

# Origins of Power Struggles



# Origins of Power Struggles:

*In Light of Humanistic  
Semiotic-Ethical Epistemology*

By

Youzheng Li

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Semiotic-Ethical Epistemology

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## PREFACE

This project is neither a historical nor a history-philosophical study in a regular sense but about the relational analyses between historical events and related moral/ethical aspects through presenting the chosen historical phenomena. More exactly, it is about the causal analyses of morality and political morality expressed in actual historical manifestations in terms of humanist epistemology, which highlights the empirical inductive more than the logical-deductive approach. Our interests are focused on the causal connections between the motive and the results of historical figures regarding the formations of historical events, not specific investigations of the formative mechanism of historical developments, which would involve much more complicated historiography and other related scientific knowledge. However, the humanist-lined epistemology adopted in this project attempts to emphasize the decisive role played by basic human nature with respect to the interpersonal power struggles in history.

In consideration of the sheer volume of historical material and the diversity of interdisciplinary perspectives adopted in this study, the writing strategy of this book undergoes several changes to better present the central theme. First of all, it is not a standard-type work done according to academic patterns or to meet educational standards. Owing to space limitations, the author has had to forgo quotations and references from texts, although a great number of theoretical and historical works in different languages have been carefully studied either over past decades or during the present project process. So almost all historical materials used in the book remain at the historical and social-scientific commonsense level that is well known in different scientific and historical fields, while the author's central theme and related analyses are independently made in reference to his own specific observations and particular reading experience. Although the author has a long-term interest in theoretical studies, especially the history-theoretical one (including the semiotic-hermeneutic type), not many extended theoretical elaborations will be involved in the book's formulation either. The author hopes that the related theoretical topics will be the subject of his next possible project. So, this project is designed in terms of the secular humanist ethics explored by the author through his long interdisciplinary and cross-cultural investigations, but its final presentation remains descriptive in style. The

main intention of the author lies in pointing out that our present-day civilization remains in the transition period before the genuine humanitarian stage of human civilization. Until then, human history has always been disturbed or negatively impacted by strong careerists everywhere whose ambitious lust for power is deeply rooted in basic human nature. There have been a variety of excuses invented by power monsters for covering up the common true aims of conquests and expansionism; nevertheless, their true motivation, real effects, and ideological rhetoric can be consistently revealed by our humanist moral analyses through chosen historical manifestations across different eras and areas.

As an independent scholar living over the entire period of Mao's reign in the Chinese mainland, the author has led a parallel way of life there over many decades: on the one hand, he personally experienced and observed the entire Maoism period since 1949, and on the other, he has led a long-time (almost 20 years) self-taught study life about modern western philosophy outside the current social networks (regularly monitored by local policemen and activists). The possibility of conducting research in solitary seclusion in Maoist China was firstly due to the existence of the Peking Library (at the side of the North Sea Park, built in 1931 with the American refund of the Boxer Rebellion indemnity. The author's mother killed herself by falling from the eastern pavilion in the park for unclear reasons in 1957; a year later, the author started a long reading life at the library). Peking Library was the only Chinese library in Mao's time that was allowed to regularly import new contemporary western humanities books. After dropping out of the Department of Civil Engineering at Tianjin University immediately after the Anti-Right Movement, the author spent six years studying in that library until the start of the Cultural Revolution (1966). Ten years later, when the library reopened in the middle of 1977, the author was able to get access to its new publications, especially those about semiotics, hermeneutics, and phenomenology.

Prior to the end of the Cultural Revolution, the author's main efforts were directed to empirical positivism and Husserlian phenomenology, but he maintained a consistent interest in Chinese history. As regards his intellectual preferences, the author always pays parallel attention to two domains and different ways of thinking: modern western theoretical discourses and ancient Chinese historical narratives. Between these two heterogeneous fields, what can be communicated is the ethical elements whose formulation is, however, difficult to determine clearly. This epistemological tension formed in the cross-cultural and interdisciplinary intellectual confluences has become a motivational force driving the

author toward critical thinking of the relevant problematics, leading to the mode of the present writing strategy.

