

Global Ethics in the Age of Cultural Diversity

Tu Weiming

The emergence of a sense of interdependence among regions, nations, societies, and individuals is undeniable. Whether or not the idea of a "global village"¹ is only an imagined possibility or a realizable goal, the globalizing trends enable the world to become an interconnected community, overcoming vast distances as it is now and crossing virtually all borders. Yet, humanity has never been as divided by wealth, power, influence, and accessibility to economic, social, and cultural goods. Underlying this obvious paradox are forces so serious and threatening to human survival that we, ordinary citizens especially future national leaders, must learn to cope courageously, intelligently, and effectively to, as a joint enterprise, solve these troubling divisions.

I. The Human Condition

It is an unprecedented insight that our species has in recent decades been acknowledged as an integral part of the evolutionary process. We are more than simply a product of evolution because we also contribute, unfortunately often negatively, to what for millions of years has been instrumental in shaping our form of life. To put it more directly, we have become a factor in determining the evolution of the natural environment as well as ourselves as human beings. What we do as human beings has great consequences for Mother Earth. Indeed, our activities are irreversibly endangering the natural order.² The Confucian idea that what we do as individuals in the privacy of our homes is not only significant for us but also relevant to society, the nation, the world, and the cosmos is not a figment of the imagination but an experienced reality.³

Our human impact on nature is such that environmental degradation and the depletion of natural resources directly affect our own existence. It was only thirty-five years ago, in 1968, when human beings, through the naked eyes of the astronauts for the first time observed from space the entire earth and our blue planet. Since then, facilitated by scientific exploration, our seemingly eternal habitat provided by the bounty

of nature is actually vulnerable in very respect: soil, mineral, oil, water, and air. Our conference will focus on yellow dust, acid rain, and marine pollution,⁴ but the list can be extended to include loss of forests and soil, global warming, and the ozone problem. As the noted scholar Ji Xianlin of Peking University poignantly reminded us, whereas conflicts among nations in the last century were often occasioned by fights over oil, water may turn out to be a source of contention in our lifetime.⁵

Equally devastating to the environment are the man-made instruments for self-annihilation, notably weapons of mass destruction. Although these devices are the result of ingenious scientific breakthroughs, they pose grave threats to human survival. We have to come to the recent realization that no matter how well protected a country is in terms of national defense, the danger of being attacked is not necessarily reduced. A sense of insecurity is pervasive even in the wealthiest and militarily most powerful nation on earth. Human security is a highly desirable aspiration but not easily achievable, clearly indicating that we are all vulnerable to forces beyond our control. The case of terrorism is the most obvious. This shared vulnerability makes international cooperation necessary, which may enhance the need for collaborative efforts at all levels -- local, national, regional, and global.

Despite the environmental crisis and the danger of man-made disasters, however, there is hope and promise for humanity. Surely, our vulnerable human condition raises frightening questions and causes great anxiety and insecurity, but it is undeniable that since the Enlightenment of the seventeenth century, the great Western transformation has engendered a process of human liberation that has fundamentally redefined who we are and what we can become. The scientific revolution, which brought about a series of breathtaking technological inventions, empowered human ingenuity, creativity, and productivity to such an extent that human beings have virtually transformed themselves into co-creators of the cosmic process.⁶ In recent decades, the information revolution has changed the way we communicate, interact, and live with one another. This emerging network has made the ancient utopian idea, "within the four seas, all human beings are brothers and sisters,"⁷ a lived experience.

The exponential growth in international finance, trade, tourism, and immigration

makes the world an increasingly interconnected community. The formation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) throughout the world opens up the possibility that transnational cooperation, more effective than the United Nations, is emerging. The proposal for global governance is no longer the dream of a few farsighted statesmen, but also the aspiration of numerous self-defined citizens of the world. The eradication of abject poverty is far from being realized, but the potential is there. Although faith in globalization as an economic solution to inequality has met with a variety of opposition, the belief is still strong that, through the wealth-generating market, the rich will become richer and the poor may also be the beneficiaries of this mechanism.

I am not suggesting that a brave new world is upon us. Yet, if we examine the benefits that science and technology have given to empower the human species, we should be grateful that in many ways we are better off than all our ancestors. These obvious benefits include food, public health, Medicare, longevity, housing, transportation, and a host of other social and cultural goods. Our knowledge about the cosmos (astronomy), subatomic particles (physics), and the application of the genetic code (biotechnology), not to mention the subtle forces that keep the universe together, is unparalleled to any other period of human history. The idea of progress is irrefutable. Indeed, our data, information, and knowledge about nature have provided us with a holistic sense of our blue planet that is intellectually captivating and aesthetically enchanting.

Human beings are far from being omnipresent, omniscient, or omnipotent. Yet on this earth our presence is everywhere. From the tallest mountain to the deepest ocean the human eye has observed with wonderment the geodiversity and biodiversity of our habitat and the human hand has touched virtually all aspects of the lifeboat that sustains us: soil, minerals, water, air, plants, birds, and animals. Furthermore the human mind seems to have an unlimited sensitivity to respond to the cosmos around us; the most distant star or the tiniest piece of dust arouses our insatiable curiosity to explore, to understand, and to appreciate. The human capacity has been so enhanced that if it is put to productive use, the world can be substantially improved as a hospitable environment for all creatures. The potential for us to become the custodian of the earth is great. Human flourishing, in

the true sense of the term, lies in our stewardship for, rather than our domination over, the blue planet.⁸ The resources available to us are rich. The crisis of the viability of the human species may urge us to seek the best opportunity and, perhaps the last, to save ourselves and realize our aspiration to be responsible co-creators of the universe.

II. Emergence of a Global Community

In simplistic economic terms, globalization may mean "the removal of barriers to free trade and the closer integration of national economies."⁹ Globalization so conceived is a positive trend rather than a sinister force. It has the potential of enriching everyone, including the poor. It is certainly the belief of the World Economic Forum where CEOs (chief executive officers) of multinational corporations and political leaders gather annually at Davos in Switzerland to discuss vital issues of the world based on the proposition that globalization, like a rising tide of prosperity, can actually lift all boats, both rich and poor. The Forum symbolizes a tacit understanding, if not a formal declaration, that market forces will eventually eradicate poverty and bring about an affluent society that will benefit all developing countries.¹⁰

Critics of this optimistic view point out that, although several nations have been successful in reducing the percentage of those living in poverty, globalization has had a devastating effect on many developing countries, especially on the poor within them. Furthermore, the so-called Washington Consensus policies, defined in terms of liberalization and privatization, have failed repeatedly to deal effectively with financial crises throughout the world, notably the Asian financial crisis of 1997. Nevertheless, despite the grave negative consequences of "market fundamentalism," the liberalization of financial and capital markets and the privatization of state enterprises seem unstoppable waves of the future. The increasing pressures of free trade inevitably are transforming the world into an interconnected network. A clear indication of this seemingly certain process is the role of the World Trade Organization (WTO) as the major arbiter of trade disputes.

