

[Essay]

“Dehellenization of Thought” and the Philosophy of Life From the Viewpoints of Leslie Dewart and Masahiro Morioka

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Abstract

Within his philosophy of life, I suggest that Masahiro Morioka is inviting us, at a basic level, to “think about thought,” which is an inclusive activity embracing all versions of philosophy as well as science. Only humans think philosophically, thus as an academic discipline his philosophy of life, to my mind, engages the unique quality of life, i.e., human consciousness. That is to say, his understanding philosophy of life, as an intellectual activity requires the human mind, within an historical and an evolutionary context, to recognize a unique “human self” and relate it to its environment without the aid of classical Greek philosophical categories. I suggest that Morioka’s thinking about nature, life and death, in the Western context may be compared favourably with the “dehellenization of thought,” as understood by Leslie Dewart.

1. Commentary on Morioka’s Paper: “Philosophy of Life in Contemporary Society”

It took me a few readings of Masahiro Morioka’s paper, “Philosophy of Life in Contemporary Society,”¹ presented in 2017 at the Fifth China-Japan Philosophical Forum (Ritsumeikan University) before I understood, I believe correctly, the intent of his particular point of view. Being a philosopher myself, although retired from formal teaching, I can appreciate his frustration with the lack of philosophical understanding in contemporary academia. As well, I can understand his intuitive attitude towards human life, having had that experience myself, which I found is often under-appreciated in Western philosophy.

Philosophy of life, as he sees it, is a broad-based concept and too broad in fact, to be conceptualized within a single intellectual perspective. It requires more than one perspective. Thus, his philosophy of life constitutes a variety of approaches to human thinking requiring various epistemologies in interpreting

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¹ Morioka (2017).

human experience.

The sciences have their place within his philosophy of life. These may be viewed collectively as intellectual activities proper to human beings, and like philosophy, amounting to “thinking about thought.” Such thinking about thought philosophically and scientifically characterizes the difference between human life and animal life, which appears to lack the ability to reflect on its own experience of life. All life, human and animal, is conscious but human consciousness has a specific capacity that animal consciousness lacks, that is, self-reflectiveness upon its own experience. (I prescind from any consideration of a “vegetative consciousness.”) Further, humans consciously give meaning to their experiences. Which is to say that animals fail to conceive an “image of life,” to use Morioka’s words. He notes that humans are able to contextualize their experience around the two poles of “irreplaceability” and “interrelatedness.” Both poles are metaphysical notions. As metaphysical notions their meaning cannot be deduced merely from an organism’s activity. They must be assigned meaning arising from the experience of the individual thinker. Further, these particular notions are not like the metaphysical notions abstracted from the social sciences which do allow for the contextualization of their intellectual objects that, of themselves, have no concrete being, i.e., crowds, nations, political parties, ideological movements, a history, etc., which constitute images of life.

To my mind, his understanding of philosophy of life as an academic discipline formalizes the various dynamic principles generated in human thinking. That is to say, thinking is not static, but it is an activity, an intellectual energy that involves the human mind in an historical, as well as an evolutionary perspective, the interpretation of which realizes a human self. A human self is not realized through the principles of a determinist philosophy. Nor does the human self consist of an “essence,” in the classical sense, to be discovered. As a social reality the interpreted and evolved self is a positive entity. A moment’s reflection will confirm that the self cannot negate itself. Rather, a human self as a living organism seeks to extend its presence even when aware of its own death. With an understanding of death, the question then becomes, for the human self, how to promote the extension of life through self-directed evolution in order to interpret the phenomenon of death on human terms, and not merely biologically (scientifically). This self-determination of the evolutionary process is a major theme in the writing of the Canadian academic Leslie Dewart (1922-2009).

