

On the Highest Practical Wisdom of Chinese Confucianism Through Mou Zongsan's Moral Metaphysics

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Abstract

Although Confucian philosophy has always existed in a theoretical form, the question of practice has always been a part of its theoretical existence, and this is in fact the basis of the theoretical construction of Confucian philosophy. The study of "practical wisdom" therefore inevitably requires a discursive discussion of Confucianism. As our society has changed, the traditional Confucian concept of "practice" has undergone complex and profound changes. We can then explore the core of Neo-Confucianism through the study of modern and contemporary Confucianism. The study of contemporary Neo-Confucianism naturally involves a systematic study of Mou Zongsan's Chinese philosophy. On the basis of his reflections on Kantian philosophy, Mou Zongsan has examined such issues as Confucianism's "theory of conscience", "phenomena and things in themselves", "the theory of the goodness of the circle" and "the two layers of existence". The "intuition of wisdom" is used to reconcile Western philosophy, especially Kant's philosophy, with traditional Chinese philosophy, and to develop a practical path of "reverse consciousness and body evidence", and to creatively construct a "moral metaphysics". The "moral metaphysics".

Keywords

Intellectual intuition; Moral metaphysics; Practice.

1. Introduction

According to Ni Liangkang, the term 'intellectual intuition' comes from Kantian philosophy. It is from Kant's philosophy that Mou Zongsan draws the core of his thinking in Western philosophy. Through his discussion of Kant's philosophy on "phenomena" and "things in themselves", Mou quotes the concepts of moral consciousness, moral conscience, and "intellectual intuition", which in turn is the core of Mou's thinking on Western philosophy. The "intuition of the intellect" is the core category of Mou Zong San's "moral metaphysics", and its relevance is an important part of his philosophy. The "moral metaphysics" is centred on the "intuition of the intellect" and mediated by the self-involvement of conscience, which is dialectically unified in Mou Zongsan's philosophical system and has become a key part of Mou Zongsan's connection to Kant's philosophy. Thus, Mou Zongsan adheres to the Confucian idealism of morality, and by recognising that one can have a 'wisdom intuition', he establishes a theory of non-stereotypical existence, which is in fact a theory of the existence of value, a theory of the existence of meaning, in which morality becomes the source of all creation. This article will take the interpretation of the 'intuition of the intellect' as a starting point to clarify the theoretical lineage of Kant and Mou Zongsan's philosophy, and then to understand the basic structure of the 'moral metaphysics' in Mou's philosophy and the convergence of Chinese and Western philosophies, and finally from The final step is to see the highest practical wisdom of Chinese Confucianism from the "inner sage" to the "outer king".

2. Mou Zongsan Reconciles "Transcendence with" "Intellectual Intuition"

The "intuition of the intellect" is not inherent in traditional Chinese philosophy, but was proposed by Mou Zongsan on the basis of his inheritance of Kant's moral philosophy. According to Kant, intuition is a necessary way for the subject to relate to an object, and all thinking must be done by means of intuition, which cannot be given to us in any other way. This is what Kant meant when he said that 'we must always have a view of value at hand in order to set forth the objective reality of purely intellectual concepts on it'. Kant calls the ability of objects to stimulate us and thus acquire representations sensuous, and the intuition corresponding to sensuousness is sensuous intuition. Perceptual intuition is a form of knowing, i.e. space and time, and is formal in nature; at the same time, it is also qualitative in nature, since it must be stimulated by an object to acquire material. Sense intuition is the only form of intuition that we have, and it is only through sense intuition that we can gain experience and form knowledge. One cannot rely on one's own form of knowing alone, apart from the stimulus of an object, in order to form knowledge. Here, Kant does not recognise that one can have 'intellectual intuition', and he summarises the character and role of 'intellectual intuition' as follows: 'In so far as it is understanding, its role is intuitive, not discursive, i.e. it does not use concepts. In the sense that it is intuition, its function is purely intellectual, not sensual. The intuition of the intellect is the self-activity of the soul-mind and the mere representation or judgement of the soul-mind itself. The intuition of the intellect itself can give us the existence of its object, the intuitive activity itself can realize existence, the intuition is the realization, this is the creativity of the intuition of the intellect". Kant goes on to distinguish between all general objects as phenomena and things in themselves. The distinction between phenomena and things-in-themselves is made throughout Kant's philosophical system, and this distinction can be further clarified by examining the capacity for reason on the basis of Kant's 'critique of reason'. Kant's division of reason into "theoretical reason" and "practical reason", and his belief in the unity of human reason, is in fact a distinction between the two functions of reason. "Theoretical reason" refers to the cognitive function of reason, whose task is to know the innate supreme principles of the object; "practical reason" refers to the volitional function of reason, which is to prescribe the ultimate end of the will, i.e. to enunciate the moral "absolute law". For Kant, the sphere of knowledge only allows for empirical application, not a priori application, and the laws of the empirical sphere are conditional, while conditional laws cannot become "absolute laws", only laws that transcend experience can become "absolute laws". The moral law as a universal, purposive and self-regarding "absolute law" is only an a priori form, not a law of moral practice, and the realisation of its value depends on the combination with experience. In other words, before it is implemented into moral life, the moral law has only theoretical value, not practical value. Mou Zongsan does not recognise the objective reality of the unintuitive, arguing that the inference of necessity in practical philosophy is incapable of providing objective reality. In this way, Kant's emphasis on man's practical reason denies man's 'intellectual intuition', and 'things in themselves' are unknowable. As a result, the "moral metaphysics" that Kant intended to construct as a "transcendental metaphysics" naturally becomes, in Mou Zongsan's case, a moral philosophy, or "moral bottom metaphysics". and inevitably ends up as a 'moral theology' under a theological system.

