

走向公民儒學——回應〈後新儒家實踐哲學的一個側面——關於「外王-內聖」問題的一些回應〉

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摘要

本文主要回應林安梧〈後新儒家實踐哲學的一個側面——關於「外王-內聖」問題的一些回應〉一文。該文肯定牟宗三先生對中國儒學的貢獻，回應牟先生「良知的坎陷」，認為新儒家的內聖修養，仍然容易引生道德實踐教條化的蔽病。主張人們進入公民社會，應理解社會規範是共同約定，而非不可調動的至高行動指導原則。就因為這些行為規則是可調動的，隨時節不同而變化的，主體參與其中，也隨著調動。這個主體與社會相互配合調動的過程，即是主體學習的過程。由此可以將主體從絕對的道德框架中解放出來，同時也避開主觀境界型態自我封閉的情形，而可參與社會。林先生自稱「從外王到內聖」是一「儒學革命」，但它並不真的否定牟先生藉康德理路融入的儒學心性系統以「內聖開外王」的這套系統，而只是強調現代儒者必須調整實踐方式來回應新局。筆者肯定林安梧問題意識的意義，也肯定他二十餘年思考的成果，完成《當儒家走進民主社會：林安梧論公民儒學》一書。但筆者認為林安梧未意識到儒者之所以為儒者，乃「正德利用厚生」的自我期許，不會安於是個守法公民。提出三點想法回應：一、既是儒者，就要有「存天理，去人欲」的氣魄；二、公民儒者當積極參贊社會行公義；三、千萬不能失去主觀境界形態的道德論述。

關鍵詞：新儒家、牟宗三、內聖外王、正德、公民

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壹、前言

〈後新儒家實踐哲學的一個側面——關於「外王-內聖」問題的一些回應〉一文首先肯定牟宗三先生對中國儒學的貢獻、對自身學養的深刻影響，並簡述新儒家唐、牟、徐三先生在外王事業接上民主與科學的學術立場。接著以回應牟先生良知的坎陷為主，認為牟先生作為新傳統主義者，其「方法論的本質主義」引生道德實踐偏至化、教條化、專制化。要解決這偏向，應代之以「方法論上的約定主義」，社會規範既是共同約定，不但是群體的最大共識，以共約處理眾人事物，也能夠順應時節調動，透過「不斷的經過循環往復的檢覈」，去回應當下生命的存在。

筆者忝為後學，站在向林先生請益、對話的立場，試著表達對林先生觀點的理解，進而參考林先生其他著作後，提出個人淺見，以盡切磋問對之宜，深廣自家學識。敬請林安梧先生指教。

一、關於新儒家—後新儒家

「新儒家」之所以為「新」，乃是為回應新世局，面對不同的時代議題，提出解決方法，且其方法大不同於前，而謂之「新」。牟先生的重要貢獻是以西方哲學話語系統分析、建構儒家的道德哲學，而能與西方哲學系統對話。除了學術上的成就之外，也呼籲並立定新儒家的當代使命：「接上民主與科學」，去實現儒者經世濟民、利用厚生的理想。至於新儒家如何接上民主與科學，牟先生主張「良知之自我坎陷以開出民主科學」。

儒學自孔子後的發展，幾經受挫與挑戰，首先是秦漢大一統的君主專制，將法家操控臣民的技術帶入儒家，至唐宋，儒道吸納廣大信眾，儒學沒落，但宋明諸儒吸收佛、道的心性論後，理路更加深密壯大，因其學之「實」（人倫日用）進而成為思想場域的主流。直到進入現代，西方民主與科學挾其強大的經濟武力背景，衝蕩中國傳統社會，儒學不得不順應時勢接招。牟先生在傳統儒學以心性論為正宗的學術基礎上，提出一心開二門的架構，主張「良知自我坎陷」去接上民主與科學，為現代儒者奠基法政思維、民主制度的道德理論基礎。

牟宗三（1996）直言「儒家的當前使命——開新外王」⁸⁶，曰：

儒家的理性主義在今天這個時代，要求新的外王才能充分的表現。今天這個時代所要求的新外王，即是科學與民主政治。事實上，中國以前所要求的事功，亦只在民主政治的形態下，才能夠充分的實現，才能夠充分的被正視。（牟宗三，1996）

⁸⁶ 牟宗三（1996）。新版序。《政道與治道》，學生書局，頁 11。附註：為省略繁冗，標註引文出處時，只於第一次列出版本資訊。以下皆同。

儒家的政治理想就是「藏天下於天下」，牟先生（1996）說：

民主政治能夠表現一些「藏天下於天下」的理想。儒家學術最內部的要求亦一向在於此，但是從未在現實上出現，而今天之現代化亦主要在要求此一理想的實現，此亦即是儒家當前使命所要求的「新外王」。民主政治是新外王的「形式條件」，事功在此形式條件的保障下才能充分實現，在民主政治下才有事功，才能讓你做事；除此之外，還需要科學知識作為新外王的「材質條件」。新外王要求藏天下於天下、開放的社會、民主政治、事功的保障，科學知識，這就是現代化。（牟宗三，1996）⁸⁸

「藏天下於天下」即是「開放的社會」（Open Society），自三代以後中國君主政治則「藏天下於框篋」即是家天下，以天下為個人的私產，並承認「天天講王陽明、講良知，是講不出科學的」（牟宗三，1996）⁴，儒家心性之學要開出新外王，必須透過「道德理性的自我坎陷」（牟宗三，1996）⁸⁹這一種「曲通」的方式：

「誠心求知」行為卻必然為道德理性所要求所意欲，既要求此行為，而若落下來真的去做此行為，則從「主體活動之能」方面說，卻必須轉為「觀解理性」（理論理性）及由動態的成德之道德理性轉為靜態的成知識之觀解理性。這一步轉，我們可以說是**道德理性之自我坎陷（自我否定）**。（牟宗三，1996）⁹⁰

牟先生「良知自我坎陷」說，掀起一波熱烈的討論⁹¹⁷。有反對⁸，有認同，較為中肯的意見主要是認為良知坎陷說過份集中於形上學分析，對實質的制度與社會組織倫理反省則太少：「自我坎陷說對中國文化走上現代化的探討，在邏輯也許無可厚責。然而在現實上總感有所不足。」（顏炳罡，1991）⁹新儒家從傳統社群走出，立基儒學基

⁸⁷ 牟宗三又曰：「要求民主政治乃是新外王的第一義，此乃新外王的形式意義、形式條件，事功得靠此解決，此處才是真正的理想主義。」〔牟宗三（1996）。新版序。**政道與治道**，頁15〕。

⁸⁸ 牟宗三（1996）。新版序。**政道與治道**，頁20。

⁴ 牟宗三〈新版序〉：「另一面則是科學，科學是「新外王」的材質條件。亦即「新外王」的材料、內容。……天天講王陽明、講良知，是講不出科學的。因為良知不是成功科學知識的一個認知機能。然而，科學亦可與儒家的理性主義相配合，科學乃是與事功精神相應的理性主義之表現。……儒家內在的目的及要求科學，這個要求是發自於其內在的目的的。何以見得呢？講良知、講道德，乃重在存心、動機之善。然有一好的動機卻無知識，則此道德上好的動機亦無法表達出來。所以，良知、道德的動機在本質上即要求知識作為傳達的一種工具。……要想貫徹其內在的目的，都得要求科學，肯定科學。」〔牟宗三（1996）。新版序。**政道與治道**，頁15〕。

⁸⁹ 牟宗三。新版序。**政道與治道**，頁58。

⁹⁰ 牟宗三（1996）。新版序。**政道與治道**，頁57。

⁷ 參考李明輝（2021）。公德、私德之分與儒家傳統。**鵝湖學誌**，（66），1-34；李翔海（1993）。「牟宗三與當代新儒家」學術思想研討會紀要。**鵝湖月刊**，（215），35-41；王大德（1995）。評介《當代新儒學論文集·外王篇—關於「良知的自我坎陷」的討論》。**鵝湖學誌**，（14），165-177。

⁸ 如蔣慶（1996）。良知只可呈現而不可坎陷：王陽明良知學說之比較及「新外王」評議。**中國文化**，（14），14。

⁹ 顏炳罡（1991）。牟宗三先生的自我坎陷說與當代文化癥結。劉述先（主編），**當代新儒學論文集·外王篇**，文津出版社，頁197-214。

礎去適應西方民主與科學可見卓學與胸懷，而牟先生這一套以康德融入心性理學的新儒學，除了開闢一與西方哲學對話的學術框架，在事功層面，正如蔣年豐所說：

法政主體雖然不是從固有的中國文化中開發出來的，儒家的原始思想中也的確沒有這個精神側面在。儒家雖然沒有開出這個精神側面，但他卻以其道德主體為法政主體預定了位子。(蔣年豐，1989)¹⁰

不管怎麼說，後新儒家的確在牟宗三之後，接著談「內聖外王」之學。其中林先生自 1996 年《儒學革命論》起，構築「公民儒學」，已二十餘載。

貳、後新儒家林先生的「新內聖學」

牟先生於 1995 年逝世之後，留下深厚紮實的思想遺產，也留下許多爭論。孔子死後儒分為八，牟先生逝世之後，進入「後新儒家」則有護教派與批判派。林先生自居為批判一派，許多論點的確有別於牟先生的思路。在接上民主與科學問題，林安梧(1998)於《儒學革命論》批評牟先生的外王理論，「儒家實踐論的缺失在於這實踐是境界的，是宗法的，是親情的，是血緣的，是咒術的，是專制的這些一直都掛搭粘合在一起，分不清楚……沒有提到一自為主體的對象化情況下來理解。」¹¹，於 2023 年直言：「內聖而內傾、內捲，境界型態的圓教系統，生出許多問題」(林安梧，2023)¹²，他認為：

(良知自我坎限以開出民主)強調那道德的形而上之體，承體啓用，可以開出現代化。這樣承體啓用的方式，卻忽略了真正具體真實的世界，就此來說，面對現代化的開出與否，其實，只有消極意義，而很難有積極作為。這也就是說，他們沒有真正為開出現代化如何落實，提供更有力量的實踐。(林安梧，2023)¹³

怎麼才能提供更有力量的儒學實踐呢？林先生提出的解方是「新外王而內聖」的主張，從對舊社會的反思「解開道的錯置」，到民主體制的道德實踐約則「方法論的約定主義」，再到理路背景的支持「新外王而內聖」，明顯有一條思考的脈絡。

