

ALIENATED AND PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE: AN ANALYSIS OF SCHOLARLY MODELS

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Abstract: This article considers the idea of knowledge from the basis of Western and Classical Chinese models of knowledge transmission. The transformation of understanding “what is the knowledge” was revealed through emphasizing the milestones in the history of Western philosophy. The result of such analysis is formalized as the concept of “Alienated” knowledge. Advantages, limitations and the effects on the structure of society of this model were reviewed. The alternative approach that used to be found in Oriental cultures was examined on the material of the Classical Chinese system of tuition. Its essence was embodied as the concept of “Personal” knowledge. This paper pays attention to actual questions of human body and mind improvement and transformation, exposes the foundation of this process in the historical development of thought and compares mutually exclusive ways of further evolution of humanity.¹

Introduction

Every human has a piece of knowledge. Possessing something, we suppose to be free in its usage, including its transmission to another; also, we pretend to know what we have. But the latter is very similar to seeing objects: observing them tells little about our eyes. Can we give anything except concrete examples of our knowledge? Moreover, is it necessary? Through a special discipline, the Theory of Knowledge was formed not so long ago; the whole history of Western philosophy, in one way or another, deals with the question of knowledge and I will consider this further. Is it the same in Chinese culture? Should we have some concept of knowledge itself, besides a concrete manifestation of what we do know and can do? Should we have some universal standard, as detailed as possible, that can be applied to everyone, or a person should be one of an education system key elements? This article is an attempt to look at these questions. Professor Jiang Shuzhuo and Professor Pu Ruoqian, the supervisors of the author’s postdoc research project, sponsored by Jinan University, Guangzhou, PRC, 2015 – 2017, proposed the theme of current article.

The strongest argument in favor of the ‘Western’ answer to the question “What is it to know?” is the achievements of modern science and technology. They construct the

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global world we live in, give opportunities to everyone, but also may lead to some dreadful perspectives: pollution and destruction of the environment, uncontrolled mutations and diseases, global conflicts and so on. It is worth mentioning the perspective of creating nonhuman forms of life, which is linked with posthumanism. We increasingly use technology to improve and change our bodies and methods of communication; we can already speak with someone on the other side of the globe, but don't know the name of our neighbor. It is most likely that these processes will deepen more and more, and may be that their result will be the creation of some creatures that will not be human, but will replace us. If so, will it be the sport of chance or someone's intention? For example, looking at the book "Posthuman Life: Philosophy at the Edge of the Human" by David Roden (Roden 2015) where the actual question is investigated: can we predict the result of scientific progress and recognize technology that may lead our species to extinction, or will we face the changes only when they are irreversible? We can accept it if there is evolution, but what if it is degradation that awaits us? To find out where science and technology lead us, it is worth examining their source.

I. Alienated Knowledge

The source of the modern science and education system that is spread almost worldwide today is based on the Western understanding of knowledge, so I will start with an introduction of its origin. The beginning of Western philosophy is supposed to be from Ancient Greek civilization, and Plato, considered to be the first philosopher who theoretically investigated the question 'What is it to know?' Besides his well-known theory of 'Ideas' as true reality and objects of knowledge, there is one simple story also attributed to Plato. It was told during the explanation of the essence of Western Philosophical development by a full member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Vladislav Lectorsky, the Ph.D. supervisor of the author. Let's imagine the situation, where we asked someone directions to a city, for example Athens. We supposed that, following the words of this man, we could come to our destination. This is a good motive to say that he had knowledge, because his words correspond to reality. But what if we suppose that this man has neither been to Athens, nor heard about it, he has merely told us something just to end the conversation? In this case, we won't say that he had knowledge, and the fact that we reached the city is simply luck. The correspondence of some words to reality is not enough on its own. Moreover, we want to find some basis of the words we've got: this man passed the road to Athens himself or at least he heard about it from a trusted source. Thus, there are two main criteria for some proposition to be knowledge: to correspond to reality and to have some foundation. In further elaboration, we can ask what does it mean to 'correspond' to reality, is it possible to extract proposition from the context and so on. It was discussed in western philosophy for so much time that I cannot pretend to add something prominent here and will just direct interested readers to investigate conceptions of truth in epistemology and truth-false problems in logic. The simplest thing should be emphasized: in western philosophy, all knowledge should have foundation.

