympathetic deliberation in ethical dimension. So, the capacity can be simply defined neither as rationality nor as sentiment because moral affairs per se often represent a totally perplexed aspect of human life. Based on recent achievements of cognitive science for ethics, Mark Johnson defines human capacity for moral judgments as moral imagination. In short, Johnson explains moral imagination in the sense that moral judgment or deliberation is imaginatively constructed by cognitively framing the metaphorical elements of a specific situation.

Such a definition of human capacity for moral deliberation can in a sense equate with John McDowell’s claim that the conception of how to live cannot be codifiable because both of them are reluctant to take the principle-dependent accounts of moral reason. Hence, after briefly sketching contemporary debates Jay R. Wallace introduced in his paper “Virtue, Reason and Principle,” 11 I will finally argue that such a discourse on moral virtue as rational capacity can also be trapped within the dualistic pendulum of reason and desire. Then, can Zhu Xi’s view of virtue provide us with a reliable and adequate alternative to the contemporary understanding of virtue? In order to answer this question, I should be able to reexamine two premises of McDowell: [1] the conception of how to live cannot be codifiable. [2] The principle-dependent accounts of moral reason are incompatible with uncodifiability. By examining these two premises, I will inquire into how Zhu Xi’s ideas of virtue can play an alternative role in understanding contemporary debates on virtue. I will posit that the ti-yong framework

and the unity between the internal and the external are still effective ways of
approaching some issues McDowell and Wallace raised.

With explanation of the distinctive characteristics of the Confucian sages,\textsuperscript{12} in fact, Zhu Xi's view of the moral person will be addressed in advance of the contemporary
debates on the nature of virtue. Through the ideal model of the moral person, i.e. the
sages, moral sensibility is seen as a decisive factor constituting knowledge of virtuous
nature. Of course, this exploration of the morally good person should be understood in
light of self-cultivation, namely, the development of knowledge of virtuous nature. In
relation to the change of the temperamental disposition, I will show that self-cultivation
aims at developing intellectual understanding. In addition to this, I will show that the
notion of impartiality (\textit{gang 公}) can be established in the understanding of how to
remove selfish desires. That is, the sage as the ideal moral person can help us to
approach an understanding of the role of virtuous nature in virtue ethics. In addition, I
will dwell on the paradox of virtue. In fact, the consideration of virtue as paradoxical is
to acknowledge a gap between an agent and the dispositions of the agent. I believe that
this problem can be solved through the neo-Confucian idea of \textit{ti-yong (體用)} framework.

Self-cultivation is the moral effort towards acquiring the neo-Confucian idea of
the knowledge of virtuous nature through a change in temperament. Their ardent
efforts to realize the ideal moral person emulating the sages are a significant hallmark in
recognizing Zhu Xi's ethics as a good example of virtue ethics.\textsuperscript{13} Needless to say, this

\textsuperscript{12} To neo-Confucians, anecdotes concerning the sages in the classics were excellent citations of the moral life. As seen by Mencius' detailed description of different types of sages, the character and behavior of the sage was one of the most significant authorities in the attempt by neo-Confucian thinkers to argue their own premises on moral issues.

\textsuperscript{13} Self-cultivation is also one of the most important issues in the intellectual history of Song China. Peter Bol emphasizes that "the core of the movement by most serious neo-Confucians was the cultivation of self-reflection and self-consciousness as the foundation of personal morality." Therefore, for neo-Confucians, to understand the values of the sages through textual studies of the Classics and early Confucian texts is key to finding "principles to follow and purposes to accomplish that had the highest order of cultural
has little to do with an engrossment in an inner self that is independent of the world. Rather, self-cultivation is an active mode of life, constructing a relation-network with everything else in the world. In conclusion, in relation to self-cultivation, the robust belief of neo-Confucians to reform the world for the better begins here and now with changing oneself in the process of daily life.
CHAPTER II: ZHU XI ON SELF-CULTIVATION

In this chapter I will discuss self-cultivation in more fundamental terms, beyond its role in ethical discourse. In order to explore Zhu Xi's idea of self-cultivation, I will show that the self is not only the subject of reflection but also the object of cultivation. First, I will discuss ideas of self-cultivation in ontological terms by elucidating the nature of self via notions of reflexivity, inwardness, and correlative experience. Second, I will examine the underlying implications of self-cultivation from two angles: the Whiteheadian idea of reason as an urge to live better; and Socrates' question of how one ought to live. Finally, I will reconstruct Ivanhoe's model of self-cultivation in light of the broader implications of a whole life. In this vein, I will introduce the idea that Zhu Xi's understanding of the Great Learning aims not only at the ethical achievement of completing virtue, but also at contextual considerations of experiences in the world. In addition, I will explain that the investigation of things, as a process of embodiment, and attentiveness, as the way of cultivation, are sources for investigating the principle. Thus, we will see that self-cultivation in Confucianism is a radical starting point for pursuing a proper way of living.

2.1. The Self

2.1.1. The Self – Reflexivity, Inwardness, and Correlative Experience

As a preliminary discussion to Zhu Xi's idea of self-cultivation, I will explore the nature of the self in terms of reflexivity, inwardness, and correlative experience. These philosophical efforts to understand the self per se show that human beings are the only animals capable of moral transformation through self-reflective inquiry. When thinking
of the self, we usually begin with its literal meaning, that of reflexivity: 'That is, the I who can reflect on me. To reflect on myself is to gaze on the inward space of the self. For example, Zhu Xi emphasizes that moral efforts (gongfu 工夫) to understand ethical virtues should start with reflections on the self. Such reflexivity is, of course, neither transcendent nor schizophrenic. It is simply a capacity to objectify the self by directing questions of self inward. For example, before discussing self-cultivation in Confucian philosophy, Chung-ying Cheng explicates in detail two aspects of the self: the active self and the reflective self. These two aspects indicate a self that actively lives in time and the world, and that simultaneously is aware of itself as having relations to things in the world. Cheng’s claim that these are two aspects of the same self presupposes a capacity to objectify the self. We may call it a radical reflexivity. So, Cheng claims that “even though zi indicates source and origin of action, it at the same time embodies the ability to reflect or turn back upon itself.” The active and the reflective aspects aim at interactive engagements of self with the world. Therefore, it is natural to think that this model, the active/reflective self, represents ontologically dynamic possibilities of the self, by requiring its constant endeavor.

It seems that Ames’ and Hall’s model of the self, the focus/field self, shares a similar framework to that of Cheng. For example, just as the fields and foci are

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1 This is a key term of Charles Taylor for elucidating the self as modern identity. Notably, he often adds “radical” to this word to explicitly emphasize its first-person standpoint. See Taylor (1989): part II.
2 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 486, 1061, 1145. It is a very common idea in early Confucianism “to search by turning back to myself (fangqiuzhushen 反求諸身)”. For instance, to Confucians, archery is a good example of an activity meant to prove the turning inward. For this, see Zhongyong ch.14.
3 Along with an etymological explanation, Chung-ying Cheng (2004) argues in detail for the self as the prerequisite for self-cultivation (125-128, 145n5). This is very persuasive for understanding neo-Confucian thinkers since the usage of ziji has steadily gained in popularity since the Song period. We can easily locate daily usages of ziji as a reflexive expression of self in the Conversations of Master Zhu Arranged Topically (Zhuzi Yueli).
dynamically correlated with each other, so the active and the reflective are interactive by embodying one another. In terms of dynamic processes and contextual changes in time and the world, both of these represent the dynamic openness of the self, which can create space for cultivation. By paying special attention to the contextual and processual understanding of the self within the world, the focus/field framework successfully describes a notion of self often marginalized in Western thought. In order to understand the self, according to Hall and Ames, we need to pay attention to contextual correlations in light of temporal and spatial changes. These features would seem to fit nicely with the Chinese idea of a self that routinely considers harmonious socio-political correlations. Hall and Ames use the term *ars contextualis* when describing the focus/field self.

The variety of specific contexts defined by particular family relations or socio-political orders constitute the "fields" focused by individuals who are in turn shaped by the field of influences they focus. *Ars contextualis* as a practical endeavor, names that peculiar art of contextualization which allows focal individuals to seek out the viable contexts which they help to constitute and which in turn will partially constitute them.

The art of contextualization is the art of deploying foci by considering the harmonious balance between foci and their fields. In my human relationships, for example, depending on the fields that include my daughter, wife, friends, and teachers, I form a focus alternately named father, husband, friend, or student. Of course, I am also a part of one of their fields. Let me give you another example. Suppose I am friends with a celebrity, such as the Dalai Lama. Even though he might be my intimate friend, I should still treat him with respect as the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism.

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Maintaining such a proper demeanor can be called the art of contextualization. However, this does not mean passive conduct confined by external circumstances. Rather, it truly represents active rapport with one another. In other words, the art originates from the capacity to mutually interact through a consideration of multilateral contexts. Depending on how one sets up the focus and its field in terms of *ars contextualis*, we react in various ways according to context. Hence, the art of contextualization suggests that a "this-that" relation can be the ontological beginning of an ethical way of thinking reflecting human relations. In the case of self-cultivation, consequently, the focus/field self is meaningful because it indicates a dynamic and concrete self which expresses freedom to contextualize his or her actions harmoniously with situations encountered in the real world. Suppose that I participate in fundraising to save sea turtles. Learning about sea turtles gives me the context in which to understand a variety of environmental issues. Such contextualization might enable me to participate in other movements supporting the environment.

In a word, the ideas of the active/reflective self and the focus/field self originate from the etymological meaning of the self as reflexivity. Hence, discussions of embodying interactions of the active and reflective self, and of the dynamic correlations between the focus and the field, should start with a closer examination of this reflexivity by which we can reflect upon ourselves. Needless to say, the direction of reflexivity turns inward back on the self. Even if we think that the internal is relative to the external, we usually conceive of the self as what is inside, compared to the family, the state, and the world. When we refer to the inside, moreover, we metaphorically imply the heart-mind rather than the physical parts. So, Zhu Xi claims that "if one merely knows making one's intention sincere, but cannot cautiously observe preserving the mind, then
it means that one just cultivates oneself without making the inside straightforward."'

We can verify the notion of inwardness in an etymological account of the Chinese character ji (己), referring to the self. As Chung-ying Cheng explains, not only does ji point to "an inner and central position as opposed to an outer and peripheral position," but etymologically it also means the beginning of the perceiving self (己). Through such a spatial metaphor, furthermore, we are able to imagine the mind as an inner space which can reflect upon myriad things. In neo-Confucianism, the mind as an inner space is often metaphorically described by the image of a mirror. Hence, the mind can be understood as being itself transparent and able to genuinely reflect all things. Moreover, this transparency allows us to associate the self with openness because of its capacity to embrace myriad things. When we encounter an object, for example, our mind should be ready to reflect it without any prejudice. If this is not so, the mind cannot embrace myriad things correctly.

If the mind is not being solidly established, then we cannot see the principle. When we are about to read a book, first we should establish the mind, for instance, just like still water or a clean mirror. How can a grimed mirror dare to reflect things? In the effort to observe the dispositions of the human mind, we pay special attention to subtle movements of the mind per se, rather than metaphysical reality. To do so is to make an effort to guarantee moral judgments rather than to engage in

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7 Zhu Xi, Daxue Zhangju, ch.7
9 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 348. Yi Hwang T'oegeye Chonso, 28:72. If we consider the Buddhist influence on neo-Confucianism, especially, huayan Buddhism, then the metaphor of a mirror can imply not so much a passive reflection of myriad things, but an active projection of them by resonating with another.
10 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 177. 心不定, 故見理不得. 今且愛讀書, 須先定其心, 使之如止水, 如明鏡. 明鏡如何照物!
metaphysical contemplations of the world. Hence, images of a mirror, implying the transparency and the openness of the mind, are used to represent the original goodness of the mind, which can reflect all human affairs. In conversations with students, Zhu Xi asks them to keep the mirror of the human mind clean in order to reflect myriad things and affairs. It seems to me that these reflections focus not on epistemological preciseness, but on right judgments of moral actions. In a word, the nature of the self is constituted by the idea of inward reflection. Through the image of the mind as a mirror, the notion of inwardness can provide us with insight into developing the self as a moral agent, namely, self-cultivation.

However, in the neo-Confucian world, the idea of self-cultivation related to inwardness has nothing to do with isolating the self from the world. Zhu Xi consistently stressed "the way of unifying the inside with the outside (he neiwei zhi dao)." Even though this expression seems vague, we can see that it means neither the absorbing of external things by what is internal, nor the lapsing of what is external into inner life. The main ethos of Confucianism is to emphasize this world in which humans can actively engage in cultural achievements. Thus envisaged, self-cultivation becomes an effort to integrate the directions of inward reflection with the correlative experiences of ordinary life. Hence, ordinary affairs in daily life are actually the most important moments, for they make empirical realities resonate deeply with nobler cultural values, e.g., aesthetic rituals as embodiments of cosmic order in the Confucian context. The idea of ordinary life seems broad and even ambiguous. In the case of Zhu Xi, we find examples of "ordinary life" in his text Elementary Learning (xiaoxue 小學), published when he was fifty-eight. The book is designed to introduce beginners to the chores and

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11 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 261. 或以“明明德”之謂之德。曰：“鏡像雖而後明。若人之明德，則未嘗不明。雖其昏蔽之極，而其善端之發，終不可滅。"
12 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 296. 此便是合内外之理

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minutiae of basic rituals in order to build up habitual inclinations to act according to prescribed rules. Nevertheless, it is more than a mere primer, since it contains Zhu Xi's core theory of moral cultivation. This is reason why neo-Confucians have considered it a way to observe the mind in daily life. To them, all daily affairs, including the contents of elementary learning, are nothing other than moments of cultivation in which humans can reflect upon themselves. Hence, we should postulate as a basic condition of self-cultivation the idea that one's life is fully pregnant with ordinary affairs, which we are always experiencing, even when just brushing our teeth, cooking dinner, or washing dishes.

In short, I have so far inquired into the nature of self in light of reflexivity, inwardness, and ordinariness as correlative experiences. I have shown that reflexivity and inwardness as the nature of self in neo-Confucianism do not entail lapsing into a closed realm of inwardness, but harmoniously interacting with all other entities. We should keep in mind that Zhu Xi devotes much attention not only to demystifying discussions on spiritual ghosts and related phenomena, but also to thoroughly criticizing the Buddhist and Daoist tendencies toward inner-worldly emptiness or nihilism. To him, such tendencies represent an irresponsible flight from the genuine field of life. Thus, those features of self become my point of departure in order to inquire into self-cultivation in Zhu Xi's moral philosophy.

2.1.2. Relational Self in a Common Field

In terms of reflexivity, inwardness, and correlative experience, the self can be defined as a relational self in daily life such that humans can encounter a variety of

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13 For this, see Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): ch.3 "spiritual ghosts (guishen)"
14 In fact, the relational self here could be termed the "relational person" because the self has nothing to do with its Western conception, which stems from an isolated and individual self focusing on an invariant
experiences of ordinary affairs expectedly or unexpectedly. Through these experiences we not only can grasp many things from concrete objects to cultural symbols like rituals, laws, and languages, but also project our own ways of life on the interactive space of experience. I call it the common field of daily life. This idea seems very similar to the phenomenological way of thinking. According to Edmund Husserl, "intersubjective experience plays a fundamental role in the constitution of both ourselves as objectively existing subjects, other experiencing subjects, and the objective the spatio-temporal world."

This idea can also be paraphrased as a Confucian sense of considerations (shu 思) that one should be able to put oneself in the place of others by drawing an analogy from what one desires. For instance, Zhu Xi explicitly comments that the Chinese character shu as an understanding of others by drawing an analogy from what I myself desire.

This idea stems not only from the thought that humans are correlative connected with each other, but also the idea that the humans are located in a common field wherein they share experiences of daily life. As a matter of fact, this is based on certain ontological ways of thinking that all entities are organically correlative and interactive with each

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15 I heavily rely on Michel de Certeau's definition of space.
16 Figuratively speaking, a place is a map while space is real streets, which the map represents and on which we are actually walking.
17 考而論之, 拚己及人, 反身而誠則仁矣。其有未誠, 則是猶有私意之隔, 而理未純也。故當凡事勉勉, 拚己及人, 庶幾心公理得而仁不遠也。”
other. That is, all entities are spontaneously engaging in a continuous process of
constructing a total world unity. In the continuous process of daily experience, hence,
the way I become myself is situated in the relational interaction with others.

In Zhu Xi’s ethics, the ordinariness of daily life truly consists of various affairs,
which are closely tied to the human relationship with parents, siblings, and friends.\textsuperscript{18} For instance, the process of becoming a father consists of a series of affairs related to
having a baby. When confronted with unexpected situations in taking care of that
infant, I may feel certain emotions, which I have never before realized. Through these
experiences not only do I progressively form my fatherhood, but also discover new
aspects of myself, which I have never had, through the experiences of interacting with
my baby. Moreover, the formation of fatherhood has to do not only with the inner
relationship between father and baby, but also the temporal and spatial contexts in
which the relationship is placed. Thus, the uniqueness of the relational self is
“immanent and embedded within a ceaseless process of social, cultural, and natural
changes.”\textsuperscript{19}

In terms of a sense that we can share experiences of daily life, the common field
can be looked upon as continuous space of experiences constituting a way of life. What
really exists in experience is a subtle moment that can genuinely manifest or construct
authenticity of things. Neo-Confucians often call it the grand function of the entire body
\textit{(quanti dayong 全體大用)},\textsuperscript{20} which means the entire body fully manifesting its functions in
relations to others. In an ethical dimension, for example, Zhu Xi seems to find the

\textsuperscript{18}Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 125.
\textsuperscript{19} Hall and Ames (1998): 27.
\textsuperscript{20} For this, see Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 386. “全體大用, 無時不發見於日用之間.”

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genuine character of real persons through everyday life experience. 21 Hence, the common field does mean not so much the world of temporal-spatial relations, but dynamic space that is constructed by empirical meanings of life.

As relational self in the common field, humans should be able to engage in the practice of how to live and what kind of person to become. Of course, this means a ceaseless process of interaction between relational selves as full-fledged persons. This process requires a persistent self-reflection. As I shall demonstrate, this is the reason why self-cultivation cannot be understood as an instrumental way of developing virtue.

In short, I think that self-cultivation should be conceived as the process of becoming a relational self in the common field of life. So, the way of self-cultivation consists, on the one hand, of appropriately contextualizing the self in relation to others. On the other hand, it means to integrate one's own worth in everyday experience. Finally, in terms of the neo-Confucian view the relational self in the common field means the one who sincerely interacts with others in order to consummate the creative possibilities of human achievement in daily life.

2.2. The Philosophical Context of Cultivation
2.2.1. How Should One Live?

I will first explore the notion of cultivation. Whenever I refer to self-cultivation, I intend the object of cultivation to be the self. Thus, regarding cultivation, I might simply ask as follows: “Why do I cultivate?” and “How do I cultivate?” In order to compare the Chinese ethical tradition with the Western one, for instance, Philip Ivanhoe states briefly, “Western philosophers have been much more concerned with trying to define what the good is. [while] Chinese thinkers have focused instead on the problem of how to become

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good." In other words, his question of "How can I become morally good?" has a link with the matter of cultivation as one of the persistent and dominant issues in Chinese ethics.

To Ivanhoe, it seems obvious that cultivation is conceived of as pursuing an answer to a how-question. He proceeds to fill up his book, *Confucian Moral Cultivation*, with explanations of human nature and virtue. According to him, the reason one must talk about human nature is because without it one cannot understand why certain methods of cultivation are needed. Thus, the reason Ivanhoe elucidates Confucian ideas of human nature under the title of self-cultivation is because of the substantive significance of human nature as an object of self-cultivation in the Chinese philosophical tradition. Ivanhoe's philosophical interest is "to show that self-cultivation is a central concern of Confucians and to illustrate why and how their discussions of human nature -- which are everywhere in the literature -- are so important to them."24

I can here broach a question in his philosophical interest: why should we begin with human nature? Of course, I fully agree with his claim that the character of human nature is an important issue for Chinese thinkers and its implications on self-cultivation. Is human nature then a necessary condition for understanding self-cultivation? More precisely, can the definition or conceptions of human nature become the first necessary condition of self-cultivation? I think that Ivanhoe's approach to understanding cultivation can be conceived as the idea that the understanding of human nature can be a major premise for defining the matter of cultivation as an instrumental way. It seems

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23 Ivanhoe provided me this point in response to my e-mail inquiry. Ivanhoe's e-mail response (February 15th 2007).
24 This point was also provided through my email discussions with him. Ivanhoe (1993): 11-69. Ivanhoe classifies Confucian self-cultivation into several models: Confucius on the acquisition model, Mencius on the developmental model, Xunzi on the reformation model, Zhu Xi on the recovery model, and Wang Yangming on the discovery model.
to me that a major definition of human beings deductively defines practical process of life, i.e. matters of cultivation. On the contrary, if we accept that we can improve virtue by means of cultivation, it is obvious rather that cultivation can mold human nature. So, it involves that the notion that cultivation can be conceived not as a subordinate method, but as the entire process of human life, which can shape human nature. Hence, in order to understand cultivation I think that we should first clarify the philosophical context of cultivation, rather than the understanding of human nature.

The understanding of human nature does not necessarily entail the need of self-cultivation. For example, even though many Western thinkers were also very interested in the character of human nature, as far as I know, they did not pay attention to the idea of cultivation as keenly as did Chinese thinkers. If we can accept that Chinese thinkers focused on the problem of how to become good while Western thinkers on what good is, then we need to be aware of the difference between cultivation, which can be called a process of becoming, and human nature, which can represent the Western ontological way of thinking, i.e., being. In a word, I think we need to pay attention to the nature of cultivation as a continuous process of life. If we consider the notion of cultivation as an instrumental method of understanding human nature, then we may neglect the significance of the process of everyday life, which can emerge from the nature of cultivation. Furthermore, Chinese thinkers' perspectives on human nature could be reinterpreted as an answer to the practical issues with which they were confronted in daily life.

Hence, I think that I need to reconsider the idea of self-cultivation from the bottom up, because it has relevance beyond its ethical dimensions. If we are inquiring

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25 The Analects, 8:7. As Zengzi said, the life of sincere persons can be symbolized as a long journey with heavy burden.

26 I will later argue this point in section 2.2.2 of this chapter.
into the how-question of self-cultivation, then this implies that the why-question is already tentatively solved, at least as far as we agree that people cultivate moral virtues in order to do right actions. In relation to ethical issues, however, this question cannot be understood without an adequate understanding of what it means to do right actions. Right actions originate from teleological values that either an individual or a community tries to pursue. When a community prohibits stealing, for example, abstaining from stealing can be called right action. Right action is of course not only abstaining from stealing, but also the active and voluntary effort to avoid it. Such teleological values can be reduced to the question: "How should one live?" In the traditional Aristotelian view, for instance, moral virtue is concerned with our actions; an important feature of Aristotelian ethical theory is that we cultivate moral virtues in order to do right actions, which can be originated from an attention to how I should live. Bernard Williams claims that "the aims of moral philosophy are bound up with the fate of Socrates' question: how one should live." This question makes me reflect not only on what I should pursue, but also on my attitudes toward what I pursue; i.e., a manner of life. When I ask how I should live, I answer that, of course, I should live well. Furthermore, I should continually strive to live better. When one pursues a better life, a key issue one should seriously consider is how to live better, namely, how to change one's attitude.

What does it mean to live better? Explaining the function of reason in terms of the evolution of life, Whitehead defines "to live better" as one of the active urges toward the environment. Hence, to Whitehead, to live better is the urge to promote the most desirable course of life. I think that this definition plays an important role in

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27 The criteria of how-what are very rough when we compare the Chinese ethics with their Western counterpart. Rather, I use this distinction between 'how' and 'what' in order to involve differences between normative ethics and meta-ethics.


understanding cultivation. For example, the neo-Confucian thesis "nature is rationality" (xing ji li 性即理)\(^{30}\) can be explained in light of Whitehead’s explanation of reason.

Human nature starts from biological tendencies and becomes rationality because we have an urge to live more orderly lives, which modifies human nature itself in an evolutionary process. Ethically, living better means to transform life into what is morally desirable. Through efforts to transform the environment according to our values, we live our lives on the upward course of rationality. If humans have only the urge to transform the environment without any power or organizational support, then they must start with self-cultivation. Therefore, to cultivate should be understood first as an effort to foster a better life.

The question of how one should live can be conceived as a matter of an attitude toward life. On the one hand, in an ethical transformation, attitudes are constituted in accordance with the ethical values pursued by either a community or an individual. On the other hand, these attitudes are also the paths by which we achieve ethical values. Hence, attitudes should harmoniously coincide with ethical values. Confucius’ declaration of rectifying names\(^{31}\) is an attempt of reconciling attitudes with values. In other words, the ethical transformation should be justified by what is pursued morally. For instance, when one transforms one’s life according to an aesthetic order representing ritual propriety (li 禮), the transformation should be justified by the spirit of the ritual propriety. This would be the reason why Confucius blamed the prime minister of Qi, \(^{30}\) As I explained in chapter one, the Chinese character, li, is the most important term in neo-Confucian discourse. Even though li can be rendered into English as principle, order, reason, and coherence, etc. in accordance with context, these English terms barely grasp its exact meaning because it often involves all of the English terms above at the same time. However, we can find certain family resemblance among the English terms. That is to say, these words entail a common, consistent, coherent and continuous pattern that can be captured in the world. So, it represents a relational totality that can coherently unite everything. When considering it in its ethical dimension, as well as in philosophical anthropology, I think that “rationality” would be better than other English terms. I will elucidate upon this in chapter three.

\(^{31}\) The Analects, 13.3.\)
Guan Zhong, for violating ritual propriety even while praising his political capacity.\textsuperscript{32} In this vein, the question of how one should live concerns not only a manner of life, but also the good life \textit{per se}, or a life worth living. Therefore, I think the philosophical account of cultivation should begin with the mutually informative relation between ethical values and attitudes toward transformation.

2.2.2. Some Problems with Ivanhoe’s Models for Self-Cultivation

Ivanhoe provides us with several different models of Confucian cultivation: Confucius on an acquisition model,\textsuperscript{33} Mencius on a development model, Xunzi on a reformation model, Zhu Xi on a recovery model, and Wang Yangming on a discovery model.\textsuperscript{34} In fact, these models are based on different notions of human nature. That is, Ivanhoe set up these models in accordance with different conceptions of human nature Chinese thinkers interpreted. In fact, these models are not mutually exclusive. As Van Nordem convincingly argues, each of these models incorporates in part aspects of the others.\textsuperscript{35} If so, it is difficult for us to make a necessary link between each model and the character of human nature. In addition, it can involve that each model would eventually be a fragment whereby to piece together the whole picture of human nature with which most persons can agree. Hence, I think we need to clarify the relationship between the nature of cultivation and the character of human nature.

Based on his argument, I will tackle the problem of whether a substantive understanding of human nature is the source for his variant models. As Ivanhoe

\textsuperscript{32} The Analects, 3:22
\textsuperscript{33} Ivanhoe (1993): 11 and n.6. Let's leave Confucius aside because “he does not directly tie his method of learning to a theory about human nature.”
\textsuperscript{34} Ivanhoe (1993): 11-69. Especially for the difference between Zhu Xi and Wang Yangming, see p.69 n.4, 5.
argues, if Mencius and Xunzi eventually shed light on the same aspects of human nature but only from different angles, then it seems that their different ideas of cultivation are derived from different perspectives on the same human nature, rather than "substantively different" conceptions of human nature itself. This understanding of human nature should extend not only to the field of ethics, but also to broader considerations of life itself. According to the development model, people have naturally inchoate tendencies toward moral action, which must be developed to fully achieve virtue. According to the reformation model, people should establish virtue by fundamentally transforming the qualities they each have naturally. According to the recovery model, each person must recover virtues, which are negatively impacted by human temperaments (qizhi). Finally, according to the discovery model, people innately have virtues already intact, and which each person reveals in themselves.

Let me briefly summarize Bryan Van Norden's argument. Mencius has a development model in which people must develop their incipient moral tendencies. In addition to this, he has discovery model; Mencius helps King Xuan of Qi discover that he has a virtuous disposition within himself. In the case of Xunzi, even though he largely follows a transformation model, emphasizing the fundamental transformation of the natural human temperament, there are also developmental aspects in that Xunzi acknowledges humans are naturally affectionate toward their own kin. Lastly, Zhu Xi has a discovery model with both reformative and developmental aspects. According to Van Norden, Mencius, Xunzi, and Zhu Xi all share aspects of a development model, despite the fact that Mencius and Xunzi have very different understandings of human nature.

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In fact, Ivanhoe posits Zhu Xi as representing a recovery model. However, Van Norden does attribute discovery model to Zhu Xi remaining the distinction between the two models unsolved.
nature. The fact there is no reformation model in Mencius and no discovery model in Xunzi would make them different from one another. Interestingly, Zhu Xi has all three models, while explicitly claiming that he is the successor to the intellectual legacy of Mencius.

In fact, these models Ivanhoe defines are also evident in how each Confucian understands human nature and what they each mean by virtue. For instance, the Mencian idea of human nature makes it possible to frame the developmental model that we can “fully develop” human nature as a moral resource that is naturally given to us. On the other hand, the Xunzian theme that human nature is naturally bad can lead us “to reform or reshape” the character of human nature in order to establish a Confucian institutional community. Although Ivanhoe wants to show us how Chinese thinkers’ interpretations of human nature can shape the models of cultivation, cultivation in itself can eventually be understood as a consistent and active effort to make it better. Hence, the overlap of Ivanhoe’s models above enables me to reconsider the relationship between the nature of cultivation and the character of human nature.

That is to say, I can give rise to the question of whether the matter of cultivation determines or shapes the character of human nature or vice versa. As Ivanhoe argues, if each model of cultivation is based on different notions of human nature, it implies that we should already know what kind of human nature we have in order to adopt a model. How can we take the idea of human nature first prior to cultivation? I think that the matter of cultivation is not based on the character of human nature, but actively interwoven with it. In a sense, the matter of cultivation can be understood in light of a continuous process of human life. Hence, I think that the models Ivanhoe suggests not only fail to provide an adequate understanding of the conception of self-cultivation in
relation to the character of human nature, but they also add confusion to their understanding of human nature and virtue. According to Ivanhoe, on the one hand, Zhu Xi’s model of self-cultivation, namely, the recovery model, is based on his conception of human nature constructed by the encounter with Buddhism. On the other hand, Zhu Xi relied on three models of cultivation as his paradigm. It does not mean that Zhu Xi can simply be called eclectic for his acceptance of both Mencius and Xunzi. Neither does it mean that his ethical theory is inconsistent. If Zhu Xi’s position does not address any conflict between Mencian and Xunzian ideas of human nature, then perhaps he has neatly solved certain inconsistencies in their thought. It could be true. Otherwise, his position would involve the idea that we need all kinds of cultivation models to capture the entire picture of human nature. Then, the relationship between each model and the notions of human nature cannot be necessary.

I think that Ivanhoe was preoccupied with Chinese thinkers’ understanding of human nature instead of paying special attention to cultivation per se. I do not mean that Chinese thinkers were not interested in human nature. Rather, it seems that their theoretical interests in human nature were but an answer to the more practical issues with which they were seriously confronted in daily life. In other words, cultivation should be understood as an entire process of human life lending consistent meaning to life in itself, which can be seen as something ephemeral, unexpected, and discontinuous.

Therefore, I think we should reconstruct the models of self-cultivation, based on considerations of life as a whole and of a good way of living. That is, I want to modify the way we ask questions concerning moral virtue and human nature. If Confucian models of self-cultivation essentially aim at transforming the self, we should be able to ask about the results of such a fundamental transformation. If we can agree that most
ethical theories eventually aim to solve social and political conflicts among humans, then ethical reflections on the self cannot avoid considering social networks. This kind of contextual consideration relies on a correlative way of thinking about self-cultivation. Such contextual considerations will shed light on why neo-Confucians take self-cultivation as the answer to political, as well as philosophical, problems. In short, we need to reconsider our ways of questioning philosophical issues. For instance, the Mencian claim that humans are innately good could be not so much a question thrown at us today, as an answer to questions Mencius sought to solve in his own times. Moreover, the Xunzian claim that human nature is bad could not be an intuitive axiom, but a result of reflection on socio-political issues Xunzi confronted in his own age. Hence, their ideas of human nature can be the results or answers to questions they wanted to solve in their own times if cultivation can be seen as a consistent process of reflection on a daily life accompanied with many conflicts and issues. Hence, our analysis of the understanding of self-cultivation should start with the question of how one should live, taking into consideration the context of a whole life.

Let me again look at the implications of the three models. The fact that Mencius, Xunzi, and Zhu Xi share a development model only shows us that, generally, what is required to develop full virtue is at first incomplete, inchoate, or deficient. This model presupposes that humans are not satisfied with the current conditions of practical life. This implies that humans have an urge to live better. In the case of Wang Yangming, if we have something discovered, it can still imply an imperfect thing unless we discover it. In a rigorous sense, the effort to discover it or an intuitive awareness of discovering it can

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38 I owe this idea to Kim Youngmin. For this, see Kim (2005): 207-30. That is, I had regarded philosophical texts as “problems” to which I should provide an answer. He gave me the idea that philosophical themes can in themselves be answers. Of course, this idea is derived from one of the methods of understanding the history of philosophy or intellectual history.
be linked with an urge to live better. Furthermore, the fact that Xunzi does not have a
discovery model reveals that he thinks there is nothing morally valuable to be
discovered within ourselves. Based on this, it seems that moral virtues cannot emerge
from human nature, but must be constituted by institutional consensus. In contrast,
Mencius has different reasons for avoiding the reformation model; he thinks each of us
should rely more upon our moral conscience, and less upon institutional sanctions.

Such differences between the two models, i.e., discovery and reformation, point
to an interesting issue at the bottom of many ethical theories. There is a fundamental
question regarding which one is prior to the other; that is, either individual moral
agency precedes institutional reformation, or vice versa. That also brings up the
question of whether it is most urgent that we implement institutional reformation that
can support individual moral agency; or that we first address moral agents directly. For
example, Zhu Xi declares: “self-cultivation is the root whereas the state and the world
are the tips of the branches.” To him, cultivating moral agents is prioritized over
implementing institutional systems. Therefore, if cultivating moral agents is the priority,
then self-cultivation is the best way to achieve this.

In a word, the underlying differences between the two models, discovery and
reformation, originate from the question of whether moral agency is prior to
institutional reformation: the discovery model emphasizes human agency whereas the
reformation model emphasizes institutional efficacy. In addition, insofar as Mencius,
Xunzi, and Zhu Xi agree with the development model, they all recognize the human
urge to create a better way of living. The paradigms of self-cultivation based upon

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especially within the Cheng-Zhu School, should be understood within the political context of Zhu Xi's
contemporaries. We can verify this in the current work by Chinese intellectual historians. For this, see Bol
inquiries into human nature can offer new accounts of an ideal model that considers a whole life and bears on the question of how one should live. Of course, this perspective does not mean that we may neglect the role of self-cultivation in ethical contexts. My focus is on correlative considerations of self-cultivation, namely, the historical and spatial contexts in which self-cultivation should be placed. Hence, moral considerations represent one element relevant to my inquiry.

What is self-cultivation to Zhu Xi? His comment that self-cultivation is the root while the state is the tip of the branches does not mean that institutions are useless. He is only employing a typical vegetative metaphor to describe the organic alliance of things. When figuratively comparing the organization of the state, including humans, with a tree, Zhu Xi sees the cultivation of humans as the trunk, maintaining the vitality of the tree. That is, people cannot be changed, while dynasties can be replaced in accordance with the vicissitudes of the time. Of course, he still held the role of the institution in high esteem. In order for the state to flourish, the people must live well economically and politically. We easily find in Zhu Xi’s works many official documents and articles dealing with political institutions and economic and financial solutions for the people. Therefore, I conclude that Zhu Xi’s understanding of self-cultivation is derived from historical, political, and philosophical insights into human life, not just from theoretical reflections upon achieving virtue.

This is why Zhu Xi devoted his life to revising the Great Learning.\textsuperscript{41} Zhu Xi tries

\textsuperscript{41} The Great learning is the most significant book to Zhu Xi. At the time of his death he was still at work revising the commentary on that work that he had written in 1189. The most detailed study of Zhu Xi and the Great Learning in the English-speaking world is Daniel Gardner’s Zhu Hsi and the Ta-hsüeh: Neo-Confucian Reflection on the Confucian Canon. Both the Great Learning and the Zhongyong were originally chapters of the Book of Rites. The Book of Rites, which is supposed to have been compiled by scholars of the Han dynasty, explicitly records the ruling ideologies and systems of the dynasty that may be understood as the first unified empire to establish the framework of future Chinese civilization.

Ever since Sima Guang, a well-known historian and politician of the Northern Song, divided the Great Learning from the Book of Rites, many neo-Confucian scholars have tried to reinterpret and even reedit it
to make a consistent structure to unify all entities, from individuals to the world, relying on the model of the *Great Learning*. In other words, he finds in the classic text a theoretical model for moral agents who are organically correlative with the world. In his philosophy, self-cultivation can be considered as an ethical string threading together all entities in the world. When inquiring into the moral psychology of self-cultivation, therefore, I do not concentrate on psychological explanations of moral thinking, but rather to explanations that portray the human mind as having correlations with other entities. In short, Zhu Xi’s moral philosophy of self-cultivation is based on the correlative experience of the self and the world.

2.3. Zhu Xi on Self-Cultivation (xiuji 修己 or xiushen 修身)42

The Chinese character *xiu* (修) carries several meanings in ancient Chinese texts, including “to govern,” “to clean,” “to decorate,” “to discipline,” and “to prepare.”43 Meanwhile, the English translation “cultivation” has agricultural roots, referring etymologically to the tilling of fields, later extended to the idea of developing civilization. Though both *xiu* and cultivation can both denote cultural refinement, the Chinese character *xiu* is in fact closer to the meaning of “bestowing order by means of discipline.” In spite of these etymological differences, the notion of cultivation refers basically to the effort to draw certain qualitative transformations from previous conditions. That is to say, transformations such as moral development, physical strength, and technical skills all belong to the idea of cultivation.