Dissatisfied with their experience of the inadequacy of Western (Hellenistic) understanding, philosophers are motivated seek adequate answers to their questions. Within their search, what may need to be re-addressed in the future is the current idea of self-consciousness as the *essence* of a human being. In Western culture the understanding of self-consciousness as the essence of the human being is often accepted uncritically by philosophers and other academics. Rather than defining the essence of a human being, however, I suggest that self-consciousness is *characteristic* of human thinking, it is a quality, that distinguishes the consciousness of human life from the consciousness of animal life. While ordinary consciousness, that is, a non-reflexive human or animal consciousness, does not necessarily lead to thinking, *self-consciousness* does lead to thinking. Only a human organism can consciously think itself as an “I,” that is, to think about itself as a subject and *simultaneously* as an object.

Morioka’s paper sets forth the “genesis” of the *Journal of Philosophy of Life* and the suggestion that “Philosophy of Life” (or thought about thought) become an academic discipline in its own right. Initially, I was skeptical as to this suggestion. Is not this task already being undertaken in some form or other which makes Morioka’s attempt just another variation on a theme? I asked myself that question. However, after re-reading his article and reconsidering his intention, and in light of my own experience in philosophical and theological thinking, I recognized his project as particularly purposeful. That is to say, his philosophy of life provides a forum for the philosophical perspective of dehellenization of Western thinking as promoted by the unconventional philosopher Leslie Dewart. Contemporary philosophers, Catholic and non-Catholic, may fail to appreciate the degree of institutional fear generated at that time by Dewart’s departure from the traditional scholastic formulation of Catholic philosophy.²

Dewart admits of his unconventional academic status:

Very few of the observations and concepts I have used in this investigation are original; indeed, most are not even new. What I have tried to accomplish here — the sort of task that philosophy had always deemed among its chief responsibilities, though in the anglophone world as I gather no longer — is mainly to arrange a large number of tesserae

² In 1969 the Vatican’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith examined the theological implications of Dewart’s books, particularly *The Future of Belief*. No condemnation was ever issued.

that, if taken one by one, are very familiar, into the single mosaic of a fairly *comprehensive and unconventional philosophical synthesis*.³

The word “dehellenization,” as I use it in this essay, most likely is unknown to the reader. In using it here, I have not left it as Dewart had introduced it throughout his writing. Rather, from my own perspective, I have engaged in what I understand was his attempt to re-think Western thought in the contemporary philosophical context. Hence, associating Dewart’s perspective with that of Morioka’s notion of philosophy of life. In Dewart’s works a philosopher will not find a single citation nor definition that exhausts Dewart’s understanding. A philosopher will need to follow Dewart’s application of the notion to gain an understanding of his meaning. Similarly, the reader must adopt the same approach in reading this essay. Then, hopefully, the notion of dehellenization will gain clarity and its parallel purpose in Morioka’s perspective will be recognized.

But before proceeding further, I think that a few remarks that characterize the notion are in order at this point. First “dehellenization” is not a concept in any classical philosophical sense. It is an attitude, a stance, a way of approaching knowledge through experience. Dehellenization does not rely on an *a priori* understanding of anything as is characteristic of ancient Greek philosophical thinking. Secondly, dehellenization ultimately rejects the linguistic structure of the Indo-European languages in its epistemological structure which tends to reduce all concepts of the mind to an ontology. (Hence the amusing introduction of Shakespeare’s literary phrase “to be or not to be; that is the question” into the philosophical arena.)⁴ Thirdly (through its understanding of consciousness) dehellenization represents an evolution within Western philosophy beyond the traditional (inherited) approach to thinking. Consciousness has epistemological value, not merely psychological value. Fourthly, dehellenization has developed beyond the religious (theological) context in which Dewart first introduced it. This is evident even in his own thought and may be seen in his posthumously published book, *Hume’s Challenge and the Renewal of Modern Philosophy*.

Overall dehellenization is a positive concept. However, reflecting the philosophical context in which it initially appeared, it displayed negative and

³ Dewart (1989), p. xi, my italics.