A remarkable elaboration of this issue was made by Aristotle in "Metaphysics"

(Aristotle *Metaphysics*). The text is a persuasion in understanding knowledge as some true and not false belief that is verified by logical procedure. But any logic is grounded on certain assumptions that are drawn from our everyday experience. In this attitude Aristotle's criticism of Empedocles, the pre-Socratic philosopher, is very interesting: "[The light] is certainly not a body, for two bodies cannot be present in the same place. The opposite of light is darkness... Empedocles (and with him all others who used the same forms of expression) was wrong in speaking of light as 'travelling' or being at a given moment between the earth and its envelope, its movement being unobservable by us; that view is contrary both to the clear evidence of argument and to the observed facts; if the distance traversed were short, the movement might have been unobservable, but where the distance is from extreme East to extreme West, the draught upon our powers of belief is too great" (Aristotle *On The Soul. Book II. Chapter 7*). It is interesting that contemporary physics agrees with the criticized thinker. Of course, only if we understand the 'light' of Empedocles, Aristotle and the contemporary notion as equal. We will never know why Empedocles claimed this, but was Aristotle so wrong? In his time, the phenomenon of light movement could not be seen; therefore, there was no reason to acknowledge this judgment as knowledge. It was idle opinion. All knowledge should have foundation. Even the view of Plato and his disciples, that real knowledge may be only about 'ideas', not material things, match the concept revealed by Aristotle: to know the ideas we should 'see' them ("The Republic" (Plato *Republic*)) or 'recollect' them (theory of 'anamnesis' in "Meno" (Plato *Meno*)). Our mind is used for the perception instead of our body organs, but, in any case, we do perceive ideas and gain knowledge then. Neoplatonic and all other mystic traditions say the same. There may be different ways to obtain experience, which is the foundation of knowledge, but it should be gained by personal effort in any case. Words of another can help us in this, but cannot replace our own perception or insight. Therefore, we can say that personal human experience was the foundation of knowledge throughout all philosophy of Ancient Europe.

So it has been for almost two thousand years. Christian culture took a lot from Ancient philosophy, and the concept of knowledge as well. Platonic Ideas were changed into Divine revelation, but it also had to be obtained by oneself through righteous living and Heaven's mercy. The foundation in one's personal experience gave an opportunity for one's own understanding of the World and its source. However, the desire to cease arguing was natural for adepts of official doctrine. The beginning of it was established by Descartes.

In his most popular work, "Meditations on First Philosophy" (Descartes *Meditations on First Philosophy*), Descartes looked for the ultimate criteria of trustworthy knowledge. His solution is well known: only the thing that we cannot doubt can be the foundation for knowledge. His reasoning was highly praised and criticized, but I want to emphasize one thing – the foundation of knowledge was removed from common human experience, that anyone should get first through experience, to the sphere of that which humans are supposed to have before any experience, because it is that which we cannot doubt, being human. Previously, one could still argue even if one could not gain some experience, just as Aristotle did in the debate mentioned above. After Descartes anyone who claimed that some conventional experience is unavailable

to him could be convinced of being underdeveloped or corrupted. However, this argument relied on introspection and still could be the matter of dispute that took place as an argument between rationalism and empiricism. That's why the next step was predetermined.

