KRITERION, Nr.5 (1993), pp.31–38

Zhang Xian

HUSSERL'S INTENTIONALITY AND THE "MIND" IN CHINESE PHILOSOPHY

> To set up the mind for Heaven and earth; To establish their Heaven-ordained being for the people.[1]
>
> Chang Tsai [a][2]

> Man muss erst die Welt durch ἐποχή verlieren, um sie in universaler Selbstbesinnung wiederzugewinnen.[3]
>
> E.Husserl

Husserl's phenomenology is, in a certain sense, a theory of the pure consciousness, which tries to lay an absolute, ultimate and rigorous ground for sciences in the field of pure consciousness. Husserl believes that he can provide an eternal significance for the spiritual life of human beings through his phenomenology. I think that intentionality is a key concept in the theory of pure consciousness in Husserl's phenomenology, and for Husserl it plays an important role in the realization of his philosophical ideal. In contrast, Chinese philosophy does not pay any attention to how an absolute and ultimate ground for the sciences is to be found, nor to how a set of moral norms and a theory of value for the life of human beings is to be provided from logical and scientific knowledge. Rather, Chinese philosophy is concerned with how to adjust the relationships between Heaven [Tian. b] and man, and man and man in secular life, and does not value pure logic, pure science, and pure consciousness as does Husserl's phenomenology. Chinese philosophy establishes an experiential and intuitive "mind" [Xin. c] as the ground of moral reason. This "mind" does not need to be proven by a rigorous logic and a theory of science – any person can often perceive his own "mind" in daily life, and can thereby, by analogy, discern the "mind" of others.[4] If Husserl's intentionality can be considered to be a typical form of transcendental reason in Western philosophy, then the "mind", in my opinion, can be regarded as the basis of moral reason in Chinese philosophy. What are the characteristics of Husserl's intentionality and of the "mind" in Chinese philosophy? What functions in constituting objects do they have? What is the relationship between them? Can they communicate with each other? I will attempt to explore these problems in my essay.

1. The Aim and Basis of Phenomenology and Chinese Philosophy

Husserl's philosophical ideal is to provide an absolute and ultimate rational ground for all sciences, thus man's significance and value in his spiritual life can be eternally ensured. According to Husserl, man can only obtain a relative and accidental truth through the attitude of naive and experiential naturalism, whereas man cannot, of course, realize his philosophical ideal. In order to realize this ideal, that is to say, in order to obtain absolute truth and the eternal significance of spiritual life, man has to withdraw himself from the field of his own naive experience and return to the field of pure consciousness. This is the socalled "phenomenological reduction". Why can man carry out this reduction by withdrawing his intentionality from the real world and returning it to the immanent world of his pure consciousness? It is because man's consciousness possesses intentionality: consciousness is always the consciousness of something, and at the same time, it is an action of attention, desire, evaluation, memory, willingness, reflection, and so on. It is this intentionality that I will discuss at present.

The concept of intentionality is inherited by Husserl from his philosophical teacher Brentano. He is not, however, content with the psychologist tendency in Brentano. Husserl believes he can show that the universal concept, which is regarded by Brentano as the fiction of language, really exists, and hence that a logical, ideal being must be accepted.[5] This implies that through intentionality man can constitute not only the particular in his intentional

1. Xiao jie fu, Li jing quan: *The History of Cinese Philosophy*. Vol.2, Beijing 1982, p.63

2. Letters in brackets refer to the Chinese Glossary at the end of this article.

3. *Husserliana* Bd.I, ed. by S. Strasser, Den Haag ^{2}1973, p.183

4. It relates to the problem of intersubjectivity in Husserl's philosophy. I will discuss the relationship between Husserl's use of intersubjectivity and the establishment of universal moral principles in Chinese philosophy in another essay.

5. Cf. Stegmüller: *Hauptströmungen der Gegenwartsphilosophie* Bd.I, Stuttgart 1989, p.49.

experience, but also the universal in his intentional transcendental reflection.