⁴ *Hamlet*, Act III, scene 1.

positive aspects. The first negative aspect assumed that the Western epistemological tradition is inadequate to express contemporary (religious) experience. The second aspect assumed that there is a breakdown of the foundations of Catholic belief in the modern world. While originating within the Catholic Christian philosophical tradition Dewart's work is not necessarily reserved to that tradition and has implications for Reformed Christian Theology, and by further extension to Jewish and Muslim epistemological traditions. The first positive aspect called for a restoration of religious belief. The second positive aspect called for reconstruction of belief and the third positive aspect called for new meanings to be assigned in any future belief. Clearly, in light of an historical approach, it is easy to understand this last point within a secular philosophical context. In section 2, "Dehellenization: a corrective activity within Philosophy of Life," I elaborate further on Dewart's notion relating it to Morioka's perspective.

Like many philosophers Morioka's thought is rooted in dissatisfaction, (frustration) in the way humans interpret their experience in thinking about life. To my way of thinking, such dissatisfaction provokes a desire for a comprehensive and (if need be, unconventional) philosophical synthesis. In his particular case, the discipline of bioethics lacked something necessary for it to achieve its goals properly, he tells us. Science and technology, *of themselves*, cannot answer our deeper questions. Our deeper questions must be philosophically answered by being interpreted within their existential context. An existential philosophical interpretation begins with the *intuitive* awareness of life and of the understanding of the environment. As I understand him, Morioka notes that many philosophies *describe* life, but he suggests that no philosophy independently *probes into* life as a discipline, that is, approaches life critically. Such independent and critical probing can be recognized in the contemporary social sciences and technologies. However, such probing when applied to non-scientific thought, or thinking, that is to philosophy, can expand the boundaries of what it means to think critically, and to think from within an historical and evolutionary point of view. In short, philosophy is required to interpret the universal significance of any particular experience. In other words, philosophy recognizes thought, or thinking, as a proper universal human activity.

His questionnaire of "ordinary folk" revealed an untutored understanding of life gleaned from individual experience and subsequently expressed in the

non-technical and non-philosophical language of daily life. His interviewees were freed from an obligation to express their thoughts within the formal heritage of their culture. Such an approach within the Western context, that is being freed from one's formal philosophical heritage, reflects Dewart's dehellenized philosophy. To think freed from the categories of the philosophical Hellenistic tradition recognizes that our ideas and notions are not innate in our understanding. That our ideas and notions are not innate in our understanding is a major theme in Dewart's thought that developed since he earned his PhD on Karl Pearson's "scientific philosophy." Karl Pearson (1857-1936) was an influential interpreter of philosophy and the place of science in society, who eventually abandoned classical philosophy for science.⁵

Further, in opposition to the tradition of reductionist philosophy in the West, Morioka maintains the legitimacy of a metaphysical understanding of human experience. As I understand him, there is a *relationship*, not a *connection*, between the physical and that which is beyond the physical. (As I comprehend the terms, a relationship is characteristic of dynamic thought, with a capacity for growth; whereas, a connection is characteristic of static thought capable of construction.) In short, the former characterizes organic thought and the latter characterizes architectural or mechanical thought. Further, when describing an "academic research field" Morioka speaks of *activities* that probe into the understanding of life. Human activities, which have their origin in one's will, open the possibility to an alternative interpretation of classical Western thinking which has been greatly influenced by the *static* idealist concepts of Hellenistic philosophy. However, quantum philosophical theory may be able to offer a new understanding of the activity of life.⁶

Highly significant, to my way of thinking, is the inclusion of non-human life within Morioka's perspective. Here he presents an interesting observation for the philosopher in the understanding of what it means to live a meaningful life. Humans assign meaning to their lives and, as well, to animal life.⁷ Non-human, or animal life, lacks this ability to assign meaning to itself or to other living

⁵ Dewart views Pearson's discovery of a "creed of life" in science as a normal since "this apparent forsaking of philosophy for the sake of science should not appear surprising once we realise the nature of his thought." University of Toronto (1954) PhD thesis: "The Development of Karl Pearson's Scientific Philosophy."

⁶ See Rovelli (2104).

