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Social Ethics in a Changing China: Moral Decay or Ethical Awakening?:
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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. CHENG LI: Could you hear me, in the back? Good morning. My name is Cheng Li, Director of the John L. Thornton China Center here at the Brookings. It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all for today's event, the Chinese Discourse on Moral Decay in The People's Republic of China.

The topics of the moral decay, and the lack of trust in present-day China, are not sensitive topics, and certainly not political taboos in the PRC. In the wake of horrifying food and drug safety scandals, and other well-known or well publicized incidents pointing to a moral crisis in the country, top Chinese leaders, both former and current, have publicly acknowledged that. I quote, "The moral decay and the loss of trust have reached an extremely serious point." These intriguing phenomena highlight the greater need for ethical discourse in a country that is increasingly seen by some critics as both a materialistic giant and a spiritual dwarf.

Paradoxically, however, this ongoing discourse also demonstrates a serious effort to rebuild the Chinese collective consciousness and the social norms necessary for an ethical awakening. To a broad extent, the ongoing Chinese discourse on ethics reflects a painstaking search for modern virtues in Asian civilization. A search for what country first did China really represents in term of values and beliefs. The ramification of this Chinese discourse on ethics will be filled beyond the Chinese national borders, especially now that the country is re-emerging as a global power.

This morning, we are so honored to feature some of the greatest minds and most articulate voices in the world on the subject. First and foremost we are privilege to be joined by Dr. He Huaihong, Professor of Philosophy at the Peking University who traveled from Beijing here.

This event also serves as the launch of the publication of his first English book entitled *Social Ethics in a Changing China*, which is the newest volume of the Thornton Center, Chinese Thinkers Series. Over the past two decades Professor He Huaihong, his scholarly writings, public lectures and media interviews in China, have transformed the Chinese public understanding of the moral predicament underlying many news headlines and the controversy issues.

Perhaps more effectively and constructively than anyone else, Professor He Huaihong is

bringing ethics back into Chinese discourse. Professor He, we are happy to have you today, at Brookings, and looking forward to hearing your keynote remarks.

For the second Panel, we have the distinguished honor to assemble America's leading scholars on China, but representing various academic disciplines and point of views. They all happen to be Chinese-Americans, and my colleague, non-resident fellow at Brookings, Evan Osnos, will serve as a Moderator for the Panel. A Staff Writer for *New Yorker Magazine*, Evan's first book, *Age of Ambition: Chasing Fortune, Truth, and Faith in the New China*, based on eight years of living in Beijing won the 2014 National Book Award. I also should add that we hire him and before his nominations for the National Book Award.

And he has now emerged as the second-most sought-after public speaker on China, of course the first is Professor Jonathan Spence, so quite achievement, Evan, we are very proud of you. Evan will introduce the Panel Speakers in a more formal way, but please, allow me to say a few words about the other panelists for the Panel.

Minxin Pei is a dear, personal friend, and our Washington audience is very familiar with his work. In fact, more than anyone else Minxin helped me adjust to the Washington environment when I arrived here nine years ago. But he then moved to California where he teaches at an excellent Liberal Arts College. Really, I very much, you know, envy you. *Foreign Policy Magazine*, recently named Minxin as one of the most influential thinkers in the world, and that title is well deserved. Minxin we are so happy to have you back to Washington, hoping that you will speak at Brookings more often in the months and years to come. So it's really Brookings gain and Carnegie's loss.

Dali Yang is also a dear, personal friend. We were classmates at Princeton, so therefore we are really in Chinese, we call it academic brothers, you know, 师兄, and about 10 years ago, Dali served as the Chair of the Department of Political Science at the University of Chicago. This was the first time, a PRC-born scholar has that title, and I should say that Dali will always be able to claim that remarkable achievement, there is no other PRC-born scholars that ever served in that position.

Last but not least, Professor of Anthropology at UCLA, Yunxiang Yan, who, actually I have met for the first time today. However, I have known about his work for really, two decades as his

anthropological research has strong implications on other academic disciplines including political science. Professor Yan changed his schedule in order to come to speak with us this morning, and we are very grateful.

And, unfortunately, Professor Jonathan Spence and Professor Annping Chin were supposed to be here this morning, but we got a phone call early this morning that their flight was cancelled. You know, we tried to arrange what's called Skype, but that still could not work. So of course, we are all disappointed about this, but know that in their absence, we still have an unparalleled group of distinguished scholars with us today.

Please join in today's discussion through our Twitter, @BrookingsChina, and also we will post a video of this event to our website in the coming days. Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in welcoming our first Keynote Speaker, a Philosopher, a Historian, and a social critic, Professor He Huaihong. (Applause)

MR. HE: (Speaking in Chinese) Thank you very much for this -- Thank you very much for inviting me, and thanks to -- (inaudible audio cut) (Speaking in Chinese) Okay. So today basically there are three things that I'd like to discuss here. First of all, as historical, cultural traditions go, the Chinese historical, cultural traditions we can say are the least bad. The second thing is that the fundamentals of modern, social ethics are basically minimum moral standards, or the minimum ethical standards. And the third idea is about striving not to be the fastest, but about striving to achieve something that's lasting.

(Speaking in Chinese) But first I want to tell you a true story, recently it was October 27th, I was on a public bus in Beijing, I was on my way to and from Peking University to teach, and on the way, on the bus, both there and back, young people were giving up their seats for me. They were all young people, and I felt a little bit bad. What do you guys think? Do I look that old?

Well of course I was thankful that those young people all gave up their seats for me, but then, I asked myself a question, I was thinking, what if it were an elderly person that had fallen on the ground, would these young people pick that elderly person up after a fall? Because everyone knows that in China today, a lot of people don't dare do that, when they see an elderly person falling, because there's always a risk involved. There is a risk that you might end up having to pay for that elderly person's bills.

Some of our elderly, I don't know, there's a term -- we have this specific term in Chinese, and some of them what they do is they fake an injury, and then they try to extort money out of the person who picks them up, and then ends up taking them to the hospital. So, we always keep asking ourselves, have the elderly become bad, or have the bad guys just gotten old?

So, if it is the former, that the elderly have become bad as it were, then that probably shows that there are major moral issues that we are facing today in our society, with the coarsening, the general coarsening of morality. If that's the case it means that even the elderly who have always been more moral, they are now being affected by the whole trend, and they've become less moral.

If however, it's the latter, then that tells us that we still may live in a more moral society it's just the elderly who are the bad ones. Perhaps a lot of them lived, obviously, through the Cultural Revolution, I was young back then, too, myself, and even back then they got angry, they liked to pick fights, and a lot of them are actually selfish, and sometimes they even make other people give up their seats for them on the bus.

Of course we can't make sweeping generalizations and say, all old people are good, or all young are bad, or vice versa, the elderly though may appear obstinate, stubborn, or they have short tempers and they often end up -- you know, they lose their tempers. But actually if we look a little deeper it's the elderly who are more interested in -- they take an interest in politics, what's going on around the country, and what's going on around the world.

And young people, while they appear very modern, and they think of themselves as modern; and they are very civilized, very polite, the thing about them is, often when they are faced with unfair institutions or rules, or things in the political system that aren't good, they actually are just willing to comply and go along more so than the older generation. And as a matter of fact I have a colleague at Peking University, a friend of mine, who is a professor there, Professor Chen, and he is -- at Chinese universities, what they are doing is now training up a crop of young people who are polished in the art of egoism.

As for these specific questions that I'll throw out for discussion, I'm not going to talk about them specifically. I'll be leaving them for some of other speakers who will follow, and they can talk about

that. What I'd like to do now, is discuss three aspects from my book.

First I would like to say that Chinese historical, cultural traditions basically represent something that is the least bad among historical, cultural traditions. What I'm trying to say here is sort of borrowing from Winston Churchill, back then he said that democracy was the worst form of government except for all others, so I'm not exactly saying that, but I'm saying it's the least bad.

If we look at it from the perspective of a modern democratic society, these historical traditions might seem to us, oh, it's unacceptable, and that's definitely true, there are some Chinese people who consider themselves to be very mod, and they are not satisfied with any of that, they don't like any of it, they just think Chinese tradition is bad, and maybe even the worst of all traditions.

However, in my book I do argue that when compared with the cultural traditions of other civilizations in the world, Chinese historical cultural traditions are one of the least bad. Our Chinese cultural traditions have their own historical values, and they are not only a tradition and a set of cultural traditions that have been there a long time, they also have their own refined elegance. They have managed to hold together the largest human civilization for thousands of years.

And furthermore, even now, those traditions that have this whole, long, history are still very relevant actually, in today's society. Of course it might take some tweaking here and there, and it might take some reforming, but they can be made to fit into today's society, and they are useful, actually even in helping us cope with the problems that we do face today. So, I've used a lot of traditional thought, and even institutional resources to come up with these modern Chinese social ethics.

But I would just like to point out here again, the concept of a selection society that John Thornton talks about in his foreword at the beginning of my book. Historically, for more than 2,000 years, China had been, what began as a recommendation system, and then it moved to an examination system, and under these systems, it didn't matter how humble your origins were. Almost everyone, they were able to experience a kind of justice, because they had equal opportunity to advance to the highest levels of government as long as they did well on the exams.

I'll give a couple of examples that resulted as a result of that type of a system. There is a U.S. historian, He Bingdi (Ping-ti Ho), and he has done a lot of research into the social mobility that

existed during the Ming and Qin Dynasties, and according to his research and what it shows, 50, 60, even as close to 70 percent of the officials that were able to pass these examination exams, came from families where there were no officials in their families for three generations. And there have also been, by way of another example, Chinese researchers and scholars have faced, Fei Xiaotong and Pan Guangnian said that in Ancient China, vertical mobility in our society was better than it is now.

