

## Yulgok and the Logic of *Li* and *Qi*

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The following paragraphs from Park Dong-Hwan's book entitled, *Western Logic and Eastern Mind*, caught my attention:

In the past I have lived under the influence of Buddhism and Confucianism. How universal are the truths uttered by Buddha and Confucius? Now I live under the influence of Western science and Christianity. Could the truths expounded by St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, Ludwig Wittgenstein and Martin Heidegger become the subjects of my lifelong research? When their ripples are gone in the never-ending flow of history, what parts of their truth will remain in my mind? In light of the turbulent experiences Koreans have had over the past several centuries, what truth can we share today?

What will disappear and what will remain? What are the principles that determine what disappears and what remains? What could indeed remain with us other than the principle of fate? Will anything of real worth remain in this world?<sup>1)</sup>

"Could the truth expounded by Wittgenstein and Heidegger become the subjects of my lifelong research?" This question led me to look back on the path I have trodden as a philosopher and to examine the point at

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1) Park Dong-Hwan (Bak Dong-hwan), *Seoyang-ui nollu dongyang-ui maeum* (Western Logic and Eastern Mind) (Seoul: Kachi Publishing Co., 1987), pp. 215-216.

which I stand now. It also made me ponder: "In light of the turbulent experiences Koreans have had over the past several centuries, what truth can we share today?" Thinking about "the principle of fate," "determining what disappears and what remains," I read Yulgok's<sup>2)</sup> books again, shelving for a while those of Wittgenstein, who has been the "subject of my lifelong research."

### String Theory

Let's start our discourse with a paragraph from Zhu Xi (Chu Hsi)'s *Daxue huowen* (Questions and Answers on the Great Learning), often cited as the basis of distinguishing between "why things are how they are" (所以然) and "what things ought to be" (所當然). The paragraph, which will be frequently discussed and referred to as "quotation A" hereafter, is usually translated as follows:

Quotation A: Truly everything has "what cannot be **abandoned** as it is what ought to be." "**The reason why things are how they are**" should be delved into, however. "The reason why things are how they are" is *li* (理). Being such, *li* is unchangeable. If somebody sees a child drowning in a well, for instance, they feel frightened and pitiful. The feeling arising in this situation is "**what cannot be abandoned** as it is what ought to be." Why so? It is because there inevitably exists the **Unchangeable Way** (道理).<sup>3)</sup>

The phrase in the above quote translated as "what cannot be **abandoned/neglected** as it is what ought to be" is "所當然而不容己" in the original. The phrase "所當然" can of course be translated as "what ought

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2) Yulgok is a pen name of Yi I (1536-1584), a statesman, theorist of government and Confucian philosopher of Joseon Dynasty

3) 『大學或問』(Questions and Answers on the Great Learning) 補亡章(英譯?): "凡事固有所當然而不容己者 然又當求其所以然者何故 其所以然者 理也 理如此 故不可易 又如人見赤子入井 皆有怵惕惻隱之心 此其事所當然而不容己者也 然其所以如此者何故 必有箇道理之不可易者"

to be" (當爲), as has been so. Taking the word in its literal sense, however, it could also be translated as "acquaintance/confronted with so and so." Then, the phrase in question would read: "What cannot be abandoned in acquaintance with/when confronted with such state of affairs 사태라는 용어에 대해서는 항상 이 譯語를 사용해야 합니까?."4) This translation fits naturally with the following sentence. Ideally speaking, as we see a child drowning in a well, we are bound to feel frightened and pitiful; this cannot be abandoned. If that is the case, "所當然" means coming in contact with a specific state of affairs, rather than "what ought to be." "What ought to be" is rather found in the following term, "what cannot be abandoned" (不容己). If we consider this connection as naturalistic fallacy under the Western tradition established and practiced by a host of philosophers ranging from David Hume to G. E. Moore, the understanding Zhu Xi's philosophy is blocked from the outset. This is because what ought to be "that cannot be abandoned" for Zhu Xi occurs only when someone is "acquainted with such state of affairs."

The issue of "why things are what they are" is directly connected with "contacting a state of affairs" and "what things ought to be." After mentioning "what cannot be abandoned in acquaintance with such state of affairs," Zhu Xi asks: "Why is this so?" In response he answers: "Because there inevitably exists the Unchangeable Way." In other words, as we are acquainted with the state of affairs, something that cannot be abandoned (what ought to be) occurs in our mind. The reason for this (what ought to be) is none other than the unchangeable (necessary) way. Not only the state of affairs and what ought to be, but also what ought to be and its necessity are thus linked up in a string.

The following example helps us to more easily understand such a connection. Let's call the following sentential form "D": "If the reason for

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4) Kang Shin-Ju (Kang Sin-ju) made this suggestion. Even if "所當然" is translated as previously, the point of the argument as developed in this article remains effective. Even when "所當然" is seen as "what ought to be," an acquaintance with the state of affairs still precedes. This will be discussed further. In quotation A, "所當然" is related to the event of seeing a child drowning in a well. The point in his argument is not concerned about its translation. The goal is to discriminate between right and wrong not in the translation of 所當然, but in the interpretation of philosophical issues. Throughout this article "a state of affairs" will be used as a concept to refer to an event and a thing.

x is necessary, x is also necessary." To see if D is true, let's substitute x with "the falsity of a contradiction like  $p \ \& \ \sim p$ ." Derived from this is the following sentence: "If the reason for the falsity of a contradiction like  $p \ \& \ \sim p$  is necessary, the falsity of a contradiction like  $p \ \& \ \sim p$  is also necessary." The antecedent and consequent of that sentence are both true. We can prove why a contradiction like  $p \ \& \ \sim p$  is false; this proof is necessarily valid. This proof also evidently shows that the falsity of a contradiction like  $p \ \& \ \sim p$  is necessary. Accordingly, this sentence is true: "If the reason for the falsity of the contradiction like  $p \ \& \ \sim p$  is necessary, the falsity of a contradiction like  $p \ \& \ \sim p$  is also necessary." Thus we find that D is true.<sup>5)</sup>

