

SELF-TRANSFORMATION AND MORAL UNIVERSALISM: A COMPARISON OF WANG YANGMING AND SCHLEIERMACHER

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Abstract: The self-transformation has been one of the most important ideals of the human morality, and also a fundamental goal of the various secular thinkers, from Confucius and Socrates to many later Eastern and Western philosophers. Wang Yangming and Schleiermacher really made creative contributions to the philosophy of mind. The common purpose of these two great masters is to transform the lives of common people from the unexamined, the immoral to the moral, the religious to the secular, the corrupted to the purified, the particular to the universal, and the regional to the cosmopolitan through understanding and practicing the truth of life. A gradual process of self-transformation should be developed by highly justified and clarified theoretical guidelines. Any type of self-transformation follows the principle of self-transcendence, and is based on self-identification, and self-affirmation. The function of self-transformation is to release our spiritual life from an original bondage to a liberated freedom which is based on positive moral universalism.

WANG YANG MING (1472~1529) was a great thinker during the Ming Dynasty.¹ He developed philosophy of mind initially and systematically, and created a theory of self such as self-consciousness, self-cultivation, self-perfection, self-purification, self-realization, self-transcending and self-transformation. Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768~1843) was a German philosopher and Protestant theologian. He developed philosophy of mind, and created a theory of self such as self-consciousness, self-realization, self-transcending and self-transformation. What is the most leading moral purpose of the two philosophers? We may find that it is the moral transformation of the self, which is based on innate moral consciousness. The final moral purpose of these two thinkers is to realize and develop the transformation of the self from an ordinary state to the highest good.

Wang emphasizes self-transformation in his metaphysics, epistemology and ethics. He asks the question: "How perfect is the secret of mysterious *transformation*, with whom else can I probe it, if not with you?" (Ching, 1976, 223) He emphasizes that the highest good, as the final moral purpose, must require the extension, realization, and transformation of innate knowledge and moral consciousness. Wang asserts: "Our nature is the substance of mind and Heaven is the source of

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¹ Wang Yangming combined Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism together to formalize his own theoretic framework.

our nature. To exert one's mind to the utmost is the same as fully developing one's nature. Only those who are absolutely sincere can fully develop their nature and 'know the transforming and nourishing process of Heaven and earth.' Those who merely preserve their minds, on the other hand, have not yet exerted them to the utmost. Knowing the affairs of a district or a country, which is what the titles prefect and magistrate mean." (Chan, 1963b, 13) Heaven-given principles are the principles of the vital force. This vital force represents the functioning of the heaven-given principles. Without these principles there could be no functioning of the vital force and without this functioning, those things that are called principles could not be seen. Devotion to the essence of things (discrimination) implies mental energy and includes the manifestation of virtue. It signifies being undivided. It is mental energy and sincerity of purpose. Being undivided is devotion to the essence. It implies the manifestation of illustrious virtue. "It is what is called being transformed. It is being sincere in purpose...If a person steadily has the will to be a sage, then he is able to make efforts to realize self-achievement and to be watchful over himself when he is alone." (Wang, 1992, 1024)

Schleiermacher also emphasizes self-transformation. He indicates that the Man has undergone a religious transformation and all his activities are differently determined and even all impressions are differently received, which means that the personal self-consciousness becomes different. "Insofar as the personal self-consciousness has been transformed, the actions that arise from it, too, will be different from those of the former self...central to Schleiermacher's outlook was his ethical theory. It is in the sphere of ethics that religion has its ultimate meaning, for the fruit of all true religion lies in its transformative power over the self." (Mariña, 2008, 3) For him, an individual religious transformation really reveals that the individual self-consciousness is different, and the actions will become different from those of the former self. Human feeling can be regarded as the unity which is the point of transition from knowing to acting. This transition is also recognized as the consciousness of nothing, and the identity of the subject (the ego). Human life is a series of moments which is transitioned from thought to volition. The transition is the point from which thought ceases and volition begins, it can be considered the identity of both. If everything finite can be absorbed into the self-consciousness, and can form a consciousness of community between the self and nature, it will become the consciousness of the absolute unity of all life. We may assume an immediate tendency toward the infinite, and try to abolish the antithesis between the conscious being as a genus and the being given to consciousness in self-consciousness through self-transformation.

In the history of the world, so-called self-transformation for the cosmological and universalistic purposes has been a longtime debated topic for religion and philosophy. Today, it is still an important issue for scholarly argumentation in our contemporary cosmopolitan age. As Shulman declares: One typological divide, then, is, that between models of gradual self-transformation, often built upon the active cultivation

over years of asceticism or meditative praxis, and those of sudden or even violent change in the composition of the self—for example, in religious conversion...a strong “religious” assertion about the self—such as the Buddhist denial of its existence—“may color self-experience and processes of transformation in highly diverse culture.” (Shulman, 2002, 5-6) We will examine the similarities and distinctions between Wang’s and Schleiermacher’s doctrines of the moral and universalistic transformation of self. Transformation of the self can be re-examined through the following multiple perspectives.

I. Wang’s and Schleiermacher’s Theory of Self

When one of his disciples hold the old theory of Zhu Xi, Wang says: “this would be seeking wisdom in external things.” This disciple replied, “If you regard the investigation of principle (*li*) of things as external, you belittling your mind (*hsin*)” Wang proceeded to give a discourse on Mencius’ chapter regarding the complete development and realization of mind (*hsin*). (Ching, 1976, 86) From this story, we may find two key points: one is that Wang is “seeking wisdom in internal things; another is that he really emphasizes “self-realization” and “self-transformation.” Wang declares, “By authentic self I mean innate moral consciousness (*Liangzhi*).” (Wang, 1992, 250) Innate moral consciousness as authentic self has been embodied, going beyond intellectual knowledge of good and evil. It contains not only awareness of oughtness but the will to do oughtness as well. If you innately know what is good, you will immediately like it just as you like loving beautiful colors; if you innately know what is evil, you will immediately hate it just as you hate bad odors—it is quite natural and spontaneous for you to do goodness and stop evil since innate knowing, liking, and hating all “result from authentic heart/mind.” (Wang, 1992, 195) The relations between the mind and the external world are: 1) the external world is dependent on the self, and there is no such world that exists beyond the scope of the self; 2) the mind is the master of Heaven-and-Earth and myriad things in the external world; 3) one’s experienced reality is based on an inseparable relationship between the mind and the world; and 4) the mind and the world are coexistent and coextensive, but the former must be the dominant and determinate one.

For Mencius, “conscience” originally is a transcendently moral concept which means to sympathize with people, to shame evil, to politely refuse interests and to distinguish right from wrong. Wang developed this idea ontologically and epistemologically, and thought that Man’s conscience is just a Reason of Heaven. He reduced *a priori* moral conscience to Reason of Heaven which represents essence of the world and also becomes primitive morality in Man’s Mind. He considered conscience the only criterion to judge good from bad, and right from wrong. Conscience exists, as *a priori* entity or reality, in Man’s Mind. Man will produce right moral behaviors according to his internal conscience, and there is no need to search for any external sources. Wang’s “Benevolence of All-in-One” was related to his claims

of Enlightened Morality. Man is the center of all things, Man's mind should be the master of heaven, earth, and spirits, and Man's conscience is the conscience of all things. A saint's mind should treat all things of the world as a whole, all individual people should promote their own conscience to the whole world, and finally save society from suffering. According to Wang, benevolence, justice, propriety, and wisdom are naturally manifested virtues. In educating the young, he recommended teaching filial piety, brotherly respect, loyalty, faithfulness, propriety, justice, integrity, and a sense of shame. Wang believed that all things can be merged into an organic whole as the form of the world is the ideal political order of human society. A man should love other people like he loves himself, and treat all people like he treats his own blood relatives in order to achieve a perfectly good social life. All things in one was the ideal social order which means "there is no barrier between you and me," "all Chinese people are united as one", and "all people in this world is one family." Wang's thought further deepened and developed Confucian cosmopolitanism for the needs of social changes.