So, basically if you'd see that they came from the lower levels of society, and they became educated, and they were morally conscious, these people back in those days under that system. Whether or not they achieved a perfect level of morality, and whether the system is perfect, that's something that's left to talk about, but it lasted for more than 2,000 years. And if you look at now the election system, if we compare this to the election, let's say, that we have in the United States, there was a researcher by the name of Mills who talked what American Presidents read.

Well, in the past American Presidents read things like detective, you know, mysteries, those types of books -- that was in modern history. But if you go back to the founders of our country, they read things such as Locke and Rousseau.

The second thing is that I argue that the fundamentals of modern social ethics, and what I refer to as minimum moral standards, and I've advocated such minimum moral or ethical standards since the '90s. As I see it, modern social ethics should be directed at everyone. Everyone should have the expectation of being able to live up to these ethical standards. It shouldn't be as it was traditionally back in the days of our hierarchal society where it was mostly the upper class and officials who were expected, only them to observe these ethical standards. Just as our societies are now moving toward equality for all, in terms of ethical expectations, those expectations should also reflect the kind of move toward equality.

So, basically back in the old days we had different standards for different types of people depending on what your position was in society. There was a differentiation, and for those who were officials, and those who were in power, they were expected to be like saint or like a sage, and we wanted them to achieve that level, but we didn't have the same type of expectations at all for regular people.

So, we need to differentiate between basic social norms and the pursuit of higher values,

actually this type of a concept started way back with Immanuel Kant, when he talked about values and norms. We shouldn't be asking everybody to behave like a saint or a sage, what we need to be doing is requiring that everybody respect basic norms instead. Of course for those who choose to hold themselves up to the highest ethical standards, they are always welcome to continue working harder to develop themselves in pursuit of that. But for the society as a whole, we should give precedence to fulfilling basic obligations, and not necessarily pursuing the highest values and ultimate concerns that people can do on their own if they want to.

In other words, individuals are more than welcomed to choose a higher lifestyle or a higher set of beliefs and do better than the basic minimum moral standards for themselves. But from the perspective of the society as a whole, looking at ethics and laws, what we should be giving precedence to is fulfilling basic obligations and responsibilities preventing the worst things from happening, preventing a collapse of the whole society.

And in recent years a lot of people, high-level officials including Xi Jinping himself, brought up the idea of minimum standards for thought many times, several times, and Xi Jinping said that China is a big country, and as such it should avoid making mistakes which would end up being disastrously disruptive on issues that are fundamental to the country. Perhaps he's thinking along the same liens here?

Also the anticorruption movement, which everyone knows about in China, and is supported by people, that could perhaps be seen as the practice, putting into practice of these minimal moral standards. Of course this movement is aimed mostly at government officials, but communist party leaders have said repeatedly that if we do not go all out against corruption then that would be the demise of the party, the demise of the country, and even though of course we have to remember that they are saying that from the standpoint of their one party, or a standpoint of a country where the party and the country are one.

The third thing is if we don't strive for top speed, then what should we be striving for? I don't want to say we should be striving to be the best, as a matter of fact I'm a little bit wary of saying that. I would like to use the word; do we want to do something that's lasting? For an entire society that would

mean lasting peace and stability. For the human race it means the pursuit of sustainable development and lasting happiness in the true sense of the word though, not a moment of fleeting pleasure, because when we think of these words in Chinese and translating them into -- interpreting them into English, pleasure is not the word I want to use here, because pleasure is just fleeting, and it's done right away.

In the modern world, in the modern society that we live in, all countries are concerned with their economics and their economic development. It's all about economics and fast economic growth, but do we always have to be the fastest, I think always trying to be the fastest is actually pretty dangerous. Thinking that way will bring a lot of issues that arise out of materialism, consumerism, so this, actually, is not specific to China, it includes China, but concerns the whole world and old men.

So, yeah, faster is not always better. In Galileo's experiments, actually, an increased speed was associated with the speed of falling bodies. So in the history of the civilization of humankind we began with hunting and gathering, and then with farming and herding, and then we formed nations, we invented writing systems. We've only gone through 10,000, or a little more than 10,000, or I might say 12,000 years to get to that point.

Chairman Mao had a famous line in a poem where he said, "10,000 years is too long to delay, seize the day." That 10,000 years that he's talking about is pretty much the same 10,000 years that it took us to do all the things that I just mentioned.

So, looking at it from me perspective of human history, 10,000 years is not a long time, because what about millions of years, and what about even 4.6 billion years? Ten thousand compared to 4.6 billion is nothing, it's extremely short. So I think maybe we should still seize the day.

The strongest and mightiest creature that ever walked this earth was the dinosaur, today they are extinct, but they did live on this earth for over 100 million years. Today humans are the wisest and most powerful creature on earth, but the question is, will we be able to survive for a longer time than the dinosaurs did?

So, I believe that humans need to spend more time thinking about what's long-lasting, and less time just trying to speed up. Perhaps in this context, I can call on everyone to see if we can appreciate the lightness and slow rhythm of Ancient Chinese wisdom. And that’s all I have to say. Thank

you. (Applause)

MR. CHENG LI: Well, can you hear me? Is that okay? Professor He, I think you personify the best of the Chinese tradition. The lightness and also the slow rhythm, and really basically a remarkable presentation, and you certainly reflect that. And I will say that, really, you are a master of the art of public speaking, and can use very simple language to explain complicated issues and profound ideas.

I will raise a few questions, and based on your book, and based on your presentation. Let me start with the first one from a more historical perspective, you know, and I'll try to imagine that if Jonathan Spence is here, what kind of question he will ask. So as you know there is a very famous Chinese saying that vividly capture the ramification of the spiritual or moral decay in present China, and really from a historical perspective. Let me repeat that in Chinese first.

明亡之后无华夏，满清之后无汉人，文革之后无信仰，改革之后无道德。(Speaking Chinese) My colleague Sun Yun, she probably is not here, and she helped me translate it into English. I think it's a beautiful translation, here's the translation. "China lost its Middle Kingdom with the end of Ming Dynasty. Lost its Han ethnicity with the conquest by the Qing Dynasty, lost its face with the Cultural Revolution, and then lost its morality with economic reform."

Now you wrote in the book, "Fundamental trust and fundamental kindness are being lost in our society." Could you elaborate for our audience on this startling assessment? Now, your oral presentation only mentioned this in passing. Or actually, you briefly highlighted the key traditional virtues that you think the Chinese should work to restore, and also what kind of a contemporary ethical codes that the Chinese now should embrace?

MR. HE: (Speaking Chinese) Okay. Thank you for the question; and here is how I would like to answer it. It's true, currently we do have quite a serious problem with morality in our society in China now, and basically the issues are that we lack basic trust, and we lack kindness, so when I'm talking about trust I'm even including in the political realm, trust in our political leaders.

If you look at the leaders from our Chinese Communist Party in our government today, it seems that some of them have fallen into a Tacitus trap, and what that means is, whatever the

government says, the people don't believe any of it. Even when they say things that are the truth, the people still don't believe it. This is true inside the party and for the government officials, this is what they are facing. And a lot of it, they, on the other hand, are also very mistrustful and very worried. Whenever they hear dissent, or opinions that aren't the same as theirs, they are always worried that they are going to be overthrown, or overturned. So trust is a major problem, and this is key, this is very important, and it's a serious issue today.

So, of course I think that the Chinese Government, the Chinese leaders and our party, the Communist Party, if you compare it to other points in its own history compared to what it was like in the past. I think it's pretty good today in comparison, but it does lot of legacies left over from the past which are heavy burdens for it, and a lot of it is trapped under these heavy burdens, and it can't just get rid of them just like that.

Some of them are ideological, and for instance during the 20th Century, it was kind of a mobilization era, where people were mobilized to go and do things, and there were movements toward that end, and they were mobilizing people, they were carrying out revolutions, and they took over the government, and in that process they did say things that weren't entirely true. But they are saddled with that.

So, what I think it is, that if you look at our government and our authorities, they are trying to work at the same time from historical traditions but move in the right direction, and I think they are basically going in the right direction. In the past, very traditionally, in Ancient Chinese culture, we talked about benevolence, righteousness. We talked about formalities, wisdom and trust, those five qualities, politeness, whereas in the modern era they are also trying to tie those good things from our past with some of the modern trends, such as equality and compassion. However, it's not just for the government to do this alone, to sort of have a moral awakening in China. I think we need civil society to play a very important role, but I think the government is doing, basically, a good job.

MR. CHENG LI: Well, for the sake of debate, and I wanted to offer contrasting view, and I would like to challenge the main thesis of your book, about the perceived, the moral decay in present-day China. One can argue that ongoing Chinese discourse on moral decay is nothing new. About 100

years ago, during the May Fourth Movement, that Movement is also about both sides, about the moral decay, and also the concern about the imperative for ethical reconstruction, and the spiritual enlightenment.

One can also go back to ancient time, and it's really, almost 3,000 years ago that during the Spring and Autumn period, another intellectual renaissance era in China's long history, when some wise men, of course only men at that time, wise men were deeply upset with what they call or perceived disintegrating of propriety, what the Chinese called 礼崩乐坏. And here is my question. Is the perceived moral decay in present China really extraordinary or even unique? If so, what factors have made this unique phenomenon?

Let me say, that one-child policy that really created a generation of selfish little emperors and princes. But as you know, that this was probably unique, but you knew that two weeks ago or a week ago, Chinese government announced to end that policy. So, as world history makes it very clear, a nation in the throes of rapid economic and social transformation is likely to experience some sort of spiritual or ethical crisis.

