The Japanese Journal of American Studies, No. 20 (2009)

Emerson and Zhu Xi: The Role of the "Scholar" in Pursuing "Peace"

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I. EMERSON, ZEN BUDDHISM, AND NEO-CONFUCIANISM

Daisetz T. Suzuki, the Japanese Zen Buddhist scholar and teacher, through his numerous writings and lectures made a great contribution to introducing Zen Buddhism to the Western world during the first half of the twentieth century. He confessed that he was deeply impressed with Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882) in his college days, and his first publication was an essay on Emerson.[1] Some Japanese and American scholars, greatly influenced by Suzuki, have tried to find resemblances between Emersonian Transcendentalism and the Zen concept of "emptiness" (空 *kū*).[2]

However, Suzuki's "emptiness" is somewhat different from the Indian Buddhist idea of emptiness. According to the great Indian Mahāyāna Buddhist philosopher Nāgārjuna, emptiness is not a state of nonexistence as opposed to existence, but one of transcending the opposition between existence and nonexistence, that is, it is an absolute or religious enlightenment. Suzuki's concept of "emptiness," as it merged with Chinese Taoism (Daoism) and Japanese Buddhism, can be thought of as being much closer to "nonbeing" (無 *mu*) or even to a state of "naturalness" (自然 *jinen*).[3]

It is true that in Suzuki's writings such expressions are comparable to Emerson's "God within" and "self-reliance": "If you wish to seek the Bud-

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dha, you ought to see into your own Nature; for this Nature is the Buddha himself."[4] Both Suzuki's Zen and Emerson's Transcendentalism show an attitude of truth-seeking, of trying to find the profound spring of truth within the inner soul apart from every outer traditional authority, institution, and form. However, there is a noteworthy difference between Suzuki's "original self" and Emerson's "inner self." Zen's original self is revealed when a person utterly gives up attachment to anything. As long as one clings to something, one cannot enjoy the absolute state of freedom. On the other hand, in Emerson's thought, there is a concept of double-consciousness within humans, an outer self and an inner self. Humans can be in touch with the "eternal One" or the "universal soul" at the bottom of their inner selves. This is possible only by overcoming the outer self through self-purification and self-denial. It can, therefore, be said that Emerson's self transcends its individuality and becomes united with a superpersonal "Over-soul," while Suzuki's self dissolves into oneness with nature, abandoning its personality.

Moreover, Mahāyāna Buddhism, the core doctrine of which is "emptiness," has a tendency to break off from human ethical and social duties and show indifference to human values, while a noticeable characteristic of Emerson is the bearing of human moral and social responsibilities. Therefore, the contention that there can be found much similarity between Buddhism and Emersonian thought is quite problematic. It is true that Emerson read a few Buddhist books and was somewhat influenced by them, but he also wrote in his journal: "[T]his remorseless Buddhism lies all around, threatening with death and night"[5] and "The Indian system is full of fate, . . . it is the dread reality, it is the cropping out in our planted gardens of the core of the world: it is the abysmal Force untameable and immense."[6] These expressions show that Emerson regarded Buddhism as a philosophy of dreadful and remorseless fate and that he thought negatively of the supreme perfect enlightenment (Nirvāna) that the Buddha attained. [7]

In terms of the relation between Emerson's thought and Asian religious thought, many Emerson scholars have acknowledged the great influence Hinduism exerted on him. In the 1820s Emerson began reading Indian poetry and mythology. It is well known that his aunt Mary Moody Emerson, who had much interest in Hinduism, inspired the young Emerson. In 1845 he read the *Bhagavad-Gita*, one of the most important Sanskrit scriptures. Emerson's "Over-soul" can be compared to *Brahman* in Upanishad philosophy as expressed in the *Gita*. In his poems, such as "Hamatreya" and "Brahma," and his essays, such as "The Over-Soul," "Fate," and "Illusion," there can certainly be found Hindu influences. The similarities have been pointed out be-

tween the Hindu doctrines of "karma," "maya," and "transmigration of the soul" and the Emersonian concepts of "compensation," "fate," "illusion," and "immortality."

American scholars such as Frederic I. Carpenter, Arthur Christy, and Arthur Versluis have undertaken comprehensive studies of the influence of Asian thought and religion on Emerson in their respective works—*Emerson and Asia*, *The Orient of American Transcendentalism*, and *American Transcendentalism and Asian Religions.* In these they examine the influence on Emerson not only of Hinduism but also of Chinese Confucian and Taoist thought, such as that of Confucius (Kongzi 孔子), Mencius (Mengzi 孟子), and Lao Tzu (Laozi 老子).[8]

My own comparative studies of Emerson's thought and Neo-Confucianism make it clear that Emerson can be understood as much closer to Neo-Confucianism, especially to the doctrines of Zhu Xi (Chu Hsi 朱熹 or 朱子, 1130–1200), than to Hinduism, Buddhism, and Taoism.[9] One likely reason Emerson was embraced with enthusiasm by Japanese readers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries may have been that they found marked similarities between his thought and Neo-Confucianism, a system of ideas and ethical values in which Japanese culture had been steeped for several centuries.

Neo-Confucianism emerged in Song dynasty China (宋 960–1279) with the support of a rising class of bureaucrats (士大夫). The teachings of Neo-Confucianism preserved the human and social morality of Confucianism, while criticizing Taoism for promoting natural idleness and Buddhism for devaluating the human duties necessary to ordinary family life and social relationships. At the same time, Neo-Confucianism borrowed elements of Buddhist metaphysics and Taoist cosmogony in a new formulation of ethical philosophy that was clearly distinguished from Buddhism and Taoism.