Generally speaking, we must grasp the two concepts "noesis" and "noema", if we want to be able to discuss intentionality in Husserl's phenomenology. "Noesis" and "noema" are connected with each other. Of the two it is, in my opinion, more important to understand the "noema". The "noema" is opposite to the real object in the world, and it is the result of intentional reflection (which includes analysis and explication). In naive experience, man can obtain only a relative, mixed and swiftly disappearing "fact", however in intentional reflection, through analysis and explication he can obtain the meaning which is necessary, whole and beyond the space-time dimension.[6] According to my understanding, "noema" is actually a meaning, which is irreal and appears as an idealization in our pure consciousness. It is also said that "noema" is our explication of the experiential fact, or that it is the immanent object in our pure consciousness.[7] It depends on the endless critique of our reflection in pure consciousness that we can open continuously the horizon of our cognitions, so that we can find the absolute truth and the eternal significance of the spiritual life of human beings.

Compared to Husserl's intentionality, the characteristics and functions of the "mind" discussed by Chinese philosophers are very different, and its meaning is very complicated and ambiguous.[8] Among Chinese philosophers, Mencius is reputed to be the first to have talked systematically about the "mind". He says, "to the mind belongs the office of thinking. By thinking, it gets the right view of things; by neglecting to think, it fails to do this. These – the senses and the mind – are what Heaven has given to us."[9] [Kao Tzu I. d] Here, the "mind" seems to be an organ for Mencius, which can be used to think just as our eyes can be used to see something. Mencius also says, "the mind full of commiseration [Ce Yin. e] is the origin of humanity [Ren. f]; the mind knowing shame and dislike [Xiu E. g] is the origin of righteousness [Yi. h]; the mind with politely declining is the origin of propriety [Li. i]; and the mind being capable of judging right and wrong is the origin of wisdom [Zhi. j]; [...]"[10] [Gong Sun Chou. I. k] "Origin" means a beginning point. For Mencius, the "mind" seems to be the beginning point of all moral evaluation and cognition, which is given a priori to human beings. But what is the relationship between the "mind" and our direct and original experience (Husserl calls it an "originär gebende Anschauung" in his work "Ideen I"[11])? And how can the "mind" constitute humanity, righteousness, propriety, and wisdom? Mencius does not elaborate any further.

These questions seem to have been partly answered by Hsun Tzu and Mo Tzu. In "Mo Jing" [I] we find such an idea from Mo Tzu, "man can obtain the sense from what he sees and hears, it is because of the observation [Cha. m] of mind; man can understand the sense from the word, it is because of the distinguishing [Bian. n] ability of the mind."[12] That means that our "mind" can not only observe, but also distinguish. So, Mo Tzu concretizes the "thinking" of Mencius. According to Mo Tzu, man can probably realize the feelings of commiseration, shame and dislike through the observation of the "mind", as well as the sense of politely declining and capability of judgement through the distinguishing powers of the "mind". But observation and distinction as discussed by Mo Tzu remain at the level of man's moral experience; he does not yet discuss "thinking" on the level of transcendental reflection.

It is obvious that Hsün Tzu emphasises the mind's abilities to consider and choose more than Mencius does. He says, "Human feelings, like or dislike, joy or anger, sorrow or happiness, can be called nature, and to make a choice with these feelings in man's mind is called consideration [Lü. o], the consideration of mind is called the moral control."[13] [Zheng ming. p] In my opinion, both the consideration and choice (including Mo Tzu's observation and distinguishing ability) are the manifestations of intentionality. It is to be regretted that Hsün Tzu (as well as Mo Tzu) does not further investigate the

6. Gurwitsch and Føllesdal hold obviously different views. Gurwitsch takes "noema" as percept and Føllesdal takes it as meaning.

7. Cf. Küng, G.: "The Phenomenological Reduction as Epochè and Explication", in: Elliston, F., McCormack, R.(eds.): *Husserl Expositions and Appraisals*. Northwestern University Press, USA 1982.

8. There are also some similarities between Husserl's phenomenology and Chinese philosophy, especially buddhist philosophy. Here I discuss mainly the differences.

9. *Selected Readings from famous Chinese Philosophers* Vol.1, Beijing 1988, p.111.

