

Interpretating and Expanding The Golden Mean of Confucius with Neutrosophic Tetrad

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Abstract: Neutrosophy is a new branch of philosophy that studies the origin, nature, and scope of neutralities, as well as their interactions with different ideational spectra. There are many similarities between The Golden Mean and Neutrosophy. In order to achieve the mission of the expansion and development of The Golden Mean towards "modernization" and "globalization", not only Chinese scholars, but also foreign scholars should participate in this mission, and not only Chinese contemporary popular ideas and methods, but also foreign contemporary popular ideas and methods should be applied. There are many different ways for interpretating and expanding The Golden Mean with "Neutrosophic tetrad"(thesis-antithesis-neutrothesis-neutrosynthesis), and come to different conclusions. This paper emphasizes the one conclusion that in practice, The Golden Mean cannot be applied lonely for long-term; it needs to be combined with other "principle".

Key words: Neutrosophy, interpretation, expansion, The Golden Mean, Neutrosophic tetrad, thesis-antithesis-neutrothesis-neutrosynthesis

1 Introduction

"The Golden Mean" is one of the most significant achievements of Confucius (Kong Zi). Mao Zedong said, Kong Zi's notion of Golden Mean is one of his great discoveries and achievements, also is an important philosophy category, and worth explaining well.

As well-known, moderate views were originated in ancient times. According to historical records, as the Chinese Duke of Zhou asked Jizi for advice, Jizi presented nine large governing strategies, including the viewpoint of "The mean principle". That is the unbiased political philosophy dominated by upright, and the comprehensive pattern with the combination of rigidity and moderation. According to the interpretation of many predecessors' viewpoints of "The mean principle", after expanding and developing these viewpoints, Confucius created "The Golden Mean".

Similarly, after the age of Confucius, many scholars are trying to use all kinds of ways to interpret and expand "The Golden Mean" of Confucius.

From the Tang dynasty, a number of "Neo-Confucianism" were emerged, which highlighting characteristics were combining Confucianism with Buddhism, Daoism, and the like, including Western academic thought, and forming numerous new schools.

If considering "The Golden Mean" presented by Confucius as the first milestone, like that, the thought of "worry before the people and enjoy after the people" presented by Fan Zhongyan, the Chinese Northern Song dynasty's famous thinker, statesman, strategist and writer, is not only the highest idea of Confucianism, but also can be considered as the second milestone of "The Golden Mean". Its meaning is as follows: neither worry everything, nor enjoy everything; but taking the middle, namely, worry in some cases (before the people), and enjoy in some cases (after the people). In addition, this historic famous saying is perhaps the most meaningful "golden mean". Someone once pointed

out that "The Golden Mean" is very conservative, and very negative. However, reading this sentence of Fan Zhongyan carefully, that people may make a new assessment for "The Golden Mean".

The thought of "traditional Chinese values aided with modern Western ideology" appeared in Late Qing Dynasty is the third milestone of "The Golden Mean". Since the first opium war (June, 1840~August, 1842), in view of the fact that China repeatedly failed miserably in front of Western powers, some people argued that China must be reformed. The early reformists had proposed "the policy mainly governed by Chinese tradition, supported by Western" (this is also a "middle way"), that purpose is to encourage people to learn from the West, and oppose against obstinacy and conservatism. In late 19 century, there was a dispute between old and new, and between Chinese model and Western model. The old-fashioned feudal diehards firmly opposed to Western culture, they regarded anything in the Western capitalist countries as the enemy. While the bourgeois reformers actively advocated Western learning, argue that China should not only learn the advanced science and technology, and also follow Western political system. Among the violent debate, ostensibly neutral thought of "Chinese learning for the essence, western learning for practical use" gradually gained the upper hand, and had a profound impact. Even today, there are still some scholars appreciate this slogan, and attempt to make new interpretations to it.

It is not unique, in foreign countries we can also find the similar formulation.

For example, in ancient Greece, Aristotle proposed the idea of "The Mean Principle" .

According to Aristotle, people's various acts have three possible, namely excessive, less and moderate. For example, all men have the desire, while the excessive desire, and the less desire, are all the manifestation of evil, only moderate is a virtue. Namely the middle path is the virtue. There is a clear difference between Aristotle's view and "The Golden Mean" of Confucius that the latter was taking "benevolence" as the core.

In addition, Buddhism and the like also have the thought of "The Mean Principle" .

In 1995, the American Romania scholar Florentin Smarandache created Neutrosophy, it had similarities with "The Golden Mean". For more information about Neutrosophy, see references [1-3].