Let's substitute x in D with "what ought to be." Then we get the following sentence: "If the reason for what ought to be is necessary, then what ought to be is also necessary." In this sentence, what ought to be and its necessity are truly linked into one. From Zhu Xi's proposition that the reason for "what cannot be abandoned in acquaintance with the state of affairs" is that there inevitably exists "the unchangeable way," we can infer the following proposition: "What cannot be abandoned in acquaintance with the state of affairs" itself is "the unchangeable way." In short, what ought to be in Zhu Xi's context is a sufficient condition of necessity. This can be symbolized as follows:

$$(x)(Ox \supset Nx)$$

\* O: . . . ought to be    \* N: ... is necessary

Here we need to clarify the extension of necessity as referred to by Zhu Xi. For him, necessity is a property of the way, the reason for what ought to be "that cannot be abandoned in acquaintance with the state of affairs." Through the medium of what ought to be, necessity, accordingly, is linked with acquaintance with the state of affairs. This can be summarized as follows:

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5) This does not prove that D is always true, however. D is not true if its antecedent is true, but its consequent is false. But could there be an instance at all that is unnecessary in itself, whereas its reason is only necessary?

acquaintance with the state of affairs  $\rightarrow$  what ought to be that occurs in our mind therefrom  $\rightarrow$  the necessity of the way constituting the reason thereof

As is the case with the necessity of (the reason for) the falsity of the contradiction like  $p \ \& \ \sim p$ , accordingly, logical necessity regarded unrelated to the state of affairs in fact does not come into the extension of necessity Zhu Xi considered. This, of course, does not mean that  $x$  in  $D$  should not be substituted with "the falsity of the contradiction like  $p \ \& \ \sim p$ ." For  $D$  is a sentential form not requiring a direct linkage with the philosophy of Zhu Xi. It merely means that the above substitution is not allowed when the philosophy of Zhu Xi is made the domain of discourse. If so, a criticism may arise that our argument is problematic. It is because it tries to show that what ought to be in the philosophy of Zhu Xi is a sufficient condition of necessity by first proving the truth of  $D$  by substituting  $x$  with logical necessity, unrecognized by Zhu Xi, and then again substituting  $x$  with "what ought to be." In short, the criticism holds that we should have proved the truth of  $D$  by substituting  $x$  with a kind of necessity recognized by Zhu Xi.

What, then, is a kind of necessity Zhu Xi recognizes? It is nothing but the necessity of the way, constituting the reason for what ought to be that occurs in our mind when confronted with the state of affairs. Showing the truth of  $D$  by first substituting  $x$  in  $D$  with such necessity and then arguing therefrom that what ought to be is a sufficient condition of necessity for Zhu Xi commits the fallacy of begging the question. To avoid such fallacy when explaining the relation between what ought to be and necessity in the philosophy of Zhu Xi by drawing  $D$  into his philosophy, we did not discuss the truth of  $D$  within his domain of discourse.

Let's elaborate on the implications of the conclusion derived from this argument. Necessity for Zhu Xi is that of the way constituting the reason for what ought to be, which occurs in our mind in acquaintance with the state of affairs. Logical necessity regarded irrelevant to the state of affairs, therefore, cannot enter the extension of necessity considered by

Zhu Xi. In the context of Zhu Xi, then, is necessity a sufficient condition of what ought to be as well? A way to answer this question is contained in his use of the word "necessity." If the property of the way, constituting the reason for what ought to be that occurs in our mind in acquaintance with the state of affairs, is necessity, can that necessity itself be what ought to be as well? We should not forget that in the philosophy of Zhu Xi, what ought to be is connected with acquaintance with the state of affairs, and that necessity is connected with what ought to be. Therefore, no question can be raised in the philosophy of Zhu Xi as to whether the necessity of the way constituting the reason for what ought to be, which occurs in our mind in acquaintance with the state of affairs, can itself also be what ought to be. If such a question is permitted, an endless series of questions would ensue, repeatedly asking whether the reason for what ought to be is necessary, and if so whether that necessity itself is what ought to be. All such meta-questions, however, are foreign to Zhu Xi.

### **Conceptualization and Contextualization**

We have seen above that what ought to be and its necessity of the state of affairs man confronts in the philosophy of Zhu Xi are quite closely linked with each other. If so, precisely speaking, does what ought to be reside in the state of affairs or the human mind? As will be discussed below, when seen from the perspective of the state of affairs, it resides in the state of affairs; when seen from the human perspective, it resides in the mind. However, those two answers are not so different from each other as they appear to be. For the mind is also a state of affairs, consisting of *li* and *qi* (氣). Accordingly, the question boils down to this: Does what ought to be reside in the state of affairs man confronts or in another state of affairs, namely, the human mind that state of affairs is acquainted with? The perspective of the state of affairs and that of humans, which we have discriminated from each other, strictly speaking, respectively refer to the perspective seen from the state of affairs the

human mind is acquainted with and the perspective seen from the human mind acquainted with the state of affairs. Seen from the former perspective, what ought to be resides in the state of affairs the human mind is acquainted with. The reason is given below.

As seen in analyzing the sentential form D based on quotation A, what ought to be is a sufficient condition of necessity. By contraposition, therefore, what ought to be does not exist in the absence of necessity.

$$(x)(Ox \supset Nx) \equiv (x)(\sim Nx \supset \sim Ox)$$

\* O: ... ought to be \* N: ... is necessary

As mentioned in quotation A, necessity is a property of *li*. The absence of *li* as necessity in the state of affairs the human mind is acquainted with, constitutes a sufficient condition for the lack of what things should be in the state of affairs. Without *li*, however, the state of affairs itself cannot exist. Therefore, *li* should exist in the state of affairs; its sufficient condition calls for the existence of what ought to be in the state of affairs. As seen in the analysis of quotation A and sentential form D, however, the necessity of *li* exists where there is what ought to be. If *li*, possessing necessity as its property, resides in the state of affairs, therefore, it may be inferred that what ought to be exists in that state of affairs. This is supported by the previous observation as well that Zhu Xi will not acknowledge necessity that is not of what ought to be (logical necessity for instance). Because what ought to be and its necessity, as far as Zhu Xi is concerned, accord with each other at least in their extension.