10. Xiao jie fu, Li jing quan: *The History of Chinese Philosophy*. Vol.1, Beijing 1982, p.147

11. Schuhmann, K. (Ed): *Husserliana III.1*. Den Haag 1976, p.51.

12. Xiao jie fu, Li jing quan: *The History of Chinese Philosophy*. Vol.1, Beijing 1982, p.94.

13. Ibidem, p.213.

modes of intentional acts of human beings on the level of transcendental reflection. So, how can man ensure the rigorous validity of his consideration and choice of mind in constituting intentional objects? Furthermore, what is the relationship between direct and original moral experience and the universal principle of morality? It seems that he fails to discuss these questions.

Later Lu Jiu Yuan [q] and Wan Yang Ming [r] in the Song Dynasty carry Hsün Tzu's conclusion to its extreme in their doctrine of mind. Lu Jiu Yuan says, "the mind is not blood and force [Ch'i. s], it is intangible, boundless and full of change: sometimes seeing, sometimes hearing, sometimes speaking, and sometimes acting – all these happening in a fleeting moment."[14] In Lu Jiu Yuan's words one can find a suggestion of the theory of pure consciousness, whereas the "mind" in Lu's doctrine is quite similar to the "noesis" in Husserl's phenomenology. As to Wang Yang Ming, he explains the characteristic of the "mind" by connecting it with "intuitive knowlegde" [Liang Zhi. t]. He points out, "the substance of mind is originally neither good nor bad; owing to the intentional act, good and bad come out; knowing good and bad is the result of intuitive knowledge, giving up bad and returning to good is the extension of knowledge through the investigation of things."[15] Obviously, like Husserl, Wang also stresses the active function of intentionality. He holds that a variety of intentional acts of mind must have their objects: good and bad. In other words, our moral objects, e.g. good and bad, can be constituted by our intentional acts. But what is the relationship between intuitive knowledge and these moral-intentional acts? How can we guarantee the rigorous validity of this intuitive knowledge (of good and bad)? Wang Yang Ming's explication is quite different from that of Husserl. First, for Wang, intuitive knowledge of good and bad is the only true knowledge human beings can attain. It is a given in our minds, like an original substance. This intuitive knowledge is prior to the moral-intentional acts. Secondly, Wang's proof of intuitive knowledge seems to resort to the method of intuitive analogy. He says, "knowing is the original substance of mind, the mind can naturally know something: seeing father, man can naturally have the filial piety for his father; seeing brother, man can naturally pay respect to his brother; seeing a child fallen in a well, man can naturally have the commiseration for this child. It is called the intuitive knowledge, and man can not get it from the outward world."[Chuan Xi Lu, part I. u] Moreover, I still want to point out that for Wang intuitive knowledge, so to say, is similar to Husserl's experience ("originär gebende Anschauung"). However, Wang considers his intuitive knowledge to be an original substance in the mind while Husserl's original experience is a phenomenon.

Husserl discusses intentionality, I think, in order to inquire into the conscious structure of human beings, and to study how "noemata" are constituted by the "noesis". In this respect, the most important thing is that the intentional object is essentially understood as a meaning. Moreover, each intentional object should be regarded as a horizon of meaning whose potential range will be continuely revealed by the changing and unfolding of our intentional acts. In contrast, the Chinese philosophers discuss the "mind" in order to find an original substance of moral cognition and the absolute ground of moral acts. In my opinion, the Chinese philosophers are not yet able to free themselves from the theory of substance, when they discuss the "mind". In other words, for the Chinese philosophers, the "mind" is a certain substance, which is a moral substance as well as a cognitive substance. (Of course, the concept of substance in Chinese philosophy is quite different from that in Western philosophy.) But how can the "mind" constitute intentional objects through certain intentional acts? The Chinese philosophers turn to experiential intuition and mystical analogy for the answer. It is obvious that although the manifestations of the "mind" in Chinese philosophy are found in the mystical metaphors and are rich in poetic flavor, they still lack rigorous and prudent proof through logic and science. But, from another point of view, this is probably the advantage of Chinese philosophy because poetic descriptions of our primary life in the social world can enrich our imagination, and thus the Lebenswelt (life-world) will be given more meaning. I suppose that this is the reason why some Western philosophers living in a modern society of scientific and technical development often look back upon the philosophical ideas of ancient China with great interest.

