

# THE MIND IN PROCESS: MEANING OF CHINESE PHILOSOPHY OF MIND ON MIND ECOLOGY STUDIES

Xiuhua ZHANG<sup>1</sup>  
Jingyuan LIU<sup>2</sup>

**ABSTRACT:** Traditional Chinese Philosophy directly concerns the issue of mind. There is not only Theory of Mind-Nature, but also many scholars regard Confucianism as the Mind Studies, so that some see Chinese Philosophy as Philosophy of Mind. Human mind is seen as an absolute subject, dominates and concerns everything in the universe, moreover possesses characters of wholeness, introversion, and functions of praxis for growing and developing, so it is not entity of western metaphysics but a being in process for actualizing Sage Realm of morality by spiritual praxis. In the course, various factors and relations of mind get synergy in the thinking of organism, holism and becoming theory. These understanding are coincident with postmodern Mind Ecology Studies in the perspective of Process Philosophy. Therefore, Chinese Philosophy of Mind has implication of Mind Ecology Studies, and the latter further demonstrates contemporary theoretic value and realistic meaning from Chinese Philosophy of Mind.

**KEYWORDS:** Mind; Process; Praxis; Chinese Philosophy of Mind; Mind Ecology Studies; holism; organism, Theory of Becoming

## *Contents*

### *Introduction*

1. The Mind as Absolute Subject and Its Characters
2. The Mind with Praxis Function for Growing and Developing
3. Seeing Chinese Philosophy of Mind from the Mind Ecology Studies

### *Conclusion*

### **Introduction**

Traditional Chinese Philosophy is different from the Western Philosophy as metaphysics of substance and epistemology for questioning of the cosmos and the world as well as knowledge. The former, it doesn't put vision on the world to resolve the issue of being and how to know the world, but aims at human beings and discusses the question of human mind. Its interest lies in considering the relationships

---

<sup>1</sup> School of Marxism, China University of Political Science and Law, Beijing, CHINA.

<sup>2</sup> Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, USA.

between human being and world, man and man, man and himself, in order to construct ethic, aesthetical and value world of meaning. Therefore, Chinese Philosophical human studies of humanism directly concern the issue of mind. There is not only Mind Studies (心学) as theory of mind-nature (Han 1992:2–16) which discusses human nature, self-value and its realization, tries to interpret the relationships between human beings and nature, society as well as human life, the mutual relations between lust sexual passion, sense-perception, moral reason, spiritual freedom, and the methods of mind self-cultivation in order spiritual self-transcendence by human consciousness about all phenomena of matter and spirit though Confucianism Buddhism Taoism have their own characters, but also some scholars regard Confucianism as a Philosophy of Mind<sup>3</sup> which is different from psychologism but has close relation with the issues of mentality and concerns the relationships between men and the world, mind and things, mind and Tao. Some directly see Chinese Philosophy as a Philosophy of Mind (Meng 1998:3), because traditional Chinese Philosophy mainly emphasizes the existence of human mind as well as its value and meaning including the self-actualization and transcendence of mind. Maybe, these judgments are very strong. However, we have to say Chinese Philosophy possesses rich thoughts of mind. Moreover, these understanding are coincident with postmodern Mind Ecology Studies in the perspective of Process Philosophy. Therefore, this paper tries to make a new proposition: the Chinese Philosophy of Mind has the meaning of postmodern Mind Ecology Studies, and the latter further demonstrates the contemporary theoretic value and meaning of praxis from Chinese Philosophy of Mind. In main text, three issues will be discussed as follows.