3. The Establishment of Mou Zongsan's "Moral Metaphysics"

Faced with this dilemma in Kant's philosophy, Mou Zongsan insists on reason as an important principle of philosophical thinking, fully affirming Kant's distinction between phenomena and things themselves, and then acutely perceiving that when Kant grasps "things themselves" and "phenomena" from the epistemological perspective and within the scope of reason, "things themselves" become a superlative conceptual category, an objective fact that we cannot grasp

at all with our sensibility and reason, and phenomena are the object of empirical category knowledge. "The "thing-in-itself" becomes a superlative conceptual category, an objective fact that we cannot grasp at all with our sensibility and reason, and the phenomenon is the object of empirical category knowledge. Any being, including a metaphysical entity thought of solely through reason, has an aspect of being as it is. The "intellectual intuition" can present this "thing in itself" because the intellectual intuition can present the being of all things, and in this presentation of the being, the thing presents itself as existing in itself. The relation of being to the 'intellectual intuition' is thus different from the relation of phenomena to human sensuality and knowledge. The distinction between the object itself and the phenomenon is a transcendental distinction, a subjective distinction, in relation to the subject. The "thing itself" does not relate to the cognitive subject and cannot be approached by our sensibility and knowledge "in itself", i.e. the thing itself; the phenomenon is the presentation of the being to the cognitive subject, a being presented in relation to the being of man, and when it relates to the subject It is a phenomenon when it appears to the subject in relation to the subject. This is the inevitable result of Kant's view of God as an infinite being and of man as a finite being who determines, thus attributing the infinite mind to God and the finite mind to man, and separating 'intellectual intuition' from 'sensual intuition' as two subjects. This distinction between phenomena and things themselves also provides the basis for Confucian moral metaphysics, in that the same thing is a thing to God and a phenomenon to man, and that sensual intuition cannot present things to themselves, and the application of the category of knowledge can only be limited to sensual intuition. If the mind is regarded as a subject, Mou Zong San, by breaking down the limited nature of human sensual intuition and the categories of knowledge, separates "intellectual intuition" and "sensual intuition" into two subjects, and presents a way of intuition above the subject that is completely different from sensual intuition, in order to bring "The 'intellectual intuition' is drawn back into the subject. In "wisdom intuition", all the innate forms of sensuality and the categories of knowledge have no role to play, so that the presentation of wisdom intuition is a direct presentation without the unification of sensuality and knowledge. Mou Zongsan takes the "intuition of the intellect" as a springboard for the exchange between Chinese and Western philosophies, and points out that the "intuition of the intellect" is not only theoretically possible, but also inevitably present in practice. Mou Zongsan does not theorise existence as an external object, but rather follows the "moral path" to develop a metaphysics that transcends experience, exploring the innate principles of morality through a metaphysical analysis of "morality", bridging "morality" and Through a metaphysical analysis of "morality", he explores the innate principles of morality, bridges "morality" and "existence", makes practical and theoretical arguments for the "intuition of wisdom", and draws on Western rationalist philosophy to reconstruct the Confucian system of "metaphysics of morality". These arguments are in fact a manifestation of the differences between Chinese and Western philosophies on this issue. Mou Zongsan argues that although Kant was great, he was in the Western tradition, under which "intellectual intuition" belonged to God alone, and that man could not have "intellectual intuition". Mou denied Kant's establishment of a 'moral metaphysics', arguing that it was only a theology of morality. In the context of Chinese philosophy, however, "intellectual intuition" can be possessed by human beings, and "moral metaphysics" can be truly established; at the same time, "moral intuition" runs throughout the entire moral metaphysics. is also present throughout the entire moral metaphysics.