42 The Chinese characters, *ji* and *shen* of *xiuji* and *xiushen*, literally indicate self and a body respectively.
When Aristotle, for example, states that “moral virtue comes about as a result of habit”\textsuperscript{44}, he turns away from the Platonic Ideas to the practical cultivation of the moral self. In the Aristotelian concept of scheme, “morality” is a virtue to be attained only after long years of constant habituation. Hence, according to Aristotelian concepts, cultivation is an effort, or a process of embodying good habits. The emphasis on elementary learning by neo-Confucians also refers to embodying good habits. However, we cannot embody good habits at the level of elementary learning alone, because at that stage our relation to moral principles is merely heteronomous.

According to Zhu Xi, the method of self-cultivation includes an integral sequence from setting one’s mind properly to investigating the principle in things, in which sense the process can be termed achievement of morally full-fledged persons.\textsuperscript{45} If the goal of cultivation is the embodiment of autonomous morality through ordinary life, then cultivation relies on the firm belief that we can become morally good. Such a firm belief gives rise to another theoretical presupposition that humans are naturally good, as Mencius strongly insists. Otherwise, such a belief should at least admit that humans have the potential to become morally good by reforming their nature. In the context of Zhu Xi’s moral philosophy, we now see that cultivation as a method of moral development relies heavily on his understanding of human nature.\textsuperscript{46}

2.3.1. Self-cultivation in the Daxue (Great Learning)

The Daxue is succinct yet comprehensive. Consider the following passage of the

\textit{Daxue} related to self-cultivation:

\textsuperscript{44} Aristotle, NE, 1103a15-20. As James Tiles explained, “Aristotle’s word ἔθικα was translated into Latin as ‘moralis,’ a word derived from mos (moris), which also meant both habit and custom.” It implies that habit or habituation as the origin of ethics holds a very important status in the light of cultivation. Tiles (2000):2

\textsuperscript{45} Zhu Xi, \textit{Daxuezhangjiu} 1-2.

\textsuperscript{46} In chapter three, I will argue in detail Zhu Xi’s understanding of human nature and mind.

After things are entirely structuralized, knowledge fully becomes extended; knowledge being fully extended, intention becomes sincere; intention being sincere, the mind becomes set properly; the mind being set properly, the persons become cultivated; the persons being cultivated, the families become managed well; the families being managed well, the states become governed well; the states being well-governed, the entire world becomes peace. [The Classic portion; Chapter 1]

What is called cultivating themselves lies in setting their minds properly is this: if there are emotions of anger, fear, mirth, and anxiety, the mind cannot be set in the right balance. If the mind is not attending, one looks but does not see, listens but does not hear, eats but does not appreciate the flavor. What is called cultivating themselves lies in setting their minds properly. [Chapter 7]

In the structure of the Daxue, self-cultivation is presented as the root of all socio-political concerns, from managing the family to establishing world peace. To the ancient Chinese, the social and political world does not so much imply a normative space as the entire kingdom, in which people actively participate in building civilization. The Daxue
understands things and the world in terms of a systematic organism. This idea originates from the awareness that we, as human beings, are core components of our communities, as well as the entire world. Regardless of class, race, and gender, self-cultivation is the basic ground for becoming humans. Thus, self-cultivation is construed in terms of external contexts, like social and political systems.

We find this point in chapter twenty of the Zhongyong, which is the only chapter in the text including the characters for self-cultivation. This chapter starts with Prince Ai’s question about politics. Confucius’ answer expresses the notion that self-cultivation is supremely important for princes ruling an empire. Confucius of course closes this chapter by emphasizing that we should be persistent in our efforts toward self-discipline. This chapter gives us another version of the ideas in the Daxue, in terms of politics. More practically, both chapter twenty of the Zhongyong and the Daxue express that all actions of rulers and all institutional systems boil down to the efforts individuals make to achieve self-discipline. In other words, all institutional problems can be traced to the moral aptitude of individuals. In sum, Confucian intellectuals and rulers are implicitly accountable for all social and political conflicts, because all such conflicts can be traced to the moral cultivation of the individuals involved. Finally, the Zhongyong and Daxue tell us that each person’s resolute self-reflection eventually benefits the entire social network, providing the creative energy that supports social development. Such an idea is impossible without the ontological realization that the self

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51 Of course, the Great Learning holds that “things have their roots and branches. Events have a beginning and an end. To know what is first and what is later is akin to the Dao.”
52 Of course, the Great Learning just mentions a class, i.e., “from emperor to common people.”
53 In the Zhongyong, rather, we should pay particular attention to other notions, which are related to dispositions of mind and feelings, e.g., weifa, yifa, the mind of Way and the human mind. I shall discuss these in chapter three.
54 For a detailed content of this chapter, see Zhu Xi, Daxue Zhongju, 14-19. Ames & Hall (2001): 99-104.
55 For this, see Lunyu 8:7, Zhongyong 21
is linked correlatively with all other entities of the entire world.

In the *Daxue*, self-cultivation is a process moving from the investigation of things to the proper setting of the mind. That is, the core task of self-cultivation implies both understanding the principles of things and attentively observing the dispositions of the mind. In the language of the *Zhongyong*, these are matters of pursuing inquiry and study (*daowenxue* 道問學) and honoring virtuous nature (*zundexing* 尊德性).

Zhu Xi often argued with his students about how to attentively observe the mind and about why we first must make our intention sincere before setting the mind properly. As we see in chapter seven of the *Daxue*, most of these arguments concern how to deal properly with volatile emotional dispositions. Zhu Xi holds that the irrelevant operations of emotions can make the human mind deviate from the right way. According to him, therefore, we should always strive to keep the mind’s awareness lucid. Furthermore, he advocates that having an open and candid attitude toward one’s own inner life can make one’s intention sincere and that such an attitude eventually helps one embody moral integrity.

Zhu Xi’s argument about making one’s intention sincere shows that aspects of our psychological experience need to operate properly in our intentional efforts. This is associated with certain features of self-cultivation in early Chinese thought: Mencius on “flood-like qi” (*haoran zhi qi* 浩然之氣), Zhuangzi on “the fasting of the mind” (*xinzhai* 心齋) and “sitting and forgetting” (*zuowang* 坐忘), and even the Buddhists on the way of meditation (*zuochan* 坐禪). All of these ways show us certain methods of meditative concentration. From this we can assume there are some conditions that will interrupt concentration and prevent us from setting the mind properly. Hence, cultivating the self might be interpreted as a matter of correcting these conditions that interrupt the mind.
For example, attempts to clear the mind by focusing attention inward might be interpreted as inward absorption marked by solitude and isolation, rather than the improvement of ethical relations with others through moral dignity. In short, if we see attentive observation of the mind as meditative contemplation, then we misread the Confucian way of self-cultivation.

In a broad sense, Confucianism in Zhu Xi's era did not have a monopoly on the issue of cultivation. It was mainly a concern of Buddhism and Daoism. For instance, one of the emperors in the Southern Song, Xiao-zong, once professed himself to be a person who cultivates his mind with Buddhism, his body with Daoism, and who governs the socio-political order with Confucianism. The emperor's words express that the three teachings each have their own excellent features, which he wanted to use for different purposes. Such an understanding of cultivation based on the features of the three teachings shows that contemporaries in the Southern Song saw cultivation as a method or technique for improving specific mental and physical capacities.

It is natural that the intellectual atmosphere of the Southern Song would lead Zhu Xi to differentiate the Confucian way of cultivation from others. Zhu Xi finds in the Daxue Confucian resources for an intellectual approach to self-cultivation. Specifically, he sees Confucianism differing from Buddhism and Daoism on the issue of the investigations of things.

"The reason investigation of things is valuable is this: although both Buddhism and Daoism have their own merits, they only know one way. If there are things that can be reached by their knowledge, there is no mistake because the path is unquestionably obvious. However, if there is a place that cannot be reached by their knowledge, they will undergo pell-mell distracted experiences and, may not decide what right place is. The reason is why they have no efforts...

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33 Li Xinchuan, Miscellaneous Records of Jianyan Period (建炎雜記 Jianyan Zaji). SKQS.
of investigating things.  

The simple statement "extension of knowledge lies in investigation of things" in the Daxue inspires Zhu Xi to establish the Confucian way of self-cultivation. When presupposing that neo-Confucians believe the physical world to be identical with the normative world, we take it for granted that Zhu Xi pursues not only factual truths but also normative and prescriptive ones. Hence, if the extension of knowledge is an intellectual effort to understand only the physical world, then such knowledge is not necessarily linked with making one's intentions sincere. The reason being that "sincerity" of intention is related less to an epistemic account of things and more to our normative attitude toward them.

To Zhu Xi, knowledge should cover all things, human actions, and events that we may encounter in daily life. To extend knowledge is to pursue genuine knowledge. To have genuine knowledge is to deeply understand what is quintessential by clarifying it.  

The more one knows, the more sincere one's intentions will become. Suppose we take a simple math test, and we know the correct answer to a simple question, such as, "what is the sum of three angles of a triangle?" Then we will sincerely intend to mark the correct answer. The intention is a mental disposition arising from the mind. Because the emphasis is on sincere intention, not merely intention, then making one's intention sincere is a decisive factor in whether one can become either a noble or petty person.

That is, intention as Zhu Xi describes it means how to carry out one's knowledge sincerely in practice. As I shall argue in chapter four, this is concerned with moral motivation and action, because genuine knowledge can give rise to immediate action.

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So, the effort to make one's intention sincere is one way to remedy moral weakness of will.

The *Daxue* gives us the example of a petty man (*xiaoren*), in order to explain sincerity of intention. This petty man at least knows what is good and bad. However, his actions are opposed to what he knows. Moreover, the man intends to disguise himself; in fact, he *sincerely intends* to disguise himself, in order to show others that he is a good person. His reason for disguising himself is to show others that he is a good person, and not to make moral effort for the sake of improving himself. Therefore, contrary to what the petty man intends, everybody clearly sees through his deception because of his awkward behavior. But, if the petty man *sincerely and persistently* intends to disguise himself to show us that he is good, then can he ever become a moral agent? I would provisionally say "yes" if I were a utilitarian. Even though the petty man intends to disguise himself for our benefit, if he *sincerely and persistently* intends to do so, then it may be hard for us to see his genuine intention. In addition, his disguise could produce many good consequences for others. Moreover, the reason I say "yes" is because his sincere and persistent efforts might unintentionally transform his moral habits regardless of his intentions. We would say "no" insofar as we might be able to clearly see his genuine intention. For what does he intend to disguise himself? The reason he intends to disguise himself is not to show us that he has a disguise, but to show us that he is good. Furthermore, if the petty man has to sincerely maintain his disguise, and not let it be merely temporary, then his sincere disguise might morally

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57 The *Daxue*, ch.6. "The petty man, when alone, does bad things, stopping at nothing. However, as soon as he sees the noble man, he draws back and disguises himself, concealing bad things and making a display of good."

58 Here, we can be reminded that the theme of Confucian authentic learning is for the sake of the self rather than for the sake of others. For this, see The *Analects* 14:24.

59 Probably, the petty man would be very confused. Neo-Confucians would then advise him to observe his mind more deeply. I shall argue this in chapter three.
transform him. So, the Daxue concludes in chapter six that “to become sincere within can shape one without. Therefore, the noble man must be watchful over himself when he is alone.”60 These words are key to understanding self-cultivation as the embodiment of moral values through the continuity of self-reflection. That is, self-cultivation is employed in the process of the embodiment.

Here, such a process of embodiment can be constituted by observing oneself,61 which secures one’s inner space, or inwardness. Roger Ames interprets the Chinese character *du* (貛) as uniqueness, which can be attained through the transactional achievements of persons.62 In contrast, Zhu Xi defines *du* as a situation that is free of interactions. He writes: “*Du* is where I know by myself, but others do not know yet. It is called a subtle and fine event in darkness.”63 This symbolizes a space where only I know by myself with an inexpressible experience of *du* in language. This is a metaphor describing the human mind as an inner space, which experiences subtle changes in psychological dispositions. As Whitehead says: “Life is an internal fact for its own sake, before it is an external fact relating itself to others.”64 First of all, we should keep in mind that the emphasis is on one’s internal uniqueness, which is understood as a matter of learning for the sake of the self. Hence, harmonious interaction with others would be a next matter, even if we accept logically that both can occur simultaneously.65 Due to such a distinction, we can make room for the persistent efforts of self-cultivation, including the investigation of the external world in the Cheng-Zhu School. In comparison, the Yangming School put little emphasis on this, instead highlighting the

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60 The Daxue, ch.6. For this, refer to Ames and Hall (2001): 118.
61 According to Taylor, it can be called “radical reflexivity.” He uses “radical” in terms of its first-person standpoint.
63 Zhu Xi, Zhongyuanzhangju 2.
65 In this context, Mencius also severely criticizes the notion of impartial love in the Mohist School.
original completeness of the self.66

As I briefly mentioned before, such steps as setting the mind properly (zhengxin) and making one's intention sincere (chengyi) are tightly bound up with the investigation of things. Let me next address why Zhu Xi considers the investigation of things as the way of cultivation unique to Confucianism.

2.3.2. Investigation of Things (gewu 格物) as Process of Embodiment

First, I would like to draw attention to the fact that the investigation of things is the starting point for self-cultivation.67 In fact, there has been a great deal of exegetical research on the Chinese characters gewu, which are interpreted by Zhu Xi as reaching the utmost principle of things and events.68 The investigation of things (gewu) is a fascinating expression, which can be interpreted as scientific research in the physical world. Moreover, we can clearly see the extent to which Zhu Xi devotes himself to the study of the natural world, through the academic achievements found in Chinese intellectual history.69 So, even though they saw the investigation of things as playing a decisive role in self-cultivation, it can still be interpreted as an embryonic form of a scientific method, which inquires into the natural phenomena of the world.70 This is why many neo-Confucian scholars understand things (wu 物) as objects of the external

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66 As was the case in Wang Yangming. Zhan Ruosui, one of the representative scholars of mid-Ming China, denies eight steps in the Daxue. Kim (2002): 151.

67 In fact, the chapter on investigation of things in the Daxue was originally lost in Zhu's age. When writing The Commentary of the Daxue in Chapters and Verses, he adds his own chapter on the investigation of things which is called “the chapter of complementing the lost.”

68 When annotating the notion of “gewu (investigation of things)” in the Daxue, Zhu Xi elucidates that the meaning of ge is “to arrive at” and so that I can completely arrive at or reach the ultimate meaning of all principles of things. For this, see Daxue Zhangju, 2, and refer to Chen Lai (1988): 189–210.

69 For this, see Kim, Yong-sik, (2000). Yamada Keiji, (1991). Yamada’s book was composed of four main chapters: chapter 1 cosmology, chapter 2 astronomy, chapter 3 meteorology, and chapter 4 from natural science to philosophical anthropology.

70 For example, Wang Fuzhi understood things (wu) as objective things and events in the natural world.
world. For example, in a well-known story, Wang Yangming observed a bamboo tree for seven days, trying to discover its principle; but he became sick before reaching his goal. Since the mid-Ming period, many neo-Confucian scholars have sought alternative solutions to the dichotomy between the investigation of the "external" things and the moral improvement of human nature.71

No matter how many hairsplitting analyses we make of its meanings, we cannot deny that the investigation of things is eventually the way of self-cultivation, which aims at the moral improvement of persons in neo-Confucian moral discourse. In other words, the investigation of things as the way of self-cultivation becomes a cliché of moral interpretation. Hence, in reconstructing "gewu" in neo-Confucian discourse, we need to elucidate how to understand such a cliché as a reasonable account for an ethical theory of self-cultivation. As Angus Graham points out, neo-Confucians of the Cheng-Zhu School believe that we first acquire knowledge, including moral knowledge, by investigating the "external" world.72 When Zhu Xi's students asked him whether the investigation of things could be understood negatively as running after external things, Zhu Xi answered that the objects of investigation are not only in the external world but also in the internal world. More precisely, to Zhu Xi the investigation of things involves the coherence between the external and the internal world. So, Zhu Xi calls it the principle of conjoining the internal with the external.73 How is this possible?

The key to understanding gewu in Zhu Xi's moral philosophy is his claim that principle, whether it is descriptive or normative, lies in things and events. Unlike Wang Yangming's understanding of gewu, Zhu Xi admits that the principle (li) is one and, at

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73 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 288, 296. According to Zhu, the external implies external events such as governing a state, establishing world peace etc.
the same time, exists everywhere. Just as such external things, such as trees, rocks, and
animals have their own principles, so do humans. Hence, *gewu* aims at the resonance
between my principle and other principles existing outside me. As Ivanhoe points out,75
the investigation of things as the way of self-cultivation means to recover one's own
moral principle by resonating with others. In this light, *gewu* is the process of
confirming total unity between self and the world by combining the principle within the
self with the principles outside.

Meanwhile, the investigation of things is obviously an extension of knowledge,
no matter how it differs from methods of scientific inquiry. If this is so, then *how* do I
know *what* I know? Interestingly, the extension of knowledge (*zhizhi* 致知) through *gewu*
does not mean to know what one does not yet know, but to extend what I have already
taken in, subjectively and intrinsically.76 Morally, it is a process of self-transformation.
How is this possible? What are the practical methods of *gewu* and *zhizhi*? More precisely,
how does Zhu Xi systematically understand the entire world? He defines *zhi* (致) as “to
infer (or to extend: *tui* 推) to the utmost” in the *Daxue*. Moreover, Zhu Xi interprets
Mencius’ statement “to extend and fill” in the sense of extending knowledge.77 In the
*Questions on the Great Learning* (*Daxue Huowen*), he claims as follows: “Investigation
of things does not try exhaustively to inquire all things in the world, but infer (*tui* 推) the
rest of others by drawing the analogy (*lei* 類) from a full-fledged inquiry of one event.”78
In sum, the capacity for inference by analogy is the basic and prime condition of the

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76 Chen Lai (1988): 212.
77 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 324. 因其已知之理而益窮之…‘擴而充之，便是致字意思。
78 Zhu Xi, *Daxue Huowen* (1986): 16. The first literal meaning of *tui* 推 is “to push”. So, to extend and to infer
are originally derived from the meaning of *pushing* something by asking the cause or reason. In fact, the
word *tui* 推 alone is an important technical term for later Mohist dialecticians. Nivison argued the concept
of extending in terms of possibility of moral action in the *Mencius*. Im Manyul refuted the argument in his
dissertation. For this, see Nivison, 1996, ch.7 and Im, 1997, ch.2.
investigation of things.\textsuperscript{78}

Zhu Xi gives a clear account of the first meaning of zhi, as follows: "zhi is one that I naturally have. The state of mind is empty, luminous, wide, and grand, and so there is nothing which does not know. Hence, it deserves to get itself through at the utmost."\textsuperscript{79} According to my interpretation of gewu above, the extension of knowledge is not separate from the investigation of things. More precisely, extension of knowledge (zhi) does not so much extend external information, which we do not yet know, through the investigation of things, but focuses on the intellectual faculty of the mind investigating things. As I explained before, both extension of knowledge (zhizhi) and investigation of things (gewu) are processes of creating resonance between the values I already have and the values others have. So, Zhu Xi claims that zhizhi is said in terms of my perspective, while gewu is said in terms of things.\textsuperscript{80}

According to Zhu Xi, the principle (li), whether it is descriptive or normative, lies everywhere and in everything. This is why investigating things can be interpreted as the activity of inquiring about the external. Nevertheless, Zhu Xi’s account of gewu means neither lapsing into the internal moral world nor chasing external things, but keeping a unified balance or harmonious resonance between them.\textsuperscript{81} In other words, extension of knowledge is the process of strengthening the human axiological disposition while the investigation of things is the way of realizing the patterns of things and events. The

\textsuperscript{78} I will explain in detail “inferential extension by classifying the same kind (lei er tui zhi 類而推之)” in terms of moral imagination in chapter five.

\textsuperscript{79} Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 293. 知者，吾自有此知，此心虛明廣大，無所不知，要當極其至耳．After the account of zhi, Zhu Xi gives us ethical examples of the Mencian four clues. This account is quite similar to that of luminous virtue (mingde 明德). I shall argue this in further detail in chapter five.

\textsuperscript{80} Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 292. 致知，是自已而言；格物，是就物而言．

\textsuperscript{81} Zhu Xi, Dixue luewen, 17. Somebody asks “how can we say that “observation of things and reflection of the self” mean that we do look for the reason within ourselves because of observation of things?” I (master Zhu) may answer, “That is not necessary. Things and I are penetrated with one principle. If one illuminates that for even a moment, then one immediately enlightens this. This is the way of conjoining the internal with the external.”
interaction between zhizhi and gewu is the process of unifying the moral values of humans with the heavenly order.

2.3.3. Attentiveness (jing 敬) as the Way of Cultivation

How can the investigation of things (gewu) continuously commit itself to engage in the process of embodiment? Zhu Xi succinctly defines “preserving attentiveness as the root of investigating the principle.”

What is attentiveness (jing)? Etymologically, this word is related to the idea of being keenly awake in alarming situations. It later came to mean a reverent attitude toward objects. Zhu Xi is convinced that attentiveness is the way we keep the mind in optimal condition. But by attentiveness, can we actually make this possible?

Zhu Xi prefers to Cheng Yi’s references to attentiveness as follows:

“concentrating on oneness is called attentiveness” and “one should use attentiveness when one is nourishing oneself.”

Basically, this means one should have a highly attentive attitude toward one’s inner states. This attentiveness is a kind of force internally converging on oneness. Loosely speaking, Zhi Xi refers to attentiveness as keeping the mind’s awareness lucid. More analytically, he defines attentiveness per se as “the force of concentration” and calls the oneness sincerity (cheng 诚), which can be understood as integrity. Although the term cheng is used grammatically as an objective of concentration, we extend it semantically to include the idea of making intention sincere (chengyi). In the Zhongyong, cheng can be interpreted as sincere creativity representing the movement of the Heaven-Earth (tian-di). Nevertheless, we should here

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82 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 150. 持敬是窮理之本
84 Cheng (2004): 140-41. Explaining the notion of cheng in the light of self-deception, Chung-ying Cheng elucidates that cheng is to indicate an act of self as a whole self in total unity.
be able to think of oneness (cheng) in relation to the notion of attentiveness (jing) involving a mental ability of concentration and awareness. Hence, I believe that oneness should be conceived as the intentional consistency of consciousness in the light of self-cultivation. This consistency can be interpreted as the maxim "do not deceive oneself" in the Daxue. What is deceiving oneself? It means that we may fail to understand our own motives for action, because we do not pay sufficient attention to our intentions. Such a lack of attention can cause one to misinterpret one's perceptual experiences. We often act in ways that we do not understand like the King of Qi in Mencius 1A:7. To Zhu Xi, of course, attentiveness does not mean the Buddhist way of quiet-sitting (jingzuo 靜坐) and meditation (zuochan 坐禪).\(^5\) Zhu Xi believes that attentiveness should be actively employed in affairs of everyday life. He gives us an interesting picture of attentiveness: living and dead attentiveness. He writes: "Attentiveness can be living or dead. Even if one is obstinately holding attentiveness concentrating on oneness, it is dead [attentiveness] if one cannot solve any problem by proper criteria or even discriminate right from wrong when dealing with affairs".\(^6\)

So, the way of attentiveness helps stably maintain the investigation of things, to better concentrate on oneness. Figuratively, it can be likened to the ripening of wine, which implies ideas of immersing and nourishing (hanyang 滋養). This word is linked to a botanical analogy. Crops grow up with sufficient rain, sun, and fertile soil.\(^7\) Although we cannot recognize their growth in one day, they are nonetheless growing by tiny increments. From the image of botanical growth, the idea of nourishment expresses fostering and preserving subtle dispositions of the mind. When immersing and

\(^5\) Whether Zhu correctly understood the Buddhist way of meditation is not my concern here. Zhu at least reproached the Buddhist way of meditation as a nihilistic extinction, like ashes entirely burnt out.

\(^6\) Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 216. 敬有死敬, 有活敬. 若只守著主一之敬, 遇事不濟之以義, 僅是敬, 兒不活.

\(^7\) Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 205. 學者須敬守此心, 不可急迫, 當栽培深厚, 而, 只如種得一物在此. 但栽培時之功夫繫纏不已, 是栽培深厚. 如此而異者之治, 則治治而有以自得矣.
nourishing an image of what I want to embody, I should be able to preserve attentiveness. Therefore, Zhu Xi said on the one hand that the preservation of attentiveness (chijing 持敬) is the root of investigating the principle, namely, the source for the process of embodiment. On the other hand, it is the way of preserving the mind (cunxin 存心). As I shall explain in chapter three, the preservation of attentiveness plays a crucial role in maintaining the harmonious balance of the subtle and dynamic dispositions of the mind: weifa and yifa. Such observation of the mind is the constant activity of scrutinizing all my actions, including the mental.

What does preserving attentiveness mean for Zhu Xi's moral psychology? Can the observation of the mind solve many ethical problems? Although Zhu Xi claims that attentiveness as the way of self-cultivation can address all problems, I do not think that maintaining moral awareness alone can solve all ethical conflicts between individuals, groups, and countries. Nevertheless, the reason attentiveness plays a crucial role in self-cultivation is because it at least helps us capture a moment of the mind's motivation for action. Thereafter, we need to make constant efforts throughout our whole life. So, Zhu Xi called it “the efforts” (gongfu), e.g., the effort of preserving attentiveness, of immersing and nourishing, and of investigating the principle. Here, I should distinguish the notion of effort from self-cultivation. In Zhu Xi's understanding of self-cultivation, the common word gongfu symbolizes a persistent endeavor, fully devoted to attaining one's goals. If we regard self-cultivation only as a method of self-discipline aimed at developing our capacities, then our efforts would be immediately identical with self-cultivation. But, effort is not coextensive with self-cultivation, even though it

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88 For the notions of weifa and yifa, see chapter 3.2.4. There I discuss problems of attentiveness as the way of self-cultivation in understanding of the dispositions of the mind.

89 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 371. “The attentiveness is the way to penetrate everything from head to foot. From investigation of things to establishing world peace, everything does not escape from this.”

“敬”字是敬頭敬尾工夫，自格物致知至治國-平天下，皆不外此.
may form a part of self-cultivation.

In addition, as we have seen in the Daxue, the investigation of principle (qiongli 建理) is another crucial part of self-cultivation. To Zhu Xi, in fact, learning (wenxue 閲學) means the earnest questioning of the student directed at understanding himself or herself, even though the investigation of principle also implies an inquiry into the principles of external things. Hence, for him, reading books and inquiring about the principles of external things are secondary affairs. These affairs should, after all, contribute to learning for the self. The reason Zhu Xi emphasizes the investigation of principle is because he is convinced that students must develop a rational understanding of things, including ethical events. In sum, both nourishment of inwardness and investigation of principle are indispensable to self-cultivation. Zhu Xi explicitly describes their correlation as follows: “Those who only make efforts to reflect inwardness regard wide observations as external attachment. Those who only make efforts to undertake wide observations regard reflection of inwardness as the narrow. Both of them fall to one side. These are big obstacles to learners.” So, we see that the investigation of principles of external things should harmoniously coincide with the preservation of attentiveness, to make moral judgments in accordance with rational ways of thinking. Through attentiveness as the way of self-cultivation, therefore, we prepare ourselves for human relationships by realizing precisely what we feel, think, and intend to do. Zhu Xi believes that an exact understanding of the subtle movement of the mind is the first step to addressing the variety of ethical conflicts in the world.

2.4. Conclusion

**Notes**

90 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 160, 150. 務反求者, 以博觀而外馴, 務博觀者, 以內省焉稽難, 墾於一偏, 此皆學者之大病也!

91 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 161. 學問, 就自家身上看要處理會方是...
Let me briefly review what self-cultivation means in Zhu Xi’s moral philosophy. In this chapter, I argued that we should understand self-cultivation in light of more fundamental considerations, not just relating it to an ethical discourse on achieving virtues. In order to explore Zhu Xi’s ontological reflections on self-cultivation, I clarified the nature of the self as being not only the subject of reflection but also the object of cultivation. Then, I tried to reconstruct Ivanhoe’s models of self-cultivation by highlighting broader perspectives based on considerations of a whole life.

Zhu Xi believes that the most salient feature of Confucian self-cultivation is the investigation of things through which the extension of knowledge (zhizhi) takes place. According to Zhu Xi’s ontological understanding, the investigation of things is a constant process of inquiring into their principle, which can be both normative and descriptive. Of course, here “things” implies the human affairs that we encounter in daily life. The method of investigating things can be regarded as the “reflection on what is near at hand (jinsi).” Hence, in the light of ethical theory, the investigation of things is the starting point for pursuing the art of humanity. Given the basic premise that the logic of jinsi can be applied to gewu, humanity (ren), the ultimate value of Confucian ethics lies in the investigation of things. In relation to “reflection on what is near at hand,” the logic of the investigation of things leads us to the Confucian ethical maxims: “doing one’s best on one’s behalf” (zhong 忠) and “putting oneself in the place of others” (shu 舍). Zhu Xi glosses them as follows: “fully attaining the self is called zhong and extending the self is called shu.” Like the logic of both jinsi and zhongshu, therefore, the investigation of things is an ethical inquiry aimed at establishing the dynamics of human relations no matter how it implies the metaphysical pursuit of the

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93 Zhu Xi, Lunyu jizhu, 23. I shall not elucidate the ethical and metaphysical implications of these notions here. For this, see Nivison (1996): ch.5.
principle, which is omnipresent.

Meanwhile, it seems that Zhu Xi explicitly places the investigation of things and the extension of knowledge into the intellectual domain. That is to say, according to him, making one's intention sincere and setting one's mind properly belong to achieving virtuous nature, while the investigation of things and the extension of knowledge are parts of an intellectual inquiry. Zhu Xi holds that “two polarities are great clues of cultivating virtues and solidifying the Way.”

Needless to say, both are correlative with one another. The investigation of things is the way of Confucian ethical cultivation. However, we must still clarify the meaning of preserving the mind (cunxin 存心). In the dimension of self-cultivation, observing and preserving the mind elucidates the nature of moral virtues, and I discussed this in terms of attentiveness. In the next chapter I will examine how Zhu Xi understands human nature and the mind as objects of moral cultivation.

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94 Zhu Xi, Zhongyongzhangju, ch.27. 二者修德凝道之大端也.
CHAPTER III. ZHU XI ON HUMAN NATURE AND MIND

3.1. The Mencian Theme Revisited
3.1.1. Mencius and Xunzi on Human Nature

In terms of the understanding self-cultivation as a continuous life process, we can establish more clearly Zhu Xi’s way of thinking on human nature and mind. Before capturing Zhu’s ideas of them, I need first to consider Mencius’ and Xunzi’s ideas of human nature because they undertook seriously reflection upon human nature as the crucial philosophical issue in the Chinese intellectual tradition. I think that the differing understanding of human nature between Mencius and Xunzi finds its source in the view of how to establish the authority of moral actions.

For example, Mencius finds his standard in the common heart that all humans obtain from their sensual experiences. However Xunzi holds that human nature is bad and claims that all cultural values and moral measures are generated from the conscious activity of the sages. According to Xunzi,

“Human nature is bad. The goodness results from conscious activity (wei 为).”

“Human nature is the basis, beginning, material, and naïve; conscious activity is the pattern, principle, abundance, and flourishing. If there were no human nature, there would be nothing for conscious activity to add to. If there were no conscious activity, human nature would be unable to beautify itself.

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1 Mencius, 2A6, 3A5.

Here, I am reluctant to use “heart-mind” instead of “heart.” I do not think that “heart-mind” is a proper term to capture Chinese character, xin. The reason I use “heart” in this section is because it exactly implies typical meanings of English word, “heart” as follows: a. The vital center and source of one's being, emotions, and sensibilities. b. The repository of one's deepest and sincerest feelings and beliefs. c. The seat of the intellect or imagination. 4. a. Emotional constitution, basic disposition, or character. b. One's prevailing mood or current inclination. 5. a. Capacity for sympathy or generosity; compassion. b. Love; affection.” The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Third Edition (1996).

In fact, many Chinese texts, xin has had these English meanings above. Of course, Mencius has been conscious of the function of xin as the organ of thinking. So, I will use “mind” instead of “heart” when highlighting its intellectual capacities and aspect of consciousness in terms of ethical context.

2 Xunzi, “Xing’e” (Human nature is bad). 23:1.
Only when human nature and conscious activity combine are the names of the sages unified and the accomplishments of all under Heaven completed."³

Xunzi finds his ethical standard in the conscious activity of the sages, whose actions fairly and unselfishly contribute to the public good and to human civilization. According to Michael Puett, concerning the creation of culture, most Confucian sages mentioned by Confucius and Mencius did not create new inventions and technologies, but "simply imitated the patterns of Heaven and brought those patterns to the world of man."⁴ However, Xunzi opposes the idea that the sage ought to imitate nature and hence act unconsciously, even though he claims that cultural achievements are generated from the conscious activity of the sages. In sum, Xunzi does not agree with the Mencian idea that human dispositions naturally resemble the order of nature, but believes that humans should make efforts to conform to the heavenly order by realizing ethical norms and rituals given by the conscious activity of the sages. That is, Xunzi tries to draw normative values from the conscious activity of the sages by drawing attention to distinctions between nature and artifice, at least when the latter can be regarded as cultural attainment.⁵ To him, therefore, moral goodness is an achievement, and not a natural disposition.

However, I cannot help but wonder from whence the sages draw their authority? How do they know the correct standards? If Xunzi were right, then the sages would be something special, or there would be a hierarchical gap (might we say, dualism) between sages and the common people. What is so extraordinary about the sages? Unlike common humans, they seem to be a cognitively different species in the order of nature.

⁵ Xunzi, "Xing'e". 23:4.
If this were so, it would mean that the order of nature exists in a secret place (might we say, transcendent) that only the sages can find. On the contrary, as Mencius explicitly insisted, if the sages have the same hearts as we, then all humans should have a faculty or disposition for grasping the moral authority, viz., the cosmic order.

We may conclude that Mencius underscores inchoate dispositions, which can bloom fully into ethical virtues, while Xunzi focuses upon the arbitrariness of the temperament that leads to social, political, and ethical conflicts. It seems to me that they saw opposite sides of the same coin. Their differing views on human nature can give rise to problems regarding self-cultivation and moral motivation: Do we have a source either for knowing what is good or for acting morally? If we have it, where is it and how do we cultivate it? According to Nivison, Mencius solves this problem by arguing that all humans have a natural disposition (xing) toward what is right and good. Meanwhile, Xunzi believes that we are naturally disposed to have intemperate desires. What distinguishes humans in Xunzi's view is "the capacity to give the intelligent action a moral shape." However, he did not define it as a natural disposition. Why did he refrain from doing so? Xunzi probably found that the usages of xing too strongly imply only physical disposition, which is given by nature (tian), while yi (義) or "sense of duty" is a cultural product gradually accumulated over long periods of time. That is, a "sense of duty" is understood as a product of civilization, by which the sages create norms through solving problems. In sum, Xunzi explicitly makes a sharp distinction between natural (physical) dispositions and cultural norms.

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6 *Mencius*, 6A7.

7 According to neo-Confucian terms, the sages have very "lucid and purified mind, i.e., qi," which can clearly perceive and sincerely deliberate on what they intend to do.


9 Nivison (1996): 212. According to Nivison, "conscious activity (weil)" cannot become what distinguishes humans from animals because animals already have it in some degree.

10 For the traditional usages of xing, see Graham (1990): 7-66.
that are products of human efforts, implying that cultural phenomena are products, not inherent parts, of human nature.

Mencius, on the contrary, undoubtedly identifies human natural disposition with normative values of the goodness. When explicitly stating that "[the fact] that human nature is good is just the same as water flows down to,"\(^{11}\) for example, Mencius clearly views the goodness of human kind's natural disposition as similar to a certain efficacy, which necessarily emerges from a natural tendency of things. However, the disposition of life and the direction of desired normativity are not always in accord with each other. In this case, Mencius is clear in saying that "life is also what I desire; rightness is also what I desire. If I cannot take the two together, I will take rightness over life."\(^{12}\) So, the reason one chooses rightness over life is because we possess a certain disposition, which has consistently been constructed by a certain moral consensus of how one ought to live. Mencius calls it the human natural disposition (xing), which has common ethical contents of humanity, rightness, propriety, and wisdom.

It is in fact the long march of human civilization that has bequeathed such a comprehensive accordance with how to live in the Confucian world. It is an ongoing process of embodying cultural accumulations with natural disposition, which might be termed "cultural genetics." Mencius made a very creative breakthrough in using the term xing that differs totally from traditional usages. To him, moral values of how to live, which have been formed through the long history of civilization, are exactly identified with a human natural disposition. Although ardently advocating the effort to attain virtues, Xunzi attributes ethical norms to our capacity for intelligent choice and not to our natural disposition. If this is so, we should have a tension between our

\(^{11}\) *Mencius* 6A2. "人性之善也，猶水之就下也．"

\(^{12}\) *Mencius* 6A10. "生亦我所欲也，義亦我所欲也，二者不可得兼，舍生而取義者也．"
intellectual capacity and our natural disposition. Nivison concludes that "Xunzi is a classic example of a two-sources moralist: we have a nature, and all that is good in human life results from applying to it the direction of the intellect." With Xunzi, there is a question of from where the capacity of the intellect and the ethical sense (yi) are derived. Such a question itself implicitly involves either an ontological cause or an innate source. Did Xunzi really keep this question in his mind and intend to solve it? It seems to me that Xunzi's main concern, given the age in which he lived, was not so much the nature and location of the ethical ground, but how to effectively organize human community and government. Nevertheless, for our purposes here we can at least be convinced that Xunzi never considered natural disposition per se as the ethical ground, whereas Mencius did.