Seen from the perspective of man acquainted with the state of affairs, however, what ought to be resides in one's mind. There is no need to elaborate on that process because it was fully discussed in the analysis of quotation A.

Then how about necessity? Does it exist in the state of affairs the human mind is acquainted with, or in the human mind acquainted with that state of affairs? Seen from the perspective of the state of affairs the human mind confronts, necessity resides in the state of affairs human mind confronts. For necessity is nothing but *li*, which is, combined with

*qi*, an element forming the state of affairs. Seen from the perspective of a man in acquaintance with the state of affairs, necessity resides in the human mind. For as observed in analyzing sentential form D based on quotation A, necessity exists where there is what ought to be, which itself resides in the human mind.

Based on the analysis of quotation A, we have seen that the state of affairs, what ought to be and its necessity are linked up into one. This applies intact to the philosophy of Yulgok which we will examine henceforth. Our interpretation does not hold that no state of affairs existed that man has not been acquainted with or that no state of affairs existed before the evolution of man. The state of affairs no man has contacted or that existed before the evolution of man carries little significance for Zhu Xi and Yulgok. Of course, they referred to such state of affairs, but their references are nothing but inferences made on the basis of acquaintance with the state of affairs. This is evident in this proposition found in *Reflections on Things at Hand*:

As we look at something immediate to us, our own body, we can see that all *li*s are present in it.<sup>6)</sup>

Depending on the background perspective, what ought to be and its necessity, it may be argued, reside in either the state of affairs the human mind confronts or the human mind confronting that state of affairs. And necessity also exists where what ought to be exists. The philosophy of Zhu Xi and Yulgok starts from acquaintance with the state of affairs. If the state of affairs prior to its being acquainted with man is others defined in no way, the state of affairs acquainted with man is transformed into man's context of life. We can describe the process of this transformation from the perspective of either the state of affairs or that of man. The perspective of the state of affairs provides ontology of the process of the transformation; that of man epistemology of the same process. Seen from the perspective of the state of affairs, as it is connected to human, the state of affairs comes to possess something that

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6) 『近思錄』 (Reflections on Things at Hand) 卷1 頁33 (bk 1, clause 33): "近取諸身 百理皆具"



ought to be, the reason of which is a necessary *li*. Seen from the perspective of man, man, being acquainted with the state of affairs, comes to possess something in his mind that ought to be, the reason of which is a necessary *li*. Yulgok articulated those two perspectives in a proposition dubbed "*qi* occurs/manifest itself, and *li* rides on it" (氣發理乘). We intend to approach this proposition from two perspectives: the state of affairs and man.

First let's interpret "*qi* occurs, and *li* rides on it" from the perspective of the state of affairs, which consists of *li* and *qi*. *Li* is a necessary reason of something that ought to be, given when a state of affairs confronts man. Subtracting *li* from the mind gives you *qi*. The state of affairs consists in a structure in which *qi* and *li* are bound together with *li* riding on *qi*, which occurs. *li*, riding on *qi* that occurs, plays the key role in binding. The occurrence of *qi* and the ride of *li*, constituting an event, *li* in tension between centrifugal and centripetal forces and between going out and coming in. The strain is formed between the unknown and the already known, the individual and the universal, furthermore the different and the identical. In each couple, the former is related to *qi* and the latter to *li*. As the individual difference emitted by centrifugal force, *qi* is the unknown surplus which refuses being subsumed by the universal identity, *li*. *Li*, pulling objects with centripetal force by riding on *qi*, is the trace of the identical and the universal that run through the many events it subsumes. It goes without saying that the centripetal force of *li*, is a metaphorical expression of *li*'s conceptual function. For unlike *qi*, no physical power is given to *li*. After all, observed from the perspective of the state of affairs, "*qi* occurs, and *li* rides on it" denotes the function of universal *li* conceptualizing individual *qi*.

Below follows an explanation of "*qi* occurs, and *li* rides on it" from the perspective of man. Confronting the state of affairs, humans come to possess something in his mind that ought to be, the reason of which is a necessary *li*. And yet the mind consists of *li* and *qi*. *Li* is a necessary reason of something that ought to be, which is what man comes to possess in his mind when confronted with a state of affairs.

Subtracting *li* from the mind gives you *qi*. The human mind is so structured as *li* and *qi* are bound together with *li* riding on *qi*, which is something that occurs and ought to be. By comprehending human mind and *li* that runs through the state of affairs mind intends, we convert unknown into known. Wherever *li* reaches, the relation of intentional affinity thus always develops between man and the state of affairs. Through this process, man draws the state of affairs he confronts into his context of life. At the same time when universal *li* intervenes in our individual and private mind, a state of affairs called our mind also undergoes transformation. Man's mind intends events, but it itself is a state of affairs made of *li* and *qi*. Reflection is possible by such duality of the mind. Only on account of *li*'s intervention, a state of affairs called mind is incorporated into the context of man's life. In short, man establishes a contextual link with not only others but himself. All in all, "*qi* occurs, and *li* rides on it," seen from the perspective of man, denotes contextualizing unknown *qi* by known *li*. *li* riding on that *qi* is the *li* of context (文理), which will be discussed in detail later.

