POSTSCRIPT:
INTELLECTUALS, JUSTICE, TOLERANCE, AND DIALOGUES

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This peace proposal originates from Professor Josef Maria Seifert, a renowned scholar worldwide. It reflects the conscience and sense of responsibility of a European intellectual during a critical moment in global affairs. As the author emphasizes in the preface:

> Because of the extremely urgent and dramatic importance of the topic (each day without peace means many deaths and misery) it seemed the right thing for a philosopher who should live fully in the real world and not in an ivory tower, to propose a philosophically deeply reflected peace plan, a peace convention not based on deals or mere compromises but on truth and justice. (Seifert, 2025, 19)

As editors, we may not fully agree with all the author's viewpoints. However, in the spirit of justice and tolerance, and in line with the principle of allowing diverse perspectives to engage in democratic discourse regarding the critical issue of the Russia-Ukraine war at this crucial moment, we have decided to publish this appeal in *Journal of East-West Thought* immediately.

I.

Intellectuals should be the subject of any dialogue of ideas. There was a very narrow definition: intellectuals were literati, scholars, and educated people in the past. It is not. A considerable part, or even most of them, are not worthy of this title. The primary meaning of the English word “Intellectuals” is individuals with rich knowledge and powerful thinking simultaneously. Over the years, there have been extensive and in-depth discussions on an intellectual. There is a relatively unanimous opinion that intellectuals have three essential characteristics: First, a reasonably broad knowledge, primarily comprehensive knowledge across disciplines and cultures, rather than it is a professional machine that only knows one’s simple field; the second is the ability to think independently, with solid rational thinking, especially the pursuit of truth, the spirit of criticism and non-blind obedience; the third is a sense of social responsibility, especially a sense of justice and Self-discipline, distinguish right from wrong, sympathize with human suffering, and oppose those unreasonable systems and phenomena. It is difficult to say that it is difficult, and it is not difficult to say it is not difficult. There should be many such people; otherwise, there is no hope for our future.

In Aristotle's philosophy, the concept of "Man" seems to have four dimensions—the biological, the psychological, the social, and the metaphysical. There are three stages in the development of the human soul-- natural disposition, habitual temperament, and rational self-determination. The first one is beyond the reach of education. In general, the ideal state should be secured to have the perfect disposition, the best state, the best one, or

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the straight state, the straight one. Logically, deviant states cannot be secured by good dispositions. The second stage, which can be approached by education, belongs to the desire or non-rational stage. Similarly, the ideal, the best, or the straight states should have matched habitual temperaments. However, the strong desire for power, privilege, and self-interest would be negative potential factors for constitutional deviation. Through further education, the final stage will involve rationalization of the highest element of the soul — reason, expressed through the intellectual tools of mathematics, logic, and philosophy. At this stage, Man's reason clears up his desire and guides his action for the good, justice, and truth. Only at this stage is Man's psychological status sufficiently high to avoid any crises and conflicts.

Journal of East-West Thought aims to advance constructive, creative, critical, theoretical, and forward-looking thoughts and ideas concerning East-West studies. It aims to provide a forum for the interdisciplinary, cross-cultural, global, and philosophical examination of all issues within this arena. Intellectual pluralism, multicultural pluralism, and academic methodological pluralism are fundamental principles that underpin the author's studies. Its purview includes problems and themes from the natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, and other fields, including economics, political science, law, business, and the arts. This journal attempts to combine Western and non-Western perspectives, construct an integrative and cosmopolitan outlook, and benefit the international community of educators.

II.

