

Unit 15  
Reading C

Kung Fu for Philosophers 《功夫与哲学家》

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1 In a 2005 news report about the Shaolin Temple, the Buddhist monastery in China well-known for its martial arts, a monk addressed a common misunderstanding: "Many people have a misconception that martial arts is about fighting and killing," the monk was quoted as saying, "It is actually about improving your wisdom and intelligence".

在 2005 年一篇关于少林寺的新闻报道中，这座以武术闻名的中国佛教寺院里的一位僧人谈到了一个常见的误解：“很多人有一个错误的观念，认为武术是关于打斗和杀戮的，”这位僧人被引述说，“实际上，武术是关于提升你的智慧和智力的。”

2 Indeed, the concept of Kung Fu is known to many in the West only through martial arts fighting films like "Enter the Dragon," "Drunken Master" or more recently, "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon." In the cinematic realm, skilled, acrobatic fighters like Bruce Lee, Jackie Chan and Jet Li are seen as "Kung Fu masters."

确实，在西方，很多人对功夫的概念仅仅是通过像《龙争虎斗》《醉拳》或者更近一些的《卧虎藏龙》这样的武术打斗电影而得知的。在电影领域中，像李小龙、成龙和李连杰这样技艺高超、身手敏捷的打斗者被视为“功夫大师”。

3 But as the Shaolin monk pointed out, Kung Fu embodies much more than fighting. In fact any ability resulting from practice and cultivation could accurately be said to embody Kung Fu. There is a Kung Fu of dancing, painting, cooking, writing, acting, making good judgments, dealing with people, even governing. During the Song and Ming Dynasties in China, the term Kung Fu was widely used by the neo-Confucians, the Daoists and Buddhists alike for the art of living one's life in general, and they all unequivocally spoke of their teachings as different schools of Kung Fu.

但正如那位少林寺僧人所指出的，功夫所包含的远不止打斗。事实上，任何通过练习和修炼而获得的能力都可以准确地说是体现了功夫。有舞蹈功夫、绘画功夫、烹饪功夫、写作功夫、表演功夫、做出正确判断的功夫、与人打交道的功夫，甚至治理的功夫。在中国的宋明时期，“功夫”一词被新儒家、道家和佛教徒广泛用于一般的生活艺术，他们都明确地将自己的教义称为不同的功夫流派。

4 This broad understanding of Kung Fu is a key (though by no means the only key) through which we can begin to understand traditional Chinese philosophy and the places in which it meets and departs from philosophical traditions of the West. As many scholars have pointed out, the predominant orientation of traditional Chinese philosophy is the concern about how to live one's life, rather than finding out the truth about reality.

对功夫的这种宽泛理解是一把关键钥匙（尽管绝不是唯一的钥匙），通过它我们可以开始理解中国传统哲学，以及它与西方哲学传统的交汇点和不同之处。正如许多学者所指出的，中国传统哲学的主要方向是关注如何过好自己的生活，而不是去探寻关于现实的真理。

5 The well-known question posed by Zhuangzi in the 4th century BC — was he Zhuangzi who

had dreamt of being a butterfly or was he a butterfly dreaming he was Zhuangzi?—Which pre-dated virtual reality and "The Matrix" by a couple of thousand years, was as much a Kung Fu inspiration as it was an epistemological query. Instead of leading to a search for certainty, as Descartes's dream did, Zhuangzi came to the realization that he had perceived "the transformation of things," indicating that one should go along with this transformation rather than trying in vain to search for what is real.