Economic globalization is, of course, only part of the story. Obviously, the jury is still out about its positive or negative impact on the human community. The euphoria

merely two decades ago has now dissipated. Instead, critics of "market fundamentalism," clearly motivated by a strong ideological bias, have been vocal in recent years. The brutal force of the market, more appropriately the imperfect market, has been devastating to many developing countries and extremely cruel to the tens of millions of urban and rural poor throughout the world. WTO itself has become the target of well-organized protests. Its meetings in Seattle and the meetings of the IMF and World Bank in Washington and Prague were disrupted by a coalition of movements in the global civil society, ranging from environmental protection to consumer advocacy. The issue of inequities at international, regional, national, and local levels, the broken promises of foreign aid and the hypocrisy of the advanced industrial countries in assuming responsibility for more sustainable growth loomed large in these protests.

The perfect market, often the assumptive reason behind free trade ideologies, has never existed in human history. Adam Smith's argument in his *Wealth of Nations* (1776) that markets by them lead to efficiency as if an "invisible hand" is at work has been significantly modified by contemporary economists. Simply put, if information is not perfect or markets are not complete "competitive equilibrium is not efficient." ¹¹

¹² F. von Hayek's faith in the workability of the spontaneous market, while theoretically persuasive, is not practical in concrete economies.¹³ Milton Friedman's assertion that in the 1980's Hong Kong was a paradigmatic example of laissez-faire is misleading. The experience of Asia strongly refutes the claim that government interference is always detrimental to economic development.

Probably under the influence of Confucian humanism, Mainland China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Vietnam, and Singapore, whether socialist or capitalist, all take it for granted that strong government leadership is necessary and desirable for the smooth functioning of the market. Anxieties over bureaucratic inefficiency, public accountability, and lack of transparency and corruption notwithstanding, a responsible government is essential for restrain a runaway market. Surely, the role of government differs dramatically according to specific circumstances--direct involvement (China and Vietnam), proactive interference (Singapore), indirect engagement (South Korea), strategic guidance (Japan), passive encouragement (Taiwan), and active non-interference (Hong Kong), but the

government is expected to assume the main responsibility for market failures.¹⁴ Understandably, the demands of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for liberalization and privatization failed to stem the Asian financial crises and, in several ways, considerably worsened the situation. The economic disaster of the former Soviet Union can be attributed to the mind-set and the praxis of market fundamentalists who, without sufficient attention to the institutional infrastructure, dogmatically advocated a course of action that substantially marginalized the role of government.

A merely economic perspective on globalization is inadequate and deceptive. If globalization symbolizes development, economic growth tells only a partial and often distorted story about development. The hope for environmentally sustainable, socially equitable, and politically democratic development requires sound institutions. The pervasive ethos of public accountability, transparency and responsibility in highly industrialized countries helps to "discipline" governments all over the world to abide by international norms of behavior. Even though the hypocrisy of some of the most powerful nations in dealing with foreign assistance is blatant, domestically they do function in a legal framework that is basically honest, efficient, and just. The spread of democratic ideas and practices from Europe and America to other cultural zones (for example, Confucian, Hindu, Buddhist, and Islamic areas) is an observable indicator of political globalization.

In the long run, the emergence of civil societies in dictatorial and authoritarian systems of government may be the most significant sign that world governance is no longer a figment of the imagination. The situation in China is a case in point. Since the reform policies of the 1970s, centralized control has been gradually replaced by a pluralistic mechanism. Surely the People's Republic of China is far from democratic, but the demand for active participation in all important sectors to realize the goals of a level of noticeable prosperity within fifteen years fundamentally eroded the socialist ethos. As a result, the totalistic government either by design or, more likely, by default, is willing to share power with several centers of influence, notably business, the mass media and academia.

On the global scene, the recent appearance of NGOs in practically all spheres of

interest signals an unprecedented dynamics in international cooperation. The seemingly wishful thinking about a People's General Assembly indicates an emerging consensus that the time is ripe for reformulating the UN's rules of the game by making them more compatible with democratic principles.¹⁵ Since the Social Summit at Copenhagen, the U.N. itself has fully recognized the persuasive power of NGOs.¹⁶ The Secretary-General has taken advantage of this new phenomenon to enhance the U.N.'s strengths in finance, relief, and peace-keeping efforts. NGOs not only address vital issues of the world-- the environment, human rights, religious conflicts, migration, and refugees--, but also have almost inadvertently created ingenious methods of considering related issues, such as the movement to ban land mines. The U.N. is particularly suited to integrating discrete groups into an international organization and facilitating transnational institution building.

Another noteworthy development is regional integration. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) exemplifies regional cooperation at its best. The ethos underlying ASEAN is respect, negotiation, dialogue, consensus, harmony, and mutual learning. However, it is a joint venture for the practical purpose of achieving tangible aims, rather than a forum to make idealistic declarations. The recent attempt to broaden its presence in the Asia-Pacific region by exploring the feasibility of an ASEAN Plus Three (China, Japan, and South Korea) is a farsighted move. Although the regional integration of East Asia is still at an initial stage, the potential is there. After all, China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, and Singapore all belong to the Confucian cultural zone.¹⁷

Japan may have been an exception in her cultural identity. Ever since Fukuzawa Yukichi's concerted effort to "leave Asia" in order to become part of the modern West, she has been unusually successful even to the point of joining the G7. Yet, it is inconceivable that, with a view toward the future, Japan can maintain her posture as if she has really left the Asia-Pacific region.¹⁸ Thus, the major intellectual challenge for Japan today is to find the proper way of returning to Asia, without jeopardizing her remarkable achievement in amalgamating imported foreign ideas and practices with indigenous traditions. In the future, Japan's relationships with Korea and China, let alone that with the United States, will be a major factor in East Asian security, stability and solidarity.

Particularly relevant to our United Nations University's Global Seminar (Seoul Session) is the community building in Northeast Asia, involving South Korea, China, Japan, and Mongolia. The purpose of this initiative is to explore challenges and opportunities in this part of the Asia-Pacific region. As Professor Moon Chung of Yosei University, in his lecture on "Globalization, Regionalism, and Nation-States" notes, globalization can either be spontaneous or managed. On the spontaneous side, as a result of supply and demand in the free market, economic interdependence is a recognized fact among newly industrialized countries (NICs). As artificial national boundaries are torn down "an organic and functional network of complex interdependence" has appeared. Managed globalization, on the other hand, may lead to "defensive mercantilism, hegemonic domination, and offensive bilateralism." The practice of Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation, as an open system, seems promising as a form of regional integration. Moon's recommendation for community building in North Asia suggests an open regionalism compatible with, rather than hostile to, globalization.

