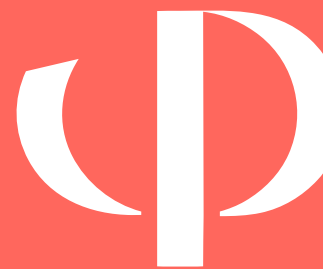


Asian and Asian American Philosophers and Philosophies



SPRING 2023

VOLUME 22 | NUMBER 2

SPECIAL ISSUE ON KOREAN PHILOSOPHY

FROM THE EDITORS

A. Minh Nguyen and Yarran Hominh

Contemporary Perspectives on Korean Philosophy

ARTICLES

Bongrae Seok

Philosophy of Mind and Moral Psychology in Korean Neo-Confucianism

Hwa Yeong Wang

The Korean Ritual Debate and Its Contemporary Relevance

Hannah H. Kim

Defending Juche Against an Uncharitable Analysis

Sun Kyeong Yu

Sudden Enlightenment: Paradigm-Shifting Awakening

Philip Ivanhoe

Korean Philosophy: Comments on Seok, Wang, Kim, and Yu

Bongrae Seok

Response to Ivanhoe

Hannah H. Kim

Response to Ivanhoe

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION



APA STUDIES ON

Asian and Asian American Philosophers and Philosophies

A. MINH NGUYEN, EDITOR

VOLUME 22 | NUMBER 2 | SPRING 2023

FROM THE EDITORS

Contemporary Perspectives on Korean Philosophy

A. Minh Nguyen, Editor

FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY, ATNGUYEN@FGCU.EDU

Yarran Hominh, Associate Editor

BARD COLLEGE, YHOMINH@BARD.EDU

This issue focuses on Korean philosophy. Korean philosophy bears historical influences from Chinese philosophy, both from Chinese Buddhism, which migrated to Korea around the fourth century CE and formed the basis of the Goryeo Dynasty (918–1392), from which the name “Korea” is derived, and from Chinese Neo-Confucianism, which was the core of the state religion during the Joseon Dynasty from 1392 until the early twentieth century. And there are philosophical influences going both ways across the Korea Strait and the East Sea due to Japanese imperialism and war. However, a main strand of argument of all the papers in this issue is to emphasize the ways in which Korean philosophy developed its own autochthonous interpretations of these traditions. These distinctly Korean philosophies were driven by internal features of Korean social, political, and religious life, including the particularly close connection between philosophical learning and state power. Korean state officials governed drawing directly on philosophical ideals and practices, and philosophical argumentation and interpretation were consequently and very directly forms of practical politics.

The issue contains four original papers (by Bongrae Seok, Hwa Yeong Wang, Hannah H. Kim, and Sun Kyeong Yu), a set of comments on those four papers (by Philip Ivanhoe), and separate responses by two of our authors (Seok and Kim) to the comments. With the exception of Yu’s contribution to this issue, the papers were first given at a session at the 2022 American Philosophical Association Eastern Division Meeting, organized by A. Minh Nguyen on behalf of the APA Committee on Asian and Asian American Philosophers and Philosophies. We had hoped that all of the authors could have responded to Ivanhoe’s comments, exemplifying the kind of philosophical conversation one finds ideally at a session of this nature, but unfortunately, time constraints and the 2022 end-of-the-year holiday period intervening in the middle of our editing time meant that only Seok and Kim were able to write a reply.

Two of the four papers treat issues in Korean Neo-Confucianism of the Joseon period. Bongrae Seok’s paper reads three of the major philosophical debates of this period—the Four-Seven Debate, the Horak Debate, and the Simseol Debate—in order to argue that Korean Neo-Confucianism can usefully be understood in terms of a methodological dispute in moral psychology: Should philosophers understand the mind normatively, in light of the regulative moral ideals to which the mind ideally is directed, or should philosophers understand the mind purely descriptively, in terms of the local and causal processes and dispositions that the mind instantiates? This methodological dispute is orthogonal, Seok suggests, to the standard reading of these debates in light of a *substantive* or metaphysical distinction between the priority of *i/li* (理, principle, form) and *qi/qi* (氣, material force, energy)—a distinction commonly mapped onto the two main schools of interpretation during this period. This reading of the tradition, for Seok, has the added benefit of bringing Korean Neo-Confucianism into the space of contemporary philosophical debates in moral psychology and metaethics, including debates about moral foundationalism, moral constructivism, Humean/Kantian moral psychology, and the modularity of moral cognition. Philip Ivanhoe, in his comments, wonders about the relation between the methodological framing that Seok proposes and the more standard metaphysical framing of the disputes. It can’t be, Ivanhoe suggests, that they are inconsistent. And one might suspect, as Ivanhoe does, that there is some connection between the methodological terms and the relative priority of *i/li* and *qi/qi*.

Hwa Yeong Wang examines the lesser-known Ritual Debate in the late seventeenth century CE, which concerned the proper way for Queen Dowager Jau (Jau *daebi* 慈懿大妃, 1624–1688; posthumous name Jangnyeol wanghu 莊烈王后) to mourn the deceased King Hyojong (孝宗, 1619–1659, r. 1649–1659). The required ritual was made more complex by the fact that King Hyojong was Queen Dowager Jau’s stepson. The Ritual Debate was of great political consequence, in ways that Wang spells out in her paper. Yet, given the close connection between philosophy and politics in the Joseon Dynasty, the debate also has many philosophical consequences. Wang reads the debate as displaying practically and in a high register the much-emphasized centrality (political as well as metaphysical) of ritual to Confucian philosophy. That general point is importantly inflected, Wang argues, through the lens of gender, given that one of the main protagonists of the debate was the Queen Dowager. The intersection of gender and ritual opens up, for Wang, a gap between Confucian theory and Confucian practice—a gap that

might be philosophically important for feminist purposes. In response, Ivanhoe raises two general questions about the larger significance of Wang's project. The first question concerns what kind of reimagining of the concept of ritual follows from Wang's reading of the Ritual Debate, and the second concerns the relation between metaphysics and practice in Wang's reading of ritual. In the background of both questions sits the particular Korean connection between philosophy and political practice.

The other two papers focus on issues in twentieth-century Korean philosophy. Hannah H. Kim argues that it is politically and philosophically important to take seriously the North Korean state philosophy, Juche, as a form of philosophy and not to treat it, as many scholars do, as merely a philosophical sham for the use of totalitarian state power, a kind of philosophical nonsense. That is so especially, for Kim, if one wants to understand and criticize North Korean state ideology. Kim aims to make room for proper philosophical criticism of Juche first by situating it in relation to some of its philosophical roots (anticolonial and anti-imperialist Marxism-Leninism, Confucianism, and humanism) and second by arguing that some of its central tenets can be charitably interpreted as expressing ideas and positions drawn from these traditions. Kim's analysis is in line with a central strand of critical theory (from Karl Marx through to Raymond Geuss) that treats even ideology in the pejorative sense (ideology that justifies some form of oppression or domination) as containing some germ of truth. And the important idea at the core of that strand of critical theory is a humanist recognition that *people* follow ideologies, no matter how horrible or destructive, and that treating people as people requires that we treat them not as *complete* dupes of a sociopolitical order, but as recognizing and responding to something real, even if that reality is in various ways distorted and thus their responses to it are distorted. Ivanhoe asks, in response, where Kim's reading of Juche fits in the contemporary political philosophy landscape. It isn't, Ivanhoe suggests, a political philosophy based on moral principles in the vein of John Rawls. But neither is it a merely pragmatic or practical handbook for political practitioners in the vein of Han Feizi or Niccolò Machiavelli. And, Ivanhoe wonders, what exactly is the interpretive burden that Kim has set for herself in giving this defense of Juche? Is it to make any kind of positive case for Juche as a philosophy, or just the negative case of defending it against unfair criticisms, whatever philosophical merits it may have?

Sun Kyeong Yu takes on the large debate about the nature of Buddhist enlightenment. She explicates the Venerable Hyun-Eung's conception of "revolutionary enlightenment" in terms of Thomas Kuhn's notion of a "paradigm shift." For Hyun-Eung, on Yu's interpretation, coming to enlightenment involves a paradigm shift from an essentialist and realist worldview to a worldview based on a Buddhist metaphysics of dependent arising and emptiness. When such a metaphysics comes to characterize one's worldview, one's perspective on oneself and the world is thoroughly transformed; hence, *revolutionary* enlightenment. The analogy with a Kuhnian paradigm shift reveals other features of enlightenment. It is sudden, not gradual, in the sense that no accumulation of evidence (or

principle or commitment or any other particular attitudes) can constitute enlightenment. Enlightenment is a shift in one's perspective, in the frame in which one holds particular beliefs and commitments and other attitudes, accumulates evidence, and engages in particular practices. Enlightenment is a fundamental insight, not something that one "works at." (This may be true even if—like in the case of a Kuhnian paradigm shift—some gradual process is a causal precursor to enlightenment or plays some other, non-justificatory role in bringing about the paradigm shift.) All the same, there might be disanalogies. One might think that, unlike scientific paradigm shifts, enlightenment is a shift from a *false* frame to a *true* frame (in some sense of "true" and "false"), and there is only *one* such shift, not the multiplicity that Kuhn suggests. Ivanhoe raises another possible disanalogy in his comments. In the case of enlightenment, the enlightened person lets go of a deeply held *psychological commitment* to the existence of the self. Ivanhoe suggests that no such deep self-oriented commitment is at play in a scientific paradigm shift, which is usually more intellectual (though one might think there might be such commitments involved—think of the Catholic Church's reaction to Galileo Galilei's proposal of the modified Copernican heliocentric model of the solar system, or Albert Einstein's rejection of quantum mechanics when he said, "God doesn't play dice"). In the same vein, Ivanhoe inquires as to the role of practice as well as "theory" in the analogy. As philosophers of science have pointed out, paradigm shifts are as much a matter of changes in scientific practice as they are in scientific theory.¹ Is the same true of enlightenment for Hyun-Eung and Sun Kyeong Yu?

These four papers, comments, and replies, of course, can only scratch the surface of millennia of Korean philosophy. None considers Korean philosophy prior to the Joseon period, for instance. And there is new work, to which Hwa Yeong Wang alludes in her essay, on Korean women philosophers. But hopefully this issue gives some sense of the philosophical depth and interest of the Korean peninsula, both historically and now in the present time.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank Nhi Huynh, Hannah H. Kim, Vivian Nguyen, Brent Robbins, Bongrae Seok, and Hwa Yeong Wang for their helpful comments and suggestions on an earlier draft of this introduction. Vivian and Brent are currently serving as our editorial assistants, and we are grateful for their outstanding contributions to the editing of this issue. Brent's work is underwritten by the Honors College of Florida Gulf Coast University, where he is a senior, and we would like to thank the FGCU Honors College for their generous support. Lastly, tremendous thanks to Erin Shepherd, APA Publications and Communications Coordinator, for her extraordinary patience and understanding during the preparation of this issue.

NOTES

1. Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970); Joseph Rouse, "Kuhn's Philosophy of Scientific Practice," in *Thomas Kuhn*, ed. Thomas Nickles (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 101–21; Davis Baird, *Thing Knowledge: A Philosophy of Scientific Instruments* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); Alexander Bird, *Thomas Kuhn* (New York: Routledge, 2014); and Hasok Chang, "Operational Coherence as the Source of Truth," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 117, no. 2 (2017): 103–22.

ARTICLES

Philosophy of Mind and Moral Psychology in Korean Neo-Confucianism

Bongrae Seok

ALVERNIA UNIVERSITY, BONGRAE.SEOK@ALVERNIA.EDU

ABSTRACT

This essay discusses the unique characteristics of Korean philosophy during the Joseon Dynasty (1392–1910) by focusing on its philosophy of mind and moral psychology. Korean Neo-Confucianism in the Joseon Dynasty is influenced by the Neo-Confucianism of Song Dynasty China, specifically the philosophy of the Cheng-Zhu school (Neo-Confucianism of Cheng Yi and Zhu Xi), but it developed its own rigorous philosophical analyses of the metaphysical and moral nature of the mind, emotions, and Confucian virtues. The essay will explain the philosophical contribution of Korean Neo-Confucianism to the philosophy of mind and moral psychology through its normative approach (focusing on the regulative and ordered nature of the mind) and psychological approach (focusing on the generative and causal efficacy of the mind) to major philosophical issues of Neo-Confucianism such as the nature of the mind, morality, and emotions.

INTRODUCTION

With its long history filled with diverse schools of thought, Korean philosophy has developed many intellectual traditions. In this essay, I will discuss Korean philosophy in the Joseon Dynasty (1392–1910), i.e., a version of Neo-Confucianism closely affiliated with the Cheng-Zhu school of Chinese Neo-Confucianism. Neo-Confucian philosophy in the Joseon Dynasty is called *Seongrihak* (性理學), i.e., the study of nature (*seong/xing* 性) and order (*i/li* 理) of the universe and human beings. It is a form of Confucianism that focuses on the foundational nature of Confucian virtues and the heart-mind of moral excellence in terms of *seong/xing* (nature), *i/li* (order, coherence, principle), and *gi/qi* (material force, energy). Following the *li-qì* metaphysics of the Cheng-Zhu school, the major philosophical schools of Korean Neo-Confucianism are often identified as the *i*-school (*juripa* 主理派) and *gi*-school (*jugipa* 主氣派). However, Korean Neo-Confucian philosophers in this period started a unique philosophical pursuit in their debates: a coherent understanding of the nature of the mind and morality.

In the sixteenth century, Korean Neo-Confucians analyzed the moral psychological nature of the Four Emotions discussed in the *Mencius* and the Seven Feelings listed in the *Book of Rites* in the Four-Seven Debate (*Sachil Nonjaeng* 사칠논쟁 四七論爭, 1559–1572). In the eighteenth century, the Horak Debate (*Horak Nonjaeng* 호락논쟁 湖洛論爭, 1712–1724) sparked deep philosophical analyses of the pure, unaroused state of the mind that can reflect the nature of human beings. In the nineteenth century, many Korean philosophers engaged in an extended debate on the moral and ontological nature of the mind in the Simseol Debate (*Simseol Nonjaeng* 심설논쟁 心說論爭, 1865–1891).

An analysis of these philosophical debates will demonstrate that Korean Neo-Confucianism in the Joseon Dynasty, although heavily influenced by the Cheng-Zhu school of Neo-Confucianism in Song Dynasty China, developed its own philosophical tradition, a tradition of moral psychology of the Confucian heart-mind. In the following sections, I will give an account of the philosophical orientation of Korean Neo-Confucianism by analyzing the broad implications of the three major debates of the Joseon Dynasty: the Four-Seven Debate, the Horak Debate, and the Simseol Debate. Particularly, I will focus on two philosophical characteristics of Korean Neo-Confucianism.

First, Korean Neo-Confucianism is deeply invested in the moral psychological analysis of the mind and emotions. Second, the philosophical conflicts among different schools of Korean Neo-Confucianism, at least in the three major debates, can be understood as the conflict between the normative and psychological approaches to major philosophical issues of Neo-Confucianism such as the nature of the mind, moral emotions, and moral virtues. I will argue that utilizing the interpretative framework given by the distinction and the tension between these two philosophical approaches is the best way to understand how Korean Neo-Confucians in the Joseon Dynasty investigated the moral, ontological, and psychological nature of the mind and morality.

In this essay, a normative approach refers to a theoretical viewpoint that focuses on the universal, regulative, and moral properties of the mind. In contrast, a psychological approach explains the nature of the mind and its moral emotions through local, interactive, and causal processes of the mind. Seen through the two contrastive approaches to the moral mind, one can understand that Korean Neo-Confucianism is a stimulating philosophical tradition of moral psychology that can be studied in conjunction with comparable Western philosophical theories such as moral psychological foundationalism, constructivism, and modular and non-modular processes of moral cognition.

THE FOUR-SEVEN DEBATE

The Four-Seven Debate is a philosophical debate on the moral psychological nature of the following two Confucian sets of emotions: the four intrinsically moral emotions discussed in *Mencius* 2A6 (pity and compassion, shame and dislike, compliance and deference, and right and wrong) and the seven feelings (joy, anger, grief, fear, love, hate, and desire) listed in the *Book of Rites*.¹ In this debate, Toegye (Yi Hwang, 1501–1570) argues that the intrinsic moral nature of the Four should be clearly distinguished from the morally contingent nature of the Seven. Specifically, he suggests that the Four and the Seven should be explained by the differential contributions of *i/li* and *gi/qi*. In his second letter to Kobong (Gi Dae-Seung, 1527–1572), Toegye states that “although the neither of the two [the Four and the Seven] is separable from principle [*i/li*] and material force [*gi/qi*], on the basis of their point of origin, each points to a predominant factor and emphasis, so there is no reason why we cannot say that the one [the Four] is a matter of principle [*i/li*] and the other [the Seven] a matter of material force [*gi/qi*].”² In this letter, Toegye does not deny the inseparability of *i/li* and *gi/qi*, but he

suggests that the Four should be explained by *i/li* and the Seven by *gi/qi*. Since *i/li* is normative and regulative and *gi/qi* is variable and contingent, the intrinsic moral nature of the Four should be explained by *i/li*, and the variable psychological nature of the Seven should be explained by *gi/qi*. By proposing this type of differential explanation of the Four and the Seven, Toegye stresses the sincere moral drive behind the Four and differentiates it from the morally contingent feelings of the Seven. He believes that the mind feels emotions, but it also expresses its intrinsic moral character and regulative order. Specifically, he takes a normative approach to explain how the Four is different from the Seven.

Against Toegye's view, Kobong argues that although the Four and the Seven are different emotions in terms of their moral characteristics, they are all affective states of the mind aroused by the efficacy of *gi/qi* and the regulative order of *i/li*. In other words, all emotions, whether they are the Four or the Seven, are basically the same: they are psychological states aroused by *gi/qi* and regulated by *i/li*. He states that "[s]ince the mind-and-heart is a conjunction of principle [*i/li*] and material force [*gi/qi*], feelings certainly combine both principle and material force. It is not the case that there is a particular distinctive kind of feelings that only issues from principle and not from material force."³ Here, Kobong takes a different approach, i.e., a psychological approach. He focuses on the local and interactive properties (i.e., being aroused in particular local conditions) of the Four and the Seven. Primarily, they are all emotions with the close interaction between *i/li* and *gi/qi*. Therefore, it is wrong to say that the Four, because of its intrinsic moral nature, is fundamentally different from the Seven or that the Four is driven exclusively by the regulative order of *i/li*.