In Emerson's day, the *Four Books* (四書) : the *Analects of Confucius* (『論語』) , the *Book of Mencius* (『孟子』) , the *Great Learning* (『大学』) , and the *Doctrine of the Mean*, (『中庸』) might have been the only Confucian writings available in English translation. Emerson read a version of the *Four Books* translated from original Chinese texts.[10] The very fact that Emerson read these texts, including Zhu Xi's commentaries, demonstrates that he was influenced by Zhu's Neo-Confucian views, though he was almost certainly not aware of it. Zhu Xi, the synthesizer of the philosophical system of Neo-Confucianism, turned to the Confucian tradition and merged Neo-Confucian ideas developed during the period of the Northern Song dynasty with elements of Buddhist and Taoist philosophy. Zhu valued the *Four Books* highly,

interpreted the *Analects of Confucius* in terms of his Neo-Confucian view of human nature as fundamentally good, and revised some parts of the *Great Learning* and the *Doctrine of the Mean*. His commentaries on the *Four Books* formed the basis of civil service examinations in China from 1314–1904, and have generally been regarded as his most important work.

The influence on Emerson of Confucian doctrines of the *Four Books*, including those of the mean, of the inborn goodness of human nature, of sincerity, and of the superiority of the human individual to the state, can be recognized in such essays as "Experience," "Character," "Manners," and "Politics," which appeared in *Essays: Second Series* in 1844. Passages in his later works, including *Representative Men*, *English Traits*, and *The Conduct of Life*, also reveal the influence of the *Four Books*, albeit indirectly.[11]

It is worthwhile, therefore, to consider from a comparative viewpoint the relation between Emerson's thought and Neo-Confucianism, especially Zhu Xi's philosophy. In this essay I closely examine, from four significant conceptual viewpoints, the affinities and differences between Emerson's thought and the doctrines of Zhu Xi.

II. SCHOLAR

In each cultural area in the world supreme value has been placed on its own ideal image of a human being. People in each cultural area set a goal of how character should be developed and how they can align themselves with the ideal human being. In ancient Greece the ideal human being was a man of wisdom who had intellectual faculties of seeing and recognizing Idea, a supposed eternally existing pattern or archetype of things; in Buddhism an awakened human being was one who penetrated a truth; and in Confucianism a sage was one who had moral faculties of knowing *tao* (*dao* 道 the way) and joining with it.

Zhu Xi, in his commentary on the first chapter of the *Doctrine of the Mean*, focused on the statement "What Heaven has conferred is called *nature*."[12] From these writings he developed the idea of *li* (理 principle) in *tian* (天 heaven) and called it *tian li* (天理 heavenly principle). Through the heavenly principle the inborn goodness of human nature was given a fundamental and universal ground. It became clear that *xing* (性 nature) is immanent within every human heart as a decree by heaven. Zhu's "nature" can be considered to parallel Emerson's "God within," and Zhu's "sage" (聖人) to parallel Emerson's "genuine man."

The first noteworthy parallel between Zhu Xi and Emerson is that both

held the view of the fundamental goodness of human nature. Neo-Confucianism, under the slogan that becoming a sage can be attained by learning, held that there is a chance for every man to realize the ideal state of the sage, and portrayed the human being as a "scholar" morally bound to make great efforts at learning and practicing the way of self-cultivation (修身). Emerson, likewise, repudiated the orthodox Puritan doctrine that only Jesus Christ, as the Son of God, is endowed with the special supernatural and mystical authority of the Savior. As a result, for Emerson Jesus was only a "mediator" between God and humans and a great religious leader who realized the ideal of human morality. Emerson's "scholar" is a "genuine man" who, faithfully following moral principle, seeks essential and universal human nature by giving up the superficial and selfish self. Thus a remarkable similarity between Zhu Xi and Emerson can be found in that both philosophers place great importance on the role of a "scholar," denying the divinity and sacredness of Confucius or Jesus, and regard them instead as great teachers and embodiments of a human moral ideal.

The second parallel can be recognized in Zhu Xi's "subduing one's self and returning to propriety" (克己復礼) and Emerson's "self-reliance." In Neo-Confucianism, before "nature" as *li* is manifest in humanity as five cardinal virtues *li* keeps its own transcendent uncorrupted state, called the "original nature" (本然の性). When *li* is clouded and restrained through the dulling effects of *qi* (気 material force), it is called "physical nature" (気質の性). What human beings, therefore, should try to do is to overcome "physical nature" and return to the "original nature" of heaven and earth (複初). This is called "transforming physical nature" (気質の変化), which means controlling and putting aside all selfish human desires and returning to propriety, the impartial moral order of human society, and to the heavenly principle. For Zhu, learning should be done by improving oneself so as to possess moral principles in one's own heart (自得) and to gain a feeling of deep inner contentment. As Mencius says: "The superior man lays the foundation in sound principles: wishing to possess them in himself."[13]

Emerson, much influenced by the Unitarian doctrine of "self-culture," developed it further in his original Transcendental idea of "self-reliance," preaching that one should bear responsibility for the spiritual and moral growth of one's own mind. For Emerson, moral conduct lies in returning to one's original self, as he put forward in his "Divinity School Address": "The man who renounces himself, comes to himself by so doing."[14] Zhu's "returning to the original nature," therefore, can be comparable to Emerson's "returning to oneself." Moreover, his idea of "self-reliance," much like Zhu's

"subduing one's self and returning to propriety," entails incorporating oneself with the universal Over-soul by trusting wholly in "God within," which is inherent in an individual's soul. As he writes in his essay "The Over-Soul": "Behold, it saith, I am born into the great, the universal mind. I the imperfect, adore my own Perfect." (*CW* 2: 175).