Undoubtedly the most significant case in regional integration is the European Union (EU). Although it is still unfolding, it is truly remarkable that the dream of a few farsighted statesmen in World War II is now being realized at the turn of the century. Since the process under way is fluid and open-ended, it will take years to know for sure if the EU is durable. Nevertheless, the signs in recent years are most encouraging. The issuance of the Euro symbolizes the strong will of the majority of European countries to unite as one economic system, even as a united polity, with far-reaching cultural implications. Pending Turkish membership will test the resolve of Europe in transforming itself into a multicultural civilization with an open-minded attitude toward its neighbors.

Cultural globalization is more difficult to fathom because it is predicated on a paradox. On the surface, it is surprising that globalization, propelled by Westernization and modernization, has been an intensified process of homogenization. The speed with which it spreads throughout the world brings about dazzling results. Among them, linguistic and cultural losses are apparent. The assumption that the English language will eventually overwhelm the world seems persuasive, especially in the international

business community. While the French elite are deeply concerned that their language has become obsolete, Italian business urges the promotion of English in schools as a way of internationalizing its economy.¹⁹ In either case, the spread of English in Europe, East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Latin America, Russia, and the Islamic world is irrefutable. Of course, English is only one aspect of Anglo-American culture. Films, music, TV dramas, and other forms of entertainment, as well as fast-food and life styles clearly indicate that globalization as Americanism is accelerating in an unparalleled way.

Obviously globalization is not simply Americanization. It seems also to erode the authority of the state, including the federal government in Washington D.C. More importantly, it complicates the meaning of sovereignty and transfigures the boundaries of nationality. A prevailing anxiety among eminent politicians is that the power of the multinational corporations, especially those dealing primarily with capital and financial transfers, undermines the governance of national and international organizations.²⁰ The impact of new enterprises, notably information technology upon society, is inestimable. Corporate culture may be the single most important influence on college students, the future leaders of the global community.

Nevertheless, globalization enhances the desire for cultural identity. The more global our world becomes, the more vital our search for roots. All the "primordial ties" that define our existence are irreducible aspects of our lived world. It is not surprising that the importance of ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, age, land, and faith are much more pronounced now than at any prior period in history.²¹ The strong claim that modernization will eventually make cultural differences insignificant is definitely rejected. "Primordial ties" play a major role in the economy, polity and society in advanced industrial nations as well as in developing societies. No country can avoid the issue of cultural identity. It is worth noting that the term "identity" in its current usage, coined by the psychoanalyst Erik Erikson, first appeared in the 1960s.²² Since then, identity is understood as a personal sense of belonging, the core values that make a group cohesive, the willingness to establish the distinctiveness of an individual or community, and the defining characteristic of an organization, a profession, or an academic discipline. Then how can we avoid "identity" if it is so broadly conceived?

The dynamic interplay between internationalization and localization compels us to examine globalization in a more complex context than either universalism or particularism. The paradox of internationalization through localization or, in other words, cultural identity as an irreducible dimension of globalization opens up a new horizon²³

24

on to understand the human condition. The awkward term "glocal" captures the uneasiness of the "either-or" mode of thinking. To change the basic methodology to comprehend the phenomenon signifies the necessity to radically restructure this mind-set. In assessing the meaning of cultural globalization, Peter Berger of Boston University organized a major team to study this phenomenon from several perspectives. The resultant book amply recognizes that, culturally speaking, globalization takes on a variety of forms that must be appreciated in this age of cultural diversity.²⁵

III. Beyond the Enlightenment Mentality: An Asian Perspective

By far the most influential ideology in modern history is the Enlightenment project. Both capitalism and socialism are products of this endeavor. However, what is pertinent here is not the project itself as elaborated on by philosophers such as Habermas.²⁶ Rather, it is the mentality that underlies the mainstream of East Asian thinking since the late nineteenth century. In recent decades, the end of the Cold War in particular, there has been a strong claim that a version of the Enlightenment, namely capitalism, triumphed. There is no longer any alternative to what the modern West, especially the United States, exemplifies in terms of the wave of the future. A smoothly functioning market economy, a fair and efficient democratic polity and a vibrant civil society are regarded as essential institutional characteristics of human well-being. More important, perhaps, are the values that sustain these institutions--liberty, rationality, law, rights, and the dignity of the individual.

Since I have written on this subject elsewhere,²⁷ my comments on the need to go beyond the Enlightenment mentality will be brief. While the Enlightenment legacy is already a common heritage of the global community, its intellectual scope should be

broadened and its moral basis deepened so that it can continue to serve as a guiding principle for human flourishing. A truly ecumenical vision based on the Enlightenment must be supplemented by three interrelated requirements.

(1) As a strong reaction against the Christendom of the medieval period, the Enlightenment thinkers of the seventeenth century were, in general, against religion. As a result, they initiated a secular movement that overwhelmed the modern West. Secular humanism can hardly account for the vibrancy of spirituality in the twenty-first century. More serious is the proud and arrogant assertion that "man is the measure of all things" and that man alone is the source of the value and meaning of life. Such a view is not only incompatible with the revival of historical religions but also detrimental to the growth of new religions. Actually, the renewed appreciation of indigenous spiritual traditions, mainly because of the increasingly acknowledged environmental concerns, is also an implicit critique of the Enlightenment anthropocentrism. The move toward an anthropocosmic vision is desirable and inevitable.

(2) The Enlightenment emphasis on rationality is a major contribution to human "progress." However, predicated on Francis Bacon's assertion that knowledge is power, instrumental rationality features prominently in the Enlightenment mentality. The exclusive emphasis on individual human ingenuity in exploring, controlling, exploiting, and subduing nature and society reduces the world around us to objectified and lifeless facts. Environmental degradation and the disintegration of community are serious negative consequences of this life-orientation. Rationality, specifically instrumental rationality, without sympathy and empathy, is hardly sufficient for human self-reflexivity.

(3) The values of the modern West, as enumerated above, are universal, or at least universalizable. Indeed, liberty, rationality, law, rights, and the dignity of the individual have become defining characteristics of the modern consciousness. It seems that no persuasive argument can be marshaled to fight against any of these values being inconsequential for meaningful human existence. Even if a government that chooses to deny its citizens their basic freedoms, uses irrational means to control the masses, refuses to be law-abiding, denies human rights, and ignores the privacy of the individual, must find its justifications, often fallacious ones, to cover up for its blatant violation of basic

civility in the eyes of the international community.

The complexity of the global community demands a much broader scope of the essential values for human flourishing. It may be misleading to characterize them as "Asian values," especially when such an idea is politicized to serve an anti-West rhetoric. Nevertheless, it is vitally important to promote them as universal, or at least universalizable, values as well. These include sympathy, civility, responsibility, and communal solidarity. If we are to address the urgent concerns of the poor, if we want to make globalization work for the developing as well as for the developed countries, if we want to constrain the brute force unleashed by the runaway market economy, then we must develop institutions inspired by a whole range of values, both Western and Asian. There is not a sure way to fix the unequal infrastructure of the world order. Without a holistic vision we cannot even begin to humanize it.