一、解開道的錯置

傳統儒學乃伴隨君權、父權結構而有的道德系統，心性儒學的主觀境界型態，尤其

¹⁰ 蔣年豐解釋道：「我的論證之一康德的道德形上學所凸顯出來的形式主義性格的道德主體可以輾轉轉化成法政主體，而與真實的道德主體並立。就在這樣的意義之下，我們可以說儒家的道德主體為法政主體預定了位子。」〔蔣年豐(1989)。法政主體與現代社會——當前儒家應該思考的問題。中國文化月刊，(111)，60。〕

¹¹ 林安梧(1999，頁42)。儒學革命論：後新儒學哲學的問題向度序言。鵝湖月刊，(288)，42-47。

¹² 林安梧(2023，頁18)。「外王內聖」還是「內聖外王」辯論之後——敬答周群振、李瑞全兩位學長。鵝湖月刊，(578)，17-25。

¹³ 林安梧(2023，頁22)。「外王內聖」還是「內聖外王」辯論之後——敬答周群振、李瑞全兩位學長。鵝湖月刊，(578)，17-25。

助長了道德的異化，造成「父、聖、君」不當其位，變成是「君、父、聖」，由君主掌握社會結構的核心，主宰父、聖，林先生認為這是傳統儒學在歷史發展過程中，產生的歷史事實，名之曰「道的錯置」。若要避免此一根本困結「道的錯置」，讓「君、父、聖」三者能恰當歸位，即是正視原有的君權結構已經瓦解，代之以「較為獨立的社群、社會的組織結構」（意指當時尚不夠成熟的臺灣民主社會），則維持此社會結構的道德系統當改為「契約性的社會連結」（林安梧，2009）¹⁴。「契約性的社會連結」構想之由來，主要是回應當下的社會生活，既然已不是舊有的君父家國型態，真正要進入既有的社會生活中，當然就要改變，以相應於民主、法治社會。就是這一儒家姿態的改變、儒學的轉向，林先生稱之為「第二波的儒學革命」（林安梧，1999）¹⁵，這是後新儒家進入廿一世紀對人類文明的貢獻。

二、方法論的約定主義

林先生主張「我們應該跨出主體性哲學的限制，歸返到豐富的生活世界中尋求一真存實感的啟動處，參贊處，應摒棄方法論上的本質主義，而代之以方法論上的約定主義。」（林安梧，2023）¹⁶，才能解開舊社會「道的錯置」。這意思即是呼籲現代儒者，應該拋棄經典裡頭君父家國的思維，重新去觀照社會，去實踐道德（主觀境界型態的道德）。這一方面提醒現代儒者，主觀境界型態的心性之學在過去無法改變君父的宰制，反造成道德規範壓迫主體生命的歷史事實¹⁷；另一方面也要求後新儒家正視現今迥然不同的社會結構、生活型態以及價值觀，改變道德實踐的方法為「約定主義」有其必要。

林先生認為「境界形態的心性修養」不足以回應民主政治，主要有鑑於儒學在秦漢以後，二千多年大一統帝制壓抑之下，無法真正實現它的理想，只好走向內在心念的涵養檢視，「境界形態的心性修養取代了真實世界的社會實踐，本來修身是為了齊家治國平天下，現在修身就只是檢點心念」（林安梧，2016）⁹³。

三、由外王而內聖

¹⁴ 林安梧（2009，頁 7）。「公民儒學」下的「道德思考」。鵝湖月刊，（413），7-19。

¹⁵ 林安梧（1999，頁 47）。儒學革命論：後新儒學哲學的問題向度序言。鵝湖月刊，（288），42-47。

¹⁶ 林安梧（2024）。後新儒家實踐哲學的一個側面——關於「外王--內聖」問題的一些回應。本土諮商心理學學刊，15（3），1-51。

¹⁷ 林安梧（2021，頁 6-9）。當儒家走進民主社會：林安梧論公民儒學。作者序：儒家還有戲嗎？。提到「五倫」在大一統的君主專制制度下被扭曲為「三綱」：「這是帝制的絕對化造成的，豈是儒學？……這是『偽儒學』、是『假儒學』，這是被帝皇專制暴虐過的儒學。」〔林安梧（2021）。當儒家走進民主社會：林安梧論公民儒學〕。商周出版〕。

⁹³ 林安梧。作者序：儒家還有戲嗎？。當儒家走進民主社會：林安梧論公民儒學，頁 8。林安梧（2016，頁 141）。血緣性縱貫軸，學生書局。

林先生主張後新儒家的「外王」議題，不是「內聖開出外王」——主體自覺之仁轉出自由民主，而是：吾人現今已處在以契約精神運行的現代社會裡，如何調整內聖學去回應「新外王」：

在現代性的社會裏面，以契約性的政治連結為構造、以責任倫理為準則，重新審視如何達到「一體之仁」；不是如何地「由舊內聖開出新外王」，而是「在新外王的格局下如何能夠調理出新的內聖學」。(林安梧，2009)¹⁹

「由外王而內聖」的提出，並非對「內聖開出外王」的否定，林先生認為「良知的自我坎陷以開出知性主體」是為了在儒學理路根源給出一個後設的解釋，儒學有能力接上科學與民主，但「內聖開出外王」並不是現實實踐的理論指導。²⁰若要落在儒學的道德層面，應當轉換思考問題的方式：

在民主化與科學化的過程中，儒學如何扮演一個調節者，參與者的角色，在理論的、特別是後設的考虑的層次，它如何扮演一理解、詮釋，進而瓦解與重建的角色。(林安梧，2009)²¹

亦即，後新儒家已經接受現有的開放社會框架，如何在這「新外王」時代，成為一個涵具公民意識的儒者。為此，後新儒家必須轉換思維方式，如何調整原有內聖學的內容。這一調整的過程，就是一個學習、轉化的過程——道德主體學習如何進入眾多道德主體並立的社會。林先生：

強調「境界型態的形而上學」，如此一來，便容易忽略了真正的外王。「外王」很重要的就是從「血緣人倫的共同體」，進到「政治社會共同體」，到「天地自然的共同體」，而凡此種種，都離不開人文化成這個「人文教養的共同體」。(林安梧，2023)⁹⁴

這個「人文教養的共同體」，就是新內聖學的載體。新內聖學主張人是不斷再進化的個體，「本心」本質主義的談法將忽略現實環境的變動，以及道德主體在經驗界的不成熟，以及趨向成熟的成長過程，是林先生受王船山人性論啟發而提出的，認為「天命之謂性」的道德不能只是先驗的，須知：「命日降、性日生日成，未成可成，已成可革；道德是發展的，是變動的，是人文化成的。」(林安梧，2023)⁹⁵他進一步說：

你把宋明儒學的義理講透了，講明了，那還是不足的，那是不夠的。其實，現代化是要活生生地，要從具體生活世界活生生的，生長出來的。這是具體而真實的實踐，不是理論的邏輯次序可以安排的，它涉及到的是「實踐的學習次序」。(林

¹⁹ 林安梧 (2009)。「公民儒學」下的「道德思考」。鵝湖月刊，(413)，7-19。

²⁰ 林安梧 (2009)。儒學革命論：後新儒家哲學的問題向度。學生書局，頁 23。

²¹ 林安梧 (2009)。儒學革命論：後新儒家哲學的問題向度。學生書局，頁 23。

⁹⁴ 林安梧 (2023)。「外王內聖」還是「內聖外王」辯論之後——敬答周群振、李瑞全兩位學長。鵝湖月刊，(578)，18-19。

⁹⁵ 林安梧 (2024)。後新儒家實踐哲學的一個側面——關於「外王--內聖」問題的一些回應。本土諮商心理學學刊，15 (3)，1-51。

安梧，2023）⁹⁶

總而言之，林先生提出「由外王而內聖」的重要意義，不在「外王」，而在「新內聖學」。「本心」沒有新舊之別，它是恆常的，它是人之所以為人的真誠惻怛。但從道德實踐層面來看，「本心」有義務，也有其不容己的趨動力，要去理解所在的社會、文化處境。儒家經典所載所言都是面對著封建制度、君主專權制度、父權體制而有的思想與行動，我們不能一言一動照搬到公民社會裡來，必須有意識地調整和取捨，因而吾人一現代儒者，都必須學習如何理解經典的訓諭、指點，學習公民社會的運作方式以及價值觀，兩相涵攝融通，成為公民儒者。這也意謂著，從新內聖學的觀點，公民儒者不再從「聖賢」的角度直貫回答「人何以為人」這個問題，而是「性日生日成」，把每個共存的個體視為成長中的仁人。他提醒讀者，從五四之後，儒者就已經處在「新外王」的大環境中，不斷地學著理解現代社會，回應種種變動。在這新外王學習過程中，吾人不曾從中反思「原先帶有專制性的內聖之學」以及這一「由外王而內聖」的過程，有何意義。（林安梧，2023）⁹⁷進而提出「新內聖」說：

要問一問，在一個新外王學習過程裡，必須好好的學習一個新內聖的方式。我重視之所在，是在這個地方。這便是我所謂的「由外王而內聖」，強調的是在外王（包括：民主、科學）的學習過程裡，我們好好的去調解內聖，為內聖調理出、融通出一個新的方式。（林安梧，2023）⁹⁸

關於「學習一個新內聖的方式」，他曾說：

我們必須去正視，當自己作為一個具有主體性的個體時，是以何種身份進入社會，並且如何面對具體的制度結構問題？顯然地，這時候的修行方式便會有所不同。這個修行方式我覺得是會在一個具體的發展過程中慢慢去學習到，而不是去選一個懸空的、構作的理論。（林安梧，2009）⁹⁹

這個學習新內聖的方式，就是先意識到自己是公民這個身份，因而呼籲「先成為公民，再成為君子」（林安梧，2021）¹⁰⁰。所學「不是在宗法親情底下的那個『禮』，而是應該在一個社會正義底下的正義之『理』」。（林安梧，2009）¹⁰¹在他《當儒家走進民主社會：林安梧論公民儒學》這一本書裡，他提到公民教育的內容，強調公民要公私分明，保護個體性並尊重其他具有個體性的個人；現代公民社會以分別性原理為主，且強調客觀法則性的共同認定；去了解，自由就是尊重自己跟他人以及群體客觀法則性的共同認