According to Wang: 1) All universal moral laws or codes are innate in man and discoverable through self-cultivation. 2) The moral awareness is finally derived from the self, and self-awareness and the unity of knowledge and action should be stressed. 3) Self-perfection is a self-realized human nature through a way of self-absorption, self-transcendence, and self-renunciation of egotistical feelings intuitively and subconsciously, not through knowledge, cognitive theory and investigation of things by Zhu Xi. 4) The real causes of human problems or social crises are due to the fact that man cannot gain a right understanding of his own self as well as his relationship to the world, and thus cannot live up to what he should be. 5) The primary quality of the mind (the original mind) is the "mind in itself" which can be regarded as the fundamental root of moral judgment, and the secondary quality of the mind is the applications or functions of human mind, which is equivalent to the principle of the universe; these two types of qualities of mind really represented self-causality, self-support, self-fulfillment, and self-sufficiency. 6) Ontologically, there are no significant distinctions between the mind in itself and the human mind, because they are revealed through self-consciousness. 7) The external world exists as the directed operation of the mind, which means that our knowing about all things through observation, sensation, and experience must be finally associated with the mind; in other words, the world is an inseparable part of the mind, not an independent entity external to it. 8) The salvation of the society and the world from "selfish desires" must be through personal moralization or self-purification, and all moralized personal conducts and social activities are finally established in the expansion of self-realization to respond correctly to the world. Feng Yulan criticizes: "Some neo-Confucians practice self-cultivation in the pursuit of domestication responding to external things, as if it were possible to be domestic to any external thing. Therefore, their learning is empty and useless, which is a big mistake of neo-Confucians." (Feng, 1985, 663) We may make a meta-philosophical examination on Wang's

mind and self, as Chung-ying Cheng says: from these general meta-philosophical reflections on Wang's philosophy of mind as a whole, it is not difficult to see that his philosophy mind indeed a unity of experience and method, a unity of description and prescription, and a unity of cognition and performance. "All these unities are only to be explained by the creative insights of Yang-ming into mind and reality, and to be conceived as a creative agency, which leads to many important philosophical theses, which cannot be otherwise understood, as well as to fruitful answers to many philosophical problems which cannot be otherwise formulated." (Cheng, 1973, 49)

Wang summarizes: 1) If one refers only to the place it occupies, it is called body; if one refers to the matter of control, it is called mind; if one refers to the activities of the mind, it is called purpose; if one refers to the intelligence of the purpose, it is called understanding; if one refers to the relations of the purpose, it is called things. If one wishes to make the purpose sincere, it is necessary to correct the purpose, expel passion, and revert to natural law with special reference to the matter on which the purpose is fixed. 2) The mind itself is the embodiment of principles. When the mind is free from the obscuration of selfish aims, it is the embodiment of the universal principles of heaven. When service to parents emerges from the mind characterized by pure heaven-given principles, we have filial obedience; when service to a prince emerges, faithfulness; when the making of friends or the governing of the people emerges, sincerity and benevolence. It is only necessary to expel human passions and devote one's energies to the eternal principles. 3) In order to keep one's self under the restraint of rules of propriety, it is necessary to have a mind completely under the influence of heaven principles. If a person desires to have his mind completely dominated by heaven principles, he must use effort at the point where principles are manifested. 4) If it is not corrupted by human aims and passions, it is called an upright mind, and if corrupted, it is called a selfish mind. When a selfish mind is rectified it is an upright mind; and when an upright mind loses its rightness it becomes a selfish mind. 5) In a position of wealth and honor to do what is proper to a position of wealth and honor, in a position of sorrow and difficulty to do what is proper to a position of sorrow and difficulty, implies that one is not a mere machine. This can be accomplished only by the man who cultivates an upright mind. 6) The nourishing of virtue and the nourishing of one's body are essentially the same thing. 7) When you cease to regard those external things, they become quiet in your mind. When you see them, their colors at once become clear. From this you can know that these flowers are not external to your mind. 8) Virtues and moral purposes objectify and realize themselves through self-demonstration. 9) Man alone knows what is meant by being enticed by the influence of things, but is unable to carry on self-investigation with full sincerity or to carry out vigorously the law of reciprocity. He stops with recognizing his body as the person and external objects as things, and forthwith separates things and himself into two distinct realms, so that in the last analysis his

person represents but one thing among ten thousand cosmologically and universally.

Mariña says “Despite the importance of Schleiermacher’s ethical theory, it has received little attention in the English-speaking world.” (Mariña 2008, 13) His highly original contribution to ethics lies in his understanding of “(a) what constitutes individuality, (b) how language and social institutions shape *self-consciousness*, (c) the relation of the individual to the community, and (d) the way that individuals and communities can be the occasion for *self-transformation* [my italics]” (Mariña 2008, 221). Schleiermacher defines religion as the totality of all relations of man to the deity, in the Universe, as he feels it to be an immediate part of his own life. After continuing progress, this feeling becomes more conscious from the lower to the higher and finally to the highest level. For him, the organization of nature, as becoming, is the history of nature, and the organization of mind, as becoming, is the history of culture. He writes: “If transcendental philosophy and the philosophy of nature are to be the eternally contrary but entirely corresponding views, then the philosophy of nature must explain the reality of the ego for the external world, just as the transcendental philosophy explains the reality of the outer world for the ego.” (Brandt, 1968, 156) The examinations of transcendental subjectivity and transformative reality of the ego (self) are the dominant parts of Schleiermacher’s transcendental idealism. The self-consciousness is one of the key ideas of Schleiermacher’s philosophy. We should clarify self-consciousness, and provide a comparative study for Wang’s and Schleiermacher’s transcendental subjectivity and self-consciousness. Schleiermacher discloses that feelings, desires, and moral consciousness rooted in the conative side of human nature can play an important role in the ethical expression of the self. His transcendental ethics justifies both genuine freedom and the unity of an agent’s character throughout the process of moral transformation. For him, any intention to mediate between science and religion must find a solution to the issue of human consciousness, which is our window to the world, however we may conceive it. The path to reconciling a scientific naturalism rejecting any possibility of transcendent meaning and a reactionary fundamentalism that advocates possession of absolute truth is based on an investigation of the nature of the subject, its relationship to the world, and the possibility of its relationship to a ground transcending both self and world.

Schleiermacher’s theory focuses on: 1) The study of transcendental subjectivity is an analysis of the possibility of knowledge from finite subjectivity to infinite subjectivity, and also of the possibility of moral transformation from imperfection to the most universal perfection. 2) Philosophy starts with the “finite nature of man,” but religion starts with the Infinite; for this reason, we must leave room for mysticism beyond the limits of philosophy. 3) The Universe is in unceasing activity, and reveals itself to human being every instant. 4) One’s organs mediate the connection between he and the object, and produce a change in his inner consciousness. 5) The subjective part in the expression of one’s own intuition of the Universe is to constitute its essential truth and vitality,

and the freedom of the highest intuition is to consist in this particularity and having something for oneself. 6) Every rational individual, as “finite subjectivity,” is assigned his definite place in a moral world order. 7) All acts of knowledge are conditioned by the inherently particular and subjective standpoint from which they first originate; all truly ethical acts must proceed from the awareness of the limited and perspectival character of the self; and all virtuous characters must be grounded in the self’s relation to the transcendent. 8) The inmost being of man’s mind must reach everything that belongs to his life; everything which is to be continuously active in the human mind is far beyond the realm of teaching; and every creation of the human mind can be examined and comprehended from its inner essence as a product of human nature. 9) Ethics proceeds from the consciousness of freedom, seeks to extend its kingdom to infinite, and make everything subordinate to it. 10) The force which purges itself forth in the matter of nature is essentially the same as that which manifests itself in the world of mind. 11) So-called religious feeling is made inward and absorbed into the inner unity of mind and man’s life and being. 12) Religion is regarded as the totality and universality of all relations of man to the deity in the Universe.