2. The Methodological Comparison between Phenomenology and Chinese Philosophy

The main function of intentionality in Husserl's phenomenology, according to my understanding, is to

14. Ibidem, Vol.2, p.95. (*Complete Works of Lu Hsiang-Shan* [ad]).
15. Ibidem, p.132.

constitute the objects of consciousness. Generally speaking, we can discuss this function of constitution at two different levels. Firstly at the level of experience. As we know, the objects in the external world appear in our experiential consciousness only when we directly pay attention to them. The appearance of external objects in our experiential conciousness can be called phenomenon. But this phenomenon is merely the result of outward perception, and therefore it could equally be called outward phenomenon. The outward phenomenon is a mixed phenomenon which has no coherent connection and as of yet no meaning. Therefore, we should withdraw ourselves from the first level and return to the second level – the level of transcendental reflection. As mentioned above, the characteristic of intentionality is that man can not only pay attention to external objects, but can also reflect on the noetic acts and sensations themselves. This reflection is a guarantee that we can obtain pure consciousness. The basic principle of Husserl's phenomenological method demands that we pay attention to not only the objects in the real world, but also the intentional objects in our consciousness. It also demands a reflective observation, instead of a mere direct observation (naive observation). Man can regard all objects as intentional objects in his reflection. That is to say, the objects existing for us obtain true immanent determination in our reflective consciousness – called meaning. The conscious element giving meaning is called "noesis". In a narrow sense, "noesis" is the constituting act in our consciousness which gives meaning. "Noesis" can give, or adjust, or reflect again on the meaning of objects. But all these elements of meaning (intentional objects) are not real but ideal, and they are included in the stream of conscious life of human beings.[16]

Man would naturally put forward the question: is there a place for the explication of meaning in the theory of mind in Chinese philosophy? My answer is affirmative, but, I should add that the explication of meaning in Chinese philosophy is quite different from the theory of meaning in Husserl's phenomenology.

Let us compare Husserl's words with those of Wang Yang Ming. Husserl says, "Die Existenz einer Welt, und so dieses Würfels hier, ist vermöge der ἐποχή eingeklammert, aber der eine und selbe erscheinende Würfel ist dem strömenden Bewusstsein kontinuierlich immanent, deskriptiv in ihm, wie auch deskriptiv in ihm ist das ein und dasselbe. Dieses In-Bewusstsein ist ein völlig eigenartiges Darinsein, namlich nicht Darinsein als reelles Bestandstück, sondern als intentionales, als erscheinendes Ideell-darin-sein oder, was dasselbe besagt, Darin-sein als sein immanenter gegenständlicher Sinn."[17] Here, according to my understanding, first of all, the real object can be changed into the immanent object in our consciousness after "bracketing"; secondly, the immanent being is the appearance of the object in our consciousness – the immanent phenomenon; thirdly, this immanent being in our consciousness is also the meaning of the immanent object – idealization; finally, the meaning of the object is the result of a certain continous intentional act.

Now let us turn to the dialogue between Wang Yang Ming and his friend. "The teacher [Wang Yang Ming] visited the southern town one day with his friend, and his friend asked him, pointing to the flower in rock, 'there is no object in the world outside the mind, but this flower comes into bloom itself and perishes itself in the remote mountain, how is it relative to my mind?' the teacher answered, 'before you see it, this flower and you were deadly still; when you come here to see it, its color suddenly appears in your mind, therefore, we know that the flower is not outside your mind.' The friend asked again, 'human's mind and his body belong to the same substance, for example, the blood and force circulate originally in my body, it is called the same substance, but, for the others, it is a different substance, animal and plant are more different from me, how can it be the same substance?' the teacher answered, 'you should observe it from the interaction, so you can understand that not only animal and plant are the same substance as you, but also the Heaven and earth, even the ghost and gods, are the same substance as you.'" (Chuan Xi Lu, part II.)[18] Like Husserl, Wang Yang Ming believes that the object appearing in the mind is a result of man's intentional act, therefore the flower can appear in man's mind (experiential consciousness). But epistemologically, Wang Yang Ming's explication is

16. Prof. Guido Küng said, "the claim that we are not only able to reflect on the sense [the noematic objects] of our acts but that we are furthermore capable of reflecting on the noetic acts and sensations themselves [that we can have an inner perception of acts and sensations] is not prima facie meaningless." (Küng, loc. cit.)