公元前 4 世纪庄子提出的那个著名问题——是庄子梦到自己变成了蝴蝶，还是蝴蝶梦到自己变成了庄子呢？——这比虚拟现实和《黑客帝国》早了几千年，它既是一种功夫的灵感源泉，也是一个认识论的疑问。与笛卡尔的梦导致对确定性的追寻不同，庄子认识到自己感知到了“万物的变化”，这表明人们应该顺应这种变化，而不是徒劳地去寻找什么是真实的。

6 Confucius's call for "rectification of names"—one must use words appropriately—is more a Kung Fu method for securing sociopolitical order than for capturing the essence of things, as "names," or words, are placeholders for expectations of how the bearer of the names should behave and be treated. This points to a realization of what J. L. Austin calls the "performative" function of language. Similarly, the views of Mencius and his later opponent Xunzi's views about human nature are more recommendations of how one should view oneself in order to become a better person than metaphysical assertions about whether humans are by nature good or bad. Though each man's assertions about human nature are incompatible with each other, they may still function inside the Confucian tradition as alternative ways of cultivation.

孔子所倡导的“正名”——人必须恰当使用词语——更多的是一种确保社会政治秩序的功夫方法，而非捕捉事物本质的方法，因为“名”或词语是对名称承载者应如何行为和被对待的期望的占位符。这指向了对 J. L. 奥斯汀所说的语言的“施为”功能的认识。同样，孟子的观点以及他后来的对手荀子关于人性的观点，更多的是关于人应该如何看待自己以便成为更好的人的建议，而非关于人本质上是善还是恶的形而上学断言。尽管两人关于人性的断言相互矛盾，但在儒家传统中，它们仍可以作为不同的修养方式发挥作用。

7 The Buddhist doctrine of no-self surely looks metaphysical, but its real aim is to free one from suffering, since according to Buddhism suffering comes ultimately from attachment to the self. Buddhist meditations are Kung Fu practices to shake off one's attachment, and not just intellectual inquiries for getting propositional truth.

佛教的“无我”教义看起来肯定很具形而上学色彩，但它的真正目的是让人摆脱痛苦，因为根据佛教的说法，痛苦最终源于对自我的执着。佛教的冥想是摆脱执着的功夫修行，而不仅仅是为了获得命题真理的智力探索。

8 Mistaking the language of Chinese philosophy for, in Richard Rorty's phrase, a "mirror of nature" is like mistaking the menu for the food. The essence of Kung Fu—various arts and instructions about how to cultivate the person and conduct one's life—is often hard to digest for those who are used to the flavor and texture of mainstream Western philosophy. It is understandable that, even after sincere willingness to try, one is often still turned away by the lack of clear definitions of key terms and the absence of linear arguments in classic Chinese texts. This, however, is not a weakness, but rather a requirement of the Kung Fu orientation—not unlike the way that learning how to swim requires one to focus on practice and not on conceptual understanding. Only by going beyond conceptual descriptions of reality can one open up to the intelligence that is best

exemplified through arts like dancing and performing.

把中国哲学的语言误认为用理查德·罗蒂的话说的“自然之镜”，就如同把菜单误认为食物。功夫的精髓——各种关于如何修身养性、为人处世的技艺和教导——对于那些习惯了西方主流哲学的味道和质地的人来说常常难以消化。可以理解的是，即使有真诚的尝试意愿，人们也常常因中国经典文本中关键术语缺乏明确的定义以及缺乏线性论证而却步。然而，这并非弱点，而是功夫取向的要求——这与学习游泳需要专注于实践而非概念理解的方式并无不同。只有超越对现实的概念性描述，人们才能开启那种通过舞蹈和表演等艺术得到最佳体现的智慧。

9 Philosophers' ideas, even when theoretical, have never stopped functioning as guides to human life.

哲学家的思想，即使是理论性的，也从未停止过作为人类生活指南的作用。

10 This sensitivity to the style, subtle tendencies and holistic vision requires an insight similar to that needed to overcome what Jacques Derrida identified as the problem of Western logo-centrism. It even expands epistemology into the non-conceptual realm in which the accessibility of knowledge is dependent on the cultivation of cognitive abilities, and not simply on whatever is "publicly observable" to everyone. It also shows that cultivation of the person is not confined to "knowing how." An exemplary person may well have the great charisma to affect others but does not necessarily know how to affect others. In the art of Kung Fu, there is what Herbert Fingarette calls "the magical, "but"distinctively human" dimension of our practicality, a dimension that "always involves great effects produced effortlessly, marvelously, with an irresistible power that is itself intangible, invisible and unmanifest. "