## 1. The Mind as Absolute Subject and Its Characters

In general, the core category of traditional Chinese Philosophy is the Mind, and the mind is always seen as an absolute subject which dominates everything, concerns everything in the universe. However, it is not substance as Descartes' mind entity for thinking and opposed with the nature but keeping the unity with the nature. The relations between Mind as absolute subject and outside things are not single cognitive relationship in epistemology but potential and manifesting, silent and feeling, hidden and apparent relations. It emphasizes that the human mind and Tao of *the book of Changes* are interlinked, in other words, the mind potentially possesses Tao. From Mencius, all things are prepared for me. In Chu Hsi's opinion, the mind is regarded as Taichi. From Wang Yangming, nothing exists beyond the mind. Lu ChiuYuan believes that the universe is my mind, and my mind is just the universe. According to Zhang Zai, one of philosophical missions is setting up the mind for the heaven and earth. Buddhist thinks, such as, any natural law and principle is attributed to the mind, and has no law outside human mind, and so on. These ideas all embodied the

---

<sup>3</sup> Chinese some scholars including Mou Tsung-San regard Confucianism as the Philosophy of Mind in a certain extent. In addition, Meng Peiyuan in his book of *The Transcendence and Realm of Mind* also sees Confucianism and Taoism as Philosophy of Mind.

concept of the mind as absolute subject, and set up Confucian ethic subject, Taoist aesthetical subject.

From Meng Peiyuan in his book of *The Transcendence and Realm of Mind*, the mind of traditional Chinese Philosophy as absolute subject has characters of wholeness and introversion. (Meng 1998:4–8)

The wholeness of mind refers to, the mind can integrate intellectuality, emotions, will, intention, and it is self-contained, so it is not necessary to analysis (from Wang Yangming). This character emphasizes the balance between various factors of mind activities, and it is supported by spiritual practice or spiritual praxis.

The introversion of mind refers to self-contained mind subject is not completely realized, it is relative with potentiality and possibility. That is, the mind always lies in a self-actualized process, so it needs to return itself, and depends on itself in order to self-reflect, self-practice, self-realize. Due to mind is dominator for body and human action, so “If cultivating virtue within oneself, the virtue will be real” (Lao Tzu). From Zengzi, I should reflect myself three times each day; I desire “benevolence” (Ren, “仁”), the benevolence (Ren, “仁”) will be present. Meng Tzu proposes that the idea of “conserving and settling the mind” (Shou Fang Xin, “收放心”), do not lost conscience (Ben Xin, “本心”). Taoism thinks that the mind itself is pure and light ethic-mind, real-mind, but human being has to keep it in secular society by seeking to the states of “natural Wu-Wei” (doing nothing, “自然无为”) as the baby and getting rid of any interference and maintaining tranquility of mind (“致虚守静”) as well as non-utility, non-desire (“心斋”) and enabling mind forget own body and secular norms, give up own intellect, follow the universal Tao in order to take real freedom (“坐忘”).

The subjectivity, wholeness and introversion of mind decided that the mind is basic reason for understanding and explaining the universe and humanity (human nature). From Mou Tsung-San, the mind is reason, its full character of dense is called Qi (Chi, “气”), its character of clear venation is called Li (“理”), its prevalence and giving individual encounter of necessary certainty is called Ming (Inochi, “命”), its certainty of limitation is called Xing (“性”), its character of being with itself principle is called Dao (Tao, “道”), its unpredictable marvelous character is called Shen (divinity, “神”), its cohesion is called Jing (spirit, “精”), its master and domination is called Xin (heard, “心”), its without false and excessive demands is called Cheng (sincerity, “诚”), its impartial state is called Zhong (doctrine of the mean, “中”), its without any additional thing is called Ji (pole, “极”), its message running or information communication is called Yi (Change, “易”).(Mou 2005:167) All these belong to one, namely, the “conscience”(“良知”). In another words, Qi, Li, Ming, Xing, Dao, Shen, Jing, Xin, Cheng, Zhong, Ji, Yi, are all different expressions of the conscience.

The thoughts of absolute mind as subject with above characteristics are mainly embodied in the studies of mind, the philosophy of the mind.