17. *Husserliana* Bd.1, loc. cit. p.80.

18. Xiao jie fu, Li jing quan: *The History of Chinese Philosophy*. Vol.2, Beijing 1982, p.139.

quite different from Husserl's. First, as mentioned above, for Wang Yang Ming the "mind" and the "flower" belong to the same substance, that is to say, it is a "substance", not a "phenomenon", that appears in man's mind. Here, Wang Yang Ming does not yet free himself from the theory of substance in the unity of Heaven and man [Tian ren he yi. v]. The level at which he remains is one of analogy with experiential intuition. Secondly, Wang Yang Ming does not notice that, from the viewpoint of phenomenological epistemology, the so-called object in the reflective consciousness is merely the pure phenomenon; more precisely, it is merely the meaning given by us to the object. In this sense, once the real object is given some meaning, its "being" emerges from our consciousness. (Here, language naturally plays an important role; I have been greatly inspired by Heidegger's explanation of Dasein.) Finally, how can the "mind" constitute the object of consciousness? Wang Yang Ming's proof is a mystical metaphor with rich poetic flavor. He holds that man's "inspiration" about something can be stirred up in his mind, therefore man can "interact" with the object so that in so doing the flower (real object) appears in his mind. Once man's "inspiration" has been stirred up in his mind, some "interaction" between his mind and the object (here the flower) can take place. Thus, in an instant man accomplishes the "wonderful connection" of the "mind" with the "object". I would say that Wang Yan Ming does not explicate the meaning of the object at the level of transcendental reflection. It seems that it is quite difficult for the ancient Chinese philosophers to change the real object in the external world into the immannent pure phenomenon.

In discussing the problem of meaning, that I believe, Husserl wants to stress that, owing to the different modes of man's intentional acts, man can constitute different intentional objects (meanings). Here, what Husserl attaches importance to is the ability to perform constitution inherent in human beings. But how can a finite person give a universal, ultimate and absolute meaning to this world? And what is such a meaning? These problems are very complex. Husserl wants to solve these problems on the basis of the transcendental ego, which is separate from the experiential ego and can give the absolute and universal meaning to the world. That is to say, he wants to solve these problems by establishing transcendental reason in phenomenology. In contrast, Chinese philosophy solves these problems not through transcendental reason, but through the theory of the unity of nature and man; therefore it expounds the meaning of the world and human life on the basis of "the same substance of mind and object" [Xi wu yi ti. w] – which is just another expression of "unity of Heaven and man". "The same substance of mind and object" is internal as well as external. The meaning of an object is not the result of the constitution of man's intentional acts, or more precisely, it is not given to the object by our explication, because rather our mind is originally the same substance as the object, and meaning is the result of the mutual interaction of mind and object. Here, man needs only the practical reason commensurable with the common sense of his moral life, a mystical metaphor with rich poetic flavor and a mystical analogy of intuition; he does not need rigorous logic and science.

3. Husserl's Transcendental ego and the ego in Chinese Philosophy

In order to obtain the rigorous and absolute knowledge of essence[19], or so to say, in order to give an absolute and universal meaning to the world, Husserl must lay the basis of intentionality in the transcendental ego. That is to say, only on the basis of the transcendental ego can man constitute the field of the absolute knowledge of essence through his intentional acts (at the level of transcendental reflection). It is here that man can lay the ultimate and absolute ground for all sciences, therefore he can realize the eternal significance of his spiritual life. According to Husserl, since man can transform the relative, accidental and experiential fact into the universal, absolute and transcendental essence through the phenomenological reduction (in my opinion, through the giving of meaning), likewise, man can also transform his experiential ego into the transcendental ego through the same reduction. According to Husserl's thinking, the transformation of the experiential ego into the transcendental ego means that the ego can be seperated from its relationship to the real world; therefore, each of us can become an onlooker who loses interest in the world. In fact, after the transcendental reduction, the ego has already become the "philosophized" ego, which frees itself from the natural attitude of the science of fact, observes the world from a new point of view and with a new attitude, and constitutes the