There are differences in Emerson and Zhu Xi's views as to what a "scholar" is. First, a clear difference can be found between the two philosophers' views of the role of a "scholar" in society. In Neo-Confucianism a scholar's duties are "illustrating illustrious virtue" (明明德) and "renewing people" (新民), also stated as "the cultivation of the self" (修己) and "the government of the people" (治人). Here personal ethics and social and political ethics are closely and inseparably connected. On the other hand, in Emerson's "scholar," there can be recognized serious conflicts between trusting one's self and following social moral standards, thus leading to opposition rather than harmony between inner personal ethics and outer social ethics.

For Zhu Xi "selfishness" (私) should be annihilated in favor of "impartiality" (公), but for Emerson, on the contrary, one is required to seek the "public" good while placing oneself as a citizen in the sphere of the "private." According to Emerson, the ultimate purpose of society is to realize the character of the individual.[15] Emerson views democracy as an ideal system of social organization, but it serves as but one means to attain this purpose. For him consideration should be given to the inner human mind before society, as he writes in his essay "Politics," "To educate the wise man, the State exists; and with the appearance of the wise man, the State expires. The appearance of character makes the State unnecessary" (*CW* 3: 126). As mentioned earlier, in Zhu's philosophy, there can be found harmony between individual ethics and social and political ethics. From this viewpoint, in spite of Zhu's great efforts to renovate a morally corrupted society, there remain conservative attitudes that maintain the existing society, and it may be difficult to criticize and reform it in terms of the conceptions of a society with a more advanced political system.

Second, Emerson's concept of a "scholar" has much more diversity than Zhu Xi's. Zhu's concept of a "scholar" is exclusively limited to a great sage who embodies a human moral ideal. Emerson's ideal man, on the contrary, includes even poets such as Shakespeare and Goethe, as well as religious men, naturalists, and heroes. Emerson's "scholar" has a remarkable tendency, using the power of imagination, to create beauty and history.

Zhu Xi's sage, as an image of ideal man, constantly examines whether he embodies a Confucian moral ideal. He is not required to love and express

aesthetic truth, but to realize intellectual and moral truth and practice virtue. *Li*, as an immutable moral value transcending time and space, exists, keeping its perfect state innately within man, society, and nature. *Li* surely is the root of generating all things in the cosmos, but it does not grow toward perfection. This immutable state of *li* cannot be compared to the dynamism found in the Emersonian notion that God, or Spirit, or Law manifests and develops itself as "Reason" and reaches completion through the human mind, nature, and history. Emerson's "Reason" is not perfect, but has a process, tendency, and power of evolving into perfection: "Truth never is, always is a-being" (*JMN* 4: 18).

III. LANGUAGE

The basis of Zhu Xi's philosophy, the idea that "nature is principle" (性即理), is most clearly evident in his doctrine of "the investigation of things and the perfection of knowledge" (格物致知). Emerson's Transcendentalism is rooted in the concept of analogy and "correspondence" between all things in the universe and human minds. I shall make a comparative examination, therefore, concerning "correspondence" and "the investigation of things and the perfection of knowledge." The first of the similarities between Emerson's thought and Zhu's doctrines is that they are not based on such religious creeds as the innate depravity of humankind and salvation by divine grace of a transcendental absolute being. For both of them, it is the intellect, not religious faith, that is considered to be closely associated with virtue.

Second, Zhu's doctrine of "the investigation of things and the perfection of knowledge" comes from the assumption that for each thing there is a particular *li*. *Li*, as moral truth, is always found with *qi*, as a physical thing, and is never separate from it. This is opposed to Buddhism, which completely denies the function of *qi* and emotions. Emerson likewise writes in his journal: "Ah! a fact is a great thing. The soul passed into Nature" (*JMN* 7: 14). Here a fact can be considered to be a physical thing having a figurative form. Emerson also tries to pursue moral truth and intellect within a particular physical thing. There is, thus, a remarkable resemblance when Emerson and Zhu start from the examination of each physical thing, thus seeking the abstract and universal "Over-soul" and *tai ji* (太極 supreme ultimate).

What is the difference between Emerson's "correspondence" and Zhu Xi's "the investigation of things and the perfection of knowledge"? Since both are related to language, it is necessary to compare their viewpoints on language. A general account of the Confucian view on language starts with the fact that

Confucianism is called "teachings about names" (名教). From ancient times Confucianism has acknowledged the value of language and regarded the acquisition of its skill as one of the required items of virtue. In this point Confucianism greatly differs from Buddhism and Taoism, because these two philosophies make the core of their doctrines "emptiness" and "nonbeing" and have a negative view of language. It is, however, true that Confucianism, while putting much importance on language, has some negative views on the use of language. This is because words, as a means of expressing what is inside human hearts, should be associated with virtue and trustworthiness through moral conduct.[16] Words, however, have a great power to influence. As Confucius says in the *Analects*: "Fine words and an insinuating appearance are seldom associated with true virtue."[17] This leads to a tendency to taciturnity and prudence in speech: "The superior man is modest in his speech, but exceeds in his actions."[18]

Emerson believed that the correspondence between the human mind and nature can be accomplished through the intervention of symbolic language. His theory of language is rooted in his symbolism. Humans are, therefore, required to read by their inner eye the hidden symbolic language of nature in which God manifests Himself. Zhu Xi clearly sees learning through language as important, since his doctrine of "the investigation of things and the perfection of knowledge" is centered on the study of the Confucian canonical classics. Zhu, though much influenced by the symbolism of the *Book of Changes* (『易経』) regarding the generation of all things,[19] cannot be considered to have developed a theory of symbolic poetry and language as Emerson did.