From the Chinese traditional studies of mind, Confucian studies of mind have

four characters as follows. (Han 1989:72–80)

Firstly, it is a mode of thinking of ontology of mind-nature. From the logical process of thought evolution of Confucian studies of mind, from the Pre-Qin and Han Dynasties' a priori natural studies of mind and Confucian studies of mind combined with emotion of moral psychology, to digestion of Neo-Taoism and Buddhist studies of mind, evolved Confucian the studies of mind from the school of idealist philosophy of the Song and Ming dynasties, and formed the abstract and speculative Cheng-Zhu's Neo-Confucianism as well as the Lu-Wang's mind theories for ontology of moral norms and relations between moving and motionlessness, body and function of mind. After the modern revolution of democracy and the import of west civilization, the modern Neo-Confucianism with "Chinese Cultures as basis, Western Cultures as subsidiary" was shaped.

Secondly, it combines physiology, psychology and morality with the mode of thinking of mind theory. According to the difference between human beings and animals, the relationships between human physiological desires, psychological emotions and moral consciousness are demonstrated; controlling desire, emotion, experience and realizing moral self-cultivation are interpreted by the relation between knowing and doing.

Thirdly, it is an internal self-transcendence. The subjectivity and consciousness of moral emotion and ethical awareness are emphasized, and it argues to actualize human internal value by making an effort, intellectual moral self-cultivation process. The pre-Qin Confucianism pays attention to self-examination by perceptual moral behavior, and takes experience of moral norms from sensible intuition. For example, Meng-Tze regards senses of compassion, of shame, of comity, and of right and wrong as Benevolence, righteousness, courtesy, and wisdom, namely, Four-Terminals Theory of Ren, Yi, Li and Zhi. Confucian school of idealist philosophy of the Song and Ming dynasties concretely interprets moral emotions from the abstract intuition of moral reason, that is, properties of mind (Ren, Yi, Li and Zhi) are externalized the senses of compassion, of shame, of comity, and of right and wrong by the relationship between body and function, moving and motionlessness. Modern New Confucianism based on Confucian school of idealist philosophy of the Song and Ming dynasties, absorbed west philosophy, and further emphasizes that moral subject. Mou Tsung-San combines Lu-Wang's studies of mind with Kant's autonomic morality, advocates the theory of mind- properties unity, and argues that the mind is not only being but activities.

Fourthly, it is the view of human life state as the Internal Sage and External King ("内圣外王"). Confucianism advocates internal self-cultivation such as, Kong Yan enjoys communication with others, and asks for people becoming the sages and men of virtue, meanwhile promotes this view of human life to society in order to realize the social ideals of rectifying the mind, sincerity, self-cultivation, regulating the family, the country and the world. The modern new Confucianism advocates new internal sage and external king, internal cultivation is mainly the Kong-Meng's Tao, external action follows science and democracy, so it is a good unity of the view of human life and social ideal.

This generalization is more accurate. The subjectivity, wholeness and introversion of the mind are all embodied. It includes Confucian Tao, learning and politics, and shows that there are not only Confucian traditional studies of mind, but also there are the learning of nature of mind of Taoism and Buddhism. This is reason why Chinese Philosophy with Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism is called the philosophy of mind.

Moreover, this philosophy of mind is aim at the Realm of Mind of actualizing sages, and constructs a meaning world based on the Realm of Mind. It tries to set up a mind for the heaven and earth, enable human life in the world abide by Tao in order to take Ming, keep excellent learning for the sages of last generations, let peace in the future generations in the world.

However, the actualization of various Realms of Mind also has to depend on spiritual praxis of mind, namely, mind needs self- cultivate for Tao to be embodied, and Tao to be practiced.

## 2. The Mind with Praxis Function for Growing and Developing

The Chinese Philosophy argues that the mind is not a motionless mirror, but lies in a process of growing and developing by its creativity. The Mind is living, and its being is embodied by the activities of emotions, will, impression, desire, feeling, perception and thinking. It is different with western philosophical substance of mind or subject of thinking, subject of reason, subject of spirit, Chinese Philosophy emphasizes the wholeness and unitarity, and unfolds praxis of mind to the aim of Sage Realm.

