

# THE HARMONY DEBATES

*Exploring a practical philosophy for a sustainable future*

*Edited by Nicholas Champion*



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edited by Nicholas Campion

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## PEACE FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF HARMONY

*Scherto Gill*

A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF HARMONY CAN HAVE PROFOUND IMPLICATION FOR PEACE. What I want to explore is the understanding of peace from the perspective of harmony, and the opportunities that such a conception might bring to the process of creating peace and peacefulness globally. More specifically, from reading Confucian and Greek classics it interprets harmony as containing the idea of right relationships amongst all, and argues that it is dynamic and proactive, rather than static and merely complying to a predefined universal order. In this reading, I find harmony to be harmonising, a co-creative and generative process that can help transform tension and conflict towards an infinite possibility of relation and interconnection.

These insights lend a holistic understanding of peace which includes a generative and proactive process that is beyond the mere presence of inner peace and the absence of war and violence. Like harmony, peace itself becomes an action embodying principles of harmony in myriad relationships, for example, between humans and spirits; amongst people, communities and nations; between people and the planet, as well as our relationships with ourselves. This holistic understanding of peace does not separate humans, spirits or the world (Confucius' humanity, heaven and earth), nor does it see our being as fragmented. Through the lens of harmony, we can bring together the multiple dimensions of peace as a whole. Thus, in peacebuilding practices, the focus would be on nurturing dialogue, listening and collaborating, encouraging the co-being and co-acting of all agents, and embracing conflict and tension as creative forces for innovation and transformation.

### HARMONY

In Greek thinking, harmony is situated within (cosmic) order, forms and (mundial) structure, and it is also a balancing force that helps reconcile, for instance, virtues and vices, opposites (eg. in music), and ensures justice.<sup>1</sup> The metaphysical base of harmony is established through a contemplative endeavour and epistemic process which taps into greater wisdom or principles inspired by the Ultimate/Transcendent.<sup>2</sup> Harmony is intimately connected to beauty and goodness (eg. the

Form of the Good which explains what is just and beautiful), and brings integrity, beauty and goodness within different realms, in one's body, within the body-mind-soul connection, in rational thought and moral reasoning, between the sacred and the profane, and in the cosmic.<sup>3</sup> To the ancient Greeks, harmony is the foundation to life, and hence the principle of creation.<sup>4</sup> In this way, harmony opens up in love, acting to connect the separate elements in the world towards an integrated whole through bonds and relationships.<sup>5</sup>

In the Confucian tradition, the concept of harmony is fluid: as John Berthrong pointed out, Confucian philosophy has been evolving over the course of last two thousand years, through four different chapters, integrating Buddhist thinking and teaching, as well as being placed alongside Western philosophy along the way.<sup>6</sup> What I discuss here is mainly based on the lenses of the four classic books written by Confucius, and scholars' interpretations of these classic texts. Starting with a contrast between harmony on the one hand, and sameness/uniformity on the other, the Confucians argue that at the core of harmony there is a dynamic process of harmonising which includes sustaining differences without rendering them to sameness/uniformity. As we read in the *Analects*, 'The gentleman harmonizes [*he*] without being an echo. The petty man echoes [*tong*] and does not harmonize'.<sup>7</sup> This core notion suggests two combined aspects of harmony: the first concerns one's self and other people, that is, one can be open to harmonise or coordinate with others, but without relinquishing those of one's own (ideas, thoughts, habits, preferences, and so on); and secondly, it recognises constituting parts of wholeness/totality as diverse, at times opposite, each being attributed its worthiness and its place within the whole through interacting with others.<sup>8</sup> These two aspects combined suggest that, to have harmony within wholeness, the different constituents, including those opposites, do not have to lose their distinctness in order to harmonise with others. In fact, 'inclusive opposites', such as *yin* and *yang*, are fundamental to the harmonising process, and through harmonising, co-constituted elements can be brought into a dialectic relationship in which they mutually constrict, contradict but also mutually expand and reconcile towards renewed relationships.<sup>9</sup> In this dynamic process, there is mutual transformation, renewal and advancement. Thus, harmony is perceived as containing within itself a perpetual creative force. Similar to the Greek conception, harmony in Confucian thoughts is comprehensive and multi-faceted, applicable in all dimensions of human life and the natural world. In fact, the perpetual creative tension places Nature and humanity as one in spirit.

