Chapter VI

Globalization, Cosmopolitanism, and Friendship[1]

In this essay I would like to suggest that many understandings of today's globalization give rise to at least one major problem. And I would also like to suggest that what might help solve that problem is focussing fresh philosophical attention on a cardinal conceptual innovation in yesterday's cosmopolitanism.

Such help would be important. For, as Korea's Ban Ki-moon, the United Nations Secretary General, observed in his speech, "The Bonds that Unite Us," on the eve of the G8 summit in early July 2008 at Lake Toyako in Japan's Hokkaido, we must recognize that today's radically new problems are global and require global solutions.[2] But among these problems might also figure a still insufficiently critical understanding of what today's globalization itself is.

My suggestion will be that a still almost forgotten understanding of cosmopolitanism yesterday may help us articulate a less unsatisfactory notion of globalization today. The bonds that unite us, I believe, are not so much Ban Ki-moon's global concerns; they are our own ancient cosmopolitan natures as human beings.

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1 This essay is a revised version of an invited paper at the World Congress of Philosophy held in Seoul 2008 and first published in revised form in Russian in *The Journal of Global Studies,* 2 (2009), pp. 61-70.

2 Cf. the French version of his speech, "Ces liens qui nous unissent," in France's main morning newspaper, *Le Figaro,* July 3, 2008.

§1. Orientations

By way of introduction, here are several stipulations about how I will be using in what follows our key terms, "globalization" and "cosmopolitanism."

In what we may call Oxford English, that is in contemporary British usage of English as recorded in the most recent Oxford dictionaries,[3] "globalization" is a relatively recent English word. This is also the case for its equivalents in other languages.

In common English usage, the word "globalization" goes back no farther than to the mid-twentieth century.[4] And, today, the word "globalization" refers to "the action of globalizing" in the sense of doing something whose scope encompasses the whole world. Thus, the emphasis of the English word "globalization" falls heavily on generalization.

By contrast, in Oxford English "cosmopolitanism" is a relatively older word. Its common English uses go back to the mid-seventeenth century. Today, the word "cosmopolitanism" generally refers to a quality some persons and groups may have.

Some dictionaries call this quality "being at home." That is, some are at home not just in their countries of origin but almost anywhere in the world. Such persons or groups are understood as no longer confining themselves to all the attachments of their countries of birth. Here the emphasis falls more on universality rather than on generality.[5]

When viewed from the perspective then of common Oxford English usage today, a philosophical seminar entitled "Globalization and Cosmopolitanism" might seem to be about inviting renewed philosophical reflection not just on some everyday par-

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3 These new dictionaries are all based on the extraordinary resources of the British National Corpus of the English Language database, the Oxford English Corpus database, and the Oxford Reading Programme database.

4 I rely here and throughout on the two-volume *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary,* 6th edition, 2007.

5 More specific nuances may be found notably in *Roget's Thesaurus of English Words & Phrases*, 150th Anniversary Edition, ed. G. Davidson (London: Penguin Reference, 2002).

ticular matters like the world-wide spread of information, communication, and financial technology. Rather, the title of such a seminar might suggest a focus on two rather abstract matters, on, say, generality and universality. And indeed our colleagues in this seminar have mainly pursued the general and the universal.[6]

With these initial remarks in mind, let me now reflect with you briefly on four brief points only.

The first point is the general character of today's understandings of globalization. The second is one substantive danger that arises from this general understanding of globalization. By contrast, the third point is the universal character of just one of yesterday's understandings of cosmopolitanism. And the final point concerns what might bring together a certain globalization and a certain cosmopolitanism into something more than either just a so-called European or African "anthropocentric ethics"[7] or just a so-called East Asian "eco-centric ethics."[8]

§2. The Generalizing of Cognitive Know-How

We are already aware of course that globalization is not one thing. For in addition to the spread of the sciences and technologies across the entire world, other important areas of human activity have also become increasingly uniform on a global scale. This has been especially the case in the course of the last several generations.

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6 Cf. F. Cheneval's Chairman's remarks at the Seoul World Congress in Philosophy about three contemporary uses of "cosmopolitanism" and recent criticisms of cosmopolitanism, C. Koné's paper, "Mondialisation et cosmopolitanisme," and A. Chumakov's paper, "Globalization and Cosmopolitanism in the Context of Modernity."