According to Zhu Xi's philosophy, *li* is an abstract principle that unites the human heart with things, but language, as long as it is not the principle of all things but a function of *qi*, cannot be considered to be identified with *li*. On the other hand, according to Judeo-Christian doctrine, all things in the universe are created by God through his words. Emerson, though denying the orthodox Christian doctrine of creation, maintains the idea of creation through words, and thinks of nature as a divine manifestation and a symbolic language. In other words, language is one of God's essential qualities. Thus, there is a great difference in their view of language such that Emerson could develop a theory of poetry rooted in his symbolism, while Zhu could not.

Emerson maintained that the corruption of language leads to the corruption of man: "The corruption of man is followed by the corruption of language" (*CW* 1: 20). He thought that the role of a poet is to see through the symbolic language hidden in visible things and to unite language with these things. A poet, by the act of naming, liberates things and metamorphoses

them into higher organic forms. This is the same as transforming visible and outer language into an acoustic and inner one, created words into creating ones. As the apostle Paul wrote: "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body."[20] By the transformation and regeneration of language, the unity of human thought and the essence of things is recovered.

According to Emersonian theory, then, words come to be identified with the indwelling essence within things. On the contrary, for Zhu Xi words merely indicate the external aspects of things, not the essence itself. In Confucianism, heaven is speechless and does not reveal itself through words. As Mencius says: "No, heaven did not speak; it merely revealed its will by actions and events."[21] Language is not a mediator between heaven and humans, as it is in the Bible; therefore heaven and humans, having no dialogue, do not have a vertical connection by way of words. Words are artificially provided by the social horizontal relations between human beings, and no indwelling relation between words and the essence of things can be found.

For Zhu Xi, when *li* comes to have a moral meaning, it is called a "name" (名). It can be said that when hidden *li* is changed into actual *li* by the human conduct of "the investigation of things and the perfection of knowledge," it comes to be identical with its name.[22] All myriad of things are required to hold the substance called the "share" (分) suitable to their names.[23] Names, therefore, inseparably related to each of their shares, are thought to realize the moral meaning of the words on the basis of the standard of *li* (礼 propriety) by recovering the state of order in meaning. This can be called "rectifying names" (正名).[24] Here, as discussed above, an essential difference between Emerson's "giving names" and Zhu's "rectifying names" can be recognized.

IV. THE WAY

Tao, having a wide range of meaning, has been one of the central concepts in Chinese thought from antiquity. Tao, originally meaning the road along which many people walk, gradually came to have a meaning of the moral standard people should follow in ordinary social life. Moreover, such metaphysical meanings as the principle of the universe and the cause of generating all things were included in the meaning of Tao. Zhu Xi conceives the discovery of the principle of the cosmos as "the way of Heaven," and the pursuit of the human moral standard as "the way of Men."[25] Emerson likewise tried to formulate human ethics based on a sense of duty of the human individual. Thus, he came to view religion not as a system of doctrines of faith but rather

as "a theory of human life,"[26] that is, an ethics consisting of moral and worldly teachings on the conduct of life. Therefore, a comparison of Emerson's "conduct of life" and Zhu's Tao will follow.

The first parallel between Emerson and Zhu Xi can be seen in their placing human ethics at the foundation of the universe and nature. Both thinkers tried to formulate systems of philosophy that can be applied both to transcendental metaphysics and human morality and ethics. Both Emerson's "Nature" and Zhu's "Heaven and Earth" are considered the origin of human moral standard and to exert continual influence on human beings. For Zhu, the moral principle, that is "sincerity" (誠), everlastingly pervades the entire universe: "In the realm of heaven and earth it is this moral principle alone that flows everywhere."[27] For Emerson as well, nature is God's perpetual manifestation, and the ultimate purpose of nature lies in the moral influence it exerts on human beings by inviting them to awaken to "Reason." As he writes in his book *Nature*, "The moral law lies at the centre of nature and radiates to the circumstance. . . . The moral influence of nature upon every individual is that amount of truth which illustrates to him" (*CW* 1: 26). Emerson's "Nature," thus, is directly related to God's "revelation," and Zhu's Tao, to "the transforming and nourishing powers of Heaven and Earth" (天地の化育). Both can be regarded as the principles of life in the continual generation of all things.

The second resemblance is that both philosophers present a human-centered ethics in this world. Emerson denied the Calvinist belief in life after death, and Zhu denied the Buddhist doctrine of transmigration of souls. Furthermore, for Emerson and Zhu, death is conceived from a rational and natural viewpoint as merely a transition from life, having no special determinant meaning. In their thinking, there is no idea of depravity, sin, salvation, and resurrection. Emerson teaches that there is no Last Judgment of God in which people are sentenced to eternity in heaven or hell. Zhu preaches that humans are not judged by how their souls are transmigrated into the next world as a reward in accordance with their good or evil deeds in this world. Both of them, taking affirmative views of life, attach importance to enriching life in this world rather than to facing death.