这种对风格、微妙趋势和整体视野的敏感性需要一种洞察力，类似于克服雅克·德里达所指出的西方逻各斯中心主义问题所需的洞察力。它甚至将认识论扩展到非概念性领域，在这个领域中，知识的可及性取决于认知能力的培养，而不仅仅取决于对每个人来说“可公开观察到的”东西。它还表明，人的修养并不局限于“知道如何做”。一个模范人物可能具有影响他人的巨大魅力，但不一定知道如何去影响他人。在功夫的艺术中，有赫伯特·芬格莱特所说的我们实用性的“神奇但独特的人类”维度，这个维度“总是涉及毫不费力、奇妙地产生巨大影响，具有一种不可抗拒的力量，而这种力量本身是无形的、看不见的和未显现的”。

11 Pierre Hadot and Martha Nussbaum, partially as a result of the world-historical dialogue of philosophy in our time, have both tried to "rectify the name" of "philosophy" by showing that ancient Western philosophers such as Socrates, the Stoics and the Epicureans were mainly concerned with virtue, with spiritual exercises and practices for the sake of living a good life rather than with pure theoretical endeavors. ' In this regard, Western philosophy at its origin is similar to classic Chinese philosophy. The significance of this point is not merely in revealing historical facts. It calls our attention to a dimension that has been eclipsed by the obsession with the search for eternal, universal truth and the way it is practiced, namely through rational arguments. Even when philosophers take their ideas as pure theoretical discourse aimed at finding the Truth, their ideas have never stopped functioning as guides to human life. The power of modern enlightenment ideas have been demonstrated fully both in the form of great achievements we have witnessed since the modern era and in the form of profound problems we are facing today. Our modes of behavior are very much shaped by philosophical ideas that looked innocent enough

to be taken for granted. It is both ironic and alarming that when Richard Rorty launched full-scale attacks on modern rationalistic philosophy, he took for granted that philosophy can only take the form of seeking for objective Truth. His rejection of philosophy falls into the same trap that he cautions people about—taking philosophical ideas merely as "mirrors" and not as "levers".

皮埃尔·阿多和玛莎·努斯鲍姆在一定程度上由于我们这个时代的世界历史性哲学对话，都试图通过表明苏格拉底、斯多葛学派和伊壁鸠鲁学派等西方古代哲学家主要关注美德、为了过上美好生活而进行的精神锻炼和实践，而非纯粹的理论努力，来“正名”“哲学”。在这方面，西方哲学在其起源上与中国古典哲学相似。这一点的意义不仅仅在于揭示历史事实。它提醒我们注意一个因对永恒、普遍真理的追寻及其通过理性论证来实践的方式的痴迷而被遮蔽的维度。即使哲学家们将他们的思想视为纯粹的旨在寻找真理的理论话语，他们的思想也从未停止过作为人类生活指南的作用。现代启蒙思想的力量既以我们自现代以来所见证的伟大成就的形式，也以我们今天所面临的深刻问题的形式得到了充分展示。我们的行为模式在很大程度上是由那些看起来足够无害以至于被视为理所当然的哲学思想所塑造的。具有讽刺意味且令人警醒的是，当理查德·罗蒂对现代理性主义哲学发起全面攻击时，他当然地认为哲学只能采取寻求客观真理的形式。他对哲学的拒斥陷入了他提醒人们注意的同一个陷阱——仅仅将哲学思想视为“镜子”而不是“杠杆”。

