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THE TEACHING OF HAPPINESS IN MAINLAND CHINA
IN LIGHT OF ARISTOTLE AND MARX

by

Zhaojun Xu

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of

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THE TEACHING OF HAPPINESS IN MAINLAND CHINA
IN LIGHT OF ARISTOTLE AND MARX

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University of Nebraska, 2012

Adviser: Karl D. Hostetler

In this dissertation, the teaching of happiness through morality courses in Mainland China is explored. The exploration centers on three questions: 1) What should be taught to students in terms of happiness? 2) Should schools focus on the cultivation of voluntary virtue or habituation of virtuous actions? And 3) what is the relation between happiness and achievement and/or sacrifice of self-interest? Based on both Aristotle's and Marx's views on these questions, the author argues that a comprehensive rather than a "correct" understanding of happiness should be taught to the students. Also, the author suggests that the goal of habituating students to virtuous actions is to cultivate voluntary virtue in students, and the habituation itself should not be the ultimate goal of moral education. Finally, the author suggests that in order to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of happiness, students should be taught how to properly advance self-interest rather than always oppressing the concern of self-interest.

The structure of this dissertation is as follows:

The research purpose and core issues are discussed in the Introduction. Chapter 1 is a background knowledge of the teaching of happiness in Mainland China and a literature review on this topic. Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 focus on Aristotle's and Marx's views of happiness, respectively. In Chapter 4 Aristotle's and Marx's views of

happiness are compared and discussed. Chapter 5 focuses on the implications of both the two philosophers' views of happiness for the teaching practice of happiness in Mainland China. Chapter 6 is the conclusion.

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INTRODUCTION

In this dissertation, I explore the teaching of happiness in Mainland China, in light of both Aristotle and Marx. In the Chinese context, the understanding of happiness is generally based on a Marxist view, while the teaching practice is also constrained by the government within the Marxist framework. Also, some Confucian virtues are integrated into morality course in Mainland China. Based on comparison and analyses on both Marx's and Aristotle's views on happiness, Confucius' views if necessary, a better understanding of the philosophical foundation of happiness is established in the dissertation. Hopefully, a better understanding of happiness will contribute to a better practice of the teaching of happiness in Mainland China.

In Mainland China, moral education, or education in morality, is a particular form of education dealing with students' moral development. Generally, moral education in Mainland China deals with the cultivation of the "correct" values and virtues in students. Moral education is applied as a particular subject matter as is mathematics and Chinese, which are all compulsory courses for students to take. Morality courses are provided from elementary school through graduate school, but the titles of morality courses vary.

Since the 1990s, happiness has been included as an important content in morality courses in Mainland China. Certain chapters in different morality textbooks are devoted to teach students how to be a happy person. Happiness is officially interpreted as a certain kind of life only existing in a socialist or communist society; and only in a communist society can perfect happiness for all be achieved. Students

are taught that in a communist society, everyone's needs and desires are satisfied, and everyone can fully develop his or her talents. As a result, people in a communist society lack nothing and are perfectly happy. In addition, happiness is connected with virtuous behaviors in morality courses. That is, students are taught that happiness is the outcome of certain virtues such as helping others and devoting oneself to collectivism. Students are taught that by exercising certain virtues, they will achieve happiness. For example, Chinese students are also taught that they should always sacrifice self-interest for common interest; this sacrifice is imposed on the students as a noble and virtuous action, which would definitely lead to happiness. At the same time, the concern of self-interest is viewed as selfishness or egoism. All these educational practices regarding the teaching of happiness represent a philosophical foundation of happiness in Mainland China, but this philosophical foundation has seldom been explored there.

1. Purpose and Core Questions

The Chinese government has demonstrated its increasing emphasis on the teaching of happiness since decades ago. In order to properly teach happiness in Mainland China, several fundamental questions regarding happiness should be fully discussed or at least be considered by Chinese scholars and educators. For instance, "What is happiness?" "What contributes to a happy life?" "How can happiness be achieved?" "Can we really teach people to be happy?" "If we can, by what means?" In the Chinese context, the government has regulated answers to these fundamental questions, not only in school settings but also in education research. The only "correct"

interpretations and principles of happiness, the Marxist view of happiness, are taught as irrefutable truth to students. Questioning such truths is not encouraged or even allowed by the Chinese government. As a result, these fundamental questions regarding happiness have not been fully discussed, or even discussed at all, due to the government's ideological control. Other views on happiness besides the Marxist view have rarely been introduced to Mainland China. Research of happiness (some other humanity topics as well) has largely been constrained within the Marxist framework by the government.

However, in order to teach happiness, investigation into these fundamental questions is necessary. It helps us Chinese educators establish a better philosophical foundation for the teaching of happiness and morality. The lack of such a foundation may, and has, caused problems in the teaching practice in Mainland China. For instance, in educational practice, schools put more stress on habituating students to virtuous actions rather than cultivating voluntary virtue in students. That is, whether or not students voluntarily exercise certain virtues has been neglected or even discouraged, as long as students exercise those virtues in schools and outside of school. This neglect or ignorance may be due to the fact that virtuous actions are easier to observe than virtue itself, because invisible virtue is generally demonstrated through humans' behaviors. This neglect or ignorance implies that the Chinese government tends to believe that habituation makes people accustomed to virtues and finally possess virtues. However, the Chinese government has never justified this argument that habituation of virtuous actions results in virtuous persons. In contrast,

voluntariness is an important concept in many ethicists' theories, such as Aristotle. Aristotle advocates habituation or character training seemingly similar to the Chinese government, but he also emphasizes the importance of voluntariness in a virtuous action. Without a sufficient exploration on happiness, how would we Chinese educators know that we are doing the right thing? In this sense, it is necessary for us Chinese educators to delve into the fundamental questions of happiness, in order to improve our teaching practice.

As a scholar from Mainland China, I am fortunate to have the opportunity to go beyond, at least to some degree, the constraint of a Marxist framework to explore the philosophical foundation of happiness. In this dissertation, I focus on three basic topics regarding happiness, based on my observation and personal experience of the teaching of happiness, and research review on this issue in Mainland China.

- a) What is happiness?
- b) What is the significance of voluntariness in virtues, which may lead to happiness?
- c) What is the relation between happiness and the achievement/sacrifice of self-interest?

The first question is the most basic question about happiness. It may be difficult to provide a universally acceptable definition of happiness; different philosophers disagree with each other in their definition of happiness. However, by comparing and analyzing different definitions of happiness, we may gain some legitimate understanding of the nature of happiness. This nature, though that still could be

abstract, and difficult to be elucidated to students, will help us establish a philosophical basis for the teaching of happiness in Mainland China. Different definitions or identification of happiness, besides the Marxist view, Aristotle's in particular, would contribute to a full understanding of happiness in Mainland China. Without such an understanding of happiness, how could we Chinese educators say we know about happiness? If we do not understand it as we assume, based on what philosophical foundation should we teach happiness to students?

In addition, to let the student know what is happiness is not the only goal of the teaching of happiness. As suggested by the Chinese government, the ultimate purpose of the teaching of happiness is to help students achieve happiness in their lives. In this sense, we should also find out ways to achieve happiness, when we explore "What is happiness?" For instance, according to the Chinese government, devoting oneself to collectivism always leads to happiness. We need to think it over, "It that true?" and "why or why not? We also need to figure out, "What contributes to happiness?" The investigation in "What contributes to happiness" would justify or oppose some of our Chinese teaching practice.

The second and third questions, the voluntary virtue and achievement/sacrifice of self-interest, are both questions connected to happiness. The "correct" or tacitly understood answers to them imposed by the Chinese government may not be the best or even good answers. For instance, can we really cultivate generosity, benevolence, and fraternal love in students through forced, involuntary donation, as the government expects? Is the concern of self-interest always be bad, as it has been taught in

Mainland China? Why and why not? Is it possible that sometimes the concern of self-interest contributes to the realization of common interest rather than being detrimental to it? Fixed answers to these questions provided or suggested by the Chinese government may hinder educational practice there.

In summary, this dissertation centers on the philosophical foundation of the teaching of happiness in Mainland China. By analyzing both Marx's and Aristotle's views on the three issues of happiness, this dissertation provides different perspectives other than the Marxist one to view the teaching of happiness in Mainland China. The ultimate purpose of this dissertation is to improve the teaching practice of happiness in Mainland China, even to the least degree.

2. Procedure and Methods

My analysis of happiness involves both Karl Marx's and Aristotle's works. For the former, the reason is obvious: the teaching of happiness in Chinese schools is based on Marxism. As a result, Marx's works cannot be neglected if one decides to investigate moral education in Mainland China. Also, Marxism is modified and localized by the government; the Marxist view in Mainland China may not represent Marx's own view. As a result, it is necessary for me to explore Marx's own writings on morality. Karl Marx seldom writes on either virtue or happiness as a particular topic, because he is not at all a virtue ethicist as Aristotle is. However, in his works, he still has left us some thoughts relevant to happiness. For instance, he writes about what the unhappy life of workers of his time is like and what the reason for this unhappy life is. In addition, Marx pays attention to both voluntary labor and self-interest, though

through the lens of economics or sociology rather than ethics directly.

In this dissertation, I concentrate on the following works of Marx, although his thoughts about happiness are not limited to them: *Manifesto* (1848), *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* (1844), *The German Ideology* (1845-1846), *The Holy Family* (1845), *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy* (1906), and *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* (1843). One thing that needs to be clarified is that although the dominant ideology in China is mainly based on Marx, not all of his arguments are taken by the Chinese government. For instance, Marx's rejection of morality is not taken into the Marxist view of morality in Mainland China¹. Also, the Chinese government may demonstrate a misunderstanding of some of Marx's own view.

I select Aristotle's works, because he is one the most influential philosophers of virtue ethics. His discussion about happiness, which was written almost 2400 years ago, still nourishes many contemporary philosophers' thinking. Moreover, the "correct" principle that happiness derives from morality, which is taught in Mainland China, is consistent to some extent with Aristotle's argument that happiness is the outcome of acting in accordance with virtue. Besides, Chinese schools apply habituation as a means of virtue training, which is also suggested by Aristotle as a necessary way to cultivate moral virtue. In addition, regarding the three questions of happiness that are the focus of this dissertation, Aristotle demonstrates views different from Marx. Aristotle's views may inspire us Chinese educators to go beyond the

¹ In the Chinese context, the Communist Virtues are presupposed to be based on Marxism; however, Marx himself rejects all morality and virtue in his work. Additionally, Marx never proposes the concept of communist virtues.

Marxist framework and to conceive happiness from different perspectives. I select Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Politics* as the main sources of his view on happiness. The former is Aristotle's most influential book on ethics, also on happiness in particular; the latter, though it is not a treatise on ethics directly, provides many important arguments regarding happiness. This book centers on how to properly constitute a state so that the people can have happy lives.

My dissertation is composed of six chapters.

Chapter 1 is the background information and literature review of the teaching of happiness in Mainland China. A brief history of moral education in Mainland China is provided; it helps readers have a broad sense of how the Chinese government shapes students' morality through moral education. Also, Chapter 1 focuses on what the "correct" Marxist view of happiness is in Mainland China, and how it is taught there. Examples of the teaching of happiness are provided. Based on the outline of how happiness is being taught in Mainland China, the literature review on this topic is also provided in Chapter 1.

Chapter 2 explores Aristotle's view of happiness. The previously stated three core questions are discussed. Aristotle's arguments on happiness, cultivation of voluntary virtue, and self-interest are analyzed. Following the same line of core questions, Chapter 3 focuses on Marx's views on these issues. Agreement and disagreement between both Aristotle's and Marx's views on happiness are compared and analyzed in Chapter 4. Based on the comparison between the two philosophers' views, my own arguments on these three issues are also provided in this chapter.

Chapter 5 centers on the implications for the teaching of happiness in Mainland China based on the analysis in Chapter 4. It suggests other ways other than the dominant Marxist one to conceive and even to improve the teaching of happiness in Mainland China. Chapter 6 is the conclusion. It provides a summary of my entire dissertation; also, it suggests some further potential research questions.

The last thing that I would like to articulate in this introduction is my personal stance in this dissertation. As a scholar, I believe that there is a connection between happiness and morality. Also, I believe if schools teach morality or virtue, regardless of how they deal with it, either through hidden curriculum or through an independent subject matter as Chinese schools do, or any other ways, the teaching of morality should contribute to human well-being. However, moral education in Mainland China, to a great extent, fails to achieve this goal. That is, the way that happiness has been taught in Mainland China - basically through rote memorizing and rigid habituating - fails to build in students a broad understanding of happiness. Also, it fails to cultivate voluntary virtues in students, and these virtues, according to the government, should lead to students' happiness.

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW

In this dissertation, discussions on moral education involve schools and institutions only in Mainland China. Taiwan, although according to the Chinese government is a province of China, is an independent country. Moral education in Taiwan has some similarities as that in Mainland China, for instance the influence of Confucian tradition. However, Taiwan has a different educational system, and Marxism has never been the dominant philosophical foundation there. Hong Kong and Macao, as “Special Administrative Regions” of China, both have moral education distinct from Mainland China due to their long colonial history and different educational systems.

1. An Overview of Moral Education in Mainland China

a) The Confucian tradition of moral education in the ancient China

Moral education, as a particular form of education, has a long history in Mainland China. In general, Confucianism was the most influential philosophy in China from 134 B. C. to 1895. During this period of time, moral education was based on Confucianism, which emphasizes character training and virtue cultivation. For Confucius, the ultimate purpose of education is to establish a perfect state organized by “rules of proprieties (*li*, in Confucius’ words).” As a result, Confucius suggests that everyone should learn all the “rules of proprieties,” such as benevolence, filial piety, righteousness, and so on, in order to establish such a state. For Confucius, everyone should learn moral principles to become ideal persons, or “junzi” in his words. An ideal person, according to Confucius, is the one who lives in a way “to illustrate

illustrious virtue, to renovate the people, and to rest in the highest excellence” (*The Great Learning*, 1). Also, Confucius believes that ideal persons or “jun zi” contribute to the constitution of a perfect state.

In order to become an ideal person, Confucius suggests that one should start from cultivating oneself with knowledge and virtues. According to Confucius, the most important virtues are Ren and Li. Ren generally refers to benevolence, which is seen by many Confucian commentators as the “fundamental virtue of all other virtues” in Confucian ethics (Liu, 2004, p. 114). Li refers to a series of moral principles based on Ren; for Confucius, Li are established by the sage and should be followed by average people to achieve Ren. Confucians identify some other particular virtues as variables of both Ren and Li, such as loving the people, filial piety, and respectfulness (Confucian virtues are not limited to this list). For Confucius, once a person possesses these virtues, he/she should regulate him/her behavior with them. Then he/she should move on to apply these virtues to regulate his/her family, and then to govern the state, and finally to achieve the perfect state, which is “tranquil and happy” (*Li Ji*, li yun). Although Confucianism is no longer the dominant ideology in Mainland China, many Confucian virtues have been integrated into current moral education to inculcate good citizenship and characters in students.

b) Moral education based on Marxism in Mainland China

In the early 1900s, Marxism was introduced to China. When the Communist Party of China began to gain the power in the early 1920s, communism gradually replaced Confucianism and became the dominant ideology in Mainland China. This

replacement is also demonstrated through changes in moral education. With decades of curriculum re-design, moral education in Mainland China becomes an independent subject matter, which is based on Marxism. According to the Chinese government, moral education, together with intellectual, physical, artistic, and labor (working) skill education (Five Education, or wu yu in Chinese), may produce qualified and virtuous socialist citizens, and in turn, will lead to a harmonious and prosperous socialist/communist nation. Moral education, according to the government, is the most important among these five areas of education.