⁹⁶ 林安梧（2023）。「外王內聖」還是「內聖外王」辯論之後——敬答周群振、李瑞全兩位學長。《鵝湖月刊》，（578），17-25。

⁹⁷ 林安梧（2023）。「外王內聖」還是「內聖外王」辯論之後——敬答周群振、李瑞全兩位學長。《鵝湖月刊》，（578），17-25。

⁹⁸ 林安梧（2023）。「外王內聖」還是「內聖外王」辯論之後——敬答周群振、李瑞全兩位學長。《鵝湖月刊》，（578），17-25。

⁹⁹ 林安梧（2009）。「公民儒學」下的「道德思考」。《鵝湖月刊》，（413），7-19。

¹⁰⁰ 林安梧（2021）。《當儒家走進民主社會：林安梧論公民儒學》封面。

¹⁰¹ 林安梧（2009）。「公民儒學」下的「道德思考」。《鵝湖月刊》，（413），7-19。

定，個體性的意志自由必須符合群體的普遍意志；私人領域的維護是對個體性的尊重，是對社會公益法則的深層認定。不管是個體性還是公共性，其所求所行仍然通於天理良知，天理良知放在公民社會裡會轉成理性普遍性的要求。(林安梧，2021)¹⁰²

參、簡評

以上簡述牟先生「內聖外王」的架構，以及林先生翻轉儒學，提出「從外王到內聖」這條方向相反的思維。為什麼我們需要談「內聖外王」問題，討論儒學與民主、科學的關連？是因為希望在既有的傳統文化底蘊底下，跟上現代化的腳步。這是為了文化主體的自信，強國富民的時代要求，而儒者作為知識分子之主流，以利用、厚生為理想，應當肩負起這個責任，去開出民主與科學。這是唐君毅、牟宗三、張君勱及徐復觀四人聯名發表的〈為中國文化敬告世界人士宣言〉關心之所在，其惺惺所念者乃「中國文化之前途」。其中，牟先生就儒學心性之學做出說明，以「良知坎陷」去接上民主與科學。牟先生這套融會康德哲學的學術架構，就是一個成功的典範，保住儒學的中國文化道統。然而這套「內聖外王」之學能開展什麼樣的「外王」，牟先生未有進一步的描繪，有待後人接續。

筆者以為，雖然唐、牟、徐三先生學識宏大深廣，尚能在學術論述之餘，鞭辟時政，然自牟先生提出「內聖外王」去回應現代化問題之後，其後之學者的確給人感覺：「外王」說得多、做的少，如陳昭瑛：「(當代儒學)在政治上，儒家一直在各種重大政治改革運動中缺席，而所有重大的政治改革也多援引西方政治思想作為社會實踐的理論基礎。儒家不論在實踐或理論方面都是缺席的。」(陳昭瑛，2012)¹⁰³，甚至招來阻礙臺灣的民主化之負評。杜維明(2012)¹⁰⁴

因而，當林先生將儒學是否開出民主科學視為一個假問題，推開那些討論，直接從「走進民主社會」入手，即以「吾人已在民主社會當中，吾人已具公民身份」這一事實為前提，主張現代儒者要做的外王工夫，就是做一個公民。這的確是一「新外王」事業，也符合儒家道德實踐上的自我要求。正因這套「從外王到內聖」的理路，符合儒學道德實踐上的期待，林先生雖自稱是「儒學革命」，然有本於船山學，並不真的否定傳統儒學學問本身，也不真的否定牟先生藉康德理路融入的儒學心性系統以「內聖開外王」的這套系統，而只是強調：不能只有思想根據，必須調整實踐方式來回應新局。牟先生在儒學理論背景下足了工夫，給予儒學學者經典詮釋上的滋養與依據，肯定儒學的現代意義，

¹⁰² 參考林安梧(2021)。關於「公民教育」的哲學思考。當儒家走進民主社會：林安梧論公民儒學，頁274-290。

¹⁰³ 陳昭瑛(2012)。徐復觀與自由主義的對話。思想，(20)，175-193。

¹⁰⁴ 杜維明(2012)：「美國政治學界一批具有影響力的教授，對東亞儒家社會的民主前景做了悲觀的評估。……堅持民主運動在「儒教文化圈」極難開展。」〔杜維明(2012年6月28日)。走自己的民主路。天下雜誌，138)。〕

牟先生的「開出」，不是「經驗界的創造出」，而應是如霍晉明所言的「開展並護持」（霍晉明，2011）¹⁰⁵，賦予當代儒者在價值層面一個充足的理由與背景，肯定儒者有能力去迎向、甚至去創造民主與科學（雖然歷史上不曾有，初期也尚未創造民主與科學）。

由於牟先生在學術層面已經做了很大部分的工作，完成接上民主與科學的可能與解釋，在這個基礎上，只須接著談就好了。「良知坎陷」的優越在於它既可以保有中國文化的道統體系「天道性命相貫通」的道德主體，同時也不礙於這個詮釋體系下的道德主體去發展民主與科學。它提供儒者一個思想地圖，身份認同、文化歸屬安身之處，在立德的基礎上，積極擁抱實現民主科學，這是現代儒者的自我期許。良知開出知性的主體，去接受、學習傳統沒有的民主與科學，學習身為一個公民如何恰宜地回應開放社會，也就順理成章。

這中間不能是一個轉換，而必須是一個承接的過程。意即，林先生的「儒學革命」實是「接續」，因為關注的議題改變，從「儒學開出民主與科學」改成「儒學如何實踐民主與科學」，因而說「儒學轉向」。林先生的確也意識到對舊傳統批判得太多，易生誤會，所以他也在文章裡面屢屢強調「仁」才是儒學的核心。

歷史的推進，讓我們進入現代化，進入民主與科學的新世界，儒家經典所對應的君權、父權社會可想見不會復返，現代儒者除了孺慕經典，陶養自家心性、氣質之外，在實踐層面的確需要有一應對公民社會的意見與借鑑，供作學習、參照與思考，成為與時俱進的君子。林先生《當儒家走進民主社會：林安梧論公民儒學》就是這樣的一本書，提供一套相對完整的想法供參。

肆、三點想法

一、既是儒者，就要有「存天理，去人欲」的氣魄

林先生提出「由外王通內聖」，意指公民儒者接受現有的社會架構、歷史事實，並充份發揮、實現民主制度應有的樣態，在這過程中，將反過來再理解、再詮釋「內聖」應有的性質，從而更良好地回應環境。這是一個內外往復交流，學習、提升的過程。他對儒者做為一個公民在開放社會裡的形象，進行以下的描述：

我們不必再去強調主體的自覺該當如何，而應當強調，當我在一個開放的、自由的言說論述空間裏，通過清明理性的思考，彼此交換意見之後，就能夠慢慢地得

¹⁰⁵ 霍晉明（2011）：「不要將『開出』解釋為『生長出』，而是解釋為『開展並護持』（一個可供民主科學生長的空間），則應無理論其意義是：良知可以自覺地放下它對主客圓融一體的德性境界之要求，而容許以認知心（分別心）作主，去充暢其『分解的盡理』之作用，則一個『客觀對列之局』可以打開，而良知只盡一個『監臨』的責任，以防其『客觀對列之局』所產生的作用逾越了『利用、厚生』的原始初衷。」〔霍晉明（2011）。「現代化」情境下的道德實踐問題－從牟宗三先生的「坎陷說」到曾昭旭先生的「愛情學」。鵝湖月刊，（435），55-64。〕

出新共識；並且預期，當我們展開一個自由的交談之後，共識就會浮現出來。我們在一个契約的社會裏慢慢尋求一個恰當的制度結構，在這個制度結構裏，我們可以依著自己的個性本身想說什麼就說什麼，在這想說什麼就說什麼過程中，就會慢慢地調適出恰當的方式。

處在開放社會的儒者，因為受到保障的發言權利，得以從容地向他人表達自己的個性、需求與想法，同時也開放傾聽他人表達各自的需求與想法，透過彼此充份的交流，最後得出一個共識，且相信這個共識是可以被實現的。林先生想像，在這樣的處境中，公民儒者不須被天理所壓迫，他可以單純是一「七情六欲的存在」：

這時候我們便能夠正視自己是有七情六欲的存在，而不需要想到一個問題時馬上想到「存天理、去人欲」，因為我們不是以這樣的道德論式作為我們時時刻刻去警覺的核心，而是作為一個人就是這麼自然地進到社會裏頭來開始展開我們的論述。這樣的倫理學不再是高階思考之倫理學，不是個要求九十分、一百分的倫理學，而是只要求六十分倫理學。這樣說的社會公民，就是一個以六十分為基礎點的社會公民，可以暢達其情，回溯到自然本身的存在而說的，而不是個宗教苦行式的倫理學。(林安梧，2009)¹⁰⁶

就林先生的描述，在公民社會中，不必「去強調主體的自覺該當如何」，只須清明理性思考後陳述自己的主張，以期求得共識。這只是一個公民的權利以及最低的自我要求：說話不要亂說造謠、不要惡意攻擊，要清明理性。而且這個說話者，因為自由地「正視自己是有七情六欲的存在」，不需時時刻刻「存天理、去人欲」，不必被道德壓迫去受道德的「宗教苦行」，生活舒適自在。

筆者以為，儒者跟其他的公民不同，他必須有更高的自我要求。首先，我的言說還是必須出於自覺，雖然共識不見得同意我自覺的需求或訴求，儒者在有自覺的情況下，會了解到「公民」著眼於群我關係，重視的是法治、是社會正義，此中即有道德意義在，修養的是自身的「公德」。儒者既須內備「公德」，那麼「存天理去人欲」，就是必要的工夫。

這裡有個問題：一個對民主制度抱有信仰的人和一名儒者充份實現民主制度，有什麼實踐上的差異？若無差異，能夠說儒學對民主制度的完善提供什麼貢獻嗎？換個方式問，如若先聖先儒仁心所現之仁政是「制禮作樂」，是「君君臣臣父父子子」，面臨現代民主價值，儒者之仁心當開顯出什麼樣的民主形態或民主制度下如何實踐其德性？同是仁心，何以有不同的顯現？時局不同，儒者當以何者為判準而有別於一般公民不同的政治實踐？林先生忘了儒者對自己有如下期許：希望成為君子（甚至賢聖），而非只是守法公民，儒者會以更高的道德標準與淑世理想來要求自己。在過往的君主專制中，君子「天下為公」

