

特別專輯

Feature Essays



遊戲學海攝含識

——有關「宗教」與 「學術」的些許雜感

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依世界各大宗教的想法，人並非動物。這一點，猶太教、基督宗教、回教等一神論者，其認知跟佛教是一致的。倘若進一步問人和畜生間的差異何在，不僅是宗教人士，其餘省思過此問題的人（包括古代哲學家等），往往提到的就是「語言」，以為能夠說話是人類一個主要特徵。這也沒錯，因為部分動物儘管叫得出若干聲音來，卻找不出任何一種旁生能像人那樣，在同類的環境裡自然而然地學會最起碼一種語言。這方面，動物與人類形成強烈的對比：儘管各個語言構成極其複雜的符號系統，但只要是一個嬰孩在生理、心理、社會條件沒有遺憾的話，就能夠發揮人獨特的學習本事，主動、迅速地掌握語言。此一特殊能力影響極大：人依靠這樣的能力，才有辦法將歷代祖先累積的經驗、知識、學問等傳授給下一代，換句話說，人類文化的相續端賴語言。至於人類文明的建設，則進而還需要建立在語言基礎上的書寫文字。

當然，人類跟動物很多方面一樣，諸如覓食與繁殖，但人既有語言，自然就會思考，而且思索的範圍不局限於眼前的現象，也難以滿足於膚淺的認知。因此，人經常回憶過去，預想未來，並想探究現象的真實面目，明瞭萬事萬物背後是否蘊藏了怎麼樣的原理。這些精神活動，歷史上就發展出宗教和學術兩種既深又廣的不同領域。前者以人生的意義、死亡後的去處



等為重點，後者以現象世界的客觀認知為主要關懷。二者理趣雖然有別，大概不會有人相信可以透過學術研究獲得永生或能了生脫死，同樣應該沒有科學家以為他可以用個人的修行來解決學術上的疑難，但在動機與目標、態度與方法，乃至精神和遠景上，過著修行生活跟從事學術研究卻堪稱相應。

這話怎麼說呢？先從內心談起。一個人決定全力實踐他的信仰或者從事學術研究，一定有他的發心。當然，由於煩惱的干擾，自己的動機、想法可能頗為扭曲，例如信仰者之希望修得神通，受到別人瞻仰、崇拜，成為領袖，或如科學研究者渴盼得獎成名等等，但這些一律跟宗教、學術的關懷本質上不符。所以諸如此類的因素撇開不談，單就宗教和學術的職志而論，投入行持或科學研究的行列，皆以自利、利他為純正的動機。質言之，推動

修習與研究的力量是一顆既要提升自己又熱心饒益有情的心。跟此發心一樣屬於心理層面的，乃是行者、學者追求的對象。無可否認，古今中外歷史上都有宗教人物及活躍在學界的人士不能抗拒世間法的誘惑，因個人的缺陷而犧牲了宗教、學術純潔的性質，不過這些庸俗的例子不足以否定真正的行者與學者皆以真相的追求為己任。無論是學者想確定、增廣的知識抑或行者要通達的究竟實相，世俗諦也好，勝義諦也罷，絕不能離開一個「真」字，否則也只不過是披著宗教、學術的外衣，而橫行個人熱惱之雜事。

至於實踐信仰、研究學術所持的態度，也看不出有什麼出入，因為二者都堅持道德。就宗教來說，則有種種戒（誡）幫助行者一方面自我約束，免得不幸成為染心的奴才，作出種種惡行，傷害自己，困擾眾生，而另一方面積極護己、護他。同樣，用語雖然可以不同，不說「偷盜」而用「剽竊」，不講「欺誑」而說「掛名」等等，但學術也十分講究道德、倫理。我當然承認有不少黑暗混入了學術，且學界也容易發生違背良心的事，然而正如充斥宗教界那許多問題，個人醜陋的行為不能毀壞宗教、學術本身的高尚性質。所以道德是宗教行動與學術實踐的共同準繩。不過，品德再無瑕，儘管令人欽佩，卻不等於能修證或研究出什麼。這最低限度還得具備兩種條件：一則豐富的知識，二乃正確的思辨方法，像佛門所謂的「多聞」、「如理思惟」，或如學術的學問與邏輯。