The major contention between the classic Greeks and Chinese conceptions of harmony appears to lie in whether there is a pre-existing order imposed upon the world, either through normative description or through divine prescription. In

other words, the major contention is the question of whether there is an ultimate ideal of harmony.<sup>10</sup> One argument is that whilst the ancient Greeks recognise a deep transcendent order and structure that can inspire harmony in the world, the ancient Confucian scholars perceive the force to have come from the harmony or harmonising process itself that encompasses spatial, temporal, metaphysical, moral and aesthetical dimensions of dynamic interplay.<sup>11</sup>

There is also a common understanding of harmony between Greek and Confucian schools of thought. For instance, both see harmony as ‘the coming-together of different things’, and believe that tensions, opposites and conflicts are not only part of harmony, but also the creative driver of harmony.<sup>12</sup> This has led some scholars to reconcile the differences between the Greek and Chinese conceptions of harmony and arrive at some common understanding in the following: harmony is an on-going dynamic and fluid process of integrating different forces towards coordination, collaboration and congruent relationships amongst all that is, including things in nature, amongst humans, within a person him/herself (by harmonising the various parts of his/her body, and body-mind-heart-soul relationship), in society and within social institutions, in relations amongst communities and nations, globally and cosmically.<sup>13</sup> This conception of harmony includes Love which connects and binds all the parts in an integrated whole.<sup>14</sup> Implied in this understanding of harmony is that it is not only desirable in itself but is intrinsically valuable, and also contains in it the values of aesthetics, beauty and goodness.<sup>15</sup>

This reading of harmony reveals at least five important insights that may shed light on our understanding of peace:

First, harmony is both a process and action of harmonising and a quality of what is harmonious. The former is strongly supported by the Confucians; that harmony means harmonising, a process of responding to, coordinating and co-creating with others (plant, animal, human, structure, system). The latter is found in the Greek explanation that harmony is a metaphysical and a moral concept that both describes and prescribes: it describes how the world is and operates (especially in the non-human world) and prescribes how human beings ought to be and act in the world. As I shall discuss, harmony is neither an abstract notion nor a rigid postulation, but rather it expresses the qualities of being harmonious in actions and processes, in relationships, in the traits and characteristics of being harmonious, and in the state of our being within the cosmos.

Second, as already indicated, harmony is multidimensional and the processes and actions of harmonising take place at different levels and in all dimensions at the same time. Thus, harmony assumes far-reaching symbiosis and interdependence

within a totality. This symbiosis and interdependence are found in the elements and energies constituting our world, and in movements and changes in nature and human activities, such as music making, making a livelihood, developing social institutions and governing.

A closely connected point here is the relational nature of harmony, applicable to all the afore-mentioned relationships, for example, between the human world and natural universe, and amongst individuals, groups, societies, structures and systems. Harmony likewise involves intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships, the relationships amongst sciences, religions/spirituality, cosmos, culture, economics, technology, politics and civilisation, as well as general relatedness and interdependence of all things within a greater whole.

Third, within the harmonious whole, differences are not suppressed. Instead, harmony contains and holds tension, differences and contradiction in these diverse aspects, elements, and dimensions, forming an interactive 'sphere' of co-constituted components. As expounded by the classical Confucians, within this 'sphere', all relationships are mutually constricting and mutually emancipating at the same time, whilst supporting an optimal space for all to flourish. In this way, the world can accommodate and nurture 'myriad things'.<sup>16</sup> For instance, such an interpretation can be applied when we are engaging with cultural and religious differences, or clashes between value systems. In this case, a value of pluralism is often favoured. Likewise, within international relations, this interpretation of harmony can support mutual accommodation, resulting in 'relativity without relativism'.<sup>17</sup>

Fourth, harmony evokes aesthetic expressions and embodies inherent goodness in these symbiotic relationships. Plato's form is an illustration: where there is harmony, there is beauty, goodness and truth, which in turn epitomise harmony. Similarly, Confucians place great significance on the practice of ritual in everyday life. Practising rituals involves living out the values as the core of an ethical life.<sup>18</sup> The emphasis is not on the repetition of certain practices, such as prayers in religions, etiquette in the family, or ceremony in the community, but instead, the rituals reinforce moral propriety and goodness in a certain way of relating and acting, which further leads to cultivating good human beings and a harmonious world. Thus, harmony entails acting mutually responsively but in appropriate ways. What is appropriate is also aesthetically pleasing, such as music as a ritualistic action.

