

CHALLENGE AND RESPONSE:  
BERTRAND RUSSELL ON “THE OUTLOOK FOR  
CHINA” REVISITED<sup>1</sup>  
—A CHINESE SOLUTION TO THE WESTERN PUZZLE

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“My sayings on Tao,  
ever so easy to understand  
and ever so easy to practise,  
the whole world, alas, know not how  
to understand,  
nor how to practise!”  
—Laotzu<sup>3</sup>

“The Chinese  
have discovered,  
and have practised for many centuries,  
a way of life  
which, if it could be adopted by all the world,  
would make all the world happy.  
We Europeans have not.  
...how profound is the disease  
in our Western mentality!”  
—Bertrand Russell<sup>4</sup>

## Prologue

### What Sort of Future Can We Expect?

For almost an entire century humankind has been living under the shadow of World War. Historians like Arnold Toynbee and philosophers like Bertrand Russell have both cautioned us to “Beware of the Middle East!” As early as the 1950’s Russell warned against the possible immediate precipitating causes of global destruction, “Perhaps it will be a dispute about Persian oil, perhaps a disagreement as to Chinese trade, perhaps a quarrel between Jews and Mohammedans for control of Palestine.”<sup>5</sup> As a modern writer observed during the Persian Gulf War in early 1991:

...U.S. and allied forces are bombing Iraq and Kuwait. ...In the absence of the striving for an authentic understanding of “the other” the only interaction that will result is violence in one form or another. ...Philosophy may be viewed by the non-philosopher as something esoteric, divorced from the realities of global politics and world diplomacy, but our work in comparative, cross-cultural philosophy has an important contribution to make towards the future well being of our planet. In the absence of the quest for authentic understanding cross cultures what sort of future can we expect?<sup>6</sup>

The Middle East Crisis, although no more than the tip of the iceberg, was an alarming lesson for all of us today living as members of the human family on this tiny planet called “the Earth.” Any failure on our part, whether due to the lack of ability or good will, to solve human problems peacefully and wisely is, in the words of the Pope, “a grave defeat for all mankind! Weapons cannot solve all the problems; they only create more new problems!” Under such circumstances, naturally there is an obligation to, “reflect critically upon what we are actually doing in our world,” i.e., “to philosophize,” —nay, to philosophize comparatively!

## Introduction

### The Middle-Heart Crisis

It has often been said that the causes and motivations of war are of various kinds, such as breed, creed and greed, all leading to bleed. But we wish to point out that first and foremost the source of trouble is not located here or there, geographically, in the outside world. Rather, it has its psychological root deep in the innermost of human nature. The Middle East Crisis, if thought out, is a Middle-Heart Crisis. We agree with both Sigmund Freud and Albert Einstein who have said that all war comes from the human mind. To the question “Why War?” the answer they give is even more silly

than the question itself “Why Not?!” Inasmuch as we remain in the *status quo* of human nature, with the same mind set as inherited from time immemorial, war is inevitable—and hopeless. “We are a combative race,” we are told. Or as Hermann Keyserling put it, “We Westerners are essentially fighters,” whose motto is “You or I.”<sup>8</sup> No you, therefore only I; hence, all winding up in me-ism.