19. Husserl distinguishes between immanent essence and transcendent essence. Cf. Schuhmann, K. (Ed):*Husserliana III.1.* Den Haag 1976, pp.128, 131.

potential world of meaning. Moreover, the transcendental ego is also the philosophically pure ego, which is fully immersed in the pure consciousness, which deals only with the intentional object appearing as the idealization in its pure consciousness.[20] According to Husserl, once the transcendental ego has been established, we can constitute the apodictic and universal knowledge of the essence of our consciousness on the basis of this absolute "Archimedean point".

Indeed, in order to attain the knowledge of essence of consciousness, we need to jump from the level of experience to the level of transcendental reason. From the viewpoint of phenomenology, before we constitute the field of pure consciousness – an immanent phenomena-world, we must first establish a transcendental ego. It is here, it seems to me, that we meet a problem: establishing the transcendental ego must depend on the transcendental reduction of phenomenology,[21] that is to say, we should turn our sight from the external world to the immanent consciousness of our own ego. But in order to proceed with this transcendental reduction, we must first take the transcendental ego as the beginning point of this philosophical reduction. Here it is possible that we could fall into the dangerous situation of a vicious circle.

Furthermore, I wonder if the pure consciousness resulting from the transcendental ego is really so pure. The so-called pure consciousness, in my opinion, is merely an idealized expression of Husserl's. I think that it is very difficult for us to attain the so-called pure consciousness in the sense of Husserl's phenomenology. At the same time, it is also very difficult to express our pure consciousness in a logical language. Maybe the ideal language for the expression of pure consciousness is the poetic one as can be seen in Lao Tzu's rich and poetic description of the essence of Tao [Dao. x]:

> The Tao that can be expressed is not the eternal Tao;
> The name that can be defined is not the unchanging name;
> Non-existence is called the antecedent of heaven and earth;
> Existence is the mother of all things.[22]

Again, if we understand the intentional act as the act of explication in a narrow sense, this act of explication is limited by at least two such conditions: on the one hand, it is limited by real social life; and on the other hand, it is limited by the frame of pre-explication made by our history. In fact, social life itself is not so pure. How can man purify his social life in his pure consciousness? How can our pure ego give absolute and universal meaning to this complicated society of human beings? The answers of Adorno(1903–1969) and Marcuse(1898–1979) are negative. According to Adorno, the discussion of intentionality limited by Husserl to pure consciousness is not right, and the concepts of "noesis" and "noema" in Husserl's intentionality are nothing but the climax of the development of the traditional philosophy of idendity in the West.[23] The critical theory of society demands that we seek the negation of identity, not its affirmation.

Now let us return to Chinese philosophy and try to find another possible solution to these problems. Before doing so, we want first to ask, is there a transcendental ego in Chinese philosophy? Can man take the "mind" in Chinese philosophy as the transcendental consciousness in Husserl's phenomenology? It seems very difficult to answer these questions. No doubt, generally speaking, Chinese philosophers pay more attention to the moral experience of human beings and have no interest in laying the ground for sciences at the level of the transcendental reason, but at the same time, they also claim that man needs to reflect on the experiential ego in his mind in order to arrive at an ideal state of moral life.[24] Furthermore, some of them hold that man should live in the realm of selfforgetfulness [Wang wo. y]. Here, I naturally recall Chuang Tzu's "no-ego" [Wu wo. z]. (The ideas of no-ego and no-mind [Wu xin. aa] can also be seen in the buddhist doctrine of mind.[25]) According to Chuang Tzu, ego means a native, experiential ego, which suffers and is not free in its daily life. In another words, these

20. Cf. "1. Meditation: Der Weg zum transzendenten Ego", in: *Husserliana* Bd.I, loc. cit. p.58–63.

21. Dr. Iso Kern holds that there are three ways to the transcendental phenomenological reduction in the philosophy of Husserll, that is: the Cartesian way, the way through intentional psychology and the way through ontology.

