

Culture and Ideal—
The Dignity of Life as a Postulate

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Introduction

THE differences among cultures are something that is often emphasized. Today, it is generally accepted differences of geography and place, ethnic differences, differences of history and tradition are all reflected in cultural diversity. The most difficult question is whether or not there will be mutual acceptance of these differences. Ways of thinking, of feeling and of living, form together a system, and the system of one culture will not necessarily have an affinity for those of other cultures.

Does this mean, however, that what are sometimes described as clashes of culture can in fact be attributed to cultures and cultural differences? Here I think it is necessary to think more deeply about the essential nature of culture; to avoid being swayed by the more superficial forms of cultural expression in order to understand and grasp the shared essence of all cultures. When we are able to grasp the universal aspect of culture, we will be able to understand the various phenomena of so-called cultural clashes in a new way. We will be able to create a space in which people can come together across their differences in their common humanity.

Looking at the world around us, it is impossible to avoid the feeling that the tendency to disregard life, to treat it as something of little value, represents one of the major pathologies of our age. The idea that life should be treasured is one that we are all familiar with and which few people would openly reject. Yet we cannot say that this idea is being upheld in reality. This points to the fact that respect for life requires more than just verbal expressions of support to be realized.

We need, in other words, to demonstrate the basis or foundation for calls to respect life. Without this, such calls will be relativized, and may be supplanted by assertions that there are some things more valuable than life.

For this, it is necessary to communicate a more profound message of

life's dignity. Dignity indicates that which has ultimate value, above which nothing can stand. When the recognition that life has inherent dignity is established as a practical concept, an idea that guides our actual behavior, then we will have realized the real-world significance of respect for life.

When we consider the question of culture from a deeper angle, the necessity of a conceptualization of life's dignity becomes clear. Culture is an ineluctably human undertaking. This is because culture is nothing other than how we, as humans, live our lives. Respect for the dignity of life opens the path to a world in which differences are transcended on an authentically universal, human dimension.

When we think of culture in this light, I believe we will be able to find paths for advancing the challenge taken up by this symposium: How to transcend the conflicts that arise between different cultures in order to create a global civilization.

The Essential Nature of the Multiculturalism Question

The concept of multiculturalism is understood somewhat differently by different scholars. As a general matter, it is typically understood as a way of thinking that recognizes coexistence among the different cultural groups that exist within a given state or society, and actively promotes policies to this end.¹ Today it can be understood as a set of political and social policies that seek to avoid needless friction and conflict among different cultural groups.

Today, it is clear that there is widespread recognition of existence of different, multiple cultures. It is thus only natural that there should be mutual recognition of the cultural differences that pertain among various groups. Further, there are areas in which concrete political accommodations or legal protections are required.

Here, however, it is important that we consider the way that we think about cultures, for if we think of the differences among different cultures as something fixed and permanent, we run the risk of making human beings subordinate to particular cultural expressions. This error can be compounded by treating culture politically.

What, then, is a more appropriate way to think about and deal with the question of culture? Without such an understanding, various critical problems are likely to arise. As a general matter, cultural pluralism tends to treat cultural identities as fixed in a way that becomes progressively less reflective of reality. Something similar can be said of multiculturalism. There is concern that when cultures are viewed as a plurality of

fixed, unchanging identities, the original dynamism of culture is obscured. In the worst case, such an approach can lead to violent clashes among different cultural groups.

The conflicts that have beset the Middle East, for example, are complicated by the agendas of the major powers. At the same time cultural—including religious—differences are often cited as a root cause of the conflict. But so long as different groups view themselves in terms of the unique cultural identity, building barriers that isolate them from each other, this cannot serve as the basis for discourse that leads to mutual understanding. This view can negate the very meaning and value of dialogue. In point of fact, it is just the fundamentalist stance of the leaders of the respective groups, feeding on such unreflective preconceptions, that gives rise to military clashes that bring suffering to large numbers of ordinary citizens.

As the refugee crisis demonstrates, the challenge of multicultural co-existence is a global one that no society can avoid. The present sense of deadlock in the world has its roots in the idea that cultural differences are the root cause of conflicts and that this renders their solution difficult, if not impossible.

The Search for the Universal in the Depths of Culture

However, I think such a view of culture is fundamentally problematic. Are cultural differences in fact the irremediable cause of these clashes?