Next, we wish to stress that a pugnacious, aggressive, war-like mentality has a long story in the West. It has been bred in a long tradition of moral self-righteousness, religious intolerance and theological exclusiveness, a tradition that has continued for over four thousand years from the ancient down to the present times—one that can be traced at least back to the days of Abraham, father of Ishmael and Isaac who, as half brothers to one another, had each become the ancestor of the Arabs and Jews, respectively.<sup>10</sup> Toynbee even spoke of the suicidalness of militarism, “Militarism has been by far the commonest cause for the breakdown of civilizations during the last four or five millennia which have witnessed the score or so of breakdowns that are on record up to the present date.” Or to put it in the formula of the Greek tragedy, “Pride goes before the fall” [*kóros—hubrid—äte*].<sup>11</sup> Russell in his article, “Can Religion Cure Our Troubles?” admitted frankly, “That the world is in a bad way is undeniable, but there is not the faintest reason in history to suppose that Christianity offers a way out. ...What the world needs is reasonableness, tolerance, and a realization of the interdependence of the parts of the human family.”<sup>12</sup> Virtues such as these—essentially Chinese in motif—constitute what he calls a “positive ethics” in contradistinction to the “negative ethics” in the old sense. The latter is based on the doctrine of sin further turned into the doctrine of cruelty by vindictive punishment; the former is based on the “encouragement and opportunity for all the impulses that are creative and expansive.” Such a new outlook, such a new way of thinking and feeling, makes possible a new way of life, enabling us to view the so called warrior’s motto of “You or I” as a bad habit in the mode of thought known as the fallacy of vicious bifurcation; a false belief in economics known as economical nationalism; a poor strategy in politics or policy-making known as segregationism or racism; in one word, as a colossal example of stupidity or, in Sanskrit, *avidya* as the root of evil. The enlightened ethical outlook is based on a simple but great conviction as the guiding principle for a more humane way of life, both interpersonally and internationally, an insight whose validity the heart can spontaneously perceive: Discard the false belief in bad economics, that one’s gain is based on the other’s loss; and the false belief in wrong psychology and ethics that one’s happiness is based on the other’s suffering. Instead, the enlightened ethical outlook teaches, “That it is not by making others suffer that we shall achieve our own happiness; but that happiness and the means to happiness depend upon harmony with other men.” Thus, Russell concludes, “If men could think and feel in this way, not only their personal problems, but all the problems of

world politics, even the most abstruse and difficult, would melt away.”<sup>13</sup> But regrettably, all this still remains but a big “if.” Is he not here simply echoing Laotzu’s dictum as cited above?

The more one lives for others,  
The more rich one is in his worth;  
The more one gives to others,  
The more plentiful one is on this earth.<sup>14</sup>

## I The Problem of China Revisited

### 1. Cultural Perspective

To most modern readers Russell (1872-1969), Nobel Laureate for Literature in 1950, is best known as an outstanding figure in mathematics, symbolic logic, sciences, analytic philosophy as well as a leading voice in the Pacifist Movement. Few have been able to fully appreciate him as a comparative philosopher of culture. But in the words of Sun Yat-sen, he is fully recognized, “Among the Westerners, only great philosophers such as Bertrand Russell and John Dewey have truly a sympathetic understanding of China, her people and her culture.” On the other hand, Russell spoke highly of Sun, too, though they never met:

The number of men who determine the character of an age is small. The important men in the age that ended about 1930 are Edison, Rockefeller, Lenin and Sun Yat-sen. With the exception of Sun Yat-sen, these were men devoid of culture, contemptuous of the past, self-confident, and ruthless.<sup>15</sup>

What a remarkable coincidence in their mutual admiration, by meeting each other on the ground of culture.<sup>16</sup> Especially for Sun as a statesman, no higher tribute is conceivable. It is chiefly from a cultural perspective that Russell approached the problem of China as, “much less a political entity, than a civilization—the only one that has survived from ancient times.”<sup>17</sup>

Much has been said about “China” and “things Chinese” since the beginning of this century. To mention a few: Bertrand Russell, *The Problem of China* (1922); Hermann Keyserling, *The Travel Diary of a Philosopher* (1925), *Creative Understanding* (1929); F.S.C. Northrop, *The Meeting of East and West* (1967). Russell’s work, based on a year’s experience in China (1920-1921), was published in 1922 as a report to the West about this old civilization as he saw it and the proper role China was expected to play in the future.