In general, the interdisciplinary scholarly interest of the author is reflected in various fields of philosophy, literature, history, arts, and religion, and a common denominator between different types of discourses is the very ethical dimension that penetrates different fields in different ways. What should be done is how to make the different ethical expressions coherent with one another in terms of humanist epistemology. In any case, we should not attempt to employ a regular approach of one discipline to “rationally” unify the materials from other disciplines. Therefore, for the purpose of grasping the entirety of ethics/morality issues, the author attempts to avoid following any traditional moral or historical philosophy formed in professional academia. Because of the involvements of natural and social sciences, the formulation of moral/ethical issues must present a plural modality. So, there exists an academic complex of moral/ethical elements appearing in heterogeneous zones, including narrative, fictive, causal, scientific, religious, artistic, and philosophical modes. However, those different approaches should not be readily put in a unified system like some professional scholars tend to do. Instead, we should deal with them first separately and then explore how to lead them to interact relevantly with one another while keeping epistemological coherence. That, no doubt, will be a collective task for subsequent generations to pursue continuously. In this regard, the present project intends only to present a temporary conclusion concerned with drawing attention to the significance of humanist epistemology in historical studies. Accordingly, interdisciplinary/cross-cultural semiotics, with which the author has been engaged for over 40 years, far from being an established academic discipline, is only a label marking intellectual orientation and the expectation of collective efforts in human sciences.

While preparing this project about morality/ethics in history, the author underwent several shifts in his writing plan. Because of the extreme complexity of the topics, the plan was ultimately fixed on analytical discussions organized at the empirical-reductive commonsense level without special theoretical dialogues with various other related important scholarly theories. The materials used in the book are mostly well-known in academia, but the author’s causal/evaluative judgments may be quite different from the current academic consensus, which is formed in different schools prefixed in various professions. The mutual difference concerning the judgments, the author hopes, will provide international colleagues with a noteworthy reference because of the author’s particular angle, formed in different historical and intellectual contexts. The special

interdisciplinary inclination of the author is, on the one hand, due to the fact that he is not trained in any special professional discipline and therefore presents a naturally interdisciplinary-lined tendency of thinking because he has never been bound by any special academic paradigms and, on the other, because, as a person who personally experienced a Stalinist-style historical period, he may know more concretely the hidden interactions between words and deeds owing to different ideological sophistications. Meanwhile, the book pays close attention to the semantic ambiguity issues widely infecting our daily languages, which could become very good soil for creating tactical tricks (consciously or unconsciously), leading to various actual consequences in historical developments. Nevertheless, even today, the human scientific and historical disciplines still suffer from the linguistic ambiguity of moral/ethical terms used in scholarly discussions.

In this regard, we should, on the one hand, learn from modern scientific and social accomplishments and, on the other, more carefully deal with the related issues of semantic clarifications of languages. That means we should pay close attention to the ambiguous/polysemic usages of traditional abstractive words used in history and philosophy, particularly those about morality and ethics, such as faith, spirit, truth, value, and other similar terms. Despite being employed in both secular and sacred spheres and signifying meanings relevant to the two worlds, those words refer to the same worldly affairs. In other words, the same humankind lives in two divergent worlds sharing the same human affairs (the same ways of eating, walking, acting, sexual contact, and fighting) but following different intelligent and operative “reasoning,” including different causational rules and behavioral codes. These paradoxical phenomena also appear in pre-modern historical records, displaying intermixed ways of descriptions/interpretations caused originally by different principles and methods. Thus, the modern segregation principle originating in separating politics and religion is also comparatively applicable to the separation of different ways of understanding human affairs recorded in historical documents, especially through distinguishing the two formulating rules belonging to the empirical/natural and transcendental/supernatural spheres. These two spheres should not be put into the same unified discursive systems like most traditional humanities do.