II. A Conceptual Examination of Self-transformation

Both Wang Yangming and Schleiermacher made very thoughtful conceptualization or abstraction for their terminological system and theoretical frameworks, and reformalized, reinterpreted, and reconstructed certain basic concepts and structures of their doctrines of mind and self which were not as exactly uniform as had been assumed. By following Confucius’ semantic methodology, Wang was applying *Zhengming* (rectification of names) to the conceptualization of his system. The rectification of certain terms such as the mind, self, virtues, and knowledge is aimed at the real meaning, understanding and usage of the whole framework. Wang maintains: “What cannot be obscured nature in it is the manifestation of the highest good, and constitutes the illustrious virtue in its original state which is I also what I call *Liangzhi* (the innate knowledge). When the highest good is manifested, right is right and wrong is wrong. To things trifling or important, significant or petty, it responds and reacts with unceasing *transformation* (my italics), yet in everything attaining to the natural mean.” (QGL, 206) We may find two key points: 1) the highest good is manifested through *Liangzhi*; and 2) this manifestation by *Liangzhi* is “unceasing *transformation*.” *Liangzhi* which literally means “good knowledge” is one of the most important concepts of Wang’s theory of self. Wang considers *Liangzhi* as “the drop of blood transmitted from antiquity by the sages.” In a poem, he expresses this point again: “the sage’s instruction lasted a thousand years; *Liangzhi* is its oral transmission.” (Wang, 1963, 630A)

Wang’s *view* was derived from Mencius’ idea, “The ability possessed by men without having been acquired by learning is innate ability, and the knowledge possessed by them without deliberation is

Liangzhi. ” (*Mencius*, 7A.15) Moral actions are relevant to the endeavor of self-cultivation, *Liangzhi* relates to substance that is indispensable to the endeavor of self-cultivation, there is no distinction between the external and the internal. Virtues produce an identical self to guide various actions responding to various situations. *Liangzhi* demonstrates itself in different moral actions in accordance with diversified social relationships and situations. The relationship between innate moral consciousness and moral actions is therefore in a form of one controlling many. Innate moral consciousness constitutes the authentic self. While principles of Heaven are external and alien, innate moral consciousness as virtues represents mostly self-demands of a moral agent. When a moral agent follows innate moral consciousness, he is acting at his own free will. Considering acting in accordance with innate moral consciousness is a process of the realization of self-satisfaction. A perfect action lies in the unity of the obtainment of propriety and the realization of self-satisfaction. The significance of emotions to innate moral consciousness embraces reason, emotions, and will at the same time. For Wang, a moral action springs from nature with the presence of emotions which are rooted in innate moral consciousness: “When aroused naturally, all seven emotions are the functions of innate moral consciousness.” A perfect moral action is an action of self-consciousness, free will, and nature. (Wang, 1992, 195)

The better translation for *Liangzhi* could be “moral consciousness,” “self-consciousness,” or “innate moral consciousness.”² This one is also a key concept of Schleiermacher’s theory of self. Wang declares that

² *Liangzhi* has the following characteristics: 1) it is defined as the nature which Heaven has conferred on us, and the original state of our mind, which is spontaneously intelligent and keenly consciousness; 2) it is the instinctive human sense planted within us by nature; 3) it is imbedded in one’s conscience, and demonstrated by the instinctive love or the form of omnipotent love in its outward expression; 4) it has a priori and transcendental and original substance of mind-in-heart; 5) it automatically comprehends any ideas; 6) it does not come from the five senses, and the five senses are functions; 7) it is man’s own moral criterion in one’s mind-and-heart, and may be called sagehood; 8) it is innate, intuitive, and transcending; 9) it means that all man have an innate moral ability to provide moral judgements; 10) it is only real knowledge, and there is no other knowledge beyond it; 11) it is “Dao” of morality; 12) it is guided by Heavenly Reason, Heavenly Rules, and Heavenly Mandate; 13) it is innate moral consciousness or intentions for justifying the good or bad, and right or wrong; 14) it is the starting point of ethical practice, and constitutes man’s real self; 15) it is to apply self-cultivation to reject “immoral consciousness” and develop “moral consciousness”; 16) it is inner source of moral guidance, can be simply applied to human conduct or society irrespective of the circumstances, and can also understand and make perfect judgments about things without much information; 17) it is a perfect potential power and intuitive enlightenment in the mind which can be activated anytime; 18) it can manifest the original mind that is equivalent to the universe; 19) it represents the universal moral law as the foundation of man’s moral judgments; 20) If it is clear, one can either try to attain truth through quiet reflection or through efforts made in the midst of activity; and 21) it can be characterized by the knowledge of good and evil.

even if the whole world says that his actions do not measure up to his words, he would still act according to *Liangzhi*. In a series of poems about *Liangzhi*, Wang praises: Confucius resides in every man's *hsin* (mind/heart), hidden by distractions of ears and eyes. The real image being now discovered, doubt longer *Liangzhi*. Why, sir, are you always agitated, wasting efforts in the world of sorrows— Know you not the sages' occult word, *Liangzhi* is your *Cantong Qi* (*Tsan-tung Chi*).³ In everyman there is a compass, his mind-and-heart the seat of a thousand changes. Foolishly, I once saw things in reverse, leaves and branches sought I outside. "The soundless, odorless moment of solitary self-knowledge, Contains the ground of Heaven, Earth, and all beings. Foolish is he who leaves his inexhaustible treasure, with a bowl, moving from door to door, imitating the beggar." (Wang, 1963 20, 629a) Towards the end of his life, Wang expressed again in a poem the fulfillment of all his desires in the discovery of *Liangzhi*. It presents a summary of his personal evolution: "Transmit arts difficult and complex/In me is *Qian* (Heaven), in me *Kun* (Earth); I need not seek elsewhere—the thousand sages pass as shadows; *Liangzhi* alone is my guide." (Ching, 1976, 158) Conceptualization of Wang's self is based on the Six Classics, which are constant Dao in his mind, because the "Way" can penetrate persons and things, reach all lands, fill up Heaven and Earth, go through past and present, comprehend all that exists, and is identical to all that exists without changing anything. His moral consciousness is innate, the supernatural, the infinite, the transcendental, the immediate, the highest, and absolute.

Schleiermacher's views are based on a rigorous metaethical analysis of the individual's relation to the divine or the absolute; the character of self-consciousness and personal identity; the relation of the self to others and its effect on self-consciousness; and the specific character of individuality and its relationship to the formation of the ethical community. (Mariña 2008, 7) Any movements of mind or self must be developed from feeling to consciousness from the lower to the higher, and from the immediate to the mediate through the different stages of conceptualization. (Schleiermacher, 1958, 65) Thought can occur only in the form of concepts or judgments, and the foundation of all thought, as knowledge, is the relation of thought-form and sense data. Conceptual thought is embodied in speculative science which consists in a system of thought exhibiting the relationships of the essences of the various types of reality. The system of all concepts constituting knowledge must be reduced to one Reason, which animates all individuals in a timeless way, as the source of true concepts in which God is the source of all living forces. Schleiermacher asserts that when man seeks through "self-consciousness to enter into fellowship with the unity of the Whole, the finite resists him, and he seeks and does not find and loses what he has found. He is defective, variable and attached to details and non-

³ *Cantongqi* is the main Chinese alchemical scripture written by the alchemist Wei Boyang in 142 AD.

essentials.” (Schleiermacher, 1958, 242) Similarly with Hegel, his conceptual transformation follows thesis—antithesis—synthesis. Antithesis could be divided into the lower, the higher and the highest. Body and soul in man is the highest tension of antitheses, and the most universal antithesis is that of Ideal and Real. The function of the ideal in the particular object of Reason is consciousness, as innate one in the form of soul and body. The highest antithesis of the Real and the Idea is the line of demarcation between the transcendental and the immanent, and comprehends everything in which the system of antithesis is extended. The One Being (the transcendental Being) can be regarded as the idea of Being-in-itself under two opposed and related forms and modes of the Ideal and the Real, which is a condition of the reality of knowledge. There are seven types of dichotomies of self-consciousness: 1) the God’s vs. the human; 2) the universal vs. the individual ; 3) the infinite self vs. the finite; 4) the transcendental vs. the empirical (sensible) ; 5) the immediate⁴ vs. the mediate; 6) the highest (higher) vs. the lower; and 7) the absolute vs. the particular. Accordingly, the God-consciousness must be the divine, the infinite, the transcendental, the immediate, the highest, and absolute. The major distinction between these two philosophers is that Wang’s moral consciousness is based on Heaven that is impersonal Supernatural Being or Supernatural Being, but Schleiermacher’s is based on personal Divine Being--God. We may clarify the concept of Schleiermacher’s God-consciousness from the perspectives of the transcendence-sensibility, universality-individuality, subjectivity-objectivity, humanity-divinity, spontaneity-receptivity, and necessity-possibility.