22. *Selected Readings from Famous Chinese Philosophers*. Vol.1, p.23.

23. Cf. Adorno: *Against Epistemology. a Metacritique*. translated by W. Domingo, Cambridge (Mass.) 1984.

24. The reflection in Chinese philosophy is mainly a moral calculation, not a cognitive reflection.

25. E.g. we can read, "Those who seek the truth should realize that there is nothing to seek. There is no Buddha but Mind; there is no Mind but Buddha." (Cf. Chang Chungyuan: "KIANGSI TAO-I [The Mind is Buddha]" = "From the Transmission of the Lamp", Chüan 6., in: Takakusu, Junjivo: *The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy*. Honolulu ^{3}1956, p.149.)

sufferings and shackles come only from our desire to know, explain and reform the world. The only method of being freed from the suffering is to get the experiential ego full of desire expelled from our mind, so that man can arrive at the so-called state of "no-ego". More precisely speaking, "no-ego" is "no-mind", that means that man should get rid of everything (e.g. experience, language, ideas and so on) in his mind. In a certain sense, Chuang Tzu's "no-ego" is similar to Husserl's transcendental ego, as the "no-mind" is to the pure consiousness: both lay stress on getting rid of experience, and want to purify our consciousness. However, when we consider them further, the differences between them can easily be found.

First, Husserl's transcendental ego is the basis, or so to say, the origin, of all intentional acts; it is also the absolute and ultimate ground of the immanent unity of the whole phenomena-world. On the contrary, Chuang Tzu's "no-ego" maintains that man should free himself from those kinds of habits of thinking, in which all language, ideas and categories are fixed by human beings themselves, and that man should go beyond (or precisely speaking, de-construct) all metaphysics, so as to be able to turn his "calculative mind" [Ji Xin. ab] towards the "no-mind". It is the premise that man can realize his freedom in his daily life.

Second, Husserl's transcendental ego is the subject which can constitute the universal, absolute and necessary knowledge of essence for himself. The transcendental ego constitutes the field of transcendental consciousness for himself through intentionality; thereby man can lay the ultimate ground for sciences and realize the ideal of philosophy as a rigorous science. Nevertheless, Chuang Tzu's "no-mind" denies human beings' need for cognition. He stresses again and again, that one should attempt to get rid of limbs as well as intelligence, to depart from body and to eliminate knowledge; it means that we have a thorough understanding of everything. [Cf. Da Zhong Shi. ac] According to him, to explain the essence and origin of the world is completely futile, and there is no necessary connection between our explanation of the world and our free spiritual life. Rather, in doing so, man must certainly be fettered in language and idea by his cognitive acts. Although Chuang Tzu denies the necessity of our cognition of the world, I firmly believe that he still has laid stress, from the negative side, on the subjective activity of the human consciousness. In my opinion, when we want to explain the essence of the world and to lay the ultimate ground for sciences, we hope to be encouraged by the philosophical ideal of Husserl's phenomenology; however, when we regard our explanations as the absolute, rigorous and ultimate ideas, we need to be attentive to hear Chuang Tzu's warning.

Finally, Husserl's transcendental ego is attained through the phenomenological epoché, which is, in my opinion, no more than a new angle from which to observe the world. But the "no-mind" of Chuang Tzu is gained through the complete negation of all of our cognitions. The "no-mind", I think, serves to establish a new way of human life. According to Chuang Tzu's thought, one can say that there is no such Husserlian transcendental ego in Chinese philosophy, and Chinese philosophy doesn't seem to need such a transcendental ego. At the same time, the "mind" in Chinese philosophy is not the "transcendental consciousness", rather, it is merely a moral reason that pays more attention to the practical life of human beings.