IV. Dialogue among Civilizations

Since 2001 when the General Assembly of the United Nations designated the Year of the Dialogue among Civilizations, a new paradigm of interaction in the international community has been in the offing. Unfortunately the tragic events of September 11 may have seriously delayed the full burgeoning of such a paradigm. Furthermore Washington's decision to follow a unilateral course of action in dealing with terrorism has further negatively affected its effectiveness as a new mode of thinking in world politics. In the long run, however, it seems that dialogue, rather than confrontation, will be the norm for international communication and negotiation.

As a member of the "Group of Eminent Persons" appointed by the U.N. Secretary-General to facilitate the Dialogue among Civilizations, I have taken part in an international joint effort to conceptualize this idea and, then, to put it into practice. I have traveled to Dublin, Doha, Beijing, and, more recently, New Delhi to learn about the feasibility of presenting a dialogical mode as the enduring pattern of human interaction at individual, communal, national, regional, and global levels. Again, like in my suggestion that we move beyond the Enlightenment mentality, I have discussed this issue elsewhere.²⁸ I will confine myself to a brief note here.

Despite the power of homogenization, it seems irrefutable that cultural diversity, including linguistic and religious differences, will persist. Although there are trends toward a mixture of cuisine, music, arts, and entertainment in general, the different traditions of eating and playing will likely maintain their distinctive features. Surely traditions are themselves invented and reinvented, but the dynamics beneath these metamorphoses are varied and often untranslatable. The case of religion is particularly noteworthy. It is difficult to imagine that each of the three world religions--Christianity, Islam and Buddhism would be converted to the others en masse. This may apply as well to Judaism, Hinduism, Jainism, Confucianism, Daoism, or Zoroastrianism. Of course, all religions will undergo a major transformation according to their inner tensions or external pressures. Although the conversion of individuals or groups occurs all the time, the likelihood of one entire tradition being absorbed into another is slim.

The multiplicity of religious traditions suggests a new situation where no matter how strong one's faith is, there always are others (otherwise an amicable neighbor, for example) who may subscribe to a radically different form of worship. Even though proselytizing by the three world religions is unavoidable, the importance of peaceful coexistence cannot be exaggerated. Indeed, mutual respect is necessary to minimize confrontation and conflict. Without dialogue, well-organized and powerful religions will attempt to overwhelm the others, thus provoking a strong and violent reaction. On the other hand, without dialogue, religious fundamentalism may develop into militant defenses and aggressive exclusivism.

In a deeper sense, religious pluralism suggests that the time is ripe for us to reexamine Karl Jaspers' idea of the "Axial Age." According to his interpretation, for more than two thousand years, the religious landscape has been shaped by spiritual civilizations that emerged independently in the first millennium B.C., specifically Hinduism and Buddhism in South Asia, Confucianism and Daoism in East Asia, and Judaism (later the other Abrahamic religions--Christianity and Islam) in the Middle East, and Greek philosophy. In 1948, Jaspers singled out Socrates, Confucius, Buddha, and Jesus as the four paradigmatic personalities most influential in world history²⁹ (in the

contemporary context, we should also add Mohamed). Although each of these Axial-Age civilizations follows its own dynamics, it is inevitable that they will redefine themselves in response to the vital issues confronting the earth and in light of the others. This entirely new situation inspires the theologian Ewert Cousins to promote the idea of a Second Axial-Age.³⁰ This felicitous observation offers a new perspective on the dialogical mode.

The need for tolerance is obvious, but tolerance is only the minimum condition for co-existence. All religions must recognize the existence of the other as a natural order of things. With recognition, there is an opportunity to cultivate mutual respect. Respect can serve as a basis for mutual reference and mutual learning. A Christian can learn from Buddhist meditative practices and a Buddhist can learn from Christian social services. A Jew and a Muslim can share a common root in the faith of Abraham. Similarly, a Confucian can learn from a Hindu in the art of spiritual exercises and a Hindu can learn from a Confucian in managing the world (statecraft). It is too idealistic to believe that inter-religious dialogue is possible, let alone practicable, without the ethos of a culture of peace. Religious conflict occurs not only between religions but also within a single religion itself. Often intra-religious struggles are even more vicious and more devastating. How can we assume that dialogue is a realistic alternative to confrontation and outright hostility?

A salient feature of the age of cultural diversity is the consciousness that the other is not necessarily an aggressor, a threat, an enemy, a challenger, or a competitor. Potentially, the other can be a friend, a partner, a companion, a collaborator, or an adviser. The true spirit of dialogue, like in Martin Buber's seminal work on the "I-Thou" relationship,³¹ is mutual responsiveness. When one enters into a dialogue, the purpose is not to convert, persuade, influence, or explain. Rather, it is to listen, to learn, to extend one's intellectual horizons, and to enhance one's self-reflexivity. Through dialogue, which is actually a common experience in interpersonal encounters, our self-awareness is heightened and our ability to understand others is deepened. In the Second Axial Age, the world becomes exponentially more complex and sophisticated. Paradoxically the age-long means of acquiring wisdom--the art of listening and face-to-face communication

-- is more appreciated and more valued as a way of life. Dialogue, far from being an unattainable ideal, is an ordinary practice of learning to be human.

V. Toward a Global Ethic

Globalization enhances cultural diversity. Some scholars maintain that cultural diversity is compatible with and essential to the globalizing trends. This paradoxical situation strongly suggests that, if there is any possibility of a new world order, the need for universally applicable values and norms is imperative. Understandably, philosophers have been exploring the practicability of a global ethic for decades. It is inconceivable that a human community can really come into being if there are no standards of behavior that all community members accept. Although, in practice, such an assertion is too idealistic in our pluralistic society, the aspiration that a universally relevant ethic must be found or reformulated is pervasive among public intellectuals throughout the world. UNESCO, for example, organized a special group (a five year-long project in the Philosophy Division) to examine the feasibility of universal ethics. Under the leadership of Professor Yersu Kim, several international seminars and conferences were convened to initiate a multidisciplinary inquiry on this subject.³²

The dominant trend in this quest for universal ethics is the minimalist approach. Acutely aware of the irresolvable conflict between radically different belief systems, the minimalists strongly urge, in theory and in practice, the necessity to rise above any particular culture, religion, or morality so that the lowest common denominator can be established. They insist that any truly ecumenical discussion must take a transcending view. The danger of being mired in endless ideological debates is often unavoidable. After all, a genuine dialogue between two strong dogmatic positions is nearly impossible. But we should try to suspend our unrelenting commitment to our own faith in order to search for a more basic sharable foundation of communication with peoples of other faiths. Strategically, the “thin” description of what are the essential features of global ethics is the best and, perhaps, the only way out of the quagmire of inter-religious dogmatic quarrels.