12 One might well consider the Chinese Kung Fu perspective a form of pragmatism. The proximity between the two is probably why the latter was well received in China early last century when John Dewey toured the country. What the Kung Fu perspective adds to the pragmatic approach, however, is its clear emphasis on the cultivation and transformation of the person, a dimension that is already in Dewey and William James but that often gets neglected. A Kung Fu master does not simply make good choices and use effective instruments to satisfy whatever preferences a person happens to have. In fact the subject is never simply accepted as a given. While an efficacious action may be the result of a sound rational decision, a good action that demonstrates Kung Fu has to be rooted in the entire person, including one's bodily dispositions and sentiments, and its goodness is displayed not only through its consequences but also in the artistic style one does it. It also brings forward what Charles Taylor calls the "background"—elements such as tradition and community - in our understanding of the formation of a person's beliefs and attitudes. Through the Kung Fu approach, classic Chinese philosophy displays a holistic vision that brings together these marginalized dimensions and thereby forces one to pay close attention to the ways they affect each other.

13 This Kung Fu approach shares a lot of insights with the Aristotelian virtue ethics, which focuses on the cultivation of the agent instead of on the formulation of rules of conduct. Yet unlike Aristotelian ethics, the Kung Fu approach to ethics does not rely on any metaphysics for justification. One does not have to believe in a pre-determined telos for humans in order to appreciate the excellence that Kung Fu brings. This approach does lead to recognition of the important guiding function of metaphysical outlooks though. For instance a person who follows the Aristotelian metaphysics will clearly place more effort in cultivating her intelligence, whereas a person who follows the Confucian relational metaphysics will pay more attention to learning rituals that would harmonize interpersonal relations. This approach opens up the possibility of

allowing multiple competing visions of excellence, including the metaphysics or religious beliefs by which they are understood and guided, and justification of these beliefs is then left to the concrete human experiences.

人们很可能会将中国功夫视角视为一种实用主义形式。两者的相近之处可能是上世纪初约翰·杜威在中国巡回演讲时实用主义在中国广受欢迎的原因。然而，功夫视角为实用主义方法增添的是其对人的修养和转变的明确强调，这一维度在杜威和威廉·詹姆斯的思想中已经存在，但常常被忽视。功夫大师并非只是做出好的选择并使用有效的工具来满足一个人碰巧具有的任何偏好。实际上，主体从来不是简单地被当作既定的存在而被接受。虽然一个有效的行动可能是合理决策的结果，但一个展示功夫的好行动必须扎根于整个人，包括一个人的身体倾向和情感，其善不仅通过其结果表现出来，还体现在行动的艺术风格中。它还提出了查尔斯·泰勒所说的“背景”——诸如传统和社区等元素——在我们理解一个人的信仰和态度的形成过程中。通过功夫方法，中国古典哲学展现出一种整体视野，将这些被边缘化的维度汇聚在一起，从而迫使人们密切关注它们相互影响的方式。

14 The Kung Fu approach does not entail that might is right. This is one reason why it is more appropriate to consider Kung Fu as a form of art. Art is not ultimately measured by its dominance of the market. In addition, the function of art is not accurate reflection of the real world; its expression is not constrained to the form of universal principles and logical reasoning, and it requires cultivation of the artist, embodiment of virtues, and imagination and creativity. If philosophy is “away of life,” as Pierre Hadot puts it, the Kung Fu approach suggests that we take philosophy as the pursuit of the art of living well, and not just as a narrowly defined rational way of life.

功夫方法并不意味着强权即公理。这是为什么更适合将功夫视为一种艺术形式的原因之一。艺术最终不是以其在市场上的主导地位来衡量的。此外，艺术的功能不是对现实世界的准确反映；它的表达不受限于普遍原则和逻辑推理的形式，并且它需要艺术家的修养、美德的体现以及想象力和创造力。如果如皮埃尔·阿多所说，哲学是“一种生活方式”，那么功夫方法建议我们将哲学视为对美好生活艺术的追求，而不仅仅是一种狭义定义的理性生活方式。