Now, what you refereed earlier on, the cynicism on the government, I thought it's wonderful. I mean, we should be cynical about what the government told us. So, is the fact that there has been a strong public awareness of the ethical issues in China, itself, is encouraging sign for ethical awakening, maybe even major enlightenment movement in the making. Could you respond to that? So the whole thesis of a moral decay, maybe it's a fake one.

MR. HE: (Speaking Chinese) Actually if you talk about the kinds of moral crisis, or failure in our moral system, moral failure, that’s really an old question that’s been around since the -- for a long, long time, and I think it's a question that intellectuals have been pondering for a long time, because intellectuals are always the ones in our society who are unhappy with this and unhappy with that.

Back in the Spring and Autumn periods, Confucius was so worried that there was a moral decline, and that it was getting worse and worse, and everything was on the downfall, but if we look back from today's perspective at what was going on then, things were pretty good then actually.

However, the things that these intellectuals do bring up and warn us about, and the

reminders that we get from them are meaningful, and we should pay attention to them. The thing about China in the area of morality and ethics is that it does have a situation that makes it different from other countries, in that during the 20th Century, we in China went through a lot of things that was -- a complete reversal of our original ancient traditional values. And on top of that we were affected in a big way by the Soviet Union in their values and styles, so -- morality back then was less important than politics, it was buried. It took a back seat to politics, so that's the first thing.

And then with the onset of market economics and the new era, a lot of people paid no attention to morality and it got buried again by the economy, by market economics. So, it wasn't able to survive independent of the trends in politics or economics, and I think that is the main reason that we are having these moral issues that are having in China today.

MR. CHENG LI: Let me move to another question. That in your remark you mentioned that the traditional moral codes, or moral standards, it's not only applied for elites, now you talk about that more than ethical codes should apply for everyone. Not just elites but also the general public. You also create a very important concept over the past couple of decades, which is the minimum moral standards, 道德底线.

I'm a little confused, you used that term because of they think, now you apply for methods your should lower standard, or because officials, it's so bad you lower standard to include them; because as you know, that you really talk about the rampancy of official corruption, which is a serious problem. So, here is my question, it's four-fold, first -- or maybe three -- First, what's the connection between these two, you know, the failure of society and rampancy of official corruption is number one.

Number two, which one you worry most, or worry more among these two. And finally, what should be the top priority and the key method to deal with these dual challenges?

MR. HE: (Speaking Chinese) Okay. First of all, I would just like to say here that I think you all know that President Xi, when he talks about going after -- in his own anticorruption campaign, he's not only going to go after the tigers, but also the flies. I think you've all heard about that. I think when he talks all about that, he is basically talking about his campaign against corrupt officials, but it's not just the officials that we have to look at here. There is a Professor, Sun Liping, who mentions that it's the society

itself, society even a person who is -- you know, he just might in charge of -- he might be a doorman, and his job maybe to open the door for you, even people who are not officials with great power, they have a teeny, tiny bit of power, they try to use that power and even abuse that power.

Again, back to the flies and the tigers, or whether or not we should go after the political first, or the society as a whole. The question is if we are going to try to save the morality of our country, which takes precedent, which should we look at first? I still think we need to look at it from the political class, and from a political viewpoint, because since the beginning of time, China has always been a country where politics, the state is very important, the ruler has the power and everybody is sort of very much -- they know that system, and they know it's very hierarchical, so politics affects our society much more than the rest of the society affecting the political sphere.

But the thing that I would just like to say here, is traditionally we've very revered our rulers, and politics has been so important in our country throughout the ages, but in terms of culture, in terms of individuals, morality and individual person, what moral standards he should hold himself to, I think that we need to have institutional ethical systems. We need to have this based on the principles of justice, and I think doing that would be a lot better, and would go a lot longer of a way than just grabbing those corrupt officials and firing them, or just going after individuals only.

MR. CHENG LI: That's very nicely, to link to my fourth and final question. It's really very much inspired by your point about the speed, the tension between speed and sustainability, and towards the end of your former presentation. Now it reminds me a joke, in the middle of across Pacific flight, the pilot announced to the passengers that he has good news and bad news. The good news, he said, we are ahead of schedule; the bad news is we are lost.

Well, as we know that China has had unparallel fast economic growth over the past three decades, but the country seems to be lost in terms of political direction. It is fair to say that China has yet to find a sound, safe, sustainable political system, which you just mentioned, to accommodate rapid-changing economy and rapid-changing society. Your book aims to reconstruct a new intellectual framework of the Chinese social ethics and values. At the beginning of your presentation you also made an interesting argument, that the Chinese culture tradition is the worst except for all others.

Now, I want to ask you to share with us your stance regarding universal values, or universal ethics, especially how your concept of minimum moral standards relates to the ideas of universal values. Well, how should the Chinese tread the fine line between reserving Chinese ethical norms and promoting universal values at a time of unprecedented multidimensional and, indeed, very fast-paced globalization? Whether we like it or not like it, the pace is fast, so what's your stance on this fine line between traditions, virtues in China, and embrace the universal values? And whether this is the approach that China should pursue?

MR. HE: (Speaking Chinese) Okay. I would just like to state, or even restate here, when we talk about the concept of universality, and in the realm of ethics especially modern ethics, it's important here to differentiate between values and norms, and differentiate between good and right. The thing is, when you talk about values, what exactly is good? And also, today, I don't think we can really come up with something completely universal in terms of these questions.

In the past, traditionally it might have been universal, but that's no longer applicable in today's world. What we could try to do in terms of being universal is come up with how to determine what is right and what is wrong morally, I think that we could use universal principles to differentiate that.

So, actually, what I'm describing here, are actually differentiations in the academic sense of the word. In our daily lives sometimes we are actually not that specific on -- the differentiation isn't that clear, so norms are different from values, but when we talk about what's right and what's just those could be values and, generally speaking, I do agree with the idea that there could be universal value, but to get to what's universal core issues, I think we could define them as maybe behaviors.

For instance in Christianity they have their Golden Rule, and in China, Mushiri we had the four things that you couldn't do. So these are all in terms of behaviors, so it's a disciplined code of what types of behaviors are unacceptable. So, in answering this question, and I'm trying to determine to what specific, or some kind of cultures, versus what's universal. I would say that even the most basic behavioral norms are going to be expressed differently, and they are going to end up being slightly different, depending on which culture you are watching or you are seeing them in.

Values and ways of life, lifestyles, that you have to see different countries, different

customs, different cultures have different ways of -- there will be a different embodiment of these good values and good ways of life, because one culture, or one nationality might have a certain custom, or they might be accustomed to doing something, or they just might be comfortable doing it a certain way.

So, for both norms and values I think there will be a bit of a difference depending on what their cultural customs are. So that is how I'm going to answer the question of what's specific versus what's universal. For instance, getting back to the issue of lifestyle, I could just say that, let's say, I myself, even if I were in the United States or in the West for a long time, my stomach would still be a Chinese stomach, and I just would like to each Chinese food.

MR. CHENG LI: Ah. This is so interesting. So, now we -- I've never thought that way, so I have a Chinese stomach, but brainwashed with American mind or brain or what? Anyway, now let's open, we have 15 minutes for questions, and please identify yourself, and make sure not to go beyond one question, because for more discussion. Ambassador Roy, first?

MR. ROY: I'm Stapleton Roy; I'm from the Woodrow Wilson Center. Professor He, thank you for your very thoughtful comments. You stressed in your remarks the importance of sustainability in ethical systems but when you look at Chinese history and the dynastic cycle, you see every current pattern of ethical decline, corruption of the ruling group, and the efforts to reverse those declines even if they had temporary success, did not succeed in breaking the dynastic cycle of ethical systems declining into corrupt systems.

All modern systems of governance are based on the concept that power corrupts, and therefore power has to be checked and balanced. This concept is missing in Chinese traditional political philosophy. If the concept is accurate, then the question is, how can China introduce those concepts as a means of dealing with the problem of corruption? Modern systems of governance have a built-in peaceful process for removing corrupt leaders, and replacing them with leaders who have not held power, and there are less corrupt than their predecessors, but the traditional patterns of governance didn’t provide for that type of a replacement cycle.

So I'd be interested in your comments, because in essence the anticorruption campaign that is currently underway illustrates the problem. The power-holders have become corrupt from the very

top down to the bottom, and the effort is to renew the problem by restoring ethical behavior but without addressing the problem of its power, that is the source of the corruption.

MR. HE: (Speaking Chinese) Okay. That's an excellent question, and it's often a question that people often ask me. And for generations and for dynasties that are hundreds and thousands of years, it's true we have had this problem with corrupt officials, and then maybe the dynasty changed, people changed, but the problem came back.

So, well the question here is what can be done about it? First of all -- and what causes it and what to do -- First of all I would say that with our population, that's one issue that I'm not going to go into here, but that's an issue that causes the problem and makes it worse, but of course there is the system itself. All through the beginning of our history we've always emphasized personal morality, and that officials had to hold themselves to the highest standards, but we really didn't have morality built into the system, so we didn't have these checks and balances.

We didn't have a system in there to check the government's power, instead we always emphasize the idea of officials holding themselves to a higher standard. The system of checks and balances wasn't there, and it especially was never and has never been there on the highest ruler in the land. The Monarch, the Emperor, they just had nothing to check them. That is a very serious issue, and all throughout history Chinese intellectuals have been looking at this issue, and they've been looking for something to do about this question and this question and this problem.

Looking at the West, the Mediterranean, the Greek societies, you had something that you founded your cultures on. We, in China, haven't found something, haven't brought something in to deal with checks and balances on government power. I think it's very important here to look at the rule of law, and democracy by the rule of law. I think that Professor Li Cheng, he mentioned this too, and I think that rule of law to bring about democracy is very important and I think we need to look at that in China going forward.

MR. CHENG LI: Yes, the young lady.