7 See, for example, Park Ynhui's "Human Nature and Human Worth," in his *Man, Language and Poetry* (Seoul: Seoul National University Press, 1999), p. 41.

8 See, for example, Imamichi Tomonobu's critiques of such merely "eco-eccentric" views and the elaboration of his alternative account of an "eco-ethics" in his influential book, *Eco-Ethica* first published in Japanese in 1990, shortly thereafter translated into Korean by Jung Myong-Hwan, and then more recently translated into German and English.

Thus, some cultural activities are now to be found almost everywhere, such as the dominance of certain forms of popular Western music. Similarly, certain industrial practices are also now to be found almost anywhere, such as the dominance of East Asian just-in-time manufacturing and ware-housing techniques. Still another example of globalization can be found in the accounting practices of the World Trade Organization which now uses widely harmonized methods for primary, secondary, and tertiary goods and services.

So, far from being just one thing, globalization includes different scientific, technological, financial, industrial, political, and cultural forms – to give a partial list only.

Moreover, globalization in this sense of the world-wide generalization of certain human practices has occurred many times in human history and not just within the limits of our own daily experiences and memories today.

To take but one example, recall that at the end of the nineteenth-century and up until the outbreak of the twentieth-century's ominously entitled First *World* War, the industrial revolution had already spread – at least in theory – across the entire world. This movement has been called the first modern globalization.

That is, countries around the world were already beginning to profit everywhere from the application of the substantially improved efficiency of manufacturing practices that previously had been confined to one part of the world only.

Contemporary world historians point to many other examples in the ancient, the medieval, and modern eras across the globe, such as the spread of Alexander the Great's Hellenistic culture across the ancient world, or, in the medieval period, the spread of Chinese maritime trade, and so on.

Now, many historians today would appear to have reached provisional consensus on at least two aspects of globalization.

Thus, many historians today seem largely to agree, first, that the most important period of extensive and truly pervasive globalization is the present era. And they also seem largely to

agree, second, that the most salient kind of globalization is the globalization of today's science and technology. In this second respect we may speak of globalization in Imamichi Tomonobu's felicitous terms as "the technological conjuncture," that is, as the now historically most important era of the global interconnectedness of informational and communicational technologies.

If globalization today is neither uniform in kind nor unique in number, can we briefly specify globalization further in terms of several of its most striking properties? Recall for now several elements only from just one of many such contemporary analytic attempts to do so.

Thus, we might reasonably characterize globalization thematically as a set of at least six theoretical features.[9]

That is, at the worldwide level globalization would seem to exhibit the systematization and generalization: first of economic realities; second, of social relationships; and third, of political unions. And, similarly at the world wide level, globalization would also seem to exhibit: fourth, the generalized contraction of diversity; fifth, the collapse of various dichotomies between the particular and the universal; and finally, a generalized mixture of trust and risk.

We need not, of course, to take these features here in any definitive order. For very schematic characterisations like these require careful qualifications. Nonetheless, something like this recent thematic characterisation of globalization is highly representative of contemporary expert opinion.

If we now go on to reflect on the current working consensus among historians and theorists of globalization, perhaps we can discern at last one very prominent and perhaps even

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9 Among many others, see notably M. Waters, *Globalisation,* 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 15-16. I owe this reference to Cheikh Mbacké Gueye. See his discussion in his important book, *Late Stoic Cosmopolitanism* (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2006), pp. 147-159. Note, however, that my discussion of *oikeiôsis* is independent of his views (cf. notes 12 and 13 below).

fundamental feature of globalization today. May I suggest that such a feature might not unreasonable be taken in summary as globalization's essential tendency today to generalize at the world level that particular kind of practical knowledge English speakers call "know-how," the specific cognitive mix of imaginative power and technical expertise?

For our present purposes then, we might take globalization here as the planetary generalization of systematized practical know-how. Perhaps we may call the generalization of this kind of knowledge "cultural globalization."

§3. Is Today's Globalization Mainly Cognitive Generalization?

I come now to an important problem with today's generalized understanding of globalization as mainly cultural globalization in the sense of the generalization of knowledge understood as mainly technical know-how.