⁷ From a philosophical perspective, the Judeo-Christian account in Genesis 1:26 and 2:18 provides an exception in that the non-human life form, God, assigns ultimate meaning to the human creature, whose representative Adam, assigns meaning to the other living creatures.

beings. It seems, up to this point at least, there is no serious reason to suggest the contrary. Dewart admits the consciousness of animal life, but he notes that it is through the self-consciousness of human life that meaning is determined and subsequently assigned, which is the “most fundamental role” of human consciousness.⁸

In his essay Morioka has suggested that a new role might emerge within his philosophy of life. “We might be able to witness the emergence of a philosophy of life that bridges the East Asian traditions and analytic philosophy,” he wrote. Since it may resonate with Asian readers, I offer the quote below as an example of Dewart’s notion of “philosophical ancestry” with respect to the “dead” scholastic philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas.

The doctrine of St. Thomas, true enough as it was, is dead. But it is not dead as a doornail. It is dead as a venerable ancestor is dead, who begat an existence which begat ours in turn, and to whom we owe our consciousness and life. Ancestors are to be neither cursed and forgotten, nor left unburied and mummified in case they may suddenly find it possible to come back to the world. They are to be gratefully and regretfully buried; they are to be truthfully and honourably remembered, and their truth and virtue is to be perpetuated, not in the vain attempt to resuscitate them, but in the conscious exercise of our own descendant but independent life.⁹

Within the Western philosophical tradition such an understanding is a foundational block for an attitude of the dehellenization of thought.

At the risk of being accused of quibbling (as some philosophers are known to do) I would prefer to understand Morioka’s role for philosophy of life “as a bridge,” rather as a *conduit* between Eastern and Western ways of thinking. Why? While a bridge simply joins (connects) independent entities, a conduit implies a participatory activity (relationship) among independent entities. More comprehensive than simply providing a crossing from East to West and vice versa, a conduit between entities actually contributes to the transfer of notions and ideas that are incorporated reciprocally into Eastern and Western philosophical traditions. In short, a conduit is an *active agent* within philosophy

⁸ Dewart (1989), p. 127.

⁹ Dewart (1969), p. 212.

of life, or thinking about thought. And itself participates in the transfer of knowledge to achieve a new understanding of both the knower and the known. Philosophically, this active conduit is consciousness.

This new understanding of the knower and the known derives from the conscious re-arrangement of understanding what is *already* “there” in human experience. Strasser makes a parallel observation about scientists who view “individuals and groups as originators and organizers of their respective worlds,” and change their object of study *while* they study it and *because* they study it.¹⁰ In changing their object of study while they study it and because they study it nothing new is “brought-into-being,” in the sense of classical Western philosophy. As we know, in the Hellenist epistemological tradition only the knower, not the known, is changed through the act of knowing which is the overcoming of the dichotomy between knower and known. In this new perspective however, not the overcoming of a dichotomy, but, in fact, its opposite, the continual dichotomization of subject and object is the case for gaining knowledge. Thus, dichotomization allows for the deepening of consciousness and a *holistic* understanding of knowledge in place of the Hellenistic understanding.¹¹

As Morioka notes we did not ask to be born as our experience confirms, but we are here and our presence in this life is a positive reality. We are “some-thing,” not “no-thing,” in other words. Being some-thing is Morioka’s “birth affirmation,” as I see it. Being some-thing that lives and undergoes change with an apparent beginning and an end, raises the question of death. Human experience shows that things, inanimate and animate, that have a beginning also have an end. (It is questionable that animal life is capable of comprehending this truth of experience.) For many contemporary philosophers, death is the “negative” end to life, at least in the West.

Within secular society Morioka notes that death is not necessarily a negative experience constituting an *end*. Rather, death defines a *boundary*, if I have understood him correctly. Since meaningfulness unto death, or meaningful boundaries to life, appear with the contingency of human experience in *this* world, certain Western philosophers accept that there is no “other world” in a

¹⁰ Strasser (1963), p. 7.