The main goal of moral education in Mainland China is to shape students' socialist/communist morality and to prepare them to be qualified "socialist/communist Successors. According to the government, socialist/communist successors should possess the Four Must-Have Qualities: communist ideals, communist morality, knowledge, and discipline. Regarding the content of moral education, the Chinese government determines what is taught through morality courses and how. For instance, the government censors morality textbooks to make sure only the "correct" morality (socialist/communist morality) is taught to students. In general, the "correct" socialist/communist morality is claimed by the government to be based on Marxism, but this Marxist view of morality may not be the authentic view of Marx. That is, the Chinese government, more or less, distorts and localizes Marx's own view on morality and society.

In addition, the government applies several means to arouse students' serious attention to morality. For instance, students' memory and understanding of the

“correct” morality is tested, and their moral performance is assessed and kept on records by teachers. Records of students’ morality significantly affect their future academic and professional development. Morality records have an important, if not determinant, impact on the students’ future graduation, admission especially in secondary and higher education levels, and their later employment in some sensitive administrations or departments. Usually in order to have a good moral record, Chinese students have to demonstrate a good memory of the “correct” morality in tests and to perform virtuous actions in schools. In this way, students’ voluntariness in virtuous actions is neglected or even ignored; I will return to voluntary virtue in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5.

2. An Outline of the Teaching of Happiness in Mainland China

According to the Chinese government, happiness is a certain kind of life that only exists in a socialist/communist society. The Chinese government does not provide a direct definition on happiness in morality textbooks, but based on all the descriptions and analysis of the life in a communist society, the government tends to convince students that everyone will have a happy life only in a communist society. The Chinese government identifies current Chinese society as a socialist one, which is a primary and temporary stage towards a communist society. According to the government, since a socialist society is only at the primary stage of communism, not all the people are having happy lives. However, a socialist society is still superior to and better than any other societies, in terms of contributing to people’s happiness.

Students in Mainland China are expected by the government to have a “correct”

(or the Marxist) view of happiness, which is tightly related to communism. As a result, one of the most important and necessary contents to teach happiness is to teach Marx's ideas of communism to students across all educational levels. Students are expected by the government to develop a "correct" view that happiness is inseparably bound to communism. Also, students are expected to memorize and understand the features or necessities of real happiness in a communist society, which includes all-sided development, to distribute products according to people's needs, and to abolish private property.

In addition, students are taught that happiness can only be achieved by exercising communist virtues². For example, a chapter titled "To Be a 'Happy Bird'" (in the second grade morality textbook) focuses on the question "how to be a happy person?" The text indicates that by helping others and devoting oneself to collectivism, one will be happy. The chapter "We Are Happy: The Happiness of Sharing" (in the third grade textbook) focus on the idea that by sharing one's personal possession with others, one makes others happy and in turn that person will be happy. Usually the socialist/communist virtues are collectivism-oriented virtues, which emphasize the absolute priority of collectivism over individuals. Universal virtues such as honesty and kindness are also included in socialist/communist virtues, and these universal virtues are usually taught in a collectivism-oriented context. The highest virtue that leads to happiness, according to the Chinese government, is to dedicate oneself to

² According to the official document, communist virtues refers to virtues mainly based on Five Loves, which includes a love for the country, the people, labor, science, socialists/communist (In Mainland China, a socialist is purposed as the primary stage of a communist society, as a result, socialist and communist are essentially synonyms in the Chinese context). For instance, one's loyalty to the country and the Communist party is an important and necessary virtue for every citizen in Mainland China.

communism.

In Mainland China, different educational levels have different emphases in moral education. So it is in the teaching of happiness. In general, primary level moral education focuses on good habit training rather than learning theory; at secondary and higher educational levels, more Marxist theories are taught to students. Across all educational levels, students' political "correctness" in their views of happiness, that is, their beliefs in communism as the premise of happiness, is shaped and emphasized. Besides morality courses, this "correctness" is also stressed through collectivism-oriented activities in schools. Students' active involvement in these activities is an important part of their morality performance to be recorded by teachers. For instance, students are compelled to apply to join the Young Pioneers in junior high and apply to join the Communist Party in high school. Those whose applications get approved are praised and honored, while the last-approved or even denied students are usually labeled "trouble-maker students."

Besides communist virtue, the teaching of happiness in Mainland China also integrates some Confucian virtue. For instance, harmony, as a Confucian virtue, is integrated as an important component of happiness, although Marx himself hardly demonstrates enthusiasm for this particular virtue. That is to say, in the Chinese context, happiness implies harmony in a broad sense, such as harmony between individuals and collectivism, individuals and individuals, and harmony between the nature and human beings. Among all these relations, harmony between individuals and collectivism is the most important one, according to the Chinese government.

Students are taught that the primary principle to deal with the relation between individuals and collectivism is to always give the priority to the collectivism and always be ready to sacrifice interest in self for the interest of collectivism (common interest). In this sense, sacrifice of self-interest is conceived as socialist/communist virtue. In contrast, concern for self-interest is generally viewed as a synonym of egoism or selfishness in the Chinese context, which is extremely detrimental to communism, according to the government. As a result, students are taught that they should oppress their concern for self-interest and only concern for common interest. In this way, everyone can dedicate oneself to collectivism, and so to communism; finally all the people will achieve happiness.

In summary, in Mainland China, moral education refers to a particular subject matter, which deals with students' socialist/communist morality development. Happiness becomes an important content of moral education in Mainland China in recent decades. The teaching of happiness in Mainland China can be summarized as the following points:

- a) Happiness is a certain kind of life that only can be achieved in a socialist/communist society.
- b) In order to achieve happiness, one should follow the socialist/communist virtues, which emphasize one's dedication to the collectivism and communism.
- c) The teaching of happiness is also based on the assessment of students' memory of socialist/communist morality and virtuous performance in school. As a result, students' voluntariness in these virtuous actions is neglected or ignored.

d) Self-interest is generally conceived as something opposite to communism and real happiness; consequently, for the sake of harmony students should oppress their concern for self-interest and only concern for common interest.

3. Literature Review on the Teaching of Happiness in Mainland China

a) Research on the Teaching of Happiness Published in Mainland China

In the recent decades, the amount of research on the teaching of happiness in Mainland China has increased, as a result of the government's propaganda of its political goal "to constitute a harmony and happy society." For researches that are published in Mainland China, they are generally under the ideological constraint of the government. As a result, these researches are conducted within the Marxist framework. In general, the philosophical basis for these research studies are that the Marxist view of happiness is the only "correct" view that should be taught to students and should contribute students' happy lives.

For instance, Meng (2010) argues that the teaching of happiness ("happiness education" in his words) should focus on emancipation of human beings, free labor, and humans' all-round development. Meng's argument on these three aspects of happiness education is based on Marxist arguments on human emancipation, labor, and humans' full development in a communist society. Hou (2008) compares different ideas on "happiness education," and she proposes that real happiness is always related to "constraint, regulation, sacrifice, and devotion," which are typical socialist/communist virtues contributing to happiness imposed on students by the Chinese government. Zhu and Cao (2007) argue that students should develop a

scientific sense of happiness. This scientific sense of happiness refers to a view of happiness, based on both Marxism and Marxist ideas developed by the Chinese Leaders such as Deng, Jiang, and Hu. He (2006) proposes that the real happiness is to be rational and to have a valuable life. When describing what a valuable life is, He (2006) defines it is a life in which one constantly “develops one’s ego and to uplift the value of being a human.” This conception of a valuable life, according to He, is based on the Marxist concept of self-realization. Wang, Shen, and He (2004) and Xu (2004) focus on how to effectively foster communist morality in students and how to teach them the “correct” political beliefs or values that will contribute to their future lives.

Although the Chinese government favors research studies within the framework of Marxism, Chinese researchers have also include other philosophical views in their writing. However, the purpose of the inclusion of different views besides Marxism is to compare, to criticize, and to integrate reasonable content of other views to enrich the Marxist view. For instance, two nationally influential textbooks on moral education, Chen’s (2006) *On Chinese Moral Education* and Huang’s (2008) *The Reform of Chinese Moral Education in the Process of Values Transition*, both introduce philosophies other than Marxism but treat them as potential theories to perfect Marxism. Hou (2008) quotes Aristotle’s idea that happiness should be associated with virtue, but in Hou’s argument, virtue refers to socialist/communist virtue in particular, which is different from Aristotle. Weiyong (2008) criticizes post-modern views of happiness, which according to her emphasize instant pleasures. Weiyong suggest that moral education in Mainland China should focus on the

“correct” view of happiness to encounter the challenges from “incorrect” views.

To summarize, the researches on happiness published in Mainland China are largely under the ideological control of the government. Few researches go beyond the Marxist view of happiness, which is taught as the only “correct” view of happiness in Mainland China. Rather than challenging the only “correct” view, many researches focus on how to teach it well in schools. Research on voluntary virtue and self-interest published in Mainland China are rarely found. The two topics may be sensitive in the Chinese context. For instance, by stressing voluntary virtue, one may imply that moral education in Mainland China fails to cultivate voluntary virtue. This implication is a direct challenge of the authority and correctness of moral education in Mainland China. Also, in the Chinese collectivism-oriented context, attempting to justify self-interest is dangerous, which may be labeled individualism and incorrect. As a result, research on the teaching of self-interest is also lacking in Mainland China.

b) Research on the Teaching of Happiness or Morality that Are Not under the Government’s Constraint

Sometimes Chinese researchers have opportunities to publish their studies in foreign journals that are out of the ideological control of the government. However, these researchers still try to avoid directly challenging the “correctness” of the Marxist view of happiness or morality in Mainland China. Also, they avoid directly criticizing the ideological indoctrination through moral education. A good example is Lian’s (1980) “Moral Education in New China,” which is written in English and published in *International Review of Education*. In this article, the author applied a

descriptive method in explaining what and how Communist morality is taught in Chinese schools. Lian (1980) attempts to hold a neutral stance towards the Communist-value-indoctrination programs, even if he said he was not supportive to them, this was apparent in his wording. A possible reason for this avoidance of direct criticism is that the Chinese researchers may possess positions in institutions of Mainland China, and their publications are still under that constraint of “political correctness” of the government. They do not want to challenge the authoritative ideology to endanger their positions.

On the other hand, for those research studies published outside of Mainland China, they are usually carried out by independent researchers who are not concerned for Chinese government’s censorship. These research studies can cross the ideology barrier and directly criticize moral education in Mainland China. For instance, Bass (2005) criticizes that moral education in Tibet China has attempted to gradually twist native students’ ethnic identities, which is detrimental to students’ future happiness. Bass argues that moral education in Tibet not only fails to contribute to students’ happiness but also has negative influence on it. Cheung and Pan (2006) also offer works examining the outcomes of moral education in Mainland China. They argue that the Chinese government has failed to exclude individualism from students through its collectivism-oriented moral education. They find that “regulated individualism” and “gradual but conditional liberalization” has partly replaced traditional collectivism from Mao’s time, and they both have affected students’ morality, students’ attitude towards individualism and collectivism in particular. For

instance, students may have more concern for individual happiness rather than the happiness of the society. Hawkins, Zhou, and Lee (2001) analyze the content changes of moral education in Mainland China, and they argue that the Chinese government has struggled to balance between the collectivism and the individualism in morality courses.

These research studies by outsiders contribute to a holistic understanding of moral education in Mainland China. Nevertheless, probably due to their perspectives as outsiders, they do not demonstrate a full knowledge of what and how morality, happiness in particular, has been and is taught in Mainland China. For example, Bass (2005) focuses on the Tibet area where an ethnic minority resides; education there could be slightly or greatly different from other areas of Mainland China. Moral education in Tibet may not be sufficiently representative of the general situation in Mainland China. Cheung and Pan's (2006) analyses are based on governmental instruction menus, which may not fully indicate the reality of moral education practices. Similarly, Hawkins, Zhou, and Lee's (2001) research results of moral education in Mainland China are based on a survey of sampling leaders in the field of values education. Their results manifest only the leaders' views and may be slightly or greatly different to that of the general public, parents, and the students. To summarize, rare outside researchers fully explore the teaching of happiness in Mainland China, though they can go beyond the government's constraints.

Based on the literature review, I find that there exists little critical exploration regarding how happiness has been taught in Mainland China. For native Chinese

scholars, they have to consider the government's tolerance for their research topics. Consequently, they tend not to directly challenge or criticize moral education, and their research studies hardly go beyond the Marxist framework. At the same time, researchers outside of China may freely express their critical and challenging attitude toward Chinese moral education. However, these scholars may be insufficiently familiar with the details of moral education in Mainland China, and their criticism is usually from disciplines like anthropology, sociology, or educational administration, rather than ethics. Regarding the teaching of happiness in moral education in Mainland China, the three core questions of this dissertation in particular, investigation is lacking. These questions will be addressed in this dissertation, and hopefully exploration of these questions will contribute to a better practice of teaching happiness in Mainland China.

CHAPTER 2: ARISTOTLE'S VIEW OF HAPPINESS

Aristotle's view of happiness is one of the most influential philosophical thinking regarding happiness and has significantly affected many modern ethicists. About 2500 years ago, Aristotle addressed basic questions regarding happiness, such as "What is happiness?" and "How can a person achieve happiness?" His analyses of happiness also cover issues of voluntariness and self-interest, two important concepts related to happiness.

1. Aristotle's Conception of Happiness

Aristotle's arguments on the concept of happiness can be summarized as follows:

- a) Happiness is the highest and final good; people pursue happiness for its own sake.
- b) Happiness is a certain kind of life; it means to live well and do well.
- c) Happiness is the activity of the soul in accordance with virtue.
- d) Happiness has embraced many different kinds of good, it involves not only good for individuals but also good for others.

First of all, Aristotle's conception of happiness is based on his argument on "What is good?" For Aristotle, the term "good" has as many senses as being, so "there could not be a common Idea set over all these goods" (NE, Book I). For instance, Aristotle identifies different goods in the following cases:

... it is predicated both in the category of substance, as of God and of reason, and in quality, i.e. of the virtues, and in quantity, i.e. of that which

is moderate, and in relation, i.e. of the useful, and in time, i.e. of the right opportunity, and in place, i.e. of the right locality and the like. (NE, Book I)

Aristotle argues that good could exist in substance, quality, quantity, relation, time and place. For instance, Aristotle believes that God is good; this is good in substance. Bravery is also a particular kind of good, which is in the category of virtue. A knife may useful tool a person, then, it is a particular good in relation. For Aristotle, there are many kinds of good; consequently, good cannot, or at least is difficult to, be generalized as something universal. However, Aristotle still insists that there is a “single Form” good that “other goods that are pursued and loved for themselves are called “good by reference to [it]” (NE, Book I). Aristotle believes that happiness is this “single Form” good, or the “chief good” or “final good” in his words.

Aristotle states:

Now such a thing [a particular good] happiness, above all else, is held to be; for this we choose always for itself and never for the sake of something else, but honor, pleasure, reason, and every virtue we choose indeed for themselves (for if nothing resulted from them we should still choose each of them), but we choose them also for the sake of happiness, judging that by means of them we shall be happy. Happiness, on the other hand, no one chooses for the sake of these, nor, in general, for anything other than itself. (NE, Book I)

For Aristotle, happiness is good in itself and persons pursue this good for its own

sake. In contrast to happiness, other goods are pursued and loved by people for something else rather than these goods themselves. For instance, delicious food is good for people, but people pursue delicious food not only for the food itself but also for something else such as health, taste, and the pleasure of enjoying the food.

Aristotle believes that many things like food, though they may be good for people, are good in the “secondary sense,” because these things tend to produce or to preserve the final good or to prevent something contrary to it (NE, Book I).

In addition, Aristotle identifies happiness as “a certain kind of life,” as “living well and doing well” (NE, Book I). Then, the question is, for Aristotle, what does it mean to live well and to do well? Aristotle believes that it means to act in accordance with virtue. This argument is based on Aristotle’s conception of a person’s function in a state.