The difficulty is that this insufficiently critical understanding of globalization all too often results in devastating cultural consequences.

Among these consequences, I think, are often the rather thoughtless Western criticisms of most Asian so-called "ecocentric" ethical reflections, of so-called "Asian values" and of the absolute primacy of the value and worth of nature. And, conversely, among these negative consequences also are the often rather thoughtless Asian criticisms of most European and African so-called "anthropocentric" ethical reflections, of so called "humanistic values" and of the absolute primacy of human beings.

But, perhaps, the most important negative consequence of the overly narrow yet dominant understandings of globalization today in terms mainly of cultural globalization, is the gradual subjection of the entire planet to a generalized and largely uncritical notion of knowledge and understanding. This notion is the idea of knowledge and understanding as pre-eminently systematized practical know-how as contrasted with the idea

of knowledge and understanding as also an always incomplete approximation to a less inadequate knowledge of oneself and of others.[10]

This subjection of the reflective pursuits of genuine self-knowledge – artistic, philosophical, and spiritual – in turn leads inexorably to the instrumentalization of nature itself including human nature, whether in the smoggy skies today above Beijing or in the smouldering forests of Borneo or in the depleted fisheries of the Mediterranean or in the now virtually completed hyper-development of the Italian, French and Spanish coastlines.

This quite serious problem, however, may also be taken as including in part some elements for a serious solution. For the very cultural *imperium* today that has globalized an overly practical interpretation of knowledge and understanding as systematized cognitive know-how conceals within its origins a still fruitful philosophical view. That view is an understanding of a reflective cosmopolitanism in terms of a largely stable yet nonetheless dynamic equilibrium between fundamental self-directed and other-directed primary impulses at the centre of human nature itself.

Besides the generalization of systematized practical know-how, then, globalization now needs to incorporate a certain critical cosmopolitanism. Such a critical cosmopolitanism would be a universal and not just general consciousness of human nature as so constituted that both natural self-interest and natural affinity with others and with all living beings are equally primordial for all human beings.

But on such a view of globalization and cosmopolitanism, neither human nature's instrumentalization of nature as a whole nor the deification of cosmic nature as a whole, is finally satisfactory. The simple truth we already recognize everywhere, is that neither human kind nor nature is divine. Neither an an-

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10 See for example J.-P. Delahaye's paper on undecidability and incompleteness in recent work on Gödel, "Presque tout est indécidable!", *Pour la Science*, n° 375 (Janvier 2009), pp. 88-93.

thropocentric ethics nor an ecocentric ethics can finally satisfy us. The differences are too profound.

To begin to appreciate just how profound these differences are, imagine briefly another one of those tiresome so-called "dialogues." The dialogue might be between still another European sometime political leader visiting East Asia and trying to suggest all too politely to his East Asian host that the continuing violation of human rights in East Asia is ethically unacceptable everywhere. And imagine a similarly tiresome dialogue between still another sometime East Asian political leader visiting Europe and insisting just as overly politely to his European host that the continuing violation of the natural environment in Europe is ethically unacceptable everywhere.

In Europe, the European leader could well respond to his East Asian guest's criticism by questioning the absolute primacy many East Asians seem to place on the value of nature in the light of the finally more important priority that human beings have of needing to reasonably use nature for their legitimate development. And in Asia, the East Asian leader could well respond to his European guest's criticism by questioning the absolute primacy many Europeans seem to place on human rights in the light of the fundamentally more important priority over human rights for any truly humane government to guarantee natural communal harmony.

The basic difficulty here is how to mediate thoughtfully enough the quite fundamental differences in such a way as to preserve the genuine insights of each quite basic worldview while finding a mutually acceptable way of reconciling their incompatibilities.

We must be careful here not to underestimate the profound nature of differences like these, differences between which of two primary values is taken as finally absolute in the sense of being primordial.

For behind such fundamental differences between nature as absolute value, versus human beings as absolute value, lie still more fundamental cultural presuppositions. Such presupposi-

tions subsist not just at the level of countries nor of languages nor of religions, but at the level even of entire civilizations where greatly different comprehensive worldviews have held sway for many centuries.