3.1.2. Ames and Bloom on Human Nature

Roger Ames' and Irene Bloom's interpretations of human nature shed light on the distinction between Mencius and Xunzi articulated above. Presumably, the ideas of Ames and Bloom concerning human nature concern how to highlight different aspects of the same object in accordance with their own philosophical positions. Ames has constantly interpreted Mencius' view of renxing in light of process and self-realization, by criticizing English translation of the Mencian notion of renxing as "human nature." The reason for criticizing this translation is that the nuances of the English word "nature" have essentialist and/or transcendent implications. His argument denies the kind of Platonic metaphysical system that confidently presupposes a transcendent and a priori existence or value, like Aristotle's Unmoved Mover. Meanwhile, Bloom argues

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that Mencius’ view on renxing is innately universal and “is fundamentally a biological
concept” with espousal of the English translated term of “human nature.” Focusing
on “innate (nature)” versus “acquired (nurture),” furthermore, she more emphasizes the
former than the latter in understanding the Mencian idea of human nature. In other
words, Bloom has conviction of innately firm qualities that can be prescribed as human
unique traits. Are the arguments of Ames and Bloom then incompatible with one
another?

I will first analyze the controversial passage of Mencius 7B24, which Ames and
Bloom have interpreted differently.

[A] The sensual response of the mouth to tastes, of the eye to colors, of
the ear to sounds, of the nose to fragrances, and of the four limbs to comfort are
(1) xing. But there is (2) ming (命) in them. So the noble man does not call
them (1-1) xing.

[B] Humanity between parent and child, rightness between sovereign
and minister, propriety between guest and host, wisdom for the worthy, the
Way of Nature for the sage are (1) ming. But, there is (2) xing in them. And
the noble man does not call them (1-1) ming. [Mencius, 7B24]

According to Zhu Xi, (2) ming and (2) xing are said in light of li whereas (1)/(1-1)
xing and (1)/(1-1) ming are said in light of qi. Hence, on the one hand, Zhu Xi thinks of
(1) xing as a natural tendency of temperament, which should be disciplined by (2) ming.
On the other hand, he understands (1) ming as temperamental differences, which should
be controlled by (2) xing.16 Zhu Xi basically identifies xing with ming but understands
them from different perspectives; xing is given to humans whereas ming is given from
Nature (tian).17 That is to say, the thing that Nature gives us, or what is given to us, is

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17 Zhu Xi, Mencji jishu, 7B24. One of the most well-known neo-Confucians in late Ming period, Wang Fuzhi
twofold: the temperamental as \(qi\) and the original or the moral as \(li\). So, we may reinterpret the above passage in light of Zhu Xi’s perspective as follows:

[A] We may think that the sensual responses are 'being naturally given to us' [(a) \(xing\)]. Nevertheless, there are differences among them because of 'cultural, social and environmental factors' [(a) \(ming\)]. So, the noble man does not call them being naturally given to us.

[B] We may think that moral and cultural values are depending on 'material, social and environmental grounds.' [(b) \(ming\)] Nevertheless, there are original factors that are naturally given to us [(b) \(xing\)]. So, the noble man does not call them 'material, social and environmental grounds.'

Consequently, Zhu Xi holds that there are dual meanings in both \(xing\) and \(ming\). \(Ming\) implies both a material ground [(b) \(ming\)] and cultural and social factors [(a) \(ming\)]. According to Zhu Xi’s terms, (b) is a destined temperamental difference, while (a) is a task mandated by Heavenly ordinance, which we must attain. As Bloom points out,\(^{18}\) (a) would be internal when we realize a certain mission by ourselves whereas (b) would be external when given to us. According to Zhu Xi, \(xing\) also has both meanings of natural tendency as temperament and moral authority as the cosmic order (\(tianli\)). Not only does \(xing\) have both these features, but it also has the ontological difference between "above concreteness" and "below concreteness" in terms of the li-qi framework: the original and the temperamental.

Hence, we need to examine the meanings of \(xing\) and \(ming\) in terms of their coherence to the passage above. This passage has two polarities. First, sensual responses might be a common ground on which all humans can agree, while cultural behaviors might depend on personal and practical experiences. So, we see that \(xing\)

indicates a common thing with which we can sympathize, while *ming* implies unique characteristics that differentiate our experiences. Thus, the meanings of *xing* and *ming* intersect with each other while still being distinct. Through such a structure, Mencius seems to reveal the other side of the commonsensical meanings that *xing* and *ming* normally have. Finally, it seems that both *xing* and *ming* have dual meanings - a normal and commonsensical idea and a fresh idea that Mencius newly interprets.

Mencius' new interpretation is, I think, the identification of cultural products with human natural disposition. In fact, Ames' interpretation is relevant to Mencius' own idea because Ames at least regards Mencius' *xing* as a cultural product. In relation to self-cultivation, moreover, the Mencian developmental model in which humans should bring to full bloom their own ethical buds (*siduan*) implicitly advocates Ames' interpretation that human nature is molded in accordance with the processual unfolding of cultural achievements. Meanwhile, Bloom considers human nature as the "pattern or principle" of cultural products in light of the development of moral fulfillment. So, it is possible for us to become civilized because human nature is an innate capacity to acquire some kind of cultural product. This is the reason why Bloom quotes E.O. Wilson, who insists that human nature is a collection of epigenetic rules and that cultural phenomena are not parts of human nature, but its products. However, I do not think that the principle of cultural products must necessarily be understood as an unchanging and essential substance. In the ethical dimension, it seems that Mencius needs an ethical common ground for moral action.

When we term it "human nature," we highlight the meaning of "*nature*" by

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19 The interpretation of *duan* plays a crucial role in understanding of differences between Mencius and Zhu Xi. For this, see Chapter 5.1.2.
evaluating it in terms of the cultural achievements in human civilization. For all that, can we overlook the "human"? This might refer to what is nascent in the basic human condition. If we regard the pattern as an invariant and essential foundation, we discover another ontological approach to human nature. Though such a pattern may be changed in the long history of human evolution, the pattern \textit{per se} (we might say, natural disposition) always exists in things. Moreover, these two polarities interact dependently with each other. Hence, they would be interwoven not only with ontological troubles but also many ethical issues: motivation/result of behaviors, free will/determinism, and the existence of ethical authority.

3.1.3. Key Issues of Human Nature

In summary, Mencius claims that natural dispositions are identical with cultural and ethical norms. By contrast, Xunzi maintains that natural dispositions should be disciplined by objective norms, which are generated from the conscious activity of the sages. Ames claims that there is no invariant and essential human nature by considering Mencian natural dispositions as cultural products. Meanwhile, Bloom asserts that there is a universal human nature, because there is a constant pattern shared by all humans. In the end, the issue between Mencius and Xunzi is whether human nature can play a crucial role in the moral judgment of actions. The issue between Ames and Bloom is whether the Mencian view of human nature can be interpreted as something universal.

I will confine my argument to the Mencian view of human nature because Zhu Xi ardently and explicitly advocates his theme that the nature is innately good. Like Mencius, when identifying human nature with normative goodness, we may
presuppose that it can become a kind of an ethical ground of action. But one cannot escape a puzzling problem. Can it cover all people's experiences and varieties? Mencius would say "yes." He claims that humans share similar ways of thinking and feeling, as they have similar sense organs. Furthermore, Mencius tries to establish the commonality of human beings by emphasizing the notion of an infant's mind (chizhihixin 赤子之心) and the original, good ability (liangneng 良能). By using the words of infant and original (ben 本), Mencius intended to shape the idea of an ethical common ground that all human beings share. If we accept personal experiences and social mores as motivations for actions, then it is hard to establish an ethical ground that satisfies everyone. In a word, Mencius wanted to ensure a shared ethical ground that is prior to personal experiences. To him, xing as a physiological disposition has an axiological intentionality for realizing normative efficacy of action. Therefore, Mencius robustly establishes the ethical ground by appealing to natural (we might say, physiological) disposition inherently possessed by all. However, this does not necessarily imply "transcendent, invariant, and essentialist" conditions, because Mencius appealed not to universal transcendence, but to the common hearts of humans. We need then to inquire further into whether this "commonality of physiological disposition" can be understood as "invariant, essential, and transcendent" universality, as Ames and Bloom posit. If Mencius immediately considered physiological conditions as a common ground for normativity, it would give rise to a paradoxical dilemma, requiring that we should approve of particular and limited conditions becoming universal. That is to say,

21 Mencius, 6A7.
22 If so, Mencius might inevitably consent to approve both Mohists and Yangists' ethical behaviors. However, Mencius harshly criticized them by arguing that both Mohists and Yangists violate common hearts of humans.
23 As James Tiles points out, of course, the fact that we need food can become universal. In relation to neo-Confucian idea of the cosmic order, li, what I want to point out here is their view that human biological conditions cannot become universal normativity to cover all cosmic phenomena. Of course, it seems that
Mencius would not be aware of a crucial issue arising from his claim, i.e., whether or not the ethical ground is universal. Hence, he was not aware the ground he proposed could still be restricted to the least “practical and given” situation, which may be called “the biological and individual.” In other words, we need to investigate whether the human nature elucidated by Mencius is equivalent to the basic rules or patterns illuminated by evolutionary biology. If so, it would be a universal ground to the extent that ethical discussions are treated within the boundary of the human species. Nevertheless, it would still be limited by the human species as well as restrictive empirical contexts, which are provided by the biological conditions of humans. Can we then call it universal?

Neo-Confucian thinkers realized the puzzling problem of human nature. They tried to solve this by dividing human nature into two layers: original nature (benanzhixing 本然之性) and temperamental disposition (qizhizhixing 氣質之性). When involving the temperament, xing indicates a particular and distinct disposition, which each person would naturally have. When contrasting original nature with the temperament, Zhu Xi and other neo-Confucian scholars presupposed that xing as temperament denoted all physical and mental conditions, including psychological phenomena, emotions, and even intellectual capacities, while xing as the original means common values. On the one hand, such a distinction between original nature and temperamental nature implies that neo-Confucian thinkers have inquired into xing in terms of two angles: the physiological disposition and the axiological disposition, which has been formed through the long march of civilization. By situating the axiological disposition into human beings, on the other hand, the distinction involves not so much a

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Mencius was not aware of this aspect of human biological conditions.
substantial bifurcation between them, as a conceptual understanding of human nature. For example, imagine a man who was born blind. Even though his disability would in part limit his ability to judge events/things, his ethical heart would be preserved, intact, since his birth. I think that neo-Confucian thinkers have established the axiological disposition by paying attention to such an ethical heart, which cannot be disturbed by temperamental disposition.

Of course, the matter of self-cultivation should be concerned with both the temperamental and the original. That is to say, we make efforts to preserve the original and, at the same time, to control the temperamental, even though Zhu Xi often advocates literally getting rid of it. In spite of these contradictory expressions, I think these are two modes of a unitary nature (xing). How, then, can we plausibly explain the relationship between the two modes of human nature? If we may approach the two faces of a unitary xing in terms of such dualistic perspectives as rationality/sentiment, value/fact, and the normative/the descriptive and so forth, then the human nature can be customarily understood as a kind of schizophrenia, a sort of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Hence, we need to examine with greater precision his central theme of human nature; xing ji li, “human nature is the cosmic order.”

3.2. Zhu Xi on Human Nature and Mind

Let me first discuss translations of the term xing (xing). In order to highlight the processual aspect of xing, Ames rendered it as “natural tendency.” This translation seems adequate when we use it to designate specific natural tendencies, which each person innately possesses. For example, Mencius metaphorically analogizes the

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24 This distinction is ontologically based on the li-qi framework.
goodness of human kind's natural disposition with certain efficacy, which necessarily emerges from a natural tendency of things. For this reason this translation does not work without distinctness of species. On the other hand, Zhu Xi often used the term in a general sense, in order to indicate xing in itself within a universal and abstract dimension and, at the same time, took it as temperamental disposition of particular things. Therefore, I should be able to apply either natural disposition or nature in accordance to the context of a given passage. In addition, I will sometimes take an axiological disposition to delineate the implications of its normative features.

When Zhu Xi actively advocates Cheng Yi’s theme that “nature is the coherent order (xingjili 性即是理),”26 for example, the meaning of xing seems at least to entail “the nature” of myriad things. Impartially permeating all through the world, the coherent order (li) is to be named nature (xing) as what makes humans become humans (suoyiran 所然) from the ontological perspective. As natural disposition embodying the normative, it is what makes humans become “ought-to-be” (suodangran 所當然) as well.

3.2.1. The Nature is the Cosmic Order – xing ji li (性即是理)

Zhu Xi's idea of xing is exemplary of neo-Confucian interpretation. It is how neo-Confucian scholars tend to interpret early Confucian ideas, in accordance with the li-qi framework. In fact, the Chinese name of neo-Confucianism in general is “the study of the Principle of Human Nature” (xinglixue 性理學),27 which explicitly suggests a

26 Zhuxi Zhongyang Zhangju, ch.1. As I mentioned in the footnotes of chapters 1 and 2, it is hard to translate li into a relevant English term. Even though it has multiple and comprehensive meanings in general, it can be delimited in an ontological principle when it comes to mention human nature (xing). So, I will take “the coherent order” as its ontological meaning while taking “rationality” as its ethical implication. In addition, li can be translated as the “cosmic order” or “heavenly order” when Zhu Xi refers to “tianli (天理).”

For the philosophical implications of li related to my argument, see chapter 5.

27 For the nomenclature of neo-Confucianism, see Tillman (1992a). According to current achievement in Chinese intellectual history, it seems that most contemporary Chinese historians nowadays agree to call it
metaphysical investigation of human nature (xing). Hence, it is reasonable to assume a hermeneutic turn in the neo-Confucian notion of xing. Moreover, it is expected that a clear understanding of Zhu Xi’s idea of xing is the key to reconciling various arguments that Zhu Xi and his followers unfolded. Furthermore, it serves as a roadmap for a grander conceptualization of neo-Confucianism.

In order to explore Zhu Xi’s idea of xing in light of self-cultivation, we should keep in mind that most neo-Confucian scholars, especially of the Cheng-Zhu School, ardently advocated the Mencian theme that humans are naturally good.28 As Chungying Cheng pointed out,29 this implies that we should clarify coherent philosophical characterizations of xing in light of Mencian insights and neo-Confucian views, which would penetrate all relevant points concerning xing in Chinese philosophy. In addition, I believe that the Mencian theme that humans are innately good will contribute to contemporary virtue ethics.30

(1) The Human Nature is the Rationality

In order to analyze Zhu Xi’s way of understanding of human nature, we first need to examine some ontological themes in neo-Confucian discourse: first, Cheng Yi’s idea, “The nature is the rationality (xing ji li 性即理),” second, the idea that li and qi are neither mixed nor separated. Zhu Xi believes that there is a coherent order that fully penetrates and permeates all through the world. In terms of philosophical anthropology, it is identical with the notion of xing, which can be called nature, or

29 Chungying Cheng had in details analyzed the philosophical implications of the theme; xing ji li. For this, see Cheng (1997): 33-46.
30 The neo-Confucian claim that human [nature] is innately good is to mean that the human nature as the moral virtue is inherently good. In contemporary debates on the Aristotelian virtue as moral reason, I explained that Zhu Xi’s idea of virtue can be an alternative. See Chapter 5.1.4.
natural disposition of humans. In terms of the ontological level of things and events, it is of course the coherent order (li) implying a rhythmic urge toward the myriad things. So, the cosmic order of each particular thing does not indicate a part of the entire cosmic order, but the entire cosmic order in itself. Furthermore, Zhu Xi regarded tian (which might we interpret as, Nature, the Heaven-Earth) as the cosmic order in the light of its natural and spontaneous characteristics. That is to say, li, tian, and taiji (太極), fully permeating all through the world, are the total and perfect order that maintains the world naturally and spontaneously. Therefore, what is inherently given to us by the Heaven-Earth is termed xing, which might be rendered into a natural disposition permeating humans spontaneously and making them the way we really inclining us to become.

In ethical dimension, Zhu Xi identifies the cosmic order (li) with the Mencian conception of human natural disposition, which has formed through the long march of civilization and so that it is interpreted as a kind of axiological tendency. As I will explain soon, nevertheless, xing is seen as neither transcendent nor the cognitive functions of human experience. Because xing is the entire authority of moral actions, which perfectly equate with the cosmic order, we should be able to manifest it in relation to the matter of self-cultivation. More precisely, to cultivate oneself is a process of consummating the virtue of the cosmic order naturally by practicing moral actions.

For example, Zhu Xi clearly possessed the worldview of the Yijing and the

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31 Since the Xia dynasty, in fact, tian has been a historical and comprehensive concept, which has been formed from tian as a natural condition (ziran tian 自然天) through tian as a superintendent spirit (zhuditian 主宰天) to tian as an immanent principle (li tian 理法天). In other words, the notion of tian has been changed in accordance with the historical developments of civilization. In short, tian does not refer to an independent and transcendent creator deity in the Chinese intellectual context. Zhu Xi's understanding of tian mainly focuses on an immanent principle even though he admits natural tian in terms of astronomy. See Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 5.
Zhongyong, which declare the mutual participation of human beings and tian-di in executing cultural achievements. According to this worldview, such an embodiment of the cosmic order ontologically implies spontaneous practices with 'reflective equilibrium,' rather than a mysterious personal experience through sudden enlightenment. Therefore, the unity between natural disposition and the cosmic order is not only an attempt to realize moral values but also a cornerstone in constructing a form of life as ethically grounded. In sum, the thesis that nature is the coherent order is a kind of manifesto declaring that humans actively participate in cultural achievements through the process of embodiment, viz. self-cultivation.

(2) The Relationship between li and qi

Zhu Xi’s view of human nature (xing) should be understood as the li-qí framework if we attempt to examine it in light of ontological perspective. Zhu Xi is explicitly saying as follows.

“When discussing the nature of the Heavens-Earth, it is only said in light of li; when discussing the nature of the temperament, it is said in light of interblending li with qi. Before qi exists, there is already xing. Although qi does not exist yet, xing has always existed. Although it exists in the midst of qi, qi is just qi in itself; xing is just xing in itself so that they do not interblend with one another.”

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32 http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/reflective-equilibrium/ “The method of reflective equilibrium has been advocated as a coherence account of justification in several areas of inquiry, including inductive and deductive logic as well as ethics and political philosophy.” Coined by Nelson Goodman, the concept of reflective equilibrium has been developed by Rawls. I use this concept for examining our moral judgments about a particular issue by considering their coherence with our beliefs about similar cases as well as by looking for balance with factual issues from investigation of things. If I consider this term in the Zhongyong, then it can be interpreted as ‘harmonious equilibrium’ (zhonghe 中和).

33 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 67. 謝天地之性，則專指理言； pute氣質之性，則以理與氣雜而言之。未有此氣，已有此性， 氣有不存，而性常在。雖其方在氣中，然氣自是氣，性自是性，亦不相交雜.
On this paragraph, Zhu Xi is clear in stating that the natural disposition has nothing to do with physiological and emotional disposition of human beings. It just represents the axiological disposition, which is normatively knitted into our mind. If so, human nature (xing) as the axiological disposition might be seen as something conceptual, and not something real. This problem is derived from Zhu Xi’s definition of the relationship between li and qi. He consistently held that they are neither mixed nor separated. This relationship can apply to other dyadic expressions, e.g., yin-yang, the body and the function (ti-yong 體用), the Way and the material (dao-qi 道器) and movement and stillness (dong-jing 動靜). More simply, they are mutually interdependent, or interpenetrated, but cannot be mixed. This logic is almost the same as the four dharma world (sifajie 四法界), which was set forth by Du Shun (556-640) in his remarkable essay On the Meditation of Dharmadhātu.\(^{34}\) That is, Zhu Xi thought that li is the unitary order, despite the fact that it is diversely manifested (liyi fenshu 理一分殊).

This way of thinking about the li-qi framework is akin to huayan philosophy. Just as one is all and all is one, so each has li as the unitary order and the order is reflected in each. The idea that each thing has its own order (li), but that order is not a part of a whole or larger order, but is itself the whole, is very similar to the huayan way of thinking. For example, it is a well known metaphor that one moon in the sky is reflected in a thousand rivers and each reflection is itself the whole.

Can such a way of thinking solve the problem in the relationship between li and

\(^{34}\) Chang (1971): 121, 142-154. It is well known that the li-qi framework was deeply influenced by Huayan Buddhism. More clearly speaking, the framework was not created by neo-Confucian thinkers, but has been developed and articulated by many Chinese intellectuals including Daoists and Chinese Buddhist monks since the import of Buddhism. Nevertheless, it seems that such a way of thinking was still unfamiliar to neo-Confucians like Zhu Xi’s students. For the influence of Buddhism on neo-Confucianism, see Ivanhoe (1993): 50-55.
In order to solve it, the logic of huayan philosophy uses the poetic expression: “mutual immediacy and mutual penetration.” According to the huayan logic, L is Q and Q itself is L. Both are mutually interpenetrated. In this logic, L is neither a transcendent substance nor the nominal premise. Additionally, it is not a dualistic distinction between them. We may see that Zhu Xi prefers this logic because he uses the copula, ji (即), when expressing mutual immediacy. This character was used only four times in the Four Books and its meaning was “to go forward,” having nothing to do with “immediate”. In Zhu Xi’s work passim, however, we can find it having the meaning of “immediate, direct”. By using this character, one might effectively express that two things are mutually penetrating with each other. Nevertheless, we should clearly keep in mind that Zhu Xi seemed reluctant to immediately identify it with both meanings. So, his account of the relationship between li and qi always emphasizes that they are neither mixed nor separated. It is very tricky. However, can we be satisfied with this explanation? Does it logically make sense?

I will point out one more puzzling issue in the relationship between li and qi, in light of the ethical discussion. As often as his students debated the problems regarding the relationship, Zhu Xi also frequently gave them unsatisfactory answers. When one of his students asked whether or not li is prior to qi, Zhu Xi replied that “there naturally exists li wherever qi is conglomerating.” He added that “li has no intention (qingyi 情意), no plan (jidu 計度), and no operation (zaoyou 造作) although qi can conglomerate and operate.” This would mean that all activities eventually depend on the activity of qi, and have nothing to do with li. In the real world, qi is the most important agent,

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35 It is the same as contemporary Chinese, jiushi就是. With the development of colloquial expression since the Song China, frequency of its usage was getting increased. Buddhist monks had effectively used this expression.
while *li* is figuratively the king without the throne. This would give rise to many ethical issues, which are related to the nature of virtues, free will, and the authority of moral actions. Despite the puzzling problem, Zhu Xi strongly claimed a dynamic unity between the two by means of the theme that *li* and *qi* are neither mixed nor separated. This puzzling question reminds me of Russell’s paradox. The idea that *li* and *qi* are neither separated nor mixed can be logically paraphrased as saying that the notion of *li* should be an element of the myriad things constituted by *qi* and, at the same time, a set that has the *li* as its element.

For example, we may find a pattern similar to this idea in both the *Yijing* and the Buddhist worldview: "The rule that everything undergoes changes (*bianyi 变易*) is unchangeable (*buyi 不易")." In Zhu Xi’s work, it is hard to find any theoretical efforts to articulate this problem, although he was aware of it as a puzzling issue. Probably, this paradox would be constituted by those who take it for granted that there is obviously a dualistic distinction between the universal/the particular, *li/qi*, value/fact, and the mental/the physical etc. On the other hand, the paradox can be formed by the metaphysical imagination, which tries to establish the transcendent substance as an ontological foundation. However, we have seen that Zhu Xi rejected both the transcendent substance and the dualistic framework. In other words, his ontological

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37 One of the problems is that Zhu Xi did not clearly articulate this second theme in his works while just affirming it.
38 This idea was inspired by Kim Sang-il (1997).
39 In order to link with Russell’s paradox, I should first explain categorical continuum or commonness between conceptual pairs of universal/particular and *li/qi*. Is the universal exactly identical with *li*? *Li* can be conceived as the universal in terms of the point that it is a unitary order to cover varieties of phenomena. Meanwhile, *qi* represents particularity, numerousness and diversity of myriad things in accordance with its qualitative and quantitative differences. So, I think it can be symbolized the particular.

In addition, *li* and *qi* can represent value and fact respectively. Even though *li* is both the normative and the descriptive, it means normative values whereas *qi* involves factual events or feelings, which would be raised in ethical situations.
idea strongly aims at the total unity of li, even though his students, because they saw li and qi as part of a dualistic framework, did not understand the relation between the two.

There is one solution on which I depend. As Gödel showed in his incompleteness theorems, in a complete and consistent system, there will be always some statements that are true, but not provable in the system. Moreover, if a system is complete and consistent, then the system does not include the statement of its own consistency. That is to say, we cannot prove Zhu Xi's paradigm of total holism as long as we consider a dualistic world as a consistent system. No matter how one tries to prove the unity between li and qi in a consistent system of a dualistic world, it is still incomplete in the consistent world. We should be aware of that there is originally no dualistic gap between li and qi in his ontological world. So, we can naturally follow the idea that li and qi are seamless as well as immediately interpenetrated. Hence, as both Ames and Ivanhoe have generally indicated, we can take it for granted that it is very natural that "li is both descriptive and normative". Nevertheless, the relationship between li and qi is still the most puzzling problem in neo-Confucian philosophy.

3.2.2. New Discourse of Equilibrium and Harmony (zhonghe xin shuo 中和新說)

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40 Hofstadter (1999): 17, 86. As Tiles points out, the sense of completeness is also known as categoricity.
41 We can find a similar logic in chapter 2 of the Zhuangzi. (Harvard-Yenching Institute Sinological Index Series. 27/85). Graham (2001): 60. "You and I having been made to argue over alternatives, if it is you not I that wins, is it really you who are on to it, I who am not? If it is I not you that wins, is it really I who am on to it, you who are not? Is one of us on to it and the other of us not? Or are both of us on to it and both of us not? If you and I are unable to know where we stand, others will surely be in the dark because of us. Whom shall I call into depend on?" If I get someone of your party to decide it, being already of your party how can he decide it? If I get someone of my party to decide it, being already of my party how can he decide it? If I get someone of a party different from either of us to decide it, being already of a party different from either of us how can he decide it?...Shall we find someone else to depend on?"
43 This nomenclature is derived from the passage of the Zhongyong.
"The moment at which joy and anger, grief and pleasure, have yet to arise is called a nascent equilibrium (zhong 中); once the emotions have arisen, that they are all brought into proper focus is called harmony (he和). Ames (2001): 89.
- Two Dispositions of the Mind: *weifa* (未發) and *yifa* (已發)

(1) Zhu Xi’s Theoretical Transition of *Weifa* and *Yifa*

I claimed that Zhu Xi’s view of human nature is neither transcendent nor the cognitive functions of human experience. In order to understand this, I shall illuminate his “New Discourse of Equilibrium and Harmony.” In fact, Zhu’s philosophical enterprise begins with a Confucian understanding of human nature (*xing*) and the mind (*xin*) under the guidance of his master Li Tong (李侗: 1093-1163). Li Tong guided him to meditate on the *weifa* state of the mind, which entails the original and tranquil source of human nature. In fact, we can find the term *weifa* in Chapter One of the *Zhongyong*. In the *Zhongyong*, *weifa* was not a defined philosophical term, but an ordinary descriptive expression as follows: “The moment at which joy and anger, grief and pleasure, ‘have yet to arise’ (*weifa* 未發) is called a nascent equilibrium; once the emotions have arisen, that they are all brought into proper focus is called harmony.”

Zhu Xi frequently glossed it as *xing* (we might say, natural disposition), despite the fact that this expression is neither abstruse expression nor dead language.

Why can *weifa* be understood as *xing*? When Li Tong taught Zhu Xi to acquire the *weifa* state as the original source of human nature, it involved certain state of the tranquility that seems close to the extinctive emotionally. Zhu Xi confessed that he failed to acquire the *weifa* state of human nature.

After his teacher passed away, Zhu Xi gradually established his own idea of it through many exchanges with Zhang Shi (張栻: 1133-1180). Zhang preferred *yifa* to *weifa* and did not regard meditation so highly. Rather, Zhang insisted that one should

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45 Zhu Xi, *Zhongyong Zhangju*, 2. “Joy and anger, grief and pleasure are *qing* (sentiments, emotions). Their dispositions having yet to rise are nature.”
46 I do not think that Li Tong was aware of that it could in a sense have intimacy with Buddhist idea of nirvana.
pursue contemplation in the rise of emotions and actions. According to Zhang Shi, the nature (xing) is something transcendent that we cannot attain through meditation. For this reason does he encourage Zhu Xi to study the mind as inchoate stirring of human experience, which Zhu Xi considered as the yifa state of the mind. After struggling with Zhang’s opinions for a long time, Zhu Xi concluded that we, humans, experience the state of yifa consciousness during our whole life. To Zhu Xi, weifa is “the eternal life force (shengsheng buyi zhi ji) responding without ceasing to the flow of events in life”.47 Although he does not break the two, according to Julia Ching, Zhu Xi explicitly understood the obvious distinction between them as a kind of dichotomy, or dualism, e.g., the relationship between the noumena and the phenomena.48 In a word, Zhu Xi assigns the nature and the mind to the weifa and the yifa respectively. This is named “the Old Discourse on Equilibrium and Harmony.”

A few years later, in 1169, Zhu Xi found new doubts during conversations with Cai Yuanding (蔡元定).49 By examining Cheng Yi’s works on the issue, Zhu Xi realized that the two dispositions, weifa and yifa, belong to the same entity, the mind, rather than to nature and the mind respectively.50 This means that Zhu Xi organically and seamlessly unified the two dispositions with one another.51 This is his “New Discourse on Equilibrium and Harmony.” We can see that there is typically a dialectic pattern in his theoretical transitions. That is, he has been first (1) emphasizing weifa (the disposition of the original nature), then (2) focusing on yifa (dualistic understanding of

49 Zhu Xi, Zhu Xi Ji, vol.75, “zhongge jiushuo xu” (Prologue to Old Discourse on Equilibrium and Harmony), 3949.
50 Zhu Xi, Zhu Xi Ji, Ibid., and vol.64, “yu hunan zhugong lun zhonghe di yi shu” (The First Letter of Discussions on Equilibrium and Harmony with Scholars of Hunan province), 3383.
51 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 86. 心無關於已發未發, 徵謂徵徵者為, 那處觀為已發未發! 如放縱邪修行, 此心亦在, 不可謂非心.
them) and finally (3) unifying both of them. Roughly speaking, this is called the investigation of subtle dispositions of the mind. As we can read from Zhu Xi’s gloss of weifa, “having yet to arise” (weifa) eventually implies two dispositions of the mind, i.e. when a nascent and subtle movement of mind begins: “already (yi-)” and “not yet (wei-)”.

(2) Ethical Implications of Weifa and Yifa

Consequently, observing his accounts of equilibrium and harmony, both the new and the old, we can see that he understood the two dispositions of the mind, not as incompatible, but as a harmonious unity. So, we may simply say that it is the transition from the dualistic framework to the holistic world. So what? How can we understand this transition in Zhu Xi’s ethical discussions? First, it would mean that Zhu Xi thoroughly broke with exclusive internal meditation as a way of self-cultivation, which isolates the self from the world. In other words, completeness of internal excellence alone has nothing to do with practical achievements of moral actions in the real world. Second, such unification implies that yifa alone, which would be called activity of consciousness, i.e., qi-activity, cannot also take any right direction for human actions. So, this is another expression of “the way of unifying the inside with the outside (he neiwei zhi dao)”.

If we were attached to only axiological dispositions, we may fall into religious dogmatism or ethical rigorism. As a matter of fact, Zhu Xi criticizes Buddhist ways of

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52 Chen Lai (1988): 149. He evaluates it as the establishment of rationalism by transition from intuitionism to intellectualism. Ching (2000): 120. She also appraises that this is to build Confucian way of cultivation rather than to proceed into mysticism. Such a theoretical transition was deeply related to Zhu Xi’s intellectual quest between two contemporary Confucian groups of the Daonan School, which was represented by Li Tong, and the Huxiang School represented by Zhang Shi. For this, see Tillman (1992b): 43-82.
cultivation for pursuing the perfect extinction of all existences. To Zhu Xi, the Buddhist cultivation of Chan meditation for Enlightenment means entering into the perfect extinction of consciousness. It appeared to him that this leads to ethical nihilism. Furthermore, Zhu Xi cannot be satisfied with Zhang Shi’s account of equilibrium and harmony. He seems to think that we are unable to know what we should do if we pay attention to the activity of consciousness alone. In fact, Zhang Shi’s account of the agent in light of the activity of consciousness could be enough to handle ethical issues in the real world because it at least requires us to deliberate on all activities of consciousness in action. However, if one accepts this account, one does not necessarily have a teleological value which one should pursue. It means that there is no certain intentionality to what makes one become human. If so, all humans can realize that it is the mind having only temperamental impulses without any moral directedness.

Therefore, Zhu Xi’s new attempt is to establish a coherent understanding of two dispositions of the mind in order to reconstruct the Confucian way of ethical thinking in the real human world. To him, the Confucian way of ethical thinking means that desires and emotions encountered in everyday life are immediately identical with moral sensibility, which can naturally lead to moral actions. It would be a final goal to what Confucius said of himself, that “at seventy I followed my heart’s desires without overstepping the boundaries.”

(3) *Weifa* and Activity of Consciousness

What then does Zhu Xi mean by *weifa*? What significance does it hold in his ethical theory? We need to inquire into this in detail. Yi Sung-hwan maintains that the

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dispositions of *weifa/yifa* indicate whether intentional consciousness has yet to rise.\(^54\)

When discussing the state of *weifa*, Zhu Xi first says that it can be described as a state wherein “consciousness is not benighted (zhijue bumei 知覺不昧)” and “thought has not yet sprouted (sīlū weimeng 思慮未萌)”. A few years later, however, he revised these two descriptions of *weifa* to represent subtly different features of it.\(^55\) Here, we may see that Zhu Xi regards an awakening disposition of consciousness itself as *weifa*, while the emergence of thought, consideration, and discriminative sense are understood as *yifa*.

However, as Yi pointed out,\(^56\) it seems that many of Zhu Xi's students continued to misunderstand the state of *weifa* as a pause of consciousness. Zhu Xi denies that it is either a pause of consciousness or a transcendent state of original nature. Accepted as a pause of consciousness, he maintained, would make it a Buddhist way of cultivation, not the Confucian way. Zhu Xi goes one step further to divide consciousness (zhijue) into two parts. That is to say, when we are in the state of *weifa*, there is only activity of consciousness (neng zhijue), but there is no object being perceived (suo zhijue).\(^57\) Hence, according to Yi, *weifa* is pre-intentional perceptual consciousness while *yifa* is intentional consciousness in general.\(^58\) When activity of consciousness encounters its object, therefore, one intends to do something, or feels one's likes or dislikes toward an object.\(^59\) Obviously such a moment can ethically give rise to diverse behavior.

\(^{54}\) Yi Sung-hwan (2004): 67-106. I am indebted to him for summarizing his detailed argument of *weifa*.

\(^{55}\) In order to describe subtle differences, Zhu Xi draws the analogies from two hexagrams of the *Yijing*: kun and *fu*. For this, see Yi (2004): 80-81.

\(^{56}\) Yi (2004): 71.

\(^{57}\) Yi (2004): 81. I reconfirm the original source, Zhu Xi, *Zhu Xi Ji*, vol.48 “Da Lü Ziyue” (A letter to Lü Ziyue) 2327. 至靜之時但有能知能覺者而無所知所覺之事此於易卦為純坤不為無陽之象若論復卦則須以有所知覺者當之不得合為一說矣...


Let me give an example of the notions of weifa and yifa. Suppose we imagine a bright lamp moving on its own accord. The diffusion of the bright light itself is an activity of consciousness (weifa). If the lamp were to move with the express intent of illuminating a given object, then it is called yifa. Just as the colors and intensity of the lamp can vary in accordance with its uses, so the activity of consciousness can be changed into various modes of consciousness, such as thought (sīlū), intention (yì), and will (zhì). Including movements, colors, and intensity, all varieties of the lamp are emotions as well as intentional modes. That is to say, all of these modes of the mind can share one thing: the intentional.

Therefore, we can now realize why Zhu Xi emphasizes the notion of making intentions sincere in the Great Learning. When activity of consciousness rises in the mind, it has intentions. For example, the weather is freezing. I can of course have no intention to do anything, although I feel chilly. The reason I feel chilly is merely because my consciousness is present. However, if I start mentally or physically to react to my feeling, it means that I consciously or unconsciously have intent. By this understanding, then, both good and bad feelings and rational thought possess intent. Moreover, rational thinking can be strategically used on the level of instrumental reason, e.g., justifying one's bad intentions or pursuing private interests. Disguising one's

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60 According to Zhu Xi, this is the state of weifa. We can see a difference between notions of zhi (感; sensory knowing)and yì (意; intentional consciousness) here. For this, see Zhu Xi, Zhu Xi Ji, vol.48 "Da Lü Ziyue" (A letter to Lü Ziyue), 2327. "程子云若無事時耳須聞目須見既云耳須聞目須見則與前項所答已不同矣... Here, I may raise a question about the mind and body problem in the light of the contemporary philosophy of mind. For instance, how can the physical event (the freezing weather) give rise to the mental event (feeling of the chilly)? What is the relationship between them? To Zhu Xi, however, it would be no problem because his ontology is monistic, qi-physicalism. Moreover, all activities of consciousness that are regarded as the mental also belong to the activity of qi. When one further asks about the ontological relationship between qi and li, as we have seen before, Zhu Xi would give us an answer of immediate identity, which is originated from the logic of Huayan Buddhism.

61 I do not think that I need to deal with autonomous nerve system here.

hostility with rational thinking, for instance, one may stubbornly adhere to a
conservative position (or vice versa) on some ethical issues, such as prostitution,
homosexuality, and abortion. After all, such an ethical judgment tries to justify one’s
personal preference. According to Zhu Xi, justification of personal preference by
rational thinking (sǐlǔ) is one of the most dangerous acts of intent, because it destabilizes
community. So, Zhu Xi points out that we should watch with care the intentional
moment which can give rise to emotions.