¹¹ Holism: The philosophical theory that parts of a whole are in a relationship such that they cannot exist, nor be understood, independently of the whole which itself is then regarded as greater than the sum of its parts. (Greek: *ὅλον*, holon).

Hellenistic sense. (This view is contrary to the dominant Western perspective, however, which accepts the existence of another world or plane of being.) For those counter-cultural philosophers there is no meaning in the notion of a “world to come.” It appears in the East, however, that for many individuals the dead continue to participate in the meaning of life because, in a certain sense, they have not left this world according to Morioka. From my perspective to what degree this notion of the dead among the living within one world will become a major philosophy, acceptable within Western thought, remains to be seen.

How does one engage in the “practice of studying world philosophy” Morioka asks in the conclusion to his paper? Through re-visiting “particular” philosophies of our world, he suggests. Following up on his suggestion, then, I present a short consideration in the next section of a few points of significance for both Eastern and Western thinkers in light of Leslie Dewart’s understanding of the dehellenization of Western philosophy.¹²

2. Dehellenization: a corrective activity within Philosophy of Life

To be able to introduce something positive in *apparently* negative language is a skill within the Western philosophical tradition. I suggest that Leslie Dewart’s dehellenization of thought is an example of this. As a philosophical attitude his dehellenization is a positive description of an epistemological understanding in terms appropriate to our times, but in terms of consciousness which is considered often only a psychological state of mind. (Further, it is not to be confused with un-hellenization, a negative concept.) Robert Prentice, to my mind, has captured Dewart’s intent in introducing the attitude of dehellenization into epistemological thinking.

As we have seen [Dewart] has abandoned the classical and scholastic concepts, but in doing so his purpose has been to render faith more acceptable in its critical foundations. In particular he has been driven by a desire to be guided by an empirical rather than an *a priori* method of approach, since, in his view one will find there the first step in a richer re-interpretation of the Christian or of any faith. This is an immediate concern of our age, since the experience which man is in the process of

¹² Naturally, any philosophy or academic discipline not rooted in ancient Greek thought will not need to be dehellenized.

undergoing clamours for re-interpretation.¹³

On occasion, Dewart has been understood as a theologian. I believe that this is a misunderstanding. He was a religious philosopher whose thinking included the theological values of the Christian faith. In his process of dehellenization values are carried by one's faith, not by philosophical concepts. This view reverses the traditional order which is that concepts carry values for one's faith. This epistemological stance cuts to the heart of the question "Is faith an (imperfect) form of knowledge?" As an activity of the mind, dehellenized thinking moves one away from understanding faith as an imperfect form of knowledge. Rather, faith is the meaning-carrying dimension of human existence and not a lower (inferior) form of, or substitute for, knowledge. Rather, faith (something animal life lacks) carries the values of cumulative human experience, at least this has been the record of the Western Christian experience.

The aim of this section of my essay is to suggest that Leslie Dewart's notion of dehellenization of thinking, among other of his notions, fits well within Morioka's perspective on the philosophy of life, or thought about thought. Dewart's *Religion, Language and Truth* (1970) popularly summarizes his overall thinking.¹⁴

In the wake of the discoveries of contemporary social evolution, it may be to humanity's advantage to preserve a multiplicity of philosophical attitudes, for the sake of the *unity*, not *union*, of philosophy itself.¹⁵ Social evolution generates a dehellenized perspective of thought, since it is evolution directed by human beings for particular values. Natural evolution, as introduced by Charles Darwin, ultimately retains its Hellenistic concepts since it was dependent on these epistemological categories. In short, in a dehellenized understanding of thought, evolution becomes purposeful, that is, psychozoic as opposed to merely zoological. Therefore, a methodological union of thought need not remain a desired goal. Such a methodological union may even be counter-productive

¹³ Prentice (1971), p. 280.

¹⁴ Giving his motivation for this book, Dewart writes: "A recent reviewer of my book, *The Foundations of Belief*, has suggested that I should write 'a short, popular statement of [my] views, so that they may be made available to those [who may not have a professional level of] technical and historical knowledge. I wish I could say that this present book responds to this request, but in point of fact it goes only a short distance towards fulfilling it.'" [p. 9].

