


Modern Science and Mans View of Moral Values

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November 18-21, 1973

The Second International Conference on the Unity of the Sciences

Modern Science and Moral Values

The Imperial Hotel Tokyo, Japan

Closing Address

May I extend my heartfelt congratulations on the very successful Second International Conference on the Unity of the Sciences where today's great scientists are present. I feel greatly honored to have the opportunity of making some brief remarks at the close of this conference held in the most modern city of the Orient — Tokyo, Japan.

First of all, my deepest admiration and gratitude go to the eminent professors of the executive committee who rendered such painstaking efforts to hold the conference and make it a success. Please allow me to express my profound respect and appreciation to this committee, who decided to adopt the subject of "Modern Science and Moral Values" as the theme of the conference, and especially to the professors who in response to the invitation have deeply researched on the respective topics that have been brought forth and discussed with positive enthusiasm.

Once again, I want to extend my deepest congratulations to and appreciation of this epoch making conference. I am going to express my views about the theme under the topic of "Modern Science and Man's View of Moral Values." I suppose that the conference adopted and handled the question of science and moral values because the situation in today's society urgently demands the handling of such issues which, I am sure, have been thoroughly discussed here. I think not only myself but also many other people have the impression that modern science now shows undesirable side effects even though it has so far contributed tremendously to promoting the welfare of mankind with unceasing and outstanding development. As I see it, men of today are losing their subjectivity over science and it looks as though man's ability to control scientific technology, which he himself has developed, is gradually being weakened. If this situation persists it would be difficult for us to guarantee against any undesirable situation which may arise in the near future.

The reason for man's loss of subjectivity is that science, by nature, is apt to allow scientists to exclude the questions of humanity and man's moral values in the process of scientific development. As time elapsed, science has gradually fractionated with each field becoming more and more specialized, inclining to be more analytical and materialistic, utterly ignoring the questions of morality or values. Thus, man's subjectivity and dominion over science began to be either weakened or lost. I am sure it is not erroneous to think that out of many possible motivations of scientific research the ultimate and most important one is no doubt to realize man's common welfare, prosperity and peace. Nevertheless, as the fields of science became more subdivided and the methods more analytical, its development deviated from the right direction which is towards a state of moral value in which man's common welfare can be guaranteed. Men originally expected and anticipated the common welfare and happiness of man, who is in the subject position over the environment. But on the contrary, scientific achievements have so far resulted in the improvement and development of the environment and new means of life which are in the object position to man. That is to say, while man's original desire was for science to achieve the welfare of man who is the subject, scientific achievements have appeared as the improvement and development of the environment which is the object. This unconformity and discrepancy between man's desire and scientific achievement finally caused the weakening or loss of man's subjectivity. However, it is desirable for science to deal with the question of man's subjectivity as well as the objective problems such as the improvement of the environment and the development of

the means of life. My ardent wish is that all scientists develop their respective fields on the basis of a solid view of moral values thus exalting human dignity by adopting also the spiritual and unified method as well as the materialistic and analytical one. If we had created the climate of science centered on human dignity the formidable problem of pollution would have been prevented.

Here arises the question of man's original image, that is, man's nature. My view is that man's original image is the harmonious oneness between his mind and body. The original man should be a being of unity and harmony between his spirit and body centered on the purpose of goodness or value. I view the original character of science as embodying in unity the two sides of spirit and body resembling man. This means that science should assume a unified character dealing also with the field of moral value. It may be appropriate to call this synthesized science "Cultural Science" However, in order for science to handle this view of moral value, another question of what should be the standard of value appears. In general, the standard of value has changed according to age and environment. There is a vast difference between the standard of value in the ancient times and that of the modern age. And again the standard of value in the Orient differs from that of the Occident. Therefore, to establish a true standard of value for the common benefit and welfare of all mankind we cannot but set up as the standard some universal and absolute element that can apply at any time and any place. The establishment of this absolute standard signifies the establishment of a new view of moral value. The essence of this absolute standard should be the love which makes the basis of the ethics of the family system. This is because the true love in the ethical relationship of the family is an absolute love-agape love-which emits heartwarming joy to all mankind just as the sun emits its light to all creation. And this love alone has never changed through history whether in the East or West. At this point we can think of the one absolute being who is the only subject of this absolute love. I believe it is most desirable for this absolute being to become the ultimate standard of the new view of value.

In my view, this absolute being is not at all any conceptual being but rather a substantial entity which has hitherto revealed Himself throughout human history. We know that in history many sages and saints including so many religious leaders have appeared in different times and in different places. These people, without exception, appealed to the human conscience and heart urging the practice of love. When men responded and followed their teachings the people and nations enjoyed peace and prosperity but when they were obstinate they fell into confusion or decline. Even today the whole of mankind is in confusion and chaos waiting either consciously or unconsciously for the appearance of modern sages and saints to realize this love. All these facts signify that history has developed in the direction to realize this love. Therefore we cannot but realize that in history there has been one central axis functioning consciously in a certain direction. I want to define this substantial being who has played the role of the axis as the "Absolute Being." We can see that behind the scenes of human history this Absolute Being has planned to establish the world of moral values by actualizing the love through the saints, righteous men and conscientious leaders. Accordingly my conclusion is that if the whole of mankind will accept this Absolute Being as the axis of human history the world of moral values will be realized without difficulty.

Lastly I extend my heartfelt wishes that the wonderful presentation of your research and discussions at this conference will produce epoch making results to contribute to the true peace and prosperity of mankind. Thank you very much.

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