So, the present work attempts firstly to employ, as clearly as possible, common expressions to redefine the meaning of some familiar words in reference to various concrete historical complicities. The main purpose lies in presenting the empirically displayable causal connections between the subjective intention and the objective conditions, revealing the related moral/ethical implications, and in showing a “rule” for why and how the

instinctive “evil” intention could become the primary origin of the impulses for organizing conquests and aggressions in human history while the related external or objective conditions are only the secondary factors used as the means handled by strong careerists to realize their self-interested aims. The latter are potentially lurking in the population all the time, waiting for favorable conditions to be activated, probably resulting in some negative consequences in history, which is full of interpersonal power struggles. In some sense, we may say that evil mindsets can easily make history in suitable conditions despite the fact that the relations between a spontaneous mind and objective conditions are highly variable. A bad mind is much more effective than a good mind in making use of the objects and conditions to pursue bad self-interested expansion plans in political history, although the reverse is not true; that is, well-intentioned thought can hardly lead directly to a desirable good end if no suitable fighting technique is produced separately. However, our focus is laid neither on historical nor ethical themes as such but mainly on the presentation of the temporal sequence in the formation of historical events by analyzing the motive-result mechanism rooted in basic human nature.

In our panoramic historical presentation, the book is divided into two big sections: the pre-modern and modern parts, highlighting that the decisive turning point in human historical evolution happened around the Enlightenment. This became the starting point of the overall modern turn to intellectual and technical progress. Additionally, it marked a new historical stage where political-ideological anarchy began to prevail in a way never seen before, producing the ever-complicated cognitive confusions about common knowledge of justice, moral rationality, and ethical implications in modern history. Accordingly, a humanist-epistemological hermeneutic view of history should be further emphasized to explore the role of the permanent potential of the evil basic human nature that is also capable of applying advanced intelligent and technical conditions to attain its unchangeable instinctive impetus: to pursue absolute selfishness by conquering and enslaving other human beings. Therefore, our approach rests especially on the original mechanism of the formation of negative historical events, exhibiting the regular causal link between evil motives and bad events in human history, as well as the substantial relationship between the subjective and the objective aspects concerning the formation of events. In light of empirical-rational humanism, different types of objective historical determinism (economic, technical, geographic, cultural, and metaphysical) would be regarded as secondary or conditional in nature with respect to the formative sequence of big events. In this regard, our present point of view, based mainly on

straightforward observations and descriptions of historical experiences, may provide a useful reference perspective about human affairs for deepening our understanding of historical causation.

This book is not organized in terms of standard scholarly normality but instead intends to dig out a general pattern by reviewing the history of power struggles in the widest possible scope. Therefore, the historical examples chosen in the book are used only as empirical contexts to help present a consistent model about the real mode of the causal connections between motivation and consequences in certain big historical events. However, as said above, no specific historiography studies or historical theories are involved in our studies. Without regular citations of paragraphs from a number of other related publications read either in the author's scholarly life or during this writing period, a list of reference works is therefore omitted. Although most discourses presented in the book are empirical-descriptive in style, the writing strategy of the book follows an underlying theoretical framework, namely a semiotic-hermeneutic-lined, historical-ethical epistemology, parts of which appear in many of the author's previous publications. For the same reason mentioned in his last English book, a list of the author's publications is attached at the end of the book to introduce the outline of the intellectual/scholarly background of the author, who lives and works in a marginal world.

Briefly speaking, facing ever-complicated discussions of intellectual and political histories since modern times, the author presents a double model of historical developments: the pan-materialist political one and the pan-spiritual cultural one in functional terms. In addition to the classification among synthetically formed natural events, there is also a humanist-ethical division between the material-lined and spiritual-lined civilized accomplishments in terms of our historical epistemology. The author has pointed out before that there exist two kinds of "operational logics" driving and guiding the corresponding historical routes. The double, rather than the single, evaluative/analytical strategy of historical-ethical epistemology will provide a more rational and morally profitable theoretical-analytical diagram for us to grasp the mechanism and significance of civilized history more precisely. It should be pointed out that in the author's last book published with CSP (*High-Tech Pan-Materialism and Humanist Ethics*, 2022), the two historical lines were abbreviated as A and B, while in the present book, they are renamed as H1 and H2.

In light of the above theoretical frame, many of the author's works about traditional Confucian (*ren*) humanist ethics (*ren*-learning) have been

published in both Chinese and English. As almost the single version of the secular rational humanist ethical thought in human intellectual history, *ren*-learning, formed about 2,000 years ago, presents an impressive epistemological modernity accumulated in the spiritual-cultural history of China. In terms of a model of the alleged “ethical heroism” marked by the “three supreme virtues” (wisdom, **benevolence**, courage), three separate but coordinated ethical dimensions are employed jointly to constrain or evaluate the choices for moral actions, presenting structural-styled ethical pragmatics in the face of any ethical challenging situations. So, it is dramatically different from any single/two-dimensional morals exclusively emphasizing bravery or bravery/wisdom, frequently missing the ethical aspect in historical evaluations. There exists a cognitive/pragmatic tension among the three operative dimensions, and an operative art of *ren*-learning lies in how to deal with the three aspects coherently in the face of any moral dilemmas so as to maintain the two criteria of justice and feasibility.