Firstly, sin can be regarded as the result of inattention to the influence of the higher and transcendental God-consciousness upon moments of the sensible self-consciousness. Schleiermacher says “The transcendent basis must now indeed be the same basis of the being which affects us as the being which is our own activity” (Schleiermacher, 1996, 274–5). The God-consciousness is always present and in relation to the sensible self-consciousness, which is the self’s consciousness of itself as related to, and interacting with, the world, and conditions every

⁴ The “immediate self-consciousness” can be regarded as: 1) a ground of the feeling of infinite and living nature which has an inner-temporal psychic phenomenon and a supra-temporal, or one of inclination or receptivity to the givenness of the self in its juxtaposition to others, and could be morally transformed through reason; 2) the ground of the feeling of absolute dependence; 3) the principle locus wherein the divine causality is immediately operative as a formal and *in-forming* cause in the deepest recesses of the self; 4) the one that can help the self experience the absolute and stand in relation to the whence of all existence, the point from which all self-consciousness originates; 5) the absolute, the “Whence” of both our active and receptive existence, or through it the self stands in direct relation to the absolute; 6) a transcendental moment which not only makes possible the transition between knowing and doing, but also grounds the unity of a person’s character; and 7) the one that can provide transitions between moments of the self’s activity and its receptivity.

moment of the sensible self-consciousness. The God-consciousness is transcendental, which is like a light that casts its rays on how the world is understood, valued, and felt. The God-consciousness involves an element of self-consciousness, which is the consciousness that one is not the author of one's own existence. This relatedness of the sensibly determined to the higher consciousness in the unity of the moment is considered the consummating point of self-consciousness.

Secondly, the work of Christ can be divided into two key moments: 1) He strengthens each individual's God-consciousness, enabling it to dominate each moment of the sensuous self-consciousness, and awakens the God-consciousness and establishes the dominance of spirit over the flesh; and 2) He constructs the Kingdom of God. Both moments are interdependent, so that the awakening of the God-consciousness occurs through the establishment of the Kingdom of God, which is established through the awakening of the God-consciousness.

Thirdly, the God-consciousness is an abstraction from the reality of the Christian God-consciousness, which can only provide its appearance along with the sensible self-consciousness. In self-consciousness, the self treats itself its own object, and distinguishes between itself and the world. The relationship between self and world presupposes an original unity of consciousness, a moment given in pure immediacy, in which the two are one. This original unity of consciousness produces the transition between the moments of spontaneity and receptivity. The consciousness of absolute dependence comes from this moment of pure immediacy.

Fourthly, the work of Christ in transforming ethical outlooks that the God-consciousness is freed can be understood as a theological one. The life of the historical Jesus can be considered the sensuous self-consciousness in Jesus, which is able to determine something as attractive or repulsive in such a way that he had to struggle with it, even if infinitely small in Jesus. If the sensuous self-consciousness could determine a course of action as genuinely attractive for him, this would reveal that in him there was a moment of consciousness in which the sensuous self-consciousness was not just the organ of the expression of the Spirit of his God-consciousness. Jesus' self-consciousness is really functional in relation to the world, and he imparts his God-consciousness to others and also quickens the whole race. The perfect passivity of Jesus' self-consciousness in relation to God implies its perfect activity in relation to the world.

Lastly, while the experience of absolute dependence is immediate and transcendental, to understand the world is based on the relationship between the God-consciousness and the sensible self-consciousness. We may find that the transitions between all moments of the sensible self-consciousness take place in the immediate self-consciousness, through which the self stands in direct relation to the absolute. Because transitions between the moments of self-conscious life are susceptible to the divine influence, one's actions and treatment of others in the world will rely on the powerfulness of the God-consciousness. The activity of

the higher consciousness is most developed has a historical development influencing the expression of religion.

Schleiermacher exceeds Kant in emphasizing the link of each human being to the infinite and eternal in the immediate self-consciousness. He connects the source of each person's ultimate value with the element in self-consciousness that interpenetrates all aspects of a man's psyche rationally and emotively, and also posits an immediate awareness of absolute dependence. The individuals can be immediately aware of their activity and receptivity, which is the correlation between self and world. Schleiermacher agrees with Fichte on the need to posit the immediate self-consciousness. He maintains the immediate self-consciousness, and recognizes Fichte's interpretation of Kant. He understands the fundamental structure of human consciousness present in Jesus, in terms of the immediate self-consciousness and its relation to self-consciousness, as mediated through the representations of self and world. He continuously justifies higher consciousness, human consciousness, and individual self-consciousness. For him, one could not exclusively realize his relations within the realm of the antithesis, for he is as a man determined for this moment in a particular manner within the realm of the antithesis that he is conscious of his absolute dependence.

Both of Wang and Schleiermacher provide similar dichotomies of self-consciousness: 1) the infinite vs. finite; 2) the perfect vs. imperfect; 3) the unconditioned vs. conditional; 4) the transcendental vs. empirical (sensible); 5) the immediate vs. mediate; 6) the highest (higher) vs. lower; 7) the absolute vs. particular; and 8) the instinctive vs. learned. However, Wang emphasizes the Heaven vs. the human; but Schleiermacher the God's vs. the human; Wang emphasizes the universal Heaven vs. the individual Heaven, but Schleiermacher the universal God's vs. the individual's God's. For Wang, "moral consciousness" recognizes an original substance of mind-in-itself, but Schleiermacher does not.

III. A Metaphysical Examination of Self-transformation

What are the essences and natures of the self? This is a metaphysical question. Both Wang Yangming and Schleiermacher paid attention to the metaphysical transformation of the self.

Wang is also an idealist philosopher. He declares, "My clear intelligence is the master of heaven and earth and spiritual beings." (Chan, 1963, 690) For him, the mind is *Dao* (the Way), *Dao* is *Tian* (Heaven); and if one knows his own mind-and-heart, he would know the Way and Heaven. (Ching, 1976, 125) Why does Wang's philosophy of mind have such strong metaphysical character? One of the reasons is that he attempted to unify the Three Teachings: Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. For this reason, similar with Schleiermacher, he is more religionized than most Chinese philosophers. As he indicates: the practices of Buddhism and Daoism can all be his practices. "When I complete and cultivate myself while developing my nature and fulfilling my destiny [what I do] may be called Taoist. When I

refrain from worldly contaminations while developing my nature and fulfilling my destiny, what I do may be called Buddhist....the Confucians did not know that the whole place could be used by themselves. When they saw the Buddhists, they separated the room on the left to give it to them. When they saw the Taoist, they also separated the room on the right to give them. And so the Confucians themselves remain the middle.”(Wang, 1963, 34: 960a)