To sum up, the ideas of "The Golden Mean" and the similar concepts are the crystallization of the mankind wisdom. However, in order to keep pace with the times, "The Golden Mean" and the similar concepts must be expanded and developed in the directions of "modernization" and "globalization". In order to achieve this task, not only Chinese scholars, but also foreign scholars should take part in the related actions; and not only Chinese contemporary popular ideas and methods, but also foreign contemporary popular ideas and methods should be applied. Only in this way, the results can be widely recognized all over the world, and have a positive and far-reaching impact.

Needn't avoid speaking, it has not yet attracted enough attention to expand and develop "The Golden Mean" applying foreign contemporary popular ideas and methods. In view of this, in this paper we try to interpret and expand "The Golden Mean" with Neutrosophy, and hope that more people will pay attention to this problem.

In references [2,3] we have pointed out that, the position of “mean” pursued by The Golden Mean, is the optimized and critical third position, situated between the excessive and the less.

It needs to stress that, according to the fact that Confucius made great contribution for the amendment of “The Book of Changes”, some people thought that The Analects of Confucius only discussed the two kinds of situations which are positive and negative (masculine and feminine, yin and yang, pro and con). While in fact it was not so simple, besides the contents related to “The Golden Mean”, The Analects of Confucius also discussed three kinds of situations which are positive, negative and neutral. For example, in book 2 of The Analects of Confucius, Tzu Kung put forward the positive and negative situations: “What do you pronounce concerning a poor man who doesn't grovel, and a rich man who isn't proud?” Confucius presented the better critical situations: “They are good, but not as good as a poor man who is satisfied and a rich man who loves the rules of propriety.”

Neutrosophy is a new branch of philosophy that studies the origin, nature, and scope of neutralities, as well as their interactions with different ideational spectra.

This theory considers every notion or idea $\langle A \rangle$ together with its opposite or negation $\langle \text{Anti-}A \rangle$ and the spectrum of "neutralities" $\langle \text{Neut-}A \rangle$ (i.e. notions or ideas located between the two extremes, supporting neither $\langle A \rangle$ nor $\langle \text{Anti-}A \rangle$). The $\langle \text{Neut-}A \rangle$ and $\langle \text{Anti-}A \rangle$ ideas together are referred to as $\langle \text{Non-}A \rangle$.

Neutrosophy is the base of neutrosophic logic, neutrosophic set, neutrosophic probability and statistics used in engineering applications (especially for software and information fusion), medicine, military, cybernetics, and physics.

Neutrosophic Logic is a general framework for unification of many existing logics, such as fuzzy logic (especially intuitionistic fuzzy logic), paraconsistent logic, intuitionistic logic, etc. The main idea of NL is to characterize each logical statement in a 3D Neutrosophic Space, where each dimension of the space represents respectively the truth (T), the falsehood (F), and the indeterminacy (I) of the statement under consideration, where T, I, F are standard or non-standard real subsets of $] -0, 1+[$ without necessarily connection between them.

Thus it can be seen that for the discussion of “mean”, “middle”, “neutralities”, and the like, there are many similarities between The Golden Mean and Neutrosophy.

It should also be noted that, the biggest difference between Neutrosophy and The Golden Mean is that the former includes a wide variety of practical mathematical methods. Because of some reasons, the mathematical knowledges of many Confucian scholars are not much. Therefore, in general the Confucian scholars cannot propose the quantitative standard to evaluate The Golden Mean, they only rely on their perception. While, Karl Marx believed that, a science can only be achieved perfect situation when it is successfully applied to mathematics.

Now we present a simple example of the application of mathematical method. Considering the middle situation composed by “positive” and “negative”. The proportion of positive and negative, besides the standard 5:5, also can be 6:4 or 4:6, 7:3 or 3:7, 8:2 or 2:8, 9:1 or 1:9, and so on. For more complex cases, it is necessary to apply the mathematical methods of Neutrosophy.

However, involving mathematics not much cannot preclude that "The Golden Mean" and "Neutrosophy" realize the common situation in mathematics; as discussing "The Golden Mean" and the related questions, if we need to take into account quantitative relationship, then the mathematical methods of "Neutrosophy" can help us, and realize the common situation in mathematics with "Neutrosophy". In fact, this is also one important part of the interpretation and expansion of "The Golden Mean". Of course, this kind of work need to be undertaken by the people who are familiar with both "The Golden Mean" and "Neutrosophy" .