The Four-Seven Debate continued with Ugye's (Seong Hon, 1535–1598) and Yulgok's (Yi I, 1536–1584) extended discussion. Ugye followed Toegye's view on *i/li* and *gi/qi*'s differential causation/generation (*hobal* 互發) to the Four and the Seven and argued for the distinction between the Four and the Seven. Yulgok, however, expanded Kobong's view and argued for *i/li* and *gi/qi*'s common causation/generation (*gongbal* 共發) of emotions, whether they are the Four or the Seven. He states, "Without material force [*gi/qi*], there would not be the power of issuing; without principle [*i/li*], there would not be that whereby it issues."⁴

To generalize, in the Four-Seven Debate, Toegye and Ugye focus on the *distinctive moral* or *normative* nature of the Four and distinguish it from the Seven, but Kobong and Yulgok focus on the *common psychological* nature of the Four and the morally contingent nature of the Seven. The former stresses *i/li*'s primary or distinctive contribution to the moral nature of the mind, but the latter highlights *i/li* and *gi/qi*'s common or combined contribution to the psychological nature of the mind. Specifically, for the aroused states of the mind (i.e., emotional states), the latter brings forth the critical causal role of *gi/qi* because *gi/qi*, unlike *i/li*, has the causal efficacy to generate emotional states.⁵ From Toegye and Ugye's perspective, however, it is not the physical efficacy of *gi/qi* but the normative moral order of *i/li* that makes the Four a special set of moral emotions. Although the Four are aroused states of the

mind, the physical efficacy of *gi/qi* does not fully explain the normative moral nature of the Four. Therefore, the Four-Seven Debate is the conflict between Toegye-Ugye's normative approach and Kobong-Yulgok's psychological approach to the nature of the affective moral mind.

THE HORAK DEBATE

The same type of philosophical conflict can be witnessed in the Horak Debate and the Simseol Debate. In the Horak Debate, Han Wonjin (1682–1751) and Yi Gan (1677–1727) asked questions about the nature of human beings and the mind: Is the nature of human beings the same as that of other things (such as [non-human] animals)? Is the mind of the Confucian sages the same as that of ordinary people? To answer these questions, they investigated how nature (*seong/xing*) is reflected in the *mibal/weifa* state of the mind, an unaroused and transparent state of the mind. They expected to see the original nature of the mind and human beings in this resting state. In this debate, Han and Yi developed their distinctive explanations of the mind and its moral nature in this minimal state of *gi/qi*.

According to Yi, the *mibal/weifa* state is a pure and transparent state that can reveal the original nature of the mind. He states that "in its original substance, *gi/qi* possesses ultimate clarity and purity—this is the original state of *gi/qi*."⁶ However, Han understands *mibal/weifa* as a psychologically inactive (resting, unaroused, or dormant) state that is not necessarily pure and intrinsically good. He argues that, even in the *mibal/weifa* state, the variability and unevenness are not completely controlled because *mibal/weifa* is still a state of *gi/qi*. He states that "although it [the mind in the *mibal/weifa* state] is quiet, empty, and clear, its varying degrees of clarity and goodness cannot be avoided."⁷

As his explanation of the *mibal/weifa* state shows, Han takes a psychological approach to the mind. The mind can be contaminated and clouded by the uneven temperament of *gi/qi* with varying degrees of clarity and refinement. For this reason, one should think about the different types of nature (*seong/xing*). Because of the varying dispositions of *gi/qi* that affect the nature of myriad things, the nature of human beings is different from that of other things and the mind of the Confucian sages is different from that of ordinary people. However, Yi takes a normative approach to the mind and its *mibal/weifa* state. He takes the *mibal/weifa* state as an ontologically original and morally intrinsic state, i.e., a pure and transparent state of the mind that reveals the original nature of human beings (*bonyeonjiseong/benranzhixing* 本然之性) and the original body of the luminous moral virtue (*myeongdeok bonche/mingdebenti* 明德本體). The Horak Debate, therefore, is another example of how the normative and psychological approaches divide Korean Neo-Confucianism into two competing viewpoints on the nature of the mind and morality.

THE SIMSEOL DEBATE

The Simseol Debate occurred in the later part of the nineteenth century to the early twentieth century in the Joseon Dynasty. Korean philosophers such as Yu Jung-Gyo (1832–1893), Kim Pyeong-Mook (1819–1891), and Jeon Woo (1841–1922) debated the nature of the mind in relation

to the nature of human beings and the original body of luminous virtue (*myeongdeok/mingde* 明德). The debate started when Yu defended Yi Hang-Ro's (1792–1868) view (the mind is *i/li*, i.e., the nature of the mind lies in its normative order of *i/li*) against Jeon's criticism (the mind is *gi/qi*, i.e., the nature of the mind lies in its sensory and reactive functions) and attempted to clarify Yi's view, in consideration of Kim's critical suggestions, to support the mind theory (*Simseol*) of the Hwa Seo School (華西學派) of Korean Neo-Confucianism.

Yi is the founder of the Hwa Seo school within the lineage of Yulgok's *gi/qi* philosophy, but he stresses the regulative moral order by stating that the mind is *i/li*. Against Yi's statement, Jeon Woo points out that nature (*seong/xing*) is *i/li* but the mind is *gi/qi*, and argues that it is wrong to characterize the mind as *i/li*.⁸ Yu Jung-Gyo, one of Yi's disciples, defended Yi's view against Jeon's criticism. He explained and clarified Yi's view and argued that the mind operates and works with *gi/qi*, but its moral nature is *i/li*. He states that "[t]he mind is *gi/qi* and a thing. However, if one moves up to its higher dimension and refers to its virtue, it is *i/li*."⁹ The debate continued with Yu's careful and articulated defense of Yi's view against other criticisms raised by Jeon. The debate continued fourteen years from 1873.

When Yu shared his thoughts with Kim Pyeong-Mook, one of the senior scholars of the Hwa Seo School, another debate started within the Hwa Seo School in 1886. Kim had some reservations on Yu's clarification and supplementation of Yi Hang-Ro's thesis and argued that the mind has the intrinsic moral ability of luminous virtue (*myeongdeok*) and ingenious wisdom (*shinmyeong*). Later, a similar debate on the nature of the mind started in other schools of Korean Neo-Confucianism beyond the Hwa Seo School when Jeon Woo, who represents the Gan Jae School (艮齋學派), criticized the Han Joo school (寒洲學派), specifically Yi Jin-Sang's (1818–1886) view that the mind is *i/li*. Gwak Jong-Seok (1846–1919), one of Yi Jin-Sang's disciples in the Han Joo School, defended Yi's view and argued against Jeon Woo's view that the mind is *gi/qi*.

At the surface, the Simseol Debate follows through different theories of mind from the perspective of the Neo-Confucian *li-qi* metaphysics (i.e., the mind is *i/li* or *gi/qi*). However, in its deep foundation, the debate reveals the conflict between the two different approaches to the mind. Yi Hang-Ro, Yu Jung-Gyo, Kim Pyeong-Mook, and Jeon Woo are all in the same philosophical lineage of Yulgok's *gi/qi* philosophy, i.e., a school of Korean Neo-Confucianism that highlights *gi/qi*'s physical efficacy in active psychological processes of the mind. However, Yi Hang-Ro and Kim Pyeong-Mook (Neo-Confucian philosophers of the Hwa Seo School) understand the mind from the perspective of the moral order of *i/li* and its luminous virtue. According to them, the mind is not just psychological processes and emotional arousals but the foundation of intrinsic goodness and moral wisdom. Although they do not deny that *gi/qi* is part of the mind, they argue that the mind (i.e., moral consciousness, agency, and sense of duty) can be best understood from the perspective of the moral order (*i/li*) embedded in its luminous virtue. Jeon Woo, however,

strongly criticizes the "the mind is *i/li*" thesis of the Hwa Seo School. The main point of Jeon's criticism is that the thesis is in conflict with the motto of Yulgok school's *gi/qi* philosophy (*seong/xing* [nature] is *i/li*, but *sim/xin* [mind] is *gi/qi* 性即理 心是氣). Jeon states that "[u]ltimately it [Yi Hang-Ro's view] comes down to the problem of taking *gi/qi* [of the mind] and turning it into *i/li*."¹⁰

The philosophical conflict in the Simseol Debate, therefore, can be understood as the conflict between the two approaches to the mind and its moral nature. Although the debate continued with the apparent struggle to integrate the *i/li* theory (such as Yi Hang-Ro's) and *gi/qi* theory of the mind (such as Jeon Woo's), it reveals a deep philosophical divide between the normative and psychological approaches to the mind within the Yulgok school's *gi/qi* philosophy. This type of philosophical conflict can be witnessed regardless of the philosophical affiliations of Jeon Woo, Yu Jung-Gyo, and Kim Pyeong-Mook because they are all Neo-Confucian scholars of the Yulgok's *gi/qi* school. Yu takes a balanced stance in his explanation of the moral mind. He understood the mind primarily as a system of psychological activities and processes with its ingenious moral abilities. In its activity, the mind is driven by the variable efficacy of *gi/qi*, but it can become virtuous and achieve brilliant wisdom by following the moral order of *i/li*.¹¹ Therefore, one cannot understand the mind simply by characterizing it as *i/li* without recognizing the psychological activity and efficacy of *gi/qi*. Because of this, Yu is concerned that Yi Hang-Ro's *i/li* theory of the mind can invite misunderstandings and criticisms such as Jeon Woo's and is motivated to defend and supplement Yi's view by arguing that the mind is basically run by *gi/qi*, but it also represents the normative order of *i/li* in its virtue and wisdom.

Against Yu's somewhat moderate interpretation of Yi's view, Kim takes a strong normative approach to Yi's thesis. Kim does not believe that Yi's thesis needs any major supplementation or modification, as Yu suggests. Yi knows, according to Kim, that the mind is an interactive combination of *i/li* and *gi/qi*, and its activity derives from the efficacy of *gi/qi*.¹² However, Yi's intention is that if one wants to understand its essential and intrinsic moral nature, the mind should be understood from the perspective of *i/li*. Simply attending to its psychological activities is not sufficient in explaining the moral nature of the mind, i.e., the mind's ability to recognize moral values/duties, follow moral norms, and cultivate moral virtues.¹³ From the perspective of Kim's interpretation, the best way to understand Yi's thesis is to take a full, uncompromised normative approach to the mind, whether the mind is *gi/qi* or the combination of *i/li* and *gi/qi*. Therefore, the same type of philosophical conflict is observed in the Simseol Debate as in the Four-Seven Debate and the Horak Debate.

I/LI, GI/QI, AND BEYOND: MORAL PSYCHOLOGY OF KOREAN NEO-CONFUCIANISM

One may argue that the conflict between the two approaches is basically the same conflict between the *i/li* philosophy (i.e., the philosophy of the *i/li* school or the Toegye school) and *gi/qi* philosophy (i.e., the philosophy of

the *gi/qi* school and the Yulgok). In fact, a modern Japanese scholar Tōru Takahashi (高橋亨, 1878–1967) explained the history of Korean Neo-Confucianism in the Joseon Dynasty from the perspective of the conflict between the *i/li* school and the *gi/qi* school.¹⁴ According to him, Toegye is the founder of the *i/li* school (主理派), Yulgok is the founder of the *gi/qi* school (主氣派), and this distinction is associated with the two major political parties in the Joseon Dynasty. The *i/li* school is affiliated with the Eastern Party (*Dong In* 東人) and the *gi/qi* school is affiliated with the Western Party (*Seo In* 西人) in the Joseon politics.

Although Takahashi's is one of the popular interpretations of Korean Neo-Confucianism, it does not provide a consistent and coherent explanation of the philosophical conflict in the major debates in the Joseon Dynasty. First, the Four-Seven Debate is not a debate between the *i/li* philosophy and the *gi/qi* philosophy. Yulgok, for example, stresses the role played by *gi/qi* in the arousal of emotions (i.e., all emotions are aroused by the efficacy of *gi/qi*), but he does not say that *gi/qi* is exclusively necessary or important in emotions. Instead, he believes that everything is a combination of *i/li* and *gi/qi*. He states that "[i]t is a mistake to conclude that filthy things do not have principle [*i/li*]."¹⁵

Second, it is important to point out that the Horak Debate and the Simseol Debate took place within the *gi/qi* school in Yulgok's philosophical lineage. That is, the philosophical conflicts in these debates cannot be explained simply by the conflict between the *i/li*-ism and the *gi/qi*-ism.

Third, in the Simseol Debate, Yu Jung-Gyo and Kim Pyeong-Mook developed different interpretations of Yi Hang-Ro's thesis that the mind is *i/li*. If Takahashi's interpretation of Korean Neo-Confucianism is right, how can Yi Hang-Ro, the founder of the Hwa Seo School and one of the major Neo-Confucian philosophers in the Yulgok's philosophical lineage of *gi/qi* philosophy, talk about the *i/li* of the mind in a serious philosophical manner, and how can Yu and Kim from the perspective of the *gi/qi* philosophy discuss the different interpretations of Yi's *i/li*-ism? Therefore, Takahashi's distinction and his explanation of the conflict between the *i/li* philosophy and the *gi/qi* philosophy are not fully applicable to the philosophical conflict developed in the Simseol Debate, where the philosophers in the *gi/qi* school seriously explored and pursued the nature of the mind through *i/li*. Given that Korean Neo-Confucians concentrated on the philosophical analysis of the moral mind and the same pattern of philosophical conflict is observed in the three major debates, it is important to understand Korean Neo-Confucianism from the perspective of the normative and psychological approaches to the mind regardless of Korean Neo-Confucians' affiliation with or support of the *i/li* or the *gi/qi* philosophy. For these reasons, I argue that Korean Neo-Confucianism in the Joseon Dynasty is a philosophical tradition of moral psychology, the central debates of which revolve around the distinction and tension between the normative and psychological approaches that provide contrastive explanations of the moral mind. If the former is devoted to the "moral" psychology, the latter is devoted to the moral "psychology" of Neo-Confucianism.

In the context of contemporary moral theories, stimulating philosophical implications can be drawn from Korean Neo-Confucianism. First, seen from the conflict between the normative and psychological approaches, one can understand the major debates of Korean Neo-Confucianism as the conflict between moral psychological foundationalism (the view that the normative standard of goodness is founded upon the pure and constant nature of the mind) and moral psychological constructivism (the view that the normative standard of morality emerges from the intentional and effortful processes of the moral development and cultivation of the mind). The former explains the moral mind on the basis of the intrinsic or innate moral abilities (such as the intrinsic moral traits of the four emotions [*sadan* 四端] that Toegye focuses on in the Four-Seven Debate), but the latter highlights the developmental processes of the mind to recognize and secure moral norms (such as the effortful moral practice [*yeokhaeng* 力行] that Yulgok discusses in his moral philosophy). The former is comparable to moral faculty theory or moral nativism, but the latter is related to various theories of moral development.

Second, one can also understand Korean Neo-Confucianism as an attempt to integrate the conflict between the two major paradigms of moral psychology: Kantian and Humean theories of the moral mind and agency. On the one hand, many Korean Neo-Confucians believe that moral will and autonomous moral agency reside in the ingenious or enlightening moral abilities of the mind, which seems to follow Kantian moral philosophy. On the other hand, they also believe that our naturally aroused feelings and concerns for others' well-being are the foundation of our moral sense, which seems to follow Humean moral sentimentalism. The question is how to combine or integrate the view that moral goodness exists in the mind independently of the variable psychological inclinations and the view that moral goodness emerges from the naturally arising other-caring inclinations of the mind. Although philosophical debates of Korean Neo-Confucianism are not perfectly aligned with the contrastive orientations of Kantian deontology and Humean sentimentalism, and Korean Neo-Confucian philosophers are not fully successful in solving or resolving their conflicts, philosophical debates in the Joseon Dynasty provide a stimulating opportunity to explore and analyze the relation between the deontological and sentimentalist explanations of moral consciousness and agency.

Third, from the perspective of moral cognition, the philosophical debates of Korean Neo-Confucianism can be compared to the two contrastive processes, i.e., the modular and non-modular processes of moral cognition. When good, evil, virtues, and vices are perceived, and moral judgments are made, the mind goes through particular cognitive processes. If moral cognition is served by dedicated processes that are specialized in recognizing and distinguishing moral categories and exemplars (as the *hobal* [differential causation] theory of Toegye suggests), the mind becomes a modular system of moral cognition. If moral cognition is served by general (i.e., non-specific) processes of perception and judgment (as the *gongbal* [common causation] theory of Kobong suggests), the mind becomes a non-modular system of moral cognition.

In this comparative interpretation, the normative and psychological approaches in Korean Neo-Confucianism can be comparable to the modular and non-modular views of moral cognition, respectively. Although this type of comparative projection of Korean Neo-Confucianism to contemporary theories of philosophy and cognitive science seems a bit anachronistic, it may stimulate inspiring interpretations of Korean Neo-Confucianism and highlight its unique philosophical contribution to our understanding of the mind, morality, and emotions.

NOTES

1. For detailed discussions of the Four-Seven Debate and its philosophical implications, see Edward Chung, *The Korean Neo-Confucianism of Yi Toegye and Yi Yulgok*; Philip J. Ivanhoe, "The Historical Significance and Contemporary Relevance of the Four-Seven Debate"; Xi-De Jin, "The Four-Seven Debate and the School of Principle in Korea"; Jeeloo Liu, "A Contemporary Assessment of the 'Four-Seven Debate'"; Bongrae Seok, "Moral Metaphysics and Moral Psychology of Korean Neo-Confucianism."
2. Michael C. Kalton et al., *The Four-Seven Debate*, 11.
3. Kalton et al., *The Four-Seven Debate*, 32.
4. Kalton et al., *The Four-Seven Debate*, 131.
5. Kobong, for example, states that "[i]t's just that principle [i/li] is weak while material force [gi/qi] is strong." Kalton et al., *The Four-Seven Debate*, 6.
6. Gan Yi, *Oeam Yugo*, Book 4; Suk-yoon Moon and Hansang Kim, "Discussions of the Uniqueness of the Sage's Mind-and-Heart in the Horak Debate," 207–08.
7. Wonjin Han, *Nam Dang Jip*, Book 11.
8. Woo Jeon, *Dan Jae Jib*, I, 2, Letter to Yu Jung-Gyo.
9. "心氣也物也但就此物此氣上面指其德則曰理也." Jung-Gyo Yu, *Seong Jae Jib*, I, 7, Letter to Kim Pyeong-Mook.
10. "終歸於認氣爲理之弊." Jeon, *Dan Jae Jib*, I, 2, Letter to Yu Jung-Gyo.
11. Yu, *Seong Jae Jib*, I, 7, Letter to Kim Pyeong-Mook.
12. Pyeong-Mook Kim, *Jung Ahm Jib*, I. 21, Letter to Yu Jung-Gyo.
13. Kim, *Jung Ahm Jib*, I. 21, Letter to Yu Jung-Gyo.
14. Tōru Takahashi, *The Li School and the Qi School in the History of Korean Neo-Confucianism*.
15. Kalton et al., *The Four-Seven Debate*, 119.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Chung, Edward. *The Korean Neo-Confucianism of Yi Toegye and Yi Yulgok: A Reappraisal of the "Four-Seven Thesis" and Its Practical Implications for Self-Cultivation*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1995.
- Han, Wonjin 韓元震. *Nam Dang jip* 南塘集 [The Collected of Works of Namdang Han Wonjin]. Seoul: Translation Institute of Korean Classics, 1998.
- Ivanhoe, Philip J. "The Historical Significance and Contemporary Relevance of the Four-Seven Debate." *Philosophy East and West* 65, no. 2 (2015): 401–29.
- Jeon, Woo 田愚. *Dan Jae Jib* 艮齋集 [Collected Works of Jeon Woo]. Seoul: Translation Institute of Korean Classics, 2004.
- Jin, Xi-De. "The Four-Seven Debate and the School of Principle in Korea." *Philosophy East and West* 37, no. 4 (1987): 347–60.
- Kalton, Michael C. with Oaksook C. Kim, Sung Bae Park, Young-chan Ro, Tu Wei-ming, and Samuel Yamashita. *The Four-Seven Debate: An Annotated Translation of the Most Famous Controversy in Korean Neo-Confucian Thought*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1994.
- Kim, Pyeong-Mook 金平默. *Jung Ahm Jib* 重菴集 [Collected Works of Kim Pyeong-Mook]. Seoul: Translation Institute of Korean Classics, 2003.

