

狗子無佛性： 人類世末世下意義強迫症、虛無恐懼影視再現和公案治療

張嘉如 紐約市立大學布魯克林學院，正教授兼系主任

摘要

本論文思考「意義」在行塑造人類願望和痛苦上所扮演的角色。在查爾斯·泰勒所謂的「世俗時代」下，我們稱之為「意義」的東西已取代超越性的地位，取而代之地成為我們所信奉的新宗教。我們以自身構建的意義為基礎來為抽象的思想、原則或意識形態而戰，甚至犧牲生命在所不惜。人類的意義生產不僅造成大規模滅絕，也催化了人類文明的滅亡。現在我們正走向「人類世末世」：2018年聯合國政府間氣候變化專門委員會提出警告，地球距離災難性的生態崩潰只有12年的時間。面對當前的人類世災難，人類必須「學會如何死亡」，進而從事後人類世的修復工作。本文提出，「學會如何死亡」的方式不在產生更多的意義或重新配置意義，也不在於拒絕或超克虛無主義。要想重修我們與其他物種的關係，我們得先認清人類自身的「意義強迫症」。對虛無或虛無主義的恐懼（我稱之為「虛無恐懼症」）實為意識到生命的無意義性、意義的匱乏以及繼之而來的恐懼的反應。

我認為，「學會如何死亡」必須仰賴「虛無」和「虛無主義」。藉由更深入地進入虛無和虛無主義的深淵，全盤解構人類物種出發的認知和意義建構（如我、人類和壽者等概念），人類才能開始與其他生態生命和解，並接受被排除在意義之外的剎那生滅的無常。唯有消除人類的意義建構的妄想，我們才能夠真正親近那些處於「例外狀態」的裸命眾生。禪宗的公案修行為「人類世末世」下的療癒科技，幫助我們對治虛無恐懼症，將我們從意義強迫症的枷鎖裡解放出來。本文聚焦禪宗公案，作為的療治人類「意義強迫症」的修行工具。禪宗裡的「大死」和「大活」指的是從空的經驗裡面的意義消亡。藉由參「無字公案」、「大隋劫火」和「龍潭吹燭」等公案，修行者最終得以「返根還源」，克服自身存在的疏離感或「匱乏感」。虛無主義或「空」為一個「人類世末世」生態脆危時代下必要的治療策略，從而與世間萬物建立一種超越意義的親密無間且真實的關係。

關鍵詞：人類世、禪宗、公案、虛無主義、生態治療、無/空

Dog Has No Buddha Nature: The Compulsion for Meaning, Nihilphobia and Chan Nothingness as Eco-Therapy in the Anthropocene End-time

Chia-ju Chang Brooklyn College-CUNY, NY, USA

Abstract

The paper considers what role “meaning” plays in shaping the unintended suffering caused by human aspirations. The thing we call “meaning” in what Charles Taylor terms “the secular age” has replaced the transcendent and becomes the new religion we espouse. We fight for abstract ideas, principles, or ideology, predicated on the meanings we construct, and we are even willing to be martyred for them. Humans’ meaning production has catalyzed not only the massive extinction of non-human species but also our own civilizational demise. Now we are heading toward an “Anthropocene eschatology”: in 2018, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warned that the Earth is only 12 years away from calamitous ecological collapse. To face our current Anthropocene crisis in the most awakened way, we as a species must “learn how to die,” so to speak, so that we can begin the post-Anthropocene restoration. This article proposes that the way to learn how to die does not reside in churning out more meanings or reconfiguring old meanings, but embracing the meaninglessness described by the very term nihilism. To restore our relationship with other species, we first need to recognize the problems with *Homo sapiens*’ deep-ingrained compulsion to construct meaning for building and sustaining a sense of identity. Our fear of nihility or nihilism (or what I call “nihilphobia”) is a gut-reaction to our recognition of the meaninglessness of life, our personal and collective insignificance, and the inescapability of death or impermanence vis-à-vis the threat of climate catastrophe.

I argue that humanity (particularly in the West) has not become more nihilistic as Nietzsche predicted and most modern scholars of nihilism profess. On the contrary, it

has become more anti-nihilistic and nihilphobic. This is particularly evidenced in the cinematic representations of nihilists as sources of evil and chaos. From an ecological standpoint, nihilism is not and should not be a curse word. In fact, learning how to die requires nihility and nihilism. Only by going deeper into “nothingness/nihility” and “nihilism” can we thoroughly deconstruct human-centered views and meaning construction (e.g. the concepts of an I, human beings, and a long life, etc.). Only then can we begin to come to terms with other eco-lives and with our impermanence, which has been excluded from our meaning production. Only by letting go of our grip on meaning can we become truly intimate with “bare lives” in the “state of exception” phenomenologically. In terms of this situation, the gong’an or kōan practice of Zen Buddhism is the therapeutic technology we need in the Anthropocene eschatology. It helps us in the treatment of nihilphobia and liberates us from the shackles of our meaning-driven obsessive-compulsive disorder.

The paper zooms in on the spiritual genre of gong’an, a soteriological tool devised to cure Homo sapiens’ of their compulsive search for meaning. In the gong’an literature, the phrases “dying on the cushion” and “the great death/awakening” refer to the abolition/nihility of meaning through the experience of śūnyatā. By working with gong’ans such as “Has the Dog Buddha Nature?” “Da-sui’s Kalpa Fire,” and “De-shan Blows out the Candle,” Chan practitioners equip themselves with the means to overcome their existential sense of separation or “lack” by returning to the root source of our consciousness itself. Nihilism and śūnyatā are both necessary therapeutic strategies for building an intimate and authentic non-anthro-solipsistic relationship with ten thousand things beyond the hegemony of meaning.

Keywords : the Anthropocene, Chan/Zen, gong’an/kōan, nihilism, eco-therapy, śūnyatā/emptiness