Increasingly global-scale interactions make the appreciation of different cultures important and this is encouraged in a variety of ways within the school curriculum. It goes without saying that mutual understanding of each other's cultural phenomena is crucial. But if such efforts are limited to learning about other peoples' customs, language, or history, or gaining knowledge of their cultural productions, this will not be enough to foster true cross-cultural understanding.

I believe we have entered an era when it is necessary to go beyond such superficial approaches to culture, and start instead to consider the nature of culture, our fundamental way of apprehending and thinking about things. We need to grapple with the actual significance of culture. There is of course a need to recognize and respect diverse lifestyles and ways of thinking, but this alone is not enough. We need to seek out that which is universal in the depths of diversity.

To search for the universal does not mean to discover, for example, a sacred being or all-encompassing concept or idea in a transcendental realm beyond the secular world. Rather, it means to search for the

universal elements inherent in the cultural expressions of our immediate experience. This can be likened to a process of excavating the history and traditions of each culture in search of deep veins of shared values. Those veins link and connect different cultures to each other.

Only through such steady efforts will we be able to fully grasp the wellsprings of our respective cultures. Moreover, this will give us better understanding of those we may consider to be “other,” opening the way for mutual respect and cooperation in resolving real-world problems. This can also open the path to meeting the challenge of multiculturalism.

Culture as an Educative Ethos

What distinguishes humans from other animals is our desire for self-understanding. Humans seek knowledge about ourselves—what we are striving to do, who in fact we are... The impulse toward self-knowledge is a kind of spiritual need. Because of this spiritual quality—the capacity for thought that seeks deeper understanding—humans can transcend the animalistic, self-centered desires we are born with, and can express, instead, the desire to grow in our humanity and in the capacity to be authentically concerned about others.

Further, what is known as culture can be thought of as something that arises on the foundation of this spiritual quality or orientation. That is, culture is inseparable from our humanity, and it is therefore an error to think of cultures as having fixed or static content, or to consider culture and humanity separately, in mutual isolation.

Edward Burnett Tylor (1832–1917), sometimes referred to as the father of cultural anthropology, defined culture and civilization as “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.”² His definition is extremely broad but it also presents a view of humans and cultures as inseparable.

I would like to define culture as the entirety of the mental/spiritual world that arises wherever human beings engage in social life, in a way similar to the ancient idiom that refers to ethos as the second nature. Human beings live in the midst of their relations to others, and as such, culture and humans are inevitably linked. The ontological structure of the human can be described, in Heidegger’s style, as “Being-in-the-Culture.” Or to borrow the terminology of the Japanese philosopher Kitaro Nishida, we can say that humans exist in the place, or field, of culture.

Here I would like to stress another important perspective. That is, like

an ethos, culture has an educative function for humans. In Western languages, the word “culture” has roots in the verb to cultivate. The Chinese characters for “culture” mean to edify through written texts. These etymologies point to the fact that human beings grow and develop within culture, through culture and together with culture. This further suggests that humans are not automatically or necessarily human, but become human through the processes of learning and edification. This clearly indicates the educative function that is part and parcel of what we think of as culture. It would thus seem that the most appropriate way of understanding human culture is as an educative ethos.

Seeking the Wellsprings of Culture and Civilization

The Axial Age (German: Achsenzeit) is a term coined by the German philosopher Karl Jaspers (1883–1963). This frequently cited concept characterizes the period in human history around 500 B.C.E. as an era of major spiritual awakening. The ideas and philosophies developed in this period have served as a spiritual axis underpinning human culture to the present.

Thinkers of the Axial Age had a profound grasp of the significance of culture. Moreover, there are important commonalities running through their ideas, such as their insights into the nature of goodness and happiness—concepts to which many of them gave considerable thought. Their attitude suggests that culture, including religion, is not something special or extraordinary but, rather, that it arises from the essential nature of human existence and the way humans live. In contemporary terminology, their insights might be termed the humanities, broadly defined, or a philosophy of life.

Here I would like to consider Socrates (470/469–399 B.C.E.), as a representative of these Axial Age thinkers. In Plato’s *Crito* (*Κρίτων*), Socrates states, “the really important thing is not to live, but to live well.”²³ It is, in other words, a question of our fundamental orientation. This is the constant challenge for humans who are charged with the task of becoming human (or are in process of becoming human) and of considering the direction and goals toward which we are moving.