4. The Concept of "Practice" in Mou Zongsan's Philosophical System

At this point, when we look at "Kant's denial of human intellectual intuition and the unknowability of the object itself", we find that Mou Zongsan gives the "intellectual intuition" and the "object itself" under Kant's philosophy a value implication. "The meaning of being finite but infinite is the meaning of value, and directly expresses "the thing itself" as the existence of

"the meaning of value", which is ultimately evidenced in practical philosophy through a moral law-based The thing-self, understood in this way, becomes 'the use of knowing'. The body of knowledge presents itself through 'intellectual intuition' and contains 'intellectual intuition' as its use, so that it has the meaning of being a moral entity, which at the same time means an existential entity, the ground of existence of all things. It is the principle of creation or realisation of all things, the foundation of all things, the genius of creation, in the sense that it is an existential entity. This opens the realm of existence. "Existence is the existence of the knowing body, the existence of the self-realisation of all things, and therefore the existence of "things in themselves", not the existence of the sensual knowing, that is, of the sense mind, that is, not the existence of phenomena. One of the key reasons why Mou Zongsan does this is that he wants to work on ontology and value theory, to bridge the gap between the moral world and the natural world, to merge ontology and value theory, to take morality as a way in to existentialism, to make the leap from the moral world to the existential world, and to eliminate the relations between subject and object, between inside and outside, and between energy and what is. He emphasizes the fundamental feature of the "moral metaphysics" of "ontology as kung fu", in line with his "practical rationality to the fullest", and the fundamental role of moral practice in Confucian metaphysical thinking. He does not acknowledge that the inference of necessity in practical philosophy can provide objective reality, and does not admit an objective reality without intuition. Both "intellectual intuition" and "things in themselves" are value-bearing concepts, and it is only when they are seen in the light of value that "intellectual intuition" acquires its independent and real meaning. As a Confucian, the question of 'how moral practice is possible' is a central concern of Confucian philosophy, and practice must be the destination of all aspects of its life, but practical rather than theoretical value is also the starting point and destination of moral philosophy, and certainly of Kant's philosophy. Kant's moral law is a formal law with no specific requirements of content; its only requirement is that the norm be able and willing to be universalised. The fact that a norm can be universalised means that it does not contradict itself or cancel itself out when it is universalised, and that the moral law applies to all rational beings. For if a practical principle takes quality as the basis for the determination of the will, then it is dependent on empirical conditions, is valid only for the individual will, and can only serve as a subjective code of conduct and not as a law. Only a practical principle that is based solely on form as the basis for the determination of the will can become a law independently of any object of the will, and is not dependent on experience but is universally valid. The moral law is therefore a practical principle based on the mere form of legislation as the basis of volitional determination, which one can grasp implicitly but not fully. But at the same time Kant affirms that man can legislate for himself as a moral subject, that is, he confirms the possibility of "free will". In Kant's practical philosophy, the "intellectual intuition" acquires existence by means of the being, and the being also acquires existence by means of the "intellectual intuition". "The possibility of moral law becomes the objective basis for the possibility of moral practice, and things themselves are ultimately justified by the inference of necessity based on moral law. In Mou Zongsan's philosophical system, 'moral practice' gives an active connotation to the 'original mind', and uses moral practice to illustrate the consistency of mind and essence, and to confirm the 'intellectual intuition' of It also confirms the inevitable presentation of 'wisdom's intuition'. Mou Zongsan argues that since 'intellectual intuition' is possible, free will is not only a theoretical but also a practical manifestation, and that virtue has a subjectivity independent of knowledge.