Therefore, the fundamental meaning of mind is growing and developing. The growing and developing is a process, so the mind is not entity but spiritual practice for realizing the Sage Realm of morality. In the course, factors and various relations of the mind get synergy, and communicate the heaven and earth. In the thinking of organism and holism, Chinese Philosophy from human life to universal life, to interpreting human life by universal life, finally, pays attention to mind. From the *Yi Zhan*, the great virtue of the heaven and earth is treasuring life, and growing life is change. However, everything is actualized by spirit (Shen, “神”), the spirit refers to Shen Ming (“神明”) of the mind which is fundamental for realizing the virtue of heaven (Tian De ,“天德”) and the virtue of life (Sheng De, “生德”). That is, the mind is root of life. Hence, human mind is not only a process of activities, but also is the activities for ethic or aesthetic aim of praxis. We can say that the functions of mind activities are not in the ways of cognizing and logical inference, but in the ways of human intuitional experience and praxis. It is very clear, the praxis of mind is based on creative activities of novelty and the emotion- intentionality activity of human mind, finally, actualizes the Sage Realm for the unity of the heaven and man.

It is necessary for giving an interpretation. There are some differences between Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism for understanding the Mind Realm, so there are different means and ways for realizing ideal mind realm.

Confucius sees the “benevolence” (Ren, “仁”) as the highest realm, and Lao Tzu

regards “Tao” (Dao) as the highest realm. The Theory of Realm of Benevolence (Ren) pays attention to human ethical value of morality in order to get the realm of the unity of the heaven and human beings. The Theory of Realm of Tao (Dao) focuses human nature of nature of the morality beyond ethics in order to go the way of spiritual freedom of the unity of virtue and beauty. Of course, the two ways are completed by subsequent Confucianism and Taoism. (Meng 1998:192) This determinated the different means and ways of Confucianism and Taoism actualizing ideal realms, for example, Confucianism until emphasizes moral education and self-cultivation, and Taoism continuously asks for dislodging intellect including moral knowledge, advocates desirelessness and doing nothing (Wu-Wei, “无为” ) to comply with the Tao of nature, in order to keep tranquility and freedom of mind.

In the fact, in the tradition of Confucianism or Taoism, there are different ways for pursuing of moral realm.

Seeing from the realm theory of Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu of Taoism, Lao Tse and Chuang-Tzu all emphasize the way of self-cultivation for getting rid of any private idea and keeping tranquility of mind (Zhixushoujing, “致虚守静”). Lao Tse’s Realm Theory of Tao advocates that returns the state of the simple and the baby. The baby state as a metaphor of life meaning, concerns the growth and self-realization of the mind. The simple state as a metaphor of being meaning, focuses on original truth. From Lao Tse, with the beginning of chaos of the universe, human being is actualizing and differentiating his or her oneself, and the latter, the process of self-differentiating possesses the possibility of alienation, so man has to self-cultivation and self-transcendence. Therefore, it is needed for growing knowledge everyday for engaging in learning, and it is necessary for giving up unnecessary desire and knowledge everyday for practicing Tao in order to improve the moral realm of mind. The word of “decrease” (Sun, “损”), discloses that the activity of moral cultivation is a process of doing (Wei, “为”), namely, it is a process of praxis for the subject of mind in the ways of conscious self-practice, self-transcendence and self-realization. In the process, the ability of self-calming is necessary in order to exclude any uneasy, concentrate one's attention to experience Tao. It is very clear that the realm of unity of human being and Tao needs the self-transcendence of mind.