SPEAKER: Yes. Thank you very much for your remark, and very interesting the ethics issues in China, although I'm not really an expert in this field. I'm Li Rongliu from Howard University,

School of Social Work, and working as an Assistant Professor there. So my question is, the discussions of ethics in China started back in -- already dated back in 2010, 2011, and in 2013 the government promoted the 24 items, 24 core value of socialist, the moral values -- Am I right? 24 条社会主义核心价值观.

So, I just want to know, and I saw this promotional slogan for this core values in China right now already. I just wonder, does this reflect -- the governments are trying to reconstruct the moral in China, or ethics in China from what perspective? And what do you see the impact on ethics in China -- in Chinese society right now? Thank you very much.

MR. CHENG LI: If I may? We'll pick up a couple more questions, and answer together. Yes, please?

SPEAKER: Thank you. This is Xu Wu from Arizona State University. You mentioned in your presentation actually that the Chinese Communist Party is burdened by its legacy, and especially if you'll listen to some of the officials talking history, it's either they are kind of ignorant or delusional, and sometimes deceptive. So, if the premise is true, then as long as the CCP is in power, and as long as it's the histories are in line, how can we really get out of this vicious cycle of moral decay. Thank you.

MR. CHENG LI: Thank you. And Xu Wu, I love your book. And one more in the back, and the lady, yes; you didn't raise your hand, yes -- Gentleman, I'm sorry.

SPEAKER: Good morning. I'm (inaudible); I'm Assistant Professor and Lecturer from De La Salle University in Manila. My question is not related to South China Sea. I understand that -- Thank you, for the presentation. I understand that it's more domestic, but considering the questions you raised about the fundamental issues of trust and the fundamental issues of kindness in Chinese society now, I'm interested in how this will impact on China's relations with neighbors. Thank you.

MR. CHENG LI: Another excellent question. We have three professors, is there any journalist, I want to reserve the last question for you; journalist? Okay, you are a journalist, right? The last -- well, yes.

SPEAKER: Chief of 21st Century Business Herald. But I'm not asking a question -- or have a media question. You talked about the '80s, '90s, the children who were in '80s and '90s; I was

born in '81. And this generation now, considered to be little prince or princess, but from my point of view it's not true. We are hardworking; we are studying hard, going abroad. Maybe this little prince or princess was perceived by our parent period. So do you think is a stereotype?

MR. CHENG LI: Okay. Now we close questions. Yes?

MR. HE: (Speaking Chinese) I'm going to sort of try to talk to all of the questions, and answer them altogether. First of all, about what this woman in the back, she was asking her question about the 24 -- the Chinese Government, the core values that they put out. Let me say it this way. I think that political power, and the political sector, and the political ruling class is still very important, and they play a very big role right now in China.

I'll just give you an example from my own personal perspective. I translated a book, and it was hard work and nobody gave me much recognition for it, but then, when one of our leaders, like Wen Jiabao goes and reads the book, immediately I can just get famous and I can make a lot of money, 500,000, et cetera -- No, 500,000 copies published.

TRANSLATOR: Oh, oh, oh.

MR. CHENG LI: He did not get any --

TRANLSATOR: Okay.

MR. HE: All right. I didn’t make -- even though I wasn’t personally getting any money from it, there were 500,000 copies that came out.

TRANSLATOR: Okay. Sorry.

MR. HE: (Speaking Chinese) I still think that today in China there exists a misconception. I think that the government thinks that they can go out and put these things out, and that immediately, from the political level, they are encouraging morality and that will just happen. But actually the people, the civic society, the civil society, they actually are the ones where it should be happening.

It needs to be broad, it needs to be trained, it needs to be cultivated. It can't just be: put out 24 things and then it happens. So I think it needs to be organized. It needs to be organized at the grassroots, from the people, so a lot of our NGOs are worried about that actually. Okay. So, I'm actually quite skeptical about how much can actually be accomplished by the government just putting out some

slogans, or 24 principles. I think that, of course the government what they should do is, to try to really benefit the society, they should allow the development, as much as possible, of charitable organizations, of NGOs, let them develop, and actually, first of all in doing that, they could reduce the burden on the government to do it all themselves, but also if the civil society, if these types of organizations were able to work their organizations, to train, to cultivate, to build up such virtues, that's what I think would be the best thing to happen, that's what I hope for the past going forward.

And I don't hope that it's just going to be slogans, because if you just have slogans, they are very complicated slogans. I'm an Ethicist, I study this, and I don't necessarily know what all of the 8 moral principles are supposed to be. I can't even remember them, and they expect that if they put these things out there, the people are just going to take them, copy them and do them. It's not going to happen.

And as for the issue of China and its neighbors, or China and the Philippines, relationships there, first of all, I don't know that much, this is not a topic that I even consider myself, that I even any right to talk about. I don't -- It touches on historical issues, it touches on current events and other issues, so I'm not really going to talk to that.

And finally as to the question of those born in the '80s, millennial, that generation, and whether or not they are like little emperors, and whether they are spoiled, and whether or not they don't work hard and they are lazy, I think people just say that, but I don't necessarily think it's true. My daughter was born in the 1980s and I can see that she, and even her friends, they work hard and they are good kids. I think people who are in the millennial generation, born in the '80s and after 1980, they are different from those born in the 1970s and those born in the 1960s, they see things differently, and of course very different from those of born in the '50s, like myself.

But the other thing is, they came of age in the 1990s, that was when they began to understand what was going on around them, and that was the age of the market economy in China, and so they don't always come back to politics. Not everything in their lives revolves around politics. So, that's the difference, but I think they do work hard, and they are not, you know, little Hegemons that demand everything from everybody.

MR. CHENG LI: Well, I wanted to add a few things for the question about the China,

Philippines relations. Now, you see the -- you see the effort from Chinese leadership, recent effort to improve relationship, between China and Vietnam, and I see President Xi Jinping is going to visit Vietnam next week. And he is going meet with Ma Ying-jeou of Taiwan in a couple of days. And also some Chinese scholars define China's foreign policy, Xi Jinping's foreign policy as a Moral Realism, so then you raise the question about China's now messy moral decay.

How could you do that? How could make your neighboring countries believe you when you have terrible moral predicament and hope? So, therefore, they'd be the driving force to improve China's, you know, ethical codes, et cetera. This is part of reason that Xi Jinping wants to have the great rejuvenation of Chinese nation, and hope that he will have good luck.

Now, because of time that we cannot continue, but I wanted to thank Professor He Huaihong again, for leading this fascinating Chinese ethical discourse, through your very prolific -- you know, very productive Chinese publication, through your influence upon Chinese leaders, through your first English book, you know, with the Brookings Press, and also through your very insightful remarks with us this morning.

I also want to thank the Interpreter, really brilliant translation. It's only my fault because I only mentioned 500,000 -- terms not mentioned for the books. You know, it's difficult to imagine that the 500,000 book, and from one edition, you know, and he really should have charged copyrights, this is your rights and, et cetera.

So I want the audience to join me to give a round of applause, to thank Professor He. (Applause)

So, now I would like to invite my colleague, Evan Osnos, along with Distinguished Chinese-American scholars, to present your perspective. And thank you very much.

MR. HE: Thank you.

MR. CHENG LI: Thank you. Well done.

MR. OSNOS: Everybody in this room is so ethically advanced that you fell into a deep silence the moment we got up here. Very gracious of you. I'm Evan Osnos. I'm a nonresident fellow here at the John L. Thornton China Center at Brookings, and it is a real pleasure to welcome you to this

session on the Moral Predicament in Present-Day China. This is an event I've been looking forward to for a long time. I'm very grateful to Cheng Li for having me here and for convening this terrific group, and for bringing in Professor He for us to hear his comments, which I certainly found stimulating this morning, and I'm sure a lot of you did as well.

I want to add one brief point, which is that I can confirm Professor He's observation that in American politics today, there is very little discussion of Rousseau and Locke. (Laughter). I've been out recently interviewing presidential candidates, and I'm here to volunteer if we want to have a follow-up session on the moral predicament in America. We might have a pretty good conversation about that too.

Before I introduce our panel today, I want to make a very brief personal observation about our subject of moral decay and ethical awakening. For a number of years in Beijing, I lived next door to the Confucius temple. When we moved into the house in 2009, my wife and I, it was a very quiet next door neighbor. The only people who went in and out were a few administrators and the occasional visitor, and that changed very rapidly. In 2010, the Confucian temple woke up in Beijing, and all of a sudden, for the first time, they celebrated the birthday of Confucius, for the first time since the founding of the People's Republic in 1949. They created a stage show based on the Chinese classics, which played every hour on the hour, seven days a week. And they also had all of a sudden an enormous number of visitors coming in from around China. And I will add, the stage show was so loud and so regular, that one of my neighbors said to me, "You know, you should go tell them to turn down the volume." And I said, "Why me?" and he said, "Because you're a foreigner and they'll listen to you." I don't think I want to be known as the foreigner who asked China's most important philosopher to keep it down a little bit.

The reason I mention this is that I do think it reflects something very interesting that's going on in China, which is at the same moment, you have a genuine, authentic, deeply felt appetite for a reconstituted moral conversation, a moral discourse that feels to people as if it's been absent, and then at the same time, you also have a top-down directed effort to control this process. The political authorities are very aware of this pursuit of a moral conversation, and they want to try to keep it within the boundaries that they feel comfortable with. And that combination of things, I think, sets us up for an interesting conversation today. Where is it going? Well, we've got three people with us who can help us

decode this moment and map out where it's likely to lead us from different disciplines.