¹⁰⁶ 林安梧（2009）。「公民儒學」下的「道德思考」。鵝湖月刊，（413），7-19。

的理想被埋沒在家天下的框架之下，如今民主政治「別傳」(鄧育仁，2015)¹⁰⁷而來，以儒者公天下的仁者本懷，仍可以從中發聲，整合共識，並作為公民之一，尊重此共識，甚至實現此共識。在實踐面，儒者仍是必須提出理念、理想的那個知識份子(道德標杆)，去發聲、去影響他人，提升社會，同時尊重他人各式各樣的存在—七情六欲的存在。林先生說「正視自己是有七情六欲的存在，而不需要想到一個問題時馬上想到『存天理、去人欲』」漫漶了道德主體和實踐現實。林先生若希望人倫作為人權的前導或基礎，就不能不強調道德主體的首出。只有這樣，儒者才能在人世間成就「有人倫的人權，有自覺的自由，有民本的民主」。

「公民」和「草民」的差異在，公民有權制法，如公投、選民代。在立法過程意識到我的個人價值觀(合理的權益)得以申說、表達，去影響他人以謀求共識，這才是道德自覺。傳統社會的草民、人臣，服膺長上、盡忠職守，草民的道德處境是個人、家庭、家族的，沒有基本權利的概念。

公民儒者，這一身份，想必牟先生是能夠認可的。但這一身份，若由牟先生來談，恐怕就不是六十分的倫理學而已。他說「既曰外王，則其不能背乎內聖亦明矣」，內聖是外王的基礎。人倫的安頓，即道德的安頓，此立場即新儒家迎接西方民主制度之起始立場(李明輝，2014)¹⁰⁸：

夫既曰外王，則其不能背乎內聖亦明矣。並列言之，曰政道、曰事功、曰科學；總持言之，皆賅于外王。內聖之學即儒家之「心性之學」，其直接之本分乃在道德宗教之成立。然儒教之為教與普通宗教本不同。其以道德實踐為中心，雖上達天德，成聖成賢，而亦必賅攝家國天下而為一，始能得其究極之圓滿。故政道、事功與科學，亦必為其所肯定而要求其實現。反之，政道、事功與科學亦必統攝於心性之實學，而不能背離此本源。(牟宗三，1996)¹⁰⁹

誠如林先生所言在傳統的宗法儒學中養成的儒者，大不同於公民社會文化土壤下生長的儒者。(林安梧，2009)¹¹⁰然而，亦可想見現代的公民儒者，理應大不同於一般公民才對，既是儒者，即便以「社會正義」為實踐核心(林安梧，2009)¹¹¹，仍需要回應良知的叩問，去面對七情六欲。林先生似乎樂見人們脫離君父權力宰制，不必再被教條拘縛；而忘了儒者在道德層面自我修練和要求，無分時地。至於是否就是自

¹⁰⁷ 鄧育仁(2015)，《公民儒學》用語。意指儒者「深入理解、學習，並收編西方民主傳承的優點。(鄧育仁。公民儒學。國立臺灣大學出版中心，頁145-146)。

¹⁰⁸ 李明輝(2014)曾簡述新儒家對民主的態度：可以「儒學開出民主論」標致之。一、一切文化上的創新必須建立在傳統文化的基礎之上。二、民主政治必須建立在道德理想之基礎上，故政治自由必須預設道德自由。[李明輝。當代新儒家「儒學開出民主論」的理論意涵與現實意義。Asian Studies, 2(1), 7-18。]

¹⁰⁹ 牟宗三。序。政道與治道。學生書局。

¹¹⁰ 林安梧(2009)。「公民儒學」下的「道德思考」。鵝湖月刊，(413)，7-19。

¹¹¹ 林安梧：「以「社會正義論」為核心的儒學思考不再是在帝王專制底下那樣的修身養性的方式，也不再是那樣良知的自虐方式，我們可以說這是一嶄新的『公民儒學』。」[林安梧(2009)。「公民儒學」下的「道德思考」。鵝湖月刊，(413)，頁7-19。]

虐，也就因人而異。

總而言之，林先生這套公民儒學，與心性之學並不相悖，雖然實踐思維的方向不同，但精神上並不相悖，他也說：「把正德放在最前頭仍然是千古常新的道理」(林安梧，2023)¹¹²與其說是「革命」，筆者比較傾向說是當代儒學實踐面的補充，是接著講。

二、公民儒者當積極參贊社會行公義

其次，再深入思考，這個新外王的儒者，會怎回應現代公民議題？做為一個公民儒者，他會關心哪些公共議題？站在什麼基礎上回應？對公民儒者而言，哪些權利依什麼理據可以被創造、被肯定？他可能是什麼樣子？

以婦女平權議題為例。儒家宣稱要「正德、利用、厚生」、「為天地立心，為生民立命，為往聖繼絕學，為萬世開太平」，但在回應婦權問題上，除了曾昭旭屢屢撰文支持之外，”參贊”者非常少。婦女佔人口半數，這問題公民儒者不重視嗎？其餘如環境保育問題、軍中人權、勞動權益、農民運動、土地正義、司法改革種種議題，公民儒者在哪裡？”參贊”哪些公民議題？若只有「去中國化」上新聞的時候才有所作為，那麼，新儒家招來只說不做的譏評實不足怪。筆者以為性別平權問題就是最好的石蕊試紙，要看新儒學接上民主的外王事業如何，只要問問，新儒家怎麼回應婦權問題。儒者作為公民，當有促進全體公民福祉的理想，積極作為才可曰「參贊天地化育」。

從台灣 1980 狂飆年代婦女運動興起，新儒家除曾昭旭站在愛情學的立場，堅定而明確地支持性別平權，將傳統儒學從人性學角度去探討，提出以易經「人倫之始」做為兩性平權（人人平權）之基礎，實為洞見，其著書不輟，亦有其社會影響力。餘諸學者，從未能直接回應台灣女權主義者的批判、抨擊，亦未見積極認同，積極為婦女爭取權益。如果新儒家大聲疾呼「新外王」，卻從未看見其”參贊”社會改革的身影，新外王云云如何使人信服？儒學又如何能令現代公民敬仰、信仰？正如賴錫三（2015）所言：

學術和文化的實踐，除了話語論述的創新以外，更重要的還是價值信念（理）與生命氣力（氣）的競爭。(賴錫三，2015)¹¹³

新外王理論牟先生說的已經足夠，林先生所謂「約定主義」可視為補充說明，但既稱新外王，還是期待新儒家學者、士人，修練內在德性之餘（正德），在人權、環保等相關公共議題上，也能「利用」、「厚生」，為百姓盡一份力，畢竟學者仍有一定的影響力。後世之儒，亦可見台灣民主社會演進、歷史積累過程中，看見當代儒者參贊的過程，而生有為者亦若是之心。

要之，公民儒者，不能只是公民。新儒家使命既是接上民主與科學去回應新局，在

¹¹² 林安梧（2024）。後新儒家實踐哲學的一個側面——關於「外王--內聖」問題的一些回應。《本土諮商心理學學刊》，15（3），1-51。

¹¹³ 賴錫三（2015）。「港臺新儒家」與「大陸新儒家」的「兩行」反思。《思想》，（29），頁 286。

性理層次充份闡釋、無礙接上民主與科學之後，意者自然希望進一步得見新儒家們如何開創外王事業。而懷有仁心，有著濟世理想的儒者，不能只是寄望進入官門才能利用厚生，開放的公民社會，自由發聲，自由展現理念與影響力，儒者當有更積極的自覺與作為，自利利人，讓世界更美好。

三、千萬不能失去主觀境界形態的道德論述

順著以上兩段文字的觀點，筆者強調儒者之所以為儒，就是他懷抱更高的道德要求及淑世情懷。正因為這個道德要求，是儒者自我期許，它不見得能在外王事業立功，但必然會以儒者的主觀境界形態展現。

林先生在多處著作論文當中，對「主觀境界形態的道德實踐」多所貶抑，認為它就是事功無法開展的禍首之一。然而，回溯中國學術思想史，儒學自先秦孔、孟起，即強調個體道德意識的主觀、主動，子曰：「吾欲仁，斯仁至矣。」、「苟志於仁矣，無惡也。」、「人而不仁，如禮何？人而不仁，如樂何？」道德行為、外在事功，都從此心的能動性與自主意願出發，且德行若是虛有其表，亦非孔子所肯定。發展至宋、明，心性之發越加深密，「心」、「意」、「已發」「未發」等驗證，結合道德意識，闡釋道德實踐，去討論成賢成聖的方法與可能。像這樣，不依賴人外的、超越的神秘力量，期許自身之修養能夠心意純淨，體證天道，成為至善之人，只有中國儒學。這一套鍛鍊心性的道德修養工夫，為西方倫理學所無，獨樹一格。也因此，若因為「主觀境界形態」德性學在外王事業難有明顯的成就，就以為心性理學、主觀境界型態可有可無，就太可惜了。

鄭家棟（2022）認為「內聖心性之學」是儒家可以保有純粹道德意識的命脈。對此，他有一愷切的感言：

（儒家內聖心性之學）在一個紅塵滾滾、銅臭之氣瀰漫的時代，使得儒家思想有可能突破重圍，在「超越性」的層面維繫「道統」的一線之延。唯有如此，儒家的精神義理才不至於為洶湧的「歷史洪流」所淹沒，也不至於成為一小撮為謀求滿足某種自我封聖（筆者按：指儒學政教化可能養成的鄙儒）和操控他人（「凡人小人」）的心理欲求而抱殘守缺的憑藉。是則，未來中國文明仍然可以稱之為「儒家文明」。（鄭家棟，2022）¹¹⁴