The third resemblance, related to the second, is that both Emerson and Zhu Xi developed doctrines of reward, not in another world, but in this one. Emerson, though denying the doctrines of the Last Judgment and justification by faith, developed a theory of compensation that "a man is made the Providence to himself" (*CW* 1: 78). Zhu, though rejecting the doctrine of transmigration of souls, still kept the Confucian doctrine of reward that heaven gives blessings to good and calamities to evil. There can be found a remarkable

tendency in their doctrines to acknowledge the interrelation between natural law and ethical law, and to place trust in these laws' functions to maintain moral order by the powers originally inherent within humans and all things in the universe. Both Emerson's theory of compensation and Zhu's theory of yin-yang (陰陽) are successful in explaining such powers for an autonomous maintenance of order.

However, there are differences between Emerson's theory of compensation and polarity and Zhu's theory of the yin-yang, although both assert that two powers, based on a dialectical principle of movement, conflict with each other in both nature and human ethics. In Emerson's polarity, the two poles, while opposing each other, have a tendency to develop to a higher state and eventually to achieve unity and harmony by overcoming the opposition through "metamorphosis." Here can be seen movements of self-overcoming and self-denial through the struggle between two contradicting and opposing powers. The result, therefore, from the opposing and overcoming in polarity is "improvement" and "evolution" to a higher state through a spiral movement. Zhu's yin-yang, on the contrary, involves two phases of movements and energies of *qi*, and through its own continual coming and going operation, it either acts to transform into the yang (active cosmic force) or condenses into the yin (passive cosmic force). Moreover, the yin-yang does not operate through opposition of yin and yang but by their complex interrelationship in which yang is contained in yin, and yin in yang. The yin-yang principle aims at balance and harmony through its contradictions; it is rather a principle of assistance, interchange, transformation, and repetition than that of opposition and struggle between things and phenomena.[28] Thus, in the operation of yin-yang, such Emersonian ideas as self-denial and self-overcoming cannot be found, since the two opposing and contradicting powers of yin and yang rely on each other for their existence and operation.

The second difference concerns the problem of freedom. Emerson faced the problem of freedom and fate throughout his life.[29] Freedom is based on the concept of individual free will given by God to human beings. Emerson, although repudiating the doctrines of orthodox Christianity, still attributed the essential significance of human existence to having freedom of will. Each human mind as "a selecting principle" (*CW* 2: 84) is duty bound to aspire to moral perfection, unceasingly challenged by "its choice between truth and repose."[30] There is, indeed, no doctrine of the Last Judgment, but man is at every moment judged by "God within." As Emerson said in his "Divinity School Address": "Thus, of their own volition, souls proceed into heaven, into hell" (*CW* 1: 78).

In Zhu's philosophy, on the other hand, there can be found willing and aspiring minds, but they, as long as they are dependent on *qi*, are considered to be operating not from *li* but by *qi*, or by the cooperation of *li* and *qi*, no matter how mysterious and ethereal their functioning may be. Moreover, the state of mind a sage attains is the unification with heaven and earth and freedom from any restraint. This freedom (自由), however, has an implication like the Buddhist and Taoist meaning of "at one's pleasure" (自在) and is not like Emerson's freedom, which only an individual, wholly relying on his own self and independent of others, can accomplish and enjoy.

V. PEACE

It can be said that both Emerson and Zhu Xi are philosophers who sought peace and harmony in ethics, not only for individuals, but also on a social and cosmic level. Therefore, I examine their views on peace.

The first similarity between Emerson and Zhu Xi is that both lived in an age of national crisis. Emerson maintained an attitude of being a transcendental observer who retreated from actual society, believing that a scholar's essential duty was "the study and the communication of principles" (*CW* 1: 69). He, however, was greatly shocked by Massachusetts senator Daniel Webster's address in March 1850, in which he supported Henry Clay's proposal of compromise to avoid the separation between the North and the South by having the North accept the Fugitive Slave Law. After the compromise passed, Emerson felt that the slavery issue had become a matter that weighed on the conscience of the people of the North. In the 1850s Emerson severely criticized the law in his lectures and clearly expressed his support of the abolitionists and the Anti-Slavery Society.[31] Thus Emerson, faced with the great crisis of separation and war, felt obliged to be positively active in the serious problems of slavery.

Zhu Xi lived in an age of crisis for the Chinese empire. The Song dynasty established its rule in 960, but it had much difficulty when faced with an invasion by the Khitans and Tanguts and lost its control over sixteen northern prefectures. At the beginning of the twelfth century, the Jurchen tribes rose to power in Manchuria and established the empire of Chin (金). The Song tried to defeat Khitan power in cooperation with the Chin, but the Chin extinguished the Khitan and occupied even the capital of the Song. The Song, then, retreated to the south, moving the capital there in 1127, and then, after making peace with the Chin in 1142, its control over China was limited to the area south of the Huai River. Thus, in Zhu's age the Chinese people were

continually faced, by invasions from northern tribes, with problems of war and peace.