Another outstanding philosopher, Immanuel Kant, was one of those who made this step. His analysis of cognitive processes revealed the fact that all our experience is not a mere reflection of outer reality, but a constructive process of perception, in which our contribution is substantial (Kant *Critique of Pure Reason*). In some cases, like mathematics and metaphysics, we fully rely on analysis of our own mind or reason. In natural sciences we also follow principles of our representation. The most well-known example is that we perceive or imagine any material object in three spatial dimensions and no achievement of modern physics has changed that yet. And probably will not, while we talk about humans, not anything else. Nevertheless, Kant considered very abstract and profound ideas and without introduction into everyday life, they had little chance of becoming so influential. However, he was not alone. Even a bit earlier than him, Adam Smith wrote about economics, that it is the foundation of social life, and probably made an even more significant contribution to considering cultural trends. He insisted that the individual doesn't and shouldn't know the principles by which society functions. This is his well-known claim: "[an] Individual... neither intends to promote the public interest, nor knows how much he is promoting it... he intends only his own gain, and he is in this, as in many other cases, led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention" (Smith *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations. Book IV, Chapter II*). The whole economics of the Western world is currently based on this principle. Thus, the structures of mind, reason and human society were claimed to be the foundation of any knowledge. The gap between personal experience and 'knowledge' became substantial. The last thing that remained in the sphere of personal responsibility was morality. Eventually it was also replaced by new concepts that derive from a person, even knowledge about himself. It happened with the revelation of the 'unconsciousness' by psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud (Freud 1949). Though in his conception there were certain common principles of originating and functioning of unconsciousness, but each man could have a unique one. Karl Jung made of this theory the same that Immanuel Kant did of Cartesian philosophy: that all humans have common unconsciousness 'archetypes' that slightly vary according to one's experience (Jung 1981). The process was confirmed by the development of 'Non-classic' philosophy. One of its key ideas is the complex structure of the cognition agent, it is opaque even to himself (Lectorsky 2000). Some unconscious structure or power dictates how man represents reality, others and even himself. After all, an individual cannot pretend to know anything and should be told what he really thinks, sees and wants.

This theme can be discussed more and more and so many examples from modern mass culture can be suggested: advertisements that determine the needs of people, mass media that provides their opinion on everything and so on. The essence is that in contemporary Western culture, the individual, whoever it may be, is separated from knowledge. The one with a high social position has a right to claim something about the world only because of his role in the universal system of market relations. Personal

achievements and personal knowledge have no value at all. In philosophy and social studies it was manifested in claiming the ‘death of the author’ – the announcement of accomplished fact, in my opinion (Barthes 1967). The modern approach to describing human consciousness is also very demonstrative. Perhaps the most influential tradition of the last century was analytic philosophy, which tried to reveal human essence through analyzing the language we use. There can be no doubt that language without the speaker is totally cleaned from any personality – or consciousness. This notion is used in the same sense today. The development of analytic philosophy led to the cognitive science that is popular now. Although many philosophers, like D. Chalmers (Chalmers 1996) and T. Nagel (Nagel 1974), whose arguments are just reiterated again and again, claim that human consciousness cannot be reduced to anything else; from my point of view, they can do nothing against D. Dennett (Dennett 2005). His provocative thesis that any human can be considered a ‘zombie’ is nothing more than sincerely revealing the fact that the way of western science doesn’t require any personality in the object or subject of scientific description. Why should humans be treated any other way? This approach follows the general trend absolutely and is confirmed by achievements of social sciences. How is it possible to show the existence of consciousness or personality, if the whole culture denies it? While the opponents of this view follow the same way of understanding knowledge as separated from man, their arguments will never reach that point. Knowledge became alienated.

Alienation presupposes the possibility of taking something from a person and using it without any regard to the previous owner. It is well-known in economic theory (Marx *Capital: Critique of Political Economy*). In the conception of knowledge, it is based on the idea that all time and space is equal and the same for all agents of activity. This is the only way to establish ‘verification’ as a criterion for being science: anytime and anywhere any agent should come to the same results through the same actions – or demonstrate its complete impossibility (Popper 1959). The source of success or failure is not Reality or the personality of the actor, but formal procedure and its accuracy. Therefore, there may be only one universal theory: the very idea of universal knowledge neglects the attempts to change accepted core principles of the theory or searching for alternative explanation methods and experimental techniques. It is a commonplace in the philosophy of science (Lakatos 1978). Such an approach allows taking the right to make decisions away from the individual and to transfer it to some potentially overarching system that manifests universal knowledge. This system will determine what each individual should be. The responsibility for an action is not held by the one who committed it, but can be appointed to anyone by that system.

What are the consequences? Not only natural science originates from the accepted concept of knowledge, but also the social structure almost everywhere in the world is a legacy of the colonial era, and hence of Western culture. To deal with it, let us remember that in the time of ancient Greece, knowledge was grounded in common human experience. Each man could know something unique and thus comparing of opinions was possible and the need for proof arises – it could be the source for the origin of mathematics and geometry. Moreover, if each citizen possesses knowledge, the system that allows reaching an agreement is required. Not by chance, the democratic structure of society was established then and there.