Liu, Jeeloo. "A Contemporary Assessment of the 'Four-Seven Debate': A Comparative Study of the Moral Psychology of Yi Hwang and Ki Dae-seung." *Yugyo munhwa yeongu* 儒教文化研究 [Journal of Confucian Philosophy and Culture] 31 (2019): 39–73.

Moon, Suk-Yoon and Kim Hansang. "Discussions of the Uniqueness of the Sage's Mind-and-Heart in the Horak Debate." *Korea Journal* 51, no. 2 (2011): 201–28.

Seok, Bongrae. "Moral Metaphysics and Moral Psychology of Korean Neo-Confucianism: Explanation of the Moral Mind and Emotion in the Four-Seven Debate." *Irish Journal of Asian Studies* 5 (2019): 11–28.

Takahashi, Tōru. *The Li School and the Qi School in the History of Korean Neo-Confucianism*. Translated by Hyeong-seong Yi. Seoul: Yemoo Seowon, 1929/2001 (In Korean).

Yi, Gan 李東. *Oeam Yugo* 巍巖遺稿 [The Posthumous Writings of Oeam Yi Gan]. Seoul: Translation Institute of Korean Classics, 1997.

Yi, Hang-Ro 李恒老. *Hwa Seo Jib* 華西集 [Collected Works of Yi Hang-Ro]. Seoul: Translation Institute of Korean Classics, 2003.

Yu, Jung-Gyo 柳重教. *Seong Jae Jib* 省齋集 [Collected Works of Yu Jung-Gyo]. Seoul: Translation Institute of Korean Classics, 2003.

The Korean Ritual Debate and Its Contemporary Relevance

Hwa Yeong Wang

EMORY UNIVERSITY, HWA.YEONG.WANG@EMORY.EDU

ABSTRACT

The Korean Ritual Debate is one of three major scholarly debates during the Joseon Dynasty that had a great impact on a variety of aspects of Korean Neo-Confucianism. Despite its significance, of the three debates, the Ritual Debate has received the least philosophical attention, due largely to the political aspects of Confucian ritual propriety, which turned the debate into the basis for purges and executions. Another barrier to accessing the Ritual Debate is its extremely complex nature. In order to discern the true contours of the debate, one needs not only to follow the complicated arguments it generated but also to understand their implicit philosophical meanings and implications within the history of Korean Neo-Confucian philosophy. Drawing upon recent scholarship that sheds helpful light upon these complex issues, this paper aims to introduce the debate and some of the philosophical issues that arose in the course of its development that are relevant to contemporary philosophical discussions of morality.

INTRODUCTION

In the history of Korean Neo-Confucianism during the Joseon Dynasty 朝鮮 (1392–1910),¹ there are three major debates: the Four-Seven Debate, the Horak Debate, and the Ritual Debate. The first two debates have been introduced to the English-speaking world,² but the last, the Ritual Debate, has received very little philosophical attention. Recently, more scholars have conducted research focusing on its political nature and implications. This paper aims to introduce the debate and briefly analyze its main points, how it proceeded, and its consequences—focusing on its philosophical meanings and its implications for contemporary times.

WHAT IS THE KOREAN RITUAL DEBATE?

The Korean Ritual Debate occurred over a period of several decades, beginning in 1659. It initially concerned how the Queen Dowager Jai (Jai *daebi* 慈懿大妃, 1624–1688; posthumous name Jangnyeol *wanghu* 莊烈王后) should mourn the deceased king, King Hyojong (孝宗, r. 1649–1659), her stepson.³ This seemingly simple question reveals, in part, its complicated nature. The issue at the heart of the debate drew forth a series of opinions from a wide range of people in the country and resulted in profound changes in the ruling faction of the time. Because of the consequent effects these changes had on later periods, this issue became the most debated problem in Korean history and one of the three major debates of Korean Confucian philosophy.⁴

Let us set the stage for the debate. In 1659, King Hyojong passed away. During the Joseon Dynasty, a stepmother was obligated to mourn her husband's legitimate children as her own. The Queen Dowager Jai was a second wife of King Injo (仁祖, r. 1623–1649) and King Hyojong was by birth the king's second son, who succeeded his father after his elder brother, the eldest son of King Injo, Crown Prince Sohyeon (昭顯世子, 1612–1645) had died. This state of affairs was not ordinary and lacked any exact precedent; it thus called for the application of an altered rite. Song Siyeol (宋時烈, 1607–1689; pen name Uam 尤庵), a respected scholar-official and a ritual master of the Westerners (Seoin 西人) faction, argued for one year of mourning wearing trimmed sackcloth and carrying a staff (*jachoe janggi* 齋衰杖藜), the rites appropriate for a younger son. Two scholars of the Southerners (Namin 南人) faction, Heo Mok (許穆, 1595–1682) and Yun Hyu (尹鑄, 1617–1680), had different opinions, offering different justifications. Heo Mok argued for three years of mourning wearing trimmed sackcloth, treating the deceased king as the king's eldest son. Yun Hyu advocated that she should mourn him for three years in untrimmed clothes (*chamchoe* 斬衰), the highest form of mourning, as he was her sovereign.

Two fundamentally different views divided these three scholars' opinions. First, should we apply a different principle for the royal house, regarding political status as taking precedence over the familial relationship? Second, when an eldest son dies and the second son succeeds the descent-line, how should the successor be recognized: as a next eldest son (*cha jangja* 次長子) or a second son (*chaja* 次子)? Both Song and Heo followed filial familial rank as their primary criterion while Yun argued for the exclusivity of the royal family. Song and Heo bore different views on the position of the king and differed in their interpretations of commentaries on the ritual text, the *Book of Etiquette and Ceremonies* (*Uirye* 儀禮), regarding the four exceptional cases that included interpretations of the characters, "eldest son" 長子 and "illegitimate son" 庶子. Song Siyeol pointed out that if we were to follow the exceptions covered, King Hyojong should be considered as "(having) substance but not right" (體而不正), and this principle was potentially explosive, because the son of Crown Prince Sohyeon was still alive and this would affect his right of succession. After a series of debates, a final decision was agreed upon, with Song Siyeol's opinion being declared the consensus view. Yet, the exact role

and position of the deceased king remained ambiguous because the decision was officially made on the basis of the *National Code* (*Gyeongguk daejeon* 經國大典), which prescribed one year of mourning for all sons by a mother.

In 1674, the unresolved ambiguity at the heart of the previous debate resurfaced when Queen Inseon (仁宣王后, 1618–1674), the widow of King Hyojong, died. Since the status of a woman followed her husband's familial and social positions, questions arose as to how the Queen Dowager Jai should conduct mourning for her daughter-in-law. However, the second debate did not retain quite the same ambiguity as the first because, according to the *National Code*, a surviving mother's mourning for the first legitimate son and other legitimate sons differ. The Westerners remained consistent with their previous position, seeing King Hyojong as the second son; therefore, they argued that the Queen Dowager should mourn Queen Inseon for nine months as the wife of one of his non-eldest legitimate sons (*jungja* 衆子). This made it clearer that the previous decision regarded King Hyojong as a second son. Do Sinjing (都愼徵, 1604–1678), a Southerner scholar, submitted a memorial, pointing out the inconsistencies in the previous debate and argued for one-year mourning as the wife of the eldest son. The new king, King Hyeonjong (顯宗, r. 1659–1674), realized the discrepancies and their implications. Feeling betrayed and sensing that the legitimacy of his throne was endangered, the king ordered a thorough re-examination of the first debate. The detailed processes and arguments that were involved in this re-examination are beyond the scope of our contemporary interests and this essay. Let it suffice to say that the Southerners, who advocated that the king's sovereign position should be regarded as taking precedence over his filial rank, won the debates. The Westerners, including Song Siyeol, were exiled for misunderstanding the issue and misleading the ruler.

EVALUATION OF THE RITUAL DEBATE

To most modern eyes, the Ritual Debate may seem overheated and a purely doctrinal dispute of historical interest but with little or no significant contemporary value. Some have dismissed the debate as a purely factional dispute that led Joseon Neo-Confucians to neglect *real* problems of their place and time and instead to exert themselves in hair-splitting theoretical discussions that had little to do with improving the lives of the people of their time and especially the commoners. Some have argued that because of this kind of idiosyncratic, unrealistic, and empty argument, Korea fell behind instead of moving forward toward modernity. It is my contention that the Ritual Debate cannot and should not be understood merely as controversy over etiquette or manners or as simply a power struggle. There are deeper reasons motivating the debate, and these have insights to offer to contemporary philosophers interested in ethics, social practices, and the relationship between these two.

To gain a more complete and accurate grasp of the Ritual Debate, it is crucial to recognize the ideological foundation of the Joseon Dynasty and its unique development of Neo-Confucian philosophy. The Joseon was explicitly established based on Cheng-Zhu Neo-Confucian philosophy. At least in terms of the ideology of

the ruling class, it was a country led by philosophers—a fact that might have pleased Plato. Moreover, Joseon Neo-Confucian scholar-officials did not just discuss philosophy. They formulated policies and governed, and their political and social institutions were codified in a set of rituals; they ruled by ritual (*yechi* 禮治).⁵ Since rituals both granted obligations and powers to government officials and limited their individual roles and prerogatives, ritual functioned as a form of “constitutionalism”⁶ and offered a means to engage in “practical reasoning [concerning] the theoretical conundrum of the throne.”⁷

The social and moral order that Neo-Confucians had carefully constructed collapsed⁸ as a result of two major invasions: one by Japan (1592 and 1598) and another by the Manchus (1627 and 1636). Internationally, during this period, the Great Ming Dynasty (大明, 1368–1644) fell and the barbarian Qing Dynasty (清, 1644–1912) was established. This marked not only political regime change but also a great threat to the whole of Confucian civilization. Facing the acute need to redraw the boundary between civilization and barbarity while symbolically constructing Korea’s position as the smaller new center of Confucian civilization, Korean Neo-Confucians sought for ways to restore or rebuild a new order and episteme based on ritual propriety. This new reconstruction cannot be understood apart from Korea’s unique development of a set of questions that moved Korean Neo-Confucianism to another level of sophistication. The following brief description of main arguments and key terms will crystalize how the Ritual Debate was connected to their metaphysical views.

The former ruler, King Injo, had violated the agnatic principle (e.g., 宗法) and passed his throne to his second legitimate son instead of his living grandson, the son of the eldest legitimate son, Crown Prince Sohyeon. This is against what is prescribed according to the correct rite (*jeongnye* 正禮), and the death of King Hyojong unavoidably revealed the king’s filial rank according to the principle. Scholar-officials had different interpretations of this situation concerning the altered rite (*byeonye* 變禮). On the one hand, they argued what would be correct, and on another, what the textual evidence supports in light of the theory of the “rectification of names.”⁹

One of the big differences between them was whether they agreed with the “universal application of ritual” (天下同禮) or recognized the exceptionalism of the royal family (王者禮不同士庶).¹⁰ The former stance implies that there is one governing principle for all people, the agnatic principle, and parent-children relationships override all other relationships, meaning that a mother cannot be considered as a sovereign because the parent-child relationship is a heaven-endowed natural principle. The latter stresses the ruler’s unique position as a ruler and parent for all people and argues that the ruler’s natural filial rank must be altered to ensure he would be mourned with the utmost honor. In light of these concerns, we can already appreciate the extent to which apparent scholastic hair-splitting about what is the proper mourning rite actually directly concerns and affects moral and political issues of the highest order.

Although it is debatable whether Song, Heo, and Yun’s fundamental metaphysical views differ,¹¹ it seems clear that their views on ritual are strongly influenced by aspects of their metaphysical views. Their unprecedentedly strong belief in the unity of all under heaven and pattern-principles as the underlying principle, and the feeling of urgency to protect and maintain the one single line of agnatic lineage as a way to preserve or restore a permanent harmonious order, cannot be explained without taking into account their philosophical beliefs as Cheng-Zhu Neo-Confucian philosopher-officials in seventeenth-century Korea. For example, the key terms Song Siyeol used demonstrate this kind of metaphysical connection clearly: the universality of the patrilineal descent-line, “not wearing three-year untrimmed mourning twice” (*buricham* 不二斬) and “no two right lines” (*muitong* 無二統). There should be only a single right descent-line, and this principle is externalized by following the utmost form of mourning: three years in untrimmed attire, only once. The “two” represent “multiplicity” and the “right line” (*tong* 統) and “three-year mourning in untrimmed attire” (斬) are external forms of pattern-principle. Song had a strong belief in “ultimate oneness” in all its forms and expressions, and this faith reflects the Neo-Confucian belief in there being “one pattern-principle with many manifestations” (理一分殊).¹²

All three thinkers believed in the oneness of the agnatic line as a symbolic representation of this cosmic order. But their understanding of “three-year mourning in untrimmed attire” varied. Since King Injo, the father of King Hyojong, mourned his eldest son, Crown Prince Sohyeon, for three years in untrimmed attire, this ultimate expression should not be repeated, Song argued. Heo Mok and Yun Hyu disagreed with Song Siyeol on this matter but offered different reasons and textual support. While Heo still considered King Hyojong’s familial position as the second eldest son, who is entitled to the “three-year mourning in trimmed attire,” Yun insisted that the Queen Dowager should mourn the deceased king’s son as her sovereign (*sinmoseol* 臣母說) based on “亂臣十人.”¹³ Yun’s view was criticized as being against Confucian ideas and was rejected by most of his contemporaries, including members of the Southerners faction to which he himself belonged.¹⁴ A parent-child relationship and family are natural human relationships that constitute the core of Confucianism. When one’s political obligation and familial duty clash, the Confucian solution is to choose familial duty.¹⁵ For Song, Heo, and other contemporary Neo-Confucians, treating one’s parent as a subject was unacceptable.

Yet, the agnatic principle was more than a *natural* principle of blood relationship between biological father and son. The principle was designed by human beings with other accompanying rules to ensure its structure and maintenance against all potential natural failures (e.g., the eldest son not being able to produce a son). The unchanging descent-line was organized and based not only on the principle of “keeping close those who are close” (*chinchin* 親親) but also on “honoring those who are honorable (*jonjon* 尊尊).”¹⁶ The principle was not in force between a father and all his sons, but only his eldest son from a legitimate wife. Biological children were discriminated by their gender and birth order, matters in which they had no

choice. Children were organized in a hierarchical order; one was more honorable than another. Human emotions or disposition (人情) were regulated by ritual prescription (禮制). What would be a standard rite and what would be an altered rite were designated either by the ancient sages (e.g., ritual classics such as the *Book of Rites*) or by the worthies and great masters (e.g., commentaries and ritual manuals by Zhu Xi). But these ritual principles cannot be blindly applied and must be considered within the given time and space. A true Confucian scholar-official who has the knowledge, experience, respectful status, and rank can understand what pattern-principle is and when and how it can be applied universally, as well as what can be distinguished or discriminated, leading to a complex and delicate balance. In other words, whose view determined what was right implied the person's proximity to sagehood; those with such knowledge and wisdom had clear warrants for being granted and remaining in political power so that they could assist a ruler.

CONTEMPORARY IMPLICATIONS

The seventeenth-century Korean Ritual Debate presents two important lessons that are relevant to people in modern society. First, the debate reminds us of the philosophical significance of ritual or ritual propriety for Confucians, especially Cheng-Zhu orthodox Neo-Confucians. Unlike Chinese Neo-Confucians, for whom court politics and local voluntarism were never combined,¹⁷ seventeenth-century Korean Confucians offer examples in which these two were inextricably combined based on their theoretical and academic development and full understanding of Cheng-Zhu Neo-Confucian framework. Within different historical and sociopolitical circumstances, the matter of "how should the Queen Dowager mourn her deceased step-son king" had further moral and philosophical implications. In addition to the issues that were raised earlier, the Korean Ritual Debate shows that there are "gaps" between the metaphysics and ethics of Confucianism and its application in reality,¹⁸ and that these gaps are extremely complex and difficult to understand and require delicate negotiation. The gaps might appear simple and easy to cut or eliminate from the perspective of a modern academic philosopher, but if one is committed to or interested in Confucianism as a way of life, the gaps bear more weight and call for rigorous philosophical contemplation. For example, Confucian mourning rituals reveal their views on death and the relationship between the dead and the living, and confirm and reorganize the positions of the surviving living people. For those who wish to fully understand the views involved or reform contemporary mourning rituals, the Korean Ritual Debate offers a full, detailed, and nuanced picture of the conceptual and practical landscape one must navigate.

Second, the Korean Ritual Debate helps us understand issues related to women and gender in Confucian philosophy. The Ritual Debate was a turning point in the dissemination of the agnatic principle. As a result, an agnatic consciousness spread across the country, even reaching to and affecting local Confucians. Throughout more than two decades (from 1659 to 1679) of the debate, not only scholar-officials in the court but also students at the National Confucian Academy, as well as private scholars

and students in local communities, participated.¹⁹ Even the reigning kings, who normally relied on and deferred to the decisions of counselors and scholar-officials, started to look into the specifics of ritual texts, scrutinized their implicit and explicit meanings, and at times actively joined the debate. This wide involvement heightened people's agnatic consciousness and sharpened its practice, and the sociopolitical consequences influenced people's thought and everyday life. Despite the tremendous changes in nineteenth-century and twentieth-century Korea, one sees the strong and persistent influence of patrilineal thought and practice in Korean society.²⁰

The most recent studies of the Korean Ritual Debate have revealed issues related to women and gender. Ha Yeoju has explored the debates from the perspective of Queen Dowager Jau. Queen Dowager Jau was the one whose mourning attire was the central object of concern in all these debates, but she had hardly received any scholarly attention.²² Ha Yeoju also brings our attention to the fact that the Queen Dowager contributed to the expansion of (royal) women's ritual participation in terms of physical space.²³ This historical insight calls for philosophical analysis. In my research on Song Siyeol's views on rituals for women and their philosophical meanings, I argued that the Korean Ritual Debate "signifies the momentum of the actualization of patrilineal succession, the Confucian ideal succession, in reality in a fuller shape"²⁴ and that Song's views on the debate demonstrate how he reinforced the right of the descent-line and spread of patrilineal consciousness. By presenting topics and textual evidence focusing on women and gender, the Korean Ritual Debate and Korean Neo-Confucian theorization offer one way to understand the "rules of exclusion, its negativities, [and] the ways in which it coerced people in their everyday life."²⁵ We might ask what a feminist reformation of mourning rituals would look like. Can feminist reform coexist with the ideal of oneness based on the traditional pattern-principle or should it accommodate multiplicity? In order to further explore these topics, I plan to examine Korean women Neo-Confucians who knew (understood) ritual.²⁶

CONCLUSION

To pursue oneness²⁷ with "varieties of moral possibility,"²⁸ one needs imagination drawn from our cultural reservoirs concerning the nature of persons and the nature of reality. Some Western philosophers are interested in "rehabilitat[ing] the cosmic dimension of ritual,"²⁹ seeing "ritual activities as embodying metaphysics."³⁰ Yet, some Confucian philosophers try to see ritual apart from its metaphysical foundation. Interpreting ritual apart from its metaphysics may be possible and valuable, but the danger is that "in so doing, one is abstracting the actions from the context that provides their justification as wisdom."³¹ In the case of Confucianism, "If there is no basis for talking about rituals that support true visions of authentically good human lives and people who are moved by such rituals to sincerely embody such ideals,"³² it cannot be called ritual.