As a comparative philosopher Russell may not have the metaphysical subtlety of Keyserling, the methodological neatness of Northrop and the “spiritual depth” of Alfred North Whitehead but his book on China has a unique charm of its own which is presented in his characteristically lucid, brief and witty style and is highly suggestive, full of insight. Even when reread today, more than seventy years after its first appearance, it remains a rare classic, unsurpassed, in the field of China studies. Unlike many other works by so called “China hands” or “China watchers” in the West, whose interests are primarily or solely political, economic or journalistic, *The Problem of China* is a book written with an unusual perspicuity, profound sympathy and a long range perspective into the cultural heritage of Chinese civilization, its future and that of the entire world. Much of what is said therein remains unchallenged, especially the non-topical parts. Many of the insightful prophecies made about the destiny of China have turned out to be true. For example, his pessimistic view of the two alternatives China would be forced to take: militarism and/or communism, if the Western powers were not to relieve their pressure. “I love the Chinese” he said later in 1951, “But it is obvious that the resistance to hostile militarism must destroy much of what is best in their civilization. They seem to have no alternative except to be conquered or to adopt many of the vices of their enemies.” Further he remarked in 1956:

There was much that I found admirable in the Chinese tradition, but it was obvious that none of this could survive the onslaughts by Western and Japanese rapacity. I fully expect to see China transformed into a modern industrial state as fierce and militaristic as the powers that it was compelled to resist. I expected that in due course there would be in the world only three first class Powers—America, Russia and China—and that the new China would possess none of the merits of the old. These expectations (in 1920) are now being fulfilled.<sup>18</sup>

For better or for worse, events tend to favor his predictions.

## II Chinese and Western Civilization Contrasted

### 1. The Make-up of Chinese and Western Mentality

The three fundamental elements that account for the mentality of the West, in Russell’s analysis, are: 1) Greek culture; 2) Jewish religion and ethics; 3) modern industrialism:

Western Europe and America have a practically homogeneous mental life, which I should trace to three sources: 1) Greek culture; 2) Jewish religion and ethics; 3) modern industrialism, which itself is an outcome of modern science. We may take

Plato, the *Old Testament*, and Galileo as representing these three elements, which remain singularly separate down to the present day. From the Greeks we derive literature and the arts, philosophy and pure mathematics; also the more urbane portions of our social outlook. From the Jews we derive fanatical belief, which its friends call “faith”; moral fervor, with the conception of sin; religious intolerance, and some part of our nationalism. From science, as applied in industrialism, we derive power and the sense of power, the belief that we are as gods, and may justly be the arbiters of life and death for unscientific races. We derive also the empirical method, by which all real knowledge has been acquired. These three elements, I think, account for most of our mentality. ...No one of these three elements has had any appreciable part in the development of China.<sup>19</sup>

On the other hand, the three elements that make up Chinese mentality are: 1) Confucianism; 2) Taoism; 3) Buddhism:

I must confess that I am unable to appreciate the merits of Confucius. His writings are largely occupied with trivial points of etiquette, and his main concern is to teach people how to behave correctly on various occasions. ...His system, as developed by his followers, is one of pure ethics, without religious dogmas; it has not given rise to a powerful priesthood, and it has not led to persecution. It certainly has succeeded in producing a whole nation possessed of exquisite manners and perfect courtesy. ...There is one, and only one, important foreign element<sup>20</sup> in the traditional civilization of China, and that is Buddhism.

Here we notice at once both Russell’s strengths and his limits as a cross-cultural critic. Temperamentally, he was, “unable to appreciate the merits of Confucius,” the sage of China who, recently elected as one of the top ten greatest persons in world history, is far more than a “master of ceremonies” or a “social genius.” His treatment of Buddhism, as cited here, is far too sketchy even though he fully recognized the tolerant outlook of both Confucianism and Buddhism, saying, “Of all religions of history, I prefer Buddhism, especially in its earliest forms, because it has had the smallest element of persecution.”<sup>21</sup>

## 2. Superior Perception of Taoism

It is only of Taoism, nevertheless, that Russell had a “superior perception.” He was at his best when criticizing Western civilization from the Taoist point of view:

The oldest known Chinese sage is Laotzu, the founder of Taoism. ...Laotzu describes the operation of Tao as “creation without possession, action without self-assertion, development without domination.” I think one could derive from these words a conception of the ends of life as the reflective Chinese see them, and it must be admitted that they are very different from the ends which the white men have set before themselves. Possession, self-assertion, domination, are eagerly sought, both nationally and individually. ...Comparing the civilization of China with that of Europe, one finds in China most of what was to be found in Greece, but nothing of the other two elements of our civilization, namely Judaism and science. ...What will be the outcome of the contact of this ancient civilization with the West?<sup>22</sup>

Indeed, the last question is crucial, both for China and for the entire world. Russell urged that China should by no means follow the example of Japan:

The Japanese adopted our faults and kept their own, but it is possible to hope that the Chinese will make the opposite selection, keeping their own merits and adopting ours. ...The distinctive merit of our civilization, I should say, is the scientific method; the distinctive merit of the Chinese is a just conception of the ends of life. It is these two that one must hope to see gradually uniting.<sup>23</sup>

### 3. China and Ancient Greece

As cited above, China and ancient Greece have a great deal in common as far as their cultural achievements are concerned. For example: 1) both take philosophy and art as the determinative factors in their cultural traditions; 2) both represent knowledge of culture; 3) both love beauty, harmony and wisdom as exhibited especially in the virtue of flexibility. To illustrate the first observation we quote Thomé H. Fang:

Each culture has its own determinative factor. For instance, in Hebraic and Islamic cultures, religion decides everything; all features other than religious life will be of less importance. In the contemporary European and American branches of world-culture, science is the predominant factor, and everything has to fit in with science. So far as I know, it is only the Chinese and Greek cultures which, alike, find their master-key in philosophy and art. India in classical antiquity, I should add, would pursue the *madhyma-pratipad*—the middle path—in the matter of culture.<sup>24</sup>

Max Scheler has distinguished human culture into three types corresponding to three types of knowledge, maintaining that both Indian and Judeo-Christian cultures represent knowledge of salvation; Chinese and Greek cultures, knowledge of culture; modern Western culture, knowledge of work and technology.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, just as the determinative factors in the Chinese and Greek traditions are philosophy and art, both are the standard bearers for knowledge of culture. It follows that their cultural ideals, their ways of life and their value-orientations are superbly distinguished by the love of wisdom, beauty and harmony (though with a difference in inclination towards the dynamic or static mode of harmony, respectively). For the Greeks, as for the Chinese, wisdom is a matter of the creative mean explicable in terms of flexibility or *eutropelia*. According to Pericles in his famous *Funeral Oration*, “the happy and gracious flexibility” or “the happy and right mean,” stand for a quality, “by which Athens is eminently representative of what is called Hellenism.” This quality is best exemplified in: 1) lucidity of thought; 2) clearness and propriety of language; 3) freedom from prejudice and stiffness; 4) openness of mind; 5) amiability of manners.<sup>26</sup>

### III. Summary and Conclusion: New Hope

Surely Russell’s admiration of Laotzu and the Taoist philosophy of life is not without good reason. He even cited the sublimely simple and terse aphorism, “Creation without possession, action without self-assertion, development without domination” on the front page of his *Roads to Freedom* (1918). He adopted Creative Impulse as the master principle of all his socio-political writings from *Principles of Social Reconstruction* (1916) to *New Hopes for a Changing World* (1952).

Laotzu’s work abounds in perennial themes of great relevance to the world today, such as: 1) pacifism and anti-militarism; 2) non-interference; 3) liberal/democratic socialism; 4) tolerant spirit and outlook; 5) contemplative wisdom (whereby we are enabled to view the passing events *sub specie eternitatis*).<sup>28</sup> But owing to the limited space here, it is not possible to go into detail.

“I set for China to seek a new hope,” Russell stated in *The Problem of China*. But what constitutes such a new hope?:

I believe that, if the Chinese are left free to assimilate what they want of our civilization, and to reject what strike them as bad, they will be able to achieve an organic growth from their tradition, and to produce a very splendid result, combining our merits with theirs. ...What is bad in the West—its brutality, its restlessness, its readiness to oppress the weak, its preoccupation with purely material aims—they seem to be bad, and do not

wish to adopt. ...The Chinese...do not wish to construct a civilization just like ours; and it is precisely in this that the best hope lies. If they are not goaded into militarism, they may produce a genuinely new civilization, better than any that we in the West have been able to create.