Let's ask ourselves – is democracy possible if members of society have no knowledge? The answer is evident: in each developed society children have rights, they must be protected even more than adults, but they cannot intentionally influence public life. The reason is simple – they don't know many things yet. But if we face the fact that the right to claim knowledge was taken away from individuals and belongs to some abstract 'humanity' – what is the difference of any citizen from the child? We won't find it. Therefore, society based on alienated knowledge cannot implement 'democracy' as true governance of the people. It is a mere phantom that is used like a brand. Every child likes the assurance that his opinion is important.

Nevertheless, let us follow Smith and pretend that expression of the unconscious collective will somehow work in the interests of everyone. Here, we will face difficulties at the level of collectives. Alienated knowledge can be only universal, hence, a question of who manifests it better, will inevitably arise. Each group will pretend to implement the truth. The strongest participant will try to dictate how all others should live and think because they are automatically deprived of knowledge. However, this criterion is too unsteady for punitive systems and there will always be an intention to establish differences at the level of physiology to finally justify the distinction. If, along with this, the rhetoric claims the highest value of democracy and human rights, it can be nothing but a joke.

Even acknowledging all that is mentioned above, the most committed follower of alienated knowledge conception may say that this is not important. Someday humanity will face its end, what, except our knowledge, may we leave for the future? On the other hand, adepts of posthumanism may claim that it is the development of our science and technology that will overcome these dangers. Nevertheless, alienating knowledge from people and pretensions of one approach to be universal are not fruitful even from the point of theory.

The essence of knowledge alienation is a conversion of personal experience into propositions, or information. It is not accidental that our century is called the information age. Information is an encoded state of some space and time area that may be transmitted without losing its essence to another part of space and time. However, this requires some common structure in the areas of transmitting and receiving. Human interaction is possible because we have many common features. For example, practically everybody will understand emotions in the same way, while more detailed communication needs knowledge of language. Increasing the role the information leads to the decreasing of standards of transmitting and receiving. We already have one standard for communication all over the world. Computers, united into the web, are interchangeable, developing of 'cloud' services is dictated by logic. Now it affects only our devices, but when essential enhancement of human body and mind will be available, the same processes of reducing to one standard will take place there too, just because this will be required by the logic of informational streams. In order to reduce the costs of production and distribution of goods, it will lead to standardizing the behavior of agents. One may complain about the fact that everyone will be the same and there will be no individuality. But it doesn't seem to be the worst thing. We are different in our realization and this is the reason why we have different skills. That is important. If the structure of body and mind will be reduced to one standard, and this is what is required

by the logic of sharing information, everyone will have the same skills and abilities. Unified society is not flexible and inevitably will face a situation to which it won't be able to adapt. Obviously, it is the degradation of humanity that leads to extinction. A complex system has many foundations and a simple system always has less. First, survive. Second, die. Manifested knowledge will be lost too. Of course, this is not a near future, but if the question is "Where will our current understanding of knowledge lead us?" – This is the answer. Is it what we seek or, maybe the question would more appropriately be "Can we find something else?"

II. Personal knowledge

Forthcoming events are determined by actions in both the past and the present. After considering the historical development of knowledge in Western culture, it is worth analyzing its manifestation in real lives of people. The characteristic feature of humans is that we can preserve some of our experiences and transmit them through ages: the transmission of knowledge is education, where key features are fixed in different scholar models. New members of humanity do not have to start all the way from discovering fire and sharpening stone (Stepin 2011). It may seem that alienation of knowledge is the essence of this process, because even parents and children have different personalities. However, it is not so single-valued.