A hermeneutics of *ren*-ethics could be established by a rational demarcation between the two historical trajectories mentioned above. The so-called modernity of *ren*-learning is therefore deeply revealed by its ethical-spiritual operative zone. Although it has always been claimed by imperial rulers of all times as a “political bible” and all Confucianist despotic dynasties claim to govern the country according to *ren*-learning, the true principle of *ru*-imperial reigns is the *fajia* school (traditional Chinese Machiavellian technique), the axiological opposite of *ren*-learning. Owing to this historical-ideological fabrication, however, the genuine role of *ren*-learning can be clearly disclosed today in terms of modern semiotic analysis. It is revealed to be the original mover and the humanist-ethical guide of the main streams of traditional Chinese spiritual-cultural creations, which functioned relatively independently within ancient autocratic communities.

In light of this historical fact, *ren*-learning provides us modern humans with a historically experienced model of the operative logic in the H2 zone. This ethical perspective is also reflected in the writing strategy of this book. Originally, the author intended to combine the two theoretical chapters (historical theory and humanist ethics) in the book; while the idea was eventually given up due to limitations of scope and stylistic coherence, the *ren* humanist-ethical stance can be found throughout the entire book.

\* \* \*

I thank Cambridge Scholars Publishing very much for again accepting this new explorative project of mine. For the purpose of expressing the basic clues in the complicated causal network of moral/political/intellectual



compounds in human history, I could only attempt a special formulating way of writing in order to more clearly highlight certain hidden aspects in the human-natural mechanism operating in different civilized histories. Accordingly, I prefer to be focused more on the observations and judgments originally formed in terms of my own intellectual/scholarly experiences than on following regular, professional ways of presenting. So, I am exceptionally grateful for CSP's open policy that encourages free and original critical attempts within the current closely organized academic systems and publishing markets. As is widely known, it is always challenging to organize truly liberal publishing businesses to encourage free thinking in the current totally commercialized world. Considering projects like this are performed through highly interdisciplinary/cross-cultural approaches, and especially in consideration of the contemporary global situation, full of urgent crises and risks covered up by lots of ideological superstitions, I am very satisfied that this book about multiple sensitive topics could be accepted by a professional publisher like CSP.

I have to re-express my intellectual respect for Mr. Adam Rummens and the editorial board for their broad-minded attitude to help circulate the expressions of free-thinking exploration. Without the existence of such an independent academic publisher, as an author, I would have been hesitant to compose such a book, instead probably involving myself in ideological debates that could hardly have been published smoothly. As always, a special thanks is given to Mr. Alex Mnoaghan and Mrs. Sue Morecroft, who complete successfully the proofreading of my manuscript. Knowing the availability of their qualified help, I, as a self-taught student of English, could become more self-confident in writing the book in English.

Finally, in light of my own semiotic-directed perspective, the extremely challenging mission of modernizing human-scientific theories in our globalization era requires collective efforts over generations, so my present project should be taken only as something to be improved and elaborated continuously according to the humanistic positivist orientation.

Youzheng Li  
SF Bay Area  
June 1, 2024



## **SECTION ONE**



## **PART ONE:**

### **INTRODUCTION TO THE HUMANIST HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

## CHAPTER ONE

# SECULARIZATION ERA AND HUMAN-SCIENTIFIC RATIONALITY

### **1 Segregation of politics and religion and the divisions of historical epistemology**

Human history covers miscellaneous parts or zones that have different composite contents and operative “logics” created and applied by humans at a phenomenal rate. History presents synthetically perceptive-natural matters and events formed around various sorts of human practices. For the sake of objectively describing the synthetically shaped historical phenomena and processes, we first need to divide them into different spheres in terms of their functional levels or domains. Our present essays are not regular historical studies but rather moral-ethical analyses organized on historical facts. Therefore, above all, we need to make epistemological-methodological divisions with respect to disparate functional zones, especially between the secular and sacred ones in general history (H) as well as between the material-political one (H1) and the spiritual-intellectual one (H2) in the earthly world. (The difference between phenomenal and functional divisions will be further clarified in the subsequent discussions.) For example, the first historical-epistemological division could be naturally based on the historical tendency of the modern segregation between the sociopolitical and religious spheres.

