

“Conquering Modernity with Confucianism: Tang Junyi’s Vision of a Future China”

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Abstract

In the first part of this talk, I will propose that Tang Junyi developed a civil theology (sections 3), and that he did so against the backdrop of his perception of social modernity (section 2). The second part of the paper will deal with Tang’s ideas on the “practical” manifestation of civil theology within society. It is in this respect that Tang proposes to implement modern Confucianism as the foundation of a civil religion (section 4). Since Tang did not refer to “civil theology” and “civil religion” by the exact Chinese words for these terms, one may raise the question if it might, after all, be anachronistic to introduce these concepts here. Pointing to the distinction between words and concepts (which in turn can be expressed by different words) is an obvious way of addressing this problem. But the justification for introducing these concepts cannot solely rely on this distinction. It is, therefore, necessary to consider the historical and intellectual context of Tang Junyi’s application of concepts like “civil theology” and “civil religion”. If no contexts could be identified to which these concepts plausibly relate, the suspicion of an anachronistic distortion would be well founded. This problem will be addressed in various parts of my talk.

摘要

演講的第一部分我將會提出，唐君毅發展出了一套 civil theology，而他之所以這麼做是為了要因應他所理解的當代社會。在第二部分我將探討唐君毅的 civil theology 在社會中實際展現的想法，在此一方面，唐君毅主張當代儒學的實踐可以作為 civil theology 的基礎。既然唐君毅並未明確用中文來指涉“civil theology”和“civil religion”這兩個詞語，有人可能尤其會質疑，引介這些概念根本是時代的誤植。由於概念可以用不同的語詞來表達，指出字詞與概念的區別，是處理此問題的一個明白的方式。然而要證成引介這些概念的正當性，並不能僅依賴此一區別作為理由。因此，有必要考慮唐君毅使用像“civil theology”和“civil religion”這樣概念時的歷史與知

識脈絡。倘若真的找不到這些概念可以相應的脈絡，那麼懷疑會造成時代誤植的曲解便可以成立。在我的演講中將會一一地討論這個問題。

Some critical considerations on Tang Junyi's Confucian civil theology and civil religion

對唐君毅儒家公民神學(civil theology)與公民宗教(civil religion)的一些批判思考

1) Contemporary critics of Tang Junyi who denounce his interpretation of modern Confucianism as being too lofty or too “philosophical” for a Confucianism which sets out to gain social impact miss a crucial point: Tang was keenly aware of the danger that Confucianism might be reduced to a “profane utilitarianism and positivism” which in turn might readily be turned into dogmatism by the hands of those in power.

1) 當代評論家指責唐君毅對現代儒學的詮釋，認為對於儒家來說，唐君毅之說乃過於崇高或過於「哲學性」，以致於無法展開社會影響力。這一批評錯過了一個關鍵點：唐君毅深知儒學可能被化約為“世俗效益主義及實證主義”之危險，而反過來可能輕易為掌權者將其轉變為教條主義。

The result of this in regard to the continuing interpretation of Confucianism is, in Tang's view, disastrous: If the religious dimension is neglected, modern Confucianism turns into a tool for serving the profane purposes of an one-sidedly mechanistic type of modernity.

在唐君毅看來，關於儒學的延伸性詮釋，其結果是災難的：假使忽略宗教面向，現代儒學將變成是對現代性單面機械化類型之世俗目的而服務的一個工具。

Those who would still resist such an undesirable course of modernity and turn to Confucianism in a broader, scholarly context, would be compelled to take up the role of monks.

那些仍然抗拒現代性不良進程，並且在較廣闊學術脈絡下轉向儒學的人，將被迫開始扮演僧侶的角色。

2) What Tang's civil theology sets out to achieve with respect to modernity is highly ambitious: to establish a normative theory of modernity, covering all spheres of society, based on the theological metaphysics of a Confucian “study of spirit and essence”.

2) 唐君毅公民神學所要達成與現代性相關的目標，是非常有企圖心的：以儒家「心性之學」(“study of spirit and essence”) 神學形上學為基礎，涵蓋社會所有領域，由此建立一套現代性規範理論。

This does not take the form of dogmatic prescriptions and there is no prescribed way of how to implement the concepts of *liang zhi* and *sheng ren* in political agendas.