Clarifying this is the role of ethics or the study of humanity, which grapple with questions of good and evil. Herein lies the reason for the quest by many philosophers to elucidate the nature of “the Good.”

The challenge to live a good life can be said to require humans to constantly reflect on our inner state of life, something which, as in the Riddle of Sphinx, can change dramatically from the morning, to noon

and then the evening of our lives. And here the greatest question becomes that of whether or not life continues after death.

Almost all religions take the position that life (the soul) is something that continues after death. This can be understood as a central justification for the existence of religion. At the same time, however, the eternity of life (or the soul) cannot easily be proven or verified. Socrates himself is portrayed as firmly upholding belief in this eternity, even as he struggled to find ways of explaining it convincingly to others.

Phaedo is another of Plato's dialogues, one whose central theme is the soul's immortality—the question, in other words, of whether the soul is eternal. Since the setting of this work is Socrates's conversation with youth on his last day in prison before his execution, it can be assumed that Plato saw this dialogue as dealing with an issue of critical importance to be transmitted to posterity.⁴

Socrates and the Soul's Immortality

Imprisoned and facing imminent death, Socrates attempts to communicate the soul's immortality to two young men. Simmias and Cebes, however, are not convinced, and Socrates tries to persuade them using a number of proofs. Among these is the well-known theory of anamnesis (the idea learning is principally the act of remembering). The final argument Socrates uses is the Theory of Ideas or Forms; the soul's immortality proven by the fact that Ideas do not perish.

According to the Theory of Forms, if the form of smallness approaches the form of greatness, greatness yields its place to smallness. But it doesn't mean the greatness disappears. Likewise, if death approaches the living soul, the latter only yields place to death but the soul itself will never become extinct. Thus the soul is immortal.

I am not certain if this really proves his assertion. But this can nevertheless be understood as a full-throated expression of Socrates' conviction that the soul must be immortal, because it is the subject that never stops seeking the Good. If the soul, which the protagonist of this search, were to disappear, what would have been the point of those efforts?

Thus, in the concluding section of *Phaedo*, Socrates describe a myth of the afterlife in which the life of a virtuous man after death will be filled with goodness. He concludes their exchange thus: "But I do say that, inasmuch as the soul is shown to be immortal, he may venture to think, not improperly or unworthily, that something of the kind is true. The venture is a glorious one."⁵

The soul's immortality is not something that has ever been empirical-

ly verified. But Socrates asserts that he always took care such that his soul would be in a good state; and if the good person is to enjoy goodness after death, this compels us to maintain confident belief in the immortality of the soul. The principle of soul's immortality must in this sense be seen as an ethical or human imperative. As Socrates says, it is indeed a kind of venture or gamble, and his final message to youth is that there is something of value here that justifies the effort to believe.

It is not clear whether in the end the two youths fully understood Socrates's assertion. But through their dialogue, they probably grasped the significance of believing in the soul's immortality. The Theory of Forms appears for the first time in this work. For Plato, an Idea is a concept with eternal existence; in this sense it represents an ideal or norm. The immortality of the soul is likewise such an ideal or norm.

Many researchers consider the Theory or Forms to be something original to Plato. I think we can understand this theory as his way of guiding his readers to the idea of the soul's immortality.

The themes explored in *Phaedo* appear again more than two millennia later in Emmanuel Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason* (*Kritik der Praktischen Vernunft*). While on the one hand Kant distinguishes between morality and happiness, he also argues that, just as the human body and mind are one, morality and happiness must ultimately accord with each other. In other words, the Supreme Good must be established. To make this possible requires the soul's immortality. Only on this condition will it be possible for a morally good person to become happy. According to Kant, the principle of the soul's immortality (the eternity of life) is, as a postulate of practical reason, what gives meaning and satisfaction to our lives as humans.

Breaking Free from the Present Crisis and the Development of a New Civilization of Life

In the present age, culture or what might be termed the human realm is under threat. Globalization has both positive and negative aspects. The positive aspect is that, by creating common spaces, it invigorates dialogue and can contribute to mutual understanding. The negative aspects include various forms of standardization and uniformity, which are then enforced as global standards, causing important qualitative differences to be ignored or discarded. This risks shifting culture away from its original function, discussed earlier, of fostering and nurturing life. It could even end up undermining the very foundations of culture itself. Needless to say, this cannot be seen as the direction toward which a

global civilization should develop.