Confucius claims: “There is one which runs through all my teachings.” (Analects 15:2) The general worldview of Wang is *Wangwuyiti* (All in One or the Unity of All Beings). He supports a metaphysical universalism, and attempts to unify the human being, natural being, and supernatural or superhuman being as the Great One. He expresses: the great man regards Heaven and Earth and the myriad things as one body. He regards the world as family and the country as one person. As to those who make a cleavage between objects and distinguish between the self and others, they are small men. That the great man can regard Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things as one body is not because he deliberately wants to do so, but because it is natural to the humane nature of his mind. “Forming one body with Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things is not only true of the great man.” (Chan, 1963, 659) One of Wang’s ontological views is *Benti* (*Pen-ti*). *Ben* literally means original or fundamental; *Ti* literally means substance, being or entity; *Benti* literally means original substance, pure being or ultimate reality. *Benti* has the independent and transcendental character, and it can be manifested by a self-developmental process or self-realization. Perhaps, the best translation of *Benti* is mind-in-itself. Wang considered *Benti* the moral substance of mind-in-itself. He says: “But while the *pen-ti* (*Benti*) of love can be called *jen*, there is a kind of love that is correct, and a kind that is not correct. Only the correct kind of love is the *pen-ti* of love, which can be called *jen*. If one knows only universal love, without distinguishing between the correct and incorrect kinds of love, there will be a difference.” (Chan, 1963b, 176)

Wang developed a theory of *Liangzhibenti* (mind-in-itself of innate moral consciousness). He transferred the “*Benti*” from “pure moral entity” to “existential entity”: through conscious movement and understanding of reality, man’s mind can penetrate all things, and unify and identify mind-in-itself with Heaven-and-Earth and all things. *Liangzhi* (moral consciousness) has been given *a priori* and transcendental *Xinbenti* (original substance of mind-in-itself); but *Zhiliangzhi* (to extend moral consciousness) is *a posterior* and experiential practice through *Gongfu* (actual efforts). *Benti* of mind can be recovered, only when myriad things are investigated, innate knowledge is extended, and intention becomes sincere. The purpose of the rectification of mind is to recover its *Ti* (substance). *Benti*, as the final being of self-causality, is substantial but intangible, ultimate but real, and reachable and understandable but indescribable. Man cannot add anything to this *Benti*. *Benti* is *Taiji* (the ultimate). *Benti* has different levels and multi-dimensions: it can be regarded as 1) the original condition of the unity of Heaven and Earth and the myriad

things; 2) the supreme being of self-causality; 3) the ultimate reality of mind; 4) the internal quality and character of mind; 5) the final meaning of the highest good; 6) the spiritual entity of *Tianli* (Heaven Principle); 7) the Way (Dao) of spirituality; and 8) the root of man's mental activity. Ching concludes: Wang's mind-in-itself represents "a psychological as well as metaphysical view of reality. It is a state of consciousness, a disposition of the spirit, which is to be achieved...When this is done, nothing in life can hinder the continual operation of *Liangzhi* as it responds to events and affairs, entering into reality, absorbing reality by its activity, until it becomes one with all reality, and even the heart of all reality." (Ching, 1976, 139) In order to interpret his dualist and dialectic metaphysics, Wang claims: the master of the body (*shen*) is the mind (*hsin*), that which proceeds from the mind is intention (*yi*). Intention-in-itself is knowledge. That to which intention is directed is affair (*wu*). When the intention is directed to the service of one's parents, then such service is an affair or action. There is no *Li* (moral principles), no *wu* (affair, action) outside of *hsin* (mind-and-heart). There is only one *li* (principle of being). "When concentrated in an individual, it is known as *hsing* (human nature). As master of this nature, it is known as *hsin* (mind-and-heart). In terms of the operation of this [mind-and-heart], it is known as *yi* (intention or thought). In terms of the clear consciousness of this intention, it is known as *chih* (knowledge). And, from the point of view of experience of this [knowledge] it is known as *wu* (act or thing)." (Chan, 1963b, 160-61)

One should develop mind-in-itself, and enter into oneself and seek to realize what is said in one's mind, because the Four Books and Five Classics talk about mind-in-itself. When mind-in-itself is understood, the *Dao* is also understood. The superior man seeks the movements of *Yin* and *Yang* of the mind in order to act accordingly to them by his respect for *the Book of Changes*. He seeks the laws, regulations, and government of the mind in order to practice them by his respect for *the Book of Documents*. He seeks the musical and lyrical expressions of nature and emotions of the mind, in order to develop them, by his respect for *the Book of Poetry*. He seeks the rules of deportment and propriety of the mind in order to pay attention to them with his respect for *the Book of Rites*. He seeks the joy and peace of the mind in order to give expression for them by his respect for the Classic of Music. He seeks the distinctions between sincerity and hypocrisy, perversity and orthodoxy of mind in order to discern their differences by his respect for *the Spring-Autumn Annals*. Wang is a hylozoist, because he thinks that man's *Liangzhi* acts also with the *Liangzhi* of plants, trees, tiles and stones, and Heaven and Earth; all of them could not exist if without *Liangzhi*. When *Liangzhi* begins its wonderful functions, Heaven-and-Earth open up, all the myriad things reveal themselves, and man's ears and eyes can also hear and see. He provides the ontological, cosmological, theological and psychological views for his theory: 1) The mind-and-heart has no substance of its own, and it regards as its substance, the right or wrong of the operations and responses of Heaven-and-Earth and all things; 2) The nothingness of *Liangzhi* is the

formlessness of the Great Void; 3) The mind-and-heart of the sage regards Heaven-and-Earth and myriad things as one body and regards all men under Heaven as his brothers, children and kin; 4) The essence of mind is nothing other than *Tianli* (Principle of Heaven), and is also the True Self which is the master of man's body; 5) Man's luminous spirit is the master of Heaven-and-Earth, spiritual beings and all things, but it cannot be separated from them; 6) The highest good refers to mind-in-itself; 7) Without man's mind, there would be no five senses and any sensations; and 8) When mind is free from hindrance of selfish desires, it is the embodiment of heavenly virtue. The mind of the philosopher regards heaven, earth, and all things as one substance. Mind, nature, and heaven are one all-pervading unity, and all things are one substance.

Schleiermacher discusses the effort of the transcendental philosophy to provide a unified basis for metaphysics and ethics. For him, there is little hope for a philosophy which relies simply on a dialectical basis without any mysticism, because one does not pursue his thoughts to the Unconditioned or the Infinite as the ultimate mental. The world can be the totality of antithesis, and God is the real negation of antitheses. M. Frank maintains: Schleiermacher does not have a metaphysics, if by this is meant a foundational philosophical doctrine. He was not convinced that metaphysics could grasp the highest object of the human mind, or that it could exhaustively deal with the essential interests of the human spirit. "He reserved the expression 'metaphysics' for the systematic exposition of descriptive truths. Schleiermacher wished to dispense entirely with the distinction, introduced by Kant, between the transcendental (grounding the knowability of objects of experience) and the transcendent. Instead of metaphysics, Schleiermacher called his first philosophy, in the Platonic tradition, Dialectic." (Mariña, 2005, 15)

Schleiermacher's metaphysics can be called "dialectical ontology." For him, religion is not dependant on knowledge or morality, but on feeling. The essence of religion is the feeling of absolute dependence on God. In other words, the essence of religion is feeling inside of the self. In his *Monologen*, Schleiermacher gives us his idealism: Is there a body without a spirit? Does not the body exist only because and in that mind needs it and is conscious of it? "Every feeling which seems to press out of the physical world is really my free action; nothing is its action on me; the effect always passes from me to it. It is not something different from and opposed to me. Therefore, I do not honor it with the name 'world', that lofty phrase which implies omnipresence and omnipotence. What I thus honor is only the eternal community of spirits, their influence on each other...the sublime harmony of freedom." (*Monologen*, 17) Schleiermacher's metaphysics of the self and understanding of self-consciousness provide the foundation of an ethical system that stands as a powerful examination to the usual moral theories. He attempts to acknowledge "the consciousness of the relation of man to a higher world." We may try to disclose the problem of the nature of self-consciousness and personal identity, and also an analysis of the development of his thought. The core of his philosophical and

theological system is that the self-consciousness of one individual can transform the self-consciousness of all. For him, ideas and words are simply the necessary and inseparable outcome of the core. "Doctrine is only united to doctrine occasionally to remove misunderstanding or expose unreality." (Schleiermacher, 1958, 17) His metaphysical arguments reject the existence of a genuine plurality of individuals. He shows that he does not simply identify the transcendent ground of consciousness with the ultimate reality itself, but that rather, it is a rift in the immediate self-consciousness that signals the self's relation to ultimate reality. He says: "If mankind itself is something transitory...and changes in itself, do you not think it impossible that it can be the Universe? Rather, it is related to Universe, as individual persons are related to it; it is only a single form of the Universe, a presentation of a single modification of its elements...some other character than his humanity must be found in man in order to relate him directly to the Universe....." (Schleiermacher, 1958, 104-105)

We will examine Schleiermacher's understanding for the Kantian theory of subjectivity, regarding the metaphysical problem of the relation of self, world, and the ground of both. He attempts to answer the question of what can be inferred from the unity of self-consciousness. This effort is deeply inspired by Kant's argument in the first *Critique*, in which Kant argues that we cannot validly infer the noumenal substantiality of the self from the identity of self-consciousness. From ancient times until the early modern times, so-called metaphysics covered the following four branches: ontology, cosmology, theology, and psychology. Schleiermacher's theory was involved in these branches. The seven types of dichotomies of self-consciousness mentioned above are the matters of theology and psychology.