Aristotle states:

... we state the function of man to be a certain kind of life, and this to be an activity or actions of the soul implying a rational principle, and the function of a good man to be the good and noble performance of these, and if any action is well performed when it is performed in accordance with the appropriate excellence: if this is the case, human good turns out to be activity of soul in accordance with virtue... (NE, Book I)

Aristotle believes that for all things that have a function or activity, the good and the “well” resides in the function; consequently, man’s good resides in man’s function. According to Aristotle, the function of man is to live well and to do well. Also, he

believes that in order to live well and to do well, one needs to follow rational principles. Since for Aristotle, following rational principles represents man's excellence or virtue, which according to Aristotle is "the state of character which makes a man good and which makes him do his own work well" (NE, Book II). In this way, Aristotle states that happiness is the highest good or excellence of people, which is a "activity of the soul in accordance with virtue" (NE, Book I). For Aristotle, moral virtue can be learned and cultivated in people through habit training. He says, "happiness seems, [to me,] comes as a result of virtue and some process of learning or training" (NE, Book I). In this sense, Aristotle believes that happiness comes as a result of virtue habit training.

Finally, for Aristotle, happiness is self-sufficient; it has embraced many other kinds of good. As a result, people cannot make happiness better by adding something good to it.

Aristotle states:

... the self-sufficient we now define as that which when isolated makes life desirable and lacking in nothing; and such we think happiness to be; and further we think it most desirable of all things, without being counted as one good thing among others- if it were so counted it would clearly be made more desirable by the addition of even the least of goods; for that which is added becomes an excess of goods, and of goods the greater is always more desirable. Happiness, then, is something final and self-sufficient, and is the end of action (NE, Book I).

For Aristotle, in order to be happy, one needs at least some materials such as food, clothes, shelter, and so forth, because “no man can live well, or indeed live at all, unless he be provided with necessaries” (*Politics*, Book I, Part IV). This implies that for Aristotle, happiness has at least embraced some other goods such as necessary or possession or property. In general, these necessities enable a person to maintain his or her own life and to act in accordance with virtue. Otherwise, how could a starving and dying person act virtuously, if he or she can barely act at all? Aristotle states, “... a poor man cannot be magnificent, since he has not the means with which to spend large sums fittingly” (NE, Book IV). For Aristotle, necessary material conditions contribute to virtue, and in turn contribute to happiness. So, Aristotle suggests, “of the remaining goods, some must necessarily pre-exist as conditions of happiness, and others are naturally co-operative and useful as instruments” (NE, Book I).

Besides embracing many other kinds of good, happiness, according to Aristotle, should embrace both an individual’s happiness and others’ happiness. He says:

... for the final good is thought to be self-sufficient. Now by self-sufficient we do not mean that which is sufficient for a man by himself, for one who lives a solitary life, but also for parents, children, wife, and in general for his friends and fellow citizens... (*Nicomachean Ethics*, Book I).

This quotation demonstrates that in light of Aristotle, happiness is not an issue of only an individual; instead, other people such as an individual’s parents, children, neighbors, and the entire society must be considered. For Aristotle, happiness must involve not only different kinds of good such as wealth or health but also the goods

for both others and oneself. That is to say, Aristotle conceives happiness in a comprehensive way; in this sense, happiness embraces all kinds of good and persons, and it is self-sufficient and lacking of nothing.

2. Aristotle's View of Voluntary Action and Involuntary Action

As a virtue ethicist, Aristotle insists that moral virtue can be a result of virtue habituation. The emphasis on habituation does not suggest that Aristotle only pay attention to the inculcation of virtuous action, although habit training is usually based on people's overt behaviors. Aristotle notices that sometimes people may apply an action involuntarily, and he believes that voluntarily virtuous actions are better than involuntarily ones. Based on Aristotle's argument regarding voluntary and involuntary, the following three points are noticeable:

a) For Aristotle, voluntary actions involve deliberation, while involuntary actions do not.

b) According to Aristotle, voluntary actions are moved by a "moving principle in a man," while involuntary actions are moved by "moving principles in abstract."

c) When considering whether an action voluntary or not, Aristotle suggests that one should always refer to the moment of that action.

Let's unpack these arguments in detail.

First of all, Aristotle distinguishes voluntary actions from involuntary ones. Aristotle argues that a voluntary action is an action done based on an agent's deliberation. According to Aristotle, "Not every class of men deliberates about the things that can be done by their own efforts" (NE, Book II). This idea is consistent

with Aristotle's argument on different classes and their different capacities and functions in a state. For instance, common people and slaves either do not deliberate at all, or they do not deliberate as the philosophers do, because common people and slaves do not have sufficient wisdom. That is the reason why common people and slaves need the philosophers to teach them rational principles or to tell them what to do, according to Aristotle. In addition, Aristotle believes that this deliberation is "not about ends but about means" (NE, Book II). Aristotle believes that deliberation is to consider possible means to a certain end and to select the appropriate means. For instance, Aristotle argues that a doctor does not deliberate whether he shall heal, but through what means he can heal a patient. Through deliberation, the doctor selects a treatment and applies it to the patient. The selecting and application of the treatment, according to Aristotle, is a voluntary action. On the contrary, if due to ignorance, the doctor randomly selects a treatment, then in Aristotle's view, the doctor's action is involuntary, because this actions is not based on deliberation.

However, Aristotle's view on whether an action is voluntary or not is very complicated. He provides some exceptional cases, which at first sight look involuntary, but are identified as voluntary by Aristotle. For instance, Aristotle suggests that a tyrant's forcing someone to do something base through the threat of killing his family is a voluntary case. That is, for Aristotle, if the person finally does the base thing, he or she does it voluntarily. The action of doing the base thing seems to be involuntary at first sight, because this person would not do it without external force from the tyrant. Nevertheless, Aristotle tends to identify it as voluntary, or in his

words, “mixed, but [is] more like voluntary action[s]” (NE, Book II). That is, for Aristotle this kind of action is most likely to be voluntary, but not necessarily. His rationale is, to do the base thing is “worthy of choice at the time when [it] is done” (NE, Book II). If we recall Aristotle’s argument that deliberation is not about end but about means, his rationale may become easier to understand. If the end of one’s action is to maintain virtue or nobility, then what one should deliberate on is how to best achieve this end. However, in the tyrant’s case, the end is not only to maintain virtue, but also a more urgent end, to secure one’s family. Since the end changes, then the deliberation on the means should also change. To do the base thing, though it is blameworthy, seems to this person the only means to save his or her family at that moment. As a result, according to Aristotle, it is voluntary.

In addition, it seems to Aristotle that when a person acts involuntarily, that is, to act without deliberation on why he or she acts in a certain way, this person is not really moved by himself or herself. Instead, for Aristotle, it is like this person carried by a wind. Aristotle identifies this situation as being moved by “moving principles in the abstract” (NE, Book II). In Aristotle’s terms, “moving principles in the abstract” is opposite to “moving principles in a man.” The former are the moving principles shaped by factors outside of a man, while the latter are principles internalized in man’s nature.

Aristotle states:

Both the terms, then, 'voluntary' and 'involuntary', must be used with reference to the moment of action. Now the man acts voluntarily; for the

principle that moves the instrumental parts of the body in such actions is in him, and the things of which the moving principle is in a man himself are in his power to do or not to do. Such actions, therefore, are voluntary, but in the abstract perhaps involuntary; for no one would choose any such act in itself (NE, Book III).

According to Aristotle, a person feels compulsion to do something with these outside principles, in which “ nothing is contributed by the person who is acting or is feeling the passion” (NE, Book III). For instance, when the ignorant doctor in the previous case randomly selects a treatment, the doctor himself or herself contribute nothing to this selection, compared to the case where a doctor deliberately selects that same treatment. This ignorant doctor is being carried by something outside of him/her, as a result, Aristotle believes this doctor acts involuntarily. Similarly, Aristotle suggests that other people who can manipulate a person also belong to outside principles. That is, if someone is threatened or manipulated by some powerful people, and this person does something according to their commands, then this person’s action is also involuntary.

However, based on Aristotle’s argument, it still may be still not so easy to distinguish “moving principles in a man” from “moving principles in the abstract,” because in practice things are very complicated and mixed. For instance, a person may be moved by mixed moving principles to act in a certain way. Then the question is, how to distinguish one principle from another? Or, can we really identify purely internal or external principles, when everyone is affected by multiple factors,

including both inward and outward? Since in many cases, the moving principles are a combination of both, Aristotle himself calls this kind of actions mixed; also he says that actions moved by principles in the abstract are only “perhaps” involuntary.

If we combine the doctor’s and the tyrant’s case together, we may find why Aristotle calls some cases “mixed” regarding voluntary or involuntary. Supposed a doctor should select a treatment to save a patient’s life, but the doctor is threatened by a tyrant to let the patient die, otherwise the doctor’s family would be killed. If the doctor finally withholds all treatments and lets the patient die, then in Aristotle’s view, is the doctor’s withholding of treatment voluntary or involuntary? According to Aristotle, voluntary actions are actions based on deliberation about the means. Based on this argument, the doctor’s action is voluntary, because the doctor has to deliberate on his situation and select a particular means. However, Aristotle also argues that involuntary actions are those moved by “moving principles in the abstract” rather than “moving principles in a man.” When we refer to this argument, the doctor’s action is actually moved by an outside principle, which is a person in the power who can manipulate the doctor. In this sense, the doctor’s actions should be identified as involuntary.

According to Aristotle, it is difficult to identify voluntary and involuntary actions, due to the complexity of humans’ nature and their lives. But one thing in Aristotle’s arguments that we should keep in mind is that we should always refer to “the moment of action” to judge whether an action is voluntary or involuntary. In the doctor’s case, we may say that the doctor voluntarily saves his family by involuntarily

letting the patient die. When referring to different ends and different means, we may come to different conclusions about what is voluntary and what is not.

3. Aristotle's View on Self-interest

Aristotle's conception of self-interest is related to Aristotle's argument on how to manage a state. That is, Aristotle tends to believe that a good state is managed on a private basis rather than a common one. That is, if everyone is properly concerned for the interest in self and appropriately pursues self-interest, then personal lives and the state are both good. Aristotle's discussion on self-interest contains the following points:

a) To act in one's interest resides in humans' nature; if not taken to an extreme, self-interest is positive to people's development.

b) Private property based on self-interest should be kept; while a society managed on a common basis may be chaotic.

c) Self-interest is the basis for certain virtues such as generosity.

d) Selflessness is noble, but only few people can really give up concern for self-interest and only look out for other's interest.

First of all, Aristotle distinguishes self-interest from egoism. He believes that unlike vicious egoism, self-interest, is necessary and positive in man's development. As Aristotle states, "... when everyone has a distinct interest, men will not complain of one another, and they will make more progress, because everyone will be attending to his own business" (*Politics*, Book II, Part V). For instance, when a person is concerned for his or her health, which is generally in his or her own interest, this

concern for self-interest may compel this person to improve his or her physical condition. Consequently, this person may have only healthy food and do physical exercises. With a better physical condition, this person may be more energetic to participate in activities such as helping others. In this sense, self-interest could be very positive and contributive to people's development, both individuals and others.

However, excessive or exclusive concern for self-interest is close to egoism, which Aristotle criticizes:

Again, how immeasurably greater is the pleasure, when a man feels a thing to be his own; for surely the love of self is a feeling implanted by nature and not given in vain, although selfishness is rightly censured; this, however, is not the mere love of self, but the love of self in excess (*Politics*, Book II, Part V).

For Aristotle, the feeling of having something of one's own is pleasant. It is determined by persons' nature that they act for their own sake or to love themselves. This love of self is the basis of one's concern for interest in self. According to Aristotle, when this love of self is excessive, one may become selfish. Selfishness or egoism is beyond Aristotle's definition of positive self-interest; the latter should be encouraged but the former should be blamed.

Aristotle's distinction between self-interest and selfishness is based on several considerations. First of all, according to Aristotle, a defect or excess in certain character are two vices for people. In this sense, since selfishness or egoism is the excess of self-love, it should be "rightly censured" (*Politics*, Book II, Part V). In

addition, for Aristotle, the proper self-love is not to gratify one's own interest only. Instead, proper self-love should also take into consideration others' interests. As Aristotle says, "... the good man acts for honor's sake, and the more so the better he is, and acts for his friend's sake, and sacrifices his own interest" (NE, Book IX). That is, Aristotle believes that a good person should first be a self-lover, but more important, a good person acts for others' sake as well. For example, if a person stays away from danger, this person may be called a self-lover. But if this person, who is aware of the danger to save a drowning stranger in a deep river but still exercises the noble action, then this person is noble. He or she is noble because he or she sacrifices self-interest for the stranger's sake and/or honor's sake rather than for anything else such as rewards. In this sense, Aristotle suggests that to be concerned for and to act in self-interest is natural, but to sacrifice self-interest in proper ways at proper times and to act in others' interests may make one noble. This point is central to Aristotle's view on self-interest.

Secondly, Aristotle tends to emphasize the conflict between self-interest and common interest. His argument is based on his justification of private property, which is generally based on self-interest. Aristotle argues that people must keep property private, so that their rights, benefits, and responsibilities may be clear. He says, "Property should be in a certain sense common, but, as a general rule, private" (*Politics*, Book II, Part V). Aristotle's rationale is that when everyone has a distinct self-interest, he or she will focus on his or her own business and try to make progress in oneself. Also, according to Aristotle, when one is focusing on one's own business,

people would not complain about each another. In contrast, Aristotle sees several disadvantages of a state based on a common basis, where people frequently complain about each other. Aristotle claims that “there is much more quarrelling among those who have all things in common” than those who have private property (*Politics*, Book II, Part V). One of the reasons for the quarrelling is, Aristotle suggests that it is difficult to identify one’s particular responsibility or rights, since everyone shares everything. For instance, should a wife clean all other peoples’ house, since it is also this wife’s houses on the common basis? If this wife refuses to clean others’ houses, should other wives still clean her house? It seems to Aristotle, a common basis may cause this kind of confusion and make a state or family chaotic.

Thirdly, Aristotle insists that some virtue such as liberality is based on private property. For instance, according to Aristotle, when a person has private property, he or she can do liberal actions to help his friends, guests, or even strangers. This liberal action involves the sacrifice of self-interest. In this sense, for Aristotle, virtues such as liberality and generosity are based on self-interest. Without self-interest, these virtues seem to lose their ethical basis. Also, according to Aristotle, evils such as selfishness do not arise out of the possession of private property, but from “the weakness of human nature” (*Politics*, Book II, Part V). That is to say, Aristotle does not believe private property causes egoism; neither does he believe that the best way to eliminate egoism is to abolish private property.

Finally, Aristotle believes that only very few people can look out for others’ interest without being concerned for their own interest. Aristotle calls this kind of

person the self-sufficient man, who is “sufficient to himself and excels his subjects in all good things” (NE, Book VIII). According to Aristotle, a self-sufficient person “needs nothing further” and “will not look to his own interests but to those of his subjects”. Aristotle argues that only the king of a state, rather than everyone, can be self-sufficient and always looks to the advantages of his subjects.

To summarize, Aristotle believes self-interest can be positive to people’s progress. However, excessive concern for self-interest leads to selfishness. Aristotle justifies people’s concern and pursuits for self-interest, but criticizes selfishness. Also, Aristotle tends to doubt the complete consistency between self-interest and common interest. Rather, Aristotle believes that they generally conflict with each other. He advocates private property and implies that it is a good way to protect self-interest. Moreover, Aristotle believes that self-interest could be the basis of some particular virtues such as liberality. Finally, he believes that only few people rather than all can be really selfless and concerned for only interest of others.