I'll begin, to my left is Minxin Pei. He's the Tom and Margot Pritzker Professor of Government at Claremont McKenna College, where he also directs the Keck Center for International and Strategic Studies. Minxin specializes in democratization in developing countries, economic reform and governance in China, and his next book, which comes out next year -- and I'm very much looking forward to it -- from Harvard University Press is *China's Crony Capitalism: Dynamics of Regime Decay.*

Yunxiang Yan is Professor of Anthropology and Director of the Center for Chinese Studies at UCLA. Anybody who's read my work knows that I make frequent reference to Yunxiang's work, and he has been really one of the foremost chroniclers of the intimate moral experience in China, the family, how it's changing, kinship, and of course, the experience of being an individual in a globalized world, and he is now at work on a book on individualization and moral changes in post-Mao China, so very much on point with our discussion.

And of course, Dali Yang, who is the William Claude Reavis Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago. He's also the founding faculty director of the University of Chicago's Center in Beijing, and Dali, over the years, has looked at a number of very interesting elements of the state-society relationship. His current projects include studies of social regulation, environmental governance, and the role of institutions and trust, and he'll be telling us more about that today.

But, Minxin, I'd love if you would start us off. The floor is yours.

MR. PEI: Thank you, Evan. I also want to thank my good friend and esteemed colleague, Li Cheng, for inviting me here. It's been six years since I left this town, so it's always good to be back. As someone who has just written a book, *Regime Decay*, I would concur was any suggestion that the Chinese Communist Party is undergoing through a process of institutional decay, but I would differ with my colleague, Professor He, on whether China actually is experiencing moral decay.

This is a very important topic, but it's also very difficult empirical subject to study, because how do you measure moral decay with any plausible convincing numbers. So I will first talk about I want to challenge the conventional wisdom that China is or has experienced moral decay, because there are signs that Chinese society is already going through what I might call an incipient phase

of moral rebirth. So what evidence do I have to show that this might be the case? Because the essence of ethical choice is freedom, is choice of morality. So if you want to measure whether a society is doing the right thing, the first premise is whether the society has been given a choice to do the right thing. So when you look at how Chinese society responds to opportunities of choice, of course you can see negative manifestations of normal behavior or behavior we would not endorse. However, at the same time, you also see very impressive, welcome signs of ethical behavior, and let me just give you a few examples.

One example I would cite is the rapid growth of religious groups, Christian groups in particular, and we see also now a connection between religious groups and lawyers who defend human rights, citizenship rights. I just had a meeting with a friend from China, and one of the things he told me is that all those lawyers, if you bother to check their religious affiliations, are Christians. And this is a very interesting phenomenon, and to me, it shows that individuals, once they have a choice, we should trust that they are going to make the right choice. And the growth of religious groups and emergence of rights defenders and their affiliation with those groups is one piece of evidence. And this piece of evidence is, as I was saying, even more remarkable because we have to consider the enormous repressive pressure these groups have to operate under in China.

And the second piece of evidence is the growth of charitable donations and organizations in China. I looked at the number. I have not been able to verify this, but this is from Professor Yanzhong Huang, a colleague, and I trust his -- Dali's students, I trust that he must have checked out his numbers, and he said as of 2012, total amount of charitable donations in China exceeded $13 billion dollars. That's a big number. I calculate by that, that year, probably it's about 0.2 percent of GDP. This came from nowhere. China used to have zero. So over that period of, let's say, about 35 years since reform began, from zero to 0.2 percent of GDP is a huge progress. So if you believe that this number says something about social morality or social ethics, I would say we're doing pretty well, or China is doing pretty well. Not as good as the U.S., the U.S. number is much, much bigger. There’s probably is between 1 percent, 2 percent, but the U.S. is always the leader on that front.

And the third aspect piece of evidence is that the Internet in recent years has really

become a very powerful tool for both behaviors that we would consider manifestations of social ethics, but also, the Internet has become a mechanism for enforcing ethical behavior, and I'll give you just a few examples here.

I have a friend, very well-known in China, called Yu Jianrong, he founded a charity all through his -- he has about 2 million followers on Weibo -- He noticed that China has a lot of homeless people. In Beijing, beneath bridges, government would put nails to prevent them from sleeping on bridges, so he organized an effort to donate heavy coat to these people, to homeless people. And every year, he said he could collect a million, all through the Internet, over a million coats for homeless people in China. There's another charity he talked to me about, which he was not part of, that organized free lunches for poor students in schools, because the government does not provide free lunches, and that charity has grown a great deal as well.

Another example, again associated with Yu Jianrong, was a few years ago, he noticed a lot of children begging on streets. He launched this citizen movement to ask people to take pictures of young kids begging on street corners and then send it to him and he would distribute. That alone saved about 3,000 young boys, mostly boys, some of them were kidnapped, some were coerced into begging. I would say these are really uplifting examples of a society that probably is going through moral rebirth.

And the last example, I would say that Chinese society has also shown an impressive ability to make its own choices on the issue of morality, because in recent years as Professor He said, the government has never tired of trying to manufacture morality or enforce, impose its own conception of morality. So 八荣八耻 this 8 glories, 8 shames, and 24 definitions of 24 elements of social morality; most people cannot remember. But when you look at how Chinese society responds, they reject official imposition or official artificial manufactured morality, and as they embrace their own. And I see this really as another sign that Chinese society has reached the level of moral maturity that they can make their own choices.

The second part of my talk is less optimistic, because I think that the biggest obstacle to moral rebirth in China is really the one-party system in China, because the essence, as I said, of ethical behavior is choice, is freedom. You just cannot. It's impossible. I think, historically, based on my very

limited knowledge, you just cannot find ethical behavior striving in a dictatorship under tyranny, just not. The two are incompatible.

So the challenge for China is, how can genuine ethical moral standards be improved or ethical conduct be practiced in daily life in a system in which lies, distortion of facts are the rule. Just one thing as Professor Shu said, when you have an official history, that if you bother to read it, probably 95 percent is lies. How can a society that seeks to achieve a higher level of moral standard really deal with this political structure? So I think as long as that system stays in place, it will be very, very hard.

The last point I want to make is that I think that rebirth of social morality in China poses a real political threat. One is that, because in trying to really be truthful to yourself, you need truths, and the effort to seek truths who are undermined, what I call the party's founding myths in China.

The second one is that in order to practice social morality, you actually need civil society, as Professor He said, and organizing civil society is viewed as a political threat to the current political system in China. That's why I think one of the saddest events that occurred in China in the last couple of years is the demolishing of crosses, churches, in Zhejiang. At some point, I think the person who is responsible for this will have to be punished, either by God or by the anti-corruption authorities in China.

Last one, I want to say that this is counterintuitive. I would say that even if the Communist party has been decrying the moral collapse of China, I submit that the Communist party would see a society with moral collapse as an asset. The party will welcome a society in which there are no moralities, moral behavior, for the following reasons.

Because in such a society, you're going to see it's going to be chaotic as a society. It will be a society of rule governed by the law of the jungles, and in that kind of society, there will be more justification for iron-fisted rule.

The second reason for that statement is that, in their society, material needs, not spiritual needs, not sense of justice, will prevail. And that kind of society actually is easier to govern than a society that wants to have a clear answer on justice, on issue of social justice, on morality.

Last point is that in this kind of society, any opposition can be bought, can be coopted with material incentives. So this is a society, again, from a one-party perspective, probably moral

collapse in that kind of society is an asset.

I leave you with a split picture. On the one side, we are seeing signs of moral rebirth in a society that is becoming more independent, more mature, but at the same we have to be aware of the real political obstacles to a society in which moral rebirth actually is happening. Thank you.

MR. OSNOS: Thank you very much. Yunxiang, over to you.

MR. YAN: Thank you. Well, we have a lot of political scientists here, so I don't need to worry about a political side. What I'm going to do is to introduce some of my observations from a more sociological, anthropological perspective. I will be at my best if I can tell stories, and give me enough time and I'll tell you numerous stories. The stories themselves will demonstrate the points, but I cannot do that today. So what I am going to do is to elaborate the following four points.

One is that out of the larger societal context, what we have witnessed in China in the past 30+ years is a social transformation which I called individualization of the Chinese society without individualism, okay, which can be breaked down into the following parts.

One is out of the subjective domain, you have seen the increasing rise of a self-awareness, which include both individuals' desires and individual rights. This is the end of subjective domain. In the objective domain, you have seen, on one hand, that the government sponsor institutional reforms that push more burdens on the shoulders of the individual, which is the essence of the China success of a market oriented reforms.

On the other hand, due to the subjective domain's change, there's increasing competition in the society which fundamentally changed interpersonal relations in Chinese society.

Third, there is also this continuing misunderstanding of what individualism is, which started from the turn of the 20th century, and during that time, the Chinese elite thought individualism was the weapon through strength in China, because it promoted selfishness and anti-social behavior, independence, and so on and so forth, which is only one side of individualism. The other side has never been properly introduced into China even up to today. Most Chinese understanding of individualism remains in the early turn of the 20th century, that model.

Lastly, along with this transformation of Chinese society at the level of social behavior,

we see diversity, the constant increasing of diversity, in both social behavior and other aspects of the society, which was also further driven by the increasing opportunities of mobility, both the physical and social. That's the first point.

The second point is against this background of social transformation, what we have witnessed in the last three decades is a moral and ethical transformation. Here, I made a distinction between moral and ethical, because I believe in my discipline, morality mostly refers to behavior level things, what we do. Ethics is more like moral reasoning. We think, we elaborate what we ought to do.

First, there has been a ethical shift from collective ethics, which emphasizing own obligations and the self-sacrifice, and also oriented toward delayed gratification. For instance, we work very hard for the glory of ancestors.

Two, a more individualistic ethics, which emphasizing individuals' rights, desires, and self-development with the orientation toward instant gratification. We want the things we want, here and now.