### Multiple Realization, Locality and Individuation

Another proposition representing Yulgok's philosophy along with "*qi* occurs, and *li* rides on it" (氣發理乘) is "*li* passes, *qi* localizes" (理通氣局). While the former means that a particular *qi* that occurs is bound by universal *li*, the latter means that universal *li* is realized by being localized by a particular *qi*. The *li* that controls *qi*'s occurrence, realizes itself by the very *qi*. The proposition "*li* passes, *qi* localizes" appears to be more stable than the proposition "*qi* occurs, *li* rides on it." Whereas the former bears the burden of having to explain how *li*, devoid of causal power, rides on *qi*, the latter, by adopting a different conception, starts explaining the realization of *li* based on a locality concept that universal *li* is localized by individual *qi*. "*li* passes, *qi* localizes" implies that a single *li* is realized in various forms in many varying state of affairs formed through its interlocking with individual *qi*, localized in

various forms. This can be called "the multiple realization of *li* in the state of affairs."

But formidable problems arise in the process of *qi* localizing *li*. As it is clean, turbid, pure or impure, *qi*, unlike *li*, is not even. *li*, therefore, is individually as varied as the individual *qi*, by which it is realized. Let's hear what Yulgok had to say on this:

Being one, *li* essentially has no difference between partiality and balance, cleanliness and turbidness, and purity and impurity. But *qi*, *li* is to ride on, incessantly rises and falls, tumbles and tosses, mixed and uneven. . . . Although *li* is one, once it rides *qi*, it changes innumerably.<sup>7)</sup>

Yulgok's views do not differ from those of Zhu Xi, who made the following remarks:

Truly *li* is devoid of evil. The instant it is bestowed on temperament (氣質), however, *li* instantly gives rise to difference between cleanliness and turbidness, partiality and balance, hardness and softness and slowness and fastness.<sup>8)</sup>

What is then the reason why *qi* is so diversely individualized like this? At first glance Zhu Xi and Yulgok appear to differ on this matter. Let's hear Zhu Xi's answer first.

Question: If *li* is devoid of evil, why does *qi* have difference between cleanliness and turbidness?

Answer: To talk about *qi*, it invariably has in itself something that is cold or hot, and fragrant or foul-smelling.<sup>9)</sup>

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7) 『栗谷全書』(Collected Works of Yulgok Yi I) 卷10 頁2: "夫理一而已矣 本無偏正通塞清濁粹駁之異 而所乘之氣 升降飛揚 未嘗止息 雜糅參差 … 理雖一 而既乘於氣 則其分萬殊."

8) 『朱子語類』 *Zhuzi yulei* (英譯?) 卷4(1: 71): "理固無不善 纔賦於氣質 便有清濁偏正剛柔緩急之不同"

9) 『朱子語類』 *Zhuzi yulei* (英譯?) 卷4(1: 68): "問 理無不善 則氣胡爲有清濁之殊 曰 才說着氣 便自有寒有熱 有香有臭."

From Zhu Xi's standpoint, *qi*'s individuation results from nothing but itself. From Yulgok's point of view, on the other hand, the principle of *qi*'s individuation is very *li*. He said this:

It is *qi*'s doing that the difference cannot be leveled off. Though it is the doing of *qi*, it is necessarily controlled by *li*. The reason why it cannot level off the difference is again *li*. It is not the case that *qi* alone is so while *li* is not so.<sup>10)</sup>

What we must make sure first is the fact that the positions of Zhu Xi and Yulgok on the manner under question, as was the case earlier, are not so different from each other. In short, Zhu Xi too regards the reason of not being able to level off the difference as *li*, while Yulgok agrees that its cause lies in *qi* itself. The following quotations substantiate this well.

*qi* coagulates and organizes with ease, but *li* has no emotion, scheme and concoction. Only *li* inevitably exists where *qi* coagulates.<sup>11)</sup>

What does "*qi* occurs, *li* rides on it" mean? Tranquility of *yin* (陰) and movement of *yang* (陽) are what the frame naturally is; no causer exists that makes this happen. If *yang* moves, *li* rides on that movement; *li* does not move. If *yin* is tranquil, *li* rides on that tranquility; *li* is not tranquil. Accordingly Zhu Xi said: Great ultimate (太極) is marvelousness of nature; movement and tranquility are the frame that can be ridden on. Tranquility of *yin* and movement of *yang* are what the frame naturally is; it is the work of *li* that *yin* is tranquil and *yang* moves.<sup>12)</sup>

10) 『栗谷全書』(Collected Works of Yulgok Yi I) 卷10 頁2: 參差不齊者 氣之所爲也 雖曰氣之所爲而必有理爲之主宰 則其所以參差不齊者 亦是理當如此 非理不如此而氣獨如此也

11) 『朱子語類』卷1(1: 3): 蓋氣則能凝結造作 理却無情意 無計度 無造作 只此氣凝聚處 理便在其中

12) 『栗谷全書』(Collected Works of Yulgok Yi I) 卷10 頁26: 氣發而理乘者 何謂也 陰靜陽動 機自爾也 非有使之者也 陽之動則理乘於動 非理動也 陰之靜則理乘於靜 非理靜也 故朱子曰 太極者 本然之妙也 動靜者 所乘之機也 陰靜陽動 其機自爾 而所以陰靜陽動者 理也

In the first quotation above, Zhu Xi stresses that in *qi*'s coagulation and organization there lies *li*. In the second quotation, Yulgok says that tranquility of yin and movement of yang as the occurrence of *qi* is what the frame naturally is, and that there exists no causer that makes this happen. At the same time, reasoning *li*'s riding to be riding yin's tranquility and yang's movement, he emphasizes that the tranquility of yin and movement of yang are the work of *li*. Let's analyze those two quotations by combining them with the previous quotations. Both Zhu Xi's remarks, "to talk about *qi*, it invariably has in itself something that is cold or hot, fragrant or foul-smelling" and Yulgok's words, "tranquility of yin and movement of yang are what the frame naturally is; no causer exists that makes this happen," represent a causal closure that the cause of *qi* is *qi* and nothing else. Both Zhu Xi's remarks, "*li* inevitably exists where *qi* coagulates" and Yulgok's words, "it is the work of *li* that yin is tranquil and yang moves" make it clear that *li* is not the cause but reason of *qi*. We should not confuse cause with reason. Based on this, we may summarize our answer to the question of *qi*'s individuation this way: Cause of the individuation of *qi* is *qi*; its reason is *li*.