這樣看來，宗教的生活及學術的實踐有許多相應的層面。若是不談一般宗教而具體指佛教，情況

也一樣：諸如學佛的發心如果不是為了自利、利他，那就不知道是在學哪一種佛；行者的訴求假設不是希望能證得如實了知的菩提，就等於心甘情願地繼續睡覺而不想覺醒；如果標榜實修，卻不在乎道德與思惟，便連最基本的態度和途徑都未沾上邊，等等。這是就一般現象來說的。然而有一個差異值得特別提出，亦即聲聞乘與菩薩乘，個別的行者理念有所不同。在一心要解脫的聲聞弟子來看，他的努力將有圓滿的終點，即阿羅漢果。成就之後，所有問題都終究解決。走上菩薩道的行者則不然。他不在乎個人何時能成佛，反而懷著尚有眾生漂流生死中就不休息的大心。這種態度，包括廣泛學習各種有用的知識，都跟學術較接近，因為學者也不認為所有的問題會有都算圓滿解決的一天。

上述觀點假定能成立的話，宗教人士就不必擔心一旦投入學術研究，就會遠離真理。正好相反，只要是不陷入世間法的漩渦，懂得學術，就對自利、利他的宗教生活有幫助，也可以說宗教與學術的結合本身是自然而有意義的。因此，每看到因緣和合，有人在這個結合上付出努力，並著重實質內涵而不流於空洞、虛幻的表面，則由衷隨喜之心不禁湧現。誠所謂：善哉！善哉！



於圖書館接待遠道而來的霍普金斯教授。
The staff receives Prof. Hopkins.

A Few Random Thoughts on “Religion” and “Academia”

F. F. Grohmann

From the vantage point of humanity’s long history, the idea that human beings are simply one kind of animal can hardly be called mainstream, and it is one of the obvious success stories of modern state-run education systems that they have managed to inculcate new generations on a vast scale with the rather astonishing belief

that they themselves are nothing but mostly furless mammals. Traditional religions, it should be pointed out, espouse a vastly divergent understanding. The major monotheistic traditions—Judaism, Christianity and Islam—see man (and, I hasten to add, women of course, too) as a discrete species of beings. So does Buddhism.

According to many a religious and philosophical thinker of yore, among the traits distinguishing humans from their fellow beings, the most outstanding is language, the ability to communicate creatively by means of infinitely variable speech. Animals do produce sounds in order to express meaning, no doubt. However, the acoustic signs they send operate on a manifestly different scale and in a manner essentially dissimilar to man. Despite the enormous complexity of human language, any newborn will acquire, on their own, any language spoken by parents and/or caregivers with astonishing speed unless this natural process is impeded



擔任霍普金斯教授的口譯。
Translating for Prof. Hopkins.

by physiological, mental or environmental constrains. This is an ability with truly profound consequences. The transmission of experience and knowledge, lore, belief and everything we call tradition depends on it. Without language, human culture would be unthinkable, and without script, its written form, one would have a hard time to build civilizations.

None of this is meant to deny that we have much in common with animals. We share the need for food, for example, and, in many cases, the desire to procreate but we don’t stop there. Human language becomes the vehicle for thought and what human beings are thinking about is neither limited to the present nor confined to the superficial. Quite the contrary, we remember the past and plan for the future, pore over principles underlying phenomena and ponder the problem of reality. These efforts to interpret ourselves and the cosmos we live in led to the development of two distinct though related hermeneutical approaches: religion

and science. While the former probes into the meaning of life and cares about what follows earthly death, the latter aims at a hopefully objective understanding of the phenomenal world. Thus they differ in terms of primary concern. It would be difficult to find someone who deems it possible to gain eternal life or liberation by means of academic endeavours and, likewise, the academician

who believes spiritual cultivation alone could solve scientific problems would be a rare bird indeed. Nevertheless, in the light of motivation and goal, attitude and method or spirit and expectation, leading a religious life and devoting oneself to scholarly research are by no means incongruent.

Let's look at the mind. Someone who decides to put every effort into the practice of his faith or to invest all his energies into academic studies must be motivated. True, due to interference from afflictive emotions, one's incentive can be thoroughly perverted as it happens in the case of the religious person who hopes to acquire supernatural powers, craves the adulation of the gullible faithful or fancies himself in the role of a spiritual leader. The scientist whose main interest lies in the acquisition of gain and fame, the defeat of his perceived opponents or the collection of prizes and honours is no better. Yet concerns like these have nothing in common with the unsullied nature of religion and academia, and need not be further discussed here.