林先生也明白內聖學的重要性，才會說「把正德放在最前頭仍然是千古常新的道理」，筆者只是讀過林先生的「新外王」主張後，覺得應該再強調一下「內聖」在儒學的重要性。

由唐君毅諸先生執筆的〈為中國文化敬告世界人士宣言〉（1958）提到心性儒學在正

¹¹⁴ 鄭家棟（2022）。「牟學」前景何在？—兼談兩岸儒學紛爭與「儒」在現時代的自我定位(下)。鵝湖月刊，(564)，頁12。

德與利用厚生之間，少了一個擴充的媒介，因此無法以此仁心外推去經世濟民，只好退卻存養本心。「由此退卻，雖能使人更體悟到此內在的道德主體之尊嚴……然而亦同時閉塞了此道德主體之向外通的門路，而趨於此主體自身之寂寞與乾枯。」¹¹⁵短短數語，道盡新儒者之慨嘆。林先生接續著此一問題意識，多年撰述，思索的主題不離儒學的外王事業，尤其針對依附傳統君父權力結構的道德教條扭曲人心，有著敏銳而且執著的針砭。這是他從新儒家所承繼而來的思想養份，救儒學之蔽以開新局，以「公民儒學」為新外王的理想，意在安立千差萬別的個體，從中可見仁者胸臆，《當儒家走進民主社會：林安梧論公民儒學》一書，即是這數十年來思索的脈絡與結晶，讀之，感受得到儒者參與民主社會的情懷，不再寂寞乾枯。唯論述再精彩，言說再精闢，都是書中城堡，吾人仍期待在此基礎上，儒者可以走得更遠，實現「有人倫的人權，有自覺的自由，有民本的民主」。

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¹¹⁵ 張君勱、牟宗三、唐君毅、徐復觀（1958/1989）。為中國文化敬告世界人士宣言。〔在張君勱（1989）。一九四九年以後張君勱言論集（5）。58-117，稻鄉出版社，頁89。〕

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Towards Civic Confucianism: A Response to “A Side View of Post Contemporary Neo-Confucianism Practical Philosophy: Some Responses to the Issue of ‘Outer Kingliness and Inner Sagehood’”

Ming-Chu Hsu

Abstract

This article primarily responds to An-Wu Lin's "A Side View of Post Contemporary Neo-Confucianism Practical Philosophy: Some Responses to the Issue of 'Outer Kingliness and Inner Sagehood'". It acknowledges Mr. Mou Zongsan's contributions to Chinese Confucianism while responding to Mou's viewpoint on the "Self-Entrapment of Conscience". Lin argues that the Contemporary Neo-Confucianism emphasis on Inner Sagehood cultivation still risks leading to moral practice becoming overly rigid and dogmatic. An-Wu Lin advocates for individuals in civil society to understand social norms as collective agreements rather than immutable principles. He argues that as these norms adapt to different contexts, individuals participate in their evolution, creating a mutual learning process between individuals and society. This approach, Lin argues, liberates individuals from absolute moral frameworks and avoids self-enclosed subjectivity, fostering active societal engagement. Mr. Lin considers the question of whether Confucianism leads to democracy and science as a false dilemma. He pushes aside such debates and directly approaches the idea of "entering democratic society." Starting with the premise that "we are already in a democratic society, we already possess citizenship," he advocates that the outer kingly effort modern Confucianists should engage in is to be a citizen. This indeed constitutes a "new Outer Kingliness" endeavor and aligns with the self-demands of moral practice in Confucianism. Mr. Lin claims that his self-proclaimed "Outer Kingliness to Inner Sagehood" represents a Confucian revolution. However, he does not truly reject Mr. Mou's integration of Kantian philosophy into Confucianism, including the set of theories on inner virtue and the practical theory of Inner Sagehood and Outer Kingliness. Instead, he emphasizes that modern Confucianists must adjust their practical methods to respond to new situations. He inherits the nourishment of thought from the Contemporary Neo-Confucianism, aiming to establish "citizen Confucianism" to accommodate diverse individuals. The book

"When Confucians Enter Democratic Society" is the culmination of decades of contemplation within this context. Reading this book evokes a sense of Confucians' engagement in democratic society, no longer feeling lonely and arid. However, these arguments, while compelling, remain largely theoretical – “castles in the book,” so to speak. We anticipate that Confucians can go further and truly realize "human rights with human ethics, conscious freedom, and democracy based on the people." I affirm the significance of An-Wu Lin's awareness of the issue and commend the results of his over two decades of contemplation, culminating in the book *When Confucianism Enters Democratic Society*. However, I believe An-Wu Lin overlooks the fact that Confucians aspire to “uphold heavenly principles while restraining human desires” and would not settle for mere law-abiding citizenship. I offer three points in response: First, as Confucians, we must embody the spirit of “Zhèng Dé Lì Yòng Hòu Shēng.”(正德利用厚生, virtue cultivation and societal enrichment) Second, Confucian citizens should actively participate in promoting social justice. Third, we must not lose sight of moral discourse rooted in subjective ethical perspectives.

Keywords: Contemporary Neo-Confucianism , Mou Zongsan, Inner Sagehood to outer Kingliness, Moral Uprightness, Citizenship

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I. Preface

The article, "A Side View of Post Contemporary Neo-Confucianism Practical Philosophy: Some Responses to the Issue of 'Outer Kingliness and Inner Sagehood'," begins by affirming Mr. Mou Zongsan's significant contributions to Chinese Confucianism and his profound influence on the author's scholarly development. It briefly outlines the academic positions of Contemporary Neo-Confucianism figures Tang Junyi, Mou Zongsan, and Xu Fuguan, highlighting their efforts to connect the external pursuits of Confucianism with democracy and science. The central argument critiques Mou's concept of the "Self-Entrapment of Conscience," positioning him as a Neo-Traditionalist whose "methodological essentialism" results in a moral practice that is overly rigid, dogmatic, and authoritarian. To address these biases, substituting "methodological conventionalism" in place of essentialism, wherein social norms are viewed as collective agreements that not only reflect the greatest consensus of the community but are also adaptable to changing circumstances through "continual iterative review," thereby responding to the realities of contemporary life.

As a junior scholar seeking insight and dialogue with Mr. An-Wu Lin, I wish to articulate my understanding of his perspectives. After reviewing Mr. Lin's other works, I offer my humble reflections in the spirit of mutual scholarly exchange, with the hope of expanding my knowledge. I respectfully invite Mr. An-Wu Lin's guidance and feedback.

1. On Contemporary Neo-Confucianism and Post Contemporary Neo-Confucianism

The term "Contemporary Neo-Confucianism" signifies an effort to address contemporary global challenges and propose solutions that are distinct from past approaches, thereby rendering it "new." A significant contribution of Mr. Mou Zongsan is his application of Western philosophical discourse to analyze and reconstruct Confucian moral philosophy, facilitating a dialogue between Confucianism and Western philosophical systems. Beyond his academic achievements, Mou advocated for and established the contemporary mission of Contemporary Neo-Confucianism: "connecting with democracy and science," with the aim of realizing the Confucian ideal of engaging in world affairs and enhancing societal welfare. He proposed that Contemporary Neo-Confucianism should "connect with democracy and science through the Self-Entrapment of Conscience."

Since the time of Confucius, Confucianism has faced numerous setbacks and challenges.

Initially, during the autocratic unification of the Qin and Han dynasties, Legalist techniques for controlling the populace were integrated into Confucian thought. In the Tang and Song periods, Confucianism experienced a decline as Daoism and Buddhism attracted more followers. However, the incorporation of Buddhist and Daoist theories regarding the mind and nature by Confucian scholars during the Song and Ming dynasties enriched and fortified its doctrines, grounding them in practical ethics and everyday human affairs, ultimately establishing Confucianism as the dominant intellectual current. As the modern era emerged, Western democracy and science, driven by economic and military power, disrupted traditional Chinese society, prompting the need for Confucianism to adapt to these new realities. Building on the traditional emphasis of Confucianism on the philosophy of mind, Mou Zongsan proposed a framework of "one mind opening two doors," advocating for the Self-Entrapment of Conscience as a means to align Confucianism with democratic principles and scientific advancements. This approach aimed to establish a moral and theoretical foundation for modern Confucian engagement with legal and democratic institutions.

Mou Zongsan (1996) explicitly stated, "The current mission of Confucianism is to initiate a New Outer Kingliness," saying:

"Confucian rationalism, in the contemporary era, demands a new form of Outer Kingliness for its complete expression. The New Outer Kingliness required in our time encompasses both science and democratic politics. Indeed, the public achievements that China has historically aspired to can only be fully realized and recognized under democratic governance." (Mou, 1996)

Confucianism's political ideal is to "hide the world in the world." Mou further elaborates: *"Democratic politics can embody the ideal of 'hiding the world in the world.' This aspiration has always been central to Confucian scholarship, although it has yet to be fully realized in practice. Contemporary modernization primarily seeks to achieve this ideal, which also represents the mission of Confucianism in the present era, referred to as the 'New Outer Kingliness.' Democratic politics establishes the 'formal conditions' necessary for this New Outer Kingliness, allowing public achievements to be fully realized. Additionally, scientific knowledge serves as the 'material condition' for the New Outer Kingliness. The New Outer Kingliness advocates for an open society, democratic governance, the protection of public achievements, and the advancement of scientific knowledge—these elements constitute the essence of modernization." (Mou, 1996)*

Mou Zongsan's theory of "hiding the world in the world" aligns with the concept of an

"Open Society." In contrast, post-Three Dynasties Chinese monarchical politics adopted the approach of "hiding the world in the ruler's treasury," treating the world as personal property governed by a single family. Mou acknowledged that "talking about Wang Yangming and Conscience repeatedly will never lead to science" (Mou, 1996). To cultivate a new form of "Outer Kingliness" through the Confucian study of the mind and nature, it must be achieved via the method of "self-sublation of moral rationality" (Mou, 1996), which is described as a form of "curved approach":

"The act of 'sincerely seeking knowledge' is inherently valued and required by moral rationality. However, when this act is genuinely pursued, it must undergo a transformation, shifting from the perspective of 'the capacity for subjective activity' to 'contemplative rationality' (theoretical rationality). This transition moves from the dynamic process of moral rationality to the static process of acquiring knowledge through contemplative rationality. This transformation can be characterized as the self-sublation (self-negation) of moral rationality." (Mou, 1996)

Mou's theory of the "Self-Entrapment of Conscience" has ignited intense debate among both critics and supporters. A balanced perspective suggests that the theory places excessive emphasis on metaphysical analysis while inadequately addressing the practical aspects of institutional and social organizational ethics: "The self-sublation theory's exploration of China's cultural path to modernization may be logically sound, it often appears to lack practical applicability." (Yan, 1991) Contemporary Neo-Confucianism, which has emerged from traditional communities, is grounded in Confucian principles while adapting to Western democracy and science, showcasing both scholarly depth and a broad vision. Mou's interpretation of Contemporary Neo-Confucianism incorporates Kantian elements into the exploration of the mind and nature, thereby establishing a framework for dialogue with Western philosophy. However, as noted by Jiang Nianfeng:

"Although legal-political subjectivity did not emerge from inherent Chinese culture, and Confucianism's original thought indeed lacks this aspect, it has nevertheless established a foundation for legal-political subjectivity through its moral subjectivity." (Jiang, 1989)

Regardless, post Contemporary Neo-Confucianism has continued to engage with the "Inner Sagehood and Outer Kingliness" tradition, following the work of Mou Zongsan. Since the publication of *The Theory of the Confucian Revolution* in 1996, Mr. Lin has been developing the concept of "Civic Confucianism" for over two decades.