Usually, education is accompanied by a verbal explanation. It is a report about the state of affairs in some area of time and space. We know that the weather is fine, that smoke usually indicates fire and so on. In a conventional division of cognitive processes it is mostly the field of 'theory'. This type of knowledge can be transmitted without significant loss; it is information and was analyzed above. But we also have a lot of knowledge of other types: we know how to walk, how to ride a bicycle, how to talk (Ryle 2002). We definitely can claim to know it, but we cannot express it in some proposition: after reading the instruction for how to swim, you won't have this skill. We cannot directly transmit this knowledge to somebody else, because our body and mind are still inalienable part of it. Personal effort is crucial for mastering any skill and we call it 'practice'. This is well known in common sense and it is obvious that we use both types of knowledge in teaching others. Very often, the formation of skill is most important and we use personal examples for this: this is how we introduce someone to a new activity. We speak to our children, even while they don't know the meaning of the words – how else could we teach them to talk? In everyday life we act this way, it was considered in Western philosophy during the recent century (Wittgenstein 1953), and even the notion of 'Personal knowledge' was introduced into Epistemology (Polani 1958). Moreover, we acknowledge the importance of the knowledge source: in most cases, education starts in the family and its role in constructing one's personality is doubtless. The ground of man's personality is formed by the environment during their early years, we appeal to this in our everyday life talking about one's character and even in the court it can be taken into account. These ideas are not new and can be considered as already established (Harre 1984). This is a doubtless fact that a child will never become human without nurturing, and the youngest years are crucial for the

formation of such common abilities as speaking, seeing and hearing. Later, personality is constructed through interaction with others: parents, friends, teachers, peers. What will be one's personality is highly dependent on the society. This is acknowledged in our everyday life and corresponding philosophy. Thus, all humans rely on practice in the tuition of common skills and recognize the role of personality in the transmission of knowledge.

Due to deep divisions of labor in modern society, common human abilities should be complemented by special skills that define the professional competence of an individual. But the modern Western cultural approach to them is very different from human common sense. Almost every specialization is acquired in educational facilities that pretend to implement abstract 'science'. Every idea can become knowledge only by being recognized as 'scientific'. This clearly follows the process of alienation and constructs the scholar model of universal knowledge. It was considered in the previous part of this text and the consequences were revealed.

If we examine not preliminary preparation for being human as acquiring basic skills that can be found in family, we can consider the ways of transmitting cultural knowledge. Is the scholar model based on the process of alienation the only possible solution? I do not believe so. 'Alienation' is the key feature of Western culture that causes its advantages and disadvantages. However, other examples can be found in Oriental thought. I will ground my explanation on the basis of the Classical Chinese scholar model, which was an official doctrine for centuries and rejected one hundred years ago, when in 1911 the modern Western educational system was accepted and applied. Nevertheless, even after one hundred years, it is possible to find contemporary and living examples of such a system on Chinese land, whereas in other cases, we can mostly dig in the dust of centuries. Moreover, the Classical scholar system is implemented into practice in some places, it will be very interesting to look at its outcome after half a century. All of this was the reason for me to choose Chinese culture as the foundation of my research, because it is one of the few possibilities to rely not only on some abstract theory, but learn through living practice that is embodied by living people.

In Chinese culture, history has kept two basic approaches to construct a scholarly model. The first is Confucianism, which insists on a personal example and following *rites* from the earliest years. The second is Legalism, which stresses formal regulations and a penalty system. My dear friend, Dr. Elizabeth Woo Li, the chairperson of Sinological Development Charitable Foundation² explained to me the essence and consequences of applying each model. Legal regulation is something that man faces at some point in life as external obstacle that is coercion over him. As a child, they could do whatever he or she wants, but then suddenly they had to obey some rules. Who will follow them sincerely and respect their source in this case? It will be enough to look at the education of children in modern society, see the mental problems that will inevitable arise, and no questions will remain. The Rites work in completely the other way. Obviously, this is also a regulation, constructed in the interest of the society,

² Sinological Development Charitable Foundation Limited – www.sinological.org

which the person is compelled to follow often against their will. But the actions performed during the foundation of personality, became a part of it. All habits of a person are formed this way. Their further realization is not a coercion but a realization of a personality's inner structure, which brings satisfaction from compliance of manifestation with the essential. Will the formation of habits be spontaneous and uncontrolled, or will they be based on the achievements of culture? The basis of classical education is purposeful development of the human personality's structure through learning from culture. That was the explanation. It means that students, while learning classical text, first of all, master such skills as reading, writing, and memorization. Also, physical training is regular in the classical system. As in any other case, it is much more fruitful to introduce maintaining bodily health through exercises, than endless and useless treatment upon reaching a certain age. Each human affair requires body activity and simply being healthy, which is why the body is the basis for every human action, and it is natural to pay much attention to it. Each task corresponds to the possibilities of a students' mind and body and relies on the level of their development; no one will require an understanding of the truths about State regulation from the child. Memorizing the classics and performing other exercises, students get used to learning and practice. It becomes a part of their personality, and its manifestation will bring them satisfaction in future. Maybe this is what Confucius meant when he said: *"To learn and to practice continually, what can be more pleasant?"* (*Analects lun yu* 論語. I, 1 – translation, Kanaev).