### Counterdetermination and the Theory of Regulation

There remain a few interesting questions to be analyzed concerning the realization of *li*. *Li* realizes itself in the process of being localized by *qi*. *Qi*, localizing *li*, is partial or balanced, opened or closed, clean or turbid, pure or impure (氣,의 특징을 나타나는 이 문장이 너무 등장합니다. 뒷 부분에서는 간략하게 한마디로 표현했으면 합니다.) giving rise to deviations in *li*'s realization. But the reason why *qi* that realizes *li* is clean or turbid, pure or impure is nothing but *li*. If so, *qi* dually relies on two different *li*: *li*<sub>1</sub> that *qi* realizes and *li*<sub>2</sub>, the reason of *qi*'s being partial or balanced, opened or closed, clean or turbid, pure or impure, that may impede *li*<sub>1</sub>'s realization. Those two *lis* to be realized, loaded on *qi*, are placed in the relation of mutually inverse proportional regulation. If *li*<sub>1</sub> is realized

strongly, it means that  $li_2$  is realized weakly in inverse proportion; if  $li_1$  is realized weakly, it means that  $li_2$  is realized strongly. When pure water is mixed with the raw materials of beer, for instance, if  $li$  of pure water is realized strongly,  $li$  of beer is realized proportionately weakly; if  $li$  of pure water is realized weakly on the other hand,  $li$  of beer is realized proportionately strongly. Viewed from the standpoint of pure water, beer, though produced using pure water as the raw material, is water in which  $li$  ( $li_1$ ) of pure water is not properly realized because of  $qi$ 's turbidity and impurity; but the reason for the turbidity and impurity originates in  $li$  ( $li_2$ ) of beer. Beer, seen from the standpoint of pure water, is something in which  $li$  ( $li_1$ ) is not justly realized due to  $qi$ 's turbidity and impurity; seen from the standpoint of beer, however, beer is something in which  $li$  ( $li_2$ ) is justly realized on account of  $qi$ 's cleanliness and purity. All in all, it can be concluded that  $qi$ 's **partiality or balance, openness or closeness, cleanliness or turbidness, purity or impurity** are relative concepts the degree of which is regulated by what is the  $li$  that is realized by  $qi$ .

$li_2$  as the reason of **partiality or balance, openness or closeness, cleanliness or turbidness, purity or impurity** that may impede the realization of  $li_1$  can be many in number. When flavor-generating chemical drugs are added in the above example, and when nutritive substances are added, the  $li$  of taste and the  $li$  of health may form new relation of contention with the original  $li$  ( $li_1$ ). All in all,  $li$  intending to realize itself through  $qi$  is always entangled in a complicated relation of regulation with various  $li$  that blocks its realization;  $Li$ 's control of  $qi$ , accordingly, cannot be decisive.  $li$ 's control of the state of affairs, consisting of  $li$  and  $qi$ , is thus also challenged. We want to call this "the counterdetermination of the state of affairs by  $li$ ." Yulgok says:

**Because of a law of nature and desire in it, human mind** is both good and evil. To eat when one ought to eat and to be clothed when one ought to be clothed, for example, which even a **saint** cannot avoid, is **a law of nature**. If one becomes evil by practicing appetite and sexual passion, however, that is an outcome of human desire.<sup>13)</sup>

Whether the human mind is good by practicing the law of nature or evil by practicing human desire depends on whether respective *li* has been "justly" realized in the human mind when it confronts the state of affairs. And the yardstick of the justness, in principle, again depends on whether respective *li*, that can contend with each other, has been regulated to the state of affairs in the most fitting way. After all, the human mind becomes excessive or insufficient depending on how much the inborn nature is covered with physical inclination and on how justly it has been realized.

### Overdetermination, Reverse Multiple Realization and Underdetermination

Besides counterdetermination, the realization of *li* has another aspect which will be called "the overdetermination of the state of affairs by *li*." Let's suppose we have an apple in front of us. In addition to being an apple, it is a fruit, a plant and a living thing. In other words, the *li* of an apple, the *li* of a fruit, the *li* of a plant and the *li* of a living thing are heaped up/overlap in an apple. Many kinds of *li* are thus amassed/overlapping in a thing or a state of affairs. This overlapping structure of *li* can be verified, for example, in the process of locating an apple in an illustrated book of nature. In accordance with the classification entered in the contents of the illustrated book, we locate first the heading of living things in that of living and inanimate things/as contrasted to inanimate things, then the heading of plants in that of animals and plants/as contrasted to animals, next the heading of fruits among plants, and finally an apple among fruits.

The overdetermination of the state of affairs by *li* represents that many different *li* which overlap are laden over one another/is a proposition that expresses that overlap in a single state of affairs.

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13) 『栗谷全書』 (Collected Works of Yulgok Yi I) 卷14 頁4: “人心 也有天理 也有人欲 故有善有惡 如當食而食 當衣而衣 聖賢所不免 此則天理也 因食色之念而流而爲惡者 此則人欲也。”

Overdetermination, accordingly, should be distinguished from counterdetermination in which different *li* **intervene/interfere** with each other in the same state of affairs. Overdetermination lacks the **intervention/intervention** and regulation mechanism shown by counterdetermination; counterdetermination on the other hand lacks the non-intervening overlapping structure of *li* displayed by overdetermination. Though the aspect of *li*'s realization differs, however, counterdetermination and overdetermination are the same in that different *li* are realized in one state of affairs. To discriminate from *li*'s multiple realization representing the realization of one *li* in numerous state of affairs, we want to call "the reverse multiple realization of *li* in the state of affairs" the element shared by counterdetermination and overdetermination: one state of affairs realizing many *li*. While multiple realization is a proposition of one *li* being realized in many different state of affairs, reverse multiple realization is a proposition that many different *li* are realized in one state of affairs. Counterdetermination and overdetermination are the two aspects of reverse multiple realization.