In the long period of pre-modern history, both primitive and civilized political existences extensively intermixed with religious/quasi-religious existences. Since the beginning of civilization, politics (power relationship) and religion (worship of gods) led an almost united existence. Even for higher civilized political entities, sociopolitical thoughts had been long restricted to different degrees by various religious dogmas. It is the period around the European Renaissance that marked a historical turning point at both institutional and intellectual levels, leading to the tendency toward the segregation between secular politics and sacred religion, resulting in the emergence of natural humanism in various spheres. These historically

unprecedented changes began shaking off the historical bondage and launched a new era of man-made active creations and constructions in comparison with the basically stagnant/repetitive historical modes of the past. Despite various social/cultural/intellectual achievements existing fragmentally from old times, traditional civilizations belong to the static type, while modern civilizations belong to the dynamic type owing to the rapid technical and commercial progress mainly due to the advent of mundane humanism.

From a historical-epistemological point of view, we should recognize that the entire civilized history of mankind could be divided into two sections: traditional and modern. Among the various distinguishing parameters, the separation between rational-humanist freedom and theological dogmatism should be the most determinative factor. Since then, the intellectual focus of mankind has shifted from the supernatural to the human-natural perspective, which has started an unprecedentedly accelerated development in world affairs. The new humanistic-centric history is characterized by two predominant, a-religious spiritual orientations: scientific and liberal-intellectual thoughts/practices. The former has laid the basis for modern social/economic revolutions; the latter is the source for modern social/human scientific developments. These two intellectual trends have formed the substantial foundations of modern history, during which religious traditions' sociopolitical role has continuously decreased and rational-scientific renovations have played an ever-important role in shaping new history. This eventually resulted in the present-day global pan-materialism, which, in spite of its multiple and incredible technical/material progress, is marked sharply by its lack of a pertinent mundane-spiritual dimension refilling the void left by the religious-spiritual sphere.

Modern history, in its different aspects, began in the Renaissance/Enlightenment periods. Since then, this historical period in Europe has been characterized by two major ever-increasing mental tendencies: social-cultural secularization and empirical rationalization. The emphasis on this world and the empirical-practical way of thinking/behavior has become ever more prevailing since then, co-leading to the advent of the further radically changed modern world. Suppose the 20<sup>th</sup> century highlighted the culmination of historical modernization that could be primarily marked by two features: the rational realization of political-social-cultural secularization and the all-round advancement of the empirical scientific way of thinking/practices in all fields. However, these two huge social and intellectual revolutionary changes in history had never been clearly predicted or anticipated during the long period of pre-modern

history dominated by the pre-scientific, quasi-theocratic/extreme-despotic ecology where various mythological-pessimistic prophecies prevailed, degrading the merits of earthly life and negating the interests in worldly reforms. After all, human civilizations, with their evolutions over hundreds of millions of years, entered yet another completely new stage of history after the last 300 years, full of dramatic turbulence. Despite constant complaints about and criticism of consequences brought about by these modernizing evolutions everywhere, what cannot be denied is that the modernized world today provides mankind with the best living conditions in its long history, except for the world war/natural disaster periods. We may surely assert that the main causes of this clearly advantageous transformation are exactly due to the two above-mentioned social/intellectual tendencies. So-called social/intellectual progress is mainly due to getting rid of the multiple dominances of political authoritarian, ideological-theocratic, and metaphysical-speculative powers; the key factors are scientific rationalism and sociopolitical humanism, and both are derived from generally civilized secularization. This civilizing character of intellectual/institutional secularization is ultimately based on the legal division between the religious/theological and the political/scientific spheres.