Thus, for many European philosophers today, often marked far beyond their conscious realizations by their Hebrew, Greek, Roman, and Christian heritages, who might argue the absolute priority of human beings over that of nature itself, one profound assumption is necessarily the presupposition of meaningfulness and, still more deeply, of reason in its guise of Greek *logos.*[11]

By contrast, for many East Asian philosophers today, often marked equally far beyond their full comprehension by a Buddhist heritage whatever its Indian, Chinese, Tibetan, Korean, or Japanese lineages, who might urge the absolute priority of nature over human beings, one profound assumption would be the presupposition of action and, even more deeply, of suffering in its guise of Sanskrit *dukkha.*[12]

How could any clear-headed European philosopher argue out of the fundamental cultural presuppositions of a universal cosmic reason in any finally mutually satisfactory way with any right-minded East Asian thinker reflecting out of the fundamental cultural presuppositions of a universal cosmic suffering?

How to proceed?

For an all too partial response if not a solution to this difficulty with today's overly narrow construals of globalization, may I direct our attention briefly to several elements from one of yesterday's reflective cosmopolitanisms?

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11 See for example the unusual Japanese perspective of Seizô Sekine's *A Comparative Study of the Origins of Ethical Thought: Hellenism and Hebraism*, tr. J. Wakabayashi (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005).

12 For example, see the non-Asian American perspective of Glenn Wallis's compilation, translations, and notes in his *Basic Teachings of the Buddha* (New York: Modern Library, 2007).

§4. Yesterday's Reflective Cosmopolitanism

If we might agree tentatively, then, on taking the problematic nature of today's globalization as mainly the planetary generalization of systematized practical know-how only, just how are we not unreasonably to understand further the sense and significance here of "cosmopolitanism?"

Like globalization, cosmopolitanism is neither uniform nor unique. That is, cosmopolitanism is neither essentially any one thing nor has it historically appeared at only one time. Rather, on similar kinds of historical and thematic investigations that we just rehearsed with respect to globalization, I think that cosmopolitanism is also more than one thing and has also appeared historically more than once.

This is especially the case for what we might call generally a reflective or philosophical cosmopolitanism. And it is particularly for at least one cardinal conceptual feature of ancient Western Stoic cosmopolitanism.

In short, I would now like to suggest that a cardinal conceptual element on exhibit in, specifically, late Stoic cosmopolitanism in one of the major originating moments of Hebrew, Greek, Roman, and Christian Europe may still prove fruitful even today in other parts of the world. For this Stoic notion in yesterday's cosmopolitanism may offer an important conceptual resource for reconfiguring less unsatisfactorally the generally one-sided and insufficiently critical understandings of today's globalization.

That almost forgotten conceptual feature was what later Greek and early Roman Stoics termed, with a now barely translatable expression, *oikeiôsis* or *oikeiôusthai.*

§5. "Appropriating" One's Shared Human Nature?

Very roughly in English, the noun form, *oikeiôsis,* means something close to "orientation," or "appropriation," or "affiliation," or "the recognition of something as belonging to one[self]." And in its more frequent occurrences in its verbal form as

oikeiôusthai, oikeiôsis means, again very roughly, something like "coming to be (or being made to be) well-disposed towards something."[13]

Stoic philosophers began their reflections with a shared conviction that the nature of human beings was part and parcel of the nature of the universe.[14] Accordingly, cosmic nature and human nature, although evidently quite different in scale and in many other respects, are, on Stoic views, unified in the ways in which the whole is unified with its parts. Stoic thinkers investigated cosmic nature mainly in the contexts of their logic and physics. And they investigated human nature mainly in the related contexts of their logic and their ethics.

Many Stoic thinkers believed that they could most reliably investigate human nature by beginning empirically with careful observations of the newly born human being, and then by confronting their own observations argumentatively with those that eminent non-Stoic thinkers had also made of newborns. Thus, sets of fundamental observations were to be opposed and their oppositions resolved wherever possible through reasoning.

In particular, some Epicureans believed that observations of the newborn human being show that it naturally and above all primarily and originally endowed with a basic inclination towards pleasure. By contrast, some Stoic thinkers held that the most basic, original, natural, and primary impulse of the newly born human being (just as with newborn animals and newly burgeoning plants) was not towards pleasure but towards self-preservation.