Since the *li* being realized in the state of affairs may be many, according to the reverse multiple realization of *li*, we cannot determine the state of affairs in question to be subsumed under a single *li*. We want to call this "the underdetermination of the state of affairs by *li*." Counterdetermination and overdetermination on the one hand and underdetermination on the other hand are interchangeable properties gained when relations between the state of affairs and its *li* are examined centered on *li* and the state of affairs respectively. Accordingly, the two are different sides of the same coin. For while underdetermination is a property formed when one state of affairs realizes many *li*, counterdetermination and overdetermination fall exactly under such a case. In short, underdetermination is interchangeable with reverse multiple realization.

The discourse developed thus far can be symbolized as follows:

I: *li*

II: many *li*



s: state of affairs

ss: many state of affairs

$xM_{yy}$ : x is realized in many ys. (multiple realization)

$xxR_y$ : y realizes many xs. (reverse multiple realization)

$xxC_y$ : many xs counterdetermine y. (counterdetermination)

$xxO_y$ : many xs overdetermines y. (overdetermination)

$xU_{yy}$ : x underdetermines many ys. (underdetermination)

(1)  ${}_lM_{ss}$

(2)  ${}_{ll}R_s \equiv ({}_{ll}C_s \vee {}_{ll}O_s)$

(3)  ${}_{ll}R_s \equiv {}_sU_{ll}$

(4)  $({}_{ll}C_s \vee {}_{ll}O_s) \equiv {}_sU_{ll}$

(1) is a proposition showing multiple realization; (2) a proposition that reverse multiple realization subsumes counterdetermination and overdetermination; (3) a proposition that reverse multiple realization is interchangeable with underdetermination; and (4) a proposition inferred from (2) and (3), showing that counterdetermination and overdetermination are interchangeable with underdetermination.

The features of *li* revealed from our discussion thus far are summarized as follows:

(5) Multiple realization: A single *li* may be realized in many state of affairs.

(6) Reverse multiple realization: A state of affairs may realize many *li* simultaneously.

(6-1) Counterdetermination: *li* that is realized in the state of affairs is subject to interference by other *li* that impede its realization.

(6-2) Overdetermination: Many *li* may be overlapped in a state of affairs.

(7) Underdetermination: In reverse multiple realization, no state of affairs may be completely subsumed by a single *li*.

Due to the multiple realization of *li* in the state of affairs, *li* and the state of affairs come into the relationship of one to many. Due to the reverse multiple realization of *li* in the state of affairs and the underdetermination of the state of affairs by *li*, which is interchangeable

with the former, *li* and the state of affairs come into the relationship of many to one. When combined, *li* and the state of affairs come into the relationship of many to many. This is a natural conclusion gained when multiple realization on the one hand and reverse multiple realization and underdetermination on the other hand are applied to *li* and the state of affairs simultaneously. Such a relation between *li* and the state of affairs opens room for one to interpret the philosophy of Zhu Xi and Yulgok as agnosticism, skepticism or relativism. Such an interpretation, however, is very foreign to them. For Zhu Xi and Yulgok are determinists who emphasize the existence of a single *li* in each state of affairs that decisively controls the state of affairs. For the proper understanding of the philosophy of Zhu Xi and Yulgok, therefore, multiple realization, reverse multiple realization, underdetermination and the relationship of many to many between *li* and the state of affairs, resulting therefrom, should be interpreted deterministically, not based on agnosticism, skepticism or relativism.

### Trinity

How can we deterministically interpret multiple realization, reverse multiple realization, underdetermination and the relationship of many to many between *li* and the state of affairs? To fulfill this end, let's return to the examples of pure water and the apple discussed earlier. In discussing the counterdetermination of the state of affairs by *li*, we observed that *qi*'s partiality or balance, openness or closeness, cleanliness or turbidness, purity or impurity are relative concepts, the degree of which may be regulated by what the *li* is that is realized therefrom. The acknowledgement of such relativity, however, does not make Zhu Xi and Yulgok relativists. In pure water mixed with a drop of beer, the pure water's *li* and the beer's *li* form a relationship of counterdetermination and are realized through mutual **intervention/interference**. But we do not call that water beer. At least, we do not drink it to get intoxicated. When

we drink it, we drink pure water, not beer and pure water at the same time. Beer is inadequate as pure water and so is pure water as an alcoholic beverage. In addition, beer mixed with water is not good beer; nor is pure water mixed with beer good pure water. Not only because beer and pure water have different contexts of use in our life, but also because we clearly understand which is adequate in a certain context, the one is not confused with the other. The same applies to the case of an apple. When we eat an apple, we do not eat an apple, a fruit, a plant and a living thing. Nor do we eat them at the same time. We eat only an apple. The context in which what we eat is regarded as a fruit, a plant or a living thing is placed on a level different from the context in which we regard it as an apple. (영어로 옮겨놓으니 언뜻 이해가 가지 않습니다.)