The minimalists’ logic of the “thin” approach has generated reasoned books and

monographs. Hans Küng, the Swiss theologian, has been instrumental in conceptualizing global ethics in an inter-religious context. The celebration of the centenary of the first Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago in 1993 provided a rare opportunity for religious leaders to articulate their joint resolution to address the critical need for a global ethic. Hans Küng's effort to come up with a draft proposal acceptable to all spiritual traditions was widely endorsed, signaling a new chapter in cross-cultural religious collaboration. In a comparative civilizational perspective, it is worth noting that all major historical religions recognize the significance of a new human condition: as far as the earth (our lifeboat) is concerned, despite dogmatic differences, we are all obligated to establish a sustainable and harmonious relationship with nature. Environmental awareness is only the most visible manifestation of this new human condition. Indeed, the well-being of the human village (even though it is no more than an imagined community) carries so much weight in religious and theological thinking that seemingly contradictory dogmatic ideas, such as the Other Shore in Buddhism or the Kingdom of God Yet To Come, do not at all undermine the shared concern for maintaining the welfare of our existence in this world here and now. Accordingly many philosophers and theologians take it for granted that a new humanism, occasioned by serious and pressing issues in ecology, security, violence, terrorism, and disease, has become an integral part of religious consciousness. Hans Küng deliberately defines his quest for a global ethic as humanistic.

Underlying this humanistic quest for universalism is the classical Kantian contribution to moral reasoning. Assuming that all rational beings can apprehend the transparency of the categorical imperative, either the immortality of the soul or the existence of God is, theoretically, nonessential to the universality of this core idea in ethical thinking. On the surface, at least, Apel and Habermas' effort to establish an impeccable argument for communicative rationality is still predicated on Kant's transcendental principle. Surely, in recent years, Habermas may have departed from his teacher-friend's strong claim that the transcendental principle is nonnegotiable, but, even with his sensitivity to American pragmatism, his insistence on the perennial rules governing all civilized conversation is never compromised. John Rawls' definition of

justice as fairness is, in a sense, also Kantian. Even though, perhaps as a response to the critique of multiculturalism, in his self-constraint in applying the theory of justice only to democratic liberalism, his interpretive position is un-mistakenly universalistic.

Despite the challenge of cultural diversity, the universalists never question the appeal of generalizable principles. Kūng's persistent effort to identify the Golden Rule in world religions is a case in point. He observes that the Golden Rule, stated either in the negative or in the positive, can be found in Confucianism, Judaism, Islam, Jainism, Buddhism, and Hinduism.³³ He further observes that it is not basic enough to single out truth and justice as elementary values, as Michael Walzer proposes.³⁴ Rather, the "minimum consensus" or the "smallest possible basis for human living and acting together" must be the idea of humanity itself.³⁵ Consequently, Kūng identifies two cardinal principles as the basis of global ethics—"Every human being must be treated humanely!" and "What you wish done to yourself, do to others."³⁶

It should be noted that Kūng's Golden Rule of humanity contains a subtle point that merits serious discussion. Whether the Golden Rule stated in the negative as in the Confucian and Judaic cases or in the positive as in the Christian case is consequential, in the sense that the choice has far-reaching implications. The negative case can be characterized as a principle of sympathy and compassion. According to this principle, since we cannot know others to the extent and depth that we ought to know ourselves, what we take to be absolutely good for ourselves may not be appropriate for others. Therefore, out of sympathy and compassion, we should refrain from imposing our views on others. In a strict sense, the negatively stated Golden Rule is more congenial to peaceful co-existence among religions. Indeed, the self-imposed restriction on evangelism is more compatible with the spirit of dialogue among different religious traditions.

On the surface, this negative principle seems too passive to account for the need for an actively integrated community. The Golden Rule stated in the positive is obviously more congenial to the dynamics of organic social solidarity.³⁷ Moreover, the recognition of the well-being of the others as charged by the ideal of "doing unto others" what we wish done to ourselves suggests an altruism well-suited to communitarian ethics. Avoiding the danger of conflict resulting from proselytizing is such an urgent matter in

our age that we must first cultivate a sense of considerateness and respect for radical otherness. If peace between civilizations depends on peace between religions and peace between religions depends on dialogue between religions, the Golden Rule stated in the negative should take precedence over the Golden Rule that enjoins us to share our blessings by imposing on others what we cherish as particularly meaningful to us. For the sake of encouraging active participation in community building, we must see to it that such a rule be supplemented by a positive charge, "As for the good man: what he wishes to achieve for himself, he helps others to achieve; what he wishes to obtain himself, he helps others to obtain."³⁸ These two principles—sympathy, compassion, considerateness, and respect on the one hand and responsibility and duty on the other - are commensurate with Kūng's Golden Rule of humanity.³⁹

The Kantian idea of treating every human being humanely is a constitutive part of the minimalist approach to the global ethic. Sissela Bok's philosophical work on this subject exemplifies the persuasion of this line of thinking.⁴⁰ In response to Walzer's challenge, Kūng opts for a sophisticated combination of elementary (thin) and differentiated (thick) morality. The purpose of his concerted effort to underscore universal ethical principles is to identify those behavioral norms that are absolutely necessary for the human community to survive, endure and flourish.

The critics of minimalism, often mistakenly labeled as deconstructionists or post-modernists, raise serious questions about the feasibility and practicability of the global ethic. They normally do not take on the theoretical basis of the minimalist position. Rather, they consider issues such as incommensurability and un-translatability across cultural boundaries as sufficient reason for denying the workability of universally shared ethics. Some of them embrace relativism as an inevitable and even a desirable alternative. They definitely prefer a relativist to a dogmatic ethicist position. In most cases, they do not take relativism as an end in itself, but rather as an advantageous procedure to expose the narrow-mindedness of dogmatism.

The instrumental utility of the relativistic position notwithstanding, relativism as a mode of thinking is a serious challenge to universalism. Relativists are suspicious

of the generalizability of many universalistic claims. Indeed, they argue vigorously that the rationality underlying truths, especially the Truth, is itself problematic in our age of diversity. If the culture of peace ever has a change to be realized in our life-world, we must abandon the abortive attempts of abstract universalism. The idea of reasonableness is more germane to the cultivation of civility among individuals and groups. They further maintain that the minimalist position is a form of truism, seemingly self-evident but in practice irrelevant to genuine dialogue among civilizations. Unless we are motivated to engage ourselves in practicing ethics, all idealistic assertions are no more than empty talk. Even within the same cultural, linguistic, or religious community, there is no way to steer clear of intra-group conflict. The quest for truthfulness is wrong-headed. We should instead focus our attention on the issue of meaning.⁴¹

In a rudimentary sense, the difference between truth and meaning lies in our experience. Where truth is aimed at disinterested objective standards, meaning is inexorably intertwined with personal knowledge. Authenticity, sincerity, and reality are pertinent to the subject of meaning. The quest for meaning involves a personal embodiment of what we experience as worth attaining. In aesthetics as well as ethics, attainment connotes an achievement, especially in understanding and appreciation. Taking the case of the body, it has to be comprehended experientially. The attempt to make it an object of investigation inevitably fails. Actually, we do not own our bodies. Rather, as a subject which can never be completely objectified, we learn to become what it has attained.⁴² Meaning, likewise, entails self-knowledge and self-reflexivity. There is often a bodily sensation if we find something particularly meaningful. It is difficult to imagine that meaning is not historically, culturally, and linguistically situated. Meaning is always embedded in the presence of a living encounter.