Finally, harmony is reflective. It provides philosophical guidance about how to be and act in relationship with another, including human, non-human and divine others. Equally, it articulates a spiritual worldview where all is located within a

wider framework of meaning and interconnection, and is part of a larger whole. Through harmony and in harmony, there exists the possibility and desirability of flourishing within the totality. From this philosophical and metaphysical base, we can see that harmony within one's self is inseparable from harmony amongst things beyond one's self, such as our relationship with other people and other beings in the world.

Therefore, harmony can be embodied pragmatically in our everyday being and actions, for instance, in our being (or co-being/co-humanity as per the Confucians), language (which reflects our forms of life within communities), attitudes, beliefs and values, our personal, cultural and institutional practices, socio-economic and political structures, in the ways that we appreciate our experiences in the world, and, above all, in the way we educate and nurture people who are capable of living and acting in harmony with each other and with the world, and who are motivated to create harmony in the world.

So far, in interpreting the notion of harmony in classical Greek and Confucian philosophies, I have outlined five important perspectives through which we may further develop a framework to understand and appreciate peace.

#### UNDERSTANDING PEACE FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF HARMONY

From the above classical vantage points, there is clearly a connection between peace and harmony. This connection is already obvious from the etymology of the term 'peace' in both ancient Greek and classical Chinese. 'Eirene' is the Greek root word for peace. It describes the following qualities: harmonious relationships between humans, nations and between God and humanity; freedom, welfare, order, friendliness, and a sense of rest and contentment. The Greek conception (and in its use in the New Testament) stresses the quality of peace in relational harmony, highlights the importance of loving connection between people, communities and states and underlines both the inner and outer qualities of being human. In the Confucian conception, especially in the Doctrine of Mean, peace is referred to as *zhong* (中), a state of being centred, and *he* (和), harmony where everything is in its proper place in unity with others and through dynamic and creative tension.<sup>19</sup> The centred harmony is peace itself: equilibrium in accordance with the way of the universe, towards which all strive, and through which all thrive, the divine destiny.

In both traditions, peace is intimately connected with harmony in three aspects. The first is harmony's relationship with peace in a threefold distinction. In other words, harmony is seen as not just the state of peacefulness itself, it is

also an expression or outcome of peacefulness, and equally a source or condition of peacefulness. This threefold distinction is helpful in understanding peace holistically. The second is the relational nature of harmony that can enable us to appreciate peace as right relationships. The third is the part that human proactivity can play in promoting harmony, and hence peace can embody proactivity.

#### A. UNDERSTANDING PEACE HOLISTICALLY

The threefold distinction reminds us that when we understand peace, we must take into account all three aspects and consider such questions as: (1) what counts as peacefulness in oneself, in the community, within society and globally; (2) what contributes towards peace; (3) what are the expressions of peace.<sup>20</sup> All three aspects are constituted in peace, even though (1) is clearly the primary meaning of the word and (2) and (3) are derivatives of peace, and they are helpful in directing our attention to the holistic nature of peace. Indeed, the perspectives of harmony suggest that peace has rich meanings and proactive qualities, ranging from one's state of mind to interpersonal dynamics, and from community relations and international relations to current global situations and climate change. In all these cases, we can refer to peace, and despite the differences in its meaning in each context, and that what counts as peaceful in one context would not necessarily be perceived in the same way in another, the concept of peace is neither ambiguous nor fragmented. The threefold distinction allows a semantic unity within these contexts.<sup>21</sup>

As the etymology of peace shows, like harmony, peace is not a single value and is instead a much *thicker* notion than any single paradigm can capture. Any understanding of peace must unify its different forms and qualities without denying their variety. It requires a similar exercise to that which we undertook with harmony, which is to consider: is peace primarily a thing, a value, a relation, a process, an action or all of these? Like with harmony, we could be thinking of peace primarily not as an abstract object, but as a quality. In other words, 'peaceful' qualifies something else, such as a state of being (spiritual, psychological, worldly), relationship, social conditions, processes and actions. In this way, we can understand peace not as an absolute ideal or a single idea but from its holistic qualities.