Globalization should not be seen as a goal in and of itself. Rather, it is meaningful to the degree that it serves as a means to reach more desirable conditions. What matters most is the way that people actually live their lives. This refers to the fact that we live in this world exerting efforts to live better; and we do so not in isolation but together with large numbers of other people. In other words the most important thing is to turn our eyes to the world of life and to make efforts to enrich and fulfill it. To enrich life means to live with a sense of awareness of and appreciation for the myriad others—including even plants and animals—with whom we share the fact of coexistence. This is where the act of respecting life has its meaning.

Simply put, underlying the various problems of our age is a widespread disregard for life or, more fundamentally, the failure to understand and appreciate the true nature of life. The lack of such an understanding of life make it impossible to discover the significance of our own and others' lives, degrading consciousness of human values and gradually undermining the very foundations of culture.

The French term *fin de siècle* is sometimes used to describe the decadence and cynicism that prevailed in Europe in the final decades of the nineteenth century. It points to a state of society in which the meaning of life and living has been lost sight of. The philosophy of life (vitalist philosophy), or *Lebensphilosophie*, that emerged at this time grew from an acute awareness of the crisis of cultural decline and urged, in response, a return to and renewal of interest in life. Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900), influenced by Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860), worked to construct a human-centered philosophy that would make possible the fulfillment of life in an era when the vital impulse was stifled and blocked. What he referred to as the superman (*der Übermensch*) was the portrayal of the human for new era, of a humanity that pursued the fulfillment of life itself.

When we look back over history, we can find a number of examples of eras in which the inner life of humanity was in crisis, and this was responded to through efforts to break out of the impasse and configure life in new and meaningful ways. The twelfth-century renaissance⁶ in Europe can be cited as one such example, as can the movement of Kamakura Buddhism in Japan, which emerged around the same time, the end of the Heian Period (794–1185) as people expressed their concern about the arrival of the Latter Day of the Law (or the final Dharma era, said to be the time when the salvific power of Shakyamuni's teachings would be lost).

The twenty-first century might very well mark the start of a similar historical transformation. That is, the present era is seen as one in which human life and vitality are confronting a crisis of historic gravity. There appears to be an increasingly sensed need for a new mode of civilization, one rooted in a new understanding of what it means to be human, of the purpose of religion, and of the nature of life itself.

As noted above, the meaning of culture is to be found in its function as an educative ethos and, as the etymology of the term indicates, culture is ineluctably tied to the question of the right way for humans to be and to live. Put differently, authentic culture has an inherent orientation toward the fulfillment of life, and respecting all that lives. This orientation can be thought to hold true in any age and place. If this is indeed the case, it is a perversion of the original sense of culture to see it as the cause for confrontation or conflict. Such a view is itself a non- or anti-cultural perspective.

To see only the superficial diversity of cultures and thus lose sight of the primal orientation existing in the depths of all cultures is to misapprehend the true significance of culture. Such an approach makes effective interactions and exchanges between cultures impossible. The important thing is the effort discover the humanity—the incomparable reality and value of life—within each culture. It is through this effort that the path toward new global civilization, one centered on respect for humanity and life, will be found.

Life and Appreciation of its Sanctity

In this sense, it is crucial to further deepen our understanding of life, and in particular, of the meaning of the sanctity of life.

When we use the word “life,” we often do so without any particular premise or explanation. We do this because we assume it is something everyone understands. But as soon as we are asked to explain what exactly we mean by “life,” it becomes clear that we don’t really know. This is because life is not something that can be explained as the object of perception or understanding. When we see something, for example, what is seen is the object. But neither the act of seeing nor the seeing subject—we ourselves—are objects of understanding here. To understand life involves the difficulty of understanding something which is not objective and cannot be objectified.

According to Japanese dictionaries, life can be defined in several ways. One of the definitions I found in a dictionary was this: “the primary source of that which makes a life form what it is.”⁷⁷ Again, this is an

explanation that is at once seemingly clear and yet not really comprehensible. The nature of life has been subjected to various debates and analyses, yet all explanations seem condemned to remain vague and indefinite in this way.

Another dictionary definition is that the “life” of something is that which is crucial or essential to its existence. This demonstrates that the word “life” already contains the implication of being of paramount importance. In this sense, expressions such as the sanctity or dignity of life are expressing something essential to the nature of life itself.