Beneath this ethical shift are two more conditions. One is China's unfinished task of the politics of emancipation, which has a long way to go and more complicated things to elaborate. But just to cut a long story short, although everybody knows it is important, is desirable to have individual rights, but how to get there, especially how to get there at the same time to guarantee other people's equal rights remains an unsolved issue.

And another condition underneath this ethical shift is the rapid development of a consumerist ideology, which was in part encouraged by the Chinese government state ever since the late-1980s. So China has an unfinished task of emancipation politics and also full-grown consumerist culture. So that's the second point.

Third point, if we shift from ethics to morality, look at what happened in the past several decades. What I saw is a moral transformation instead of moral decay, instead of moral rebirth, so I have to put myself somewhere diverse from both of the two people spoke before me. In this transformation, we can identify three domains of change in moral behavior.

One is what I call absolute immorality. Trust me, I did some empirical research, I

published some things. One is about extortion of good Samaritans, and another one is about the food safety issues in China. The third one is a more general review of immorality in Chinese society, which is absolutely true obviously but mostly is eye-catching that is also the base we call moral decay.

The second one is new morality. New morality, my best friend, Minxin, just elaborated some, so I don't need to repeat. And also, Professor He started actually with a new morality anecdote, that is how the young people in the public transportation system giving up their seats to the elderly, which is also true. But what I want to emphasize is one more point, that is both immorality and new morality occurred in the very new social domain that is a domain where strangers encounter with strangers. You could do very bad things to strangers. You could do very good things to strangers. So this is absolutely new. How to deal with strangers, in my view, is remaining the biggest challenge in China's moral transformation, because China used to be a society of acquaintances.

The third domain is what I call the contested morality, contested moral behavior, which can be further break down into two parts. One is it is contested simply because of the different perspectives across the lines of age, gender, class, economic status, or belief, like a religious perspective. Examples you can think of it. One very concrete example is, a few years ago, there was this general call of moral crisis in the Chinese countryside because so many Chinese women in the rural area divorced their husband. And they divorced their husband because they went to the city to work, they saw new horizons of life and then they simply ran away. Is that a moral decay? If it is, from whose perspective? Do these women have the freedom to make their choice, to remake their own life?

Another part of this contested morality has a lot to do with a temporal perspective, life course changed. Here is the issue about it, post-18ers opposed to 19ers, the behavior. For instance, the post-18ers generation now, in the last 5 years has picked up a lot of responsibilities, has changed their behavior, changed their views, so on and so forth. This is one thing.

Another thing is that yesterday's immorality could be today's immoral neutral behavior and could well possibly be tomorrow's moral behavior. One thing, one sharp example in this is homosexuality in China.

The last point I want to make is, given what I have said, what you can see is that in the

Chinese moral landscape, diversity is -- I still have five minutes, I only need two -- diversity is the new thing, right? And that's why the contested immorality sphere, domain, is the most interesting part. However, in Chinese cultural system, there has not been already available approach to embrace, not even to embrace, to deal with diversity. So far, nearly all the efforts of moral reforms stick with one wishful thinking, that is, we needed to find the system that could create a new consensus that could be our new moral authority, every day, everybody follow with that, which I would argue, under the condition of modernity, probably will be very difficult, if it is possible at all.

So by pushing for this new version for moral authority, virtually everyone wants to impose his or her view and using that perspective as the new consensus, and then you create a war, a cultural war, about what should be the moral ethical things. And so I would say two issues facing China. One is how to deal with strangers at a behavioral level. Two is at the ethical level, how to deal with diversity remains to be our biggest challenge in China. Thank you very much.

MR. OSNOS: Thank you very much. That was terrific. Dali, over to you. That was great.

MR. YANG: It's really great to join this group, and thank you, Evan, and of course, thank you, Cheng, for organizing such a great event. It's truly a lot of pleasure to engage with Professor He's works. He is published prolifically and also on very important matters. What I find especially instructive in many ways is the way that he engages both with what is in Chinese culture, in Chinese tradition, and also the way he reaches out to the West in terms of both classical philosophies as well as modern philosophies. So in this process that he's seeking not only a critique of what is happening in contemporary China, and of course, Ying reflection with China's traditions and histories, but also how he's proposing, he's trying to find a way for China to get out of this moral predicament, but at the same time, with a system that actually transcends Chinese tradition and Chinese history, and also connects China with the modern world. And I think it's a remarkable undertaking. He's book in particular, and of course many of you have his English book in terms of the new ethics, but in fact he has especially a book entitled (speaking Chinese) (*xin gangchang)* in Chinese, which is very wide-ranging but also it's truly remarkable. It's almost like actually like a classical sense of more modern Western political theories as well, and I

think actually this is a very unique opportunity in terms of his thinking in thinking about the reconstruction of the Chinese moral order, but in many ways it's not simply moral, it's also about the political and the social and so on.

In this case, I think actually what's interesting, for example, is how he rephrases traditional Chinese ethical order in terms of, for example, he emphasizes the (speaking Chinese: xin zhenglin) in talking about (speaking Chinese:Guanguan. Minmin, Renren, Wuwu) in thinking about how you can sort of think and reorder the moral and political universe in China in ways. I find it a remarkable read in this case, and when towards the end of that book, he goes back to the issue, what can we do? Of course, Ambassador Roy asked him, for example, how do you limit power? The ethicist in this case is not obligated to provide other tools in a way in making the transition. Although he is also very modest in thinking, well, what I'm offering is the minimal standards. What are the minimal standards? Of course, in the conversation earlier, he was actually being prompted by the questions to speak about the differences, that in fact, you may have a Chinese or an American stomach. Although, the Chinese stomach is part of the American stomach too, I think actually in a way, but what is interesting is how he goes back to some basics in terms of the protection of life and property. And of course, there I find that what he's speaking about is actually not just connecting with Chinese traditions, but also connecting with what he was referring to what the American presidents used to read. But of course, today we do actually have a constitutional scholar in the White House who happens to be also from the University of Chicago. So I think we are elevated quite well, but in fact, we can't also afford to have presidents not to read and reside from law anymore because our predecessors did read law and, incorporate law into our constitution and so on. And what I think actually Professor He is trying to do is also to do the same for the new Chinese moral, social, and political order in a way that, in fact, also my colleagues here have referred to.

Here I think I also hear a passionate plea in the book. Later on, he emphasizes the urgency, what do you need to do. And he actually, I think Professor He was very modest this morning in not trying to get to that, in a way, but when I read, I really saw his frustration with how there are a lot of falsehoods being told, when in Professor Pei also mentions how you cannot trust the official histories that a lot of the moral predicament in China today, the problems are not caused by society as I earlier -- I fully

agree with Professor Pei, in fact. In fact, it's the politics that drives a lot of the problems in China today.

And in this context, I want to speak to especially the issue of trust, because I happen to have done some empirical research on this matter, in fact, and we do know that social capital is extremely important for economic development for really building our order. In fact, it's remarkable so we actually try to engage to find out about Chinese social trust in this, because very often you read about resolves from social and political service. Chinese trust in political institutions are extraordinary high, but immediately, people ask, can you trust the trust numbers, especially when you ask people, do you trust the central leaders, the central institutions? More than 90 percent of the Chinese say yes, and then immediately, people say, can I really trust you to say that you trust the central, right, because people asking and answering the questions are more truncated in a system whereby maybe people, the responders, are not at will in answering those kinds of questions.

So then actually we try to figure out how to deal with this issue, because we can ask people to answer questions about not only trust about the central institutions where they say 90 percent of them say they trust. We also asked them to answer questions about trusting local authorities. Here the numbers immediately come down, in fact, to around 60 percent, 60 percent, but also with significant variations, in fact. Then suddenly this got much more interesting, and also you find that, in fact, a set of in many ways, there are significant variations across the country. For example, we find that a lot of the issues today related to political trust is related to issues of land takings, food safety, for example. We find for example, in all those matters, if people had experienced adverse actions by the authorities in particular, they are likely to be less trusting of the local authorities. If they had had their land taken by the authorities, and of course usually they are on the (inaudible) victims of efforts by the authorities to pay them less than their land is worth in the market, therefore they're likely to be less trusting of the local authorities and so on.

Then we try to figure out, social scientists have actually so there's some massive industry studying the issue of social trust, but we also have a lot of questions about trust. It is a puzzle. And also, what is the relationship between social and political trust? High social trust helps with political trust and perhaps vice versa, but what is the direction? How do you truly find out? In fact, my coauthors and I

have tried to deal with this issue in the Chinese context, but here it's really interesting, because here again also Professor Yan was emphasizing how a lot of the trust in the Chinese system is based on the intra group trust.

This morning, I read a little piece from a professor at Beijing University, in fact, who emphasizes all trust in China is about family lineage. In fact, Professor He himself goes in to some extent in that direction in starting in thinking about this. But there is a standard question derived from the general social survey, which continues to be conducted by the University of Chicago affiliated group, essentially ask you about the trust of strangers. Do you think that people can generally be trusted, or do you think that you should be careful with most of the times? This is the question that is asked around the world, including in China. In the survey that we analyzed, we also asked the same question. And then there is the question people think, oh, can we truly trust that the Chinese answer the same question as well? So then the social scientists in recent years have started to introduce this concept called the read years of trust. Do you think you are really trusting your fellow friends or are you instead are trusting more generally? I think actually, just based on common sense, I think people trust quite a bit, and this is again where I agree with Professor Pei. How else can people buy all the fake foods and fake goods and all that if they don't trust actually? So if you think about it, on the one hand, it's a bad sign that there are a lot of bad things happen, but it's also the fact that many Chinese invest massive amounts of money in all sorts of (inaudible) because they trust. Isn't that right?