¹⁵ I distinguish evolution *to* humanity from evolution *of* humanity. The former is merely biological (externally directed), whereas the latter is self-directed (that is, consciously directed), hence one may speak of social evolution.

when diversity in understanding is what is experienced. It could be argued that, according to Dewart, a dehellenized attitude of consciousness is what is required in place of a union of concepts.

In the West with regard to understanding the notion of truth, the judgement that opinion is incompatible with philosophy is a judgement in favour of philosophy's ability to determine the truth. That is, it is presumed that philosophy *necessarily* achieves truth, whereas opinion may not. Thus, only traditional (classical) ideas of truth and reality, previously determined only by philosophy, can serve as a foundation for future philosophy. In contemporary Western culture classical philosophy is sometimes misunderstood as needing correction. However, it is *Hellenistic* philosophy, which is philosophy in the *style* of the ancient Greeks, that needs to be dehellenized in thought (corrected) in Dewart's perspective. Classical philosophy remains proper to its historical time and epistemological context, which is, scholasticism.

With regard to language, one may ask the question: Do humans speak to be social, or speak in order to be human? Dewart does not say "communicate" when he asks the question because it is generally uncontested that the individuals of many non-human life forms communicate with each other for social purposes. Language is not speech itself, but is the *form* of human speech which allows thinking to be expressed to oneself and to other human beings. With respect to the many cultural forms that language assumes in expressing experience none can claim to be the "right" one and, none may be considered the "wrong" one. However, with respect to *specific* contexts certain languages are more adequate than others.

Dewart notes the following:

There can be, on the other hand, more or less adequate languages in relation to given purposes. For speaking about the Arctic weather, the richness of the various Eskimo dialects is proverbial. For philosophizing in the Scholastic manner Latin is unsurpassed. For viewing the world scientifically, the modern European languages are especially apt.¹⁶

Thus, diversity, language and speech, all understood from a dehellenized perspective of thought appear as proper topics for consideration within

¹⁶ Dewart (1970), p. 71.

Morioka's philosophy of life.

Morioka has indicated that he is interested in life within a *secular* society. Contemporary society, in itself, may be considered secular but the meaning that individuals give to their experience may not be so necessarily. A similar phenomenon can be seen to have taken place in our time concerning an understanding of Hellenist, or ancient Greek philosophy. In the minds of many academics, it is a common impression that in ancient Greek times philosophy was antagonist towards Greek religion.¹⁷ Ancient Greek philosophy may have been inimical to certain cults within Greek religion, "but it was never anything itself but a profoundly, and often enough even a consciously, religious institution," according to Dewart.¹⁸ However, the Hellenic concept of religion (philosophy) is not to be equated with the contemporary concept of Western religion that Dewart sought to dehellenize. Their difference is found in their intent. Hellenic religion (philosophy) attempted to discover the individual's assigned place in the cosmos as Fate had determined it. This was a legitimate undertaking for its time. However, in a dehellenized understanding (of Hellenistic religion) individuals attempt to interpret experience within the cosmos, disallowing any role of Fate. The cosmos is not fixed and can become other than it is. Not mere meaning, but meaningfulness that carries personal responsibility characterizes the dehellenized stance to life (religious or secular). Thus, meaningfulness as personal responsibility replaces the classic meaning of Fate.

In expressing their intention through speech humans *self-relate* to their particular environmental and cultural contexts. (They also self-relate to themselves through speech which is but spoken thought.) Speech is carried by language within any philosophical system, secular or religious, intended to interpret experience. Common sense shows that the facts of life are the same for every creature. However, truth (religious or secular) is recognized only within human consciousness in thinking about thought, or, which is the same, thinking about the philosophy of life.

In this context truth becomes the fidelity of consciousness to the facts of experience. Truth is not the adequation of the mind to an ideal in the Thomistic sense. Dewart maintains, that "human conscious experience does not transfer reality into the mind but, on the contrary, 'transfers,' the mind into the reality

¹⁷ Here, I am not referring to Hellenistic philosophy.