Over the course of human history, however, we see that dignity has for the most part been attributed to things that exist outside ourselves, such as a deity, the state or some elevated individual. These things or people are thought of as being separate and different from us, and we refer to them as “sacred”⁸ and take a worshipful attitude toward them. To consider oneself and one’s own existence as something dignified or sacrosanct has typically been seen as an expression of arrogance.

If we consider Socrates’ injunction to “Know thyself,” or the fact that in Buddhism the term Buddha means an enlightened one, I think the significance and directionality implicit in the phrase the “the dignity of life” is brought better into view. The sanctity of life suggests first an awareness that life means oneself, and that the “life” referenced here is one’s life in its highest state of awakening.

It can further be said that the idea of the sanctity of life requires some proof that life is not extinguished by death, that is, some presumption of life’s eternal continuity.

On this question, Daisaku Ikeda had the following to say in his dialogue with Arnold Toynbee. “Does life continue after death, or it is limited to this existence? If it continues, is that continuity finite or infinite? And then what is the state in which life continues? When we talk about ‘life,’ these are the overriding questions that must be faced and addressed.”⁹

How can the eternity of life be proven in a convincing manner? This is a truly difficult challenge. The idea that life has an eternal aspect is not an empirically verifiable assertion, and thus we have difficulty accepting it. Even if someone is convinced of this themselves, there is still the problem of how one would convince others.

Scientific and Religious Hypotheses

Here I would like to introduce another passage from the above-noted dialogues, in which Toynbee states, “I do not find any cogent evidence

either for the immortality of the soul or for rebirth. ... As I see it, the human mind has only a limited capacity for understanding the nature of the universe in which we find ourselves.”¹⁰

To this, Ikeda responded, “You are correct in saying that the inadequacies of our intellectual abilities limit our theories about the universe and about the true nature of life to unverifiable hypotheses.”¹¹ He further stated that religious hypotheses must be evaluated on the basis of the efficacy of the judgments and actions that are taken based on them. “In other words, we must ask whether scientific hypotheses are true, whereas we must ask whether religious hypotheses have value for the improvement of the qualities of humanity.”¹²

In other words, when we discuss things that transcend normal intellectual understanding, we are compelled to deal with hypotheses. Hypotheses are typically only accepted as the true explanation of phenomena when they have first been verified. But here Ikeda is saying that hypotheses can be understood in two different ways.

The truth or falsity of such hypotheses as “water is composed of hydrogen and oxygen” or “the solar system contains as yet undiscovered planets” can be verified through scientific experiment or observation. What about the hypothesis that life is eternal, that it continues over the three realms of past, present and future? This is a proposition that cannot be verified by the scientific method. But we can confirm the meaning that is generated by acceptance of this proposition.

A person who considered that her or his present bears a relation to a personal past prior to this existence may have a deepened awareness of and sensitivity to the way that they live their life in the present. Likewise, a person who believes that their present existence has a bearing on a future beyond this life may be more careful in the way they think of and treat themselves in the present compared to someone who thinks that their existence ends with this life.

In other words, the hypothesis or proposition that life is eternal is significant in terms of how people regard and value themselves in their present existence. If we accept this idea, the proposition that life is eternal is meaningful for the “improvement of the qualities of humanity” and in this sense is worth accepting or believing.

This can serve as a reminder of the importance of how, when we consider abstract concepts, it is important to make the effort to understand them from a human perspective. The phrase “improvement of the qualities of humanity” indicates such a human perspective, or what might also be called an ethical consideration and judgment. In Socratic terms, this is the challenge of living well; in Kantian terms, the challenge

from the standpoint of morality. These are qualities that are sought for by the human perspective—humanism—across differences of ethnicity, nationality or religion.

The Sanctity of Life as a Postulate

We can think about the idea of the sanctity of life in similar terms.

The assertion that life has inherent dignity or sanctity is clearly an idea that does not lend itself to scientific verification. Thus, it is appropriate to consider it as a religious hypothesis in the sense set out above. If this is the case, then acceptance of the idea of the sanctity or dignity of life must be encouraged from a human, or ethical, perspective. Only then—when the impact of a concept of life’s dignity on how we live is considered—will this concept gain universal acceptance.