In professor Seifert's view, "Ukraine has gradually moved toward greater tolerance and legal recognition of LGBTQ rights, particularly since 2014, when the country began aligning more closely with the EU's most liberal ethical standards." (Seifert, 2025, 26) Tolerance has become a crucial issue in ethical and political philosophy, as exemplified by thinkers such as Karl Popper, John Rawls, and Jürgen Habermas, among many others. So far, we may find a growing number of books and articles approaching tolerance issues from various angles and in many different nations. R. Forst classifies "toleration" into four types*:* the permission conception, the coexistence conception, the respect conception*,* and the esteem conception. (Forst, 2012) All four types of conceptions must be involved in inclusivism, pluralism, and multiculturalism. Cultural pluralism believes that all genders, races, nations, religions, and socio-political units are equally worthy. All of them should have a legitimate status as a unique and independent cultural heritage. Multiculturalism is a body of thought in political philosophy that addresses the response to cultural and religious diversity. "Mere toleration of group differences is said to fall short of treating members of minority groups as equal citizens; recognition and positive accommodation of group differences are required through 'group-differentiated rights" ("Multiculturalism," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*). Tolerance is considered indispensable for any decent society. It has been recognized today as a crucial characteristic in a pluralist, multicultural community that seeks "to be free of oppression, violence, and discrimination" (Bergen et al, 2012, 112). Studies of tolerance are closely related to cultural pluralism and multiculturalism, and they continually face new and specific issues and challenges.

Academic pluralism should ultimately be intellectual, comprehensive, and reasonable. John Rawls claims: "A modern democratic society is characterized not simply by a pluralism of comprehensive religious, philosophical, and moral doctrines but by a pluralism of incompatible yet reasonable comprehensive doctrines. Citizens generally

affirm none of these doctrines. Nor should one expect that one of them, or some other reasonable doctrine, will ever be affirmed by all citizens in the foreseeable future. Political liberalism assumes that, for political purposes, a plurality of reasonable yet incompatible comprehensive doctrines is the normal outcome of human reason exercised within the framework of free institutions in a constitutional democratic regime. Political liberalism also supposes that a reasonable comprehensive doctrine does not reject the essentials of a democratic regime." (Rawls, 1993, xvi) For Rawls, reasonable pluralism is the natural "outcome of the free exercise of human reason under conditions of liberty." (Ibid., 144) Therefore, discussions on religion, morality, philosophy, and socio-politics should be characterized by pluralism and tolerance. We encourage our authors to contribute research from diverse cultural and disciplinary backgrounds.

This journal strongly opposes any form of "academic hegemony," supports the free expression of academic points of view, and encourages the freedom to apply various research methods. This journal's core principle is to provide more plentiful, powerful, justified, and profound "thoughts" with a positive human connotation of social development rather than confining dogmas and mediocre sermons. More importantly, Williams L. McBride criticizes that one social/political philosopher who has been an important figure "in recent hegemonic thinking, John Rawls, evinces a certain lack of complete agreement with this emerging consensus among philosophers in his late work, *The Law of Peoples*." He argues that it reflects that philosophies from some cultures have been marginalized in recent times "due to the phenomenon of hegemony." He expresses the hope that this situation is changing now, with the globalization of philosophy becoming an increasing reality. In his conclusion, McBride quotes the words of the fourth paragraph from the end of Rousseau's *Social Contract*. Having summarized the few simple dogmas of the civic religion he is advocating, he says: "These are the positive dogmas. As for the negative ones, the author of this book limits them to a single one: intolerance. It belongs with the cults we have excluded." (McBride, 2013, 3) The fundamental problem of constructing the broadest possible common ground while maintaining some boundaries could not be better expressed.

III.

According to Seifert, "A peace convention not based on deals or mere compromises but on truth and justice." Western cosmopolitanism emphasizes the global community, universal values, and transnational cooperation, advocating for global justice and inclusive moral, economic, and political relations. It does not necessarily endorse a particular form of world government but emphasizes inclusiveness and cooperation between countries and nations. Even from a purely metaphysical perspective, the foundation of Western philosophy is more influenced by ancient Greek philosophy and Christian mysticism. In particular, the democracy, legal system, and philosophical thoughts brought by ancient Greece have laid a solid foundation for Western culture. Western culture emphasizes immediate benefits and rights, attaching importance to modern values such as individuality, freedom, equality, human rights, and justice. We should cultivate a sense of social responsibility, including a sense of justice and self-discipline, to distinguish right from wrong, sympathize with human suffering, and oppose all unreasonable systems and phenomena. Rey Martin thinks that the issue addressed in the "conflict of rights" is crucial to Rawls' overall theory of justice (Martin, 1985).