Let us rather consider the plain and simple calling to lead a life devoted to religion or research. Would it not be driven by the pure thought to serve oneself and others? Would the power sustaining the decision to follow such a vocation not derive from a mind which strives to improve and benefit both, oneself and one's fellow beings? And isn't the goal the religious practitioner and



攝於宗玉燮論文口試。
At a student's Thesis Defense.

the academic worker try to reach equally located in the psychological sphere? Of course, I am the first to admit that in all times and at all places we find people active in the context of either religion or science who miserably fail to resist the temptations of worldly values and sacrifice the pure character of their chosen field on the altar of their personal shortcomings. These examples of vulgar corruption, though, do not contradict the fact that a real practitioner or scholar regards it as his duty to pursue truth. Both the researcher who labours to prove the correctness of human knowledge and to widen the scope thereof as well as the man of faith who attempts to penetrate the real mode of existence of phenomena be it on the relative or the absolute level, do so for the sake of truth. Otherwise they would simply hide behind the cloak of religion or science shamelessly engaging in all kinds of sundry pursuits dictated by their pitiful mental distortions.

As to the attitude involved in the practice of religion and research, no substantial discrepancy can be found either as both are based on ethics. In religion, there are all kinds of rules, vows, or commandments which help the follower to restrain himself so that he can avoid to become slave to his own impure mind and engage in all kinds of behaviour harmful to himself and troublesome to his fellow beings. Adhering to a code of ethics, he actively protects himself and others. For the scholar

who sticks to the ethics of academic research the same holds true though the nomenclature varies: the usual “theft” becomes “plagiarism,” “fraud” morphs into “ghost-writing,” and so on. Again, it is plain to see that much darkness has descended upon academia and instances contravening a clean conscience happen easily, just as problems within organized religion abound, yet individual action, abominable as it may be, cannot destroy the lofty character of religion and science itself.

It could be well said that ethics is the common cornerstone of religious and academic practice but an unblemished character, however admirable, is not enough to attain spiritual realizations or solve scientific problems. For this, at least two further conditions have to be fulfilled: one needs a wealth of knowledge and a valid way of thinking, qualities which are referred to as “vast learning” and “systematic investigation” or “scholarship” and “logic” respectively.

It should have become clear by now how compatible in general a religiously led life and academic practice are. In the specific case of Buddhism, this is true, too. If the motivation to practice dharma is not to benefit oneself and other beings, then one would be hard pressed to answer what kind of “dharma” one is practicing; should the goal aspired to not be an awakening that sees phenomena as they are, it would mean one prefers to go on sleeping and dreaming; were one to

advertise practice but be oblivious to ethics and rational thought, one’s utter lack of proper attitude and correct approach would be there for everybody to see, and so on. This is the situation in principle. There is, however, an important difference between the path walked by the hearer and that of the bodhisattva. The hearer desires with all his heart to be liberated as soon as possible from the dreadful cycle of samsaric existence and in his mind one day his efforts will culminate in the accomplishment of his goal. He has reached the end of the path and will be an arhat with the problems he set out to solve solved once and for all. Not so the bodhisattva. His aim is buddhahood but he doesn’t worry about when he will have accomplished his mission. His main concern are the sentient beings undergoing myriad kinds of indescribable suffering—as long as they have not yet been liberated he will not rest but devote himself to further study on a vast scale whatever useful knowledge there is. This type of attitude is closer to the scholar who also does not suppose that all scientific questions will be solved one day.

Now, if the analysis so far does make sense, religious people do not need to worry to loose contact with “the truth” in case they get involved with academic work. The opposite should be true. As long as one can protect oneself from falling into the maelstrom of worldly concerns, scholarly knowledge benefits a life devoted to serve others

and oneself. To combine both is natural and meaningful and thus it is a cause to rejoice whenever a situation arises in which someone puts effort into this combination, even the more so if it is done with right emphasis on quality and studious avoidance of the pitfalls of a glitzy but vain facade.



也是漢藏班的老師之一。
In class with the Lamas .