5. The Possibility of Ethical Practice

In the Chinese Confucian philosophical tradition, we have an intrinsic moral subject, the mind and conscience, which is the mind-body or nature-body in Chinese philosophy. The basic concepts of Kant's philosophy, "the thing itself" and "free will", are teleological questions, not

epistemological ones. What Kant calls free will must be seen as the mental energy of the mind-body, which is absolutely universal, infinite and creative, because the conscience of the mind-body is clear, and there is the intuition of wisdom. Confucianism recognises from the beginning that human beings are both finite and infinite, that they have sensual intuition because they are finite, and that they have "intellectual intuition" because they are infinite, that is, the "self-awareness" of the realization of the mind's benevolent body. On the basis of traditional Chinese Confucianism, especially Song and Ming Confucianism, Mou Zongsan, while incorporating Western discursive philosophy and even Buddhist philosophy, has made use of the Mahayana Sutra's "One Mind Opens Two Doors" and "The Self-Purified Mind of the Buddha" to explain the relationship between the "True Gate" and the "Pure Mind of the Buddha". The "Gate of Truth" and the "Gate of Life and Death" are used to analyse and justify the objects and phenomena that correspond to them. It affirms that the human mind can directly present consciousness, and that what arises from consciousness is the object itself, and that what consciousness obtains through "intellectual intuition" is intellectual knowledge of the object itself, not knowledge of the phenomenal world. "It cannot push things out, set them aside as objects, and thus engage in the investigation of their tortuous phases. The object is the result of the synthesis and unity of the unity of perception, so that "the thing itself", because perception does not exist here, cannot constitute the meaning of the object." Starting from the idea that there is nothing outside of the mind, and considering the nature of the mind as an absolutely universal formative essence and the object itself as an infinite mental appearance, phenomena and the object itself are not two different kinds of objects, but different presentations of the same object. The former relies on sensual intuition, while the latter relies on 'intellectual intuition', which reveals the existence of 'intellectual intuition'. In this way Kant distinguishes that the existence of intuition requires the existence of the object to which it relates, confirming that intellectual intuition has no real object, and that objects themselves and phenomena are merely different representations of the same object to the subject. An object is a phenomenon when it is in a certain relation, and a thing is itself when it is not in a certain relation. When the object itself is in relation to the subject, it produces phenomena, and one therefore has a sensual intuition. The application of the sphere of knowledge can only be limited to sensual intuition, and the illumination of the infinite mind is entirely different from sensual intuition. The illumination of the infinite mind does not need categories, nor does it need spatio-temporal forms, so that it can present things as they are. The illumination of the infinite mind is the 'intuition of the intellect', and the 'thing itself' is the enlightenment of the intellect's intuition. In this enlightenment, the intellect's intuition and the thing itself are presented simultaneously, and the human mind is able to present conscience directly, so that moral practice is also possible.

6. Conclusion

Philosophy is the core of a nation's culture, and as we can see from Mr. Mou Zongsan's construction of a "moral metaphysics" based on Chinese Confucianism, the study of "man" has always been a very important issue in the study of philosophy. Starting from the "self-regulation of the will", Kant argues that the moral pursuit of man should be the ultimate goal of the "supreme good", which is the unity of virtue and happiness. The "highest good" is also the consistency of virtue and happiness. With a clear and concrete sense of the problem, Mou Zongsan uses "moral self-discipline" as a way to break the Kantian philosophy's emphasis on knowledge and its neglect of humanity, and argues from "intellectual intuition" for the existence of "things themselves". The existence of "things in themselves" is argued by "intellectual intuition". With his unique philosophical insight, he sees a fit between Kant's moral philosophy and Confucianism, and can therefore use Kant's philosophy as a bridge between Chinese and Western philosophy. In traditional Chinese Confucianism, "practising benevolence and knowing heaven" means to fulfil one's nature, and "knowing heaven" means to realise the way

of heaven, with the ultimate aim of realising that "the benevolent The aim of this is to achieve the ultimate goal of "the benevolent being who is in harmony with all things", that is, "a high degree of conformity between goodness and benevolence". Practice is the core concept of Mou Zongsan's philosophical thought. Mou Zongsan believes that in real life, we should take into account both phenomena and things themselves, knowledge and morality, and that phenomena and things themselves are two sides of the same thing, two different presentations. It also clarifies the difference between "factual judgement" and "value judgement", showing the practical value of Confucianism in modern society, especially in the interpretation of Western philosophy. Mou Zongsan goes beyond the limits of Kantian philosophy and stands on the foundation of traditional Chinese Confucian philosophy, using morality as a way in to rediscover and develop the metaphysical meaning of traditional Chinese philosophy. This theoretical reflection demonstrates the practical spirit of Chinese culture embedded in Confucian philosophy, with ren as its core, and provides the spiritual force for the flourishing of the Chinese nation.

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