So when we actually make the adjustments and all that, we control for all the variables, we actually find that the Chinese are very high on social trust, which is again why people in China can develop so rapidly because people are willing to make the investments, in fact. So even after making all the adjustments, they find that today, actually, China compares well with France, Spain, South Korea, so both developed European countries and, of course, Confucian, a country with very strong Confucian tradition. China ranks among those countries. So China doesn't do very badly at all in that case in terms of social trust.

We also do find, and we have a way which in statistical terms is called instrumental variables, we try to test how can you delineate the linkage between political and social trust, we do find

also political trust in China significantly affects social trust. In other words, if China wants to rebuild to sustain the level of high social trust, it really needs to build its politics. Here in fact remarkably, I find that I'm fully in agreement with Professor He in terms of his new ethics for China in thinking about a lot of the challenges facing China would be the reconstruction of politics. If you can reorder the politics, in fact, that the system has to turn more choose to allow people to be more authentic, then in fact, China already has very strong social conditions in that case.

And in here, I think I'm a little less -- I would be in disagreement with Professor Pei. He's a master in arguments. I think he may have deliberately set this up for me in some way, in the sense that he thinks that the CCP would probably even welcome moral decay. I do think actually the CCP has a sense that it wants to have a stronger society in terms of trust and so on, as long as the trust is in CCP. But in order to do so, the CCP had to make the people trust it, right? So in that sense actually, what Professor He has done is a remarkable effort to help think through those issues, but also build it on universal foundations.

And let me end in this case on what he's building actually is on this free common humanity, and I think again, this is a remarkable effort by him to transcend Chinese and Western in a way in thinking that rebuilding ethics and politics in China, you have to build on those common humanity for the very simple reason, it used to be China can do it all by yourself because it's in its own universe. It couldn't learn from the West. But now that we have all this knowledge, we have all the experiences, we have all those interactions -- for example, 275,000 Chinese students are studying in the U.S. alone -- then what's the justification for not borrowing. Of course, the CCP itself borrowed, took Marxism, but today, we can't just do that anymore, we have to do more. And that foundation has to rest on the common humanity. So let me end there. Thank you.

MR. OSNOS: That was terrific. Well, thank you all to the three of you. I hear and also, of course, in Professor He's comments, there is the one point of consensus is that this is a moment of moral turbulence, whether or not we are on the process of rebuilding or still in the process of decay or whether these go on at the same time. One thing that I think is interesting hearing all of your comments today is that there are the factors that you identify as both contributing and demonstrating this

phenomenon are different. So for instance, in Minxin's case, you draw out the technological element, which is you (inaudible) can go on the Internet and can forge, in a sense, a moral conversation with people he doesn't meet face to face, with a couple million of his followers, and he can, in a sense, recruit them or coordinate with them to participate in moral activity.

I thought it was also interesting that, Yunxiang, you identified the sort of logistical geographical fact of modern life, which is that you encounter people outside of your immediate kinship and family circles, and this interaction with strangers forces people into a new moral moment as they go into the city and they encounter people that they haven't met before. And then of course, in Dali's case, I thought you identified the point that I want to now develop further, which is the role of institutions. And principally, of course, that would be the role of the government. I think in many ways, we've circled around this subject of what is the potential role for the government in the moral life of China today and tomorrow. And if I could ask you, Dali, to just talk for a moment about whether you think fundamentally, is the party today, the party state, let's say, in the position to be an impediment to a moral life in China, or is it, in fact, capable of being a catalyst for a more moral life?

MR. YANG: Well, that's a very broad question in many ways. I think it's an important question, although in this case, when you talk about institutions, we're not just talking about government institutions in many ways. Of course, this morning earlier we were talking about the shared observation that, for example, the government is beginning to be engaging developing a social credit rating system.

I want actually to begin with my observation about Chinese restaurants, because a lot of the issues we face and a lot of things that people worry about is food safety. Yunxiang has written on this. I personally have also written it, and Cheng had spoken specifically on this issue. But you go to China today, increasingly, one of the reasons many Chinese like to visit McDonald's and KFC in the past is you go for the experience, in many ways, because that's a sure way to find a clean restaurant in the past. But of course, after the last couple years, they also realize, even those restaurants can be subject to problems and so on. But what's remarkable in recent years is the development increasingly of restaurant chains. For example, there is a chain called (speaking Chinese: *xibei youmian*), and so on, that actually, you go, the experience is remarkable. You have the server come to you practically

swearing that they guarantee the quality of the food, and so on. And that, in fact, they have also the kosher foods, the emergence of chains like that. So social institutions have a certain way to gradually develop.

And of course, we go back, I remember President Reagan used to say on nuclear inspections is trust, but verify. What's interesting is online institutions as they have developed increasingly, there are also some ways through public comments and other things, social individuals are being honest to provide opinions on restaurants, on those kind of including goods and so on.

So I think actually it's not simply a government aspect, it's actually a sort of a social institutions. Let me end by also mentioning a phenomenon. We have the University of Chicago Center is in the university district in Beijing right outside of Renmin University, in fact, just outside of where usually there are a lot of people pedaling to sell you fake actually, you know, certificates, sort of diplomas. Let me assure you, diploma from Peking University is worth much less on the black market than one from a obscure college. Why is it so? Because over time, the Chinese government has developed online databases that you can search and verify the degree certificates. So if you come from a major university, easily that can be searched and verified, and therefore, the value of a diploma or ID from Beijing University is not worth much anymore. Instead, it has to be an obscure institution that he can't search for it anymore practically. And this is happening in many areas, and this goes back to what Minxin has done. And I think you can talk about a lot of those other things. Environmental institutions, again, they are verifiable, so increasingly, there are local authorities that are suspected of manipulating data, but then increasingly, environmental data are released in real time, so that you can't really manipulate it anymore. A lot of those things are beginning to happen, and therefore, I think actually, in the process the Chinese are heavily engaged socially and politically rebuilding those kinds of institutions.

MR. OSNOS: In a few minutes, we're going to turn to your questions, but before we do, Yunxiang, I wondered if you would help us think a little bit about an element in your work, which is the rural experience and also the urban experience, because sometimes it's easy for us to say we can write off phenomenon in China by saying, well, this may be going on in the city, but it's not going on in the countryside, or vice versa. Can you talk a little bit about what's going on these days? Are we seeing a

merger of these two moral experiences or do they remain for practical and deeper reasons, do you have a separate experience if you're living in a county town versus if you're living in a big city?

MR. YAN: Well, if you alluded to the general assumption that moral landscape in the countryside should be better, then my answer is a direct, straightforward no. It could be worse. It actually being worse in many places. If you think of food safety issues, who are the vendors and the producers of those fake faulty poisoned food? Most of them are from the countryside, but they didn't do this in their own hometown. They didn't sell those to the people they knew. So it's not a matter of urban-rural divide, it's rather the divide between acquaintances with acquaintances or strangers to strangers. So I think that's the critical part of China's contested morality and moral transformation.

MR. OSNOS: Minxin, your book that's coming out on the subject of crony capitalism, Xi Jinping in some ways has done advanced publicity for you with his anti-corruption campaign by drawing attention --

MR. PEI: I quote him in every chapter.

MR. OSNOS: Well, maybe you'll get a blurb from him on the back of the book. I want, if I can, I'll co-op Ambassador Roy's question for a moment, and ask what your research led you to at the end. Did you arrive at the conclusion that the system today is able to do the sort of self-corrective mechanisms that have been both so elusive in Chinese history and also would appear to be, at the moment, so difficult for the party to accept, or is in fact the process that we're seeing now capable? is it up to the task of putting China back onto a more stable moral and political footing?

MR. PEI: Well, the short is answer is no, because the current campaign is a campaign from within the system, and over the last 35 years, the party has launched -- I stopped counting -- I don't know how many, but many, many campaigns, and these campaigns work for a brief period of time, but if you do not go after the underlining causes of political decay or institutional decay comes back; they multiply actually. So the real reason, because this is something I've been working on for three years. I've looked at 260 cases involving multiple officials. So we're talking about crony capitalism in the sense of corruption that works, not just individual conduct. And the conclusion I draw from this study is that when you have a group of political elites in control of enormous economic wealth, crony capitalism is the

inevitable outcome if political power is not placed under institutional questions.

MR. OSNOS: I want to stay with you for one second. Before we turn to questions, I just can't resist. I'm curious of the context for our conversation today is in some ways self-contained. We're talking about China's internal dynamics, but I think it's worth asking the question about why those of us here abroad should actually care about China's internal moral conversation. I say -- I'll be provocative -- from what I say, we look around the world and we see barbarism and tyranny and collapse in so many parts of the world, and in China there is stability of a certain kind. Certainly there is sustenance there of the basic conditions of human life. Is this conversation that in the end doesn't lead us to a relevant conclusion or should we care about what's going on?

MR. PEI: I think we all care about China, because we want China to do better, because China is important to us, to our lives, to the world. When you read yesterday's New York Times that China is burning 70 percent more coal, I think we all have to worry about the future of the planet. Frankly, we cannot compare China with Syria, with Iraq. I think people in China will be extremely offended because they see themselves as future Americans. What they're doing is much, much better than what they did under Mao, but we worry that it's not enough.

MR. OSNOS: And we are connected. Their moral decisions affect us over here and vice versa. Let's open this up to questions. I would encourage you please to remember to ask a question, not make a statement, and to try to confine it to one question so that we get as many people in as possible. We'll start right here with Mike in the fourth row.

MR. MOSETTIG: Mike Mosettig, PBS Online NewsHour. There seems to be a contradiction that come out of both panels, or there are contradictory campaigns. One is the anticorruption campaign, although you have to determine is that against corruption or just to get rid of inconvenient people. And secondly, the campaign going on against NGOs. Can those two campaigns go on in tandem or is one or the other going to just collapse?

MR. OSNOS: Anybody want to take that? Minxin?

