

Disclosing the Truth in the Methods of Buddhist Meditation

A Proposal for the Future of Philosophy and Religion

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Nowadays it has become commonsensical to claim that unlike the European traditions, Asian religion and philosophy have never been separated from each other since the beginning, the feature of which is often considered as the core of tradition. By contrast, dualistic conflict between religion and philosophy is said to occur in the West only. However, if we look into what happens in modern Asia, we will see that there is no exception to the disintegration of philosophy and religion as the result of the world-wide project of Enlightenment. As a result, reclaiming the holistic unity of religion and philosophy becomes ironically and equally urgent for the East Asian traditions.

As the response to the above-mentioned situation, I will show the way in which one can rigorously and critically *do* philosophy within the *methodical* context of religious practice. In order for doing so, I choose to focus on the relationship between truth and method in two Buddhist schools, namely the Yogācāra School in India and the Tiantai School in China. The theme I focus here is reminiscent of Hans-Georg Gadamer's *magnum opus*. In opposite to Gadamer's anti-methodic stance, however, Paul Ricoeur's proposal of hermeneutic detour seems much appealing to my project when he claims that truth can be disclosed only through the dialectics of multiple methods.

This paper concludes that in the Yogācāra School logic and epistemological analysis are required as the central method for the final realization of truth, whereas in the Tiantai School the skillfulness in exercising the dialectics of the threefold contemplation is employed as the summit of the various methods for the disclosure of truth. The former belongs to the gradual and progressive path, while the latter belongs to the sudden and paradoxical path. In spite of the distinction as such, both the Yogācāra and the Tiantai can be characterized to be the different forms of Buddhist phenomenology, because both reject the naïve metaphysical assumption. Both also agree that philosophy should be taken as the method only, but not as metaphysical system. Last but not least, although in both forms of Buddhism philosophical methods play the central role for the disclosure of truth, the moral discipline and religious compassion are equally important for achieving the altruistic liberation. To borrow Buddhist dictum, wisdom and compassion are two wheels of one cart. So are the same for philosophy and religion in the age of post-Enlightenment.