¹⁸ Dewart (1970), p. 52.

within the world of which the mind already existed.”¹⁹ Truth is the mind’s faithful transfer of itself into experience in other words, which is the dehellenized activity of thought with the possibility of a creative relationship on the part of the knower. One’s mind becomes an agent of change and does not rely on any necessary *a priori* principles.

Morioka mentions the problem of “life extension.” Realistically, however, I would suggest, since I follow Dewart, that it is a problem of understanding the overall *nature* of human life, along with its prolongation. If one wishes to understand the nature of human life, and its extension: 1) one must look to the world that humans bring about, that is, how humanity extends and projects itself outwardly through time and in space; and 2) how humanity shapes its undetermined future by consciously creating, that is, consciously directing evolution and living out a history for itself. That is to say, life is known by being contextually mediated in some fashion. As I understand Dewart, dehellenization of thought is a corrective act of consciously creating and living out a history for ourselves and thus an activity that qualifies as a philosophy of life, although restricted to Western and Westernized cultures. In our time, humanity in all its various cultural expressions must participate more consciously and deliberately in its own self-fashioning than it has done in the past. Dehellenization of Western-style thinking allows individuals to live simultaneously out of the past, within the present, and into the future. In other words, dehellenization of thought as an activity parallels Morioka’s philosophy of life and opens the possibility of the conscious creation of a future of philosophical belief, which is not necessarily a religious act.

Lastly, philosophy of life, as an academic discipline, has a *creative* dimension not merely an interpretive one. That is, the human world does not have to remain the way humanity has inherited it. The human world may be consciously or unconsciously changed by human activity. Within Morioka’s philosophy of life there is the potential for recognizing a self-directed evolution, not merely a biological evolution given humanity’s participation within the cosmos.²⁰

¹⁹ Dewart (1969), p. 271.

²⁰ See Dewart (1989).

3. Concluding Remarks

Dehellenization of thought as an intellectual activity falls within Morioka's philosophy of life considered as an academic discipline. Dehellenization affords the possibility of correcting the inadequacies of the inherited understanding of Western science and technology which have been influenced by Hellenistic philosophy. Human life is more than the conditioned physiology of living organisms as defined by contemporary biology. Human life has a conscious capacity resulting in intelligence.

Uniquely, philosophy of life allows for a place and for a role of the observer in what is observed. Philosophy of life allows for a phenomenological methodology which transcends the classical Western Hellenistic, hence static, philosophical inheritance. In phenomenological methodology, an observer does not begin retrospectively with the chronological origin of human life. Rather, the phenomenological philosopher is situated in a life already "in progress" which reflects the past experience of previous generations. Thus, there is the recognition of an historical content within philosophy of life that is subject to improvement and development through time. When attempting any improvement and development of this historical content of life we recognize something about ourselves and others. What do we recognize?

The first is to recognize that we may choose to become goal-oriented rather than remain goal-dictated. In being goal-oriented we *find* and *select* what we need to be human, based on our experience. Finding and selecting what we need in order to be human constitutes the difference in understanding life's experiences meaningfully through philosophy and understanding those same experiences non-philosophically, that is, scientifically and technologically. Secondly, in attempting improvement and development in life we recognize a unique difference between animal and human modes of life. Human life has the potential to develop an individual identity, a self, whereas animal life does not. Thirdly, when humans contemplate their understanding of life and death, or philosophize about life and death, and the meaning it holds for them as individuals and as a society, they often recognize this activity as *religious* and reserved to humans. However, this religious understanding need not be the monotheistic understanding of revealed religion (Judaism, Christianity, Islam). In light of the dehellenization of thought, religious understanding may include belief as understood philosophically, or as any form of myth or ideology. In

short, Morioka's philosophy of life presents a forum for understanding dehelleneization as a continual process of diversification in human understanding and expressions of thought appropriate for both Asian and Western thinkers.

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