4. Conclusion

Aristotle provides tremendous inspiring thoughts on happiness. First of all, Aristotle believes that happiness is the highest good of human beings; it is an activity of the soul in accordance with virtue. Secondly, Aristotle believes that voluntary virtue contribute more to happiness rather than involuntary virtue. And he suggests that voluntary virtue can be cultivated in people through habituation. Finally, Aristotle states that concern of self-interest is positive in a person’s development; he also insists that private property based on self-interest should be kept in order to constitute

a good state.

CHAPTER 3: MARX'S VIEW OF HAPPINESS

Marx is not at all a virtue ethicist; he seldom writes directly on happiness. For Marx, happiness is not the most important thing to be considered for human beings. There are some other dimensions in Marx's writings, such as self-realization of human essence, freedom, communism, which are at least equivalently important as happiness, if not more important. Marx describes the unhappy or pathetic lives of workers of his time; also he predicts a perfect life in a communist society. This indirect writing on happiness is the main source for us to explore Marx's view on relevant issues of happiness. Also, Marx explores voluntary labor and self-interest in his works, which is a valuable source for us to understand his view on both voluntariness and self-interest.

1. Marx's Conception of Happiness

Marx's conception of happiness can be summarized as follows:

- a) Happiness is a particular good but no higher than some other goods, such as freedom and self-realization of human essence.
- b) Private property and alienation cause unhappy lives, as a result, happiness can only be achieved based on the abolishment of private property and alienation.
- c) Happiness should also be based on sufficient materials or social products.
- d) Happiness should include happiness of both individuals and others.

First of all, Marx tends to identify happiness as one of the highest goods for human beings but not the only one. For instance, Marx criticizes that the aim of industry in his time is "the possession of wealth"; and he argues that the aim of

industry should be “happiness of men” (*Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, p.10, EPM for short for the following discussion). In this sense, Marx believes that happiness is not only important but also necessary for human beings. However, For Marx, happiness, as important as it is, is not the highest or ultimate goal of human beings. He never indicates that happiness is the only highest good of human society. Marx’s conception of happiness is based on his prediction of a happy or even perfect life in a communist society. Marx seldom identifies the life in a communist society as a happy life, though he would not deny that life there is happy. Marx tends to conceive communism as the precondition of real happiness for the entire human species. Marx states that communism is “the doctrine of the conditions of the liberation of the proletariat” (*Manifesto*, p. 44). It seems to Marx that communism leads to happiness rather than vice versa. In this sense, Marx tends to suggest that happiness is not the highest good of human beings, at least not the only one.

Besides happiness, Marx also stresses some other equivalently important goods for human beings, such as the realization of human essence. Marx puts great emphasis on it, and he uses several different expressions, such as “full development of all our potentialities” and “rounded development of all members” to illustrate the realization of human essence in a communist society. Expressions regarding men’s self-realization or full development appear more frequently than happiness in Marx’s writings. In addition, Marx also stresses freedom of the human species. When Marx strongly criticizes the enslavement of workers, he tends to conceive freedom as a standard to evaluate whether people are really “Men” and whether they can fully

develop their capacities. For Marx, humans' full development must represent by freedom. He says, "...free, conscious activity is man's species-character" (EPM, p. 31). When humans are no longer subject to the division of labor, they make their lives free, and "the genuine and free development of individuals" can be achieved (*The German Ideology*, p. 51). In brief, if Marx believes that there is a hierarchy of goods, he tends to position happiness as a particular good among the highest goods, but not the only one.

Second, Marx's conception of happiness is based on his consideration of private property and alienation. Regarding "what is happiness", Marx does not give a direct answer in his writings. However, his description of an unhappy life of workers in his time may give us some clues on Marx's view on "What contributes to happiness?" For Marx, the workers of his time, regardless in which country they live, were suffering from unhappy or even tragic lives. The unhappy lives, according to Marx, derive from private property. For Marx, private property causes alienation, which refers to the separation between humans' labor from their products. That is, humans, the proletariat in particular, cannot enjoy what they have created or produced by their labor, which for Marx, is abnormal. Since people cannot enjoy what they have created, they are unhappy. Marx believes that this alienation deriving from private property is both the cause and demonstration of an unhappy life.

For Marx, self-realization is the opposite of alienation. For Marx, men, unlike other animal species, are creators of not only the world but also themselves, because men can produce "their means of subsistence" (*The German Ideology*, p.6).

Consequently, men are “indirectly producing their actual material life” (*The German Ideology*, p.6). In this sense, Marx affirms that by producing and enjoying what human beings have created, men become men. He says, “As individuals express their life, so they are” (*The German Ideology*, p.6). Marx calls this process the “realization of human essence” (*Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right*, p. 3). Marx believes an ideal person should have the capacities to produce, and at the same time, enjoy the production. In contrast, alienation represents that humans fail to express their lives or realize their essence as human beings.

For Marx, since workers cannot afford and enjoy what they have produced, that is, they are alienated from what they have created, it is impossible for them to have happy lives. Marx thinks that these workers are “working animal[s]” and they are like “beast[s] reduced to the strictest bodily needs” (EPM, p.7). Marx associates both alienation and workers’ unhappy lives to private property; he believes that private property is “the necessary consequence of alienated labor,” and the accumulation of private property exacerbates the alienation and workers’ unhappiness (EPM, p.33). According to Marx, workers provide labor, but they do not possess any productive material or means, while capitalists have the productive property. Workers have to sell their labor for a low wage, and capitalists purchase workers’ labor to produce. Workers and capitalists are not equal to each other with regard to productive power and production distribution. The latter always tend to maximize surplus value of the products; workers are paid only a small amount of money to maintain their basic living. For Marx, the conflict between workers and capitalists, labor and capital,

actually represents the “antithesis between lack of property and property” (EPM, p. 42). That is, the conflict between worker and capitalists derives from different possession of private property. As a result, Marx believes that in order to have a happy life, people must first abolish private property and alienation based on it.

Third, for Marx, happiness involves social products sufficient for the satisfaction of people’s needs. Marx sketches a possible happy life in an ideal society, a communist society. Marx argues that all the productions of the society must be managed communally, and the needs of the entire society should be satisfied (*Manifesto*, p. 47-51). Marx also argues that in a communist society, “machinery and other inventions made it possible to hold out the prospect of an all-sided development, a happy existence, for all members of society” (*Manifesto*, p. 39). That is to say, a communist society should have sufficient productions to satisfy the entire society’s needs, at the same time to maintain everyone’s all-sided development.

Finally, Marx argues that happiness involves both happiness of the individual and happiness for all. Marx argues that a communist society should be organized on “certain irrefutable basic principles” (*Manifesto*, p. 37). According to Marx, these basic principles include principles such as “every individual strives to be happy” and “the happiness of the individual is inseparable from the happiness of all” (*Manifesto*, p. 37). Since communism abolishes both alienation and private property, then the entire society at large can be emancipated from all kinds of limitations derived from private property and alienation. In this way, people may fully develop their capacities and their relationships with one another. They are no longer alienated but cooperative.

In this way, for Marx, people in a communist society can dedicate themselves to all. As a result, Marx believes that in a communist society, happiness for a self is consistent with happiness for other. This argument is also demonstrated in Marx's consideration of self-interest and common interest, which I will discuss later in section 3.

2. Marx's View on Voluntary and Involuntary

Marx's view about the importance of voluntariness in one's action is based on his argument about labor, but not virtue. As discussed before, Marx is not directly interested in morality or ethics, and he believes that morality could be used by the ruling class as a tool of oppression. As a result, whether a virtuous action is voluntary or not is not a question that Marx asks. However, Marx still covers the topic of voluntary and involuntary action in his writing, but through the lens of labor rather than ethics. Marx distinguishes voluntary labor from involuntary labor, and he values the former as a form of humans' self-assertion or self-realization of their humanity, or in his words, the realization of human essence. At the same time, Marx objects to involuntary labor and believes it represents humans' self-denial.

Marx says:

... the fact that labor is external to the worker, i.e., it does not belong to his intrinsic nature; that in his work, therefore, he does not affirm himself but denies himself, does not feel content but unhappy, does not develop freely his physical and mental energy but mortifies his body and ruins his mind... His labor is therefore not voluntary, but coerced; it is forced labor.

It is therefore not the satisfaction of a need; it is merely a means to satisfy needs external to it. Its alien character emerges clearly in the fact that as soon as no physical or other compulsion exists, labor is shunned like the plague. (EPM, p.30)

For Marx, labor is a particular activity, that can only be done by humans rather than any other animals in this world. According to Marx, through labor, humans create not only the world around them but also themselves. As a result, labor as a creative activity, represents humans' self-realization. In addition, Marx believes that humans, as both individuals and an entire species, should voluntarily and cooperatively produce and enjoy their labor products. This process of both producing and enjoying is the basis of a happy life, in the light of Marx. In this sense, Marx argues that in an ideal society, everyone should labor voluntarily, because labor contributes to his or her self-realization. In short, Marx proposes that voluntary labor contributes to humans' happy lives.

According to Marx, the workers of his time did not labor voluntarily, because the workers could not enjoy the products that they have created. Marx describes that these workers had to labor for a long time each day with low pay, but they could not afford the products that they created through their labor. This kind of involuntary labor, for Marx, does not lead to the realization of human essence. As a result, the workers of his time were having unhappy lives. Marx argues that capitalists, who barely labor at all, are happy by occupying what the workers have created. For Marx, involuntary labor does not represent human's intrinsic nature; also, humans deny rather than

confirm themselves through this kind of work. As a result, involuntary labor is painful for humans, and they feel forced to work. In this sense, Marx says that involuntary labor leads to human's unhappiness while voluntary labor leads to happiness.

Since Marx distinguishes voluntary labor from involuntary labor, would he also distinguish voluntary virtue from involuntary virtue? It is difficult to find Marx's direct answer to this question, since Marx barely focuses on virtue or morality in his writings. For Marx, a more meaningful question would be "Is morality/virtue important?" rather than "Is voluntary morality/virtue important?" According to Marx, morality or virtue is:

- a) a particular mental production of human society;
- b) can be used as a ruling tool to oppress the people; and
- c) would disappear in a communist society.

Regarding mental production, Marx states:

The production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness, is at first directly interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men, the language of real life. Conceiving, thinking, the mental intercourse of men, appear at this stage as the direct efflux of their material behavior. The same applies to mental production as expressed in the language of politics, laws, morality, religion, metaphysics, etc. of a people. Consciousness can never be anything else than conscious existence, and the existence of men is their actual life-process (*The German Ideology*, p. 9).

For Marx, virtue or morality is a “mental production” of human beings, which is no higher than any other production produced by human beings. That is, Marx does not view virtue or morality as something superior, praiseworthy, or connecting to happiness. Instead, Marx argues that the process of the “particular mode of production,” which creates morality or virtue could be neutral. However, Marx believes how the outcome of the mental production is used could be very negative or blameworthy, for instance, it could be used as a means to rule or oppress. Marx believes that in a class society, the dominant class usually determines the dominant morality. He poses, “The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas” (*The German Ideology*, p. 2). For example, Marx argues that in a capitalist society, the bourgeois morality is preached to the proletariat by the capitalist as the ruling morality. This morality, for Marx, is a deceptive means for the capitalists to manipulate the proletariat and to maintain the capitalists’ rule. The capitalists may preach to the workers the bourgeois morality such as submission or sobriety, so that the workers may be satisfied with “temperate living and constant employment” and would not rebel against the capitalists’ rule (*Capital I*, p. 485). By following this morality, Marx suggests that the proletariat would not emancipate themselves from an unfair and unequal system, not to mention having real happy life. What the proletariat identify as happiness, such as religious happiness, according to Marx, is “illusory happiness.” In this sense, bourgeois morality hinders rather than contributes to the happiness of the proletariat. As a result, Marx argues that it does not matter whether being in accordance with a certain morality is voluntary or not, since anyhow it would

not result in happiness, freedom, or self-assertion.

Surely, there are some cases where morality or virtue is not used as a tool of ruling. For instance, there are some universal moral principles such as honesty, which are not used as a means of oppression. In this kind of case, would Marx agree that it is better for one to be voluntarily honest than involuntarily? Marx tends not to answer this question independently; he would ask to know about the social conditions where the case exists. As discussed before, Marx's discussion of voluntary or involuntary is from an economic or sociological perspective rather than an ethical one. He objects to discussing virtue or morality without considering its social conditions.

For example, Marx says:

The ethics of political economy is acquisition, work, thrift, sobriety – but political economy promises to satisfy my needs. – The political economy of ethics is the opulence of a good conscience, of virtue, etc.; but how can I live virtuously if I do not live? And how can I have a good conscience if I do not know anything? It stems from the very nature of estrangement that each sphere applies to me a different and opposite yardstick... (EPM of 1844, p.51-52)

In this quotation, Marx demonstrates several concerns regarding the meaning of being virtuous. First of all, Marx believes that we can never discuss virtue separately from its existing social conditions, which is for Marx the premise of morality or virtue. Marx would like to know “What are the social conditions?” and “What kind of life that a person is living?” For those who barely have lives, Marx doubts the meaning of

being virtuous for those people. Marx does not explain what he means by “do not live” in this quotation. Based on his analysis on the tragic life of people in his time, Marx suggests that a normal life that everyone should live would be a life where people can realize their human essence through their voluntary labor, that is, they could cooperatively create and enjoy their products together. If people do not have normal lives, or “do not live,” then Marx would argue that it is not important whether they are virtuous or not.

Second, Marx is concerned for the potential conflict among different virtues or moralities, because according to Marx, different classes may produce contradictory virtues. This consideration is based on Marx’s view on estrangement, which is a process that humans are estranged from not only materials that they have produced, but also from other human beings. When humans are estranged from one another, as individuals or as members of particular classes, conflict arises, not only in their interest but also in their mental production. In this sense, Marx argues, “each sphere applies to me a different and opposite yardstick.” As a result, before considering whether a virtuous action is voluntary or not, he would first focus on “Which class’s morality?” or “What kind of morality is it?”.

In addition, Marx claims that morality, as a particular mental product of humans, will disappear in a communist society. He says in the *Manifesto*, “Communism abolishes eternal truths, it abolishes all religion, and all morality, instead of constituting them on a new basis” (p. 26). That is, for Marx, people in a communist society are free from all morality. If all the moral principles would never exist in a

communist society, according to Marx, then what is the point to discuss voluntariness or involuntariness in following these principles?

In summary, Marx views the importance of voluntariness through the lens of labor rather than virtue. He believes that voluntary labor represents self-realization of human essence, while involuntary labor represents their self-denial. Marx would reject Aristotle's argument on the dependence between happiness and virtue, because for Marx, happiness might come together with humans' self-realization rather than being according with virtue. Moreover, Marx believes that certain morality or virtue could be used as a ruling tool and would lead to unhappiness or "illusory happiness." Marx does not believe that voluntariness in virtue is an important issue. For Marx, virtue or morality, as a mental product of certain social conditions, will disappear in a communist society. As a result, Marx doubts the necessity of virtue or morality in a state, regardless of whether it is voluntary or involuntary. Also, Marx would argue that we should not separately conceive of virtue or morality from their existing social conditions. He thinks that it is meaningless to discuss virtue when people are not having normal lives.

3. Marx's View on Self-interest and Common Interest

In general, Marx does not demonstrate a negative attitude towards self-interest compared to his attitude towards private property. Marx's view on self-interest can be summarized as follows:

a) Concern for interest in self, just as egoism and selflessness, is a social consciousness determined by social conditions, which is not blameworthy or

praiseworthy.

b) Self-constraint is not the only option to make people stay away from egoism or selfishness.

c) Self-interest and common interest mutually shaped each other rather than conflict each other.

