

Zheng Guan-ying (鄭觀應) 's Enlightenment Thought — Its Civilization-theoretical Interpretation —

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In Zheng Guan-ying's enlightenment thought, modernity coexists with tradition. But his thought is not a simple mixture of tradition and modernity. Both of them raise chemical reactions with each other in his thought, and produce a new kind of modernity or tradition. That shows in his theory of *yang-wu* (洋務), *bien-fa* (變法), and *dong-tao* (東道); the former two are based on the Western method and the last one is the Eastern or Confucian Way.

I suggest the perspective of civilization-theory, which means not by prescribing that tradition is conservative, particular or wrong; nor that modernity is progressive, universal or right, but by understanding that both of them have their own values from which each could learn from the other. Bearing this in mind, I will consider Zheng Guan-ying's enlightenment thought. This subject is divided into five sections, identified with his writing activity and enlightenment thought, his concern about *yang-wu*, *yang-wu* and *bien-fa*, *bien-fa* and *dong-tao*, and *bien-fa* and the faction of *bien-fa* and/or revolution.

His thought is characterized by the 'anti-modern' modernity or the modern of 'anti-modernity': Adding to the tendency of modernism, it includes the aspects of moralism, globalism (the ideology of *tian-xia*), mutualism, and relativism which are based on traditional thoughts, particularly Confucianism. In the process of adopting the modern Western method/civilization he intended to comply with its strengths on the one hand, but also to keep its defects—above all, the lack of morality—out of the good points in traditional thought, as a matter of course. As we are

about to enter the 21st century and are talking about post-modernity, in my judgement, his thought and its characteristic of morality have to be reevaluated.