A holistic understanding of peace is important because it provides an opportunity for us to integrate the diverse layers and dimensions of peacefulness from a unified vantage point. It also unites the intrinsic and instrumental values of peacefulness. The intrinsic value of peace lies in the meaningfulness in and of

itself; and the instrumental value of peace refers to the goodness that peace can bring to the world, such as flourishing life and thriving communities.<sup>22</sup> Above all, it can further help us overcome limitations in the two most common conceptions of peace: the inner/outer conception of peace and the positive/negative conception.

The inner/outer axis postulates that peace is an inner state, and there can only be peace in the world when we are at peace within ourselves, or when we embody peacefulness.<sup>23</sup> In this view, peace is defined as inner tranquillity or harmony that is found in one's feelings, mind and body, arising from a spiritual state. In the positive-negative axis, peace is regarded as having positive qualities, or prudent features (for example, values) rather than just the absence of negative features (for example, violence).

The inner and positive conception would seem to tend more towards an absolute pacifist position. This is because insofar as peace is an inner state (primary definition), peacebuilding actions are oriented towards the practices of mindful living and meditation. This involves the promotion of positive states of mind, which can help reduce and resolve anger, fear and other negative emotions, thus bringing peacefulness into one's body, mind and feelings, and from there, extending peace towards others as a disinterested love, for example for animals, plants and the natural environment. The inner and positive conception is not focused on the socio-political economic conditions necessary for the emergence of peace. Instead, under this positive conception, the focus lies with cultivating individuals who can serve as peace agents and who will bring peace to the world because of their inner peacefulness.

In the outer and negative conception of peace the default *de facto* natural state is egoistic and one of aggression, war or violence and peace is opposite to this default perpetual state of violence. In the classic view as portrayed by Hobbes the state of nature as one in which all self-interested individuals are in perpetual potential violent conflict with each other in competing for limited natural resources as well as limited positional goods, such as honour or glory.<sup>24</sup> According to this conception, the pacifist state is not a natural state of being human, and as long as there is no violence between peoples, groups and nations, there is peace. According to this view, peacebuilding will stress combating, removing or suppressing violence and its root causes. Hence, peace-oriented processes including democratic governance, the rule of just laws, a fair system of economic distribution, institutions that ensure equal respect for all, and free exchange of thought, among others, are only directed symptoms of violence.

There are a number of limitations in the inner/outer and positive/negative conceptions of peace: one sees peace as an absolute entity or single ideal, the

same in all circumstances and contexts; the other that the peaceful state remains at the levels of the psychological and the individualistic; a third is the separation of spiritual peace from worldly peacefulness. This means that institutional and systemic peace must be conceived of in purely negative terms, leaving no space for peace to be conceived in a non-individualistic or integral sense.

Through the lens of the threefold distinction of peace drawn from the perspectives of harmony, these limitations can be overcome. It is helpful to develop a holistic conception of peace, an understanding that connects the idea of peacefulness as a (spiritual) way of being, a psychological state, a relationship between persons and groups, a condition of community, a feature of political economic structures and international relations, and a collective process and co-action for the greater good.

We can see two examples of the holistic conception of peace in contemporary history: one is Gandhi's theory of peace that presupposes peace as both a spiritual value and at the core of worldly peace processes. Non-violence as a spiritual practice of peacefulness is therefore an active struggle against injustice and violation of human rights. It denounces any form of violence and enemy-making. Gandhian peace contains compassion and truth as self-transformation and has important social implications because the idea of active struggle sees peace as a continuous integral process in which the ends cannot be separated from their means.

Another example is that of Lederach's proposal of building peace through strengthening community relationships and reconciliation in post-conflict societies. Likewise, being peaceful is both a spiritual attribute and socio-economic and political endeavour.<sup>25</sup> Such a holistic conception of peace will make sense of the differences between peace in multiple diverse contexts and conditions without denying such variations.