We may try to reveal the ontological and cosmological transformations of Schleiermacher's self, namely, the relations and interactions between the self-consciousness and ultimate reality, being, existence, world, and substance. This kind of verification could be an effective process that confirms the importance of the ontological transformation of his self associated with study for some particular cases. First, he does not simply identify the transcendent ground of consciousness with ultimate reality itself, but that rather, it is a rift in the immediate self-consciousness that signals the self's relation to ultimate reality. Second, his self-consciousness really opens up into the world that it shares with other selves and which results from the interactions of spiritual beings; hence there genuinely exist outer contact points, wherein the energies of the self meet with external things. Third, an element in his psychology is his focus on the grounding principle of the self that points to the whence of its active and receptive existence. The self-consciousness accompanying our entire spontaneity, and our entire being, and which negates absolute freedom, is already in itself a consciousness of absolute dependence, for it is the consciousness that our entire spontaneity comes from elsewhere.

The relations and interactions between subjectivity and objectivity should be discussed. The self-consciousness presupposes a duality

between subject and object, and it implies that the subject can provide itself with its own object. In transcendental self-consciousness the self is immediately related to the Infinite and Eternal; this point is the theoretical core of Schleiermacher's view of the inner and higher self. The man expresses himself to the other, and the self as expressed is reflected back to the self in the self-consciousness of the other. Loss of the other can be a loss of oneself. Schleiermacher attempts to produce a direct interaction between self and others. For him, the beginning of the Kingdom of God is supernatural or superhuman as it owes its origin to the consciousness of Christ that as complete passivity in relation to the divine, and all the moments of Jesus' sensuous self-consciousness are completely based on the divine influence. This passivity guarantees its complete spontaneity in relation to the world. The existence of the higher consciousness is only related to the antithesis of the sensible self-consciousness between self and world. There can be no development of the higher consciousness if without any development in relation to the sensible self-consciousness. This relation between the higher consciousness and the sensible self-consciousness can be understood as the consummating point of self-consciousness. There must be a distinction between subject and object in the realm of the sensible self-consciousness. Objects are provided to consciousness through perception, but consciousness must apply interpretive categories to embrace and to make sense of them. Many of these categories are developing contingently and historically. Religious symbols can be regarded as certain products of consciousness on the material given to it.

Schleiermacher seeks some valid argumentations to resolve Kant's problem of the empirical self and Descartes' rationalistic self. Thandeka claims: he believed that Kant's suspension of sensible domain in order to make room for faith had failed to answer these questions. Kant's formation for belief in God was therefore incomplete. He sought to develop his own answers to these questions by suspending thinking in order to discover what, from the standpoint of human being as part of the natural world, is suspended in sentient being. "Waiting to find in the self as an organic agent of the world...the meaning of Descartes' proposition *Cogito, ergo sum* is that the subject, with regard to thinking, is identical in all of the alternations of its individual moments of thinking (D529)...By contrast, Schleiermacher does not allow the separation of thinking and being to stand as a basis for self-consciousness. Rather, self-consciousness becomes, in Schleiermacher's work, identity of two (D529). Our being is not simply as expression of thinking; we are also the being that does thinking." (Thandeka, 1995, 24)

Schleiermacher emphasizes that self-consciousness is the identity and unity of thinking and being, mind and body, inwardness and outwardness, and spirituality and materiality. Wang regards mind, nature, and heaven as one all-pervading unity, and all things as one substance. For him, the mind, *Dao* (the Way) and *Tian* (Heaven) can be regarded as three-in-one. The essence of mind is *Tianli* (principle of Heaven), and is also the True Self which is the master of man's body. Man's luminous spirit is the master of Heaven-and-Earth, spiritual

beings and all things. Mind is the embodiment of heavenly virtue (*Tianli*). He provides a unified basis for metaphysics and ethics. The world is the totality of antithesis, and finally reaches the totality of syntheses such as ideal and real, and different levels of consciousness through God's real negation and ultimate unification. The immediate self-consciousness signals the self's relation to ultimate reality, and self-consciousness really does open out into the world which shares with other selves and results from the interactions of spiritual beings. The self-consciousness is accompanying our entire being. Both of them advocate the identity, unity, and entity of the moral, the natural, and the divine world cosmologically and universally. However, Wang maintains that the nothingness of innate moral consciousness is the formlessness of the Great Void, which is a typical Buddhist world view.

IV. An Epistemological Examination of Self-transformation

We should open a discussion on the epistemological transformation of Wang's and Schleiermacher's self. Like all philosophers, both emphasizes the function of knowing and cognitive power, the relations between knowing subjects and known objects, and the interactions between reason and experience for the transformation of the self.

Wang's thinking is based on his critique of Zhu Xi's theory. He criticizes that Zhu stressed the cognition and knowledge, but neglected the cultivation of body and mind. Mind and reason cannot be divided into two parts. Knowing and doing as well as knowledge and self-cultivation must be combined. In other words, knowing and doing are same in mind, or they are the two sides of the same mind; surely, they cannot be separated. Real knowledge must be followed by actions. All things are attributable to the judgments of man's mind, and thus the moral cultivation is demanded by the mind. Conscience or moral consciousness can be considered reason of heaven. For him, "The knowledge and action you refer to are already separated by selfish desires and are no longer knowledge and action in their original substance." (Chan 1963, 10) For Wang, *Zhi* (knowledge) and *Dao* (the Way) are inseparable. The determination to have the mind-and-heart completely identified with Heavenly Reason, and devoid even of the least bit of selfish desire, is the work of becoming a sage. If an unenlightened scholar is able to discern *Tianli* in his mind in order to develop his *Liangzhi*, he will surely become intelligent and strong, and finally he can establish the great foundation and understand the universal way. Wang considers: "Your pretty innate moral consciousness is the criterion of yourself. When your thoughts are aroused, innate moral consciousness cannot be hidden but immediately knows what is right and what is wrong. If you do not deceive it, but just follow it – domestically, then you will certainly preserve good and remove evil." (Wang, 1992, 56) Human moral consciousness embodies the essences of true reasonableness, our life purpose is to know our inborn goodness, and this process of knowing must be combined with a process of doing. In this regard, the pursuit of knowledge is to apply one's innate moral consciousness to everything

that one comes in contact with. The doctrine of the unity of knowledge and action (*zhixingheyi*) can be considered the most important part of Wang's philosophic system. Knowledge and action are really two words describing the same, one effort; and the unity of knowledge and action is made precisely as if a medicine to remedy the sickness of a wrong knowing process. His justification of self and world is probably the most puzzling, debatable, and controversial. He believes that "it was right to search for sagehood within, and there was no need to seek it in things and affairs outside. Self-examination and inward exploration are enough for one to gain true knowledge and to be a sage." (Yao, 2000, 221). Wang says, "By the extension of knowledge and the investigation of things I mean the extension of innate moral consciousness in my heart/mind in all affairs and things. Innate moral consciousness in my heart/mind is so-called principles of Heaven. If I extend innate moral consciousness in my heart/mind in all affairs and things, then all affairs and things get their principles." (Wang, 1992, 45)