Ancient Western thinkers, such as Plato and Aristotle, emphasized that power was for the good of justice, not for the evil of self-interest. Plato emphasizes that there must be four virtues--wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice. Wisdom belongs to the rulers, courage to the guardians, and temperance to the ordinary free people. If the three virtues and three classes have a harmonious relationship, the highest virtue, justice, will be realized. Aristotle generally agrees with Plato, although from a different angle. In his views, for a ruler: 1) the unique quality or goodness is intelligence; 2) something more that is needed is the virtue of military prowess, for without valor, a city cannot be well managed; 3) the people must take some temperate way--middle way--to avoid too much or too little property; 4) justice is something critical in a state because the suitable aimed at is justice; so any general difference in the persons would mean different justice, but there is not any absolute justice. For Aristotle, "reason" means truth, beauty, justice, and peace. He believes that social and political harmony, order, and equilibrium are based on dissimilarity within a society that rests on principles of justice.

> Since the unjust person [in one sense] is greedy (πλεονέκτης), it [i.e., injustice in this sense] will be about good things, not all of them, but those where there is good and bad fortune. … The unjust person does not always choose a greater share (τὸ πλέον), but also a smaller share in what is bad, simply put; but since the lesser evil is thought in a way also to be good and greed is for what is good, for this reason they are thought to be greedy. And the unjust person is inequitable, since this notion covers [taking more of the good as well as taking less of the bad] and is common [to these cases]. (*NE* V.1, 1129b1–11)

Accordingly, Aristotle distinguishes the other-regarding dimension of particular justice, which applies only in a relatively weak way outside the political community, from other-regarding dimensions of other virtues of character, which capture the type of universal (or 'cosmopolitan') concern that neo-Aristotelians should endorse. (Jagannathan, 2024)

Western society places greater emphasis on personal rights and freedoms. Individual rights are regarded as the supreme value, and the legal system places greater emphasis on protecting individual rights, fairness, and justice. Although the West emphasizes the inviolability of the private sphere, it is related to interests, but it encompasses more than just interests; it also includes personal independence and human dignity. The premise of this independence and dignity is fairness and justice.

There is a problem of contextualization in various Eastern and Western research disciplines. Taking philosophy as an example, in the West, "philosophy" is inextricably linked with ancient Greece's "thought" influence, such as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and the European cultural tradition. It was strengthened after the Enlightenment, particularly by the "thought" influences of Descartes, Bacon, Locke, Hume, and Kant. The development of "new science" in the 18th century produced a comprehensive view of nature, as well as a clear and rational understanding of human nature, justice, morality, law, economy, religion, the state, and other fields, all within Newton's framework.

Cosmopolitanism examines the relationships among nations, groups, or individuals and how they can be unified morally, culturally, economically, and politically as a global community. Through this "cosmopolitan" approach, we verify and justify the relationship between international justice and universal justice, finally leading to the concept of universalism. Universalism may not be as implausible as some contemporary philosophers believe. The real world demands universalism, encompassing principles like universal justice and shared values. If we revisit the concept of universalism, we then face questions

of cultural and linguistic translatability. We may regard global justice, cosmopolitanism, and universalism as a "Three-in-One" or "Threefold Truth," interrelated, interacting, and transformed. This article will examine the transformative modes of Chinese cosmopolitanism through a historical comparison.