He repeatedly emphasized, “the cultural questions are the most important, both for China and for mankind.” He made many far-sighted observations in, “The Outlook for China.” The Young China should aim at: 1) the establishment of an orderly government; 2) industrial development under Chinese control; 3) the spread of education under Chinese direction for the purpose of creating a new generation of public-spirited citizens, inspired by an enlightened patriotism, who can use and appreciate Western knowledge without being the slaves of Western follies and who are neither de-nationalized, nor have a slavish attitude towards Western civilization. China’s way to salvation consists in: 1) preserving the virtues of its traditional culture; 2) combining it with Western science; 3) abstaining from war and devoting to the cause of world peace. For all these, the Chinese do not demand the adoption of the Western philosophy of life. Why? The reason is not far to seek:

Our Western civilization is built upon assumptions which, to a psychologist, are rationalizing of excessive energy. Our industrialism, our militarism, our love of progress, our missionary zeal, our imperialism, our passion for dominating and organizing, all spring from a superflux of the itch for activity. The creed for efficiency for its own sake, without regard for the ends to which it is directed, has become somewhat discredited in Europe since the war, which would have never taken place if the Western nations had been more indolent. But in America this creed is still almost universally accepted; so it is in Japan. ...The Great War (World War I) showed that something is wrong with our civilization; experience of Russia and China has made me believe that those countries can help to show us what it is that is wrong. The Chinese have discovered, and have practiced for many centuries, a way of life which, if it could be adopted by all the world, would make all the world happy. We Europeans have not. Our way of life demands strife, exploitation, restless change, discontent and destruction. Efficiency directed to destruction can only end in annihilation, and it is to this consummation that our civilization is tending, if it cannot learn some of that wisdom for which it despises the East. ...The Chinese are a great nation, incapable of permanent suppression by foreigners. They will not consent to adopt our vices in order to acquire military strength; but they are willing to adopt our

virtues in order to advance in wisdom. I think they are the only people in the world who quite genuinely believe that wisdom is more precious than rubies. That is why the West regards them as uncivilized. ...When I went to China, I went to teach; but every day that I stayed I thought less of what I had to teach them and more of what I had to learn from them. ...I wish I could hope that China, in return for our scientific knowledge, may give us something of her large tolerance and contemplative peace of mind.<sup>30</sup>

## Notes

- 1) Abridged and expanded from George C. H. Sun's unpublished research project, *Quo Vadis, Sinica?—Bertrand Russell on Chinese Civilization Reappraised*.
- 2) Formerly Director, Graduate Institute of Philosophy, National Taiwan University (1973-74) and Chinese Culture University (1983-84), Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China. Currently Executive Director, *Comprehensive Harmony: International Journal for Comparative Philosophy and Culture*, Thomé H. Fang Institute, Mobile, Alabama, U.S.A.
- 3) Laotzu, *The Way and Its Power* (known in the West as *Tao Te Ching*), Ch. 70, trans. George C. H. Sun.
- 4) Bertrand Russell, *The Problem of China* (London: George and Unwin Ltd., 1922), reprinted with a "New Foreword", 1966, p. 18.
- 5) Bertrand Russell, *Unpopular Essays* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1950), p. 135.
- 6) Jeffrey R. Timm, "Message from the Editor", *SACP Forum*, Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy, no. 16 (Spring 1991), p. 2.
- 7) Josiah Royce, *The Spirit of Modern Philosophy* (New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1896), p. 1.
- 8) Hermann Keyserling, *The Travel Diary of a Philosopher II*, trans. J. Holroyd Reece (New York: Harcourt Brace and Co., 1925), p. 303.
- 9) Cf. Moses' first Commandment in *The Bible*, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me; for I thy Lord am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments." Cf. Bertrand