II. Mr. Lin's 'New Inner Sagehood' in Post-Contemporary Neo-Confucianism

After the passing of Mou Zongsan in 1995, his extensive and profound intellectual legacy sparked considerable debate. Just as Confucianism fragmented into eight schools following Confucius's death, the emergence of " Post-Contemporary Neo-Confucianism " after Mou's death led to the rise of both apologetic and critical factions. Mr. Lin aligns himself with the critical faction, presenting perspectives that diverge significantly from those of Mou. In his work, **The Theory of the Confucian Revolution** (1998), An-Wu Lin critiques Mou's theory of "Outer Kingliness," stating: "The flaw in Confucian practical philosophy is that its practices are bound by boundaries, clan systems, kinship, bloodlines, and authoritarianism, all intertwined without clear differentiation. It fails to consider understanding within a self-subjectifying context." (Lin, 1998) In 2023, Lin further asserted: "Inner Sagehood often turns inward, becoming self-restrictive and susceptible to circular, inward-focused systemic issues, which can lead to numerous problems within its boundary-oriented system." (Lin, 2023) Lin contends:

"The emphasis on the metaphysical essence of morality (Self-Entrapment of Conscience to open up democracy) operates on the premise that foundational essence generates function, ostensibly leading to modernization. However, this essence-to-function approach overlooks the concrete realities of the actual world. Consequently, in the context of modernization, this approach often holds only passive significance with limited active implementation. Essentially, it has not offered a robust practical strategy for achieving modernization." (Lin, 2023)

To address this gap and provide a more comprehensive approach to Confucian practice, Lin introduces the concept of "New Outer Kingliness with Inner Sagehood." This approach reflects on traditional society by "correcting the misplacement of the Way," promotes moral practice within democratic systems through "methodological conventionalism," and supports this framework with the philosophical foundations of " New Outer Kingliness with Inner Sagehood." This demonstrates a coherent line of reasoning throughout his arguments.

1. Unraveling the Misplacement of the Dao

Traditional Confucianism, which is aligned with monarchical and patriarchal structures, serves as a moral system where the subjective domain of mind-nature Confucianism often leads

to the alienation of ethics. This results in a misalignment of the roles of "father, sage, ruler, into "ruler, father, sage." In this distortion, the ruler assumes control over the core of the social structure, dominating both the father and the sage. Mr. Lin argues that this represents a historical reality stemming from the evolution of traditional Confucianism, which he terms "the misplacement of the Dao." To address this fundamental issue and properly reassign the roles of "ruler, father, sage," it is essential to recognize the disintegration of the original monarchical structure and replace it with "more independent community and social organizational structures, to the relatively nascent democratic society of Taiwan at that time. The moral system that underpins this social structure must transition to a "contractual social linkage" (Lin, 2009). The concept of "contractual social linkage" primarily responds to contemporary social life. Since the old model of ruler-father-state is no longer applicable, a transformation is necessary to align with democratic and rule-of-law societies. According to Mr. Lin, this shift in Confucian posture and orientation constitutes the "second wave of the Confucian revolution" (Lin, 1999) and represents the contribution of post Contemporary Neo-Confucianism to 21st-century human civilization. Reason: Improved clarity, vocabulary, and technical accuracy while maintaining the original meaning.

2. Methodological Conventionalism

Mr. Lin argues that "we should move beyond the limitations of subjective philosophy and return to the rich world of lived experience to seek the activation and validation of genuine reality, and replace methodological essentialism with methodological conventionalism" (Lin, 2023). This approach is crucial for unraveling the "misplacement of the Dao" in traditional society. In other words, modern Confucians are encouraged to abandon the classical notions of ruler, father, and state, and to re-examine society while practicing morality within the subjective domain of moral practice. This approach serves two purposes: on one hand, it reminds modern Confucians that the subjective domain of mind-nature studies could not alter the dominance of ruler-father structures in the past, which instead resulted in moral norms that oppressed individual lives. On the other hand, it urges post Contemporary Neo-Confucianism to acknowledge the vastly different social structures, lifestyles, and values of today, and to adjust moral practices to be based on "conventionalism" as necessary.

Mr. Lin observes that "the cultivation of moral character based on personal development" is insufficient for addressing the complexities of democratic politics. This limitation arises from the fact that, following the Qin and Han dynasties, Confucianism, constrained by over two

millennia of unified imperial rule, could not genuinely realize its ideals and was compelled to shift its focus inward toward personal cultivation. "The cultivation of moral character based on personal development replaced real-world social practice; originally, self-cultivation was intended for managing the family and governing the state, but now it has merely become an examination of one's thoughts" (Lin, 2016).

3. From Outer Kingliness to Inner Sagehood

Mr. Lin advocates for a post Contemporary Neo-Confucianism approach in which the concept of "Outer Kingliness" is not focused on deriving external governance from Inner Sagehood—specifically, how personal virtue contributes to democratic freedom—but rather on how to adapt internal Confucian teachings to address the new external framework:

"In modern society, structured by contractual political connections and governed by ethical responsibilities, we must re-examine how to achieve 'universal benevolence.' This endeavor is not about deriving new external governance from traditional internal saintliness, but rather about cultivating a new internal saintliness within a contemporary external framework" (Lin, 2009).

The proposal of "from Outer Kingliness to Inner Sagehood" does not negate the idea that "Inner Sagehood leads to Outer Kingliness." Mr. Lin believes that "the Self-Entrapment of Conscience to establish a rational subject" provides a meta-theoretical explanation of the roots of Confucianism, demonstrating that Confucianism can engage with both science and democracy. However, the concept of "Inner Sagehood leading to Outer Kingliness" does not serve as a practical theoretical guide for real-world implementation. To effectively address the moral dimensions within Confucianism, it is essential to reconsider our approach to these issues:

"In the process of democratization and scientific advancement, how can Confucianism serve as both a mediator and a participant? At the theoretical and, more specifically, the meta-theoretical level, what roles can it play in understanding, interpretation, deconstruction, and reconstruction?" (Lin, 2009).

In other words, post Contemporary Neo-Confucianism have already embraced the framework of an open society. The challenge lies in becoming Confucian citizens in this new era of external authority. This necessitates a transformation in thought and an adaptation of the content of traditional internal saintliness. This process of adjustment involves learning and transformation—specifically, how moral individuals learn to function in a society composed of multiple moral subjects. Mr. Lin observes:

"Emphasizing 'metaphysical dimensions of personal development' often overlooks the significance of Outer Kingliness. Outer Kingliness is essential for the transition from a 'bloodline-based communal society' to a 'political and social communal society,' and ultimately to a 'cosmic and natural communal society.' Each of these elements is vital for establishing a 'cultural and educational communal society'" (Lin, 2023).

The "cultural and educational community" is the vessel for a new form of Inner Sagehood. This new Inner Sagehood proposes that individuals are in a constant state of evolution. The essentialist perspective on "original nature" overlooks the dynamic characteristics of the natural environment, the developmental stages of moral subjects in their experiential realm, and their growth toward maturity. This viewpoint is inspired by Wang Chuanshan's theory of human nature. According to Lin, the moral dimension of the "heavenly mandate" cannot be understood purely a priori; it must recognize that: "Destiny is given, nature is born, what is incomplete can be completed, and what is completed can be transformed.

Morality is developmental, dynamic, and culturally cultivated" (Lin, 2023). Lin further elaborates:

"Even if you thoroughly explain the principles of Song-Ming Confucianism, it remains inadequate. Modernization requires a dynamic emergence from the tangible realities of life. This is a genuine and pragmatic process that cannot be dictated by theoretical logic; it encompasses the 'practical order of learning'" (Lin, 2023). "

In summary, Lin's proposal of "from Outer Kingliness to Inner Sagehood" emphasizes the importance not of "Outer kingliness" but of "new inner Sagehood." The concept of "original nature" is timeless and constant, representing the genuine compassion inherent in being human. However, from a moral practice perspective, "original nature" entails obligations and an intrinsic drive to comprehend its social and cultural context. The Confucian classics were formulated in response to feudal systems, monarchical authority, and patriarchal structures. They cannot be directly transplanted into modern civic society; rather, they must be consciously adjusted and adapted. Therefore, modern Confucians need to learn how to interpret the teachings of the classics while understanding the operational modes and values of civic society. This process involves both integration and reconciliation. From the perspective of new Inner Sagehood, Confucians no longer address the question, "What makes us human?" from a static viewpoint; instead, they view each individual as a person evolving toward benevolence. Lin reminds readers that since the May Fourth Movement, Confucians have been operating in an environment characterized by "new Outer Kingliness, learning to understand modern society and respond to its various changes. In exploring the concept of new Outer Kingliness, we must also reflect on the significance of "the originally authoritarian Inner Sagehood" and the process

of transitioning "from Outer Kingliness to Inner Sagehood." (Lin, 2023) Lin further explains:

"We must ask ourselves: How can we cultivate a new approach to Inner Sagehood by understanding the concept of Outer Kingliness? This is where my focus lies. By 'transitioning from Outer Kingliness to Inner Sagehood,' I emphasize that in the process of learning about Outer Kingliness—encompassing democracy and science—we must effectively adjust and harmonize our Inner Sagehood, thereby developing a new approach to it" (Lin, 2023)."

Regarding the "learning of a new inner sagehood," he once stated:

"We must confront the reality of entering society as subjective individuals and address specific institutional and structural issues. The approach to self-cultivation will vary at this stage. I believe that this method of cultivation should be gradually learned through a concrete developmental process rather than through the selection of an abstract or contrived theory" (Lin, 2009). "

Learning a new inner sanctity begins with recognizing oneself as a citizen, thereby advocating for the principle of "first becoming a citizen, then becoming a gentleman" (Lin, 2021). The focus of this learning should be on "not the 'rituals' of traditional patriarchal and familial relationships, but rather the 'principles' of justice under social justice" (Lin, 2009). In his book *When Confucianism Enters a Democratic Society*, Lin discusses the content of civic education, emphasizing that citizens must distinguish between public and private spheres, protect individual rights, and respect the individuality of others. A modern civic society operates on principles of distinction and underscores the shared acknowledgment of objective laws. Understanding freedom as the respect for both oneself and others, while aligning individual will with the collective will, is crucial. Protecting the private domain signifies a recognition of individual rights and a profound acknowledgment of social welfare principles. Regardless of whether actions pertain to individual or public aspects, they should align with the universal principles of natural law and conscience, which, within a civic society, translate into rational, universal demands (Lin, 2021).