Consequently, the way of self-cultivation aims at the subtle movements of the
mind. Not only does it entail the state of yǐfā as the rise of intentional consciousness but
also the state of wéifā as the original activity of consciousness. That is to say, we need to
make efforts not only to manage intentional directedness but also to maintain the
natural and original disposition. In the end, it is a persistent effort to let emotions
spontaneously follow the moral disposition.

3.2.3. The Ontological Understanding of the Mind
(1) The Mind and Activity of Consciousness – xīn and zhījùe

In the “New Discourse of Equilibrium and Harmony”, we can see that Zhu Xi
views the mind from a new angle, viz. the unity between human nature and the
emotive/cognitive stirring. In other words, the mind shifts to a new dimension of
organic entirety. Despite the fact that xìng itself involves both the temperamental and
the original dispositions, the main semantic usage of xìng exclusively entails the
cosmic order implying a perfection of axiological authority in his philosophy. Hence,
the comprehensive view of the mind unifying xìng with qìng (xīn tōng xìng qìng
心統性情) delineates the holistic picture of humans as moral agents that harmoniously

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63 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 63-65 如有天命之性，便有氣質。若以天命之性為捏於心，則氣質之性又安頓在何處!
combines the axiological disposition with all emotive/cognitive faculties. This is why Zhu Xi highly respects Zhang Zai's idea that "the mind unifies natural disposition (xing) with all activities of consciousness (qing)." In the same vein, Zhu Xi remarkably esteems Zhang Zai's other statement that "the mind is named the combination of natural disposition (xing) with consciousness (zhijue)."64

What Zhu Xi defined as the emotive and cognitive activities aims to capture all about human activities. One of the most important features of human beings is their ability to experience the world via their own sensual-cognitive faculties. To him, the mind as the organic entirety should be the reservoir, which can fully contain not only the cosmic order of Nature (tianli), but also all cognitive and sentimental activities (qing).65 Within the mind, in other words, all mental activities such as "knowing", "perceiving", "believing", "desiring" and "intending", should be consonantly unified with the normative tendency of how to live with a neo-Confucian moral philosophy. However, the mind is not simply the sum of the axiological disposition (xing) and the emotive/cognitive activities of humans.

The Chinese idea of xin (mind) is the relevant locus to capture the comprehensive disposition of human beings, which can synergize the value-intended disposition with the emotive/cognitive faculties. That is condensed into the vivid creativity of the cosmic energy.

[Student]: Could you please clarify the meaning of mind (xin 心)?
[Master]: If it can be covered in one expression, it just would be "life (sheng 生)." "The great virtue of the Heavens-Earth is called giving life."66 Humans are given birth by taking qi of the Heavens-Earth...Mind (xin) should

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64 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 94. 合性與氣 有性之名; 合性與知覺 有心之名, 是就人物上說。
65 Even though qing is very comprehensive notion to indicate consciousness in general, I shall define it as the sentimental or the emotional in terms of moral psychology.
66 Great Commentary Appendix to the Yi Jing.
be understood in the meaning of grand flow, moreover, in the will of life.\(^67\)

In this dialogue, Zhu Xi clearly manifests that the mind is an actuality of life. In other words, he sheds light on the point that the mind should be understood in “the will of life (shengyi 生意).” It is a dynamic and orderly urge toward life, like the “soaring hawks and jumping fishes (鷹飛魚躍)” in the Book of Song, which neo-Confucians traditionally quoted to depict the vivid energy of the Heavens-Earth, fully manifesting the cosmic order. Such a creative vitality of producing myriad things is more than a simple sum between xing and qing.

On the other hand, the mind has total sensibility of thinking and feeling.

“When humans are born, there first exists qi (biological energy). After constituting a shape, lower soul (po 魂) first exists there. (Zhou Dunyi said) ‘After a shape comes to becoming, cognitive faculty (zhi 知) emerges from the spirits (shen 神).’ After a shape existed, spirits and consciousness dwell in there.”\(^68\)

Though I will not analyze here such abstruse words as po and shen, it is enough to assume that the main idea of this sentence indicates that the cognitive faculties of humans are supervened by the lives of humans. Such an idea is based on his ontological position that the mind is qi. By the simple definition, “the mind is quintessential lucidity of qi,”\(^69\) Zhu Xi means that the mind has a cognitive capacity or

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\(^{67}\) Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 85. 發明心字，曰：一言以蔽之，日生而已。天地之大德日生，人受天地之氣而生，故此心必仁，仁則生矣。心須兼廣大流行底意看，又須兼生意看。且知幾先生言：仁者，天地生物之心，只天地便廣大，生物便流行，生生不窮。

\(^{68}\) Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 41. 會思量度度底便魂，會記當去底便魂。又曰：“見於目而明，耳而聰者，是魂之用。老氏云載玄魄，魄是晶燦之義，魄是一箇晶光寒凝物事。釋氏之地水火風，其說云，人之死也，風火先散，則不能為魂，魂魄先散而魄尚存，只是消磨未盡，少間自壞了。若地水先散，而風火向滅，則魄為魂，靈魂氣猶存爾。”

人生初開是先有氣，既成形，是魂在先。形低生矣，神發知矣。既有形後，方有精神知覺。

\(^{69}\) Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 85. As I briefly explained before, the translation of qi is philosophically controversial. Qi basically involves all material things and their phenomena. Meanwhile, he admits it to the abstract
mental property because it is constituted by the highly superior part of *qi*, which lets it move astutely. Or more simply, humans are composed of *qi*. Depending on the degree of density, *qi* can represent diverse shapes, qualities, functions, and relations. The more transparent *qi* is, the more it is akin to lucid mental activity. The thicker the *qi*, the closer it is to the material or physical.

Thus, according to Zhu Xi the mind, as quintessential lucidness of *qi*, is mental activity. For example, “the organ of mind is extremely inscrutable; it preserves the past [memory] and knows what it comes (might we say, the future) [inference].” Describing it, he uses two adjectives: empty (*xu* 虛) and numinous (apparition; *ling* 靈). These adjectives are metaphors for the mind; the empty is spatial, and the numinous is functional. Such a spatial metaphor implies a reservoir of mental activity, while the functional metaphor indicates the inscrutable movement of the mental itself. In short, all of these descriptions eventually lead us to conclude that the main faculty of the mind consists in the entire process of knowing, including aspects such as awareness, perception, reasoning, and judgment. So, it is the comprehensive activity of the mental capacity which may be called consciousness (*zhijue* 知覺). Even though it can be translated as consciousness in contemporary Chinese, it has more complex and broad implications in Zhu Xi’s philosophy. First, it covers sensual perception to moral cognition. For example, when he mentions that all living things, including animals and plants, have activity of consciousness, he means sensual perception in light of *qi*-activity. Meanwhile, Zhu Xi often uses it when describing moral judgments. In addition, Zhu Xi

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principle for understanding the order of things. Nevertheless, both of them are not independent entities, but a correlative and organic unity for constituting the world. We may call Zhu Xi’s ontology the property dualistic monism.

70 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 85. 心知至靈。藏往知來。

71 Mind is often expressed by spatial metaphor. For example, “the mind is the outer castle of human nature.” Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 3, 64.
distinguished zhi from jue by quoting Cheng Yi's words.\textsuperscript{72} To him, zhi is to know one event while jue is suddenly to comprehend by oneself. In other words, it seems that zhi means perceptive knowledge, while jue implies the comprehensive faculty of understanding.\textsuperscript{73} Together they imply the comprehensive activity of human intellect.

How then does the mind relate to the natural disposition in ethical discussions? I explained that Zhu Xi wanted to implant this as an ethical ground into the human mind. Such a disposition is a characteristic unique to humans. That is to say, Zhu Xi explicitly considers ethical properties of human beings as the properties that differentiate humans from other animals.\textsuperscript{74}

"Xing is the coherent order (li) that humans [naturally] receive from the Nature (tian), and life (sheng 生) is psychophysical energy (qi) that humans [innately] receive from the Nature. Xing is above concreteness, qi is confined by concreteness. All humans and living things have not only xing but also qi. In terms of qi, movements of consciousness (zhijue yundong) are common to humans and living things. However, in terms of li, how can living things get characters of humanity, rightness, propriety, and wisdom, and maintain them intactly!" [MZJZ 6A3]

Zhu Xi thought that all living things, including humans and animals, share the comprehensive faculty of the intellect, although the faculty might differ in each according to the degree of density of qi. With xing, however, means a unique natural tendency only possessed by humans as a species. When explaining mind (xin) and the natural disposition (xing) through a grain analogy, Zhu Xi explicitly claims that xing

\textsuperscript{72} Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 1363. "Cheng Yi said "zhi is to know events and things while jue is to realize their principles." 知是知此事，覺是覺此理．

\textsuperscript{73} Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 85. “The object of the comprehension (jue) is the principle of the mind; the ability of the comprehension is the numinous of qi.” 知知覺是理，理不離知覺，知覺不離理．

\textsuperscript{74} Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 65-66. In 17-18th centuries of Choson period, many Korean neo-Confucian scholars had actively participated in whether human nature is the same as the nature of other things or not. Based on the ontological understanding of li-qi, this debate gave rise to an issue of how to figure out the relationship between the universal and the particular.
indicates certain traits indigenous to each species. "If we draw analogy to grain, then seeds of grain are the mind, and xing is the vector whereby they grow into chestnuts, beans, and rice respectively." Just as the xing of each grain makes the seeds grow into each indigenous species, so the xing of humans also makes humans become (morally) human. So, xing is the human natural disposition being worthy of the human.

Even though xing as temperamental nature somewhat implies a particular disposition, here Zhu Xi specially designates xing as the unique human disposition of morality, which differentiates humans from other species. The natural disposition would be either axiological intentionality that humans naturally have, or cultural genes that lead one to do what one should do, in Zhu Xi's ethical discussions. In other words, activity of consciousness (zhijue) alone cannot differentiate humans from other living things. In sum, the mind (xin) covers the overall field of human life, i.e., both mental activity of consciousness (zhijue) and natural disposition (xing) as basic condition of humans as moral agents. That is say, qing points out all intellectual and emotional activities, while xing indicates the natural disposition, which makes such qi-activities morally directed. Ontologically, these two polarities represent li as the rational pattern of all things and qi as all of the psychophysical activities, respectively. Thus, the mind should have both activity of consciousness and natural disposition together.

Such an understanding of the mind implies that the activity of consciousness which pursues the extension of knowledge is not just a collection of objective information, or factual descriptions of the phenomenal world. Therefore, the object of self-cultivation is not natural disposition alone, but the entire agency of the mind.

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75 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 91. 曰: "若以穀譬之, 穀便是心, 那為聚, 爲穀, 爲禾, 爲稻, 便是性.

76 We should be always aware of the fact that Zhu Xi seamlessly combines the natural disposition with what humans morally ought to attain.
combining the activity of consciousness with the natural disposition.

(2) The Mind as the Great Ultimate

I shall further examine Zhu Xi’s reading of *taiji* (太極; literally, the Great Ridgepole) in order to clarify what Zhu Xi means by the mind. Zhu Xi defines the pattern of the mind as the Great Ultimate (*taiji*) and the movement of the mind as *yin* and *yang.*^77^ In attempting to understand Zhu Xi’s view of *taiji*, I believe that we should mull over the organic unity of the mind once more.

Chen Chun (陳淳 1159-1223), Zhu Xi’s most astute student, asks him as follows:

> The Great Ultimate (*taiji*) is not something undifferentiated and yet formed ahead of the Heavens-Earth (*tiandi*). Rather, isn’t it the general name of the coherent order of myriad things and the Heavens-Earth?

Zhu Xi answers, “*taiji* is only the coherent order (*li* 理) of myriad things and the Heavens-Earth. In terms of the Heavens-Earth, there is *taiji* within the Heavens-Earth. In terms of myriad things, there is *taiji* within each thing. Ahead of the Heavens-Earth, there should be antecedently the order.”^78^

Chen Chun wanted Zhu Xi to clarify the implications of *taiji* because since Zhou Dunyi (周惇頴 1017-1073) many neo-Confucians had continued to understand it in a Daoist context. Zhou, a neo-Confucian pioneer of the Northern Song, explained the structure of *taiji* in the *Diagram and Explanation of the Great Ridgepole (taiji tushuo 太極圖説)*. Being aware of chapter twenty-five of the *Daodejing*, Chen Chun seemed to think that *taiji* should be conceived as the nominal, not as the Daoist substantial.

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^77^ Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 84. 心之理是太極, 心之動靜是陰陽.


In fact, even if one tries to put *li* instead of *taiji*, there is no difference to grasp what Zhu Xi intends. It seems that Zhu Xi actually prefers *li* to *taiji* because of the Daoist nuance of *taiji*. 
Chapter twenty-five of the Daodejing which states that “there exists something undifferentiated before the existence of the Heavens-Earth,” can lead one to imagine the existence of something transcendent, independent of time and space, like the Western notion of God.\(^7\) Hence, Chen thought that the understanding of taiji should be differentiated from the Daoist notion of something undifferentiated (huncheng zhi wu 混成之物), which can be interpreted as the transcendent. In other words, he did not think that taiji could be something transcendent. Chen focuses on this sentence in order to understand the notion of what is ahead of Heavens-Earth. He tentatively suggested the nominal as his answer because he could not accept the idea of the transcendent. Zhu Xi decisively rejects Chen's answer. Nevertheless, he does not affirm that taiji is the transcendent, which would be independently substantial. Zhu Xi’s answer explicitly identifies it with li,\(^8\) i.e., his main philosophical theme. To him, taiji is not the name of the coherent order, but the order in itself. Zhu Xi believes that li should be neither the transcendent nor the nominal.

Regarding the notion of taiji, I should examine Zhu Xi’s debate about wuji-taiji with Lu Jiuyuan (陸九淵 1139-1192).\(^9\) This debate focuses on how to interpret the first sentence of Zhou Dunyi's Diagram and Explanation of the Great Ridgepole: “The Infinite Ultimate and, at the same time, Great Ultimate (wuji er taiji 無極而太極)”. While Lu

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\(^{7}\) In order to overcome interpretation influenced by the Western theology of God, Roger Ames and Hall philosophically re-translate it as follows: “There was some process that spontaneously, emerging before the heavens and the earth…” Ames and Hall (2003): 115.


\(^{9}\) Their debates proceeded for elucidating some points as follows: (1) whether Zhou Dunyi was an authentic writer of the Diagram and Explanation of the Great Ridgepole. (2) How to understand the notion of wuji? (3) What is the meaning of ji (Ridgepole)? (4) What is the origin of the Diagram and Explanation of the Great Ridgepole? For my argument, I focus on (2).

I try to translate taiji as the Great Ridgepole in order first to show a literal meaning of it because the term, the Great Ultimate, translated by Wing-tsit Chan (1967), heavily leans on Zhu Xi’s interpretation of it. For the debate, also see Tillman (1992b): 216-222.
insisted that the notion of *wuji* is superfluous. Zhu Xi held that it was a very significant adjective of *taiji*. The reason Liu insisted on this is not only because it can be found in the Daoist works but not Confucian texts, but also because *taiji* itself is enough to attest an ultimate balance of things. However, Zhu Xi responded that *taiji* can be misunderstood as one ultimate "thing" if *wuji* is gotten rid of. So, Zhu Xi claimed that *taiji* can ensure the ontological openness of things, due to *wuji*. Through the notion of *wuji*, according to Zhu Xi, *taiji*, i.e., the coherent order (*li*) does not become the invariant substance, but instead certifies infinite openness as the dynamic process of things.

In sum, Zhu Xi held that the coherent order (*li*) as *taiji* really exists, although it is neither the nominal nor the transcendent substance. It is truly real to him. In fact, it is very abstruse and problematic. So, his many students continuously inquired of him whether or not *li* is prior to *qi* and how to relate it to *qi*. It seems to me that his students tried to place them in a dualistic framework. However, Zhu Xi is explicit in arguing that we cannot originally divide 'before' with 'after', even though he overtly approves the antecedence of the coherent order. Zhu Xi explains that it is not ontological antecedence, but logical antecedence. Thus, it cannot emerge from *qi* but naturally exists within *qi*. So, we cannot say that one is "actually" prior to another.

(3) Ethical Contextualization of the Mind

So far, we have seen that Zhu Xi's ontological way of thinking leads to a

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83 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 3. 鄭: "先有理, 抑先有氣?" ... 或問: "必有是理, 然後有是氣, 如何?" ... 或問 "理在先, 氣在後". 或問先有理後有氣之說. In human dimension, it is the same as a question of whether or not axiological disposition (*xing*) is prior to the cognitive/emotive activities and how to relate *xing* to *qing*.

84 Chungying Cheng had proposed this problem in the neo-Confucianism and Global Philosophy Conference (Feb. 24-25, 2006, Wesleyan University). For this, see Cheng "Ontology and Interpretation in Zhu Xi: Six Philosophical Questions Considered." (Draft).
dynamically unified system wherein the cognitive/emotive activities \textit{per se} are immediately identical with the value-oriented disposition. For Zhu Xi, the value-oriented disposition (xing) is real. He believes that such a disposition is what makes humans become \textit{humans}. More specifically, I need to examine Zhu's view of the mind in terms of his contemporary ethical context. There are two considerations. First, I can assume that Zhu Xi was seriously concerned about such prevalent crises as the political chaos caused by the Jurchen invasion and the social and intellectual confusion fostered by Buddhism and Daoism, leading to \textit{fin de siècle} nihilism in the Tang-Song transition period. Not only was Zhu Xi explicitly aware of the "Genealogy of the Way" (daotong 道統), but also of distinctive discrimination between orthodoxy and heterodoxy and civilization and barbarism in terms of Chinese intellectual history. He believed that there was a unique characteristic of the Chinese intellectual tradition that could clearly differentiate itself from foreign thought or heterodoxy. Just as Yang Zhu and Mozi were the worst public enemies for their disservice to the Chinese cultural tradition, according to Mencius (Mencius, 3B9), so Zhu Xi held that Buddhism and Daoism were the worst public enemies of the Chinese intellectual "orthodoxy." Zhu Xi severely criticized Confucian scholars, e.g., Su Shi, who were hospitable to Buddhism and Daoism. In relation to his consciousness of genealogy of the Way, his belief in the Mencian theme that humans are naturally good seemed a resolute answer, arising from a variety of intellectual disputes with not only Confucian inner groups, but also with Buddhist and Daoist groups. Therefore, Zhu Xi believed that his understanding of the total unity

\begin{itemize}
\item "Introduction to the \textit{Commentary of the Zhongyong (zhongyong zhangju xu)}".
\item For example, Zhu Xi criticizes Chen Liang as being has utilitarian-mind. For this, see Tillman (1992b): 170-171. For more detailed argument of this, see Hoyt Tillman. 1982. \textit{Utilitarian Confucianism: Chen Liang's challenge to Chu Hsi}. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. In fact, this view should be more fully
\end{itemize}
between xìng and qìng could effectively criticize both transcendent and nihilistic features.

Second, Zhu Xi's interpretation of the mind based upon the li-qi framework can ontologically fortify the Mencian theme that humans are innately good. It implies that a natural disposition as the cosmic order is innately given to humans. Furthermore, Zhu Xi's solid conviction that human nature (xìng) is real was one way to attack the Buddhist idea that human nature has no identity. On the other hand, his idea of human nature strongly advocates a political-ethical position that moral agents are prior to institutional formations. That is to say, Zhu Xi took a position urging us to see community through what humans really are, rather than the other position that tries to define humans through their social system (the perspective of Chen Liang). This is a resolute belief of the moral agent as an autonomous self. Hence, Zhu Xi's ardent passion for the Mencian theme at least reflects the idea that ethical ground should be firmly established in each person. In addition, I can regard his work as a scholarly passion to revive the authenticity of practical and everyday life, i.e., real Confucian life, by placing the reality of the coherent order into each person. Therefore, we may conclude that his self-cultivation converges on the revival of the authenticity of everyday life, lived spontaneously and harmoniously by the common people.

3.3. Conclusion

We have seen in this chapter that philosophical issues on human nature aim at establishing two things: whether human nature can play a crucial role in moral

clarified by recent studies of Southern Song as a watershed moment in Chinese history. In the aftermath of the New Policies (1068-1126), neo-Confucian thinkers in Southern Song started to reflect on the consequences of this reform in history. So, Zhu Xi's ethical inquiry into human nature could be conceived as a kind of philosophical reflection on the reform in the Chinese intellectual history.

98 "Autonomous self" has nothing to do with the Kantian idea of autonomy. I am using this term in the manner of those who believe that moral agent is prior in some way to socialization.
judgment of actions and whether Mencian human nature can be interpreted as something universal. By reconstructing human nature in accordance with the *li-qi* framework, Zhu Xi thoroughly fortified the Mencian theme that humans are naturally good. That is, he established an ethical ground in humans by implanting a value-oriented disposition into human nature. As we have seen above, it is ontologically the comic order permeating all through the world as well as ethically the guiding moral virtues. Such an ethical enterprise is derived from cosmological insights, viz. the Chinese worldview that humans are perfectly identical with the dynamic harmony of the Heavens-Earth. Moreover, it is a resolute effort to place ethical authority for actions into humans.

What does Zhu Xi mean by the dynamic unity between *li* and *qi*, in his ethical discussions? It seems that he at least rejects all dualistic frameworks, for they interrupt the practical attainment of right actions. Zhu Xi did not find any ontological authority of humans in the external world. By unifying the common order (*li*) with materiality (*qi*), human *per se* means a kind of practical incarnation of ethical values. In short, Zhu Xi's theoretical reconstruction of human disposition aims at practice-oriented ethics in daily life, i.e., rediscovery of ordinariness.

Furthermore, Zhu Xi's interpretation of the mind as the unity between the activity of consciousness (*zhijue*) and the natural disposition (*xing*, i.e., ethical directedness) gives us an important implication of human nature. The reason Zhu Xi criticizes Buddhism is because Buddhism only approves of the activity of consciousness while denying the reality of the natural disposition. For Zhu Xi, human nature cannot be only a collection of cognitive activities by means of sensual perception. What

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distinguishes humans in his view is the axiological disposition that makes us truly become *human* by leading us spontaneously to do what is right. On the other hand, he criticizes Zhang Shi because Zhang immediately identifies the activity of consciousness with the natural disposition (*xing*), without distinguishing between them. If Zhang Shi were right, then *li* (natural disposition) and *qi* (activity of consciousness) would be immediately identical with one another. In other words, when we identify activity of consciousness with moral values it implies that we can realize moral virtues if and only if the activity of consciousness rises. According to Zhu Xi, this implies that we cannot find an ethical ground within us. For example, one does not know whether one has moral virtue until one sees a child falling into a well. Right after seeing the child, according to Zhang Shi, then I can have moral virtue. That is why Zhu Xi denies Zhang Shi's account of *weifa* and *yifa*.

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CHAPTER IV. ZHU XI ON MORAL MOTIVATION AND MORAL ACTION

When talking about moral motivation in the Western ethical tradition, we implicitly presuppose necessary relations between moral action and the authority of that action as motivational source: what motivates us to act morally. Does Zhu Xi also understand a link between the authority of acts and moral conduct in light of a necessary relationship? For example, Kwong-loi Shun categorizes Zhu Xi as a kind of act-internalist in a sense which "an act is yi (義: moral virtue) only if it is performed not just because it is proper, but because the agent is fully inclined to so act." So, I shall consider whether Zhu Xi's position on the authority of action, i.e., its role in moral motivation, is internalistic by discussing Kwong-loi Shun's interpretation of "Mencius 6A:4-5. Moreover, I will examine how Zhu Xi's position on moral authority differs from the Mencian position on it, through analysis of the meaning of ‘duan (端)’. In order to distinguish one position from the other, I will use li-internality for Zhu Xi and sprout-internality for Mencius respectively. Through a comparison of Zhang Shi and Zhu Xi, we can see that they shared the claim that moral virtues are identified with natural disposition, in the sense that humans inherently possess virtues as internal desirable attributes.

I will then elucidate Zhu Xi's idea of knowledge and action in light of the moral weakness of will. According to him, the relationship between knowledge and action

1 Shun (1997b): 98. Shun categorizes Zhu Xi into the same group as David S. Nivison. In the interpretation of Mencius, Nivison defines Mencius as follows: "Mencius is a kind of act-internalist: a moral act is related to the feeling it expresses in the same way that a smile is; and a forced smile, of course, isn't a smile." For this, see Nivison (1980): 739-61. His idea of act-internalist means a motivational source for actions that is internal. It can be conceived as a kind of motivational internalism that moral judgments are intrinsically motivating, and do not require any other reason to motivate the agent to moral action.

2 As I shall argue later, Mencius focuses on the 'good seed' of virtue, while Zhu Xi 'virtue' in itself in accordance with their respective interpretations of "duan".
can be rewritten as a problem of how to motivate one to do what one knows to be the morally correct course of action. In addition, Zhu Xi regards certain apparent instances of lack of knowledge as self-deception (ziqi 自欺), instances which can otherwise appear to involve moral weakness of will. Thus, we shall see how Zhu Xi solves the problem of moral weakness of will through the interpretation of self-cultivation in the Great Learning.

4.1. The Interpretation of Moral Motivation

This chapter will first examine Zhu Xi’s idea of xing (性) as a motivational source for action by elucidating Zhu Xi’s interpretation of the debate between Mencius and Gaozi in Mencius 6A:4-5. However, I shall not focus on the debate itself, but rather on Zhu Xi’s view of it. The debate in Mencius 6A:4-5 considers whether or not rightness (yi 義) is internal. Gaozi’s claim is as follows:

“Humanity (ren) is internal, not external; rightness (yi) is external, not internal...he is old and I treat him as old. It is not that there is oldness in me. This is like that it is white and I treat it as white following its white outside. So, I call it external...If he is my younger brother, I love him; if he is Qin person’s younger brother, I do not. This person takes himself as pleasure. So, I call it internal. I treat old men of Chu as old; I also treat my old men as old. This is to take oldness as pleasure. So, I call it external.”

Gaozi insisted that the reason I should treat him as old is because he is old.

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3 For a more detailed explanation of this term, see section 4.2.4 of this chapter.
5 An alternative translation is: “This case is to take the self as pleasure.”
whereas Mencius indirectly implied that what moves me to do something arises from
my own attitude and taste. As Kim-Chong Chong clearly pointed out, what both
Mencius and Gaozi mean by "internal" is that the act's "motivational source lies in me."
Although we cannot textually find Mencius himself explicitly stating that yi is internal in
Mencius 6A:4-5, nevertheless, we can at least see that Mencius was not satisfied with the
statement, "yi is external." He refuted this statement by asking if old men themselves
are rightness or if treating them as old is rightness. On the other hand, even though
Mencius did not tackle Gaozi's claim that humanity (ren) is internal, Zhu Xi did not think
that Gaozi fully understood ren.

I believe that an inquiry into the debate of yi-internality can provide us with an
adequate understanding of moral motivation. I will begin by examining Kwong-loi
Shun's three different interpretations of the internality of yi in Mengzi 6A:4-5. This will
make it easier to approach the neo-Confucian discourse since Shun's interpretations rely
heavily on commentaries of some neo-Confucian thinkers.

4.1.1. Critique of Kwong-loi Shun's Interpretation of the Mencius 6A:4-5

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8 In fact, the yi-internality should be rendered into virtue-internality or li-internality in Zhu Xi's
philosophical context. For the convenience of my explanation of Shun's explanations, I here use yi-
internality.
9 I will not examine all neo-Confucian commentaries on the Mencius quoted by Shun, but look over their
commentaries as they relate to yi-internality. However, one key problem with Shun is that his quotations
are too fragmentary to examine the three interpretations he categorized. As we shall soon see, for
instance, Kwong-loi Shun places Chiao Hsin in the second and third interpretations at the same time.
Although I examined the textual evidences of Chiao's Mengzi Zhengyi, I could barely distinguish the
second interpretation from the third interpretation in light of his quotations of Chiao's commentary.
Chiao's commentaries simply explained the main sentences of the Mencius. Moreover, Shun quoted
Chiao's commentaries on different lines of the dialogue set between Mencius and Gaozi, respectively. In
addition, Kwong-loi Shun did not categorize Zhao Qi, one of the most famous commentators of the
Mencius, into any of the three interpretations despite the fact that Chiao Hsin's commentary succeeds to
the tradition of Evidential Proof (kaozheng), which Zhao Qi represented in the Han period. However, in
order not to stray too far from my argument of moral motivation, I will leave aside the matter of
intellectual historical consistency.
Let me begin with Shun's interpretations in *Mencius and Early Chinese Thought*.¹⁰

Of the different interpretations of the nature of the disagreement whether *yi* is internal, three are particularly common. The first takes the internality of *yi* to be the claim that an act is *yi* only if it is performed not just because it is proper, but because the agent is fully inclined to so act. Something like this interpretation has been proposed by Zhu Xi and David S. Nivison. The second regards the internality of *yi* as the claim that *yi* is part of *hsing*, in the sense that human beings already share *yi* as one of the four desirable attributes or are already disposed to *yi* behavior. Chang Shih, Chiao Hsün, Tai Chen, and D.C. Lau have interpreted the idea along these lines. The third regards it as the claim that one's knowledge of *yi* derives from certain features of the heart/mind. This view has been suggested by Chiao Hsün, Wang Yang-ming, Huang Tsung-hsi, Mou Tsung-san, Hsü Fu-kuan, and T'ang Chü¹-ți.¹¹

His three interpretations are based on commentators who have interpreted the internality of *yi* as “(1) a claim about the agent’s motivation for *yi* behavior, (2) shared human dispositions to *yi* behavior, and (3) a claim about the source of one’s knowledge of *yi*.” In short, Kwong-loi Shun holds that the first interpretation was proposed by Zhu Xi, which “takes the internality of *yi* to be the claim that an act is *yi* only if it is performed not just because it is proper, but because the agent is fully inclined to so act.”¹² Shun’s interpretation, at least in the case of internality of *yi*, seems robust.

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¹⁰ Shun uses the Wade-Giles Romanization system in his book while I use pinyin system here. I only use W-G system when quoting Shun’s book.


Such different interpretations per se already have an implication that neo-Confucian commentators have different ideas of *xing*. For example, Wang Yang-ming is a founder of Yangming School that strongly criticizes Cheng-Zhu School. Mou Zongsan, a contemporary neo-Confucian, interprets intellectual history of neo-Confucianism in terms of moral metaphysics that places Wang’s Learning of Mind at the zenith of the historical unfolding of Chinese philosophy. It can be called teleological interpretation of Chinese philosophy. However, Shun did not mention any background of intellectual history at all.


While Shun had named this interpretation as the unforcedness interpretation (Shun (1991): 176), he revised the apppellations of three interpretations, unforcedness, naturalness, and mind-dependence, by putting the ordinal numbers instead of them. When he refers to first interpretation as unforcedness, he probably wants to imply it is something spontaneous or voluntary. I will argue the concept of
However, I find his example of how Zhu Xi tries to interpret the debate in a Mencian context unsatisfactory.

The textual basis of Shun's first interpretation is a sentence in the *Classified Conversations of Master Zhu* (Zhuzi Yulei 朱子語類) as follows:

Many friends say “eating and having sex constitutes xing.” Master Zhu asks, “Gaozi understood being perceived as nature. How does that correlate with the words, ‘a person is old and I treat him as old’?” Nobody answers. Master Zhu says, “While Gaozi just knew the human mind, he did not know there is the mind of the Way. He just feels pursuit of interests and an escape from harm, e.g., famine, the cold, satiety, and warmth, etc. However, he does not know what differentiates interests from harm is immediately the original human nature. The reason he said ‘a person is old and I treat him as old’ is because I don’t have the mind of treating him as old, but because of its oldness, therefore, I reluctantly treat him as old, [this is] the reason why [Gao holds that] *yi* is external.13

In fact, it is hardly possible to infer from this dialogue alone why Shun interprets Zhu’s position as the one above. Moreover, this is not adequate for proving Zhu’s claim that *yi* is internal. In other words, it is difficult to reconstruct Zhu’s viewpoint of *yi* as Shun interprets it, unless Shun provides us with additional textual evidence that can demonstrate such a stance. If one uses this dialogue as the sole proof supporting Shun’s argument, then it would seem his reasoning for Zhu’s viewpoint derives from the Chinese rendering of “reluctantly” or “inevitably” (*bu de bu* 不得不).

Citing the last two sentences of the above passage, Shun holds that the first interpretation is linked to Zhu Xi, which “takes the internality of *yi* to be the claim that

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an act is yi only if it is performed not just because it is proper, but because the agent is fully inclined to so act."\textsuperscript{14}

In the dialogue above, Zhu Xi explicitly explains why Gaozi insists that yi is external rather than focusing on understanding Mencius' intention. According to Zhu Xi, the reason is that one has no idea of treating a person as old, but one reluctantly treats him/her as old because of the oldness. If I fully accept Shun's interpretation in light of the text of Zhuzi Yulei he quoted, then I can rearrange Zhu Xi's explanation of Gaozi's statement as follows:

[Gaozi's statement in Mencius] “A person is old and I treat him as old.”

[Zhu Xi's explanation of Gaozi's statement]
(1) I don't have the mind of treating him as old. (我無長彼之心)
(2) Because of the oldness, I reluctantly or inevitably treat him as old. (由彼長,故不得不長之)
(3) This is the reason (Gaozi holds that) yi is external. (所以指義為外也).

[Kwong-loi Shun's inference]
(2-1) (Regardless of its external conditions) I voluntarily or willingly treat it as old.
(3-1) (Zhu Xi may say) yi is internal.

Here (1), (2), and (3) are the content of the dialogue quoted by Shun. Based on Zhu Xi's explanation of Gaozi, it seems that Shun infers that if the speaker were Zhu Xi, he might say (2-1) "I voluntarily or willingly treat him as old", and (3-1) the reason is “yi is internal”, which is based on (1), (2), and (3), respectively. Based on his inference, furthermore, he might infer that Zhu Xi claims that an “act is yi only if it is performed not just because it is proper, but because the agent is fully inclined to so act.” Paying special attention to the rendering, ‘reluctantly,’ in Zhu Xi's dialogue above, Shun

\textsuperscript{14} Shun (1997b): 98.
assumes that Zhu Xi implicitly understands that the internality of yi is derived from an unforced attitude of the agent. He presumably infers that Zhu Xi’s claim would be derived from an inclined attitude if Zhu Xi explains that the reason yi is external is because the agent is disinclined to so act (bu de bu 不得不).

If this reconstruction is not satisfactory, it is hard to see how Shun can insist that Zhu Xi proposes the first interpretation, as given above. In fact, Shun should have provided us additional evidence to buttress his interpretation if he plans to find an example of moral motivation from Confucian-Mencian thought. Even if Shun’s interpretation were relevant, he needs at least to provide an answer to the question, ‘Where does such willingness come from?’ which might better approach the question of a motivational source of moral action. That is to say, if Shun inferred from (2-1) once more, he would say that “I have the mind of treating him as old.” However, he might think that such an inference is closely linked with his second or third interpretations of the internality of yi.

Using another source for the first interpretation, David Nivison’s article, “Two Roots or One”, which describes Mencius as a kind of act-internaIist, Kwong-loi Shun adds Nivison’s explanation: “a moral act is related to the feeling it expresses in the same way that a smile is; and a forced smile, of course, isn’t a smile.” Nivison’s description of Mencius as a kind of act-internaIist seems relevant if it explains whether or not Mencian authority of moral actions is internal. However, we should first be able to understand why Shun quotes both, as textual authorities for supporting the first

13 In fact, Shun provided us with two other interpretations offered by Zhu Xi, who regarded yi as internal, although the two interpretations differ from the first interpretation Shun categorized. I will examine this further in section 4.1.3. Here, it seems that Shun has made a trivial mistake. Though stating that Zhu Xi offered two other interpretations, Shun repeats the quotation from the first interpretation, viz., Zhuzi Yulei 1378.

interpretation. Is there any common ground between Zhu Xi’s idea and Nivison’s? For example, I can see that Zhu Xi holds that an inevitable treat is not a treat, just as Nivison claims that a forced smile is not a smile. In other words, willingness to act can guarantee that the resource of moral acts, which can be called moral motivation, comes from within the agent. Hence, Shun seems to regard the willingness to act as the source for the internality of acts. To Shun, moreover, willingness to act can be the authority of the internality of yi, which makes acts spontaneous. Here, I should clarify the relationship between yi and act, a pivotal point of the debate between Mencius and Gaozi. Shun uses act-internality in order to support his first interpretation of the internality of yi. This can be conceived as a claim that Zhu Xi’s view of authority of action is the same as that of the Mencian view, which Nivison defines as a kind of act-internalist. Of course, that authority of action is internal is to mean that yi is internal unless we reject that yi is the authority of action. Despite the fact that yi can manifest itself through action, we need to ask whether or not yi per se is truly identical with the authority of action in both Mencius and Zhu Xi. I think yi-internality can be differentiated from act-internality, at least in the case of Zhu Xi’s ethical theory.

4.1.2. Interpretations of duan (端): Sprout-internality and li(理)-internality

Kwong-loi Shun categorizes Zhu Xi the same as does Nivison, who defines Mencius as an act-internalist. Zhu Xi attempts to interpret yi as an ethical principle for guiding action, disciplining the human mind, and justifying events. He defines it as being inherently precious, being bestowed [with preciousness] from Nature (tian).17 In Mencius’ metaphor describing yi, Zhu explains as follows.

17 Zhu Xi, Mengzi Jizhu, 1A1, 2A7. “仁、義、禮、智，皆天之所與之良貴.”
“Yi is (justifiable) appropriateness (yi 宜). That is, on the one hand, a conformable movement of the cosmic order of Nature (tianli). On the other hand, it has no crooked human desire at all. Therefore, it is called the right path.”