Meaning is inseparable from conventional wisdom; the judgment of what is meaningful is often intermixed with a deep-rooted sense of the good, beautiful, and true. Abstract universalism is not a requirement for meaning. It may even delude the rich texture in which meaning is ingrained. A salient feature of meaning is its "lived concreteness." A fully embodied meaning cannot be reduced to a few propositions, no

matter how sophisticatedly they are formulated. There is always an extralinguistic referent in the meaning-construction. Language can never thoroughly capture the meaning intended by the speaker-writer. Meaning can be understood and appreciated as an inner experience, even if it can never be sufficiently explained to an outsider. The concreteness with which meaning is articulated makes it unavoidably particularistic. However, it is mistaken to assume that meaning, as a form of local knowledge, can never attain universal significance. Paradoxically, nothing prevents a "thick description"⁴³ of meaning in a specific enough context to have universal appeal.

Although meaning is interwoven with a personal sense of sincerity, authenticity, and reality, it is never confined to the subjective domain. Meaning-creation necessarily involves the other. Under no circumstances a single individual can generate meaningfulness alone, as if it were a private matter. Emmanuel Lévinas' insistence that the other is a defining characteristic of selfhood addresses this issue in a dramatic way. He argues passionately that only living for the other makes our own existence sincere, authentic, and real.⁴⁴

This inclusive sense of selfhood is open and dynamic. By incorporating otherness into the self, the relationship between subject and object or between inner and outer, assumes a new significance. Despite tension and conflict, complementarities and symbioses characterize the fruitful interaction between the self and the other. In *Crossing the Divide*, the report by the Group of Eminent Persons presented to the General Assembly of the United Nations in November 2001, a new paradigm of human interaction is proposed: the other need not be regarded as an enemy, a threat, a challenge, or a competitor; in most cases, the other is a friend, colleague, partner, companion, a fellow citizen, a member of a profession, a comrade in a social movement, or a participant in a celebratory event.

This perception of the other is eminently applicable to inter-religious dialogue. The assumption that a religion is organically self-contained, that its boundaries are solid, and that it clearly separates us (the believers) from them (the nonbelievers) is naive at best. All historical religions and Axial-Age civilizations, like mighty rivers, allow and attract numerous streams to enter into its major flow. Surely, each one of them has distinctive

core values that define its identity, but it is the adaptability and fluidity of these values that enable a historical religion or an Axial-Age civilization to persist for centuries. Virtually all enduring spiritual traditions have the same quality. Self-enclosed fundamentalism may preserve its inner strength for decades, but as soon as its charismatic leader fades away, it can rarely escape the fate of disintegration.

The maximalists assert that a thin description of one's humanity may be strategically efficacious in singling out the minimum conditions for survival, security, and stability. Indisputably, a Hindu, Confucian, Daoist, Buddhist, Jew, Christian, or Muslim is above all a human being. We must first establish the elementary values of being human. Only then can we elaborate on the differentiated values in each of the great traditions. This may turn out to be wishful thinking. A more realistic approach is to take the thick description of each tradition as a point of departure. This painfully difficult procedure of animating the universal through the lived concreteness of the particular may be the only way out of the dilemma of abstract universalism vs. exclusive particularism.

There are hopeful signs that, through dialogue, this concrete-universal course of action may be workable. Actually, in recent decades, inter-religious communication has been greatly facilitated by a joint resolve to regard the faith of other people as intimately connected with one's own. It may be too idealistic to consider encountering radical otherness as a liberating experience, but the celebration of difference is no longer novel in interfaith dialogue. Especially noteworthy is the long-term interchange between John Cobb (Christian) and Abe Masao (Buddhist). The mode of questioning itself, in "Can a Christian be a Buddhist or Can a Buddhist be a Christian?" is profoundly significant. A Christian can learn from a Buddhist (or a Buddhist from a Christian) in order to become a better Christian (or Buddhist).⁴⁵ Dual membership, even multiple memberships, in religious practices is increasingly accepted as normal.⁴⁶ A religious ecumenism is in the offing.

Nevertheless, it is undeniable that, in our age of cultural diversity, we are witnessing with alarm and anxiety the emergence of degrees of ethnocentrism, militant nationalism, cultural chauvinism, and religious fundamentalism unprecedented in human history. How can we avoid a "clash of civilizations"⁴⁷ and imagine there is peaceful coexistence

among religions?

Hope lies in the heightened awareness of religionists to redefine their faith in light of the new human condition. There is convergence among religions in responding to the crises of the Second Axial-Age: the depletion of natural resources, environmental degradation, annihilation by weapons of mass destruction, insecurity, crime, drugs, and disease, just to mention a few. Farsighted philosophers and theologians have been reexamining some of the most cherished dogmas to find ways to confront these new challenges that have never been encountered since the advent of our species. We are urgently in need of a new cosmology and a new way of life to ensure the integrity of the self, the integration of the community, and the sustainability of nature. Ultimately, we must also transcend Enlightenment anthropocentrism and secularity so that we can fully realize that there is purpose in life and that, as co-creators of our universe, we are obligated to acknowledge that our responsibility extends beyond family, community, nation, region, and the world. We are indebted to geodiversity and biodiversity for our existence. Our own cultural diversity empowers us to be the stewards of nature.

The ethics vitally important for our age has to be future-oriented without losing sight of the historical legacy and the imperatives of the present.⁴⁸ An African proverb instructs us: the earth is not only a gift that our ancestors bequeathed to us but also a treasure that is entrusted to us by numerous future generations.⁴⁹ Equally important, the new ethic must be holistic and universal. The universality so conceived is not abstracted from historical religions. Rather, it is the result of fully embodied spiritual traditions (including a variety of indigenous ways of life) encountering the uniqueness of the contemporary human condition. This may be the place to note the incredible circumstances of the African continent. The current situation gives the impression that the poverty, unemployment, corruption, famine, disease, and social disintegration portray a hopeless scenario.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, with a view toward the future, we should also note that Africa is rich in natural sources and geodiversity.⁵¹ Its linguistic and cultural diversity, not to mention the traditional wisdom of the elders in healing, human interaction, social solidarity, and spiritual exercises, is truly extraordinary. The African

developmental potential, both in natural and non-natural terms, is so great that it may eventually rise as a shining example of human flourishing.

Human beings have never been so threatened by our own destructive power. Our viability as a species is no longer taken for granted. We are also blessed with great potential for adaptation, revival, creativity, and imagination. Our own well-being as well as the sustainable and renewable vitality of the earth depends on our actions. One of the most depressing scenarios concerning our survivability is: as we become increasingly clear of what we ought to do to turn the tide of irreversible self-annihilation, the infrastructure and the mind-set constrain us from making any effort to do the right thing. We are victims of our own ignorance and arrogance. The availability of information and knowledge does not automatically make us wise.