### *B. PEACE INCLUDING RIGHT RELATIONSHIPS*

Compelling and convergent ideas have emerged in the perspectives of harmony, especially in the light of harmony's embodying symbiosis amongst all things within a totality. It suggests that our being is fundamentally relational, that peace reflects an interdependence of our being. We are all part of the whole and instead of having 'us' and 'them', there will always only be 'we'. In this sense, peace contains the idea of we-ness and that our being is always already being-with. The word 'with' here is the most important and it really captures the essence of our being – a genuine *coesse*, or co-being, a mutual presence, found in love, trust and respect for each

other, and for all there is. At the heart of co-being lies the right relationships.<sup>26</sup>

Through the perspectives of harmony, we are aware of the beauty and goodness and truth in these myriad relationships in the world, and these three core qualities of harmony can in turn help us reflect on the qualities of our relatedness and relationships. For instance, the propriety, appropriateness and different kinds of good must be contained in the right relationships.

For our discussion, I distinguish four kinds of co-being or being-with which are all characterised by peacefulness and harmony: (1) being-with one's self; (2) being-with others; (3) being-with the Divine other; (4) being-with the world, including the social and natural world. I will briefly discuss each below:

*Being-with one's self.* As human beings, we also have intrapersonal relationship. Some call it inner peace, which is beyond a mere feeling of calm, but instead it is a state of being that is the fruit of harmonising all aspects of ourselves, including the ways we identify ourselves (eg. gender, race, sexuality, family, clan, nationality), the narratives of our past, present and future, our emotions, dispositions, wants and desires, and so forth. This includes our relationships with our past traumas and our aggressive reactions towards trauma and victimhood. Peace and peacefulness is when our being-with our self is a harmonious relationship. and this peacefulness can engender joyful tranquility that silences the potentially aggressive nature of all intra-personal conflict. As we shall see later, this inner/spiritual state is when one is appropriately connected to the transcendent, or divine or sacred, reality in a way that constitutes part of one's development and has moral fruits.

*Being-with others.* Being human is being aware that we are finite, and our ways of being, our practices, values and worldviews are always situated in our histories, memories, collective wounds, religious teachings, cultural traditions and communal journeys. So it is imperative for us to engage with others including other people and other beings in the world, and to be in a relationship with others in ways that are mutually transformative and transcending.<sup>27</sup> As illustrated in the harmony discussion, this means that our growth is not only enriched by those others we encounter, but also co-dependent on the growth of others and the development of humanity as a whole.<sup>28</sup> Thus our being as co-being has others already constituted in it instead of outside of it, and it challenges the predominant Western individualism, a mentality which tends to accentuate the self, giving priority to the individual's self-interest and self-actualisation.

This interpersonal relational vision suggests that the self should never be understood as a singular bounded individual. Instead, each person experiences their self as a relational being, the meaningfulness of whose existence is intimately connected to that of others.<sup>29</sup> This way of being-with is implicit in the notion of

harmony, and hence peace is the *fellowship* of men and women which is depicted in the essence of love.

*Being-with Divine.* Our being consists not only in the fellowship of men and of women, but also in the communion with the Divine, the sacred, or the transcendent. Divine qualities are only realised in their revelation of presence to humans and all that is, such as in the saying 'Heaven is the author of virtues in me'.<sup>30</sup> To be in peace is to seek, to remain and to sustain this communion with the Divine which affirms our being and becoming. Different traditions have given this state of being-with different names, such as the soul, the true self, atman.

Many non-confessional wisdom traditions point out that divine quality is not limited to God's being, but is also found in all animated beings in the world. So, there is divine nature in animals, in trees, and in other beings. Indeed, most indigenous traditions have always maintained that nature itself is divine. Recognising the divine nature of all beings is to affirm the oneness of all life. That is also to say that by communing with the divine, peace, justice and flourishing can spring from this collective core – our spirit or spirituality.