Not only is it the most adequate guideline for measuring all human conduct, but it is also an intrinsic disposition for justifying the morality of an event. In short, Zhu Xi seems aware of its ontological characteristics derived from the perspective of the Commentary of Yi (Yizhuan), even though it is explained in terms of the normative world. Because of his awareness of the ontological implications of yi, I think Zhu Xi's understanding of yi makes its meanings richer than Shun's definition of yi in the interpretation of the Mencius as an ethical attribute of a person.

Zhu Xi's arguments that yi is based on human nature start by annotating Confucian classical texts like the Four Books (sishu). For example, as Ivanhoe and Van Norden have pointed out, Zhu Xi explicitly glosses Mencius' expression of “sprouts (duan 端)” as “clues (xu 續)” in his Commentary on the Mencius (mengzi jizhu). Did he unconsciously misread it in spite of the fact that the etymology of duan implies both clue and sprout? According to Ivanhoe, such a reading of Mencius by Zhu Xi can be understood in light of different models of self-cultivation. Because of Zhu Xi's interpretation of duan, Ivanhoe sees Zhu Xi's way of self-cultivation as a recovery model.

19 Zhu Xi, Ibid., 4A10. “義者，宜也。乃天理之當然，無人欲之邪曲，故曰正路。”
18 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 106-7. “問仁義禮智體用之別，曰：‘...義者，順義者，仁禮是用，義之體...’秋敵冬穀，義也。仁義禮智，便是元亨利貞...仁義禮智，性之大美，皆是形而上者，豈可分也!”
18 Shun (1997b): 56. Of course, Shun's first interpretation of the internality of yi is closely akin to the idea Mencius intended in terms of ethical attributes for describing moral actions.
21 Morohashi, (1989-2000): 8-25806, 8-27633, 9-28880. Etymologically duan in itself carries a botanical metaphor. “duan is the outset of being newborn. The upper part imitates beginning to form, while the bottom part is root. Duan in a dialect implies a tip or a clue.” Xu (clue, 續) viewed etymologically means the tip of a ball of thread.
but not as Mencius’ developmental model.\textsuperscript{23}

What difference, then, does it make to the interpretation when we highlight *xing* in the text? Through this ordinary word, *duan*, what Zhu Xi is saying is: just as one tries to pull the end of thread out in order to find something inside, so we should capture a clue of emotions in order to recover the reality of nature.\textsuperscript{24} He firmly believes that we as humans possess a ‘complete nature’ as a source of the good in our minds. We can simply discover it by pulling the clue out. For instance, Zhu Xi’s statements about ‘*siduan*’ below will help us to see how he understands ‘*duan*’ (sprouts) in relation to human nature.

The realization of heavenly destiny is that sages know that four sprouts come out from the middle of human nature. It is the same as humans see water. Common people just look at water flowing while sages immediately know the fountainhead of the water.\textsuperscript{25}

When seeing the goodness of one’s *siduan*, we can see one’s human nature is good, just as we realize the fountainhead is necessarily clean when seeing the flow of the water is clean.\textsuperscript{26}

“*In ‘four sprouts (siduan),’ a sprout (duan) is similar to a bud.* Compassion is a sprout emerging out from within humanity. Master Cheng says, “We can know humanity because of compassion.” Because of the thing arising on outside, we know that there is human nature inside.\textsuperscript{27}

A student asks, “On ‘sprout (duan)’ of ‘four sprouts (siduan),’ you glossed it as a tip of thread in your book, but last time Jitong explained it as a tail. Please clarify?” In terms of *ti-yong*, the whole body is prior to its function. So, *duan* can be called a tail. If we see it in terms of the beginning and the end,

\textsuperscript{23} Ivanhoe (1993): 54.
\textsuperscript{24} Zhu Xi, *Mengzi jizhu*, 2A6. “*Duan* means *xu* (clue, 蹲). Due to arising emotions, we are able to discern the reality of nature. It is like when there is something inside something but the clue is visible without.”
\textsuperscript{25} Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 79. “知天命”即所言人知性中四端之所以自来，如以水乾，有之而知得水之發源處。
\textsuperscript{26} Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 89. 看他四端，即以性之發源處，見其性之善，如見水流之漸，則知源頭必清矣。
\textsuperscript{27} Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 465. 四緒者，端如萌芽相似，端端方是從仁之本發出其端。種子曰：“因其四端，知其有仁。”因其外面發出之端，便知是性在裏面.
siduan is a starting point. So, it can be called the tip of a thread. Neither implication conflicts with the other.\textsuperscript{28}

Humanity, rightness, propriety and wisdom are four roots. Compassion, indignation/shame, reverence/respect, and approbation/disapprobation are buds sprouting out from the roots.\textsuperscript{29}

As a matter of fact, Zhu Xi also mentions that the meaning of ‘duan’ is sprouts.\textsuperscript{30}

Even though he would have glossed it as sprouts, his idea differs from that of Mencius. In terms of his botanical metaphor, Zhu Xi thought that sprouts spring from the ‘root’, which is ‘human nature’ (xing), while Mencius wanted us to develop ‘sprouts’ and consummate their fruits. The expression “sprout” used by Mencius can imply that we have an initial disposition, which can develop into complete nature. So, we should carefully tend and develop the four sprouts in order to realize the four virtues. To Mencius, humanity, rightness, propriety, and wisdom are the four virtues that can be realized by through effort. That is, we have the seeds with the potential to fully blossom into perfect ethical virtues, but do not have the four virtues as such in our minds. Hence, we may admit that Shun also reads Mencius in terms of the interpretation that four sprouts are the starting points for ethical development.\textsuperscript{31} Zhu Xi’s water metaphor also carries a similar implication to his botanical metaphor. He thought we could find the fountainhead of water when we trace the water back to its source. Through the apparent tendencies, we should be able to approach what makes such tendencies possible. The fountainhead carries the image of the origin of things. That is, we should be able to discover or find human nature as the fountainhead of water through

\textsuperscript{28} Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 1286. 読: “‘四端’之‘端’, 集解以爲端端, 向見季通說‘端乃尾’, 如何?” 曰: “以體·用言之,有體而後有用,故端亦可謂之尾。若以始終言之,則四端是始發處,故亦可以端終言之。二說各有所指,自不相礙也。

\textsuperscript{29} Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 606. “仁義禮智是四箇根子, 惡懼·憂患·恭敬·是非是根上所發苗苗.”

\textsuperscript{30} Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 465. “端如萌芽相似...”

\textsuperscript{31} Shun (1997b): 138.
the natural tendencies of such moral sprouts as compassion.

Through Zhu Xi's ideas of *siduan*, one can detect a subtle difference between Mencius and Zhu Xi. Zhu Xi of course holds the same view as Mencius in terms of the point that the authority of action is internal. To Zhu Xi, however, the authority of action is *yi*, viz., virtue, rather than *duan* (sprout). That is, while Mencius focuses on developing *duan*, Zhu Xi highlights discovering the fountainhead of water. As Van Norden points out, however, Zhu Xi's moral philosophy does not operate exclusively with the discovery model of human nature. Precisely speaking, Zhu Xi emphasizes the internality of *yi* by supplementing the discovery model with the development model. To Mencius, then, *yi* *per se* is not so much the authority of action, but an ethical virtue that is realized through moral acts.

We can see then why Mencius never explicitly held *yi* to be internal. In 6A4-5, Mencius argued that the authority for treating the man as old is internal. To Mencius, what is internal is not *yi* itself but a motivational sprout for action. If so, Nivison's act-internality seems to be relevant in the case of Mencius' text. Because Mencius holds that a sprout of *yi* exists inside, as both Nivison and Shun explain, willingness to act is internal and *yi* is the ethical ideal realized through constant effort. I am certainly not the first to make this argument by differentiating Zhu Xi's idea of *duan* from Mencius'.

Chong Yagyong (1762-1836), a Korean neo-Confucian of the late Choson period, keenly criticized Zhu Xi's gloss of *xing* as it is used in the text, *Mencius*. Chong understands that *duan* is not a tip of thread (*xu* 緣) to find entire virtues within the human mind, but rather a starting point to achieving virtue by ethical effort.

In Zhu Xi's commentary, *duan* is glossed as a tip of thread. Because of the rise of emotions, the genuineness of human nature can be manifested. This is the same ideas as there is a tip of thread arising out from the middle of a
thing. Cai Jitong says, "duan is a tail." Mr. Chen says, "It is figuratively a
spawn of silk having a piece of string outside." So, we can see there is a ball of
thread inside. I, Yagyong, examine, "The names of humanity, rightness,
propriety, and wisdom are attained after events consummate. Therefore, after
loving persons, we call it humanity. The priority is to love persons; the name
of humanity is not established yet. After esteeming me well, we call it
rightness. The priority is to esteem me well; the name of rightness is not
established yet... How is it possible for lumps of four virtues to lurk in the
middle of the human mind?"32

Chong Yagyong holds that the four virtues can be fully realized only after we
have done something related to virtuous behavior. Unlike Zhu Xi, he does not think
that there exist such virtues as being complete in the human mind. Furthermore, it
seems that Chong thinks that normative virtues are constructed by relational
interactions. Hence, to Chong duan is conceived as a starting point that can
constructively accomplish virtue through relational interaction. That is, Chong’s idea of
duan is closely tied to Shun’s and Nivison’s interpretations of Mencius.

Meanwhile, Zhu Xi actively identifies xing with moral virtue by internalizing
them in the mind. However, this internalization has a little to do with making natural
disposition (xing) an essential and invariant foundation of normativity. Rather, the
internalization of moral virtues should be seen as a mode of tianren heyi, i.e., the way of
unifying the cosmic vitality of the Heavens-Earth with the axiological disposition of
human beings. I believe that the cosmic vitality of the Heavens-Earth should be
conceived as the virtuous disposition of “harmonious equilibrium” in terms of moral
judgments, which can properly and spontaneously deliberate specific situations.

32 Chong, Marugja Youi (Essential Meanings of the Mencius) 6A. “集日絃，絃也。因其情之發，而性之本然，
可得而見。猶有物在中而縛見於外也。窗學通云絃乃是尾。陳曰比之絃絃。外有一條絃。便知得內有一圓絃。
縛索仁義禮智之名。成於行計之後。故愛人而後謂之仁。愛人之先。仁之名未立也。善義而後謂之義。
善義之先。義之名未立也。義主拜服而後為之名立焉。事物明晰而後智之名立焉。豈有仁義禮智四者。
磊磊落落，如桔仁杏仁。伏於人心之中者乎。”
4.1.3. Zhang Shi Compared

According to Kwong-loi Shun, Zhang Shi’s idea belongs to the second claim regarding “the internality of yi as the claim that yi is part of xing, in the sense that human beings already share yi as one of the four desirable attributes or are already disposed to yi behavior.” We clearly see that Zhu Xi himself refers to Zhang Shi in his Commentary on Mencius, and we know he values Zhang’s work as insightful, and thinks that Zhang illuminates the meaning of humanity and rightness in his Questions on Mencius (Mengzi Huowen 孟子或問). We can, then, assume that Zhu Xi agrees with Zhang Shi in his understanding of human nature, xing. First, let us look at Zhang Shi’s commentary on Mencius 6A:4.

Eating and sex truly come from xing. However, a rule should exist in there. Gaozi just pays attention to things and ignores such a rule. His argument of xing is one that there is no distinction between good and bad. When it is prevailing, the principle of Nature is unclear and human desire cannot be prohibited. His mistake is getting serious when he refers to the doctrine that ren is internal and yi is external. … Even though oldness exists in the object (bi), treating him as old is in me. Therefore, the principle of treating him as old is originally presented in here [ci, me] and does not exist in there because of the object. If there is xing, then the principle is equipped in it. Justifiability of various cases, e.g., light/heavy, intimacy/estrangement, small/big, and near/far, truly overflows into the middle of human nature. So, it cannot reach the status above [as Gaozi argued] by disturbing events and things. Even though there are myriad things differentiated, it is necessarily a rule if there is a thing. Whenever we respond to diverse situations, therefore, we are able to take their justifiability respectively. This does not mean that it is taken from outside but that everything is derived from my original rightness (yi). This is a command given by Nature (tian).

34 Zhang Shi, Mengzi Shuo (Discourse on the Mencius: SKQS) 478-9. “食色固出於性，然不有則難。今魯子乃舉物而違其則，是固出於性，無分於善不善之論也。其說行而大理不明，而人欲遠之過矣。至於仁內義外之說，其失又甚焉。彼以長之在人，如白之在彼，豈不知白之為色一定而不變而長之所宜則隨事而不同也。若一聚而論則，馬之長將亦無以異於人之長而可乎。夫長雖在彼而長之者在我。盡長之之理，果見於此，非因彼而
Relevant is Shun’s second interpretation of Zhang Shi’s idea that “yi is part of xing, in the sense that human beings already share yi as one of the four desirable attributes or are already disposed to yi behavior”. However, it seems at least in Zhang Shi’s argument here that it is hard to find something different from Zhu Xi’s idea. For instance, both understand xing in terms of the cosmic order (li) of Nature / Human desire. Moreover, they admit that xing is the li within that adequately responds to everything, namely, the internalization of xing as the cosmic order. Both Zhang Shi and Zhu Xi consider Gaozi’s view as the claim that xing is neither good nor bad. As I quoted before, Zhu Xi criticized Gaozi for considering perceptual movements of humans as xing. Zhang Shi also reprimanded Gaozi for regarding habits or temperaments per se as xing. They do not so much think that “Gaozi’s claim that yi is external amounts to the claim that yi is not part of xing,” but that Gaozi’s claim implies that he totally misunderstands what yi and xing are. Therefore, Shun should have put Zhu Xi into the same category as Zhang Shi.

In fact, their criticisms of Gaozi have nothing to do with whether or not yi is part of xing. Rather, they thought that Gaozi’s misunderstanding of xing gave rise to his claim that yi is external. For example, we can reconfirm this point in Zhu Xi’s unsatisfactory reference to Gaozi’s claim that ren is internal. Zhu Xi felt that there was something wrong with Gaozi’s claim of humanity (ren). According to Zhu Xi, Gaozi renders ren as a sentimental love and so that it is internal while considering a criterion of

有也。有是性則具是理，其輕重親疏小大遠近之宜，固森然於乗杖之中而不可亂事，至於前者雖有萬之不同，而有物必有則，況應曲順，各得其當，皆吾素有之理，而非外取之。此天所命也。”


Zhang Shi, Ibid. 480.

normative judgment as yi so that it is external. Hence, to Zhu, Gaozi's views of yi and ren are both irrelevant although Gaozi's claim that ren is internal appears superficially true. Meanwhile, Zhu Xi was explicit in stating that “humanity is not only the principle of love but also the virtue of the mind.” Interestingly, Kwong-loi Shun quotes Zhu Xi's dialogue concerning this statement in order to provide us with other interpretations of yi-internality offered by Zhu Xi. In this dialogue, Zhu Xi clarifies that Cheng Yi's words, “yi concerns our dealing with things,” are the gist of yi-internality, which means that authority of normative judgment is on the inside. Zhu Xi insists that “even though appropriateness of things exists on the outside, the reason to attain the appropriateness by properly dealing with things is on the inside.” This claim of Zhu Xi is close to Shun's third interpretation of yi-internality that “one's knowledge of yi derives from certain features of the heart/mind” because Zhu Xi here elucidates that the virtue of the mind as humanity (ren) involves other four virtues and rightness (yi) is just one of them.

If so, Zhu Xi's views can cover all of Shun's three interpretations of yi-internality. Then, we should ask again what Shun does mean by yi-internality. When categorizing Zhu Xi and Nivison into the first interpretation together, Shun explicitly implies that yi-internality means a motivational source for action. As we have seen thus far, Zhu Xi's views of yi-internality can be spelled out via all three interpretations into which Shun categorized them. In other words, Zhu Xi identifies yi with natural disposition, which

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38 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 1379. "告子已不知性，如何知得仁為內?”曰：“他使以其主於愛者為仁，故曰內；以其制是非者為義，故曰外。”又問：“他恊義，固不是；然仁，莫亦不是?”曰：“固是。” Such an indication of ren is of course not included in the debate between Mencius and Gaozi.
39 Zhu Xi, Lunyu Jishu, 1.2. "仁者，愛之理，心之德也。”
41 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 1219. "盡物之宜屬在外，而所以盡之使得其宜者，則在內也。“
43 Shun (1997b): 99. “...a claim about the agent's motivation for yi behavior...”
is inherently given to us, and at the same time considers it as one of the virtues of the mind as the cosmic vitality of the Heavens-Earth, which can mean certain features of the mind. Hence, the three interpretations are not so much substantial distinctions defining yi-internality as they are contextual differences in accordance with such different angles as ethics, philosophical anthropology, and ontology in Zhu Xi's philosophy.

In relation to the matter of moral motivation, intriguingly, two other interpretations of Zhu Xi, which are suggested by Shun, can lead us to think of the unity between the external and internal.

4.1.4. The Unity of the Internal with the External

If I wish to inquire into moral motivation in light of the notions of the internal/external, I should consider the notions in accordance with the dominant usages of contemporary moral philosophy, which Bernard Williams argued in his article, "Internal and External Reasons" in *Moral Luck.* Let me briefly sketch the conceptual implications of the external/internal reasons by taking a famous story of the *Mencius.*

For example, when I help a child falling into a well, if I have a motivating reason for doing so (e.g., forging a good relationship with the child's parents or achieving fame) then I have an *internal* reason to motivate me to help the child. Even if I helped the child without reason, I must still have some motives for doing so, which can be seen as an *internal* desire or urge. So, according to Williams, all normative reasons are internal. Now, I will inquire into Zhu Xi's view of moral motivation with awareness of this implication of the internal reasons.

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44 Williams (1981):101-113. However, neither Shun nor Nivison mention Williams' ideas of the internal and external reasons.

45 Of course, there are people who believe that there can be an external reason for one to do it.
Let us look at Zhu Xi’s dialogue which Kwong-loi Shun quoted as textual evidence for two other interpretations.

Student: “in your Commentary, ‘the reason Gaozi externalizes yi (excludes yi from the inside) is not because he attempts to attain yi in the outside, but because he does not pursue it by externalizing it.’ Is it true?” Zhu Xi: “Gaozi just got rid of yi and (ideally) understands it in terms of the mind. For example, Lu Zijing (陸子靜: 1139-1193) said that ‘reading books and investigating the principles all mean Gaozi’s efforts of externalizing yi.’ However, I do not think so. If (we were doing) just as Zijing does not read books and investigate the principles, but just cultivates the mind with silent meditation, then it looks Gaozi’s externalization of yi.”

“Even though appropriateness of things exists on the outside, the reason to attain the appropriateness by properly dealing with things is on the inside.”

First, we can see that Zhu Xi’s view of li-internality has nothing to do with either idealistic transcendence or the inner-worldly emptiness of Buddhism and Daoism, which were severely denounced by Zhu Xi. When insisting that engrossment of the mind via silent meditation can externalize yi, Zhu Xi implies that we might lose a certain principle, viz. what allows for things to be treated properly. In addition, he did not deny that appropriateness of things is on the outside. This is a case of matching one with another: appropriateness of things and the principle of making things being properly treated.

For instance, let us return to the famous story of the Mencius. When seeing a child falling into a well, I can be motivated to aid the child because of my internal desire

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46 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 1264. 问: “集注云:‘告子外義, 廳外之而不求, 非欲求之於外也.’ 曰: ‘告子直是將義屏除去, 只欲心上理會.’” 通: “陸子靜云:‘讀書請求義理, 正是告子義外工夫.’ 然以義不然。如子靜不讀書, 不求義理, 只靜坐澄心, 卻似告子外義.” Here, the commentary the student mentioned is not Zhu Xi’s standard version of the Mencius.

47 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 1219. …物之宜雖在外, 而所以處之使得其宜者, 則在內也.
even though I have no reasons. External is the given specific situation, a child
dangerously crawling towards a well, which is wholly independent of my desires.
According to an externalist, hence, we can be motivated to help a child without any
reasons because the given specific situation is very contingent so that our moral
motivation has no necessary relation to our actions. In this context, Zhu Xi's view of
motivation for action is neither internal nor external. Not only do we have an internal
urge to help a child, but also we contingently encounter the given specific situation.
Somebody would be motivated to help the child or not in the given specific situation.
No matter how strong the urge to help others, on the other hand, we cannot help but
consider specific situations into which the other is really placed. So, moral motivation
should be bound up with the matter of self-cultivation because most moral conflicts ask
us to do certain judgments or actions in unforeseen and specific situations. In other
words, self-cultivation aims at how to act properly in such unforeseen and specific
situations.

In chapter twenty-five of the Zhongyang, for instance, we find an interesting
sentence: "the virtue of (human) nature is the way of unifying the internal with the
external." Zhu Xi is explicit in claiming that there should be continuous unity
between the internal and the external. For instance, humanity as a whole can manifest
itself by unifying itself with wisdom as the function. In addition, "the internal
straightforward (zhinei 直内)" should be integrated with "the external square (fangwai
方外)" in light of continuity between attentiveness (jing 敬) and rightness (yi 義). Sincerity
(cheng) is the Way making possible the unity with achievement of equilibrium
and harmony. Thus, the proper way of becoming human is fully and persistently to

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48 Zhongyang, ch.25.
consummate the unceasing creativity of the Heavens-Earth. In this vein, therefore, the virtue of human nature pursues the way of unifying the internal with the external.

How then can we understand the unity of the internal with external in Zhu Xi's moral motivation? I have so far argued Zhu Xi claims that moral virtues as the authority of action are internal. Then, can we call Zhu Xi a virtue-internalist in terms of moral motivation? Even though he emphasizes the internality of moral virtues, I do not think he considers the virtues to be an exclusive motivational source for [moral] actions. Rather, Zhu Xi claims that all dyadic frameworks should be harmoniously unified with one another. As we have seen so far, Zhu denies both absorption into inwardness and attachment to external things. In order to understand Zhu Xi's moral motivation in terms of the unity between the internal and the external (he neiwei zhi dao), I should be able to elucidate the "New Discourse of Equilibrium and Harmony" (zhonghe xin shuo 中和新說) aiming at a holistic consideration of human nature and mind.

To sum up, Li Tong, Zhu Xi's teacher, taught him to attain the tranquil state of the mind for embodying an intuitive oneness of weifa. Through exchanges with Zhang Shi, Zhu Xi realized that it was important to focus on the mind's actual experience, yifa, in daily affairs while situating the state of weifa in the essential foundation of the mind. That is, he considers human nature as ti (the whole-body or the organic entirety) and the mind as yong (the nature's function) respectively. If so, there would be a gap between the mind and human nature although they have the ti-yong relationship. For instance, Zhu Xi soon questions why one cannot nourish the organic entirety of the mind before apprehending it in activity. After studying Cheng Yi's works, finally, Zhu Xi solves inconsistencies between the mind and human nature. That is to say, the mind in itself is the dynamic unity between the whole body, the weifa state of tranquility, and the
function, the *yìfā* state of active penetration of all things. Hence, in the dynamic unity of the mind human nature manifests itself through fitting in the proper way.

We should first keep in mind that in Zhu Xi's moral philosophy moral virtues are human nature in itself, which is naturally given to us. Moreover, it ontologically involves equilibrium of the whole body of the mind, while the proper emotions entail harmonious functions of the mind. Hence, moral virtues can realize themselves in the proper balance between moral intentionality of human nature and active penetration of emotions. In Zhu Xi's view, to practice moral judgments is to unify the dynamic activities of the mind with human nature as moral virtues. Neither human nature nor the activities of emotions alone can motivate us to act. Such an idea of motivation is not so much a necessary relation, but a dynamics of resonance (*gānyìng* 感應) with others. In a word, I believe that Zhu Xi's view of moral motivation has to do with a ceaseless process of resonance, which is influenced by the *Yìjīng* way of thinking. That is, the internality of moral virtues as the authority of action differs from a trajectory of question that concerns the extent to which emotion and reason guide moral judgment. Therefore, moral virtues as a motivational source should be able to resonate with specific situations by fitting emotions in the proper way. This is the way of moral motivation in Zhu Xi's virtue ethics.

Furthermore, Zhu Xi is reluctant to distinguish the internal from the external. As a matter of fact, the unity between the external and internal is necessarily to acknowledge a certain distinction between them. To him that distinction is not a substantial difference, but a relative one, which can be defined in terms of contextual and specific situations. For example, when a student asked about whether or not objects of investigation are external things Zhu Xi states explicitly as follows.
"External things are things too. The investigation of things should follow Master Cheng's explanation. We cannot change it. Among daily affairs like cleaning a court and treating a guest, we will realize a place of ‘entering into the numinous through refinement of firm justifiability.’ How can we divide the internal from the external?"  

Zhu Xi tries to efface a line of demarcation between the inner subtlety, which we should attain through refinement of justifiability, and the daily affairs with which we can always encounter. In the “New Discourse of Equilibrium and Harmony”, we have seen that his new understanding of human nature (weifu) does not imply a transcendent dimension, which is independent of this world, but entails immanent integration in which all things interactively take place. In this vein, moral motivation can be categorized as neither the internal nor the external. Moreover, it can be defined as neither an emotional urge nor a rational tendency. The idea of moral motivation is closely linked with either total experience of humans or empirical totality of humans: how one should live in this world. In short, morally right actions are manifested when we can properly resonate with specific situations of the world that we interactively live together. Thus, moral motivation is not the matter of either reason or desires, but how to properly resonate with the situations.

4.1.5. Interacting with the World: Receptive and Responsive Resonance (ganying 感應) and Fitting in the Proper Way (zhongjie 中節)

In order to further the idea of the unity between the internal and external, I will focus on the sentence, which Zhu Xi described as the moment of realizing natural

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Here, the locus classicus for ‘jìngyì rùshén (精義入神)’ is the Great Commentary appendix to the Yijing.
dispositions as moral virtues: “availing oneself of events, and so arising by resonating (gan 感) with them, they are realized in fitting in the proper way (zhongjie 中節).”

Furthermore, in order to inquire into this sentence in terms of manifesting moral virtues, I will start with what Zhu Xi did claim in the Commentary of Mencius 2A:6: “due to the rise of emotion, the genuine disposition of xing can be realized.” This explanation seems to imply that the natural disposition (xing) as moral virtues is inactive until the rise of emotion happens. What I want to argue here is how to interpret the meaning of the rise (fa), namely, the beginning of resonance (gan). For Zhu Xi, this is simply to capture a moment of constant movement. To him, the natural disposition and the mind are exactly identical with the ontological entity of the Great Ultimate and its movement.

So, activity of the mind has the same pattern of movement of the Way, constantly alternating yin with yang. Hence, such an idea quite differs from attempting to find a first cause of movement. Rather, the idea seems to appeal to the resonance of transformation of the qi cosmology.

In Zhu Xi’s natural philosophy, for example, all interactions and productions of things are ontologically based on the principle of ‘receptive and responsive resonance (ganying 感應).’ However, this involves not only ontological interactions between things but also inchoate stirrings of ethical actions. When elucidating the rise of emotion, therefore, Zhu Xi took the expression to be resonating with things (gan yu wu 感於物) rather than perceiving things. He clearly mentioned that the resonance is a

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51 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 469. 是感之本體，及因事感發而見於中節之時，則一事形，一理隨著.
52 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 84. “The principle of mind is the Great Ultimate (taiji); the movement and stillness of mind is yin and yang (心之理是太極，心之動靜是陰陽).” Ibid. 87. “Natural disposition is the same as the Great Ultimate; the mind is the same as yin and yang (性猶太極也，心猶陰陽也).”
54 For the metaphysical principle of Resonance, see the Yijing, especially Hexagram 31 (xiangua 景卦).
The basic and unique function of the mind. The literal meanings of *gan* and *ying* are ‘to feel’ and ‘to respond’ respectively. The reason I render it as ‘to resonate’ is because it does not mean unilateral perception or feeling, but interactive encounter. Although the principle of receptive and responsive resonance involves causal relations, it has broader meanings than causal relations because it highly emphasizes synchronicity, coexistence, concurrence, and interaction.

The agency of resonance can lead us to interact with another event or thing actively, but not to be perceived passively. Such a characteristic of resonance can play a crucial role in virtue ethics. For instance, to the extent that manifesting virtues consists in participating and sympathizing with another’s suffering, it will contribute to agent-based virtue ethics. That is to say, it presupposes that the agent will manifest his/her virtues by actively engaging in moral situations. What connects one phenomenon with another, i.e., what makes resonance possible, is human action or the engagement of agents.

What kind of role does self-cultivation play here? This is the reason why we call for attentiveness (*jing*). Zhu Xi was tirelessly asking us to make efforts to observe and be attentive in order to keep a harmonious balance of subtle movements of the mind. These processes of self-cultivation would make the mind flow naturally, but not additionally add training or practice to it. Manyul Im makes the very suggestive claim that Mencius’ agricultural images of moral development just involve natural development, but not the perfectibility of the heart through habituation like the Aristotelian view.

Comparing Mencius with Zhu Xi, I think that Zhu Xi more actively

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highlighted spontaneity of moral virtues as natural dispositions because he took it for granted that moral virtues *per se* are entirely contained in our mind. To Zhu Xi, hence, even the natural development of moral virtues would not be logically a necessary condition. Of course, whether moral virtues fully manifest depends on each human's capacity. In the midst of the subtle movements of the mind, moral virtue as the natural disposition can encounter a moment to manifest itself through the agency of resonance. Now, how can we know whether or not it is a morally proper manifestation?

In fact, human motives are so complex and fluid that it is hard to explain them with one cause. Does then the notion of resonance only explain particular and personal ethical situations? If so, do we give up any general account to be had of our response to moral situations? Although the idea of resonance accepts the complexity of human motives, it also emphasizes the timeliness of moral action. In other words, the sentence, "emotions are brought into proper focus", is the most key idea that we can identify emotional motivation for moral action with a source of natural dispositions, which would seem a necessary condition for the authority of morality. That "emotions are brought into proper focus" does not imply an emotionally insensible state, but rather properly expressing one's emotions. Zhu Xi suggests the case of the legendary King Shun as the exemplar of fitting in the proper way. When the legendary sage King Shun killed four villains, for example, his punishment perfectly expressed pertinent indignation. This is related to the notions of time (shī 寅) and position (wèi 位) in the *Book of Change*. These notions show us how to properly and nobly act when we are placed in a predicament. In the Confucian context, therefore, we can be motivated to act morally when emotions properly arise in the mind in accordance with time, place,
and position.

Let me further explain what “fitting in the proper way” (zhongjie 中節) means. Fitting in the proper way means to capture a moment of manifesting natural disposition as a motivational source in a dynamic process of total unity. Moreover, the moment can be considered to the conditions of transforming emotions into moral virtues.

“The will is being intended by the mind. Preserving the will means nourishing the mind. In addition to preserving the will, there is no nourishment of the mind. To preserve is to hold stably. When one is happy, she/he should be happy... After examining steadfast holding, one can fit in the proper way whenever emotions arise. This is preserving the will."

There is fitting in the proper way or not in compassion and shame/indignation. When one is compassionate in spite of that one ought not to be compassionate and...these are called fitting in the improper way."

Through the passage above, we see that Zhu Xi claimed that fitting in the proper way implies a candid attitude toward one’s own emotions. It requires us to pay attention to inchoate stirrings of emotion per se. However, most emotional states already entail cravings: the positive or the negative. In the Great Learning, for example, a candid response to one’s own emotion is described as hating a bad smell and loving a beautiful color. Even if these are figurative expressions of instinctive responses, they already involve one’s own preference for what one naturally feels. Zhu Xi analyzed love, saying that to love means ‘emotion’ whereas to love something, e.g. a beautiful color, has an object. That is, to have an object means ‘intention’. So, we may see that

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his definitions of characters like ‘love’ and ‘intention’ are not meticulous analyses of emotion per se, but intentional attitudes toward an object, namely, what properly manifests those emotions. Therefore, it comes down to a matter of self-cultivation, of making one’s intentions sincere.

Zhu Xi explicitly held that “fitting into the proper way is an efficacy of investigating the principle.” Through consistent efforts to investigate the principle, in other words, we can attain the proper way to reflect on our actions. In Zhu Xi’s ethical theory, investigation of the principle should presuppose preservation of the mind, because the mind has all of the principles. Zhu Xi claimed that “the mind is equipped with myriad principles” or that “the mind contains myriad principles.” These claims can be conceived as supporting the perspective that the human mind has a rational capacity to capture all things and events. What does Zhu Xi ethically mean by investigation of the principle? When one feels a clue of compassion, for example, one should be able to extend it to humanity as a virtue of the mind. This is a way of reasoning by rationally reflecting on emotions. According to Zhu Xi, we can get the ontologically ultimate and the heavenly virtue through the way of reasoning. In sum, that through reasoning the agent can fit in the proper way implies that the agent can deliberate about what the best course of action is. According to Zhu Xi, therefore, our ethical judgments or actions can be explained in terms of rational patterns of natural dispositions that resonate directly and properly with emotional responses.

4.2. Knowledge and Action

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4.2.1. The Unity of Knowledge: Knowledge of Virtuous Nature (dexing zhi zhi 德性之知) and Wisdom (zhi 智)

What is the meaning of “dexing zhi zhi” in Zhu Xi’s moral philosophy? It can be literally translated as “knowledge of virtuous nature.” Although we can find expression of “dexing zhi zhi” as a synthetic term in the Classified Conversations of Master Zhu, its source is in fact the work of Zhang Zai, one of the famous neo-Confucian literati of the Northern Song period. Let me first look at Zhang Zai’s statement of it in his Rectifying the Obscured. “Knowledge of the senses (jianwen 見聞; literally, seeing and hearing) is one which is attained by mutually responding to things, but is not attained by dexing. Being known by dexing is not sprouted by the senses”.

What, then, does dexing mean? Zhu Xi defined dexing as what is bestowed on humans by the proper order (zhengli) of tian in the Commentary of the Zhongyong. In addition, he explicitly glossed de as “the just principle (yili 義理) being acquired by the self.” The expression of “yili” has very comprehensive and varying connotations, e.g., either ultimate principles or valued criteria that are related to all human affairs, such as historical orthodoxy, statecrafts-making, and normative judgments, in the intellectual culture of the neo-Confucian literati. Thus, we can at least see that the meaning of yili is an appropriate framework, order, or pattern for capturing all human affairs properly. That is, de acquired by the self is conceived of as unique value-making qualities or properties of the self. In short, the Chinese character de indicates virtue or excellence, and xing, natural disposition. Hence, dexing implies a natural disposition toward moral virtues. As we have seen so far, human nature per se already involves moral virtues in Zhu’s moral philosophy. So, “natural disposition of virtues is identical with that of ‘the

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67 Zhu Xi, Zhongyong Zhangju, chapter 27. 德性者，智所受於天之正理.
68 Zhu Xi, Lunyu jizhu, 15:3. 德，謂義理之得於己者.
just principle (*yìli* 義理)**, namely, the natural disposition of humans embodying all axiological principles for answering the question, "how should one live?"

Let me now briefly define "*zhī* (知)” of “*dexing zhi zhi*,” which literally means "knowledge of virtuous nature." Zhu Xi regarded the knowledge as a motivational capacity by always connecting it with actions. To him, it would be useless if it were only defined as a theoretical aftermath of reason. Knowledge is of course also true beliefs; however, Zhu Xi thought that its truth can be only justified by actions. So, I call it practical justification of knowledge. In the end, *dexing knowledge* can be conceived of as a kind of actualizing knowledge for conduct. The intellectual understanding of virtuous nature leads me to examine Aristotelian ideas of intellectual virtue. By inquiring into Zhu Xi’s view of luminous virtue (*mingde 明德*) in relation to the Aristotelian view of intellectual virtue, I will suggest how to understand the luminous virtue in Zhu Xi’s moral philosophy. Let me look at Zhu Xi’s definition of it.

Luminous virtue is what humans acquire from the Nature (*tian*); it is emptily numinous and lucidly not-benighted (*xuling bumei 虛靈不昧*) and thereby fully embodies all principles and responds to the myriad affairs.?

Here, I should take heed of the statement of "*xuling bumei*,” i.e., “emptily numinous and lucidly not-benighted.” It is typically a figurative expression, delineating the intellectual capacity of human mind.?

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   The natural disposition of the just principle also means original nature (benran zhi xing) and the natural disposition of nature (*tianti zhi xing*).
60 For expediency, from now on I will indicate knowledge of natural disposition of virtues *as dexing knowledge* unless otherwise noted.
61 Zhu Xi, Daxue Zhangju, chapter 1. “明德者，人之所得乎天，而虛靈不昧，以具衆理而應萬事也.”
62 For the intellectual capacity of the mind, see chapter 3.2.3.
property by means of the quintessential lucidness of \textit{qi}. The expression of luminous virtue \textit{per se} already entails an implication of the intellectual. This is because the Chinese character, \textit{ming}, indicates an intellectual astuteness that is achieved by visual perception, but also because the character implies light or brightness, which is a classical symbol for insightful wisdom.\footnote{We may find such clichés in some Latin phrases, which have been used as the mottos of many universities, such as \textit{Lux et Veritas} (Yale University and Indiana University), \textit{Lux at Veritas} (Winnipeg University) and \textit{Veritas Lux Mea} (Seoul National University) etc.} As I elucidated in Chapter 3, two adjectives, \textit{xu} and \textit{ling}, are metaphorical expressions describing the intellectual capacity of the mind, which are all related to properties of \textit{qi}: material force or psychophysical energy. For example, implying spatially something pellucid and empty, the word \textit{xu} symbolizes an intellectual clearness without any prejudice. Denoting functionally something inscrutably sharp, \textit{ling} means an intellectually powerful faculty that can cover even something spiritual. Needless to say, the rest of the Chinese terms, \textit{bumei}, designate intelligibly being awakened to genuineness.\footnote{Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 261, 267. Zhu Xi emphasized that luminous virtue is originally bright while a mirror will be clean after polishing, when somebody asked him whether polishing a mirror is metaphorically adequate to describe “lightening the luminous virtue.” However, we should keep in mind that Zhu Xi’s contemporary mirrors were totally different from mirrors in 21\textsuperscript{st} century. \textit{Huzhou} Mirrors made in Zhejiang province were very popular in the Southern Song period. As is well known, their material was an alloy of copper and tin gilded with amalgam. So, without polish, it could not function as a mirror, i.e., mirroring objects.}

Zhu Xi entirely acknowledged that luminous virtue is nothing but human nature such as humanity, rightness, propriety and wisdom.\footnote{Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 260. 或問: “明德便是仁義禮智之性否?” 曰: “便是.”} Through the notion of luminous virtue, hence, what he really intended was to delineate either the rational faculty of the moral events or the normative faculty of the mind. In fact, we can indirectly confirm his intention through his criticism of the Buddhist idea of natural disposition: “Chan Buddhists consider ‘being emptily numinous and lucidly not-benighted’ as a natural disposition without any regard to full embodiment of all
principles and so forth.”⁷⁶ In short, we can call it “intellectual virtue of moral nature” in a sense which humans have luminous virtue of the mind, which can perceive moral events, and which is inherently human nature as moral virtues.