According to the principle of fairness, those (individuals, societies, nations, and regions) who are wealthy, powerful, influential, and informed must be obligated to assume leadership and responsibility to promote the goodness of the global community. In reality, however, the developed countries exhibit habits of the heart that are unconscionably self-centered, self-interested, and self-indulgent. The ethos of market fundamentalism is detrimental to the cultivation of justice, sympathy, civility, duty, and communality as shared values. Since the 1991 Gulf War, the political elite in the United States, has been intoxicated by its omnipresence and omnipotence. Wealth and power dominate the world order as conceived by it the only remaining superpower and hegemonic control underlies its *modus operandi*.

Since September 11, 2001, America's perception of herself and the world has undergone a major transformation. The tragic event could have provided a rare opportunity for deep self-reflection and for dialogue with other civilizations, especially the Islamic world. Unfortunately, preoccupied with homeland security, the American administration opted for unilateral action, bypassing international organizations (not only the UN and NATO) and alienating France and Germany, two of its staunchest allies. The road ahead is painfully difficult and the effort to rebuild the United States as a moral

leader of the global community will take years.

Whether or not the superpower transcends national interests as the sole guidance for its foreign policies, the pluralist world with at least three centers of influence--North America, the European Union, and East Asia -- will endure. It seems obvious that globalization fundamentally invalidates the claim that modernization is a linear progression, a rupture from tradition, and a process of homogenization. Instead, traditions continue to be present in modernity; modernization takes many forms, and, as a dynamic transformation, it diversifies as well as it unifies.⁵² It is in this sense that multiple-modernities is an appropriate description of the current situation.⁵³ This new vision makes a single player on the global scene, no matter how strong, a dialoguer, a negotiator, a mediator, a communicator, and a conversation partner, rather than a dictator.

Globalization may lead to oppressive hegemony, yet through dialogue, it may also bring about a peaceful and prosperous community; cultural diversity may cause aggressive exclusivism, yet through dialogue, it may generate a sense of security and stability. The challenge ahead is to form a global ethic rooted in pluralism and open to all human beings. In order to put our own house in order, we must develop an anthropocosmic vision. Unless we are situated in our own home, we will never feel safe; unless we are connected with the cosmic order, we will never fulfill our role as co-creators of our universe.

I am indebted to Ms. Nancy Hearst and Dr. Ronald Suleski, both of the John King Fairbank Center for East Asian Research at Harvard University, for meticulous and thoughtful editorial comments on an early version of this article.

¹ The idea was first formulated by McLuhan of the University of Toronto, see Marshall McLuhan and Bruce R. Powers, *The Global Village: Transformation in World Life and Media in the 21st Century* (New York, N.Y., 1989).

- ² For an inspiring account of the earth from an "anthropocosmic" perspective, see Brian Swimme and Thomas Berry, *The Universe Story*. It is "a celebration of the unfolding of the cosmos--from the primordial flaring forth to the ecozoic era." Also, see Berry's *The Dream of the Earth* and *The Great Work*.
- ³ For the ecological implications of Confucian humanism, see Tu Weiming, "The Ecological Turn in New Confucian Humanism: Implications for China and the World," 130 (4) (fall 2001), 243-264.
- ⁴ Kwak II Chyun, "Environmental Cooperation in Northeast Asia: yellow Dust, Acid Rain, Marine Pollution," in *Community Building in Northeast Asia*, Programme, session III: lecture 5, 46-48
- ⁵ Professor Ji Xianlin's remark was made in his keynote speech at the International Symposium on the Dialogue among Civilizations, organized by the People's Consultative Conference of the People's Republic of China, Beijing, September 11-12, 2001.
- ⁶ For a discussion of the idea of human beings as co-creators, see Tu Wei-ming, *Centrality and Commonality: An Essay on Confucian Religiosity* (Albany, N.Y.: State University Press, 1989, pp. 67-91.
- ⁷ *The Analects*, 12.5 reads: "Sima Niu was grieving: 'All men have brothers; I alone have none.'" Zixia said: "I have heard this: life and death are decreed by fate, riches and honors are allotted by Heaven. Since a gentleman behaves with reverence and diligence, treating people with deference and courtesy, all within the Four Seas are his brothers. How could a gentleman ever complain that he has no brothers?" For this translation, see *The Analects of Confucius*, translation and notes by Simon Leys (New York, Norton, 1997), p. 56.
- ⁸ The Biblical reference to in Genesis, chapter 1 and verse 28, may give the impression that the humans are empowered by God to "replenish the earth, and **subdue** it" and to "have **dominion** over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." I have emphasized the words "subdue" and "dominion" to indicate that for decades, this passage has been cited as evidence that the Christian tradition, in terms of its deep theological assumption, is detrimental to human-earth relationship. See the prophetic article by Lynn White, Jr., "The Historical Roots of our Ecologic Crisis," *Science* 155 (10 March 1967). For recent attempts to give a significantly different interpretation, see Sallie McFague, "New House Rules: Christianity, Economics, and Planetary Living," *Daedalus* 130 (4) (fall 2001), 125-140.
- ⁹ Joseph E. Stiglitz, *Globalization and its Discontents* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2002), preface, ix.
- ¹⁰ The Devos consensus, unlike the Washington consensus, is less ideologically motivated. It seems clear that the Forum is open enough to set a new agenda for exploring vital issues of the twenty-first century. In recent years, the forum has significantly broadened its spheres of interest to discuss topics significant for understanding the present state of the human condition. For example, in its annual meeting in January, 2000, topics such as "Family: the heart of civilization," "The power of imagination: unusual means, surpassing results," "Is globalization for everybody?" "The Future of religion: beyond beliefs?" and "Visions for the future" were discussed.
- ¹¹ For an excellent exposition of this thesis, see Jérôme Bindé, "Toward an Ethic of the Future," in *Globalization*, edited by Arjun Appadurai (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), pp. 90-113.
- ¹² B. Greenwald and J. E. Stiglitz, "Externalities in Economies with Imperfect Information and Incomplete Markets," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 101 (2) (May 1986), pp. 229-64.
- ¹³ For his philosophically sophisticated presentation of the self-regulating market, see Friedrich A. von Hayek, *The Constitution of Liberty* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1960).
- ¹⁴ See Tu Weiming, "Cultural Implications of the Rise of 'Confucian' East Asia," *Daedalus* 129 (1), 195-218.
- ¹⁵ This idea has been advocated by the noted legal scholar Richard Falk of Princeton and University of California at Santa Barbara, see his *Reforming the International: Law, Culture, Politics*, edited by Richard Falk, Lester Edwinn J Ruiz, and R.B. J. Walker (New York: Routledge, 2002).