The main aim of the Classical scholarly model organization is the construction of students' personality (person) on the foundation of the native culture. Each teacher is guided by the principles established in it, but embodies them on the basis of their personal experience, their own thinking and practice, therefore, always in their own way. In his everyday practice he embodies the concrete idea of person, and each student perceives it. Through communication with the teacher, students begin to strive toward the idea manifested by him. Knowledge, preserved in classical culture, is not some abstract proposition, but the idea of person – the learner perceives it through concrete people: father and mother, siblings, friends. In the ancient Chinese dictionary, "educate" is explained as: *"People at the lower level model those at the higher level"* – from the etymological sense of "jiao 教." (Xu Shen 许慎 2013: 253) – translation, Kanaev). One is recognized as a teacher after achieving required level in a certain skill. The purity and precision of his actions determines how clear his students obtain the knowledge. Eventually, students become able to embody principle on their own. It is important that different learners cannot embody the same idea in the same way. A unique body and mind inevitable leads to the appearance of personal features in the realization of knowledge. That's why the words of the classics usually claim general principles and just the possibility of certain achievements.

One of the Four Confucian Classics, The Doctrine of the Mean, begins with the definition of education as cultivating students' natural qualities (The Doctrine of the Mean *Zhong Yong* 中庸 1). This principle of the Classical scholar model complements the purposeful construction of a student's personality, which is the aim of modeling after the teacher. That's why, the teacher gives different explanations and tasks to

different students according to their personalities and abilities. Without the real attention to educated persons, the system of constructing personal qualities may fossilize and lead to maximum alienation of knowledge from the person. From my point of view, this is what once happened in Chinese history and was the reason for military defeats in the past and the forbidding of traditional educational system for a century as a result. But if the principle of modeling is balanced with the task of cultivating natural qualities, literally what Classics claim, society is able to progress. Here, the question of differences between personalities of parents and children, teacher and students can be discussed. What is the aim of the difference? The reproduction of family models is well-known. Purposeful formation of diverse professional skills in educational institutions complements personal qualities acquired in the family. This makes individuals more different, and thus increases diversity within the society. Its stableness increases accordingly: three thousand years of succession inspire respect.

Special organizations provide education to the masses, including schools, institutes, universities – they are the agents of knowledge transmission. This is the reason why the prestige of the educational facilities is so important, especially in China. It is a natural desire of people to have guarantees of the knowledge that is imparted there. Although the contemporary rating system does not seem to be adequate, because it counts mostly the production of alienated knowledge, the approach to the perception of collective agent deserves attention. The real measure of a teacher's efficiency is the success of his students; it does not matter whom do we evaluate: individual man or school. If we count not published papers, but achievements of graduates, each group of teachers will try to find the best solutions and develop unique methods. This is equal to the personal abilities and skills of a person, and such practice will lead to the origin of collective personal qualities. It should be noted that in sport and art, teachers are evaluated according to the success of their students. Such models are known and used in Russian sports and arts schools, for example. Not by chance, a lot of them have their own unique style and are well-known worldwide.

When a learner encounters real life and starts to perform actions valuable for society, he can investigate the doctrine that he already knows by heart. One of the most influential text, "The Great Learning", gives the words of Confucius, praising knowledge and tracing governing of one's own country and regulation of one's own family to the extension of one's own knowledge. Knowledge is in the 'investigation of things' (*The Great Learning da xue* 大學 1). Two points should be emphasized. First is that it is said about the things, i.e. the real world that one faces during his life and practice. Second, one's own state, family and knowledge are considered – not some abstract conceptions of how to rule some abstract collective and so on. Personal knowledge is always based on one's own experience and used for managing it. During the attempts to realize learned ideas, one will inevitable face obstacles. It is impossible that everything will go in the desired and planned way all at once; something will definitely go wrong. Here, the authority of classics arise – it doesn't allow to throw back that which is not achieved as 'falsification' (Popper 1959). The reason for failures is in lack of own skills regarding this aim. Hence, a student has to learn and practice again and again, perfecting their own skills. Moreover, very soon it becomes obvious