In Aristotle's ethics, moral virtues are not acquired by nature, but habit while “intellectual virtue in the main owes both its birth and its growth to teaching.”⁷⁷ To Aristotle, moreover, virtue is neither passions nor faculties, but a state of character.⁷⁸ Now, we can see that Zhu Xi's view of luminous virtue (mingde) differs from Aristotelian position of intellectual virtue and moral virtue. In order clearly to help my readers to understand the difference between Aristotle and Zhu Xi in light of the nature of virtue, I pose the following questions. What does Aristotle mean by “a state of character”? Does it differ from a natural disposition which can make human differentiate from other species? How can we sharply distinguish 'a state of character' from 'faculty' in terms of moral conduct? For example, the issue of distinction between them seems to be more problematic in understanding intellectual virtue including philosophical wisdom, understanding, and practical wisdom. In fact, I will leave aside the answers to these questions because it might lead me far from my main theme. Nevertheless, I can at least say that moral judgment for action should be constituted by both deliberative and desiderative elements in Aristotle's ethics.

For instance, Aristotle is explicit in addressing that “the origin of action-its efficient, not its final cause-is choice, and that of choice is desire and reasoning with a view to an end. This is why choice cannot exist either without reason and intellect or without a moral state; for good action and its opposite cannot exist without a

⁷⁶ Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 265. 禪家則但以虛靈不昧者為性，而無以具衆理以下之事。
⁷⁷ Aristotle, NE. 1103a15-18.
⁷⁸ Aristotle, NE. 1105b20-27.
combination of intellect and character." That is, choice as the origin of action should require two parts of soul: the rational (reason) and the irrational (desire). Aristotle clearly realizes that "it is not possible to be good in the strict sense without practical wisdom, nor practically wise without moral virtue." In relation to practical wisdom, hence, Aristotle's view of moral virtue also lies in certain complex interactions between rational and irrational parts of the soul which constitute one's character.

When Aristotle claimed that "a state of character is determined by activities and by its objects," more precisely, a state of character means the one being constantly constructed in accord with habituation of behavioral patterns. In other words, as certain state, character means its excellence, which we can acquire by means of adequate habituation. In this vein, Aristotle's state of character cannot be natural disposition, which we can inherently have and which Zhu Xi considered as moral virtues. But, I think that there would be certain dispositions which can properly form a state of character within human beings if we can pay attention to Aristotle's claim as follows: "the proof is that anger and wishing and desire are implanted in children from their very birth but reason and understanding are developed as they grow older." Aristotle's claim implicitly involves that anger, wish, and desire can be properly bound up with the rational part of soul via adequate education or habituation. If so, I think that character should also have certain initial dispositions, which can be fully developed into certain state of character, viz. virtues. It seems that Aristotle never thought of such dispositions at all. So, a state of character reminds me of the maxim: "habit is second nature." As we can see in M.F. Burnyeat's paper, "Aristotle on Learning to Be Good,"

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79 Aristotle, NE. 1139a32-35.
80 Aristotle, NE. 1144b30-31.
81 Aristotle, NE. 1122b1-2.
82 Aristotle, Politics. 1334b24-26.
83 The wise saw of Diogenes' dictum. Aristotle also used the similar expression in NE. "It has to become
how to become a good man depends on how “one should have been well brought up in good habits” and has nothing to do with naturally good dispositions, which are inherently given to us. Although a state of character is not a natural faculty in Aristotle’s ethics, it is seen as a kind of constructive faculty in the sense which it can have a settled disposition by means of habituation. According to M.F. Burnyeat, one comes to understand the intrinsic value of what is noble and truly pleasant through the process of habituation. In order to understand the intrinsic value of what is noble, one must first learn to enjoy something in doing actions, which can ultimately lead one to internalize knowledge. That is, the process of habituation makes it possible to internalize the intrinsic value of virtues.

Nevertheless, Aristotle’s view of the virtues totally differs from what Zhu Xi had thought of virtues as human nature. No matter of how we internalize virtue, it has little to do with Zhu Xi’s idea of human nature. Unlike Zhu Xi, Aristotle did not identify virtues with human nature. If we may ask Aristotle what is an innate faculty making us morally good, his answer would be the human soul having two parts: the rational and the irrational. I need to stop here not only because a discussion on the relationship between Aristotle’s ideas of soul and Zhu Xi’s human nature will take us far from my main theme, but also because it can give rise to many philosophical issues into which I should comparatively inquire.

In defining dexing knowledge, Zhang Zai regarded it as something different from empirical knowledge. However, Zhu Xi did not distinguish empirical knowledge

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84 Aristotle, NE. 1095b6.
85 Burnyeat (1980): 76-77. I believe that an inquiry into the relationship between habituation and formation of character can provide us inspiration in understanding comparative views between Aristotle and Zhu Xi, especially in relation to differences between cultivation and habituation in light of forming moral character.
from *dexing* knowledge. In order to understand what Zhu Xi thinks of knowledge, I will first examine the relationship between wisdom as intellectual virtue (*zhi* 智) and as a cognitive capacity of the mind, viz., activity of consciousness (*zhijue* 知覺) in terms of extension of knowledge (*zhi* 知).

Based on Cheng Yi's remark, Zhu Xi claimed that "*zhi* (知) is to perceive events/things; *jue* (覺) is to understand their principles." These two aspects of *zhijue* can make us attain both empirical and speculative knowledge, respectively. In addition, *zhijue* means all of rational capacities, including the theoretical and the practical, by covering empirical perception to moral understanding. Just as the principle of love is humanity (*ren*), so Zhu Xi regards wisdom as the principle of the activity of consciousness in light of the *li-qi* framework. Meanwhile, as the activity of consciousness, "*zhijue*" means *qi*-activity that cannot be separated from the principle (*li*) of intellectual virtue, namely "wisdom." When saying that "activity of consciousness is the virtue of the mind," more precisely, it implies the rational disposition of wisdom (*zhi* 智) as one of human nature. Hence, what is important to Zhu Xi is to attain knowledge entailing the principle of things.

As I mentioned before, Zhu Xi was reluctant to distinguish *dexing* knowledge from sense knowledge. Rather, he suggested a unitary mode of knowledge. In other words, Zhu Xi criticized Zhang Zai’s point that *dexing* knowledge is different from sense knowledge.

[A] Somebody asked about Zhang Zai’s [distinction between] sense knowledge and *dexing* knowledge. Zhu Xi answered that “there would be a

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* For the notion of activity of consciousness, see chapter 3.2.2.
mistake. The principle is equally shared in when we just see and hear. I don't know why he made a mistake despite of his gifted talent."\(^86\)

[B] Somebody asked that “Isn’t there sense knowledge among knowledge?” Zhu Xi answered that “there is merely one mode of knowledge. We just debate on whether it is genuine or not. There is no extra knowledge later.”\(^90\)

If dexing knowledge were totally different from sense knowledge, we may assume that there would be a distinction between the two, i.e., the empirical and the a priori. So, dexing knowledge could be a priori. In addition, there would be two ways of investigation for each kind of knowledge. Unlike Cheng Yi and Zhang Zai, however, Zhu Xi does not substantively divide dexing knowledge from sense knowledge. Why does not he make the distinction? The easiest answer, of course, would be to point out that Zhu Xi regards the cosmic order (II) as something comprehensive, including both the descriptive and the normative. For example, he at least believed that there is a rational pattern that can explain all the myriad things, from human affairs to trivial natural things, like an insect in the world. Moreover, Zhu is explicit in saying that “the principle is merely one in terms of unity of the world with myriad things.”\(^91\) So, Zhu Xi was not necessarily forced to distinguish two kinds of knowledge from each other. When pursuing knowledge, rather, we need to grasp it in accordance with the matter of genuineness (zhen 真).

In these conversations, we can see two points concerning knowledge. (1) To attain knowledge is to investigate the principle, which is equally shared in all of the myriad things. (2) The key point of knowledge Zhu Xi is concerned with is not a

\(^86\) Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 2537. “問橫渠耳目知，德性知”。曰: “便是差了，聖在聞見，亦同此理。不知他貨貿如此，何故如此差?”


\(^91\) Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 2. “合天地萬物而言，只是一箇理。”
distinction between *dexing* and sense knowledge, but a distinction between the genuine and the factitious. Dividing *dexing* knowledge from sense knowledge, Zhang Zai seemed to think that sense knowledge is trivial, whereas *dexing* knowledge is momentous. This implies that sense knowledge is confined to the narrowness of empirical observations. If so, *dexing* knowledge can be unexpectedly understood as something mysterious, beyond humans’ experience.

To Zhu, what is significant concerning knowledge depends on its genuineness in light of actions. In other words, the issue is not what kind of knowledge one attains, but *how to do* what one knows what one should do. Zhu Xi thought that *dexing* knowledge cannot clearly be separated from sense knowledge and that all of knowledge has ‘one mode (*yiyang* 一樣), viz., whether or not it will be actualized by those who know. Even if *dexing* knowledge and luminous virtue would involve moral virtues, they do not connect exclusively with certain moral events, but with all human actions, viz. all of human life.

I will now highlight the significance of practice by explaining the notion of the activity of consciousness (*zhijue* 知覺).

When a student asked, “If activity of consciousness means numinous aspect of the mind, is it *qi*-activity?,” Zhu Xi replied, “it is not solely *qi*-activity. There should first be the principle of activity of consciousness (*zhijue* 知覺). When the principle does not perceive yet, it can really perceive after *qi* conglomerates, makes a form, and unifies itself with the principle.

The one being perceived is the principle. The principle cannot be separated from activity of consciousness and vice versa.92

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An intellectual capacity of the mind as the activity of consciousness should be derived from qi-activity, which constitutes a basic agency of the mind discerning 'this' from 'that,' viz., shifei zhi xin (是非之心). In the relationship between li and qi, however, it cannot be separated from a rational pattern, viz., the intellectual virtue (zhi) of human nature. To Zhu Xi, genuine activity of consciousness always involves the principle as the intellectual virtue of human nature. In other words, moral integrity either manifests or realizes itself through the principle of the activity of consciousness. In as much as we agree that human nature is such virtues as humanity, rightness, propriety, and wisdom, these virtues realize themselves through the intellectual capacity of the mind, in Zhu Xi's ethical theory. In relation to the ethical dimension, therefore, the activity of consciousness enables us to represent the principle of humanity that carries out moral actions, like helping a child who has fallen into a well. In the end, knowledge is attaining the rational patterns of the myriad things\(^\text{\textsuperscript{93}}\) through the agency of the intellectual understanding. When we are saying dexing knowledge, hence, it is the type of knowledge for capturing morally rational patterns of human affairs or events.

So, it can be called moral knowledge. This, however, differs from the definition of moral knowledge in the contemporary analytic moral philosophy. For instance, according to Geoffrey Sayre-McCord, a contemporary analytic moral philosopher, one can say that "one has moral knowledge when, but only when, one's moral opinions are true and held justifiably."\(^\text{\textsuperscript{94}}\) It seems to me that such a definition aims at the understanding of moral statements in accord with epistemological criteria, viz., truth and justification. In the meantime, Zhu Xi's moral knowledge has bearing on whether

\(^{93}\) Here myriad things includes everything, including a variety of all human affairs, metaphysical objects of the Great Ultimate, and even trivial things such as a blade of grass, an insect, etc.

or not moral values can be truly performed by agents, although he agreed that whether or not it is knowledge depends on its genuineness (zhen).

For Zhu Xi, justification of moral knowledge can be only warranted by realizing them through actions. For example, a moral opinion, "it is good to help a child falling into a well," can be true when I really rescue the child from the dangerous situation. In this vein, moral knowledge is a motivational source to trigger moral conducts by playing a performative role. It seems to Zhu Xi that any attempts to analyze if moral opinions are expressions of beliefs are useless. Hence, knowledge does entail not so much a static phase of belief, as a dynamics of performative power. If this is so, knowledge does involve not only an epistemic aspect of knowing, but also a practical entailment of intellectual agency. Consequently, knowledge is more than an intellectual virtue, because it is a real outcome properly combining the virtue with the activity of consciousness.

4.2.2. The Interdependency between Knowledge and Action

In Zhu Xi's philosophy, knowledge mainly covers investigation of the principle, and its understanding, namely, the way of extending knowledge through investigation of things. As I argued in Chapter two, in relation to Zhu's idea of self-cultivation, these

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95 Zhu Xi severely criticized Chan Buddhism as armchair philosophy because of its idealistic or excessively speculative aspects, thereby praising Confucianism as real and practical learning.

96 One can find an interesting example of the use of the character, zhi, (知; we might translate it as knowledge) as performative implication in the titles of government positions in pre-modern China and Korea. For instance, one common title was zhishi(知事), usually indicating governor. Literally it translates as the person who "knows affairs". More precisely, in the title of the chief official of government organizations, the character, zhi, is often prefixed to the name of the organization. Thus, the Director of the Supreme Prosecutor's Office, "zhishi yijin shi"(知義英府事) could be literally translated as "the chief who knows the affairs of the supreme prosecutor's office." Here, we can easily see that the meaning of zhi does not mean "to know", but "to command, to manage, and to direct" fully designating the performative roles of its position.

97 According to Zhu Xi's li-qi theory, intellectual virtue as natural disposition cannot manifest itself without qi-activity.
intelligible activities do not mean only theoretical speculations, i.e., rational thought (sīlǐ). As Confucius pointed out, agency of knowledge should always aim at flourishing in humanity (liren 利仁), namely, moral achievement. In Zhu Xi's moral philosophy, therefore, the issue of the relationship between knowledge and action can be paraphrased as a problem of how to immediately relate moral actions to knowledge of moral affairs. Just as each pair of all dyadic polarities harmoniously interacts with one another, so knowledge and action are mutually intertwined with each other.

Interdependently, knowledge and action always follow each other, just as feet cannot walk without eyes and vice versa. In terms of order, knowledge is prior to action. In terms of importance, action is more important than knowledge.\(^9\)

This not only implies a relationship between understanding of things/events and its practice, but also a relationship between the investigation of the principle (qiong líi 窮理) and the preservation of attentiveness (chijing 持敬). So, action even involves all efforts to be aware of a subtle movement of the mind. In a word, the interdependency between knowledge and action in itself thoroughly aims at how to actualize what one morally knows. In terms of interdependency between knowledge and action, Zhu Xi requires us to make the mind free from any prejudice or personal interests so as to contemplate the principle.\(^10\) To make the mind free from anything is the starting point of extending knowledge, viz. the investigation of the principle.

So, in Zhu Xi's philosophy the matter of investigating the principle is closely tied up with how to actualize what I genuinely know. In order to actualize what one

\(^9\) *The Analects*, 4:2

\(^10\) Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 148. 知行相须, 如目無足不行, 如目無目不見。論先后，知為先; 論輕重，行為重。Although knowledge is prior to action, it is almost a simultaneous event with action.

Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 155. 建理以虛心靜虛為本...虛心建理.
morally knows, hence, Zhu Xi persistently emphasizes interdependency between knowledge and action in the level of self-cultivation. To him, interdependency between knowledge and action is understood in the sense that we should be able to maintain a continuous accord between internal reflection of the self and comprehensive contemplation of things. That is, total understanding of the correlative unity between knowledge and action is led to full attainment of genuine knowledge without any prejudice. Here, we should keep in mind that the action Zhu Xi remarks is to entail not only performative practices, but also an effort to set the mind properly or make one's intention sincere. When Zhu Xi is explicit in saying that “action is more important than knowledge,” it implies therefore that not only do actions as self-cultivating bolster the genuine knowledge firmly, but also they activate it vividly.

In relation to moral motivation, of course, the key point is how to do what is morally right when one can influence the outcome of a morally relevant event. Thus, what one morally knows can involve one's moral motivation. When I see a child falling into a well, for example, my compassion, which can be considered a moral motivation, implies that I can morally perceive such a dangerous situation. As I will elucidate in 4.23, the knowledge Zhu Xi mentioned can be considered to be moral motivation in light of moral weakness of will.

Xu Zirong asks “Because I clearly know that fire and flood are terrible, it is needless to say that I am naturally terrified of them without any effort. In case of human desire, there is an intention of being attached to something. Even though knowing it, I cannot help loving what I am attached to. What can I do?” Zhu Xi says “it cannot be what one really knows yet.”

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When Xu laid bare his mind, Zhu Xi immediately connected his weakness of will to genuine knowledge. Furthermore, Zhu Xi explicated that certain attitudes, such as excessive rivalry, hatred, self-conceit, and greed etc., naturally move people to act, but do not forcefully move people to act after fully knowing them. If one entirely understands the situation of the attachment he/she has had, Zhu Xi holds, then one would naturally solve the pain, which would come from human desire. Hence, to know genuinely is immediately to act on what one knows, i.e., being fully motivated to act. In Zhu Xi's understanding of knowledge, it seems that Zhu rejected any skeptical view of perception. So, to perceive correctly is closely connected with the motivational dimension. For example, suppose that I am taking an examination such as the SAT. If I know the answer to a question regarding an equation, then I will mark the answer correctly, unless I fall into an illusion. If I intentionally mark it incorrectly, then such an action would be caused by another intention or desire. This would be bound up with a matter of weakness of will because I do something wrong or bad because of another desire or temptation.

In order further to read the relationship between action and knowledge as motivation, I will delve more deeply into fitting in the proper way. The key idea of "fitting in the proper way" lies in the gerund, 'fitting.' Through the emphasis on verbal expressions, I read Zhu Xi as claiming that knowledge immediately follows action. Whether or not we are fitting in the proper way is in fact the issue of how to act properly when I know what I should do. To Zhu Xi, therefore, "fitting in the proper way is an efficacy of investigating the principle."102 As I have elucidated above, fitting in the proper way is to manifest emotions properly for doing right actions. So, investigation

102 Zhu Xi, ZZYL. (1986): 1509. 中節則須窮理之功.
of the principle can lead me to act as I know I should.

Nevertheless, it seems that Zhu Xi did at least differentiate between what I know and what I should do. He said: "Seeing is just seeing, so after seeing, there would be action or not." To see, of course, doesn't mean a deep level of investigation, but just sensual perception. That is to say, this is not genuine knowledge, but an incipient step of knowledge. What, then, is genuine knowledge? Zhu Xi provides us an interesting example: "one who had been injured by a tiger knows that he is terrified. By thoroughly retracing the context of being injured, one who has not been injured by a tiger identically and exactly knows the terror that the other had undergone."

Therefore, in the incipient step of knowledge, or not yet having genuine knowledge, humans may not be motivated to act.

4.2.4. Self-Deception – An Example of Moral Weakness of Will

In the relationship between knowledge and action, then, the reason I cannot conduct myself with moral propriety is not just a matter of moral weakness of will, but sometimes because of the lack of moral knowledge, i.e., the fact that I do not genuinely know yet. So, we can say that moral weakness of will stems from moral ignorance.

Let me first define some terminology related to a situation that I can or do not act morally although I know what is right.

First, incontinence can be one example of moral weakness of will. The Greek, akrasia, means a state of lacking command over oneself. It thus can indicate a state wherein one cannot control oneself against certain temptations. Meanwhile, Nivison

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103 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 153. 私只見, 見了後有行, 有不行。
104 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 309. 又問真知, 曰: "曾被虎傷者, 便知得是可畏, 未曾被虎傷底, 須還旋思量管被傷底道理, 見得與被傷者一般, 方是。"
105 For this, see Aristotle, NE. Book VII, chapter 1-7.
claims that *acedia* (we might say, moral apathy or sloth) is more adequate than *akrasia* in understanding the moral problems of early Chinese philosophers.\(^{106}\) I think both *akrasia* and *acedia* can be attributed to the matter of weakness of will. The point that *acedia* is caused by an unspecified disposition of aversion to act is to entail that it can be also conceived as an attitude against what one intends to do. However, it seems that Zhu Xi considers such weakness of will as moral ignorance, rather than a certain psychological problem of conduct, because he believes that one can do what one knows if and only if one has genuine knowledge.

How, then, can we solve the problem of moral weakness of will, which stems from ignorance? The way of intensifying motivation, according to Zhu, is of course to attain genuine knowledge through investigation of the principle. Moreover, we have seen that the process of attainment should entail the efforts of making one's intention sincere and setting one's mind properly, which are penetrated by the idea of preserving attentiveness, in order to overcome moral ignorance through moral awakening. Here, we can see that the key phrase linking knowledge with action is making one's intention sincere. According to the logic of the *Great Learning*, making one's intention sincere can be redefined as allowing no self-deception (*wuziqi* 毋自欺).

"Self-deception is to indicate a betwixt and between person, namely, half-knowing and half-unknowing. Although one knows well what one should do, for instance, one does not fully do it (might we say, *acedia*); although one knows bad things that one ought not to do, one cannot quit it because of one's fondness (*akrasia*). These are self-deception. Even if we might name as deception a state that one doesn't even know what one doesn't know, the state is...

\(^{106}\) Nivison (1996): 92. Bryan Van Norden gives an interesting example to distinguish *akrasia* from *acedia* as follows. "Consider my failure to grade my students' papers: this is *akrasia* if I do it because I succumb to the desire to spend a night out on the town with my friends; it is *acedia* if I am not tempted by anything else in particular, but simply cannot get myself to grade. (Perhaps I just "channel-surf" without even finding anything fun to watch.)" Van Norden, 'Introduction' in *The Way of Confucianism* (1996): 2.
not immediately called self-deception.”

What is called self-deception does not mean that the person originally has no desire either to do the good or to get rid of the bad. When his will just rises, there is always a certain idea interrupting or blocking the will. Because of the idea, the inside cannot be identified with the outside. This is self-deception.

To Zhu Xi, self-deception is the both the case of moral incontinence and apathy. His remarks need not be considered as layered with any connotations of self-contradiction or incoherence, but as an ordinary and familiar kind of mental activity that most people have experienced. If one situates oneself in an equivocal place, then one might unintentionally be engaging in self-deception. What Zhu wanted to discuss is not the status of total ignorance, which can be called deception, but self-deception. When Zhu Xi calls a conduct self-deception, he means that the person is not acting under a guidance of what s/he knows. The person is at least aware of what is good even if she doesn’t have genuine knowledge. Precisely speaking, according to Zhu Xi, self-deception is a status in which one does not commit to do what one should do, without any intentional purpose. Moreover, the person does not intend either to do the good or to get rid of the bad, even though she in part knows what is right. The reason is that one’s intention is impure when it arises from one’s mind. So, what I want to focus on is how to delineate subtle dispositions of intention, rather than the awakening activities of it. Therefore, Zhu Xi’s focus aims at how to make one’s intention sincere, i.e., the way of intensifying moral motivation. How can we make our intention sincerely and persistently directed toward the good?

Zhu Xi’s answer to the question is the extension of knowledge, if we can retrace the strings of self-cultivation in the *Great Learning*. To make one’s intention sincere is a natural consequence of a full extension of knowledge. Then, we may further ask how to make one’s intention sincere for motivation? To Confucians, the matter of making one’s intention sincere is immediately conceived as that of self-deception.

Let me again examine the episode of the petty man. We have seen that the petty man intends to disguise himself to show us not that he is deceiving us, but that he is doing the good. However, everybody can easily recognize his intention because his conduct seems to be awkward. Nevertheless, he knows what is good in a specific context. So, his disguise is a kind of self-deception, which is considered to be moral apathy or moral weakness of will. Zhu Xi explicitly mentions that the case of the petty man is derived from an absence of knowledge, rather than malice. Moreover, he concludes that both absence of knowledge and self-deception are eventually caused by a lack of investigation of things. Therefore, his solution is, “one should extend one’s knowledge. After distinguishing the good from the bad, one can achieve the efficacy of being watchful onaloneness and get rid of vulgar desire for material gain. Then one’s intention can attain sincerity.”

In fact it is hard for us to blame the petty man only because of his disguise. Rather, the key point is to help him to continuously do the good. As I mentioned

11 The Daxue, chapter 6.
12 For this, see chapter 2 of this thesis and chapter 6 of the *Great Learning*.
13 Although the petty man when alone does something not good, the reason he does so is not described in the *Great Learning*. So, we cannot say yet whether it is incontinence (akrasia) or sloth (acedia).
previously, self-deception is as ordinary a psychological attitude as most persons can undergo in daily life. As Zhu Xi pointed out, if self-deception is derived from incomplete knowledge, then we should be able to help him to attain genuine knowledge. In order to lead him toward the good, we may need to encourage him to do it or to teach him kindly.\textsuperscript{116}

Therefore, we should be able to pay attention to the moment that he intends to disguise himself, showing us a good person even though his pose would be transitory in order to escape from a situation. Here, the key point is how to help him to continuously and sincerely disguise himself as a good person. We can see that his disguise is caused by the eyes of a virtuous man or those around him. That is to say, the eyes should be constant and kindly concerned for him, but not going so far as to keep him under surveillance. In the other’s eyes, the petty man could find a new way of behaving, which he had not yet found within himself. Seeing the other’s gaze is not perceiving a certain objective, but realizing different phases in myself that I have thus far not discovered. In other words, through the constant eyes of a virtuous man, the petty man can find the potential to be a good person in his conduct. No matter how transitory it may be, I believe that he can be aware of the moment of discovery. The noble man should help him to realize the discovery that he is also capable of right actions. Self-cultivation as moral effort helps him to realize his potential and to maintain his capacities to do the good continuously.

4.3. Conclusion

\textsuperscript{116} For this, we need to see William T. de Bary. 1998. “Community Contract.” In Asian Values and Human Rights. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. Since the Southern Song, the Community Contract (xiangyue\textsuperscript{fugao}) was a salient example of local autonomy, which neo-Confucians organized.
Zhu Xi’s idea of moral motivation can be seen as the internalist view in the sense that humans have inherently human nature as moral virtues. Moreover, his idea of the internality of moral virtues (xing) differs from the Mencian idea of seed-internality in light of their interpretations of duan (a sprout or a clue). However, Zhu Xi’s internalistic view of moral virtues is not invariantly substantial, but dynamically contextualizing in terms of his view of the unity between the internal and external. Such a holistic understanding of continuity between the internal and the external rejects a causal way of thinking on moral motivation. In Zhu Xi’s moral philosophy, rather, the agent should be able to fully resonate with moral events through a process of fitting in the proper way. So, the process of motivation involves totalconsummation between humans and the world because the process naturally leads us to manifest the normative virtues of the Heavens-Earth (tian-di).

How is it possible in his ethics? We need to keep in mind that Zhu Xi’s “the New Discourse of Equilibrium and Harmony” is a turning point in understanding human nature and mind. Zhu Xi confessed that he ‘entirely and deeply underwent’ real experience of benti (本體; we might say, the whole body or the organic entirety). It means that he has a kind of a cosmic awareness that the human mind becomes an underlying ground of the Great Ultimate (taiji), which involves subtle and dynamic movements of the world. Zhu Xi unifies the mind (xin) with human nature (xing) seamlessly. In ethical dimension, thus, the mind should be able to manifest moral conduct by fully embodying human nature as virtuous dispositions.

I explained the characteristic features of dexing knowledge, which is rendered as

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117 For this, see Cheng (2005): 260-283. Especially, for the meaning of tiren (體認), see Cheng (2005): 261. n.29. Basically, it entails “deep and integrative experience through the whole body”. Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 84. 心之理是太極。87. 太極只在陰陽之中，非能離陰陽也。然至論太極，自是太極；陰陽自是陰陽。惟性與心亦然。所謂一而二，二而一也.
knowledge of virtuous nature. In understanding knowledge for moral actions, we can realize that the rational disposition of human nature cannot be substantively independent of other human dispositions including emotional areas. I think, moreover, the moral virtues are ceaselessly constituted by certain "upward trends" of human nature, which are based on interaction with the total experience of daily life. But, humans possess inherently the virtuous disposition of human nature in a sense that it is one of the given conditions, like the physical conditions of the human body.

In Zhu Xi's philosophy, such an understanding of knowledge is deeply bound up with how to actualize what one knows, namely, moral practices. In order to actualize knowledge into practices, Zhu Xi persistently demands self-cultivation. To him, the ways of cultivation, like setting the mind properly and making one's intention sincere, are attributed to actions. This process leads us to attain genuine knowledge without prejudice. That is, the process of cultivation has an adequate role to play in interweaving knowledge with action. In fact, the realization of interdependency between knowledge and action is to establish a firm ground for moral practices. In addition, if the matter of knowledge is tightly intertwined with moral practices, then moral weakness of will can be solved through the entire attainment of genuine knowledge. Hence, self-deception stems not so much from a moral psychological problem, but from a lack of genuine knowledge, i.e., moral ignorance. In conclusion, Zhu Xi's enterprise of moral motivation shows us how to approach one of the oldest themes in Confucian philosophy: the integrative continuity between human and the Heavens-Earth (tianren heyi 天人合一).

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118 This idea is indebted to Whitehead's Function of Reason.
CHAPTER V. ZHU XI ON MORAL IMAGINATION AND THE MORAL PERSON

5.1. Zhu Xi on Moral Imagination and Whitehead’s Definition of Reason

As we have seen thus far, we concede there is at least an inherent moral capacity to judge a specific situation. How can we define this capacity in the context of Zhu Xi’s ethics? I think that we must reconsider the main theme of the Cheng-Zhu neo-Confucians, *xing ji* (性即理), “human nature is the cosmic order.” Truly advocating Cheng Yi’s theme “nature is the cosmic order”, for example, Zhu Xi implies that the cosmic order can be understood as a rational disposition related to moral events. More clearly, this means that human axiological disposition continuously equates itself with the cosmic order. In order to do so, according to Zhu Xi, we should be able to extend knowledge by investigating the patterns of things and events. Despite the fact that grasping the coherent patterns of things in the world is explicitly the activity of a rational disposition, it cannot simply be defined as the conception of speculative reason because the neo-Confucian notion of *li* involves both the normative and the descriptive. Moreover, the ethical dilemma reveals itself in the perplexing aspect of human affairs. Thus, when deliberating an ethical situation it seems obvious that neither reason nor desire alone can resolve it.

Such a human capacity to make moral judgments is something more than a conceptual implication of moral reason. Hence, I should be able to remold the concept of moral reason in accordance with a certain unified perspective between rationality and sentiment; otherwise, I will need to find a relevant expression to nail down with precision the comprehensive implications of this capacity. By examining the conception of reason in light of Whitehead’s idea of it, I will inquire not only into how their definitions can plausibly conform with Zhu Xi’s idea of the rational disposition, but also
whether it is appropriate to delineate the conception of li in his understanding of human moral capacity. In short, I will neither deny nor dispute the concept of reason. Rather, I believe we can see another possibility of reason through the case of Whitehead.

5.1.1. Whitehead’s Definitions of Reason

Can the conception of moral reason be clearly justified in Zhu Xi’s ethical context? Zhu Xi’s view seems to be that the ground for moral judgments and moral conduct is li (理) in the human heart. How should we interpret li in his ethics?

""The Yi was fully modeled on the Heaven-Earth, and it can embrace, therefore, the Way of the Heaven-Earth. Looking up, it contemplates the configurations of the Heavens (tianwen 天文), and looking down, observes the patterns of the Earth (dili 地理)..." (The Commentary of Yi A:4)

Here, the author of the Commentary of Yi is explicit in stating that li is a certain constant pattern or order of things like the earth, things, etc. In terms of the idea that human experiences or humans per se are identified with the cosmic order of the Heaven-Earth, inherently, fully and isomorphically, we can say that li, a coherent integrative pattern, is continuously unfolding through the world including within the myriad things [liyi fenshu 理一分殊]. However, most sinologists have thus far translated it as the principle, order, pattern, reason, law etc., which becomes problematic in grasping the whole meaning of li. Willard Peterson, meanwhile, suggested “coherence” as an alternative to the other translated terms above. Coherence is a very adequate and plausible word for capturing the neo-Confucian terminology, “li”.¹ In particular, it succeeds in clearly describing the nature of li in terms of neo-Confucian philosophy.

because coherence has the most optimal disposition, covering all other the English translated terms.

Nevertheless, I cannot be fully satisfied with the term, 'coherence,' when using it to describe a human disposition. When considering 'coherence' as the translation of li, I think, Peterson seems to have searched out a certain English term as free as possible from such Western cultural biases as philosophical and religious tradition, social and political context, and even natural scientific influence. As he puts it, "I intend 'coherence' to be taken in the straightforward sense of 'the quality or characteristic of sticking together,' with the connotations varying according to context." To me, the phrase, "with the connotations varying according to context," implies a certain neutrality that can be flexibly applied to various contexts. That is, Peterson chooses a comprehensive meaning of coherence, which can cover all previous translated terms of li such as principle, reason, pattern, order, law, and so forth.

Even though li in itself may be rendered as coherence, as Willard Peterson argued in detail, we should have a certain context when applying the term "coherence." How then can we call it when applied into humans? When we say, for example, "he is coherent" in everyday English, this would seem to imply that his mode of expression is very logical or reasonable. When a person has a coherent pattern or orderly coherence, it means his way of life, thinking, or constructing a relationship with the world has a certain logical pattern. It should be understood as a coherent disposition when applied to personhood. Thus, the coherent disposition may be called the rational. More specifically, in relation to moral judgment or moral authority of action, I believe that we can term li a normative-rational disposition, rather than coherence, which carries a
neutral nuance. If we persist in calling it coherence, what then can we mean by “coherent judgment” or “deliberate coherence” in terms of moral judgment? I think that certain moral deliberation should at least be called “moral virtuous rational disposition,” taking into consideration all possible events. This involves a consideration of the contextualization of li in a specific situation. If we consider the contextualization, then we should be able to use many different translated terms for li because all previous translated terms already have the property or tendency of coherence.³

If we stick to “coherence” for li, then we may use coherence if and only if li is placed in a neutral situation. However, this seems almost impossible because language always carries its own contexts from which its meaning is derived. When considering the contextualization of language in a deeper dimension, I think common English terms such as ‘reason’, ‘principle’, ‘order’, etc., need not necessarily be trapped within a Western philosophical tradition, representing particularly analytic and instrumental ways of thinking.

When ‘reason’ is used in Chinese philosophical anthropology, it should be conceived as an integrative human capacity to capture everything in an orderly pattern: the rational disposition of a human being. For example, Alfred Whitehead’s definition of Reason provides us an exemplar of its creative interpretation in the Western intellectual tradition.

...The function of Reason is to promote the art of life.....I now state the thesis that the explanation of this active attack on the environment is a three-fold urge: (i) to live, (ii) to live well, (iii) to live better. In fact the art of life is first to be

³ The etymological origin of coherence is the same as that of reason, stemming from the Greek, logos, the verbal noun of lego, which means to “collect,” “gather,” “pick up,” and “put together.” Interestingly, the famous toy brand, “LEGO,” shares the same root.
alive, secondly to be alive in a satisfactory way, and thirdly to acquire an increase in satisfaction. It is at this point of our argument that we have to recur to the function of Reason, namely the promotion of the art of life. The primary function of Reason is the direction of the attack on the environment.\(^4\)

Whitehead defines reason as the upward urge to live better. Moreover, he approaches it in terms not of a substantive being, but a functional aspect of the human disposition. However, his reading of Reason should not be seen as a kind of speculative reason. Whitehead persistently criticizes the speculative and calculative roles of reason, which have been dominant in modern natural science.\(^5\) Rather, to him, such a functional aspect should be understood in the integrative continuity between organic entirety and function. That is, reason as the functional aspect is a way which fully manifests the totality of humans. Whitehead is explicit in stating that “Reason is the practical embodiment of the urge to transform mere existence into the good existence, and to transform the good existence into the better existence.”\(^6\)

Thus, to Whitehead, Reason can be a dynamic urge of life, just as Zhu Xi defined the mind as “life (sheng 生)” which is called “the great virtue of the Heaven-Earth.”\(^7\) In this vein, the mind as humanity is conceived as the will of the grand flow, which produces without cease the myriad things in the world.\(^8\) The mind as the will of life involves not only a vivid cosmic vitality, but also integrative unity of axiological disposition (xing) with activity of consciousness (zhijue). When discussing moral judgments or authority of action in Zhu Xi’s ethics, therefore, the “li” as (moral) reason

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\(^6\) Whitehead (1929): 23.
\(^7\) Great Commentary Appendix to the Yijing.
\(^8\) Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 85. 劉明心字，曰：一定以居之，日生而已。天地之大德日生，人受天地之氣而生，故此心必仁，仁則生矣。心必須廣大流行庶事者，又須兼生意者。且如程先生言：仁者，天地生物之心。只天地使大，生物便流行，生生不窮.
has the vivid vitality with the axiological disposition. So, Zhu Xi’s view of moral
reason is defined as an orderly urge to live morally better in full accord with the cosmic
order of the Heaven-Earth. Hence, in the Whiteheadian perspective of Reason, the *li* in
a blade of grass would be “reason” in a sense that it is very orderly and expresses
optimal coherence in order to best sustain its life. In this vein, the Confucian idea of
reason can be newly understood as an orderly urge of projecting life better with the full
intention of consummating a total unity of coherence.