- Russell, *New Hopes for a Changing World* (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1952), pp. 116-119.
- 10) Cf. *The Bible*, especially “Genesis,” “Joshua,” “Book of Revelations.”
  - 11) Cf. Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History*, Abridgment of Volumes I-VI by C.D. Sommervell (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 190, 336-337.
  - 12) Cf. Bertrand Russell, *Why I Am Not a Christian*, ed. Robert E. Egner and Lester E. Denonn, *The Basic Writings of Bertrand Russell* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1956), p. 604.
  - 13) Russell, “Current Perplexities”, *Ibid.*, p. 698.
  - 14) Cf. Laotzu, *The Way and Its Power*, Chs. 2, 10, 51, 81; trans. George C. H. Sun.
  - 15) Cf. Ou Tsiun-Chen, *Selected Essays on Education and Culture* (Taipei: The Commercial Publishing Co., Ltd., 1972), p. 450; Bertrand Russell, *The Scientific Outlook* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1931), p. 276; *The Autobiography of Bertrand Russell* (Boston: An Atlantic Monthly Press Book, 1968), II, p. 180, where the author expressed his “lasting regret” for having missed the opportunity of meeting with Sun Yat-sen while they were both in Shanghai, China, 1921. As to his versatility as a writer and thinker, we have learned from his own account that early in his student days (1894-1898) at Cambridge, he already planned to write, “a series of books in the philosophy of sciences, growing gradually more concrete” passing from mathematics to biology and also to write, “a series of books on social and political questions, growing gradually more abstract. At last I would achieve a Hegelian synthesis in an encyclopedic work dealing equally with theory and practice.” Cf. “My Mental Development”, *Why I Am Not a Christian*, *op. cit.*, p. 43.
  - 16) Notice that the term “culture” is extremely multiguous. For further reference see Appendix 1 at the end of this paper.
  - 17) Russell, *The Problem of China*, *op. cit.*, p. 208. Here, if other traditions such as India and Israel are omitted, it is because the book was written in 1922 when India was still subject to British colonialism and Israel, as a new country, was yet to be seen.
  - 18) Cf. Russell, “My Mental Development”, *Why I Am Not a Christian*, *op. cit.*, p. 48; Bertrand Russell, *Portraits from Memory* (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1956), p. 38.

- 19) Russell, *The Problem of China*, *op. cit.*, p. 186.
- 20) *Ibid.*, pp. 189-190. Saying, "Buddhism is the one, and only one, important foreign element in the traditional civilization of China," seems over-simplified. As a matter of historical fact, both Nestorianism and Mohammedanism were introduced into China early in the 7th century during the great Tang Dynasty. The Muslims have formed one of the five major races of the Chinese nation. Christianity was introduced into China no later than the Ming Dynasty during the 15th to the 17th centuries. Unfortunately, the intellectual tie between China and the modern West was cut off in the early 18th century by Emperor Yung Cheng of the Ch'ing Dynasty, chiefly out of political motivation. From that time on, China's door was closed to the West until the Opium War (1840-1842) which marks the beginning of a series of tragedies in recent history.
- 21) Cf. Russell, "What is an Agnostic?", *Why I Am Not a Christian*, *op. cit.*, p. 584.
- 22) *Ibid.*, p. 192.
- 23) *Ibid.*, p. 194.
- 24) Cf. Thomé H. Fang, "Poetry and Life", Address to the Second World Congress of Poets, Taipei, Republic of China; included in Thomé H. Fang, *Creativity in Man and Nature* (Taipei: Linking Publishing Co., Ltd., 1980), p. 128.
- 25) Cf. Max Scheler, *Philosophical Perspectives* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1958), p. 43.
- 26) Cf. Matthew Arnold, *Mixed Essays* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1908), pp. 413-416. For further clarification of the concept of "wisdom" see Appendix 2 at the end of this paper.
- 27) Laotzu's little work, *The Way and Its Power*, is composed of roughly 5000 Chinese characters, perhaps the world's shortest, yet the most translated of all philosophical classics. Up to the late 1980's more than three hundred translations in a variety of Western languages have been available. According to Karl Jaspers, "In a single short chapter all four elements (of metaphysics, cosmogony, ethics and politics) can appear at once." See *The Great Philosophers*, trans. Hannah Arendt (New York: A Harvest Book, 1966), II, p. 88. For textual scholarship see Yen Ling-fung's new version (Taipei: Chinese Culture Publishing, Inc., 1954, 1965), I, II. For an in-depth treatment and insightful interpretation see Thomé H. Fang, *Chinese Philosophy: Its Spirit and*