Second, both Emerson and Zhu Xi were faced not only with political crises but also with cultural and spiritual ones. American society in the days of Emerson was undergoing a rapid change as a result of the industrial revolution, the transition from an agricultural society to a capitalistic urban one, and the appearance of mass democracy. Puritanism was losing vigor in its religious doctrines, and the emerging middle-class was in need of a new ethical and moral outlook. The Song period during which Zhu Xi lived was also faced with cultural crises. The popularity of heretical Buddhist teachings, particularly of Zen Buddhism, came to be so widespread that it seemed difficult, because of the decline of Tao, for Confucianists to maintain Chinese cultural and moral tradition. In Zhu's time the teachings of Zen Master Ta-hui (大慧) fascinated even the class of bureaucrats. For Zhu, the teaching of a sudden spiritual awaking (頓悟) of Zen Buddhism seemed shallow. He thought Zen gave up on human ethics and relationships and was not based on reality. He saw Zen as failing to extend knowledge through objective study, no matter how much it had lofty philosophical principles and deep insights into the human inner mind.

The third similarity is that both Emerson and Zhu Xi, thinking that the moral and cultural improvement of people would reinvigorate a weakened society, made great efforts in educational and cultural activities. Emerson, after his resignation from the ministry, lectured extensively in various parts of the United States, which had not yet developed a good national education system. He preached new doctrines of ethics including self-reliance and continued exerting a strong spiritual influence. Zhu Xi also devoted his life to the education of his young followers. In 1175 he and Lu Zuqian (呂祖謙) compiled an introductory anthology of Neo-Confucianism, *Reflections on Things at Hand* (『近思録』), in which the teachings of such Neo-Confucianists as Zhou Dunji (周敦頤), Zhang Zai (張載), Cheng Hao (程顥), and his brother Cheng Yi (程頤) of the Northern Song dynasty were systematically gathered. Furthermore, in 1178 he restored the White Deer Hollow Academy (白鹿洞書院), making it the center for the revival of Confucianism. In opposition to the examination-oriented education of his time, he called for the return to disinterested study of the Confucian canons, insisting that "in ancient times, men learned with a view to their own improvement. Nowadays, men learn with a view to the approbation of others"[32] and that true learning is to investigate *li* in things, cultivate one's moral character, and extend one's virtue to others. Even during the difficult time in his later years, when he was driven

away from the court and his school was under bitter attack, he still continued lecturing to the younger generation that gathered around him.[33]

The word "integrity" is a keyword in Emerson's view of peace. He said in his "Harvard Commemoration Speech" delivered in July 1865 soon after the Civil War came to an end, "The war gave back integrity to this erring immoral nation."[34] He said in a sermon that the true reason why he resigned from the ministry in October 1832 was that he likewise wished to maintain the state of "integrity" in his inner heart.[35] For him "integrity" meant "freedom from moral corruption," and he was constant throughout his life in his resolution to keep, first of all, his "integrity."

Zhu Xi's view of peace, on the other hand, is based on the concept of "equilibrium and harmony" (中和). This comes from the passage in the first chapter of the *Doctrine of the Mean*: "Let the states of equilibrium and harmony exist in perfection, and a happy order will prevail throughout heaven and earth, and all things will be nourished and flourish."[36] According to Zhu, in the human mind (*zin* 心) there are two states: "nature" (性) and "emotions" (情). In the state of "nature," the human mind is in supreme equilibrium, quiescence, and impartiality, and there is no stirring of emotions (未発). On the other hand, when "nature" manifests itself by taking the form of *qi* (已発), there spring up to the human mind emotions such as joy, anger, worry, and terror. In the state of "harmony," even when human mind comes into activity, it does not deviate from the state of equilibrium because there are no excesses or insufficiencies in the stirring of emotions. The realization of the perfect state of equilibrium and harmony in the human mind, therefore, directly extends to that of moral harmony and order in human society and heaven and earth. By casting "cultivation of the self" as the "root" and "government of the people" as the "branch" of the same tree, Zhu tried to extend both eventually to "bringing peace throughout the world" (平天下). Zhu also clearly expressed his opinions in his written reports presented to the emperor, advising him to make his thoughts sincere (誠意), to rectify his mind (正心), to take men of ability into government service, to maintain public law and order, and to encourage good popular morals.

Peace and nonresistance were doubtless ideals for Emerson, as is shown by his opposition to the U.S.-Mexican War. The reason, however, why he eventually approved the use of force against the South was that he believed the principle of liberty and the original American spirit won by the War of Independence would be expanded to the black race and every part of the republic. The most important thing for him was the realization of goodness and truth: "My creed is very simple, that Goodness is the only Reality."[37] He was confi-

dent that Providence would manifest itself, transcending the value of goodness and evil, and that even a war, destroying the existing social system by the realization of goodness hidden in its evil appearance, would help restore a state of "integrity."

He felt much sympathy with John Brown, who tried to overthrow slavery, and said in his speechs that Brown was a national hero who, through an armed uprising, sacrificed his life for the cause of freedom.[38] He also remarked at a memorial service held in Concord in April 1865 immediately after Abraham Lincoln was assassinated that Lincoln was a heroic deliverer who overcame the great crisis of the nation, and that his inauguration as president and his tragic death were wrought by a serene Providence. [39]

It is indeed true that following moral principle was the first consideration for both Emerson and Zhu Xi, and they didn't approve of settling matters by using armed force. Both of them, on the other hand, were against keeping peace by making easy compromises. Zhu, against making peace with the Chin, insisted on the Chinese holding their ground even by force while strengthening domestic administration.