The secularization of civilization means the segregation between the temporal and supernatural lives among humans to prevent their mutual interference. As a result, the freedom of faith of individual believers could provide even more security, for cross-national religious warfare, one of the main causes of most historical violent disasters, could be avoided on principle in the secularly legalized world. More exactly, the modern world has attained a relatively satisfactory consequence: in legal terms, a social-political balance is maintained between the secular and religious sides and a peaceful coexistence can be achieved among mutually conflicting religious schools. Therefore, in secularizing contexts, religious institutions and the majority of believers are able to more effectively and safely perform their purely religious activities in their legally secured autonomies. So, so-called secularization refers only to the clearer delimitation between the secular and religious realms; in other words, the affairs of this world and those beyond are legally and intelligently divided. This sociological-legal development may even fit more with the genuine Christian principle concerning the separation between what is Caesar's and what is Christ's. Accordingly, in this world, religions would logically lose their traditional domineering privilege with respect to political and cultural affairs. A traditional religious dogmatism of the supernatural world domineering over the earthly world and its history is certainly excluded as well from the



modern democratic system and its scientific knowledge. The two worlds have been institutively and operatively segregated despite their extensive intermixture at cultural and customary levels. As a result, the legal and institutional realization of modern secularization leads to the consequence that almost all religious elements have been withdrawn from or disappeared from the main social fields, not only in most modernized countries but also in various international spheres, such as:

- political systems, both domestic and international
- law systems
- economic systems
- natural sciences
- social/human sciences
- general educational systems
- most cultural fields
- most media
- most business networks

Although many states declare that they are various religious countries maintaining their own long religious traditions, most of them exclude the religious elements from the above-listed worldly fields. Moreover, modern universal segregation has been remarkably embodied in a variety of international organizations and agreements, including the United Nations Declaration. This fact clearly indicates the contributions of the segregation ecology, particularly to the peaceful coexistence among countries with different religious-historical sources, for in history, religious-faith conflicts have frequently been the fuses of war disasters. Without the progressive segregation between temporal politics and sacred worship, different monotheistic powers would have fallen logically into mutual struggles for protecting/spreading respective sole truths within the shared earth. In the segregation context, the word “truth” should be used separately in the two worlds so that secularization can maintain, rather than undermine, a peaceful life among peoples with different life beliefs not only practically but also logically. So, in the sphere of beliefs, different traditions and customs could continue persisting freely with their different supernatural doctrines dating back thousands of years, while in the a-religious and cross-religious public domains, all kinds of believing people, as common human beings, must share the same secular-humanist interests and principles. Accordingly, in the religious world, science and worship could be thought of in a united way, while in the secular world, they must be separated both practically and logically.

The above secular-humanist manifestations of social, scientific, and intellectual achievements in modern history are all represented in written books preserved in thousands of academic libraries, the segregated counterparts of churches. The peaceful coexistence between churches and libraries without mutual interference becomes the symbol of modern times. Modern libraries are the spiritual treasures of modern empirical-rational-directed, highly intellectually developed civilizations and the foundations of modern knowledge of general cultivation, school educations, and professional training, and over 95% of collections of those written records are clearly of a secular nature. These facts can doubtlessly indicate that the modern world, especially its intellectual part, has become a secularized one in contrast with the medieval era, where intellectual centers were in monasteries. That means that most of the population, including believers, accept and follow the ways and rules of empirical rational knowledge produced in the secularized world. Even for the majority of believers, most of their life still falls in the mundane spheres, while the absolute majority of the population actually lives, thinks, and behaves according to various secular-legalized ways.

Of course, modern humans, with their various faiths, could show a psychological tension between an internal-sacred spiritual mindset and an external-temporal life. This phenomenon indicates a healthy tendency to realize a reasonable division between sacred and secular lives in the world. However, the essential mark of the secularization of modern civilization is that most professional activities are already definitely worldly in nature, and all former religious powers in both political and ideological fields no longer hold sway over the direction and approaches of earthly affairs. Regarding all kinds of earthly conflicts/disputes among different believers in the modernized world, the only authoritative judges are secularly legalized offices rather than any religious authorities as agents of a supernatural supreme power. So, quite different from ancient times, in the modern world, almost all believers in democratic countries should be subject to secular-legal regulations in disconnection with old religious laws, even though secular and sacred laws share the same historical-cultural origins. Therefore, we should pay serious attention to the following historical developments: firstly, the progress of modernizing civilization is mainly due to the success of social/intellectual secularization, and secondly, the consequences of this huge material progress are beneficial to all believers of different religions and worldviews.