III. Brief Review

The above outlines the framework of Mou Zongsan's concept of "Inner Sagehood to Outer Kingliness" and An-Wu Lin's contrasting approach, "From Outer Kingliness to Inner Sagehood." It is essential to address the issue of "Inner Sagehood to Outer Kingliness" and to explore the relationship between Confucianism, democracy, and science. This exploration

stems from a desire to progress alongside modernization while preserving the foundations of traditional culture. Such preservation is crucial for fostering confidence in cultural identity and meeting the demands of a stable and prosperous era. As intellectuals, Confucian scholars should embrace the ideal of utilizing and enriching their cultural heritage to fulfill the responsibility of advancing democracy and science. This concern is articulated in the joint declaration by Tang Junyi, Mou Zongsan, Zhang Junmai, and Xu Fuguan, titled *A Manifesto on the Reappraisal of Chinese Culture*, which focuses on "the future of Chinese culture." Mou Zongsan elucidated the Confucian study of inner nature by linking the "Self-Entrapment of Conscience" with democracy and science. His integration of Kantian philosophy into Confucianism is a successful model that preserves the Confucian cultural tradition. However, Mou's vision for "Outer Kingliness" requires further elaboration, leaving opportunities for future scholars to expand upon it.

In the author's view, although Tang, Mou, and Xu were erudite and actively engaged in both academic discourse and political critique—particularly since Mou proposed the concept of "Inner Sagehood to Outer Kingliness" to address modernization—subsequent scholars have often been criticized for focusing more on "Outer Kingliness" than on its implementation. Chen Chaoying observes, "In contemporary Confucianism, Confucians have been absent from major political reform movements, and significant political reforms often reference Western political thought as the theoretical basis for social practice. Confucianism has been absent both in practice and theory" (Chen, 2012). This absence has even led to criticisms that it hinders Taiwan's democratization (Tu, 2012).

Thus, when An-Wu Lin considers whether Confucianism leads to democracy and science as a false dilemma, he dismisses those discussions and directly addresses the reality of "entering a democratic society" with the premise that "we are already in a democratic society, and we already possess citizenship." He argues that the work modern Confucians should undertake in terms of Outer Kingliness is to be a citizen. This represents a "new Outer Kingliness" endeavor and aligns with the self-requirements of Confucian moral practice. Although An-Wu Lin refers to this approach as a "Confucian revolution," it is fundamentally rooted in Shunshan's scholarship. It does not reject traditional Confucian learning or Mou Zongsan's integration of Kantian principles into Confucian moral systems of "Inner Sagehood leading to outward kingliness." Instead, Lin emphasizes that while a theoretical basis is essential, practical methods must be adjusted to respond to new circumstances. Mou Zongsan made significant contributions within the framework of Confucian theory, providing nourishment and justification for interpreting classical texts and affirming the modern relevance of Confucianism. His concept of "opening up" should be understood as "expanding and sustaining," as Hou Jinming

articulates (Hou, 2011), offering contemporary Confucians a substantial rationale and context to affirm their capacity to embrace and even create democracy and science, despite these not having been historically realized initially.

Since Mou Zongsan has already laid much of the scholarly groundwork for integrating democracy and science, further discussions should build upon this foundation. The superiority of the "Self-Entrapment of Conscience" lies in its capacity to retain the moral subject inherent in Chinese cultural tradition while facilitating the development of democracy and science within this interpretative framework. It offers Confucians an ideological map and a sense of identity and cultural belonging, encouraging active engagement with democracy and science grounded in moral cultivation—an expectation for modern Confucians. By fostering moral self-awareness, individuals can better accept and learn about democracy and science; thus, responding appropriately to an open society becomes a logical progression.

This process must embody continuity rather than mere transition. An-Wu Lin's concept of a "Confucian revolution" indeed emphasizes the focus has shifted from "Confucianism leading to democracy and science" to "how Confucianism can practice democracy and science," hence the notion of "Confucianism's shift." Lin is aware that excessive criticism of traditional values may lead to misunderstandings; therefore, he frequently emphasizes that "benevolence" remains the cornerstone of Confucianism.

As history progresses and we enter the modern era characterized by democracy and scientific advancement, the Confucian classics, which correspond to feudal and patriarchal societies, are unlikely to regain their former prominence. Modern Confucians, while valuing these classics and nurturing their moral character, require practical guidance for engaging with a civic society. This guidance should offer insights, references, and reflections to ensure they remain progressive. An-Wu Lin's "When Confucianism Enters a Democratic Society" provides a comprehensive set of ideas for consideration.

IV. Author's Three Reflections

1. As a Confucian, One Must Embody the Spirit of "Making the Course of Nature Existent and the Desire of Human Extinct"

An-Wu Lin proposes the concept of "from Outer Kingliness to Inner Sagehood," suggesting that Confucian citizens should embrace the existing social structure and historical facts, fully realize the ideals of a democratic system and, through this process, encourages a reinterpretation and deeper understanding of "internal saintliness" to more effectively engage

with their environment. This represents a reciprocal process of internal and external exchange, learning, and improvement. He describes the role of a Confucian citizen in an open society as follows:

Rather than emphasizing how self-awareness ought to be, we should focus on how new consensus gradually emerge within an open and free discourse space through clear, rational thinking and the exchange of opinions. We anticipate that through such unrestricted discussions, consensus will naturally develop. In a contractual society, we strive for an appropriate institutional structure that allows individuals to freely express their thoughts in accordance with their own nature. Throughout this process of self-expression, suitable methods will gradually be refined.

Confucians in an open society, where they have the protected right to express themselves, can comfortably articulate their individuality, needs, and thoughts while remaining receptive to the needs and thoughts of others. Through meaningful dialogue, a consensus is achieved, and it is believed that this consensus can be realized. An-Wu Lin envisions that in such a context, Confucian citizens are not pressured by moral dictates but can exist as beings with "seven emotions and six desires":

We can now acknowledge ourselves as beings with seven emotions and six desires without immediately associating them with the notion of "making the course of nature existent and the desire of human extinct" when confronted with a problem. We do not need to keep such moral formulas at the forefront of our constant vigilance; instead, we should engage in discourse naturally as human beings. This ethical framework does not require advanced ethical reasoning but rather a basic understanding, estimated at around sixty percent. A socially aware citizen who operates at this level can freely express their emotions and return to a natural existence, rather than adhering to a religiously ascetic form of ethics (Lin, 2009).

In Lin's depiction of a civil society, it is unnecessary to emphasize the nature of self-awareness. Instead, individuals should express their viewpoints through clear and rational thinking in order to seek consensus. This is not only a citizen's right but also a fundamental requirement: to speak truthfully, avoid malicious attacks, and maintain clarity and reason. Furthermore, this speaker, by freely "acknowledging oneself as a being with seven emotions and six desires," is not obligated to constantly adhere to the principle of "making the course of nature existent and the desire of human extinct," nor should they feel morally pressured into religious asceticism. As a result, they can live comfortably and at ease.

From my perspective, a Confucian differs from other citizens because he must hold himself to a higher standard. First and foremost, my speech must stem from self-awareness, even though consensus may not necessarily align with my conscious needs or appeals. A Confucian,

possessing self-awareness, understands that a "citizen" focuses on the relationship between the individual and the group, valuing the rule of law and social justice—these are inherently moral pursuits that cultivate one's "public morality." Since Confucians are expected to embody "public morality," the practice of "making the course of nature existent and the desire of human extinct" becomes a necessary discipline.

This raises an important question: What is the practical difference between a person who believes in the democratic system and a Confucian who fully comprehends it? If there is no distinction, can we assert that Confucianism offers anything unique to the enhancement of the democratic system? To rephrase, if the benevolent governance envisioned by the sages and Confucians of the past involved "establishing rites and creating music," with roles such as "the ruler being a ruler, the minister a minister, the father a father, and the son a son," how should a Confucian's benevolence manifest within the framework of modern democratic values? How does a Confucian practice their virtues in a democratic context? If both perspectives stem from benevolence, why do they manifest in different ways? At various times, how should Confucians differentiate their political practices from those of the average citizen? Reason: The revisions improve clarity, enhance vocabulary, and ensure grammatical accuracy while maintaining the original meaning of the text.

Lin seems to overlook the Confucian aspiration of becoming a junzi (gentleman) or even a sage, rather than merely a law-abiding citizen. Confucians hold themselves to a higher moral standard and pursue lofty ideals. Historically, under monarchical despotism, the junzi's ideal of "All under Heaven being for the public" was suppressed within the framework of a familial state. However, with the advent of democracy—a "separate transmission" (Deng, 2015)—the Confucian ideal of public-mindedness can still resonate, foster consensus, and, as one among citizens, respect and even realize that consensus. In practice, the Confucian must continue to be the intellectual (moral standard-bearer) who proposes ideas and ideals, advocates for change, influences others, and elevates society, all while respecting the diverse existences of others—as beings with seven emotions and six desires. Lin's assertion that "acknowledging oneself as a being with seven emotions and six desires, without the immediate need to consider 'making the course of nature existent and the desire of human extinct'" blurs the distinction between moral agency and practical reality. If Lin desires for human relations to guide or support human rights, he must emphasize the primacy of the moral subject. Only in this manner can Confucians attain "human rights grounded in human relations, freedom rooted in self-awareness, and democracy founded on the people" in the world."