In spite of such resemblances as stated above, there is a fundamental difference between Emerson's and Zhu Xi's views of peace. For Zhu "equilibrium" means a perfect state of supreme moral goodness, and "bringing peace throughout the world" will be finally realized by letting the state of equilibrium and harmony exist in perfection with complete virtue manifesting itself. For Emerson, on the other hand, "peace" is not a static state of keeping a tranquil and happy harmony but a dynamic process of evolution proceeding toward a more complete unity of the cosmic mind and realization of justice and goodness.

In this article I have made a comparative examination of Emerson's thought and Zhu Xi's Neo-Confucian ideas from the point of view of the scholar, language, the Tao, and peace. It is clear that there is much affinity in their philosophies despite their having lived in different cultures and ages. At the same time, it should be noted that fundamental differences can also be recognized in their thinking.

NOTES

An overview of this article was presented at the panel "Emerson's Representations of Asia, Asia's Representations of Emerson," sponsored by the Ralph Waldo Emerson Society at the Nineteenth Annual American Literature Association Conference held in San Francisco, California, May 2008. I would like to thank the American Studies Foundation of Japan for a travel grant that supported my presentation.

[1] Regarding Emerson and Daisetz T. Suzuki (鈴木大拙, 1870–1966), see Daisetz Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture* (New York: Princeton University Press, 1959) , 343–44; "Emason no Zen-gaku-ron" [Emerson's view of Zen], *Suzuki Daisetz Zenshyū* [The complete writings of Daisetz Suzuki] (Tokyo: Iwanami-shoten, 1971), supplementary vol. 1, 17–25; and Lawrence Buell, *Emerson* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003), 196–97.

[2] For studies of the influence of Buddhism, particularly Zen Buddhism, on Emerson's thought, see Yahagi Kodō, "R. W. Emerson ni Oyoboshita Tōyō-shisō no Eikyō nitsuite" [On the influence of Eastern thought on R. W. Emerson], *Hikaku-shisō* [Comparative thought] 2 (1965), 1–13; "R. W. Emerson no Shizen-kan to Tōyō no Shizen-kan" [R. W. Emerson's view of nature and Eastern views of nature], *Taishō- daigaku Kenkyū-kiyō* [Journal of Taishō University] 52 (1967), 1–15; *Amerika Runessansu no Kenkyū: Konkōdo Gurūpu to Tōyō-shisō* [A study of the American Renaissance: The Concord Group and Eastern thought] (Tokyo: Mogamigawa-shobō, 1969)；Shōei Andō, *Zen and American Transcendentalism: An Investigation of One's Self* (Tokyo: Hokuseidō Press, 1970), 136–46; Van Meter Ames, *Zen and American Thought* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1962), trans. Yūji Nakata (Tokyo: Ōshisha, 1995); and John G. Rudy, *Emerson and Zen Buddhism* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2001).

[3] For the concept of "emptiness" of Indian Mahāyāna Buddhism, see Hajime Nakamura, *Ryūju* [龍樹 Nāgārjuna, ca.150–250] (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2002), 231–84; and concerning the influence of the Taoist concept of "nonbeing" on Chinese and Japanese Zen and Jōdo Buddhism, see Mikisaburō Mori, *Rōshi・Sōshi* [Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu] (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1994), 389–442.

[4] Daisetz T. Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism: First Series* (London: Rider and Company, 1949), 233.

[5] *The Journals of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. Edward Waldo Emerson and Waldo Emerson Forbes, 10 vols. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1909–14), vol. 6, 318, dated Dec. 1842.

[6] *The Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. William H. Gilman, Ralph H. Orth, et al., 16 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960–82), vol. 9, 313, dated Oct. 27, 1845; hereafter cited parenthetically in text as *JMN*.

[7] See Frederic I. Carpenter, *Emerson and Asia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1930), 146–50.

[8] Regarding Emerson and Asian thought and religions, see Carpenter, *Emerson and Asia*; Arthur Christy, *The Orient in American Transcendentalism: A Study of Emerson, Thoreau, and Alcott* (New York: Octagon Books, 1963), 61–183; Arthur Versluis, *American Transcendentalism and Asian Religions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 51–79; Shanta Acharya, *The Influence of Indian Thought on Ralph Waldo Emerson* (Lewiston, NY : Edwin Mellen Press, 2001)；and Shoji Goto, *The Philosophy of Emerson and Thoreau: Orientals Meet Occidentals* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2007). These five authors make no mention of Neo-Confucianism.

[9] See Yoshio Takanashi, "Emerson, Japan, and Neo-Confucianism," *ESQ: A Journal of the American Renaissance* 48 (2002): 41–69; and "A Comparative Study of R. W. Emerson's Thought and Neo-Confucian Doctrines," a report of the research project subsidized by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, Apr. 2005-Mar. 2008.

[10] Emerson first became acquainted with Chinese philosophy and ethics in 1830 through Gérando's encyclopedia. Then, in 1836, Joshua Marshman's translation of the *Analects of Confucius* came into his hands, and during the summer of 1843, he read all of the *Four Books* in David Collie's translation. Finally, in 1863, he read the *Analects of Confucius*, the *Great Learning*, and the *Doctrine of the Mean* in James Legge's translation.