Regarding point a), Marx says:

Communists do not oppose egoism to selflessness or selflessness to egoism, nor do they express this contradiction theoretically either in its sentimental or in its highflown ideological form; they rather demonstrate its material source, with which it disappears of itself. The Communists do not preach morality at all. They do not put to people the moral demand: love one another, do not be egoists, etc.; on the contrary, they are very well aware that egoism, just as much selflessness, is in definite circumstances a necessary form of the self-assertion of individuals (*The German Ideology*, p.58).

This quotation contains a few of Marx's important ideas regarding self-interest. First of all, Marx does not think egoism or selflessness is a moral issue, because of his rejection of morality. For Marx, egoism and selflessness can be just "necessary form[s] of the self-assertion of individuals." These forms of self-assertion are determined by their circumstances or "material source." Moreover, Marx believes that egoism is not necessarily opposite to selflessness, because they are different forms determined by different social conditions. That is, to oppose egoism to selflessness is like to oppose

an apple to a banana, which seems to Marx pointless. According to Marx, egoism is a phenomenon existing in certain societies, for instance a capitalist society. People in a capitalist society may demonstrate egoism; they may attempt to act in their own self-interests without considering others' interests. This egoism, for Marx, is not based on human nature but on private property. In Marx' view, if private property were abolished, then the egoism originating from private property would disappear. On the other hand, for Marx, selflessness is not a virtue that should be preached. People in a communist society will naturally be selfless, because private property, the root of egoism and the hindrance for selflessness, would be abolished. In this sense, Marx argues that people in a communist society are concerned most of all for common interest. In brief, Marx believes that both egoism and selflessness are merely two forms of self-assertion that are determined by certain social circumstances. As long as these social circumstances exist, so do the particular "form[s] of self-assertion of individuals." The forms themselves, as results of certain social conditions, are neither blameworthy nor praiseworthy.

In addition, Marx does not believe that self-constraint from desires is a good way to achieve selflessness. First of all, Marx argues that it is not necessary to always control one's desires. For instance, he argues that in, and only in, a communist society, people do not at all need to restrain from or oppress their needs and desires, because they will no longer have excessive or inappropriate desires that should be bridled.

Marx states:

... the Communists are the only people through whose historical activity

the liquefaction of the fixed desires and ideas is in fact brought about and ceases to be an impotent moral injunction... Communist organization has a twofold effect on the desires produced in the individual by present-day relations; some of these desires — namely desires which exist under all relations, and only change their form and direction under different social relations — are merely altered by the Communist social system, for they are given the opportunity to develop normally; but others — namely those originating solely in a particular society, under particular conditions of [production] and intercourse — are totally deprived of their conditions of existence (*The German Ideology*, p. 51).

For Marx, people's desires are produced by social conditions where people live. Some desires such as eating and drinking exist across different social forms. These kinds of desires only change their forms but will not disappear in a communist society. According to Marx, a communist society would have sufficient materials or products to satisfy these kinds of desires. Regarding excessive desires, such as obsession for unlimited delicious food and delicate clothes, Marx argues that they are actually desires developed abnormally. If these desires are "given the opportunity to develop normally" (in a communist society), then there would be no excessive desires at all. In short, people's universal desires will be well satisfied in a communist society, so people eventually do not need to oppress them at all. On the other hand, for desires originating from particular social conditions - for instance desires for profits or surplus values in a capitalist society – these desires will disappear in a communist

society because of the abolishment of their social conditions. As a result, Marx believes that people in a communist society do not need to restrain from or suppress these particular desires at all, because they will no longer exist there due to the abolishment of their particular social conditions. For Marx, the only way to eliminate egoism is to abolish all social conditions that cause egoism.

Moreover, Marx tends to criticize the preaching (or teaching) of self-restraint to the people. For Marx, as long as the material circumstances that arouse egoism exist, it is impotent to preach or teach the virtue of self-restraint to make people stay away from egoism. Marx believes that egoism itself should not take blame or critique; he does not value self-restraint or desire-control as a virtue. As Marx argues, to require people to oppress their desire is actually an “an impotent moral injunction” in a capitalist society (*The German Ideology*, p. 51). By this argument, Marx does not endorse greed or egoism. He does not suggest that people should let their desires run wild. His point is that virtue preaching or teaching, in a capitalist society in particular, is just a means of ruling rather than a way to improve people’s morality. Marx argues that the proletariat is preached with the morality of self-restraint, the proletariat is expected by the capitalists to take social conditions as they are; that is, to be satisfied with low salary and poor living conditions and never rebel against the capitalists’ rule. In this sense, Marx rejects self-restraint or desire-control as virtues.

As for the relation between self-interest and common interest, Marx does not believe that self-interest and common interest always conflict with each other. For instance, when criticizing Sahcho’s idea that “personal interest” comes into

contradiction with “class interest” or “common interest,” Marx says:

Incidentally, even in the banal, petty-bourgeois German form in which Sancho perceives contradiction of personal and general interests, he should realize that individuals have always started out from themselves, and could not do otherwise, and that therefore the two aspects he noted are aspects of the personal development of individuals; both are equally engendered by the empirical conditions under which the individuals live, both are only expressions of one and the same personal development of people and are therefore only in seeming contradiction to each other (*The German Ideology*, p. 50).

For Marx, it is natural for one to be concerned for self-interest, because every individual has an interest in food, clothing, shelter, and so forth to maintain his or her life. As a result, private interest, according to Marx, is the starting point of human life. While in a society, however, few can really isolate themselves from others and live all by themselves, and then common interest becomes an unavoidable concern due to the interdependent relationship between humans. In this sense, Marx believes that both self-interest and common interest are only two aspects of “the personal development of individuals.” They both are equally engendered by the social conditions where the individuals live, and they co-exist with each other. In addition, self-interest and common interest do not necessarily conflict with one another. If there is a contradiction between them, then for Marx, this contradiction is just “seeming” rather than real. In order to explain why this contradiction is a “seeming” one, Marx says:

Communist theoreticians... have discovered that throughout history the "general interest" is created by individuals who are defined as "private persons". They know that this contradiction is only a seeming one because one side of it, what is called the "general interest", is constantly being produced by the other side, private interest, and in relation to the latter is by no means an independent force with an independent history — so that this contradiction is in practice constantly destroyed and reproduced (*The German Ideology*, p. 58).

For Marx, common interest and self-interest mutually shape each other rather than conflict with each other. For instance, I want the place I live to be pleasant and clean; this is based on my self-interest. You want your place pleasant and clean; this is based largely on your self-interest. Supposed we are neighbors, and since we both want a pleasant and clean environment, then our common interest arises. That is, we both want not only my place, but also your place to be pleasant and clean. Otherwise, a messy and dirty neighbor could destroy one's desire for a pleasant place. In this sense, Marx argues that a person, in a practical sense, cannot be purely egoistical, that is, be exclusively concerned for the interest in self without taking others' interests into consideration. Due to "the developed mode of production and intercourse and the division of labor," everyone needs others (*The German Ideology*, p. 17). When people satisfy their own needs, they must in return satisfy some of others' needs. As a result, in Marx's view, people have to make self-interest in harmony with common interest if they want to have a good life in the long run.

Since, according to Marx, common interest and self-interest constantly reshape each other, then why do they sometimes seem to contradict each other? For Marx, it is because societies of his time make people compete with each other rather than cooperate with each other. And this competition, which according to Marx is not necessary for human life but rather caused by particular social conditions, engenders the seeming conflict between one's interest and another's, between self-interest and common interest. For instance, in a capitalist society, capitalists ignore and even infringe upon the proletariat's interest in order to guarantee maximizing their profits. Meanwhile, the proletariat requires and struggles for higher salaries and this, from the perspective of capitalists, harms their self-interest. The interest conflict between these two classes is caused by its social condition based on private property. Marx believes that this seeming contradiction is in practice constantly "destroyed and reproduced," until a communist society is established. In a communist society, class struggle will disappear, so will the unnecessary conflict between one another classes. Self-interest and common interest will be harmonious with each other. Maybe to some extent, there will be no concern for self-interest any more, as Marx states, "In a true state it is not a question of the possibility of every citizen to dedicate himself to the universal in the form of a particular class, but of the capability of the universal class to be really universal, i.e., to be the class of every citizen" (*Critique of Hegel's Philosophy*, p. 47). That is to say, for Marx, in a communist society where everyone is in the universal class, every citizen can dedicate oneself to common interest and make self-interest consistent to common interest.

To summarize this section, for Marx, concern for self-interest is neutral rather than negative, to what extent people are concerned for self-interest is determined by different social conditions where people live. If people demonstrate selfishness or egoism when pursuing their own interests, this is determined by their social conditions. Moreover, for Marx, egoism is not something that can be overcome through self-restraint. Marx suggests that if people want to eliminate egoism, they should focus on the abolishment of social conditions that cause egoism, rather than to control or suppress their desires. Finally, Marx believes that self-interest is not necessarily in conflict with common interest. Instead, self-interest is the basis for common interest.

4. Conclusion

For Marx, happiness is one of the highest goods of human beings; happiness is not superior to other highest goods such as freedom and self-realization of human essence. According to Marx, private property causes alienation of human beings: that is, human beings are alienated not only from what they have created through their labor, but also human beings are alienated from one another. People will not be happy as long as this alienation exists. As a result, Marx argues that people should abolish private property in order to achieve really happy lives. In addition, Marx believes that voluntary labor leads to happiness, while involuntary labor leads to unhappiness. Moreover, Marx believes that concern for self-interest is a social consciousness caused by social conditions, and self-interest itself is neither blameworthy nor praiseworthy.

CHAPTER 4: COMPARISON AND ANALYSIS OF ARISTOTLE'S AND MARX'S VIEWS OF HAPPINESS

Based on the previous discussion of both Aristotle's and Marx's view of happiness, we can find both agreement and disagreement between them on different issues, such as "What is the highest good of human beings?" and "What contributes to happiness?" Aristotle conceives happiness as the highest good of human beings, while Marx suggests other options as the highest good(s), such as freedom and self-realization of human essence. Also, Aristotle stresses the significance of voluntary virtue, while Marx tends to doubt this significance. Regarding the issue of self-interest, both Aristotle and Marx justify the appropriate concern of self-interest. However, Aristotle believes that the maintenance of private property benefits self-interest and common interest, while Marx insists that the abolishment of private property is the only way to benefit everyone. In this section, I compare their views regarding happiness, morality, voluntary virtue, and self-interest.

1. Is Happiness the Highest Good among all Kinds of Good?

Marx tends to conceive communism as the highest good because for Marx, communism represents the only perfect way that people manage their lives and enjoy happiness. According to Marx, communism implies the realization of not only happiness, but also of emancipation, liberty, freedom, self-assertion, all-sided development, and so forth. That is, for Marx, communism implies a perfect life, which embraces all kinds of necessary and important things for human beings, including happiness. In contrast, Aristotle conceives of happiness as the highest good.

According to Aristotle, if we call something the highest good, we mean that we desire this thing for its own sake rather than anything else. For other goods, we can provide an answer to “What do we want this good for?” For instance, we want delicious food for health, for pleasure and so forth. However, we desire happiness just for happiness; there is no further goal after we have achieved happiness. We cannot find a plausible answer to “What do we want happiness for?” because there is nothing else beyond happiness that people pursue. In this sense, Aristotle believes happiness is the ultimate good that people desire.

Although Marx would not view happiness as the highest good of human beings, he tends to agree with Aristotle that the highest good of human beings, if there is such a good, is essentially a kind of life. For Marx, everyone in, and only in, a communist society can have this life. If we suppose communism is the highest good, then we can still continue our inquiry of “What do we want communism for?” In this case, “we want communism for communism” is not a convincing answer. For instance, one may argue that we want communism because in the communist society we human beings can emancipate ourselves and can all have happy lives. In this sense, we want communism not for its own sake, but for a perfect life there. If someone insists that communism is the highest good, then in this way, happiness and communism may be synonyms to each other, both referring to something good or perfect that we want for its own sake and something which embraces other good things and lacks nothing.

However, even if happiness and communism may be synonyms in terms of a perfect kind of life, I argue that happiness rather than communism is a better answer

to the question “What is the highest good?” My argument is based on the following consideration. First of all, communism, although we can conceive of it as a particular life, generally refers to a way to manage a society. That is, the core meaning of communism centers on management rather than life, as how communism is commonly interpreted. Society management could be a sub-concept of life; for instance, how we manage a state in a given society is one aspect of a particular life in that society. In this sense, society management may be a subordinate and dependent concept of life; consequently, happiness rather than communism represents a higher concept of human beings.

Second, when we attempt to explain why communism is the highest good, usually we need to use happiness as a dimension to describe how good communism is for human beings. For instance, we may say communism is the highest good because in a communist society everyone enjoys happiness. In this sense, it implies that happiness is either easier to understand, or happiness is the ultimate goal of human life compared to communism.

Finally, happiness, as Aristotle suggests as the highest good of human beings, involves both happiness of an individual and happiness of others. In light of Aristotle, happiness is both an individually-oriented and a state-oriented concept. Aristotle believes happiness involves both happiness of an individual and happiness of others. Also, Aristotle focuses on a happy state where everyone does well and lives well, that is, happiness of individuals contributes to a happy state. Aristotle's conception of happiness follows the line from happiness of individuals to happiness of a state. In

contrast, communism is a society-oriented concept in Marx's view. That is, communism is not about any single individual's life but a life that constituted by all the people (as a group) of a communist society. When Marx talks about happiness, he focuses on happiness of the entire human species rather than that of individuals. In this sense, Marx's conception of happiness may follow the line from society to individuals. In practice, it is not that we human beings create a happy state first, and then enjoy the happiness derived from the happy state. Rather, society is constituted of individuals; happiness of a state or society is based on happiness of individuals and is achieved based on the achievement of individuals' happiness. As a result, it is necessary to conceive of the highest good of human beings not only from the perspective of a state or society, but also from the perspective of individuals. In this sense, happiness, based on the highest good for both individuals and a state is better than communism to be viewed as the highest good of human beings, which centers mainly on a society rather than individuals.

2. What Contributes to the Highest Good?

Aristotle states, "the activity of this in accordance with its proper virtue will be perfect happiness" (NE, Book X). For Aristotle, being in accordance with virtue leads to happiness. As a result, Aristotle suggests that to cultivate virtue is the most important means to achieve happiness. In contrast, Marx rejects the significance of morality or virtue, and he argues that in order to achieve the highest good (communism in Marx's view) people need to abolish the basis for their unhappiness, which is private property and alienation based on it. In this sense, Marx questions the

necessity to teach morality or virtue in contrast to what Aristotle insists. Then, the first question is “Do human beings need morality and virtue?”

Marx tends to say “No.” He argues that in a communist society, all morality, religion, and virtue will disappear. Also, he insists that in a communist society everyone will dedicate oneself to others. Since dedicating oneself to others is a particular virtue that is valued nowadays in many societies, let us use it as an example to discuss whether human beings need virtue. The reason that we believe dedication is a virtue is that it illustrates a certain kind of good or excellence in human character. We value it because in many cases people behave oppositely, that is, rather than dedicating oneself to others, people tend not to do so. According to Marx, everyone can be dedicated in a communist society; that is, dedication, as a particular character trait, will not disappear. Rather, people in a communist society will not identify dedication as a virtue, since everyone naturally behaves in a dedicated way. In this sense, in a communist society, people still need good character traits such as dedication, but people will not name them as morality or virtue.

Similarly, in light of Marx, people in a communist society will be honest, righteous, hardworking, and so forth. Everyone there performs these good character traits naturally, and nobody would behave reversely. In this sense, it is not that virtue or morality disappears in a communist society; instead, immoral or bad behavior will disappear there. By proposing that all morality and religion will disappear in a communist society, Marx refers to those morality and religious virtues that are used as ruling tools in a capitalist society, and he believes they will no longer exist in a

communist society. Moreover, virtue such as dedication and honesty will become human beings' second nature or even nature in a communist society, but people would not call them virtue. Additionally, virtue would not be distinguished from what we are considered immoral today, and immorality would ultimately disappear in a communist society. As a result, people in a communist society still possess and need what we call morality or virtue today.