The modern history of segregation implies the significant historical-epistemological enlightenment that the separation between temporal and

sacred worlds leads to two operative autonomies. Reasoning and methods regarding human life in the two worlds have been clearly distinguished, and therefore temporal human affairs can no longer be thought of and solved in any supernatural ways. In light of this, we have to exclude a popular misconception that the current sociopolitical troubles are due to the weakening or lack of religious faith or morality based on the former. All actual or worldly human conditions and situations can only be relevantly dealt with in terms of the humanist empirical-rationality or pan-scientific knowledge derived from the secular reality.

So-called secularization, in contrast to pan-religious dominance in history, is merely one aspect of historical modernization, which is characterized by the general expansion of empirical-rational mentality and universal humanistic-moral consciousness. Far from being unreasonable utopian-humanist attempts to expel religious culture from the earth, this empirical-rational movement tends to set up a more reasonable political/social/cultural division between religious and non-religious activities in our world, clarifying/readjusting different rights and functions between the two different historical experiences. In religious terms, so-called secularization is equivalent to the operative segregation or mental labor division between religious and mundane affairs. In other words, secularization, or secular-sacred segregation, refers to a more reasonably workable ideal and a more productive social system, which are more commonly acceptable by all believers as human beings who belong to mutually conflicting faithful systems. It is an absolute fact that despite reciprocal contradictory faiths (because of all self-proclamations of the unique true god), different believers exist on the same earth and share experiences of countless worldly affairs. They have suffered from two kinds of life needs in history—sacred and secular ones—while their related objects, objectives, and methods in this regard are accidentally mixed together. One sad consequence is caused by the semantic and categorical confusions in history. A reasonable solution naturally focuses on clearer discernment between the shared earthly part and the divergent heavenly part. The former belongs to the anthropological/human-natural world that keeps its natural autonomy, which can be more consistently handled without being confused with numerous supernatural elements. Therefore, a focus on this world and significant attention to empirical human affairs has been able to arise since the Renaissances, along with an empirical-rational way of thinking and humanitarian morality. Dialectically-ironically, the restrictive effect of the secularizing tendency on traditional religious dominations has led unexpectedly to two favorable consequences with respect to religious ecology. First, the segregation

principle can help realize the original Christian spirit of the operative division between the political and the convictional more effectively, leading believers to be more innocently directed to matters of supernatural faith. Second, the secularized world can help decrease or exclude the violent struggles among different religious sects. Multiply ambiguous overlapped activities in connection with the interaction of the mundane and the heavenly subject matters will lead to sharp conflicts and warfare because their mutually exclusive and intolerable dogmas are due to absolute single divine authorities; the unique “true god” systems logically imply mutual inimical antagonism.

Despite being directed to supernatural heavenly goals with different sacred stories and principles, all religions are engaged in empirical earthly affairs. A constitutional-hermeneutic self-contradiction would therefore happen as follows. First, there are different heavens-kingdoms with different religious control systems but only one single common earthly world shared positively by different kinds of believers. Second, all religions assert that their policies on the earth should be supervised and guided by their respective heavenly authorities. Accordingly, the mundane conflicts among various large religious powers have therefore become liable to be the origins of unavoidably violent turmoils throughout history. Practically speaking, how to make different religious systems coexist peacefully on our shared globe has become a historical challenge for mankind. Therefore, religiously neutral, empirical-rational humanistic wisdom could be dialectically able to solve these religion-related worldly issues caused by the traditional semantic habits formed from various mythological origins.

In the modern world, all religious and non-religious systems share the same temporal world and its history, which are structurally different from any super-empirical or imaginary spheres. As humans co-existing in the same global village, they have to have a workable common ground for pursuing consistent and reasonable communication with each other to solve their commonly shared mundane troubles. In this regard, we should recognize a reasonable epistemological duality accepted by all humans with different religious-historical traditions, namely the justified divergence of supernatural identities and the sameness of humanist identities without mutual interference. The practical tension between sacred pluralism and mundane monism in an epistemological sense could eventually be relaxed by the modern principles of secularization/segregation. Accordingly, the latter indicates that a humanist identity rooted in *homo sapiens* must make all believers of different systems share

the same empirical rational mentality and adopt its empirical-rational treatments.