Here it is worth noting how the world’s religions have, since the ancient past, included ethical content in their teachings. To give a just a few, limited examples, more than half of the injunctions contained in the Mosaic Decalogue—such as those against killing, theft, adultery, or to respect one’s parents—have a distinctly ethical orientation; they are all easily understood from an ordinary ethical perspective. The same can be said of the teachings of Christianity and Islam. In the case of Buddhism, the precepts to be obeyed are almost entirely ethical, human in their content.

There is thus a large body of humanistic, ethical content shared across different religions, commonalities that coincide across sectarian differences. When these various ethical injunctions are considered together, the idea that life should be treasured and cared for emerges as something common to them all.

As noted earlier, the ideas of happiness and peace are also important. In Kant, morality, which derives from reason, and happiness, which derives from sensibility, while distinguished, are both seen as important for human beings.

Kant saw reason as the foundation for morality and identified the Supreme Good (*das oberste Gut*) as the paramount moral good toward which humans should strive. But that alone was not enough. For Kant, ultimately the morally good must accord with human happiness; a state he called the Highest Good (*das höchste Gut*). Here, he saw immortality of the soul as necessary for the realization of the concordance of morality and happiness. It was, in this sense, the postulate of practical reason.¹³

We can say that Kant was able to establish a metaphysics in terms of practical reason. If we develop and expand on Kant’s thinking

somewhat, I think we are able to say the following:

The idea of the sanctity of life will be requested from the human and ethical standpoint. That is, respect for life must correspond to the human experience of happiness and peace. The concept required for this correspondence is the idea of “the dignity of life.”

Conclusion

When we consider the lack of respect for life that is evident throughout contemporary human society—as seen in the suffering wrought by war and all acts of violence—it is self-evident that there is an urgent demand for the widespread recognition of the sanctity of life. This is a human and ethical postulate which, if properly framed in that light, should gain widespread acceptance. This concept contains the implication that refraining from acts that harm life is the source of happiness and peace.¹⁴

We all need to attend more carefully to the implications contained in the idea of the sanctity of life. This should not, however, be particularly difficult. Because this is something inherent in all cultures; it can also be thought of as something that issues from each of our lives. When we attend carefully to this, we can always hear the echoes and resonance of non-violence. These are the echoes and resonances that Gandhi and Tolstoy clearly heard.

The work of identifying and uncovering the universals that flow through the depths of each and every human culture is essential to ensuring dialogue among civilizations. I believe that this work can contribute importantly to the realization of the theme of this symposium: Creating a Global Civilization.

Notes

¹ Trans. from *Daijirin* dictionary, third (electronic) edition entry for 多文化主義.

² Tylor, Edward. 1920 [1871]. *Primitive Culture*, New York: J. P. Putnam’s Sons. Vol.1, p. 1.

³ Plato, *Crito*, 48B. *The Last Days of Socrates*, Penguin Classics, p. 87.

⁴ In *Phaedo*, Plato has Simmias express the desire that Socrates will share with his disciples his understanding of the immortality of the soul before he dies. cf. Plato, *Phaedo*, 63C. op.cit., p. 107.

⁵ <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1658/1658-h/1658-h.htm>

⁶ The twelfth century in Europe saw the introduction of classical Greek texts, which stimulated the development and flourishing of Scholasticism. This was also the period in which the first European universities were established and Gothic architecture arose, along with the trends toward expanded commerce and urbanization. The US historian Charles Homer Haskins (1870–1937) first used the phrase the renaissance of the twelfth century, an idea set out his 1928 book of the same title.

⁷ Trans. from *Kojien* dictionary entry for 生命.

⁸ In his 1917 work, *The Idea of the Holy (Das Heilige)*, the German theologian Rudolf Otto described the religious feelings of awe and mystery as the numinous, a realm beyond rational understanding.

⁹ Ikeda, Daisaku and Arnold Toynbee. 1989. *Choose Life*, Ed. Richard Gage, New York: Oxford University Press. p. 272.

¹⁰ *Choose Life*, p. 275.

¹¹ *Choose Life*, p. 275.

¹² *Choose Life*, p. 275.

¹³ For a detailed discussion, see: *Kants Werke V, Kritik der Praktischen Vernunft*, Akademie Textausgabe, S.122ff.

¹⁴ This resonates with Albert Schweitzer's assertion that reverence for life (Ehrfurcht vor dem Leben) represents the ultimate ethics.

Author Biography

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