Even if Marx is correct that happiness has nothing to do with morality or virtue, and people would be automatically happy in a communist society. The question remains "How should people treat morality or virtue before the establishment of communism?" Should people totally ignore morality and virtue in order to achieve happiness, because according to Marx by following moral principles one would not achieve real happiness? If people reject morality or virtue now, then how would people determine whether an action is right or wrong? Without moral principles, wouldn't people just follow their instincts or act randomly? In that case, wouldn't people become barbarians or beasts and by no means realize their human essence? Marx does not discuss in detail how people would treat morality or virtue before communism is successfully constituted. However, given the fact that morality and virtue has existed and will exist for a long time, also, given the importance and necessity of morality and virtue in regulating humans' behaviors, it is not wise for us to reject morality or virtue right away. Rather, it would be worthy of us to consider how to cultivate morality and virtue in people and to avoid using them as ruling means.

Next, let us explore whether morality or virtue contributes to happiness.

Supposed they do not. Then, the question is “What contributes to happiness?” Besides virtue, there are many other desirable things that make people happy, such as wealth, honor, love, and so forth. Would they contribute to happiness? The answer is “Yes, but not necessarily.” For instance, we have heard that many wealthy people are complaining that they are not happy. Sometimes wealthy people identify themselves as the poor who have only money but nothing else, which makes them unhappy. This is probably because they don’t know how to utilize their wealth to pursue happiness. To properly use wealth is an issue based on rational principles. That is, it is necessary to involve morality or virtue for one to utilize wealth to pursue happiness. For instance, wealthy people can donate money to help people in need and to make their lives better. If the wealthy people are happy for helping others, it is not because they are rich but because they are helping. Wealth, in this case, is the condition to enable wealthy people to be happily helping others. That is, helping others is the particular virtue that makes wealthy people happy.

Similarly, honor may contribute to happiness, but not necessarily so. Some people with great honor are not happy because they are suffering from all kinds of stress aroused by their success. There are examples where successful people try to avoid being honored by the public to maintain their quiet lives. If honor contributes to happiness, then why do these people avoid honor rather than pursuing it? One may argue that it is because honor may cause some disadvantages such as stress, though honor contributes to happiness. According to Aristotle, happiness is the most

desirable thing of human beings, and it lacks nothing. If happiness aroused by honor is also accompanied by painful things such as stress, then, this kind of happiness is not genuine or perfect in light of Aristotle.

Love also makes people happy in many cases. Both being loved and giving love to others can lead to happiness. However, too much love may become dotage and cause spoiling, which is not desirable for human beings. In addition, not all kinds of love contribute to happiness. For instance, love could become troublesome if one's love is not welcomed by another. That is, only proper love at a proper time contributes to happiness. In order to love properly, rational principles for love are necessary. These principles are within the scope of morality or virtue. In a word, many desirable things such as wealth, honor, and love contribute to but do not necessarily lead to happiness. If they do, they need the guidance of morality or virtue.

Another possible element that contributes to happiness is chance. Aristotle rejects this idea by saying "To entrust to chance what is greatest and most noble would be a very defective arrangement" (NE, Book I). If people rely on chance to give them happiness, then, people would not take any effort to learn anything that would contribute to happiness. Marx would call this behavior self-denial of human essence, that is, people act in a way that they are rejecting their potentials and possibilities to become better as human beings. For both Aristotle and Marx, chance is never a determinant factor of happiness. Otherwise, for those people who have bad fortune, their lives do not deserve living at all because they may be destined to be unhappy forever.

In contrast, being accordance with virtue solely can contribute to happiness. That is, even if without other desirable things such as wealth or honor, virtue itself can lead to happiness. A virtuous person may be poor. However, when this person exercises virtuous actions, he or she may be truly happy, even though being poor is generally a painful rather than pleasant thing. Also, this person's virtuous actions may not be honored or even recognized by others, but still this virtuous person is happy without possessing honor. In addition, virtue is consistent with rational principles; it is related to the rational part of the soul. On the contrary, wealth, honor, and love may be related to people's irrational parts of the soul. Without the instruction of the rational part of the soul, people's pursuits of other desirable things could be inappropriate, which may lead to unhappiness. Virtue guides a person to properly pursue desirable things such as wealth and honor and to use them appropriately, so that people can pursue happiness.

In this sense, Aristotle's argument regarding happiness and virtue makes more sense than Marx's. According to Aristotle, happiness is a kind of life that embraces all kinds of good; also, it is the highest good, which embraces good not only for individuals but also for a state as a whole. Meanwhile, Aristotle believes that virtue is an excellence (the highest form of a particular good), which is based on rational principles and makes a thing/person good and work well. In this sense, virtue or excellence based on rational principles is the foundation of happiness in light of Aristotle. Based on my previous discussion, many other desirable things such as wealth and honor benefit happiness but do not necessarily lead to happiness. In

contrast, morality or virtue solely can make a person happy. Moreover, morality and virtue will still exist until someday when people are naturally virtuous. As a result, Aristotle's argument regarding happiness and virtue inspires us to teach morality or virtue to benefit everyone's happy life.

3. Is Voluntary Virtue Better than Involuntary Virtue?

Based on Aristotle's arguments regarding voluntary actions and involuntary actions, he believes that in the sphere of virtue, voluntary virtue is better than involuntary virtue. This argument is based on Aristotle's conception of happiness. According to Aristotle, in order to be completely or perfectly happy, one should always be in accordance with virtue. However, if a person exercises virtue without deliberation, or if this person's virtuous actions are moved by some outside principles, Aristotle argues that this person may not gain happiness from his or her virtuous action because he or she does not have a desire in doing so. He or she either exercises a virtuous action by force, or he or she happens to perform it accidentally. In these two cases, the person may not have pleasure in performing the virtuous actions. According to Aristotle, if a person cannot enjoy virtuous action, he or she can hardly be called a virtuous person; neither would he or she gain happiness through that virtuous action. That is, Aristotle thinks that the person is not happy when he or she involuntarily performs that virtuous action.

One may argue that a person can still be happy for an involuntarily virtuous action. For instance, a person may incidentally help others, and he will be happy for the outcome, though he did not mean to help others. However, this kind of happiness

is not perfect, according to Aristotle. It seems to Aristotle that chance rather than one's reason or rational part in the soul contributes to this kind of happiness. That is, for Aristotle, happiness derived from involuntary virtue would be inferior to happiness based on voluntary virtue. In this sense, Aristotle would argue voluntary virtue contributes more to happiness rather than involuntary virtue.

Would Marx agree with Aristotle that voluntary virtue is better than involuntary virtue, based on his arguments on voluntary labor? As discussed before, since Marx rejects the significance of virtue or morality, he may have little interest in answering this question. Or at least, Marx would first ask, "What kind of morality are we talking about?" For instance, if it only involves the bourgeois' morality, which for Marx is a means to oppress and tame the proletariat, then his answer would be "involuntary virtue is better than voluntary." First of all, for Marx, if workers voluntarily exercise bourgeois' morality such as submission, it implies that the capitalists have successfully brainwashed the workers. It also implies that the workers have largely internalized the bourgeois' morality. On the contrary, if workers involuntarily perform the bourgeois' morality, it implies, to some extent, the workers resist this morality. This resistance, for Marx, is a promising power to be aroused in the workers and to lead them to rebel against the bourgeois' exploitation. However, when it comes to the case of labor, Marx definitely believes that voluntary labor is necessary to happiness, because people can realize their human essence only through voluntary labor.

Also, Marx would agree with Aristotle that a moving principle inside contributes to happiness more than a moving principle outside. Suppose happiness is a destination

where many people want to arrive. Some people purposefully walk toward there, while others barely move but happen to be delivered there by a wind or be dragged there by someone else. In this case, Aristotle believes that the former group of people are moved by moving principles in a person, while the latter being moved by moving principles in the abstract. For Aristotle, although both groups of people arrived at the destination happiness, the former contribute more to this arriving than the latter. What Aristotle emphasizes is that when a person voluntarily initiates a virtuous action, and he or she enjoys performing this virtuous action, this is much better than when he or she is forced to or accidentally exercises the virtuous action. With regards to Marx's argument of voluntary labor and involuntary labor, since workers who labor voluntarily can cooperate well with each other and can completely enjoy their working productions, the workers have desire to labor; and they are moved by moving principles in a person. On the other hand, for those workers who labor involuntarily, they are forced to work rather than having a desire to work, consequently, they are moved by moving principles in the abstract.

To summarize the discussion of voluntary virtue, Marx agrees with Aristotle that moving principles in a person contribute more to happiness than external moving principles. In this sense, if we expect people to behave in certain way, for instance to voluntarily labor in light of Marx and to be voluntarily virtuous in light of Aristotle, it is important for us to arouse moving principles inside rather than imposing outside moving principles on people. However, when it comes to dealing with a particular virtue, which can be used as a ruling tool, then, Marx reminds us to be cautious to

cultivate this kind of virtue. For instance, when attempting to cultivate obedience as a particular virtue, it is worthy of us to first justify that when and how obedience is a virtue. It is also worthy of us to think that whether cultivating this virtue contributes to happiness.

4. Is Habituation a Necessary Way to Cultivate Voluntary Virtue?

Aristotle believes it is. For Aristotle, before being taught or trained to be virtuous, people, average people in particular, tend to behave reversely. For instance, people tend to unlimitedly satisfy their desires and needs due to people's ignorance of virtue, and this tendency is opposite to what Aristotle calls continence, a particular moral virtue. Also, after being taught moral virtue or moral principles, average people, according to Aristotle, may still behave oppositely. For instance, sometimes people know that it is good for them to be continent, but still they refuse to do so. Aristotle believes that this is because there is something in human nature that is opposite to moral virtues. That is, for Aristotle, people's resistance to moral virtue comes from their nature. Aristotle attributes this resistance to the irrational parts of the soul, and he argues that the irrational parts of the soul may hinder one's being virtuous. Since according to Aristotle, moral virtues do not exist in human nature, and they usually encounter the resistance in human nature, people need to be trained to be virtuous.

Aristotle proposes that habituation is a necessary way to cultivate moral virtue in people, average people and slaves in particular, who do not have the wisdom to know what is really good for them. For Aristotle, although the irrational parts of the soul in

human nature resist moral virtue, this does not suggest that moral virtue cannot be cultivated because the rational part of the soul is ready to receive moral virtue. As he says, “we are adapted by nature to receive them [moral virtue], and are made perfect by habit” (NE, Book II). That is, human nature provides not only resistance, but also and more important, the potentials for people to receive and internalize moral virtue. In this sense, habituation is necessary for human beings to cultivate moral virtue in themselves. Aristotle states, “moral virtue comes about as a result of habit” (NE, Book II). He also states, “we become just by doing just acts, temperate by doing temperate acts, brave by doing brave acts” (NE, Book II). This indicates that for Aristotle, continuous performing certain virtue contributes to the cultivation of these virtues.

Then, does Aristotle believe that habituation contributes to the cultivation of voluntary virtue? Aristotle tends to say “yes,” because he believes that human beings are “made perfect by habit” (NE, Book II). Since for Aristotle, voluntary virtue contributes more to happiness than involuntary virtue, and involuntary virtue may lead to happiness, but not the perfect happiness, then, only voluntary virtue rather than involuntary virtue contributes to the perfectness of human beings. In addition, Aristotle quotes Evenus’ words, “I say that habit's but a long practice, friend, and this becomes men's nature in the end” (NE, Book II). That is to say, for Aristotle, people will finally exercise virtue voluntarily, when moral virtue becomes their nature through habituation. In this sense, for Aristotle, habituation is not only a necessary way to overcome ignorance and resistance to moral virtue, but also a necessary way to

cultivate voluntary virtue, because only voluntary virtue contributes to perfect happiness.

Although Aristotle has a strong belief in cultivating voluntary virtue in people through habituation, he also suggests that habituation may not work well on everyone in virtue cultivation. His arguments are based on the following considerations:

a) Habituation cannot change all the people to the same degree.

b) Through habituation, not only moral virtue can be cultivated in people, but also bad habits to destroy virtue can be cultivated.

First of all, habituation may not work on people to the same degree in virtue cultivation. For Aristotle, different classes of people have different qualities; some classes are superior to others, in terms of intellect and capacities. Also, Aristotle believes that different classes may possess different virtues; some virtues may not be possessed by all. For instance, Guardians have virtues that common people and slaves do not have, because according to Aristotle, the former have intellectual wisdom while the latter do not. As a result, Aristotle argues that it may be easier to cultivate moral virtue in some people but much more difficult in others. For instance, Aristotle believes that continence is cultivated more in excitable people than “those who deliberate but do not abide by their decisions” (NE, Book VII).

Second, Aristotle believes that both virtue and evil can be cultivated through the process of habituation. He says, “Again, it is from the same causes and by the same means that every virtue is both produced and destroyed” (NE, Book II). According to Aristotle, just as both a good player and bad player are produced by practice

lyre-playing, good and bad habits are produced through habituation, so are good and bad character traits. That is, sometimes virtue cultivation through habituation may go off the track: instead of cultivating moral virtue in people; habituation arouses and cultivates some bad habits.

Aristotle's considerations of habituation remind us of some potential difficulties in virtue cultivation through habit. However, it is not a good way to identify differences among people based on a class hierarchy, as Aristotle suggests. People's intellectual or capacities differ from one another, but not in a superior or inferior way. Also, the difference is not determined by birth only and cannot be changed through practice. As a result, although through the same process of habituation, moral virtue can be cultivated more in some people and less in others, this does not suggest that habituation cannot work on the latter. It suggests that it may take longer to cultivate virtue in certain people through habituation. Although bad habits can also be produced and cultivated in people through habituation, it does not suggest that habituation is not a good way to cultivate virtue. Rather, it reminds us to avoid cultivating bad habits through habituation.

In contrast, for Marx, it is not necessary to cultivate morality or virtue in people. For instance, Marx believes that in a communist society everyone would be selfless, this selflessness is not a virtue being directly cultivated through habituation but a natural outcome in a communist society. Also, Marx tends to reject cultivating voluntary virtue through habituation, because he argues that the purpose of this habituation could be to oppress the ruled class in a class society. If it is the case, then,

Marx doubts that this kind of voluntary virtue contributes to happiness. For Marx, if people voluntarily exercise this kind of virtue, it may be very difficult to arouse a consciousness of rejection to this virtue in order to pursue real happiness.

In addition, Marx argues that it may be fruitless to attempt to replace involuntary virtue with voluntary ones, because according to Marx, people's resistance or involuntariness to particular virtue is determined by their existing social circumstances. For instance, in a capitalist society where human beings are alienated from one another, people tend to compete with and even antagonize each other rather than cooperate with one another. This alienated human relationship, according to Marx, is determined by the productive forces and the relation of production at that time. As a result, people are doomed to compete with and antagonize one another, as long as the social conditions maintain. In this sense, Marx argues that it may be fruitless to cultivate the virtue of cooperation in people in a capitalist society because people tend to behave reversely, and this tendency cannot be eliminated in a capitalist society. For Marx, voluntary cooperation cannot be achieved through habituation.

Compared to Aristotle, Marx demonstrates little support to habituation as a necessary way to cultivate voluntary virtue. Marx reminds us that virtue cultivation cannot be applied in a vacuum environment; that is, in order to cultivate virtue, it is worthy of people to take into consideration the social conditions of a given society. This may help people determine whether a virtue is actually a virtue, or if it is just a means to oppress the people.