In terms of religious monist classics, the temporal and supernatural parts are handled consistently, while since the new era began, believers may adopt a double hermeneutics: the original religious one and the modern humanist one, which is embodied in many social/cultural systems. In other words, a profitable split between supernatural faith and secular knowledge would occur, allowing more reasonable divisions between the two different practical logics regarding human existence. In terms of the benefits described above for both sacred and secular affairs, the principle of separation is particularly helpful in preventing various pseudo-religious frauds from underpinning secular sociopolitical progress by confusing the two types of practical logic. This kind of confusion is one of the main tricks played by cunning political rogues who pretend to play the agent of any invented gods (the cheapest way to mislead) to collect followers. If no legal criteria could be used positively to distinguish genuine religions from pseudo-religions, the legalized segregation principle could exclude the latter's involvement with such unnecessary or even harmful confusion.

## **2 Segregation and peaceful coexistence among different religions: rational causal analyses in sociopolitical history**

Modernization, secularization, and sacred-secular segregation should be taken as synonymous expressions of the same historical evolution. It is clear that all believers, regardless of their various transmitted faiths in their preferred pictures of the afterworld, are also beneficiaries of secularized modernity. They can even enjoy a more secure freedom of faith in their chosen divinity autonomies in the modern radical secular-legalized communities. In ancient times, so much cruel and violent warfare between different powers with different religious beliefs frequently happened, but in the modern legalized circumstances maintaining sacred-secular segregation, different kinds of believers can comfortably perform their various spiritual lives in their respective religious autonomies. Although traditional religious privileges in mundane life are apparently reduced or excluded, the result could become even more advantageous for genuine religious life. There would be no confusion about the separate divergent standards of evaluation and reasoning caused by the two heterogeneous worlds. And it should also be recognized that because of this epistemological/practical confusion between the two worlds involved in different evaluation/reasoning norms, people's living conditions in this world were frequently damaged or less improved in history. Arbitrary

involvements in disorderly earthly affairs by divergent religious doctrines and habits were liable to produce mutual conflicts. For the sake of maintaining peaceful coexistence among different supernatural faith systems (each one has a single absolute authority) in the shared earthly world, it is naturally desirable that all humans find a commonly acceptable way to handle their common problems occurring in the shared earthly world where all humans are defined in equal terms.

No doubt, the progress or improvement of living conditions in this world should be almost totally ascribed to the revolutionary developments of empirically-rationally directed scientific knowledge and simultaneous democratic-political progress. So, all kinds of believers should also recognize how much benefit they have obtained from secularization, which apparently leads to reducing the earthly involvement of any religious authorities. Epoch-making progress in long human history was made by the early democratic land of the United States, which is partly based on the special secularized arrangement by dint of the sacred-secular segregation era despite most founding states having strong religious faiths. The point does not lie in the strong Christian beliefs of the Founding Fathers but rather in their intelligent wisdom for clearly segregating the secular and the sacred affairs in the constitution. The awareness of strictly segregating the two worlds (human-natural and divinity-supernatural) in human life represents tremendous creative rationality in reorganizing political/social life in human history. The achievement was also due to the especially favorable geographic/historical conditions that made the people in the new continent cut off the traditional ties with the old world full of religious warfare.

The religion-politics complex in the old continents had been one of the most serious causes of disasters and tragedies throughout history. These political-military conflicts, which made so many believers of different sects fight each other and therewith suffer horribly, were frequently caused by conflicts between different religious faiths and their secular policies. Contrary to the above-mentioned popular saying that social-political wrongdoings in the world are due to people lacking firm religious faiths, history ironically reveals that paranoid faith operating in unsuitable contexts can become a dynamic trigger to increase fighting energy for killing other humans in countless religious wars. The intertwined phenomena of spiritual piety directed toward heaven and physical brutality on earth prove once again that only the segregation principle can solve these disasters caused by the conflicts between heavenly and earthly authorities. Now, because of prevailing political secularization, different religious traditions can have a more rational, peaceful, and cooperative