Now we still want to ask the question: do human beings actually need the transcendental reason of phenomenology or the moral reason of Chinese philosophy if they want to live an ideal social life? (Chuang Tzu and Buddhism affirm this moral reason from the negative side.) I think that both answers are only one-sided. When we look up at the heavens and, getting at the root of the matter, our curiosity is stirred by the boundless universe, do we not need to seek the absolute ground of the immanent unity of this infinite world from the point of view of transcendental reason? At the same time, when we look around at all the things on earth and want to seek the ideal mode of morals in the complicated social life, do we not need to hear the voice of moral reason coming from the depths of our hearts? Thus, my answer seems to be eclectic, that is to say, we need not only to study the transcendental reason of Husserl's phenomenology, but also to study the moral reason of Chinese philosophy. It is here that the dialogue between Chinese philosophy and Husserl's phenomenology is necessary. This dialogue is communication, whose root lays deep in our immanent spiritual life. Only through this communication can we find some valuable meeting point between Chinese philosophy and Husserl's phenomenology, so that we can meet the challenge raised to our philosophy by our times and history.[26]

26. Cf. Tymieniecka, A. T.: "A Dialogue Between Chinese

4. Conclusion: An Enlightment from Husserl's Phenomenology

In the turbulent world that we live in today, philosophy should undoubtedly answer the important questions raised by our times, and Chinese philosophy needs even more to give her own peculiar answer to these questions. Each answer can be regarded as a kind of reconstruction of Chinese philosophy. Indeed, whether considered from the summons of our times or from the development of the spiritual life of human beings, Chinese philosophy should accept a new critique, examination and reconstruction.

When we consider the problem of the reconstruction of Chinese philosophy, the theory of intentionality in Husserl's phenomenology can give us some useful insight. First, the theory of intentionality shows that perhaps there is a real world, but the potential world of meaning constituted by our "noesis" would be infinite, because we can continually constitute different "noemata" through our different "noeses", and the potential world of meaning is composed of our "noemata". It actually implies that there is only an "objective text" of Chinese philosophy in history , but we could give (or so to say create) many different meanings for this "text". Each person's intentional act of considering the "text" is different, so that the meaning (noema) constituted by him is naturally different. It is clear that the reconstruction of Chinese philosophy will be embodied in the new meanings we have given to the "text". Second, the theory of intentionality shows that the world is not simply a real world, but an intentional "horizon" existing for ourselves. I have said above that the "being" of the world comes from the meaning we have provided. Now I must add that the appearing of the world's "being" is actually a constant opening of the "horizon" of meaning. It tells us that Chinese philosophy is not an accomplished and sealed system, but an open "horizon" constantly created by our intentional acts. This means that the reconstruction of Chinese philosophy actually creates the constantly opening process of the "horizon" of meaning we have provided. It is same with the explication of the "mind" in Chinese philosophy. Accordingly, the success of the reconstruction of contemporary Chinese philosophy will depend on how far our "horizon" of meaning can be extended.

As a result, we must bravely bear the responsibility of constituting a new "horizon" of meanings; in fact we should consciously claim to reconstruct Chinese philosophy. I believe that the value of the spiritual life of a beginner in philosophy is only embodied in the process during which he creatively and spiritually works to constitute the "horizon" of meaning![27]

Chinese Glossary

[a]	[宋] 张载	[b]	天
[c]	心	[d]	《告子上》
[e]	恻隐	[f]	仁
[g]	羞恶	[h]	义
[i]	礼	[j]	智
[k]	《公孙丑》上	[l]	《墨经》
[m]	察	[n]	辨
[o]	虑	[p]	《正名》
[q]	陆九渊	[r]	王阳明
[s]	气	[t]	良知
[u]	《传习录》上	[v]	天人合一
[w]	心物同体	[x]	道
[y]	忘我	[z]	无我
[aa]	无心	[ab]	机心
[ac]	《大宗师》	[ad]	《象山先生文集》

Philosophy and Occidental Philosophy in Meeting the Challenge of our Times", in: *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 13, 1986, pp.271–282.

27. This essay has already been presented in the 7th International Congress in Chinese philosophy, 1991, in Munich, Germany.