Chuang Tzu concretizes Lao Tze’s above principles in self-cultivation, advocates Xin-Zhai (“心斋”) and Zuo-Wang (“坐忘”), You-Xin(“游心”) and Qi-Wu“齐物”. Xin-Zhai (“心斋”) refers to a state of mind which refuses outside various lures of the utilitarian including reputations and benefits, and lets mind is not disturbed, in order to keep mind doesn’t depend on especially doesn’t infatuate any outside thing. Zuo-Wang(“坐忘”) refers to consciously giving up some things what are not relative and necessary, and controlling the emotions of pleasure, anger, sorrow and joy as well as utilitarian desires. Chuang Tzu said that forgetting feet shows that the shoes are suitable; forgetting waist, due to the belt is suitable; if you know forgetting right and wrong, it means that the mind is in nice state (《庄子·达生》). (Sun 2007:279) However, this kind of forgetting has its own premise, namely, the mind is self-sufficiency. You-Xin (“游心”) refers to the

mind lies in a state of freedom. According to Chaung Tzu, You-Xin (“游心”) is just Wu-Dai (“无待”), getting rid of limits, stumbles, without relying on vain glory in the world. Qi-Wu (“齐物”) refers to equality of things in the meaning of ontology and axiology, anything has its own value and meaning, because Chaung Tzu opposes the distinguishing of the way in the utility, the useless thing maybe has its own great function. In his opinion, any distinguishing comes from human subjective prejudice and Cheng Xin (“成心”), and it is not necessary for distinguishing out right and wrong, great and small things in the world. Hence, he advocates that human beings and all things in the earth are equal, and everything has its own value of existence by its own nature which Tao learns from and abides by the nature of thing. Therefore, Chaung Tzu’s thought is called the Theory of Freedom Realm.

Whether Lao Tze’s Theory of Tao Realm or Chaung Tzu’s Theory of Freedom Realm, they all gave the ways of realizing transcendental Mind Realm, and seek to growth and development of mind by playing the roles of experience and keeping of Tao in order to realize the realm of the unity of the heaven and human being.

In addition, various mind realms of Confucianism also went through a process of evolution. Finally, Wang Yangming’s Study of Mind which emphasizes the internal pursuing of mind and the interpretation about the functions of growth and development of mind is regarded as the Theory of Mind Resonating (“心灵感通说”). Mou Tsung-San’s book of *the Conscience (Du-Ti) in loneliness* (Mou Tsung-San 2005) tries to interpret his own views of Wang Yangming and Zhuxi in the *Theory of Spirituality Resonating* (“精灵感通论”) and the *Dialogue of Zhu and Wang*. (Mou 2005:161-177) In Mou Tsung-San’s opinion, Yangming’s Study of Mind make an opposition between his “Mind(Xin, 心)” and “Reason(Li, 理)”, and Yangming argues that “Reason (li, 理)” is not in outside of mind. In the fact, Zhuzi’s “Reason (Li, 理)” doesn’t neglect “Mind (Xin, 心)”, and it is only a methodology for interpreting the order of the universe, namely, theory of cultivation. Zhuzi not only sees the order and the rule of the cosmos as “Reason (li, 理)” from the aspect of physics, but also regards “Benevolence (Ren, 仁)”, “Justice (Yi, 义)”, “Propriety (Li, 礼)”, “Wisdom (Zhi, 智)” and via media as “Reason (Li, 理)” in the humanity. The “Reason (Li, 理)” becomes to Zhuzi’s a whole principle for interpreting all phenomena. (Mou 2005:163)

Therefore, from Mou Tsung-San, the difference between Yangming and Zhuxi is just that, Zhuxi’s question is on order of the universe and goodness of human nature, so his system of theory is from ontology to cultivation learning; Yangming’s question is in the investigation of things (Ge-Wu, “格物”), his system of interpretation is from cultivation learning to ontology. Due to the difference of two systems in the direction, produced different propositions in the ontology, one is the Theory of Spirituality Resonating in an aspect, and another is comprehensive rationalism in two aspects. (Mou 2005:164) Zhuxi’s theory also concerns cultivation learning, and Yangming only considers the mind, so some call his theory as the Study of Mind. Mou Tsung-San prefers to see it as the Study of Conscience. (Mou