that simple repetition of unsuccessful actions is painful, and simple iteration of possible manipulation does not work either. Common sense is more than enough for such conclusions, of course, if actions are carried out in the real world, not some fantasy. Therefore, each man has to think over his practice. Confucius said of this: *“To learn but do not think over is to be entangled. To think over but do not learn is to be reckless”* (*Analects lun yu* 論語. II, 15 – translation, Kanaev). Thinking over is not a single act. Being investigation in its essence, it presupposes persistent practical embodiment and attempts to find the sense in acquired experience. Learning is continually and inextricable from personal practice. Moreover, the end of learning is not assumed: every person, as long as they live and embody their knowledge, become more conscious of it.

Furthermore, on this basis can be given quite simple but easy to be practically ensured definition of consciousness. Being conscious of something is the transformation of memorized alienated proposition into personal knowledge – what person can do by themselves. Everything is committed through efforts of body and mind, thus investigation of things and obtaining experience is grounded in perfecting one’s own body and mind. Knowledge forms the person. A person is an inseparable part of realized knowledge. Hence, consciousness is a process of extending one’s own personal knowledge.

Interconnection of person and knowledge does not mean arbitrariness in the manifestations. Persistent practice is necessary because the world is much stronger than humans. Whatever technical heights humanity can reach, they will always be within the limits of our reality. Here are shown the deepest difference between considered concepts of knowledge. Alienated knowledge presupposes that utmost principles of reality can be abundantly manifested within the limits of the space and time available to a human body and their tools. The final aim of Western thought, which is attributed to Aristotle, is discovering the ‘Theory of everything’: a set of propositions which can explain all phenomena of the world. The linked scholar model presupposes distribution of one abstract model of activity over everyone. It causes sameness of individuals and leads to the decreasing of societal adaptability.

Personal knowledge infers irreducibility of the world’s utmost principles to certain manifestations of space and time. Each manifestation embodies a certain side of the world, but not the whole of it. Thus, equal rights of knowledge, embodied in different personalities, is possible – but not it’s sameness. Personal knowledge is the realization of the idea or principle, exceeding the capacity of every individual. Its complete realization is possible only during the entire life of culture. Each person that personally embodies it, makes a step in its development. Development is possible only on the basis of one’s own practice and becoming conscious of it. Being conscious can be achieved only through the possibility to convert principle into practice, and continuous perfecting of one’s own body and mind is necessary for it. Consciousness is a process of extending the conscious area or embodying principles in the material world. It can be defined as “Investigation of things”. The scholarly model of personal knowledge is aimed at the formation of a certain idea of the person on the base of natural qualities of the educated one. The transmission of an idea occurs through interaction with one who

embodies it. Everyone does it in their own way because of unique body, mind and experience. Variety of manifestations makes possible the adaptation of the society to changing circumstances; the transmission of the essential principles of culture allows it to exist and develop through ages.

Summarizing can be done through metaphor: the way of alienated knowledge involves a single route for all; the way of personal knowledge allows a variety of routes to reach the goal. The reader can choose for themselves. In this text we appealed only to Confucianism, but traditions of Taoism and Buddhism are no less important for Chinese culture; from each of them we draw a lot for our personal practice. Although representatives of these traditions may fiercely argue with each other, embodying their personal understanding of the World, all three traditions are recognized as a source of Chinese culture. A more recent example is the well-known principle of "One country, two systems" (Dai and Peng 戴, 彭 2013: 84-89) that allowed *China* to fulfill important geopolitical task peacefully. Sincere recognition of an individual's right to possess knowledge makes available the uniting of multinational people. Describing of the traditional educational system was possible due to the living examples of it on the territory of modern China. I learned a lot about it at my University, the Jinan³, and at Xianqian School for The Classics in Guangzhou⁴. For latter opportunity, I am grateful to the head of the school and prominent master – teacher Ma Zi, whose explanations of Chinese classics and Wushu lessons made a great contribution to my personality. Due to such people as teacher Ma, Elizabeth Woo Li and my university patrons professors Jiang Shuzhuo and Pu Ruoqian the Classical system of Personal knowledge transmission is not only the experience of the past, but also for the future.

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