5. What Is the Relation between Happiness and Achievement and/or Sacrifice of Self-interest?

For Aristotle, both advancement of self-interest and sacrifice of self-interest, at a proper time and to a proper degree, may lead to happiness. Aristotle believes that appropriate self-interest is positive in humans' development. By appropriate, Aristotle emphasizes that the concern of self-interest should not be excessive, otherwise it becomes egoism, which is criticized by Aristotle. For Aristotle, when people are appropriately concerned for self-interest, they will focus on making their personal progress. According to Aristotle, the more progress one has made, the more one may contribute to a state. For instance, one may pay more tax, which in turn would be used to improve people' lives. In this way, appropriate self-interest contributes to happiness. Meanwhile, Aristotle believes that sacrifice of self-interest is a noble virtue. Since virtue also leads to happiness, Aristotle believes that sacrifice of self-interest also contributes to happiness.

For Marx, self-interest is the starting point of human lives. In order to survive, one has to first act in the interest in self, such as to first satisfy one's own needs and desires. Otherwise, one may suffer from unsatisfied needs, such as hunger. In this sense, Marx agrees with Aristotle that self-interest contributes to happiness. Also, Marx values sacrifice of self-interest, although he dose not directly state this in his work. He argues that in a capitalist society, everyone competes with each other and people tend to be egoistic to survive; in contrast, in a communist society everyone can dedicate oneself to others, that is, in a communist society everyone can sacrifice

self-interest for others. Marx's comparison between a capitalist society and a communist society indicates that he agrees with Aristotle that self-sacrifice is valuable and good for human beings. However, because Marx rejects morality and virtue, he would not identify self-sacrifice as a virtue as Aristotle does. Instead, Marx believes that sacrifice self-interest for all is natural in a communist society; people do not need to struggle with their resistance to sacrifice, which resides in human nature.

Aristotle disagrees with Marx that everyone can dedicate oneself to all. For Aristotle, only few people, such as philosophers, can be only concerned for others' interests without considering one's own. This difference is related to their conceptions of private property. For Aristotle, private property should be kept for a good management of a state; while for Marx, private property should be abolished to constitute a communist society. In a society based on private property, one's sacrifice of self-interest may make oneself disadvantaged, because this sacrifice usually benefits others rather than oneself. For instance, if I have five dollars, and you have five dollars as well, if I sacrifice my self-interest by giving you my five dollars without any compensation from you, then, this sacrifice benefits you rather than me because it increases your money by reducing mine. If someone continues to sacrifice self-interest in this way, then one may find difficulties in maintaining one's own life, especially when others refuse to sacrifice their self-interest to help this person. If one hardly maintains one's own life, how could one have a happy life? In this sense, Aristotle insists that sacrifice of self-interest, though as noble as it is, may not always lead to happiness. For Aristotle, it is natural for one to first act in the interest in self

and few people would always sacrifice for others without first considering self-interest.

In contrast, according to Marx, in a communist society, social products is managed and distributed on a communal basis. People in that society share social property together, and people do not desire to possess any property as one's own. In this sense, self-interest is consistent with common interest. If one dedicates oneself to all, he or she does not need to worry about being disadvantaged by this sacrifice because others would sacrifice their self-interest for him or her in the same way. For instance, if I give you my five dollars (suppose currency is still used in a communist society), you or someone else would definitely give me your/his/her money when I am in need. That is, in a communist society, people are mutually altruistic to each other. As a result, it is possible for people in a communist society to be concerned only for others' interests.

Aristotle argues that a society where private property is not allowed would become chaotic because people would be confused with and quarreling about their responsibilities and rights. He points out, for example, a wife may decide to clean only the house where she lives and refuse to clean others' houses because she does not live there. However, according to the communal arrangement, everything is commonly shared, and consequently she has the obligation to clean others' houses. If she refuses to clean others' houses, quarreling may arise because other housewives fulfill their duties. In this way, Aristotle believes that people would quarrel over every trivial thing in a communal society. However, Marx would argue that this potential

quarreling is still based on private property, which makes people identify things as yours, mine, theirs, and so forth. In a communist society, for Marx, it is impossible that a wife would refuse to clean all the houses because it is natural for her to do so, just as she needs to eat and drink. Neither does Marx believe that quarrels suggested by Aristotle would happen in a communist society.

In a word, both Aristotle and Marx agree that to advance self-interest contributes to happiness. Regarding whether sacrifice of self-interest contributes to happiness, Aristotle tends to say “It depends,” while Marx tends to say “Yes.” Aristotle argues that if one is only concerned for others’ interests, one may end up unhappily. Aristotle believes that sacrifice of self-interest should be maintained at a certain degree to contribute to happiness. Marx, on the contrary, believes that sacrifice of self-interest for all is not only necessary but also natural in a communist society, where everyone has a happy life.

6. How to Overcome Egoism?

For Aristotle, if one is excessively or exclusively concerned for self-interest, then one is egoistic. Egoism, or selfishness, is criticized by Aristotle to be a deficiency in one’s character. According to Aristotle, both excess and defect are bad for human beings. As a result, he believes that excessive concern of self-interest, or egoism, should be censured. In contrast, Marx does not believe that egoism is blameworthy. For Marx, egoism, just like selflessness, is a particular social consciousness derived from certain social conditions. Marx does not believe egoism, as that a particular social consciousness, deserves blames; rather, certain social conditions that cause

egoism, private property in particular, is responsible for peoples' blames on egoism. Given their different identities and attributions to egoism, Aristotle and Marx provide different ways to overcome or eliminate egoism. Aristotle suggests cultivating in people virtues contrary to egoism; while Marx suggests abolishing private property, the basis of egoism.

Since according to Aristotle, excessive concern of self-interest is egoism, at least there are two kinds of virtues are contrary to and can bridle egoism. On the one hand, one needs to be cultivated with virtues related to self-control or self-restraint such as temperance, which help a person to hold back excessive concern of self-interest. As he says, "the temperate man craves for the things he ought, as he ought, as when he ought; and when he ought; and this is what the rational principle directs" (NE, Book III). For Aristotle, one's concern for self-interest, just as one's desires for other good things, should be kept at a proper time and to a proper degree. In this sense, virtues based on self-control contribute to keeping one's concern of self-interest properly. On the other hand, Aristotle suggests that virtues related to selflessness such as benevolence and generosity can also be cultivated, which help people be concerned for not only self-interest but also others' interests in a proper way. Since selflessness and egoism are opposite to each other, once a person becomes selfless, that is to be first concerned for others' interests, this person may no longer be egoist. As a result, these two kinds of virtues are helpful in overcoming or even eliminate egoism, according to Aristotle.

However, one thing that needs to be pointed out is Aristotle's argument

regarding excessive or inappropriate concerns or desires is based on his conception of a hierarchical state. Aristotle believes that in an ideal state, different people ought to crave for different things³. For instance, what a king ought to desire is different from what a slave or craftsman does. What a person ought to desire, for Aristotle, is determined by this person's position in a state. That is, if a craft person desires good ruling of state rather than making good crafts, according to Aristotle, this desire is inappropriate. However, in today's egalitarian societies, it is discriminative and unfair to regulate what one ought to desire based on one's social position or status.

Nevertheless, excessive or exclusive concern for self-interest is still identified as egoism, which is generally believed morally wrong. For instance, if one is an egoist and is concerned for only self-interest, one tends to advance self-interest by any means, including means that would do harm to others. In this way, one may view others as means to advance one's own interest rather than as human beings. If everyone in a society is egoistic, the human relation there would be terribly antagonistic, because others are either hindrance or means to advance one's self-interest. In this sense, Aristotle's suggestion on how to overcome egoism is practical and inspiring in today's world.

In contrast, Marx's suggestion on how to overcome or eliminate egoism is not from a moral perspective. Instead, Marx suggests that to abolish private property and to constitute a communist society is the only way to eliminate egoism because egoism is only a social consciousness derived from private property. Also, Marx would reject

³ In *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle indicates that different people may have different virtue. For instance, men's virtue is different from women's. In this sense, when people act in accordance with their virtue, they may demonstrate different kinds of goods or excellence. For Aristotle, these goods or excellence should be desired and pursued.

the Aristotelian approach to overcome egoism, that is, to cultivate virtues that are contrary to egoism. First of all, Marx does not identify one's desires as either appropriate or excessive; consequently he argues that it is not necessary for one to control one's desires. Rather, Marx identifies desires as general desires, such as eating and drinking, or abnormally developed desired such as capitalists' desires for maximizing the surplus value.

Regarding these two kinds of desires, Marx states:

Communist organization has a twofold effect on the desires produced in the individual by present-day relations; some of these desires — namely desires which exist under all relations, and only change their form and direction under different social relations — are merely altered by the Communist social system, for they are given the opportunity to develop normally; but others — namely those originating solely in a particular society, under particular conditions of [production] and intercourse — are totally deprived of their conditions of existence (*The German Ideology*, p. 51).

For Marx, general desires such as eating and drinking exist across different social forms. These kinds of desire only change their forms but will not disappear in a communist society. For Marx, people in a communist society do not need to control their general desires because all the general desires will be satisfied there. He believes that a communist society “will make possible the normal satisfaction of all needs” due to the highly developed productive forces (*The German Ideology*, p. 51). On the other

hand, for desires originating from particular social conditions - for instance desires related to egoism that are aroused in a capitalist society - this kind of desire will disappear in a communist society because of the abolishment of its social conditions.

In addition, due to Marx's rejection to virtue or morality, he argues that it is not a good way to overcome egoism through virtue cultivation. As Marx states, "the liquefaction of the fixed desires and ideas" is actually an "an impotent moral injunction" in a capital society (*The German Ideology*, p.51). As long as the material circumstances of egoism exist, Marx believes that it is impotent to preach the virtue of self-control or selflessness to overcome egoism. By this argument, Marx does not endorse avarice or selfishness. His point is to teach morality or virtue without changing what causes egoism; this kind work is impotent.

To summarize, for Aristotle, egoism is evil and needs to be censured. A good way to overcome or eliminate egoism is to cultivate in people virtues contrary to egoism. For Marx, egoism is neutral rather than negative; it is determined by its social conditions. Also, Marx rejects that virtue cultivation is a good way to overcome egoism, but the abolishment of private property is.

7. Conclusion

My comparison and analysis of Aristotle's and Marx's views of happiness is based on several questions. Their answers to these questions are largely different for each other. Aristotle believes that happiness is the highest good, and in order to achieve this highest good, peoples should be in accordance with virtue. In contrast, Marx argues that communism is the highest good, if there is such a hierarchy of good

things. Also he argues that freedom, self-realization of human essence, and all-sided development are as equivalently important to human beings as happiness. As a result, for Marx, in order to achieve happy lives for all the people, the establishment of communism is the precondition. In addition, Aristotle believes that voluntary virtue contributes more to happiness than involuntary virtue, and he also believes that habituation is a necessary way to cultivate voluntary virtue. On the other hand, Marx, although he believes that voluntary labor contributes to happiness, while involuntary labor causes unhappiness, argues that voluntary virtue may not necessarily lead to happiness. Moreover, Marx doubts habituation is a necessary way to cultivate voluntary virtue. Finally, both Aristotle and Marx believe that advancement and sacrifice of self-interest can both contribute to happiness. Aristotle emphasizes the appropriateness of concern and/or sacrifice of self-interest, while Marx focuses on their social conditions. Aristotle suggests that virtue cultivation can overcome egoism, while Marx suggests that people should abolish private property to eliminate egoism.

CHAPTER 5: IMPLICATIONS FOR MORAL EDUCATION IN MAINLAND CHINA

In this chapter, I propose that it is worthy of us Chinese educators to reexamine moral education in Mainland China, the teaching of happiness in particular, in light of Aristotle and Marx. I address three aspects of moral education in Mainland China, which I believe are deserving more consideration. First of all, the “correctness” of students’ understandings of morality and happiness is stressed over other possible dimensions, such as breadth and depth. Second, students’ rote memorization of the “correct” view is stressed; also, students’ moral performance based on communist virtues in school is emphasized. However, the cultivation of voluntary virtue is ignored, compared to the emphasis of habituation of virtuous performance. Also, students’ moral performance out of school seems unimportant, based on the morality assessment in Mainland China. Third, concern of self-interest is generally taught as something that students need to suppress in order to cultivate virtues such as selflessness and dedicating oneself to communism. However, self-interest is not necessarily evil; it may contribute to human beings’ development and happiness. Based on my discussion in the previous chapters, I pose that it is worthy of us Chinese educators to reconsider at least these three aspects of moral education in Mainland China.

For instance, the following questions deserve some exploration:

Do we really want the only “correct” view of happiness to be taught in school?

Why and why not? If not, what are the possible ways for educators and teachers to

include other views of happiness into morality courses? What might we have missed, if we teachers and educators focus mainly on students' moral performance in school and rote memorization of the "correct" view? How might we teach students to balance advancement and sacrifice of self-interest, which both may lead to happiness? My following discussion is kept in the same framework as in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, from teaching of happiness in general, to voluntary virtue, and then to the teaching of self-interest.

1. A Comprehensive Understanding of Happiness vs. the "Correct" One

In Mainland China, the Marxist view of happiness is taught as the only "correct" view of happiness. Students are taught that communism is the highest good of human beings; a really happy life for all the people only exists in a communist society. Additionally, in order to achieve happiness, everyone should dedicate oneself to communism. However, it may be too assertive to claim that only one view of happiness is correct, because every theory may contain both correctness or plausibility and deficiencies or incompleteness. For instance, Marx rejects the connection between happiness and morality and virtue, while Aristotle insists on this connection. Based on my previous discussion in Chapter 4, they both make a point with their arguments. In addition, Marxism, as correct as it is presupposed, may be misunderstood in Mainland China. For instance, the concern of self-interest is treated as egoism in the Chinese context, and the censure on self-interest, according to the government, is based on Marxism. However, Marx himself does not directly criticize self-interest or even egoism in his work. Moreover, it may narrow down students' vision to view

happiness by teaching them only one “correct” view. Also, it would be problematic to identify different views of happiness as either correct or incorrect. Correctness or incorrectness may not be a good standard, or at least not the only appropriate one, to evaluate ethical theories.

Given all these potential problems caused by teaching Marxism as the only “correct” view, I argue that it would be worthy of us educators to redesign morality courses based on a comprehensive understanding of happiness in order to improve our teaching practice.

a) A comprehensive understanding of happiness involves more than one view of happiness.

Many scholars and philosophers provide valuable thoughts regarding happiness, besides Marx and Aristotle. For instance, for utilitarians, happiness is to maximize pleasure for the most people while minimize pains. This view seems to make a point, because in some cases happiness for all is hardly achieved based on Aristotle’s or Marx’s views. For instance, in a non-communist society, happiness for all is impossible, according to Marx. In this kind of society, some people tend to be unhappy anyhow, even though they are following moral principles and trying to be virtuous. It is arguable why someone is unhappy anyway, but utilitarians make a point here by attempting to maximize happiness for the most people. In addition, for Kantians, happiness is not necessarily related to morality or virtue. This argument does not suggest that Kantians disregard happiness; rather, Kantians doubt that moral principles created by human beings always represent the truth. In this sense, Kantians

agree with Marx that when moral principles are not the truth or really good, they lead to evil rather than happiness. Kantians also make a legitimate point because when ruling class uses morality as a means of ruling, moral principles may not be the truth and may cause unhappiness.

It is impossible to find an irrefutable view regarding happiness because human lives and ethical issues are complicated. Furthermore, contention between different ethical views may contribute to the enrichment of either view, and also it may contribute to the development of ethical philosophy. Given the complexity of our lives and ethical situations, it is worthy of us Chinese educators to involve more than one view of morality or happiness in class rather than focusing on only the Marxist view. However, since there are so many valuable and inspiring views of happiness, it may be difficult to decide which views are better than others to be included. Due to this reason, I am not going to suggest several views over others here.