2005:164)

Indeed, from Yangming, the mind has multiple properties and functions by his Theory of Spirituality Resonating, and it is related with all things of the heaven and earth. In Mou Tsung-San's opinion (Mou 2005:166–167), (1) I am center, by the function of induction of conscience, all things of the heaven and earth are prepared for me. The “spirituality” (Jing-Ling, “精灵”) of conscience is seen as center, everything with my mind turns to silent when Ling Ming doesn't happen to induction. (2) The conscience and spirituality (Jing-Ling, “精灵”) are in every place. Human conscience is the consciences of grass, wood, and stone. They are not themselves if the heaven and earth have not human conscience, so everything and human being are a unity, moreover Qi (“气”) run between the heaven and the earth. This is the theory of spirituality feeling and understanding, namely, the Theory of Spirituality Resonating (“精灵感通论”). (3) The principle of Genius (Spirituality, Jing-Ling, “精灵”) plays same role with Zhuxi's Reason (Li, “理”), Tao (“道”) and Tai Chi (“太极”). The conscience as subject has twelve properties, such as Qi (“气”), Li (“理”), Ming (“命”), Xing (“性”), Dao (“道”), Shen (“神”), Jing (“精”), Xin (“心”), Cheng (“诚”), Zhong (“中”), Ji (“极”), Yi (“易”), and they are called as twelve proper nouns. (4) The “Nothing is outside mind” of The Theory of Spirituality Resonating (“精灵感通论”) based on conscience is a question of inquiry but an issue of being in ontology.

We can say that Yangming's Theory of Spirituality Resonating (“精灵感通论”) of Study of Mind especially emphasizes the activity of spiritual interaction with all things and environment, and the universe will become lonely and dark if there are not the activities of spirit. In other words, thanks to the activities of spiritual interaction with all things and environment, man can experience Tao and promote his realm of morality, and enable the universe and all things are lighted. Meanwhile, the praxis of spirit for mind growing and developing is attributed to human conscience and spirituality (Jing-Ling, “精灵”) from mind.

### **3. Seeing Chinese Philosophy of Mind from the Mind Ecology Studies**

We can say that the mind from Chinese Philosophy possesses functions of ethic and aesthetical spiritual practice. However, playing these functions need to appeal to keep the conscience (“本心”) as well as synergy between the mind and outside environment including body, in order to realize the Sage Realm of the unity of the heaven and man. Therefore, Chinese Philosophy of Mind has the implication or meaning of postmodern Mind Ecology Studies.

The postmodern Mind Ecology Studies is put in a theoretic framework of Process Philosophy of the organic cosmology and holism, and it regards human sustainability and common good as itself practical principles in order to understand and interpret the mind again. It agrees that the mind is not abstract thinking, so we have to resort to the “mind ecology” for considering it. The “mind ecology” is

proposed by the shift from modern perspective to constructive postmodern perspective. The constructive postmodernists believe that they resolved material and spiritual oppose from the modern western philosophy. Philip Clayton thinks that the Mind Ecology Studies (“心灵生态学”) is example illustration for interpreting the change from the modern to the postmodern, and environment science and human spirituality supported the movement. He sees Taoist classical book with five thousand words (called the perfect of religion of balance by some scholars) as a philosophy of balance as same as the Mind Ecology Studies. The Mind Ecology Studies emphasizes mutual relevance between the mind and environment, and it considers the aesthetic ethic and cognitive functions of mind in the whole relationship. From Alfred North Whitehead, it is internally related between us and other things.