Robert Neville argues that contemporary challenges posed, for example, by scientific understandings of the human, practices of global philosophy, and contemporary political and moral developments call for greater understanding

of East Asian approaches to ritual.³³ Though his focus was Chinese philosophy, I believe Confucianism, especially Korean Neo-Confucian philosophy exemplified through the seventeenth-century Ritual Debate, can and will respond to this urgent call. The debate allows us to see how and why ritual is crucial for Confucian philosophers, providing a fuller picture of ritual development—its contents, process, and potential tension yet unforeseen development—in specific historical and sociocultural circumstances, and revealing its moral and political significance as well as its gendered characteristics in actualizing their metaphysical and ethical philosophy into ritual practices.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Professor Philip J. Ivanhoe for his helpful comments and suggestions on an earlier draft of this paper. My gratitude also goes to Professor Halla Kim and other attendees of the panel who provided insightful questions and comments. Ms. Megan Joson read this work in my class, "Introduction to Korean Philosophy," held in the spring 2022 semester at Georgetown University, and offered an important correction. Lastly, many thanks to the editor, A. Minh Nguyen, for inviting me to contribute this piece.

NOTES

- Throughout the paper, I follow Revised Romanization used by the Korean government. For those papers in Korean that provide an English abstract, I keep their original Romanization of titles and names to help readers who might want to search further.
- See, for example, Philip J. Ivanhoe, *Three Streams: Confucian Reflections on Learning and the Moral Heart-Mind in China, Korea, and Japan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), chs. 4–5.
- For a more detailed and succinct summary of the debate, see JaHyun Kim Haboush, "Constructing the Center: The Ritual Controversy and the Search for a New Identity in Seventeenth-Century Korea," in *Culture and the State in Late Chosŏn Korea*, ed. JaHyun Kim Haboush and Martina Deuchler (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 1999), 46–90, esp. 52–62.
- See Haboush, "Constructing the Center," 46n1.
- Kim Hyun Soo points out that, despite its benefits, the term *yechi* poses difficulties for understanding and examining the meaning and role of ritual in Confucianism. Instead, he suggests using *yegyo* (禮教), for it is the term used in the Confucian texts, especially Joseon texts, and can capture not only the political and ideal but also the moral and practical aspects. See Kim Hyun Soo, "17-segi Joseon ui yegyo sasang yeon-gu" 17世紀 朝鮮의 禮教思想 研究 [A Study of Confucian Ritualism's Thoughts in 17th-Century Chosun Dynasty] (PhD diss., Sungkyunkwan University, 2007), 1–9.
- See Sungmoon Kim, "Confucian Constitutionalism: Mencius and Xunzi on Virtue, Ritual, and Royal Transmission," *Review of Politics* 73, no. 3 (2011): 371–99; and Chaihark Hahm, "Ritual and Constitutionalism: Disputing the Ruler's Legitimacy in a Confucian Polity," *American Journal of Comparative Law* 57, no. 1 (2009): 135–204.
- Moowon Cho, "The Problem of Sovereign Succession in Confucian Ritual Discourse: Constitutional Thought of Reconciliation Between Fact and Value," *Korean Studies* 42, no. 1 (2018): 59.
- For a brief description of the wars and their impacts, see Ki-Baik Lee, *A New History of Korea* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard-Yenching Institute / Harvard University Press, 1984): 209–17.
- Jeong Injae 정인재, "Yun Baekho ui yulli sasang" 尹白湖의 倫理思想 ["Ethical Theories of Yun Baekho"], in *Han-gukhak yeon-gu ui seonggwa wa gue seongchal* 韓國學研究의 成果와 그 省察 [Achievements and Reflections of Korean Studies], ed. Hanguk jeongsin munhwa yeon-guwon pyeonchanbu pyeonjipsil 한국정신문화연구원 편찬부편집실 (Seongnam-si: Hanguk jeongsin munhwa yeon-guwon, 1982), 55–88; Pai Sang-Hyen 배상현, "Joseonjo Giho hakpa ui yehak sasang e gwanhan yeon-gu" 조선조 기호학파의 예학사상에 관한 연구 [A Study of Propriety Thoughts of Central and Honam Schools in Chosun Dynasty] (PhD diss., Korea University, 1991).
- For instance, Ji Doohwan 지두환, "Joseon hugi yesong yeon-gu" 조선 후기 예송 연구 ["A Study on Ritual Debates in the Late Joseon Dynasty"], *Buhae Sahak 부대사학* [The Historical Review of Pusan National University] 11 (1988): 1–49.
- Lee Bong Gyu questions Ji Doohwan's argument that Song Siyeol and the Westerners did not accept the issuance of pattern-principle, which Ji understood as a "changeability" of principle, including the agnatic principle. Lee argues that issuance cannot be equated with changeability and that these scholars' metaphysical differences do not match their views on this ritual debate. Lee Bong Gyu 이봉규, "Yesong ui cheolhak jeok bunseok e daehan jae geomto" 예송의 철학적 분석에 대한 재검토 ["A Review on the Studies in the Controversy about the Confucian Funerary Rituals in the 17th-Century Korea"], *Daedong munhwa yeongu* 대동문화연구 [Journal of Eastern Studies] 31 (1996): 161.
- Kim Munchun 김문준, "Uam Song Siyeol ui choelhak sasang e gwanhan yeon-gu" 우암 송시열의 철학사상에 관한 연구 [A Study on the Philosophical Thought of Song Siyeol] (PhD diss., Sungkyunkwan University, 1996), 173–74.
- For example, *Analects* 8.20.
- Chang Dong Woo 장동우, "Dasan yehak ui yeon-gu" 茶山 禮學의 研究 [Study of Tasan's Lixue] (PhD diss., Yonsei University, 1998), 27.
- Analects* 13.18 and *Mencius* 7A35.
- Lee Bong Gyu and Choi Jinseok see these two principles of human relationship, vertical and horizontal, as fundamental concepts required to understand the philosophical meanings of the ritual debates. Lee Bong Gyu, "Joseon hugi yesong ui cheolhak jeok hamui" 조선 후기 禮訟의 철학적 함의 [An Analysis of the Philosophical Implications of the Controversy about the Confucian Funerary Rituals in 17th-Century Korea], *Han-gukhak yeon-gu* 한국학연구 [Korean Studies] 9 (1998): 173–216; Choe Jindeok 최진덕, "Dasan Sirhak ui gujo wa geu ui sangbok jedoron" 茶山實學의 構造와 그의 喪服制度論 ["The Structure of Dasan's Practical Learning and His Theory of Mourning Attires"], in *Dasan ui sasang gwa geu hyeondae jeok uimi* 茶山 의 사상 과 그 현대적 의미 [Dasan's Thoughts and Its Modern Implications], ed. Kim Hyeon-hyo and Hanguk jeongsin munhwa yeonguwon (Seongnam-si: Hanguk jeongsin munhwa yeon-guwon, 1998), 243–406.
- Peter Kees Bol, *Neo-Confucianism in History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center / Harvard University Press, 2008), 277.
- For instance, Pang-White points out "the differences between Zhu Xi's descriptive and normative texts in relation to the status of women." See Ann A. Pang-White, "Zhu Xi on Family and Women: Challenges and Potentials," *Asian Philosophy* 40, nos. 3–4 (2014): 451.
- This engagement by students and private scholars and students marks their first *en masse* engagement in national discourse. See Haboush, "Constructing the Center," 60–61.
- For example, it was only in 2021 that a Confucian academy, the Museong Seowon, in Korea, allowed a woman to preside over a ceremony in its more than three-hundred-year history. See Anthony Kuhn, "A Woman Takes a Lead Role in Confucian Ceremonies, Breaking a New Path in South Korea," *NPR News* (October 19, 2021), <https://www.npr.org/2021/10/19/1045999366/women-equality-south-korea-confucian-ceremony-confucianism>.
- Ha Yeoju 하여주, "Injo~Hyeonjong dae Jangnyeol wanghu ui saeng-ae wa jiwi byeonhwa" 인조~현종 대 장렬왕후의 생애와 지위 변화 ["The Queen Jangnyeol's Life and Status in the Reigns of King Injo to King Hyeonjong"], *Yeo-seong gwa yeoksa* 여성과 역사 [Women and History] 28 (2018): 153–74.
- Ha, "Injo~Hyeonjong dae Jangnyeol wanghu ui saeng-ae wa jiwi byeonhwa," 168–69.
- Ha's discussion on the spatial expansion of the royal women's ritual participation is based on Shin Ji Hye 신지혜, "Joseon Sukjongdae wangsil sangjangnye seolhaeng gonggan ui geonchuk teukseong" 조선 숙종대 왕실喪葬禮 設行공간의 건축특성 [The Architectural Character in the Space Executing the Royal Funeral and Ancestral Rites During the Reign of King Sukjong in the Joseon Dynasty] (PhD diss., Kyonggi University, 2011). See also Shin Ji Hye 신지혜, "Joseon hugi daebi ui sangjangnye

chamyeo hwakdae wa uirye gonggan ui byeonhwa" 조선 후기 대妃의 喪葬禮 참여확대와 의례공간의 변화 ["Expansion of Queen Dowagers' Role in Royal Funeral Rites and the Change of Ritual Space in the Late Joseon Period"], *Jangseogak 장서각* [Korean Journal of Jangseogak Royal Library] 26 (2011): 128–60.

24. Hwa Yeong Wang, *Confucianism and Rituals for Women in Chosŏn Korea: A Philosophical Interpretation* (PhD diss., Binghamton University, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2018), 74.
25. Angela Zito, *Of Body and Brush: Grand Sacrifice as Text/Performance in Eighteenth-Century China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 225.
26. Hwa Yeong Wang, "Women Who Know Ritual," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 49, no. 2 (2022): 113–24.
27. Philip J. Ivanhoe, *Oneness: East Asian Conceptions of Virtue, Happiness, and How We Are All Connected* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).
28. Owen Flanagan, *The Geography of Morals: Varieties of Moral Possibility* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).
29. Kevin Schilbrack, "Ritual Metaphysics," in *Thinking Through Rituals: Philosophical Perspectives*, ed. Kevin Schilbrack (New York: Routledge, 2004), 131–51, at 146.
30. Schilbrack, "Ritual Metaphysics," 144.
31. Schilbrack, "Ritual Metaphysics," 136.
32. Philip J. Ivanhoe, "Confucian and Islamic Approaches to Rituals and Modern Life," *European Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 13, no. 2 (2021): 14.
33. Robert Cummings Neville, "New Projects in Chinese Philosophy," *The Pluralist* 5, no. 2 (2010): 54.

The aim of this essay is to defend the ideology against uncharitable criticisms. My intention isn't to justify the regime's reprehensible practices, including its human rights violations. At the same time, failing to or refusing to understand Juche with the philosophical resources we have is not only intellectually dishonest but also politically inexpedient. Though it's possible that the ideology truly is a sham, or that epistemological barriers will hinder us from fully understanding Juche, an open-minded analysis is owed to Juche as it is owed to any system of thought. For the rest of the section, I'll give more context for Juche, tracing its origins and its main tenets. I'll then turn to Alzo David-West's criticisms of Juche and offer ways of interpreting Juche that alleviate his worries. My hope is that presenting North Korea's ideology in a more charitable way will help us see its merits and demerits in a clearer way.

Juche, usually translated as "self-reliance," holds up political independence, economic self-sufficiency, and military self-reliance as the ideals of the state. Victor Cha, a former national foreign policy advisor, identifies the following tenets as the core of Juche:

1. Man is the master of his fate.
2. The master of the Revolution is the people.
3. The Revolution must be pursued in a self-reliant manner.
4. The key to the Revolution is loyalty to the supreme leader, Kim Il-sung.⁴

Experts disagree whether Juche is a "real philosophy or not," some arguing that it is an outward-facing ideology that doesn't inform the everyday decision of the regime.⁵ Nevertheless, most scholars believe Juche to be important to the regime's self-conception. Some note that the literal translation of "juche" is "subject," a key concept in Marxism and in philosophy in general.⁶ Understanding the word to pick out an agential subject would be fitting given the context in which the term is believed to have been introduced. In a 1955 speech titled "On Eliminating Dogmatism and Formalism and Establishing Juche in Ideological Work," Kim Il-sung had brought up juche to encourage Koreans to prioritize one's identity as a Korean and, as a Korean, to prioritize Korean national interests.⁷ A historical view of the peninsula also contextualizes North Korea's desire for self-reliance and explains why the notion of juche *qua* subjectivity was spelled out in an overtly nationalistic way. The conventional understanding, shared among North and South Koreans, is that Korea has had to assume a defensive stance against powerful neighbors for millennia—and Kim Il-sung highlighted the fact Korea was exploited whenever it was dependent on nearby powerful nations, historically China, then Japan during the occupation.

Juche formed a natural connection to anti-imperial culture in Korea. By the 1920s, communism was a major philosophical influence on anticolonialism, and the first domestic Korean communist party was established in Seoul in 1925. Socialism and Marxism, as critiques of both imperialism and capitalism, were seen as modern ideologies, and

Defending Juche Against an Uncharitable Analysis

Hannah H. Kim

MACALESTER COLLEGE, HKIM1@MACALESTER.EDU

ABSTRACT

In this article, I aim to do two things: first, introduce Juche, the official philosophy of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea ("North Korea"), and second, defend Juche against Alzo David-West's allegation that it is a nonsensical philosophy. I organize David-West's complaints into two major strands—that Juche's axiom is too vague to be of philosophical use and that Juche makes too stark a distinction between human vs. everything else—and offer responses to both strands. My goal isn't to defend the regime, but to present its ideology in the most charitable way so its merits and demerits can be seen more clearly in future engagements.

I. INTRODUCING JUCHE

Juche (주체/主體) is the state ideology of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK or "North Korea").¹ Comprehensive analyses of Juche tend to be uncharitable and suspicious.² Some North Korea specialists argue that Juche is simply an excuse of an ideology the regime uses to rationalize the Kim family rule, its politically motivated beginnings³ and continual redefining proof that it is not a self-standing, real philosophy on its own. They also argue that Juche is nonsensical or that it is a sham doctrine that only gullible foreigners take seriously.

Juche inherited its buzzwords, such as “revolution,” “social movement,” “liberation,” and “class struggle.”

Juche was heavily influenced by Marxism-Leninism, with Kim Il-sung himself having called Juche “Korean-style socialism.” Until the early 1970s, North Korea openly acknowledged her philosophical influences. Juche’s ideological origins were widely understood to be Marxism-Leninism (*Markseu Renin Juui*), and state-organized parades included oversized portraits of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin.⁸ See, for instance, Figure 1 from Pyongyang in 1946, where Kim Il-sung’s portrait only appears after the aforementioned figures (as if to signal his continuation of their legacy).



Figure 1. Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Pyongyang’s May 1st Commemorative Event (평양의 5.1절 기념 행사), 1946. (북한, public domain, via Wikimedia Commons)

From the early 1970s, however, references to Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin slowly disappeared, and North Korea began to promulgate Juche as “the singular ideological system” (*yuilssasang chegye*).⁹ Juche was formally adopted as the sole guiding principle of the state at the Fifth Party Congress in 1970,¹⁰ and by 2009, all references to communism were removed from the North Korean Constitution.

Despite being a Marxist offshoot, Juche’s strong nationalistic underpinning set it apart from socialism and Marxism from the beginning. What made North Korea’s socialist thought different from the Chinese and Soviet applications was the incorporation of national feelings and macro-historical narratives.¹¹ Juche also departs from Marxism-Leninism in its privileging of the state over the workers; Juche is all about the Korean state, Korean identity, and Korean independence, not the working class or the individuals who make up the proletariat.¹² (It has this in common with other anticolonial Marxist-Leninist thought in Asia and in Africa.) Kim Jong-il said in a speech titled “Let Us Highly Display the Korean-Nation-First Spirit” that a “Korean-nation-first spirit” was needed to protect the “time-honoured history of five thousand years, a refined culture and tradition.”¹³ Juche was introduced as a way to “decolonize the Korean mind” so Koreans could emerge as

“masters of their own destiny.”¹⁴ Kim Il-sung encouraged independence and creativity in problem-solving,¹⁵ and he rejected a dogmatic application of Marxism and Leninism, arguing that a European/Soviet philosophy wouldn’t apply to postcolonial Korea. Koreans were to work out their own philosophy and carry out their own revolution, Juche being the resultant “Korean-style socialism.” Workers are empowered only insofar as they form a part of the larger collective worth defending, namely, the state and race/ethnicity.

Juche is also notable in its de-emphasis of historical materialism, the view that history is driven by economic arrangements and the sociopolitical relationships that are built around modes of production. Juche’s “mentalism” highlights humans’ mental activity as the central driving force of history.¹⁶ As such, Juche emphasizes the importance of a strong will to bring about the future one would like to see. Leaning into the “mind over matter” motto, Juche thinks that an agent’s decision is ultimately independent from external factors.¹⁷ “The Juche age,” Kim Jong-il writes, “is a new historical era when the popular masses have emerged as masters of the world.”¹⁸ Marx, Engels, and Lenin all talk about a kind of proletariat “dictatorship” after bourgeois control of the state, and Juche puts a national and mental spin on the new agency. The Juche system’s prioritization of the mental aspects of what makes a person revolutionary is a mutation from dialectical materialism, the view that all aspects of society are interconnected and that its organizing principle is structured around modes of production.¹⁹ Juche highlights the agent’s sheer efforts as the prime mover of history,²⁰ but unlike other can-do philosophies, Juche specifies that citizens can forge their own path by remaining loyal to the leader who will resist external threats and usher in the “final phase of human development,” manifested in the unification of the peninsula.²¹ This leader, of course, was Kim Il-sung.

To wrap up, Juche was initially conceived as a Korean extension of Marxism-Leninism, but its nationalist undertone and mentalism set it apart from other applications of Marxist-Leninist thought. (The cult of personality is also considered a factor that separates Juche from Marxism-Leninism, but I’ll save that discussion for a later occasion given space constraints.) Having provided a brief summary of the major characteristics of the Juche ideology, I’ll turn next to David-West’s assessment.