MR. PEI: Yeah, well, I think what the question really illustrates the point most of us were trying to make, that is, one of the causes of what we consider the moral challenges China faces is really

government decision, the use of power. How can a government decrying moral decline at one minute and then the next minute going after the sources of moral renewal in China?

MR. YANG: Well, I would not say that in China there is a campaign against NGOs. You look at the universe of NGOs in China, for example, there are a lot of NGOS that the Chinese government is encouraging and working with, for example, in the area of environmental protection, but at the same time there are certain NGOs that the government is heavily wary of and has cracked down. So in that sense and also for the same reason, in a way, I think in the case of corruption however, it's gone further than simply tackling one's political opponents. There is an institutional sort of drive towards it as well. Overall, I would put all of this on the term regulation. By regulated, however, within a one-party system and with the fundamental interest of the one-party system in mind, and therefore what we see is in certain aspects of this effort we like, in certain aspect of the effort, we also see things that we really don't like.

MR. OSNOS: Yeah, back there where there's a question.

MR. STEELE: Thank you very much for coming and speaking with us. This is very important and thanks Brookings. My name's Andy Steele. I work at RANE, a corporate risk company. My question is, when you're talking about social trust, Dr. Cheng Li offered earlier the quotation translated of the economic policy has forced China to lose some of its morality. And I'm wondering about economics affecting social trust, and I can think of coastal regions being richer than inland. China has the second most number of billionaires after the U.S. Even the *hukou* system, citizens in their own city might feel like they're disincentivized from using social programs like hospitals and schooling. So what aspects of economic policy do you think should be most quickly addressed to encourage social trust? Thank you.

MR YANG: Let me speak to this issue, since it's especially relates to the article that I had coauthored. Let me actually begin by saying, however, that it's not necessarily true that the higher trust, the better. You don't want blind trust also. So one of the reasons developed societies do not have extraordinary high trust is we also tend to have critical citizens who are skeptical, who are wary and who really don't want, for example, strong power in the federal government and so on. That actually is healthy as well. So you want a mixture of trust, but also a certain degree of skepticism and distrust as well in any society. So in that sense, therefore the question is, what are the patterns in China? What we find is in

fact in coastal regions in fact in China, trust tend to be a little lower. So you do find that in the less developed areas, trust is higher. So in that sense, actually, in certain cases, you want on average a decent level of trust, but you also don't want to have extraordinary low levels of trust. We actually also find a very strange and interesting phenomena. Communist party members tend to have lower trust.

MR. PEI: It's not strange at all.

MR. YANG: So I'm still trying to figure out what does it really mean, but overall though, actually it's a sort of certainly you want developed institutions. Used to be in the West, for example, one of the issues have studied is blood safety. We used to emphasize how we want to encourage simply blood donations. In fact, the UK emphasized, blood donations is better than blood is actually sort of offers with remuneration, but in the end actually the systems converged, because you can't fully trust anybody anymore. In that sense actually, you have to develop institutions, and I think more than societies today have to rely on regulation in the many ways, but at the same time, you want people to have the sense of generosity and trust and is that healthy combination that matters.

MR. YAN: I'd like to follow your comments on this issue as well. That is, in addition to trust, that there's civility. So in a modern society, you need the properties of proper level of trust, not too much, not too strong, not too weak. But also you need civility to support it. Civility could be further break down into mutual respect, consideration, and tolerance. But that's three factors you can see actually in the more developed coastal areas. There's a higher degree of civility, and the reverse is also true if you think about it, the inland. For instance, Shanghai, you have probably the highest civility comparatively speaking in Chinese cities, and then you have probably a higher degree of distrust, which could work toward a positive end as well.

MR. OSNOS: Yeah, there's a question right here on the third row, yeah?

MS. HINDEL: Thank you. My name is Hannah Hindel. I'm at CSIS and the China Power Project, and one question that I've been thinking about throughout the talks today has been the government's appeal to young people in particular as sort of top-down expectation of an ability to either influence or, I guess, impose a certain type of morality. Since 1963, we see campaigns every single year. March 5th comes around and we see (speaking Chinese: Xiang Lei Feng Xuexi 向雷锋学习), he like

received the model emulation campaigns, right? He's dead, but he's not, and so I would be interested to hear what the panel thinks of what the success potential there is, in part for the government to actually have a real influence on the morality and the value systems of young people, and is there an ulterior motive there, and if so, what is it?

MR. PEI: The repeated use of Lei Feng really shows how unimaginative the propaganda department has become. Young people, if you deal with them, you know, they actually are very independent-thinking. The last thing you want to do to a group of young people in China today is to tell them what to do. They would precisely do the opposite. That's why one of the points I'm making is that whenever you give Chinese society an opportunity to make the choice, they make the right choice, but you do not impose a set of choices. That's why the Chinese Communist Party has been very frustrated in its inability to foster or build new role models for the young generation. The only area that the party has been successful is not to build new models but to fan nationalism, but that's a very different issue.

MR. YAN: If you look at young people's behavior, you can see actually in public domain, when dealing with strangers, younger generations tend to show a higher level of number one, civility, number two, mutual understanding of the other party, but if you look at the older generation, they tend to do better toward people they know in their own circles. So it's just dealing two different population, that even within the young Chinese people, you have the sort of difference between the post-18ers and the post-19ers, because the post-19ers really was born into affluent society, increasingly so. They have different concerns, and so there's a further difference. But lumping them all together, this is what I early on alluded that it is almost like a dead end. If you deal with the increasing diversified moral landscape from a unified version or perspective, I mostly refer to this as government sponsored top-down moral reform efforts. In that sense, I think what Professor He suggested is could it be a very healthy and functional approach.

MR. YANG: Well, I think it's interesting when Professor Yan mentions how young people may behave today. Of course, this is a generation that have no brothers or sisters in the urban areas, so they have to reach out in some ways, because they cannot go to their brothers and sisters anymore. Already I see the phenomenon of families broadening. You reach out to cousins and so on much more,

and then by extension, younger people tend to be, in essence, more outgoing. I think actually you raise one of the most profound questions facing Chinese education today, because this is where you want to go online. And what you find is there are a lot of comments that are very challenging, because just this morning, I received actually someone sent me a picture of the rules governing for pupils in China, and they are all critical of this, basically saying the Chinese ones tend to have things that are very abstract and lofty. For example, the first line, let me read it out. "Love the motherland. Love the people. Love the Communist Party of China." And then the other circulated posts online then begin to say, what are the Americans and others tell their kids to do? There are a lot of comments about what happens in American schools. I have kids who have gone through schools here and all that, and we know how they have to do the independent projects to learn about the American Revolution. We are revolutionary. We study the revolution and all that, but they learn it from the bottom of their heart in many ways. They go through this process. In China, everyone, the young pupils basically are told, you have to recite those correct results in order to pass the exams. And that's actually a significant difference. One of the reasons many people send their kids abroad is because they are unhappy with the Chinese system in such a way they want to send to have their kids, their only children in many ways, to have an authentic educational experience. So therefore, I think actually this is where I am much more hopeful as well, because we do have a new generation of people in China today who have access to information, who can think for themselves, and for the first time also most of them are going at least have a high school education and more. In fact, seven and a half million people graduate from colleges each year today, more than two times as many as in the United States. So we have a remarkable generation of younger people who are going to be thinking differently, who have the information, and who can act differently as well in the future. However frustrated we may be, as Professor He is, in fact, raise some of the political developments, what's remarkable is time is remarkable in that they always usher in this new young generation in China today, but they also have all the information, and they are going to be more critical citizens.

MR. OSNOS: I think we have time just for one or two more questions, way in the back there, I think we've got a question.

SPEAKER: Thank you. My name is Barbara from Fletcher School of Law and

Diplomacy. And my question is, how do social scientists of political science evaluate the increasing decay of moral standard in China and an increasing lack of a social trust in China can be correlated to the increasing of China's activity or tendency to challenge the current global order and increasingly China's tendency to use a militarized measure to solve either a dispute in neighbor in land and sea, and increasing China's tendency to setup an order to center around themselves. And also, how the domestic phenomenon of stranger meeting stranger can be adopted to evaluate the international scenario of phenomena that the China actually is increasingly active in a global stage, while it's lacking of a trust on the global (inaudible)?

MR. OSNOS: While we've got the microphone back there, we'll add this question right to your right there, and then we'll answer them both together.

SPEAKER: 21st Century Business Herald, Two leaders from Mainland and Taiwan will meet tomorrow for a historical meeting, so I wondered if the professors can share with us about the --

MR. OSNOS: Moral implications?

SPEAKER: -- similarity or differences across straight in terms of political morality and political trust. Thanks.

MR. PEI: I thought I'm done with my previous life as a talking head, and I guess it's not.

MR. OSNOS: I actually am curious too about the question of whether you see any difference in the moral experience right now in China and on the mainland and in Taiwan, whether this bears into this (inaudible)?

MR. PEI: I think if I have to make a very simple statement, Taiwan clearly is a society in which we would not use moral decay to characterize. Taiwan actually is a very well-functioning society, but whether that's going to be reflected in tomorrow's meeting, nobody knows.

MR. OSNOS: Does anybody want to address this question whether there's a morality --

MR. PEI: At least I think it was that Taiwan is not launching an anticorruption campaign. There's an election campaign going on, but not an anticorruption campaign.

MR. OSNOS: And on the first question, do you see any analogy between what's going on in China's moral --

MR. PEI: No, that's really hard. I think that's the connection between internal morale and external militaristic behavior would have, I think that's a Ph.D. thesis.

MR. OSNOS: But we have the makings of another session someday on China's external moral behavior around the world, but before everybody leaves, please join me in thanking our panelists for a really stimulating discussion.

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