Hence, the Mind Ecology Studies thinks that the relations between mankind and other creatures are internally related, and the good or bad influence from us will become their part. All human beings have to face various benefit lures, but we have right of selection. We are a part of the web of life, and this web of life is a community of all creatures, moreover we should offer services for this community. From the process philosophy, our every thinking, every word and action will produce eternal impression in the whole cosmos – Objective Immortality. The Mind Ecology Studies is appropriate for whole ecological system including us. Philip Clayton said that “The Mind Ecology Studies reminds us should not empty talk about praxis, and sustainability concerns praxis, our mental state and states of mind, as well as my action at present. The web of life is still hovering in my heart.” (Clayton 2012: the first edition)

In the fact, Mou Tsung-San, as a Neo-Confucianist, had absorbed and accepted Whitehead’s thought of process philosophy. He shows his own theoretic position of Whitehead’s philosophy in the book of *The Conscience in Loneliness* (《寂寞中的独体》), especially is in the chapter of *Theory of Causality of Perception and Theory of Possibility of Knowledge*. Mou Tsung-San thinks that Alfred North Whitehead’s Theory of Image of Thing from Sensation (“感觉物象说”) or the Theory of the Form of Thing from Sensation (“感觉物相说”) is his expression about Theory of Internal Relationship of Feeling. Mou Tsung-San admits that he followed Alfred North Whitehead’s thoughts when he considers the “pure givenness” (“纯粹所与”) and the “givenness emerged” (“显现所与”). (Mou 2005:13) Due to he follows Alfred North Whitehead’s thought, Mou Tsung-San interprets as follows. (Mou 2005:12-16)

Firstly, the natural world is the world of events, and the relationships come from events, movement also belongs to events. The internal relationships are happened to by the relations of events.

Secondly, the relations of extending occurred by each event and any event, then they can produce a kind of collection, so that present a certain shape, namely characterizing actual anything. The certain shape is the focus as well as way and appearance as events presenting. We can find their causal chain by the focus presented, and confirm our object of cognition by the way and appearance presented.

The appearance presented is called the “form of thing” (“物相”) which used for classifying the types of things. The events and the “form of thing” (“物相”) have causal relationship on the focus presented. The “form of thing” (“物相”) is a result, and the relationship of events is cause.

Thirdly, the relationship of sensation is also relations between events in the knowledge. We call it the “event on the middle seat” or “event as media” (“中座事素”) in the body which it produces relationships with objective events around it, so there are match relationships. The match relationships are also a collection and a certain shape characterized. The certain shape characterized (“定型”) is also focus presented, and it has its own appearance presented. The shaping of appearance presented is called feeling shaping the “form of thing of sensation” (感知物相) which is shaped by sense organs of body.

Fourthly, the “form of thing of sensation” (感知物相) is just the “givens emerged”, and the events produced the “form of thing of sensation” are the “pure givens”. The relation between “pure givens” has a relationship of extending, so it also has causal relationship which is seen by the focus presented. Inquiry for this causal relation is questioning the logos of the world, and the inquiry is based on the “givens emerged”. Therefore, the “givens emerged” and “pure givenness” possess causal relationship, namely, the upper and lower relation. The lower level or shadow is the “givens emerged”, and the upper or shape is the “pure givenness”. We have to be based the form of thing of the “given emerged” to analyze the logos of the world. That shape is also called the model or format which is public, universal, eternal and invariable. Whitehead calls the finalizing the design or objectification of actual events as the “eternal object” (“永恒客体”), however, our knowledge comes from the “eternal object”. Formats of the “form of thing of sensation” can compose the “form of thing of perception”, it is the union of abstractions for many forms of thing of sensation, and it is also the union of abstractions of relations between formats. This kind of the “form of thing of perception” is more abstraction, and it prefers to use thinking of abstraction, and it is more and more closing the logos of the world, finally, we can take scientific forms of thing. The meaning of the abstraction is just an application of Alfred North Whitehead’s method of the abstraction-extending (“抽延法”).

The answer for knowledge how to be possible is proved by Mou Tsung-San like Alfred North Whitehead. Mou Tsung-San uses the causal relationship between the givens presented and the pure givens, as well as the abstractions from the “form of thing of sensation” to the “form of thing of perception”, and he unifies feeling and thought, body and mind, thing and me, the world and spirit, being and thinking, finally these conflicts are unified in the process from occurring to developing of the relationships of events. This understanding shows, the cognitive question of mind does not only belong to single thinking activity, and involves the questions of the relationships between body-mind and environment, concerns human activities of feeling or prehension in the particular and concrete environment.