II. RESPONSES TO DAVID-WEST ON JUCHE

In “‘Man Is the Master of Everything and Decides Everything’: Deconstructing the North Korean Juche Axiom,” David-West concludes Juche to be “non-philosophical and in fact nonsensical, being neither humanist nor materialist nor rationalist in conceptual substance.”²² He complains about nonspecialists in philosophy having made inadequate claims about Juche, though his own nonspecialist status doesn’t dissuade him from reaching uncharitable conclusions about the philosophy. I’m not sure how robust or systematic we will find Juche to be as a philosophy after sustained analysis, but I’ll show that David-West’s philosophical worries can be adequately addressed. The etymology of “to respect” points us to “re” and “specere”—to respect is to look/see again,²³ and I’d like to respect

Juche in this sense. Andrei Lankov writes that North Korea is a “surprisingly sane place,”²⁴ and I’ll channel this spirit to see how Juche might be defended against David-West’s allegations. Below, I organize David-West’s criticisms into two major strands and offer responses to each.

JUCHE’S AXIOM IS TOO ABSTRACT AND DEMONSTRABLY FALSE

David-West dubs Juche as “national subjectivism” but says it’s really a kind of subjective idealism, a metaphysical view that what we take the world to be is inextricably tied to our subjective projections and observations. He takes “man is the master of everything and decides everything” as the distilled axiom of Juche, and he performs a surprisingly literal reading of the slogan to criticize Juche. For instance, he writes the following:

The *Juche* axiom, to be sure, inverts the principle that the whole is greater than its parts. Logically and naturalistically, *man* is a part of *everything*. . . . A part is not greater than the whole.²⁵

Of course, among the fundamental distinctions between human beings and atoms is that humans are conscious agents, determined nevertheless by their material, historical, and social conditions of life. . . . Practical cognition does not, however, put human beings in a position to conquer the laws of nature at any level.²⁶

But a more reasonable interpretation of Juche wouldn’t entail blatant mereological embarrassments or commit Juche to be saying that humans can overcome any and all laws of nature.

To illustrate by analogy, let me take a line from the American Declaration of Independence: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” If taken in David-West’s literalist spirit, we might think: clearly, not all men are created equal; humans have different heights, parents, and abilities, to name just a few disparities. But this line of questioning is crude and hardly worth our time. Putting aside questions about the Founding Fathers’ inconsistent applications of these ideas, retorting to the declaration by commenting, “but obviously people aren’t all equal!” is silly at best—and I think this is analogous to how David-West approaches the Juche axiom. There’s a need to carefully interpret what each of the words “man,” “decides,” and “everything” means, and attention to the context and aim of the utterance helps us arrive at an interpretation that doesn’t relegate the axiom to nonsense.

David-West also complains that “the abstract and one-sided construction of the axiom renders it insufficient” to properly account for all the philosophical questions that rise from the statement.²⁷ But any slogan will come up insufficient in this regard. Consider the line from the Declaration of Independence again. What does it mean for a truth to be “self-evident”? If a truth is self-evident, why did the Founding Fathers have to declare it? What does it

mean for a right to be unalienable? Aren’t people robbed of life, liberty, and the chance to pursue happiness all the time? What constitutes happiness? Are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness abstractly existing entities to which all humans are entitled? What grounds this entitlement, and under what conditions can they be revoked? Again, the fact that the slogan itself is insufficient to answer all further philosophical questions that rise from it is not a reason to doubt the meaningfulness of the thoughts expressed by it. Sometimes, a claim is philosophically valuable precisely because of the further questions it raises, some unanswerable with the initial claim alone.

Insofar as Juche is first and foremost a political philosophy—after all, it takes political independence, economic self-sufficiency, and military self-reliance as applications of Juche—I don’t think it would be productive to read metaphysical commitments from it. But even *if* we were to take Juche as a kind of idealism, there is a reading available that allows us to interpret Juche in a coherent light.

Taken at face value, David-West believes that the maxim “man is the master of everything and decides everything” “resembles a metaphysical and thus nonsensical first principle that must be accepted on faith,” a thought that is “not a philosophy or method, but a dogma.”²⁸ However, terms like “everything” need to be taken in context. If I were looking for a particular grocery item and commenting that I looked *everywhere* to no avail, context would determine that I must have looked *at all the eligible stores within a reasonable distance*. It would be inappropriate to take “everywhere” literally to mean that I had searched the entire cosmos for the item. Similarly, for Juche, “master of everything and decides everything” must be understood in its appropriate context. The way we understand “everything” must be restricted to the kinds of thing that humans can have mastery over, and it must be the kinds of thing that humans have deciding power over. So what domain does “everything” cover in this case?

My recommendation is to take Juche to be quantifying over *social* or *political* objects and relations. We should take the “everything” talk in Juche to apply to the sociopolitical world. If we take “everything” to be quantifying over *social* or *political* realities, then the slogan becomes a claim about humanity’s ability to decide what is valuable to them, it becoming a way to express the much less controversial thesis that humans shape their communities and decide what’s important to them. David-West readily applies this reading to Marxism when he writes that “[c]lassical Marxism sees that ‘man has become the measure of all (societal) things,’” the “true sphere of domination” being social forms of organization.²⁹ It’s unclear why he’s unwilling to extend the parenthetical gesture to Juche.

Some find it intuitive that all values are intrinsically dependent on humans and that humans are “masters” over all things valuable in the sense that without a subject endowing things with value, there would be no mind-independent source of value. These ideas roughly track antirealist sentiments in moral philosophy and value theory, the view that goodness isn’t objective and mind-independent things “out there” to be discovered.³⁰ Moral

antirealists, for instance, don't believe that moral facts exist in some objective fashion; rather, humans construct, or otherwise agree upon, what we consider "moral" or "good." According to this view, morality is a product of human judgment and effort and not an independently existing feature of the world. Though moral philosophers continue to debate about antirealism's merits, the point is that existing philosophical debates lend us conceptual schemes with which to interpret Juche in a meaningful way.

JUCHE ASSUMES TOO STARK A DISTINCTION BETWEEN "HUMAN" AND "EVERYTHING [ELSE]"

David-West says a literal reading of the slogan puts too extreme a distinction between "man" and "everything," not to mention the fact that cognition doesn't endow humans with the ability to transcend the laws of nature. The Juche axiom "does not make logical and philosophical sense in face of the combination of real human subjective fallibility and the objective material forces that created the social catastrophe of the Great Famine."³¹

Three responses are available. First, that man is the measure of all things is an ancient idea. Second, the hierarchical understanding of the universe, with humans on top, might be coming from Confucian influences over Juche. Third, the slogan need not posit a human-vs.-everything-else binary. We'll take these in turn.

David-West takes issue with Juche privileging "man" "to an extreme degree, making him the absolute measure of all things."³² One might disagree with this claim, but it won't do to simply dismiss the idea given its long history and varied repetition across different philosophical systems. A fragment attributed to Protagoras (c. 490–420 BCE) says that "of all things the measure is man: of those that are, that they are; and of those that are not, that they are not."³³ Philosophers debate whether "man" here refers to individuals or abstract humanity, but the point is that the human-centric worldview is far from senseless. In ancient China, too, we get the suggestion that man "measures" all things in the sense that values originate from humans. The idea that humans "complete" (成 *cheng*) the cosmos is discussed in texts like *Huainanzi*, and Xunzi writes that social or moral order is determined ("completed") by human decisions (guided by the sage) even though the physical stuff of the world is created by heaven and earth. *Zhuangzi* maintains that conceptualization is central to the construction of "things" (*wu* 物), and Han Feizi takes "standards" (*fa* 法) to be heavily reliant on human decisions about the ordering of the world. These historical precedents show that while Juche's claim to originality might be dubious, its core claim about humans being the standard is an intuitive one that finds expression in both ancient Greek and Chinese contexts.

Secondly, Confucianism formed the philosophical background of Korea for millennia, and the human-favoring hierarchy that David-West takes issue with might be Confucian in origin. Geir Helgesen writes that Juche inherits the Confucian picture that order and hierarchy are built into the world.³⁴ The Neo-Confucians take this basic Confucian conviction and develop a robust metaphysical

apparatus around order and hierarchy, arguing that an invisible force, *li* (理 principle), structures the world and that *li* is a loftier organizing force than *qi* (氣 vital force). In a similar way, Juche might be seen as a development of the Confucian view that a particular order or hierarchy governs the universe—and whereas Neo-Confucianism appealed to the abstract *li* as the source of order and deemed it the preeminent force, Juche might be putting human agency, volition, or consciousness as the decisive force that orders reality, considering it the preeminent force. Juche, then, can be seen as an attempt to adapt Marxism into the Korean context by incorporating local philosophies, "Korean-style socialism" being a kind of tradition-respecting ideology. The North Koreans "transcended Marxism-Leninism" and saw "social relations as the pivot of politics, and so they stress ideological education as the most important tool in directing social development. In this, they are in accordance with the teaching of Confucius."³⁵

I don't mean to suggest that Juche is unanimously considered a Confucian ideology, nor does Juche seem to see itself as such.³⁶ But the Confucian influence illustrates just one possible source of Juche's commitment to hierarchy and shows that the view isn't so outlandish. Many systems of thought, including Confucianism, Christianity, and Mahayana Buddhism, posit metaphysical hierarchies in the way we understand the world. David-West's complaint against Juche's prioritizing of humans over other animals and objects, then, is not a unique complaint against Juche that undermines it.

Lastly, there's no need to posit an essential subject-object binary in order to make sense of Juche. Humans may shape society in ways they see fit, and make decisions about what is valuable, without mistaking themselves to be somehow essentially separate from everything else. Marx's historical realism, which argues that societies are organized around modes of production because humans must labor to subsist, takes social relations—such as the way labor power is organized—to be the driving force of history. Insofar as Marx considered human labor to be the beginning point of his theorizing, "material" included humans, and "consciousness" also included humans. There's no need to posit a strong idea/matter or subject/object distinction in Marx's thought, and there is no reason to read it into Juche, either.

Juche reduces the extent to which material conditions shape history, agreeing with Marx that they impact human behavior but denying that material conditions are the sole or the strongest driving force of history. Rebuilding a state that was reduced to rubble during the Korean War, Kim Il-sung, in line with many strands of Marxism, might have thought that economic determinism—the view that economic configurations of labor and capital determine all other social and political relationships—isn't true. People's consciousness, including their ways of making sense of the world, was conditioned by previous societies and produced by a particular given culture.³⁷ Developing a state philosophy that would speak to its people, then, needed to include a perspective that is familiar—for instance, a family-like perspective and a hierarchical perspective that Koreans would have been used to from Confucianism. With

Juche, Helgesen writes, North Koreans add to Marxism “the human being’s decisive role, in that they changed the philosophical focus from matter/idea to a new one called man/matter.”³⁸ Even while Juche invokes Confucian underpinnings, it also “seems that Juche in this way brought Marxism closer to its origin, with its thesis about people creating their own society, while at the same time being a product of this society.”³⁹

In neither the case of Marxism nor Juche do we need dualistic understandings of “man” and “everything else.” It’s not as if “mind” or “consciousness” is neatly separated from “matter” or “labor conditions” in Marx’s philosophy, and similarly, “human” need not be separated from “everything” in Juche. We need not take Juche to involve “a false perception of objective reality,” which attributes “false powers to human beings with disastrous philosophical and social implications.”⁴⁰ It’s one thing to insist on this interpretation and disagree with Juche on historical realist grounds—but we shouldn’t call Juche philosophical nonsense if there are interpretations available that would render it coherent and even consistent with other philosophical systems.

III. CONCLUSION

There’s a reason why North Korea hasn’t imploded yet, and it’s uncharitable to its leaders and citizens to think that it’s merely due to coercion or brainwashing. A better explanation is that the regime operates with a cultural logic that isn’t convincing to outsiders but compelling to insiders.⁴¹ Cha writes that the Juche ideology “forms the backbone of the state’s control” such that without it, the state could not survive.⁴² Insofar as Juche is the official state philosophy of North Korea, it would be politically expedient, not to mention intellectually worthwhile, to analyze it in a way that would help us make sense of its motivational force. An open-minded yet context-sensitive interpretation must precede any analysis worth taking seriously, and I hope to have begun this work.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to Yarran Hominh and Alexis McLeod for helpful conversations and comments.

NOTES

1. I’ll capitalize the word to refer to the ideology; when referring to the word or the concept, I won’t capitalize.
2. Andrei Lankov, “Juche: Idea for All Times”; Alzo David-West, “Man Is the Master of Everything and Decides Everything”; B. R. Myers, *The Cleanest Race*.
3. When Stalin died in 1953, there was no longer a natural center for socialism. North Korea now had to choose whether to politically side with China (Mao) or the Soviet Union (Khrushchev). Fearing alienating either one of them, Kim Il-sung decided to “go the Korean way” and develop the Korean-specific Juche ideology, maintaining ties with both China and the Soviet Union. Also, Rhee Syung-man (the South Korean president) was suggesting that communism was a break from the tradition of Korea, culturally alien and therefore a threat to the people’s national identity. So Kim Il-sung answered with Juche, Korean socialism. See Geir Helgesen, “Political Revolution in a Cultural Continuum,” 191–92.
4. Victor Cha, *The Impossible State*, 37.
5. Andrei Lankov argues that Juche is simply too vague to be taken seriously and that the interpretation of its philosophy has changed countless times. According to Lankov, Juche

is an empty shell, a term that includes everything the North Korean leadership considers “correct” at any given moment in time (see his “Juche: Idea for All Times”). Alzo David-West also attacks Juche on philosophical grounds, concluding that it is “non-philosophical and in fact nonsensical” (see his “Man Is the Master of Everything and Decides Everything”). B. R. Myers writes Juche exists just for foreigners, something that is to be praised but not actually studied (*The Cleanest Race*). Felix Abt is skeptical of this deflationary view given his lived experience there (see his *A Capitalist in North Korea*).

6. Myers, *The Cleanest Race*, 44–45.
7. Lankov, “Juche: Idea for All Times.”
8. Sonia Ryang, *Reading North Korea*, 199.
9. Ryang, *Reading North Korea*, 199.
10. Cha, *The Impossible State*, 39.
11. Daniel Schwekendiek, *A Socioeconomic History of North Korea*, 31.
12. Cha, *The Impossible State*, 38.
13. Kim Jong-il, “Let Us Highly Display the Korean-Nation-First Spirit.”
14. Kim Jong-il, “Let Us Highly Display the Korean-Nation-First Spirit.”
15. Kyo Duk Lee, “Peaceful Utilization of the DMZ’ as a National Strategy,” 4.
16. David-West, “Man Is the Master of Everything and Decides Everything,” 70.
17. Lee, “Peaceful Utilization of the DMZ’ as a National Strategy,” 4.
18. Kim Jong-il, *On the Art of the Cinema*, 1.
19. Ryang, *Reading North Korea*, 199.
20. Cha, *The Impossible State*, 37.
21. Cha, *The Impossible State*, 38.
22. David-West, “Man Is the Master of Everything and Decides Everything,” 68.
23. This etymology is mentioned in Ryang, *Reading North Korea*, 208.
24. Andrei Lankov, *The Real North Korea*, xii.
25. David-West, “Man Is the Master of Everything and Decides Everything,” 69.
26. David-West, “Man Is the Master of Everything and Decides Everything,” 69.
27. David-West, “Man Is the Master of Everything and Decides Everything,” 69.
28. David-West, “Man Is the Master of Everything and Decides Everything,” 71, 76.
29. David-West, “Man Is the Master of Everything and Decides Everything,” 71.
30. See Richard Joyce, “Moral Anti-Realism.”
31. David-West, “Man Is the Master of Everything and Decides Everything,” 80.
32. David-West, “Man Is the Master of Everything and Decides Everything,” 70.
33. Hermann Diels and Walther Kranz, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, 80B1.
34. Helgesen, “Political Revolution in a Cultural Continuum,” 189.
35. Helgesen, “Political Revolution in a Cultural Continuum,” 211.
36. See Alzo David-West, “Between Confucianism and Marxism-Leninism,” for a discussion on how the North Korean regime has responded to Confucian and Neo-Confucian historical figures depending on their latest political needs. Like Marxism-Leninism, Confucianism predated Juche in the Korean peninsula, but scholars debate the extent to which Juche can be described as Confucian. Cha argues that the ideology was effective as a source of control because it borrowed conventional Korean

notions of Confucianism; hierarchy, social harmony, and respect, which serve as bedrocks of a Confucian society, accompanied the regime's need for control (*The Impossible State*, 39). Though Juche seems to have inherited, at the very least, the Confucian and Neo-Confucian idea that order and hierarchy are built into the world (Helgesen, "Political Revolution in a Cultural Continuum," 189), this isn't enough to call North Korea a Confucian state (Ryang, *Reading North Korea*, 193–94) since many philosophical systems divided the universe into hierarchical categories (think of Christianity with its God-humans-beasts hierarchy and Mahayana Buddhism with its ultimate truth-conventional truth distinction). In addition, North Korean leaders don't fit the mold of the traditional Confucian patriarch; artistic and political renderings depict the Kims as joyful, naïve, spontaneous, and loving instead of scholarly or virtuous, the traits usually associated with a Confucian ruler. Kim Il-sung is described as an androgynous Parent Leader (Myers, *The Cleanest Race*, 48–49) and is sometimes symbolically and visually represented in feminine ways, e.g., welcoming soldiers into his bosom and featuring rosy cheeks. Ryang thinks it muddies the water to consider Juche Confucian since the crucial private father figure is missing (*Reading North Korea*, 192–94). The cult of personality also forms a contrast against Confucianism. Though Confucianism does encourage leaders to sway subjects with moral charisma (*Analects* 2.1) and encourage subjects to respect their leader, Confucian classics such as *Analects* and *Xunzi* are full of criticisms of their past and present rulers, suggesting that leaders aren't beyond reproach.