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13 The first translation is that of B. Inwood in his *Ethics and Human Action in Early Stoicism* (Oxford: OUP, 1985); the second that of A. A. Long and D. N. Sedley in their standard collection of texts and translations in English, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: CUP, 1987); the third that of B. Inwood and P. Donini in their comprehensive article, "*Oikeiôsis* and Primary Impulse," in the authoritative *Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy*, ed. K. Algra *et al.* (Cambridge: CUP, 1999), pp. 675-738; and the fourth that of G. Stricker, "the Role of *oikeiôsis* in Stoic Ethics," in her collection, *Essays on Hellenistic Epistemology and Ethics* (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), pp. 281-297.

14 In this general summary here I mainly follow Inwood and Donini, 1999.

These Stoic thinkers held, further, that in all cases this primary impulse was directed to the way the human being, animal, or plant is so-to-speak "constituted." This constitution while remaining generally fixed nonetheless changes with time. In the specific case of the human being, the generally stable character of one's constitution is the natural basis for one's ego-centric dimension, the self-regarding pole. And the particular evolving character of one's constitution is the natural basis for one's "allo-centric" dimension, the other-regarding pole.

Thus, on many late Stoic accounts, a human being retains a fundamental affiliation with its own natural constitution, with itself. Yet as its natural constitution develops, a human being also develops a consciousness of a just as natural fundamental affinity with others. That is, a human being has a natural affiliation both with himself or herself and with all other human beings as well.[15]

In short, late Stoic teachings on *oikeiôsis* comprise a set of carefully argued both empirical and philosophical views. On these views, all human beings are naturally endowed with a stable and yet dynamic natural constitution. All human beings bear an inalienable affinity to their natural constitutions which

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15 Note that later Epicureans tried to explain how in friendship our own pleasure is more desirable than our friend's and yet how our own pleasure in friendship cannot be more desirable than our friend's without taking our friend's pleasure fundamentally into account. For experience shows that taking our friends as no more than means to our own pleasure finally subverts the friendship itself. Yet taking our friends as ends in themselves would subvert the basic Epicurean doctrine of the primacy of one's own pleasure. Addressing this problem in Book I of his *De finibus,* Cicero distinguished. He argued (at least on one authoritative reading) that "although our friends' pleasures and wellbeing are not intrinsically as important as our own, we must love them as though they were. And the only way someone can do that is actually to feel the same towards his friend as he does towards himself... Hence the [Epicurean] theory [of friendship] is made to yield to treat friends altruistically" (I.67-68). The ms. text is to be found in *Sent. Vat.* 23. This translation incorporates, however, a strongly supported textual emendation of *airetê* (choice-worthy) for *arête* (virtue). See M. Erler and M. Schofield, "Epicurean Ethics," in *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy,* ed. K. Algra *et al.* (Cambridge: CUP, 1999), p. 668, note 61, whose discussion I follow here.

their primary impulse is to preserve. And they also bear a natural affinity to all other human beings in that all other human beings have exactly the same natural constitutions.

This human nature of all human beings strongly impels human beings to appropriate consciously and reflectively their double affinity, both to themselves as singular individuals and to all other human beings a well, by leading thoughtful, reasoned, and virtuous lives in the interest of promoting a new solidarity.

So much then for several brief reminders about one of yesterday's reflective cosmopolitanisms, a truly critical cosmopolitanism refined in both continuing empirical inquiry and in continuing philosophical argument, an almost forgotten resource today for thinking second thoughts about the nature of globalization.

§6. Claims, Attitudes, and Friendships

I would now like to conclude with a fourth and final remark about trying to mediate between profoundly opposed philosophical attitudes such as those often underlying some of today's most intractable ethical disputes about absolute values.

This final point can be no more than a speculative proposal. Such a proposal arises not from further reflection on the uncritical globalization of systematized practical know-how. Rather, the proposal comes from trying to retrieve the old ideal, remarkably present in both traditional East Asian as well as in traditional European reflective cultures, of pursuing the virtues of cosmopolitan philosophical friendships.

Here, I would like to offer this concluding suggestion not in the typical European form of an extended philosophical argument such as those between Greek Epicureans and late Roman Stoics, but in the looser and larger form of a brief personal reminiscence.

Thus, the bare fact is that in concluding I have no theories to urge as to how finally to mediate today such profound differences as those that hold between contrasting basic cultural presuppositions. However, like so many others both in Asia and

in Europe, I do have several exemplary teachers whom I often remember.