However, I suggest that perhaps teachers can pay more attention to those theories, which focus on happiness of individuals, or theories which focus on both happiness of individuals and a society, as the Aristotelian one. This argument is based on my observation of moral education in Mainland China, which focuses largely on happiness of the country or the society. That is, individuals seem to be the means to realize the happiness of the country rather than the end, and individuals' happiness is largely ignored there. However, as I have discussed in Chapter 4, individuals contribute to the happiness of a state; at the same time, individuals' happiness is also the end that people pursue. As a result, both happiness of individuals and happiness of

a state may deserve considerations. In this sense, I suggest it is worthy of considering theories of happiness which focus on not only society-orientedness but also individual-orientedness, such as the Aristotelian view of happiness.

Considering the political atmosphere in Mainland China, it may not be practical to urge the government to include other views besides Marxism in morality textbooks. That is, morality textbooks are still based on the only “correct” view there. However, it is possible for teachers to introduce students to several views of happiness besides Marxism. Teachers’ selection of different views may be based on several factors, such as teachers’ own thinking of different views, teaching content, and schools’ tolerance to different views. Also, teachers may try to avoid imposing the “correctness” and irrefutableness of Marxism on students. Moreover, teachers may allow some arguments regarding Marxism, though it may be very challenging for teachers in Mainland China.

b) Families and communities may be invited to contribute to a comprehensive understanding of happiness.

A comprehensive understanding of happiness may also urge us Chinese educators to invite parents and communities to participate in the redesign of morality curriculum. Under the guidance of the only “correct” view of happiness and morality in Mainland China, school (as the branch of the government) is the only authority to teach morality or happiness. If parents hold different views other than the “correct” one, then parents are viewed as a hindrance to moral education. However, morality is not only a subject matter taught in school; rather, students may encounter moral issues

every day and everywhere, in and out of school. Also, parents' different views may not be incorrect views; neither would their views necessarily hinder moral education. Rather, parents and communities may also be a valuable source to teach morality; consequently, it is worthy of us to think about ways to invite them into moral curriculum rather than ruling them out.

For instance, the following assignments might be helpful in intriguing students' exploration of happiness and also involving the participation of parents and other people. Teachers may ask students to interview several people including parents, other family members, neighbors and strangers on "What is happiness to you?" Also, teachers may encourage students to compare these answers with students' own answers, "Are they the same?" "Why or Why not?" "Which answer(s) is/are the one(s) that interest you the most?" This kind of exploration may inspire students' own thinking of happiness and may contribute their comprehensive understandings of happiness.

2. It Is Worthy to Reconsider the Way We Teach and Assess Morality or Virtue in Mainland China.

In Mainland China, the emphasis of the only "correct" view of happiness and morality affects the ways that happiness and morality are taught and assessed there. Teachers lecture on happiness and morality, based on morality textbooks. Students' arguments or challenges to the "correct" view are not encouraged or even allowed. Students' rote memorization of the "correct" view is tested, and their test scores are the components of their moral report. Also, students' virtuous behaviors in school are

observed and evaluated by teachers; it is necessary for students to perform virtuous actions in order to have a good moral reports. The way that morality is taught and assessed in Mainland China implies that schools only focus on habituating students to “correct” morality memorization and virtuous actions in school.

However, this kind of habituation does not necessarily result in the cultivation of voluntary virtue in students in Mainland China. That is, students may exhibit virtuous actions and “correct” virtuous knowledge without being virtuous. Voluntary virtue, according to Aristotle, is the goal of moral education, but voluntariness in students’ virtuous actions is neglected in Mainland China, in both teaching practices and government guidance documents. For instance, in official educational documents, voluntariness is seldom addressed. It seems to the government that voluntariness is insignificant; rather, the government assumes that students will definitely possess the communist virtues if the students are imposed with these virtues and are habituated to behaviors based on these virtues. In addition, voluntariness is also ignored in educational practices. For example, many schools apply forced donation as an approach for arousing and cultivating virtues such as fraternal love, benevolence, and kindness. In this particular educational practice, little attention is paid to students’ voluntariness to donate. Let us explore this example in detail to see how voluntariness in students’ virtuous behaviors is ignored.

It is very common in Mainland China that individuals and enterprises are required by the government to donate when serious disasters or accidents (such as earthquakes or train collisions) occur. For many employees in the government,

schools, and any other state-owned enterprises, the donation is a direct deduction of their salary. For students, they are usually urged or even required by teachers to donate a certain amount of money. In some schools, a minimum donation would be suggested or implied by teachers. In general, the donor's name and the amount of donation are posted publicly as an honor to the donors, individually and/or as a certain group. The goal of this kind of forced donation, according to the government, besides to help people in need, is to arouse people's fraternal love to each other, and to cultivate the kindness or benevolence to help each other. Usually, students' engagement in a forced donation is viewed by teachers as an indication of their morality. As a result, students may donate, though involuntarily or reluctantly, in order to gain a good score in their moral assessments. Since students donate involuntarily, forced donation may fail to cultivate voluntary virtue in students.

Based on Aristotle's argument on voluntary virtue, he would suggest a cautious attitude towards forced donation, a particular means of habituation. First of all, for Aristotle, habituation can cultivate both virtue and vice in people. Through forced donation, students' resistance to being forced to do something, even to do the good deeds, may be intensified. Consequently, it is possible that students also resist certain virtues, such as fraternal love or sacrifice that are bonded with forced donation, due to students' resistance to forced donation. That is, rather than being habituated to be virtuous, students may possess some unacceptable character traits contrary to these virtues. In this sense, forced donation may not be a good approach to cultivate voluntary virtue. In addition, because forced donation always involves external forces,

many students are moved by external moving principles rather than a moving principle in a person. According to Aristotle, voluntary virtue is based on moving principles in a person. In this sense, it may deserve some considerations on how to replace external moving principles with internal ones when applying forced donation, which is an issue that attracts little attention in Mainland China.

As a result, maybe it is time to ask ourselves, “What do we want students to gain through moral education?” “Do we want students to provide the ‘correct’ answers like a repeating machine without processing them?” “Do we want students to exercise virtuous actions without being virtuous?” Or, “Do we care about students’ virtuous performance out of school?” If we Chinese educators have opportunities to think about these questions, we might find potential problems in our teaching approaches and assessments of morality. Considering the political atmospheres and the test-oriented educational system in Mainland China, it may be very difficult to change teaching approaches and assessments of moral education from top to bottom. However, there is some possible space that teachers can make towards improvement. For instance, rather than focusing on rote memorization of “correct” morality, teachers may encourage students to develop their capacities of moral reasoning through class arguments and assignments. Also, if teachers have to engage students into forced donation, maybe teachers can apply it in a less forced way. For instance, maybe teachers can stop persuading and pushing students, although in this case teachers themselves may have to take pressure from school board and peers. These kinds of change by teachers may be limited; however, it may still increase the

possibilities to shift our focus from students' virtuous performance to the cultivation of voluntary virtue.

3. Some Considerations on the Teaching of Self-interest in Mainland China

Self-interest and common interest are emphasized as important content in morality courses in Mainland China. Self-interest is generally taught as a negative concept in the Chinese context. Students are taught that self-interest fundamentally conflicts with common interest; it is always appropriate to sacrifice one's self-interest to common interest, when they conflict with each other. Moreover, students are taught that they should be self-restrained, that is, to restrain themselves from excessive or inappropriate desires, which are based on excessive concern for self-interest. Both Aristotle's and Marx's views on self-interest give us some clues to reexamine the teaching of self-interest in Mainland China.

First of all, rather than assertively imposing on students the idea that concern of self-interest is selfish or egoist, it would be worthy of teachers' considering how to teach students to distinguish appropriate self-interest and egoism. Both Aristotle and Marx justify appropriate self-interest, which is positive to human beings. Since moral education in Mainland China is based on Marxism, it would be relatively safe and less challenging for teachers to introduce Marx's own views of self-interest to students. The relevant content of self-interest in morality textbooks is presupposed to be based on Marxism; however, the content may represent a misunderstanding of Marxism. As a result, teachers may introduce to students, for instance, Marx's views of self-interest, his justification of self-interest in particular, in order to help students understand the

distinction between self-interest and egoism. Also, teachers may introduce students to Marx's argument that self-interest and common interest mutually shape each other. In this way, students may find out that self-interest and common interest can be advanced at the same time, they do not necessarily conflict with each other, as morality textbooks suggest. Marx's thoughts of self-interest are much richer than what is illustrated in morality textbooks in Mainland China. Teachers may make their own decisions regarding which of Marx's ideas of self-interest to be included in classes.

In addition, Chinese teachers may also consider encouraging arguments and debates in their classes. Since moral education in Mainland China is based on the only "correct" view of morality, the only "correctness" implies that there is always a correct way to resolve moral issues. As a result, arguments or debates based on ethical issues seldom appear in morality classes. However, life is more complicated than just right or wrong; sometimes moral principles provided in textbooks may not solve all moral problems. For instance, according to morality textbooks, self-interest should always give priority to common interest. Consider the following case. Suppose a group of people are on a sinking ship, and there is not enough lifeboat room for everyone. Suppose everyone tends to act in the best interest of self, then how to arrange the lifeboat? In this fictional scenario, sacrificing self-interest for common interest is not the key point. Rather, people on the ship need to determine on what standard someone deserves life opportunities more than others.

In the Chinese context, theoretically, if there are communists on the ship, they should first let others take their position in the lifeboat. But besides this standard,

what other standards could we have? Gender? Age? Personal achievement? Why or why not? All these questions may inspire students' moral thinking about self-interest. Given the complexity of moral issues, it may be worthy of encouraging arguments and debates on moral issue in class in order to broaden students' moral visions and to develop their moral reasoning.

Finally, it is worthy of us to reconsider self-restraint, which is a particular virtue related to self-interest and is valued in Mainland China. In the Chinese context, if one can restrain oneself from inappropriate desires and actions, this person is usually viewed as noble and virtuous. There is a Chinese maxim that those who do not have any selfish desires are the strongest people (*wu yu ze gang*). Another Chinese saying is that one would be happy if one does not have excessive desires and is satisfied with what one has (*zhi zu chang le*). It seems that in the Chinese context, the fewer personal desires one has, the better and nobler one might be. Self-restraint is taught as an important virtue in school to abstain from inappropriate desires or actions. Students are taught to restrain themselves from private desires, and dedicate themselves to the collectivism.

If one is well self-restrained, one may avoid irrational actions based on excessive or inappropriate desires. In this sense, self-restraint may be a good character trait. However, in many Chinese schools, self-restraint may be overemphasized. For instance, without teachers' permission, students are not allowed to talk or move in class. They are required to sit steadily all day long. Also, they are restrained from

their personal thoughts, if those thoughts are not consistent to the “correct” view⁴. Aristotle, although he also identifies self-control as a virtue, may remind us to consider “To what degree one restrains oneself would contribute to happiness?” Marx, who rejects the idea of desire control, may remind us to question “Why should we control this or that desire?” These two questions may deserve our consideration, when we attempt to cultivate self-restraint in students. Teachers may increase their tolerance to students’ certain utterance or behaviors.

4. Summary

In this chapter, I provide suggestions to reconsider the teaching of happiness in Mainland China, based on the inspirations from Aristotle’s and Marx’s views. Generally, there are two aspects of teaching of happiness that may deserve our thinking. One is that it is worthy of us to introduce other views of happiness besides the Marxist one in class; also, it may benefit students by teaching them a comprehensive understanding of happiness rather than the only “correct” one. The other aspect is about pedagogy. It may be worthy of us to involve other teaching approaches to teach happiness and morality. For instance, we may encourage, or at least tolerate, students’ arguments and debates on moral issues. Also, it would be worthy of us to reconsider the ways we assess morality and virtue. However, given the political atmosphere and the test-oriented educational system in Mainland China, it may be very challenging for Chinese teachers to do so.

⁴ For instance, a student would get zero point in essays of paper tests, if the student demonstrates an “incorrect” view in his/her essay. In this way, students are restrained from personal but “incorrect” view in school settings.

CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY

In this dissertation, I examine the teaching of happiness, an important part of moral education, in Mainland China. My examination centers on the following three aspect of happiness education there:

- 1) What is happiness and what contributes to happiness?
- 2) What is the significance of voluntary virtue in moral education?
- 3) What is the relationship between self-interest and happiness?

My analysis is based on Aristotle's and Marx views of these three questions. For Aristotle, happiness is the highest good of human beings; it is an activity of the soul in accordance with virtue. As a result, Aristotle believes that in order to achieve happiness, people should be habituated to moral virtues. Also, he insists that voluntary virtue contributes more to happiness than involuntary virtue. In addition, Aristotle believes that both advancement and sacrifice of self-interest can contribute to happiness, but they should be kept in an appropriate degree, for instance the mean degree according to Aristotle.

In contrast, for Marx, happiness is a particular good of human beings, but it is not higher than other goods, such as freedom and self-realization of human essence. Rather, Marx suggests that communism is the highest good, because it the precondition of other goods. In addition, Marx believes that voluntary labor contributes to happiness, while involuntary labor leads to unhappiness. Regarding whether voluntary virtue contributes to happiness, Marx does not give a direct answer. Given his rejection to morality and virtue, he tends to answer "No," because he

believes that morality or virtue can be used as a means of ruling. Furthermore, Marx agrees with Aristotle that self-interest can be positive to human beings. Also, Marx values sacrifice of self-interest, but he believes that only in a communist society everyone can be selfless and first concerned for others' interests.

Based on the comparison and analysis of Aristotle's and Marx's view of these issues, I make suggestions for us Chinese educators to reconsider our teaching of happiness in Mainland China. First of all, it would be worthy of us to involve other views of happiness and morality besides the Marxist view in class. Different views may contribute to a comprehensive understanding of happiness; also, it may contribute to students' practice of pursuing happiness. Moreover, it may be worthy of us to engage families and communities to participate in the redesign of morality courses. Second, it would be worthy of considering how to cultivate voluntary virtue in students, besides habituating them to virtuous actions. I use forced donation as an example to illustrate that moral education in Mainland China focuses on virtuous performance rather than voluntary virtue. I argue moral education that ignores voluntary virtue may be incomplete. As a result, I suggest that we Chinese educators work together to develop new approaches to cultivate and to assess morality or virtue. Finally, I suggest that it is worthy of considering how to teach self-interest based on involvement of different views and methods.

The teaching of happiness in Mainland China is a big issue. It is impossible for me to cover every aspect of that topic in this dissertation. There are several main inadequacies in this dissertation, which need further investigation. First of all, there

are many valuable philosophical thoughts of happiness and/or morality, such as the Kantian view, the utilitarian view, and so forth. However, my analysis is mainly based on Aristotle's and Marx's views of happiness. Other views besides the two philosophers' may inspire me to reexamine the teaching of happiness in Mainland China, from other perspectives, which may contribute more to a holistic view of this issue.

Second, I involve several of Confucius' thoughts regarding happiness in Chapter 1. However, I do not provide an extensive analysis based on the Confucian view. A possible reason for this is that Confucianism was replaced, marginalized, and suppressed, when communism became the dominant ideology, educational ideology in particular, in Mainland China. However, considering Confucianism's influence and its recent potential reviving in Mainland China, further work may be needed to explore Confucius' influence on moral education in Mainland China.

Finally, in this dissertation, I focus on the teaching of happiness. I do not explore what we Chinese educators teach happiness for. Personally, I believe that we teach happiness and morality for a happy life. However, according to the Chinese government, the ultimate goal of moral education, happiness education in particular, is to cultivate qualified and reliable "socialist/communist successors⁵." Based on the government guidance documents, happiness is not the ultimate end of human beings. I believe that the philosophical foundation of moral education or happiness education deserves more examinations, but I purposefully skip this topic in this dissertation. "How to teach for happiness" may be an interesting and important issue to examine in

⁵ Socialist successor and communist successor are treated as synonyms in Mainland China.

the future.

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