[11] See Robert E. Bundy, "Some Traces of the Influence of the Four Books of the Chinese Classics on the Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson" (MA thesis, Columbia University, 1926);

Carpenter, *Emerson and Asia*, 232–46; and Christy, *Orient in American Transcendentalism*, 131–37.

[12] *Confucius: Confucian Analects, The Great Learning, and The Doctrine of the Mean,* trans. James Legge (New York: Dover, 1971), 383.

[13] "Memoirs of Mencius," chap. 8, *The Chinese Classical Work Commonly Called The Four Books*, 2 vols., trans. David Collie (Malacca: Mission Press, 1828), vol. 2, 111.

[14] *The Collected Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. Alfred R. Ferguson, Joseph Slater, Douglas Emory Wilson, et al., 7 vols. to date (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971-), vol. 1, 78; hereafter cited parenthetically in text as *CW*.

[15] Regarding Emerson's view of the relation of an individual to society, see Gustaaf Van Cromphout, *Emerson's Ethics* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1999), 101–7; and David M. Robinson, *Apostle of Culture: Emerson as Preacher and Lecturer* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982), 104–5, 141–44.

[16] For the Confucianist view of language, see Michitaka Imahama, *Jukyō to "Gengo"-kan* [Confucianism and its view of "language"] (Tokyo: Kasama-shoin, 1978), 53–54.

[17] "Confucian Analects," bk. 1, chap. 3, Legge, *Confucius*, 139.

[18] Legge, bk. 14, chap. 29, 286. See Imahama, *Jukyō to "Gengo"-kan*, 11–97.

[19] The derivation of the two forms, yin and yang, from the Supreme Ultimate, and their further division into the four emblems and eight trigrams, is described in the *Book of Changes*, in which the two forms represent the two kinds of lines, one divided, the other undivided, the combinations of which form the trigrams and hexagrams. See Fung Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 2, trans. Derk Bodde (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953), 546.

[20] *CW*, 1:19; and 1 Corinthians 15:44.

[21] "Memoirs of Mencius," chap. 9, Collie, *Chinese Classical Work*, vol. 2, 124.

[22] For the Confucianist view of names, see Mikio Ōmuro, *Seimei to Kyōgen* (狂言)*: Kodai Chūgoku Chishiki-jin no Gengo-sekai* [Rectifying names and farces : The world of language of ancient Chinese intellectuals] (Tokyo: Serika-shobō, 1886), 44–46, 66–68; and Mikisaburō Mori, *"Na" to "Haji" no Bunka* [The culture of "names" and "shame"] (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2005), 13–54, 110–28.

[23] For the Confucianist concept of "share," see *Chūgoku-shisō-bunka Jiten* [The dictionary of Chinese thought and culture] , ed. Yuzō Mizoguchi, Matsuyuki Maruyama, and Tomohisa Ikeda (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 2001), 246–53.

[24] "The Master replied, 'What is necessary is to rectify names,'" "Confucian Analects," bk. 13, chap. 3, Legge, *Confucius,* 263.

[25] "Sincerity is the way of Heaven. The attainment of sincerity is the way of men," "The Doctrine of the Mean," chap. 20, Legge, *Confucius*, 413.

[26] *The Complete Sermons of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. Albert J. von Frank et al., 4 vols. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1989–92), vol. 2, 88.

[27] *Learning to Be a Sage*: *Selections from the Conversations of Master Chu* (『朱子語類』), *Arranged Topically*, trans. Daniel K. Gardner (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 125, chap. 9.

[28] For the philosophy of the Changes, see *Hikaku-shisō Jiten* [The dictionary of comparative thought], ed. Mineshima Hideo (Tokyo: Tokyo-shoseki, 2000), 487–88; and Takehiro Sueki, *Zōho-shinpan: Tōyō no Gōri-shisō* [Eastern rationalism], new ed., rev. and enlarged (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 2001), 228–36.

[29] See Stephen E. Whicher, *Freedom and Fate: An Inner Life of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1953).

[30] See *CW*, 2:202.

[31] Regarding Emerson's involvement with the slavery issue, see Marjory M. Moody, "The

Evolution of Emerson as an Abolitionist," *American Literature* 17 (Mar. 1945), 1–21; and Len Gougeon, *Virtue's Hero: Emerson, Antislavery, and Reform* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1990).

[32] "Confucian Analects," bk. 14, chap. 25, Legge, *Confucius*, 285.

[33] Regarding the biography of Zhu Xi and the political and cultural history of his time, see Gardner, *Learning to be a Sage*, 3–81; and *Shushigaku Nyūmon* [An introduction to the doctrines of the Zhu Xi school], ed. Morohashi Tetsuji, Yasuoka Masahiro, et al., vol. 1 of *Shushigaku Taikei* [The complete writings of the Zhu Xi school] (Tokyo: Meitoku Press, 1974), 31–65, 397–410.

[34] *The Complete Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. Edward Waldo Emerson, 12 vols. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1903–4), vol. 11, 342; hereafter cited parenthetically in text as *W.*

[35] See *Complete Sermons*, 4:194.

[36] Legge, *Confucius*, 385.

[37] Edward Waldo Emerson, *Emerson in Concord: A Memoir* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1888), 254, dated Jul. 3, 1841.

[38] See "John Brown," speeches delivered in Boston on Nov. 18, 1859, and in Salem on Jan. 6, 1860 (*W*, 11: 265–81).

[39] See, "Abraham Lincoln," speeches delivered in Concord on Apr. 19, 1865 (*W*, 11: 327–38).