Jürgen Habermas, one of the most influential philosophers in the world, attempts to reconstruct Kant's cosmopolitanism and envision a future, non-state, constitutionalized world society. For him, social development has challenged the Kantian theory of cosmopolitan rights and justice. Habermas has integrated universalism, cosmopolitanism, and global justice into his comprehensive theoretical framework. The political responsibility of national or regional governments towards their citizens can be institutionalized only if the universal justice of the world's political constitution can be recognized. Only a world state would establish the world order from the will of its citizens. We must consider two legitimate ways to accomplish this: 1) coming from the citizens of the world from an existing state to the international community for peace and human rights policies of the world organization; 2) coming from the citizens of a related nation-state to the transnational negotiation system, which is part of the international community on issues of global governance. Habermas discusses "individuals and states as subjects of a World Constitution." This world organization specializes in the primary regulatory function of securing peace, protecting human rights, integrating the international community of states and citizens, and unifying the global legal order. (Habermas, 2011, 7-22)

Habermas discusses three primary subjects: 1) the three-level global system and Nagle's Problem; 2) individuals and states as subjects of a World Constitution; and 3) legitimacy requirements and learning processes by following H. Brunkhorst's theory aims to distinguish the fundamental differences between a supranational level and a transnational level in the political system of world society. For him, the political constitution and the joint membership of an association of free and equal citizens can reach across national borders. The lowest level of the political system of world society would be compared to the idea of states. The citizens of this world follow universal standards, which are based on the United Nations' peace and human rights policy, as its world domestic policy was negotiated among global players. Citizens' requirements for the behavior of their governments and negotiators in these international arenas are based primarily on global standards of justice and the conduct of national and regional interests. This conflict would occur in the minds of the same citizens who need notions of legitimacy and unfold in the cosmopolitan framework of the international community. The political responsibility of national or regional governments towards their citizens can be institutionalized only if the universal justice of the world's political constitution can be recognized. Only a world state would establish the world order from the will of its citizens. We must consider two legitimate ways to accomplish this: 1) coming from the citizens of the world from an existing state to the international community for peace and human rights policies of the world organization; 2) coming from the citizens of a related nation-state to the transnational negotiation system, which is part of the international community on issues of global governance. Habermas discusses "individuals and states as subjects of a World Constitution." This world organization specializes in the primary regulatory function of securing peace, protecting human rights, integrating the international community of states and citizens, and unifying the global legal order. (Ibid., 7-22)

For A. Bogdandy and S. Dellavalle, universalism, cosmopolitanism, and global justice are related. For instance, the concept of *jus cogens* can be linked to the assumption

of a universal communication community. It encompasses the totality of actors involved in international relations, including states and individuals, as it sets the core requirements for legitimate public action worldwide. The concept of a global political community is outlined within the framework of international relations theory. Hugo Grotius placed the secular foundation of international law's universalism in an ontological postulation of human nature, which he saw as determined by human beings' natural and universal disposition to sociability. As Aristotle claimed, humans naturally tend to form societies, and this tendency extends globally. International law can be regarded as the common law of humankind, containing the general rules of universal sociability. This interpretation of Western universalism underpins the law of nations, grounded in the natural reasoning of every human being, regardless of their cultural or religious background. Indeed, universal sociability is less "thick" than its counterpart within the borders of single polities. Nevertheless, it is strong enough to bear the responsibility for a set of general, minimal, or "thin" norms that guarantee the orderly and significantly peaceful interaction of peoples and individuals beyond their countries' borders. The idea of naturally sociable humankind as the basis of a universal order informs a universalism that is increasingly independent of the Christian tradition. "Notwithstanding its paramount significance in shaping the universalistic perspective of international law, this understanding of order also shows at least one unresolved shortfall. The founding assumption of a global community including all individuals and states and common fundamental values is little substantiated within this strand of thinking" (Bogdandy, 2009, 12-13). In Mertens' opinion, "Their voices, shared with scholars who work as their partners to support the increase of social justice and human rights, are reflected in the shift to transformative beliefs to guide researchers and evaluators" (Mertens, 2008, 3). Slavoj Žižek asks: Why are so many problems today perceived as intolerance, not as problems of inequality, exploitation, and injustice? Why is the proposed remedy tolerance, not emancipation, political struggle, or even armed struggle? For him, the direct answer is the fundamental ideological operation of liberal multiculturalism: political centralization. Political differences, which are determined by political inequality and economic exploitation, are naturalized and neutralized into cultural differences, namely different ways of life, and these ways of life, which "are something given, something that cannot be overcome, but must be merely tolerated." (Žižek, 2008, 660)