這並不以獨斷的解決之道為形式來呈現，也沒有對政治議程下如何實施良知及聖人這些概念，提供任何解決之方。

Nevertheless, Tang's project is characterized by an extremely optimistic attitude to the modern world, since it portrays modernity as a historical process which is altogether controllable through the workings of a Confucian civil theology.

雖然如此，唐君毅所提方案，是以對現代世界抱有極度樂觀的態度為特色的，因為它將現代性描述為可通過儒家公民神學之運作予以全面控制的一個歷史過程。

Arguably, a notion of a modernity which remains completely within the reach of human agents (and their good intentions) bears the imprint of a potentially dangerous illusion.

可以這麼說，認為現代性完全可以由人的施為(及其良善動機)所掌控，這樣的想法透露出潛在危險的幻相。

3) Does modern Confucianism as it is developed by Tang Junyi and others serve as a source of spiritual inwardness which in turn provides consolation for the individual who is caught up in the “iron cage” of modernity?

3) 唐君毅等人發展出來的現代儒學，可否作為內聖之源，為關在現代性「鐵籠」裡的個人提供慰藉？

If so, does this consolation, in the last consequence, serve the self-stabilization of modern societies without fundamentally questioning societal issues of modernity?

如果可以，那麼這一慰藉的最終結果，在未經根本上質疑現代性社會問題的情況下，可否提供現代社會自身的穩定？

Does modern Confucianism nourish the individual's delusion of a modernity which fully submits to the *ethical* will of human agency, and thus exaggerates the role of human agency in

a process which is, at least partially, characterized by developments outside the immediate reach of an ethical will (see above: “iron cage”)?

現代儒學是否增長了個人對現代性的迷惑？此現代性是完全屈服於人的倫理意志之下，因而誇大了人在歷程中的角色，至少部分來說，此一歷程是以倫理意志直接所及範圍之外的發展為特徵(見上述「鐵籠」)。

In “vindication” of modern Confucianism, one might refer to its theological-metaphysical vision, which does not promise the Confucian believer consolation, justice etc. in a world beyond, but leaves him or her in constant need of addressing this world and engaging in it, although not without a “transcendental vision” (*liang zhi, sheng ren*).

為現代儒學所做的「辯護」中，吾人可能會涉及其神學形上學視域，即並不為儒家信徒在此世之外承諾任何慰藉、正義等等，而是將他們留在不斷須要處理此世並參與其間的狀態中，雖其並未欠缺「超越性視域」(如：良知、聖人)。

The Confucian believer is, thus, well-equipped to fundamentally question the modern world. But possibly this is done in terms of a superelevation of ethical agency, “humanism” etc. that provide a distorted picture of the process of modernity.

因此，儒家信徒對現代世界的根本質疑是有備而來的。但是，這很可能是在高舉倫理主體及「人文主義」等等這些方面所進行的，提供的是對現代性歷程一副扭曲的圖像。

4) Tang Junyi’s idiosyncratic depiction of „world religions” represents their complexity in regard to theologies and historical as well as social and political aspects insufficiently (Daoism and Islam are hardly mentioned at all).

4) 唐君毅對「世界宗教」別具特色的描述，顯示出世界宗教在神學與歷史上的複雜性，此一描述也在社會、政治諸面向不夠充份(道教和伊斯蘭教幾乎完全沒有提到)。

Perhaps even more problematic is Tang’s tendency to interpret the religious commitment of followers of world religions as stemming from an individual decision of the believer.

或許更有問題的是，唐君毅傾向於將世界宗教追隨者的宗教許諾，解釋為是來自於信仰者的個人決定。

Consequently, he tends to equate religious consciousness (including religious denomination) with a consciousness of values (applying a rationalistic concept of value) that shall serve, at the same time, as antidote to the reification of modern man.

因此，他傾向於將宗教意識（包括宗教教派）等同於價值意識（運用價值的理性概念），同時也是用來對治現代人的物化。

It is questionable, to say the least, whether this “humanist” interpretation of religion can be an adequate basis for further reflection on the function of “religiosity” in a global perspective.

最起碼來說，這種對宗教「人文主義式」的詮釋，能否成為全球視野下進一步反思「宗教性」之功能的適合基礎，是相當成問題的。

(中譯：胡元玲)