And, again like so many others, I also have the experiences of philosophical friendship to reflect on. I would like then to draw on those experiences now in an informal way to bring some of these perhaps overly abstract reflections a little more down to earth. And I also would hope to recall here presumably very similar experiences which perhaps many others have shared as well.

With deep gratitude I often remember a most demanding teacher. He was at home in the bi-lingual, multi-religious Alsatian culture of France, my maternal grandmother's culture, but almost everywhere else as well. He had not just generalized but universalized certain reflective views about the proper appropriations of true self-knowledge in the ongoing recognition of one's true affinity with others – "*soi-même comme un autre*" he would say.

And in speaking of the profound reflections of the truly great philosophers, he also often said, "Do not keep looking for mistakes. Even in the finest works of the finest philosophers there are always far too many mistakes. Rather look always for what is good in these thinkers. And then strive over and over again to re-articulate that good ever less unsatisfactorily." After some years working together yet always independently, we became friends, philosophical friends.

And with deep gratitude I also remember a most challenging colleague. He was at home in the culture of Japan, the culture of my father's mortal enemies, but almost everywhere else too. For like my French philosophical friend, he too had not just generalized but universalized certain reflective practices, especially those arising from the relationships between *jiriki* and *hariki,* between the Pure Land Buddhist notions of self-power and other-power.

While discussing with each other the successes and failures of different philosophical attempts to articulate the good, he often would stop and then say nothing. He would quite simply

just sit there, and he would sit silently. Like many Western persons I was both increasingly disquieted by this to me unfamiliar behaviour and yet unwilling to risk offence by breaking such silences.

And after awhile my colleague would start talking again. But then the usual pauses would become longer. Eventually, I was less disquieted with his now protracted silences. And after some years meeting together, we became friends, philosophical friends.

In the case of my European philosophical friend, speaking together as long as possible both in his own language, French, and in my language, English, while trying to articulate what is good was at the very basis of this friendship. Putting together less unsatisfactory words in what Descartes memorably called the order of reasons enabled us, I believe, to open ourselves out onto fresh philosophical reflections which we now shared in a feeling of profound respect, gratitude, and freedom.

And, in striving to articulate what is good, I also believe we came to realize more fully a fundamental affinity between perhaps some small goodness in ourselves and finally one that subsists in ever human being. Thanks to my friend, I sometimes think, perhaps mistakenly, that I am now a little more like him, a little more at home almost anywhere, at least for awhile.

In the case of my East Asian philosophical friend, however, I discovered that trying together to articulate what is good was not a matter of speaking for as long as possible about such dark matters; it was rather a matter of letting certain silences protract themselves. For although he alternated speaking English and German, my friend could not speak his own language with me because I neither understood nor spoke Japanese. We were often just silent together.

Meditating these initially frustrating silences, however, eventually became the basis of this different philosophical friendship. Letting the silences gather gradually made room, I now believe, for intimations of very much larger contexts which we learned to share.

And, in struggling repeatedly to let myself be silent while my friend was silent, I also believe I succeeded not so much in opening up a set of philosophical claims about what is good that each of us together could reasonable come to endorse. Rather, I came to believe, again perhaps mistakenly, that my friend and I had allowed ourselves to come to recognize perhaps some of those much larger horizons that disclose no particular set of philosophical claims yet sustain some of our most fundamental philosophical attitudes, the complex contexts of our shared humanity.

Envoi

These two personal experiences of philosophical friendship – so similar I am sure to what so many today from both Asia and the West have also experienced – give rise to my concluding suggestion.

The suggestion is that exploring the universalization of the reflective cosmopolitanism we find in traditional understandings of philosophical friendship can help counter the often dangerous consequences of most understandings of globalization today only in terms of the generalization of systematic practical know-how. This reflective cosmopolitan attitude that philosophically interiorizes a critical re-appropriation of Stoic doctrines of *oikeiôsis* is part of what makes for true philosophical friendship.

And this reflective cosmopolitanism is also what can motivate the striving for a dynamic equilibrium between egocentric self-regard and altruistic concern for others, between self-power and other-power, between a merely anthropocentric ethics and a merely ecocentric ethics.