When faced with violations of laws and regulations and damage to public interests, people cannot be unthinkingly tolerant; instead, they should adhere to the bottom line of law and morality. Some people may take advantage of others' tolerance to do any possible evil activities. These acts should be resolutely cracked down on and punished to maintain social fairness, justice, and good order. At the same time, legal and moral education should be strengthened to enhance people's legal awareness and ethical standards, thereby jointly creating a tolerant and orderly social environment.

For Confucius, justice is a rational basis for establishing a perfect social order. One who learns but does not think is lost! One who thinks but does not learn is in great danger. The superior man seeks in himself what the small man seeks in others. One who conquers himself is the mightiest warrior (*Lunyu*, 2.15). Confucius' theory of justice consisted mainly of equity, fairness, impartiality, integrity, equality, legitimacy, moderation, righteousness, etc. Justice was one of humanity's basic categories and the highest ethical principle; it was the ultimate ideal of individuals, families, countries, and international relations. Cosmopolitanism, which is based on universal love, was one of Confucius' final social purposes. He advocated for "the whole world and all countries as one community" and "universal harmony in the world," while also emphasizing the national self-

identification of Chinese culture. Confucius claims: "There is one which runs through all my teachings" (*Analects*, 15: 2). Confucianism's views on the self, personality, and individual of the state and society, as well as self-discipline as the key to governance are "from the perspective of Confucian social justice philosophy." (de Bary, 1998, xvii-xviii)

According to Laozi, if the government is relaxed, ordinary people are happy; however, if it is strict, they are anxious. When those authorities responsible for justice become unjust, evil becomes good. Only maternal leadership can be long-lasting. Controlling a large country is like cooking a small fish; the leader must be careful not to overdo it. Politically, any ideal state should be governed by justice, and the world should be governed by non-intervention. In his opinion, states that violate justice wage wars. For Laozi, practicing justice is to demonstrate how the realization and transformation of Dao translate into fundamental rules that govern society, nature, and the universe. Like Laozi, Zhuangzi's highest ideal was constructing a natural, passive, non-aggressive, non-oppressive, and non-exploitative society. This society was based on naturalism, egalitarianism, moral universalism, and primitive communism.

Mozi 墨子 was the only one who considered justice the highest ethical standard. For him, all things and needs, such as wealth, power, position, reputation, relationships, and so on, must be established based on justice. He was the earliest pacifist and cosmopolitan in Chinese history. One of his social ideas is *Fei Gong* (anti-war): all people should love each other equally and fight against unjust wars and fighting between people and countries.

According to Zhu Xi 朱熹, justice as a common reason was the first principle of Confucianism. A man must discern good and evil, right and wrong, justice and interests, and then transform himself from an ordinary person to a sage by searching for justice as the code of conduct. In Wang Yangming's （王陽明）thought, benevolence, justice, propriety, and wisdom are naturally manifested virtues. In educating the young, he recommended teaching filial piety, brotherly respect, loyalty, faithfulness, decency, justice, integrity, and a sense of shame.

In A. J. Langlois' discussion, despite the rhetoric of human rights - universal, inalienable, inherent, etc. - the contemporary application of rights has only emerged in modern times and originated from Western history. For him, whether it is Socrates or Jesus, whether it is Confucius or Buddha, they will not claim that their universal human rights have been violated when facing the injustice they have suffered. However, human rights discourse has been globally recognized as a response to injustice. "The way in which we think about this transition, the emergence and spread of the idea of rights, is important for the way in which we seek to justify and theorize human rights" (Langlois, 2013, 12).

IV.