3 Interpretating and expanding The Golden Mean with “Neutrosophic tetrad” (thesis-antithesis-neurothesis-neutrosynthesis)

In reference [4], Prof. Smarandache pointed that, the classical reasoning development about evidences, popularly known as thesis-antithesis-synthesis from dialectics, was attributed to the renowned philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and later it was used by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels . About thesis and antithesis have also written by Immanuel Kant, and the like. While in ancient Chinese philosophy the opposites yin [feminine, the moon] and yang [masculine, the sun] were considered complementary.

For the reason that Neutrosophy is a generalization of dialectics. Therefore, the dialectical triad thesis-antithesis-synthesis of Hegel is extended to the neutrosophic tetrad thesis-antithesisneurothesis-neutrosynthesis. A neutrosophic synthesis (neutrosynthesis) is more refined than the dialectical synthesis. It carries on the unification and synthesis regarding the opposites and their neutrals too.

For interpretating and expanding The Golden Mean with “Neutrosophic tetrad”(thesis-antithesis-neurothesis-neutrosynthesis), there are many different ways and come to different conclusions. This paper emphasizes the one conclusion that in practice, The Golden Mean cannot be applied lonely for long-term; in many cases, it needs to be combined with other "principle".

Example 1, if ask a man who likes to do everything according to The Golden Mean: will you wear the black, or white clothes to attend the meeting? The answer should be the unbiased one: I will wear grey clothes. But according to “Neutrosophic tetrad” (thesis-antithesis-neurothesis-neutrosynthesis), there are many different ways: (1) wear deep grey clothes; (2) shallow grey clothes; (3) coat white, trousers black; (4) underwear white, coat black; (5) black for the beginning of meeting, white for the end of meeting; (6) changing colors sequently with black, grey, and white; (7) this conference black, next conference white; (8) participate in different conference respectively to wear black, white, grey, and different combination of the three colors. And so forth et cetera.

In this example, The Golden Mean cannot be applied lonely for long-term; in fact, no one can always wear grey clothes to participate in any meeting and gathering, at least the bride cannot wear gray clothes for wedding.

Example 2, in Chinese ancient romance of the three kingdoms, as Zhuge Liang command the war, he is generally apply "combining punishment with leniency" of The Golden Mean. The most obvious example is that in the battle of Red Cliff, firstly he associates with Zhou Yu to beate the army of Cao Cao, and obtain a brilliant victory; but he deliberately send Guan Yu to ambush at Huarong Road, due to gratitude for the old

kindness, Guan Yu and his army loose the powerful enemy of Cao Cao. However, in some cases, Zhuge Liang cannot carry on The Golden Mean. For example, as Ma Su is defeated and losing a place of strategic importance, Zhuge Liang put him to death without mercy. In addition, Zhuge Liang captures Meng Huo seven times, and looses him seven times; it is so tolerant, and rarely seen in history.

Example 3, some scholars believe that the theoretical foundation is the unity of heaven and man. An instance is as follows, a boat is travelling from the river's midstream to downstream. In Song dynasty, the famous poet Su Dongpo was rafting with guests beneath Red Cliff, and did write the eternal masterpiece "Chibi Fu". For this reason, the men who cling to "The Golden Mean", intend to follow Su Dongpo and write a masterpiece again. While although thousands of writers visit Red Cliff, no one can write a decent poem.

However, besides Su Dongpo's manner, according to the viewpoint of "Neutrosophic tetrad" (thesis-antithesis-neurothesis-neutrosynthesis), people can also boating against the current, sail in the sea, sing in the loess plateau, and the like;

In short, at the right time, the right place, and having a good authoring environment (similar to what happened when Su Dongpo wrote "Chibi Fu"), the writers can apply different ways to write excellent poetry and other literary works. For example, the "Four Classics" (A Dream of Red Mansions, Journey to the West, The Three Kingdoms, Water Margin) were not written by sticking to the stereotypes of Su Dongpo.

Due to space limitations, we no longer discuss other examples and results of the interpretation and expansion of "The Golden Mean".

3 Conclusions

The "mean", "middle", "neutralities", and the like, are not fixed; "The Golden Mean" is not a rigid rule too. The "mean" and the like are not always located at the equidistant midpoint between the two opposing sides, and are not always fixed at some point or within a certain range, but will change with the specific time, specific location and specific condition.

Including "The Golden Mean", the essences of Chinese traditional culture, should change with the times, and expand and develop towards "modernization" and "globalization".

For this purpose, to expand and develop the essences of Chinese traditional culture (including The Golden Mean) with foreign contemporary popular ideas and methods, is a very important task. In this aspect, Chinese scholars have the unshirkable responsibility. Applying "Neutrosophic tetrad" (thesis-antithesis-neurothesis-neutrosynthesis) to expand and develop The Golden Mean, is an initial attempt, and hoping to play a valuable role.

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