*Being-with the world.* The life in peace and harmony is furthermore to be in fellowship with the world, including the social, spiritual (inner) and natural world. This view rejects the concept that 'man is abstract, isolated, independent, and unattached to the world' or that 'the world exists as a reality apart from people'.<sup>31</sup> As we have seen, being in peace is the living out of our human qualities in the world with a view to transforming the world and ourselves in it. Thus, peace is not only constituted in human fellowship and solidarity but also provides a context within which each individual proactively pursues co-being together. This way of understanding peace offers an understanding of the nature of work – work is no longer just a means to gain a livelihood, it is also an expression of who we are and enriches the community's life, strengthens fellowship amongst all and serves the goodness in the world.

As defined by the Earth Charter, peace is intimately connected to the notion of right relationships with 'oneself, other persons, other cultures, other life, Earth, and the larger whole of which all are a part'.<sup>32</sup> The two key concepts here are wholeness and right relationships. Peace and harmony, when so defined, is found in the relationship with all that is.

### C. PEACE EMBODYING PROACTIVITY AND CARE

When understanding our way of being from such relational perspectives, peace, and harmony, is communing, being in interdependent and mutually constitutive

relationships. Peace entails that we are beings *with* other beings, and we are beings *for* other beings, and these relationships are realised through a form of care, respect and deep concern for each other and for the world. So the caring is reflected in our collective inquiry around the question: ‘What kind of being do we want to become?’ rather than merely ‘What kind of being are we?’ This is about what it means to be and become human and to live well with others and with the world. Indeed, peace is also the fruit of our collective endeavour, life’s gift we offer to each other through our being and availing ourselves to others, through our growth and development, our synergetic relationship with each other in the service of goodness in the world. As Parker J. Palmer wrote, we, as ourselves, are the only gift we can offer to others.<sup>33</sup> This reflective proactivity can also be directed at one’s self, and whenever we attend to and listen to our self and give it the care it needs, we are at the same time attending to, listening to and caring for others.

Like harmony, peace also contains and holds tensions, differences and contradictions, and peace does not rule out conflict. In fact, tension, differences and conflict are essential to human life because without encountering differences, there will be little dialogue, innovation or transformation. Peace must consider the potentially enriching effect that conflict can have on creating constructive and desirable change within wider social processes.

Whilst conflict is a normal part of human relationships, when unaddressed it can become a driver for hostility and can catalyse violence. Thus, as part of building peace and developing harmony, it also necessitates our continued encounter, dialogue and negotiation of differences, tension and contradiction, and invites the proactivity of all people to take the initiative to transform conflicts and bring peace and harmony to the community and to the world. Such proactivity and care are examples of integrating human rights with our responsibilities.<sup>34</sup>

So peace embodies the conscious and enduring striving of humanity. Apart from the already mentioned individual and collective (co)-action, dialogue, coordination and co-creation, peace is also reflected in our endeavour to integrate ethical values in the practices of institutions as a key to governance; and likewise, peace is found in the ways that we structure our economy, develop national political systems, international relations and even global governance. Above all, peace includes cultivating our habits and capabilities of listening, dialogue and collaboration which is one of the primary tasks of education. Education can further help us develop our capacity to navigate through complex socio-economic and political landscapes and all forms of relationship, without losing sight of the goodness, beauty and truth.

## CONCLUSION

I have attempted to understand peace from the perspectives of harmony through a reading and interpretation of classical Greek and Chinese ideas. This leads to a more holistic understanding of peace as relationally harmonious, ethically just, structurally dignified, aesthetically pleasing, and that peace can hold tensions and conflicts creatively, and integrate the wholeness of all beings in a mutually transformative way. This understanding of peace highlights that peace is not just a state of being, an intrinsic value or a condition for flourishing life, but it is also a process, a structure, and an action towards a greater good. At the core of this understanding is that peacefulness qualifies our mutual flourishing experience in the world, including how we live our lives, pursue activities, engage in relationships and make a contribution to the well-being of others and the goodness in the world. This also means that any socio-economic structures, political systems and institutional practices that count as peaceful must be directed at enabling mutual flourishing.