Needless to say, this kind of reason diverges from the Western traditional
conception of reason, most especially speculative reason. The Confucian idea of reason
ontologically manifests itself within the correlative continuity between *li* and *qi*, viz. the
dynamic pattern of *qi*-cosmology. As an axiologically rational disposition of human
beings, *li* never allows itself to be disjoined from emotions, desire, and sentiment,
representing *qi*-activity. So, the urge to live better, which is the Whiteheadian
definition of Reason, shows us well the optimal harmony between two aspects of the
human disposition: the rational and the temperamental.

5.1.2. Inferential Extension of Resemblance (*lei er tui zhi* 類而推之)

Let me examine one of the Chinese phrases, *lei er tui zhi* (類而推之), that has
been interpreted as “analogical reasoning” by some Chinese philosophers such as David
Nivison and Kwong-loi Shun. Unlike them, however, I will focus the expression on
cognitive imagination. As we have seen, in Confucian ethics the human capacity for
moral judgment entails a capacity to sympathize with the sufferings of others. Hence,
this way of sympathy can be epitomized in the Chinese expression, *lei er tui zhi*
(類而推之), which is applied as a more practical way of investigation to both natural and
normative worlds in his philosophy. The terms can be literally translated as
“inferentially to extend by classifying into the same kind.” How is Zhu Xi’s idea of
analogical extension understood morally in light of self-cultivation? We may assume
that the idea of analogical extension, or the way of understanding patterns in the world,
plays a decisive role in Zhu Xi’s moral philosophy. In fact, Zhu Xi’s idea of analogical
extension is Cheng Yi’s answer to the question: what is the meaning of “reflection on the
near” (jinsi 近思)? The problem here is ambiguity about “the near.” Zhu Xi’s
commentary on the Analects 19:6, from which the words jinsi originate, is as follows:

“These four are all concerned with studying, questioning, reflecting, and
discriminating. However, we do not necessarily attain humanity by putting
effort into these four steps. If one follows these in this manner, then ‘one’ mind
does not run after the external” and what one preserves comes to maturity.
Therefore, we say that humanity lies within this...Master Cheng says, “to study
widely, to be resolute of will, to ask pertinently and to reflect on the near – It
can be said that humanity lies in this. Those who study must get it through
reflection. That is the way of penetrating the top and the bottom...when one
asks pertinently and reflects on what is within self, humanity lies in
this...reflection on the near is to infer by analogy...”

Here, Zhu Xi quotes Cheng Yi’s definition that reflection on the near means

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9 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 1203-4. “魏子曰：‘近思，以類而推，何謂類推?’ 曰：‘此語道得好。不論趨避顚跌，
亦不論縱橫往來，只是就事事近備著應機於去。如是過事理會得透了，又因過事件事推去做那一件事，
知得亦是處地，如論得這事有許多光，便因這事推將去，論得那事亦做地光。如升階，升第一階了，
便因第一階進到第二階，又因第二階進到四階... Derived from the Analects, the characters, “jinsi”, are used
in order to title one of the most important texts in the neo-Confucian tradition. Wing-tsit Chan translated
it as “reflection on things at hand.”

10 This is Cheng Hao’s statement. Zhu Xi summarizes the content of the Analects 19:6 by quoting two master
Chengs in the Questions on the Analects (Lunyu Huowen). “If the mind does not run after the external, all
events would be beneficial.” For this, see Lunyu Huowen, 217.

11 Zhu Xi Lunyu jizhu, 19:6. 四者皆學問思維之事耳，未及乎力行而為仁也。然從事於此，則心不外馳，
而所存自熟，故曰仁在其中矣。程子曰：學問思維，切問而近思，何以貴仁在其中矣？學者要在得之。了此，
便是做上做下之道。又曰：學不博則不能守約，志不誠則不能力行。切問近思在己者，則仁在其中矣。又曰：
近思者以類而推.
analogue extension. Zhu Xi wants us to understand that learning this is something more than an intellectual accomplishment, but also the moral achievement of the realization of humanity through preserving the mind. However, the meaning of “the near” (jin) is still questionable. In order to read Zhu Xi more clearly, we need to look at another example of what is “near.” There is a similar expression in the Analects 6:28.

“One who has humanity wishes to be established, and so he establishes others; he wishes to achieve, and so he helps others to achieve. To be able to draw analogy from what is near can be called the art of humanity.” [Analects 6:28]

“...I take analogy from myself, i.e., by drawing analogy from what I desire, I can know what others desire...Then I can attain to understand others by inferring what I desire. It is a matter of consideration (shu 議) and the art of humanity...” [A part of Zhu Xi’s commentary of this chapter]

It seems that what is considered “near” is the self (shen 身), in both the Analects and Zhu Xi. What is near is something intimate and accessible to me, intimate events that I can experience in everyday life like dish-washing, tooth-brushing, or baby-sitting. More precisely, it is the accessible feelings that we have in daily life. That is to say, I can truly consider others by realizing my own dispositions and I am guided in my treatment of others by what is inferred from my own desires. Here, cognitive imagination does not mean a reckless drawing without any empirical experience, but certain optimal-maximum possibilities within a given cognitive situation.

Zhu Xi holds that “investigation of things should start from what I am really close to.” He defines what I pertinently and ardently want as all human relationships.

12 Zhu Xi Lunyu jizhu, 6:28. 近取諸身，以己所欲施之他人，知其所欲亦是也。然後推其所欲以及於人，則恕之事而仁之術也。
13 Zhu Xi Daxue Zhangju, 2. To Zhu Xi, things (wu 物) should be interpreted as events (shi 事), which can occur in everyday human relations. So, he glosses things as events in the Daxue.
like those between princes and subjects, parents and children, wives and husbands, and friends. For example, Zhu Xi is explicit in stating that "extension of knowledge through investigation of things is not to know what one does not know yet." To Zhu Xi, to realize our own disposition is not to know what is as yet unknown, but to recognize innate [moral] feelings, which we already possess. So, the reason Zhu Xi glosses ge as "to arrive at" in understanding the investigation of things (gewu) is because he believes we can fully "reach" the heart of others based on an analogical extension of our own hearts. To him, we naturally understand others' hearts and form human relationships.

More specifically, Zhu Xi connects the way of analogical extension with sympathetic deliberation (shu 愍) in an ethical context. So, the Chinese terms, "lei er tui zhi (類而推之)", can be interpreted as inferential sympathy based on resonance of a similar kind. Sympathy is the capacity for sharing the feelings or emotions of others placed in a specific situation. Even if it is a logically inferential process of deduction, sympathy should involve a subtle sensibility of insight into the complexity of human life.

5.1.3. Moral Imagination – Sympathetic Deliberation (shu 愍)

In Steven Fesmire's book, "John Dewey and Moral Imagination", we can see how there were pragmatic ethical efforts to reconstruct the conception of reason in order to delineate a human capacity for moral judgment in light of a unified perspective, combining rationality with sentiment. Fesmire named the alternative to moral reason "moral imagination" through an analysis of Dewey's theory of imagination. In fact, the term and concept of moral imagination, which can be found in many recent studies

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15 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 297. 致知，不是知那人不知底道理。
16 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 2762比而推之便是怨。
18 Fesmire (2003): 64-68.
on ethics, is defined by Mark Johnson as “an ability to imaginatively discern various possibilities for acting in a given situation and to envision the potential help and harm that are likely to result from a given action.”¹⁹ In short, Johnson explains moral imagination in the sense that moral judgment or deliberation is imaginatively constructed by cognitively framing the metaphorical elements of a specific situation. Johnson’s idea of moral imagination relies heavily on his view of framing of specific situations, which are cognitively structured by a broad range of imaginative structures, such as image schemas, metaphors, and prototypes.²⁰ As a result, the moral imagination does not simply imply a logical reasoning of moral facts. Further, according to Johnson, “the chief imaginative dimension of moral understanding is metaphor.”²¹

Metaphor makes cognitively our thought more vivid and interesting, but also actually structures our perception and understanding. It is a cognitive process of assembling analogical resemblance through sensual experience. When Mencius take the term sprout (duan 端) for delineating human emotion related to the virtue of humanity, for example, this botanical metaphor aims to manifest a similarity between development of the virtue and the fruition of a plant. Needless to say, this metaphor is closely tied to a specific experience, which is based on a particular cultural milieu. In this vein, I think that we can clarify the implication of what is near in relation to “classifying into the same kind.” This clearly represents a sequential extension from one’s kin to others in application of ethical order. For instance, Zhu Xi also took the

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steps of a stairway as metaphor to explain such a sequential extension. Zhu Xi is explicit in stating that “I should be able to extend what I already know based on my established knowledge and then I can arrive at knowing everything.” In other words, imagination has nothing to do with an illogical jump, but a creative configuration of human experience. In the Confucian ethical context, thus, analogical extension is conceived as cognitive imagination or “imaginative cognition”, as Mark Johnson claimed.

So, moral understanding via the subtle sensibility of human capacity can be named moral imagination, which can specifically designate sympathetic deliberation (shu 忍). According to Zhu Xi, the Chinese term, shu, clearly represents the capacity to plan and discriminate human affairs. So, “sympathetic deliberation is the method of attaining the virtue of humanity” in an ethical dimension. More clearly, He identifies sympathetic deliberation with “the way of measuring square (xieju zhi dao 齐矩之道)” in the Great Learning.

In dealing with subordinates, do not work what you hate in your superiors; in serving superiors, do not work what you hate in your subordinates. In leading those behind you, do not work what you hate in those ahead of you; in following those ahead of you, do not work what you hate in those behind you. In interaction with those on your left, do not work what you hate in those on your right; in interaction with those on your right, do not work what you hate in those on your left. This is what is called the Way of Measuring Square, [which means to measure the hearts of others in accord with the proper measure of my heart]. [The Great Learning (Daxue) chapter 10]

Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 1203-4. “程子曰: 近思, 以類而推, 何謂類推?”...“不要越鬼越礮, 亦不是銀領銀眼, 只是就這處近便處得處極著去。如這一件事理會得透了, 便因這一件事推去做那一件事, 知得亦是恁地。如隱得這處有許多光, 便因這處推著去, 便得那處亦恁地光。如升階, 升第一級了, 便因這一級透到第二級, 又因第三級透到第四級... Derived from the Analects, the characters, “jinsi”, are used in order to title one of the most important texts in neo-Confucian tradition. Wing-tsit Chan translated it as “reflection on things at hand.”

Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 292. “是因其所已知而推之, 以至於無所不知也。”

The statement is explicit in showing how one should be able to sympathetically deliberate a specific situation with others when practicing moral conduct in the interaction with them. By properly contextualizing the situation of others in accord with my own axiological disposition, sympathetic deliberation as the way of attaining humanity can consummate ethical appropriateness. This contextualization can in a sense equate with psychological integration with others.

Through Zhu Xi’s commentaries on the Analects 6:28 above we have seen that analogical extension can realize the art of humanity, which lies in studying, questioning, reflecting, and discriminating. Zhu Xi immediately answered that “if we can always preserve this mind and prevent it from running after [the external], then it is natural that the principle lies within this” while questioning himself as follows: “to study widely, to be resolute of will, to ask pertinently and to reflect on the near – how can we say that humanity lies in these?” According to Zhu Xi, a consistent process of learning is the way of constructing moral values, because of the analogical extension based on what is near, i.e., classifying into the same kind. Furthermore, all efforts to inquire into “what is near” should first focus on a careful reflection on one’s own mind, and so eventually implies preservation of the mind.

Through the investigation of things, I know that the hearts of others are the same as mine and that all other people have a similar disposition to me. Just as I feel pain when I am hurt, so do others. How do I realize this? I realize it by analogy with what I desire, want, avoid, and so forth. This is sympathy with others’ experience through analogical extension. It means that I embody the experiences of others by making

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inferences based on my own. How is this possible? Zhu Xi quotes Cheng Hao: "Those who have humanity regard the myriad things in the world as one body. So, there is nothing which is not me (self: ji)." So, I think that moral understanding should be interpreted in a broad sense that it has always to do with actions and how to live, i.e., the way of life. As we have seen so far, all dyadic polarities in Zhu Xi's philosophy are harmoniously unifying with one another in light of the unity of the ti-yong framework. Hence, the human capacity for moral understanding cannot be limited to either natural disposition (xing) or emotion (qing) in Zhu Xi's moral philosophy. By unifying natural dispositions with emotions, the mind takes a dynamic and comprehensive status in understanding humans [xin tong xing qing 心統性情]. Such a subtle and inclusive sensibility of human capacity, which can be explained by neither reason nor desire, can capture every possible aspect of human ability.

Furthermore, sympathetic deliberation depends crucially upon the cultivation of the moral imagination. Such a deliberative sympathy for the sufferings of others should not remain the psychological experience of personhood, but pursue the realization of practical action. Thus does Zhu Xi call it the art of humanity.

5.1.4. The Contemporary Issue on the Nature of Virtue – Wallace's Criticism of McDowell's Account of Aristotelian Practical Reason 27

Those who have attempted to establish the concept of moral imagination share in the view that specific circumstances we should morally judge cannot be reduced or generalized by rule-governed concerns. I think that moral imagination as motivational

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25 Zhu Xi Lunyuji, 6:28. 仁者以天地萬物為一體，無非己也。認得為己，何所不至；若不認己，自與己不相干。We can find this statement in the second chapter of the Collected Works of two Chengs.

source for action equates in a sense with John McDowell’s claim that the understanding of how to live cannot be codifiable. In this section, I will inquire into contemporary issue on moral reason in relation to virtue. It is a preliminary research for whether or not Zhu Xi’s ethics can be adequately interpreted as espousing a form of virtue ethics. As we have seen so far, Zhu Xi claims that humans have an inherently natural disposition of moral virtues, which can be conceived as moral reason. Since “virtue” and “moral reason” are Western ethical concepts, however, one may ask me to justify their application to an understanding of Zhu Xi’s ethics. Thus, my purpose here is to examine how one can understand virtue in relation to moral reason by outlining R. Jay Wallace’s criticisms of John McDowell’s work on Aristotelian practical reason. Second, I will question whether the interpretations of moral reason in contemporary debates can have a role to play in understanding Zhu Xi’s idea of moral reason in light of virtue.

Basically, contemporary interpretations of virtue attempt to construe whether virtue can play a more adequate role in understanding the motivation to act. Kantian and Humean ethical positions traditionally focus on reason and desire respectively to explain the motivational source of agency. Recently, a remarkable resurgence of interest in Aristotle’s ethics, notably his views on practical reason, has focused on whether or not the role of reason can be reconstructed to provide us with a more plausible model of practical reason than the two major alternatives, i.e., the Humean and the Kantian theories. For example, McDowell has tried to articulate the neo-Aristotelian conception of moral reason by criticizing Kantian and Humean approaches to practical reason.

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28 In her essay, “Virtue Ethics: A Misleading Category?,” for example, Martha Nussbaum suggests that we would be better to use “neo-Aristotelian”, “neo-Humean”, or “anti-Kantian” instead of taking the virtue ethics by questioning the conceptual usefulness of “virtue ethics.” It seems to me that there is little consensus on what virtue ethics is among modern philosophers espousing “virtue ethics.” For this, see Nussbaum (1999): 163-201.

29 For a detailed summary, see Wallace (1991): 471-484.
His purpose is to defend and develop Aristotle's practical reason as an alternative to Kantian and Humean positions, i.e., to construct a more plausible and attractive theory of practical reason than the other two approaches. In brief, John McDowell's arguments of the criticism start with two main ideas: "moral judgments are uncodifiable" and "a rejection of principle-dependent moral theories."\(^{30}\)

In his article, "Virtue, Reason, and Principle", however, R. Jay Wallace carefully analyses McDowell's objection to Kantian and Humean accounts of practical reason and finds it uncompelling.\(^ {31}\) Wallace claims that the character McDowell requires us to change will be defined by "a certain class of 'unmotivated' desires," which can be conformed to the Humean pattern.\(^ {32}\) According to Wallace, it is very hard to take virtue far off track of a principle-dependent framework because virtue should be able not only to consider various situations as agents, but also requires a plurality of desires. Even though McDowell argues that "we can attain a complete understanding of virtuous action by appealing to the virtuous person's overall conception of how to live," Wallace refutes that Humean and Kantian approaches will have their own way of understanding of the virtuous agent's idea of how to live.\(^ {33}\) In a word, Wallace claims that McDowell's criticisms do not strike at the core ideas of Kantian and Humean approaches to moral reason. That is, he criticizes McDowell's interpretation of the Aristotelian conception of practical reason for not providing us with a relevant alternative model, which could be substituted for the Kantian and Humean approaches. Rather, Wallace suggests that articulation or development of the Kantian and Humean approaches could make it possible for moral reason to represent "a kind of justification which anyone is capable of

grasping and responding to." Finally, it seems that Wallace implicitly states that McDowell's interpretation of Aristotelian virtue can be melted down to Kantian and Humean frameworks.

Wallace's criticism of McDowell can be viewed as a question, i.e., can we adequately and plausibly construct an Aristotelian notion of virtue as an alternative to the Kantian and Humean positions of moral reason? If so, how is this possible? This involves understanding the nature of virtue in light of moral reason. For example, Wallace provides with two ways of developing McDowell's account of virtue, which can contribute a distinctive perspective to our understanding of moral reason: rational intuitionism and a form of connoisseurship. That is to say, Wallace at least admits that intuitionism and connoisseurship would be adequate to capture the uncodifiability of virtue, even though he ultimately advocates principle-dependent accounts of moral reason. According to McDowell, "a view of how one should live is not codifiable." To him, the virtuous agent's mind cannot be captured in terms of principle-dependent frameworks, capable of being specified in advance of the specific circumstances of action. McDowell's idea of virtue, uncodifiability and a rejection of principle-dependent accounts, can give rise to two questions. Is virtue really uncodifiable? And, are principle-dependent accounts incompatible with uncodifiability?

Mencius says "Even though Li Lou has acute eyes and Gong Shuzi has

35 Wallace considers connoisseurship as the more promising. (1991): 471.
After articulating in detail the model of connoisseurship as an alternative answer to principle-dependent conceptions of practical reason, Wallace elucidates some of its problems. No matter how clear the connoisseurship model is concerning the refinement of judgment, which involves "a capacity to discern the particular features of situations that provide case-specific reasons for action," it cannot escape from a kind of principle-dependent interpretation of moral reflection. Hence, Wallace stands for a principle-dependent account of practical reason.
incredible technique, they cannot draw a square and a round without a compasses and a ruler. Even though Shi Kuang has keen ears, he cannot tune five sounds without six standards. [Just as they do so], the Way of Yao and Shun cannot make the world peace without governance of humanity.”

"There is a common thing in terms of taste. Yiya attains what my mouth loves in advance...The reason most people in the world respect him in terms of taste is because the mouths of the world are similar to each other...Does not only the mind have no commonality? What is it, then, that is common to the mind? Rationality (li 理) and rightness (yi 義). The sages just attain the commonality of my mind in advance...”

In the Mencian perspective of virtue, connoisseurship interpretation of virtue at least has no conflict with the principle-dependent account of moral reason. Rather, Mencius claims a harmonious unity between virtuous disposition and general principle with which most people can agree. Furthermore, a connoisseur’s sense of taste should be able to attain a commonality to which most people in the world can objectively and willingly assent. This idea is closely tied to Zhu Xi’s claim that the internal (might we say, virtue) is fully unified with the external (might we say, the principle-dependent framework). One of the potential problems Wallace raises is “whether it (the connoisseurship model) is by itself a sufficient substitute for principle-dependent conceptions of practical reason.” As Wallace points out, the understanding of moral reason as general principles should go “some way toward addressing the problem of the authority of morality to govern or regulate our lives” and the principle should be able to clearly construe desire, which can justify moral actions, as a matter of empirical and psychological fact. In other words, his suggestion can be paraphrased as a claim that

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38 Mencius, 4A1. 陳之明，公翰子之巧，不以規矩；不以方矩，不能成方員；師曠之聰，不以六律，不能正五音；堯舜之道，不以仁政，不能平治天下。
39 Mencius, 6A7. 口之於味，有同者也。易牙先得我口之所喜者也...至於味，天下期於易牙，是天下之口相似也...獨無所同然乎？心之所同然者何也？謂理也，義也。聖人先得我心之所同然耳。
we should be able to formulate certain rational patterns to harmonize with virtue as moral reason.

Mencius and Zhu Xi go a step further to prove that humans are naturally good. Zhu Xi draws our attention to human goodness. Even though human conduct could be either good or bad in accordance with external circumstances, like a year of famine or bounty, Zhu Xi believes the commonality to which humans fully assent indirectly proves there are common virtues in the human mind. Is there anything contemporary moral philosophers who engage in the debate can agree upon? They agree that humans have a capacity to make moral judgments and to act morally. Neither the Kantian nor the Humean approaches to moral motivation would deny this capacity itself even though they disagree on the nature of it. As I mentioned, the capacity is total human sensibility, which can be seen in the Zhuxian notion of the mind leading us to act purposefully toward the good. If "moral reason would represent a kind of justification which anyone is capable of grasping and responding to", as Wallace suggested, then it is no different from the claim that humans are potentially or innately able to make moral judgments or to act morally. In short, the Mencian theme that humans are inherently good, which neo-Confucians ardently advocated, can be conceived of as full acceptance of the fact that humans possess this capacity.

As a matter of fact, McDowell also seems aware of an interaction between the internal and the external in understanding the nature of virtue. He explicitly says as follows.

The primary topic of ethics is the concept of right conduct, and the

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42 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 1390. “心之所同然者，謂理也。故也。” 孟子此章自“富彊子之親”之下，遂經諷詁至此，其意謂人性本善...”
43 I think this quote by Wallace will become the authority on altruistic behavior.
nature and justification of principles of behavior. Virtue is a disposition (perhaps of a specially rational and self-conscious kind) to behave rightly; the nature of virtue is explained, as it were, from the outside in.

...although the point of engaging in ethical reflection still lies in the interest of the question "How should one live?", that question is necessarily approached via the notion of a virtuous person. A conception of right conduct is grasped, as it were, from the inside out.44

I think McDowell should have elucidated what he does mean by "from the outside in" and "from the inside out". These statements inspire me to examine the unity of virtue with right conduct in light of the relationship between the internal and the external. Simply speaking, the nature of virtue manifests itself via the agent's practice of virtuous conduct. Hence, agents continuously internalize the nature of virtue through the practice of (right) conduct. On the other hand, my moral judgments can be taken as a guide to formulating the standard of right action. It means that my right conduct is realized within me, viz., virtue. In other words, the nature of virtue can be explained from a principle-dependent framework, while the conception of right conduct can be also grasped from uncodifiable virtue. I do not think that virtue is absolutely internal while the principle framework is external. Rather, these two polarities have the same as the ti-yong framework, as Zhu Xi claimed. Hence, conceptions of the internal and external are dynamic as well as correlative.

I have argued that the philosophical nature of self-cultivation should be understood in terms of Socrates' question of how one ought to live. To McDowell, the conception of how to live is an absolutely significant starting point for developing the Aristotelian account of practical reason. Unfortunately, it seems that McDowell himself did not explicitly demonstrate of what this consists. He simply remarks that "a

conception of how to live shows itself, when more than one concern might issue in action, in one’s seeing, or being able to be brought to see, one fact rather than another salient. It seems that the conception of how to live manifests itself in only perceptual events. In McDowell’s other explanation, “the conception of how to live must be cable of actually entering our understanding of the action, explaining why it was this concern rather than any other that was drawn into operation.” To me, this statement just highlights the practical realization of virtuous conduct. In short, his explanations of the conception of how to live can be summarized as practice or manifestation of conduct via perceptual characterization of a specific situation.

His perceptual-dependent account of the conception of how to live is similar to Zhang Shi’s emphasis of yifa, which means manifestation of consciousness. Zhang Shi insists that we should pursue contemplation in the rise of emotions and actions for developing moral virtue. In this case, virtue carries the possibility of subjective attitudes toward a specific situation. Hence, to Zhu Xi, Zhang Shi’s account of the agent, focusing only on the realization of action and consciousness, is insufficient to explain how to live even though it can deliberate upon ethical issues in the real world. Zhu Xi’s understanding of how to live involves a certain intentionality toward what makes one become human, which may be rendered into principle-dependent accounts of moral reason.

How are then we to identify the conception of how to live with the principle-

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47 In conclusion, McDowell remarks that “occasion by occasion, one knows what to do, if one does, not by applying universal principles but by being a certain kind of person: one who sees situations in a certain distinctive way.” McDowell (1998): 73.
48 For a detailed explanation, see chapter 3.2.2.-B.
49 I think this is the reason Wallace broaches one of the problems with the connoisseurship model of practical reason; whether it is fully sufficient for solving moral issues in contemporary culture. Wallace (1991): 491.
dependent model in the context of Zhu Xi's moral philosophy? Probably, the neo-Confucian keyword of *li* (理), is the closest notion to the principle that McDowell has in mind. The neo-Confucian term, *li*, which is both descriptive and normative, means not only the objectively well-ordered principle of things and events (descriptive), but also what humans morally and culturally ought to attain (normative; *suodangran* 所當然). Unlike McDowell, hence, the conception of how to live can be entirely identified with the principle-dependent model of moral reason of Zhu Xi’s ethics. Zhu Xi explicitly confirms that there is a natural disposition (*xing*) as moral intentionality in the human mind. Here, his unity of the internal with the external entails a unity of natural disposition with activity of consciousness (*zhijue*). Of course, activity of consciousness can be seen as the perceptual characterization of a specific situation in the sense in which McDowell is working on the conception of how to live. In spite of McDowell’s recognition that right conduct has its internal authority, it seems that he does not clearly explain how to link a conception of how to live with virtue as the internal authority. I think, therefore, the principle-dependent accounts of moral reason Wallace advocates can harmonize with (uncodifiable) virtue in light of Zhu Xi’s ethics.

In this section, Zhu Xi’s ethical ideas of moral reason as virtue are compatible with the principle-dependent model McDowell criticizes. This has to do with how to understand the nature of principle. To Zhu Xi, natural disposition as virtue, which necessarily involves “a conception of how to live (normative attitude)”, is a coherent pattern that is knitted into the fabric of the mind. Even though it is real to Zhu Xi, it is not an invariant moral law, but a dynamically fluid order, which can properly resonate in specific situations. In Zhu Xi’s philosophy this principle (*li*) is entirely embedded in the myriad things of the world. Therefore, Zhu Xi’s ethical interest is to harmoniously
and continuously unify the internal pattern of natural disposition with the external order of the world. Moreover, we do understand  

li in the context of qi when considering human ethical situations. In other words, li is seen as certain consistent and optimal pattern to live better within a given qi-situation. Hence, li is harmonious order, which is constituted by the unity between the internal urge and the external specific situation. To Zhu Xi, for instance, the reason humanity, which might be interpreted as one of virtues, is conceived of as principle (li) is because humanity as one of virtuous dispositions is imaginatively and metaphorically identified with the principle of production of the Heavens-Earth.

Let us revisit the matter of self-cultivation in light of moral reason including both of principle-dependent model and (uncodifiable) virtue. The way of self-cultivation proposed by Zhu Xi aims to harmonize the natural disposition as virtue with activity of consciousness or emotions (perceptual characterization of specific situations). Through this process of self-cultivation, activity of consciousness can be attuned to the natural disposition, i.e., a conception of how to live. By preserving well the conception of how to live, which intrinsically involves the principle-dependent model (weifa), according to Zhu Xi, we are able to act if the activity of consciousness (yiJa) can purely manifest its own virtues, such as humanity, rightness, propriety, and wisdom. Furthermore, the unity of virtue with principle-dependent framework can be achieved by two methods of self-cultivation; preservation of the mind (cunxin) and extension of knowledge (zhizhi).50 These ways of self-cultivation are the process of constructing continuity of coherent order in the world. That is, it is internally to develop virtue, i.e., a conception of how to live, and externally to engage in right conduct, viz., a practical

50 McDowell (1998): 50-51. I think we need to pay special attention to Socrates' dictum that virtue is knowledge to understand the unity of virtue and right conduct.
characterization of situations.

5.2. Virtue and the Moral Person

We need to pay attention to the view that the conception of moral imagination is the outcome of efforts to overcome the dualistic pendulum of rationality and sentiment. It seems obvious that such efforts lead us to understand different implications of virtue. Based upon total unity of the mind, which harmoniously unifies axiological disposition and activity of consciousness, we can begin by reconstructing Zhu Xi’s view of virtue in relation to moral imagination.

5.2.1. Virtue and Moral Imagination

According to Zhu Xi, the four virtues are natural dispositions that lead us to morally right action. Are these virtues Zhu Xi referred to conceptually identical with the notion of virtue in Aristotelian virtue ethics? Zhu Xi thought that virtue explicitly requires being acquired (de 得). Moreover, he emphasizes that it is that which is being “uniquely” acquired by “the self.” In addition, it is naturally an internal excellence, not something acquired from the outside. For example, Aristotle claimed that the virtue of the intellect arose and grew most from instruction; while virtue of character resulted from habit. To Zhu Xi, however, the authority of virtues seems to be the Heavenly order. In other words, they are natural dispositions we inherently possess, not something either acquired or constituted by external factors. These variant views derive from a substantial difference between Zhu Xi and Aristotle: whereas Zhu Xi

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51 Aristotle, NE, 1103a15-18.
advocated the innate goodness of humans, Aristotle thought that “humans do not become good or bad by nature.”\textsuperscript{52}

Furthermore, Aristotle’s idea of virtue mainly deals with an individual dimension of flourishing, although he does not exclude the well-being of others. The fact that one acts well is in reference to an individual fixed in certain situation. In other words, the deliberative judgment of how to live in a specific situation has a meaningful role to play in the making of an individual decision, rather than considering contextual efficacy of community. On the other hand, Zhu’s idea of virtue always concerns the manifestation of optimal appropriateness in accord with the cosmic order of the Heaven-Earth. On accounts of the differences between them, we may easily rake out routine answers from an ontological schema or cosmological framework, namely, the discrepancies of respective worldview. For example, we can say that Zhu Xi’s reading of virtue has been reconstructed by means of the ontological genealogy of the cosmic order (\textit{li}). By depending on Zhu’s organic unity of the \textit{ti-yong} (體用) framework, we can smoothly dissolve a familiar set of recurring dyadic polarities in descriptions of persons: reason/desire, mind/body, mental/physical, and so forth. Rather than appeal to his \textit{li-qi} framework, however, I think that we should be able to capture the character of virtue in light of the moral consummation of the human capacity.

In order to do so, the features of virtue should be proved by the realization of action, viz. moral practice. No matter how well I either know or possess virtue, it is useless unless put into practice. How does Zhu Xi elucidate the agency of virtue? For example, Zhu Xi often claimed that “virtue is the root of action” and that “whenever mentioning virtue, action lies on the inside.”\textsuperscript{53} More precisely, he defined virtue as that

\textsuperscript{52} Aristotle, NE, 1106a11.

which is acquired by fulfilling the Way (dao). That is to say, Zhu Xi explicitly and consistently highlighted the significance of practice in understanding virtue.

Then, does moral practice have certain kinds of ends? Mencius claimed that when one attempts to help a child who has fallen into a well there are no ulterior intentions or purposes besides the desire to help something pitiful. If so, the end of such action is nothing but action for its own sake. According with Mencius' claim, Zhu Xi of course commented that such an action simply displays one's genuine heart, i.e., compassion, and has no other purpose. If we consider the act of helping a child as the art of attaining humanity, then can we say that the virtue of humanity is the end of action? It seems that neo-Confucians would accept this unequivocally. If so, it implies that action per se pursues the consummation of humanity in Zhu Xi's ethics.

In fact, in order to act naturally to consummate the virtue of humanity, we should depend on the cultivation of moral imagination. In other words, the imagination of virtue is an unceasing process of cognitive creativity that knits normativity into the fabric of the concrete experience of daily life. So, the realization of humanity is constructed not by the habitual learning of similar experiences, but by cognitive insights of imaginative deliberation, which are based on the analogical extension of moral affairs. We can fully represent moral virtue by continuously cultivating imaginative deliberation via the empirical totality of human life. As Zhu Xi identifies sympathetic deliberation (shu) as the way of measuring square (xieju zhi dao: which we might say, the principle of deep consideration), moral imagination as sympathetic deliberation stems from the cognitive construction of analogical extension,

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54 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 536. "德者，行道而有得於身也。"
55 Zhu Xi, Mengzi jizhu, 2A6. "方乍見孺子入井之時，其心恱恱，乃真心也。"
56 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 364. "鶴，亦是絜矩之意。"
which is based on the commonality of the human mind with which all of us can fully accord.57

To Zhu Xi, sympathetic deliberation is the way of consummating such virtues as humanity, rightness, propriety, and wisdom. The mechanism of sympathetic deliberation is twofold: the process of extending oneself and the process of reaching others. The (analogical) extension of oneself means to envision the various possibilities of my empirical integration by realizing my virtue. Needless to say, reaching others means making others fully manifest their own virtues. When others and I attain virtue together, it is possible for us to genuinely consummate the entirety of humanity. In this vein, the accomplishment of virtue has in a broad sense to do with the active engagement of achieving the values of community. Nevertheless, this means neither that we should sacrifice ourselves for the values of community, nor that institutional formations are prior to moral agency. Rather, we should remember that people share commonality of mind with one another. It is conceived as the relational continuity of persons, which is based upon intersubjectivity. The intersubjective relations of humans are cashed out in terms of successful communication of the normative values with which agents can fully share. Hence, this moral imagination may be delineated through the metaphoric imagery of a network or web, which connects disparate entities, allowing them to interact with one another dynamically and harmoniously.

To sum up, moral imagination of virtue is tightly bound up with thinking on a relational level with fellow persons, while the development of virtue is based upon moral reason stemming from the foundational bedrock of individuality. In the neo-Confucian context, therefore, the virtue of humanity has often been described not only

57 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 360. 壽人心之同然，所以繁矩之道
as moral excellence of the individual, but also as the cosmological creativity of the Heaven-Earth.\textsuperscript{58}

5.2.2. The Character of the Moral Person

In relation to moral actions, Zhu Xi believed that moral imagination should manifest itself without selfish intention or deliberation. When it does so, he calls it the Mind of the Way (\textit{daoxin}).\textsuperscript{59} If there are selfish desires in mind, it would be called the human mind (\textit{renxin}).\textsuperscript{60} Such a dichotomy basically reflects two dispositions, the temperamental (qizhi zhi xing), which is derived from physiological desires, and the original (benran zhi xing), which is innately embodied by cultural accomplishments. Based on the “New Discourse of Equilibrium and Harmony” (\textit{zhonghe xin shuo}), as I have emphasized so far, these two dispositions are inevitably interwoven. Therefore, self-cultivation aims not at the elimination of the temperamental disposition, but with its harmonious unity with the original disposition.

To Confucians, the sages are the ideal models, embodying unity, viz., the ideal moral character. The virtuous agency of the sages is identified with the unselfish movements of the heavenly principle. In other words, the virtuous conduct of the Confucian sages begins with the negation of selfish desires, or freeing oneself from selfhood. How is this accomplished? According to Zhu Xi, sages and common persons are the same because they are all equally possessed of a natural disposition (\textit{xing}). What then differentiates them? Zhu Xi believes that the difference is derived

\textsuperscript{58} For this, see Zhu Xi “Discourse of Humanity (\textit{renshuo 仁說})” in \textit{Huian Ji} (Collected Works of Zhu Xi). E-SKQS.

\textsuperscript{59} Actually, it is used in contrast with “the mind of humans/human mind (\textit{renxin})”, implying the selfish mind or that of biological demands or desires. Compared to this expression, “\textit{daoxin}” means the mind of Dao, that is, the moral mind, spirit, or disposition. Thus, I translate it here as the mind of the way.

\textsuperscript{60} Zhu Xi, \textit{Introduction to Zhongyong Zhongju}. “以是有人心, 這心之異者, 則以其或生於形氣之私,或原於性命之正, 而所以為知覺者不同, 是以或危殆而不安, 或微妙而難見耳.”
from temperamental disposition. That is, the natural disposition (xing), as the original disposition (tiandi zhi xing), implies a unitary source of the myriad things while the temperamental (qi) distinguishes the sages from us.

Master Cheng said “The natural disposition is the cosmic order (li) [with which all of things can share]. In terms of the universal perspective of the order, everybody, from Yao and Shun to commoners in street is all equal. Endowments are given to qi-materiality, which has differences between lucidity and turbidity. Those who are endowed by the lucid become the wise. Those who are endowed by the turbid become the stupid. If [they] acquire wisdom through study, then there is no difference of qi-materiality. All people can attain the good and recover root of natural disposition.”.....Even though the temperamental can be not good, it does not injure the original goodness of natural disposition. Even though natural disposition is originally good, there should be an effort to reflect and rectify it. The learners should take it their mind.62

As Master Cheng pointed out, we can change the temperamental disposition by means of learning. I will leave aside the meaning of learning here.63 Zhu Xi urged his students to make efforts to change their temperamental disposition, claiming that doing so would allow them to see the source of moral emotions, like compassion, by changing the temperamental disposition. In other words, to him changing the temperamental is not to add or decorate external things, but to recover original disposition (benran zhi xing).64 Such an effort aims at the elimination of selfish desires.65

61 Zhu Xi, Daxue huawen, 4.
62 Zhu Xi, Mengzi jizhu, 6A6. Actually, these are the words of Cheng Yi quoted by Zhu Xi in his commentary. “性即理也，理則亷敏至於塗人一也，才厚於氣，氣有清濁，厚其清者為賢，厚其清者為愚，學而知之，則氣無清濁，皆可至於善而復性之本，高氣質者，雖有不善而不害性之本善；性雖本善，而不可以無省察而改之功，學者所當深愧也。”
63 The meaning of learning is comprehensive. In a word, it can be conceived as the effort to extend knowledge (zhishi). For this, see chapter 2. Zhu Xi truly believes this as well. See ZZYL, 2949. “或問：‘東萊謂變化氣質，方可言學’，曰：‘此意甚善，但以變化氣質，則以學乃有變化氣質耳。若不誠心窮理，主敬存心，而徒切切計較於昨非今是之間，雖亦學而無益也。’”
64 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 2428. In order to explain the temperamental, Zhu Xi often uses the metaphor of water. “寇聞天道純然一規，便是水本未清；陰陽五行交錯雜揉而有昏濁，便是水被泥污了。昏濁可以後清者，只緣他母子不清。”曰：“然。那下愚不移應人，卻是那具體底水。”問：“也須可以澄治？”曰：“
Zhu Xi clearly claims that the sages, like Yao and Shun, are free of vices and selfish desires, liberated from selfhood or self-assertion. In the Mencius, most stories related to the sages focus on their unselfish actions. For example, Mencius writes that “the Great Shun was ever ready to fall into line with others, giving up his own ways for theirs, and glad to take from others that by which he could do good.” How is it possible that we can be free from selfhood? Just as learning can change the temperamental disposition, so the necessary condition of removing selfish desires is to illuminate the principle, viz., the extension of knowledge. That is, Zhu Xi firmly believes that extending knowledge can eliminate selfish desire. Therefore, the sages are defined as those who have knowledge naturally (sheng er zhi zhi 生而知之). Master Cheng also regarded Confucius as one who had acquired knowledge naturally, even though Confucius himself humbly denied it. Further, in chapter twenty of the Zhongyong, the sage is described as one who is sincere, achieves equilibrium without coercion, embodies knowledge without deliberation, and easily focuses on the Way. Hence, we can see in Zhu Xi’s moral philosophy that intellectual understanding is a necessary condition for attaining virtue.