37. Helgesen, "Political Revolution in a Cultural Continuum," 200.
38. Helgesen, "Political Revolution in a Cultural Continuum," 199.
39. Helgesen, "Political Revolution in a Cultural Continuum," 199.
40. David-West, "Man Is the Master of Everything and Decides Everything," 81.
41. Ryang, *Reading North Korea*, 208.
42. Cha, *The Impossible State*, 39.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abt, Felix. *A Capitalist in North Korea: My Seven Years in the Hermit Kingdom*. Rutland, VT: Tuttle Publishing, 2014.
- Armstrong, Charles K. "Familism, Socialism and Political Religion in North Korea." *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 6, no. 3 (2005): 383–94.
- Cha, Victor. *The Impossible State: North Korea, Past and Future*. New York: HarperCollins, 2012.
- David-West, Alzo. "'Man Is the Master of Everything and Decides Everything': Deconstructing the North Korean Juche Axiom." *Essays in the Philosophy of Humanism* 17, no. 2 (2009): 67–84.
- . "Between Confucianism and Marxism-Leninism: Juche and the Case of Chŏng Tasan." *Korean Studies* 35 (2011): 93–121.
- Diels, Hermann, and Walther Kranz. *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, 6th edition. Berlin: Weidmann, 1951.
- Helgesen, Geir. "Political Revolution in a Cultural Continuum: Preliminary Observations on the North Korean 'Juche' Ideology with Its Intrinsic Cult of Personality." *Asian Perspective* 15, no. 1 (1991): 187–213.
- Joyce, Richard. "Moral Anti-Realism." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Winter 2022 Edition, edited by Edward N. Zalta and Uri Nodelman. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2022/entries/moral-anti-realism/>.
- Kim Il-sung. "On Eliminating Dogmatism and Formalism and Establishing Juche in Ideological Work." In *Sources of Korean Tradition*, edited by Yŏng-ho Ch'oe, Peter H. Lee, and Wm. Theodore de Bary, vol. 2, 420–24. New York: Columbia University Press, 2001.
- Kim Jong-il. "'Let Us Highly Display the Korean-Nation-First Spirit,' Speech Addressed to the Senior Officials of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea (December 18, 1989)." In *Kim Jong Il: Selected Works* 9, 1987–1989, 407–30. Pyongyang: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1997.
- . *On the Art of the Cinema*. Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 1973.
- Kim, Suk-young. *Illusive Utopia: Theater, Film, and Everyday Performance in North Korea*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2010.

Lankov, Andrei. "Juche: Idea for All Times." *Korea Times*, November 27, 2007. https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2020/07/166_14442.html.

———. *The Real North Korea: Life and Politics in the Failed Stalinist Utopia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.

Lee, Kyo Duk. "'Peaceful Utilization of the DMZ' as a National Strategy." In *The Successor Theory of North Korea*, 1–51. Seoul: Korea Institute for National Unification, 2004.

Myers, B. R. *The Cleanest Race: How North Koreans See Themselves—and Why It Matters*. New York: Melville, 2010.

———. *North Korea's Juche Myth*. Busan: Sthele Press, 2015.

Ryang, Sonia. *Reading North Korea: An Ethnological Inquiry*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012.

Schwekendiek, Daniel. *A Socioeconomic History of North Korea*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2011.

Sudden Enlightenment: Paradigm-Shifting Awakening

Sun Kyeong Yu

MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO, SUN.YU@MNSU.EDU

ABSTRACT

Sudden enlightenment is awakening to be attained all at once. Hyun-Eung, a Korean Buddhist monastic, has proposed a new interpretation of this claim: that sudden enlightenment is the revolutionary awakening of the dynamical and indivisible structure of cognitive subjects and objects. I argue that Hyun-Eung's "revolutionary enlightenment" is achieved through a "paradigm shift" in Thomas Kuhn's sense as presented in his *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Enlightenment is obtained when one's essentialist and realist worldview is replaced, through a revolutionary change of paradigm shift, by a new perspective based on the Buddhist teachings of dependent arising and emptiness. Prior to enlightenment, each person views herself as a separate and independent individual who has her own essence. However, when our perspective on self and the world changes with the understanding of dependent arising and emptiness, it becomes clear that no one and nothing can exist independently of conditions. Everything comes into existence, abides, and passes out of existence only in dependence on conditions. Sudden enlightenment requires a revolutionary change in one's perspective of self and the world. I conclude that this concept of revolutionary enlightenment aptly explains the features of sudden enlightenment.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Chan tradition of East Asia teaches that enlightenment is followed by directly perceiving the truth. It also claims that enlightenment occurs suddenly and all at once rather than gradually or progressively. True enlightenment comes naturally, all of a sudden, and all at once; otherwise, it is not genuine enlightenment, or so Chan Buddhists argue. This debate on sudden and gradual enlightenment (頓漸論爭) has continued to attract much attention among East Asian Buddhists for more than a millennium.

Legend has it that the time-honored debate on sudden and gradual enlightenment started when Huineng's verse was compared with the stanza of his contemporary Shenxiu's in the seventh century. Huineng's verse manifests sudden enlightenment (頓悟), and the spirit of the enlightenment is clearly illuminated in *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*. First, look at Shenxiu's verse:

The body is the Bodhi tree.
The mind is like a clear mirror.
At all times we must strive to polish it.
And must not let dust collect.

Huineng, in contrast, composed his verse as follows:

Bodhi originally has no tree,
The bright mirror is nowhere standing.
Originally there is not a thing,
Where can there be any dust?¹

Shenxiu's stanza illustrates that our mind needs to be cleansed and polished so as to reveal the clear mind. Enlightenment is exposing the originally pure mind through incessant practices and efforts of removing defilements on the mind. Obviously, the enlightenment Shenxiu understands is a gradual and progressive process. A practitioner must purify her mind with an unceasing effort to attain enlightenment.

However, note that what Shenxiu's verse tells is, ironically, very similar to a metaphor in Brahmanism, as Paul Demieville points out.² Look at *Svetasvatara Upanishad*, a Brahmanistic scripture that uses the same metaphor, the dust-covered mirror:

Just as a dust-covered mirror
Glitters like fire when it is cleaned,
So does one who has recognized the atman's
essence
Attain the goal, deliverance from anxiety.³

The verse in *Upanishad* illustrates that *atman* is identified with one's reflection in a mirror. As a mirror is cleansed and polished, the true nature of one's *atman* is realized. Surprisingly, Shenxiu's stanza, in which he saw there is impurity on the mind to get rid of to achieve enlightenment, could be read in the same way the *Upanishad* verse is. However, Shenxiu's verse was supposed to be a depiction of how he understood the Buddha's teachings, which reject the existence of *atman*. How then could both verses look alike? We must think that Shenxiu's verse fails to demonstrate a correct understanding of the Buddha's nonself (*anatman*). Hence the gradualism that Shenxiu's verse represents may not be regarded as properly Buddhist.

In contrast to Shenxiu, Huineng stresses that since Bodhi originally has no tree and the bright mirror (the mind) is nowhere standing, there are no defilements to be eliminated in the first place. Enlightenment is to directly perceive the truth that originally there is not a thing—nothing exists as a separate and independent entity with intrinsic nature. Huineng's verse implies that enlightenment is a sudden realization of the truth of emptiness that there

is, to begin with, nothing that can be defiled. Awakening to this truth is nothing but an instantaneous event, so nothing more has to be done. Huineng's verse was acclaimed, and, as a result, Huineng received the title of the Sixth Patriarch in Chan Buddhism.

Buddhist scriptures prior to Huineng support the way Huineng illustrated enlightenment as sudden enlightenment.

Those who seek to thus undertake the appropriate effort, by which they give up all comforts and go forth into the teaching of Buddha. Having gone forth, *in a single instant they suddenly attain* a thousand concentrations, see a thousand buddhas and recognize their power, shake a thousand worlds, go to a thousand fields, illumine a thousand worlds, mature a thousand beings, live for a thousand eons, penetrate a thousand eons past and future, contemplate a thousand teachings, and manifest a thousand bodies, each body manifesting a company of a thousand enlightening beings.⁴

This passage expresses that enlightenment occurs instantaneously. Sudden enlightenment is to attain the concentration to realize the Buddha's teachings and gain clear perception or "the Dharma vision" to see the majestic and auspicious worlds of buddhas.

Also, consider *Āṅguttara Nikāya* 4:179:

The Venerable Ananda said that "whoever declares the attainment of arahantship in my presence, they all do it. . . . There is the case where a monk has developed insight preceded by tranquility. As he develops tranquility and insight, *the path is born*. He follows that path, develops it, and pursues it—his fetters are abandoned, his obsessions destroyed."⁵

This passage suggests that as a practitioner develops serenity and insight, she suddenly recognizes the path: "The path is born." Awakening to the path takes place as a form of sudden breakthrough attainment. The path becomes clear to her all at once and leads her to follow, develop, and pursue it afterwards. Enlightenment is hence directly perceiving the path instantaneously, and the process of cultivation follows afterward.

Sudden enlightenment is also depicted in the conversation between the Buddha and Udayi in *Samyutta Nikāya* 46:30(10):

The Venerable Udayi said to the Blessed One: "Venerable sir, while I was staying in an empty hut following along with a surge and decline of five aggregates subject to clinging, I directly knew as it really is: 'This is suffering'; I directly knew as it really is: 'This is the origin of suffering'; I directly knew as it really is: 'This is the cessation of suffering'; I directly knew as it really is: 'This is the way leading to the cessation of suffering.' I have

made the breakthrough to the Dhamma, venerable sir, and *have obtained the path* which, when I have developed and cultivated it, will lead me on, while I am dwelling in the appropriate way, to such a state that I shall understand: 'Destroyed is birth, the holy life has been lived, what had to be done has been done, there is no more for this state of being.'"⁶

"Good, good, Udayi! Indeed, Udayi, *this is the path that you have obtained*, and when you have developed and cultivated it, it will lead you on, while you are dwelling in the appropriate way, to such a state that you will understand: 'Destroyed is birth, the holy life has been lived, what had to be done has been done, there is no more for this state of being.'"⁶

This conversation describes that Udayi has obtained the path once he directly knows of suffering, the origin of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the way leading to the cessation of suffering. The path is born before him when he comes to directly know of the Four Noble Truths of the Buddha's teachings and leads him to finally declare, "Destroyed is birth, the holy life has been lived, what had to be done has been done, there is no more for this state of being."⁷ This illustrates that enlightenment takes place immediately and suddenly at one's awakening to the Buddha's teachings.

2. VICISSITUDES OF "SUDDEN" IN SUDDEN ENLIGHTENMENT

The word "sudden" is primarily construed as the sense of temporal duration, so the sudden/gradual debate could be a discussion about the short or long period of time we need to achieve enlightenment. "Instantaneous," "all at once," "at one glance," and "simultaneously" can be substituted for "sudden" in sudden enlightenment. Also, "rapid" can be added to the list of the temporal senses of "sudden."⁸

However, it may not be satisfying if we have to evaluate the sudden/gradual debate on enlightenment only in the sense of temporality. For many of us, except maybe practitioners in the Zen traditions, would assume that enlightenment requires a great deal of time and effort to realize. The studies of scriptures, moral practices, and prolonged periods of deep meditations must be considered the desiderata of enlightenment. If one needs to satisfy all of them, it must be reasonable to believe that enlightenment cannot be achieved instantaneously. So sudden enlightenment, the enlightenment to be attained all of a sudden, might be impossible.

Demieville suggests a nontemporal sense of "sudden." He explains the word "sudden" as "the totalistic aspect of salvation, which is related to a unified or synthetic conception of reality, to a philosophy of the immediate, the instantaneous, the non-temporal, which is also the eternal: things are perceived 'all at once,' intuitively, unconditionally, in a revolutionary manner."⁹ What he intends to say seems to be that sudden enlightenment is to obtain a holistic or utmost comprehensive perspective

of reality and that it likely occurs unconventionally. His proposal of a nontemporal sense of "sudden" is welcoming, but it may be an empty claim that acquiring a near-total perspective of reality is possible without explaining how such a perspective is obtainable.

Peter N. Gregory might help Demieville describe the nature of the totalistic perspective of reality. Gregory presents a nontemporal and qualitative sense of "sudden," which invokes in some way the transformation of insight. As he discusses Zongmi's theory of sudden enlightenment followed by gradual cultivation, he points out that Zongmi's theory "integrates the experience of sudden enlightenment into a comprehensive vision of a progressive path of spiritual cultivation, one that emphasizes the importance of a sudden 'leap' of insight within a larger philosophy of progress."¹⁰ Gregory's "sudden leap of insight" might mean, although it is unclear, that one's insight undergoes a sort of qualitative change and becomes a different one. This point suggests that enlightenment is some kind of dramatic change or transformation in one's vision.¹¹

Several contemporary scholars have so far proposed various meanings and interpretations of the word "sudden" in sudden enlightenment. Some have a temporal sense such as rapid, instantaneous, all at once, and simultaneously; some present a nontemporal sense such as Demieville's "the totalistic aspect of salvation," Gregory's "leap of insight," and John McRae's "transformation." Scholars have tried to find a univocal concept of "sudden" to explain sudden enlightenment appropriately. However, it appears that their attempts only aggravate confusion about the concept of "sudden." For, the word "sudden" has come to carry a variety of disjunctive meanings.

3. "SUDDEN" AS "PARADIGM-SHIFTING"

Hyun-Eung (현웅), a Korean Buddhist monastic, has recently proposed that sudden enlightenment is revolutionary enlightenment.¹² He first casts doubt on any attempts of interpreting "sudden" only in its temporal sense as "suddenly," "instantaneously," or "all at once." According to him, "'sudden' means not only the simultaneous dissolution of the twofold interrelatedness of cognition and being, but it also, in its contents, signifies symbolically the total transformation of the worldview between before and after enlightenment."¹³ He claims that sudden enlightenment is the revolutionary awakening of the dynamical and indivisible structure of cognitive subjects and objects and the comprehensive transformation of the worldview.

I agree with Hyun-Eung on the point that the concept of "sudden" in sudden enlightenment needs to be interpreted as "revolutionary," differently from the sense of temporality or a vague sense of transformation of insight. Buddhists indeed have a completely different view of the mode of existence since they deny the existence of self. Also, they, especially Mahayana Buddhists, refuse to recognize any intrinsic nature of any entity because they accept the truth of Buddhism that every entity arises only depending on its conditions, thereby lacking independent existence and self-nature. The view of dependent arising and emptiness along with no-self is drastically different from the commonsensical understanding of the nature of

persons and things we encounter in the world. The radical way Buddhists comprehend the world may lead us to the idea that enlightenment is achieved not in a conventional way but in a revolutionarily different way.

I further argue that Hyun-Eung's meaning of "revolution" can be construed in terms of a scientific revolution as presented by the twentieth-century American philosopher of science Thomas Kuhn in his book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*.¹⁴ Similar to the paradigm shift from geocentrism to heliocentrism, which took place in the fifteenth century, Hyun-Eung's "revolutionary enlightenment" is realized through a "paradigm shift" in Kuhn's sense.¹⁵ Revolutionary enlightenment is paradigm-shifting awakening: the awakening to the worldview based on the Buddhist teachings of dependent arising and emptiness.

3.1 KUHN'S "PARADIGM SHIFT"

Let me first unpack Kuhn's account of the scientific revolution. Kuhn views science as a puzzle-solving activity. As science discovers answers like the way puzzles are solved, science accumulates solutions to scientific puzzles. Science is practiced within a paradigm which represents, roughly, scientific systems and worldviews, and a scientist's activity depends on her ability to master the given paradigm. A failure to solve a scientific puzzle, then, reflects on the incompetence of the researcher, not on the soundness of the paradigm. Scientists take for granted that the prevailing paradigm is correct and try to verify, rather than falsify, the given paradigm. This is normal science as Kuhn calls it. As normal science proceeds, its scientific knowledge gradually accumulates.

However, troublesome anomalies that pose a serious problem for the existing paradigm continue to emerge. Normal science and the existing paradigm can no longer explain, eliminate, or dismiss them. As such anomalies become widespread, a new paradigm emerges. The new paradigm can embrace and explain the anomalies that remain unexplained in the old paradigm. Eventually, the existing scientific systems and worldviews come to be replaced entirely by the new ones. This sweeping and revolutionary change in the scientific system is called a scientific revolution.

A scientific revolution is only possible with a "paradigm shift" where the old paradigm is overthrown or replaced by a new one. Such a complete transition in belief systems and worldviews is unable to be achieved by the gradual accumulation of scientific knowledge. For instance, no matter how much data we accumulate for geocentrism, we can never achieve heliocentrism without replacing the system itself. Hence the manifestation of the scientific revolution indicates that science does not undergo the way of progressing or improving toward the truth about the world. Science just changes whenever the global scientific system and worldview (i.e., a paradigm) are overthrown by new ones. Thus, the history of science signifies the history of change.

After a scientific revolution, the concepts of theories that constitute the old paradigm disappear, or the surviving

concepts change their meaning within the new paradigm. For example, "planet" in the system of geocentrism referred to a celestial body that revolves around the Earth. After the scientific revolution, however, the homonymous "planet" in the new paradigm, heliocentrism, came to have a new meaning: a celestial body orbiting around the Sun. The concept of "planet" changed its meaning before and after the scientific revolution.

3.2 SUDDEN ENLIGHTENMENT IS PARADIGM-SHIFTING AWAKENING

Given Kuhn's account of the scientific revolution, let us discuss Hyun Eung's revolutionary enlightenment as sudden enlightenment. What Hyun Eung wants to say must be that revolutionary enlightenment is paradigm-shifting awakening. Sudden enlightenment takes place when a paradigm of belief systems is replaced with a revolutionarily different paradigm. It is the revolutionary transformation of one's perspective of life and the world, from the pre-enlightenment worldview based on essentialism and realism to the worldview of enlightenment based on the Buddhist teachings of dependent arising and emptiness. But note that, unlike Kuhn's scientific revolution, revolutionary enlightenment takes place only once.

Prior to enlightenment, each person views herself as a separate and independent individual who has her own essence (intrinsic nature). Everyone has her own nature (i.e., self), which identifies her distinctly from others. An individual object is also regarded as a thing that has an immutable essence which defines, distinguishes, and separates it from other objects. All things exist as independent objects. When I look at an object, I as "the cognizing subject (i.e., cognizer)" exist and perceive the object, "being as the object." The cognizer and the object are different and separate from each other. The domain of cognizing subjects is independent and distinct from that of objects. This worldview is based on essentialism and realism. Since we have this worldview, we perceive subjects and objects as separate and independent of each other.

However, when one understands the core Buddhist teaching of dependent arising (*Pratītyasamutpāda*, 緣起)¹⁶ and emptiness (*sunyata*, 空),¹⁷ she realizes that all things come into existence, abide, and pass out of existence only in dependence upon other things. The conditioned existence is the mode of existence of all things. Since all things arise in dependence upon other things, nothing exists on its own, and everything lacks self-existence and its intrinsic nature. Nothing has its own inherent nature (*svabhava*) that always makes a given thing separate from and independent of others. Everything is empty of independent existence (or intrinsic nature), that is, everything is empty of essence. Everything is empty because everything arises depending on conditions. A Mahayana Buddhist who accepts the truth of dependent arising comes to comprehend the truth of emptiness. She can also appreciate that the truth of nonself is implied by the truth of dependent arising and emptiness.

One's understanding of the Buddha's teachings results in a shifting of her perspective of self and the world and,

accordingly, leads her to obtain the insight that no one and nothing can exist independently of conditions including other people in society. One attains enlightenment when she awakens to the truth of dependent arising and that of emptiness. Any independent or immutable thing is no longer a real entity. The word “thing,” prior to enlightenment, means an individual that exists independently and separately from others. However, after enlightenment, since one recognizes that a thing arises dependently upon other things and is empty of its essence, it no longer exists as an independent and separate entity. It is now regarded as the relations to others. Here, the relations are not a secondary character of a thing to explain what a thing is. The relations are the mode of how a thing exists. Hence the same word “thing” becomes construed in terms of relations to others. One who achieves enlightenment by changing her worldview, therefore, knows that the way all things exist is determined by dynamic relations to conditions.