In particular, I have highlighted two ideas of peace – one is that peace contains right relationships amongst all and the other is that peace embodies human proactivity and the value of care and caring. Right relationships suggest that peace is constituted in the peaceful or harmonious relationships between people and groups, cultures and communities, amongst nations, and between the human, spiritual and natural worlds. Human proactivity evokes that peace compels us and inspires us to live out our humanity and pursue a flourishing life together, through our being, relating and acting in a caring way, as well as through the design and development of humanising and peaceful pillars in societal, economic, political, ecological systems and structures, and value-based governance. Only when we care can we actively live out right relationships and act with integrity in all aspects and dimensions of life.

Globally, for the first time, humanity has come close to living together in ONE peaceful and harmonious community on the planet earth. Such a global community of peace and harmony will be possible so long as we see love as the promise of belonging and bonding beyond the boundaries of cultures, religions and ideologies; community as the commitment to co-being and co-action; human spirit as a mutual experience of transcendence.

## NOTES

1. See, for example, *Plato: Republic* I, Books 1-5 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013).
2. See *Plotinus: Enneads*, Loeb Classical Library Vols. I-VII (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988).
3. See Pythagoras, trans. André Laks and Glenn W. Most, *Early Greek Philosophy* IV (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016); Plato, *Republic* 401d-402a, 411a; H. Northwood, *Harmony and Stability: Number and Proportion in Early Greek Conceptions of Nature* (University of Alberta, UMI, 1997).
4. See Plato, *Timaeus* 32b-33a,
5. See, for example, *Chaldean Oracles*, ed. and trans. Ruth Majercik (1989; repr. Westbury, Wiltshire: Prometheus Trust, 2013); Iamblichus, *On the Mysteries (De mysteriis)*, ed. and trans. E.C. Clarke, J.M. Dillon and J.P. Hershbell (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003); Kuznetsova, A. (2006). The concept of harmony in ancient philosophy, [www.nsu.ru/classics/eng/Anna/dissertation.htm](http://www.nsu.ru/classics/eng/Anna/dissertation.htm)
6. As noted by J. Berthrong, 'Confucian Formulas for Peace: Harmony 和, *Soc*, 2014. 51:645-655 (<https://slideheaven.com/confucian-formulas-for-peace-harmony-.html>),
7. Confucius, *The Analects* (New York: Penguin, 2014)13:23
8. Xinzhong Yao, 'The Way of Harmony in the Four Books', *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 40 (2), 2013, pp. 252-268.
9. Chenyang Li, 'The Confucian Ideal of Harmony', *Philosophy East and West*, vol. 56, no. 4, 2006, pp. 583-603, p. 587.
10. Chenyang Li, 'The Confucian Ideal of Harmony', p. 594.
11. Chenyang Li, 'The Ideal of Harmony in Ancient Chinese and Greek Philosophy', *Dao*, 7:1, 2008, pp 81-98
12. See Li, 2008, 90; Guthrie, W. (1962). *A History of Greek Philosophy*, vol. I. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
13. Li, 'The Ideal of Harmony in Ancient Chinese and Greek Philosophy'.
14. See *Chaldean Oracles* Fragment 39; Iamblichus, *De mysteriis* 1.12 (42.5-7). The capital L in Love is to stress that this is not the love in a sentimental and romantic sense.
15. S. Chen, 'Harmony' in S. Lopez (ed.) *The Encyclopaedia of Positive Psychology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2009).
16. Li, 'The Ideal of Harmony in Ancient Chinese and Greek Philosophy', p. 86
17. Li, 'The Confucian Ideal of Harmony', p. 599.
18. H. Wettstein, 'Ritual', *The Routledge Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* (New York: Taylor and Francis, 1998).
19. Zhongyong (中庸), in Roger T. Ames and David L. Hall, *Dao De Jing* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2003).
20. See Scherto Gill and Garrett Thomson. *Understanding Peace Holistically* (New York: Peter Lang, 2019), where we used Aristotle's model health as an example to illustrate this. We argue that, according to Aristotle, medicines, athletes, complexions and diets can all be called 'healthy' but in different ways. The qualities a thing needs to be healthy varied in each of these cases; the term is applied to each of these things in virtue of those different qualities. However, this doesn't mean that the word 'healthy' is ambiguous; it has semantic unity. This yields an account that provides unity to diversity by separating derivative and primary uses of the term.
21. Gill and Thomson, *Understanding Peace Holistically*.
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