In Wang's insight, the book of Changes speaks of knowing to utmost point to reach, and reaching it. To know the utmost point is real knowledge, and to reach it is to extend knowledge. This is how knowledge and action become united. Confucian *Gewu* (investigation of things) and *Zhizhi* (extension of knowledge) can be reduced to one term: *Liangzhi*. In all his reflections and responses, a superior man or moral person is always extending his *Liangzhi* to the utmost. Steady accumulation of righteousness is merely the extension of innate moral consciousness. A superior person responds to varied situations, acting when he should act, stopping when he should stop, keeping alive when he should live, and accepting death when he should die. He performs deliberately and properly according to different situations, tries to extend his innate moral consciousness to realize *self-satisfaction*, and clarifies the relationships between the mind, body, will, knowledge, and thing. He points out: "The mind is the master of the body. Knowledge is the intelligence of the mind. The will is knowledge in operation. And thing is which the will is directed." (Chan, 1963, 675). He continues: "Conduct by patiently following innate moral consciousness and leaving alone any censure, sneer, imputation, disgrace, and honor. Just extend innate moral consciousness unceasingly with concern about whether the state of self-cultivation is up-and-down. After a long time innate moral consciousness will surely work well and no external things will influence it." (Wang, 1936, 101) To rest in the highest good requires the extension of knowledge. The rectification of mind is aimed at the recovery of the pristine goodness of the mind. The cultivation of self expresses the effort of such rectification. This is called manifesting virtue with reference to self, and loving people with reference to others. If people attempt to transfer themselves from an ordinary person to a holy person, they should understand: 1) Self-perfection and self-purification are following one's innate sense of true or false, good or bad, right or wrong, and beautiful or ugly without any rationalizations; 2) Human beings, as self-sufficient moral agents, possess innate knowledge from the very beginning; and 3) Everyone has equal potentiality to reach

sagehood that is based entirely on innate self-knowledge through internal self-realization.

Wang claims: “In learning to become a sage, the student needs only to get rid of selfish human desires and preserve the Principle of Nature, which is like refining gold and achieving perfection in quality.” (de Bary, 1970, 10) In order to develop and bring this concept into actual operation, he calls this *Zhiliangzhi* (extending *Liangzhi*). The mind of man constitutes Heaven in all its profundity, within which there is nothing not included. For him, If now we concentrate our thoughts upon extending *Liangzhi*, so as to sweep away all the barriers and obstructions, the original state will then again be restored, and we will again become part of the profundity of Heaven. He examines: one wish to extend one’s *Liangzhi*, does this mean that one should stupefy oneself with shadows and echoes, and suspend oneself in empty unreality? It is necessary to accept the reality of (external) affairs. Hence the extension of knowledge necessary consists in the investigation of things. Here the word things (*wu*) is to be interpreted as affairs (*shi*). Extending knowledge to the utmost through “investigation of things (*gewu*) means extending and developing *Liangzhi* of good to the utmost on all affairs and things. The intuitive faculty and its knowledge of good are *Tianli*. If one extends and develops the heaven-given principles of one’s intuitive faculty on affairs and things, then all affairs and things partake the heaven-given principles. Extending the intuitive faculty of the mind to the utmost is extending knowledge to the utmost, and the condition in which all things and affairs partake of these principles is to be identified with the investigation of things, means that mind and principles are one.

Wang was very proud of his discovery of *Zhiliangzhi* as a universal method for self-transformation: “What I say about *Zhiliangzhi* is the “treasure of the orthodox dharma-eye” of the Confucian school. He who sees the truth “sets it up before Heaven and Earth, and finds nothing in it which he transgresses. He presents himself with it before spiritual beings, and finds no doubt regarding it. He examines it by comparing it with the doctrines of the three kings, and finds it free from error. He is ready to wait for a hundred years for a sage, without harboring any misgiving.” (Chan, 1963b, 159)

The single individual relates himself to other production of the world and seeks his knowledge in them. “Only when the individual...carries its spirit and consciousness in him...This is related to everything else...as the self-consciousness of mankind in individual, to unconsciousness. Thus everyone in whom this self-consciousness arises comes to church...Of course, some who are not scientists can be in the church, for they possess that higher self-consciousness in feeling, if not also in intuition.....” (*Werke*, pt. I, vol. I, 522) According to Schleiermacher, philosophy must begin with one of several principles for different fields of knowledge, and it consists in the perception that this inexpressible reality of the Supreme Being underlies all man’s thinking and feeling. The development of this knowledge is what Plato understood by dialect. The character of knowledge, as a being, corresponds to every thought as concept forms its transcendental side.

Knowledge itself in consciousness embodied in being; and the difference of the two is the distinguishing characteristic of knowledge. The absolute knowledge is the expression of the absolute Being which is identical with itself as conscious absolute ego. "Men may learn to know the Eternal Being." (Schleiermacher, 1958, 242)

All teachings and doctrines must be produced from the Christian religious self-consciousness or the inward experience of Christian people. The religious experience is a combination of cognitive and volitional components, which is fundamentally interrelated and as stemming from the depths of consciousness. If human self is related to itself, the self-consciousness can comprehend the absolute unity of Being or the transcendental source of all being and all knowledge. For Schleiermacher, the most fundamental aspect of religion is feeling, and certain reflection upon that feeling constitutes religious knowledge, which can be called theology. Self-consciousness of the world becomes the medium through which God acts causing us to be religiously aware. Immediate Self-Consciousness can be considered Feeling and Thinking.

In Brandt's regard, Schleiermacher finally became an epistemological dualist, but not an agnostic, because he describes how the rise of consciousness is determined by a pre-conscious interaction between the mind and its object, and also believes it is possible to know the nature of reality at least within limits. He divides philosophy into "the scientific" and "the religious," and both are based on the higher consciousness (scientific or religious) as the consciousness of the identity of the ideal and the real worlds. The inner content of every philosophy is the same and is the intuition of nature and reason, which are objectively identical. Although he was a theologian philosopher, not a scientific one, he still recognizes "What unifies scientists is the consciousness of the necessary unity of all knowledge, of laws and conditions of its rise, of the form and character by virtue of which, really, any perception or thought is actually knowledge....philosophy can be exhibited only in its living influence on all knowledge, and its spirit can be comprehended only along with its body, viz, real knowledge." (Brandt, 1941, 159-165) Schleiermacher attempts to examine the problems of transcendental freedom and the relation of the faculty of representation or knowing to the faculty of desire or doing which relates to the conceiving of unity and continuity of the self throughout its changing states. He attempts to complete the following tasks: (1) to justify Kant's fundamental division of the sources of human knowledge into spontaneity and receptivity; (2) to accept Kant's critique of rational psychology that we have no knowledge of the self as it is in itself; (3) to provide certain epistemological arguments against the knowability of Leibniz' principle of individuation; (4) to support key Leibnizian concerns regarding the relationship of both the individual and the world to God; and (5) to realize the transformation of Leibniz's understanding of the self in light of his appropriation of Kant's analysis of self-consciousness. According to Schleiermacher, if the self is conscious of itself in and through its relation to the manifold of its representations, then it can apprehend and construct the empirical world.

An empiricist can understand only the empirical self and the external things. One constructs himself and other things in an image that is determined by external circumstances. Self-knowledge is only of the empirical self, and the self knows itself only in its relation to that which is deferent from it and stands outside of it. When an objective perception is more perfect, the more the whole self is absorbed in the expression of the character of the object. Self-consciousness presupposes a duality between subject and object, and implies that the subject can regard itself as its own object. All can be elements of the individual's self-expression, which is the product of the transcendental activity of the self. The self knows itself through this expressive activity, which is received and reflected back to it through the activity of others. Schleiermacher tries to justify embodied individuality and the finite and perspective character of all human knowledge. The self is present to itself in the immediate self-consciousness; the other is provided to self immediately as an object of acknowledgement. Neither can be completely perceived as objects of knowledge, since what is immediately given can never be fully objectified. The immediacy of self-consciousness shows that the self can not completely know itself as its own object, and stands in relation to all other objects that constitute the self's world.