Professor Deifert, as a prominent representative of global intellectuals, strongly promotes dialogues among nations, countries, and political forces worldwide. The 2008 *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogues* defines intercultural dialogue as an open and mutually respectful exchange between individuals and groups with different ethnic, cultural, religious, and linguistic backgrounds and traditions, based on mutual understanding. This dialogue occurs at all levels of society, including between European countries and those worldwide. (*White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue*， May 2, 2008) In this definition,

"open and respectful" means "based on the equal value of the partners"; "exchange of views" stands for every type of interaction that reveals cultural characteristics; "groups" stands for every type of collective that can act through its representatives (family, community, associations, peoples); "culture" includes everything relating to ways of life, customs, beliefs and other things that have been passed on to us for generations, as well as the various forms of artistic creation; "world perception" stands for values and ways of thinking. This definition emphasizes equal cooperation and reveals the cross-cultural and cross-domain characteristics. Each type of human activity can be implemented through dialogues among individuals, families, communities, societies, nationalities, races, and religions. It encompasses a wide range of lifestyles, thought patterns, customs, value systems, belief systems, aesthetic standards, political ideologies, economic systems, and social spheres. Cross-cultural dialogue must be open and multidimensional, constantly facing various new possibilities. On one hand, the interdependence between the cultural effects of globalization is deepening; all world regions are interconnected through the development of information and electronic communication media.

On the other hand, people's cultural environment is changing rapidly and becoming more diverse. Cultural diversity is a necessary condition of human society. All kinds of different nationalities require cultural identity identification. Cultural diversity is evident in all economies, cultures, and political systems. It needs development and adequate management. Cultural interaction poses new social and political challenges, such as fear and exclusion, stereotypes, racism, xenophobia, discrimination, and violence, which threaten peace. Intercultural dialogue can be seen as the oldest and most fundamental model of democracy, serving as the antidote to exclusion and violence. Its purpose is to enable people to live together in a multicultural world with a peaceful and constructive attitude.

One of the great importance of cross-cultural dialogues is to find the sense of belonging of different communities in a multicultural world. Tools of intercultural dialogues can also prevent and resolve conflicts, thereby improving human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. More specifically, it is to understand others from different cultural backgrounds. Although most people agree with the value of dialogue, few delve deeply into its meaning or consider the full scope of its implications. In *Peacebuilding through Dialogue: Education, Human Transformation, and Conflict Resolution* (2019), the author reveals that dialogue is a key driving force for peaceful personal and social change. They explore the application of dialogue in teaching and learning, as well as in personal growth, interpersonal development, conflict resolution, and other major transformative contexts. The author considers different dialogue objectives from various perspectives through these three themes and identifies the most successful or challenging ones. The author employs multiple research methods to provide unique insights into peace, citizenship, education, organization, conflict resolution, and dignity. (Stearns, 2019)

Nowadays, the dilemma faced by programmatic and philosophical approaches requires comparative philosophy to adapt to the transformation of comparative systems. To a large extent, the future development of comparative philosophy will depend on how critical issues are handled. However, global philosophy cannot completely abandon comparative philosophy. Comparative philosophy constantly reminds philosophers in some form to pay attention to the openness of dialogue between multicultural philosophical traditions and modes of thought. (Kaipayil, 2010, 297-298)

"Thought is always the ruler of the universe!" Plato once warned the world. The highest sublimated realm of each culture is "thought." Therefore, the most significant increase in communication between cultures is the dialogue between thoughts and

thoughts. Only through dialogues can people "turn fighting into friendship," "meet each other with a smile and wipe out grievances," and "everybody is a brother from all over the world"!

To be frank, the debate on issues like "justice" remains unresolved and may continue as long as humanity exists. *Journal of East-West Thought* will continue to offer a fully open platform for intellectual exploration. It welcomes diverse theories and methods, promoting dialogue on various philosophical, ethical, aesthetic, and methodological issues, problems, and themes in the natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, and other fields, including economics, political science, law, business, engineering, and the arts. *This journal* aims to combine Western and non-Western perspectives to construct an integrative and cosmopolitan framework that benefits an international community of educators.

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