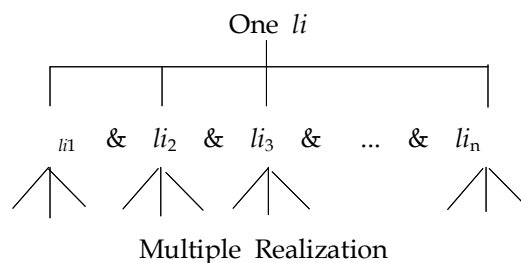
What do those two examples suggest? They suggest that in examining *man's* acquaintance with the state of affairs, we must consider the perspective of context accommodating both the state of affairs and humans as well as the perspective of the state of affairs and that of humans. Seen from the perspective of context, *li* of the state of affairs relies on context to which both the state of affairs and humans belong. Reverse multiple realization and underdetermination should be understood as a proposition that a state of affairs may realize diverse *li* depending on the context on which the state of affairs rests. Precisely which *li* is realized by the state of affairs in question cannot be determined apart from the context on which the state of affairs rests. At the same time, the reverse multiple realization and underdetermination revealed through a theoretical approach to the state of affairs and the diversity of *li* occurring therefrom are collapsed through a practical approach to the state of affairs. That practical approach is nothing but an acquaintance with the state of affairs, which Zhu Xi and Yulgok referred to. An acquaintance with the state of affairs is an *event* "that cannot be abandoned," providing a momentum for "collapsing" the realization of diversity which is allowed by the theoretical approach. State of affairs is "registered" in context when this event takes place. Diverse *li*, regarded to reside in the state of affairs, also converge into a single "unchangeable" *li*.

The convergence refers to a process through which the state of affairs makes "ingress" into the center of a context. All this process takes place through the medium of a concrete practice of humans in confronting the state of affairs.

This aspect revealed in the analysis made from a contextual perspective is a new feature unavailable in the analyses from the perspectives of the state of affairs and humans. This implies that the latter two analyses, compared with the analysis from contextual perspective, were not adequate to be complete in themselves. In short, a discourse on the *li* of the state of affairs and the *li* of mind are incomplete unless they are linked to the *li* of context. "Individuation of one *li*" (理一分殊), referred to by Zhu Xi and Yulgok, can be read as a proposition involving the relationship among the three *li*. The existing interpretation of the "individuation of one *li*" regarded it to be identical with the multiple realization of *li*. But such an interpretation faces the question of why all the *li* that are individuated constitute one in number. For whereas each individuated *li* is one in each case, the proposition of "individuation of one *li*" stresses, going a step further, that each *li* is in fact one. Of course, we can constitute one *li*, with each *li* linked up as follows:

$$\text{One } li \equiv li_1 \ \& \ li_2 \ \& \ li_3 \ \& \ . . . \ li_n$$

By connecting it with the established interpretation of multiple realization, we can also demonstrate the concept in the following diagram:



"Individuation of one *li*" then becomes a proposition consisting of two

levels: the multiple realization of *li* and the conjunction of each individuated *li*. Such an interpretation regarding a single *li* as the conjunction of many *li*, however, can hardly be established as cogent in terms of common sense. Suppose a teacher has ordered a student to "do homework, study on your own, clean the classroom, run the playground ten times and do leapfrogging for thirty minutes." It would be preposterous for the teacher to claim to have issued a single order.

It is not denied that Zhu Xi and Yulgok used "individuation of one *li*" in the sense of the multiple realization of *li*. Regarding the question of whether all individuated *li* are one in number, we propose that "individuation of one *li*" be interpreted as the *li* of the state of affairs and mind being realized by the *li* of context. To elaborate on this, we need to pay attention to the relationship among three *li*: the *li* of the state of affairs (物理), the *li* of mind (心理), and the *li* of context (文理). The *li* of the state of affairs, mind and context are introduced not to refer to an individual *li* respectively but to demarcate the different levels of *li*. The process of the context being realized in the state of affairs and in the human mind confronting it, is implied in both "*li* passes, *qi* localizes" (理通氣局) and "*qi* occurs/manifest itself, *li* rides on it" (氣發理乘). The former signifies the process of the *li* of context that runs through the state of affairs and mind being localized by *qi* into the *li* of the state of affairs and the mind respectively. The latter signifies the process of the state of affairs being conceptualized and the mind being contextualized. "*Li* passes, *qi* localizes" refers to the process of *li* of context being localized into the *li* of the state of affairs and the human mind; "*qi* occurs/manifest itself, *li* rides on it" refers to the process of *li* of the state of affairs and human mind being reduced into *li* of context. In the broader sense, there exists only the *li* of context. The *li* of the state of affairs and the *li* of mind are respectively the consequences of the *li* of context being realized in the state of affairs and the mind. Namely, "individuation of one *li*" can be understood to be referring to the individuation of one *li* into multiple *li*, going beyond implying the realization of individual *li* in multiple states of affairs. If so, "individuation of one *li*" is a proposition expressing the dependence of

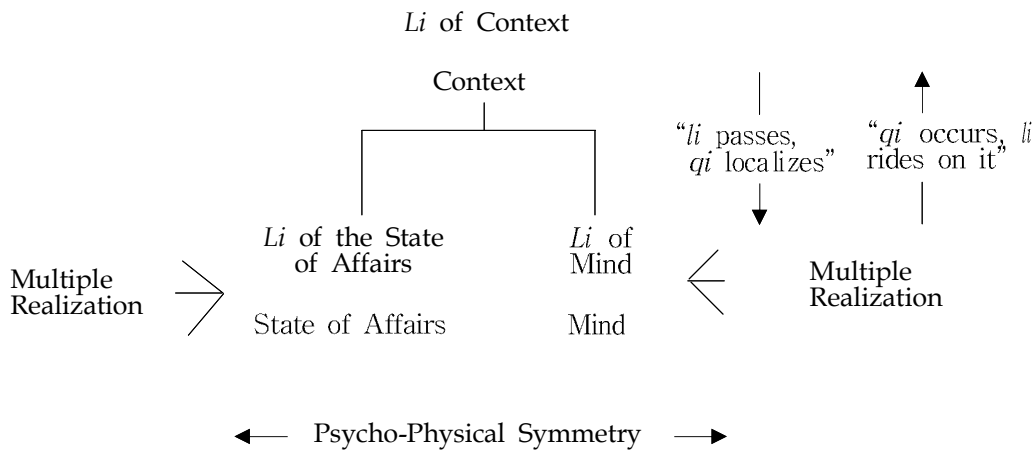
human mind and the state of affairs on the *li* of context through the medium of the concept of *li*.