Once one awakens to the very mode of existence, the enlightened one realizes that the chasm between the domain of “cognizing subject” and that of “being as the object” disappears. She sees that “cognizers” and “objects cognized” do not have their own independent and separate domains. The domain of the subjects and that of the objects determine and constitute each other simultaneously. Cognizers and the objects cognized are interrelated and interpenetrated. It is the demise of the difference between subjects and objects. Enlightened ones comprehend this kind of dynamic structure of subjects and objects and realize that cognizers and beings as the objects should be examined simultaneously, not successively.

Enlightenment is not a gradual process. It is a dramatic and revolutionary shift of paradigm, that is, a radical change in one’s perspective of self and the world. What this point implies might be surprising to some people. Recall the paradigm shift from geocentrism to heliocentrism. Scientists pursued the accumulation of scientific knowledge within geocentrism. However, we know that the amassed scientific knowledge did not lead the scientists to automatically understand the new paradigm, heliocentrism. They needed to shift their worldview completely from geocentrism to heliocentrism. Indeed, such a complete transition in belief systems and worldviews is radical and unable to be achieved by the gradual accumulation of scientific knowledge. It is the same case in enlightenment. However persistently and tenaciously one keeps training and purifying the mind, she cannot attain enlightenment while she remains in a pre-enlightenment paradigm. The prolonged period of her studying scriptures, moral practices, and meditations will be in vain as long as she maintains the essentialist and realist worldview. She is required to undergo, for achieving enlightenment, a radical and total change of her worldview, from the essentialist and realist paradigm to the one based on the Buddhist teachings of dependent arising and emptiness. There is no partial or gradual enlightenment. When the paradigm shift happens, the change is comprehensive. The truth of nonself, dependent arising, and emptiness applies to everything in the world logically, all at once, instantaneously, and simultaneously. It is a sudden (頓) change.

4. CONCLUSION

I conclude that revolutionary enlightenment aptly explains the features of sudden enlightenment. I interpret “revolution” as “revolution” in Kuhn’s notion of scientific evolution and argue that revolutionary enlightenment is achieved through a “paradigm shift” in Kuhn’s sense. Sudden enlightenment is paradigm-shifting awakening. The awakening is the comprehensive transformation of worldview, from a pre-existing worldview based on essentialism and realism to a new perspective based on the Buddhist teachings of dependent arising and emptiness. The paradigm-shifting awakening can serve as a guiding principle for understanding Buddhist practices and enlightenment.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am much indebted to Chang-Seong Hong for his comments.

NOTES

1. This English translation of Huineng’s verse is based on the Tun-huang version of *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*.
2. Paul Demieville, “The Mirror of the Mind.”
3. *Svetasvatara Upanishad*, 2:14.
4. *Avatamsaka Sutra*, 719, emphasis added.
5. *Anguttara Nikāya* 4:179, emphasis added.
6. *Samyutta Nikāya* 46:30(10), emphasis added.
7. See also *Samyutta Nikāya* 15:13; 22:59(7); 25:1; 35:28(6); 35:74; and *Majjhima Nikāya* 70.
8. John McRae, “Shen-hui and the Teaching of Sudden Enlightenment in Early Ch’an Buddhism.”
9. Demieville, “The Mirror of the Mind,” 15.
10. Peter Gregory, “Sudden Enlightenment Followed by Gradual Cultivation,” 307.
11. McRae suggests that sudden enlightenment is a rapid and complete transformation into the enlightened state. See McRae, “Shen-hui and the Teaching of Sudden Enlightenment in Early Ch’an Buddhism.”
12. Venerable Hyun-Eung, *Enlightenment and History*, 63–70.
13. Venerable Hyun-Eung, *Enlightenment and History*, 70.
14. Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*.
15. It may be a bit unusual to speak of a “paradigm shift” in an individual’s belief system, not in the belief system of a scientific society. “Perspective change” could serve better in this context. However, Buddhists would encourage all the individuals of a society to have this “perspective change” for enlightenment. So, we can say that a “paradigm shift” is required for enlightenment.
16. When this exists, that comes to be;
With the arising of this, that arises.
When this does not exist, that does not come to be;
With the cessation of this, that ceases. (*Samyutta Nikāya* 12:61)
17. *Samyutta Nikāya* 35:85(2); 41:7.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bodhi, Bhikkhu, trans. *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Anguttara Nikāya*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2012.
- Bodhi, Bhikkhu, trans. *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Samyutta Nikāya*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2000.
- Cleary, Thomas, trans. *The Flower Ornament Scripture: A Translation of the Avatamsaka Sutra*. Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1993.
- Demieville, Paul. “The Mirror of the Mind.” In *Sudden and Gradual: Approaches to Enlightenment in Chinese Thought*, edited by Peter N. Gregory, 13–40. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987.

Gomez, Luis O. "Purifying Gold: The Metaphor of Effort and Intuition in Buddhist Thought and Practice." In *Sudden and Gradual: Approaches to Enlightenment in Chinese Thought*, edited by Peter N. Gregory, 67–165. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987.

Gregory, Peter N. "Sudden Enlightenment Followed by Gradual Cultivation: Tsung-mi's Analysis of Mind." In *Sudden and Gradual: Approaches to Enlightenment in Chinese Thought*, edited by Peter N. Gregory, 279–320. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987.

Venerable Hyun-Eung. *Enlightenment and History: Theory and Praxis in Contemporary Buddhism*. Translated by Chang-Seong Hong and Sun Kyeong Yu. Seoul: Bulkwang Publishing, 2017.

Kuhn, Thomas. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd edition, with postscript. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970.

Lai, Whalen. "Tao Sheng's Theory of Sudden Enlightenment Re-Examined." In *Sudden and Gradual: Approaches to Enlightenment in Chinese Thought*, edited by Peter N. Gregory, 169–200. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987.

McRae, John R. "Shen-hui and the Teaching of Sudden Enlightenment in Early Ch'an Buddhism." In *Sudden and Gradual: Approaches to Enlightenment in Chinese Thought*, edited by Peter N. Gregory, 227–78. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987.

Nanamoli, Bhikkhu and Bhikkhu Bodhi, trans. *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995.

Yampolsky, Philip B., trans. *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch: The Text of the Tun-huang Manuscript*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2012.

Korean Philosophy: Comments on Seok, Wang, Kim, and Yu

Philip Ivanhoe

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY, PI46@GEORGETOWN.EDU

ABSTRACT

This contribution consists of responses to four papers. The first, by Professor Bongrae Seok, argues for the importance Korean Neo-Confucians attached to moral psychological analysis of the mind and emotions and how this can help us understand three of the major debates within the tradition—the Four-Seven, Horak, and Simseol Debates. The second, by Professor Hwa Yeong Wang, introduces the Ritual Debate and argues that it is founded on deep philosophical beliefs that not only are essential for understanding its meaning and significance in Joseon times but also point to important contemporary issues concerning gender and ritual. The third, by Professor Hannah H. Kim, defends the philosophy of Juche, commonly translated as "self-reliance," against what she deems to be uncharitable criticisms and contends that it advances a valuable set of philosophical claims. The final contribution, by Professor Sun Kyeong Yu, presents the Korean Buddhist monastic Hyun-Eung as offering a novel account of "revolutionary enlightenment"—an "awakening of the dynamical and indivisible structure of cognitive subject and objects"—in terms of Thomas Kuhn's notion of a paradigm shift.

I. RESPONSE TO PROFESSOR BONGRAE SEOK

In his paper, Professor Seok argues for a set of interconnected claims about (1) the importance Korean Neo-Confucians attached to moral psychological analysis of the mind and emotions and (2) how three of the major debates within the tradition—the Four-Seven, Horak, and Simseol Debates—

can be understood as reflecting conflicts between what he calls the "normative" and the "psychological" approaches to issues such as the nature of the mind, moral emotions, and moral virtues. He further contends that such an understanding (3) differs from what he calls the "standard account," which he traces back to the modern Japanese scholar Tōru Takahashi, which explains these debates and much of the history of Korean Neo-Confucianism in terms of fundamental disagreements between what he calls the *i/li* school and the *gi/qi* school. Finally, he holds (4) that his suggested alternative offers a more productive way for scholars of Korean Neo-Confucianism to productively engage Western philosophical theories such as moral foundationalism, moral constructivism, Humean/Kantian moral psychology, and modular and nonmodular processes of moral cognition.

In light of my limited understanding of Korean Neo-Confucianism, it seems to me that claims (1) and (2) are not at all controversial. Of course, scholars present different analyses of a variety of issues within the complex debates of Korean Neo-Confucianism, but I do not believe anyone would deny, either, that thinkers within this tradition attached great importance to moral psychological analyses of the mind and emotions or that "normative" and the "psychological" approaches played a major role in their understanding of a range of issues connected with the nature of the mind, moral emotions, and moral virtues. I will return to these two questions later on, but now turn to Professor Seok's third claim about how his model offers an alternative to the "standard model," which he describes as based on fundamental disagreements between the *i/li* school and the *gi/qi* school. Whether we see these contrasting approaches as "schools" and what it might mean to be a school are separate and complex issues, which has a bearing on this claim but which I will not discuss here. Rather, I want to explore the more general question of how disagreements about *i* and *gi* might serve as a way to understand the basis of these Joseon Dynasty debates.

It seems to me that there is quite a range of interpretations about what it means to claim that disagreements about *i* and *gi* served as the pivot for many philosophical debates of the period. At times, Professor Seok presents the disagreement in rather absolute terms: as if one side, represented by people like Toegye, exclusively focused on *i*, while the other, represented by people like Yulgok, exclusively focused on *gi*. There may well be people who defend such positions, but from some of what Professor Seok says, I think we can agree that this is not the most thorough or insightful way to see things. All of these thinkers accepted that both *i* and *gi* play important roles; the question is not so much one or the other but what roles did these concepts play?

My own view is that, roughly speaking, Toegye held that *i* is *morally more foundational and pedagogically more important*, since it is through an initially theoretical grasp of pattern-principle that one understands the nature of actual things and events in the world and how they all hang together in the unified system that is the Way. In contrast, Yulgok taught *i* and *gi* are less distinctly separated from

one another. For him, *gi* is *morally more foundational and pedagogically more important*, since it is through a grasp of actual things and events that one understands the *i* that constitute the Way and underlie the nature of the world around one. While they surely did disagree about the metaphysics of *i* and *gi*, in many ways, their disagreements are more directly connected to, more clearly manifested, and more easily understood in their quite different approaches to learning. Now, this is but one way in which to see their disagreement as turning on issues concerning *i* and *gi* that does not make the mistake of claiming there is some absolute difference of opinion concerning these key concepts. So, while helpfully emphasizing largely overlooked or under-analyzed aspects of Korean Neo-Confucian thought, I do not see a clear or distinct contrast between the standard interpretation and Professor Seok's proposed alternative. One surely could disagree about the metaphysics of *i* and *gi* and hold that these differences reflect and support more "normative" or "psychological" approaches to issues such as the nature of the mind, moral emotions, and moral virtues. In fact, I think this is what we find in the three debates that Professor Seok discusses. So, it is not clear to me why Professor Seok sees his interpretation as *inconsistent* with the standard explanation. Moreover, I worry that "normative" simply stands in for *i* and "psychological" simply stands in for *gi*, and, if so, the proposed alternative is not really all that different but simply restates the standard view using modern Western concepts that are quite foreign to Joseon philosophical thinking.

Professor Seok argues that the alternative interpretation he proposes offers a more productive way for scholars of Korean Neo-Confucianism to engage Western philosophical theories such as moral foundationalism, moral constructivism, Humean/Kantian moral psychology, and modular and nonmodular processes of moral cognition. He does not develop this part of his argument extensively within the limited scope of his paper, and so I don't have anything definitive to say in response to this set of claims. I am not altogether clear what precisely Korean Neo-Confucianism has to offer on these particular topics. I do wholeheartedly agree with Professor Seok that an approach that focuses more on the normative and psychological aspects of the nature of the mind, moral emotions, and moral virtues and less on Neo-Confucian views about *i/li* and *gi/qi* will have much more to say to contemporary philosophers working in areas such as moral psychology and the virtues.

II. RESPONSE TO PROFESSOR HWA YEONG WANG

Professor Wang's paper introduces the Ritual Debate that occurred over a period of several decades, beginning in 1659, that, at least initially, concerned how the Queen Dowager should mourn her stepson, the deceased King Hyojong. She argues that the Ritual Debate cannot and should not be understood merely as a controversy over etiquette or manners or as simply a factional power struggle. Rather, the debate is founded on deeper philosophical beliefs that not only are essential for understanding its meaning and significance in Joseon times but also point to important contemporary issues concerning gender and

ritual. I will first present in summary form my understanding of her core arguments. In the concluding section of my remarks, I will pose a couple of questions concerning the contemporary significance of her findings.

As part of her argument about the philosophical foundations for the Ritual Debate, Professor Wang notes that, during the Joseon Dynasty, rituals both granted obligations and powers to government officials and limited their individual roles and prerogatives and so functioned as a form of "constitutionalism" that offered a medium through which people engaged in practical reasoning concerning a wide range of political and ethical issues. This is an extremely important point and helps us recognize often neglected philosophical dimensions to ritual systems such as those found in the Joseon. On a more particular level, she notes that underlying the Ritual Debates were more fundamental questions such as whether rituals, as markers of moral pattern-principle (*i* 理), have universal application or whether exceptions can be made for the royal family and, in particular, whether the king's position as sovereign should take precedence over his filial rank. Among other things, this shows the intimate relationship between metaphysical beliefs about pattern-principle and some of the core issues in the Ritual Debate. It also shows why those who upheld the former stance fiercely defended agnatic descent, which was thought to reflect the pattern-principle of the universe. This, in turn, often had profound implications for questions about royal succession, the status of women, and the nature and normative force of ritual.

We have already pointed to some of the well-known implications the Ritual Debate held for questions about legitimate succession. Women were prohibited from playing a central role in the line of royal succession and only those children who were part of the strict agnatic line of the king could hope to inherit the throne. Beyond such questions, though, is the general effect the debate had on women of this and subsequent periods. Professor Wang argues that the prominence of the agnatic principle is the source of the strong patriarchal nature and male-centeredness of later Korean society and those ritual practices and customs regarding such things as marriage and ancestral rites that support such inequities. This observation also should alert us to the ongoing prejudice contemporary scholars tend to display in studying the debate. For example, it is only recently that the role of figures such as Queen Jauui has received serious scholarly attention, despite the central role she played in the Ritual Debate. Finally, the issue, mentioned above, about the normative force and application of ritual and, in particular, how closely this was related to underlying metaphysical beliefs, is an important philosophical issue that calls out for more careful and thorough analysis.

I would like to conclude by asking Professor Wang to elaborate on some of the contemporary implications of the fascinating observations she has made in the course of her study. In particular, after noting how earlier commitment to agnatic principles has continued to echo down through time and inform contemporary practices, she holds out the prospect that the work she and others are doing in excavating and revealing these hidden and unexamined

foundations will help loosen their pernicious influence on the everyday lives women in Korea are leading today. Beyond this, though, she raises the further prospect of reimagining and reforming rituals such as marriage and mourning so that they not only are purged of patriarchal elements but also explicitly and positively support and promote gender equality. And in regard to such rituals, she asks whether they can or should aim to preserve the more universal quality characteristic of traditional pattern-principle or whether they should accommodate variety and multiplicity. I know this is a large topic, but I ask Professor Wang to offer a few thoughts on this constructive or reconstructive project.

Second and finally, Professor Wang trenchantly notes that her study raises questions about the normativity of ritual in general. Recent debates in ritual theory have taken diverging trajectories. Some seek to reconnect ritual to metaphysics in the belief that rituals shorn of metaphysical justification will lose their normative authority and prove incapable of achieving their roles in providing meaning, structure, and stability to individuals and societies. Others seek to sever rituals from their traditional metaphysical contexts and argue that they can still retain their value and work to the benefit of individuals and societies. My final question is again very large, but I ask Professor Wang to say a few words about whether her reconstructive project seeks to maintain some sort of metaphysical foundation for rituals—and, if so, what that might be—or sever the connection between metaphysics and rituals. If the latter, what does she think will happen to traditional Confucian values such as sincerity or authenticity in a world of “as-if” ritual practice?

III. RESPONSE TO PROFESSOR HANNAH H. KIM

Professor Kim sets as her goal to defend the philosophy of Juche, commonly translated as “self-reliance,” against what she deems as two uncharitable criticisms advanced by Alzo David-West: “that Juche’s axiom is too vague to be of philosophical use and that Juche makes stark distinctions between human vs. everything else.” She also contends that since Juche is the official state philosophy of North Korea, “it would be politically expedient, not to mention intellectually worthwhile, to analyze it in a way that would help us make sense of its motivational force.” I fully endorse Professor Kim’s aim of giving Juche a fair hearing and, though not an expert on Juche, I will do my best to sort out some of the difficulties presented in her essay and offer a way forward for those interested in adjudicating these matters.

Professor Kim notes that Juche holds up “political independence, economic self-sufficiency, and military self-reliance as the ideals of the state.” Given these characteristics, it would seem clearly to be a political philosophy and in a more straightforward and pure sense than a lot of political theory is today. Most contemporary political theory is founded on and seeks to promote a *moral* principle or goal; for example, John Rawls’s *A Theory of Justice* is not primarily or exclusively about what enables one to found and maintain a strong state (though it addresses such concerns); it is founded on a moral conception of justice as fairness (and is quite explicit about

this). This, though, makes it very different from the views of thinkers like Han Feizi or Niccolò Machiavelli, who explicitly eschew morality in connection with political theory and seek to offer a philosophy on how to organize and maintain a successful state. Juche seems to have more in common with this type of political philosophy. However, Juche is unlike these political philosophies in being “all about the Korean state, Korean identity, and Korean independence.” It appears to be exclusively linked to the well-being of the Korean state. If true, this is something worth exploring for anyone interested in Juche as philosophy in general and political philosophy in particular, because it seems to say that the truth claims Juche makes are specific to a particular culture and people.

David-West’s first criticism is that “Juche’s axiom is too vague to be of philosophical use.” Later in her paper, Professor Kim presents this as the criticism that Juche is “really a kind of subjective idealism, a metaphysical view that what we take the world to be is inextricably tied to our subjective projections and observations.” David-West goes on to enumerate a number of weaknesses with this kind of broad and admittedly vague metaphysical position, but Professor Kim objects on the grounds that since Juche is clearly a political philosophy, it is not “productive to read metaphysical commitments from it.” It is not clear to me whether she holds that it is not fair to claim that metaphysical commitments are essential or prominent in Juche philosophy. To decide this issue, we would need to look at the philosophy itself in more depth and with more care, a point to which I shall return below. Professor Kim complains that David-West bases his criticisms on a narrow and overly literal reading of Juche writings and offers a couple of arguments by analogy to the US Constitution, showing that an uncharitable reading of lines from this document can be construed as presenting equally implausible philosophical claims. The crux of her defense is that Juche’s claim that “man is the master of everything and decides everything” should not be taken as a universal metaphysical view, but as an epistemological claim “quantifying over *social or political* objects and relations.”