The distinction between a "citizen" and a "commoner" lies in the citizen's right to shape

laws through mechanisms such as referendums and electoral representation. In the legislative process, a citizen understands that their personal values (reasonable interests) can be voiced and expressed to influence others and foster consensus; this understanding constitutes moral self-awareness. In traditional societies, commoners and subjects were subservient to their superiors, dutifully fulfilling their roles. Their moral framework was centered on the individual, the family, and the clan, lacking a concept of fundamental rights. The identity of a Confucian citizen is one that Mr. Mou Zongsan would presumably endorse. However, if Mr. Mou were to discuss this identity, it would likely not merely align with a "sixty-point ethics." He stated, "If we speak of outer kingliness, it is clear that it cannot be divorced from inner sageliness"; inner sageliness serves as the foundation for outer kingliness. The establishment of human relations, which refers to the settling of morality, represents the initial stance of Contemporary Neo-Confucianism in embracing Western democratic systems (Li, 2014):

"If we speak of outer kingliness, it is evident that it cannot be separated from inner sageliness. When discussed separately, we refer to governance, achievements, and science; collectively, these elements pertain to outer kingliness. The study of inner sageliness is the Confucian 'study of mind and nature,' whose primary objective is the establishment of moral religion. However, Confucianism as a philosophy fundamentally differs from conventional religions. Focused on moral practice, it aspires to heavenly virtues and culminates in the sage and the virtuous, yet it must also encompass family, state, and all under heaven as a unified whole to achieve its ultimate perfection. Therefore, governance, achievements, and science must be affirmed by it and are essential for realization. Conversely, governance, achievements, and science must also be integrated into the practical study of mind and nature and cannot deviate from this root source." (Mou, 1996)

As Lin stated, Confucians nurtured in traditional patriarchal Confucianism differ greatly from those nurtured in the cultural soil of civil society (Lin, 2009). Nevertheless, it is also conceivable that modern Confucian citizens should indeed differ markedly from ordinary citizens. As Confucians, even if they center their practice on "social justice" (Lin, 2009), they must still respond to the call of conscience and confront the seven emotions and six desires. Lin appears to be pleased to witness individuals liberated from the constraints of monarchical and paternal authority, free from doctrinal limitations; however, he seems to overlook the fact that a Confucian's self-discipline and moral obligations remain constant, regardless of time and context. Whether this constitutes self-imposed suffering varies from individual to individual.

In summary, Lin's interpretation of Confucian citizenship does not conflict with the study

of the mind and nature. While the approach to practical thinking may differ, the underlying spirit remains consistent. He also stated, "Placing virtuous integrity first is an eternal and ever-fresh principle" (Lin, 2023). Rather than calling it a "revolution," I am inclined to see it as a supplementary practical aspect of contemporary Confucianism—an extension of the discourse.

2. As a Civic Confucian, One Should Actively Engage in Promoting Justice within Society.

Moreover, upon further examination, how would this new "outer kingliness" Confucian address contemporary civic issues? As civic Confucians, what public concerns would they prioritize, and what rationale would guide their responses? What rights could be established and recognized for the civic Confucian, and on what grounds? What characteristics might such an individual possess?

Take the issue of women's rights as an example. Confucianism declares the need to "rectify virtue, utilize resources, and enrich life" to "establish a heart for heaven and earth, determine destiny for the people, continue the learning of the sages, and bring peace to all ages." However, aside from Zeng Zhaoxu, who has consistently advocated for women's rights, there are very few active participants in this discourse. Women constitute half of the population—do civic Confucians not regard this issue as significant? What about other pressing matters such as environmental conservation, human rights within the military, labor rights, farmers' movements, land justice, and judicial reform? Where are the civic Confucians in these discussions? Which civic issues do they "actively engage" in? If their involvement is limited to instances when the topic of "de-Sinicization" garners media attention, then the criticism that Contemporary Neo-Confucianism is merely rhetoric without action is hardly surprising. In my opinion, the issue of gender equality serves as a crucial litmus test for evaluating how Contemporary Neo-Confucianism interacts with democratic principles. To understand how Contemporary Neo-Confucianism tackles democratic challenges, one need only ask how Contemporary Neo-Confucianism respond to the issue of women's rights. Confucians, as citizens, should uphold ideals that promote the well-being of all citizens and act positively to be considered "participants in the transformation and nurturing of heaven and earth."

Since the emergence of the women's movement in Taiwan during the tumultuous 1980s, Zeng Zhaoxu has steadfastly and supported gender equality through the lens of love studies, examining traditional Confucianism from the standpoint of human nature. He proposed utilizing the "origin of human relations" in the I Ching as a foundational principle for gender equality (and equality for all), which represents a truly insightful contribution. His persistent

writings have significantly influenced society. However, other scholars have not directly addressed criticisms or challenges from Taiwanese feminists, nor have they actively championed women's rights. If the Contemporary Neo-Confucianism vocally advocate for the "new outer kingliness," yet fail to engage in social reforms, how can the concept of the new outer kingliness gain credibility? How can Confucianism inspire admiration and trust among contemporary citizens?

As Lai HisSan (2015) stated:

"The practice of scholarship and culture, transcending mere discourse innovation, fundamentally represents a competition of value beliefs (principles) and the essence of life (vital energy)." (Lai Xisan, 2015)

Mr. Mou has effectively articulated the theory of the new outer king, while Mr. Lin's concept of "conventionalism" serves as a supplementary explanation. However, given that it is referred to as the new outer king, there is an expectation that Contemporary Neo-Confucianism scholars and gentlemen, in addition to cultivating their internal virtues (rectifying virtue), will also engage with public issues related to human rights and environmental protection ("utilizing" and "enriching"), leveraging their scholarly influence for the benefit of society. Future Confucians will be able to observe in the evolution of Taiwan's democratic society and its historical development the process of contemporary Confucians' participation, which will inspire a similar spirit of active engagement.

In essence, a civic Confucian cannot simply be a passive citizen. The mission of Neo-Confucianism is to engage with democracy and science in response to contemporary challenges. After thoroughly elucidating the connections between democracy and science at both the principled and fundamental levels, one naturally anticipates how Contemporary Neo-Confucianism will further advance the outer king enterprise. Confucians who embody benevolence and a commitment to societal betterment should not only aspire to enter officialdom to effect change. In an open civil society, where individuals can freely express themselves and share ideas, Confucians should cultivate a heightened self-awareness and active engagement, benefiting both themselves and others, while striving to improve the world.

4. Never Lose the Subjective State of Moral Discourse

Building on the perspectives articulated in the preceding paragraphs, I would like to emphasize that what characterizes a Confucian is their dedication to elevated moral standards

and a genuine desire to contribute to the betterment of society. This moral commitment, as an aspiration of the Confucian, may not always result in notable accomplishments in the sphere of external affairs; however, it will invariably be reflected in the subjective state of the Confucian.

Mr. Lin, in many of his writings and papers, frequently disparages the "subjective state of moral practice," considering it one of the main reasons for the failure to achieve external accomplishments. However, when examining the history of Chinese academic thought, it is evident that Confucianism, dating back to the time of Confucius and Mencius in the pre-Qin period, has consistently emphasized the subjective and proactive nature of individual moral consciousness. Confucius stated, "If I desire benevolence, then benevolence is achieved," "If one aspires to benevolence, there is no evil," and "What use are rituals if one is not benevolent? What use is music if one is not benevolent?" Moral actions and external achievements originate from the agency and autonomy of the heart, and virtue that is merely superficial is not endorsed by Confucius. As Confucian thought evolved during the Song and Ming dynasties, the exploration of the mind and nature deepened. Concepts such as "mind," "intention," "aroused," and "unaroused" integrated with moral consciousness to clarify moral practice and investigate the methods and possibilities of becoming a sage or a saint. This approach, which does not depend on external or transcendent mystical forces but instead emphasizes self-cultivation to purify the heart and mind, align with the Dao of Heaven, and achieve ultimate goodness, is distinctive to Chinese Confucianism. This form of moral cultivation, which trains both the mind and nature, is unparalleled in Western ethics and is notably unique. Therefore, if we dismiss the study of moral character in the "subjective state" as unnecessary simply because it struggles to achieve clear success in external affairs, it would be a significant loss.

Zheng Jiadong (2022) argues that "the study of Inner Sagehood and mentality" is the lifeline through which Confucianism can sustain a pure moral consciousness. He poignantly remarks: (The study of the Inner Sagehood and mentality in Confucianism) In an era marked by worldly turmoil and the pervasive influence of materialism, Confucian thought has the potential to transcend these limitations, preserving a thread of the "Dao-tong" (the transmission of the Dao) at a transcendent level. Only in this manner can the spirit and principles of Confucianism avoid being overwhelmed by the surging "tide of history" and prevent becoming merely a tool for a select group seeking to fulfill their self-proclaimed sanctification (author's note: referring to the petty scholars that may emerge from Confucianism's political-educational transformation) and their psychological desire to manipulate others ("ordinary and petty people"). Thus, in the future, Chinese civilization can still be regarded as "Confucian civilization." (Zheng, 2022)

Mr. Lin also recognizes the significance of studying Inner Sagehood, which is why he

states, "Placing virtue first remains an eternally new principle." After considering Mr. Lin's advocacy for a "new Outer Kingliness," I believe it is essential to further emphasize the importance of "Inner Sagehood" in Confucianism.

In "A Manifesto on the Reappraisal of Chinese Culture" (1958), authored by Tang Junyi and others, it is noted that mentality Confucianism lacks a comprehensive framework for bridging virtue cultivation and societal enrichment. As a result, it fails to extend benevolence outward to govern and assist the populace, leading to a retreat into self-preservation. "From this retreat, one may indeed deepen the understanding of the dignity of this inner moral subject...yet it simultaneously obstructs the outward path of this moral subject, resulting in the loneliness and desiccation of the subject itself." In essence, this encapsulates the lament of the Contemporary Neo-Confucianism. Mr. Lin has maintained a keen awareness of this issue, writing for many years on themes closely related to the external affairs of Confucianism. He primarily focuses on critiquing how moral dogmas, when intertwined with traditional patriarchal power structures, distort the human heart with sharp and persistent insight. This critique serves as the intellectual foundation he inherited from the Contemporary Neo-Confucianism, who sought to transcend the limitations of Confucianism and explore new directions. His ideal of "Civic Confucianism" as a new Outer Kingliness is intended to create a space for a diverse array of individuals, revealing the inherent benevolence within a Confucian's heart. His book, *When Confucianism Enters Democratic Society*, represents the threads and culmination of decades of reflection. Reading it evokes a sense of the Confucian desire to participate in democratic society, no longer feeling isolated and desiccated. However, regardless of how brilliant the discourse or insightful the arguments may be, they risk remaining mere castles in the air. We hope that, on this foundation, Confucians can advance further, realizing "human rights imbued with human relationships, freedom with self-awareness, and democracy grounded in the people."

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