*Its Development* (Taipei: Linking Publishing Co., Ltd., 1981), pp. 119-128, wherein Laotzu's system is given a fourfold reconstruction: ontologically, cosmogenetically, phenomenologically and characterologically.

- 28) For further reference, Cf. George C. H. Sun, *Quo Vadis, Sinica?—Bertrand Russell on Chinese Civilization Reappraised*, pp. 104-133.
- 29) Russell, *The Problem of China*, *op. cit.*, p. 13, 208.
- 30) *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17, 198, 225.

#### APPENDIX

- 1) “Culture”—Notice that this term is extremely multiguous. It can be used in any of the following senses: 1) generally, as interchangeable with “civilization”; 2) specifically, as opposed to “civilization” as its destiny. Every *Kultur* has its period of flowering called, “culture” and its phase of decade called “civilization” (Oswald Spengler); 3) as an anthropological concept set in contrast to *paideia* (ideas of culture) and *areté* (excellence) as an axiological concept designating, “a deliberately pursued value or type” (Werner Jaeger); (4) as “education” in the widest sense as, “the growth and cultivation of one’s spiritual personality,” attainable only through profundity, not through expansion (Hermann Keyserling). Cf. Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West*; Werner Jaeger, *Paideia*, especially Volume I; Hermann Keyserling, *The Travel Diary of a Philosopher*, especially Volume II.
- 2) “Wisdom”—As to the question “What is wisdom?” No human being is wise enough to provide any perfectly satisfactory answer. More than likely, the more one thinks about it, the more confused one will be, in a manner reminiscent of St. Augustine who, when pressed for a definition of “Time” said, “If you don’t ask, I know; If you ask, I don’t.” For it is an open concept in that no exhaustive list can be provided for both its necessary and sufficient conditions as is the case with defining “water” in terms of “H<sub>2</sub>O.” Roughly speaking, says Russell, wisdom can be understood as, “the harmonious working of knowing, willing and feeling”—a tentative definition, not free from the tincture of the 19th century faculty-psychology. In his essay “Knowledge and Wisdom” the question takes on a different form. Instead of asking “What is, or what is meant by, wisdom?” let us ask “What makes wisdom?” By means of some such constituents or ingredients, we will then be able to promote our wisdom. In his analysis wisdom is seen to be composed of eight constituents: 1) a sense of proportion (including the proper sense of relevance,

importance and priority); 2) a comprehensive vision; 3) an awareness of the ends of life; 4) intellect combined with feeling; 5) impartiality or fair-mindedness in attitude; 6) love, not hatred; 7) a pacifist temper of mind (not war-like or belligerent); 8) a cosmopolitan outlook on life as citizens of the world (not narrow, bigoted nationalism, nor aggressive, offensive patriotism). Similarly, we may formulate the Chinese view of wisdom as being composed of: 1) creativeness; 2) humanness; 3) flexibility and timeliness; 4) intellect and feeling perfectly blended; 5) equilibrium and harmony; 6) authenticity and intelligence as intercomplementary (for mutual enrichment); 7) care and concern; 8) practice. Though the Indians are, as a general rule, distrustful of any sort of verbal formulation of the profound experience of wisdom of life, they are nevertheless remarkably insightful into the nature of *bodhi* or enlightenment, as consisting in the unity of *karuna* and *prajña*, that is, compassion and intelligence.