5.2.3. The Moral Person – A Change in Temperament

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“也戒得些分生。”


67 Mencius, 2A8, 3A4, 4B32.

68 Mencius, 2A8.

69 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 985. “方殷父問: “知者不惑，明者便能無私否?” 曰: “也有人明理而不能去私懸者，然去私懸，必先明理。無私懸，則不屬於物...” Zhu Xi of course admits that there are those who cannot rid themselves of selfish desires although illuminating the principle. I shall argue the matter of knowledge in light of the motivational role later in this chapter.

70 Zhu Xi, Mengzi Jizhu, 4B19. “所謂安而行之也。此則聖人之事，不待存之，而無不存矣．”

71 Zhu Xi, Lunyu Jizhu, 2:4, 7:19.
Zhu Xi admits that the removal of selfish desires, i.e. changing the temperamental disposition, should start from illuminating the principle (mingli), viz. extension of knowledge. In fact, such an extension of knowledge arises with the matter of self-cultivation which Zhu Xi is concerned with, i.e. the reading of books, investigating the principle, achieving attentiveness, and preserving the mind.\(^1\) Of course, the temperamental changed by means of the extension of knowledge should be pure, serene, and lucid. As I explained in chapter three, these adjectives aim to describe the quality of qi-materiality, implying cognitive or intellectual discernment. Hence, Zhu Xi believes that the sages born with lucid qi can attain knowledge naturally (sheng er zhi zhi).\(^2\) In a word, moral judgment depends on whether or not the temperamental disposition is lucid. According to Zhu Xi, it is possible for us to fully manifest natural disposition as moral virtue, by making the temperamental disposition lucidly bright.

Further, in relation to moral action, the development of moral judgment by means of the removal of selfish desires comes down to relevant choices, considered sincerely and impartially. To neo-Confucians, including Zhu Xi, impartiality (gong)\(^3\) is the crucial value, symbolizing the correct movement of the heavenly Way (tiandao), and that should be realized in the world. We can see that impartiality is vividly embodied by the sages that neo-Confucians were eager to emulate. In short, neo-Confucians desired to become a certain kind of person capable of harmonizing with the movement of tian, viz. the sage as the ideal model of moral character. Without selfish deliberation, the virtuous agent should engage in moral action harmoniously arranged with the

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\(^1\) Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 2949. “若不豐書窮理，主敬存心，而徒切切計較於昨非今是之間，恐亦勞而無補也。”

\(^2\) Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 66. “所以生知安行，不待學而能，如堯舜是也。”

\(^3\) The notion of impartiality (gong) is very important to understanding the social and political philosophy of East Asian countries because it can be translated into public or communal values, as opposed to individual or private values. For this, see Mizoguchi Yuzo. 1995. Chūgoku no kō to shi (The Public and the Private in China). Tōkyō: Kenbun Shuppan. Here, I limit its meaning to the notion of impartiality in its ethical context.
movement of the heavenly Way.\(^\text{74}\)

Therefore, when neo-Confucian literati faced difficult moral choices, the judgments the Confucian sages exemplified became a crucial authority in moral justification. In contemporary ethical discourse, the notion of impartiality can be defined as a core feature of morality that acknowledges the fact that all persons are equal, and that all are equally entitled to fundamental conditions of well being and respect. Of course, Zhu Xi had argued that the importance of impartiality should be fully realized in the socio-political context of fairness, which is related to fair distribution or the public good.\(^\text{75}\) However, I will first explain this in Zhu Xi's moral psychological context. To him, impartiality basically means a state of being free from selfishhood or selfish desires. Selfish desire is defined as an obstacle which interrupts the natural manifestation of moral virtue, symbolizing the natural movement of the heavenly Way. Zhu Xi thinks that selfishness (zi) implies covert intention, while the impartial (gong) squarely implies open-mindedness.\(^\text{76}\) If one has a deep attachment to material interests, one can lose a candid attitude toward what one should decide or choose.

Feelings such as anger, pleasure, and fear are very common ones all persons can have. If one cannot get proper way to respond them, one may have selfish mind when encountering with things. For example, we should be delightful when encountering with a joyful event ... In spite of a situation that we are suddenly confronted with an event we should have indignation, it will be the case we cannot get proper way if we appease our indignation because of

\(^{74}\) Zhu Dunyi, *Tongshu*, (Penetrating the Classic of Changes), chapter 10. "The sage wishes to become *tian* (天), the wise the sage, and the literati the wise."


the joyful event.⁷⁷

That is why Zhu Xi urges us to make our intentions sincere. The way Zhu Xi describes impartiality is being candid toward one's own feelings. It does not mean a outburst of emotion, but implies a manifestation of a genuine heart by means of making one's intentions sincere. According to Zhu Xi, “to become sincere within can shape one without.” ⁷⁸ Hence, the reason one cannot properly make moral judgments is because one's temperamental disposition can be turbid when it encounters material interests. I think that the realization of impartiality, by fully manifesting one's own genuine feelings,⁷⁹ is the rational disposition allowing one to live better. Furthermore, the manifestation of moral character through the realization of impartiality can have the achievement of the common good in the real world. That was the main role of the Confucian sages, who naturally manifest their own character without the intervention of selfish desires. Rather, it should be said that their desires per se are innately and perfectly attuned with the movement of the heavenly principle.⁸⁰

On Mencius 3A1, that “Mencius always quoted examples of legendary kings Yao and Shun when referring to the claim that humans are innately good,” Zhu Xi explains that Yao and Shun can spontaneously fulfill their natural disposition because they have no vices or selfish desires. It implies that the moral mind, which is inherently given to us and thus can be called the morally good part of natural disposition, can be

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⁷⁷ Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 345-6. “忿懣 好榮 恐懼 優患 這四者皆人之所有 不能無 然有不得其正者 只是應物之時 不可夾帶私心 當有一時可喜 自家正喜 豈見一可怒底事來 吾當怒底事 卻以逞喜心之之 和那怒底事也喜了 便是不得其正。”


⁷⁹ In fact, feelings should be understood as the neo-Confucian theme that the mind unifies the natural disposition (might we say, virtues) with emotions.

⁸⁰ When Confucius said himself that “at seventy I followed my heart’s desires without overstepping the boundaries,” (the Analects 2:4) he means that the fulfillment of his natural disposition accorded harmoniously with the movement of the Way.
guaranteed by the exclusion of selfish desires. The virtuous actions of the sages can fully manifest humanity (ren) because they are always free from the vice of selfish desires. In short, impartiality is the way of realizing humanity.

Moreover, to represent impartiality without personal desire is not only the way to fully develop the core virtue of humanity, but also a virtuous product achieved through self-cultivation or self-discipline. In other words, impartiality is, on the one hand, the outcome of humanity fully recovered through self-cultivation. On the other hand, it is the premise of humanity, viz. the way of completing humanity. Hence, Zhu Xi claims that (1) humanity is internal while impartiality is external, and at the same time, (2) impartiality is prior to humanity. In the case of (1), while humanity is the natural disposition as a motivational source for action, or the original principle, impartiality is the acquired virtue that we can attain through self-cultivation. In the process of recovering the original disposition, impartiality can be understood as the moral character embodied by humanity. Meanwhile, when impartiality is prior to humanity, humanity is linked to an actual representation of virtue by the virtuous agent. Hence, impartiality means the premise or the condition for realizing virtue, i.e., humanity.

5.2.4. The Paradox of Virtue

To be free from selfhood or to negate the assertion of the self would basically give rise to the "paradox of virtue", which David Nivison explored in a series of essays. As


82 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 116, 2454.
Zhu Xi pointed out, the sages are those who have knowledge naturally. Because the sages are the only people “who can have intellect born of sincerity,” according to Zhu Xi, we can say that they thoroughly embody moral virtues like humanity, rather than knowing how to embody moral virtues. The reason the sages can do so is because they fully embody the heavenly way (tiandao). According to Nivison, we can see the paradox of virtue through the sages’ way of manifesting virtues.

(a) When I deny or sacrifice my self or my own good or interest for someone else, and so literally “have de with” the other, I acquire a hold on this person, and so gain an advantage over him or her. So, it seems, I am enhancing my own interest by denying it. But then, one would think, I am not really denying it but pursuing it, and by the same token ought to be losing de rather than gaining it.

(b) From the model of the good king, it would seem that we must conclude that one must already have de if one is to do the things that would get it; and in particular one must have “virtue” already if one is to heed the instruction that would lead one to it.84

Nivison claims that the two cases of the above paradox can be understood either as two cases of the same thing, or as two different things. According to him, if one sacrifices (or denies) oneself or is virtuous for its own sake in order to acquire genuine virtue then this implies that one can act in such a way only if one has virtue already.85 In the same vein as Nivison, Edward Slingerland also explored the paradox of effortless action (wuwei) as the main feature of early Chinese thought.86 Structurally, these paradoxes are equivalent to each other in terms of the fact that the goal one pursues can only be acquired by one who is not consciously trying to acquire it. If one tries to

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83 Zhangyong, chapter 21.
84 Nivison (1996): 34.
85 Nivison (1996): 34.
acquire it, it would be viewed as pursuing one's own interest, viz. self-centered interest. That one behaves virtuously already involves one being free from selfhood, viz. personal goals or selfish motives. That is, the goal of the virtuous action should imply the action in itself. So, Zhu Xi claims that "doing for oneself (wei ji)") is to do so with effortless action. It implies that the virtuous agent should engage in an activity not for some ulterior motive but for its own sake. So, the virtuous actions the sages perform must be fulfilled for their own sake, i.e., for the intrinsic value of the action itself. As Mencius pointed out, this emphasizes pure motivation for actions. Therefore, it shows us that the pursuit or acquisition of virtue is inseparable from how to pursue or acquire it.

Is the nature of virtue or of effortless action paradoxical? When one is enhancing "one's own interest" by denying "it", is the former identical with the latter? If they are different, the denial of one's own interest or being free from one's own interest could provide one with optimal conditions for achieving what one ultimately wants. That is, such a method could be viewed as a necessary and sufficient condition for achieving what we want. Even though it is an optimal strategy for acquiring the ultimate goal, it is still paradoxical because one cannot achieve it unless one already knows it is the optimal strategy.

If they are identical with each other, on the other hand, why did the sages deny it? It seems that an active and explicit pursuit of virtue cannot be virtuous for most Chinese thinkers, including early Confucians, Daoists, Buddhists, and neo-Confucians. According to Nivison, is reason derived from the nature of virtue? Nivison linked the paradox with the matter of moral weakness. In fact, that one does a virtuous thing for fully attaining virtue means that one already has virtue, i.e., moral force, in order to

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practice moral action. In other words, through the substantial property of the virtue, we may conclude that we must already have moral force to act morally. So, Nivison claims that Mencius tried to solve the paradox by insisting that humans are innately good.\(^8\) That is, Nivison points out that the Mencian solution is to internalize virtue via the process of cultivation itself.

In fact, the view that considers virtue as the paradoxical stems from a dualistic way of thinking that takes one's dispositions off the agent. That is, it seems that Nivison's reading of virtue is based on the idea that human beings are a monadic self that should develop their individual excellence of normativity. If so, his starting point for the problem of virtue is closer to the Aristotelian question of virtue than the Confucian contour of it. As I argued in the section "Virtue and Moral Imagination", however, we need to keep in mind that the implications of virtue in neo-Confucian ethics explicitly involve the dynamic engagement of relational persons for consummating common values. Therefore, I think that the paradox of virtue would be a kind of pseudo-problem to neo-Confucians like Zhu Xi who ardently advocated the total continuity between organic entirety and its function (*tiyong yiyuan*).

We have seen that neo-Confucians, including Zhu Xi, persistently advocated the Mencian theme. Their acknowledgement of the Mencian theme is to represent their ontological reflection that persons cannot be separated from their activities. Hence, they seemed to conclude that humans cannot undertake virtuous actions unless they are innately good. Consequently, the solution to the paradox comes down to the matter of self-cultivation, for recovering or revealing one's own good nature.

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\(^8\) Nivison (1996): 42-43. Of course, the Xunzian solution to the paradox would differ from the Mencian. Thus, Slingerland interprets the Mencian position as the internal while viewing the Xunzian as the external. In addition, he uses "sudden-gradual", a term borrowed from the Chan Buddhist debates, to express the differences in their respective approaches to solving the paradox. For this, see Slingerland (2000): 315-321.
5.3. Conclusion

Development of character by means of transforming the temperamental disposition is the “recovery of natural disposition” (fuxing)\textsuperscript{89}, meaning to fully manifest the moral tendencies of natural disposition. The natural disposition has distinctive characteristics of moral reason as virtues in Zhu Xi's ethics. Neo-Confucians found examples of the moral person in the Confucian sages. As we have seen so far, the moral person is constituted by means of a harmonious correlation between virtue and the temperamental disposition. Moreover, the change of the temperamental disposition comes down to a matter of learning. In Zhu Xi's moral philosophy, of course, we should be able to realize that the matter of learning as self-cultivation involves the preservation of the mind and the concentration on attentiveness.

In fact, the mind as the object of self-cultivation is neither the original nor the temperamental disposition, but more than the sum of both, because it always interactively resonates with the world. In fact, the human mind can influence the world we live in as much as the conditions of the world can determine the mind. That is, such a resonance brings forth the matter of how to live. Through self-cultivation, we should first be aware of the subtle movements or reverberations of the mind in the world. Therefore, the moral reason Zhu Xi is concerned with is a matter of the mind, which unifies moral virtue with an attitude of how best to live.

\textsuperscript{89} Mengzi jizhu, 7833. "無機而安行，性者也，有意而行，而至於無意，復性者也。覺而不失其性，遇武而反其性，及其成功則一也."
Chapter VI. Conclusion

In attempting to understand Zhu Xi's ethics, if I fail to capture a holistic picture of his philosophical enterprise within a particular worldview I will fail to capture with sufficient precision the aim of his discussion of ethical issues and what the cluster of these issues say to us. Zhu Xi clearly possessed a genealogical consciousness of the Confucian way (daotong). That is, he realized that one of his intellectual duties was to recover the Confucian way of thinking, which might fully remedy such prevalent crises as the political chaos caused by the Jurchen invasion and the social and intellectual confusion fostered by Buddhism and Daoism.

Hence, Zhu Xi's philosophical enterprise begins with a Confucian understanding of human nature (xing) and the heart-mind (xin) under the guidance of his master Li Tong. Through painstaking reflection on xing and xin, Zhu Xi makes a breakthrough in the ontological understanding of the relationship between them: "The New Discourse of Equilibrium and Harmony (zhonghe xin shuo)". In short, he realizes that the relationship between the weifa and the yifa is a dynamic unity between the mind and nature. That is, Zhu Xi attempted to erase clearly the substantial distinction per se between the two. Furthermore, he thoroughly mulled over Cheng Yi's theme, "xing ji li," which may be translated into "human nature is the cosmic order." Here, we should be able to understand li (rationality) not as a calculative and speculative reason, but as a cosmic order fully and continuously pervading the myriad things of the world [li yi fen shu]. This is his realization of the total continuity between humans and the world, which may also be conceived as the view that all entities are organically correlative and interactive with one another. Therefore, all entities are spontaneously engaged in a continuous process of constructing a total unity of the world.

Hence, in Zhu Xi's ethical discourse his accounts of how to live uprightly are deeply
bound up with how one actively engages in constructing Confucian values. According to him, the issue of self-cultivation signifies how one is to become a moral person fully manifesting the Confucian spirit of humanity. Hence, the matter of self-cultivation can be understood in light of an ongoing process of human life, rather than a kind of instrumental tool for attaining moral virtue. In fact, my philosophical departure concerns the question of why one does not always do what is morally right despite one's knowledge of what is morally right. It therefore follows, how can I fit this question into Zhu Xi's philosophical framework? How can I solve such moral issues within a neo-Confucian ethical context?

First, the most salient and intriguing feature of Zhu Xi's view on self-cultivation is the unification of dyadic factors in ethical discourse: the external and the internal, the rational and the emotional, the intellectual and the virtuous. As I proposed in chapter two, we should first be able to understand self-cultivation in light of more fundamental considerations, rather than simply as a complementary discourse on achieving virtues. In so doing, I have examined the nature of self-cultivation from two angles: the Whiteheadian idea of Reason – an urge to live better – and Socrates' question of how one ought to live. These two angles allow me to situate self-cultivation within the process of life. More precisely, self-cultivation should be “the practical embodiment of the radical urge to transform mere existence into the good existence, and to transform the good existence into the better existence”1 in a Confucian Way. The radical urge to live better, on the other hand, should be able to lead us to realize the proper understanding of how we should live uprightly. Needless to say, the Confucian way of self-cultivation does not remain in the attainment of personal moral contentment, but pursues more widely the consummation of world peace.

These ideas of self-cultivation can be achieved through the entire process of one’s life.

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In terms of the understanding self-cultivation as a continuous life process, we can establish more clearly Zhu Xi’s way of thinking on human nature and mind. For instance, Mencius clearly views the goodness of human kind’s natural disposition as similar to a certain efficacy, which necessarily emerges from a natural tendency of things. However, the dispositions of life and the direction of desired normativity are not always in accord with each other. So, the reason one chooses rightness over life is because we possess a certain disposition, which has consistently been constructed by a certain moral consensus of how one ought to live. Mencius calls it the human natural disposition (xing), which has common ethical contents of humanity, rightness, propriety and wisdom. It is in fact the long march of human civilization that has bequeathed such a comprehensive accordance with how to live in the Confucian world. It is an ongoing process of embodying cultural accumulations with natural disposition, which might be termed “cultural genetics”. To Mencius, moral values of how to live, which have been formed through the long history of civilization, are exactly identified with a human natural disposition.

Zhu Xi identifies the Mencian conception of human natural disposition with the cosmic order (li). To Zhu, xing is neither transcendent (the criticism of Zhang Shi in the “New Discourse of Equilibrium and Harmony”) nor the cognitive functions of human experience (the criticism of Buddhism). According to Zhang Shi, the nature (xing) is something transcendent that we cannot acquire through meditation. For this reason does he encourage Zhu Xi to study the mind as an inchoate stirring of human experience, which Zhu Xi considered as the yifa state of the mind. Soon thereafter, however, Zhu Xi rejects Zhang Shi’s understanding of human nature because Zhang placed human nature and the mind into the variant states of weifa and yifa respectively. Simply speaking, Zhu Xi’s “New Discourse of Equilibrium and Harmony” claims that nature harmoniously unifies with the mind by assigning the two states of weifa and

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1 Mencius 6A2. “人性之善也, 猶水之就下也.”
2 Mencius 6A10.生亦我所欲也, 義亦我所欲也, 二者不可得兼, 會生而取義者也.
yifa into the same entity, the mind.

On the one hand, the mind should be understood as the will of life in relation to humanity as the cosmic order (li). It is a dynamic and orderly urge of life, like the “soaring hawks and jumping fishes” in the Book of Song, which neo-Confucians traditionally quoted to depict the vivid vitality of the tian-di, fully manifesting the cosmic order. The mind has, on the other hand, total sensibility of thinking and feeling. In an ethical dimension, Zhu Xi is explicit in stating that "it is named the mind when unifying natural disposition (xing) with activity of consciousness (zhijue)." It means that activity of consciousness should accompany with axiological disposition in order to do moral judgments or actions. In Zhu Xi's ethics, as we have seen so far, xing is an axiological disposition identifying with the cosmic order (li), which has been continuously constructed through human experience and so leads us to moral conduct.

As Zhu Xi's critique of Buddhism has it, the activity of consciousness alone cannot lead us to do moral conduct because natural disposition (xing) exists as the moral authority of acts, which dictates how we should live uprightly. Every creature has consciousness in light of sensual cognition. To Zhu, activity of consciousness should not mean simply a cognitive function of empirical experience. Rather than activity of consciousness per se, therefore, Zhu Xi intentionally highlights a combined state of consciousness with the cosmic order (li), which can provide us moral guidance for actions. On the other hand, the object of comprehension

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4 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 85. 發明心字，曰：一言以蔽之，日生而已。天地之大德曰生，人受天地之氣而生，故此心必仁，仁則生矣。心本兼廣大流行底意者，又兼生意者。且如程先生言：仁者，天地生物之心，只天地便廣大，生物便流行，生生不窮。
5 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 94 ...合性與知覺 有心之名，是就人物上說
6 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 524 "知覺是心之靈固如此，抑氣之為邪?" 曰： "不專是氣，是先有知覺之理。理未知覺，氣聚成形，理與氣合，便能知覺."
[所知覺者] should also be the cosmic order of things and events. That is, the functional pattern of zhijue in itself should aim at realizing the axiological disposition of myriad things. So far, I have explained how natural disposition as the cosmic order (xing ji li 性即理) has a role to play in understanding moral authority for action in Zhu Xi's ethics. Yet I think we need to inquire more carefully into the issue of moral motivation within his ethical context. For example, Kwong-loi Shun categorizes Zhu Xi the same way as David Nivison, who defines Mencius as a kind of act-internalist. According to Kwong-loi Shun, Zhu Xi can be seen as a kind of act-internalist in light of moral motivation. Even if we acknowledge that Kwong-loi Shun is right, Zhu Xi should differ from Mencius in terms of the interpretation of the Chinese character, duan (端). To Mencius, duan is a typical botanical metaphor, to signify etymologically a bud newly shooting out, while Zhu Xi glosses it as a clue. Just as one tries to pull the end of thread out in order to find something inside, so we should capture a clue of emotions in order to discover the reality of human nature as moral virtue. In other words, to Mencius, natural disposition (xing) has the dynamic and developmental quality for the fully blooming cultural achievement of human beings. More precisely, natural disposition in itself is not identical with moral virtues, such as humanity, rightness, propriety, and wisdom. Humans have only four sprouts of an initial tendency that can be developed into moral virtues. In the meantime, Zhu Xi actively identifies natural disposition with moral virtues by internalizing them in the mind. However, this identification has a little to do with making natural disposition an essential and invariant foundation of normativity. His idea of natural disposition should be understood in light of an unceasing process of the cosmic order as vivid vitality. That is, this internalization of moral virtues means that the cosmic vitality of the Heavens-Earth is identified with axiological disposition of human beings.

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7 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 126:56 “知覺之理, 是性所以當如此者, 釋氏不知, 他但知知覺, 沒道理...”
8 Mencius 2A6 “duan means xu (clue 緒)”. 

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Hence, the manifestation of moral virtues, which are stably internalized in the mind, is closely tied to the two ways of interacting with the world: receptive and responsive resonance (ganying 感應) and fitting into the proper way (zhongjie 中節). These are based on Zhu Xi’s worldview of the qi-cosmology. Rather than pursuing a rational understanding of the world, the unceasing and subtle movements of the mind should be able to harmoniously resonate with the dynamic patterns of the Heavens-Earth in terms of ganying. More specifically, it tells one how to fit into a proper way. This way of thinking shows one how to act properly and nobly when placed in a predicament. In the Confucian context, therefore, we can be motivated to act morally when emotions properly arise in the mind in accordance with time, place, and position.

Consequently, when considering the two ways of interacting with the world, Zhu Xi’s view of moral motivation is not so much internalistic, but synthetic, in accordance with “his way of unifying the inside with the outside (he wai nei zhi dao 合外內之道).” We need to keep in mind his distinctive way of self-cultivation through a unity of all dyadic factors in ethical discourse, especially, the external and the internal. To Zhu Xi, the matter of moral motivation is not just one of dichotomous options, i.e. either the internal or the external. Rather, it should be defined in light of contextual appropriateness in specific situations. That is, moral motivation depends on whether one can properly resonate with a specific situation by fitting it into the proper way. So, while on one hand, it may be categorized as neither the internal nor the external, on the other, it can be defined as neither an emotional urge nor a rational tendency. In short, I think that his idea of moral motivation is tightly bound up with the empirical totality of humans: how one should live in the Confucian world.

The understanding of moral motivation has given rise to the matter of moral actions,

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viz. moral practice. According to Zhu Xi, the interdependence between knowledge and action was in part dealt with in the context of psychological attitude. Mainly, Zhu Xi assigns maintaining attentiveness and investigating the principle to knowledge and action respectively. So, to him, action often involves a kind of the performative intention in order for one to be always aware of specific situations related to moral affairs. Of course, it was obvious that Zhu thoroughly approached the issue of knowledge in terms of whether one could genuinely realize what one knows. To him, for example, self-deception is conceived of as a lack of knowledge, which hinders moral action. Thus, Zhu Xi thought that the answer to self-deception as moral weakness of will is the extension of knowledge. In relation to the realization of moral actions, Zhu Xi's extension of knowledge does not simply mean gathering objective information, but heartfelt and complete sympathy with the sufferings of others. To Zhu Xi, to extend knowledge is to enlarge one's comprehensive capacity and to resonate fully with the heart of another. Therefore, in examining Zhu's moral philosophy one should examine the issue of the comprehensive capacity for sympathy with the hearts of others.

How can we define the capacity of sympathetic deliberation in resonance with the heart of another? I think that for an understanding of this capacity we must return to my explanation of *xing ji li* (性即理), human nature is rationality. I argued that we should be able to understand *li* not as the rational capacity for practical reason, but as the will of life (*shengyi* 生意) to resonate coherently with the cosmic order of the Heaven-Earth. How, then, does the capacity of sympathetic deliberation present itself in Zhu Xi's ethical discourse? It depends on how one interprets the Chinese terms, "*lei er tui zhi* (類而推之)", which are applied to both natural and normative worlds in Zhu Xi's philosophy. Literally, "*tui zhi*" means "to extend". Zhu Xi is explicit in stating that "I should be able to extend what I already know based on my
established knowledge and then I can arrive at knowing everything.” To him, this method is a basic way of investigating the pattern of things and events. More specifically, Zhu Xi connects the way of analogical extension with sympathetic deliberation (shu 塥) in an ethical context. So, the Chinese terms, “lei er tui zhi (類而推之)”, can be interpreted as inferential sympathy based on resonance of a similar kind. Sympathy is the capacity for sharing the feelings or emotions of others placed in a specific situation. Even if it is a logically inferential process of deduction, sympathy should involve a subtle sensibility of insight into the complexity of human life.

Such a human capacity to make moral judgments is something more than a conceptual implication of moral reason. In Steven Fesmire’s book, “John Dewey and Moral Imagination”, we can see how there were pragmatic ethical efforts to reconstruct the conception of reason in order to delineate a human capacity for moral judgment in light of a unified perspective, combining rationality with sentiment. Fesmire named the alternative to moral reason “moral imagination” through an analysis of Dewey’s theory of imagination. In fact, the term and concept of moral imagination, which can be found in many recent studies on ethics, is defined by Mark Johnson as “an ability to imaginatively discern various possibilities for acting in a given situation and to envision the potential help and harm that are likely to result from a given action.” In short, Johnson explains moral imagination in the sense that moral judgment or deliberation is imaginatively constructed by cognitively framing the metaphorical elements of a specific situation. Those who have attempted to establish the concept of moral imagination

11 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 15:48 是因其所已知而推之，以致於無所不知也。
12 Zhu Xi, ZZYL (1986): 18:12 則昔者，因其所已知而及其所未知，因其所已達而及其所未達。
share in the view that specific circumstances we should morally judge cannot be reduced or generalized by rule-governed concerns. I think that moral imagination as motivational source for action equates in a sense with John McDowell's claim that the understanding of how to live cannot be codifiable. In other words, both moral imagination and McDowell's account of virtue have a common starting point in that an understanding of human moral capacity cannot be trapped within the dualistic pendulum of rationality (reason) and sentiment (which we might term, desire).

Based on contemporary debates Jay R. Wallace introduced in his paper "Virtue, Reason and Principle," therefore, I ultimately argue that Zhu Xi's ideas of moral virtue can be adequately interpreted as espousing a form of virtue ethics. Criticizing the Humean and Kantian approaches to practical reason, McDowell is explicit in stating that Aristotelian accounts of virtue can provide us with an adequate account of a case-specific situation when we subtly make moral judgments. After criticizing McDowell, Wallace positively provides two methods for developing McDowell's accounts of virtue, which can contribute a distinctive perspective to our understanding of moral reason: rational intuitionism and a form of connoisseurship.

Nevertheless, according to Wallace, connoisseurship still has some problems. The model cannot escape from a kind of principle-dependent interpretation of moral reflection no matter how clear the model is concerning the refinement of judgment, which involves a capacity to discern the particular features of situations that provide case-specific reasons for action.

I think we need to reexamine some premises of McDowell. Is the conception of how to live really uncodifiable? Are the principle-dependent accounts of moral reason truly incompatible with uncodifiability? We can see at least that Mencius actively claims a harmonious unity between virtuous disposition and general principle with which most people
can agree. Furthermore, a connoisseur’s sense of taste should be able to attain commonality to which most people in the world can objectively and willingly assent. This idea is closely tied to Zhu Xi’s claim that the internal (might we say, virtue) is fully unified with the external (might we say, the principle-dependent framework). I think that Wallace’s doubts on connoisseurship seem to stem from his conceptualization of the principle. The principle can be creatively reinterpreted in light of the neo-Confucian conception of the cosmic order (li). In relation to virtue, I think, the neo-Confucian way of thinking on the cosmic order can provide us an adequate alternative to contemporary debates on the nature of virtue.

All of my arguments above boil down to Zhu Xi’s view of the moral person, i.e. how one is to become as the sages. Through the examples of the sages, I explain how Zhu’s way of self-cultivation can lead to the attainment of moral character and how a change in the temperamental disposition is influenced by the development of intellect. For example, impartiality is a good character trait that can be attained by removing selfish desires. I argue here that such a trait as impartiality can be conceived as moral virtue or as a rational attitude toward how to live better. That is, my approach to moral person in Zhu’s moral philosophy is one way of establishing that moral reason cannot be categorized into reason or desire.

Finally, let me briefly sketch some points, which I can contribute to my field. First, my argument of self-cultivation may contribute to rectifying certain misunderstandings of self-cultivation, which itself can be considered as an instrumental method of achieving human nature. Through my arguments outlined above, the most important point I want to make is to establish Zhu Xi’s idea of self-cultivation as main ethical issue, which is concerned with the ongoing process of the whole of human experience. As previously mentioned, the reason I emphasize the non-instrumental nature of self-cultivation is because it should be understood as

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17 Daodejing ch.2. “They see things through to fruition but do not take credit for them...”
ch.22. “...Those who do not brag have lots to show...”
life itself. To a cellist, for example, mastering a cello through practice is not simply a way of
developing his or her skills, but more fundamentally a process of becoming a genuine cellist.
Of course, I think that ethical actions or judgments can differ from a matter of specific learning.
If ethical thinking is constituted by human relationships, one of its aims is to establish what sort
of person one should become, which can be another way of saying how one ought to live. It
aims at becoming “a real human (ren 人) within relationships (jian 间)”. In short, ethical action
can be called representative of an entire picture of moral character, which is attained through a
ceaseless process of self-cultivation.

Second, I criticized Kwong-loi Shun’s assertion that Zhu Xi can be categorized into a kind
of act-internalist. Even if we were to acknowledge this claim in the sense that axiological
disposition as motivational source can be seen as the internal, I do not think that Zhu Xi is a
kind of internalist in light of moral motivation. Not only because Zhu Xi is explicit in saying
that the internal is unified with the external, but also because Shun’s way of thinking on moral
motivation disregards the correlative world of qi-cosmology. Not only does an understanding
of correlative cosmology lead us to understand interactive relations between relational selves,
but it also resonates the mind with the world in ethical dimension. When considering the neo-
Confucian idea of receptive and responsive resonance, therefore, we can understand that Zhu
Xi’s view of moral motivation cannot be characterized as internalistic.

Third, by examining contemporary debates on the nature of virtue, I argue that Zhu Xi’s
ideas on moral virtue can be adequately interpreted as espousing a form of virtue ethics. In
spite of their attempts to unify reason with desire, the reason both McDowell and Wallace fail to
make a breakthrough in capturing the comprehensive locus of virtue has to do with their
understanding of the principle, which remains in traditional mode of perceiving the principle,
i.e. an invariant and essential foundation of ethical actions. In relation to the understanding
of virtue, I think that the neo-Confucian conception of the cosmic order has a crucial role to play in adequately combining rationality with sentiment. This is practical efficacy in studying comparative philosophy, which is especially related to virtue ethics.

In a broad sense, I believe that my thesis demonstrates that the dominant feature of Zhu Xi’s ethical theory is a kind of ethical naturalism. We have seen that Zhu Xi tried to holistically unify dyadic factors such as the original / temperamental dispositions, rational attitude (xing) / emotions (qing), and the external (wai) / the internal (nei). Such a characteristic feature of Zhu’s ethical position is based on his ontological perspectives of the Great Ultimate (taiji) that can be represented by a holistic harmony of things. In other words, Zhu Xi believes that all ethical affairs correlate with the cosmic order of the Heaven-Earth (tiandi). More precisely, Zhu’s philosophical understanding of human beings is that humans’ phenomenal activities are inseparably connected to the movement of the heavenly Way [tiandaoh; we might say, the Great Ultimate (taiji)], harmoniously entailing all dyadic frameworks. We may call this the embodiment of the heavenly Way, which is one of the distinctive features of early Confucianism, although Zhu reconstructed it in accordance within the li-qi framework. That is, Zhu’s position can be termed a kind of ethical naturalism in the sense that he never imagined moral values or properties being independent of the natural order of the Heaven-Earth. Of course, in the sense that naturalism here has a different context from its contemporary meaning, his position may also be called a type of “classical ethical naturalism.”

Consequently, I want to draw your attention to the idea of ordinariness in Zhu Xi’s ethical thought. I think that this is not so much his exclusive feature, but rather a dominant feature of Confucianism in general. Nevertheless, the reason I focus specifically on Zhu Xi is because he

18 We need not think the heavenly Way as something essential, invariant, and transcendent. It is a kind of open framework to capture the process of dynamic change. That is, we need to bear in mind that in order to understand the Great Ultimate (taiji), Zhu Xi emphasized the significance of the Infinite Ultimate (wuji). For this, see Chapter 3.
deepens the understanding of the mind in relation to the ways of self-cultivation. Preserving the mind by means of attentiveness (jing) involves not only enhancing the virtuous nature, but also extending one's knowledge of things. Zhu Xi called this "the way of unifying the inside with the outside (he neiwai zhi dao)." As Zhu explicitly clarifies, such efforts to preserve the mind differ from a religious retreat that can seclude oneself from social or relational responsibilities. This is the reason why Zhu Xi seriously criticized the Buddhist way of cultivation as being absorbed in an internal nihilism. In other words, in Zhu's moral philosophy all efforts to become an ethical being are inseparable from how one should live in this world.19

Let me now return to the question that launched my thesis: why does one not always do what is morally right despite knowledge of what is morally right? As we have seen thus far, according to Zhu Xi, the matter of moral weakness, i.e. self-deception, can be conceived of as a lack of knowledge. Of course, as I have tried to argue, the neo-Confucian way of self-cultivation, viz. to know words (zhiyan), to investigate the principle (qiongli), or to extend knowledge (zhizhi), should always be considered in its full relationship with one's mind and the entire understanding of one's natural disposition (jinxin zhixing).20 In a sense, it seems very optimistic that we believe categorically Zhu's way of moral development, which maintains that we can solve moral inaction by means of intellectual discipline, with a full understanding of our natural disposition.

Here we need to recall that intellectual discipline should entail not only the investigation of external things but also the subtle movement of the mind. Furthermore, the investigation of things as self-cultivation is one of the ways in which the human mind interactively resonates

19 As Kim Youngmin examined in his dissertation, this is nothing but the process of unifying the self with the world or identifying the principle with the self. See Kim (2002).

20 Zhu Xi Mengzi Jizhu, 2A2.
with the world in which we live. Such a resonance determines our attitude toward everyday life. Through self-cultivation, we must first be aware of the subtle movements or echoes of the mind within the world in which we live. So, I believe that self-cultivation eventually comes down to the matter of how to carry on in daily life.\footnote{We need to recall that many neo-Confucians, including Zhu Xi, emphasized as serious the commonplace events of daily life, such as cleaning the house, receiving guests, etc.} Daily life is an entire field that constitutes all of one’s experiences. To consistently reflect on the self on a daily basis can be, therefore, conceived of as the politics of changing daily life and at the same time a way of practice for reforming the world. Consequently, by reflecting on the dispositions of the mind the purpose of self-cultivation is to focus on the concreteness of daily life. In short, the optimistic view above thoroughly requires us to keep our mind lucidly aware of all things. Thus self-cultivation should be a persistent process of reflection on one’s life. Through this persistent process we can ultimately act upon what we know to be morally right.
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