Discussing the philosophies of Zhu Xi and Yulgok, we saw that what ought to be and necessity in the state of affairs man confronts reside in the state of affairs when seen from the perspective of the state of affairs and in human mind when seen from that of mind. And we defined "*qi* occurs/manifest itself, *li* rides on it" as conceptualization from the perspective of the state of affairs and contextualization from that of humans. The basic reason why the whereabouts of what ought to be and the necessity of the state of affairs humans confront is ascribed to either the state of affairs or the human mind depending on which perspective one takes can be found in that the *li* of the state of affairs and the *li* of mind are mutually symmetrical couple, subsumed by the *li* of context. I call this "psycho-physical symmetry."<sup>14)</sup> Psycho-physical symmetry is rooted in the newly interpreted "individuation of one *li*." (Though this article permits no room to discuss it, the theory of the synchronism of man and heaven, which endeavors to establish that nature and man respond to each other, provided that its mystic appearance is removed, may have been an attempt to dynamically elaborate on psycho-physical symmetry, equivalent to the "individuation of one *li*.") That depending upon the background perspective, "*qi* occurs/manifest itself, *li* rides on it" (기발리승) can mean both conceptualization and contextualization, and that both are related somehow to language (文), also corroborate that the root of the both sides, which are the state of affairs and the mind, is the *li* of context. This can be shown in the following diagram:

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14) See Lee Seung-Chong, "Toward a Symmetrical Holism," in *Language, Representation and the World*, ed. Korean Society for Analytic Philosophy (Seoul: Cheol Hak Kwa Hyun Sil Sa,, 1999). (국문으로 발표된 논문의 경우 우리말 제목을 알려주시기 바랍니다.)

### Individuation of One *Li*



Features of "individuation of one *li*" and psycho-physical symmetry revealed in our discussion thus far can be summarized as follows:

(8) Individuation of one *li*: Through the medium of conceptualization and contextualization, the *li* of the state of affairs and mind rely on *li* of context.

(9) Psycho-physical symmetry: The *li* of mind and the state of affairs, relying on *li* of context, are mutually symmetrical.

On the other hand, the process of the collapse of the relationship of many to many existing between the *li* and the state of affairs, the registration of the state of affairs for the context and its ingression into one *li*, which is at the center of the context, has an ethical implication for Zhu Xi and Yulgok. The *li* connected with man's practice and linked up with context is not underdetermined. Humans must find out and practice the most appropriate *li* in a given context. In short, one *li* refers to the most appropriate *li* for a given context and a definite principle to be practiced. Seen from such a perspective, the process of collapse, registration and ingression refers to the process of "investigating things and extending knowledge" (格物致知). The one *li* in the "individuation of one *li*" should be understood from such a practical and ethical viewpoint.

Departing from the philosophical world of Zhu Xi and Yulgok, I

turned now to discuss Wittgenstein, who was shelved for a while in order to delve into that world. Wittgenstein also acknowledges that rules have many meanings and therefore can be underdetermined. Such underdetermination, according to him, gives rise to this paradox: "No course of action could be determined by a rule, because any course of action can be made out to accord with the rule."<sup>15)</sup> But the meaning of a rule is exhibited not in any theoretical interpretation but "in what we call 'obeying the rule' and 'going against it' in actual cases."<sup>16)</sup> In short, because "'obeying a rule' is a practice,"<sup>17)</sup> no paradox arises on the practical horizon. For the meaning of a rule is always determined by practice called rule following.<sup>18)</sup> Wittgenstein's discourse, though it mentions a rule instead of *li* and a fact instead of what ought to be, is very suggestive as to how *li* of context given in a practical aspect overcomes theoretical underdetermination.

Between Zhu Xi/Yulgok and Wittgenstein, however, there lies an essential difference, offsetting such similarity. And this difference exposes to a certain extent the epochal limitations of the philosophy of Zhu Xi and Yulgok. For them, *li* of context is ultimately the fundamental principle of the Confucian community. The state of affairs and man are nothing but an aspect individuated by the community. Accordingly, Confucian social order is thickly reflected in the state of affairs and man as the bearer of one *li* that precedes them. For Wittgenstein, on the other hand, grammar as rules of context contains not only social properties. It shows what form of life in the natural history of human beings functions in the language. He regarded it more primordial than social properties. Human action as rule following and agreement in judgements are agreement in form of life.

Even if we accommodate the counterfactual presupposition that Confucian order is the only human principle available to man, as Zhu Xi

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15) Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 3rd edition, ed. G. E. M. Anscombe and Rush Rhees, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1967). The book will be referred to as PI hereinafter.

16) *Ibid.*, § 201 §표시는 페이지 아닌 다른 무엇을 가리키는 것입니까?

17) *Ibid.*, § 202

18) See Lee Seung-Chong, *Wittgenstein-i saraittamyeyon* (If Wittgenstein Were Alive) (Seoul: Monhak Kwa Jisung Sa, 2002), chapter 5.



and Yulgok invariably believed, distance between their philosophy and Wittgenstein's naturalistic philosophy is hardly narrowed. For Zhu Xi and Yulgok, *li* of context as the ultimate principle preceding *li* of the state of affairs and *li* of mind was inseparable from Confucian social order. All in all, for them context meant the context of Confucian society. For Wittgenstein, however, context does not precede nature and man. Context is rather based on human natural history and regulated by human form of life. For Wittgenstein, the social aspect emphasized by Zhu Xi and Yulgok contains only derivative reality resulting from the foundation of human natural history. We need to remember what Wittgenstein had in mind even in discussing social aspects was not a social ideology as practiced in Confucianism, but custom, habit and practice, far more primordial than that.

K C I