

Title: Superior virtue in the Laozi and in the writings of German mystics Meister Eckhart and Johannes Tauler

Subtheme : 8. Chinese philosophy and philosophies of other cultures

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Abstract

During the 20th century, the Swiss psychologist Carl Jung and the German Zen master Karlfried Graf Dürckheim were among the first prominent Europeans to integrate in their psychotherapeutic work ideas of both ancient Chinese masters and Western mystics, including first and foremost Laozi and the German mystic Meister Eckhart. Both Laozi and the German mystics, Meister Eckhart and Johannes Tauler, propose to cultivate virtue to the utmost. In the present work, we examined how one should cultivate superior virtue (上德) according to Laozi and the two German mystics. Following seminal work of Lau (2001), we first analyzed and contrasted how Laozi describes the nature of superior virtue in chapter 38 of Wang Bi's text of DaoDeJing and in the corresponding part of 《老子乙德經》, the Mawangdui B manuscript. Superior virtue for Laozi is built upon hidden virtue (陰德) and is ultimately both effortless and selfless. We showed that Laozi's ideas about superior virtue echoes with Johannes Tauler in his Sermon for Christmas Day ("Of the things by which we become children of God."). For Tauler, "children of God" after exercising long enough in good works finally possess the "very substance of virtue"; subsequently performing virtuous actions become a second nature to them. If Laozi opposes superior and inferior virtues, Tauler in his Sermon for Septuagesima Sunday rather categorizes virtue in three levels, the lowest one corresponding to Laozi's inferior virtue and the highest one to his notion of superior virtue. According to Meister Eckhart, only through the best and highest virtue (die

beste und höchste Tugend), namely Abgeschiedenheit – unattachedness (Demkovich, 2006) – one can experience unification with God. We finally drew parallels between Meister Eckhart's unattachedness, Tauler's highest level of virtue and Laozi's superior virtue.

Keywords : The Laozi, German mystics, Meister Eckhart, Johannes Tauler, superior virtue

Day 4 (7 July 2017) Paper Presentations X 專題分場 10

Venue 地點	Time 時間	Paper Presentations X 專題分場 10	
TR1 HSS-B1-08	11:20-12:50	<p><b>Comparative Philosophy</b></p> <p>Chair: Edward McDougall (University of Durham)</p>	<p><b>Jordan Jackson</b> (Huazhong University of Science and Technology) The <i>Dao</i> and the <i>Apeiron</i>: Metaphysical Roots of Chinese and Greek Philosophy</p> <p><b>韓鳳鳴</b> (河海大學) 主體緣空和死亡消解——禪宗生死觀的心學探析</p>
TR2 HSS-B1-07		<p><b>Three Teachings in Chinese Philosophy</b></p> <p>Chair: Johanna Liu (University of Toronto)</p>	<p><b>Edward McDougall</b> (University of Durham) Recovering Daoist Thought through Heidegger's Approach to Globalisation and Philosophy</p> <p><b>Robert Anthony Carleo III</b> (The Chinese University of Hong Kong) Realist Relativity: Ground Moral Variation in Contemporary Confucian Ethics</p>
SR3 HSS-B1-12		<p><b>Xiong Shili and Chinese Buddhism</b></p> <p>Chair: John Makeham (La Trobe University)</p>	<p><b>Shi Daojun (Lan Yuying)</b> (National Chengchi University) Buddhism Transmission- The Dialogue between Taiwan and China</p> <p><b>John Makeham</b> (La Trobe University) Xiong Shili — A Buddhist Philosopher?</p>
SR4 HSS-B1-09		<p><b>Significances of Chinese Philosophy</b></p> <p>Chair: Lai Pak Wah (Biblical Graduate School of Theology)</p>	<p><b>Ho Tsung-Hsing</b> (National Chung Cheng University) What Is a Good Human: Naturalism or Normativism?</p> <p><b>Lai Pak Wah</b> (Biblical Graduate School of Theology) Metaphysical Metaphors East and West: Implications for Chinese and Biomedical Dialogue</p>
TR5 HSS-B1-12		<p><b>佛敎哲學</b></p> <p>主持人: 姚治華 (香港中文大學)</p>	<p><b>譚澤民</b> (中央民族大學) 從中國佛敎對孝道觀念的闡釋看中國佛敎的本土化進程——以契嵩的《孝論》為中心的考察</p> <p><b>曾琪方</b> (中國文化大學) 四句分別與四值邏輯之比較</p>
SR6 HSS-01-04		<p><b>Li Zehou and Modern Chinese Thought</b></p> <p>Chair: Jana S. Rošker (University of Ljubljana)</p>	<p><b>Katja Kosek</b> (University of Ljubljana) Li Zehou's Anthropological Ontology and Kojin Karatani's Transcritique</p> <p><b>Jana S. Rošker</b> (University of Ljubljana) Notion of Subjectivity as a New Conception of the Human Self</p>
SR9 HSS-B1-11		<p><b>比較哲學專題: 紀念余紀元</b></p> <p>主持人: 沈清松 (多倫多大學)</p>	<p><b>傅永軍</b> (山東大學) 跨文化比較研究的普遍性要求——以余紀元的相關論述為中心</p> <p><b>陳治國</b> (山東大學) 百視、贊同抑或拒絕: 古典德性論與社會正義的契約論進路</p>