Obviously, we can say, the interpretations of cognitive activities of mind from

Neo-Confucianism and the Mind Ecology Studies, the both have a common source of thoughts, that is, Alfred North Whitehead's Process Philosophy (Whitehead 1978, 1967).

## Conclusion

To sum up, in the perspective of the Mind Ecology Studies with the tradition of Whitehead's Process Philosophy, we promote a dialogue and fusion of horizons between constructive postmodern philosophy and traditional Chinese Philosophy. Consequently, the Mind Ecology Studies in the postmodern context revealed an ecological dimension, contemporary theoretic value and practical meaning of Chinese Philosophy of Mind. However, it is necessary to give further interpretation for this comparative research between traditional Chinese Philosophy of Mind and contemporary the Mind Ecology Studies as follows.

On the one hand, we have to see their common points which are key premise of our comparative research, for example, they insist on organism, holism, theory of becoming and theory of process in the perspectives of time and history, as well as they all stress the category of relation, and they possess same characteristics of the thinking of synthesis, moreover, they argue that human mind is growing by various spiritual praxis, etc.

On the other hand, we also should admit their different points between traditional Chinese Philosophy of Mind and contemporary Mind Ecology Studies from constructive postmodernism:

(1) Their cultural backgrounds are different. Chinese Philosophy of Mind was based on traditional Chinese culture and civilization of agriculture, and the Mind Ecology Studies is based on the culture of modernity in the late western capitalism and civilization of post-industry.

(2) Their paradigms of philosophy are different. Chinese Philosophy of Mind comes from the perspective of simple and unadorned dialectics in the paradigm of pre-modern non-speculative Chinese philosophy, but the Mind Ecology Studies comes from the perspective of process-relationship dialectics in the paradigm of constructive postmodern speculative Western philosophy.

(3) Their interests and targets are different. Interests of theory for Chinese Philosophy of Mind is how to realize the transcendence of human mind by spiritual praxis, namely, to promote the aesthetical ethical Sage Realm of human beings and social orders in Chinese traditional society or community, the interests of theory for the Mind Ecology Studies lies in how to realize universal peace, harmony and ecological civilization by the subject of mind as event its own self-feeling, self-prehension, self-selection, self-creation, self-enjoyment, self-actualization in the position of metaphysics of a generic empiricism and cosmology. Above these ancient and modern, Chinese and Western differences enable the common points of comparative both look like more precious and important. Thereby, it enlightens us that nowadays, we not only should engage in civilization dialogue beyond time and space but seek to civilization of dialogue in the process of reconstructing civilization.

## References

- Han, Qiang (1992). *The Review on the Theory of Nature of Mind from Modern Neo-Confucianism*. Liaoning University Press, Shenyang.
- Han, Qiang (1989). *The Basic Characters and Researches Methods of Confucian Theory of Mind*. Naikai Journal, Issue 3, pp. 72–80.
- Meng, Peiyuan (1998). *The Transcendence and Realm of Mind*. Renmin Press, Beijing.
- Mou, Tsung-San (2005). *The Conscience in Loneliness*. Xinxing Press, Beijing.
- Sun, Tonghai (2007). *Chuang Tzu*. Zhonghua Book Company, Beijing.
- Clayton, Philip (2012): *The Mind Ecology Studies as the Constructive Postmodern Theory and Practice, Culture Communication*, Issue 50: the first edition.
- Whitehead, Alfred N. (1978). *Process and Reality*. Ed. David Griffin & Donald W. Sherburne, Free Press, New York.
- Whitehead, Alfred N. (1967). *Adventures of Ideas*. Ed. Evelyn Whitehead, Free Press, New York.