For Schleiermacher, if self and world can be related, we may find a ground unifying both of them. The analogue of the immediate self-consciousness can be understood as the ultimate object of the feeling of absolute dependence. He stresses an immediate awareness of absolute dependence. The individuals are immediately aware of both their activity and receptivity, and the correlation between the two is self. This analysis relies on a transcendental theory of consciousness which exists only in relation to the sensible self-consciousness. If the experience of absolute dependence is immediate, one who is open to the higher consciousness has concrete manifestations on the level of the sensuous self-consciousness. Like Wang's *Zhixingheyi*, he claims that feeling is the unity of knowing and doing. A determination of self-consciousness lies at the base of every impulse. Similarly with Wang's "to extend moral consciousness," he also emphasizes that the self can extend itself beyond the consciousness of its own species. The core of Wang's thought can be regarded as the extension of the innate knowledge or moral consciousness which consists of five major viewpoints: a) the real knowledge is innate; b) mind is reason; c) knowledge and action must be combined; d) innate knowledge or moral conscience is the heart of the great unity of all-in-one; e) "extending innate knowledge" is a universal method for self-transformation; and f) any innate knowledge or moral conscience is governed and guided by Heavenly Reason finally and universally. Like Wang, Schleiermacher emphasizes the development of innate knowledge and moral consciousness, and believes that the innate knowledge or moral conscience is governed and guided by God's Reason finally and universally.

V. Conclusion

From the above mentioned discussion, we may summarize the following similarities and distinctions between the two philosophers:

Firstly, both of them were the Kantian type of transcendental idealists. For them, empirical reality such as observations, sensations, and perceptions involves transcendental ideality and subjectivity. One of the major functions of mind or self is to structure, formalize, or process all collected empirical data. All external beings, and also space and time are regarded as certain forms of human intuition, feeling, and consciousness, and they can only be proved valid for all particular things as they appear to us, rather than being an activity that directly comprehends the things as they are in themselves. Wang reduces *a priori* moral conscience to Reason of Heaven which represents essence of the world and also becomes a primitive morality in Man's Mind. For Schleiermacher, if we experience a feeling of absolute dependence, then "this feeling cannot in any wise arise from the influence of an object which has in some way to be *given* to us; for such an object there would always be a counter influence, and even a voluntary renunciation of this would always involve a feeling of freedom." (Schleiermacher, 1928, 15) He claims: "What, then, shall become of our days, complete rounded idealism...all higher feelings belong to religion...I would say that this passage is specially applicable only to the ethics of that time, to Kant and Fichte, and particularly Kant." (Schleiermacher, 1958, 40, 113)

Secondly, related to the first, both of them were rational intuitionists, or intuitive rationalists. Interesting enough, their moral theories could be called rationalist ethical intuitionism. They emphasize innate consciousness, non-inferential moral knowledge, and non-empirically-based intuitions of truths on *a priori*. They agree that their rational intuitions are not justified by inference from a separate belief, and recognize man's intuitive and demonstrative knowledge. For them, all moral truths are understandable *a priori*, by intuitive rationality and inborn knowledge alone. "The kind of intuition of the Universe determines the type of your religion, the strength of feeling, its degree." (Schleiermacher, 1958, 280)

Thirdly, both of them were dialetheists. Their theories of self-transformation seemed to be based on the perspectives of dialetheism (or more correctly dialectology). Surely, Wang was following the Chinese style of dialectics such as the unity, interaction, and transformation of two opposites from I-Ching (*Book of Changes*), *Daodejing* (*Book of the Way and Virtues*), and Buddhist dialectical logic. He says, "The mean is nothing but the Principle of Nature; it is *te* Change. It changes according to the time." (Chan, 1963b, 42) As M. Frank maintains, Schleiermacher makes clear in his *Grundlinien*, "dialectic should be a science of knowledge transcending the opposition between knowing and doing, theory and praxis. Schleiermacher also hoped to counter Hegel's logical idealization of reality through his own lecture on dialectic." (Mariña, 2005, 17)

Fourthly, both of them were the theological philosopher. In a final analysis, Schleiermacher was still a theologian philosopher. For him, philosophy puts God at the peak of science as the basis of knowledge,

and recognizes that there is an immediate knowledge of God in science, which is the source of all other knowledge. Comparable to godliness in Schleiermacher theology, Wang maintains more secular innate moral consciousness or inborn rationality, but he was relatively more religionized than the most Chinese philosophers, because he attempts to unify Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism (especially Zen Buddhism) into one system.

Fifthly, both of them were dualistic mystics. Generally speaking, their self-transformation is based on mysticism which identifies man's conscious awareness with an ultimate reality, divinity, spirituality, or God through direct communication, innate knowledge, intrinsic connection, and intuitive rationality. Both philosophers emphasized participation of the self in the Supernatural as well as the Superhuman Being, or divinized the union of the self and the supernatural being such as impersonalized *Tianli* (the principle of Heaven) by Wang, or personalized God by Schleiermacher. However, they also maintained a dualistic distinction between the self and the divine, the mind and the body, the mediate and the immediate, the religious and the secular, the natural and supernatural, and the human and the superhuman.

Lastly, both of them were moral and metaphysical Universalists. Universalism examines the identification of an all-embracing truth of justice and value for all people. Wang supports a metaphysical universalism. The cosmological and universalistic tendencies of his thought guide him to unify the human being, natural being, and supernatural or superhuman being as the Great One. Benevolence, justice, propriety, and wisdom are naturally manifested virtues. In educating the young, he recommended teaching filial piety, brotherly respect, loyalty, faithfulness, propriety, justice, integrity, and a sense of shame. He believed that "all things can be merged into an organic whole" as the form of the world is the ideal political order of human society. A man should love other people like he loves himself, and treat all people like he treats his own blood relatives in order to achieve a perfectly good social life. "All things in one" was the ideal social order which means "there is no barrier between you and me," "all Chinese people are united as one", and "all people in this world is one family." (Chan, 1963, 659) Wang's thought further deepened and developed Confucian universalism and cosmopolitanism for the needs of social changes. Schleiermacher's thought is also based on universalism and cosmopolitanism, because he regards humanity as a whole in all its diversity that provides a moral base for developing successful intercultural connections. He was the first great theologian of modern times to teach universalism. (See Schleiermacher, 1928, 117-120). He stresses a doctrine of universal salvation and election. For him, all men are elected to salvation in Christ, and represents a reformed universalism, founded on the all-determining will of God. He says: "And yet, however high you go; though you pass from the laws to the Universal Lawgiver, in whom is the unity of all things....." (Schleiermacher, 1958, 35) His argument is "typically modern in its

appeal and is one element in the increasing popularity of universalism since his day." (Bauckham, 1978, 50-52)

Some religious views such as salvation, deliverance, reincarnation, and meditation have characterized the aspect of self-transformation cosmologically and universally. In today, more and more people have focused their attention on everyday moral practices by following new values which are based on the secular worldview and moral universalism. The self-realization, self-purification, or self-perfection, as a fundamental internal transformation, is a positive motivation for a transformed personality from the old to the new. The self-transformation has been one of the most important ideals of the human morality, and also a fundamental goal of the various secular thinkers, from Confucius and Socrates to many later Eastern and Western philosophers.

Wang and Schleiermacher really made creative contributions to the philosophy of mind. The common purpose of these two great masters is to transform the lives of common people from the unexamined to the examined, the immoral to the moral, the religious to the secular, the corrupted to the purified, the particular to the universal, and the regional to the cosmopolitan through understanding and practicing the truth of life. A gradual process of self-transformation should be developed by highly justified and clarified theoretical guidelines. Any type of self-transformation follows the principle of self-transcendence, and is based on self-identification, and self-affirmation. The function of self-transformation is to release our spiritual life from an original bondage to a liberated freedom which is base on positive moral universalism.

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