¹⁶ Hilary Clinton, the head of the American delegation, made explicit that international organizations for their own good must heed the voice and advice of the NGOs in her speech to the planetary session of the conference.

¹⁷ Whether or not Japan is included in the Confucian cultural zone is controversial. Samuel Huntington, apparently for ideological reasons, refuses to define Japan as Confucian. See his *Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996). Ronald Inglehart, on the other hand, takes it for granted that Japan is part the Confucian world. See his "Culture and Democracy," in *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress*, edited by Lawrence E. Harrison and Samuel P. Huntington (New York: Basic Books, 2000), p. 85.

¹⁸ In my view, by far the most succinct statement that Japan is part of the Sinic world in value-orientation is made by the eminent scholar of East Asia, Edwin Reschauer, in his article "The Sinic World in Perspective," *Foreign Affairs* (1974), 341-348.

¹⁹ This concern was repeatedly articulated by leading Italian business executives at a seminar on "Leadership and Corporate Responsibility" organized Aspen Italia at Villa D'Este, May 2003.

¹⁹ The World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995) addressed issues of poverty, unemployment, and social disintegration. The subsequent Copenhagen Seminar for Social Progress, "conceived in the context framework of the follow-up to the Social Summit," discussed such topics as "A World Economy for the Benefit of All," (1996), "Humane Markets for Humane Societies" (1997), and "Political Culture and Institutions for a World Community" (1998), "Defining, Measuring, and Monitoring Social Progress and Social Regress." This point was made most forcefully by the former Prime Minister of Canada, Pierre Elliot Trudeau. However, his remarks in 1996 were not identified but only considered as the general input in the final report. See *Building a World Community: Globalization and the Common Good*, edited by Jacques Baudot (Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, June 2000).

²¹ I have made several references to the issue of "primordial ties." For example, see Chapter II, "The Context of Dialogue: Globalization and Diversity," in *Crossing the Divide*, edited by Gianni Picco (New York: St. John's University, 2001), pp. 51-59.

²² The issue of identity, more precisely "identity crisis" was formulated by Erik Erikson in his seminal work on Martin Luther. See his *Young Man Luther: A Study in Psychoanalysis and History* (New York: Norton, 1993).

²³ For an excellent exposition of this thesis, see Jérôme Bindé, "Toward an Ethic of the Future," in *Globalization*, edited by Arjun Appadurai (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), pp. 90-113.

²⁴ For an excellent exposition of this thesis, see Jérôme Bindé, "Toward an Ethic of the Future," in *Globalization*, edited by Arjun Appadurai (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), pp. 90-113.

²⁵ *Many Globalizations: Cultural Diversity in the Contemporary World*, edited by Peter L. Berger and Samuel P. Huntington (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

²⁶ For a succinct exploration of Habermas' project, see *Habermas and Modernity*, edited by Richard J. Bernstein (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1985).

²⁷ Tu Weiming, "Beyond the Enlightenment Mentality," in *Confucianism and Ecology*, edited by Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Berthrong (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Center for the Study of Religions, 1998), pp. 3-21.

²⁸ For a more comprehensive treatment, see *Crossing the Divide*, edited by G. Picco. Chapter II on "Globalization and Cultural Diversity" is most relevant to our discussion here.

²⁹ Karl Jaspers, *The Great Philosophers* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World [1962-c1995], in 4 volumes. The first volume discusses "the foundations The paradigmatic individuals: Socrates, Buddha, Confucius, Jesus. The seminal founders of philosophical thought: Plato, Augustine, Kant."

³⁰ See Tu Weiming, "Crisis and Creativity: A Confucian Response to the Second Axial Age," in *Doors of Understanding: Conversations in Global Spirituality in Honor of Ewert Cousins*, edited by Steven Chase

(Quincy, IL: Franciscan Press, 1997), pp.401-417.

³¹ Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. Ronald G. Smith (New York, Scribner, 2000).

²⁷ For a summary of the findings, see Yersu Kim, *Common Framework for the Global Ethics of the 21st Century* (UNESCO, 1999). See also *The United Nations and the World's Religions: Prospects for a Global Ethic*, edited by Nancy Hodes and Michael Hays (Cambridge, MA: BOS

³³ Hans Küng, *A Global Ethic for Global Politics and Economics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 98-99.

³⁴ Hans Küng, p. 98

³⁵ Hans Küng, pp. 97-98.

³⁶ Hans Küng, p. 110

³⁷ Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, trans. by Carol Cosman (New York: Oxford University, 2001).

³⁸ *The Analects*, 6.30, see Simon Leys, 9.28.

³⁹ Hans Küng, p. 110

⁴⁰ Sissela Bok, *Common Values* (Columbia: MO.: University of Missouri Press, 1995).

⁴¹ I would like to acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr. Huang Wansheng, a colleague at the Harvard-Yenching Institute, for a fruitful discussion on this issue.

⁴² See *Self as Body in Asian Theory and Practice*, edited by Thomas Kasulis; with Roger T. Ames and Wimal Dissanayake (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993). Also see Eliot Deutsch, *Humanity and Divinity* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1970).

⁴³ For a paradigmatic example of this "method," see Clifford Greetz, *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology* (New York, Basic Books, 2000).

⁴⁴ Edwin Gantt and Richard N. Williams, *Psychology of the Other: Lévinas, Ethics, and the Practice of Psychology* (Pittsburgh, Pa.: Duquesne University, 2002).

⁴⁵ See *Divine Emptiness and Historical Fullness: a Buddhist-Jewish-Christian Conversation with Masao Abe*, edited by Christopher Ives (Valley Forge, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1995).

⁴⁶ For example, see John H. Berthrong, *The Divine Deli: Religious Identity in the North American Cultural Mosaic* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, c1999).

⁴⁷ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*.

⁴⁸ For an excellent exposition of this thesis, see Jérôme Bindé, "Toward an Ethic of the Future," in *Globalization*, edited by Arjun Appadurai (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), pp. 90-113.

⁴⁹ I have heard this articulated in different versions on several occasions, but I am unable to give a precise citation. Even if this is simply attributed to the wisdom of the elders in Africa, its instructive value is obvious.

⁵⁰ It might have been justified for A. Huntington to ignore this point as inconsequential and insignificant to his discussion on the "clash of civilizations", but from a long-term perspective it is ill advised to exclude such a vitally important continent on such a timely topic.

⁵¹ As the oldest continent, it is said the area around Capetown exhibits a variety of soil, rocks and minerals comparable to those in Canada.

⁵² For an example of this intriguing phenomenon, see *Confucian Traditions in East Asian: Exploring Moral Education and Economic Culture in Japan and the Four Mini-Dragons*, edited by Tu Weiming (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1996).

⁵³ See Shuel N. Eisenstadt and Wolfgang Schluchter, "Introduction: Paths to Early Modernities--A Comparative View," *Daedalus* 127 (3) (Summer 1998): 2. Also see the special issue of the Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences entitled "Multiple Modernities," *Daedalus* 129 (1). (Winter 2000).