David-West’s second criticism largely concerns the slogan that “man is the master of everything and decides everything,” which, he contends, “makes too stark a distinction between humans and everything else” and seems to imply that humans possess “the ability to transcend the laws of nature.” Professor Kim offers three responses to this objection. The first is that “the idea that man is the measure of all things is an ancient idea (attributed to Protagoras); second, the hierarchal understanding of the universe, with man on top, might be coming from Confucian influences over Juche; and third, the slogan need not posit a man vs. everything else binary.” Since we are interested in the plausibility of the view, the force of the first two points is not clear to me, but here interested readers may feel, as I felt throughout her essay, that Professor Kim has not provided us with a way to assess the claims on either side of these debates for ourselves. This was true when she defended Juche by drawing analogies with uncharitable readings of the Constitution and her disagreement with David-West about whether metaphysical views are essential to or implied by

Juche philosophy, which I mentioned above. In regard to the earlier case, the points she made about distorting a text or philosophy with tendentious cherry-picking are well taken, but what I would like to know is who, if anyone, is doing this. Aside from two or three short phrases, there is not a *single quote* from any Juche writing in Professor Kim's essay, and so I don't know whose view to take as the better representation of Juche philosophy. I look forward to Professor Kim and other scholars of Juche to present a well-argued case for the integrity and relevance of Juche, but in order to do that, one needs to *make a case*, much in the way a lawyer does by providing evidence and arguments on one's client's behalf and against her accuser. Until then, the goal of "giving Juche a fair hearing" has not begun; the jury is not so much out as yet to be seated.

IV. RESPONSE TO PROFESSOR SUN KYEONG YU

Professor Yu presents the Korean Buddhist monastic Hyun-Eung as offering a novel account of "revolutionary enlightenment," claiming that it is constituted by and consists of an "awakening of the dynamical and indivisible structure of cognitive subject and objects." Professor Yu argues that this account of the nature of sudden enlightenment, or, more accurately, the nature of the process leading to sudden enlightenment, can be understood more clearly and completely by drawing upon the work of the historian and philosopher of science Thomas Kuhn. Roughly, she argues that we can understand Hyun-Eung's account of "revolutionary enlightenment" on the model of a scientific "paradigm shift," as presented in Kuhn's seminal work *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Revolutionary enlightenment is a kind of paradigm-shifting awakening, the comprehensive transformation of a worldview, from one based on essentialism and realism to one based on the Buddhist teachings of dependent arising and emptiness.

A Kuhnian paradigm shift occurs when the dominant paradigm under which "normal science" operates can no longer account for and is rendered incompatible with a new set of challenges. Such a condition results in the adoption of a new paradigm that can handle the unruly and problematic phenomena. Kuhn illustrated the model of a paradigm shift with the example of the change from a geocentric to a heliocentric view of the earth. He also pointed to the duck-rabbit illusion, made famous by Ludwig Wittgenstein, to demonstrate how a paradigm shift could lead someone to see the same phenomena (the "world") differently. One can see the attraction of thinking of Buddhist sudden enlightenment as a paradigm shift, since the Buddhist practitioner moves from seeing a world of stable things and an enduring self to a world of no-self and emptiness. In making that shift, she moves from the unenlightened to the enlightened state.

According to Hyun-Eung, "'sudden' means not only the simultaneous dissolution of the twofold interrelatedness of cognition and being, but it also, in its contents, signifies symbolically the total transformation of the worldview between before and after enlightenment." Hyun-Eung clearly sees sudden enlightenment in terms of a radical change in the interpretive frame through which one understands the world and that is similar to Kuhn's theory

about paradigm shifts in science. Nevertheless, the appeal to Kuhn might worry some people in that it might be seen as offering an overly intellectual account of the required shift. In one respect, this worry may be warranted since, in the case of Buddhism, in making the shift, one gives up a psychological commitment to the self and this relieves one of suffering. Nothing quite like this is involved in the case of a scientific paradigm shift.

I would like to point to another feature of paradigm shifts in science and Buddhist sudden enlightenment that Professor Yu does not explore, and this concerns the degree to which both involve a change not only in beliefs but also in practices. Kuhn sometimes talks about paradigm shifts more in terms of theories or models, for example, the respective theories of Ptolemy, Copernicus, or Newton's *Principia* as laying down the principles of physics. But he also talks about paradigm shifts in terms of the general ways in which science is done, and this goes well beyond any particular theory or system, regardless of how central and influential it might be. Recognizing the complex nature of Kuhnian paradigms might lead one to see that paradigm shifts can occur in many different ways; sometimes, a profound theoretical insight results in a dramatic shift in the conception and practice of science, but sometimes, the dramatic shift occurs after a series of smaller changes in practice and conception reaches a kind of critical mass that elicits the paradigm shift.

Both these features of scientific paradigms are found in Chan Buddhist views about sudden enlightenment as well. The spirit verses of Shenxiu and Huineng seem to say that the debate about sudden enlightenment is as much about practice as it is about doctrines about the self and emptiness. The *Avatamaska Sutra* also emphasizes practice or right effort, saying, "Those who seek to thus undertake the appropriate effort, by which they give up all comforts and go forth into the teaching of Buddha. Having gone forth, in a single instant they suddenly attain. . . ." Given the radical nature of Chan beliefs about the self and the mind, it is difficult and perhaps impossible to pry apart doctrine and practice and, for different reasons, one could say much the same about shifts in scientific paradigms. I don't know what to say about some of these additional similarities, but it seems that a fuller appreciation of the complex nature of scientific paradigm shifts might offer a model that captures even more aspects of the debates about sudden and gradual in the Chan tradition.

Response to Ivanhoe

Bongrae Seok

ALVERNIA UNIVERSITY, BONGRAE.SEOK@ALVERNIA.EDU

In his comments on my paper, Professor Philip Ivanhoe asks stimulating questions about my interpretation of the *i-gi/li-qi* philosophy and the philosophical debates of Korean Neo-Confucianism. I appreciate his insightful comments and suggestions and, in this essay, I will briefly summarize his comments and respond to them. First, he observes

that my interpretation of the *i-gi/li-qi* philosophy is based on a narrow characterization of the *i/li-gi/qi* philosophy and the two major philosophical schools of Korean Neo-Confucianism. Second, he asks if my interpretation of the major debates of Korean Neo-Confucianism through the normative and psychological approaches is consistent with the standard interpretation of Korean Neo-Confucianism through the *i-gi/li-qi* philosophy. Third, he asks about different ways Korean Neo-Confucianism can contribute or relate to contemporary philosophy and moral psychology.

I will respond to his first and third comments and then explain my interpretation of Korean Neo-Confucianism to answer his question in his second comment. Regarding the first comment, I believe that Korean Neo-Confucians, when they affiliate themselves with the Toegye or Yulgok schools, emphasize certain aspects of *i/li* or *gi/qi*, but they do not necessarily ignore or exclusively focus on *i/li* or *gi/qi*. This is the reason the *i/li* school, for example, is usually called *juripa* (主理派 mainly or mostly *i/li* school), not *yuripa* (唯理派 only *i/li* school) in Korean Neo-Confucianism. On this account, I agree with Professor Ivanhoe that *i/li* and *gi/qi* are not mutually exclusive and that the *i/li* school, for example, does not deny the philosophical significance of *gi/qi*. However, the *i/li* and *gi/qi* schools (*juripa* and *jugipa*) competed for philosophical dominance in Korean Neo-Confucianism during the Joseon period. Although *i/li* and *gi/qi* are always interactive and mutually complementary, Korean Neo-Confucians believed that seeing things (mainly or mostly) from *i/li*'s or *gi/qi*'s viewpoint makes a substantial philosophical difference. In my paper, I discussed this competitive and contrastive relation between the two schools of thought and asked whether utilizing the *i/li-gi/qi* framework, although practically useful in characterizing the overall philosophical orientations of Korean Neo-Confucianism, is a good way to understand the philosophical debates and innovative thoughts of Korean Neo-Confucianism.

Regarding the third comment, I believe Korean Neo-Confucianism, as a philosophical tradition that focuses on the moral nature of the mind, has theoretical relevance to contemporary studies of moral psychology and moral cognition. Although it invested heavily in the metaphysical nature of the mind through the intriguing relation and interaction between *i/li* and *gi/qi*, contemporary moral philosophy and cognitive science would pay more attention to the way Korean Neo-Confucian philosophers explain the affective, cognitive, and developmental nature of the moral mind than to the way they explain the *i-gi/li-qi* metaphysics of the mind and morality. I agree with Professor Ivanhoe on this point and believe that this moral psychological relevance to current philosophical and empirical studies of the moral mind can be an exciting development in comparative studies of Korean Neo-Confucianism. In my paper, I briefly sketched several viewpoints to understand Korean Neo-Confucianism in the context of contemporary theories, including moral foundationalism, moral constructivism, Humean/Kantian moral psychology, and modular moral cognition.

Regarding the second comment, I agree with Professor Ivanhoe's interpretation of the *i-gi/li-qi* philosophy,

specifically the Toegye and Yulgok schools' contrastive emphases on the importance of *i/li* and *gi/qi* on the matters of morality and moral cultivation. However, when it comes to major philosophical debates of Korean Neo-Confucianism and their rigorous analyses of the moral nature of the mind, the metaphysics of *i/li* and *gi/qi* does not seem to provide a clear and coherent frame of interpretation. The *i-gi/li-qi* metaphysics is a comprehensive system of philosophy that explains a broad range of natural, social, and moral phenomena, from the ultimate foundation of the universe to the moral virtues of individuals. However, it has serious philosophical limitations when it is used to explain the moral goodness of the mind. First, the Neo-Confucian principle of "mutual distinction but no separation" (*bulsangjab bulsangri* 不相雜 不相離) tells us that *i/li* and *gi/qi* are distinct elements of the universe, but they are always together. In other words, they are different but not exclusive of each other. However, when it comes to moral goodness, good and evil are different and exclusive of each other or, at least, they do not have to be together. Therefore, applying the *i-gi/li-qi* metaphysics to moral goodness poses an inherent challenge in explaining the exclusive relation between good and evil by the inclusive terms of *i/li* and *gi/qi*. This is particularly so when *i/li* and *gi/qi* are associated with some aspects of good and evil, respectively. Second, the mind is a system of psychological processes that are supported by *gi/qi*'s variable and contingent activities, but it also develops a moral character with *i/li*'s regulative order. How to combine, in the mind, the two contrastive processes together in a coherent manner? These are the two main reasons why utilizing the *i-gi/li-qi* framework brings only limited success in interpreting and explaining the major debates of Korean Neo-Confucianism that raised questions about the moral nature of the mind. Perhaps, the existence (if not the resolution) of serious and extended philosophical debates in Korean Neo-Confucianism such as the Four-Seven Debate, the Horak Debate, and the Simseol Debate demonstrates the inherent difficulty of applying the metaphysical framework of *i/li-gi/qi* to the matter of the moral goodness of the mind.

Although Korean Neo-Confucians continued to use the terms of the *i-gi/li-qi* metaphysics such as *i/li*, *gi/qi* and *seong/xing* in their writings and followed the general philosophical discourse of Cheng-Zhu Neo-Confucianism, what they attempted to explain and what they debated about are not clearly or fully understood by the metaphysical terms of *i/li*, *gi/qi*, *sim/xin*, and *seong/xing* as witnessed in Yi Hang-Ro's provocative statement that the mind is *i/li* (how can the mind, if its activity is supported by *gi/qi*, be *i/li*?), Jeong Yak-Yong's contentious statement in his *seong giho seol* (性嗜好說) that nature (*seong/xing* 性) is simply the inclinations of the mind (how can consistent and coherent *seong/xing* be reduced to the variable dispositions of the mind?), and Toegye's ingenious explanation of the causation of the Four Emotions, i.e., *i/li* starts [the causation] and *gi/qi* follows (how can physically inefficacious *i/li* cause the Four Emotions?). For this reason, one should understand critical and innovative views of Korean Neo-Confucianism, specifically in the context of philosophical debates, from the perspective of the moral mind that can recognize moral values and cultivate virtues, even though the *i-gi/li-qi* metaphysics provides a general

framework for the interpretation of the broad philosophical and historical context of Korean Neo-Confucianism in the Joseon Dynasty. In my paper, I discussed two different ways of explaining the moral mind in the philosophical debates of Korean Neo-Confucianism through the normative and psychological approaches.

Response to Ivanhoe

Hannah H. Kim

MACALESTER COLLEGE, HKIM1@MACALESTER.EDU

Many thanks to Professor Philip Ivanhoe for his comments. In the following, I'll provide clarifications where they're needed.

Professor Ivanhoe motivates the study of Juche by comparing its political commitments to theories espoused by John Rawls (based on a moral principle or goal) and Han Feizi / Niccolò Machiavelli (focused on running a successful state). I agree that Juche is unlike these since it is explicitly focused on the well-being of a particular culture and people. Whatever truth claims Juche makes, as Professor Ivanhoe notes, must be indexed to the Korean context, and it remains to be seen what, if anything, can be universalizable from Juche.

I had written that our efforts on Juche would be best spent looking for political insights, and that Alzo David-West's complaints about Juche's metaphysics—for instance, that it makes a silly mereological mistake that a part ("man") is greater than the whole ("everything")—is uncalled for. Professor Ivanhoe takes my objections to be grounded on the fact that Juche is a political philosophy and wonders whether I think it's unfair to read any metaphysical commitments as essential or prominent in Juche philosophy.

What I meant to highlight wasn't that *any* metaphysical reading of Juche is inappropriate. Instead, I drew attention to Juche's status as a political philosophy to suggest that *facile* metaphysical readings of Juche are not worth our time. There are certainly metaphysical commitments we can read off of Juche. For instance, solipsism or moral realism would be incompatible with Juche. The suggestion was that trying to derive from Juche any metaphysical claim divorced from a reasonable context, or readings that lead to obvious falsities, would be unproductive, and that our time might be better spent focusing on the sociopolitical points made by Juche. It's a good question just what kinds of metaphysics would be compatible with Juche, but I first needed to rule out David-West's conclusions.

Professor Ivanhoe makes a methodological point that more primary literature ought to have been cited. I agree with this assessment: I should model, and not simply say, that we need a more careful study of Juche. However, I'll add a small note on the worry that "[a]side from two or three short phrases, there is not a single quote from any Juche writing" in the essay. Speeches make up a large portion of

what scholars inspect when they study Juche. For example, the maxim "man is the master of everything and decides everything" was first mentioned during an interview with Japanese journalists in 1972, ten years before the publication of *On the Juche Idea*. So, when I quote from speeches or works applying Juche (e.g., *On the Art of the Cinema*), I am providing evidence from texts that inform the study of Juche. Still, *On the Juche Idea* should have been cited, and I heed the overall methodological point that a more careful appeal to primary sources would be helpful going forward.

Let me close by clarifying what the scope and aim of my piece were. The goal was to show that some criticisms against Juche are not enough to render Juche incoherent or meaningless. By showing the various responses a philosopher might offer on behalf of Juche, I showed how Juche might be defended against David-West's allegations. For example, we might point to the plausibility of the axiom "Man is the Master of Everything and Decides Everything" by examining other contexts from the history of philosophy where ideas akin to "man is the standard/measure of all things" showed up.

Professor Ivanhoe correctly notes that I don't provide a way to assess whether Juche really is reasonable or not. This was a "feature," not a "bug." The case I was making (in the limited space I had) was that Juche deserves a closer look. In the opening of the piece, I write that it's possible that Juche is truly a sham. Still, a fair hearing is warranted, so the first thing to do was to diffuse the obviously unhelpful criticisms and offer readings of Juche that would be more rewarding to explore. To follow Professor Ivanhoe's legal analogy, the aim of the piece wasn't to show the defendant is innocent, but to show why the accusations aren't enough to show the defendant to be guilty. Better evidence must be brought forth to argue for either Juche's "innocence" or "guilt"—and I'm glad that Professor Ivanhoe and I agree this to be the next task.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION

GOAL OF APA STUDIES ON ASIAN AND ASIAN AMERICAN PHILOSOPHERS AND PHILOSOPHIES

APA Studies on Asian and Asian American Philosophers and Philosophies is sponsored by the APA Committee on Asian and Asian American Philosophers and Philosophies to report on the philosophical work of Asian and Asian American philosophy, to report on new work in Asian philosophy, and to provide a forum for the discussion of topics of importance to Asian and Asian American philosophers and those engaged with Asian and Asian American philosophy. We encourage a diversity of views and topics within this broad rubric. None of the varied philosophical views provided by authors of *APA Studies* articles necessarily represents the views of any or all the members of the Committee on Asian and Asian American Philosophers and

Philosophies, including the editor(s) of *APA Studies*. The committee and the journal are committed to advancing Asian and Asian American philosophical scholarships and bringing this work and this community to the attention of the larger philosophical community; we do not endorse any particular approach to Asian or Asian American philosophy.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

- 1) **Purpose:** The purpose of *APA Studies* is to publish information about the status of Asians and Asian Americans and their philosophy and to make the resources of Asians and Asian American philosophy available to a larger philosophical community. *APA Studies* presents discussions of recent developments in Asians and Asian American philosophy (including, for example, both modern and classical East Asian philosophy, both modern and classical South Asian philosophy, and Asians and Asian Americans doing philosophy in its various forms), related work in other disciplines, literature overviews, reviews of the discipline as a whole, timely book reviews, and suggestions for both spreading and improving the teaching of Asian philosophy in the current curriculum. It also informs the profession about the work of the APA Committee on Asian and Asian American Philosophers and Philosophies. One way the dissemination of knowledge of the relevant areas occurs is by holding highly visible, interactive sessions on Asian philosophy at the American Philosophical Association's three annual divisional meetings. Potential authors should follow the submission guidelines below:
 - i) Please submit essays electronically to the editor(s). Articles submitted to *APA Studies* should be limited to ten double-spaced pages and must follow the APA submission guidelines.
 - ii) All manuscripts should be prepared for anonymous review. Each submission shall be sent to two referees. Reports will be shared with authors. References should follow *The Chicago Manual Style*.
 - iii) If the paper is accepted, each author is required to sign a copyright transfer form, available on the APA website, prior to publication.
- 2) **Book reviews and reviewers:** If you have published a book that you consider appropriate for review in *APA Studies*, please ask your publisher to send the editor(s) a copy of your book. Each call for papers may also include a list of books for possible review. To volunteer to review books (or some specific book), kindly send the editor(s) a CV and letter of interest mentioning your areas of research and teaching.
- 3) **Where to send papers/reviews:** Please send all articles, comments, reviews, suggestions, books, and other communications to the editor: A. Minh Nguyen (atnguyen@fgcu.edu).
- 4) **Submission deadlines:** Submissions for spring issues are due by the preceding November 1, and submissions for fall issues are due by the preceding February 1.
- 5) **Guest editorship:** It is possible that one or more members of the Committee on Asian and Asian American Philosophers and Philosophies could act as guest editors for one of the issues of *APA Studies* depending on their expertise in the field. To produce a high-quality journal, one of the co-editors could even come from outside the members of the committee depending on his/her area of research interest.